



north central news

the voice of the north central phoenix community since 1999

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www.northcentralnews.net

City prepares for General Plan vote

By Kathryn M. Miller

As the city of Phoenix moves closer to finalizing its 2025 General Plan Update, the Planning and Development Department spent late November and December presenting the PlanPHX draft to residents at a series of six “Road Show” events. Each event had a specific focus, but the overarching theme was “Creating a More Connected Phoenix.”

The General Plan is required by state law (A.R.S. 9-461-06) to be updated every 10 years. The voter-approved long-range planning tool is meant to provide a vision and policies for the growth and development of cities. In 2015, Phoenix voters approved an update to the Phoenix General Plan, referred to as PlanPHX. Once the current plan is finalized it will go to Phoenix voters in November of this year.

At two different PlanPHX presentations in North Central areas, residents offered their varying opinions about the needs in their neighborhoods. At both the Nov. 30 meeting at Park Central and the Dec. 5 meeting at Cholla Library, the focus was on Transit Oriented Communities.

Transit Oriented Communities (TOC) are broadly defined by the city as areas with compact, pedestrian-scaled, mixed-use developments strategically located within a short walk of high-capacity transit. The intent of TOC is to make walking, bicycling and

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Century Library staff members were joined by City Librarian Rita Hamilton, Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego and Councilman Kevin Robinson as the branch celebrated its half-century mark on Dec. 16 (photo by Kathryn M. Miller).

Community ‘mainstay’ celebrates 50 years

By Kathryn M. Miller

The city of Phoenix’s Century Library, located on Highland Avenue just east of State Route 51, celebrated its 50th anniversary Dec. 16 with an open house celebration featuring family-friendly activities, giveaways and remarks from city leadership. In addition to the branch staff and community members, City Librarian Rita Hamilton, Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego and Councilman Kevin Robinson joined in the festivities.

We caught up with Robinson, who represents Council District 6, at the event, and he talked about the importance of libraries and general and his own personal connection to the Century Branch.

“Libraries have always been a mainstay in our communities,” Robinson said. “They’ve been there in times of need for people. [At the event] one young lady spoke about when she first moved here. The first thing her mom did was get them a library card. They couldn’t afford a lot of things, DVDs and things like that. So, they were able to check it out at the library. That’s so important.

“I have a background in law enforce-

ment, 36 years, and I know, especially with young folks, that they have to have something to do, because if they don’t, they’ll find something to do, and we would much rather them be using their time in a more productive way. The libraries have always been there for that very reason.

“For me personally, this library specifically, I used to come here and study for the sergeant’s exam. That was in 1986, I think. It was several months, several hours a week hunkered down in the corner. It’s been remodeled a few times, but I would hunker down the corner and just study.”

These types of stories are familiar to many in the

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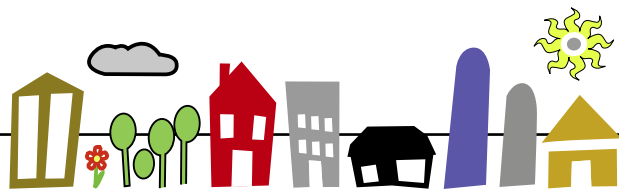
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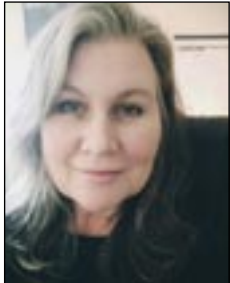


COMMUNITY

From the Editor

Happy New Year, North Central neighbors!

Like many of you, as 2024 rolls in, we are taking a moment to reflect on the previous year and think about the year ahead — and considering ways that we can better serve our readership. We would love to have your feedback. What types of story coverage are you looking for or what would you like to see more or less of?



Have you visited our website recently (www.northcentralnews.net)? How is it working for you? Are there any features that you would like to see added? Feel free to drop me a line at kathryn@northcentralnews.net. Also, if you are not already following us on

social media, you can find *North Central News* on Facebook and Instagram: @NorthCentralNewsPHX.

In this first issue of 2024, our cover stories focus on Century Library, which celebrated a major milestone in December, and the continuing efforts by the City of Phoenix to prepare for the General Plan 2025 update.

Also this month, read about the Melrose District's Sandfish and Whiskey in our Café Chat with Marjorie Rice, and catch up on all of the other community, business, dining and school news, as well as explore our round-up of things to do in the Valley this month and beyond.

We look forward to connecting with you in 2024 and hope that you enjoy our January issue. Until next month, all my best!

Kathryn M. Miller
Editor, *North Central News*
kathryn@northcentralnews.net

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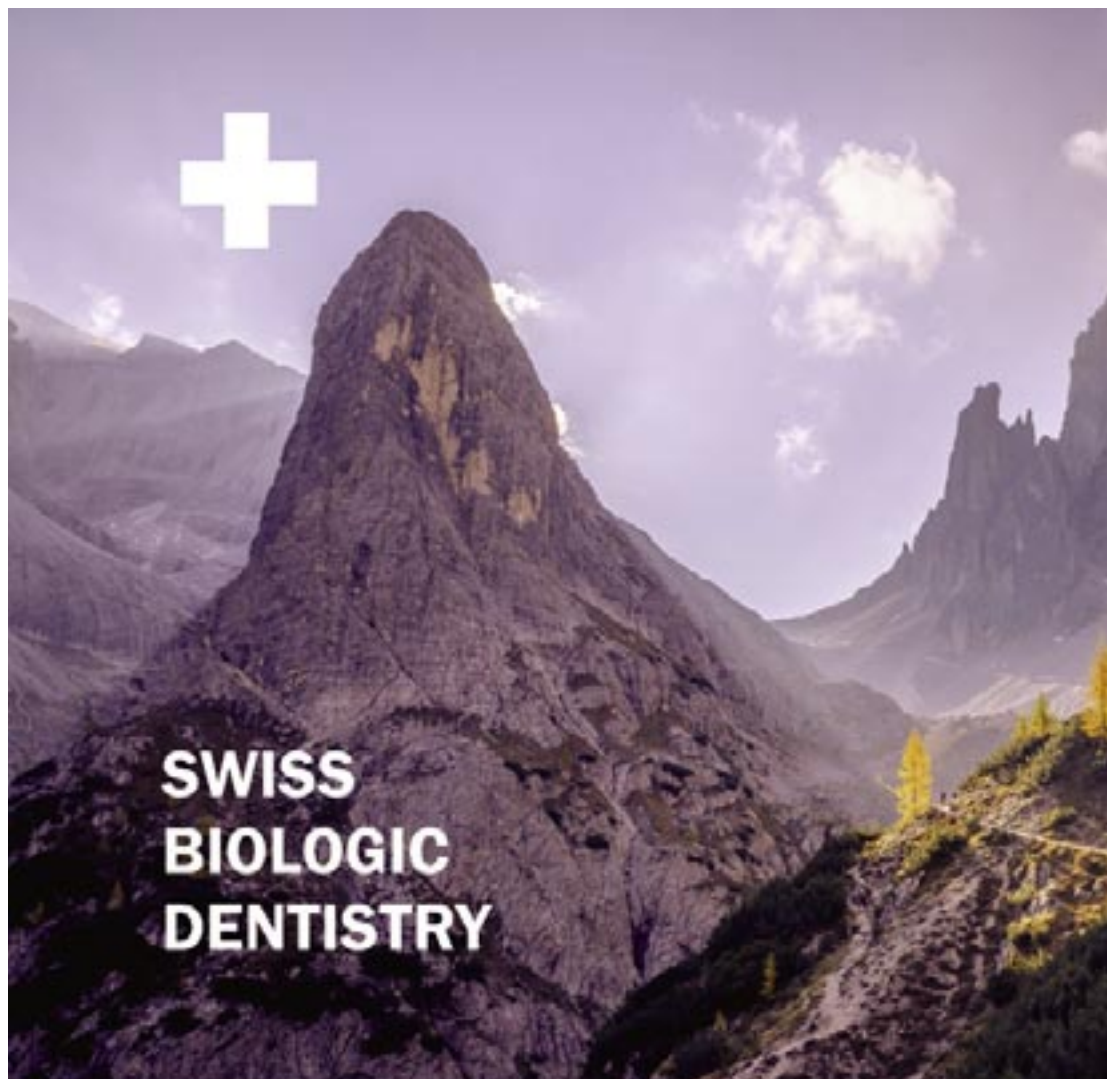
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The Phoenix City Council voted in December to reduce the speed limit along 15 stretches of the city’s roadways, including several spots in North Central (photo by Kathryn M. Miller).

City reduces speed limits

At its Dec. 6 meeting, the Phoenix City Council voted unanimously to approve the reduction of speed along 15 stretches of Phoenix roadways. Twelve of the changes were made due to traffic and road conditions — whether based on Complete Streets Policy or to create a consistent speed limit for the corridor — and three were made for record-keeping purposes, where the current speed did not match the current ordinance.

Twice annually, the Phoenix Street Transportation Department does a comprehensive review of Phoenix City Code with regards to local speed limits. In fall 2023, department staff proposed the changes that Council approved.

Changes in the North Central area include the following reductions from 35 mph to 30 mph based on Complete Streets’ context sensitive speed limit policy: Hatcher Road, from 19th Avenue to Central Avenue; Osborn Road; and 12th Street from Indian School Road to Mountain View Road.

According to the city’s website, the goal of its Complete Streets Policy is to create a more sustainable transportation system that is safe and accessible for everyone. Complete streets provide infrastructure that encourages active transportation such as walking, bicycling, transportation choices and increased connectivity. Through the policy, the primary focus of street design will no longer be solely on the speed and efficiency of automobile travel, but on the safety and comfort of all users of the

public right-of-way (ROW).

Within the policy, “context sensitive” means that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to design. It reads in part, “Flexibility enables projects to be tailored to the specific needs of each community with regards to their surrounding land uses and street character, allowing for the selection of facilities and amenities best suited to the needs of each community.” Read more at www.phoenix.gov/streets/complete-streets-program.

Other North Central changes include a reduction from 45 mph to 40 mph to create consistent speed limit for the following corridors: Lincoln Drive, 800 feet east of Ocotillo Road to 32nd Street; 24th Street, Montebello Avenue to Lincoln Drive; and 32nd Street, Arizona Canal to Lincoln Drive.

To learn which other streets have reduced speed limits, or to dig deeper into the studies behind the changes, visit www.phoenix.gov/streets/speedlimitchange.

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since 1999

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COMMUNITY

LIBRARY continued from page 1

community, and as the Phoenix Public Library system celebrates its own milestone — 125 years — we talked to Lee Franklin for some history and perspective. Franklin is not only the public information officer for the Library Department but is a major cheerleader for libraries in general.

Opened Sunday, Dec. 16, 1973, the Century branch was the seventh in the library system. The library is currently located within the Camelback Colonnade, in 1973, it was known as the Sears-Rhodes Mall. This branch came about because of a 1969 study done by the Phoenix Growth Committee, which recommended adding a library to the fast-growing area, and the Phoenix City Council agreed. The area has seen a lot of changes since that time, most dramatically, SR51 being built immediately to the west of the building in 1990, and the library itself is a historical snapshot of our communities at the time Franklin says.

“If you look at our Phoenix Public Library system, we have kind of a clustering of our library branches that came into

existence during this window,” Franklin said. “And one of the concepts at that time was to include a library facility either as part of or very closely adjacent to shopping centers or malls, as the mall concept evolved and came into being.”

The name “Century” has double reference. Most of the Phoenix library names are inspired by desert plants, Franklin added. Century is a desert plant, but also the library was the first new library built during the second century of the Phoenix Public Library’s history — it was officially established in June 1898.

Fast forward to 2023 and the Century Library serves as something as a commuter library, due to its convenience along the 51. Currently, all libraries are seeing an increase in foot traffic and Century welcomes more than 5,000 visits per month, with around 6,000 items checked out each month. And the future is bright for Phoenix libraries with a Bookmobile, 24-hour book lockers and more in the works, thanks in part to ARPA funding.

