

Wrangler NEWS

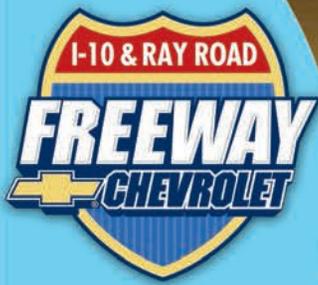
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May 3-16, 2014
Vol . 25, No. 8



.....
Grand Canyon becomes a grand destination for renown boys chorus from Regensburg, Germany - Details, Pg. 3

Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman



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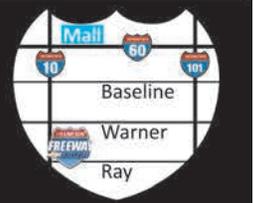
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Cover Story: A grand trip to the Grand Canyon proves memorable in many ways German boys choir shares its magical talents in an equally magical venue

Editor's note: Wrangler News contributor M.V. Moorhead and photographer Billy Hardiman accompanied members of the famed, centuries-old boys choir from Germany during their Sister Cities outing to the Grand Canyon. The following is Moorhead's account of the trip. Photos on Page 8.

One of Tempe's nine sister cities is Regensburg, Germany, at the confluence of the Danube and Regen rivers in Bavaria. And one of the prides of Regensburg—along with having Tempe, Ariz., for a sister city—is the Regensburger Domspatzen, the boys choir of Regensburg Cathedral.

The boys of the Domspatzen could perhaps be considered nephews of Tempe, and in April their American relatives got to babysit them for a few eventful days—and let them sing for their keep.

One of the oldest and most respected boys choirs in Europe, the Domspatzen (“Cathedral sparrows”) traces its lineage back to 975 A.D.—more than 500 years before the first European would lay eyes on the Grand Canyon.

Almost another 500 years after that, the boys from Regensburg visited the canyon and released their angelic tones into its vast chasm. It was a moment when geological glory met musical glory.

Just hours after an evening performance at Tempe Center for the Arts, the Domspatzen choir rolled north out of Tempe before dawn in a double-

decker tour bus and arrived a few hours later in Williams, then boarded the Grand Canyon Railroad for the remaining leg of the trip to the canyon.

It was aboard this handsome old train that they again broke into song: For the benefit of the conductors, they performed a spine-tingling rendition of “The Lion Sleeps Tonight.”

After they finished, Angie Thornton of Tempe Sister Cities remarked:

“Every time they impromptu sing, I just want them to keep singing.”

She wasn't disappointed by the rest of the day.

After a quick buffet lunch at Grand Canyon Village, the Domspatzen performed a concert at Shrine of the Ages, a multi-use, multi-denominational chapel not far from the South Rim.

Their set was a mix of devotional and secular works ranging from “Amazing Grace” to selections by Mozart, Mendelssohn and Brahms—the encore was a sublime version of his famous “Lullaby.” There was more texture and variety to this music than one might expect—while the upper-register voices of the younger boys are ethereal, they are undergirded and given substance by a surprisingly potent rumble of bass from the older boys.

But having finished this short indoor program, they weren't done singing. The Domspatzen boys, along with the mayor of Regensburg, the Cathedral's priest and other dignitaries, both German and American, next made the short hike to the rim.

Although I've lived in Arizona for more than 20 years, I, like (probably all of) the boys, was among those seeing the canyon up close for the first time, confronted with the overwhelming, word-begging beauty—and dizzying cosmic vertigo—of the view, on a flawless, cloudless late April afternoon.

The commonplace about the canyon is that no photo or film can do it justice. This certainly proved true for me. The sight was majestic and moving, although my own fear of heights also made it unnerving, and the presence of a bunch of tussling, roughhousing German boys next to a drop of several thousand feet didn't ease this anxiety.

The lads were persuaded to sing a couple more times along the trail, their dulcet sound floating down among the craggy impressionist sculptures carved by the Colorado River. Just as the canyon can't be done justice in photos, I doubt that the exquisite quality of the Domspatzen's music could be captured by a recording.

The surprised visitors present that day were lucky indeed.

At lunch, one of the boys, Max, explained how the choir works. It's connected both to the Cathedral, for whom it provides music, and to a “gymnasium” (high school).

“There are some very nice traditional songs,” said Max, 17. “But many love the modern music more because it's...” He searches for the right word, can't

— CHORUS, Page 9



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Commentary

Goodwill-store protest shows how neighborhood activism works

By Diana Whittle

When Goodwill Stores announced plans to open a sales and donation outlet in the McClintock Fountains center at Warner and McClintock in Tempe, neighbors were quick to voice their concerns.

Residents who live in several subdivisions near the center, including Sunburst Farms, Alta Mira and Circle G Ranches, met with the center's leasing agent and representatives of Goodwill, according to Sandy Swanson, a 37-year resident of Tempe.

Swanson said she first learned about Goodwill's intentions while attending a public hearing on another matter. Her concerns led her to contact *Wrangler News* via email and ask about the possibility of media coverage.

"There are already Goodwill locations within a few miles of the proposed store, and the business does not seem to fit with the demographics of the area," she noted in her email.

In the end, though, Goodwill's application for a use permit was dropped by the organization, its spokesman noting they had decided to pursue other locations.

The process, however, has once again raised the question of how those in a community can effectively become involved in planning decisions before they are made.

In other words: Can neighborhood groups really impact change?

For Shannon Jallow, the manager of McClintock Fountains, the public response to Goodwill was a double-edged sword.

"Goodwill's decision to not move forward with their store in this location was in large part due to the residents' reaction. They also hoped to be up and running within 60 days and an appeal process with the city would have extended beyond that timeframe."

Jallow has heard from several residents who are pleased at Goodwill's decision to pursue another location, but she does have concerns that residents might have the impression that they can pick and choose every business that wants to locate in their neighborhood.

Swanson's feels more positive to the process and her answer is "yes," particularly because this isn't the first time she's encountered a proposed development that ran contrary to the desires of nearby residents.

"When we purchased our first home in south Tempe, in 1976 in Sunburst Farms, the area south of the canal was zoned one home per acre," recalls Swanson.

"At that time, this area was alfalfa fields surrounding the neighborhoods on 71st Street, Buena Vista, Calle de Caballos and Sunburst Farms."

That quickly changed, though, she said.

"When the city plan changed the zoning to higher density in south Tempe, we residents found

ourselves at many hearings to insulate ourselves in Sunburst Farms. We managed to get the developers of the property north of Sunburst to put in approximately one-acre lots backing up to our subdivision; then they had higher density in the remainder of the development.

"And, when a local dairy was sold, the developers wanted to put in more than 20 homes on the 10 acres. Again, residents of Sunburst Farms fought back and got them to put in only 13 lots, now known as Shady Lane."

Swanson and her Sunburst Farms neighbors were an early example of public participation, before the phrase became common vernacular among community activists.

Now an entire global organization, the International Association of Public Participation exists to iron out complex disagreements between developers and residents.

The organization defines public participation as a means to involve those who are affected by what occurs as part of the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable actions by providing participants with the guidance they need to become involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision.

The practice of public participation might involve public meetings, surveys, open houses, workshops, polling, citizen's advisory committees



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and other forms of direct involvement with the public.

In the development industry, the thorny issues that develop, along with the contrary attitudes of neighbors, are known as NIMBYS—"Not In My Backyard."

