



north central news

the voice of the north central phoenix community since 1999

volume 26, issue 8 • august 2024

www.northcentralnews.net

Pediatric drownings ... what can we learn?

By Trudy Thompson Shumaker

They don't talk about it much. But the stories are there. Just under the surface. Painful and sad.

Todd Keller, firefighter and public information officer for Phoenix Fire Department said, "After a while, it's just one big, horrible drowning in your head. I have lost count of how many drowning calls I've been on. Firetruck roars up and we bail out to find yet another frantic parent and lifeless child. People say time heals. I say, yeah. Right. Try it. Let me know how that works for you." His voice is weary.

This year, the number of pediatric drownings alone, that's children ages 0 to 5 years, has already surpassed the 2023 number, with seven fatalities so far in 2024. That is also above the 11-year average. And the Labor Day holiday is on the horizon. Yet the City of Phoenix has what is recognized as one of the strictest pool and hot tub safety ordinances in the nation, but children continue to drown. The ordinance was enacted in 1990 and got national attention. The strict ordinance covers barrier, gate and cover requirements. For details, call 602-262-7884 or go to the city of Phoenix website at www.phoenix.gov and search "pool barriers."

Billboards, social media, TV and radio and advertisements from hospitals, water safety instructors and families affected by drowning remind us: "Two seconds is too long." "Designate a water watcher." "Teach your

please see DROWNINGS on page 6



Students love the one-on-one attention, and the volunteers enjoy the relationships they build with their students through the various volunteer programs offered at Valley schools (photo courtesy of PV Schools).

School volunteers build community

By Kathryn M. Miller

North Central's younger residents will head back to the classroom in August, and in addition to teachers, school administration and the varied and many support staff, there is another group of individuals that will be gearing up for the new school year – volunteers.

They could be parents of current or former students, retired teachers or invested community members, and whether serving as a classroom aid, lending a hand in the front office or tagging along on a field trip as a chaperone, volunteers make a difference in the lives of Valley students.

Most schools will work with potential volunteers to find an opportunity that fits their interests and schedule. And some school districts, such as Madison School District, also offer opportunities specifically geared towards older adults interested in literacy mentorship.

For the past 25 years, the nonprofit Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring Program has served students in kindergarten through fourth grade at Madison's

Camelview, Heights, Rose Lane and Simis schools. The volunteers work one on one with students, sharing their love of reading and writing with students who may need to boost their skills.

"This past year there were 74 Oasis tutors that participated," said Kim Gullo, the Madison District facilitator, "and about 85 students that participated." Volunteers support a student once a week for an hour during the school day, Gullo explained. She has been in the district for 36 years, 25 of them as a classroom teacher, and has seen the difference that the program makes in the student's lives — and how it benefits the

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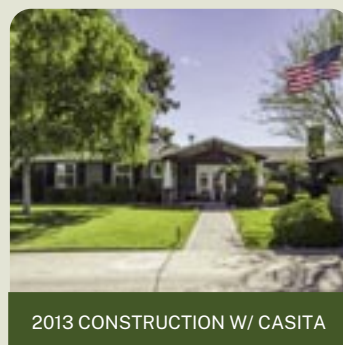
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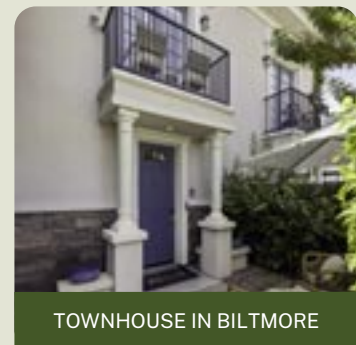
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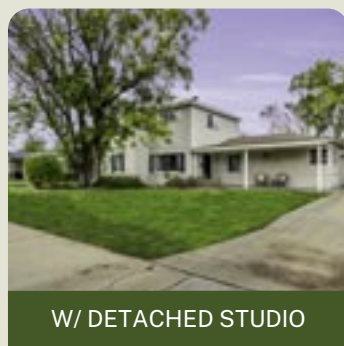
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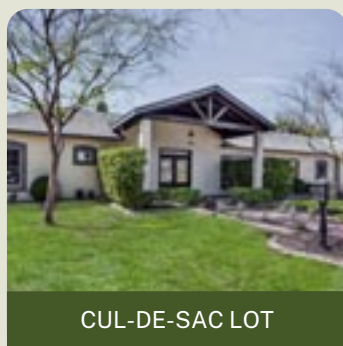
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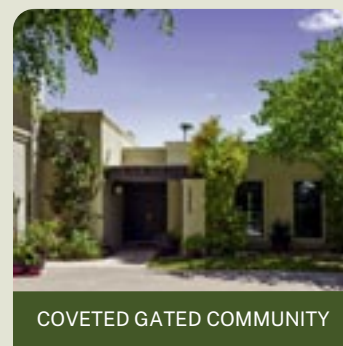
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From the Editor

Hello, North Central neighbors!

It is back-to-school time in the Valley, and for this month's cover story three different school districts helped us discover the various ways that residents can engage with their neighborhood schools by volunteering. The opportunities to build a sense of community through volunteerism are many and varied, and everyone – young and old – can benefit from the experience.



While school may be back in session, it is still summertime, and the Labor Day weekend is on the horizon – a time when many head to backyard pools or area lakes for cool recreation. With that in mind, Trudy Thompson Shumaker spoke to a handful of North

Central folks about the devastating number of drownings (especially among those age 5 and under) that happen each year – and what residents can do to help prevent them.

For this month's Café Chat, Marjorie Rice caught up with Dana Mulé. He chatted about how he brings the “aloha” spirit to his popular Hula's Modern Tiki, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary.

As always, you will find the Arizona Humane Society's Pet of the Month (this month, a tiny kitten named Bessy who is looking for a foster family) as well as other community, business, dining and school news, and our round-up of things to do in the Valley this month in the Arts & Entertainment section.

We hope that you enjoy our August issue and wish everyone a fantastic 2024-24 school year. Until next month, all my best,

Kathryn M. Miller
Editor, *North Central News*
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With the forthcoming change in bulk trash collection in Phoenix, curbside trash piles will become the norm for everyone, not just those with gated alleys, as in this North Central neighborhood (submitted photo).

Mixed reactions to new bulk trash program

By Kathryn M. Miller

As we reported in June, the Phoenix Public Works Department announced May 15 that it is changing the way bulk trash is collected beginning Sept. 30. The new program will work on an individual, appointment-based schedule, rather than a neighborhood-wide quarterly bulk trash pickup. The service will also be moved to curbside for all residents, even those who currently have and utilize their alleyways for container trash. The Public Works Department said the reasons for the change were varied.

“The Public Works Department decided to move to the appointment-based bulk trash program for various reasons (including customer convenience, blight reduction, and streamlined collection routes), and the decision to move bulk trash collection out of alleys will help the city keep better track of illegally dumped materials,” Public Works spokesperson Spencer Blake said. “When bulk trash is left in an alley for collection, it often attracts illegal dumping. With the appointment-based program, bulk trash will be collected curbside, ensuring it is collected promptly and that illegal dumpers do not have an opportunity to mix in material.”

Initial reaction from Phoenix residents was mixed. Some applauded the move to appointments citing convenience; others were upset that they could not continue using their alleyways for bulk trash, citing dangers to pedestrians and potentially unsightly (and sometimes inaccessible) front yards; still others are worried that the pick-up will

suffer from backlogs and that piles of trash will become a regular feature, rather than once a quarter occurrence.

In the Bel-Aire Estates neighborhood, the plan to move bulk trash from alleys to curbside met with disapproval and swift action. Dozens of neighbors signed a petition and sent letters to the Phoenix mayor and councilmembers laying out their objections to the move. And the city responded. Almost immediately, the neighbors were told by Public Works that they could continue to use the alley for bulk trash.

So, can other neighborhoods or individuals get the same allowances? Confirming that the Bel-Aire Estates neighborhood was given this concession, Blake responded, “Public Works collaborates with communities and individuals on a case-by-case basis to determine the placement of bulk trash. If residents have questions about the placement of their bulk material, they should contact the Customer Contact Center at 602-262-6251.”

He added that the city has dedicated crews and resources for illegal dumping investigations and clean-ups. The department encourages residents to help reduce and stop illegal dumping by notifying the city.

“If we are able to determine who dumped the pile, we will contact them and give them 24 hours to clean it up,” Blake said. “If they don't, they could face a fine of anywhere from \$100 to \$2,500, per city ordinance. If we cannot determine who dumped the pile illegally, Public Works will take care of the trash.”

If customers witness illegal dumping in progress, they may call Crime Stop at 602-262-5161. To report illegal

please see BULK TRASH on page 10



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Publisher: Tara A. Blanc
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The North Central News is published monthly by North Central News, Inc. The circulation is 22,000 copies mailed directly to homes and businesses in North Central Phoenix and 3,000 copies distributed from racks in the North Central area.

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COMMUNITY

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kids to swim.” Decades of free swim lessons, free pool fences and a nightly reminder from a friendly weather man, who made it his mission to raise drowning prevention awareness, ending every weather report with “Watch those kids around water.”

And on and on and on.

So, what can we learn?

North Central News spoke with parents, swim instructors, nurses, physicians, first responders and kids. Here is what they want residents to know.

“No child is ever totally safe around water. Layers of protection are the best approach. Teach them to survive in the water at an early age. Never ever let your guard down. Ensure barriers like fences, self-locking gates and alarms are in place,” said Keller. “Teach your kids, and model it for them, that no one should ever be alone in a pool. I am a swim instructor and when I am in the pool, awaiting arrival of a student, I get out and wait for them away from the water.”

A North Central mother of four swimmers who are now young adults said, “Remember that kids are growing and learning every day. The latch on the gate they couldn’t reach last week is now reachable. Or today they realize they can drag a chair over to it and climb to unlock it. Once they are good swimmers, don’t allow them to get over-confident and start horseplay and running on the deck. That’s the next phase of water safety.”

Many water safety experts echo the advice of Phoenix Fire Department. “Designate a water watcher when there are people in the pool. That person can be designated with a hat or something that reminds him and others that he is the designated watcher.”

“A common drowning scenario is when there are several adults in the pool with kids,” said Keller. “I think you’re watching and you think I’m watching, and kids drown that way, surrounded by adults who love them. The water watcher needs to stand up to really watch every inch of the water. When you sit, you cannot see the edge of the water. And it should go without saying: Don’t drink and think you are safe around water, or that you can supervise kids. Just don’t do it. Even a little bit.”

North Central native Kristin Bolick works in the Emergency Department at Honor Health North Mountain and is a lifeguard and teaches swim lessons. She



Amelia and Clara, seven-year-old twins, are learning their swim strokes from instructor Kristin Bolick. The North Central sisters want to swim on the city of Phoenix swim team next year (submitted photo).

emphasized, “Water wings are dangerous. Don’t use them. They give kids and supervising adults a false sense of security. They come off and the child slips under the water, often without a sound. Don’t mistake water toys for life preservers.”

Bolick added, “Learn CPR and have a phone at the pool so you can call 9-1-1 the instant there is a problem. Have rescue equipment at poolside.”

