



north central news

the voice of the north central phoenix community since 1999

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Front yard events build strong neighborhoods

By Kathryn M. Miller

The city of Phoenix will recognize National Good Neighbor Day on Sunday, Sept. 28, offering an opportunity for residents to “celebrate the wonderful people living around you.” For the past decade, however, neighborhoods throughout the Melrose area, and beyond, have been doing just that through their Front Yard Friday events.

Pam Pawlowski, a member of Melrose’s Grandview Neighborhood Association and a resident in the Melrose area for two decades, related the history of this community building effort, which began in her previous neighborhood, Woodlea Melrose.

In January 2013, the annual planning session of the Woodlea Melrose board took place. One of the themes was to breathe new life into old practices, particularly Block Watch, Pawlowski recalled.

“What we were looking at, was how can we get the results that the city is trying to get from their Block Watch program, which we felt were very old and tired and not being attended very well. We thought they all needed to have a little bit of modernizing. We were looking at ways to get neighbors out to socialize, because statistically, two things became evident to us, through research.

“Number one, is that it is statistically proven to lower crime the more neighbors know each other –

please see NEIGHBORHOODS on page 6



When it first opened in 1955, Uptown Plaza boasted a vibrant and eclectic mix of tenants, including the swanky Navarre’s restaurant, Helsing’s Coffee Shop, Jerand’s of Arizona fine fashions, Bostrom’s department store, the national grocery store Piggly Wiggly and more (photo courtesy of Uptown Plaza).

Iconic Uptown Plaza celebrates 70 years

By Kathryn M. Miller

“Uptown Plaza Opens Wonderful New World Of Shopping Pleasure In Arizona’s Capital City” – that was the headlines back in 1955 when the shopping center opened at the northeast corner of Central Avenue and Camelback Road. Fast-forward 70 years, and while the broader Phoenix area has grown exponentially, becoming more and more unrecognizable to longtime residents, Uptown Plaza remains much the same – adapting over the years, yes, but preserving its iconic mid-century design and serving residents near and far.

Originally designed by architect Del Webb, this mid-century modern gem was one of the first shopping centers in the city, offering residents a new way to shop, dine and connect. The “modern brick, masonry and steel construction” boasted innovative features, such as “the opportunity to park the family car free of care or cost... and walk a galaxy of new and shining stores.” The plaza was illuminated by neon signs until 11 p.m. each night, and

what truly set it apart was its vibrant and eclectic mix of tenants, including the swanky Navarre’s restaurant, Helsing’s Coffee Shop, Jerand’s of Arizona fine fashions, Bostrom’s department store, the national grocery store Piggly Wiggly and more.

As the Plaza moves towards its milestone 70th anniversary, residents recalled how the shopping center shaped their lives. One reader said that her favorite memory of Uptown Plaza was when she and her mother went to a Barbie fashion show at Bostrom’s. Dan Abrams, who has lived in Phoenix since 1946 and served as Uptown’s property manager in the late

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COMMUNITY

From the Editor

A handful of recent announcements caused ripples across the local media landscape. To begin with, we extend our sincere condolences to the family, coworkers and friends of *Frontdoors* publisher Andrea Tyler Evans, who died on Aug. 17.

The publication calls North Central home, and in an Aug. 21 announcement came the news that Frontdoors Media would join the Camelback Media Group, parent company of *Arizona Foothills Magazine* and *Arcadia News*. All three publications will now be housed at the North Central location.

Earlier in the month came a report that some of the most veteran columnists and reporters at *The Arizona Republic* had been offered a buyout by corporate owner Gannett. That news came on the



heels of the sudden News Media Corp closure of more than two dozen small newspapers across the country, including five in rural Arizona.

Independent publisher *Globe Miami Times* announced its intention to expand to a stand-alone weekly newspaper to fill the void left by the closure of the *Arizona Silverbelt*, the newspaper of record since 1878. But then, on Aug. 21, O'Rourke Media Group, publisher of *CITYSunTimes*, announced that it would purchase three of the Arizona properties, including the *Silverbelt*.

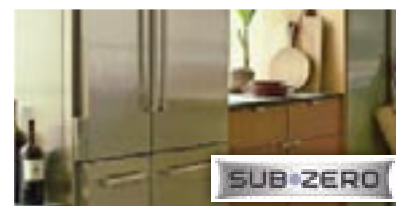
I tell you all of this to reiterate that small, local, independent newspapers, like *North Central News*, are becoming fewer, but we are still here. We will continue to tell the local stories that make a difference in your lives and we hope that you will continue to support us in our efforts.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy our September issue, and until next month, all my best,

Kathryn M. Miller
Editor, *North Central News*



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COMMUNITY

When it opened in 1960, Pedro's Mexican Food was one of the first commercial restaurant developments in Sunnyslope (photo courtesy of the Guglielmo Family).

Properties seek 'historic' status

By Kathryn M. Miller

At its Aug. 18 meeting, the Historic Preservation Commission unanimously recommended approving Historic Preservation Overlay Zoning on two Sunnyslope buildings: the Sunnyslope Presbyterian Church and Pedro's Mexican Food.

The main church building at Sunnyslope Presbyterian Church, at 9317 N. 2nd St. and now operating as Franklin Phonetic School, is a stuccoed brick Mission Revival-style building with two-story bell tower that was constructed in 1949. The McCahan building and Parsonage buildings were built in 1950, and the Memorial Building was built in 1958.

According to the rezoning narrative, in 1938, members of the informal church of the Mission formed the Desert Mission Church and formally affiliated with the Presbyterian Church of the United States. By the late 1940s, the church had seen its congregation more than double, which created the need to separate the church from the Desert Mission. By 2014, the church had closed due to a decline in membership, and the space was leased to Tom and Cindy Franklin, who opened the Franklin Phonetic School, a charter elementary school, at the site. The couple purchased the property in 2016.

A short stroll west is the second building, at 524 W. Hatcher, which was opened in 1960 as Pedro's Mexican Food and is an excellent representation of midcentury commercial architecture. Opening one year after Sunnyslope was annexed by the city of Phoenix, Pedro's was one of Sunnyslope's first commer-

cial restaurant developments. With take-out service and an expansive dining room, the rezoning narrative said that Pedro's Mexican Food was a popular neighborhood restaurant, particularly for Sunnyslope High School students and their families. Owned by Frank Guglielmo and family, this business sponsored neighborhood Little League teams, soap box derby competitions and Sunnyslope High School's yearbook. These activities solidified the connection between this family business and the Sunnyslope community.

After a couple of transformations as other restaurants, including as the Eye Opener Family Restaurant, which closed in 2020, the building was adaptively repurposed as Eye Opener Curated Vintage by Joe and Adam McCallum in 2023. While the vintage shop has since relocated, Joe McCallum said that they have plans to convert the building once again – potentially as a beer/wine bar and community space at the beginning of 2026.

According to the city's Historic Preservation Office, the eligibility criteria for HP-L zoning (overlay) are the same as for HP zoning, except that HP-L-zoned properties are required to demonstrate "exceptional significance." These properties are subject to higher levels of protection and receive the highest priority for financial incentives; HP-L zoning designates properties as historic landmarks.

The North Mountain Village Planning Committee heard the cases Aug. 20; the Planning Commission will consider the requests at its Sept. 4 meeting.

Learn more at www.phoenix.gov/administration/departments/pdd/historic-preservation.html.

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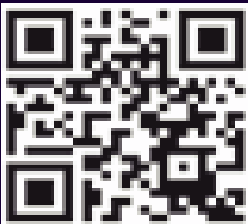


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COMMUNITY



Neighbors in the Woodlea Melrose area gathered for a recent Front Yard Friday, a monthly family-friendly "happy hour" event that brings neighbors together in a casual social setting (photo by Leland Gebhardt Photography).

NEIGHBORHOODS continued from page 1

know each other's names, contact each other, that kind of thing. And the other thing that lowered crime was people being out in the front and being visible. One of our neighbors, Carrie Dyrek, said, 'Let's try, something like a happy hour. It has to stay out in front, and it will get everybody together.' With that, the event Front Yard Friday was off the ground."

The first Front Yard Friday was held on a rainy, cold night in March 2013, Pawlowski said. About 22 people attended the first one. More volunteers kept coming forward to host the event, and after two years, the monthly event was going strong and attracting anywhere from 60 to 80 residents each time.

"Some stay for 30 minutes, some for four hours," Pawlowski said. "Children play together; animals are by their owner's side and name tags reveal the names of residents you have not met yet. There is now a waiting list of hosts for this event. It has been the single biggest improvement in Woodlea Melrose in years. More people know each other, look out for each other, care about each other, talk to each other and people are just hanging out in their front yards more now."

This success meant that more people knew who belonged in their neighborhood and calls for suspicious activity increased by 200 percent and crime went down, she added, "People's perception of safety increased because they were united." The personalization of the Block Watch came next, with attractively designed yard signs that say "Neighbors On Watch," and the acronym NOW has replaced the Block Watch terminology and represents a neighborhood that cares about their homes and residents.

"The air of pride is evident," Pawlowski said.

Front Yard Fridays took a hiatus over the summer months, but they will return to Grandview in September. The Melrose neighborhood more broadly is gearing up for a lineup of fall events, including an inaugural First Friday event, on Oct. 3, followed by a canal activation event, the Melrose Community Alliance will host its 10th annual Merriment in Melrose Dec. 13, and the annual Melrose Street Fair and Classic Car Show will return Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026. Learn more at www.melrosecommunityalliance.com.

Melrose has been built into a special community model where businesses and residents work together, Pawlowski said, and engaging with the neighborhood in a leadership role felt important.

"Of all the places that we have lived – we've lived in five states, 13 cities – this was the biggest small town and I love Melrose so much and I just wanted to be involved in the community."

She encourages other residents to join together with their neighbors to build the kind of community that they want to see. It takes a lot of work, but if individuals start small, work to their strengths and rely on one another, neighborhoods can see progress.

"It's almost like a contagion. If you can get neighbors to one event, they will see how fun it can be to come together."

Residents who would like to organize their neighborhood, or find an existing organization near them, are encouraged to begin with a City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Department. Visit www.phoenix.gov/administration/departments/nsd.html.



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COMMUNITY

UPTOWN PLAZA continued from page 1

60s, early 70s, also had fond memories. “In 1955, Helsing’s restaurant was built. It became a ‘go to’ place for many young adults – high school, Phoenix College and Arizona State College students who lived in the Valley,” Abrams recalled. “Friday and Saturday nights were the primary times for us to socialize in the restaurant, eating our hamburgers, French fries, drinking a cherry coke or a cup of coffee. It was the place to bring your date after going to the movies on the weekend and meet your friends. Older adults who also lived in the general area socialized there. It was the ‘hot social spot’ for many of us.”

The Plaza also spoke with several long-time North Central residents in advance of the anniversary, including Steve Adams and Libby Westby. Here is what they had to say.

“Libby and I grew up here in this neighborhood, and we’ve been coming to Uptown Plaza since we were little kiddos in the late 50s,” Adams said. “It’s been a part of my growing up in Phoenix, and Libby’s, since we were 3 years old, and it’s so great to come here

now. In Phoenix, with so much change over these decades, it’s so much fun to come back to some of your roots – places like Uptown Plaza.

“You revisit the past – all these memories come flying back into your head,” Adams added. “We love these landmark places and yet, Uptown Plaza is still thriving and still moving forward with new stores.”

“It’s nice that it’s been here 70 years, and it’s nice that we’ve been here 70 years,” Westby chuckled. “Whatever the changes have been, it’s still recognizable, it still has the same feel, it’s still approachable. You drive in, you know where you’re headed, but they keep it up. There’s still pockets of quality and interest in all the shops – you want to give them your business; you want it to thrive.”

“It was the catalyst for our very love story,” said Belina Penrose. She and her husband, Tim, met at Uptown Plaza 35 years ago. “I was a server and I got a brand-new job at what was then the Lunt Avenue Marble Club.” Tim was a regular, and they hit it off. Belina also worked in the deli department at Euro Market, which is now AJ’s, and when



Over the past 70 years, Uptown Plaza has preserved its iconic mid-century design while continuing to update its roster of clients to meet the changing needs of residents (photo courtesy of Uptown Plaza).

she and Tim got married, the market catered their wedding, “because I was like family to them.”

Flash forward to 2025, and the eclectic mix of tenants in this vibrant com-

munity is anchored by AJ’s Fine Foods, and local businesses like Sweatshop, Manor, Local Nomad, Chula Seafood and Muse Apparel, as well as national brands such as West Elm, Shake Shack, Flower Child and more.

In recognition of the major role the Plaza has played in not only residents’ lives, but in Phoenix’s retail and cultural history, an anniversary celebration will be held Saturday, Sept. 27, from 5 to 8:30 p.m. Uptown Plaza is inviting guests to throw it back to the 1950s with an event that invites all to “party like it’s 1955” with live entertainment, event-only deals, and a nod to its 70 years of impact, honoring Phoenix and its history.