In Tempe, a well-organized Neighborhood Services Division has adopted the standards used by IAP2, as well as a 54-page guide entitled "Tempe Involving the Public," which is available to be downloaded from the city's website.

In addition, Amanda Nelson, public information officer for Community Development in Tempe, says that the city's notification process on upcoming projects is outlined in the Zoning and Development Code, which also can be found on-line.

"Certain projects are required to provide public notification through a sign posted on the site and mailings to neighbors close to the project," said Nelson. "Other projects are not required to provide such a notification."

And, if residents have a disagreement with a specific project or type of business proposal, they can testify at a hearing of the decision-making body.

"It depends upon the type of

permit or action, but the decision body can be the hearing officer, Development Review Commission or City Council," said Nelson.

A new way for Tempe residents to share their thoughts on local development is the Character Area project, which recently was launched to involve sections of the city that share a commonality of interests, demographics and needs.

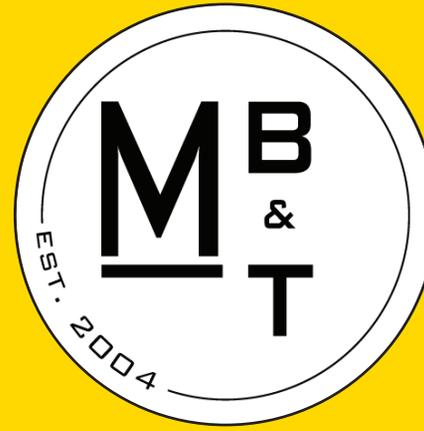
"Each character area may have issues distinct to their neighborhood, so what is important for one character area may not be for another," said Nelson.

Eventually, the character area plans will incorporate issues, needs and desires through consensus building.

"If a character area plan identifies the type or mix of businesses desired or unwanted, then the city has the ability through Economic Development to attract and through Community Development to encourage or discourage new uses consistent with the Character Area Plan," explained Nelson.

"For example, if a development goes to the Development Review Commission, the DRC can look to the

— ACTIVISM, Page 7



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Jerry Foster book signing May 10 at Tempe Library Longtime Valley broadcaster, pilot recounts his life in a new memoir

By M.V. Moorhead

“I had no education, I didn’t figure to be in broadcasting. I never even thought to be a pilot.”

These are among the random recollections of Jerry Foster, who, as longtime Valley residents will remember, became famous in Arizona both as a broadcaster and as a pilot, his growing-up days notwithstanding.

Now he’s trying for fame as an author, too.

From the early 1970s through the early ‘90s, Foster flew helicopter for several Valley radio and TV stations, gaining fans—along with no small amount of notoriety—by participating in rescues and manhunts in a daring and, in the FAA’s opinion, sometimes reckless manner.

As he explains in his memoir *Earthbound Misfit*, published through Amazon, his life on the ground was no less turbulent.

Foster signs the book (written

with Dee Dees) at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 10 at Tempe Public Library. It’s no easygoing collection of broadcasting anecdotes, however. “I had my ups and downs,” says Foster, and he’s understating.

Earthbound Misfit recounts Foster’s unpromising upbringing, his rocky military career, and his early days as a civilian helicopter pilot and instructor, training military pilots for Vietnam.

He also flew for the petrochemical industry in Louisiana, today recalling the mishap that sent him back to Arizona:

“I had to do a forced landing in a swamp. I had to spend the night, and I could hear those alligators out there. I’m an Arizona boy, so I got back here.”

He eventually became a traffic reporter for KOOL radio, flying the J-2 Autogyro—a sort of helicopter/airplane hybrid—made by McCulloch Aircraft Corporation. “They should have

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stuck with chainsaws," says Foster of McCulloch, remembering the vehicle, but he didn't have to fly it for long.

Within a couple of years Foster had moved to Channel 3, then to Channel 12, and later back to Channel 3. He was a local star, regarded as an unofficial member of area law enforcement and rescue teams. He's credited with saving a life or two. But a couple of dangerously overzealous—not to mention unfounded—pursuits of suspicious aircraft got him in hot water with the FAA.

Foster's book relates these and other troubles, including but not limited to involvement with bikers and drug traffickers, and a broken marriage. By the mid-'90s, Foster, chastened and humiliated, was out of TV and out of the pilot seat. He became a truck driver, and lost touch with almost everybody but his daughters.

"I kind of left the world for about ten years," he admits.

It was Facebook, of all things, that brought him back. Encouraged by his daughter, he signed on and discovered that he still had fans—many Arizonans remembered him fondly.

"So many people said, 'You came to my school,' or, 'You made me want to be a pilot,'" recalls Foster. This warm reception on social media led him to try his hand at autobiography. It also gave him a better outlook on his past: "I had a great career here in Arizona. I'm a winner already, because of the people."

Echoing Lou Gehrig, he concludes: "I'm the luckiest guy in the world."

Jerry Foster will sign *Earthbound Misfit* from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, May 10, at Tempe Public Library, 3500 S. Rural Road in Tempe.

For details call 480-350-5500.

Activism

From Page 5

Character Area plan for guidance in making their decision as well," said Nelson.

"The Character Area plan becomes the communication tool to inform developers of neighborhood expectations of design style, visual character, walking and biking connections, street appearance, uses, amenities, public spaces (parks, schools, city services and facilities), public art, public involvement, etc. "

The Character Areas project is also outlined on the city's website, and if the process sounds a little complex, Tempe staff insist that they are at the ready to explain the importance that they, the mayor and City Council put on public input.

Swanson agrees that it's vital for neighbors to make their feelings known to elected officials and developers.

"I feel that the public needs to understand that you must fight for what you have, or want, or you will lose it because of apathy. We must be an informed citizenry to maintain our neighborhoods."

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Choir members and their Sister Cities hosts took a moment from their day-long schedule to share a photo memory.

—Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman



Chorus

From Page 3

find it, so he snaps his fingers a few times in a jazzy beat.

“We love the modern stuff.”

Max has been with the choir since he was nine. One could theoretically be a member until the age of 20, though it would mean failing one’s graduation exams two years in a row.

This seems unlikely in Max’s case. Asked what he’d like to do for a career, he says “Something technical, because my language...” he shrugs apologetically. “There are others better than me.”

He says this in better-enunciated English than one expects from the average American 17-year-old.

After some souvenir shopping, the party was herded back onto the bus and driven to a dinner of fajitas at the Weatherford Hotel in downtown Flagstaff, then back down I-17 to the Valley, rolling into the parking lot of Tempe Public Library well after midnight.

It was seriously exhausted boys that stumbled off the bus to their waiting host families.

But they had been given lifelong memories that day, and with their music they had created some lifelong memories for all of us, too.

Sister City organizer Neuheisel recalls group’s 1950s origins

“President Eisenhower started it, in 1956,” explains one of the founders of the Tempe Sister Cities program. “(Eisenhower’s) purpose was simplicity itself: Promote international friendship.”

Almost 60 years later, more than 2,000 cities in 130-plus countries around the globe have become partners in the 34th president’s dream organization.

“The motto is ‘Bringing the World Together, One Friendship at a Time,’” said Dick Neuheisel.

Dick, with his wife Jane—“We never had a Baby Sally,” she jokes—have been involved in the program since its early days. The couple founded Tempe Sister Cities in 1971, to offer student, teacher and professional exchange programs.

Skopje, Macedonia—still part of Yugoslavia in those days—was Tempe’s first such sibling, followed by Regensburg, Germany in ‘76.