At the end of the day, though, Franklin says that libraries do so much more for communities than just pro-

viding a place where people can check out a book. They are also a place to access the internet, to gather with neighbors, to find enriching and entertaining programs and resources. And sometimes, just a place to be. And it’s all offered free of charge.

She added, “We are that open access to information, and we literally have something for everybody. If somebody needs to get information, start at the library. If we don’t have that book or we don’t have that piece of information, we know where to go find it. Anything that anybody’s got going on or wanting to figure out — always start at the library.”

Century Library is located at 1750 E. Highland Ave. To learn more about this and other branches in the Phoenix Public Library system, visit www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org.

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using transit convenient, safe and enjoyable for daily life.

Before Planning staff spoke about the impact of transit, however, they put forth the city’s accomplishments since 2015, including establishing the Transportation 2050, 2050 Sustainability, Housing PHX, PHX Food Action, Climate Action, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Policy and Road Safety Action plans, as well as Reimagine PHX, Historic Preservation partnerships and an Arts/Culture inventory.

Although the city established these plans over the past 8 years, opinions at the meetings varied as to how successful the implementation has been, particularly at the Nov. 30 Midtown/Uptown meeting with regards to TOD and road safety. At that meeting, Planning director Joshua Bednarek spoke about how the city is reinventing and connecting its 15 urban Villages, each of which have a Character Plan in place, and how that relates to the General Plan.

Since 2015, 63 rezoning cases have been approved in Midtown/Uptown, the majority have been built and eight more are currently under construction. Beyond rezoning, seven other major projects have been built, with one under construction. Developments since 2015 have brought over 6,500 dwelling units to the area, with another 3,800 units planned.

Bednarek then spoke about lessons learned and what is next for the Midtown and Uptown areas. With a **please see PREPARES on page 8**



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IT'S ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

My father, Herb, began building relationships when he first arrived in the 1960s and my brother and I have been blessed by many of those same relationships. I started thinking about how long I have been in Phoenix and it has been over half of my life. To say that we have built long-lasting friendships in Phoenix would be an understatement.

I have also become a creature of habit. Besides my morning routine of getting on the bike, I first take a ride down to LUX COFFEE, on Central Avenue. MaryAnn has been a two-latte devotee since before Jeff Fischer owned the restaurant in 2005. It really doesn't matter that I don't drink coffee, their breakfast sandwiches, creamy oatmeal, and/or yogurt parfait may not find its way home. I enjoy the company and new friendships, made every morning at LUX.

Some of you may remember our former Mayor of Phoenix and long-time friend, the Honorable Phil Gordon. He, along with a cast of characters, greets me every morning as they hold court at the entrance of our favorite neighborhood coffee café, serving freshly baked goods, lunch and dinner. Alongside Phil is Eric, an ASU alum and loyal fan; Joe, a complex flooring contractor who is a doctor's dream because of his many injuries; Rich, a retired fire captain and Phoenix history buff; Simon, who provides financial insight coupled with his English humor; and Joel, who is a personable attorney (not an oxymoron), always ready with some quick sarcasm. There may be a few verbal jabs and a lot of laughs; suffice to say, we are definitely building on our friendships. On occasion, our conversation turns to our real estate market. They ask if I hold open houses, which we do — or how the values are holding up in our community of North Central, and they are.

In December 2023, we put a home on the market between the 7's (7th

Avenue and 7th Street) for more than \$1.8 million and the residence sold in one day. One reason, other than the home being a gorgeous reconstruction, is relationships. My current clients (buyers) have been looking for just the right home in North Central, thus a buyer and seller transaction was created. In addition, agents regularly connect when they have clients interested in property and/or homes in our North Central neighborhoods. It is about connections and associations, made throughout the years. I am grateful and understand that it is a privilege to have sold 63 homes in 2023 for a total of \$65 million in sales, with 20 homes over \$1 million. This includes the \$4 million+ home sold in North Central Phoenix.

We are excited about the many possibilities in the new year and understand that while interest rates are trending downward and our communities and neighborhoods are experiencing success, in contrast, the world is still reeling. Hold on! Continue to build relationships, honor differences and trust that some conversation and a cup of coffee or yogurt parfait is where we can begin to build community.

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At a Dec. 5 PlanPHX meeting, residents identified areas within the Northwest Extension Phase II area, near Metrocenter, that need focused attention (photo by Kathryn M. Miller).

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goal of “preserving and creating a network of vibrant commercial corridors,” Bednarek said that in the short term, Planning will stipulate mixed-uses along Central Avenue where active commercial uses will be removed — something that many residents have argued did not happen with many approved developments — as well as stipulate enhanced streetscapes, greater connection to parks and public spaces, encourage developers to work with communities on how projects interface with neighborhoods and promote adaptive reuse. Long-term goals include updating the Walkable Urban Code to address all these short-term aspects as well as to include the character plans for all the TOC areas.

At the Dec. 5 meeting, the focus was on the Northwest Extension Phase II (NWE) of the Valley Metro light rail, which is already in the testing phase and expected to begin service in early 2024, and how the TOC Plan for the area fits into the General Plan. The study area for this TOC runs from 19th Avenue to 35th Avenue and Butler Drive to Peoria Avenue, excluding 23rd to 19th Avenue from Dunlap south to Butler.

At the meeting, residents were asked to identify their main priority for the future of the area, and safety came up most often. Other priorities included economic vitality and growth, walkability, access to multimodal transportation, hospitals and food, a better mix of housing (including affordable), better circulating roadways, as well as broad efforts to clean up, beautify and connect communities.

In the works now, the city will create

this TOC plan by asking the community to articulate its vision for the future and how to leverage the potential of the city's high-capacity transit investment. The policy plan will be developed in three phases, taking place throughout 2024 with a final presentation for action by Council in winter 2025. Learn more and take a survey to share your input at www.phoenix.gov/pdd/tod/northwest-extension.

Although the General Plan was presented at 90 Village Planning Committee meetings over the course of 2023, direct public input has been somewhat underwhelming, with only 1,700 submissions through the online surveys, and an average of 50-plus participants at the Road Show events. But residents will have two more opportunities to voice their opinions before the General Plan 2025 goes to the Council for final approval.

The Planning Commission will hold two public hearings, with the first scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 22, at the Goelet A. Beuf Community Center, 3435 W. Pinnacle Peak Road. The second public hearing will be held March 7 in City Council Chambers. A presentation will be provided on the General Plan at both hearings and anyone wishing to speak will have an opportunity to provide public comments. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation at the March 7 hearing, and the mayor and council will vote on the final plan at an April meeting.

In the meantime, residents who would like to review the Phoenix General Plan 2025 Public Hearing Draft can visit www.phoenix.gov/pdd/generalplan2025.

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COMMUNITY



Residents can donate blood during an event at Uptown Plaza and enjoy a discount at Huss Brewing Co. on Jan. 27 (photo courtesy of Uptown Plaza).

Blood drive scheduled at Uptown Plaza

Uptown Plaza is joining forces with Vitalant and hosting a blood drive, Saturday, Jan. 27, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The bloodmobile trailer will be stationed along Central Avenue near Applebee's.

After donating blood, donors can celebrate with 15 percent off at Huss Brewing Co. from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. with proof of donation sign up.

Donors can schedule an appointment by visiting www.uptownplaza-phx.com/events. For more information on donating blood, visit www.vitalant.org.

Local church will host arts events

Beatitudes Church will bring three artistic events to the community in January and February.

The church Arts Council is currently hosting the Arizona Print Group. The winter show will continue through Jan. 21. In addition, the group is again sponsoring an exhibit of art by students at its three neighborhood high schools, Cortez, Sunnyslope and Washington. The student art show begins Jan. 28 and will run through Feb. 25.

In addition, the church will present a jazz concert featuring the Tom Wakeling Quartet, Sunday, Jan. 21, at 6 p.m. A \$10 donation is requested.

Beatitudes Church is located at 555 W. Glendale Ave. For additional information about arts events, send an email

to media@beatitudeschurch.org. Learn more at www.beatitudeschurch.org.

Women's League supports nonprofits

At its seventh annual fall fundraiser, the North Central Women's League (NCWL) raised \$7,000 to fund the social service organizations it supports, including Native American Connections Home Base Youth Services, Hope Women's Center, The Assistance League and Sunnyslope School.

The Bubbles and Baskets fundraiser was held Dec. 7 at the Medlock neighborhood home of Amy Rhoden and featured a silent auction of 40 baskets – all created and donated by the club's membership. The fundraiser was organized by Marguerite Brown, Sue Mulligan, Cara Campbell, Julie Anderson, Julie Furey, Lisa Gall, Jennifer Goettl, Mari Sickler, Leslie McKenna, Cindy Mero and Trish Shyman.

"The committee outdid themselves this year. While it was fun and festive the real highlight is our ability to impact the lives of the students, clients and residents of the nonprofits we support financially and by volunteering," said Ruanne Hobaica, president of NCWL.

A popular stop with attendees was a permanent jewelry booth. Owner Sophia Sheehan of Heavenly Links contributed a \$500 donation to NCWL from jewelry sales at the event.

To learn more about North Central Women's League and how to become a member, visit www.northcentralwomensleague.org.

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COMMUNITY

ValleyLife opens prep kitchen

Late last year, the city of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department and ValleyLife, a nonprofit that provides residential services, day activity centers, vocational services, and in-home services to Phoenix residents with disabilities, celebrated the ribbon cutting of a new healthy prep kitchen.

The kitchen was funded by a \$150,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from Neighborhood Services. Located inside ValleyLife's existing facility, it will be used to prepare healthy pre-packaged meal kits, as part of an effort to enhance the organization's Eat Well Feel Great Nutrition Program, and will serve 25 group homes, 12 of which reside in Phoenix.

"ValleyLife's mission is to enhance the quality of life of people with disabilities. Our first goal in achieving this mission is to ensure the health and safety of our members. One critical point of that goal is to provide healthy meals and nutrition. We are thankful for this opportunity to expand our nutrition program with this new kitchen," said



District 3 Councilwoman Debra Stark and Neighborhood Services Department Director Spencer Self (second and fourth from left) were joined by ValleyLife leadership and others at a Nov. 16 ribbon-cutting event celebrating a new prep kitchen (submitted photo).

the organization's president and CEO, Cletus Thiebeau.

Learn more at www.valleylifeaz.org.

Museum hosts local TV legend

The Sunnyslope Historical Society invites residents to hear from Mary Jo West at a January in-person discussion.

West has been called the First Lady of TV News in Phoenix. She became the first prime-time anchorwoman in Phoenix in 1976, opening the door for the women who followed her. She came to Phoenix in 1975 as a producer-host at the Public Broadcasting Station KAET-TV in Tempe. In 1976, West accepted a job at KOOL-TV Channel 10, the CBS affiliate.

The Historical Society noted that her first years there were not easy, as she shared the anchor desk with an old-school newsman who saw the newsroom as a "man's domain" and wasn't pleased that a 27-year-old woman would be sharing his anchor desk.

West wanted to talk about issues that were vital and to report stories of substance, and in doing so, she won her industry's top awards including the Peabody, two Rocky Mountain Emmys, 13 Arizona Press Club awards, and the national "Gracie Allen Award" from American Women in Radio and TV. She was the first news woman inducted into the Arizona Broadcasters Hall of Fame. The City of Phoenix honored her with the Martin Luther King Living the Dream Award for her work fighting discrimination against the mentally ill.

Residents can hear from the TV legend at a Jan. 20 event, held from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Sunnyslope Historical Society, 737 E. Hatcher Road. The event is free; seating is limited. Refreshments will be served. For additional information, call 602-684-1607 or visit www.sunnyslopehistorical.org.

