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Kyrene Corridor Edition

Wrangler News

Making a big community a little bit smaller.

Aug. 4 - 17, 2007 • Vol. 17, No. 16 • Since 1991 • Reaching 20,000-plus families in South Tempe & West Chandler

Thanks to you, we're the 'Best'

From the Publisher

If you're a subscriber to *Phoenix* magazine (and you should be!), you already know that *Wrangler News* has been named the Valley's best community newspaper for 2007.

That's great news, of course. Among other things, it means that we've been doing something right these past 17 years. It also means that, whether you're a reader, an advertiser or a contributor of content to our news

and feature pages, you've played a role in helping us to achieve this enviable recognition.

It would seem now that we could enjoy our 15 minutes of fame and move on to the next deadline without more than a passing thought.

But it hasn't turned out that



Don Kirkland

way. Being considered No. 1 among the many fine community publications around our Valley simply means that we need to redouble our efforts to deserve the confidence you and others have placed in us.

It also serves as a reminder to say thanks to the talented writers and photographers who have understood our mission and remained loyal contributors over the years, even when other opportunities beckoned.

So, to all of you who have

supported our efforts, and indeed to *Phoenix* magazine for its kind words, we pledge to continue our efforts to "make a big community a little bit smaller."

We encourage you to join us in this effort, whether by suggesting coverage ideas or just by telling others about us.

All of us working together can help to ensure a continuing sense of pride in the neighborhoods we call home.

— Don Kirkland

Ex-Marine would have been proud

You'd think Alyssa Ethington would have plenty to keep her busy. After all, she's on her way to a master's degree at Arizona State University, the last stop before launching her career as a board-certified music therapist.

But a busy schedule hasn't stopped the Corona del Sol High School graduate from finding time to help others.



Damon Fawcett

"She has taken fellow students who are challenged in some way under her wing and helped to foster their love of

music," said her voice teacher, Rachel Velarde.

"Alyssa feels drawn to use her musical gifts in a way that will encourage other people. She helps others to perform to their potential, especially in terms of music.

— MUSIC, Page 16



Alyssa Ethington, a graduate of Corona del Sol High School, is the first recipient of a scholarship from the community-based Arts Council for Youth that memorializes Damon Fawcett, a CdS music student who died while attending medical school in California. He spent four years as a U.S. Marine.

Bored with job's ups and downs, she drops a line — literally



Discerning Diner



with
Elan Head

In recent columns I've talked about my summer cherry-drying job in Washington state. I'm still here, still waiting for rain, although by the time you read this, the season probably will be over.

A couple of weeks ago, after a long dry spell, my employers suggested I take my 45-year-old Huey out for some exercise.

I didn't need to be told twice. And with a helicopter and a state full of water at my disposal, I decided to go fishing.

I've always enjoyed fishing, and in the course of travel writing, I've gotten to fish in some pretty spectacular places.

But before this summer, I hadn't done much fishing on my own. One way or another, I'd always found myself with company — generally people who really knew what they were doing.

Well, this day I didn't have much choice. I'm flying a restricted category aircraft, which means I'm not allowed to carry passengers. It would be me and the fish, *mano a mano*. (Or *mano a fin*?)

One advantage of my 6,500-pound, 1,100-horsepower Huey is that there's

plenty of room in back for fishing poles. I loaded up my gear and headed north to a spectacular 600-acre parcel my employers own on the banks of the Okanogan River.

What a cool flight. Frankly, by the time I parked the helicopter in a meadow, it didn't matter whether I caught anything or not.

In fact, my luck was pretty good. I caught five smallmouth bass on spinners, and kept one of them for dinner.

Should the Fates similarly favor you this summer, here's an easy way to cook up your catch.

You'll need one whole fish, cleaned, per person — trout, bass or whatever you pull out of the water (or from the supermarket meat bin if all else fails). Cooking times assume an 8- to 12-inch fish.

First, preheat the oven to 400 degrees. For each person, scrub two to three small new potatoes (you can peel them if you'd like). Slice thinly into rounds about 1/8-inch thick.

In a baking dish or roasting pan that will accommodate your fish, toss the

potatoes with one teaspoon olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and freshly ground pepper and roast for 10 minutes.

While the potatoes are roasting, peel a small onion and slice it in half lengthwise. Then slice crosswise into pieces slightly thicker than the potatoes.

Remove the potatoes from the oven. Add the onion and another teaspoon of olive oil and toss to combine. Roast for another 10 minutes.

Wash your fish in cold water and pat dry. Season the flesh with salt and pepper.