Sunnyslope High School head swim coach Cameron Licht brings special insight to working with kids who reluctant to learn to swim.

“Your kids are afraid of the water? Make peer pressure work for your child... ‘Come on, let’s learn to swim so you can join the other kids.’ Anxious kids often respond to that parental or instructor tactic. My parents were adamant that my sister and I learn to swim.”

Licht grew up in North Central Phoenix and coaches 80 students at Sunnyslope. During summer months, he coaches younger students, using his own experience to help the anxious ones gain skills and confidence.

“I was really afraid of the water as a little kid. And to think that now I’m teaching and coaching swimming — it shows you that even an anxious kid like me can overcome it and enjoy water sports.”

Bolick becomes quiet for a moment when she talks about water safety.

“Every first responder and emergency room worker — we have stories we don’t want to talk about. The ones whose bodies we have saved but whose brains are forever impaired. There is blame and anger and sadness and families are changed forever. I hear about yet another drowning and I cry. We all do.”



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volunteers as well.

“It gives them a sense of purpose,” Gullo said. “It gives them a sense of community and they feel valued because the students really form a relationship with them. They get to know what’s going on in the schools, which is very helpful to our district.”

There is a 12-hour training program that new tutors need to complete, but a background in education is not necessary. Gullo works with the student’s teacher and then builds individual curriculum to help guide each tutor. The next training program will be held at the end of September. If interested, contact Gullo at 602-664-7285 or kgullo@madisoned.org.

The Madison district has other opportunities for families and community members to get involved. Visit www.madisonaz.org/families/get-involved/volunteer or contact your child’s school directly.

Elizabeth Pickering, a parent volunteer with Mercury Mine Elementary School since the 2022-23 school year, when her oldest started kindergarten, can vouch for that sense of community. “I love creating connections with fellow volunteers, teachers, parents and students,” Pickering said. “Additionally, I adore being around children who are just starting their learning journey, this keeps my mind active as we help them navigate new concepts, it is energizing!”

As a member of the school’s Parent Teacher Group, she helps fundraise for the school, plan events for the school community at large, and give back to teachers and staff “to show our immense appreciation.”

“At our school and the case with many schools in your local community we are in need of volunteers who are able to give their time for a few hours in the morning and afternoon to be crossing guards and general campus support during lunch and recess,” Pickering added.

Mercury Mine Principal Stephanie Taueki is equally appreciative of PTG’s efforts.

“We are such a warm and close-knit community, and everybody comes together to support our kids here at Mercury Mine. It’s just a magical thing,” she said.

The principal echoed the opportunities named by Pickering, adding “We will take as many hours as anyone’s willing to give. I would say on average,

volunteers will spend about a couple hours here on campus, but even if it’s just for an hour, to be an extra set of hands, that really goes a long way.”

And it makes a difference for students to see adults stepping up.

“They build rapport and relationships with students that the students remember for a lifetime. It’s that extra attention that they’re getting from a grown-up and seeing that another grown-up in the community cares for them,” Taueki added. “I think that really makes a difference and shows that we’re all here to support kids and do what is best for our kids.”

Prospective volunteers can begin by contacting their school directly, but the district also has an organized volunteer program, Volunteer in Paradise (VIP), now in its 12th year in the Paradise Valley Unified School District.

“Mercury Mine is one of our most engaged school communities,” said program coordinator Marisha Geraghty. “The teachers have built strong relationships with their VIPs for the past 11 years that the program has been in existence. Last year, Mercury Mine had 10 VIPs matched with teachers and provided 655 hours of tutoring to students.”

To learn more, sign up to attend VIP Orientation Tuesday, Aug. 20, at 9 a.m. at the district office. Visit www.pvschools.net/community/volunteer/volunteer-in-paradise.

Another district that is gearing up to welcome its 2024-25 volunteers is the Washington Elementary School District (WESD). Dr. Nidhi Sharma says that last year, the district had 3,200 volunteers, up from 2,900 the year prior. Sharma is the administrator of Equitable Services for the district and part of that role is coordinating the volunteers. She adds that about 80 percent of these volunteers are students’ legal guardians, and the other 20 percent is made up of other community members.

“We provide them the opportunity to pick the site where they want to volunteer and the area where they wish to volunteer,” Sharma said. “Some of the areas could be front office, helping the office manager, our libraries, organizing the books, and cafeterias, transportation. And field trips, of course, that’s another big one where parents really want to help out.”

One of the biggest benefits for parents is that they get to spend time with

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COMMUNITY

Be Well Health opens in North Central

The city of Phoenix’s Human Services Department, along with three Phoenix councilmembers joined together with Be Well Health for an event to raise awareness on National HIV Testing Day, which was June 27 this year. The event also welcomed a new resource for the community to combat the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Vice Mayor Debra Stark (District 3), and Councilmembers Laura Pastor (District 4) and Carlos Galindo-Elvira (District 7) attended a ribbon cutting for the opening of a new clinic that focuses specifically on sexual health. The Be Well Health clinic is located inside Walgreens at 3402 N. Central Ave. in Phoenix. The event included free HIV testing resources for HIV and AIDs care and treatment, and entertainment.

Last year, the Arizona Department of Health Services reported a 20 percent statewide increase in new HIV cases. Testing helps individuals get the care and resources they need to lead

otherwise normal lives and bring the virus to a state where it is not transmittable.

The event was held in partnership with the city’s Fast-Track Cities Initiative (www.phoenix.gov/hivphx), which aims to strengthen HIV programs and leverage resources to end the HIV epidemic by 2030. For additional information, visit www.bewellhealth-haz.com.

Virtual series explores sustainable living

The Watershed Management Group and the city of Phoenix Water Services Department are offering a free five-class virtual series covering various aspects of sustainable living, from rain-water harvesting to cultivating native and non-native food plants.

Residents can join one class or attend them all throughout August, from 6-7:30 p.m. Classes will be held Tuesday, Aug. 6, (Designing a Water Harvesting Landscape); Thursday, Aug. 8, (Selecting Native Plants for Multiple Benefits); Tuesday, Aug. 20 (Vegetable

Gardening in the Low Desert); Thursday, Aug. 22 (Cultivating Native Edibles); and Thursday, Aug. 29, (Native Landscape Care).

The free virtual classes will be hosted on WebEx (meeting invites open at 5:45 p.m.) For more information and to register, visit www.phoenix.gov/waterservices/online-workshops.

BULK TRASH continued from page 4

dumping after the fact, contact 602-262-6251.

Many residents are skeptical that moving bulk trash out of the alley will prevent this type of behavior, and they feel that their concerns about how the scheduling will impact their neighborhoods are valid. Regardless, online appointment scheduling will open Friday, Aug. 30; the first day of pick up by appointment will be Sept. 30, and all collections from that point on must be scheduled online.

Information can be found online at www.phoenix.gov/publicworks/bulk-trash. Residents who need assistance may call 602-262-6251.

COMMUNITY continued from page 8

their child and be involved in school activities, all while supporting the students, teachers and the school.

“That is one big ‘aha’ for our parents,” Sharma said. “They really want to be there, and students also feel very motivated, and their confidence gets boosted when they see their parents helping out.

“Volunteers benefit from building that strong district community partnership and that bond helps the students, big time.”

The first step to volunteering in WESD is to visit www.wesdschools.org/domain/53 and fill out an application.

“We love our volunteers,” added Pam Horton, director of Communications and Public Engagement for the district. “There is so much that happens on a school campus on a day-to-day basis and the volunteers really do provide that extra bit of support to our teachers and give our students that little extra bit of love to ensure their success. So, we love having our volunteers on campus.”

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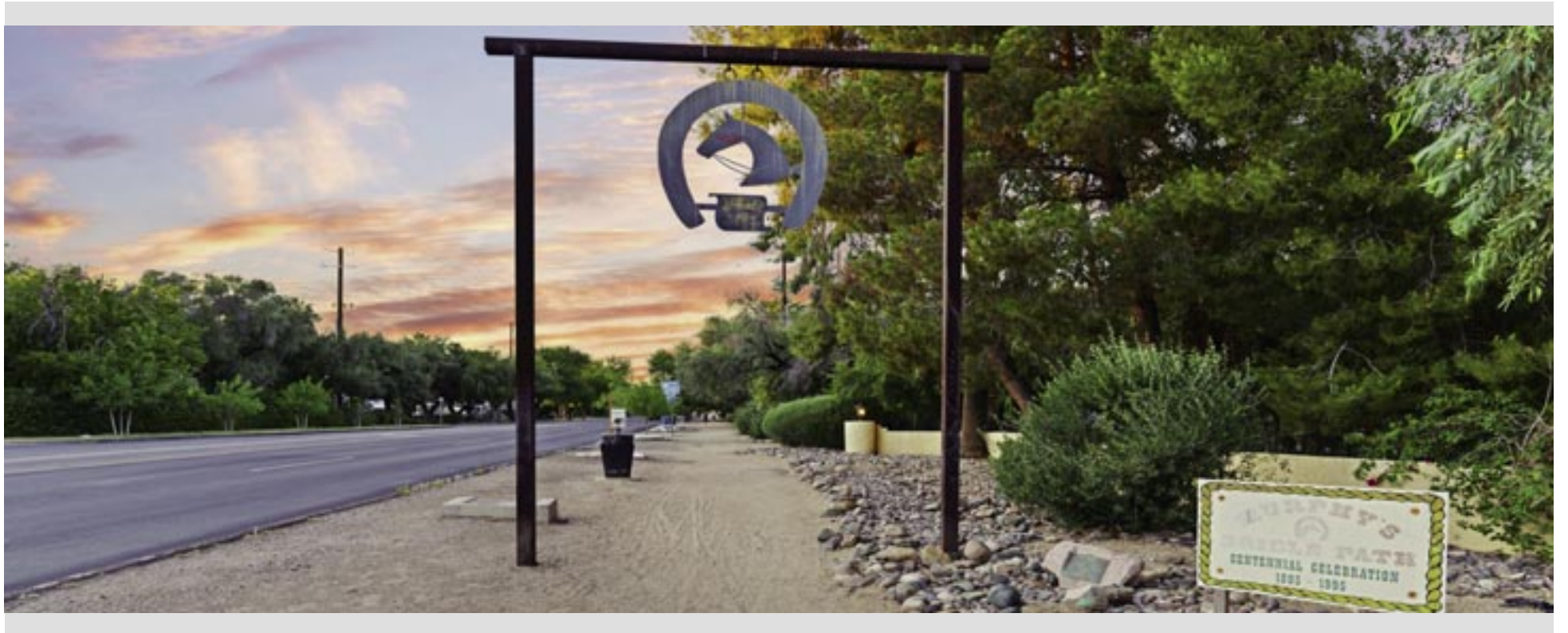
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COMMUNITY

Collaboration provides Metro update

By Kathryn M. Miller

At a July 17 community meeting, the Metro District Community Collaboration, coordinated by Gordon C. James Public Relations, updated neighbors, business owners and other community stakeholders on redevelopment plans, police department calls for service, and Northwest Extension Phase II Transit Oriented Community planning efforts. The district runs from Dunlap Avenue to Peoria Avenue, I-17 to 31st Avenue.

