

WRANGLER NEWS

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For Tempe's new mayor, home is where the job is

In an exclusive interview with Wrangler News contributor Lee Shappell, Corey Woods offered a perspective on where he's been, how he arrived at his role today and what he sees in his own and his city's future. Story & more photos starting on Page 4.

— Photo by Billy Hardiman for Wrangler News

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Locked gates, below, and signs posted near a home in the Calle de Arcos neighborhood illustrate protests related to the development of a group home.

— Photos by Billy Hardiman for Wrangler News

Assisted-living plans seemingly dashed; neighbors still on edge

By Joyce Coronel

Corona del Sol Estates, an upscale neighborhood in South Tempe, boasts quiet streets with custom homes and mature landscaping.

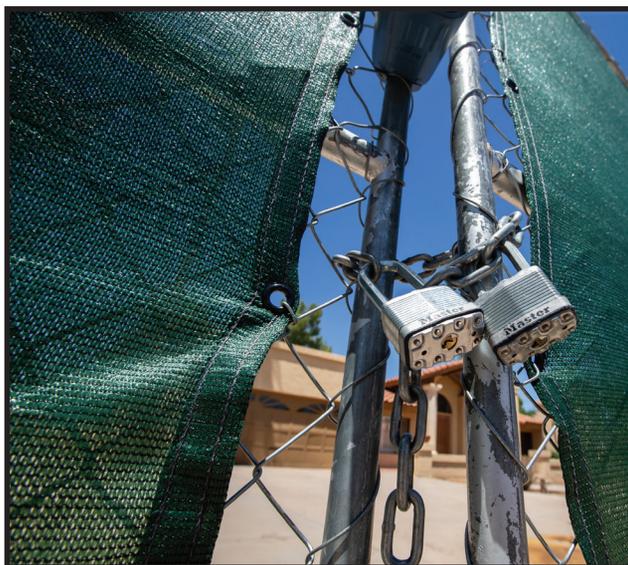
There are also a few small signs dotting the front yards of Calle de Arcos—signs that point to a neighborhood dispute that appears to have arrived at a precipitous conclusion.

“We are against commercial business getting rich at the expense of our neighborhood,” the signs declare in black all-capital letters.

The notices refer to a conflict that began back in 2019 when Jim Robinson purchased a five-bedroom, 3,000-square-foot home on the street, intending to convert it into an assisted living home for 10 residents.

Robinson sought and received a building permit from the city of Tempe to carry out the extensive work required to turn the structure into a group home. The interior was gutted to make way for renovations that never materialized.

Today, a green mesh fence encircles the property and a For Sale sign is posted out front. Construction efforts, however, have come to a screeching halt.



Nick Bastian, a Realtor who lives nearby, noticed the home was listed for sale, plans for an assisted living facility seemingly dashed.

“It seems to me like we’ve got a situation here

with an inexperienced developer who was pushing the envelope,” Bastian said.

“If he had just done it within the regular guidelines, with what the community would bear, I don’t think he would have had nearly the push-back that he did.”

Pat Dressendorfer was one of those who pushed back. The retired nurse, who lives on Calle de Arcos, designed and built the home she and her family have lived in for 31 years.

“I don’t want that traffic. First of all, they were going to have one person on nights taking care of a maximum of 10 people. Ten people with one person at night? That’s ridiculous. As an R.N., I know that,” Dressendorfer said.

Mark Kaiser, another neighbor, tried to play peacekeeper between Robinson and the collective wrath of numerous residents.

“The people along the street have serious heartburn with him to say the least, hence all these signs that have been there since he started the reconstruction project,” Kaiser said.

Once the property went up for sale, Kaiser

— CONTROVERSY, Page 8

More breaking news on Page 23 and at wranglernews.com

Profile: Corey Woods . . . City's new mayor offers his vision for the future



Newly inaugurated Tempe mayor Corey Woods spoke for nearly an hour with Wrangler News about his plans and hopes for the coming years. Woods lives close enough to Tempe's downtown to be able to walk to City Hall, as seen in photo at left. During the photo session on Mill Avenue, he also spent time with a staffer from Phoenix magazine. Woods' full interview responses appear in a report starting on this page. — Photos by Billy Hardiman

By Lee Shappell

Tempe, which prides itself on being a cutting-edge, progressive community, has long been a Valley leader on social issues.

Its downtown, where construction cranes continue to dot the skyline, paints the portrait of a young, wealthy, vibrant, urban hub – with the remnants of a flour mill in the middle of it all as a reminder of where it once was.

Corey Woods has lived in the city since moving to Arizona two decades ago.

He served two terms on City Council, from 2008 to 2016, rising to vice mayor during the throes of the Great Recession.

Now, after replacing two-term incumbent Mark Mitchell in March with 57 percent of the vote, Woods is the new mayor. He's a dynamic young voice, a polished communicator, connected and energetic. At 41, he seems to be the perfect reflection of this thriving city and a good fit to lead it.

If only it were that easy. The COVID-19 pandemic hit just before the election.

Among its victims was Woods, who learned shortly before his inauguration through an Arizona State University Biodesign Department-created saliva-based test that he had the virus.

His symptoms were mild but he was sworn in virtually from his kitchen table while in quarantine.

As with the Great Recession, the city now faces another fiscal challenge from the ravages of the pandemic. Woods also takes office amid national outcry over police brutality, especially toward Black citizens.

This hits particularly close to home for Woods, Tempe's first African-American mayor.

Numerous challenges. Unprecedented times.

"I think what our city needs now more than ever is someone who can build a coalition of diverse people and bring them to the table in an open, honest way to discuss some of our toughest topics," Woods said.

In an exclusive interview with Wrangler News, Woods addressed a wide range of issues facing the city as he assumes office.

Some responses have been edited for clarity and brevity.

Interview follows on facing page





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Question: The first question is, how are you doing?

Answer: I'm great, actually, completely recovered, doing just fine, working as hard as ever. I got my negative test back from ASU Biodesign on July 16. I'd been basically working from home since March so nothing really has changed. Tempe City Hall is still closed to the public, so I'm spending more time (working at home) than I ever thought I would be. I'm "The Pandemic Mayor," but it is what it is.

Q: How are you conducting Tempe's business? Through video conferencing?

A: Absolutely. I'm on a lot of video conferences during the course of a day, with staff members to get up to speed on existing projects, with residents who have concerns on certain key issues; some are based on my policy agenda and the agenda of the Council. We are not just letting COVID shut down the work of the city. We are committed to furthering a robust policy agenda.

Q: What's the first thing you did as mayor that made you want to fist pump in pride and say, "Yeah, I'm the mayor"?