Put a slice of lemon and a tablespoon of cold butter into the body cavity. Add two or three sprigs of fresh herbs: I used fennel, but dill, tarragon, parsley, rosemary or marjoram would be good, too. Chop an extra tablespoon of herbs and set aside.

Remove the vegetables from the oven. The potatoes should be reasonably soft when pierced with a fork, and just starting to brown. If necessary, return them to the oven for another minute or two — but skip

— DINER, Page 12



MAKE WAVES

If you've been thinking about surfing the possibilities in Tempe's exciting Town Lake development, now's the time.

Wrangler News launches its **Tempe Town Lake edition** on Sunday, Sept. 9, the same day that thousands of visitors will gather for the grand opening of a dramatic new centerpiece of the downtown community—the Tempe Center for the Arts. Join them—and us—in this celebration of Tempe's newest crown jewel.

Call **Kyle Maki at (480) 966-0837** to find out why you should take advantage of this opportunity to broaden

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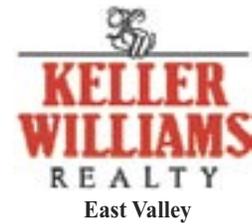
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The Homestead—0.93 Acres

Enjoy the lifestyle in this remodeled 5BR, 4BA home with granite counters, newer floors, redone baths and stainless kitchen. The backyard features pool with slide and waterfall. Sitting at Dobson and Galveston, this fabulous 4,100 sf. Home is priced at \$950,000



Pecos Vistas

This dazzling home will delight your senses. From the custom courtyard to the beautiful front door you will be greeted with open spacious rooms. Formal living and dining, spectacular backyard just under an acre well landscaped with sparkling pool and built-in-bar-b-que. Plantation shutters, slate accents, large tile and highly upgraded carpet add to the delight of this professionally decorated home. 3259 sq.ft. \$545,000



Circle G at Queen Creek

Solid Granite counters, highly upgraded cabinets, top of the line appliances, solid core Knotty Alder interior doors, custom flooring thru-out, 10' coffered ceilings, Salt Water heated pool, large Ramada with outdoor kitchen. \$950,000



Gorgeous Ahwatukee Foothills Home

5 bedrooms, 4 baths with 3 car garage. Great home features high ceilings, gourmet kitchen with newer granite counters, ceramic tile floors & custom paint. Downstairs bedroom with private bath, plus a den. Grand staircase leads to master bedroom with sitting room. Mature landscaping and sparkling pool. \$669,950



Pecos Ranch Estates

Beautiful 5 bedroom, 2 and 3/4 baths, w/large second floor loft/game room, combined living/dining room off main entry, custom floor tile, gourmet island kitchen w/beautiful granite slab counter tops, upgraded maple cabinetry w/pull out shelves, walk-in pantry & breakfast area, kitchen opens to family room w/view of covered patio & private back yard with tranquil sound of waterfall & pool. Three car side entrance garage. \$665,000



Circle G at Riggs Homestead

Beautiful ceramic travertine tile with marble inlays throughout home and bathrooms and beautiful medallion in foyer. Master suite is a sanctuary onto itself. French doors into a huge bedroom with magnificent view of San Tan Mountains. Walk out onto your private balcony and enjoy. Separate his and her walk in closets and granite vanities. \$975,000



Warner Estates

This traditional 2 story home is in move-in ready condition. Features include 4600+ sq/ft, 4 bdrms/3/5 baths, upgraded open loft, gourmet kitchen with all the right upgrades, 2 covered patios, built-in BBQ, gazebo by the diving pool, 3 car garage, plus many other fine detail features. \$1,175,000



Warner Ranch Meadows

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Area high schools add 19 classes to cyberspace curriculum

Computer-savvy students will find a new excuse to surf the Internet this month (as if they really needed one) when the Tempe Union High School district offers 19 online classes as part of its curriculum. Students interested in taking an online class may

visit the curriculum section of the district's website at www.tuhsd.k12.az.us for more information.

Registration closes Aug. 15.

Courses are developed and taught by district teachers. The course content is equivalent to the district's face-to-face classes as determined by staff who are content- and technology-knowledgeable, according to a district spokesperson.

Online classes include Computer Applications, Accounting 1 and 2, Freshman English, Honors Freshman English, Junior English, Honors Junior English, Senior English, Humanities/Composition, Life 101, AP Art History, Earth Science, American/Arizona History, World History/Geography, Honors World History/Geography, U.S./Arizona Government, Criminal Justice in the Classroom, and Health Education.

More courses are being developed and will be added as the program is expanded, officials said.