Regensburg’s longtime mayor is one of those friendships that Eisenhower envisioned—Hans Schaidinger stayed with the Neuheisels during the recent visit to Tempe of the town’s famed Domspatzen cathedral choir.

Seven more towns have followed—Lower Hutt, New Zealand (1981); Zhenjiang, China (1989); Timbuktu, Mali (1991)—currently too impoverished and embattled for any exchange other than the occasional charitable care package; Beaulieu sur Mer, France (1997); Carlow, Ireland (1998); Cuenca, Ecuador (2008); and Cusco, Peru (2012). There may soon be a 10th—Trollhattan, Sweden.

“They’re already a friendship city,” says Neuheisel.

Tempe has proved a devoted relation: she’s been voted “Best Sister City” multiple times.

Asked what the most memorable moment that the Sister Cities program has brought him, Neuheisel considers, then, of the visit by the boys choir, says: “This may be one of them.”

For more information go to tempesistercities.org.

— M.V. Moorhead

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Sports Notebook . . .

Track competition unfolds with a record-breaking early start

By Alex Zener

It's that time of the year, when track and field athletes are hitting their peak performance, that school and meet records are broken. Corona's track athletes have broken a number of records the last few weeks including a school record that had held for 21 years and two meet records by the same runner minutes apart.

Ari Rodriguez's Corona track record of 4:10.10 in the 1600 meter run set April 10, 1993 had held up for over 21 years until it took another Rodriguez to break it.

Corona's senior **Nathan Rodriguez** broke his dad, Ari's, record by running the 1600 in 4:09.01 at the Arcadia Invitational, April 11 in Arcadia, CA. Although Rodriguez ended up second after being passed in the final few meters, it did not diminish his accomplishment.

"When I was crossing the line at 4:10 for the full mile, I knew I had

broken my dad's record but it took a long time to sink in," said Nathan. "It was something I had worked towards for years and had constantly felt the pressure, like a big shadow hanging over me, to surpass my dad's record while still at Corona. It was slightly surreal."

Holding the school record for 21 years and then to have it broken by his son must have been surreal for the father as well.

"It was a lot of fun holding that school record for so long," said Ari. "I knew it would eventually go down and my son has wanted to break it for a while now. I could not be happier. He deserves it after all the hard work he has put in these past few years."

Rodriguez traveled to Walnut, CA, the following week to compete in the Mt. SAC Relays winning the Boys Brook PR Mile, April 19, crossing the finish line at 4:12.89 after going out strong and leading the entire race. He received a Golden Ticket to the Brooks

PR Invitational in June.

Traveling to both Arcadia and Mt. SAC with Rodriguez was another Aztec senior **Tevin Mayfield** who gained valuable experience that led to a record setting performance at the Tempe City Meet April 26.

"Mt. SAC was an incredible experience," said Mayfield. "Besides warming up next to World Class athletes, I set a new season best in the 110 hurdles at 14.22 and a lifetime best in the 300 hurdles at 37.87. And my times have dropped since that date."

Mayfield not only won both the hurdle events at the Tempe City Meet the following week but set new meet and school records. He ran a season best of 14.13 in the 110 hurdles beating the old meet record of 14.20 and an incredible fast and PR of 37.38 in the 300 hurdles surpassing the old meet record of 38.47.

"It felt great to break both city meet records, because I got to leave my mark on Tempe City Track and Field as I continue chasing my dreams at Colorado State University," said Mayfield.

Rodriguez and Mayfield both set hefty individual goals for their senior track season but are very focused on winning the state track meet as a team and breaking school records. Rodriguez is after the 3200 meter run school

record of 8:54 set back in the day by his dad's old teammate, Nathan Nutter.

Helping fulfill the state championship run are several other members of Corona's team who broke some records of their own at the Tempe City Meet.

Jackie Martin, besides winning both the 200 meter dash and the 400 meter dash, broke the meet record in the 400 as a freshman by crossing the finish line in 57.52.

The Aztec relay teams did exceptionally well, according to coach **Tim Kelly**.

"One of the most impressive aspects of the Tempe City Meet is that every one of our 4x400 relay teams won," said Kelly. "We swept the freshman, JV and varsity races."

The girl's 4x400 varsity relay team of **Grace Ashu, Olivia Van Vleet, Martin and Aery Ware** not only won but set a new meet record of 3:57.26.

Also beating the competition was the boys 4x400 varsity relay team of **Nicholas VanderKnoop, Nick Creasman, Nilesh Bissasuer and Jamaree Johnson** as did the boys 4x800 relay team of Creasman, Rodriguez, **Blake Fischer** and **Andrew Trusswell** finishing in 7:57.10.

The freshman boys 4x800 relay team of **Liam Kovocho, Daniel Bish,**

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Slade Sumners and Colt Peters broke the school record.

The girls 4x800 team of **Renee Clary**, **McKenzie Harder**, **Amberly Ricks** and **Kelly Naumann** won at the varsity level.

Other top finishers according to Kelly included **Ryan Normand** winning the varsity 3200 meter run, **Mayfield** taking second in the 200 meter dash 15 minutes after setting a new meet record in the hurdles and **Naumann** running the second fastest time in Corona school history in the mile.

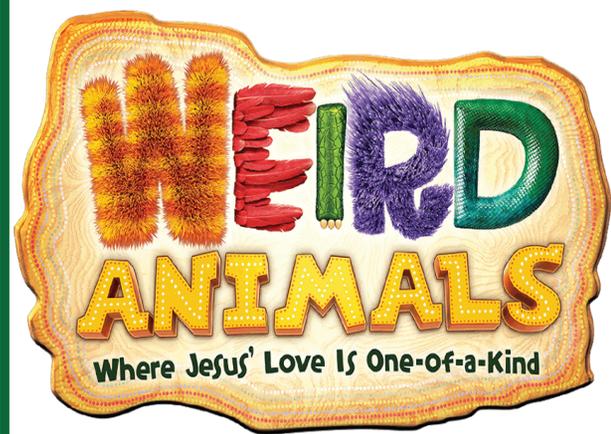
In the field events, **Sam Shultz** cleared 6'7", the same height that earned him a first place at the Arcadia Invitational, to take first in the high jump. Corona swept that event taking the top three places when **Colin Freeman** and **Josh Onwordi** took second and third place.

Matt Eckels, who was leading after the first day, ended up taking second in the pole vault after clearing the pole at 15-00.00. **Sarah Holditch** hit the 10 foot mark in the pole vault for the second time according to Kelly.

Other city champs included **Laney Gordon** running the 400 meter run at the freshman level, **Sierra Firestone** in the 300 hurdles, **Kylie McCloskey** the JV 300 hurdles, **Alex Hart** in the JV 3200 and 1600 meter runs, **Andrew Eversden** in the JV 800 meter run, **Wes Jensen** freshman pole vault, **Mitchel Warnock** freshman pole vault, **Bish** in the freshman 800 meter run and **Kovach** freshman 1600 meter run.

Corona's boys team has set their sights on winning the state championship this season.

— NOTEBOOK, Page 19



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US 60



Common Core curriculum focuses on more enlightened graduates, skilled workforce Teachers gearing up to 'expect more' as part of new educational strategy

By Diana Whittle

With the Common Core curriculum fully implemented into the curriculum of Tempe classrooms, educators are broadening their focus to explain the new learning expectations to students and parents.