A: I think for me, the evening of the swearing in was very personal. I remember for years talking to my parents about what I wanted to do. My mom passed away eight years ago from ovarian cancer. She really deeply believed in the path that I was taking on the public-service side, as does my father, still. Just getting to that point was very emotional and a wonderful experience. Everything else has been one big thrill, quite honestly. I've had conversations with residents about traffic-calming issues, conversations about what we're going to do to flatten

the curve when it comes to COVID, what we're going to do for the business community when it comes to COVID recovery, making sure that even though this is going on right now that we're planning for the future. You have to have your plans ready to launch when this finally does go away. Then, I'm doing a whole bunch of things meeting our goals of increasing affordable housing, addressing issues with our homeless population. There's a lot on my plate and on the city's plate in general and I'm just excited to be here.

Q: Wrangler News has long been delivered to homes south of U.S. 60, and some of those residents have expressed feeling disenfranchised, that the emphasis of City Hall is on the city center, Mill Avenue and the ASU community. What do you say to residents in the southern part of the city who might feel left out?

A: I would say that this Council has people who live in every ZIP code in the city. I believe we now have three members who live south of the 60 and we care about every single inch of this 42-square-mile city. Part of it goes back to conversations years ago, the Character Area process. Residents outlined strengths and deficits of their community, and they're looking for actions by the Council to fulfill those. In South Tempe, south of the 60, we hear people say they want more arts and culture. They don't want to have to go north to Rio Salado. They want more things like Arts in the Park, nicer restaurants, wine bars, coffee shops like people who live downtown have, because they'd also like to be able to bike, or walk, or take a short car drive to them. We hear them say there are a lot of things coming that they didn't ask for, but on things they did ask for, they don't see any movement. That's where the frustration becomes apparent. We are here to serve the public and all seven of us are committed to really

listening to their concerns and doing the best we can to bring them the amenities they want.

Q: We see the numbers every day and you know as well as anyone the toll that COVID-19 is taking on people, but what about the financial hit that the city is taking from the pandemic? Do you have projections on the revenue shortfall because of it?

A: When I came in, I had a conversation with our deputy city manager, Ken Jones, and the number he quoted me was \$14 million. It's a hefty shortfall, but at the same time I will say that when I first came into office in 2008 as a Council member at 29 years old in the middle of the Great Recession, the shortfall was \$34.5 million. So while this seems daunting, it's actually \$20 million less than when I started 12 years ago.

It's challenging. It's uncomfortable. I really worry about people who are under employed and unemployed and small-business people who are struggling.

I bring up the 2008 times because while I'm definitely new at being mayor, I'm used to coming into situations where there is a lot of adversity where we're not flush with cash. It's something I understand; I've been through this before, and I'm going to try to bring those experiences to the table in my new role as mayor. I do believe that as a community, we're going to be fine at the end of the day.

Q: Will Tempe have to cut back on services as a result of the pandemic?

A: A couple of things: We have a very healthy fund balance at the city of Tempe. I know that toward the end of the past fiscal year it was around \$96 million in the

— MAYOR, Page 17



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'Brother, can you spare a dime?'

Merchants squeezing pennies as coins dry up

By Janie Magruder

Calling all piggy banks, pickle jars, plastic baggies and purse bottoms: The federal government needs your accumulated pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters.

Spare change, anyone?

The Federal Reserve announced earlier this summer that coins in circulation were growing scarce because people were staying home and spending fewer of them during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Banks were closed for a time, as were many businesses — and when they did open, many shoppers preferred using credit cards to avoid touching physical cash.

“With the partial closure of the economy, the flow of coins through the economy, it has gotten all . . . it’s kind of stopped,” Fed Chairman Jerome H. Powell testified on Capitol Hill in late June.

“We’ve been aware of it, we’re working with the (U.S.) mint to increase supply, we’re working with the reserve banks to get the supply to where it needs to be.”

The mint has ramped up its coin production and shipments, cranking out nearly 1.6 billion in June and shooting for 1.65 billion monthly for the rest of the year.

The 2019 average was 1 billion per month.

In a July 23 statement, the mint said the economy has an adequate amount of coins, but the slowed pace of circulation meant that sufficient quantities were sometimes not readily available where needed.

And that’s where we come in.

Uncle Sam wants us to start locating, spending, depositing and exchanging them for currency at banks or coin kiosks. Search between couch cushions and under car seats, and empty the decorative decanter on the mantle (of coins, that is, not liquor).

This will assist retailers which, in Tempe and West Chandler, already are helping themselves and



— Wrangler News photo

seem to be in pretty good shape.

George Walston, co-owner of the Great Harvest Bread Co. bakery in Tempe, said he wasn’t aware of the coin shortage until early July when his local bank said it could give him only one roll of each denomination per day.

When the bakery’s tills seemed to be going dry, Walston asked his employees to bring in change from home, and they did not disappoint. One worker “brought in his ‘redneck retirement fund,’” and customers offered their baggies of coins to get the store over the hump, he said.

Based on supply, Wells Fargo Bank is, as Walston confirmed, providing customers one roll of each denomination per day, said spokesperson LiAna Enriquez. Business customers may receive up to five rolls of each denomination per cash order per day, she said.

“We are actively managing our coin inventory and working with customers to meet their coin needs to the extent possible after the Federal Reserve put limitations on coin deliveries to all financial institutions nationwide,” Enriquez said.

Shoppers at Fry’s Food Stores have been asked to pay with exact change, or with a credit or debit card, or to round off their transactions to the nearest dollar to support The Kroger Co. Zero Hunger | Zero Waste Foundation, said Pam Giannonatti, Kroger corporate affairs manager, Fry’s Division. The grocer also can

load coin amounts onto customers’ loyalty cards, and change will be provided when available, she noted.

Coin scarcity hasn’t been a problem at Babbo Italian Eatery, primarily because cash represents less than 5 percent of its business, said Dustin Shockley, catering director and regional manager.

Cash customers at the Tempe location are a good lot anyway, Shockley said, usually telling the cashier to keep the change or dropping it into the receptacle at the register.

Up the street at Dairy Queen at Rural and Elliot roads, the percentage of credit card-to cash-paying customers has dropped from about 60/40 percent pre-pandemic to 70/30 percent currently, said owner Ramesh Parikh.

Given that COVID-19 is highly contagious, customers seem to prefer swiping their credit cards to exchanging money with employees, he said.

Parikh said the store is now asking customers to use credit cards, if they can, but when change is due on a cash order, the amount is calculated to the customers’ benefit.

“We’ve had a few people say, ‘If we’re able to get you our coins, can we have free ice cream?’” Parikh said.

His reply:

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NOTE TO READERS: We'll be taking a vacation starting **Monday, Aug. 10**, returning **Monday, Aug. 17**. You're welcome to send us email any time, and we'll be ready to answer your ideas, suggestions or requests upon our return. Thanks for your continuing support.

Controversy

From Page 3

said, Robinson contacted him to see if he could persuade the neighbors to take down the signs so prospective buyers wouldn't be spooked. The neighbors declined but the signs vanished anyway.