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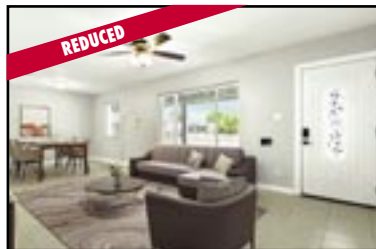
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COMMUNITY

Christmas tree composting available

The city of Phoenix Public Works Department offers Phoenix residents several drop-off locations for their live Christmas trees and wreaths to be composted. Trees or wreaths may be dropped off at any of the participating Phoenix parks anytime through Sunday, Jan. 7.

Only live trees and wreaths are accepted, not plastic trees and wreaths. Residents are asked to remove all lights and decorations before making a drop-off. Trees and wreaths will be composted at the city's 27th Avenue Compost Facility.

Area parks that will accept trees and wreaths include Cactus Park, Los Olivos Park Madison Park, Mountain View Park and Washington Park. In addition, trees can be dropped off at the North Gateway Transfer Station, located at 30205 N. Black Canyon Hwy. (Dixileta exit), and Sunbelt Rentals locations will accept items through Jan. 5, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Find a list of drop-off locations at www.phoenix.gov/publicworks/christmastrees. Contact Phoenix customer service at 602-262-6251 or email



The city will compost live Christmas trees and wreaths, which may be dropped off at select area parks through Sunday, Jan. 7 (photo courtesy of Phoenix Public Works Department).

solid.waste@phoenix.gov for more information.

Knights host car show to support Sisters

The Knights of Columbus Council #7306 invites residents to join them at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Parish for their second annual car show fundraiser.

The event is free for all spectators; there is a \$25 registration fee for each car exhibited. All makes, models and years, including pickup trucks and vans, are welcome in the show. Proceeds from the event will be used to support the renovation of the Sisters' Convent at the church.

There are 23 trophy prize categories up for grabs, and a 50/50 raffle and

basket raffle will be held, and food and drinks will be available for purchase.

The car show will be held Saturday, Feb. 10, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Most Holy Trinity McHugh Hall parking area, 8822 N. 7th St. For additional information or to register your vehicle for the event, call or text Chris Candia at 623-285-9613.

Musicians featured at fundraising dinner

Arizona sports organist Bobby Freeman and soloist Char Freeman will be featured at Lura Turner Homes' 14th Spaghetti Dinner, Saturday, Jan. 27.

The fundraiser will be held at Madison Baptist, 6202 N. 12th St., with seatings at 4 and 6 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children and include a delicious meal by Personal Touch Catering. In addition, Hidden Treasures Antiques will have collectibles and paintings for sale.

All proceeds benefit the men and women with special needs who live at Lura Turner Homes' Joyce Ridge Civitan House in central Phoenix. For tickets or information, contact Max McQueen at 602-943-4789 or visit www.luraturnerhomes.org.

MLK award recipients to be honored at event

Residents are invited to celebrate the Arizona Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. holiday at the 38th Annual Arizona MLK "I Still Believe in the Dream" Awards Breakfast, Friday, Jan. 12, at the Phoenix Convention Center, South Ballroom, located at 33 S. 3rd St.

This annual event honors the winners of the Phoenix Human Relations Commission's Calvin C. Goode — Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "Lifetime Achievement Award" and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "Living the Dream" Awards. This year, Dennis Prince, Sr. will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award, and "Living the Dream" awards will be presented to Pastor Aubrey L. Barnwell, Kenny W. Harris, Jalen Herring, Essen Out and the Honorable Leah Landrum Taylor.

The program begins at 8 a.m., with registration/check-in beginning at 7 a.m. and ballroom doors opening at 7:30 a.m. Event ticket information is available at www.azmlk.org.

For additional information, call 602-513-8311.

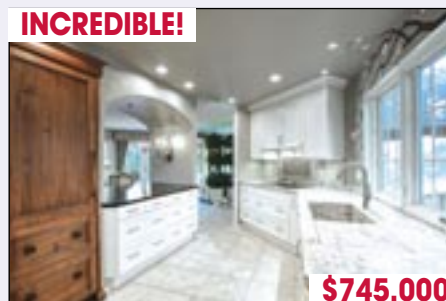
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COMMUNITY

Pet of the Month

Meet affectionate, elegant Eeyore

At just one year young, adorable Eeyore arrived at the Arizona Humane Society (AHS) when her owner could no longer care for her. Upon arrival at the shelter, the medical team found several ticks on her as well as discovered through bloodwork that she has tick fever, a condition often easily treated with medication.

This sweet pup received medical care through the shelter's trauma hospital and after a stay with one of AHS' Foster Heroes, Eeyore is ready for a new forever home. For pets like this adorable American Bulldog, fosters play an incredibly important role in their journey to adoption as they provide a loving, quiet place for pets to continue receiving care.

A true staff favorite, Eeyore is an incredibly affectionate girl who loves everyone she meets. Like most doggos, the cute pup is food motivated, loves treats and would be a great candidate for positive reinforcement training to



Eeyore is an affectionate, adorable one-year-old American Bulldog who loves everyone she meets (photo courtesy of Arizona Humane Society).

help her build her confidence. Eeyore also loves a "good lean," which is her way of asking for you to pet her. Those interested in meeting the elegant Eeyore are encouraged to visit AHS's adoption website to learn more.

If Eeyore (pet number 756502) has already been adopted, please take a moment to meet some of the other dogs, cats and other companion animals at the shelter. To see all adoptable animals currently available at the Arizona Humane Society, visit www.azhumane.org/adopt.

'Pets on Parade' celebrates 65 years

For the last six-and-a-half decades, "Pets on Parade" has touched the lives of pet lovers in Arizona and has inspired community action by featuring adoptable pets, educating the community on animal welfare, providing resources for pet owners and advocating for the sick, injured and abused animals rescued by Arizona Humane Society (AHS).

"Pets on Parade" is the longest-running local television show in Arizona and debuted in December 1958, just one year after AHS was founded. The show celebrated its 65th anniversary Saturday, Dec. 16, after the airing of the Fiesta Bowl Parade.

Each week, approximately 20,000 viewers of all ages tune in and it is estimated that approximately 35,000 dogs, cats and critters have found their forever homes thanks to the unique, in-kind exposure courtesy of 3TV.

"Not only is 'Pets on Parade' Arizona's cutest show, it truly is a lifesaving platform that has allowed AHS to continue advocating for our community's most

vulnerable pets for 65 years and counting," said Kelsey Dickerson, current host of Pets on Parade. "Thanks to this unique partnership, 3TV has helped tens of thousands of homeless pets find their forever homes while bringing joy and laughter to people throughout Arizona each week. We look forward to the next 65 years of adorable, lifesaving TV."

The special anniversary episode revisited the last 65 years and featured a lineup of special guests, while also honoring the late Marge Wright, the beloved host of "Pets on Parade" for more than 40 years. Wright passed away Aug. 26, 2014, at the age of 89, and it is estimated she provided more than 7,000 volunteer hours to the pets she adored so much.

To learn more and view past episodes visit www.azhumane.org/petsonparade, www.youtube.com/arizona-humane-society and www.youtube.com/azfamily.

Festival raises adoption awareness

Doggie Street Festival is dedicated to increasing dog and cat adoption through its yearly festival, which will be held Saturday, Jan. 27, this year.

The free admission event is designed to be an informative experience that promotes public awareness and educates on issues of responsible adoption, foster, spay/neuter and conscientious pet guardianship. The festival provides a diverse range of information on topics concerning pet care, health, training and well-being, and celebrates pet companions and urges the public to act, advocate and work together to effect positive change and help end the tragedy that is pet homelessness.

Attendees are invited to bring their friendly dogs and enjoy music, photo opportunities, contests and other entertainment. Booths featuring pet products and services, food, vet tips and more will be on site. Rescues in attendance may include Any Rat Rescue, AZ Basset Hound Rescue, Arizona Border Collie Rescue, Arizona Husky Rescue, Desert Labrador Retriever Rescue, Foothills Animal Rescue, Home Fur Good, Lost Dogs of Arizona, MASH Unit, Police and Paws Project and Regal Dane Rescue.

Doggie Street Festival will be held Jan. 27 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Steel Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road. Visit www.doggiestreetfestival.org/phoenix for more information.



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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS



Hospital staff, physicians and community leaders gathered at Abrazo Central Campus on Dec. 4 to kick off of the hospital's 60th anniversary celebration (submitted photo).

Hospital campus celebrates 60 years

Abrazo Central Campus celebrated the hospital's 60th anniversary Dec. 4, kicking off six months of celebrations for the medical center in North Central Phoenix. Nurses, physicians and hospital staff were recognized as "family" and the heart and soul of Abrazo Central Campus.

Located at 19th Avenue and Bethany Home Road, the hospital opened in 1963 as Phoenix Baptist Hospital and became Abrazo Central Campus in 2015.

The hospital says that its legacy includes generations of caregivers who dedicated their lives to patient care. The hospital's Family Medicine Residency Program opened in 1978, and many young doctors who trained at Abrazo Central and Phoenix Baptist went on to become physician leaders in the Valley.

"It is often said that healthcare is a team sport. It is more than that. It is family. Abrazo Central Campus is our family. We are a true community hospital and our commitment to providing quality healthcare for our neighbors remains strong," said Abrazo Central Campus CEO Greg Pearson in a news release.

Hospital leaders also recognized the many community collaborations in attendance that are part of the Abrazo Central Campus family.

"As a community hospital, we appreciate the collaborations we have with EMS providers and first responders, our local schools and civic organizations, and education partners," Pearson added. "With such deep roots in the North Central Phoenix community, we thank you all for being here today as we celebrate 60 years."

For more information, visit www.abrazohealth.com.

Business Briefs Phoenix Chamber seeks nominees

The Greater Phoenix Chamber will once again honor outstanding businesses and their positive impact on the local community with the 2024 IMPACT Awards.

The award identifies the stars in the business community that have made an impact in the Valley and offers a way to spotlight the work businesses are doing to attract new clients and customers, as well as celebrate employees. IMPACT Award nominees represent the very best of Arizona business, the Chamber says, adding that self-nominations are encouraged.

Nominations are due no later than Friday, Feb. 2. For additional information, visit www.phoenixchamber.com and click on the "Impact Awards" link under "Events."



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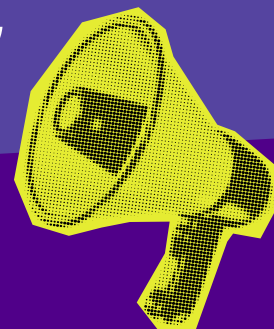
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We are a more-than-175-member-strong group of actively selling agents who have a vested interest in the community, the real estate market and North Central Phoenix. This tour is a cooperative effort among the active REALTORS of the Central Corridor. The tour has been in existence for more than 35 years and is an all-volunteer organization.

Location & Meeting

Our meetings are held on the first and third Friday of each month beginning at 9:00 am. Our meeting spot is at The Casa patio, 7878 N. 16th St., Phoenix, AZ 85020. Following the meeting, we tour up to 10 homes new to the market. We require those REALTORS who have a property on the tour to attend the meeting and then participate in a tour of all houses on that day's tour. Each agent provides constructive feedback on price, condition, and key features of the home. The goal is to network with fellow REALTORS who also specialize in North Central Phoenix neighborhoods and help sell the property.

Tour Boundaries

Tour boundaries are Campbell Avenue to the south, 40th Street to the east, 19th Avenue to the west, with the northern border running south of the North Phoenix Mountain Preserve (roughly Peoria) and just north of Lincoln from 16th Street east to 40th St. The Phoenix Country Club area also is included.

Join Us!

We love working with new members. Join our team and receive news and information about new homes on the market in the North Central Region of Phoenix.

**For more information or to become a member,
visit our website at**

<https://northcentraltour.com/>

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Auto expert debuts book

In late November, Shahe Koulloukian added “author” to his list of skills with the launch of his first book, “Car Confidential: Insider Secrets About Automobile Ownership, Car Maintenance and Road Safety.”