Jeff Stapleton, with the city of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department, is the city's project manager for the yet unnamed Metrocenter redevelopment. At the meeting, Stapleton said that the fencing off of the vacant mall is still planned to take place this summer, with demolition on track to begin later in 2024 – it could take close to a year to complete.

Phoenix Police Department (PPD) Officer Adrian Diaz broke down the June calls for service in the district. Dispatched calls (those coming from the public) are up from 262 in June 2023 to 284 in June 2024. Diaz says that this 8.4% increase is not necessarily a bad thing, but rather indicates that businesses and residents are responding to their “See something, say something,” exhortations. Most of the calls in the area were for trespassing.

PPD Lt. Mark Schweikert, who also serves in the Metro area, attended as a representative of the Phoenix Police Sergeants and Lieutenants Association (PPSLA). Schweikert announced that PPSLA will once again host their popular Superhero Saturday event in the Metro District next year and encouraged residents to save the date, Jan. 18, 2025, and plan on attending this community event. Information can be found at www.superherosaturday.org.

Finally, area residents who missed out on the first round of the Northwest Extension Phase II Transit Oriented Community planning workshops, the Planning Department is still seeking input. An online survey is available through August, along with an explanation of the project, at www.phoenix.gov/pddsite/pages/northwestextensionii.aspx. A second round of community workshops is expected to be held this fall.

To stay up-to-date on Metro District Community Collaboration news, sign up for their monthly newsletter by visiting www.metrodistrictcollaboration.com.

New shelter moves closer to opening

The North Mountain Healing Center (NMHC), a Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI) shelter that will provide 100 units to help Phoenix residents experiencing homelessness transition to housing, is anticipated to celebrate a soft opening in August. The shelter is located at 9414 N. 25th Ave.

In 2021, the city of Phoenix committed to an initial \$4 million CARES Act funding investment in the facility, with Maricopa County investing an additional \$6 million. Placements at the closed campus will be by referral only; no “walk ups” will be permitted. In addition, CBI says that both security and an EMT will be on-site 24/7, and around-the-clock staff will include a manager, supervisor and four or more behavioral health technicians.

The Maricopa County Regional Continuum of Care released its annual Point in Time Count Report in late May, and while there are some positives reported, 9,435 individuals were experiencing homelessness on the night of Jan. 22, 2024. The positive: 57 percent of those individuals were sheltered vs. 49 percent in 2023. In Phoenix, 2,701 of those individuals were unsheltered. The opening of the North Mountain facility may help alleviate some of the stress on the system.

Learn more at www.northmountainhealingcenter.com.

Club organizes collection

The American Italian Club, located at 7509 N. 12th St., is collecting water and non-perishable food for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The collection drive kicked off in July and it will run until Aug. 30.

Residents who would like to support the effort will find boxes located around the club facility. For additional information, contact the club at 602-975-8294 or visit www.azaiclub.com.

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Phoenix Housing Market Update

The first half of 2024 has been a very subdued period for Greater Phoenix's residential real estate. The market is not in trouble, but the closing volumes have been far below normal, and buyer enthusiasm is unusually weak.

We are firmly into the quiet season, and closed sales for June 2024 were already down 15% compared to June 2023. We have 2 to 3 months of seasonal price weakness to endure before the market is likely to pick up steam again in October. A drop in interest rates could jump-start this early, but we are not holding our breath.

There is no need for panic, but patience is definitely being tested.

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HAPPY HOUR WITH HERSCH

In a few days my son, Carter, will be heading off to college.

It is going to be an extremely emotional time for my wife Molly and I. We are going to miss his energy in the house and will feel the emptiness that comes with his absence. We of course are excited to watch his journey and the path he takes, he is ready. Becoming empty-nesters will be quite the change for us as **we haven't been by ourselves in over 28 years.**

While I am mourning the passing of this stage, I am excited to explore the next phase of our life together and the challenges and opportunities we will encounter.

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COMMUNITY

Commission hears Rock Garden case

With an 8-0 vote at its June 17 meeting, the Phoenix Historic Preservation Commission approved recommending the initiation of Historic Preservation Overlay Zoning for the Thompson Rock Garden, located at 10023 N. 13th Place in Sunnyslope. This is the first step in listing the property on the Phoenix Historic Property Registry.

The property will now go through the rezoning process, with a three- to four-month series of public hearings. Once rezoning is complete, the property will be formally protected through a special permit review process administered by the city of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office. These types of properties are also eligible for financial incentives offered by the city of Phoenix. Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are not rezoned and have no formal protection, but they are eligible for incentives administered by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service. The same eligibility criteria are used for both historic registers.



Grover Thompson’s Sunnyslope Rock Garden is now in the process of obtaining its place on the Phoenix Historic Property Registry (photo by Kathryn M. Miller).

At the June 17 meeting, Sunnyslope resident Julia Taggart, who was in attendance representing the case along with the property owner, Marion Blake, indicated that Blake would also be pursuing National Register status. Learn more about the historic preservation process at www.phoenix.gov/pdd/historic-preservation.

Grant provides health care access

Southwest Center, a primary health and wellness facility located in Phoenix, has received a \$25,000 grant to support their mission in providing affordable, affirming and inclusive services for diverse communities and all

those seeking compassionate care, thanks to Health Care Advocates International’s The HCAI Fund. This funding will allow the center to cover patient’s out of pocket costs in addition to increasing access to services. Southwest Center is one of six organizations to receive funding in the most recent round of The HCAI Fund’s grant cycle.

While HCAI has informally given more than \$2 million since it opened its doors in 2017, The HCAI Fund was launched in 2023 with the mission of providing financial support specifically to 501(c)(3) organizations that strengthen, serve and advocate for the LGBTQ+ community.

Applicants that address basic needs, foster safety and wellness, fight stigma and discrimination and promote equality and education through programs and services are given consideration. The Fund is now accepting applications for its next grant cycle through Sept. 30.

For additional information, visit www.hcaifund.com/advocacy-programs/grant-program or www.swcenter.org.

North Central’s own Dr. Micah Olson, M.D. announces the opening of



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COMMUNITY

Pet of the Month

Itty-bitty Bessy needs a foster

In its 67 years as a nonprofit, the Arizona Humane Society (AHS) has never cared for more pets at one time than during this extremely busy summer. With more than 1,600 sick, injured and abused pets in AHS' shelter and Foster Hero homes, overcapacity continues to be an ongoing battle and the need for the community's support has never been greater.

For pets like adorable little Bessy, a six-week-old domestic shorthair kitten, a temporary place to stay while recovering is the greatest gift she could receive right now.

Tiny little Bessy was transferred to the shelter from a local emergency animal clinic after she was found to be a sick stray. Upon examination in AHS' trauma hospital, it was found that she was suffering from a bit of a kitty cold. Bessy has been receiving great care in the shelter's Kitten Nursery and has been cleared to go to a Foster Hero home to continue her recovery journey



Adorable little Bessy, a six-week-old domestic shorthair kitten, needs a temporary place to stay while recovering from a kitty cold (photo courtesy of Arizona Humane Society).

while in a loving and quiet environment until she is ready for her forever home.

Being an AHS Foster Hero is a life-saving venture with cases that fit every family and lifestyle. By bringing in one or more foster pets, residents allow AHS to continue caring for even more of the community's sick, injured and abused pets by opening up much-needed kennel space.

For more information on how to become a Foster Hero for Bessy (pet number 781927) or any of the dozens of pets in need of foster, visit www.azhumane.org/foster to take the online orientation and apply.

Be aware of dog park closures

City of Phoenix dog parks offer canines and their people a place to enjoy off-lease fun and exercise. During the summer months, however, the city sets aside time for turf recovery, improvements and maintenance at many of the parks. Here are closures that are impacting parks in the North Central area.

The Rose Mofford Dog Park, at 9833 N. 25th Ave., is closed for maintenance every Wednesday at 10 p.m. through Thursday at 9 p.m. All other days it is open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The park features separate areas for large and small dogs, 2.5 acres of grass, seating areas and a water station.

The Steele Indian School Dog Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, closed July 1 and will remain closed until Aug. 23 for annual turf maintenance. It will reopen Aug. 24. The park features separate areas for large and small dogs, 1.63 acres of grass, seating areas and a water station. Regular hours are 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., daily.

The PETsMart Dog Park at

Washington Park, 6655 N. 23rd Ave., is open daily from 6:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. This park also features separate areas for large and small dogs, 2.65 acres of grass, seating areas and a water station. The Washington dog park does not have any scheduled closure dates.

For more information, visit www.phoenix.gov/parks/parks/dog-parks.

Save the date for golf fundraiser

Arizona Small Dog Rescue (AZSDR), located at 1102 W. Hatcher Road, is committed to rescuing dogs in need and caring for them until they find their perfect forever family. The 501(c)3 nonprofit, no-kill shelter says that it focuses on providing a safe environment where the health and welfare of the dogs is a top priority.

To help support their volunteer efforts, the organization will host its ninth annual Putts for Mutts Golf Tournament at Talking Stick Golf Club, Saturday, Nov. 2. Proceeds from the event will benefit the homeless dogs and puppies of AZSDR, especially pregnant mothers, medical dogs, and seniors needing homes.

For more information, call 602-944-2440 or visit www.azsmalldog.org. To participate or to sign up as a sponsor of the golf tournament, visit www.puttsformuttsaz.com.

Retailer launches toy take-back

A new pilot recycling program from PetSmart helps old pet toys avoid the landfill by being recycled into new ones.

PetSmart is piloting a dog toy take-back program with West Paw, which manufactures eco-friendly, durable dog toys and pet treats in Montana. Pet parents can participate in the West Paw Join the Loop takeback program by bringing their retired West Paw toy, or other similar plastic or rubber toys, to the collection box inside their local PetSmart. The old toys will be fed back into the manufacturing process to make completely new, bouncy, safe toys. Other recyclable materials received also will be processed and made into something new, so they don't end up in the landfill.

The PetSmart location at 1949 E. Camelback Road is participating in this program. For additional information, visit www.petsmart.com or www.west-paw.com/pages/dog-toy-take-back.

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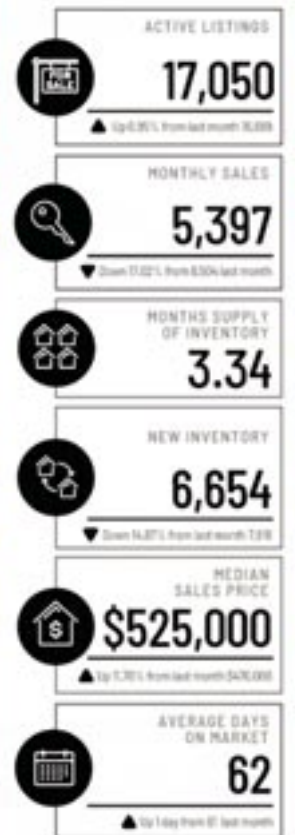


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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

Tanner Motors celebrates 20 years

By Kathryn M. Miller

An automotive repair business that began 20 years ago at 7th Street and Colter, then migrated north to Cave Creek Road, has survived and thrived based on two main principals: hard work and honesty. But for Phoenix native Chris Tanner and his family, the auto business has much deeper roots in Phoenix. It all started with his grandfather, Ray Tanner Sr., back in 1945.