An email Kaiser said he received accused Robinson of having removed the signs, so he confronted Robinson with the complaint.

"He said, 'Mark, I didn't do it.'"

Robinson did not respond to phone calls or emails from *Wrangler News*. Neighbors say he's not being truthful and accused him of being a "flim-flam" man. The signs in question were reprinted and at press time were still visible.

So what happened to the group-home venture? According to Kaiser, Robinson said the

COVID-19 crisis had "hit his business pretty hard," so he elected to sell the property.

Robinson owns another home-turned-assisted-living facility near Kyrene and Elliot at 44 E. Knight Lane.

Kaiser also noted that in addition to the signs posted in front yards, neighbors came up with other ways to thwart Robinson's effort to establish a group home in the Corona del Sol Estates neighborhood.

One elderly resident, who lives in the immediate vicinity of Robinson's property, says her son has filed a request with the city of Tempe to have her house become a group home though she adds there are no plans to actually establish one.

If she is successful in the strategy, the new owners of Robinson's property would not be allowed to develop a group home on the premises. That's

because the Tempe Zoning and Development Code has a requirement for a 1,200-foot separation distance from the lot line of one group home to that of an existing group home.

On another front involving Robinson's plans, he calls the business Avana Assisted Living.

"I don't think he ever formally trademarked it," Kaiser said. Distressed neighbors, he noted, took the name and trademarked it themselves.

Bastian, the Realtor, says Robinson's endeavor will likely prove to be a costly mistake. "You'll have to find somebody who wants to take on a project like that but the math has to work. It's currently pretty much gutted.

"I'm hopeful that somebody just goes in and makes it a really nice house, puts a nice person or people in there—somebody that wants to live (in) and be a part of our community."



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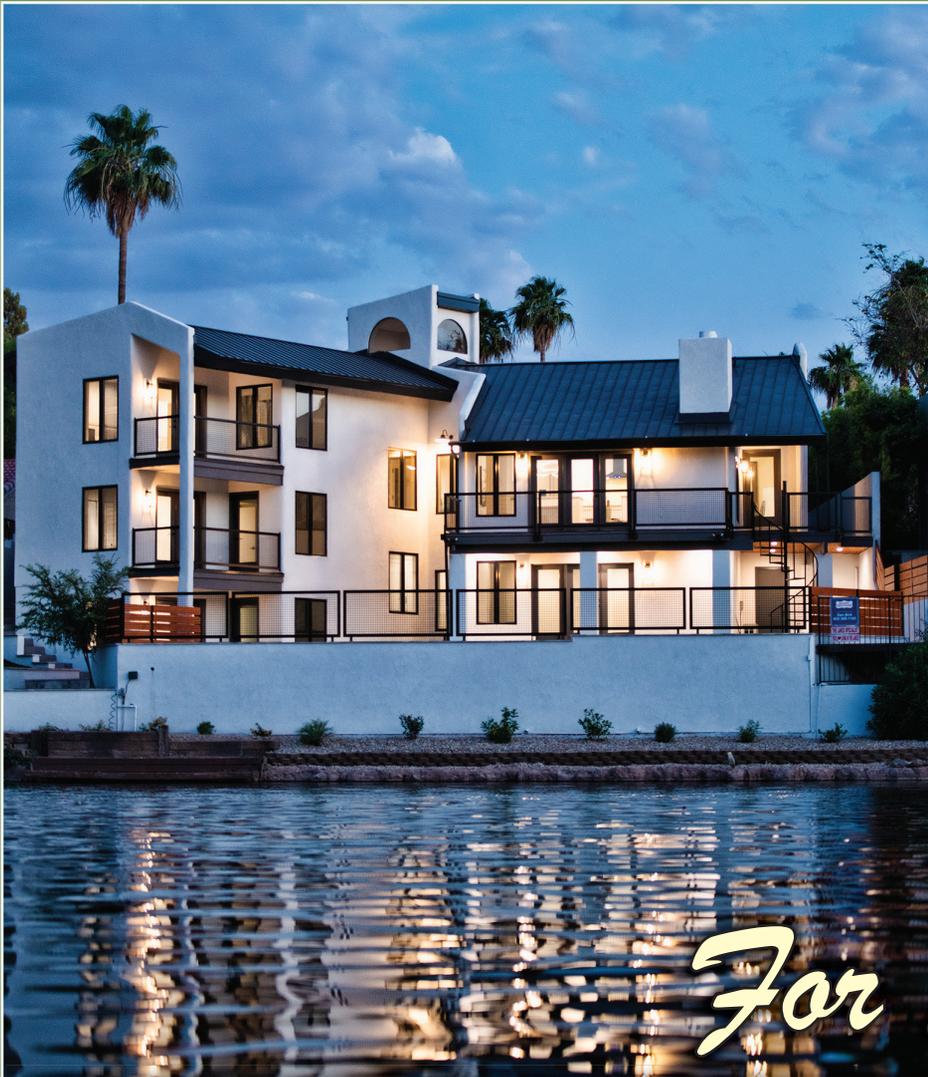


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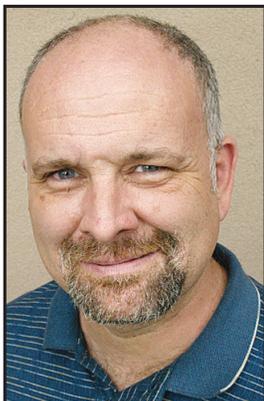


Arizonans may be lazy...but perhaps this is good for us

By M.V. Moorhead

Remember the Pixar animated movie *WALL-E*, back in 2008? It depicted a future in which humans, now living in space, had degenerated into a helplessly obese, sedentary species, cruising around in wheeled recliners staring at virtual-reality screens—in short, a race of futuristic couch potatoes.

A new survey from marketing company Cherry Digital, using polling data compiled by EzVid Wiki, suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic may be accelerating us toward that unwholesome future a little more rapidly.



M.V. Moorhead

According to the survey, here in Arizona we're doing 29% less exercise since the start of the closures.

I'm proud to say that this figure doesn't apply to me. I'm doing almost exactly the same amount of exercise now that I was before all this began.

My mileage as a jogger; my strenuous hikes up and down rugged desert trails; my push-ups and sit-ups—pretty close to zero before the closures, pretty close to zero since. So whatever else I can be accused of, bringing additional shame to my state in this regard isn't on the list.

Anyway, the survey suggests that Arizona isn't, for a change, at the worst point on the spectrum when it comes to reduced exercise. That dubious honor belongs to Vermont; citizens are reportedly

down by a whopping 67% when it comes hiking the green mountains of the Green Mountain State. Minnesota, on the other hand, is reportedly down by only 16%.

On the whole, however, the pandemic seems to have put the lie to the familiar excuse that we don't exercise because we don't have time.