Common Core curriculum was adopted in 2010 in Arizona, as well as in 46 other states, to create the next generation of K-12 standards in English language arts and mathematics, according to Lorah Neville, Kyrene's director of curriculum and learning services.

"These shared standards allow us to see how Arizona students measure up nationally on clearly articulated outcomes, not general knowledge and skills," said Neville.

"We could not do that with the previous standards or assessments."

Using these standards, learners are required to think more critically and become more involved in justifying their responses when answering higher-level questions, says Neville. Arizona believes that the use of the Common Core curriculum will help to ensure more enlightened graduates and a skilled workforce.

Now referred to as the College and Career Ready Standards in Arizona, these expectations can be found online at the state's Department of Education

website: <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/>
For teachers, the biggest change in working with the new College and Career standards is in the delivery of instruction at a more rigorous level.

"In addition, the new standards require students to apply what they have learned, often in unique or novel ways. Students must master more complex text at earlier grades than ever before," said Neville.

"So, we continue to provide teachers training to ensure that they deliver high-quality instruction in the classroom."

Tempe-based educators want all parents to be knowledgeable about the transition to College and Career readiness standards, so students can be prepared for higher-learning opportunities and the workforce.

As a result, Kyrene Middle School recently hosted Expect More Arizona to help explain the standards and discuss ways that parents can support their child's education.

Expect More Arizona is a high-expectations movement dedicated to making Arizona education the best in the nation.

Expect More Arizona champions high-quality education, from birth through career, for all Arizona children and students.

The college- and career-ready agenda is a set of policies that aims to ensure all students have

the academic knowledge and skills needed to be successful in post-secondary education, training and on the job.

Nathan Maruca, listed as a 2014 Rodel Exemplary Teacher finalist, is a fifth-grade teacher at Aguilar Elementary School in the Tempe Elementary District.

He says the new standards are already demonstrating results in his classroom.

"The implementation of Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards is making a difference in student success beyond the classroom," said Maruca.

"I am spending less time lecturing and more time teaching critical thinking skills so that my students have the ability to discover the correct answer, but also can explain the process that they took to work through the problem," he said.

According to Expect More Arizona research, in the new standards, math instruction is no longer focused on rote memorization and the recall of facts.

Teachers use problems that may arise in everyday life.

After what is designed to be meaningful student conversation about each problem, students hopefully discover that there are multiple ways to find the solutions.

The efforts of Expect More Arizona can be found on their website at: www.expectmorearizona.org

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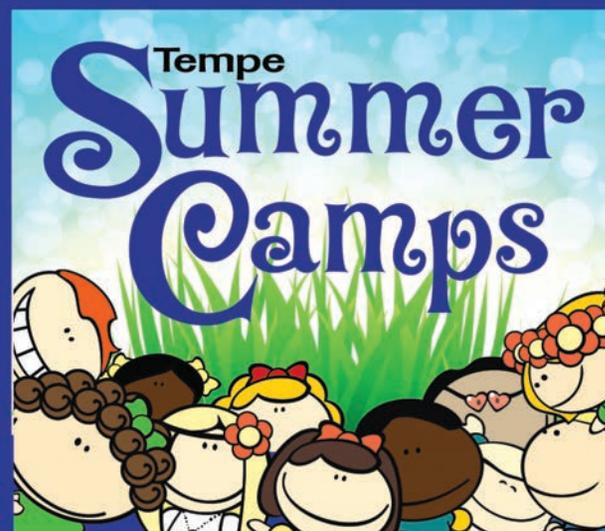
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Coveted A+ rank for 2 area schools

Corona del Sol High School and Akimel a-Al Elementary School in the Kyrene School District are among 34 public schools named winners of Arizona Educational Foundation's coveted A+ School of Excellence competition for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Since 1983, AEF has honored exemplary pre-kindergarten through 12th grade public schools in Arizona with this program, which gives recognition to outstanding public schools, and strives to create a comprehensive framework of successful programs and practices that other schools throughout the state and nation might adopt.

Applicant schools are evaluated in the areas of student focus and support, school culture, active teaching and learning, curriculum, leadership, community and parent involvement and assessment data.

Applications are made available to pre-kindergarten through 12th

grade public schools statewide. Evaluation is based on a lengthy written application submitted by the school and a rigorous site visit conducted by a team of judges.

In the application, each school provides demographic information, a description of current programs and practices, documentation of parent and community involvement, and a profile of the school's principal and his or her commitment to excellence, equity, service and sustained high achievement.

Preparation of each school's application involves collaboration among all stakeholders including students, faculty, staff, administrators and community members.

Brent Brown is the principal at Corona; Mike Deignan is principal at Akimel.

A+ School of Excellence schools receive \$500 and a banner designating it as an honors recipient.

Staff and faculty at the award-winning schools will be eligible for partial scholarships from Argosy University Phoenix.

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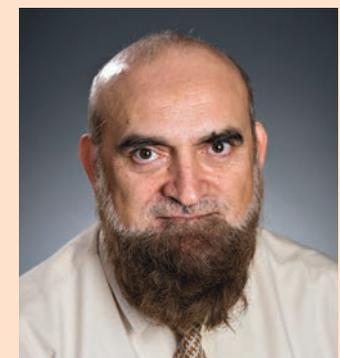
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- A new treatment for severe, persistent asthma.

Dr. Salim is board certified in Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep and Internal Medicine and completed his fellowship at Queens Hospital/Long Island Jewish Medical Center in New York. He has 35 years of experience treating advanced respiratory diseases such as asthma, COPD and lung cancers using minimally invasive techniques. He is a Fellow of the American College of Chest Physicians.

Dr. Salim practices in Chandler.



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Adult, teen vols having huge impact on hospital costs

Volunteers at Chandler Regional Medical Center and its sister hospital Mercy Gilbert racked up nearly 10,000 hours of service last year, a contribution hospital officials say would be equal to more than \$1.7 million if calculated in paid hours.

Both Chandler Regional and Mercy Gilbert are members of the Dignity Health consortium of hospitals.

Nearly 500 adult and 187 teens participate in the hospitals' volunteer program.

"It never ceases to amaze me the skills and life experiences our volunteers bring to Dignity Health," said Barb Farmer, program manager of the Volunteer Services Department.

"We partner people to create service areas that align with their passion, and it makes for a dynamic relationship.

"By doing so, we enhance the patient experience, provide support for our staff, give people meaning and purpose in their lives, and create community partners and hospital advocates."

In addition, Chandler 395 new recruits attended

volunteer orientation; "Paws for Patients" volunteers and their pets visited 31,698 guests; courtesy cart drivers provided 52,146 rides through the parking lot; Eucharistic ministers visited 14,676 patients; \$46,000 in scholarships was given to students pursuing a career in health care; and \$95,426 in equipment and supplies were purchased from gift shop proceeds.

New asst. chief at Chandler PD

Bruce Ciolli, a commander with the Scottsdale Police Department, has been named Chandler's new assistant police chief, replacing Dave Lind who retired in January. He will begin his new post in June. Ciolli's duties will include helping to oversee management of the Desert Breeze police substation in west Chandler.

Ciolli has worked with Scottsdale PD since 1993, the last three years as downtown district commander. Children's Justice.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Justice Studies from Arizona State University and a master's degree in Education from Northern Arizona University.