Ray began his career with another well-known name in the Valley auto business, Ray Korte. Tanner's grandfather opened his own car lot in 1958, eventually moving to 1500 N. Central Ave. and selling Studebaker and Jeep vehicles. By 1965, he was importing Swedish made Volvos and built the first Phoenix area Volvo dealership, and in the spring of 1972, Ray moved the dealership to 2143 W. Camelback Ave. where it would stay for the next 27 years.



Chris Tanner and the team at Tanner Motors will celebrate 20 years in business, thanks in part to the strong relationships they have built with customers over the years (photo by Kathryn M. Miller).

In the early days, Ray Jr. began working at the dealership as a parts runner and lot boy, working his way up through the ranks and eventually becoming president and CEO after his father's retirement. His son, Chris, got his start in the business much the same way.

"I started working at the dealership when I was 11 years old," Chris recalled, "just cleaning up around the

shop and running parts to the technicians."

Chris worked summer after summer and returned to the business full time after college as a car salesman. Ray Tanner Volvo was sold in 1999, and Chris followed other pursuits for a few years. But eventually, he, along with his wife, Susanna, returned to the auto industry.

"After the sale, I just really saw a need, I was still in contact with some customers that I had developed a good relationship with and I missed it so much and decided to get back into it, in a much smaller capacity."

In August 2004 Tanner Motors was born. "We started with used cars and repairs and we were strictly Volvo at the time." Now, fast forward 20 years, the company still services and repairs Volvos, along with BMW, Lexus, Mini Cooper and other brands.

The company outgrew the Colter location, which was four lifts and 2,000 square feet. They moved to a much larger facility at 10221 N. Cave Creek Road in 2015, where Chris, Susanna and their nearly dozen employees stay up-to-date with the latest industry changes and continue to focus on building and maintaining good relationships with their customers.

"The automotive industry, unfortunately, especially the repair side of it, has a very bad reputation. We just do



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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

things differently,” Chris said. “We don’t take advantage of customers. I’ve built this business based on how my grandfather built his. You know, treat people the way that you want to be treated. Ethics come way before money for us.”

He added, “We don’t want somebody to come in one time and not see them again. We want to build a relationship over the life of their cars. We have so many customers that we’re servicing second and third generations of families. That’s the kind of relationships we love to have.”

Tanner Motors is located at 10221 N. Cave Creek Road. For additional information, call 602-910-2754 or visit www.tanner-motors.com.

Business Briefs
Alloy Midtown opens for leasing

Soltrust Residential REIT, which specializes in development of infill, build-to-rent, and value-add apartments, created Alloy Midtown, which is comprised of two unique structures, forged to create one community.



Now open for leasing, Alloy Midtown is a former Phoenix Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) headquarters building that was transformed into a modern, upgraded urban loft apartment complex (photo by Kathryn M. Miller).

On one side of the community, residents will find a converted office-to-apartment structure, built out of the former Phoenix Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) headquarters. The structural steel building was stripped and is now rendered unrecognizable from its past, transforming into a modern, upgraded urban loft apartment

building. On the other side is a new building of contemporary apartments composed of light gauge framing, designed to last decades beyond typical wood apartment structures.

The complex’s 171 modern apartment homes offer a variety of floorplans, including studio, 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom options. All models

include keyless smart lock apartment entry, plank hardwood-style flooring, stainless steel and energy efficient GE appliances, upgraded contemporary black bath and kitchen fixtures, and energy efficient mini-split HVAC systems. Select apartment homes include patios and terraces, including some with private entry.

Construction began about a year ago, and the first phase (the DEA building side) is completed and open for leasing. The second building (new construction) is estimated to be completed in the next three months.

Alloy Midtown is located at 3010 N. Second St. Alloy Midtown’s floorplans, amenities and a virtual tour can be viewed at www.alloyphx.com.

Local credit union recognized

Arizona Financial has been ranked number one in Arizona on the Forbes list of America’s Best-In-State Credit Unions 2024. The award is presented by Forbes and Statista Inc., the world-leading statistics portal and industry *please see RANKED on page 20*

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

RANKED continued from page 19

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Founded in Arizona in 1936, Arizona Financial is a \$3.3 billion not-for-profit financial cooperative providing banking services to more than 165,000 member/owners. In North Central, visit the Colonnade Branch, 1945 E. Camelback Road. Learn more at www.arizonafinancial.org.

Businesses receive Empowerment grants

FirstBank concluded the second annual FirstBank Empowerment Awards in partnership with the Phoenix Suns in June.

The season-long initiative aimed to strengthen marginalized communities by providing \$30,000 in financial grants and marketing support to minority-owned businesses across the Valley. The 2024 Empowerment Awards winners included Los Suns Small Business MVP Award: Notambox (<https://notambox.mypagecloud.com>); Business of Pride Award: Phoenix Coqui (www.phoenixcoqui.com); Black Excellence Award: Big Red's Hot Sauce; ORIGINATIV Entrepreneur Award: Native Art Market; EntrepreneuHER Award: Samurai Comics (www.samuraicomics.com); and the AAPI Business Award: Hannah Cho Beauty.

Learn more about the program at www.nba.com/suns/empowerment.

Local doctor opens new practice

Micah Olson, MD, recently opened Valley Healthspan at 3333 E. Camelback Road, Suite 270. The preventative/functional medicine age management center began seeing patients in June.

A third-generation Phoenician who grew up in North Central, Olson worked as a pediatric endocrinologist at Phoenix Children's Hospital for 14 years, but recently left PCH and the pediatric world to start his own practice with a focus on age management. He says that the goal of his practice is to use a specific, personalized approach to

treat and prevent chronic diseases, with the goal of helping patients maintain their physical and cognitive ability, quality of life and vitality as they age.

The doctor says that he is dedicated to finding the root cause of chronic illnesses using advanced diagnostics, including metabolic and hormone testing, body composition analysis, continuous glucose meters, VO2 max fitness testing, and cognitive and sleep testing. He then spends time with patients formulating a comprehensive plan including nutritional and fitness/exercise counseling, and, if indicated, nutraceuticals, bioidentical hormone optimization and a weight management program or medication.

To learn more, call 480-973-9042 or visit www.valleyhealthspan.com.

Library names new services director

In mid-July, Phoenix City Manager Jeff Barton announced that Erin MacFarlane has been selected as the next Library Services Director, effective July 29. MacFarlane replaces Rita Hamilton, who retired from the city in April after serving as the city librarian for 13 years.

MacFarlane brings 26 years of experience in education and libraries to the job. She started her library career at the Phoenix Public Library in 2006. She's spent the last 14 years in various positions at the Maricopa County Library District, most recently serving as deputy director.

The city said that during her time at Maricopa County, MacFarlane significantly expanded library access by implementing virtual library programs, digital library card registration, and curbside pickup of library materials. She also played a crucial role in establishing key community partnerships, including an award-winning program with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to expand library material access in county jails.

MacFarlane works with the American Library Association and the Arizona Library Association on public policy initiatives that promote intellectual freedom and access to electronic resources for an open information society.



Micah Olson, MD

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5/1/2024 to 6/10/2024

| | |
|---|--|
| Closed Sales Over \$1M: 15 | Avg Sales Price: \$1,432,600 |
| Avg List Price: \$1,490,893 | Avg Days on the Market: 85 |
| Active Listings: 41 / \$1,000,000 - \$3,595,000 | Under Contract/Pending: 12 / \$1,100,000-\$1,795,000 |



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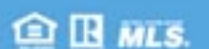
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August is here!

In my efforts to write something that may peak your interest, how about our surroundings and how our community has evolved over the past 25 years or so. I have lived in North Central ever since I moved to Phoenix in 1978 to work for my dad, who moved here in 1960. My dad loved the central corridor, and I knew that if I ever moved to Phoenix from Atlanta, this would be my forever home. Other than the nightclub business, which my father jumped into after a trip to Europe, I have been a Realtor focusing on our area for over 33 years. Let's talk about how home values have changed, specifically homes valued over a million dollars. To illustrate my point, I will use the year 2006. From January to December 31st, 2006, there were a total of 25 homes sold over a million dollars, and I sold the highest-priced home that year for \$3.2 million. Compare this to 2023 and the time frame, January to the end of December, there were a total of 114 homes sold for over a million dollars. Of those, 16 were between \$2 million to \$3 million, and one was over \$4 million, which I was the listing agent and sold. Home values in our community continue to rise despite more homes available for sale, compared to last year; and buyers anticipating a cut in interest rates and delaying their purchases. You can rest assured, people are still moving into our neighborhoods for a variety of reasons, including lower local taxes, more affordable home options, and the ease of socialization in our neighborhoods. Our schools continue to provide excellent education, new restaurants like The Henry are taking their place among top eateries, locally owned boutiques/shops, and our farmers' markets up and down Central Avenue increase the desire of folks searching for places to live in Central Phoenix. Looking to buy or sell in our awesome communities? I'd love to meet with you, answer any questions and crush your homeownership goals!

Here's to cooler evenings!



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| 33 W STATE AVE 4 BEDROOMS 3 BATHROOMS 3,467 SQ FT | \$1,399,995 |
| 7808 N 14TH AVE 4 BEDROOMS 5 BATHROOMS 3,208 SQ FT | \$1,195,000 |
| 8 BILTMORE EST 116 3 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 2,329 SQ FT | \$1,195,000 |
| 1512 W PALMAIRE AVE 4 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 2,886 SQ FT | \$925,000 |
| 5131 N 18TH ST 3 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 3,215 SQ FT | \$875,000 |
| 615 W FRIER DR 4 BEDROOMS 3 BATHROOMS 2,496 SQ FT | \$875,000 |
| 6340 N 10TH AVE 4 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 2,509 SQ FT | \$700,000 |
| 329 W OREGON AVE 2 BEDROOMS 1 BATHROOMS 949 SQ FT | \$550,000 |
| 1541 W GLENN DR 2 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,557 SQ FT | \$510,000 |
| 102 W MARYLAND AVE F1 3 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,525 SQ FT | \$425,000 |

PENDING

| | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 7240 N 11TH AVE | \$750,000 |
| 7347 N 8TH ST | \$494,000 |

SOLD

| | |
|--|---|
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| 733 W EL CAMINO DR \$2,275,000 | 314 E ROSE LN \$1,085,000 |
| 36 E STATE AVE \$2,190,000 | 1309 W LINGER LN \$835,000 |
| 7130 N 2ND ST* \$1,763,000 <small>*REPRESENTED BUYER & SELLER</small> | 3131 N CENTRAL AVE 7015* \$747,621 <small>*REPRESENTED BUYER</small> |
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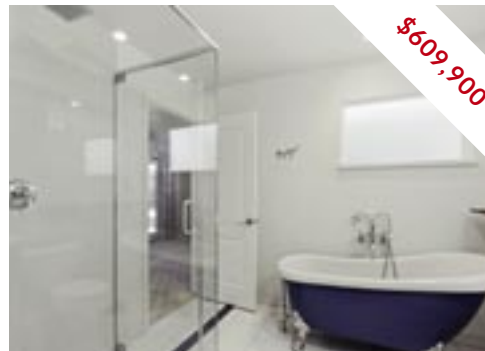
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SCHOOL DAYS

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North High School and Northern Arizona University alum Abdihamid Nur qualified for the Paris Olympic Team after finishing second in the men's 5,000-meter Track and Field event in June (photo courtesy of NAU Athletics).