The study goes on to offer more cheery figures: Arizonans, it says, have "watched an average of 394 hours of TV during the lockdown," compared to about 262 hours during a similar stretch pre-lockdown.

Again, this doesn't put us either at the top of the list (Nevada, with 519 hours a month) nor the bottom (Arkansas, with 336 hours).

Also per the survey, one out of three of those people left newly unemployed have spent time "binge watching" TV, and 57% admit to having enjoyed the chance provided by the lockdown to be lazy. Of folks working from home, half confess to watching the tube during their supposed work hours.

About one in five people claim to have become addicted to TV since the closures started, which comes as a surprise to those of us who assumed that a far higher percentage were addicted to TV decades before that.

OK, look, before we get too far down the road of flagellating ourselves, let's take a minute. A survey like this one is useful fodder for the sort of social scolds who fear that we'll all get too comfortable with loafing around, and therefore programs that support staying at home must be curtailed.

We should remember that, for a great many

people, this isn't some brief interruption of routine; it's a serious, traumatic change of life circumstance.

The idea that this period is just a massive stay-cation and we're all disgracefully failing to use the chance it offers to get in shape or otherwise "improve ourselves," while not directly stated by the press release in which these statistics are found, isn't hard to infer from it, either.

And while there's no doubt that it wouldn't do us any harm to get some exercise and read a book or take an online class instead of binging *Bonanza* reruns, maybe we should give ourselves a break if we decide to use these comforts, at least for a while, to cope.

If, as this survey claims, 57% of people admit to enjoying the laziness afforded by this time, it might mean that most of us are loafers at heart and need to be kept frantically scrambling after deadlines and paychecks at least five days a week.

If you're a corporate honcho, you might well tend to agree with this interpretation, and there's a good chance the guys you play golf with, or have long lunches with at the club, will think so too.

But what if that lazy 57% is on to something? What if part of what this pandemic is teaching us is that too much of our lifestyle, and our economy, has hinged for too long on obsessive busy-work and bustle?

What if a little more laziness proves not only part of the "New Normal" we keep hearing about, but a healthy part?

I think maybe I should go stretch out on the couch for a while, and think that over.

Bike hero? What better year to salute city's top wheeler-dealer

It's been an annual event for years, but this time around the selection of Tempe's No. 1 cycling enthusiast seems especially relevant.

Julian Dresang, Tempe city engineer, has been selected as the 2020 Bike Hero by the Tempe Transportation Commission for his contributions to making Tempe a safer place to bike the 217 miles of bikeways in the city.

Dresang worked in the Tempe Transportation Division for over 13 years.

During that time, he worked on many bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects, such as the Western Canal Path, the newly opened Highline Canal Path and the College Avenue, University Drive and Broadway Road streetscape projects.

"Julian says that the safety of road users, especially bicyclists

and pedestrians, must always be the priority," said Jessica Dresang, Julian's wife, who nominated him for the award.

Julian has spent a considerable amount of time working with stakeholders, advocacy groups and the City Council on Vision Zero Tempe, an effort to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury crashes to zero.

The program aims to increase safe, healthy and equitable mobility for all road users and was the first Vision Zero program in the State of Arizona.

Mayor Corey Woods and the Tempe City Council will honor Julian as the 2020 Bike Hero at the regular city council meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 13.

Each year, the Tempe Bike Hero Award recognizes individuals and organizations that aid in increasing awareness of bicycling and promote bicycling as a viable mode of transportation.

Winners are selected by the Tempe Transportation Commission, a 15-member Tempe resident advisory board appointed by the mayor.



Julian Dresang, city of Tempe chief engineer, was named 2020 Bike Hero by the city's transportation commission.

— Photo courtesy City of Tempe

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Mill Avenue Bridge . . . Remembering its glory days

Story by Lee Shappell

Photography by Billy Hardiman



Smoke billowing from last month's derailment on the iconic Salt River Union Pacific Bridge was considerably heavier than what Harry Mitchell recalls from the steam locomotives that powered trains across it during his youth.

"I remember that bridge because my dad was an engineer for Southern Pacific for 34 years," said Mitchell, an iconic figure himself in Tempe history. "I remember crossing that bridge on trains many times because we used to take the train to California and back East."

Michael Monti had different memories, noting that he never crossed the bridge, not on a train and certainly not on foot. "My mom put the fear of death in me in doing something like walking across it," said Monti, whose family also played a significant role in the city's 20th-century history.

"Now, I wish I had." He does remember helping a

friend yank his stuck 1968 Oldsmobile out of the sand in the riverbed under the bridge.

"My closest brush with an unruly keg party," Monti said.

Anyone who has lived in Tempe for any time likely has a story about the bridge, built in 1912. While neither Mitchell nor Monti went to the scene after learning of the freight-train derailment on July 29 that caused heavy fire and smoke and destroyed the southern end of the structure, they said news of the tragedy stirs memories.

Union Pacific on Aug. 2 blew up the unstable southernmost 150 feet of the bridge and plans to rebuild it.

The structure, built the year Arizona became a state, has stood through floods that destroyed three previous bridges on the site. It weathered massive floods in 1978 and 1980, when it, the Mill Avenue Bridge and Central Avenue Bridge were the only Salt River crossings in the Valley that survived.

Mitchell, who turned 80 last month, was a Tempe High civics teacher, city councilman, Tempe mayor, state senator and former U.S. representative in the state's 5th Congressional District.

His son, Mark, recently ended an eight-year run as mayor. A large statue of Harry Mitchell stands just off Mill Avenue, next to City Hall and the other buildings comprising the Harry E. Mitchell Municipal Complex.

"When we built Kiwanis Park, that little bridge that crosses near the lake was symbolic of that railroad bridge," Mitchell said. "There's one part we never finished from the master plan...There was a stream that was going to go underneath that bridge into the lake but it never was finished...it was inspired by the railroad bridge."

Mitchell says Tempe was founded where it is because it is the narrowest point along the river, where Charles Trumbull Hayden operated a ferry in the 1870s that



Viewpoint by Ross Robb . . . *Kyrene Governing Board: It's time to work together & lead*

I am writing as a concerned Kyrene resident who, for nine-and-one-half years, concluding in 2016, had the privilege of serving as a Kyrene Governing Board Member. I thoroughly enjoyed my Board experience and I departed believing that time and energy devoted to the public education and wellbeing of children is a noble endeavor.

I also believed after two terms that it was time for a new generation of Kyrene citizens to assume those governing duties.



Ross Robb

I served with 11 individuals during my time on the Governing Board, all well intentioned, community minded people from diverse backgrounds and beliefs, some of whom remain friends.

I believe that my colleagues and I served at a time of great challenge in public education highlighted by the Great Recession, deep budget cuts, unpopular program modifications and two controversial changes

in Kyrene leadership.

