



WRANGLER NEWS

Nov. 20 - Dec. 3, 2021 • Vol. 31, No. 22



A Thanksgiving story: The parks that Ron Ackerman once slept in during hard times, he now takes care of.

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Lights! Camera! Emmys! Corona del Sol High's Film and TV students win 2 of TV's top awards.

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It's official: West Chandler is now a place.

Thanks to Chandler's long-term community-building initiative, residents in the 85226 ZIP Code gain recognition among the city's premier neighborhoods.

Details, Page 3

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CHEVROLET 

FIND NEW ROADS™

New signage unveiled for West Chandler branding effort

By Lee Shappell

Wrangler News Executive Editor

Many West Chandler residents through the years have felt perplexed and even disenfranchised when they perceived the city’s thinking as outside the box – outside the area where they live that is bounded by Interstate 10 on the west, Ray Road on the north, Loop 101 on the east and Loop 202 on the south.

Visitors also were confused. Where are we? Is this Phoenix? Tempe? It was difficult to know.

Chandler, sensitive to their feelings, has taken action to create a specific branding campaign for West Chandler to not only to heighten visibility and

establish a sense of place but also to let that portion of the city know that it is not forgotten.

The most visible evidence is recent installation of signs defining the West Chandler Employment corridor at the behest of Mayor Kevin Hartke.

.....

I know when the 101 came up it did separate people from where their schools were. It did create a barrier. — Mayor Kevin Hartke

The freeways that create the box around West Chandler move people. But there is a down side. They separate those residents from downtown,

perhaps fueling feelings of division and disenfranchisement.

“That’s a good question,” Hartke said. “I know when the 101 came up it did separate people from where their schools were. It did create a barrier.

“West Chandler is an interesting part of our city. Sometimes it’s hard to tell whether you are in Tempe or you are in Chandler.”

The area is a significant economic driver with more than 630 businesses employing more than 29,000 workers. With nearly six miles of frontage along I-10 and Loop 202, it is seen by thousands of commuters each day.

“When you enter West Chandler, we want you to

— BRANDING, Page 14

Tempe to consider renaming some parks, streets to address ties to discriminatory group



After discovering that some Tempe streets and parks are named for people with suspected ties to the KKK, City Council moves forward on a recommendation to rename them.

By Clifford Summerhill

Special for Wrangler News

As Tempe celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary, the City Council voted to move forward with changing the names of several streets and landmarks after their

namesakes were discovered to have ties to the Ku Klux Klan’s Tempe chapter.

After staff from the Tempe History Museum discovered that prominent Tempe ancestors paid dues to the Butte Klan No. 3 chapter of the KKK in the 1920s, the City Council heard arguments during a regular meeting in late October from residents on both sides of the issue.

After a lengthy public comment period, the City Council voted to establish a special committee to look into the name changes.

Hudson Drive, Hudson Lane, Laird Street, as well as Hudson, Harelson and Redden parks all bear names of now-deceased Tempe leaders who were found to have paid dues to the KKK.

City Manager Andrew Ching will now be tasked with appointing an ad hoc committee that will discuss the issue. According to the city, the committee will include various Tempe groups, including the Neighborhood Advisory Commission, the Human Relations Commission, the African American Advisory Committee, the Tempe Tardeada Advisory Board, the Tempe Elementary School District

— STREETS, Page 20

Lights, camera, Emmys

H.S. film, TV students stunned by awards

By Lee Shappell

Wrangler News Executive Editor

Might the next Steven Spielberg be in Corona del Sol High’s Film and TV program?

Why not? After all, Spielberg, the world-renowned film director, grew up in Phoenix and attended Arcadia High School.

The Corona Film and TV students last year were given mock Emmy awards by their instructor.

“I got Most Positive Person,” said Leah Gunter, 18, a senior, and one of two student executive producers in the program. “When things get stressful in this environment, being positive is really



Layla Reif



Benjamin Forbes



Leah Gunter

— EMMYS, Page 22

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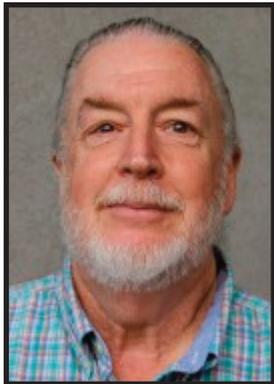


**Open Friday - Sunday*

Kids grown? Extra space in your heart, home?

Make a difference to a foster child during Adoption Month

By Janie Magruder



To Tempe resident Damian Kirwan, helping a child with significant physical, mental or emotional trauma, or perhaps all three, isn't rocket science. Rather, in his 45-year experience in social work, Kirwan says, it's more like rebuilding a home.

"You start with the foundation, then move up to the rafters and roof, where these kids find love and belonging and self-esteem, and finally you do the finishing touches on pursuing their hopes and dreams," he said. "Some of these kids have rickety walls, but they can get help to work on that, piece by piece, to build a life that's beautiful and lasting."

Kirwan is president of Human Services Consultants, which since its founding in 2000 has become the largest therapeutic foster-care agency in

Arizona. He and his team have helped more than 500 children, primarily ages 6 to 17, who have large missing chunks in their foundation, to become healthy, productive adults.

More than 100 of these children with moderate to severe behavioral and emotional challenges have been adopted, or their foster parents became their legal guardians, through HSC, he said. Some aged out of the foster-care system and moved away or are in college, but many still come home for Christmas or in the summer.

That's a special point of pride for Kirwan, especially in November, National Adoption Month. The commemoration supports activities that promote the adoption of children and youth from foster care into permanent, loving families.

It dates to 1976, when former Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis announced Adoption Week to promote awareness of the need for adoptive families for children in foster care. Former President Bill Clinton expanded National Adoption Week, declared by the late President Ronald Reagan in 1984, to National Adoption Month in 1995.

According to Casey Family Programs, 13,329 Arizona children younger than 18 were living in foster care in 2019. Of them, 45 percent were reunited with their families, 36 percent were adopted, 8 percent live with relatives or guardians and 9 percent aged out.

"The children who come to us have had an average of 12 placements before they arrive," Kirwan said.

A majority of HSC's children are referred by the Arizona Department of Child Safety, Kirwan said, but some come via hospitals and residential treatment centers. Any family member of a child enrolled in behavioral health services also can seek therapeutic foster care.