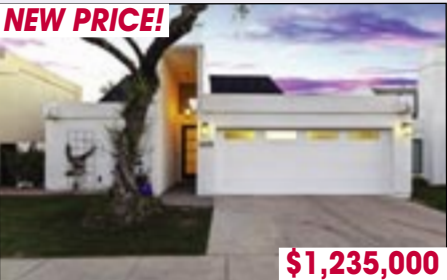
The celebration kicks off at 5 p.m. with a Sunset Yoga session led by Sweatshop on Central, a locally owned studio that originally opened at Uptown Plaza. Throughout the evening, guests can expect a retro-inspired celebration complete with live music from local band The Joeys, who will play throwback rockabilly tunes, explore decades-inspired decor and snap photos inside a vintage Volkswagen Photo Booth Van, receive complimentary vouchers and deals from select tenants, snag some exclusive 70th Anniversary merchandise and more.

In addition, the first 250 guests to “check in” at the event’s Welcome Booth, (staffed by costumed 1950s-style characters) will receive a commemorative, 70th anniversary pin that will unlock one-night-only “1955 pricing” on select food and drink items. There will be plenty of goodies in store for these lucky guests to claim, including treats from Shake Shack, Dynamite Beer Co., plus sweet scoops from Salt & Straw, available while supplies last, ahead of their opening at The Plaza in fall 2025.

“Uptown Plaza is a generational asset that will be cherished for years to come,” said Andrew Cohn, principal at Levine Investments. “We are proud to serve as the stewards of this beloved neighborhood hub. Along with bringing new tenants to the Uptown Plaza family, redevelopment will render a highly curated neighborhood shopping center. We look forward to honoring and celebrating the past while creating new memories for future generations.”

Find updated anniversary information and more by visiting www.uptownplazaphx.com.

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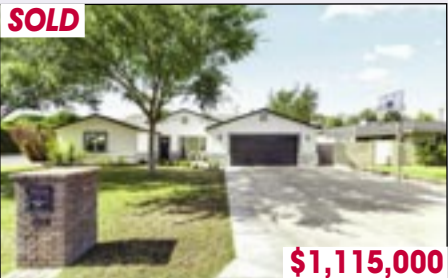
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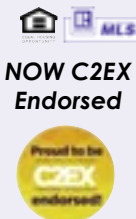
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Meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Please join us for the annual North Central Phoenix Homeowners Association Annual Meeting! Our volunteer neighborhood organization remains as busy as ever. If you live between 7th Street and 7th Avenue, Missouri to Northern, you are automatically a part of the NCPHA and have a voice in actively maintaining and safeguarding our cherished North Central Neighborhood.

Why attend this meeting? Not only will you hear about all the issues pertaining to our neighborhood, but you will also hear from Mayor Kate Gallego’s office, Councilman Kevin Robinson, and representatives from the Desert Horizon police precinct. Come and meet your neighbors and bring your questions and concerns.

What has the NCPHA accomplished over the last year?

The NCPHA Tree Committee is working tirelessly to preserve our beautiful streetscape and tree canopy. We continue to monitor the health and viability of our precious trees. In 2024, we worked with the city to replant 56 Arizona Ash trees along the Murphy Bridle Path.

Let’s do our part in not exacerbating the Murphy Bridle path’s problems. If you live on the east side of Central Avenue, please remember there is NO PARKING between your property line and the street at any



time. Each time a car or large truck drives or parks on the Bridle Path, it aids in further deterioration. Deep ruts create safety hazards for pedestrians and bicyclists. We continue to seek resident volunteers to serve on a committee to assess, evaluate, and determine preservation strategies for this beloved historical path.

As a result of your emails and fervent advocacy to state legislators, we successfully defeated some of the high-density housing bills, which would have had a devastating impact on North Central. This is the fourth year in a row that this aggressive legislation has been introduced. The NCPHA hired a lobbyist who gave us access inside the legislative process and arranged for an excellent 10-minute segment on primetime PBS to review the multi-family housing bills with viewers/residents. This exposure was crucial to the success in defeating several of the most potentially damaging housing bills being considered.

Each year, we have zoning cases that we carefully review and closely monitor. Thanks to the keen eye of many of our residents, we continue to stay on top of issues before they become difficult zoning violations. Our Board thoroughly researches and

evaluates every zoning request and makes a fully informed vote to support, oppose, or add stipulations.

Unfortunately, this year, we notified the city in January of possible building violations on 2nd Street and Bethany Home. The city assured us that all building plans were compliant with zoning codes. Later in March, when we raised the issue again, the city agreed that they had incorrectly approved the new construction with violations of the ADU zoning parameters and setbacks. Unfortunately, the city did not enforce these issues, and the character of our neighborhood suffers from these violations. We will have more details on this at the Annual meeting.

The NCPHA is also very concerned about the high rate of speed we are seeing daily on our streets. We encourage residents to SLOW DOWN and DRIVE THE SPEED LIMIT. We cannot control those speed demons who cut through our neighborhoods, but if you live here, steer with respect and abide by the speed limit. What’s the rush? Stay Alive at 35 (mph)!

Want to be more involved? Please attend the meeting! We are always seeking residents who want to participate on a committee or a potential board position.

Thank you for being such concerned and active property owners. We hope to see you for coffee and refreshments at our annual meeting on September 25th!

Our website at ncpha.org has more detailed information regarding our neighborhood. We are a volunteer organization and rely on the generosity of property owners within the NCPHA boundaries. Often, we need to hire legal counsel and other means of assistance. Your annual dues cover our regular expenses, but we always appreciate and can use more. Additionally, your financial support allows us to continue to ensure that the beauty, charm and history of North Central are preserved. If you haven’t signed up to get our email updates, please do so at ncpha.org.

Anyone who lives within the NCPHA boundaries* is considered a member of our volunteer organization. We ask that each property owner pay a **minimum of \$40.00 for annual dues (January-December)**. We appreciate any amount of generous support. For updates on zoning cases in our neighborhood, please visit www.ncpha.org. *Northern side of Missouri to the southern side of Northern; the east side of 7th Avenue to the west side of 7th Street.

Two ways to pay: Go online to www.ncpha.org and click **PAY DUES** tab on the Home page which will take you to PayPal. OR Fill out the information below and **mail your check, payable to NCPHA** to:

NCPHA
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north central news

The voice of the north central phoenix community since 1999

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DEADLINE FOR ADVERTISING AND EDITORIAL IS THE 12TH OF THE MONTH PRECEDING PUBLICATION

COMMUNITY

Hearings scheduled for ‘Middle Housing’

Hundreds of Phoenix residents showed up for an August meeting to hear the city’s answer to a new law adopted by the state legislature in May 2024. The new law (Section 9-462.13, Arizona Revised Statutes) requires municipalities to allow certain types of middle housing (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes and townhomes) on properties zoned for single-family use in locations within one mile of downtown, and up to 20 percent of the lots in any new subdivision of 10 contiguous acres or more.

The city is required to approve updates to the zoning ordinance by Nov. 5, and it must be effective by Jan. 1, 2026, and they have put forth two text amendments, Z-TA-1-25-Y and Z-3-25-4-7-8, to address the issue.

After the first scheduled community meeting, Aug. 11 at Burton Barr Central Library, drew an overwhelming number of residents, two additional community meetings were scheduled. Already on the schedule was an Aug. 26 meeting at Steel Indian School Park’s Memorial Hall. Added were two virtual community meetings, scheduled Sept. 4 and Sept. 16, both at 6:30 p.m., and the cases will begin making the “information only” rounds at Phoenix’s Village Planning Committee (VPC) meetings, also in September.

Learn more about the law, by visiting www.phoenix.gov and searching “z-ta-1-25-y.” Find public meeting information at www.phoenix.gov/city-clerk/publicmeetings/notices.

Fund assists first-time homeowners

On Aug. 5, Governor Katie Hobbs and the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) announced the expansion of Arizona Is Home, a signature initiative to increase homeownership across the state. The program provides enhanced down payment assistance and mortgage interest rate relief to qualifying low-to-middle income first-time homebuyers.




The state says that Arizona Is Home has already helped more than 500 homebuyers close on a home, and the


expansion will bring that number to around 1,000.

Arizona Is Home was launched in 2024 and funded with \$13 million. This expansion invests another \$5 million in the program, from federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars, bringing the total investment to \$18 million. Homebuyer assistance for the next phase of the program is being facilitated through partnerships between ADOH and Arizona’s Industrial Development Authorities: Pima IDA, Tucson IDA, Maricopa IDA, Phoenix IDA, and Arizona IDA.

The funds can be used for a down payment and closing costs related to the purchase of a home. First-time homebuyers in Maricopa County/Phoenix who are at or below 120% Area Median Income (AMI) are eligible to receive between 3% and 7% of the home’s purchase price. Down payment assistance is paired with competitive, federally available mortgage interest rates available to first-time homebuyers.

Find more information at <https://housing.az.gov/general-public/arizona-home-program>.





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For additional information about Beth Ami Temple and to RSVP for the Open House, Call: 602-956-0805 or Email: Bethamitemple35@gmail.com

Historical society hosts events

The Arizona Jewish Historical Society will host two events this month that examine the Holocaust through the voices of survivors and the impact of individual action.

On Friday, Sept. 5, at 10 a.m., an online presentation of *Saved by an Italian Family* will tell the remarkable story of survival and bravery as Eleanora “Mickey” Deutsch Oremán shares her family’s harrowing journey to safety during World War II. The free event will be presented via Zoom.

In addition, “*Passage to Sweden*” will be streamed for free Sept. 19-21. This documentary sheds light on the lesser-known stories of WWII, detailing the heroic efforts of ordinary people who saved thousands of Jews and fellow citizens. Between 1940 and 1945, geography and politics shaped vastly different experiences for Jews in Sweden, Norway and Denmark. As Jews were rounded up across occupied Europe, rescue efforts emerged in Scandinavia, defying Nazi forces. These remarkable stories of resistance are a testament to the impact of individual action.

Registration is required. Visit <https://azjhs.org/ajhs-events-list>.

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Who We Are

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

Location & Meeting

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

Tour Boundaries

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

Join Us!

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

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

<https://northcentraltour.com/>

COMMUNITY

Get fresh at local libraries

Starting the week of Aug. 4, Phoenix Public Library began partnering with Activate Food Arizona to bring the Farm Express Mobile Market indoors at select library branches.

Shoppers can find affordable fruits and vegetables and use SNAP/EBT and Double Up Food Bucks (buy one, get one free), with cash and card also accepted. The Indoor Market will be open from 1:30 to 3 p.m. at Burton Barr and Cesar Chavez Libraries on Mondays, Harmon Library on Tuesdays, and Palo Verde Library on Thursdays.

For additional information and to find a full schedule, visit www.phoenix-publiclibrary.org or www.activate-foodaz.org/farm-express.

Church hosts praise service

Orangewood Presbyterian Church invites the community to experience a new spirit-filled Praise and Worship Service. The first service will be held on Sunday, Sept. 7, at 6 p.m. at 7321 N. 10th St., Phoenix, AZ.

The church says that this new service offers a fresh and dynamic approach to worship, blending praise, scripture, prayer and creative expression, "From music and song to short videos and interactive discussions, participants will experience a space where centuries-old practices meet the realities of today's world."

For additional information, text 623-428-9884 or email secretary@opc.phxcoxmail.com.

Funds available for historic preservation

The City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office is making grant funds available to help with exterior rehabilitation costs for historic homes. For the 2025-26 fiscal year, the Phoenix City Council has allocated \$200,000 from the General Fund, along with an additional \$100,000 from the 2023 voter-approved GO Bond Fund to support this program.

Eligible homeowners can apply for a 50/50 matching grant of up to \$20,000 for exterior work on properties that are either located in a city-designated historic district, or individ-

ually listed on the Phoenix Historic Property Register.

To learn more about the grant and application process, the city is hosting a virtual workshop on Thursday, Sept. 25, at 6 p.m. The WebEx meeting link will be posted on the City of Phoenix Historic Preservation Office website approximately 48 hours before the workshop. A recording will also be made available afterward.

Grant applications are due by Friday, Nov. 21, at 5 p.m. Questions may be sent to historic@phoenix.gov. For additional information, visit www.phoenix.gov/pdd/historic-preservation/exterior-rehab-assistance.

Veteran to speak on Airborne service

Veterans and the public are invited to an informal talk to be presented by Cy Bassett, U.S. Army veteran, and his spouse, retired teacher Jacqui Bassett. The program topic is Cy's Army combat duty in Vietnam and his experience as a Sky Soldier, 173rd Airborne Brigade, as well as the couple's experiences as members of the local 173rd Airborne Brigade, Phoenix.