While the Board members with whom I served occasionally disagreed, sometimes passionately, I think that we all understood the mission and goals of the District and the job that we were elected to do.

At Governing Board Meetings, we tried, and generally succeeded, to present a positive image to the community putting the job and the needs of Kyrene above our own differences.

Since leaving the Board, I have stayed out of District matters to allow my successors to do their job

without my interference.

Now, almost four years after my departure and as schools face difficult decisions about opening in the face of a pandemic, I feel compelled to comment on what I see in the behavior of the current Kyrene Governing Board.

Where I believe this Governing Board is failing, especially as Kyrene faces perhaps its greatest challenges in its 130 year history, is in how it interacts with both the internal and external Kyrene communities and how individual Board members choose to interact with those communities and with one another. I strongly believe that effective Governing Board service demands embracing an 'attitude of service'. Too often, this Board seems to embrace an attitude of 'being served' and of individual inconsequential interests superseding critical District needs.

As I consider this Board, unfortunately I see the whole being less than the sum of the parts. These are good and capable people, some of who I know personally, who are choosing to not get along with one another and the District and the community are paying the price for that discord.

Space does not allow me to detail many examples that support my position. The July 14th Board Meeting is just one recent example. During a pandemic that is demanding leadership, Board Members are putting their own need to be seen and heard over the needs of students, dedicated employees, parents and constituents who are longing for focus, clarity and unity.

I believe that it is never too late to change. It is time for this Board to focus on the significant challenges before them. It is time to put politics and pettiness

aside and lead the District through the crisis presented by COVID-19.

I urge the Board to remember why they chose to serve and to follow these simple guidelines:

- Put first, the needs of the District, its students, employees and community.
- Foster an environment of cooperation and purpose that will restore community confidence in the Board.
- Exercise caution in the use of email and social media. You are an elected official – set a high and disciplined bar for your personal behavior and your engagement with constituents.
- Support your Superintendent, both publicly and privately – you have an excellent one;
- Stop antagonizing and undermining one another. Set an example for the students you serve.

If we in the community don't constructively and respectfully speak up and hold our elected officials accountable, then we surely become part of the problem.

Time is growing short for each individual Kyrene Board member to do what is needed to improve and fix what is broken. At this critical time, voters will soon determine who will fill three Board vacancies, but this current Board must come together right now, before that new Board is seated.

If they fail to do so, it will be our children, our dedicated teachers and support personnel and our community who will sadly and unnecessarily pay for that failure.

Ross Robb is a former member of the Kyrene Governing Board.

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Commentary . . . *By Jennifer Adams*

City of Tempe, non-profits combine resources to relieve crisis

As a Tempe resident, I have always been proud that a hallmark of our city is that we care about each other. And, in these crazy times especially, it has never been more important to help our neighbors.

So I want to make sure that those in need are aware of emergency funds available through the City of Tempe and our nonprofit partners to help pay rent, mortgages and utility bills.



Jennifer Adams

One of our vital nonprofit partners, Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA), is offering more than \$3 million in emergency rent, mortgage and utility assistance to households in Tempe and Fountain Hills.

TCAA expects to help about 1,600 qualifying households with up to \$4,500 in rent or mortgage

assistance.

Funds are limited, so applications are prioritized for households with the greatest need.

TCAA is accepting applications all month long – not just during the first week of the month as is typical – and those who have previously received assistance are encouraged to apply again. You can find all the details at www.tempeaction.org or call the hotline at 480-389-1375.

In addition, residents can apply for emergency rent assistance through the Arizona Department of Housing at housing.az.gov and Maricopa County at maricopa.gov/COVIDRentHelp.

Tempe landlords can get relief too. The state has a new Foreclosure Prevention Program that makes \$5 million available to individuals who rely on income from tenants.

Find more details about the program at azgovernor.gov/newsroom (look for the July 16 press release about eviction protections).

Our own City of Tempe Human Services Department also is working to meet housing and social services needs in our community.

Of course, we do this work all year long, but during these unprecedented times, providing the highest level of assistance is vital – whether finding emergency shelter for a family in crisis, operating a cooling center to provide heat relief, or connecting a veteran with counseling.

Recently, the Tempe City Council approved allocating \$760,000 for emergency rent and mortgage assistance through various funding sources:

- Housing Services offered \$460,000 in emergency rent assistance to income-eligible Tempe residents.

These funds are now helping to support a minimum of 50 households.

- This month, Housing Services expects to open up \$300,000 for emergency mortgage assistance.

When available, details on how to apply can be found at tempe.gov/housing.

In addition, the city is making as much as \$500,000 in grants available to nonprofit organizations serving individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The city is currently processing those applications.

You can find more details about ways to get help – and give help if you are able – through our city website at tempe.gov/coronavirus and Tempe Community Council at tempecommunitycouncil.org.

Governor Doug Ducey's arizonatogether.org also has a comprehensive listing of assistance.

TCAA is one of those community organizations that is truly worth any support you can offer.

Check out the new video on my Facebook page, Jennifer Adams Tempe, with TCAA Executive Director Deborah Arteaga.

She and I are showcasing the new Oasis Drop-In Center at TCAA, which provides respite and resources for unsheltered residents, including access to computers and a washer and dryer. It has been made possible through generous support from individual and corporate givers.

As always, you can contact me by phone at 480-350-8835 or via email at jennifer_adams@tempe.gov.

Jennifer Adams is a member of the Tempe City Council.

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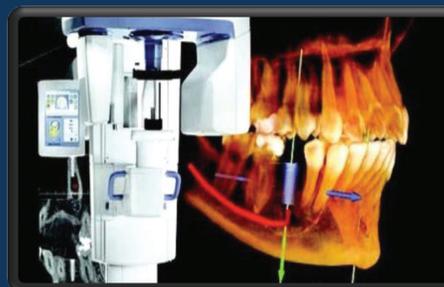
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New principals assigned in Kyrene district

For the second year in a row, all of the new principals at Kyrene schools are current Kyrene leaders on the rise.

Seven Kyrene schools will have new principals this year, and the new Kyrene Digital Academy will have its first principal leading online learners into the 2020-21 academic year.

Each of these school leaders is either a current Kyrene principal transitioning to a new school or an assistant principal taking on a new challenge.

Kyrene's new all-digital school will be led by Dr. Kyle Ross, former principal of Kyrene del Pueblo Middle School.

Ross has served as both a school administrator as well as a director of instructional technology in another school district.

In these roles, Ross has been part of the design, professional development and implementation of various initiatives involving educational technology, including online and blended learning, STEM initiatives and Google Classroom.

Said Ross:

"KDA will be the first of its kind in Kyrene, a completely online K-8 school, with all the excellence of a Kyrene education."

Ross's departure from Pueblo provided an opportunity for another Kyrene leader to step up.