DCS qualifies and licenses therapeutic foster parents to provide stable homes for children and adolescents with significant emotional, behavioral or social needs. HSC, which has trained about 275 therapeutic foster parents over the years and currently has 55 children placed in 45 homes,

—ADOPTION, Page 29



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On Nov. 28, there will be songs, entertainment and traditional Chanukah foods like latkes and jelly donuts at Pollack Chabad Center for Jewish Life. Festivities always are open to the entire community. Jelly doughnuts, called sufganiyot, are fried in oil, representing the jar of oil that historically lasted for 8 days.

— Photos courtesy Chabad Center

Chanukah Extravaganza with families at Pollack Chabad Center a fun, meaningful celebration

Times change. As Rabbi Mendy Deitsch of West Chandler-based Pollack Chabad Center noted, not long ago celebrating Chanukah meant some latkes, a few spins of the dreidel, traditional songs, a jelly doughnut or two and some gelt, if lucky. And, of course, the menorah.

Now, fortunate children get to visit the annual Chanukah celebration and experience the holiday with their

families in a fun and meaningful way. Chanukah Extravaganza will open its doors to the community from 4 to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 28, the first day of Chanukah.

Conveniently located at the Pollack Chabad Center for Jewish Life, 875 N. McClintock Drive, the celebration offers families, children and adults a way to experience Chanukah together.

Here's what visitors can expect to find this year: foam pit with dreidel find, fire juggling show, Chanukah gift shop, mini doughnut making, gelt drop, dreidels for the kids and menorah lighting.

Information: Chabadcenter.com or 480-855-4333.



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A Thanksgiving story: 'The parks he slept in, he now takes care of'

Tempe employee made most of opportunities that gave him new life

By Janie Magruder

The alarm in Ron Ackerman's head goes off promptly at 3:30 a.m. five days a week, rousing him from peaceful sleep in his two-bedroom Tempe apartment.

Ackerman's shift as a Tempe city employee starts well before dawn, and he spends his day improving and beautifying the city's parks, clocking out as many others are just ending a late lunch.

Early afternoon is the best part of the day for this U.S. Navy veteran, former small-business owner and community volunteer. He heads home and sneaks in a nap, if his two rambunctious pups, Chiweenie brothers named Cracker and Jacks, allow it. Later, he may slap a steak on his George Foreman Grill, perhaps fire up his dehydrator to make jerky or see a movie with friends.

Life is good. It wasn't always. And that's why this Thanksgiving is so special to him.

"I busted my butt to get where I am right now," the 46-year-old said. "I know it would take one stupid thing to end it."

Born in Southern California, Ackerman and his older sister were raised by their single mom, who gave them "long leashes as kids." He graduated from Marina High in Huntington Beach, where surfing class was an elective, and rode the waves in the Pacific as often as he could.

Ackerman enlisted in the Navy and was stationed in



U.S. Navy veteran Ron Ackerman says this Thanksgiving will be especially meaningful to him. Once so down on his luck that he lived on the street, he has a new job, new place to live and he'll be driving to traditional festivities with family that once shunned him.
— Photo by Pablo Robles for Wrangler News

San Diego. On his ship, he learned combat sport, a contact discipline in which two opponents fight each other. After four years, Ackerman competed in mixed martial arts, primarily in Japan, and started a commercial door business.

Then, in 2008, his life came to a screeching halt

when a car he was driving was T-boned. Ackerman suffered injuries to his shoulders, ribs and lower back, so severe that doctors put him on high doses of painkillers, including OxyContin.

"It was a time when no one really knew about pain management, and I became

addicted," he said.

For the next 12 years, Ackerman struggled with his addiction, seeking out street drugs when his prescriptions were cut off, and entering rehab multiple times. All the while, he hid his opioid dependence from his family.

"Addiction was taboo with my family, and so I wasn't up

front with them," he said.

Ackerman lost everything — his fiancé, his business, his home and his family, which had tried to intervene, but ultimately left it to him to get well. He got in his car and headed east in 2015.

"I came to Arizona to get clean," Ackerman said. "I had lots of friends in California, and they were not the best friends as far as being sober. So I came to Arizona knowing nobody and having no people to call."

With no money, no home and no job, he lived for two years in his car, through the cold winter mornings and the scorching summer heat. He suffered heat stroke while working a day-labor job, and snagged only minimal sleep in the middle of the night when temperatures "cooled down" enough.

"I had a phone, and I'd spend lots of time on online forums, learning about how other people dealt with addiction," he said. "Almost on a good note, I got sober while I was homeless."

One night, while sleeping in his car in a Tempe grocery-store parking lot, a police officer approached and told him about I-HELP — the Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program.

I-HELP was started in Tempe in 2006 by the Tempe Community Action Agency and Tempe Interfaith Fellowship to provide shelter at area churches for people experiencing homelessness. It is sustained by local faith organizations providing overnight sleeping spaces and hundreds of volunteers

serving evening meals to program enrollees.

“I don’t know where I’d be if I didn’t hear about I-HELP,” Ackerman said. “When I lost my car, I was at rock bottom.”

With a comfortable place to sleep every night, he began volunteering at TCAA’s Food Pantry, packing boxes for people in need and driving its mobile trailers. These trailers provide showers and laundry services to homeless people every day of the year.

“Volunteering makes their world a better place, and it makes me a better person,” Ackerman said, noting that doing for others has been a critical part of his five years of sobriety. “I was getting help, so I wanted to help others. It also put me past the point where I was having cravings, and kept my mind off my own problems.”

But Ackerman still needed to fill the long daytime hours. He started visiting the Tempe Library, using its computers to look for work or to read.

“I wanted to be around the right people,” he said.

One of those people spotted him near the city’s Homeless Outreach Prevention Effort office in the

library. Since its inception in 2016, HOPE has provided services to homeless people in Tempe, including street outreach, case management and connections to shelter and housing.

Since the city ramped up its homeless outreach efforts in 2017, 1,362 people have received permanent housing in Tempe, and 1,348 chronically homeless people have been served, according to city records.

HOPE employs 11 people, including Kelly Denman, a homeless-outreach specialist who built a relationship with Ackerman.

“I don’t want to stereotype, but Ron didn’t appear to be homeless. He’s just this guy I saw every day,” Denman said. “I saw him talking to some I-HELP people, and I approached him, and at first he declined, ‘I’m good, I’ll be OK.’ He turned me down probably 10 times.”

She eventually learned his story, about his military service, the details of his addiction, eviction and car troubles. When Ackerman finally accepted help, Denman got him qualified for a subsidized housing voucher, and he moved into an apartment in Phoenix.

Denman also knew about the Tempe Works

program, which City Councilman Randy Keating brought to the Council in 2017.

“Tempe Works offers a path out of homelessness when we combine employment with access to shelter, housing and social services,” said Keating, now Tempe vice mayor. “This latest investment (the expansion of staff) allows the city to assist more people who want to increase their self-sufficiency.”