The free guest speaker program is scheduled on Saturday, Sept. 27, from 9 to 10 a.m. at Cross Roads United Methodist Church, 7901 N. Central Ave. To ensure adequate refreshments, email intent to attend, or any questions to caroleenculbertson@earthlink.net by Thursday, Sept. 25.

Fundraiser supports Kiwanis programs

The 30th Annual Sunstroke Open, held on June 7 sponsored by the Valley of the Sun Camelback Kiwanis raised more than \$50,000. The funds will allow the club to continue to support programs for underprivileged youth.

Valley of the Sun Camelback Kiwanis is a service organization comprised of local citizens who come together to support the needs of children through donations and volunteer projects around the Valley and more.

Next year's golf tournament will once again be held at the Arizona Biltmore, and is scheduled for June 6, 2026.

Those interested in getting involved with Kiwanis or being a corporate golf sponsor may contact Nancy Allen at 602-451-6260 or visit <https://k02959.site.kiwanis.org>.

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COMMUNITY

Pet of the Month

Meet Betty and her baker's dozen

Betty and her baker's dozen came to the Arizona Humane Society (AHS) in late July after she was found by a Good Samaritan as a sick stray and very pregnant. Dehydrated and in need of help for herself and her future pups, the pregnant mama had nowhere else to turn.

The three-year-old American Pit Bull Terrier was taken into the shelter's Mutternity Suites, a quiet, medically supervised area for pregnant and nursing dogs, where she has been undergoing care for tummy issues. After a few days of care, Betty gave birth to 13 puppies and now the whole family is hoping for a quiet, loving Foster Hero home for a couple months as they grow big and strong.

Being an AHS Foster Hero is a life-saving venture with cases that fit every family and lifestyle. By bringing in a foster pet(s), 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 Betty (pet number 821393) and her baker's dozen or any of AHS' amazing pets in need of fostering, take the online orientation and apply online at www.azhumane.org/foster.

AHS calls for pet-friendly rentals

Animal welfare organizations across Maricopa County, including the Arizona Humane Society (AHS), are facing a severe overcapacity crisis, and they are encouraging property owners and property managers to consider the impact they can make for tenants and the community's animals.

"We will bring in more than 24,000 pets this year, which is a 10 percent increase from last year," AHS said in a press release. "The Arizona Humane Society's Pet Resource Center is receiving more than 120,000 calls a year and seeing more pets surrendered or abandoned because their families can't find housing that allows them."

AHS points to a new report from Zillow, which confirms that pet-friendly housing benefits everyone. According to the data, rental listings that allow pets are leased up to eight



An American Pit Bull Terrier mama named Betty, and her 13 pups, are looking for a quiet, loving foster home where they can grow and recover as they prepare for adoption (photo courtesy of Arizona Humane Society).

days faster nationwide and 11 days faster right here in Phoenix.

The numbers say it all. Nearly 60 percent of renters own pets, yet many listings still prohibit them; pet-friendly units lease faster and get more views, saves and shares; and rent prices have dropped nearly 3 percent in Phoenix, making pet-friendly perks a strategic edge.

With shelters at over capacity and hundreds of pets awaiting homes, as landlords look for ways to stay competitive, being pet-friendly may no longer be just a perk, but rather a solution.

"By simply allowing pets, landlords can help reduce shelter crowding while meeting renter demand," AHS said.

County shelters expand hours

Maricopa County Animal Care & Control (MCACC), a public animal shelter, is now offering extended adoption hours at its three Valley shelters. The new hours, 11 a. m. to 7 p.m., daily, went into effect July 21. Intakes and other services will be available from noon to 6 p.m., daily.

Residents can visit the East Shelter (1920 S. Lewis in Mesa), West Shelter (2500 S. 27th Ave. in Phoenix) and Everyday Adoption Center (4380 N. Miller Rd in Scottsdale, inside PetSmart).

Adoptions take time, MCACC said, and encourages residents to arrive at least 45 minutes before closing to meet dogs. They do not conduct animal-animal

meet and greets, so potential adopters are asked to not bring their own pets. Adopted animals must be transported safely inside a vehicle, and adopters should bring a valid form of ID.

Learn more at www.maricopa.gov/220/locations-hours.

GateWay will offer dog grooming program

GateWay Community College announced the launch of a new Professional Dog Grooming Program, developed in partnership with Groom Curriculum. This hands-on, career-focused program is designed for Phoenix-area individuals seeking to enter the field of pet grooming.

The curriculum offers training in safe and humane animal handling, canine anatomy and breed identification, grooming equipment usage and sanitation protocols, techniques for grooming puppies, senior dogs, and dogs of various coat types, real-world experience in professional grooming environments and preparation for an industry-recognized credential.

Students will also receive a professional student grooming kit valued at \$1,000, along with a textbook, included in the total program cost of \$4,500.

The 13-week program is now open for enrollment, with the first cohort starting in September. Interested individuals can learn more or register at www.gatewaycc.edu/dog-grooming or contact communityeducation@gatewaycc.edu or 602-286-8090.

PD launches AI help, communications center

In August, the Phoenix Police Department's Communications Bureau – home to its 911 call center and dispatch operations – officially moved in to the newly-renovated police headquarters at 100 West Washington Street in downtown Phoenix. This is the first fully operational work group to relocate to the new building.

Spanning 14,000 square feet per floor, the three-floor center is designed to enhance the working environment for the employees, including ergonomic desks, wellness rooms, quiet rooms and nursing rooms for mothers. The city says that the move is a strategic first step, enabling communications operations to transition into a modernized, centralized command center equipped with state-of-the-art technology, which will help better serve the community and officers daily.

"Our new center is equipped with updated emergency communications software, ensuring that we can handle emergencies with greater efficiency and reliability," said Communications Bureau Administrator Allie Edwards. "This technology is a cornerstone of our operations, enabling us to respond swiftly and effectively to the 2.2 million calls we receive each year."

Formerly home to Wells Fargo, the building was purchased by the City of Phoenix in 2021 and began renovations in 2023. The rest of the department will relocate in stages as specific areas are completed, which is estimated to start in the fall of 2025.

In addition, on Aug. 13, the department rolled out a new AI-powered call triage system for its non-emergency (Crime Stop) phone number. The city says the technology will improve service, reduce wait times and help ensure that emergency calls receive priority attention.

Now, when community members call the non-emergency line (602-262-6151), they will be greeted by a conversational AI system capable of speaking 36 languages. The system will then ask a few simple questions to determine the purpose of the call and will automatically direct the caller to the right resource. If an officer is needed, the call will be routed directly to a Communications Operator for dispatch entry.

BLONDIE
AKA Megan Ternes
REALTOR!

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for your support and to also make a clarification statement regarding my July's throwback comic, which can be viewed on North Central New's Website in their archives for further reference.

As a Realtor®, my first responsibility is to my clients and the public. My recent comic was created to spark informed discussion about a growing trend in real estate: private exclusive listings. These listings are often marketed as a benefit to sellers, but industry data - including studies from MLS and Zillow - show that public MLS exposure often leads to higher sale prices and more competitive offers.

My goal is not to criticize individual agents or companies, but to encourage homeowners to ask questions, weigh their options, and make fully informed decisions about their biggest investment. My goal is transparency and consumer education - because our clients deserve nothing less.

Warm Regards,
BLONDIE & BARKSTROM
HomeSmart's
Elite Group



Megan Ternes aka **BLONDIE**
& Jacob Barkstrom
Husband & Wife
Real Estate Team



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JUST
CLOSED

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FOR
SALE

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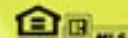
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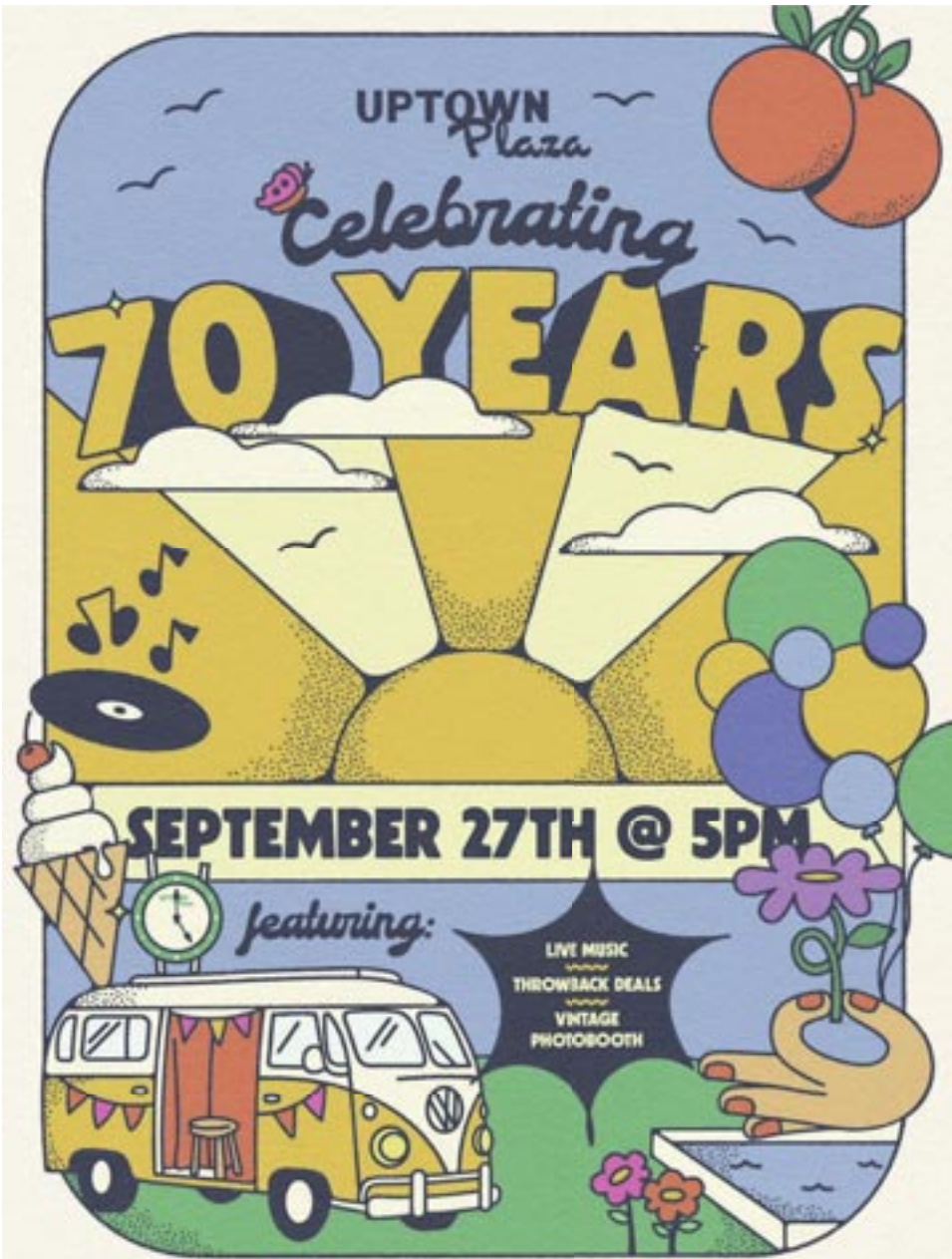
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The team at Organic Living, including father and daughter Gerard and Nathalie Windstein, has helped Phoenix residents convert their homes into organic havens for more than 40 years (photo by Trudy Thompson Shumaker).

Living organic in the Valley since 1982

By Trudy Thompson Shumaker

New parents, allergy sufferers, people with lung transplants and consumers looking for healthier products share one resource: Gerard and his daughter Nathalie Windstein at Organic Living in North Central Phoenix.

Their store, located at 8342 N. 7th St., is packed with organic products. They stock organic mattresses, pillows and bedding (free bedding for life when you buy a mattress from them) as well as medical-grade air purifiers and vacuum cleaners, flooring, paint, clothing, essential oils and personal products. Organic hair dye? They have it. Organic carpet? Yep.

Gerard started what is now a family business in 1982.

"I came to the U.S. from Europe and took a job cleaning carpets, but realized the solutions we were using were making some people sick," he remembers. "I started looking for healthier ways to clean, and one thing led to another and here we are, in 2025 with a busy online and walk-in business."

Nathalie notes that she learned about organic products from her dad.

"He has a depth of knowledge that is so valuable to anyone who wants to live a healthier life. All of us benefit from organic products, but there are certain people whose very life depends on them."

Her father goes a bit further to

explain: "Think about the relationship you have with your mattress and pillow," he said. "You spend a lot of hours sleeping, and the relationship of your bed with your body is an intimate one. You breathe in the air around your bedding, and any fumes go into your pulmonary system as well as the rest of your body. Even if you don't change your food and other products to organic, it's smart to buy an organic mattress, pillow and bedding."