Registration for online classes can be made by speaking with counselor at the student's high school. Fees are determined according to the student's current course schedule and, if applicable, are \$135 per semester class.

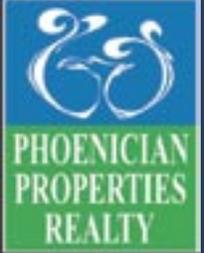
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Back to school

The Tempe Union High School District has named **Susan Jilek Edwards** principal at Corona del Sol High School. Edwards was previously assistant principal and registrar at Marcos de Niza and holds a masters degree in educational administration from Northern Arizona University. TUHSD and Kyrene District classes start Monday, Aug. 6.

— Photo by Kris Cartwright



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Obituary Tempe leader Carol Smith

Funeral services for former Tempe City Council member **Carol Smith** will take place at 10 a.m. Monday, Aug. 6, at Tempe Mortuary, 405 E. Southern Ave., Tempe.

Smith, a longtime Tempe and Kyrene Corridor resident, died July 30 after a lengthy illness.

Smith, 72, served on the Tempe City Council for three terms, from 1986 to 1998. She was vice mayor from 1990 to 1992 and received the Don Carlos Humanitarian of the Year Award in 1999.

"All Tempe residents can remember Carol Smith fondly and be grateful for her decades of service to the community," said Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman.

Smith was active in youth services and parks and recreation in Tempe, playing a role in renovation of the Escalante Community Center.

She actively participated in the East Valley Boys and Girls Club, Tempe Women's Club, Tempe Rotary Club and numerous other civic and philanthropic organizations.

Smith is survived by sons Kevin Smith of Tempe and Kelly Smith of Tucson. A daughter, Kathleen, was a murder victim in 1984, at age 20.

2 'Hanleys' honor area video team

Home Video Studio/Tempe has been named winner of two coveted *Hanley* awards at the seventh annual Home Video Studio awards program in Orlando. The awards, like Oscars, recognize achievement in the film industry.

HVS is the leading U.S. video-production franchise, with studios located across the U.S., Canada and Sweden.

Tempe studio owners **Paula** and **Todd Gunter** submitted their video work in several of the 32 *Hanley* award categories, including Best Video Production, Best Documentary and Best of Show.

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West Chandler residents will get a chance to offer their recommendations as city plans its future

West Chandler will host one of three public meetings designed to gain input from area residents on the city's general plan, a state-required planning document that will help guide Chandler's growth and development for the next decade.

The review process begins with public meetings Aug. 21 and 27 in central and eastside Chandler. The third and final session, in west Chandler, is scheduled at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Aug 29, at the Desert Breeze police substation, 251 N. Desert Breeze Blvd. West.

"These meetings are open to the public, and I encourage residents to provide us with their comments on how we are doing as a community, and more importantly, where we need to go from here," Mayor **Boyd Dunn** said.

"The greater participation we have, the brighter our future will be."

A General Plan Update Committee has been appointed to work with a consultant team and city staff during the process.

The group, to be chaired by State Sen. and former Chandler Mayor **Jay Tibshraeny**, will use the input from the public meetings to begin formulating an updated plan.

The plan relies on a number of development policies, zoning and other techniques for implementation. The current general plan was adopted by the City Council in November 2001 and was ratified by voters in March 2002. The current Chandler General Plan is available online at <http://www.chandleraz.gov/planning/generalplan.html>.

City staff anticipate presenting a final draft to the City Council for approval in the spring of 2008, with residents voting on it in the fall of 2008.



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Realty Executives Kirsten Shafer

Firefighters pledge seatbelt use

Seat belts are the most effective safety devices in vehicles today, estimated to save 9,500 lives each year. And, when it comes to Chandler firefighters, 100 percent seatbelt usage is being pledged.

They have joined the national Brian Hutton Seatbelt Awareness Campaign. Hutton was a Texas firefighter who died falling from a fire apparatus while not wearing a seatbelt.

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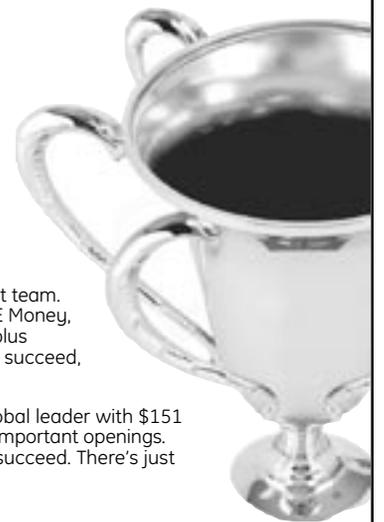
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City wi-fi expands to Chandler

By Michael Tapia

As progress continues into the 21st century, the Internet will continue to play a crucial role in our lives. Chandler has already begun the process of preparing for the future.