Denman thought the program would be perfect for Ackerman.

“This is a guy sitting all day in the library and he wants to be doing something with his time,” she said. “He has shelter, he’s sober, he has a driver’s license. So many boxes were checked in my heart on what a good employee he would make.”

Denman was right.

Ackerman was hired in 2018 as a full-time temporary employee, working weekdays from 4 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., cleaning public restrooms in city parks, the very spaces that previously were his home.

Later that year, with enough savings, he gave up his housing voucher, and moved into a Tempe

—THANKSGIVING, Page 10

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Thanksgiving

From Page 9

apartment.

“I wanted them to give it to somebody who needed it. I didn’t want to be dependent. I wanted to be on my own,” said Ackerman.

His mom helped him buy a car.

He quickly moved from city custodian to part of the team overseeing maintenance of park infrastructure citywide — picnic tables to playgrounds to lighting.

His supervisor, Ruben Wilkinson Jr., taught him to be a tradesman, learning basic plumbing and electrical work.

Ackerman was the type of person who, when finished early with assigned tasks, would ask to do more.

He is looking forward to applying for a permanent city job soon, and Denman has signed on as a reference.

“He totally deserves it,” she said. “He’s put in countless hours in a non-benefits job.

He stays late. He shows up and does more than he’s required to do.

“His dedication, his passion, his heart ... Tempe is lucky to have him.”

Denman said she’s never seen such a success story like Ackerman, someone who “worked the whole system, used every single resource for what it was intended to do, became successful and moved on.”

He stays in touch, and assists her with homeless outreach by referring people whom he meets in the parks. Perhaps they, too, can qualify for I-HELP and housing vouchers, even get a good job through Tempe Works.

“Ron inspires me,” Denman said. “He truly is the reason for what and why we do what we do.”

On Nov. 24, Ackerman will pop Cracker and Jacks into his car and head to an extended family Thanksgiving celebration at his mom’s home in Huntington Beach.

It’s his fifth straight year for such a gathering, one that he regrets missing out on for many years prior.

“I wasn’t being honest with my family during those dark times of my life,” he said. “When I came to Arizona to get sober, I had AHCCCS (Arizona’s Medicaid program), and I always asked to be drug

tested at every visit. I saved the reports until I had about 20 of them, and I sent them to my mom.”

When she received documentation that he was sober, “she was just proud and glad that she had her son back,” said Ackerman, who now visits his family several times a year.

“I’m building back bridges that I destroyed on my own.”

For their Thanksgiving feast, since his mom is a vegetarian, the meat eaters in the family will “group up prior and see who’s getting the ham, otherwise we’ll have to deal with her soy molded-like turkey.” There will be all the trimmings, including traditional cranberry salad.

Ackerman will have time to reflect on his blessings — opportunities he was given when he needed them the most: a roof over his head, steady work, dignity, respect, sobriety, the ability to serve others.

“I’m thankful for all my family and friends, the people that I’ve met along the way who believed in me,” he said.

“I don’t take the help I received for granted. I knew I didn’t have many chances left.”



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Branding

From Page 3

know that you are in an important part of our community,” Hartke said. “When you hear the name ‘West Chandler’ we want you to envision a vibrant and dynamic employment corridor.”

Chandler City Council approved \$239,937 to buy the nine signs that are being placed in strategic areas in West Chandler as part of the branding initiative led by the city’s Economic Development Division. The signs are 15 feet tall, with “West Chandler” lettering, and a high-tech theme that reflects the area’s industry base. The city worked with YESCO, a custom sign builder in West Chandler, to design and install the signs. Seven of them have been installed so far.

“West Chandler is a very special group to us in terms of business development, particularly industrial near Ray Road and Interstate 10,” Hartke said. “Right now, we’re expanding at the 10 and 202 on the northeast corner. There’s a lot of jobs up there, a lot of industrial jobs that are unique. And you’ve got Stellar Airpark in west Chandler, which is a jewel. How many communities in the

world actually have a neighborhood where you can taxi your airplane into your garage, or fly daily to California and back to work?”

“Our Desert Oasis Park is beautiful out there. Chandler Fashion Center in West Chandler definitely is one of our jewels. It’s top tier and I’m excited to see Scheels (sporting goods) moving in there and others coming in.”

The Economic Development Division is leading additional projects aimed at strengthening West Chandler’s image and sense of place. A multi-channel marketing campaign is promoting the neighborhood, including social-media posts, digital ads and print ads that highlight West Chandler business success stories, development projects and why the area is a wise place to invest.

The city will bring its “Feel Good Friday” promotion to West Chandler, visiting area businesses and rewarding shoppers with gift cards to Chandler-based businesses. The promotion is strategically timed to support West Chandler businesses during the holiday-shopping season and construction on the I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project.

“Our marketing strategy for West Chandler will target different audiences,” said Economic Development Director Micah Miranda. “In addition to local stakeholders, we are going to be promoting West Chandler to technology companies outside the state who would be a good fit for the area.”

More information: chandleraz.gov/business/economic-development/employment-corridors/west-chandler.

Pottery/plant sale to benefit dog rescues

The 25th annual pottery/plant sale, featuring one-of-a-kind stoneware pottery by Eva Vichules and several other ceramic artists, is 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Dec. 4-5 at 115 W. Balboa Drive in Tempe. All proceeds go to Island Dog Rescue in Puerto Rico (islanddog.org), Aussie and Friends Rescue (aussiefriendsrescue.com) and Happy Tails Rescue (happytailsaz.com).

Payment will be accepted in cash or check only.

Plants in ceramic containers will be available as well as plants in nursery containers. Stoneware bowls, mugs, plates and animal-related items also will be for sale.

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SPORTS

Aztecs end football season with 1st place in 6A East Valley standings

By Alex Zener

The Aztecs, with a No. 19 ranking, did not make it into the 6A football playoff championship but finished the regular season with a 5-5 overall record and a 5-0 record in their 6A East Valley Section. The Aztecs took over the first-place spot in that section after easily defeating Dobson, 51-0 on Oct. 29, Westwood, 45-23 on Nov. 5 and Tucson High Magnet School, 52-7 on Nov. 11.

Against Dobson, the Aztecs scored seven touchdowns, the first one happened within the first three minutes of the quarter when

Jonathan Kubat broke free to run 48-yard to score a touchdown. Kubat would go on to rush for 157 yards on 20 carries or 7.9 average yards per carry and score a total of four rushing touchdowns against the Mustangs.