North alum qualifies for Paris Olympics

At the end of June, North High School Class of 2017 alum Abdihamid Nur qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics in the 5,000-meter Track and Field event.

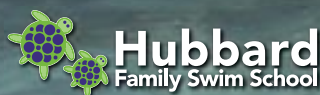
Nur, who is a 2022 Northern Arizona University (NAU) graduate, qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympic Team after finishing second in the men's 5,000-meters with a time of 13:09.01 at the 2024 U.S. Olympic Team Trials June 30 at Hayward Field in Oregon. Nur was the second NAU alum to qualify for the Olympics.

Prior to his Olympic qualification, Nur was busy setting records and win-

ning events during his college career. He is the collegiate record holder outdoors in the 10,000 (13:06.32) and won indoor NCAA titles in the 3,000-meters and 5,000-meters in 2022. He runs professionally for Nike and has won two national titles, representing the U.S. at the 2022 and 2023 World Championships.

Nur will race in the first round of the 5,000-meters on Aug. 7 with the finals set for Aug. 10. The athlete clocked a time of 13:24.14 in the first round of the 5,000-meters to finish second overall and advance to the finals. He joins Grant Fisher on the Olympic team.

"Phoenix Union is proud to cheer on one of our own!" the district said in a statement.



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madisonaz.org/enrollment



SCHOOL DAYS

School Briefs

GLENDALE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT Sunnyslope alumnus recognized

Sunnyslope High School alum Colin Lifshitz was invited to Washington D.C. to receive a Congressional Award over the summer. Lifshitz received this honor after logging over 400 hours of community service, 200 hours of personal development, and 200 hours of physical fitness.

Lifshitz met with both of Arizona’s senators and Rep. David Schweikert (R-AZ) while in D.C.

Still time to register In GUHSD

Glendale Union High School District (GUSHD) reminds families that there is still time to register for the 2024-25 school year. The district offers nine nationally recognized high schools. All schools are ranked among America’s best high schools by *U.S. News & World Report*. In addition, GUHSD provides championship athletics, extracurricular activities, cutting-edge STEM opportunities, career and technical education options, and more.

The new school year begins Aug. 5. Enrollment information can be found online. Visit www.guhsdaz.org and click on the “Enrollment” link.

Graduates earn millions in scholarships

The 2023-24 Glendale Union High School District school year ended with excellent measures of success. Three thousand students graduated from all nine of GUHSD’s high schools, and the Class of 2024 earned more than \$109 million in scholarships. Sunnyslope High School, Thunderbird High School and Washington High School received a combined total of over \$41 million in scholarships.

District schools Schedule open houses

High school is a critical time for a teen’s academic growth. Parents and guardians can stay involved and support their success by attending a local high school’s open house. The events offer an excellent opportunity to meet teachers, learn about the curriculum, and get a glimpse of a teen’s daily school life.



Solano Elementary School teacher John Formanek (center) is one of three Osborn School District teachers chosen as a teacher of the year (photo courtesy of Osborn School District).

Check your school’s website calendar for details on dates and times. Visit www.guhsdaz.org.

MADISON SCHOOL DISTRICT District is hiring for variety of positions

Madison School District is currently hiring for a variety of positions for the 2024-25 school year. The district is currently hiring paraprofessionals, bus drivers, before and after school program club leaders and more.

Paraprofessionals work closely with

teachers to implement instructional programs and provide support to students on a one-to-one basis and in small groups.

Bus drivers are responsible for safely transporting students to and from school, as well as on field trips and other events. Bus drivers are often the first and last staff members students see during the school day, and play an important role in creating a positive experience for students.

Club Leaders in the before and after school program implement daily activities, utilize instructional materials to promote learning and creativity, and

maintain a positive, safe and cooperative environment for students before and after school.

Madison School District is an A-rated district from the Arizona Department of Education and six schools were named 2024 “Best” schools by *U.S. News & World Report*. Madison offers competitive pay and benefits.

The first day of school in the Madison School District is Tuesday, Aug. 6. To learn more about current opportunities and to apply, visit www.madisonaz.org/jobs.

OSBORN SCHOOL DISTRICT Osborn teachers recognized

Before the 2024-25 school year gets underway, the Osborn School District officially introduced their three teachers of the year.

In a social media post, the district congratulated John Formanek (Solano Elementary), Danielle Wilhelmy (Encanto Elementary), and CJ Cooper (Osborn Middle School) on their selection to represent the district as teachers

please see RECOGNIZED on page 26

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SCHOOL DAYS

RECOGNITION continued from page 25

of the year.

The district said, “These three outstanding educators will be celebrated at the Osborn Educational Foundation’s annual Teacher of the Year Celebration in October, and we cannot wait to show the world why they are so deserving of this award. Congratulations again to all three of these inspiring individuals.”

The Osborn District’s first day of school in the 2024-25 school year is Monday, Aug. 5. Learn more at www.osbornnet.org.

PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT PXU students celebrate graduation

Nearly 200 Phoenix Union High School District (PXU) seniors met graduation requirements after summer school this year, and on July 8 the district celebrated their achievement.

In a social media post, the district said, “Congratulations to the PXU Class of 2024 graduates who took to

the stage this evening. We are so proud of you and cannot wait to see your impact on the world.”

Phoenix Union High School District will celebrate the first day of class in the 2024-25 school year Monday, Aug. 5. Learn more at www.pxu.org.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT Enrollment is open for district schools

Whether it is free, full-day kindergarten, premiere special education and gifted services, art, music, PE, STEM or online learning, WESD has a program to meet the individual needs of area children.

With multiple A+ Schools of Excellence, a National Blue Ribbon and a National Title I Distinguished School, the district is also a Top 20 school district in the country in student growth. Additionally, 84 percent of WESD schools are an A or B rated school. Of WESD’s nine A-rated schools, four of them are in the North

Central corridor – Desert View (K-6), Moon Mountain (K-6), Orangewood (K-8) and Royal Palm (6-8), the first and only middle school in WESD to achieve an “A” letter grade.

The district is currently enrolling kindergarten through eighth grade students for the 2024-25 school year. The first day of school is Monday, Aug. 5. To start the enrollment process, visit the WESD Welcome and Registration Center, located at 3200 W. Cholla St., in person or enroll online at www.wesdschools.org/registration.

Teacher to serve on advisory team

Megan Kingman, a teacher at Desert View Elementary School, was selected to serve on the Maricopa County School Superintendent’s Office Teacher Advisory Team (STAT) for the 2024-25 school year.

As part of the STAT, Kingman will share her expertise and perspective, join discussions regarding education practice and policy, and engage in important advocacy work on behalf of students and educators in Maricopa

County. Participating educators were chosen through an application and interview process, and represent a diverse cross section of school settings, geographic locations, content specialties and experience levels.

District has openings for teachers, staff

The Washington Elementary School District (WESD) currently has several job openings for certified and classified positions including teachers, substitutes, psychologists, paraprofessionals, nutrition services managers, health service technicians, bus drivers and much more.

The district offers paid holidays and personal leave, vacation time, employer-matched contributions to Arizona State Retirement, insurance benefits for employees working 30 hours a week, discounts on WESD-sponsored childcare, extensive training, and opportunities for advancement.

To apply online, visit <https://jobs.wesdschools.org>. To learn more, call 602-347-2622.

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Applications for Class of 2029 Open: Oct 1

Eighth-Grade Day: Oct 25

Open House: Oct 27

Admission Information Night: Nov 20

High School Placement Test (HSPT): Dec 7 or Dec 14

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SCHOOL DAYS

CHARTER AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS Program helps students explore Arizona

A jewel in the crown of the Brophy College Prep experience for select incoming freshmen, the Summer Honors Enrichment Program (SHEP) explores the wonders of Arizona through two sections: Humanities & Innovation and Biology. Students spend their first week of the five-week program at Manresa, Brophy’s creek-side retreat outside of Sedona.

SHEP Humanities students learned from indigenous curators and talented artists like Duane Koyawena and Ed Kabotie, immersing themselves in the rich culture and history of Arizona. From the Phoenix Indian School to the Museum of Northern Arizona to the Desert View Watchtower at the edge of the Grand Canyon. There, students listened to Kabotie play flute in front of a 1930s mural his grandfather painted.

The school says that the thoughtfully curated SHEP experience allows students hands-on adventures in the humanities and biological ecosystems of the Grand Canyon State like never before.

Student attends ASU summer program

Niyah McAllister was one of two Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) community school students to receive a full scholarship to attend the Barrett Summer Scholars program this year. McAllister will be a senior this coming fall at the Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona (GLAAZ), the only free single-



Niyah McAllister

gender public high school in Arizona and one of three CPLC Community Schools. GLAAZ principal Dr. Connie Jordan, who has worked for over 20 years in the education field, believes student success begins with personalized connections fostered by surrounding every student with caring teachers and staff. Jordan encouraged McAllister and her peer Natllely Pelayo to apply to the Barrett Summer Scholars program because of their academic achievement and determination to pursue higher education. The program accepts stu-



Over the summer, incoming freshmen immersed themselves in the rich culture of Arizona, including at the Desert View Watchtower at the edge of the Grand Canyon (photo courtesy of Brophy College Preparatory).

dents with a GPA of 2.7 or higher — McAllister has a GPA of 3.98 and Pelayo has a 3.6.

During the three-day program, students experience college-level courses and engage with peers from across the state. The Barrett scholarship covers housing, dining and all necessary program materials, ensuring that participants can fully immerse themselves in this enriching academic experience.

Pelayo attended the program on the Arizona State University Tempe campus in June and McAllister attended the program on the West Valley campus in July.

Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona is located at 715 W. Mariposa St. For additional information, call 602-288-4518 or visit www.flocrit.org/leadership or www.cplc.org.

Summer enrichment a success

From stirring up creativity in cooking classes, hitting home runs in baseball, to showcasing talents in theater performances, rocking out in band practice and much more, campers made the most of every moment, during Brophy College Preparatory’s Summer Enrichment Program

June 28 marked the last day of the adventure, but the program leaders said, “We’re already counting down the days until next summer!”

Classes in the 2024-25 school year begin Thursday, Aug. 8. Learn more at www.brophyprep.org

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SCHOOL DAYS

Students excel on AP exams

In July, Madison Highland Prep announced that 33 of its students have been recognized as AP Scholars by the College Board.

These students have demonstrated exceptional academic achievement by earning scores of 3 or higher on three or more Advanced Placement (AP) exams. AP Scholar Awards come in different levels and types. AP Scholars are granted to students who receive an average score of 3.00 on three exams, AP Scholars with Honors are granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on four exams, and AP Scholars with Distinction are granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.50 on five exams. Madison Highland Prep had a total of 21 AP Scholars, 11 AP Scholars with Honor, and one AP Scholar with Distinction.