What about paint?

"Yes, you can buy all kinds of paint, including the healthier ones from the big box stores," said Nathalie. "But do your research and then read labels. They don't carry the truly healthiest paints. Same with flooring and other products."

The team at Organic Living is committed to helping customers navigate the maze of information and products labeled "organic" – it is a maze of information as well as misinformation. Take air purifiers, for example. Nathalie points out that there is a wide array of air purifiers on the market, and their performance varies as widely as their prices.

"We all feel very satisfied when we change a filter in an air purifier and see that it's dusty and dirty. We think 'it's working!' and, indeed, it is working, to some extent. But a truly effective air purifier, the type that meets medical standards, removes tiny particles that

please see ORGANIC on page 18

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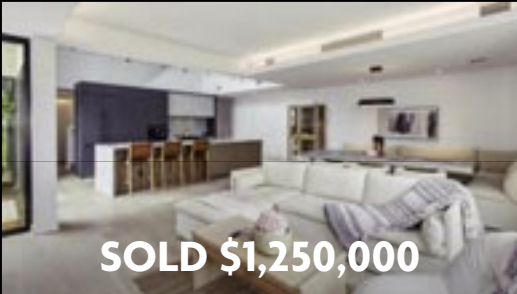
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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

ORGANIC *continued from page 16*

the eye cannot see,” she said. “Again, do your research and determine what you need in an air purifier then buy one that serves you well.”

Gerard added, “Back in the day, we only saw people who were already sick, and who knew they needed to make their home healthier because their lung or allergy doctors had told them so. But we are now seeing people who are looking ahead, trying to prevent problems by using more effective air purifiers and healthier products.”

Besides products of daily living familiar to consumers, the shop is home to some unusual finds, like the colorful radiation-blocking pouches for cell phones, and the combination of online shopping (www.organiclivingaz.com) and in-person browsing works for new and established customers, says Gerard.

“We have customers all over the Valley and beyond. We do phone consultations and we welcome appointments, so we can spend the time a customer needs to understand what products would be helpful to them and their families.”

The team at Organic Living knows that converting a home to an organic haven can be daunting and expensive, “But start with one thing that you can do. Some start with an organic mattress. Others start with organic cleaning products. Just do it a step at a time,” Nathalie advised.

“Unless you are faced with a health emergency,” added Gerard. “In that case, we can help determine the best plan to make your home and your vehicle healthier. We’ve been doing this more than 40 years, and we are happy to help.”

Business Briefs

Fitness service for older adults opens

Abby Hafen has launched Made for Motion Fitness, a personal training and mobility-focused service designed specifically for older adults and individuals living with Parkinson’s disease in the North Central Phoenix area.

Created and led by Hafen, the program brings personalized, functional fitness directly to residents – whether that’s in the comfort of their own home or at the gym. Services include in-home and in-gym personal training tailored to clients’ goals, mobility, and energy level; targeted Parkinson’s-specific movement training using the PWR!Moves approach; assisted stretching to support flexibility, reduce stiffness and improve posture, and supportive, compassionate approach that meets clients where they are.

Hafen works out of Your Strength Movement Coaching 7575 N. 16th St., Suite 9. Call or text 480-847-8698 to schedule a free consultation.

Wellness practice opens in North Central

Desert Agave Wellness, a woman-owned, concierge-style clinic at 7325 N. 16th St., Suite 135, will celebrate its grand opening on Thursday, Sept. 4, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Founded by Jules Leverenz, a licensed nurse practitioner with years of experience in both telemedicine and hands-on care, Desert Agave was created to fill the growing gaps Leverenz saw in the urgent care and wellness space – especially when it comes to access, convenience, and personalized service. Services offered will include urgent care, telehealth, hormone therapy,

please see WELLNESS on page 20

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TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

WELLNESS continued from page 18

weight loss support, Botox and injectables and RX refills,

A long-time resident of North Central, Leverenz looks forward to serving the community that she loves.

“Caring for others is at the heart of who I am. It’s what led me to nursing in the first place: the desire to help people feel better. Through this nurse practitioner practice, I’m able to bring that passion to life in a deeply personal way. I believe in a holistic approach that honors the mind-body connection, and I’m proud to offer that kind of care right here in North Central Phoenix. This isn’t just a business—it’s a way of giving back to the community I love. I feel incredibly fortunate to live and do business in the heart of Phoenix, where community and connection are at the center of everything.”

During the Sept. 4 grand opening, residents can meet the founder, tour the wellness space, enjoy champagne and hors d’oeuvres, ask questions and learn about the services offered.

“We’d love to invite the community

and help people understand the care options now available right in their backyard,” Leverenz said.

To learn more, call 602-935-5396 or visit www.desertagavewellness.com.

Swiss Biologic offers gum surgery technique

Swiss Biologic Dentistry, 3611 N. 7th St., is now offering the Pinhole Surgical Technique (PST), a scalpel-free, suture-free procedure that treats gum recession with minimal disruption. Gum recession affects well over 50 percent of adults, the practice says, causing tooth sensitivity, root decay, poor aesthetics and increased bacterial penetration. Until now, the primary treatment option has been traditional gum grafting, which involves harvesting tissue from the roof of the mouth, a procedure most patients decline due to significant discomfort and extended recovery periods.

“We strive to offer solutions that respect the body’s natural form and function,” said Matt Ellingson, CEO of Swiss Biologic Dentistry. “The Pinhole Surgical Technique aligns perfectly with our phi-

losophy minimizing trauma while promoting lasting health and comfort.”

Originally developed by Dr. John Chao, the technique is performed at Swiss Biologic Dentistry by Dr. Alexis Yip, DMD. A significant advantage of PST, Yip said, is the ability to treat one’s entire mouth in a single session, with recovery times ranging from 24 to 48 hours.

For more information, visit www.swissbiologic.com/pinhole-surgery.

Gift boutique expands to new location

Cordially, the woman-owned and operated gifting boutique founded by Jennifer Lum Lung, announced that they are now open at a new location, 5121 N. Central Ave. Already a favorite in the North Central community, cordially opened a larger retail space on Aug. 8, and now features a dedicated private event and workshop area and the debut of 12 Volt, a new men’s boutique, co-owned with Lum Lung’s sister-in-law, Raegen Johnson.

Cordially’s mission remains clear: to be the premier local gifting destination,

offering an exceptional selection of thoughtful, stylish and customizable gifts – all while proudly supporting local artisans and celebrating creativity in every form.

Shoppers will find pre-curated gift sets for quick and beautiful grab-and-go options, a wide assortment of goods for home, entertaining, kids and baby and spa and beauty items, dedicated collections for Mahjong, pickleball, tennis and custom jewelry lovers, expanded customization services and more.

Hands-on workshops available will include doormat making, candle pouring, charcuterie board creation, espresso martini mixology, hand lettering, porch boards, floral design and more – perfect for team-building events, girls’ nights and creative celebrations, the owner says.

“Our heart has always been in creating a space that’s personal, creative, and community-driven,” said Lum Lung. “This next chapter allows us to offer even more – more space, more makers, more workshops, and more ways to give beautifully.”

For information, visit www.cordiallyphoenix.com.

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Down 5.8% from last month: 23,604

MONTHLY SALES
5,259
Down 5.4% from last month: 5,558

MONTHS SUPPLY OF INVENTORY
4.28

NEW INVENTORY
6,516
Down 5.3% from last month: 6,876

MEDIAN SALES PRICE
\$455,000
Down 5.8% from last month: \$480,000

AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET
79
Up 2 days from last month: 77



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September is a month of renewed optimism.

Some of you know about Jesse Milleson, who became part of our family story in an unexpected and beautiful way. Jesse came into our lives when he was 17, then a friend of our daughter Juliann and involved with the Arizona Quest for Kids program (now New Pathways for Youth), where MaryAnn was serving as a mentor. At the time, Jesse was a Sunnyslope High School student/athlete who had been without a mentor for months. The organization asked if MaryAnn would step in, and she gladly said yes. From that moment on, Jesse wasn't just a mentee, he became a true member of the Lieb family. He graduated from Sunnyslope, played football for two seasons at Glendale Community College, and was then recruited to the University of Memphis, where he not only played Division 1 football but was honored by the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame with a prestigious Scholar-Athlete Award.

After college, Jesse returned home, began coaching, and quickly proved his talent for motivating others and driving results at Orangetheory Fitness here in Phoenix. His success caught the attention of the company's leadership, and he was invited to Long Island to help open and launch a new studio there. That opportunity grew into even more, he went on to invest in several Orangetheory locations and, most importantly, met Pamela, the wonderful young woman he will marry the first week of September. We are thrilled to host the rehearsal dinner and welcome Pamela's family, the Treibers of Sea Cliff, New York, as we celebrate this joyous milestone. Congratulations, Jesse and Pamela, your hard work, perseverance, and love are inspiring to us all.

And as we celebrate personal milestones, the real estate market is giving us reason for optimism too. September brings a fresh energy for both buyers and sellers. For those buyers who have been patiently waiting for some relief, this may be the moment you've been hoping for. While sellers are aware that inventory isn't as abundant as in past years, the balance is shifting just enough to create opportunities. If you've been eyeing a home, now might be the time to take that step—before someone else does.

Here's to new beginnings, both in life and in real estate.

Bobby Lieb



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3146 E MARYLAND AVE <small>3 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 2,925 SQ FT</small>	\$1,750,000
7631 N 20TH ST <small>4 BEDROOMS 3 BATHROOMS 3,365 SQ FT</small>	\$1,675,000
625 W ECHO LN <small>4 BEDROOMS 4.5 BATHROOMS 3,831 SQ FT</small>	\$1,475,000
6801 N 1ST PL <small>3 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 3,258 SQ FT</small>	\$1,199,500
2016 E ORANGEWOOD AVE <small>4 BEDROOMS 3.5 BATHROOMS 3,929 SQ FT</small>	\$1,099,000
3424 E LIONS ST <small>3 BEDROOMS 3.5 BATHROOMS 2,546 SQ FT</small>	\$850,000
1535 W WINTER DR <small>3 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 2,552 SQ FT</small>	\$850,000
216 E HARMONT DR <small>4 BEDROOMS 3 BATHROOMS 2,294 SQ FT</small>	\$825,000
1555 E OCOTILLO RD #16 <small>4 BEDROOMS 2.5 BATHROOMS 2,511 SQ FT</small>	\$825,000
6409 N 11TH DR <small>4 BEDROOMS 3 BATHROOMS 3,036 SQ FT</small>	\$750,000
21 W BERYL AVE <small>3 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,917 SQ FT</small>	\$749,900
6105 N 12TH WA <small>3 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,844 SQ FT</small>	\$397,500
1142 E KALER DR <small>3 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,196 SQ FT</small>	\$349,900
750 E NORTHERN AVE #2045 <small>2 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,022 SQ FT</small>	\$289,900
750 E NORTHERN AVE #1089 <small>2 BEDROOMS 2 BATHROOMS 1,013 SQ FT</small>	\$288,000
9015 N 15TH ST <small>LOT</small>	\$249,000

PENDING

31 W MARLETTE AVE	\$1,650,000
1321 W GARDENIA AVE	\$1,175,000
8135 N 5TH ST	\$699,900

SOLD

325 W SOLANO DR	\$3,375,000	7125 N 2ND PLACE	\$1,225,000
35411 N 50TH ST***	\$1,910,000	1036 E WAGON WHEEL*	\$560,000
220 W SAN JUAN AVE*	\$1,700,000	5542 N 10TH ST **	\$400,000

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SCHOOL DAYS

Freshman House offers a fresh approach

“If you’re going to be successful with 600 different kids from diverse backgrounds, speaking different languages from different countries,” said Camelback High School’s principal, James Arndt, “you need a more customized, bespoke approach.” And that is where the Freshman House program comes into play.

The journalism students at Camelback explained that the Freshman House program’s goal is to help students succeed in their freshman year – students are put into three different groups, which have four core teachers (algebra, biology, English and health), each with their own teachers.

“Starting high school is like stepping into a new world full of uncertainty, excitement, and full of possibility,” the students said.

Camelback works to make the transition as easy as possible for both the staff and students by building a strong, united foundation for the freshman from the start that continues throughout the year.

“That is why Camelback Frosh house has succeeded for the past six years,” the students added.

The Freshman House hadn’t always been this way, Arndt said. The freshmen were randomly assigned a class and that was it. The rest was for them



Camelback High School’s Freshman House teachers pose with a district award recognizing their achievements since the program was implemented six years ago (submitted photo).

to figure out, but the new system ensures that every student has four adults they know, who are deeply invested in their success.