The city of Chandler, along with Kite Networks, has launched a wireless network within the city's borders. The first phase of the network, launched July 24, covers north-central Chandler, including the downtown area. The network is available for businesses, residents and

visitors in that 13-mile area to access the Internet wherever they please.

"We are making amazing strides in technology, and Chandler has been there every step of the way to see that residents receive the benefit," said Mayor **Boyd Dunn**.

"Chandler's wireless Internet was installed at no cost to the city and is one more example of this community's ability to take the lead in identifying and deploying these new technological benefits."

The Chandler system will join Tempe's network, which was also

implemented by Kite Networks as one of the first public-access wireless systems in the Valley, to make it one of the largest contiguous networks in the nation. Unlike the Tempe network, Kite will own and operate the Chandler system.

The network was designed to improve worker productivity, attract more businesses to the community and help improve the economy for businesses, residents and visitors, while the municipality will take advantage of the network for public safety and other applications.

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They have shingled roofs; hinged cedar shutters on three windows; cedar entry doors; painted trim; and electrical wiring.

A limited supply will be available for early bird shoppers. Purchasers must arrange for transportation to

the new location. Information: **Ken Scavarda**, Marcos de Niza High School (480) 838-3200, ext. 40224.



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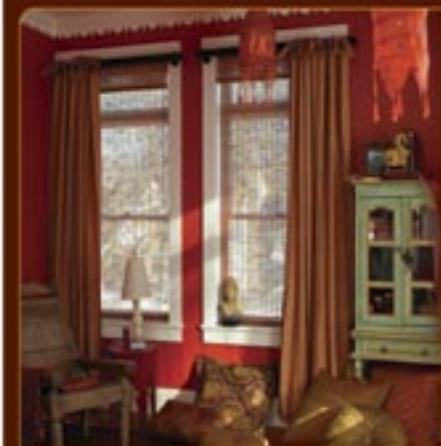
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Purchasing unit among nationwide award recipients

Helped oversee city-state collaboration to develop new Tempe Armory

When city officials decided it was time to replace Tempe's aging main fire station, folks at the Arizona Army National Guard took notice.

After all, they reasoned, what better place to construct a modernized Tempe Armory, fit for the Guard's growing role in America's defense strategy.

Enter south Tempe resident **Corry Slama**, whose role as the Guard's chief procurement officer played a role in helping the project become reality.

Now, through efforts like this and others, Slama's department

has been named a recipient of one of the profession's top honors, an Achievement of Excellence award from the National Purchasing Institute, which announced its selections July 20.

Only three state agencies — the Departments of Administration, Transportation and Emergency/Military Affairs, whose procurement program Slama heads — were among this year's honorees.

Now nearly ready for occupancy, the Guard's new Tempe Armory replaces the city's former main fire station on 2.34 acres near Rural Road and University Avenue.

The Armory was exchanged for the city of Tempe's nearly 16,000-square-foot fire station, for which renovations were estimated at about \$1.4 million.

Slama's department oversaw negotiations for architectural and engineering design, demolition, construction and all facets of the redevelopment project, although he noted the project was not

completed in time to be a factor in this year's national purchasing-award competition.

His department received similar recognition last year and will be a candidate this year for an Outstanding Agency Achievement Award from the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing in Herndon, Va., which honors efforts to raise professionalism in government-sector procurement.

"This was a textbook example of how local governments can work collaboratively with state and federal agencies for an outcome that benefits everyone," said Slama, 40. Slama has guided the Guard's procurement efforts for three years, prior to which he was a senior buyer for Maricopa County.

The new Tempe Armory will contain activity space, equipment and locker storage, and shower facilities for the Guard's 123rd Public Affairs detachment and the 108th Army band unit.



Corry Slama: Award-winning National Guard staffers helped guide cooperative effort for Tempe Armory project.

— David Stone/Wrangler News

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It's Not Rocket Science Wait, don't flush that

Editor's note: Kyrene Corridor resident Julia Perez is an electrical engineer who uses her column in Wrangler News to help readers better understand the complexities of today's scientific world.

As toddlers we're taught to go potty and flush. This could change for future generations. Scientists have discovered a bacteria, *Geobacter*, that transforms waste into electricity. The bacteria feed on the waste and, as a part of their digestive process, remove electrons. Simply stated, *Geobacters* eat waste and burp electricity.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration became interested in this discovery after determining that a team of six astronauts could generate six tons of solid waste during a two-year trip to Mars.