The 33 AP Scholars are: Mirna Arredondo, Kai Boltz-Garcia (with Honor), Jadon Buckwalter, Aiden Crossman, Danika Diaz (with Honor), Noelle Duflo (with Honor), Riley Falk,

Ella Gittner, Natalia Hernandez, Saul Hernandez, Avery Jenkins, Ethan Jones, Aydan Leeds-Peralta, James Lockwood, Joseph Lungo, Mason MacArthur (with Honor), William Marsh, Evan Marske, Adelaide Morlan, Oliver Morlan, Leonardo Parra, Rylie Reese (with Honor), Devon Reeves (with Honor), Duncan Sanders (with Honor), Anna Sandoval, Sage Schaffer (with Honor), Etta Thesing (with Honor), Isaac Timmerman (with Distinction), Dakota Tija, Xchylar Tsutsumi, Mia Urbano, Katherine Wazny (with Honor), and Matthew Yduarte (with Honor).

Madison Highland Prep is a STEM-focused college-preparatory high school located at 1431 E. Campbell Ave. The first day of class for the 2024-25 school year is Monday, Aug. 5. For more information, contact the school office at 602-745-3800 or visit www.madisonhighlandprep.com.

Xavier names softball coaches

Xavier College Preparatory announced the appointment of new coaches to lead its softball program. This change comes as Brad Downes,

head coach for the past six years, and assistant coach Deryk Sexton step down due to expanded commitments in their respective businesses.

During their tenure, Downes and Sexton built an impressive legacy, securing three state championships in four years and three regional championships. Under their guidance, numerous student-athletes earned athletic scholarships to prestigious colleges, underscoring the program's commitment to excellence.

Stepping into the roles of co-head coaches are Sydnie Sahhar and Tom Sahhar. Both bring extensive experience and enthusiasm to the program. Their vision and expertise are expected to propel the team to even greater success. In addition to her head coaching duties, Sydnie Sahhar is a valued member of Xavier's Guidance and Counseling Department.

Joining the coaching staff as an assistant coach is Brian McNerney, PhD. McNerney, a faculty member in Xavier's Chemistry department, also brings valuable experience as the former head coach of JV softball.

The school says that the new coach-

ing team will ensure a smooth transition and are committed to maintaining the program's high standards. They are dedicated to continuing the legacy of developing student-athletes' skills and achieving excellence on and off the field.

St. Mary's appoints development director

Saint Mary's Catholic High School announced the appointment of Kevin Finley as the new director of development. Finley, a proud alumnus of the school, has served as both a teacher and assistant principal at other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Phoenix.

Finley's connection to the school and his understanding of its mission and values make him an ideal fit, the school said. In his role, Finley will oversee fundraising efforts, foster alumni relations, and help ensure the continued growth and success of Saint Mary's.

For more information about Saint Mary's, located at 2525 N. 3rd St., and its development initiatives, visit www.smknights.org or contact the school's office at 602-251-2500.

Credit union supports teachers

Desert Financial Credit Union is seeking applicants for its fifth annual Adopt-A-Teacher program. More than 30 kindergarten through 12th grade teachers will each receive between \$500 and \$1,500 in school supplies. In total, the credit union will award \$45,000 to Arizona educators. In 2023, Desert Financial gave back more than \$150,000 to educators throughout Arizona through its Teacher Appreciation program.

Applicants do not need to be a Desert Financial Credit Union member. Priority selection will be provided to teachers at Title I schools, and teachers in most counties, including Maricopa County, are eligible. Check the program website for other eligible counties. Funding preference will be given to items or programs that will last for many years and impact many students.

To apply for funds, teachers can visit www.desertfinancial.com/adoptateacher from Monday, Aug. 5, through Monday, Aug. 19, to submit an application, which will require their name, school, district and a short description of how they plan to use the funds. This year's winners will be announced Tuesday, Sept. 3.

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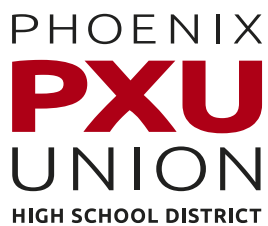
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Senior Living Fearless hospice patient takes joyride

Don Tamuty, a beloved former Madison Unified School District teacher, had one thing left on his bucket list, according to Lin Sue Flood, director of community engagement at Hospice of the Valley. The adventurous 95-year-old North Central Phoenix resident shared with his hospice nurse, Monisha Roe, that he would love to ride in a driverless car.

Roe and the rest of Tamuty's Hospice of the Valley care team knew exactly how to fulfill that wish, Flood said. They booked a driverless cruise on Waymo One to take Tamuty out to a nice restaurant. He had a humorous send-off from his buddies at the Beatitudes Campus in Phoenix, where he lives. The guys were so tickled, they couldn't resist a little teasing as they bid the fearless adventurer a dramatic farewell. "Good luck, Don," they shouted. "We hope to see you again. You're braver than we are!"

The World War II veteran was beaming as he sat in the passenger's seat and giddily pushed the "Start Ride" button. The excitement ramped up when the Waymo pulled safely to the right to let a firetruck pass before he and Roe arrived at Biltmore Fashion Park for lunch.

The hospice nurse felt honored to share this fun experience with her patient.

"It's pretty special when we can make a dream come true and bring a smile to someone's face," Roe said, adding wryly, "You know, we were all terrified initially, except for Don, but it was a smooth ride!"

The excitement grew when Tamuty's joyride was shared on social media. Hundreds made comments thanking him for his military service and praising his spunk. Even the Biltmore Fashion Park chimed in, saying: "So happy you could join us for lunch! You rock, Don!" And Waymo shared his story with their 37,000 followers.

Tamuty's daughter was thrilled to see her dad's adventure "go viral" on social media, posting a message of her own: "A huge 'thank-you' to Hospice of the Valley for the great care, support



North Central resident Don Tamuty was grinning ear to ear after his exciting Waymo adventure (photo courtesy of Hospice of the Valley).

and love they give to each and every one of their families! Love you, Monisha and the entire staff, we're so grateful!"

Now a bit of a celebrity at the Beatitudes for blithely doing what many of us wouldn't dare attempt, Tamuty says it was a day he'll never forget.

"My golly," he said, "it was wonderful...just too good to be true."

Grant supports resource program

FSL (Foundation for Senior Living) recently announced that the Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust has awarded the organization a grant of \$200,000 to support their newest initiative: Resources, Information, Support and Education (RISE) Services. The program serves as the entry point for aging Arizonans to access both FSL and community resources in times of emergency and preparation.

The grant will be distributed over two years and will fund the salary of a full-time manager for RISE Services, who will provide staff training, manage external resources, and oversee the program's Community Care Advocates, who will listen to client needs, create care plans, provide referrals, and guide clients to the next steps.

Other uses for the fund include the

GENERATIONS

purchase of additional case management software to software to enhance streamlined and integrated care for all clients and the Friendly Callers program, connecting volunteers with clients to enhance connections and well-being in regularly occurring, 15–20-minute phone calls that provide a social connection and access to additional services if needed.

FSL currently is enrolling clients for the Friendly Callers program and welcomes community members to learn more about becoming a volunteer.

To learn more about RISE Services, visit www.fsl.org/rise.

Symposium focuses on caregivers

Duet will host a Fall Family Caregiver Virtual Symposium Oct. 16, from 9-11:30 a.m. The event is geared toward family caregivers, who will learn the importance of resilience, self-care, and how to navigate familial conflicts.

“The Family Caregiver Virtual Symposium is a valuable event for any family caregiver,” said Ann Wheat, executive director of Duet: Partners In



Dancers from age 4 up to adults are invited to enroll in the 2024-25 school year at The School of Ballet Arizona (submitted photo).

Health & Aging. “Each year, caregivers come together as a community to learn about navigating the caregiving journey with practical strategies and tools developed by professionals in the field.”

This year’s speakers are Dr. Frances Marcus Lewis, the Endowed Professor of Nursing Leadership at the University of Washington Medical Center and an

elected affiliate of the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, is at the forefront of shaping compassionate and effective care practices, and Amy Cameron O’Rourke, MPH, CMC, author and featured speaker at TEDxOrlando, with over 40 years of experience in the caregiving field, including two decades operating The Cameron Group.

Registration for this virtual event opens in August at <https://duetaz.org/symposium>, and is free for family caregivers. Caregiving professionals are also invited to attend for \$15.

Kids & Families Enrollment opens at ballet school

The 2024-25 school year at The School of Ballet Arizona is fast approaching, enrollment is now open to students, from children to young adults.

Open auditions will be held Saturday, Aug. 10, and regular school year training begins Monday, Aug. 12.

The school is available to dancers of all ages through three different programs: Children’s Division, Lower Division and Upper Division, which includes pre-professional training. The Children’s Division is for ages 4 and up, with no prior experience required. This level offers an introduction to the art of ballet by promoting the exploration of creativity and expression through movement. The Lower Division (ages 8 and

please see BALLET on page 32

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GENERATIONS

BALLET continued from page 31

up) is divided into four levels and the syllabus is created to begin formal training in traditional classical ballet.

Upper Division and Professional Program students must possess the determination to commit to a serious ballet program and may have the opportunity to perform alongside Ballet Arizona's professional dancers as part of their training. Students at The School of Ballet Arizona receive a rare opportunity to perform with student musicians in partnership with the Phoenix Youth Symphony Orchestras. Students are also able to have their pointe shoes fitted by official Freed of London USA representatives.

Also available are open classes for adult students of all experience levels, including adults who used to dance and would like to get back into the studio, to ballet novices. Parents can take classes in the same state-of-the-art studios where their children train and enjoy the same high-level instruction.

For more information on enrollment and to register for auditions, visit www.balletaz.org/school.

Library hosts family events

Residents of all ages will find activities throughout the month at their local library, including Yucca Branch Library, located 5648 N. 15th Ave.

Children up to age 5 are invited, along with their favorite grownup, to enjoy Family Storytime at Fridays in August. The events will be held Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, from 9:30 to 10 a.m. Attendees will play, read, sing and dance in a fun, active program that builds reading skills. Support for early literacy programs is provided by a grant from First Things First, which partners with families and communities to give all Arizona children the opportunity to arrive at kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed. Learn more at www.firstthingsfirst.org.

Also this month, adults can take part in Masterpiece Monday, an adult painting program, held Aug. 5 and Aug. 19, as well as Adult Crafternoon, where participants will explore different craft projects to create and enjoy. The next event will be held Saturday, Aug. 24, 2-3:30 p.m. And kids of all

ages can enjoy arts and crafts at the Creation Station events, held each week on Thursdays from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.

To find additional August events at Yucca or other area libraries, visit www.phoenixpubliclibrary.org.

Pool hours shift in August

The regular season at city of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department pools ended July 28, but at eight Valley pools, residents can still take a dip on weekends through Labor Day.