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MITEY MITE			105	105	85						
CADET				109	109	89					
JR. PEE WEE				119	119	119	99				
PEE WEE					134	134	134	114			
JR. MIDGET						149	149	149	129		
MIDGET							174	174	174	174	154
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10 Unlimited				unlimited	unlimited	unlimited					
12 Unlimited						unlimited	unlimited	unlimited			
14 Unlimited								unlimited	unlimited	unlimited	

TINY MITE & MITEY MITE: Instructional Division, with special rules (e.g. Coach allowed on the field & no blitzing)

Tuned in . . .

Cassette tapes enjoying a comeback, thanks to Tempe group

By Chase Kamp

While the music industry continues to suffer from drooping annual sales figures, the resurgence of the vinyl record format has provided a beacon of hope.

MP3s are still king, but fans young and old are buying LPs again for big album art, pristine audio quality and old-fashioned nostalgia.

The lowly cassette tape would appear to have none of these attributes.

They're a bit dinky, don't have the crystalline sonic appeal of records and never really got their due in the marketplace. Reaching their highest prominence in the early '80s, cassettes were crushed by the advent of compact discs and sent to the cut-out bin.

Yet they're being dusted off by young fans once again for their humble charm, and independent record labels are issuing new music on the once-blighted tape.

Tempe's Rubber Brother Records, run by ASU alum Robbie Pfeiffer and friend Gage Oleson, has become a flagship for local bands. In just one year of operation, they have arranged over 50 cassette releases.

"Even if we're putting out a band from somewhere else, it's part of that Phoenix sound," Pfeiffer said.

In addition to local acts, the label has released music from Japanese band Boys Age and is slated to release music by Baby Nelson and the Philistines from Guadalajara, Mexico.

Like most of the new cadre of cassette labels, Rubber Brother is hardly striking out like Luddites: the label's entire catalogue is available for streaming and downloading on the label's Bandcamp.com page.

Yet there is clear disdain for the compact disc. Professionally manufactured CDs often have a

cheap unit price only if ordered by the thousands, a volume much too large for a local operation. While do-it-yourself CD-Rs can be easily burned at home and furnished with album art, they have a flimsy throwaway quality compared to a sturdy tape inside a carefully designed J-card.

Turnaround time is quick, too. In fact, Pfeiffer was in the midst of prepping for that night's tape release show for Tempe synth-rock outfit Wavelengths. The band had turned in the final mixes of their album that morning. Rubber Brother would be dubbing and labeling a cassette to be released to the masses that very evening.

"It's not the preferred method," Pfeiffer laughs, "but it's often how it ends up happening."

The price is also right: most young people never leave home without a sleek smartphone or iPod loaded with MP3s, but entry into cassette culture runs a paltry couple of bucks. "You can get a top-of-the-line cassette deck at Goodwill any day of the week," Pfeiffer said.

Last year, Pfeiffer served a summer internship at premier California garage-rock label Burger Records, one of the most prominent and prolific cassette-only labels. He was inspired by Burger's ability to pull bands and artists under a banner of fun-loving community instead of high-priced collectible commerce.

"It was an identity, a sound, an attitude," he said. "I'd never seen that before."

Will cassette tapes win a second chance in the sun like the vinyl record? Though they wield an overlooked power, Pfeiffer said the medium hardly matters: fans really just want the music.

"It doesn't have to be on tape or on a record on in your iTunes account, it can be on anything," he said.

— Chase Kamp is a graduate of Corona del Sol High School and Arizona State University.

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Padres face off vs Horizon in vball contest on Marcos' home court (top photo). Corona (below) competed against Mesa Dobson.



Valley Christian in a home game against Horizon Honors H.S. VC is 15-9 for the season.



Corona lacrosse competed against Gilbert High in a home contest.

High school sports: Month in review

Corona's track and field athletes have broken a number of records the last few weeks including a school record that had held for 21 years and two meet records by the same runner minutes apart.

— Wrangler News photos
by Billy Hardiman



Notebook

From Page 11

The team has one last chance to qualify athletes for the state meet at the Last Chance track meet to be held April 30 at Desert Vista.

"We have approximately 44 athletes qualified when you combine the boys and girls teams," said Kelly. "We have to stay focused, take care of each other and keep healthy these last couple of weeks so as a team we have a chance to fulfill our goals."

The more athletes Corona can qualify the better chance the team has of winning the state championship to be held May 7 at Mesa Community College.

Marcos Track and Field — The Padres have short-distance speed on the track this season winning both the girls and boys 100 meter dash events and setting personal bests records in several events at the Tempe City Meet April 26.

Nastasia Peevy started the girls team off on high note running her fastest time this season of 12.45 in the prelims and winning it all in the finals with a time of 12.50. **Kiana Blakey** also ran her personal best to finish in sixth place with a time of 14.21. Blakey placed third in the 200 meter dash well.

The girls 4x100 relay team out raced every Division I team to set their fastest time of the season and take home first place crossing the finish line at 49.62.

Both the girls 4x400 and 4x800 meter relay teams placed third.

Other top 10 finishes for the girls team included **Christina Winkler** sixth and **An Tran** eighth in the 100 meter hurdles while **Maria Romero** fifth

and **Teleya Bailey** ninth in the 200 meter dash. **Vianna Lopez** was tenth in the 400 meter dash.

Marcos freshman **Drew Braylen** did well in the field events finishing second among the freshman and fourth overall in both the discus, with a personal best throw of 78-06.00, and shot put. Teammate **Hebah Bahta** was third overall in the shot put and ninth overall in the discus.

Not to be outdone, **Josh Eckley** had his fastest time this season winning the boys 100 meter dash in 10.80 barely beating Isaiah Ford of Desert Vista who finished at 10.81. **Avery Sanders** was second in his age group as was **Shaun Richards** while **Carter Lindsay** was third and **Marcus Maldonado** and **TJ Miller** ninth.

The Padres were proved to be able to compete in the short distances such as the 200 meter dash with Richards and Sanders taking third in their age groups while **Kyle Lawrence** was fourth. Likewise in the 400 meter dash with **Jordan Johnson** taking first place in the JV division.

Ryan Capeloto was ninth in the 300 meter hurdles and **Jacob Moreno** tenth in the 800 meter run.

The boys 4x100 meter relay team dominated just like the girls 4x100 relay team beating out the other schools to take home first place.

In the field events, **Carl Pompa** was fifth in the discus and **Marcus Organek** was tenth. **Cole Liko** was third and **Mike Lewellin** sixth in the high jump while **Andrew Johnson** threw the shot put 42 feet to take eight place and **Malique Sharp** jumped 42-2.75 to place fourth in the triple jump.

The Padres will be competing at the Last Chance track meet at Desert Vista on April 30 in the hopes of qualifying more athletes to compete at the state track meet May 7.