Other potential uses of human waste include recycling it into compost to grow food on the red planet. Now, say the scientists, that same waste could be dried and sold for fertilizer — a concept that finds itself firmly grounded in history.

Asian farmers used human waste more than 3,000 years ago, and President Thomas Jefferson used it for compost at Monticello.

The difference between then and now is that scientists are studying the process to ensure safety to the level that drinking water could be extracted from the waste.

The European Space Agency is using rats, including one nicknamed Remy of Ratatouille for the furry hero of a Pixar animated film, to test ideas for processing waste using microorganisms.

Rats are similar to humans in that they requiresimilar amounts of oxygen. Veterinarians are supervising closely during the tests, so there's no need to be concerned about Remy and his four-legged friends.

As to us humans, Americans alone produce

20,000 tons of raw sewage daily — noxious stuff that was dumped into the ocean until the Environmental Protection Agency banned the practice in 1988.

The ban resulted in massive changes that led to the term biosolids instead of waste and that introduced such creative uses as fertilizer, compost and biofuel incineration.

Perhaps the most significant change affecting the way we live our lives is that what formerly was considered waste is now viewed as a valuable resource.

Thus, the future for toddlers could be quite different.

For example, instead of collecting aluminum cans for extra money, they might find themselves recycling the product of their personal pooper-scoopers to power their Xbox or Game Boy.



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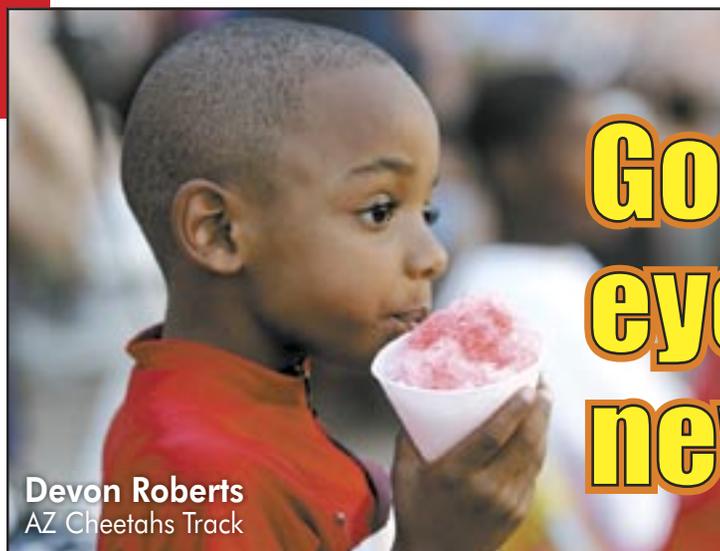
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Making dreams come true — Cinderella Affair helped foreign exchange students from Tempe Sister Cities program prepare for their American Prom Experience. The girls all arrived at the storage facility on a hot, sticky afternoon to find that special dress for their prom that was held July 30 at Shalimar Country Club. The humid weather didn't dampen their spirits. When it was all over, all had selected a dress for their special night. Cinderella Affair is a partnership of Tempe Community Council, city of Tempe & East Valley Women's League. - Contributed by Cheryl Hornyan

Diner

From Page 2

this precaution if your fish is trophy-sized.

Sprinkle the vegetables with the chopped herbs and place the fish on top. Top the fish with another slice of lemon and dot with some more cold butter.

Return the pan to the oven and roast until the fish flakes easily with a fork, another 10 to 15 minutes. If the vegetables start to brown too quickly, simply remove them from the oven and continue roasting the fish alone.

Frankly, it's hard to go wrong with freshly caught fish. Any way you cook it, it tastes like success.

Note: I wrote this column before the July 27 accident that took the lives of two helicopter news crews. Although I didn't know the pilots personally, the Phoenix helicopter community is a pretty small group, and we were all stunned and

saddened by the news.

Having been up with Valley news helicopters in the past, I can testify to the extraordinary professionalism and talent it took to do the job.

*To their families and friends:
My deepest, deepest sympathies.*

Elks Lodge schedules blood drive

Members of Tempe Elk's Lodge will hold a blood drive from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 26.

Donors receive breakfast and free entry in a drawing for a 2007 Saturn Aura.

For more information contact the club manager at the Tempe Elks at (480) 967-3160 or blood drive chairperson **Rick Roser** at (602) 751-7974.