Sophomore running back Nickolas Mustacchia scored two rushing touchdowns,

Quarterback Connor Ackerley only needed to throw five passes the entire game completing four. One of those completion was a 38-yard pass to James Miller to score Corona's second touchdown.

The defense played well preventing the Mustangs of scoring

any points by compiling a total of 40 tackles, led by Nathan Cormier-Ward who have two solo tackles and 3 assisted for a total of five. In addition, Ryne Cook and Jalen Walker both had four total tackles.

Sophomore kicker Malcolm Flynn only had one chance to show off his kicking skills while Corona's other kicker, Carston Kieffer, scored seven of the 51 points by being successful kicking seven point-after kicks.

Junior Keona Peat scored two points by tackling Dobson's ball carrier in their own end zone.

The Aztecs started strong against Westwood scoring two touchdowns, a rushing touchdown by Kubat during their first possession and a passing touchdown from Ackerley to Jovin Gomez, with a minute left in the first quarter.

Carston Kieffer successfully made both point-after kicks to put Corona up 14-0.

Westwood pulled within six with a touchdown and two-point conversion, but the Aztecs reciprocated with another touchdown just before the half with a couple of long passes from Ackerley to Kubat and a 3-yard touchdown pass from

Ackerley to Jeff Lambert to go up 21-8.

The Aztecs came out to start the second half fired up and determined to win scoring two touchdown in the third quarter along with the defense holding the Warriors to just one touchdown.

Ackerley continued to throw the long passes in the third quarter. One pass caught by Lambert and the second by Owen Janssen to set up a 3-yard rushing touchdown by Jalen Walker.

The second touchdown in the third quarter was set up by a failed outside kick by the Warriors that was recovered by junior Drew Nicolson on Corona's 48-yard line.

Kubat broke free for a long run and set up Jalen Walker for a 1-yard rushing touchdown to end the third quarter with a 20-point lead or 35-15.

Corona scored a 25-yard field goal by junior Bennett Matsler early in the fourth quarter and a rushing touchdown by Kubat set up by another failed outside kick by Westwood that was recovered to make the score 45-23 with under a

ZENER, Page 25

Guide to Chandler Parks

With more than 60 parks in Chandler, a variety of park programs to participate in and the option to rent fields and pavilions for life celebrations, residents and visitors have plenty of options to get out and enjoy the outdoors.

Visit the Guide to Chandler Parks at chandleraz.gov/ParkGuide to discover all the things parks have to offer.





The Corona del Sol Aztecs are known around the Valley as one of the top high school girls volleyball programs, and this season was no exception. The Lady Aztecs earned the No. 4 seed in the Class 6A state tournament.

After cruising to wins over Tucson Rincon and Desert Vista in the first two rounds, the Aztecs ran into top seed, Sandra Day O'Connor High, in the state semifinals and fell, 3 games to 2. O'Connor went on to defeat Hamilton for the state-title. Corona finished 28-7 overall, 10-0 in league play.

"It starts with having talent," Coach Ben Maxfield said with a chuckle. "We've been fortunate to have a lot of talent."

Above, Kierstyn Barton, Anglie Bour, Kacie Webb, Natalie Mantini, Sydney Meyer and Reese Manross celebrate a win over Desert Vista. At right, Barton elevates high to spike a ball on the Thunder. On facing page, Manross, Maddie Kamolz and Meyer share a moment of joy (top); Bour sets a ball for Webb (bottom) and Barton spikes another one.

— Photos by Andrew Lwowski for Wrangler News







DIVERSIONS

Tempe author's best-seller applies Silicon Valley model to wide array of applications



By M.V. Moorhead
Special for Wrangler News

“It’s really about how Silicon Valley built a model for business.” This is how Tempe-based author Aaron Bare explains the specifics of his bestselling book *Exponential Theory*. More generally, however, says Bare, the theme of the book is summarized in its subtitle: *The Power of Thinking Big*.

The tome, co-written with N. Forbes Shannon, describes how digital technology has changed the pace of business, both advancing and expanding at a, well,

exponential rate. Using examples like Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk, it details both the enormous potentials for profit and the equal potential for sudden failure, setback and even obsolescence.

Bare has a background that qualifies him to speak on these matters. The Indiana native, who attended Indiana tech, then Indiana University for his Master’s and the Thunderbird School of Global Management for his M.B.A., founded and ran a “digital strategy firm” called Buzz Mouth in 2009. It was acquired in 2014 by marketing powerhouse LaneTerraLever; since then Bare has worked as a consultant and speaker for businesses in “90 countries and all 50 states.” He also authored (with Shannon) the 2020 book *Reimagining Innovation*.

All of these experiences and observations led Bare to a conclusion.

“It all comes back to this common theory,” he said. “The leaders (of these game-changing, innovative companies) thought exponentially.”

This led Bare to

write *Exponential Theory*, which has reached No. 4 on the Wall Street Journal’s Nonfiction E-Books Bestselling List, and #102 on USA Today’s Bestselling Books List.

The stories of Amazon, Microsoft and the like are important and interesting, certainly, but what can reading Bare’s book do for ordinary wage slaves and hustlers like most of us? Plenty, according to the author.

When you learn to follow the tactics in his book, says Bare, “You stop sweating the small stuff, and you think in big ideas.

Once you’re thinking in big terms, small stuff becomes very easily overcome”

One of the strongest strategies for success, says Bare, is workforce diversity.

“In the future of the shortage of talent,” Bare said, “the real opportunity is diversity, and bringing up everybody.”

The author acknowledges, of course, that none of these approaches assure success. “Nothing is foolproof,” he said.

Even when the ideas behind the business

Tempe producer presents West Coast jazz saxophonist Bob Sheppard

Ensemble quintet perfect fit for new, state-of-the-art Ravenscroft Hall in Saturday, Nov. 20 concert

For more than four decades, jazz saxophonist Bob Sheppard has played sessions with A-list jazz giants Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock and Dianne Reeves, as well as big-name artists of other genres.

Producer Woody Wilson, a longtime Tempe civic leader and 2020 Don Carlos Humanitarian of the Year, brings that artistry to the Valley on Nov. 20 when Sheppard and his quintet play a 7:30 p.m. concert, presented by Wilson’s Lakeshore Music at Ravenscroft Hall in North Scottsdale.

“Bob Sheppard is truly in a class of his own,” said Wilson, founder, president and executive producer of Lakeshore Music. “He’s the A-list session player in Los Angeles when you absolutely have to have a dazzling reed player. He has worked with the legends.