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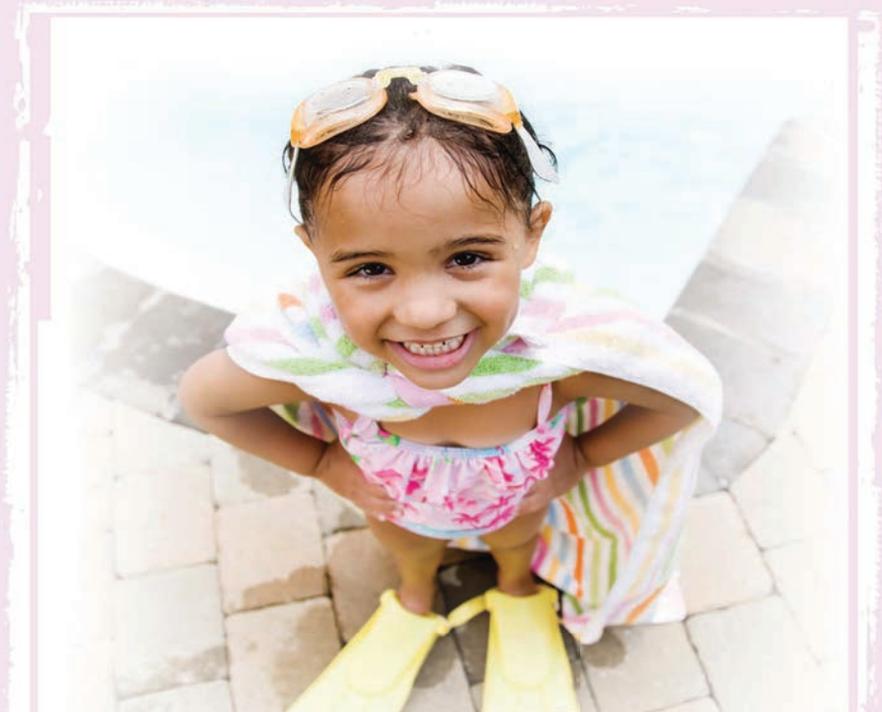
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Why Wrangler News?

Because where you live is where we live.



Whether you're in one of Tempe's new 'Character Areas' or one of west Chandler's cozy residential communities, we're your neighbors. We work here, shop here, dine here, live here. Since 1991, you've seen Wrangler News at your schools, your churches, the places you do business. And, of course, in your driveway every other Saturday. It's because this is our home, too—a place where the best of two cities is blended into a community with common interests known as the Kyrene Corridor.

The four of us—Don, Tracy, Chelsea, Billy—take pride in bringing you news and features about what's happening in your neighborhood because they're our neighborhoods too. For almost 25 years, members of our Wrangler News team have been here to provide a glimpse of the people and places that make up our combined communities. It's a job we love in a place we love—because we're part of it.

We hope you enjoy Wrangler News and invite you to let us know any time we can offer help with a question or share ideas about your community—our community. Our phone number is 480-966-0845, and we're here from 9 to 5 Monday through Friday. Or simply drop by our office in Warner Century Plaza on Warner Road just west of the Price/101 Freeway.

We're your neighbors. And after all, isn't that what neighbors are for? We'll see you soon!

Marcos de Niza orchestra launches a campaign to replace aging instruments

By Don Kirkland

Skills learned on the playing field can build more than just athletic prowess. They can lay a foundation for teamwork, for tenacity, for the ability to confront life's challenges head on.

And while the route may be less strenuous, the roadmap to a successful, rewarding adulthood lies within the reach of many young people who pursue yet another passion: orchestral music.

That's not just one man's theory. It's the lifelong zeal nourished by Scott Glasser on the campus of Marcos de Niza High School, where he has taught orchestra for the last two years.

"Music opens a pathway for many of my students. While some may not pursue athletics or connect to every academic subject, they often find a home in music."

Glasser took on the orchestra-director post two years ago after teaching music in a declining Catskills region of New York, where small, struggling communities dotted the landscape. It was an interesting and diverse area, he said, small and rural. His classroom accommodated hopeful young musicians in the wide span of ages from fourth to 12th grade, and the socioeconomics of the area made the job all the more challenging.

So when Glasser learned about an opportunity to succeed longtime Marcos orchestra director Ellen McCurdy in Tempe, he was quick to accept the offer.

And while the Marcos assignment has provided opportunities on a much larger scale than his previous position, it also has resulted in a new dilemma: wider interest in music and thus the need for more instruments.

So far, with a small stockpile of musical instruments available for loan, Glasser has managed to keep up with the demand. Now, however, he's finding many instruments are either beyond repair or otherwise unplayable.

Recognizing that his supply of

instruments was running thin, Glasser and his students entered a competition sponsored by the National Educational Music Co., first prize for which was a \$10,000 contribution to be used for the purchase of new orchestral equipment for the winning school.

The orchestra members submitted the required video of a recent performance, and have been waiting for final online votes that were due to be tallied April 30.

While the group is optimistic, they know they're up against some serious talent from schools all over the country.

Win or lose, however, Glasser will continue to have faith in the skill and determination of his young musicians.

"No matter what, we have a very solid program here; it's what drew me to Marcos." Which relates back to his belief in music as a springboard for his students' futures, and as a way to instill in them a lifelong appreciation of how music can have a positive influence on their lives.



Orchestra hopes to replace worn-out instruments.
— Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman

"Not every student is going to be an all-state performer," said Glasser.

"But by gaining an appreciation of music, they also learn critical skills that they can use across the board: how to problem-solve, how to work as a team, how to think outside the box."

Much as their athlete counterparts learn to do on the playing field.

To view the orchestra members' submission, visit www.nemc.com/contests/vote.

A message from Dr. David Schauer Why Kyrene Board service is vital to community

One of the main responsibilities of the Kyrene School District Governing Board is to work on the budget for the district.

While this work is complicated and requires a great deal of time, our elected board members work collaboratively with district leaders to make the best possible decisions for our students and staff.



Recently, the Kyrene Governing Board devoted extra effort to ensure there is strong understanding about specific budgetary items. I'd like to publicly thank these volunteer

board members who willingly scheduled additional meetings and sessions for this purpose.

I encourage the people of our community to attend a board meeting or view one online, to see the district's dedicated board members in action as they ask lots of questions and share comments about their individual viewpoints.

Kyrene is fortunate to have such committed board members.

Every two years there is an election for Governing Board seats, as the members of the team have staggered, four-year terms of office. If you or someone you know is interested in running for the Kyrene Governing Board, come to the Board

Candidate Overview from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 12, at the District Office, 8700 S. Kyrene Road, Tempe, to learn more about it.

If elected, you would be joining a group that takes whatever time is necessary to make thoughtful, well-informed decisions that will best support the overall work of the district.

After weathering a serious state budget crisis these past few years—where valued programs and services had to be reduced, employees laid off and salaries frozen—this year the Governing Board was able to work with district and employee association leaders to restore some programs and address compensation.

Kyrene schools are a point of pride in our communities. Whether or not you have children in our schools, a strong educational system prepares young people for a productive future, adds to neighborhood values, supports economic development and enhances our community's quality of life.

If you feel you can contribute—as a volunteer or sponsor, or by running for the Governing Board—please don't hesitate to contact us.

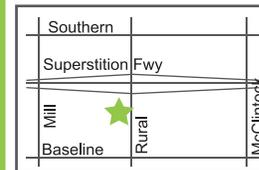
Information: 480-541-1000.

Dr. David Schauer is superintendent of the Kyrene School District.

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Scholarship honors memory of a favorite student

By Chelsea Martin

Corona senior Jessie Briggs is the first recipient of the Blake Norvell "Smiles" Scholarship, symbolizing the beginning of a lifelong honor to the man who left a mark on all those who surrounded him.

Briggs was recently chosen by the scholarship committee—which included Norvell's mother Stephanie, father Bill, sister Juliana, girlfriend Briana, friend Maycie Thornton and others—from among a slew of candidates.

Norvell, known for his welcoming, contagious personality, his accomplishments and his spirited, unrelenting love for Corona, was remembered by family and friends who felt the scholarship was an ideal way to honor his passing.