Koulloukian is a master automotive technician, television spokesman, educational speaker and founder of Mazvo Car Care Center, located in North Central Phoenix. His new book aims to provide useful advice for car owners from experienced car aficionados to first timers.

“I take so much pleasure in demystifying the auto industry. ‘Car Confidential’ provides readers with clear insights, an avenue for honesty and empowerment in an age where consumer rights can often take a back seat to corporate concerns. It offers clarity and strength to consumers in facing these obstacles head-on,” said Koulloukian, who was born in Beirut and came to Phoenix by way of France, Germany, Tel Aviv, Milan, Africa, Canada, Philadelphia and L.A. “With this book as your companion, you can transform yourself from a passive consumer into an informed vehicle owner.”

Featuring 22 chapters designed to help readers educate themselves about their responsibility as car owners and drivers as well as to empower them to feel confident when dealing with car issues or mechanics, “Car Confidential” is not intended to be read cover to cover. Instead, the author hopes that it will serve as a constant companion that readers can refer to as needed — when it comes to any car-related topic or any automotive situation.

Learn more at www.carconfidential.net.

New firm focuses on dispute resolution

Laurence DeRespino announced in November the launch of DeRespino Dispute Resolution, offering specialized mediation and arbitration services.

“I’ve evaluated, managed, and resolved high stakes and complex litigation my entire career,” said DeRespino in a released statement. “I’m channeling that depth of experience into mediation and arbitration, striving to strip down legal complexity to achieve fair outcomes for parties while at the same time obtaining finality and known resolutions.”



Auto expert Shahe Koulloukian, founder of Mazvo Car Care Center, launched his first book in November (submitted photo).

He adds that this new career trajectory allows him to use his unique experience as an outside trial lawyer, lead in-house corporate lawyer, business executive and settlement judge to help corporate, commercial and individual parties navigate the legal process through myriad substantive legal disciplines. For more information, call 602-598-1377 or visit www.derespinoadr.com.

Foundation adds to leadership team

In December, the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF) announced that Monica Brown will join the organization as its first chief people officer effective Jan. 16. Brown will join ACF after serving as The Cleveland Foundation’s where she spent more than 16 years as a member of the executive team and was responsible for leading all people and culture initiatives as the vice president of Human Resources, Building Operations & Guest Services.

The Arizona Community Foundation is a statewide family of charitable funds established in 1978 and supported by thousands of Arizonans. For additional information, visit www.azfoundation.org.

Nonprofit announces new development director

Valley nonprofit Ryan House announced the addition of a new development director, Brenna Bernick, who will help further the organization’s mission to enrich the quality of life and create cherished memories for children and their families by providing a much-needed break from 24/7 caregiving, as

please see DIRECTOR on page 22

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417 E Berridge Lane, Phoenix
\$850,000

4 bed - 2.5 - bath - 2,737 sq. ft.
Pool - 2 car garage
Great Location



923 E Berridge Lane, Phoenix
\$565,000

3 Bed - 2 Bath - 1,302 sq. ft.
Pool - Carport
Remodeled



6225 N 14th Place, Phoenix
\$995,000

4 Bed - 3 Bath - 2,199 sq. ft.
Pool - 2 car garage - 1/3 acre lot
Remodeled

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

DIRECTOR *continued from page 20*

they navigate life-limiting or end-of-life journeys.

In this new role, Bernick will serve as a key member of the development team, focusing on donor engagement and stewardship. She will oversee strategic fund development and the individual giving program management, as well as assist with annual signature events.

Before joining Ryan House, Bernick was most recently the senior philanthropy officer at Make-A-Wish Arizona in Scottsdale.

Local Goodwill leader retires

After 22 years with Goodwill of Central & Northern Arizona, Jackie Hallen, president and chief business officer, retired at the end of 2023. She joined the nonprofit in 2001 as vice president of Retail Operations and was promoted to executive vice president and COO in 2015 and then took the helm as president in 2022. Her career in thrift spans over 33 years with nearly 10



Jackie Hallen (left), pictured with Goodwill CEO Tim O'Neal, retired as president and chief business officer of the organization at the end of 2023 (photo courtesy of Tim O'Neal).

years spent at Savers prior to Goodwill.

In a Dec. 15 announcement, the organization highlighted a few of Hallen's accomplishments at Goodwill, including growth from \$25 million in annual revenues to over \$300 million this year; growing from 15 stores to over 100 retail locations, now across Arizona and Maryland and a team of more than 5,000 staff; the introduction of MyCareerAdvisor, a no-cost digital workforce development platform for

the community and MyCareerMatters, a program that offers the same career development services to employees.

She also was a part of the team to bring Goodwill's education model, The Excel Center, to Arizona. Opened in September of 2022, the tuition-free Center serves as a public high school for adults who never completed their high school education. To date, more than 700,000 adults in Arizona do not have their high school diplomas.

Studies show that the annual pay gap between employees with a diploma and employees without a diploma is upwards of \$19,000 per year.

Outside of her role at Goodwill, Hallen serves on the board of trustees at Foundation for the Blind and previously served on the board of the American Heart Association for five years.

Gym opens at Park Central

Phoenix residents have more options for fitness with the opening of a new EoS Fitness location at Park Central. This is the seventh location in the Phoenix area for the nationwide chain and its 30th in the state.

Located at 3110 N. Central Ave. and spanning over 42,000 square feet, the gym includes a smart technology line that personalizes each member's workout to their individual goals and fitness levels, as well as a variety of group fitness and cycling classes and the brand's signature amenities

The gym is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Learn more at www.eosfitness.com.

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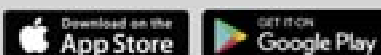
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7130 N 2nd St.....	In Escrow.....	3667SF.....	4BR/4BA.....	\$ 1,825,000
6809 N 12th Ave.....	New Price.....	3387SF.....	5BR/4.5BA.....	\$ 1,529,500
314 E Rose Ln.....	Just Listed.....	3588SF.....	5BR/4BA.....	\$ 1,399,500
123 E Kaler Dr.....	Just Listed.....	3615SF.....	4BR/3.5BA.....	\$ 1,350,000
613 E Vista Ave.....	Just Listed.....	2987SF.....	4BR/3BA.....	\$ 1,295,000
77 E Missouri Ave #52.....	In Escrow.....	3575SF.....	3BR/2.5BA.....	\$ 899,999
77 E Missouri Ave #67.....	New Price.....	3184SF.....	4BR/3BA.....	\$ 774,900
902 E Kaler Dr.....	1/2 acre LOT.....	\$ 750,000
694 W Colter St.....	In Escrow.....	1883SF.....	4BR/2.5BA.....	\$ 650,000
240 W Missouri Ave #25.....	New Price.....	2167SF.....	2BR/2.5BA.....	\$ 675,000
5720 N 64th Dr.....	1561SF.....	4BR/2BA.....	\$ 399,900
8225 N Central Ave #32.....	Just Listed.....	1178SF.....	2BR/1.5BA.....	\$ 369,500
4727 E Lafayette Blvd #128.....	In Escrow.....	720SF.....	1BR/1BA.....	\$ 325,000
3848 N 3rd Ave #2053.....	New Price.....	989SF.....	2BR/2BA.....	\$ 275,000

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620 W Lawrence Rd.....	\$4,050,000	1324 E Lupine Ave*.....	\$1,075,000	715 W Culver St.....	\$ 625,000
5319 E Rockridge Rd*.....	\$3,825,000	5130 N 6th St.....	\$1,065,000	715 W Culver St.....	\$ 625,000
6534 N 27th St.....	\$2,410,000	18244 W Meadowbrook Ave.....	\$1,025,000	1400 E Bethany Home Rd #29.....	\$ 585,000
6811 N Central Ave*.....	\$2,400,000	5645 N 7th Ave.....	\$1,000,000	17726 W Larkspur Dr.....	\$ 575,000
510 E Ocotillo Rd.....	\$2,130,000	322 W Stella Ln.....	\$ 895,000	7748 N 7th Ave.....	\$ 572,500
35 E Myrtle Ave.....	\$2,125,000	7814 N 4th Pl.....	\$ 875,000	1222 E Wagon Wheel Dr.....	\$ 515,000
25 E Myrtle Ave.....	\$1,935,000	719 E Circle Rd.....	\$ 855,000	2828 E Cholla St*.....	\$ 515,000
304 W Orangewood Ave*.....	\$1,800,000	4681 N 84th Way.....	\$ 833,705	804 E Corte Oro*.....	\$ 550,000
11608 E Onyx Ave.....	\$1,750,000	3103 E Hazelwood St.....	\$ 830,000	1516 W Glenn Dr.....	\$ 505,000
5737 N 2nd Ave.....	\$1,750,000	2524 E Beryl Ave.....	\$ 799,000	1001 W Solcicio Ln.....	\$ 400,000
4902 E Piccadilly Rd*.....	\$1,700,000	6811 N 11th Pl.....	\$ 785,000	106 E Echo Ln.....	\$ 495,000
6518 N 25th Way*.....	\$1,683,000	12243 N 58th St.....	\$ 750,000	3618 E Coronado Rd.....	\$ 460,000
345 E Pomona Rd.....	\$1,500,000	21206 N 62nd Ave.....	\$ 725,000	18383 W Vista Norte St*.....	\$ 432,000
334 W State Ave.....	\$1,375,000	23 E Laurie Ln.....	\$ 715,000	5220 N 16th Ln.....	\$ 400,000
546 E Kaler Dr.....	\$1,330,000	2227 E Palmar Ave.....	\$ 700,000	16182 W Winslow Dr.....	\$ 378,000
910 E Kaler Dr.....	\$1,260,455	3011 N 166th Pl.....	\$ 685,000	10432 N 11th St #2.....	\$ 359,900
512 E Adair Dr*.....	\$1,235,000	122 E San Miguel Ave.....	\$ 675,000	23836 W Wier Ave*.....	\$ 339,000
50 E Lamar Rd.....	\$1,200,000	5576 N 12th St #1.....	\$ 675,000	4239 N 20th St.....	\$ 280,000
510 W McLellan Blvd.....	\$1,175,000	5804 N 14th Ave.....	\$ 650,000	6541 N 41st Ave.....	\$ 270,000
7101 N 3rd Ave.....	\$1,157,500	15027 E Desert Willow Dr.....	\$ 645,000		
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2715SF • 4BR/3BA

NEW PRICE



240 W Missouri Ave #25 • \$675,000
2167SF • 2BR/2.5BA

SOLD



4681 N 84th Way • \$833,705
2501SF • 4BR/2.5BA

JUST LISTED



8225 N Central Ave #32 • \$369,500
1178SF • 2BR/1.5BA

IN ESCROW



694 W Colter St • \$650,000
1883SF • 4BR/2.5BA

NEW PRICE



3848 N 3rd Ave #2053 • \$275,000
989SF • 2BR/2BA



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SCHOOL DAYS

Camelback students add to tree canopy

On Nov. 30, Camelback High School hosted partners from Trees Matter and Meritage Homes to plant 30 brand-new trees on campus. This event was part of an effort by Camelback to increase shade and tree coverage across the campus.

The event began in the morning, and 30-plus volunteers joined over a hundred students to finish digging holes and plant trees across the campus. At the start of the event, Principal James Arndt remarked that increasing tree coverage on campus and making more shade for students and community members was a priority and then gave special recognition to two teachers who have led the way in tree planting efforts over the last two years.

“This tree planting event through the Trees Matter organization is a critical piece of how our students can contribute to the greater good of our community and future,” Erick Munoz, a student and the school sustainability officer, noted at the event. “The city of Phoenix has very large goals for increasing our tree canopy, including a city-wide goal of planting 376,000 trees each year. Trees help us save energy, promote cleaner and cooler air in our city, combat climate change, conserve water, and so much more. Studies have shown that trees help community development, increase happiness, and even help students learn better. So, while we are



Camelback High School students are contributing to the greater good of the community by planting trees on campus and beyond (photo courtesy of Phoenix Union High School District).

planting trees and learning about their impact, the trees themselves will be contributing back to our education too.”