“Our show on Nov. 20 is going to be something splendid. Besides Bob Sheppard, acclaimed guitarist Larry Koonse is in the band, along with Otmaro Ruiz on piano, bassist Luca Alemano and drummer Mark Ferber. It’s a monster band, just the sort of ensemble Ravenscroft Hall was built to showcase. It will be a spectacular show in a world-class venue.”



Wilson initially met Sheppard, who also is virtuosic on flute and clarinet, eight years ago while producing a concert starring Los Angeles pianist John Proulx. Sheppard was in the band.

“He literally blew the audience away with his tenor sax and nearly stole the show,” Wilson said of Sheppard. “People were coming up to me after the concert and asking, ‘Who is this guy?’”

“The same thing happened a few years later when we presented West Coast singer Denise Donatelli. She included Bob in her band and our crowd remembered. That’s when I knew we had to bring Bob back to headline his own show, but schedules always got in the way.”

Sheppard found gigs accompanying Tony Bennett, Sammy Davis Jr., the 5th Dimension and a steady spot with Chuck Mangione’s orchestra. He also has played with Joni Mitchell, Steely Dan, James Taylor, Stevie Wonder, Queen Latifah, Elvis Costello, Natalie Cole, Randy Newman, Rickie Lee Jones and Boz Scaggs.

He got those calls due mostly to

— Continued on facing page

are solid, “the person that creates first doesn’t necessarily reap the benefits.”

He points out, for instance, that the Segway underperformed when it was introduced in 2009, but that personal transportation remains an area of keen interest to innovators.

He also points out the Apple Pocket Crystal of 1989, a project which foreshadowed the iPhone.

For that matter, noted Bare, “No one would have thought when Facebook started that MySpace would have lost its dominance.”

Bare also observes that a failure to achieve a specific goal doesn’t necessarily mean that the effort is wasted.

“Elon Musk talks about going to Mars,” Bare said.

“If he never gets to Mars, he probably still got to the moon.”

his improvisational and interpretive abilities, and, of course, his unique sound.

"Playing with the best of the best is huge. It makes me play better," Sheppard said. "All those top 40 and funk bands in the '70s were very much jazz gigs to me. They taught me styles, how to hear my way through music, how to play in horn sections with singers.

"The pop tunes of the '70s and '80s had great harmonies and forms that left much room for individuality and expression."

From the start, it was jazz that lured Sheppard.

"When I was a kid, there was jazz all over TV and radio," he said. "I really didn't need to search jazz out. It was all around me. I really liked the idea of finding melodies and the freedom of exploring sounds on my horn. I was constantly noodling and experimenting. I never waited for my teacher to tell me what to practice. Playing along with all of the music I heard was a huge factor

in how I learned to use my ear, identify harmony and develop acute relative pitch, and to play in tune."

Sheppard became a first-call musician who could be counted upon to bring fresh ideas to a recording session or live gig.

"I learned to function in so many environments," Sheppard said. "Knowing how to react and relate stylistically to become a musical mind reader and deliver what's needed is still fun for me. The cumulative effect of experience is a priceless education."

Bob Sheppard Quintet

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Film fare . . . with M.V. Moorhead

'Belfast' sneaks up with earned tears

Kenneth Branagh's film *Belfast* begins one day in 1969, with 9-year-old Buddy walking home through the teeming, friendly streets of his working-class, religiously mixed neighborhood in the title city.

Just before he gets there, a furious mob suddenly rounds the corner and starts smashing windows of his Catholic neighbors. Before long, the streets are full of tanks and soldiers and barricades.

This is the beginning of "The Troubles," the decades-long strife between Protestants and Catholics in Belfast.

But for Buddy (Jude Hill), the more pressing issues are his crush on a beautiful classmate, or which movie he'll be taken to see, or keeping straight which road his fire-and-brimstone (Protestant) clergyman recommends he take to avoid damnation.

We see the struggles of his beautiful, decent mother (Catriona Balfe), to raise him and his siblings

during the frequent and lengthy absences of his loving but financially nonchalant father (Jamie Dornan), and the gentle teasing between his mutually adoring grandparents (Judy Dench and Ciaran Hinds), all through Buddy's eyes.

We also see his father's courageous refusal to be roped in to the mob by local protestant thugs, and we hear his parents debate whether to leave their beloved hometown.

The film, which Branagh wrote and directed, is largely autobiographical. It's much like Branagh's version of John Boorman's great *Hope and Glory* (1987), about childhood fun during the Blitz.

After a glimpse of modern-day Belfast, the movie is rendered in crisply beautiful black and white by cinematographer Haris Zambarloukas, with moments in vivid color when Buddy sees movies like *One Million Years B.C.* or *Chitty*

— FILM, Page 27

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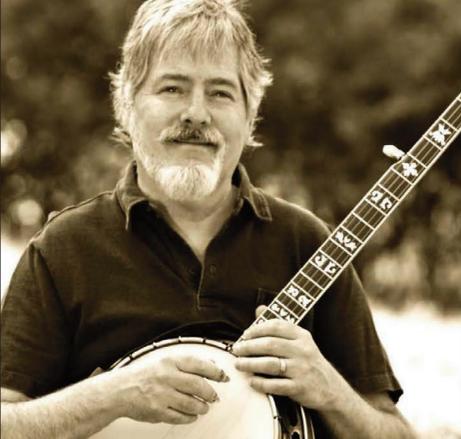
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Thanks, and we look forward to hearing from you!

Correction — Recent coverage of an ongoing issue in South Tempe's Shady Lane Estates neighborhood inadvertently referred to that community as being the only one in the area where bridle trails exist. Circle G Ranches is also known for the same availability. We apologize for the oversight.

Streets

From Page 3

Tempe staff members have communicated with Tempe Elementary School District staff leadership about this issue, since the city's research showed that Laird, Gililand and Hudson schools also were similarly named. The district's Governing Board and staff will handle community discussions and decisions about its schools, and the city will continue to collaborate with the district as needed.

The city is sensitive to the descendants of the identified people and is reaching out to the family members who have city-owned locations named for their ancestors. Communication with family members will continue so they feel invited to be part of the conversations. The city is committed to ensuring that all dialogue on



this important topic is done in safe and respectful ways.

Background materials for the Oct. 21 Council discussion are available at tempe.gov/clerk. In the coming days, an online hub (tempe.gov/renaming) will be launched with information about the renaming process and opportunities for public input.



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Be respectful if you see a horned owl at Desert Breeze Park

By Sally Mesarosh | Special for Wrangler News



If you've heard deep, soft hoots as dusk approaches, chances are there might be a great horned owl nearby. Urban dwellers often think they need to live or travel to a remote rural area to see an owl, but in fact, many East Valley residents could possibly have owls for neighbors.