Cortez, Encanto, Maryvale, Paradise Valley, Pecos, Perry, Roosevelt and Sunnyslope pools will be open on weekends, Aug. 3-4, 10-11, 17-18, 24-25 and Aug. 31-Sept. 2. Youth ages 17 and younger swim for \$1 (except for Encanto and Sunnyslope, which are Kool Kids pools and offer free admission), adults can swim for \$3 and seniors for \$1 (age 60 and older).

Beyond open swim, residents can take part in swim lessons for youth and adults, Jr. Lifeguard and Lifeguard Academy programs, for those who may be interested in becoming future life-

guards, water exercise classes and swim team activities.

For details on hours and locations, visit www.phoenix.gov/parks/pools.

Discounted sports physicals available

The HonorHealth Urgent Care team is offering sports physicals for student-athletes for the upcoming school year at a reduced cost. These exams are performed by leading-edge providers with the goal of protecting the health and well-being of athletes and ensuring that they can participate in this year's athletics season.

Reserving a spot is preferred and based on availability at each location. For questions and to reserve a spot, call the phone number of the location nearest you. In North Central, the Bethany Home location, at 1515 E. Bethany Home Road, Suite 120C, can be reached at 602-674-6260. The cost is \$25; cash and checks are accepted.

Student-athletes should wear a T-shirt, athletic shorts and shoes and bring their completed AIA Pre-Participation Physical Exam form to the appointment. For more information, visit www.honorhealth.com/discounted-sports-physicals.

STEM event focuses on weather

Curious about what causes rain, wind and even sunny blue skies? Students in grades four through eight are invited to "reach for the sky" as they discover the science behind meteorology at the Girls in STEM's August event.

Slated for Aug. 10, Magnificent Meteorology participants will explore the science behind Earth's weather through hands-on activities, local STEM mentor connections and like-minded peer engagement. Girls In STEM will explore the components of Earth's water cycle, create their own DIY weather station to get in touch with their inner meteorologist and investigate the effects of monsoon season on flash flooding here in Arizona.

The event will run from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Arizona Science Center, 600 E. Washington St. The cost is \$20 per child; lunch will be provided. For additional information, call 602-716-2000. Tickets are available online at <https://tickets.azscience.org/129603/129604>.



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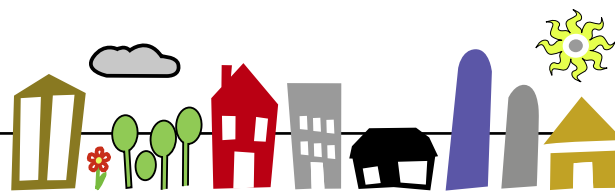
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ProMusica Arizona Chorale and Orchestra will once again take the stage under the baton of artistic director Patti Graetz (submitted photo).

Chorale group announces auditions

ProMusica Arizona Chorale and Orchestra invites Valley singers and instrumentalists to audition for their upcoming 2024-25 season. Auditions will take place by appointment Monday, Aug. 19, and Tuesday, Aug. 20, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at All Saints Lutheran Church, 15649 N. 7th St.

The group says that the upcoming season “promises to be a spectacular journey through music,” starting with the first concert, “It’s a Circus!” on Oct. 19 and 20. Rehearsals for the season will begin in September at the same location, with the Chorale rehearsing on Monday evenings and the Orchestra on Tuesday evenings.

For those interested in joining the chorale, intermediate music reading ability and prior choral experience are required. Musicians with an advanced intermediate playing level or higher are sought for the orchestra. Auditioning instrumentalists should be prepared to perform standard orchestral excerpts.

Auditions are strictly by appointment. To schedule an audition and review repertoire requirements, visit www.pmaz.org and click on the “Audition” tab, or contact Patti Graetz, artistic director, at pgraetz@pmaz.org or 602-570-4458.

Phoenix Boys Choir seeks compositions

Phoenix Boys Choir’s international choral composition competition, “New Works Rising,” is back for a

third consecutive year.

Since its inception in 2022, nearly 200 composers have participated in this unique opportunity to create new music for boys and young men. The choir says that submissions have come from every corner of the globe and are adjudicated by an all-star panel of renowned choral composers, conductors, and educators.

This year, composers of all ages and nationalities are invited to submit innovative and accessible choral repertoire that reflects originality, creativity and imagination in the context of the choir’s 2024-25 season theme: “True North.” Submissions must be received by Sunday, Sept. 15, to be considered for one of three cash awards: \$1,500 for first place; \$1,000 for second place; and \$500 for third place. The winning compositions will premier during the upcoming 2024-25 season.

More details about the 2024 competition and how to participate are available online at www.boyschoir.org/new-worksrisingcompetition.

Phoenix native releases new fantasy book

As part of her national book tour, Phoenix native and number one *New York Times* bestselling author Alexandra Bracken will talk about her latest fantasy offering, “The Mirror of Beasts,” at the Phoenix location of Changing Hands Bookstore, Monday, Aug. 5.

It’s not every day that someone traces their family back to both King Arthur and Sherlock Holmes lore. When the author uncovered a fascinat-

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Phoenix native Alexandra Bracken will talk about her latest book at an event Aug. 5 (photo by Rita & Co.).

ing piece of family history, the discovery sparked the author's Arthurian legend and Celtic lore-infused "Silver in the Bone" duology, which concludes this summer with "The Mirror of Beasts," on sale July 30 from Alfred A. Knopf.

The Aug. 5 author event begins at 7 p.m. Changing Hands Phoenix is located at 300 W. Camelback Road. For additional information, visit www.alexandrabracken.com or www.changinghands.com.

Opera announces leadership transition

In July, Arizona Opera announced that its president and general director, Joseph Specter, will conclude his tenure with the company at the end of this fiscal year when his current contract expires, June 30, 2025. Specter is entering his ninth year with the organization and will begin to implement a newly adopted strategic plan and launch the company's 2024-25 season.

The new strategy includes the "Beyond Downtown" program, part of the McDougall RED Series, that will take opera outside its traditional venues and into the broader Arizona community. The new programming will launch this fall with the company's series of in-theater productions beginning in January 2025 and continuing into the fall. The season's in-theater productions include classics "La Bohème" and "Aida," as well as the Arizona premiere of the adventure opera "Zorro." The season will also feature the expansion of Arizona Opera's annual Tucson recital program into the Phoenix metro area, and the continuation of the company's statewide education programs.

The company's board of directors is engaging national search firm Catherine French Group to begin the search for new leadership. Learn more at www.azopera.org.

On the Town

It's hot out there but you can still find plenty of cool things to do in Phoenix this month. Shop local at a farmers market, enjoy live local music and touring acts at Valley clubs, check out theater performances and film screenings, find free family experiences and more. See you on the town in August!

Uptown Farmers Market

Saturdays in August
North Phoenix Baptist Church
www.uptownmarketaz.com;
602-859-5648

'I love the 80s to Death'

Saturdays in August
Murder Mystery Company
at The Old Spaghetti Factory
www.murdermysterydinnerphoenix.com;
888-643-2583

Free First Friday Concert: Existence A.D. & Friends

Aug. 2
Heard Museum
<https://heard.org>; 602-252-8840

Lennon VanderDoes

Aug. 2
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222



Herbarium Tour

Aug. 2, 21, 23
Desert Botanical Garden
www.dbg.org; 480-941-1225

Kids in Focus Photography

Aug. 2-Sept. 29
Herberger Theater Center
www.herbergertheater.org; 602-252-8497

Nick Mason Quartet with Hope Morgan

Aug. 3
The Nash at Venue 122
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Paper Foxes

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

The Hawthorns

Aug. 4
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com;
602-612-4981

King Summer

Aug. 7
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com;
602-296-7013

Hana Vu

Aug. 7
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222

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www.fiddlersdream.org; 602-997-9795

La Santa Cecilia

Aug. 9
The Van Buren
www.thevanburenphx.com;
480-659-1641

Disney's 'The Hunchback of Notre Dame'

Aug. 9-25
Valley Youth Theatre at Herberger Theater Center
www.vyt.com; 602-253-8188

Mike Vax Quintet featuring Dennis Rowland

Aug. 10
The Nash at Venue 122
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

'A Face in the Crowd'

Aug. 11
Phoenix Art Museum
www.phxart.org; 602-257-1880



The Shivas

Aug. 12
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com; 602-296-7013

Gabe Lee

Aug. 14
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com; 602-612-4981

Great Milkweed Grow Out Tour

Aug. 14, 16
Desert Botanical Garden
www.dbg.org; 480-941-1225

Coffee House Saturdays

Aug. 17
North Mountain Visitor Center
www.northmountainvisitorcenter.org;
602-343-5125



Orkesta Mendoza

Aug. 17
Crescent Ballroom
www.crescentphx.com; 602-716-2222

Free PhxArt Family Fundays

Aug. 18
Phoenix Art Museum
www.phxart.org; 602-257-1880

Womanish Girl

Aug. 20
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com; 602-296-7013

'Girl from the North Country'

Aug. 20-25
ASU Gammage
www.asugammage.com; 480-965-3434



Charles Lewis

91st Birthday Show
Aug. 23
The Nash at Venue 122
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Free Family Summer Sunday

Aug. 24
Heard Museum
https://heard.org; 602-252-8840

Shawn James

Aug. 25
Crescent Ballroom
www.crescentphx.com; 602-716-2222

Under the Rug

Aug. 29
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222

Roots Rockin' Showcase

Aug. 31
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com; 602-612-4981

Thievery Corporation

Aug. 31
The Van Buren
www.thevanburenphx.com;
480-659-1641



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All event dates are current at the 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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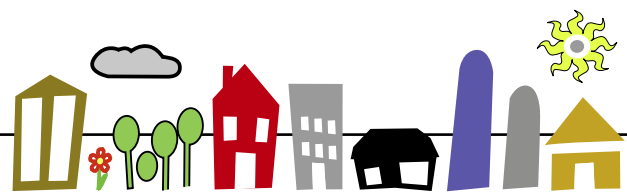
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FOOD FOR THOUGHT



From the food to the cocktails to the décor, the vibe at Hula's Modern Tiki is all about "the aloha spirit," says owner Dana Mulé (photo by Darryl Webb for North Central News).

Café Chat

Finding 'aloha' at Hula's Modern Tiki

By Marjorie Rice

If Dana Mulé (MULE-ay) had his way, he'd be a 30-year-old in the 1950s and '60s – the era of suave, swank cocktail bars, favorite hangouts of the Rat Pack and TV's Ad Men – swapping stories and sipping cocktails, then heading home to a mid-century modern home. Polynesian themes were popular in the day – think vintage Trader Vic's in San Francisco – and that's the vibe Mulé hopes guests at his Hula's Modern Tiki restaurants feel when they sit down for a tropical cocktail with friends.

"We have a lot of Polynesian influence, but we're really more of a fusion tiki bar with a mid-century aesthetic," Mulé said. "We're trying to take people back to those cool bars and restaurants. That's my era. I was born several years too late."

Hula's, originally on Central Avenue before moving to 7th Street north of Camelback in 2018, is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. Today, there are three Hula's in the Valley: on 7th Street, in Scottsdale's Old Town, and on High Street north of the 101.