The event was coordinated by teachers Holly Finch and Tori Simpson, who have applied for dozens of grants over the past three years that have resulted in more than 70 trees being planted across campus, along with partnerships that have helped students learn more about sustainability and creating more shade across the city.

Camelback students also joined the Arizona Sustainability Alliance and partners American Forests and Bank of America on Dec. 7 to help plant trees at Solano Park, 5625 N. 17th Ave.

providing the necessary resources to enable them to achieve success and satisfaction while fulfilling the mission of the district. GUHSD provides a nationally recognized teacher mentoring program, extensive professional development opportunities, and supportive and collaborative teacher teams. Educators can also enjoy competitive salaries, a benefits package, loan forgiveness opportunities, and more.

To reserve an interview space, call the GUHSD Human Resources Department at 623-435-6017. To learn more, visit www.guhzdaz.org.

Support students through donations

There is still time to give back to GUHSD students with a tax credit contribution. By donating to a GUHSD high school or program of choice, residents can benefit students' high school experiences and positively affect the community.

Arizona state law also allows residents to receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit for contributions made to an Arizona public high school, which can be used as a credit against any state income taxes that may be owed (consult a tax professional for more information).

Married couples can contribute up to \$400 when filing jointly; \$200 per person if they are filing separately; and single individuals can make a maxi-

School Briefs

GLENDALE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT District holds career fair

The Glendale Union High School District is hiring for the 2024-25 school year. The district will hold the annual GUHSD Teacher Career Fair event Saturday, Jan. 27, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Greenway High School Media Center, located at 3930 W. Greenway Rd. Phoenix.

The district says that it is committed to hiring exceptional teachers and



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- Traditional Academy
- Visual & Performing Arts



SCHOOL DAYS



Members of the Thunderbird High School NJROTC volunteered their time to assemble hygiene kits for those in need (photo courtesy of Glendale Union High School District).

mum contribution of \$200.

To make a tax credit contribution, visit <https://bit.ly/3ZL18L9>. Residents can also make a larger donation through the GUHSD Education Foundation, a 501(c)3. Visit www.guhzdaz.org/domain/50.

NJROTC team supports Assistance League

Thunderbird High School's NJROTC team collaborated with the Assistance League of Phoenix. The event was led by Community Service Officer Cadet Meredith Arends.

More than 15 cadets dedicated three hours to assembling hygiene kits for those in need, which resulted in more than 1,600 bags of essentials.

Board honors Sunnyslope students, teachers, staff

Glendale Union High School District's Achievement Above All events continue to highlight the excellence within the district and schools. Most recently, the GUHSD Governing Board honored Sunnyslope High School's 2023-24 teacher, student, student group, support staff member, and volunteer of the year during a Governing Board meeting.

The recipients included teacher Leah Clark, senior student Cooper Shillington, Viking Views support staff Courtney Lawyer and volunteer Sarah Chandler. In honor of their achievement, each recipient received an award or certificate for their dedication to the school and community.

MADISON SCHOOL DISTRICT Six Madison schools named 'Best'

U.S. News & World Report has named six schools in the Madison School District in their "Best" public school rankings for 2024. Madison Heights Elementary, Madison Simis Elementary and Madison Camelview Elementary received the "Best Elementary School" award and Madison Meadows Middle School and Madison No. 1 Middle School received the "Best Middle School" award. Madison Traditional Academy, which is a kindergarten through eighth grade school, was named in both the "Best Elementary" and "Best Middle School" categories.

According to U.S. News & World Report, "For each state, schools were assessed on their shares of students who were proficient or above proficient in their mathematics and reading/language arts state assessments. Half of the formula assessed the scores themselves and the other half incorporated the test results in the context of socioeconomic demographics."

Madison School District serves students in preschool through eighth grade. The district offers a variety of signature programs including Visual & Performing Arts, Spanish Immersion, STEAM, International Baccalaureate, REACH – Profoundly Gifted and Traditional Academy, at both the elementary and middle school levels. To learn more, visit www.madisonaz.org.

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SCHOOL DAYS

District to host hiring events

Madison School District will host several upcoming hiring events for positions currently available and in preparation for the upcoming 2024-25 school year.

There will be hiring fairs on Jan. 24 and March 20, when individuals can meet with school principals and district support departments.

On Feb. 6, the district will host the “Fall in Love with Madison – Employment Mixer Meet & Greet.” This event is an opportunity for individuals interested in joining Madison to learn more about working for the district, employee benefits and the opportunity to meet and talk with school and district leaders. Light appetizers will be served. This event is open to those interested in joining Madison as teachers, guest teachers, bus drivers, food service staff, custodial staff, before and after school program staff, school and classroom support staff and anyone interested in learning more about employment opportunities with the district. RSVPs are requested for this event.



Hugo Estrada-Duran, a teacher at Madison Meadows Middle School, recently received the “Pay it Forward” award for going above and beyond for his students (photo courtesy of Madison School District).

To learn more about these upcoming events, available opportunities, employee benefits and more, visit www.madisonaz.org/jobs.

Teacher receives ‘Pay it Forward’ award

Madison Meadows Middle School teacher Hugo Estrada-Duran recently received AZFamily’s “Pay it Forward” award. Estrada was nominated by

David, a former student, to thank him for the impact he made.

“I would like to nominate Mr. Estrada because he goes above and beyond to teach his students. He’s an amazing tutor and a great mentor,” said David. Madison Meadows Middle School offers the International Baccalaureate® Middle Years Program for students in grades 5-8. The program encourages students to become creative, critical

and reflective thinkers. To learn more, visit www.madisonaz.org/meadows.

OSBORN SCHOOL DISTRICT Equity project team visits two district schools

Arizona State University’s Children’s Equity Project brought a large team to visit Encanto Elementary and Montecito Community School.

The Equity Project aims to study systems, policies and structures that impact the lives and development of young children. The team spent an entire morning touring both campuses. Their visit was focused on how the dual language program at Encanto and the Montessori program at Montecito support and uplift the district core value of equity. The team asked many questions, visited learning spaces and chatted with instructional staff.

The district said that both campuses were honored to host the Equity Project and look forward to future collaboration and partnership.

Learn more at <https://cep.asu.edu> or www.osbornnet.org.

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SCHOOL DAYS

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Open house geared toward future kindergartners

Families of future kindergartners are invited to the Washington Elementary School District's (WESD) upcoming Kindergarten Open House events. Offered at 27 locations, WESD schools will host their annual events Thursday, Jan. 18, from 5 to 7 p.m. The events offer the opportunity for families to learn about WESD's kindergarten program, meet teachers, explore classrooms and receive important information about the district's KidSpace childcare program, transportation services and school meals.

To learn more about kindergarten enrollment, call 602-896-6950 or visit www.wesdschools.org/kindergarten.

Stanton receives Superintendent Award

WESD Superintendent Dr. Paul Stanton was awarded the All Arizona Superintendent Award for large districts by the Arizona School



Superintendent Dr. Paul Stanton was recently awarded the All Arizona Superintendent Award for large districts by the Arizona School Administrators (submitted photo).

Administrators at the ASBA/ASA Annual Winter Conference.

The All Arizona Superintendent Awards recognize leaders in small, medium and large districts who exemplify the standards for educational excellence and serve students, staff, families and their community. To qualify, administrators must demonstrate outstanding leadership in curriculum and instruction, management of stu-

dent activities, professional involvement, relations with the board, public, community, and more.

WESD celebrates students, staff

SUPER Kids and SUPER Staff honorees from Desert View Elementary School, Mountain View School and Sunnyslope School were recently celebrated for their outstanding achieve-

ments and contributions to the district.

WESD Superintendent Dr. Paul Stanton surprised each honoree at their school in front of their peers and colleagues. Students received a certificate and an award for a free pizza from Peter Piper Pizza, while each staff member earned a certificate and a \$10 Amazon gift card courtesy of Veregy.

Students participate in Science Fair

Students from Royal Palm Middle School, which recently earned an "A" letter grade, came in third place at the Engineers of the Future science fair in Phoenix.

Designed to grow the next generation of engineers, the Valley Metro Engineers of the Future Virtual Program is an online STEM program with video-delivered lessons taught by engineer-mentors along with transportation-themed project builds. As part of the program, five different Valley schools in light rail communities made bridges out of popsicle sticks, which were then tested in a bridge-breaking challenge.

please see SCIENCE FAIR on page 30

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SCHOOL DAYS

SCIENCE FAIR continued from page 29

The winners from Royal Palm received a certificate of completion and wireless earbuds.

Teacher interview fair scheduled

Prospective educators are invited to learn more about WESD at an upcoming Teacher Interview Fair, scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 20, from 8 to 11 a.m. at Arroyo School. The district currently has openings for elementary, middle and special education teachers.

The district offers a new starting teacher salary of \$51,610, including performance pay and a mentorship program (with completion of the BEGIN program and earning performance pay), student loan forgiveness, multi-layer teacher support, professional development, medical, dental and vision benefits, employer-matched contributions to Arizona State Retirement, and more.

To learn more and preschedule an interview, call 602-347-2622. Apply online at <https://jobs.wesdschools.org>.



Arizona School for the Arts' Perfect 5th team, consisting of Daniel Chow, Robyn "Rob" Foley, Lily "Loki" Horowitz, Daniel Chow, Louis Swenka and Pearl Swenka, took home the top awards with the Robot Performance Award and the Champions Award at the FIRST LEGO® League Challenge Qualifying Tournament in December (submitted photo).

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS Robotics team heads to state competition

The Middle School Robotics teams from Arizona School for the Arts won five awards at their FIRST LEGO League Challenge Qualifying

Tournament Dec. 2. Led by 8th grade science teacher Beth Wootten and coaches, three of the four teams succeeded in qualifying for the FIRST LEGO League Robotics State Championship set to take place in January. All teams that made it to the State level from the qualifier were from Arizona School for the Arts.

The Perfect 5th team, consisting of Daniel Chow, Robyn "Rob" Foley, Lily "Loki" Horowitz, Daniel Chow, Louis Swenka, and Pearl Swenka, took home the top prestigious awards with the Robot Performance Award and the Champions Award. Their coach, Dr. Jimmy Chow, was nominated and won the Coaches Award.

The Scale-Y Green Goblins team, which included Cyan Tamala, Beck Tamala, Nico Tamala, Gabe Vynalek, and Gretchen Woods, won the Core Values award.

The E-STEAM-ed Gentlemen team, made up of Maks Ariza, Liam Brown, Kai Halavais, Dylan Moses, and Bryson Shields, won the Innovation Project Award. Finally, ASA's fourth team,

The Skeletons, composed of new students Jacob Alexander, Wyatt Eckroth, Ean and Cayden Lim, Dayden O'Connell, and Luke Tallman, secured the ninth position in the robot missions in their first-ever tournament.

School celebrates new campus spaces

At a Dec. 14 ribbon-cutting event, Arizona School for the Arts (ASA) celebrated its new outdoor amphitheater as well as enhanced student quad and performance and production lab. All of the spaces are part of the school's continuous efforts to provide students with enhanced facilities, including indoor and outdoor performing arts learning environments and community areas on the campus where they can connect, create, study, play, and perform.

Special guests at the ribbon-cutting ceremony included Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego and Vice Mayor Yassamin Ansari. ASA's board members were in attendance, as well as students and their families, administration, faculty, staff, and community leaders. The event featured live student performances.

The new facilities will provide the nearly 800 ASA students and their families with more opportunities to engage in school events, assemblies, concerts and gatherings. The amphitheater offers seating for approximately 350 and will be available to partnering youth arts groups, such as the Phoenix Youth Arts Collective, and organizations that align with ASA's mission and commitment to education and the performing arts.