Owls are

nocturnal, active from dusk until dawn. As we wind down from our day, some owls are just waking up and leaving their nests to begin their day.

Ronald Reed Sill and other local bird enthusiasts say they have seen great horned owls at Desert Breeze Park in West Chandler.

"I was not surprised to see owls in the neighborhood park," said Sill of Chandler. "Owls have always co-existed in neighborhoods."

Cathy Wise, community science manager at Audubon Southwest in Phoenix, agrees that it's not rare to find great horned owls in a suburban neighborhood park.

"Great horned owls are extremely opportunistic and make use of a wide array of habitats," Wise said. "Although they are very powerful predators, they can adapt readily to whatever food sources are available: insects, rodents, birds, even skunks. This flexibility makes it possible for them to live and nest in a wide array of habitats, even in suburban and urban areas. They don't like dense, unbroken forests but other than that are widespread throughout the country."

Birders who have seen owls at Desert Breeze Park hesitate to reveal the exact location of the nest to prevent crowds of people from gathering.

"I am not an expert on how to protect them," Sill said. "But I know to give them plenty of space when it's nesting season to not stress them out. I always use a long telephoto lens when photographing them to keep my distance."

Wise said great horned owls typically do not build their own nests but take over structures abandoned by hawks and ravens.

"The pair might do a little fine-tuning—adding a stick here or there—but prefer the 'turn-key' scenario," Wise said. "If they can successfully nest in an area, they will return year after year until conditions become unfavorable. It is not uncommon for homeowners to set their calendars by the reappearance of an owl pair in late fall/early winter. Most people enjoy the company of the owls and like watching the progress of the nest."

Great horned owls are believed to be the most

common owl species in the Valley, according to Wise, followed by western screech-owls, barn owls and elf owls.

"Although it isn't possible to provide an exact number, biologists agree that the species is widespread, and numbers are stable," Wise said. "Because of this bird's adaptable nature, the species has fared better than more specialized species in recent years."

Sill said that as a photographer and a birder, it's always a great treat to see the owls.

"Owls are not birds you see too often," Sill said. "It's always nice to see them."

What should you do if you find an injured owl or baby owl out of the nest?

Wise said it's not uncommon for young, feathered birds to jump from the nest before they are ready, and to end up on the ground.

"If adult owls are present, they will continue to feed the youngster, and if you are in a safe location (no dogs or other potential predators, including people) you can let nature take its course," Wise said.

But watch closely.

"If the baby is still downy or injured, call Liberty Wildlife and explain the situation."

In some cases, the wildlife center will recommend replacing the owlet in the nest, but it is recommended you talk to Liberty Wildlife first.

"After all, owl parents do a better job than humans can do," she said. "If a visible injury is present, or parents have abandoned the nest, the rehab center will recommend collecting the bird gently, keeping it in a dark, draft free place and transporting it to the center."

For assistance, contact Liberty Wildlife at 480-998-5550.

Emmys

From Page 3

important. Sometimes I get on peers' nerves with my enthusiasm and positive energy. I'm always telling them, 'Don't worry guys, we can do this!'"

And they did. The fun Emmys became real Emmys on Nov. 6 when Corona's broadcast team at [cdstv] stunned even themselves by winning two Rocky Mountain Emmy awards – at the same ceremony as all the big television stations in the Valley, Salt Lake City and Albuquerque – after having been nominated for seven.

"It was an amazing feeling," Gunter said. "We all watched the livestream together. It was so cool to just be nominated and considered for an Emmy, but the fact that we won one and now we're held to that standard is so rewarding because we all worked so hard on the broadcast every week. It was really nice knowing all of our hard work pays off in the end."

That was echoed by Layla Reif, 16, the program's

first-ever junior executive producer.

"Just actually having the opportunity to experience it in an industry format is so cool," Reif said. "Seeing it and actually applying it in my real life is super rewarding."

The Film and TV program, taught by Benjamin Forbes, also brought home 14 Arizona Interscholastic Press Association awards this fall, including the top honor, General Excellence for Broadcasting.

Forbes took over the program, which had been a club activity, 15 years ago and made it an official class. There now are nearly 120 students in the program that includes two beginning classes, an intermediate and an advanced class and the newest, an animation class.

As Forbes says, it has become "kind of a big deal."

"We kind of grew and learned and tweaked and tweaked and tweaked for 15 years, and here we are," Forbes said. "I had no idea I would feel so passionately about this class because I was social studies teacher thinking that was what I was going

to do my entire career."

Walk into his classroom and there is an impressive collection of cameras and laptop computers. Across the hall is a full production studio.

"We're very grateful to have it all," Reif said.

Corona won an Emmy for Best High School Magazine Program. Gunter was one of the reporters.

"I've been in [cdstv] all four years," Gunter said. "Mr. Forbes came to (Aprende) middle school when I was in eighth grade and did a presentation about [cdstv] and it just sounded like exactly what I wanted to do. So I quickly signed up for the program and I just fell in love with it."

According to Forbes, "If she doesn't go into film or TV it's a crime."

Corona's second Emmy was for Best High School Multimedia Journalist, to Chandler Carlisle, a senior last school year. Reif also was nominated.

"I definitely want to do something in this field for my career," Reif said. "I've always loved acting as well. The idea of directing, producing and acting is

like a dream for me. Getting to work behind the camera also is something I didn't know I was interested in until I joined this class. I love it now."

The 10-minute [cdstv] newsmagazine airs every Friday.

"We don't do stories just to do stories," Forbes said. "We'll have cooking segments. We'll do sketches, tasting weird foods, maybe a public-service announcement about getting grades up and making it fun

at the same time.

"It's that kind of content that makes us a newsmagazine as opposed to a newscast. We don't just report the news. We do announcements, but we also bring the school together with quality content.

"I always refer to it as the *Daily Show* as opposed to the *Today* show. We're there to inform, but also to entertain."

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Zener

From Page 15

minute to go.

The Warriors were threatening to score at the end of the fourth quarter when sophomore defensive back **Keyvon Thomas** intercepted a Westwood pass to end the game 45-23.

Marcos de Niza Football

The Padres finished the regular season with a 4-6 record and ranked No. 23 in the 4A section.

Sophomore **Braesen Leon** played quarterback in all 10 games completing 162 out of 271 pass attempts for 1993 yards and 16 touchdowns scored by nine different receivers.