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Where Are They Now . . . with Katie Cartwright

New fame for comic Kimmels, and that's no joke

“Everything happens for a reason.” It’s a cliché, of course, usually to console the recipient for some sort of disappointment. Every now and then, though, one can look back and say — wow, maybe it’s true.

Jonathan Kimmel offers a case in point.

After graduating from Corona del Sol High School in 1995, Kimmel spent a year and a half at ASU, where he was involved with the sketch comedy group “The Far Side.”

That was followed with his acceptance by a performing arts school in New York, where he pursued singing. He soon discovered, however, that there were few parts written for a deep baritone, leaving him scant options.

That’s when Kimmel says he began

working as a producer’s assistant for The Jim Henson Company, where he found his true talent – comedic writing.

He moved to L.A., where he worked his way up, beginning as a producer’s assistant on South Park.

From his connections there, Kimmel advanced to writing such network productions as The Man Show, That’s My Bush!, Crank Yankers and the now-airing Andy Milonakis Show, in addition to continuing his work with South Park.

He also recently wrote for Sarah Silverman’s hosting of the MTV Movie Awards.



Jonathan Kimmel

Currently in L.A., Kimmel says he loves writing for South Park.

“It’s definitely the most satisfying, since we do it in a six-day turnaround, meaning we start writing it only 6-7 days before it airs on television.

“We get to reference what is going on in the news. It has made me pay a lot more attention to politics and news, and it’s so rewarding having your opinion out there while it’s still going on — sometimes even seeing on CNN a reference to your joke — it’s very fun.”

Even more than the show, Kimmel credits the people he works with, calling them “the most fun, cool

people — smart and funny — that make the job so enjoyable.

Kimmel says he has learned so much from his co-workers and recommends to newcomers to the field surrounding themselves with the best people possible.

Kimmel’s circle of talent cohorts, he admits, includes his brother Jimmy, in recent years the popular host of his own nightly TV talk show, from whom Jonathan says he has learned a lot. On occasion, he even gets to work with his brother, he says.

With fond memories of Tim Smith and his competition government class, taught by **Art Garbosky** and **Eric Ladue**, Kimmel speaks highly of his experience at Corona.

“Most of the people I work with attended private schools,

— COMIC, Page 15

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Comic

From Page 14

but I feel that our education was very much on par with the education they received; (Corona) is a very well-run school."

As to advice for those looking to enter the comedy-writing industry, Jonathan says: "You gotta work your way up. Take the lowly assistant job; it's the way in the door."

For those determined to get into the television-movie scene, moving to L.A. is a "must," Jonathan advises.

On the writing side of it, honing one's writing skills is critical.

"Anytime you meet someone who may be able to help you out, they are going to ask to see some of your work, so start writing."

Jonathan also recommends

the Internet for aspiring actors and comedians. Andy Milonakis, for example, was found online. Take advantage of YouTube and MySpace, says Jonathan, and create your own shorts.

"You never know who is watching them."

On an endearing note, Kimmel offered some life advice for all.

"Never assume, even if you're new to a job, that people are further ahead than you. Don't assume you will be an assistant forever.

"Most people are more capable than they think."

Common sense, he concludes, can carry people a long way, and figuring out how to deal with people will get you even further.

"Know when to take a stand against your boss, for example; it may be your key to a promotion."

Still time to enjoy brass ensemble workshops at KMS

By Michael Tapia

It's Ahwatukee Foothills Concert Band, but don't be fooled by the name.

Even though it suggests a neighboring community, the group's efforts can be appreciated by all of those who love music, even those living in the Kyrene Corridor, where Kyrene Middle School hosts regular practice sessions.

With the visiting band from across the I-10 at the local middle school, it might be to your advantage to check out its workshop for brass players.

The brass ensemble will have its final meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 9, in the KMS band room.

Conducting the workshop is **Dan Neville**, who will perform a variety of music from marches to chamber works.

No auditions are required and adults (18-plus) of all ages

are invited to come and practice their instrument while having some fun at the same time.

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Music from Page 1

She will use her education to help better the world, one person at a time." The dedication has paid off, it seems.

Alyssa has been selected by the community-based Arts Council for Youth as first recipient of the group's annual \$1,000 music scholarship, named in memory of **Damon Fawcett**, who graduated from Corona in 1994.

Damon served four years as a Special Forces Marine and was a medical student at the University of California-Davis at the time of his death in March.

The council received seven applications for the scholarship from recent graduates of four Tempe district high schools.

"I was very impressed by each of the applications, and that factor made the decision hard," said one member of the scholarship committee.