Arizona School for the Arts is located at 1410 N. 3rd St., Phoenix. Learn more at www.goasa.org or by calling 602-257-1444.



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SCHOOL DAYS

ASA to host open house

Families and new prospective 5th-12th-grade students are invited to attend an Arizona School for the Arts (ASA) open house on Thursday, Jan. 11, from 5 to 7 p.m.

This event offers the opportunity to learn more about ASA, whose mission is to inspire creative thinkers and leaders through an innovative concentration in college prep informed by the performing arts.

Informational sessions about the school's mission, values, programs and the enrollment lottery process will start at 5 p.m. and 6 p.m., followed by a Q&A session and a student-led campus tour. Following the tour, families and students are welcome to "mix and mingle" with administrators and members of our faculty in our newly completed outdoor amphitheater.

For more information and to submit an enrollment application by Jan. 18, visit www.goasa.org/enroll.

Brophy honors fall 'Distinguished Students'

Each year Brophy selects 16 seniors in the fall and 16 in the spring as Distinguished Students. On Tuesday, Dec. 5, Brophy honored the following seniors as Fall Distinguished Students: Will Carter, Nate George, Arjun Hemmady, Ransom Kaul, Aidan Kelly, Jack Kireopoulos, Benjamin Kravets, Jack Kyle, Iain Lanphier, Roman Mauskopf, Bennett McDonald, Renzo Moran, Hayden Penn, Andrew Phillips, Khalid Quintana and Sam Skrovan.

Those recognized are young men who have shown a special commitment to serving the community in unique ways that often intersect with the talents and interests they've discovered and developed while at Brophy. They have also shown a commitment to growing toward the Jesuit-educated graduate at graduation: intellectually competent, open to growth, religious, loving and committed to doing justice.

Students give back on Giving Tuesday

Phoenix Christian Preparatory School students gave a lot during Giving Tuesday, an event held annually on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. The school said that more than 300 students served at over



Phoenix Christian Preparatory School students spent Giving Tuesday serving more than 30 different Valley nonprofits (submitted photo).

30 different nonprofits.

The day of giving included ministry with Redemption Alhambra, walking along the canals, giving out sandwiches, water, and other supplies to unhoused families, packing food boxes at Feed My Starving Children, cleaning the alleyways in the school's own St. Gregory neighborhood, and serving at many other nonprofits around the Valley.

Students at Phoenix Christian spend three days per year serving around the Valley and are also required to serve 20 hours throughout the year. Jeff Blake, superintendent at Phoenix Christian said, "I could not be prouder of our students! They got dirty, picked up trash, kneeled to give food to the homeless, packed food boxes, translated for families who were shopping for

food and clothing, pulled weeds, and so much more! No doubt these service days help us accomplish our mission, to educate the minds, form the hearts, and equip the hands of students in a Christ-centered atmosphere."

Teams compete at 'Illuminate'

Four teams of Xavier College Preparatory computer science students competed in the semi-final round of the Arizona State University Illuminate Challenge. The teams were tasked with creating an innovative and novel idea addressing sustainable and inclusive infrastructure that could benefit all communities, including those in developing regions. The challenge was centered around the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) #9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure.

For the first rounds, students created two deliverables: a 10-page written proposal and a video presentation. Two of the four Xavier teams participating in the semi-finals were chosen

please see ILLUMINATE on page 32

IT'S OUR BIGGEST OPEN HOUSE OF THE YEAR!

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SCHOOL DAYS



Xavier student Talia Udelman presented her research paper at the 2023 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Ottawa (photo courtesy of the Udelman family).



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ILLUMINATE continued from page 31

for the final. At the semi-final round the students showcased their projects in a 5-minute pitch to the judges and audience.

The first winning group is EcoPod, featuring Sonya Colattur, Makenzie Lopez, Abigail Pearson, and Cara Schillinger. The second winning group is Ecoden, featuring Aku Baral, Sophia Herget, Anna Johndrow, and Alexis Muirhead. These teams will move forward to build out their projects in the second semester with full funding at the Luminosity Lab at ASU.

Xavier senior presents research

Xavier College Preparatory senior Talia Udelman was selected to present her research paper at the 2023 Annual

Meeting of the American Anthropological Association in Ottawa, Canada. She was one of only seven high school students nationwide selected to present their papers virtually to the attendees at the conference.

Udelman's paper, entitled "Hamilton and History: A Sentiment Analysis of Public Opinion on Alexander Hamilton," focused on the theater musical "Hamilton" and whether it had an effect on the sentiment of public history and opinion. She used the computer science technique sentiment analysis to analyze the tone of public opinion.

The American Anthropology Association works to advance anthropology as the science that studies humankind in all its aspects. Udelman plans to major in anthropology when she attends college next fall.



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GENERATIONS

Senior Living Literacy program tutors sought

As children gear up for their second semester of school, volunteer tutors are needed to help them finish out the year successfully.

The Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring Program is looking for community members who are interested in sharing their love of reading with a child. Oasis says that you don't have to be a teacher to make a difference in the life of a child. By becoming a literacy tutor, volunteers will support a student once a week for an hour during the school day to experience enjoyment and success in the skills of reading, writing, and communication.

Oasis is a nonprofit organization that partners with the Madison School District to pair adults, who may or may not be retired, with students needing literacy support. The program serves kindergarten through fourth-grade

children in four of the district's elementary schools: Camelview, Heights, Rose Lane and Simis. Tutors receive training by a reading specialist along with a tutor handbook, bag and materials.

Upcoming Tutor Training will be held Jan. 16-17th, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days, at Madison Camelview, 2002 E. Campbell Ave. For more information or to register for training, contact Kim Gullo, tutor facilitator, at 602-664-7285 or e-mail at kgullo@madisoned.org.

Workshop offers air travel advice

With the busy end of the year holiday travel season in the rearview mirror, many are already making plans for summer travel. For an estimated seven million people in the United States experiencing dementia, however, thinking about travel or planning a future getaway can be overwhelming.

In an effort to provide the best customer experience to all passengers that



Oasis tutor Marcia Larson works with a second-grade student at Camelview Elementary School (submitted photo).

pass through the terminals, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport adopted a dementia-friendly initiative in 2021 that added special programming for those traveling with dementia. With that in mind, this month, the City of

Phoenix Aviation Department invites Valley residents to a two-hour workshop to help passengers with dementia and their care providers plan and learn how to navigate a busy airport.

The Dementia-Friendly Air Travel Workshop, scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 10 from 10 a.m. to noon, will offer valuable insights and strategies to enhance the travel experience for individuals with dementia. The free workshop will feature representatives from airlines, TSA and the Aviation Department. An optional tour of specific locations of the airport will be conducted following the workshop.

Those interested in learning more or wishing to attend the workshop can email skyharbor@phoenix.gov. Include the subject line Dementia Friendly Air Travel Workshop Registration. In the email, include full name, phone number, address and if you would like to take a tour. Check-in begins at 9:30 a.m. Learn more at www.skyharbor.com/at-the-airport/services.



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HAPPY HOUR WITH HERSCH

I recently saw a quote that said: “Home is people, not a place.” These words express so simply what I believe, and they resonated with me deeply.

Whenever I try to explain what has impacted my life the most, I always start with the people in it. The gratefulness I have is because of this foundation. I have been blessed regarding the relationships that have influenced me - be it my family, friends, or co-workers. **I never take this blessing for granted.** It allows me to have comfort and ease in my days that I could never put a price on.

One of the groups who exemplify this best are my friends from high school. They have had my best interests at heart since I was a teen, even through many times when maybe they shouldn't! The arc of my life would have been so much more difficult without them; and so less fulfilling.

So, **Class of '85 Broncos and Gators!** I hope you know how much I love you, how much I learn from you, and how much you inspire me.

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Phoenix Housing Market Snapshot as of 12/7/23

* Source of data: ARMLS & The Cromford Report for single-family dwellings.

\$603,993

Average Monthly Sold Price



↓3.7% from last month
↑14.5% from last year

\$307.80

Average Monthly Sold \$/SF



↓3.3% from last month
↑9.4% from last year

The typical 30-year fixed mortgage rate has dropped significantly since October, from 7.92% on October 30 down to mid-high 6's as of December 7th. You might have expected this significant drop in the cost of buying a home to result in a jump in the number of people contracting to do so. A few areas have perked up, but others have shown no enthusiasm at all, and overall, I would describe the buyer's reaction to the reduced rates as very muted.



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GENERATIONS

Meal delivery volunteers sought

In partnership with 13 community agencies, including Foundation for Senior Living, Valleylife, Phoenix Children's Hospital and Duet: Partners In Health & Aging, more than 65 congregants from Congregation Beth Israel (CBI) delivered approximately 1,000 meals to over 450 families in need of help throughout the Valley on Thanksgiving Day, including many homebound adults and seniors.

The meals consisted of the traditional Thanksgiving foods — turkey, mashed potatoes, sides and pumpkin pie. The project is a cherished community service project of CBI for over 20 years, and has been facilitated and supported by Sprouts Farmers Market. CBI congregants donate money to purchase the meals from Sprouts and then deliver them free of charge to the recipients.

Beyond holiday meals, Duet is always looking for volunteers to help homebound adults who can no longer drive. Volunteers can help by driving to medical appointments, grocery shop-



Members of Congregation Beth Israel worked with Sprouts Farmers Market and more than a dozen community agencies to deliver Thanksgiving meals to homebound adults and seniors in 2023 (submitted photo).

ping, calling or making friendly visits. Right now, there are 92 homebound adults waiting to be matched with compassionate volunteers. For more information about volunteer orientations and being paired with someone in your geographic area, call at 602-274-5022 or visit www.duetaz.org.

Retirement community receives reaccreditation

La Siena, a North Central resort-style retirement community, recently announced that it has been reaccredited by CARF International. The company said that the certification is the highest level of accreditation that can be

awarded to a senior living community and is similar to the five-star rating of the hospitality industry.

This latest accreditation is the fifth consecutive three-year accreditation awarded to the community, which offers assisted and independent living. To receive the three-year reaccreditation outcome, the community completed a voluntary peer review process and demonstrated to a team of surveyors that its programs and services are of the highest quality, measurability and accountability. The survey team's report highlighted the community's many strengths, including its Zest program, a holistic approach to health and wellness appealing to residents' mind, body and spirit; high level of resident and family satisfaction and trust; and robust dining experience focused on choice and quality.

La Siena is located 909 E. Northern Ave., Phoenix. For more information, call 602-831-0003 or visit www.lasien-seniorliving.com.

Kids & Families Program prepares families for college admission

According to Access ASU, college enrollment is on a steady decline in Arizona, falling from 55 percent of high school graduates enrolling to 47 percent, and the program is committed to turning this trend around via a new digital college preparation curriculum for students and their families.

Access ASU, a K-12 outreach division at Arizona State University (ASU) announced WeGrad, a program that provides digestible courses that help support busy families in preparing their students for college, is now available directly to families for the first time. Thanks to grant funding through 2024, families with middle school and high school students can access the program digitally, at no cost.

The program, once offered only through high schools, can now be accessed directly using SMS text messaging and WhatsApp. The digital, self-paced WeGrad course is available in English and Spanish, and helps prepares middle and high school students for academic success and equips parents to be the primary support and mentor as their children apply to attend college.

The middle school curriculum covers 10 lessons on topics such as parents' role in academic success, making the most of parent-teacher conferences and

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GENERATIONS

building responsibility to achieve academic success. The high school curriculum delves deeper into college preparation with 16 lessons offering insight into university admissions, college entrance exams, high school transcripts, cost and financial aid and investing in college. The elementary curriculum will be released this month.

To participate in the WeGrad college readiness program, individuals can sign up for the Access ASU K-12 Family Fusion newsletter at <https://eoss.asu.edu/access-newsletters>. Subscribers to the newsletter will receive complimentary access to the digital course. Learn more at <https://eoss.asu.edu/access>.