On the receiving end was junior **Mason Stromstad** who caught 37 passes for 482 yards and four touchdowns. Junior wide receiver **Clinton Hopkins** caught 31 passes for 387 yards and one touchdown while senior wide receiver **Brody Bybee** caught 21 passes for 272 yards and three touchdowns. Senior wide receiver **Joesyiss Williams** caught 16 passes for 272 yards scoring three touchdowns.

The other five receiving touchdowns were caught by senior **Ju Rhodes**, junior **Juan Lopez**, sophomore **Mike Turner**, junior **Jamaal Young** and junior **Elijah Woods**.

The Padres rushed for a total of 811 yards and four touchdowns. The leading rusher on the team was Hopkins with 52 carries for a total of 202 yards followed by Woods who carried the ball 31 times for a total of 180 yards and two touchdowns.

In the quarterback position, Leon carried the ball 18 times for 77 yards and one touchdown while senior **Rosalino Valensuela** scored one touchdown.

Corona Volleyball

The Aztecs ended the regular season with a 27-6 overall record and first in the Central Section with a 10-0 record, which gave them a No. 4 seed in the 2021 AAA Girls Volleyball 6A State Championship which started at the higher seed Nov. 4.

The top eight ranked teams were exempt from the 6A Conference Play-In tournament, where the next 16 ranked teams (No. 8-24) played to determine which eight teams would round out the 16 teams to play in the championships starting Nov. 4.

ZENER, Page 27



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Film

From Page 19

Bang, or when he's taken to see *A Christmas Carol* onstage.

The period detail is convincing, and the acting is terrific, with Dench and Hinds unsurprisingly filming big chunks of the movie as the grandparents.

Their roles, especially Dench's, are arguably underwritten, but they let us see, without telegraphing, oceanic expanses of love and worry and pride behind their offhanded manner. Branagh confers a child's-eye glamor on Dornan and Balfe; the latter lets us see her passionate nature in a couple of scenes in which she dances. And young Hill is splendidly unfussy and direct as Buddy.

Not every aspect of *Belfast* works; Buddy's crush, for instance, doesn't build up much audience investment, and his siblings barely register. But the movie sneaks up on you emotionally. By the end I was in tears, very honestly won.

Also, any movie with a soundtrack made up of one Van Morrison tune after another is sure to be worth seeing, if only for that.

Belfast is rated PG-13 and plays at Arizona Mills, Chandler Fashion 20, Tempe Marketplace and other multiplexes Valleywide.

Zener

From Page 25

Corona easily defeated No. 13, Rincon/University, in the first round of the state championships on Nov. 4 at home in three sets, 25-6, 25-10 and 25-12. Junior outside hitter, **Kierstyn Barton**, had a breakout game against the Rangers with 12 kills and seven service aces. Senior **Sydney Meyer** was next with six kills and three blocks.

Middle blocker **Ella Lomigora** also had six kills to go along with her six service aces and three blocks.

Next, in the quarterfinals, scheduled for Nov. 9, Corona defeated No. 12 Desert Vista, 25-23, 25-13, 23-26, 25-8, on the Aztec's home court. Barton continued to have the hot arm slamming down 20 kills in four sets or an average of five kills a set.

On Nov. 11, Corona played the No. 1 seed Sandra Day O'Connor in a semi-final matchup at the higher seed.

The Aztecs started strong winning the first set, 26-24, and the second set 25-20 before the Eagles fought back with a 28-26 win in the third set. The Eagles used the shift in the momentum to get a 25-13 win in the fourth set and a 15-11 fifth set to win the match 3-2 and get the opportunity to play in the finals.

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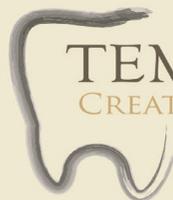
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Adoption

From Page 5

monitors the state licenses.

Janet Farmer joined HSC as a therapeutic foster parent three years ago, and has since fostered six children, including the three girls who currently live in her Goodyear home. Farmer, who has two grown sons, is a longtime preschool teacher who began doing respite work for other HSC therapeutic foster parents.

“You can’t treat these children the same way you treat your own kiddos,” she said. “It’s not a big deal to change a schedule with your own, but with these kids, who haven’t had stability, you have to keep in mind consistency. You can’t say, ‘You can do this today, but not tomorrow.’”

Farmer and other therapeutic foster parents quickly lay a solid foundation — a home environment that meets a child’s basic survival needs of air, water, food and sleep.

“These kids have to learn that it’s OK to get a drink of water whenever you want to, that it’s OK to use the bathroom in the middle of the night,” Kirwan said, “because where they came from, it wasn’t.”

Because these children require 24/7 support and supervision, it’s important to Kirwan that therapeutic

foster parents receive significant support, too. With an average burnout time of 2 1/2 years, therapeutic foster parents need to know that “we’ve got their backs,” he said.

HSC is careful about matching and placing traumatized children with the best-suited home, first taking stock of a potential family’s biological children, their schedules, even their pets.

“We had two brothers who had been mauled by a dog, and we couldn’t put them in a home with pets,” Kirwan said.

“Eventually, much later, therapy dogs were brought into the home so the children could see, ‘What does it look like when a dog is anxious? Or when it is happy to see you?’”

Most therapeutic foster parents who do adopt don’t begin with that mindset.

“Many say, ‘Our kids are grown and we have an extra room, and we want to make a difference,’” Kirwan said. “That’s the thing that starts the motion toward legal guardianship or adoption.”

Farmer says she’ll always be Mom to her three girls — and as many other children who come to her — because the rewards far outweigh the challenges.

“Don’t be afraid, just jump in,” she said. “The kids need you so much.”

Contact HSC at hscsz.com or 602-279-1427.

Giving

From Page 12

into their new American home particularly challenging,”

Khilda has learned to sew holiday table decorations, cloth napkins, women’s purses and, when COVID-19 hit, face masks, many of which have been sold on its Etsy store, RefugeeMade. LSS-SW gave her a sewing machine and delivers fabric to her home, providing a way for her to support her family.

The couple will be eligible to apply for citizenship next year, and Khilda is eager to begin English lessons again to be ready for her exam.

“I love this country,” she said.

“The first thing is freedom and the land of opportunity. Work and freedom. Safety. You can go anywhere, anytime. And you don’t even have to think about any risk.”

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TUHSD process for getting rid of school resource officers not just unfortunate, it is dangerous to our children

Op Ed by Dick Foreman, Sandy Lowe, Robin Arredondo-Savage, Mary Lou Taylor & Zita Johnson

We have, among all of us, more than a century of school-board service in Tempe/Ahwatukee Foothills/Chandler/Guadalupe and Phoenix. We know our community. We know that our community has many differing viewpoints. And, most importantly, we know that we must always keep our ears, minds and hearts open to one another.