Ashley Schutkowski has served as the assistant principal and athletic director at Pueblo for the last three years and will now be the Pueblo principal.

Schutkowski began her career in education 26 years

ago in Kyrene, teaching mathematics at Centennial Middle School.

She understands the complex needs of middle school students, and said she is committed to not only supporting their academic success, but also their social and emotional growth.

She grew up in Chandler and said she is proud to be a former Kyrene kid herself.

Schutkowski has twin daughters who also attended Kyrene schools.

Dr. Sarah Collins will transfer from Kyrene de la Estrella to Kyrene de las Manitas.

The move is a homecoming for Collins, who began her career at Manitas as a teacher, 22 years ago. Since that time, she has served two school districts as both an educator

and a school leader.

Not only is Collins an experienced Kyrene leader, but she is a former Kyrene kid herself, having grown up in Ahwatukee, attending Kyrene schools.

Keeping it all in the family, Collins is married to a Kyrene teacher and has two children who also attended Kyrene schools.

She says she is thrilled to be coming "home" to Manitas.

The other new principals will serve at Kyrene schools in Ahwatukee, including former assistant principal of Kyrene de la Mariposa Carolyn Payne who will serve at Kyrene de la Esperanza.

Felicia Williams, who served as assistant principal at Kyrene Middle School, will now be at Kyrene de los Lagos Dual Language Academy.



Dr. Kyle Ross



Ashley Schutkowski

In-person return to school delayed again by virus

As the school year gets underway—at least in cyberspace for now—school districts in Tempe and West Chandler are working to get things ready.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman announced via an Aug. 3 letter that Arizona will not meet criteria for in-person instruction Monday, Aug. 17, as both the Kyrene and Tempe Union districts had planned.

Contingency plans for online instruction for all students will therefore take effect.

"As school leaders, we should prepare our families and teachers for the reality that it is unlikely that any school community will be able to reopen safely for traditional in-person or hybrid instructions by August 17th," Hoffman said in a statement.

Acknowledging the concerns of families with special-needs students or those facing hunger,

Hoffman made reference to "critical services" that would still be met.

"While there is a need to provide some students with certain critical services that cannot be provided at a distance—such as special education therapies and nutrition services—we should not expect or ask the majority of Arizona's students and teachers to make a return to school facilities until the spread of COVID-19 is under control," Hoffman wrote.

The Tempe Elementary School District's website states that all students will be given a district-issued computer for the school year and that the district's governing board had already voted for all K-8 students to "begin instruction 100% online" Aug. 17.

Megan Sterling, executive director of community relations for TUHSD, acknowledged the difficulties the district, students, parents and staff have faced throughout the pandemic.

"This has been a year like no other—and our TUHSD community has risen to the occasion. We have all worked to remain strong, collaborative, creative, and focused during an extraordinarily difficult time for both our families and the education community," Sterling said.

She also thanked parents and students for their patience.

"These are highly unusual times to return to school. We appreciate your enthusiasm for learning and your ability to navigate a virtual start to the year. Your feedback and input into the reopening process has been vital.

"Remember that this is only a temporary situation, and we will be able to gather together again."

Mayor

From Page 5

bank savings as our “rainy-day fund.” So we are a fiscally healthy city. City management has done a very good job of streamlining and making sure we are being careful with our taxpayers’ money.

However, one of the things I learned early in my political career is that you have to be careful spending one-time money on recurring expenditures.

I think that we are going to have to take a hard look at our operating budget and figure out places where we might be able to get through the storm just by waiting things out, and some places where we might have to look at other efficiencies and say this is something we may not be able to continue in its current form.

One of the conversations I had with Ken Jones was (he said), “You know, Corey, in this situation, given how unprecedented it is, there are going to be lots of opportunity for this new Council to make mid-year adjustments to the budget.”

When folks were coming to us to express their concerns about police reform in May and June, the biggest thing I was trying to convey on social media and privately was that the Council has to pass a budget by statute, but that doesn’t mean that we’re done with this conversation and that we’re not going to revisit this issue and several others.

There are likely going to have to be some tough calls made on a bunch of things. I’m studying the budget so I know where we really sit to make sure we make thoughtful, well-reasoned decisions, to know where we want to go and to make sure we have the funds to get us to those points.

Q: So will you make cuts to the Police Department? Do you support defunding the police?

A: The challenge is that term means different things to different people. There are some people who read “defund the police” as a full dissolving of the Police Department.

There are some where all they’re talking about is reallocating certain kinds of resources. If there are resources at the Police Department, like social services or mental-health counseling that would be better suited in a Human Services Department, that would probably be a better way to go and we’d like to see some of those resources moved over there.

I can’t speak for everyone on the Council, but I think that’s where I’m at and I would think that’s where most of the Council is, as well.

I’m not a police officer, but I would think they didn’t get into the job because they wanted to be a mental-health counselor. There are people who are trained in that area and that is their special skill set, their expertise, and that is what they do on a daily basis. Those are opportunities to look at the Police Department’s budget. I think a lot of our officers might even welcome that change. They might say they didn’t get into this line of work to do that, they got into it to fight crime and protect people.

It’s all a matter of recognizing that we are living in times where people are beginning to examine all of these systems and beginning to say that just because we’ve done things a certain way over the years doesn’t mean that is how we should continue to do them. That applies to everything. Are we getting the results we

want? If the answer is no, how do we go in and shore up those areas, or change staffing around, or change some responsibilities? What’s working and what isn’t? We have to be honest with one another, and we have to have some hard conversations. But as long as we’ve got that honesty and people willing to engage, you can chart a really good path into the future.

Q: What is your impression of the Tempe Police Department?

A: My overall view is we’ve got a great department. I have really enjoyed working with our chief (Sylvia Moir). I think she’s great. I know a lot of the men and women who are in the rank-and-file of the department and I have great relationships with them. They do a great job every day.

I do know, though, in conversations I’ve had with the chief and our union representatives and others I’ve heard, that we are doing things really well but we feel we can probably improve upon them by changing some things. We’re working on that internally on what would be considered a package of reforms that I think people will be very, very impressed with, while maintaining the high level of safety and service that we are known for and while also updating policies and procedures and training to make sure we continue to be effective. Those conversations include use of force, de-escalation and Citizen Review Board. When I’ve brought those items to Chief Moir, or anyone in her command staff, or our union representatives, none of those things have been off the table. Never has anyone said we’re not going there. So I’m very encouraged that we’re going to be able to work collaboratively moving into the future. I’m encouraged by the performance of our department. We’ve done a lot right. I think the city of Tempe cannot only be a regional leader but also be a national leader when it comes to these issues.

Q: When should the police stand down and let demonstrators exercise their First Amendment rights and when should the police step into a violent situation and take command?