Phoenix Zoo to host teen career day

The Phoenix Zoo will host an in-person Teen Career Conference next month geared towards teens, grades 9-12, and their educational support networks (parents, educators, career/college counselors, etc.) who are interested in exploring different careers in the world of animal science.

At the Feb. 10 event, attendees will experience what it is like to attend a professional conference and engage in a variety of activities, including hearing from specially selected speaker panels comprised of a range of experts in zoology, conservation, animal husbandry, and veterinary care working both within the Zoo and in the field. Speakers will offer insights into their career paths and provide advice on breaking into their respective fields.

In addition, participants can network with representatives from the Phoenix Zoo and other scientific and educational institutions from around the Valley to learn about their programs and opportunities for teens. Lastly, they will attend a professional skill-building workshop led by the Phoenix Zoo's Human Resources team on how to write resumes and cover letters, and how to successfully interview for the job of your dreams.

Check-in begins at 8 a.m. and the day of events will wrap with an optional "More than a Zookeeper" tour that begins at 4 p.m. A virtual attendee option is also available. Spots are limited and teens are encouraged to sign up early. For additional information or to register, visit www.phoenixzoo.org/events/teen-career-conference.



Valley teens will have the opportunity to explore a career in animal science at a February career conference at the Phoenix Zoo (submitted photo).

Training program focuses on construction

A new training facility in Phoenix geared toward helping bring skilled workers into the Arizona workforce is now open.

The Habitat for Humanity's Construction Training Program (CTP), facility at 2830 W. Glendale Ave., offers 9-12 weeks of classroom, lab and hands-on in the field residential construction training. Participants can earn several construction industry certifications, attain career readiness skills, and receive a stipend during their time enrolled in the program. Additional benefits are offered for military and veterans. Enrollment in program is cost-free.

The CTP is an open-entry course of study. Students are allowed to enter every four weeks based on Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) approval. It also utilizes the National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER) curriculum as the basis for its certifications. Considered the industry standard, NCCER currently offers more than 45 core and preferred craft trade programs. All earned credentials are transferable throughout the U.S. and are stackable as individuals continue their training after completing the pre-apprenticeship program.

Previous construction experience is not necessary to qualify for the Habitat Construction Training Program. Learn more at www.habitatcaz.org/ctp.

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Residents can view Valley artist Joan Waters' latest series, "Totems," at the entrance of Park Central (photo courtesy of Joan Waters).

See new public art at Park Central

In late November, artist Joan Waters installed her latest series, "Totems," at the entrance of Park Central after an exhibition of her work at Park Central's Artlink Gallery, "mood room."

The pieces showcase an exploration of shadow compositions and a unique fusion of nature's energies and forms through intricate Corten steel sculptures.

Originally hailing from England and now an active participant in the Phoenix art scene, Waters earned her BFA from The Maryland Institute, College of Art. Inspired by the intense desert light of Arizona, she has become known for her sizeable abstract acrylic paintings and distinctive metal sculptures.

Waters' "Totems" series encapsulates her fascination with the mysterious shapes formed by the desert sunlight casting dense and distinct shadows. The installation provides a unique opportunity for art lovers to immerse themselves in the dynamic interplay of light and form, as each three-dimensional sculpture casts its own distinct shadows.

The sculptures, from east to west, are "Totem: Desert Flower," "Totem: Los Animales" and "Totem: Deconstructed Shadow."

Park Central is located at 3121 N. 3rd Ave. in Phoenix. For additional

information, visit www.parkcentralphoenix.com or www.joanwaters.me.

Trinity continues music series

Music at Trinity continues its 2023-24 concert series at Trinity Cathedral this month with the free Peel Memorial Concert. This year's Peel Memorial organist is the exciting and powerful performer, Damin Spritzer. Her masterful program includes several rarely heard works by 20th-century composers Johanna Senfter, Mary Howe, Larry King and Herbert Howells.

Under the direction of Erik W. Goldstrom, the concert series is held at Trinity Cathedral, 100 W. Roosevelt St., in downtown Phoenix. For information, visit www.trinitymusicaz.org.

Phoenix Art Museum hosts Amplified

A one-day audio-visual event featuring regional and global musical acts, art installations, specialty food and drink experiences will return to Phoenix Art Museum in January.

PhxArt Amplified Vol. 3, scheduled from noon to 10 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 20, is an all-day, all-ages art and music festival held at Phoenix Art Museum. The January event marks the return of the audio-visual experience following a hiatus necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Happy New Year!

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Department of Child Safety Giving Tree Program

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

This year's Amplified is co-headlined by folk artist June McDoom and Mexico City-based Latin-indie band Little Jesus. The event will also feature an extensive line-up of musical, visual, and performance artists from across Arizona. Early-bird tickets are on sale now, with discounted pricing valid through Jan. 7. Early-bird tickets are \$30 for general public; \$10 for PhxArt members; \$5 for youth ages 6 to 17; free for those under age 6.

For the most up-to-date information as additional bands and musical acts are confirmed, visit <https://phxart.org/amplified>.

Exhibition features North Central artist

Five15Arts will present "Men Like Me" Jan. 5-28. The new exhibition features the recent work of North Central resident Harold Lohner.

Exploring themes of masculine identity and male relationships, Lohner's monoprints push technical boundaries of scale and materials. His work is layered with pattern and color that both reveal and conceal his subjects, creating an environment for the viewer to explore.

An opening reception will be held First Friday, Jan. 5, from 6 to 9 p.m. Five15Arts is located at 1301 NW Grand Ave. For additional information, visit www.five15arts.com or www.haroldlohner.com.

M3F moves to Indian School park

The nonprofit music festival M3F Fest recently announced not only the lineup for the 2024 concert but a new venue — Steele Indian School Park.

Fans should expect the same M3F experience as past years with an even larger footprint than before, along with brand new art activations with more details to be announced. The historic venue will continue the evolution of M3F's growth since its debut 20 years ago.

The concert, scheduled for March 1-2, will include the dreamy sounds of Dominic Fike, award-winning London vocalist Arlo Parks, Minnesota indie rockers Hippo Campus, and the mesmerizing sounds of Bakar. The lineup continues with fan-favorite Dayglow, German vocalist Roosevelt, genre-defying Los Angeles artist Fiji Blue, Chicago duo DRAMA,



The popular M3F Fest returns to the Valley in 2024 but this time, Steele Indian School Park will play host (photo by Neil Schwartz).

the disco vibes of Poolside, the catchy alternative pop sounds of Toronto's Valley and many more.

M3F donates 100 percent of festival proceeds to charity with \$2 million donated since 2022 and \$5.2 million raised in total since its inception in 2004. The charity focus of M3F expanded last year with the launch of the M3F Fund (<https://m3ffund.com/>

getfunded), which opened up funding to the public by offering an open application to nonprofit or 501(c)(3) organizations. This includes beneficiaries such as Music Therapy Program at Phoenix Children's Hospital, Phoenix Rescue Mission, Habitat for Humanity, and many more.

Stay up to date with event details at www.m3ffest.com.

On the Town

Celebrate the arts in the new year with live, local music and theater performances, national touring shows and family-friendly special events, plus a handful of art and cultural events for all. See you on the town in January!

Vintage & Vinyl Night Market

Jan. 4
Crescent Ballroom
www.crescentphx.com;
602-716-2222

A Night of Global Jazz with Holly Channell

Jan. 4
The Nash
www.thenash.org;
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Brian Lopez

Jan. 5
Valley Bar
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Coming to Market January 10th: 12337 W Columbine Dr, 85335
Coming to market in February: Sun City, 85331
Coming Soon to market: Yermado, 85396



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 Friday - Jan. 5th From 11 am - 6 pm
 Saturday - Jan. 6th From 11 am - 3 pm
 Interior photos to follow open house dates.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Igor Glenn, Doc Rolland & Meryl Brown in Concert

Jan. 5
Central United Methodist Church
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'Arizona Unzipped'

Jan. 5-6
Orpheum Theatre
www.orpheumphx.com/events

26th Annual Festival of New American Theatre

Jan. 5-21
The Phoenix Theatre Company
www.phoenixtheatre.com; 602-254-2151

Annual House Rent Party

Jan. 6
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com; 602-612-4981

Annual Bonsai & Pottery Exhibit

Jan. 7
Japanese Friendship Garden
www.japanesefriendshipgarden.org;
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Elvis Birthday Celebration

Jan. 7
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'Islander'

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Performance Pop-Up: Fushicho Daiko Dojo

Jan. 13
Herberger Theater Center
www.herbergertheater.org; 602-252-8497

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Jan. 17 – Feb. 4
Great Arizona Puppet Theater
www.azpuppets.org; 602-262-2050

Latin Jazz Series: Miguel Zenón

Jan. 18
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

The Never Ending Fall

Jan. 18
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222

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Jan. 18
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www.lastexitlive.com; 602-271-7000

New Guard Big Band with Gracie Jay

Jan. 19
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Mayer Hawthorne

Jan. 20
Crescent Ballroom
www.crescentphx.com; 602-716-2222

Performance Pop-Up: Phoenix Youth Circus Arts

Jan. 20
Herberger Theater Center
www.herbergertheater.org;
602-252-8497

ZAZU West: Django Reinhardt B-day Celebration

Jan. 20
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Broadway Rave

Jan. 26
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com; 602-296-7013



Serpientes Fiesta

Jan. 27
Chase Field
www.mlb.com/dbacks/tickets/events/fiesta

Sonoran Dispatch: Wes Anderson Soundtrack Live

Jan. 27
The Van Buren
www.thevanburenphx.com; 480-659-1641

Michael Dease Quintet

Jan. 27
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

'The Barber of Seville'

Jan. 27-28
Arizona Opera at Symphony Hall
www.azopera.org; 602-266-7464

All event dates are current at time of publication. Check with individual venues for up-to-date show information. Find events throughout the month at www.northcentralnews.net/events.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Café Chat

Restaurant serves up a spirited blend

By Marjorie Rice

Don't call it "fusion" – Chef/Owner Engin Onural hates the term – but his Sandfish Sushi and Whiskey, with its subdued décor evoking shells, waves and sea-washed woods, blends two very different, yet complementary regions: Scandinavian and Japanese.

"They have similar cultures," he said. "They're both very clean-cut, minimalist, uncluttered."

While born in the United States, Onural grew up in Turkey. He began cooking, learning from his mother. "I decided on this journey when I was 10," he said. "That's 30 years now." He expanded his culinary education after getting a business degree, an education that included extensive travel and jobs in a variety of Southern California hotels and restaurants.

At one point, Onural decided to learn sushi-making, and studied under chef Andy Matsuda at the Sushi Chef Institute in Torrance, California. He went on to participate in the 2017 World Sushi Cup, where he came in 27th. "I want to go back in 2024, just for fun," he said.

He brings influences from those culinary journeys – especially in Scandinavia and Japan – to his restaurant's décor and menu, collaborating with Head Chef Chris Wolf.

That combination – Onural grimaces at the term "fusion" – is evident in the restaurant's spare design. The building has been stripped back to its bones, with sand-blasted and stained original roof rafters, clean-lined furnishings, and a long counter backed by a wall of whiskeys, including what Onural believes is the Valley's largest assortment of limited-availability Japanese labels.

"We carry a lot of allocated Japanese whiskey," Onural said. "I think our idea, our concept, our collection is unique in the Valley."

While many traditional whiskey drinkers take their drinks neat, or with a splash of water, cocktail menus these days have become playgrounds for "mixologists" (another trendy word Onural eschews), who concoct amalgams of spir- its, seasonings, juices, fruit, pickles – you



Head chef Chris Wolf, left, general manager Brittney O'Brien, cook Alex Cho and chef/owner Engin Onural are backed by a wall of fine whiskeys at Sandfish Sushi and Whiskey in the Melrose District (photo by Darryl Webb, special for North Central News).

name it – to tempt imbibers.