Our diversity as a community is what makes us what we are. We love and support our Tempe Union family of schools and we rise now to defend them. On behalf of our students, staff and parents, we ask that all of you reading this join in our call, too.

The Tempe Union Governing Board has taken a sudden, unprecedented and ill-advised narrow vote to disband all school resource officers.

These are the highly trained individuals who are NOT police, per se, but are active school community players who are fully invested in their love of students, highly capable of dealing with not just safety or threats, but health and emotional issues, as well.

These are not just officers sitting in a patrol car in the parking lot and glaring at kids. For goodness sake, these men and women are integral partners in the school culture of safety, equity and respect.

The resolution adopted by a narrow 3-2 margin says that it seeks to address “equitable discipline practices.”

Actually, it does nothing of the sort. SROs do not set policy, advance arbitrary disciplinary measures, nor counter the directives of the school Governing Board. They follow them.

Their service being questioned now is unworthy and forces a negative debate of anecdotal trashing.

But the board majority says that they wish to “build positive community relationships, ensure a safe learning environment for students and staff, and address students’ and staff social and emotional needs.”

However, as a Governing Board, one might wish to acknowledge that if you have the slightest interest in supporting staff, you actually need to

listen to them, too. More than 90 percent of Tempe Union staff support the SRO program according to a recent survey, including every single

school principal. So much for the “emotional needs” of staff.

As for building “positive community relationships,” one might start by not ignoring your community voices.

That means, as difficult as it is, listening to every perspective, being deliberate, taking the time to hear from the diverse and wonderful community of voices that we are. This resolution completely muzzles parent and community leaders, who are now joining us in the ranks of the alarmed, since we are all simply being told that SROs will go away.

We believe and many others believe that this perspective, in all actuality, recklessly ignores student equity, health and safety in favor of political pandering.

Make no mistake, police reform and long-overdue student-equity issues must be discussed as we continue to grow as a community and learn how to better interact with one another on behalf of our most precious resource, our children. As difficult as this process can be for many, we know that this is exactly what must be done as past Governing Board members.

But the action you have taken is not that. Your action is pure politics and anecdotal hysteria run amok.

How else can we view a Governing Board resolution that states the solution is to eliminate SROs before the study demanded of the superintendent is actually made? In other words, study this and come to a pre-ordained recommendation and conclusion because it has already been decided. No need to further discuss, listen or understand.

Trust us, you do not have it figured out. We do not state this out of hubris. We say this out of the learning experiences we have all had as Governing Board members and that we now hope you will engage with us as partners by not just ruling over us.

We join you in this admission, that sometimes we just don’t get it right. We know that this is not because any of us are bad people or that we have bad intentions. It is because we are human. Sometimes our filters get clogged.

Maybe “Covid Crazy” takes over. Sometimes, we

just have a bad day. We temporarily think that the voices we listen to are the only voices that matter. We all do it. We’ve all done it. It is always wrong.

We have heard from many, many folks in the last few weeks. They represent every nook, corner and cranny of our community. And we also have anecdotal evidence regarding the positive impact SROs have on our students and staff. One Tempe Union student, for example, responded this way to the question:

“What do you think of the Governing Board voting to remove SROs from your campus?” The answer: “I don’t think that’s a good idea. We have like 3,000 kids on campus and not one trained security person?”

We really like our SRO. He goes into the Academic Lab and teaches us about crime, laws and forensic evidence. He’s really cool.”

Students see the SROs as another support person they can trust and turn to when they need help. And yes, ALL students should feel this way based on trust and personal safety! They won’t get that by our Governing Board playing politics with the SROs. And they never will if this resolution is fully enacted.

Please take the time now to actually listen to your SROs and stop labeling them as part of the problem when actually their role is to support the school culture of safety, security and student equity as their highest priority.

It begins with intense additional training on top of their public-safety service that demands they be willing to put their lives on the line for us every day they are on the job.

We respectfully wish to join you, Tempe Union Governing Board members, not fight with you. Please reconsider this resolution at your next meeting, set it aside, and offer a long-term, thoughtful dialogue with all of us.

Let us help you deal with student equity. Let us help you ensure students, faculty and staff really are safe and secure on Tempe Union’s campuses. We are committed to it.

The writers are former Tempe Union High School District Governing Board members.

New advances, approaches keep Tempe Police services top notch

Commentary by Jennifer Adams

My fellow south Tempe residents and I value our local police officers. They provide a warm and comforting presence in our neighborhoods and parks, and I know that we are grateful for all they do. And, under the leadership of Police Chief Jeff Glover, the Tempe Police Department is doing some amazing new things – I want to share a couple with you this month.

Did you know that there is a new public safety technology out there that looks and acts like a modern-day lasso? It is true and the Tempe Police Department has been successful trying it out for a few months now, as a non-lethal means of connecting with people who may be in crisis or resistant to directions from officers.

Lt. Rashidi Johnson, who supervises the department's training and hiring unit, recently provided a glimpse at what is known as the BolaWrap. Tempe has 14 of these devices so far, which look like Tasers on the outside, but they do not have any electric charge. Instead, they deploy an 8-foot Kevlar cord that quickly wraps around an individual who is standing or walking; it is able to

cling to clothing at the legs, waist or chest levels.

The whole objective, Lt. Johnson says, is to distract the person and allow the officers to approach and detain with greater safety for both the officers and the individual. The tool has been used on two occasions so far, including with an individual who was walking on Mill Avenue and brandishing a stun gun.



Jennifer Adams

As a resident and a City Councilmember, I am glad to know that the Tempe Police Department is always looking for and open to using newer technologies and approaches to make policing even better and safer for all. What is also

great is that the BolaWrap company is based in Tempe!

Chief Glover also is reintroducing the concept of community policing in a great new way. Starting this month through mid-April 2022, the department

will have a new Police Chief's Office of Community Policing. Its aim is to increase responsiveness to quality of life issues in neighborhoods and around businesses. The new unit is a pilot project to bring together existing staff assigned to parks and to crime prevention, improving efficiency and effectiveness in addressing chronic issues in neighborhoods and parks.

Partnering with the city's Human Services and Municipal Utilities departments, as well as Tempe Community Action Agency and ASU, the unit will start by identifying concerns through a series of community meetings. The success of the pilot project will be evaluated next year. Look for these meetings and watch for the efforts of the Office of Community Policing and let us know what you think in the coming months.

Your ideas and feedback are always welcome. I can be reached at or 480-350-8835. You can also find me on Facebook at JenniferAdamsTempe.

Jennifer Adams is a member of the Tempe City Council.

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