A: There is a clear difference. Organizing and protesting and trying to make a point about certain policy changes or certain actions you feel your government needs to take, I think that is totally fine. I think at the point where people begin destroying property or engaging in a physical confrontation with another person, that clearly isn’t going to be acceptable and someone has to step in and make sure that isn’t taking place. The point I would make is that this goes well beyond issues pertaining to policing. You have to be careful. People try to lump people who are organizing with people who are unruly. The overwhelming majority of people who are out talking about these issues because they’re important in these very pivotal times right now, I think their voices and opinions have to be respected.

Q: There are demonstrations from coast to coast, including Tempe, in support of the Black Lives Matter movement with regard to police brutality toward Black people. What is your opinion of the movement?

A: What I tell people all the time is we are living in times where there’s a lot of change. The community’s expectations are shifting. I think that’s why we’re seeing protests and demonstrations in the streets. People are basically saying that what might have been the models that we were OK with 20 or 30 years ago are not the models that we might want in the year 2020. I fully support people’s rights to organize and to speak to

their government about the issues that are important to them, especially in a place like Tempe that’s a very progressive, forward-moving city.

In terms of my personal connection, I do recognize that with me being the first African-American mayor of the city there are a different set of expectations. Many times, folks who have been active in the police-reform movement have an expectation that I have a deep understanding of these issues as an African-American male who grew up on the East Coast. I know they are expecting me to deliver on some of those. I am definitely all for taking up that challenge and making sure that we are meeting the needs of all members of our community and balancing that with the need for people to feel safe in their homes, feel safe in their parks and everywhere else.

The light may shine a little bit brighter on me in this moment. I have a father who worked for the National Urban League when I was growing up. My parents were very active in the civil rights movement. Those are the stories I grew up hearing. I’m very well steeped in those. At the same time, I also have police officers in my extended family. I’ve been touched by all the people I grew up with and that surrounded me, and so I think that I’ve got a good sense of a lot of the different perspectives on this issue, and I can bring some of those to the table.

Q: Do you see a glaring racial divide in Tempe?

A: Honestly, no. But in every community there are people who feel they’ve been left out of the economic prosperity of the city, feel they’re not getting all of the resources and the things they need. We can never turn a blind eye. We always have to make sure we are listening. We need to do everything we can to bring them in.

I was accepted into the city with open arms. The overwhelming number of people I’ve come into contact with in this city are honest, hard-working, good people who are just trying to provide for their families and do the best they can to be good citizens. Tempe is an incredible place and why it’s the only city I’ve lived in in Arizona. I can’t imagine living anywhere else.

Q: You easily unseated a two-term incumbent mayor who served the city for 20 years. Why do you think you received that overwhelming support? What do you bring to Tempe as mayor?

A: Mayor Mitchell and I are friends. We had several conversations during the transition. We have definitely maintained a good, positive relationship during all of this, and I appreciate that.

I would go back to a conversation that he and I had at one point. We basically said we’re going to put our respective platforms out there and the voters will make a decision.

I would hear concerns about the traffic and feeling they couldn’t move about the city in any kind of reasonable time period. I would hear concerns that if we’re going to really be a diverse, inclusive city, we have to make sure we have housing for people of all different backgrounds and demographics, and I’m concerned that were losing that. There was concern that, with emphasis on business, we don’t lose emphasis on small or intermediate-size business, the people who live here and put their money back into our community. Those were the things I campaigned on from April of 2019 up to Election Day. Those ideas and concepts about vision resonated with the people of Tempe. They connected with that and I think that’s why my campaign was successful.

Pandemic fallout

Social workers find widened role as part of hospital emergency-care team

By Tony Gutiérrez

For Dr. Sandra Indermuhle and her Emergency Department colleagues at Dignity Chandler Regional Medical Center, quarantines brought on by COVID-19 five months ago have changed the face of emergency medicine.

While Chandler Regional, a Level I trauma center, still sees its share of critical injury and emergent general health cases confronting ER specialists, social workers have become ever more involved in the way the hospital responds to a wide variety of medical emergencies.

As always, social workers remain available 24 hours a day to their ER counterparts to help determine if patients need services for mental-health issues related to their admission, or if they are stabilized but also might need access to

outpatient support groups.

The coronavirus quarantine can affect people in many different ways, said Indermuhle, including concerns related to lockdowns being in place and people struggling with being confined to their homes for an extended period. Many jobs have had to be cut, she noted, which can lead to uncertainty about paying bills and supporting a family, combined with whatever else may have brought them in for emergency care. Additionally, she said, there's uncertainty about the disease itself, as so much is still unknown.

"When you don't have your regular outlets to release stress, such as working out, going to the movies or hanging out with friends, drugs and alcohol are there, so use has increased."

Indermuhle, who is also a member of a community-based task forces related to combatting substance misuse, helped develop the "Brave Peer Support" program at the hospital. The program allows patients to stay connected to individuals after their in-patient stay. Whereas in the past, the onus was on the patient to reach out if he or she needed any help, now individuals continue to follow up with the patient for a year, staying in contact via phone or postcards.

The peers can make sure patients get "whatever help they need. If you need help getting to an appointment, we'll help with that," Indermuhle said. "I think this will really help our patients in the recovery process."

Indermuhle said she has been interested in and passionate about these issues for many years. Her bachelor's degree is in psychology, and she developed an interest in disorders that can inhibit the recovery process.

"When you go into the emergency department and you see how devastating it can be for people or how it actually affects people," she said, "... you want to do everything you can to help them."

Indermuhle worked as an emergency room technician at Chandler Regional from 1997-2000, before returning as a physician in 2007 after graduating from the University of Arizona Medical School.

Another concern brought on by the pandemic, Indermuhle said, is that many people are afraid to come to the hospital for fear of contracting COVID-19, to the detriment of their own health.

"I've seen many patients who've come after

three days of symptoms," she said. "If you came in within three hours, you may get medicine to help you recover, whereas if you come in after three days, there are many more complications."

Indermuhle said she wants to assure readers that precautions are taken at the hospital to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, including having special enclosed areas for potential COVID patients, and full protection such as masks, glasses and gloves for staff members. Individuals who are in need of emergency medical care should seek help immediately and not wait, she said. Others may be concerned because of a lack of health insurance after having been laid off.

"When your body is sick with something, you're susceptible to getting other diseases," said Indermuhle. "In the emergency department we take care of everyone, regardless of if you have insurance, but people are stressing out and not coming because of that reason."

For those struggling, Indermuhle emphasized that, in addition to seeking professional help people should try to stay connected with friends and family via technology. Scheduled video calls can be used for not only catching up but for activities such as book clubs or virtual game nights.

"We can still stay connected with our friends and family," she said. "Game nights are huge, when you're with your family."

Exercise is also key, Indermuhle said. Although gyms are closed, there are other ways to exercise. In Arizona, in particular, when temperatures can be too high during the day, early morning hikes or walks can help.