"We based our decision on academics, community service and, most importantly, leadership qualities that we saw in Jessie's application," Thornton said.

"We also asked students to include a recommendation from a teacher and to write a "rap"



Presenting check at surprise ceremony were, from left, Maycie Thornton, Briana Wagner, Carrie Almeter, Brett Miller (behind), Daryl Coates, Stephanie Norvell, Bill Norvell, Jessie Briggs, Angie Briggs, Juliana Norvell.

— Photo courtesy Maycie Thornton

about why they love Corona, which impacted our decision. We really felt like Jessie's positive energy radiated through her application, and she reminded us all of Blake."

Recipient Briggs said she couldn't be more humbled.

"I had no idea I was going to win the scholarship," Briggs said. "My mom encouraged me to fill out the application, but after a month went by I figured I would have heard by then, so I started to forget about it."

Family and friends of Norvell arrived at Corona on April 11, ready with an oversized check, flowers and big smiles to surprise Briggs with the news.

"I thought I was in trouble," Briggs said. "They called me out of class and the security guard said, 'Well, this must be important because it involves the principal. My mind was racing: what could I have possibly done?'"

To her amazement, just the opposite was awaiting her.

"Once I got down to the office there were all these people, including my mom, with flowers and a big \$1,000 check addressed to me," Briggs said. "I'm sure I looked embarrassed because I was so surprised. It was such a fun day."

Briggs added: "It's such an honor to be recognized for embodying similar characteristics to Blake's."

The "Smile" scholarship will be awarded annually to a Corona student.

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City of Tempe Page



June meetings continue planning efforts for two Character Areas

Participants in the ongoing process to define and plan for the future in the Corona/South Tempe and Kiwanis/The Lakes Character Areas should be advised of two upcoming meetings in June.

Tempe has created eight character areas that represent the unique personalities of particular geographic parts of the city.

The City Council and staff are working closely with each area's stakeholders to develop a vision that celebrates current assets and plans for future needs. Between 2014 and 2018, the city will focus on two areas per year.

Stakeholders in the Kiwanis/The Lakes Character Area will meet Monday, June 2, at 6:30 p.m., at Aguilar Elementary School, 5800 S. Forest Ave.

Those interested in the Corona/South Tempe Character Area will meet Thursday, June 5, at 6:30 p.m., at Arizona Community Church, 9325 S. Rural Road.

Both meetings will focus on the next step in the process, which is a vision and character attributes analysis. For more information on Character Areas, visit www.tempe.gov/characterareas.

Early voting through May 16 for May 20 Special Election

Early voting continues through May 16 at the Tempe Public Library for the May 20 Special Election, in which voters will decide on ratification of General Plan 2040.

Publicity pamphlets for this election were mailed April 18 to each household with a registered voter.

On April 24, the Maricopa County Elections Department began mailing early ballots to those individuals on the permanent early voting list.

As required by state law, every city must update

its General Plan every 10 years and get voter approval. All General Plan documents reflect a community's vision for where it wants to go in the future; the documents are less specific than a given city's zoning and development code.

Tempe residents and other community members, such as property and business owners, have worked for more than a year at public meetings to update the city's General Plan 2030 to become General Plan 2040. The City Council adopted General Plan 2040 and set the election date for



Your voice can travel: Help Tempe update its Transportation Master Plan

Tempe wants your thoughts on the future of the city's transportation system including how we move people and what our streets look like as we begin the process of updating the Transportation Master Plan.

A series of public meetings are planned for late May and early August. The meetings will help familiarize you with current and proposed projects and encourage the Tempe community in the creation of a shared vision for the plan. The meetings will cover topics related to:

- Preparation of the Tempe Transportation Master Plan including existing conditions (demographics, traffic, transit, and bicycle/pedestrian);
- Tempe's proposed arterial roadway, bike, pedestrian and transit priority corridors;
- Changes to Tempe's street cross-sections;

May 20. Voters will see this on the ballot as Proposition No. 467.

General Plan 2040 can be accessed at www.tempe.gov/GP2040.

Through May 16, voters can vote in person or drop their completed ballots off at the city's early voting location, which is on the second floor of the library, located at 3500 S. Rural Road. The library is open for early voting

- Tempe's short- and long-term future street, bicycle and pedestrian networks;
- Tempe's short- and long-term future bus service plan;
- Neighborhood corridors and character area circulation needs; and
- Areas for traffic calming and/or streetscape improvements

Meetings will be held:

- Thursday, May 29, from 6-8 p.m., at the Tempe History Museum, 809 E. Southern Ave.
- Saturday, May 31, from 9-11 a.m., at the Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Community Room, 200 E. Fifth St.
- Week of Aug. 4, exact day and time to be determined, at the Tempe History Museum
- Saturday, Aug. 9, from 9-11 a.m., at the Tempe Transportation Center, Don Cassano Community Room

Residents are also encouraged to participate online from May 1 to June 15 by visiting www.tempe.gov/forum and leaving feedback.

Overall, the focus of the plan is to get visitors to Tempe and residents to their varied destinations while reducing single occupancy vehicle trips.

The current transportation plan can be found at www.tempe.gov/transportationplan.

For more information, contact Shauna Warner, Neighborhood Services, at 480-350-8883 or shauna_warner@tempe.gov.

during weekday hours, which are Mondays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. There is no early voting site on Arizona State University's Tempe campus for this election.

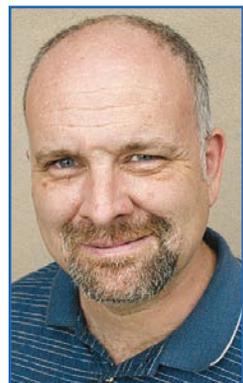
For questions, contact the City Clerk's Office at clerk@tempe.gov or 480-350-8241. For information on all 2014 city elections, visit www.tempe.gov/election.

Diversions with M.V. Moorhead

Film Fare: Documentary 'Watermark' takes wide range of twists, turns

Opening May 2 at Tempe's Valley Art Theatre

Watermark — This documentary makes the real world look like science fiction. It's about the human relationship to water—how our lives revolve around it, often without our awareness, and what we do to the world in the process of working our will upon and through water.



M.V. Moorhead

Directed by Canadian filmmakers Jennifer Baichwal and Edwad Burtynsky, *Watermark* begins in the dried, jigsaw-cracked Mexican delta of the Colorado River, its once-branching waters now diverted to the desert farmlands of California's Imperial Valley.

From there, we're shown dam projects, rice paddies and abalone farms in China, scientists collecting core samples of ice in Greenland, a tannery in Bangladesh vomiting horrifying pollution into the Buriganga River, and the fountains, somehow shockingly decadent in context,

at the Bellagio in Vegas.

We're shown the pristine beauty of the Stikine River in British Columbia, the teeming human spectacle of pilgrims washing away their sins in the Ganges, and the somehow similar sight of competitive surfers at Huntington Beach and sophisticated bathers in geothermal springs in Iceland.

There are some interviews, but no narration—mostly we just get long looks at the epic, and epically bizarre, imagery of people's ingenious, if often crazily reckless, interaction with H2O.

The movie is by turns terrifying, beautiful, hypnotic and maddening.

Still in theaters

Rio 2 — The 2011 animated kidflick *Rio* was about a romance between two endangered blue macaws who might have been the last of their kind. In this sequel the two of them, voiced by Jesse Eisenberg and Anne Hathaway, travel with their three chicks from the title city to the Amazon rainforest, where they learn that the female's old flock is thriving.