Sandfish customers enjoy the rare whiskeys as well as more exotic creations blended by bar manager, Josh Martinez. "He has very good knowledge," Onural

said. "I have a hard time following him."

Martinez and other Sandfish staff can guide guests who want to experiment with a sushi/whiskey pairing, Onural said, offering an example: the

spicy tuna tostada with Nikka Whisky from the Barrell, a spicy whisky (they leave off the "e") that stands up to the pronounced flavors of the appetizer.

Those tostadas are his customers' favorite, Onural said. "We've probably made millions of those already." They're a gyoza (Japanese dumpling) wrap that's fried flat, like a crispy a little tortilla, then topped with spicy aioli, teriyaki sauce and micro greens.

Another menu standout is the octopus. Wolf cooks it in oil and its own juice, confit-style, until tender, then chars it on a grill and serves it with edamame hummus, bubu arare (rice pearls), nori paste and micro greens. The result is incredibly tender, with a crusty, smoky exterior.

The menu offers traditional sushi, sashimi and a variety of rolls, but the signature dishes are the standouts.

"Yes, we do traditional sushi, but the way we do our food is really unique to us," Onural said. "It is hard to explain."

Some examples: Desserts including **please see BLEND on page 42**



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

BLEND *continued from page 41*

matcha creampuffs with chocolate and pistachio; and a coconut panna cotta with blood orange jell, coconut streusel, mango coulis and hibiscus powder; the Sandfish roll, with imitation crab, spicy tuna, avocado, spicy aioli, teriyaki sauce, green onions, micro greens and lightly fried potato threads (“That potato/truffle combination has a lot of umami behind it,” said Wolf.); and the Sandfish scallop signature dish, which is raw scallops tossed with yuzu vinaigrette, lime and shallot, topped with walnuts and sea beans to add some crunch and saltiness.

“We also offer an omakase, with nine courses, and our matched whiskey flights are in the works,” said General Manager Brittney O’Brien.

On this visit, the Sandfish team were celebrating their one-year anniversary in the Melrose location. The restaurant is Onural’s second with the Sandfish name. His first opened in Palm Springs in 2018.

“In late 2018 I wanted to have a second Sandfish,” Onural said. “I looked around to see if I wanted to go the L.A. route or the Phoenix route.” He chose Phoenix because, “I really liked the people in Phoenix. The people here are comfortable and real.”

He chose the Melrose neighborhood for its laid-back vibe.

“I really like this district,” he said. “I think it has huge potential. The people are very supportive.”

That merges perfectly with Onural’s ambitions for his restaurant, another happy “fusion.”

“When you walk into Sandfish, you feel warm, welcome,” he said. “It’s a place you just want to be – where you come to eat good food, not to be seen. We have a beautiful patio in the back with a nice fireplace. And we’re dog friendly.”

“I would love people to come visit us and give us a shot.”

Sandfish Sushi and Whiskey, at 4232 N. 7th Ave., is open from 4:30 to 10 p.m., Sunday to Thursday, and 4:30 to 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday. For information, call 602-675-4020 or visit www.sandfishsushiwhiskey.com.

Dining Briefs Ambrogio15 to open in early 2024

Set to open at Biltmore Fashion Park, the restaurant group behind Ambrogio15 describe it as a modern

Italian restaurant serving authentic Milanese fare. With a job fair that was held in mid-December, the restaurant is one step closer to its anticipated early 2024 opening.

Opening on the west side of Biltmore Fashion Park inside the space formerly occupied by California Pizza Kitchen, Ambrogio15 is the San Diego group’s sixth concept. The group is working with San Diego’s GTC Design, to construct a soaring, sleek and wood-lined space inspired by the owners’ hometown of Milan — the capital of design and fashion. Stepping past the glowing two-story glass façade, guests can dine in the lively lounge featuring a central wine tower, cuddle up inside leather-wrapped booth in the main dining area, or reserve the posh 12-person private dining room featuring a dedicated bar. Seating up to 145, Ambrogio15 will be open for lunch and dinner, with plans to add weekend brunch and late-night dining.

Biltmore Fashion Park is located at 2502 E. Camelback Road. Learn more about the restaurant at www.ambrogio15.com.

Local brewery takes top honors

Pedal Haus Brewery took home the top honor and was named the 2023 Brewery of the Year when the Arizona Craft Brewers Guild celebrated the craft beer community at the second annual Arizona Craft Beer Awards in October.

Fifty-three local breweries submitted 194 beers to be judged. An independent panel of 65 judges blind sampled the beers and evaluated them according to the Great American Beer Festival guidelines.

The brewery received 18 total points from the three gold medals it won for its German-Style Pilsner, Beach Cruiser Mexican Lager and Desert Classic Pale Ale beers – resulting in being named Brewery of the Year.

The company celebrated its seventh anniversary in 2023, having opened its first location on Mill Avenue in Tempe in 2015. It now also has locations in downtown Chandler, Phoenix and at Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport. The team, led by Wright and Derek “Doc” Osborne, head brewer, crafts all beer out of Pedal Haus’ brewing facility in Chandler. The brewery makes a dozen beers – many of them are true to style and several are seasonal such as the Pumpkin Ale and Peppermint Porter.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Pedal Haus is open daily, serving scratch-made dishes for lunch and dinner, plus happy hour specials. For details, visit www.pedalhausbrewery.com.

Nobel opens Phoenix location

Another coffee concept has opened in a space at 7th Avenue and McDowell Road that previously housed a Starbucks.

Noble Ground Coffee celebrated the grand opening of its flagship café and first location in Phoenix Friday, Nov. 17. Located at 701 W. McDowell Road, the grand opening event will feature a ribbon cutting and coffee toast

“Noble Ground Coffee is truly coffee with a cause,” said Tim O’Neal, CEO of Thrive Services Group. “With every cup of coffee you purchase, profits will help support social service programs like education and housing for those who need them most. Your money will go back into the community to help your neighbors get back on their feet.”

With a company mission of making a lasting impact in the community, profits will support local nonprofits



Noble Ground Coffee celebrated the opening of its flagship café on the southwest corner of 7th Avenue and McDowell Road at a ribbon-cutting event held Nov. 17 (submitted photo).

such as Goodwill of Central and Northern Arizona, an organization that works in partnership with Thrive Services Group to build affordable and transitional housing for those who need it most. Additionally, Noble Ground Coffee will help fund the Spark Education system, a micro-school designed to give underserved students

individualized instruction.

The Phoenix location will be open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Sunday. Coffee drinkers will have a variety of drinks to choose from including macchiatos, cappuccinos, lattes, mochas, cold brews, and Signature Sips like the “Honeycomb” espresso served with honey and vanilla or the “Noble

Goodness” espresso layered with white chocolate and Irish cream flavors. Tea drinkers will find matchas, chai lattes, and a variety of hot and cold teas on the menu. The location will also serve pastries, croissants, muffins, cookies, and breakfast burritos from a local bakery, in addition to-go lunch items like a ham or turkey sandwich.

Visit www.noblegroundcoffee.com for more information.

New Dunkin breaks ground

As many residents in the area of 7th and Dunlap avenues noticed in early November, a defunct gas station, which sat empty for more than a decade on the southwest corner, has been demolished. The demolition will make way for a new Dunkin location.

According to its December 2022 zoning request, the new ground-up construction of a 1,090-square-foot Dunkin will include drive-through lane operation, a walk-up window and small outdoor dining area. There will be no indoor dining or public restroom.

The coffee and donut chain is expected to open in June 2024.



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Wine festival returns to Heritage Square

Arizona’s premier wine festival will return this month with 20 of Arizona’s best wineries along with more than 40 non-winery vendors, including fine arts, artisan foods, vintage vendors, and non-stop entertainment, along with two food trucks and local beer.

The Arizona Wine Festival, presented by Willcox Wine Country, will be held Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 27-28, at Heritage Square, 113 N. 6th St. Tentative participating wineries include 1764 Vineyards, Arizona Stronghold, Barrelhead Farms Winery, Birds & Barrels Vineyards, Bodega Pierce, Caduceus Cellars, Carlson Creek Vineyards, Copper Horse Vineyard, Coronado Vineyards, Golden Rule Vineyards, Keeling Schaefer Vineyards, Page Springs Cellars, Pillsbury Wine Company, Strive Vineyards and Zarpara Vineyard.

The Cochise Graham Wine Council, Inc. (Willcox Wine Country) is a region and association of Arizona farm wineries and vineyards located in Cochise and Graham counties. The Willcox area leads



The annual Arizona Wine Festival invites residents to explore the unique wines of the state, along with art, food and entertainment (photo courtesy of Wilcox Wine Country).

Arizona wine grape production by growing 74 percent of the state’s wine grapes.

The festival begins at 11 a.m. both days and will run until 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 27, and 5 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 28. The cost per person ranges from \$30-\$45, and each ticket includes a commemorative wine glass and 10 tasting tickets. For tickets and more details, visit www.willcoxwinecountry.org and click on the “Events” link.

Festival supports public radio

The Friends of Public Radio Arizona have transformed their annual fine wine dinner into an afternoon festival featuring wines, food and fundraising surrounded by breathtaking views of the Valley.

The First Press Fine Wine Festival and Silent Auction will be held Saturday, Feb. 17, from 1 to 4 p.m. The

elegant affair will feature tastings of wine from California, Oregon, Washington and Arizona, and a selection of food to complement the stellar wine offerings, in addition to live music and a silent auction.

The festival benefits Friends of Public Radio Arizona (<https://fpraz.org>), which supports the programs and outreach of public radio in Phoenix including KJZZ 91.5, K-BACH 89.5, and the SPOT 127 Youth Media Center.

Wrigley Mansion is located at 2501 E. Telaway Trail, Phoenix. Specially-priced early bird tickets and sponsorship information can be found at www.firstpressarizona.com.

Celebrate Valentine’s at speakeasy event

Phoenix’s Heritage Square will partner with the Phoenix Art Deco Society for a special Valentine’s Day event.

Residents are invited to celebrate Valentine’s Day by stepping back in time and dressing to the nines Wednesday, Feb. 14, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Held at Heritage Square’s Prohibition Hideaway Speakeasy, guests will enjoy wine and dancing. Tickets will include admission to the speakeasy, a glass of bubbly, and a bottle of wine and charcuterie spread to share with that special someone.

Heritage square is located at 113 N. 6th St. in downtown Phoenix. Tickets are limited for this special event and available at <https://heritagesquarephx.org/prohibition-hideaway>.

Starbucks opens ‘Community’ location

In early December, Starbucks dedicated a new Community Store location at 1970 W. Glendale Ave. The coffee chain says that these store concepts are meant to “create environments for Starbucks partners to connect with, engage and represent the communities they serve,” through programming and experiences that support economic opportunity in communities and create pathways to opportunity for the company’s partners (employees).

According to a company spokesperson, the location created 20 local jobs and is working with the Arizona Foster Alliance (<https://thefosteralliance.org>) and the 19th North Community Garden (www.19north.org/ community-garden) to provide support to Phoenix youth and individuals experiencing hunger.

Wishing you the best in the new year!

As 2023 comes to a close, I reflect back on the year with fond appreciation for the wonderful relationships and trust that my clients and I have built.

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526 W Butler Dr	4	2	1,999	Sands Terrace	\$760,000
210 W Butler Dr	4	2	2,150	North Central Terrace	\$815,000
7322 N 12 th Ave	4	2.75	2,354	Meadowlark Palms Lot 1-56	\$667,500
2520 E Highland Ave	4	3	2,561	Cavalier Campus 2	\$1,180,000
1540 W Townley Ave	4	3.5	2,657	Manfield Manor	\$905,000
8285 E Via Del Sol Dr	4	4	4,103	Pinnacle Peak Country Club Unit 8	\$2,450,000
502 E Royal Palm Rd	4	4.5	3,000	Melrose Groves Unit 2	\$840,000
7147 N Wilder Rd	4	4.5	5,921	Orangewood	\$1,850,000
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