Families can also plan family work-outs in the house using household items such as soup cans as weights or looking for other recommendations on YouTube.

For those at with family members who are struggling, Indermuhle emphasized that it's important to seek professional help and not try to address the issue personally. It's also important to make sure items such as firearms, medications that can be abused or even knives be made inaccessible.

Anything they can do to stave off taking extreme steps should be watched for by friends and family, according to Indermuhle.

"It's important to reach out to "someone to help you, when it's time to get professional help."

Award honors Fire Medical for heart attack responses



Tempe Fire Medical Rescue received an award from the American Heart Association for improving treatment given to severe heart attack victims.

— Photo courtesy Tempe Fire Medical Rescue

services for their efforts in improving systems of care to rapidly identify suspected heart attack patients, promptly notify the medical center and trigger an early response from the awaiting hospital personnel.

“Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Department is dedicated to providing optimal care for heart attack patients,” said Andrea Glass, assistant fire chief.

“We are pleased to be recognized for our dedication and achievements in emergency medical care efforts through Mission: Lifeline.”

Said Tim Henry, M.D., chair of the mission:

“EMTs and paramedics play a vital part in the system of care for those who have heart attacks.

“Since they often are the first medical point of contact, they can save precious minutes of treatment time by activating the emergency response system that alerts hospitals to an incoming heart attack patient.

“We applaud Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Department for achieving this award in following evidence-based guidelines in the treatment of people who have severe heart attacks.”

The American Heart Association’s Mission: Lifeline program helps hospitals and emergency medical services develop systems of care that follow proven standards and procedures for acute coronary syndrome patients.

The program works by mobilizing teams across the continuum of care to implement American Heart Association/American College of Cardiology clinical treatment guidelines.

Information: heart.org.

Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Department has received the American Heart Association’s Mission: Lifeline EMS Bronze Plus Award for implementing quality improvement measures for the treatment of patients who experience severe heart attacks.

Every year, more than 250,000 people experience an elevation myocardial infarction, the deadliest type of heart attack caused by a blockage of blood flow to the heart that requires timely treatment.

To prevent death, it’s critical to restore blood flow as quickly as possible, either by mechanically opening the blocked vessel or by providing clot-busting medication.

The Mission: Lifeline initiative provides tools, training and other resources to support heart attack care following protocols from the most recent evidence-based treatment guidelines.

Mission: Lifeline’s EMS recognition program recognizes emergency medical

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Contributors: Alex Zener, M.V. Moorhead, Diana Nelson, Janie Magruder, Lee Shappell

Offices: Warner Century Plaza
2145 E. Warner Road, Ste. 102 Tempe, AZ 85284
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Gym, fitness center owners applaud superior court ruling

By Joyce Coronel

Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Timothy Thomason has ruled that gym owners were deprived of their due process rights and must be provided with an opportunity to apply for reopening their doors by Tuesday, Aug. 11.

“There is very little credible scientific data supporting the notion that fitness centers operating with necessary safety protocols pose a danger or that shutting down well-run gyms has a significant public health benefit. Yet, fitness centers and gyms have been closed for weeks without any due process whatsoever,” Thomason wrote in his decision.

Mountainside Fitness and EOS Fitness were part of a legal battle with the State of Arizona over the second round of gym closures by Gov. Doug Ducey’s June 27 executive order.

Tom Hatten, CEO of Mountainside, called the decision by Thomason “historic” and said the reopening of gyms would be part of the greater economic good of Arizona.

“The severity of this pandemic is not lost in today’s decision,” Hatten said.

“We just wanted to make sure that like all businesses, the fitness industry was allowed to stay open if we all agree to a protocol that we would follow to stay open. I think this ruling today said exactly that.

“The ability for all businesses to be closed for this amount of time is not something that we’re prepared to do in this country. It’s not sustainable for all of our employees and certainly as an industry.”

The ruling referred to medical experts called by both sides in the dispute and acknowledged that the

initial closures were necessary for public health but that “fitness centers and gyms are constitutionally entitled to some mechanism for petitioning for reopening. They must have some meaningful opportunity to be heard.”

“We feel like this ruling allows us to do that and go forward together as a society and beat this virus together,” Hatten said of the decision.

Gerry Lee, owner of Mega Fitness in West Chandler, was elated by the ruling.

“I’m so relieved. The mortgage is the big thing and all the other bills, insurance costs, utilities. About the only thing that’s really gone down is my payroll,” Lee said. He said the reopening process for Mega Fit will be quick. He’s waiting to see what the state requires but then will begin the process of opening his doors again.

Preliminary primary-election results as of press time

The primary elections are over and voters have made their wishes known. At press time, the Maricopa County Recorder’s Office had released preliminary results of the various races.

What follows is a listing of those contests of particular interest to Wrangler News readers.

In the race for the U.S. Senate, Democrat Mark Kelly won 99% of his party’s vote while Sen. Martha McSally garnered 76% of the Republican vote to Daniel McCarthy’s 23%.

In the race for Congressional District 9, Democrat

Greg Stanton won 99% of the vote while Republican David Giles scored 53% of his party’s vote against Sam Huang’s 23%. Nicholas Tutora, the other Republican candidate for District 9, came in third at 21%.

In District 18 Arizona Senate race, Sean Bowie, the incumbent Democrat, won 99% of his party’s vote while Republican Suzanne Sharer got 98% of her party’s vote.

For District 18’s Arizona House race in which voters chose two candidates, Republicans Bob Robson won 93% and Don Hawker won 3% of the vote while incumbent Democrat Sen. Jennifer Jermaine won 50% of the votes

and incumbent Democrat Mitzi Epstein won 49%.

At press time, in the hotly contested Maricopa Assessor’s race, Republican Eddie Cook, who was appointed to his position, was edging out contender Rodney Glassman, 52% to 47%.

The Democrat candidate, Jevin Hodge, received 99% of his party’s vote.

Six candidates vied for three spots on the Chandler City Council. Christine Ellis, a newcomer to politics, won the most votes with 19% of ballots cast. Mark Stewart received 17% and O.D. Harris came in third with 16%.



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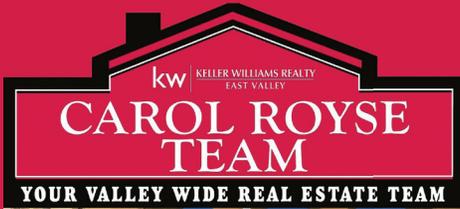


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Pricing even in a "hot" market is critical. Buyers, even those mystical California buyers are too smart to overpay for a home. Agents who discount their commission do so because in most cases they bring no other value to the seller other than a discount. They have no marketing plan or budget and only rely on the old school method of selling called the MLS. While it always seems good to work with someone nice, their personality will not matter much if they don't have a marketing plan or the expertise to sell your Tempe or Chandler home.

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