Said another: "These are amazing

applicants. They are a credit to their music teachers."

The scholarship is aimed at current seniors who are planning to major in music. Information: www.artsCouncil4youth.org

— Information and photo contributed by Mckell Keeney

Class series starts at Kiwanis

It's back-to-school time — and time to think about classes that may not be available this year at your neighborhood school.

Beginning this month, Kiwanis Recreation Center's classes can help children polish rusty social manners (etiquette classes); become complete communicators (sign language camp); or get an introduction to delicious, healthy foods (cooking instruction).

Classes will be held at Kiwanis Center, 6111 S All America Way. Online registration is available at <http://pkreconline.tempe.gov>.

All classes require advance registration.



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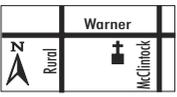
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Hues of saffron yellow enhance dining at Spices Mediterranean Kitchen.

— David Stone / Wrangler News

Tastings For dinner, 'Spice' it up

By Kirsten Schaefer

What happens when a young Chandler couple pursues a dream of opening a restaurant?

The Kyrene Corridor gets a brand-new place for authentic and appetizing Mediterranean cuisine.

Spices Mediterranean Kitchen opened in late June to a big welcome from area residents; apparently owners **Etgar** and **Misti Wagner** have quite a local following.

Etgar, originally from Israel and descended from a family filled with successful restaurateurs, was a teacher and soccer coach before he made the leap into the restaurant business.

His wife Misti, daughter of Dani and Bill Green of thriving local talent agency Dani's Agency, grew up in Chandler, literally down the street from the restaurant location.

However popular the couple may be, what keeps the lunch and dinner rush coming back is definitely the aromatic, flavorful fare in a cheerful new storefront decorated with bright traditional Mediterranean colors — saffron-yellow hued walls is just one example.

Named Spices for a reason, the first thing you'll notice about the menu is the range of authentic spices, seasonings and ingredients used in every dish.

Etgar maintains secrecy here, but the rub used for the meats on the menu smells positively entrancing from the minute you walk in the door. Smoky and with a bit of heat, the

meat is deeply flavored and grilled to perfection.

Don't immediately settle on meat items however, because the menu is diverse and filled with stand-outs.

The ever-popular Hummus (\$5.50) is classic and creamy with an interesting and welcome touch of toasted pine nuts on top.

All appetizers are respectable, but one item to avoid overlooking is the Sun Dried Tomato and Red Pepper Soup (\$4.95). It has all the comfort-food properties of classic tomato soup, but with a vibrant red-brick color, more texture on the tongue and a delightful roasted flavor.

Salads at Spices are not an afterthought, but rather some of the most unique and delicious items on the menu.

The Garden of Eden salad (\$9.95) is a mountain of fork-friendly chopped romaine lettuce with the house specialty Mediterranean Salad — a pico-de-gallo-like mixture of cucumbers, red onions, tomatoes, olives, olive oil, lemon juice and salt — and finally topped with the traditional cheese of Cyprus, Greece; Halloumi, grilled to warm, pillow-y perfection.

This salty goat-and sheep's milk cheese is exclusively made in Cyprus and imported by few in Arizona, so finding it on Spice's menu was a pleasant surprise. Not unlike mozzarella in that it doesn't lose consistency when heated, Halloumi can withstand sautéing and grilling.

A final touch elevating the salad to repeat-order status is the dressing. Etgar's mother's recipe, it is a tangy

—TASTINGS, Page 22

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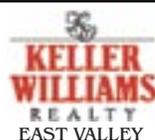


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Tastings

From Page 21

made with pureed sun dried tomatoes and garlic. Upgrade the salad by adding chicken, or my personal favorite, sautéed shrimp.

Entrees are traditional for a Mediterranean

restaurant and include a Falafel Sandwich (\$5.55), Shish Kabobs (\$8.95-\$13.95), a Gyro Sandwich or Plate (\$6.95-\$8.95), Shawarma and others. Try any of the meat entrees rubbed with Etgar's secret blend of imported spices.

Many entrees come with gratifyingly salty and crisp french fries included or as an add-on option (99 cents). At first glance this may seem untraditional, but some research revealed Etgar's native Israel residents are committed to their fried tubers, which could explain the fries' presence on the menu.

Sides range from a la carte kebabs (\$2.95-\$3.95), hummus (\$3.95), extra pitas (\$1.25) and other standards to the more interesting aforementioned Mediterranean salad (\$3.95) and a pickle plate (\$1.95).

An off-menu request Etgar recommends is

topping the Mediterranean salad with some crumbled feta, taking the already-delicious side from good to great.