Mulé said he chose the 7th Street location "because it was seeing a sort of mid-century revival, with all the Haver homes. It was becoming really cool to redo everything and make it look like it did in the '60s. It was the perfect spot for us to play into that and be part of that revival." (Architect Ralph Haver designed

quintessentially mid-century modern single-story tract homes, many of which survive in North and Uptown Phoenix.)

The result is a large, airy main bar area, a cozy Tiki Room (think grasscloth, lots of palm fronds and Polynesian masks and a virtual aquarium), and wrap-around patio.

Mulé came to the restaurant business after a career in entertainment security, for several years running the largest event company in the state.

"If you went to a concert and got kicked out by the guys in the Event Staff polos, there was about a 75 percent chance the guys kicking you out were my guys," he said.

"My entry into the culinary business was a complete fluke. I had never served in a restaurant, never been in the hospitality industry at all."

His security work kept him on the road 310 days a year, Mulé said. The career change came when he decided to get married.

"I was in Monterey, California, and realized that lifestyle wasn't conducive to a marriage," he said. "I was trying to figure out what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. Every time I was in Monterey, we spent a lot of time in a restaurant called Hula's Island Grill and Tiki Room. We loved it. One night in a semi-drunken state, I asked the owners if they'd like to be my business partners and open one in Phoenix. They're still my business partners today."

His lack of culinary background wasn't an impediment, Mulé said.



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“I wasn’t one of those guys who made good spaghetti sauce with my wife and said, ‘Let’s open an Italian restaurant.’ I had partners who had knowledge and could backstop me.

“I didn’t need a Gordon Ramsay to come in and create the dishes. I just needed someone who could execute the dishes – a really good lead kitchen guy and surround him with the best line cooks we could find.”

While he was building the restaurant, Mulé got a job as a server. “It was important to me to have that basic knowledge,” he said.

As Mulé talks about his background, a server arrives with drinks, condensation frosting the glasses: a pastel orangey-pink Tropical Itch (three kinds of rum, Jim Beam, triple sec, and passion fruit, cranberry, orange and pineapple juices), and Blue Hawaiian (coconut rum, vodka, sweet and sour, blue curacao, coconut and pineapple) arrive at the table.

The cocktails have equal standing with the food at Hula’s – on purpose, Mulé said.

“We’re very proud of our cocktails. If you can enjoy a good tropical cocktail, you can close your eyes and pretend you’re on a tropical beach somewhere. It’s a minute of respite, and I think people need that.”

The restaurant has a large appetizer selection, on purpose. Think Hawaiian ceviche; crispy coconut rolls; poke; sliders with luau pork, spicy Thai fish cake or hamburger; pork-stuffed potstickers and more.

“You can come to Hula’s and just drink cocktails and do small plates, Mulé said. “It’s nice to come in, have a tropical cocktail or two, have some appetizers, talk to people at the bar.”

For those with larger appetites, menu favorites include Loco Moco – white rice topped with a hamburger patty and brown gravy and then a sunny-side-up fried egg (Spam is optional). “It’s so popular in the Islands,” Mulé said. Other favorites include island-style ahi poke, crispy coconut shrimp rolls with pineapple dipping sauce, and the most popular item: a spicy Thai chicken bowl.

Not all the dishes are tropical. “We take tremendous pride in our hamburger,” Mulé said. “To me a good hamburger and a good side of fries, if you do that well, is more important than the exotic dishes.”

Hula’s doesn’t have Wi-Fi for



Uchi Scottsdale, which opened in February 2023, will host two North Central Phoenix area chefs during its summer dinner series (photo courtesy of Hai Hospitality).

guests, an annoyance for some but a necessity for Mulé, who believes that community and conversation are integral his restaurants’ ambience.

“Take a break and try interacting. Today, a restaurant is more about community than anything else. It’s about the aloha spirit. It sounds cheesy, but it’s about spreading kindness, man. All you

have to do is dig a little bit and it’s there. People just need to have it drawn out of them, and one of the best places to do that is over a table, and over a cocktail.”

Hula’s Modern Tiki, at 5114 N. 7th St., is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Monday and Tuesday; 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday; 11 a.m. to midnight, Friday; 10:30 a.m. to

midnight, Saturday; and 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sunday. For more information, call 602-265-8454, or visit www.hulas-moderntiki.com.

Dining Briefs

Menu collaboration blends flavors, cultures

Two popular Phoenix chefs will showcase their skills and add their flavors to those of Uchi Chef de Cuisine Blake Luecke during the restaurant’s summer dinner series.

Uchi Scottsdale will host James Beard Award-winning Chef Christopher Gross of Christopher’s at Wrigley Mansion on Aug. 13 for a menu collaboration that tempts with a modern twist on French fare from two James Beard awarded chefs.

On September 8, Valley chef Cat Bunnag of Glai Baan, which translates to “far from home,” will be joining forces with the Uchi Scottsdale team. Bunnag serves authentic Thai street food she grew up on at her central Phoenix restaurant, Glai Baan – which will inspire the **please see COLLABORATION on page 40**

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

COLLABORATION continued from page 39

menu creation for the night.

To experience the flavors of the Phoenix chefs individually, visit Christopher's at 2501 E. Telawa Trail (www.wrigleymansion.com/christophers) or Glai Baan, at 2333 E. Osborn Road (602-595-5881 or www.glaibaanaz.com).

To reserve a space for either Scottsdale event, held at 3821 N. Scottsdale Road, visit www.uchirestaurants.com and click on the "Scottsdale" link.

Summer bruschetta battle returns at Postino

The summer bruschetta throw-down returned to Postino WineCafé for a second year in July, and diners who want to get in on the next round of Battle of The Bruschetta, will want to stop by one of the establishment's eight Valley locations.

The summer-long, bracket-style competition between four limited-time bruschetta recipes includes four out-of-the-box innovative bites. In July, French Onion (roasted garlic aioli, gruyere, braised white onions, melted



In August, Postino WineCafé's Battle of The Bruschetta will place Buffalo Cauliflower bruschetta up against Philly Cheesesteak bruschetta (Credit: Upward Projects).

brie) faced off against Berry Mascarpone (blackberry mascarpone, graham cracker streusel, macerated blueberry, lemon and powdered sugar).

Battle number two, Aug. 1-31, places Buffalo Cauliflower (buffalo cauliflower, cambozola ranch yogurt, celery, chives) up against the Philly Cheesesteak bruschetta (roasted garlic

aioli, chopped steak, caramelized onion and peppers, fondue, chili oil).

The winners of battle one and two will go head-to-head beginning Sept. 1, with the champion crowned Sept. 16. During each battle, guests can order two competing bruschetta flavors and vote on their favorite by texting "BAT-TLE" to 602-637-1510 for each round.

The champion bruschetta will earn a permanent spot on the Postino menu this fall.

All competing bruschetta were created by Postino's executive chefs who are now sharing their recipes with Postino lovers nationwide. Last year, over 28,600 votes were recorded across the country, crowning "Mexican Street Corn" the winner, and earning it a spot on the current Postino menu.

In Phoenix, visit Postino Arcadia, 3939 E. Campbell Ave., or Postino Central, 5144 N. Central Ave. For additional information, visit www.postinowinecafe.com.

New dining options open in North Central

One Mexican fast-food restaurant has opened and two new bar-centric eateries are set to open in and around the North Central area in coming months.

First up, Señor Taco Express opened its doors in June at 3215 N. Central Ave. in what was a Jack in the Box for decades. The Señor Taco story began in Cotija, Mexico over 60 years ago with owner Reynaldo Ruiz's father David, who delivered fresh-baked bread to local corner stores and learned about the cuisine of the area. Twenty years later, missing the flavors of his home town, he launched Cotija's Mexican Food in San Diego.

Following in his father's footsteps, Reynaldo opened Señor Taco in Arizona in 2000. Built on the Cotija's tradition, it has grown to 13 locations and features homemade, traditional Mexican fare. And now comes Señor Taco Express, which aims to offer the same authentic Mex menu. As the restaurant's website says, "It's Señor Taco with a little more andale and some rapido mixed in."

Learn more at www.senortacoexpress.com or call 602-795-3858.

Next up is Dirtbag's Phoenix, which is expected to open this month at 4801 E. Indian School Road. The popular hotspot opened in Tucson more than three decades ago, and while the Phoenix location will be under different ownership, according to reporting by *Phoenix Business Journal's* Brandon Brown, it is expected to bring the original's menu that includes huge sandwiches, burgers and healthier options to the new location.

Dirtbag's will take over the former location of The Spot at Arcadia, which

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closed its doors in June. Also located at the address in Citrus Plaza is V's Barber Shop, Bread Honey House and Elite Cleaners. All of the businesses share a 54-space parking lot, which has sparked some concerns from area residents. To address those concerns, the owners took to Instagram (@dirtbags_phoenix) in July to let residents

know that free valet parking after 6 p.m. will add additional parking space, and they also encouraged patrons to carpool or use a rideshare service

Learn more at www.dirtbagsphx.com.

Over at the northwest corner of 7th Avenue and Missouri, The Bar is set to open a second Phoenix neighborhood location. The original, located 3174 E.

Indian School Road, had a short-lived spinoff in Gilbert, which closed earlier in 2024.

The Bar boasts a subtle theme that honors "The Big Lebowski" and aims to offer patrons a "comfortable, independent, non-corporate setting" with a "soulful and genuine atmosphere [that] brings to mind a Midwestern feel."

Food menu items include a variety of wings, appetizers and sharables (including Wisconsin Cheese Curds), burgers, salads and more. The drink menu offers signature cocktails, everyday specials and event night and Sunday specials.

The second Phoenix location will open at 5508 N. 7th Ave. Learn more at www.thebarphx.com.

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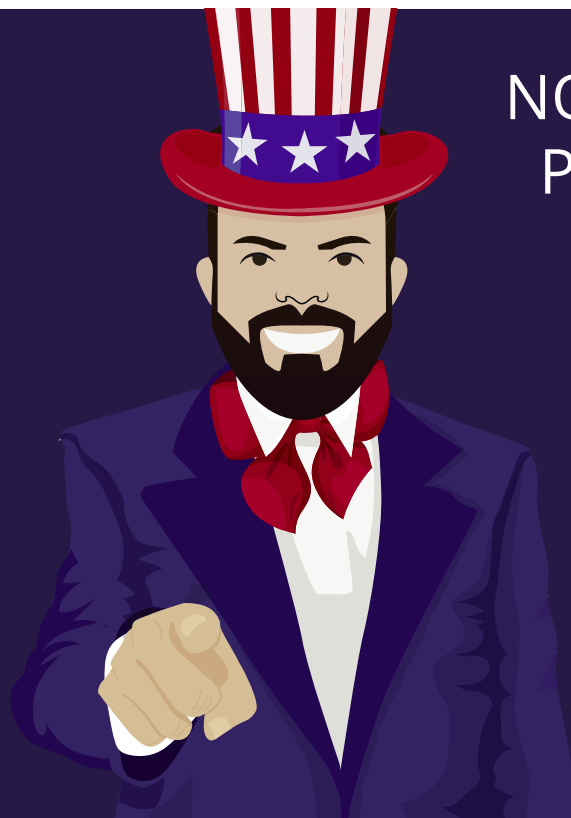
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