Kennedy Koch-Carney and Layla Gondos are members of the Link Crew, a group of juniors and seniors who help freshmen get connected with clubs and sports and serve as mentors. Link Crew is also a part of the tutoring program helping struggling freshmen.

Koch-Carney said, “After working with freshmen, over time I noticed how different they interact with each other as they grow into themselves, especially when they come to events hosted by Link Crew.”

This year, Link Crew plans to be more involved with the freshmen by splitting into groups to monitor advisories, so they know how to help the freshmen grow. The student also believes Camelback is one of the better PXU schools and recommends that future freshmen become a Spartan.

“We provide a safe environment for students and have help available to us at all times, whether that’s a counselor, teacher, coach or security, we always have something to tend to our needs,” she said.

Gondos added, “The freshman house so far is very energetic and evolved. The structure of it really culti-

vates communities and creates a sense of home for people.”

And data show that if students are successful in their freshman year, they’re four times more likely to graduate than peers who are not. The rate of kids from freshman year staying on course to graduate grew from 42 percent in the 2019-20 school year to 87 percent in the first semester of this school year.

“It’s no surprise that the first group of in-person ‘Freshman House’ kids have the highest scholarship totals in our history, have the highest college credit attainment in our history and they’re just kicking butt and breaking records everywhere,” Arndt said.

Camelback High School is part of the Phoenix Union High School District. Learn more at www.pxu.org.

School Briefs

GLENDALE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Students return to campus

Glendale Union High School District (GUHSD) welcomed students back to campuses on Monday, Aug. 4, marking the official start of the 2025-26 school year.

With excitement in the air, campuses across the district came alive as students, staff and families embraced a new school year filled with possibilities

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SCHOOL DAYS

and a focus on student potential.

GUHSD offered a special shoutout to the Class of 2029 on completing their first week of high school.

Learn more at www.guhsdaz.org.

Open house scheduled for Sunnyslope

Sunnyslope High School will welcome families to its campus during an open house event scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 4, at 5:30 p.m.

This event provides an opportunity for parents and guardians to meet teachers, explore classrooms and learn more about the programs offered this school year. Open house events are geared toward strengthening the parent-school connection in order to support student success from day one.

Learn more about Sunnyslope, located at 35 W. Dunlap Ave., by calling 623-915-8760 or visiting <https://sunnyslope.guhsdaz.org>.

Coffee purveyor supports WHS

Washington High School (WHS) expressed its gratitude for the generous coffee donation from the local Starbucks, located at 19th Avenue and Glendale, during Orientation Week.

The school said, “Community partnerships like this play a meaningful role in uplifting staff and strengthening school–community connections. Washington High School appreciates Starbucks’ continued commitment to supporting education in its



Governor Katie Hobbs joined Madison Superintendent Kimberly Guerin and staff at Madison Park Middle School on Aug. 6 to highlight the availability of free or reduced-price meals for students during the 2025-26 school year (photo courtesy of Madison School District).

neighborhood.”

Learn more about WHS, located at 2217 W. Glendale Ave., by calling 623-915-8400 or visiting <https://washington.guhsdaz.org>.

MADISON SCHOOL DISTRICT Governor visits Madison Park

In early August, Madison Park Middle School welcomed Governor Hobbs and representatives from the Arizona Food Bank Network

The governor’s visit highlighted the important funding that was recently approved by the state, which makes

school meals free this year for families who qualify for reduced-price meals.

The district encouraged Madison families to check their eligibility by filling out a free or reduced-price meal application by visiting its website: www.madisonaz.org/families/food-nutrition-services.

Madison seeks people to join district team

The Madison Elementary School District is currently looking for individuals to join their team for the 2025-26 school year.

Open positions range from teachers and guest teachers, food service workers, bus drivers, before and after school

staff and more.

“Being a part of the Madison School District is like having a home away from home. It is a pleasure to come into work every day,” said Gabriela, a Madison bus driver.

To learn more about available positions and employee benefits, visit www.madisonaz.org/jobs.

Governing board meets in September

The Madison Governing Board is a five-member body of citizens elected by the voters of the school district and charged with ensuring the district meets the best interests of the students and the school system. Members serve a four-year term and serve without pay.

The body serves as the school district’s policy maker in accordance with state and federal law. In addition, board members adopt the budget, approve personnel, curriculum and other district business matters. The board hires the superintendent of schools and oversees the superintendent’s duties and performance.

Governing board meetings are conducted on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, Sept. 9 and 23 this month. Meetings are held in the board room, 5601 N. 16th St., and scheduled school locations at 6 p.m. The locations and agendas for each meeting are posted online and at the district office within 24 hours of the board meetings.

please see MEETINGS on page 26



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SCHOOL DAYS

MEETINGS continued from page 25

Governing Board meeting dates, agendas and minutes and meeting broadcasts are available online at www.madisonaz.org/governingboard.

OSBORN
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Osborn receives
national recognition

Osborn School District said that it is “beyond proud” to announce that every school in the district has been recognized with America’s Healthiest Schools awards, earning a collective total of 26 nationally recognized honors.

These awards highlight Osborn’s holistic approach to wellness, and reflect its core values of integrity, equity, joy, growth and relationships, the district said. These recognitions include many components including hands-on culinary nutrition lessons, comprehensive sexual education, health equity practices in school health offices, family engagement through PTOs and community events, dedicated staff well-



Ulises Aragon, pictured fourth from right at an Aug. 7 governing board meeting, was awarded Administrator of the Year for the entirety of the Phoenix Union High School District at a recent ceremony (submitted photo).

ness spaces and more.

While nutritious and delicious meals are an important part of being awarded one of America’s Healthiest Schools, Osborn’s commitment extends beyond the cafeteria to include family engagement, staff wellbeing, health education and supportive services that promote the overall health of students, staff and families.

“This recognition places Osborn among a select group of districts nationwide that believe in whole-child, whole-community wellness across every campus,” leadership said. “Osborn is proud to be recognized for its commitment to the families and students that make up the Osborn community.”

PHOENIX UNION
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
PXU schools receive
top awards

At the recent Phoenix Union High School District (PXU) Opening of Schools Convocation, schools within the North Central area received top awards within the district.

First, Camelback High School received the Large School Culture and Climate Award, a recognition given to a school that exemplifies a welcoming environment that also prioritizes student success. Phoenix Coding Academy also won big, receiving the Small School Academic Achievement Award for the high academic success among its students. Lastly, Bioscience High School principal Ulises Aragon was awarded Administrator of the Year for the entirety of the district.

“We are so proud of the success of our schools and are excited for new achievements this school year,” the district said.

For more information and to enroll, visit www.pxu.org/enroll.

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Open House | Sunday, Oct. 26, 2025
12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Admission/Placement Exam
Saturday, Dec. 6, 2025 or
Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025 at 7:30 a.m.

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Oct. 26, 2025, Nov. 6, 2025
and Dec. 6, 2025

Visit xcp.org for more information.

SCHOOL DAYS

District thanks employees at annual event

The annual PXU Employee of the Year breakfast, where all of the Employees of the Year from across the district came together to eat breakfast and talk about their experiences at PXU, was held on Aug. 15.

In a social media post congratulating the employees, the district also thanked Central High School’s Culinary Arts program for providing food and service.

WASHINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Student earns perfect scores

The Washington Elementary School District (WESD) congratulated Bennett C. at Royal Palm Middle School on receiving perfect scores on the English Language Arts and Math portions of the 2025 Arizona’s Academic Standards Assessment (AASA). He was recognized at a recent governing board meeting and received a special canvas in honor of his incredible achievement.



Royal Palm Middle School student Bennett C. (center) was recognized at a WESD governing board meeting for receiving perfect scores on two portions of the AASA (submitted photo).

The district said, “The WESD Family is very proud of Bennett and appreciates the community that supports him!”

Bond dollars fund campus improvement

During summer break, new campus improvement projects were completed at a couple of WESD schools within the North Central Phoenix corridor.

Maryland School received new HVAC systems and LED lights in classrooms, as well as new translucent windows, while Royal Palm Middle School received new flooring site wide.

“The WESD is grateful for our community who made these campus improvement projects possible through bond dollars,” the district said in a released statement. “Thank you for your ongoing support in helping us

build safer and improved learning environments for our students and staff!”

WESD is enrolling students for 2025-26

Whether it’s free, full-day kindergarten, premiere special education and gifted services, art, music, PE, STEM or online learning, WESD says that it has a program to meet the individual needs of your child.

With multiple A+ Schools of Excellence, WESD is also a top 10 elementary school district as featured in the 2025 edition of *Ranking Arizona*, published by AZ Big Media. Additionally, Orangewood School and Royal Palm Middle School, both within the North Central Phoenix corridor, are currently rated as an “A” by the Arizona Department of Education.

The district is enrolling kindergarten through eighth grade students for the 2025-26 school year. To start the enrollment process, stop by the WESD Welcome and Registration Center, located at 3200 W. Cholla St., or enroll online at www.wesdschools.org/registration.












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PCDS.ORG/OPENHOUSE



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 <p>YEAR FOUNDED As a nonsectarian, nonprofit, college preparatory day school</p>	 <p>ENROLLMENT In our co-ed student body, 43% identify as students of color</p>	 <p>AFFORDABILITY 20% receive need-based financial aid grants at an average of \$15,000</p>
 <p>CLASS SIZE 16 students average per class</p>	 <p>STUDENT:TEACHER 8 students average per 1 teacher</p>	 <p>FACULTY DEGREES 85% of Upper School faculty hold advanced degrees</p>
 <p>CAMPUS SIZE 40 acres Athletic fields, aquatic center, gyms, auditorium, music spaces, and science, art & tech center</p>	 <p>ATHLETICS 18 state championships in the past 4 years 12 Upper School sports and 13 Middle School sports</p>	 <p>SCHOOL HOURS 7:50am–3:00pm Hot lunch included daily for Lower and Middle School, optional for Upper School</p>

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SCHOOL DAYS

Students at Madison Highland Prep celebrated their recent ranking as 25th among the best high schools in Arizona (submitted photo).

District seeks passionate individuals

WESD is looking for passionate individuals to work with them, and they have a variety of job openings for both certified and classified staff.

The district says that it offers competitive teacher salaries of \$53,000-\$84,950 with performance pay, student loan forgiveness, school-age child care discounts, medical, dental and vision benefits, and employer-matched contributions to Arizona State Retirement. WESD also provides support for teachers including weekly Professional Learning Communities (PLC), regular professional development and instructional coaches and social workers on each campus.

To view current job vacancies and apply online, visit <https://jobs.wesd-schools.org>. For questions, call 602-347-2622.

CHARTER AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

MHP ranked 25th in the country

Madison Highland Prep (MHP) has been ranked 25th among the best high schools in Arizona, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

“This prestigious recognition is a testament to the school’s commitment to academic excellence and its focus on preparing students for success in college and beyond,” the school said. “The rankings are based on rigorous criteria, including test scores, graduation rates and college readiness. This honor not only reflects the hard work and dedication of Madison Highland Prep’s students and faculty, but also underscores

the school’s reputation as a leader in high school education.”

As a STEM Cognia certified charter school and a continuous PLTW Distinguished School, Madison Highland Prep says that it is dedicated to providing students with a comprehensive education that emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The school has an impressive 100 percent college acceptance rate, says it is proud of its students’ achievements and looks forward to continuing to provide opportunities for growth and development.

“This recognition by *U.S. News & World Report* solidifies Madison Highland Prep’s position as a top-tier educational institution in Arizona, and the school remains committed to empowering students to become successful members of an increasingly innovation-driven society and global marketplace,” leadership added.

Madison Highland Prep is a STEM-focused college-preparatory high school located at 1431 E. Campbell Ave. in Phoenix. For more information, contact the school office at 602-745-3800 or visit www.madisonhighlandprep.com.

Students compete in ‘Makers’ challenge

Ten student teams from Xavier College Preparatory will participate in the 8th Annual Makers of Change Assistive Technology Challenge, a competition where students develop real-world solutions to improve accessibility for children with disabilities.

This is the second year Xavier has entered the challenge, with participants drawn from the school’s AP Computer

SCHOOL DAYS



Xavier’s Computer Science students Maddie Kaiser (left) and Blair Calihan will participate in the 2023 Makers of Change Assistive Technology Challenge this fall (photo by Lisa Zuba).

Science Principles and AP Cyber 1 classes. The event challenges students to apply their technical skills in innovative ways that directly address the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Senior Blair Calihan, vice president of Xavier’s chapter of the National Computer Science Honor Society, is leading a team designing a grocery store–specific wheelchair attachment to help shoppers reach top shelves.

“Competing in the Challenge is a great way to apply our skills,” Calihan said. “It takes learning to the next level.”

Junior Maddie Kaiser is exploring whether adding a Lidar-type camera to a wheelchair could help users navigate more easily. Her team is also testing the potential to adapt the same technology for white canes used by visually impaired or blind individuals.