Desserts include a sticky-sweet and flaky Baklava (\$4.95) and Sweet Malawach, described on the restaurant Web site as a traditional Jewish bread similar to a puff pastry topped with cinnamon, honey and vanilla bean ice cream (\$4.95).

Etgar seems to understand the family-centric neighborhood quite well and hasn't forgotten about the kids. Children's menu items include Chicken Strips served with French fries and ranch dressing (\$4.95) and a Pita Pizza (\$4.95).

Beverages include Coca-Cola products (\$1.75), Iced Tea (\$1.85) and Coffee (\$1.85) with free refills.

Also available is bottled water (\$1.99), Mango

— TASTINGS, Page 23

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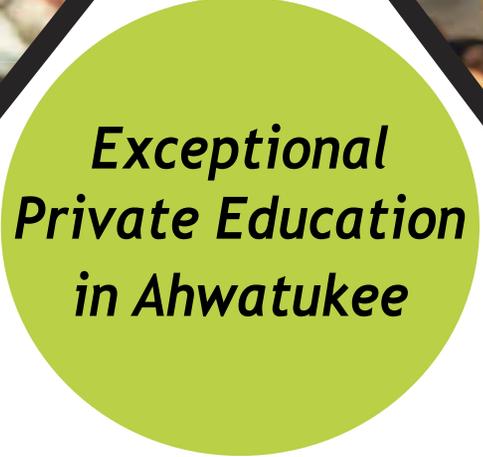
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Tastings

From Page 22

Nectar (\$2.50) and domestic and imported beers (\$3-\$4.50) including two Greek varieties – Keo and Alpha. Red and white wines are sold by the glass (\$3.50-\$4.50) or bottle (\$9.99-\$12.99).

Pleasantly casual Spices handles service like a Pei Wei or Sauce, order and pay at the counter, take your number and then fill beverages and grab service items and silverware; your food will be delivered by the friendly young staff as it is done.

Etgar and Misti describe Spices as a labor of love and it's not hard to imagine their hard work will pay off with mutual love from area residents.

After all, isn't great food in an accessible and

family-friendly environment always welcome in the neighborhood?

Details

Spices Mediterranean Kitchen, 4040 W. Ray Road, Ste 12 (Ray and McClintock), Chandler, AZ 85226. Phone: 480-491-4777; Web: www.spicesmk.com. Hours: Monday – Thursday: 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Friday – Saturday: 11 a.m. - 10 p.m.; Closed Sunday. Average price for dinner for two: \$25 (excluding alcohol, tax and tip).

When not reporting or trying restaurants for Wrangler News, Kirsten Schaefer creates recipes and cooks at home. Her cooking adventures can be found at <http://homecookkirsten.blogspot.com>, or email her at foodwriterkirsten@gmail.com.

Kyrene Corridor Briefs

The Corona del Sol class of 1997 is having its 10-year reunion at 7 p.m. Sept. 29, at Macayo's Depot Cantina, 300 S. Ash Ave., Tempe. For information email Gordon Perl at corona97@gmail.com.

Wrangler News Online

- M.V. Moorhead, former movie critic for the Phoenix New Times, takes a look at the newest Bourne incarnation, as well as at Matt Damon's progression as a truly formidable contender in Hollywood's rankings of top players.

- And yet another Moorehead, this one 12-year-old KMS student Michael, offers some advice to parents on why they should un-jam their children's schedules, and how to do it.

- Plus fully downloadable copies of recent Wrangler News issues and a searchable database for past stories. You'll find it all at www.Wranglernews.com.

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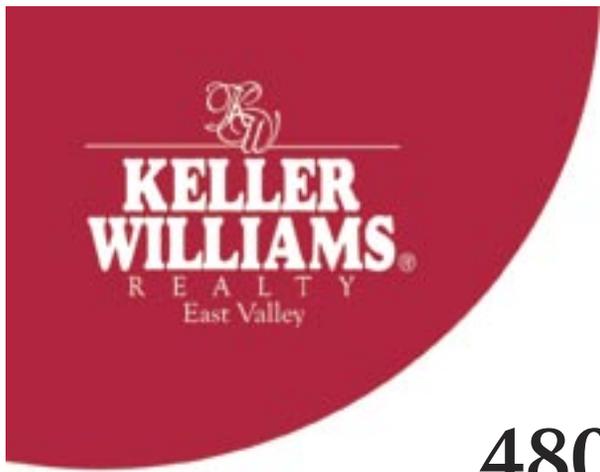
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