Some lovely musical numbers ensue, sung by the likes of Bruno Mars, will.i.am and Jamie Foxx, and "choreographed" in the style of Busby Berkeley.

Come to think of it, I bet Berkeley would love to have worked with parrots, if he could have.

The best strand, however, belongs to Jemaine Clement as a vengeful cockatoo, Ellen Chenoweth as the brightly colored frog who regards him with unembarrassed adoration, and a silent anteater who puts his prehensile tongue to admirable use.

Clement's rendition of "I Will Survive" was my favorite number in the movie.

But the flock's home is threatened by deforestation.

If you think about the reality this conflict represents, then sweet and tuneful as *Rio 2* is, and sincere as the wish of its makers to raise environmental consciousness may be, it may leave you feeling as depressed as *Watermark*.

Watermark, unrated, opens May 2 at the Valley Art Theatre. *Rio 2* is rated G and plays at Tempe Marketplace, Arizona Mills and other multiplexes throughout the Valley.

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PLAY LEARN LIVE GROW



Tempe High students designed unique sets for the May 2-3 production of 'The Yellow Boat.'

— Photo courtesy Corey Quinn

Tempe High theater group to present David Saar production

Theater students at Tempe High School will present "The Yellow Boat," a true story about Childsplay director David Saar's son Benjamin, who contracted HIV through a blood transfusion administered to treat the boy's hemophilia.

The show, which tells a story of hope, love and imagination, will be presented at 4 and 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, May 2 and 3 at the Tempe High auditorium. The show is directed by Corey Quinn and Kim Bonagofski, drama instructors at Mountain Pointe High School who have been traveling to Tempe High to help oversee the production.



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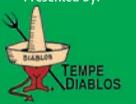
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May 30	Peter Pan	G

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Briefly

Chandler Chamber CEO recognized

Terri Kimble, president and CEO of the Chandler Chamber of Commerce, will receive the 2014 Teal & Silver Community Leader award from Chandler-Gilbert Community College at a recognition breakfast at the college's Williams campus at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 6.

The chamber's community foundation offers scholarships to CGCC business students each year and hosts an annual education forum to raise awareness of the challenges and achievement of Chandler schools.

Kimble said the award recognizes efforts by the chamber to maintain education as a high priority, based on

the premise an educated population will help ensure the success of the community for future generations.

Women to hear Olympian keynoter

Amanda Borden, captain of the 1996 Gold Medal U.S. Olympic Gymnastics Team, will be among speakers at a Women in Business Conference Wednesday, May 21, at the PERA Club in Tempe.

The program is sponsored by the Tempe Chamber of Commerce.

Borden and two other speakers will deliver messages designed to motivate audience members to strive for fulfillment, happiness and success.

Keynote speaker is Dr. Jacquie Leone, who will discuss how to stay healthy and energized in one's personal life and career.

Borden graduated summa cum laude from Arizona State University with a degree in elementary education.

Luncheon keynote speaker is Dr. Mitzi Montoya, vice president and university dean for entrepreneurship and innovation at Arizona State University. She is also chair of the Board of Directors for the Center for Entrepreneurship in the W.P. Carey School of Business. Information: www.tempechamber.org

Nabers to host youth rock bands

Nabers Music Bar & Eats will host a free "Rockin' the Neighborhood" event from 5 to 8 p.m. Sunday, May 4.

The event will showcase the talent of youth ages 10-16.

Participants will play a variety of music, including their own compositions.

Admission is free. All ages are welcome.

Nabers is at 825 N. 54th St. Information: 480-705-0288.

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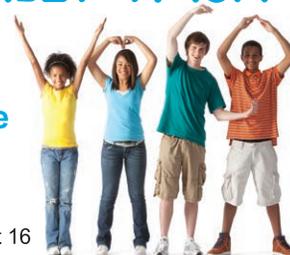
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Aprende Middle School theater instructor Marisa Peck launched a new Jaguar Players Drama Club, an after-school group for 6th-8th graders where students not only get the opportunity to perform but also get to learn about technical theater as part of the crew. The students have produced their first-ever musical, Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, which will be performed at 7 p.m. Friday, May 2, and 2 p.m. Saturday, May 3. Tickets are \$3 for students and teachers, \$6 for adults.



—Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman

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The Last Word

A mom's recollections of (happy) days past

By Tracy Doren



Mom with daughters Maddi, 1, and Taylor, 4, circa 1995

May will mark my 17th and final year as a Waggoner Elementary School mom. The journey started quietly enough: I was just another young mother, anxious about my little girl taking her first steps into the world of public education.

As I walked through the doors with my first-born, by then a 5-year-old, on kindergarten-orientation day, I'm not sure which of us was more excited and nervous about what was to come.

She saw new people (so did I),

encountered new friends (lifelong ones, as it turned out) and wonderful things to spark her eager imagination.

New opportunities awaited us both.

Eager to help out during the first months of school, I volunteered to do a class directory, complete with pictures of each student *and* his or her name alongside—pretty cutting-edge stuff back in the '90s.

To make this Herculean project come together, we bought a brand-new scanner so we could transfer the prints to a digital file and print 18 copies. It

was a lot of work, though I'm pretty sure today's kindergartners, with their fearless knowledge of technology, could easily pull off this amateur production. Over the next 12 years, I produced another three Waggoner-ready students, and with each one the first day of kindergarten was always memorable.

Sometimes there were tears from the kids. There were always tears from me—tears of joy, loneliness, sadness, fear. I know that each first day I cried more than they did as they marched off through the doors, holding hands with classmates who would quickly become friends.

Along the way I tackled other volunteer positions at Waggoner: Helping out with the PTO, lending a hand in the classrooms. There was always a project for me to do, always an opportunity to learn something new. In fact, I'm proud to say I had a hand in producing the first Waggoner PTO newsletter—a promising start to the publishing career which, unbeknownst to me at the time, lay ahead.

Something that has always stood out for me is the amazing patience that teachers possess. I thought teaching would be a great profession—holidays that match the kids', summer vacations and the always-coveted spring break.

I felt that way until I actually helped out in the classroom on a regular basis, particularly in the kindergarten class. The skills, the interests and the personalities of all those babies seemed so vastly different, yet the teacher appeared unfazed and perfectly able to launch another year-long effort to prepare them for the

years to come.

I will never figure out how teachers do that, but I will always be amazed. I have seen teachers come and go but, noticeably at Waggoner, a lot more stay than go.

It is no wonder.

The family feeling is strong. Whether you pull up to the curb or wait under the ramada, there is always a friendly face.

I consider myself very lucky. I have four incredible kiddos who got a great start at Waggoner. My oldest, Taylor, will be beginning her own teaching career soon, and I am sure she was inspired by her experience within the halls of Waggoner.

I know her first-grade teacher (and now Waggoner Principal) Lisa Gibson was an incredible influence.

I think Taylor and Mrs. Gibson connected in first grade over a shared love of fashion accessories, but I also think the connection spurred a love of learning.

Somehow, all of my kids have embraced the pursuit of knowledge, and I know that the incredible staff at Waggoner had something good to do with that.

As my kids head off on the next step of their journey, I'm sure their recollections of these early school days will be replaced by those of many adventures sure to lie ahead. For me, though, those memories will last forever.

Tracy Doren is publisher of Wrangler News. For information about submitting content for The Last Word call 480-966-0845.

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