“Our team wants to find solutions so that people with disabilities can take part in all aspects of society and make life better,” Kaiser explained.

Xavier’s Computer Science Department Chair Leon Tynes, Jr. noted that students will conduct most of their research through professional and academic journals rather than popular online sources, and will consult outside professionals, including people with disabilities, to review their projects.

“Project-based learning is essential for students to work and compete in today’s society,” Tynes said.

Judges will score all submissions to determine the top-scoring teams, who will present their projects at the challenge’s final event on October 17.

Xavier College Preparatory is an all-girls Catholic high school in Phoenix. Learn more by visiting www.xcp.org.

DAR gifts flags to Most Holy Trinity

Students at the Most Holy Trinity Catholic School, 535 E. Alice Ave. in Phoenix, obtained new American flags from members of the Paradise Valley Chapter, National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

Every morning, while school is in session, the entire student body participates in an assembly and takes turns in leading the Pledge of Alliance, along with morning prayers and daily announcements. School principal Randy Smith said the new flags will be used in assemblies and classrooms.

“Central to our mission is education and community service,” said Terri Clarke, who led the project team.

DAR is an organization devoted to preserving American history and offers programs to promote patriotism and completes community service projects. Members can trace their lineage to ancestors who served in the American Revolution. The Paradise Valley Chapter meets in Phoenix and currently has 110 members who focus on community service projects with an emphasis on veterans.

Learn more about Most Holy Trinity at www.mhtcatholicschool.org. For more information about the Paradise Valley Chapter, visit www.paradisevalley.arizonadar.org.

School year begins with special mass

Brophy College Preparatory students were joined on Aug. 15 by Bishop John Dolan of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix to celebrate the start of the school year. *please see MASS on page 30*

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SCHOOL DAYS

MASS continued from page 29

brate the Mass of the Holy Spirit.

The school said in a social media post, “As always, it is a gift to come together as one Brophy community to celebrate Mass, and the perfect way to end the second week of the new school year.”

Brophy, a private Jesuit, Catholic school, is located at 4701 N. Central Ave. for additional information, visit www.brophyprep.org.

Experience murder mystery with a comedic twist

Residents are invited to join Xavier Prep Theater and Brophy Prep Theater students for a night of mystery, murder and mayhem, as the students present their hilarious stage adaptation of “Clue.”

Based on the cult classic film and board game, this fast-paced comedy will keep theater goers guessing – and laughing – until the final twist.

Performances will be held Sept. 24-27 at Xavier College Preparatory Performing Arts Center, 4710 N. 5th St. The curtain goes up at 7 p.m. most nights; a 2 p.m. matinee performance is



Erin Weber and Ginger Armstrong will serve as co-chairs of Brophy College Preparatory’s 2025 auction fundraiser, Brophy Kicks on Route 66 (submitted photo).

scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 27.

Tickets for “Clue” are \$10 and can be purchased online at www.xcp.org/student-life/performing-arts.

Save the date for 2025 auction

Brophy College Preparatory presents Brophy Kicks on Route 66, its 2025 Auction on Saturday, Nov. 8, at Brophy’s Harper Great Hall. This year’s theme celebrates the incredible journey that the Brophy family has taken

together and looks ahead with excitement to the school’s future.

On the event webpage, the school said, “As we approach our centennial, we are committed to preserving our iconic campus facilities and investing in new innovations. All Auction proceeds benefit the Brophy Fund, supporting programs, people and places that allow every student to flourish. Whether you’re interested in donating a unique item or experience, or learning more about sponsorship opportunities, we

invite you to play a part in our journey.”

The first major social event of the 2025-26 school year, Brophy Kicks on Route 66 is an opportunity to gather together, welcome new families from the Class of 2029, rekindle friendships with current families and deepen relationships with those in the school community.

Erin Weber and Ginger Armstrong will serve as the 2025 event co-chairs. Find more information at www.brophyprep.org/giving/auction.

Event will help parents navigate tuition

Phoenix Christian Preparatory School, 1751 W. Indian School Road, invites area families to “A Night of Hope,” Tuesday, Sept. 16, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

The event will offer a practical guide to parents who might be falling short on tuition. Dinner will be provided. Parents can RSVP by contacting the school, 602-265-4707 or at hello@phoenixchristian.org.

Phoenix Christian Preparatory School serves middle and high school age students. The school also has an Elementary Campus at 4002 N. 18th Ave. Learn more at www.phoenixchristian.org.

Ethical Cadet scholarship offered

The BBB Ethical Cadet Scholarship, sponsored by Salt River Project (SRP) awards scholarships to Arizona JROTC cadets who demonstrate exceptional character and commitment to service. These scholarships recognize cadets who go above and beyond in their leadership and community involvement.

The program recently awarded 12 cadets with \$1,000 scholarships. In addition to the individual BBB Ethical Cadet scholarship, each high school JROTC program also received \$1,000, doubling the community impact, for a total of \$24,000. JROTC programs will use the money to help with equipment, uniforms and program expenses.

Cadets serve as role models by leading in times of need, doing the right thing even in the most difficult situations and empowering others through community service. Now in its seventh year, the scholarship has awarded \$144K to local AZ high school students and their JROTC programs.

Applications for the 2025-26 school year opened on Aug. 1. For more information, visit <https://cadet.bbbcommunity.org>.



Child Find Notice

It is the Madison School District’s responsibility to inform the general public and all parents within our boundaries of our responsibility to make available special education services for students with disabilities aged 3 through 15 years and how to access those services. In addition, we have a responsibility to provide information regarding early intervention services for children birth through 2 years.

We are responsible for identifying, locating, and evaluating all children with disabilities including children aged 3 through 15 and for referring children from birth through 2 years of age to Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) for evaluation and appropriate services.

We are also responsible for providing a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), which includes special education and related services to children with disabilities at public expense, under public supervision and direction without charge to the parents.

For all new students to the district, the classroom teacher will complete screening activities within 45 days of enrollment. The teacher will look at the child’s ability in the areas of academics, vision, hearing, communication, social/emotional, and motor skills. If any concerns are noted, the child may be referred for additional help.

Children birth through 2 years of age who are receiving early intervention services and will be participating in preschool programs for children with disabilities will be assured of a smooth transition into that program.

If you have any concerns about a child you know, please contact Madison School District’s Student Services Department at (602) 664-7535 or the school in which those boundaries you reside.



GENERATIONS

Senior Living
Low-cost respite
service offered

A new program is bringing together Arizona State University students and Hospice of the Valley to provide support to families caring for a person with dementia at home or in a facility.

RISE — Respite In Student Engagement is a unique partnership between ASU and Hospice of the Valley’s Supportive Care for Dementia program. RISE connects students with families to provide affordable respite for caregivers and meaningful engagement for the person living with dementia in their home or in a facility.

The rate is \$20 per hour and families pay the student directly. RISE students are not employees or contractors for ASU or Hospice of the Valley. All students are background checked, and ASU students who join RISE receive evidence-based dementia training from the Dementia Care and Education Campus in Phoenix.

A RISE Coordinator will match students with a family for an initial phone interview. Visits are scheduled by mutual agreement to best accommodate schedules. Students provide companionship and emotional support. The program does not include personal hygiene or giving medications.

Those who are interested should contact RISE Coordinator Nour Hassan at nahassa7@asu.edu or 480-310-6401. Learn more about Hospice of the Valley’s dementia care program at <https://dementiacampus.org>.

This month at
Phoenix senior centers

With 15 senior centers across the city of Phoenix, older residents are sure to find a program or activity to keep them active and engaged with their peers.

In the North Central area, residents can visit the Devonshire Senior Center, located at 2802 E. Devonshire Ave. (602-262-7807), or the Sunnyslope Senior Center, located at 802 E. Vogel Ave. (602-262-7572). Both centers offer art, exercise, education and other activities, along with scheduled field trips to restaurants and other destinations throughout the city.



Valley families now have a lower-cost option for help with caring for a loved one with dementia (photo courtesy of Dementia Care and Education Campus).

Special events this month include the Marco de Niza Fiesta Patrias at 9:30 on Sept. 12, Devonshire, and Sept. 16 at noon, Sunnyslope. In addition, the Sunnyslope center will take a trip to Rice Paper Thai restaurant for lunch Sept. 8, and Devonshire will host a \$5 grilled hot dog sale at 10 a.m. Sept. 23. A complete list of September events can be found on the city website.

Lunch is served Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. Meal reservations

and cancellations must be made at least three business days in advance. Members 60 and older may give a recommended contribution of \$2.50 per meal. The cost of a meal for all others is \$5.

The city’s senior centers are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday; however, they will be closed Monday, Sept. 1, for Labor Day. Membership gives residents access to all 15 senior centers. The annual membership fee is \$20 for Phoenix residents. For general information, call 602-262-4520 or visit www.phoenix.gov and search “Senior Centers.”

BrainLove focuses
on memory care

A new North Central medical practice wants to change the way families face Alzheimer’s disease. Led by dual board-certified neurologist and psychiatrist Dr. Dani Cabral, BrainLove focuses on a “modern, holistic approach to brain health that goes far beyond what traditional systems provide by focusing

not only on the patient, but also on the emotional well-being and resilience of their care partner.”

Located within the office of Vital Integrative Medicine at 801 W. Maryland Ave., the practice serves older adults experiencing memory concerns, cognitive decline, Alzheimer’s, and related conditions, while also supporting the people who love and care for them. Services include individualized medical care, brain health optimization, care partner mental health care, education, creative therapies and access to clinical research.

Learn more at www.mybrainlove.com.

Kids & Families
Company holds
‘Nutcracker’ auditions

Performing the role of young Clara or the Nutcracker Prince is a dream come true for many young ballet dancers, and Ballet Arizona will once again welcome

please see AUDITIONS on page 32

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GENERATIONS

AUDITIONS continued from page 31

aspiring youth performers to audition for the annual production of “The Nutcracker” on Sun., Sept. 7.

Auditions are open to children between the ages of nine and 18, as well as students in The School of Ballet Arizona’s Level Two classes. On Sept. 7, auditions will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Ballet Arizona’s studio and are broken down by age and gender. Those auditioning may be asked to stay for the entire audition period, staggered in callback groups.

Participants should come dressed in classical ballet attire for the audition. Candidates will try out for roles including young Clara and the Nutcracker Prince, angels, soldiers, party kids and bonbons. Auditions are free for The School of Ballet Arizona and Arizona School for the Arts students. There is a \$15 fee for non-students.

Ballet Arizona’s studios are located at 2835 E. Washington St. For audition times and details, visit www.balletaz.org/auditions/nutcracker-youth-auditions.



Young performers are invited to audition for a variety of roles in the 2025 Ballet Arizona production of “The Nutcracker” (photo by Rosalie O’Connor).

**Museum hosts
‘Brave Journey’**

The Children’s Museum of Phoenix is hosting a new exhibit, “Brave Journey,” in its Prototype Space for the next three months.

The experience begins with a climb into the hull of a flight simulator. On the ground, children can build cities and landscapes to fly over. Nearby, young explorers will engage with early literacy

through tactile play at the Word Well, Word Slide, and Word-Go-Round. Alphascapes walls offer opportunities for letter-building and word-making, while children explore shapes and symbols on a stacking set designed especially for them.

The space is crafted with salvaged and surplus materials using low-tech, analog makerspace production methods, celebrating creativity, sustainability and hands-on discovery. Throughout the exhibit, children are encouraged to practice character skills such as bravery, curiosity, kindness, creativity and respect.

Admission into Brave Journey is free with paid Museum admission of \$19 per person. Children under the age of one and Museum members are free. The Children’s Museum of Phoenix is located at 215 N. 7th St. For information, call 602-253-0501 or visit www.childrensmuseumofphoenix.org.

**Girls explore
construction-related trades**

Thanks to Diversified Roofing, eight girls recently got to take part in an educational camp that taught them about a number of different construction-related trades and industries.

The 2025 “Let’s Build Construction Camp for Girls” took place from June 23-27. Girls aged 13-18 were encouraged to sign up for the free camp, which gave them the chance to experience and explore the construction trades through hands-on learning and building.

Participants worked in a supportive team environment to build a mock structure that included carpentry, electrical, plumbing, roofing and finishes. In addition to learning about architecture, engineering and manufacturing during the construction process, the

campers also enjoyed taking related field trips to area businesses.

The camp will be offered again in summer 2026. For information, visit www.diversifiedroofing.com.

**The Nash announces
student ensembles**

The Nash is welcoming talented young musicians to join its 2025-26 student ensembles. The Nash offers ensembles for every skill level and interest – each taught in the state-of-the-art John Dawson Jazz Education Center in downtown Phoenix.

The Nash Legacy Ensemble will hold auditions Sunday, Sept. 7, 2-5 p.m.; The Nash Big Band will hold auditions Sunday, Sept. 14, 2-5 p.m.; The Nash Youth Vocal Ensemble held auditions Aug. 25. All auditions will be held at the John Dawson Jazz Education Center, 1014 N. 2nd St., Suite 1. Opportunities are also open in The Nash Futures and The Nash Jazz Divaz – no auditions are required to join these groups; sessions will be held Sundays, 2:30-4:30 p.m., beginning Sept. 14.

All ensemble participants have the opportunity to perform on The Nash’s main stage, sharing the same platform where world-renowned jazz artists appear throughout the year. For audition requirements, registration and program details, visit www.thenash.org/education/join-an-ensemble or contact The Nash Education Department at education@thenash.org.

**Save the date
for Innovation**

Over fall break, young scientists in first through sixth grades are invited to join the Arizona Science Center for hands-on high-tech adventures at Camp Innovation, Oct. 6-10.

Participants will dive into a world full of robots, circuits, coding and hands-on fun. Whether a child is a curious coder, a future engineer, or just loves building and inventing, this camp is packed with exciting challenges in science and technology – a place for creative kids who love to explore, design, and discover.

The cost of camp ranges from \$240-\$325; daily pricing and scholarships are available. Arizona Science Center is located at 600 E. Washington St. For additional information, call 602-716-2000 or visit www.azscience.org/learn/students/camps.

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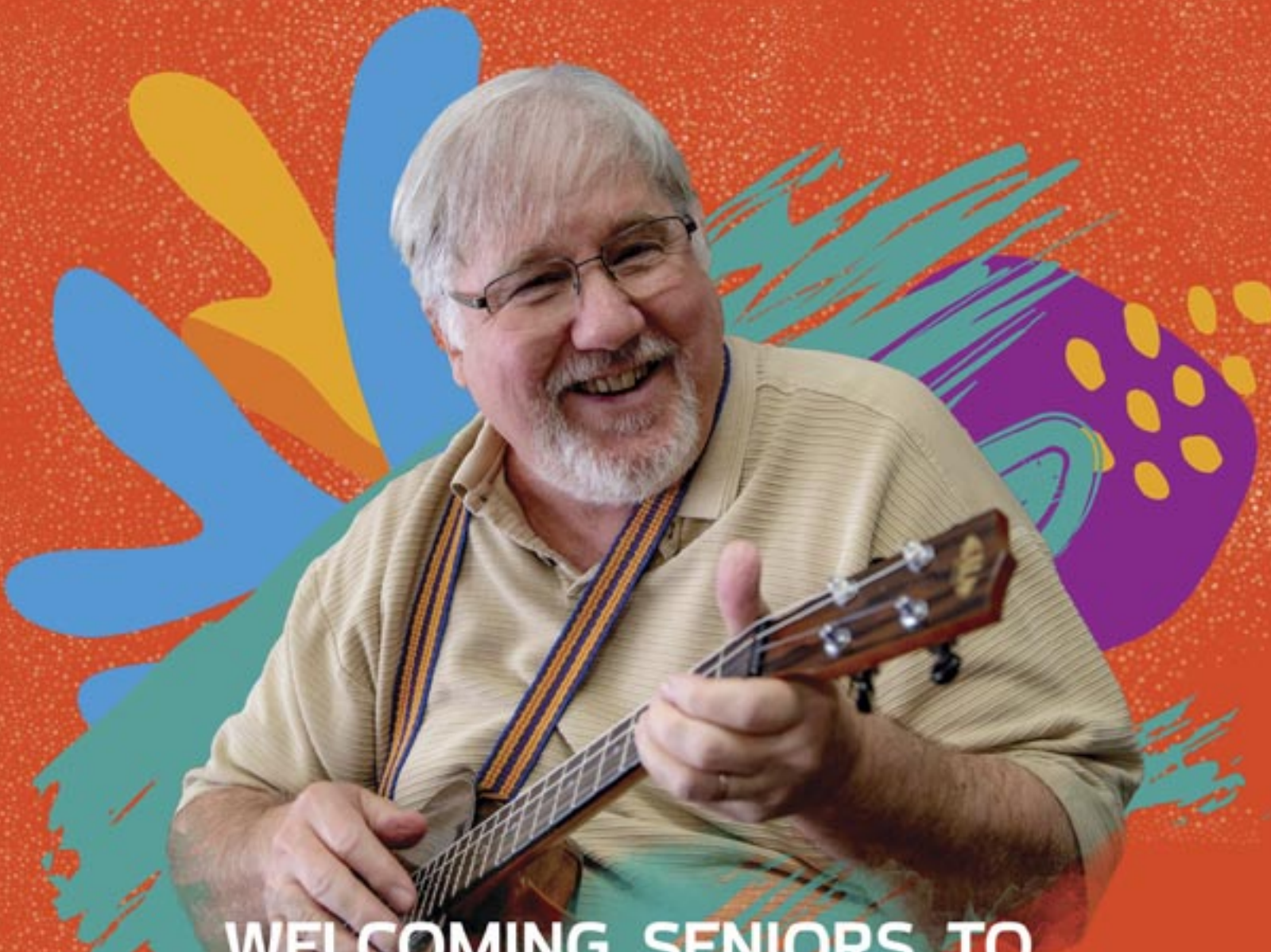
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Shingu Sayaka’s “Erosion No. 4 Shokka (Eroding Flower),” 2021, is part of a new exhibition featuring the avant-garde clay sculptures of Japanese women artists (photo by Richard Goodbody).

New art museum exhibit is ‘Radical’

Phoenix Art Museum presents a major exhibition this month featuring avant-garde clay sculptures by nearly 40 under-recognized Japanese women artists

Opening Sept. 24, “Radical Clay: Contemporary Women Artists from Japan” provides a unique opportunity to discover the technical achievements and creativity of leading women ceramicists from post-war Japan, highlighting their discovery of new possibilities for clay and its potential as a radical medium.

“Radical Clay” celebrates the originality and virtuosity of 36 women artists from Japan who have explored sculptural expression outside the traditional field of Japanese studio ceramics since the 1970s. The exhibition’s 40 avant-garde works are drawn from the Carol & Jeffrey Horvitz Collection of Contemporary Japanese Ceramics, considered one of the leading collections of Japanese contemporary ceramics outside of Japan, and explore wide-ranging content and motifs, including the human body, geology, flora and fantastical abstract forms. Through the evocative display, visitors discover an often-overlooked history of Japanese women artists who have made significant contributions to the traditionally male-dominated field of ceramics since World War II.

“Radical Clay: Contemporary

Women Artists from Japan” will be on view at PhxArt through Aug. 9, 2026. Entrance into the exhibition is included in general admission. Visitors may also enjoy reduced admission to the exhibition during voluntary donation times on Wednesdays from 3 to 8 p.m., and First Fridays from 5 to 8 p.m. For additional information, call 602-257-1880 or visit www.phxart.org.

Experience the beauty of ballet

Ballet Arizona’s annual “Ballet Under the Stars” returns Sept. 18-27 with performances at six locations across the Valley. This free, family-friendly event is a wonderful way to experience the beauty of ballet under the open sky and an ideal introduction to the art form for young audiences.

Presented by the Diane and Bruce Halle Foundation, this year’s “Ballet Under the Stars” will include excerpts from both contemporary and classic ballets. Audiences will get to experience Robert Bondara’s “Take Me With You,” set to recorded music by the alternative rock band Radiohead. In addition, Ballet Arizona will present two works by artistic director Daniela Cardim: “Nocturne,” a duet adorned by Frederic Chopin’s “Nocturne No. 13” as well as an excerpt from “The Sleeping Beauty,” which will grace the stage in full later this fall.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Ballet Arizona will once again host “Ballet Under the Stars” this month, with excerpts from both contemporary and classic ballets, including Robert Bondara’s “Take Me With You” (photo by Rosalie O’Connor).

ages, guests bring chairs, blankets and picnics to experience the beauty of dance in outdoor parks across the Valley. Ballet Arizona invites Arizonans to delight in a spectacular evening showcasing excerpts from a range of ballets, offering a vibrant portrayal of the art form’s diversity.

In North Central, a performance will be held Saturday, Sept. 27, at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road. All performances begin at 7 p.m. and are free of charge. Learn more at www.balletaz.org.

Show spotlights
Parkinson’s patients

The Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center (MAPC) at Barrow Neurological Institute and Creighton University opened a new art exhibit at Creighton’s health sciences campus in midtown Phoenix that features original artwork created by individuals living with Parkinson’s disease and their care partners.

The juried exhibit, which opened in late July, explores the daily experiences, emotions and resilience of those affected by Parkinson’s, expressed through visual art. The exhibit is also bilingual, with all pieces including descriptions in both English and Spanish.

Many of the works were created as part of the MAPC Expressive Arts Program, an initiative supported by the Barrow Neurological Foundation that emphasizes self-expression and creativity, regardless of artistic experience. The program uses painting and other art

forms as therapeutic tools to reduce stress and promote well-being for patients and care partners alike.

The exhibit is free and open to the public through early October at Creighton University Health Sciences Campus – Phoenix, 3100 N. Central Ave., in the rotating art gallery on the first floor.

Learn more at www.creighton.edu/healthsciences/phoenix and www.barrowneuro.org/centers-programs/parkinson-disease-and-movement-disorders.

iSombra! Celebrates
shade innovations

iSombra! artists, project partners and the public will come together to celebrate iSombra! Experiments in Shade at a free, family-friendly event on Saturday, Sept. 20, at Memorial Hall located at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road.

This event, scheduled to be held from 6 to 9 p.m., will showcase the creative shade solutions and community efforts to address extreme urban heat in Phoenix as part of this public art project developed by the Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture. Attendees will learn about the nine temporary shade structures and meet the artists who created them while enjoying complimentary food and drinks from local vendors. The event will also feature the premiere of the iSombra! Experiments in Shade documentary.

RSVP by Sept. 12 to attend. Learn more at <https://sombraphx.org>.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

On the Town

The fall performing arts season kicks off this month with live theater, ballet and opera performances. Added to that, catch local and touring musicians at area clubs and venues, First Fridays, cultural, educational and family-friendly events, and much more. See you on the town in September!

Lemon Library Book Club: 'Gods and Kings'

Sept. 3
Phoenix Art Museum
www.phxart.org; 602-257-1880

Paper Foxes

Sept. 4
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222

Thievery Corporation

Sept. 4
The Van Buren
www.thevanburenphx.com; 480-659-1641

First Fridays in the Garden

Sept. 5
Japanese Friendship Garden
www.japanesefriendshipgarden.org; 602-274-8700

Free First Friday

Sept. 5
Heard Museum
https://heard.org; 602-252-8840



(photo by Laura Durant)

Ryan Jenkins and Sherri Watts in "Grace & Glorie"

'Grace & Glorie'
Sept. 5-21
Black Theatre Troupe at Helen K. Mason Performing Arts Center
www.blacktheatretroupe.org; 602-258-8128

Próxima Parada

Sept. 6
Crescent Ballroom
www.crescentphx.com; 602-716-2222

Benjamin Cortez Trio – Late Night, No Cover

Sept. 6
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Ask a Ranger/ Rattlesnake Garage

Sept. 6
North Mountain Visitor Center
www.northmountainvisitorcenter.org; 602-343-5125

Ang Sirena

Sept. 8
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com

Durand Jones & The Indications

Sept. 11
The Van Buren
www.thevanburenphx.com; 480-659-1641

'Six Rounds of Vengeance'

Sept. 11-14
Irish Cultural Center
www.allqueershakespeare.com

Dr. Zombie's Movie Lab of Terror: 'Evil Brain From Outer Space'

Sept. 12
Great Arizona Puppet Theater
www.azpuppets.org; 602-262-2050

Family Story Hour

Sept. 13
Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library
www.azirish.org; 602-258-0109

Typhanie Monique

Sept. 13
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Maris and Caroline Kingsbury

Sept. 14
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222

Hedda Neelsen: 'Waking Matter'

Thru Sept. 14
Eye Lounge
www.eyelounge.com

Inspirational Ikebana

Sept. 14
Japanese Friendship Garden
www.japanesefriendshipgarden.org; 602-274-8700

Patty Talahongva: 'Stories from White Spider'

Sept. 17
Heard Museum
https://heard.org; 602-252-8840

Third Friday Ceili

Sept. 19
Irish Cultural Center
www.azirish.org; 602-258-0109

Nighttime History Walking Tour

Sept. 19
The Square at Heritage and Science Park
www.thesquarephx.org; 602-258-0048



Messer Chups

Sept. 19
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com; 602-612-4981

Coffee House Saturdays: Sugar Jam Band

Sept. 20
North Mountain Visitor Center
www.northmountainvisitorcenter.org; 602-343-5125

Trivia After Dark

Sept. 20
Madison Center for the Arts
www.themadison.org; 602-664-7777

Slater

Sept. 22
Valley Bar
www.valleybarphx.com; 602-716-2222

Mafalda Minnozzi

Sept. 24
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Disney's 'Frozen'

Sept. 24-Oct. 26
The Phoenix Theatre Company
www.phoenixtheatre.com; 602-254-2151

Destroyer

Sept. 26
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com

Bob Corritore's Chicago Blues Birthday Bash

Sept. 26
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com; 602-612-4981

Sasha Boutros

Sept. 26
The Nash
www.thenash.org; 602-795-0464

Coffee House Saturdays: Peter and Sal Palazzo

Sept. 27
North Mountain Visitor Center
www.northmountainvisitorcenter.org; 602-343-5125

'Zorro'

Sept. 27-28
Arizona Opera
www.azopera.org; 602-266-7464

National Theatre Live: 'Inter Alia'

Sept. 28
Phoenix Art Museum
www.phxart.org; 602-257-1880

The Waterboys

Sept. 28
Crescent Ballroom
www.crescentphx.com; 602-716-2222

Miss MacAlpine's 2025

Sept. 28
The Rhythm Room
www.rhythmroom.com; 602-612-4981



Rio Romeo

Sept. 29
The Rebel Lounge
www.therebellounge.com

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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FAMILY PACKAGES
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Café Chat

Neighborhood spot
elevates bar food

Jasmine Barrett is in her tiny kitchen at Original Gravity, on 12th Street at Highland, frying sliced polenta, an appetizer topped with chipotle sauce, jalapeños, corn, pickled red onions and cotija cheese – a customer favorite on her amped-up bar menu.

"It's been through a lot, but a couple of my customers love to sit there and play it," Barrett said.

It's that casual, come-on-in-and-relax neighborhood vibe that Barrett, an Arizona native with a background in restaurants and mortgage lending, was looking for when she took over Original Gravity in 2021. The original owners, a trio of sisters from New York, wanted to retire, though they're still at OG in spirit, immortalized at the entry with a wall hanging depicting them straddling a rocket in space.

"I was looking for something to start with my mother," Barrett said.

In what she calls an “elevated gastro pub,” many of the favorites on the original menu have remained, with some updates and new additions by Barrett, including barbecued pork sliders just added in August, that fried polenta and thick-cut pork belly glazed in a seasonal IPA.

“We make pretty much everything from scratch,” Barrett said. One old favorite that will always be on the menu is the beef on weck, a New York standard the sisters brought with them from their home state. It’s a massive sandwich, a thick pile of thinly sliced peppercorn-crusted prime rib, with crispy shallots and horseradish aioli, on a caraway-dusted bun from Noble Bakery, served au jus with super-crispy fries.

"I've talked to a lot of customers and people in the industry and nobody else in Phoenix serves it," she said. "I can't tell you how many people come in who are from the New York area and ask how we make it, and they have it and really enjoy it."

Those fries also show up as steak frites, dusted with parmesan and topped with sliced seared flatiron steak and brown butter. “The steak frites are real comfort food,” Barrett said. “Once you get into the parmesan and butter, it

please see ELEVATES on page 40

please see ELEVATES on page 40

North Central Phoenix

JULY 2025

MARKET UPDATE

\$798,925

MEDIAN SALE PRICE
(+13% from July 2024)

\$1,008,529

AVERAGE SALE PRICE
(+7.5% from July 2024)

\$398.17

AVERAGE SQFT PRICE
(-1.8% from July 2024)

634

ACTIVE LISTINGS
(lowest level since March 2024)

57

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85015, 85016, 85018, 85020, 85021, 85028



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ELEVATES continued from page 38

sets you over the edge.”

Barrett also put her own imprint on the cocktail menu.

Drinks are a major draw at OG, including wine on tap – yes, right there along with 20 beers on tap that rotate with the seasons – and an innovative take on margaritas.

An example: the blackberry “rita,” with tequila, Grand Marnier, lemonade, smashed berries and a lemon sugar rim. “It’s one of our top sellers,” Barrett said. “So is our tamarindo margarita, a definitely refreshing summer drink.” The cocktail combines margarita flavors with that of tamarindo candy, made from tamarind pulp, sugar and chili powder. Another combo, the coco rita, takes a tropical turn, blending tequila, lime juice and coconut puree.

“We added some new things, like our Esso tini (a blend of vodka, cold-brewed coffee, Kahlua and cream),” she said. The cold brew comes from Esso Coffeehouse and Roastery, in the same building as Original Gravity.

That brings to mind this tip for finding OG: the address is 12th Street, but the entrance is around the corner, on Highland Avenue. The building also houses a wine bar, bakery and tattoo shop. “You can get your lunch, coffee and dessert, all in one stop,” Barrett said.

“This is such a great neighborhood and community. I am a local and I love supporting local businesses. I eat here, I drink here, I shop at the farmer’s market. My focus is the community and our customers. I’m also part of the community so I love supporting Noble Bread and our local farmers.”

OG has long been a gathering place for folks in the neighborhood, Barrett said, and while they wanted their influence to continue, the sisters “really wanted me to bring some new things to the table. Just recently, we extended happy hour to include Tuesday through Saturday, 3 to 6 p.m., and all day Sunday.

“A few of the original team have stayed,” she said, “and we still have the same customers coming in. We are really big into community, and we’re open to everybody, in all walks of life. We especially want to be LGBTQ friendly – a safe space for anyone who wants to come in.”

Her connection to the community extends to helping raise money to battle cancer. Barrett’s parents died from cancer before age 50, and that inspired her to become active. “I support a



A newly launched menu at Aftermath Bar & Kitchen includes a bone marrow dish with Fresno chile jam, grilled bread and fine herb salad (submitted photo).

bunch of individuals at ASU who started a foundation for a sorority sister that they lost due to cancer,” she said. “I do fundraising events with them.”

Original Gravity, 4700 N. 12th St., Suite 101, is open noon to 10 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and noon to 9 p.m., Sunday. For information, call 602-583-7628 or visit www.ogphx.com.

Dining Briefs

New menu arrives at Aftermath

Modern American restaurant Aftermath Bar & Kitchen recently unveiled a new menu that they say will bring fresh energy to the table with a bold lineup of inventive dishes and elevated comfort food favorites.

From vibrant small plates to indulgent mains and creative desserts, new menu items include bone marrow, market oysters, baby gem salad, crispy fried chicken, Scottish salmon, Libby’s meatloaf, mushroom pasta, steak frites and a patty melt. On the sweeter side, diners can finish the evening with chocolate flan or affogato.

Aftermath Bar & Kitchen is located at 1534 E. Bethany Home Road. For more information, call 602-607-5240 or visit www.aftermathphoenix.com.

Restaurant Week announces fall dates

The Arizona Restaurant Association’s (ARA) biannual 10-day culinary exploration will return this month with the 2025 Fall Arizona Restaurant Week (ARW), which begins Friday, Sept. 19, and runs through Sunday, Sept. 28.

During Fall ARW, diners can experi-

ence tantalizing prix fixe menus at some of the state’s hottest restaurants as well as those hidden gems that are ready and waiting to be discovered. Typically, the three-course menus include a starter, main entrée and dessert for \$33, \$44 or \$55 per person, depending on the restaurant. Some establishments also include a beverage in this cost, while others offer wine or cocktail pairings to enhance diners’ experience for an added charge. Many restaurants also offer their Fall ARW menus to go.

The menus presented during Fall ARW feature a mix of restaurants’ most popular dishes as well as some new dishes that are not usually on the menu, offering guests the opportunity to enjoy their favorite meals for a deal or try something new. This unique menu presentation also allows chefs to stretch their culinary muscles, get creative and give diners something a little outside the box or a dish that features limited availability and hyper-local ingredients.

During Arizona Restaurant Week, the Arizona Restaurant Association works hard to represent a wide range of culinary flavors, cooking styles and restaurant types. Establishments of varying price points participate in Arizona Restaurant Week, presenting diners with the opportunity to explore a vast range of choices when it comes to cuisine, atmosphere and location.

While there are nearly 150 establishments already committed to participating in this year’s Fall ARW, ARA expects that list to grow to close to 300 by the beginning of the event. By Monday, Sept. 1, a complete list of participating restaurants as well as their 2025 Fall ARW menus, will be posted

online at <https://arizonarestaurantweek.com>. New menus will continually be added as restaurants confirm their participation.

Two Arizona craft brewers merge

Two of Arizona’s celebrated craft breweries, Huss Brewing Co. and PHX Beer Co., announced a merger in August. United under a recently established umbrella company, Zonafide Beverages LLC., the collective paves the way for “innovation and growth,” the companies said, and is poised to “expand into multiple beverage categories while continuing to deliver high-quality craft beers.”

The breweries will retain independent identities as well as brands and plan to consolidate their brewing in Tempe. This strategic merger positions the combined company as the second-largest craft brewer in Arizona, with a projected production of nearly 30,000 barrels annually. The brewing vision will be guided by Jeff Huss, co-founder of Huss Brewing, who will assume the role as brewmaster.

Founded in 2013, Huss Brewing Co. (www.hussbrewing.com) is the realization of a shared passion for craft beer by husband-and-wife team Jeff and Leah Huss, who bring a combined 35 years of expertise in the brewing industry. Officially established in 2019, PHX Beer Co. (www.phxbeerco.com) rapidly became a premier craft brewery known for its medal winning innovative brews and commitment to quality.

Spinato’s brings the pizza, guests add the ‘kindness’

For the third consecutive year, Spinato’s Pizzeria & Family Kitchen, in partnership with the Kenneth Anthony Spinato Foundation, is issuing “The Kindness Challenge” to its guests to help homeless individuals and raise funds for St. Vincent de Paul. The fundraiser runs through the month of September, National Kindness Month.

Spinato’s team members and other volunteers are working to create several hundred Kindness Bags full of toiletries, snacks, water, socks and other items. Restaurant guests are encouraged to purchase the Kindness Bags for a \$5 donation and distribute them to someone they see who is in need. One hundred percent of the proceeds benefit St. Vincent de Paul.

On Monday, Oct. 20, Spinato’s will

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

take the kindness challenge a step further by making fresh pizza in St. Vincent de Paul’s kitchen and serving it to the guests of its family dining room.

Diners who stop by Spinato’s from Sept. 1 to Oct. 31, also can enjoy the “WOZ-Inspired Pizza,” created with spicy chipotle peach sauce, mozzarella cheese, grilled chicken, red onion, sliced peach, ricotta cheese and fresh basil.

For the past three years, Spinato’s has collaborated with popular pizza and beer influencer Steven Larson, known as The Wizard of Za, and a local brewery, this year it is the female-owned The Hundred Mile Brewing Company, to create a delicious limited-time pizza and craft beer pairing.

The pizza is paired with a peach Hazy India Pale Ale (IPA). The craft beer is dry hopped with Nectarone hops

from New Zealand that give off a nectarine and peach flavor, fresh peach puree and bright citrusy bittering hops. A large “WOZ-Inspired Pizza” costs \$30.25 and a pint of the special Hundred Mile craft beer is \$6.50.

For additional information, visit www.spinatospizzeria.com or www.stvincentdepaul.net.

September means tomatoes at Persepshen

At the uptown Phoenix restaurant Persepshen, owners Jason and Katherine Dwight keep their menu focused on local, organic and sustainable dishes and drinks. In September, that means tomatoes.

During the season, diners will find crispy fried pickled green tomatoes on the menu, made with locally grown,

organic September harvests that are brined in a spicy dill pickle brine, then coated in a savory garlic-herb breading crust and fried to golden perfection. Topped with a drizzle of creamy butter-milk herb dressing and delicate shavings of aged pecorino cheese, the owners says that this dish “bursts with bold flavor and seasonal freshness in every bite.”

Find Persepshen at 4700 N. Central Ave. For additional information, call 602-935-2932 or visit www.persepshenarizona.com.

Local roaster hosts coffee class

Phoenix specialty coffee roaster Press Coffee is debuting its Coffee 202 class, offering an update to the recently returned Coffee 101 experience. These coffee classes are an interactive and con-

versational group experience where people can elevate their knowledge about coffee history, roasting and tasting.

In Coffee 202, participants will discover Gesha – which the roaster says is one of the world’s finest coffee varieties – processed four unique ways, including thermal and non-thermal processes. Taste your way through coffees from Press’ Panama farm, while exploring fermentation, elevation, terroir and how each shape flavor and aroma. Guests are seated at a community high-top table for a one-hour experience. Tickets are \$50 and include a \$50 subscription credit valid online. Coffee 202 classes are offered once or twice a month at the flagship Roastery location at 10443 N. 32nd St., Phoenix.

To learn more, visit www.press-coffee.com/classes.

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