

Wrangler NEWS

Think Local. Read Local.

Feb. 6 - 19, 2016 • Volume 27, No.3



New Tempe police chief Different cities, single common denominator: large college population

Tempe ushers in a new era of law enforcement next month when it introduces its next police chief, a veteran of 26 years in the progression from beat cop to top cop.

Although El Cerrito, Calif., where Sylvia Moir has spent the past five years as chief, is in many ways dissimilar to Tempe, it holds one important commonality: a major state university.



Chief Sylvia Moir

El Cerrito is within five miles of the University of California, Berkeley, whose name is well known to those who remember the student uprisings of the 1960s, though well before Moir's time.

Unlike Tempe, the city's population is comparatively small (23,000 to Tempe's 161,000) and much more

ethnically diverse (27 percent Asian).

Nestled in the San Francisco Bay area, El Cerrito was founded by those who fled the devastation of the 1906 earthquake that battered San Francisco. In terms of population, the majority of El Cerrito residents are White, but there's a strong Pac-Rim identity, according to the 2010 U.S. Census report.

— CHIEF, Page 7

Schauer to leave behind a legacy of building bridges

By Diana Whittle

Kyrene Superintendent Dr. David Schauer, the chief executive for the high-performing school district for the past 10 years, will retire in a few months.

During a recent interview, he reflected on the changes and challenges in the district, and what he views as his legacy.

Schauer reminisced that he came to Kyrene

— LEGACY, Page 17



Valentine's Day is just around the corner, and what makes a better bundle of love than a cuddly rescue pup? Pg. 8



A grieving mom gets a pre-Valentine's Day makeover, courtesy of Ragtops Salon owner Ginger Braaten, Pg. 12

Inside



Students danced and rocked their way through a rousing production of 'Bye Bye Birdie' at Kyrene del Norte elementary school. Audience members donned '50s attire for the musical production that originated on Broadway in 1960.

— Wrangler News photo by Alex J. Walker

Last challenge for 'We the People' finalists: raising \$65k to help finance a trip to D.C.

By Jonathan Coronel

The room buzzes with excitement as Allison Rund, Corona social studies teacher and Competition Government team coach, explains to students their tasks for the day.

Corona may have won the Competition Government, or "We the People," state championship for the fifth year in a row, but the students still have to balance fulfilling their senior economics class requirement on top of their preparation for the national competition in April.

Like clockwork, Corona has

earned a slot at the national tournament in April in Washington, D.C., where they will face teams from around the country.

According to one student, some teams come from prestigious private schools and even have access to lawyers who help prepare them for the event. More pressing than the challenge of competing against other national powerhouses, however, is a more fundamental one: generating the money to finance their trip.

"We need to raise \$65,000 in order to send all 29 of our students along with several chaperones to D.C. this year,"

Rund tells me.

Corona's team is relying on a variety of funding sources from online fundraising sites, like YouCaring, to tax credits and donations from members of the community.

"It's just such a great opportunity that we've earned to be able to represent our state on a national stage," student Alex Butler says. "I really want us to be able to go." Butler's favorite subjects are history and government, and he plans to attend ASU next year and one day

— WE THE PEOPLE, Page 11

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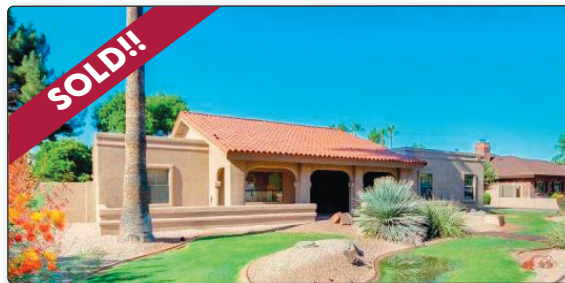
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Middle school students can access wider range of exploratory options

By Diana Whittle

Kyrene Governing board members, at a recent study session, listened as educators and the district's superintendent, Dr. David Schauer, presented ideas for new electives, which will be specifically designed for middle-school students.

Once the proposal is officially approved, it means that students will have a wider range of exploratory offerings to select from in the upcoming school year, 2016-17.

"I was really pleased to bring this discussion to the Governing Board because I think there is enormous value for students to participate in the exploratory classes," said Schauer.

Governing Board President Bernadette Coggins agrees.

"This really is good news for Kyrene families because the exploratory classes introduce new information and experiences to students, who may not continue with them throughout their life but will gain a greater appreciation for a new field of study such as music, art or theater."

Schauer says that the middle-school years are a time educationally when students should be introduced to a wider variety of electives—even if they decide they aren't interested in a subject long-term.

"It's an age when kids are open to

experiential and hands-on learning, and we want to respond as a district with categories that we believe will be beneficial learning experiences."

Currently, students can select from a variety of music classes, including band, chorus and orchestra; visual arts; Spanish and theater.

Additional offerings could include culinary arts, health and leadership skills.

New courses would need to be developed to include appropriate content for middle-school aged students. The other challenge is ensuring the district has qualified teachers for the material.

"It's a bit of a staffing and scheduling puzzle to fit the new curriculum offerings into an existing list of courses, but I believe there is broad support for expanding the exploratory classes," said Schauer.

"I'm pleased that we're at the point fiscally where we can add more choices and restore others that were cut when our funding was more limited.

"Classes such as art and music tend to keep kids connected to their school and help instill a sense of pride."

To develop the final list of electives, Schauer has enlisted the help of a committee including middle-school principals who will provide advice on the exploratory classes to offer.

Tempe candidate forum scheduled Feb. 8 at Arizona Community Church

With the election season at hand, political signs dot many street corners throughout Tempe.

But who are the candidates for Tempe City Council and what do they stand for?

Area residents will have an opportunity to find out at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 8 at Arizona Community Church, 9325 S. Rural Road.

Estate La Colina, Alta Mira, Raintree Estates and Carver Ranch Estates are co-sponsoring the "Meet the Candidates" forum in an effort to help voters make informed choices in the upcoming Tempe city election.

Lynn Danielewicz, president of Estate La Colina Neighborhood

Association, has lived in South Tempe for 28 years and is hoping many people will turn out for the event.

She said the forum would allow residents to visit with candidates before and after the program and share with them their concerns.

"The votes we cast to elect three Tempe City Council members will impact our neighborhoods, South Tempe, and our future," Danielewicz said.

"We hope this event will help people learn more about the candidates and what their priorities are."

The forum will be held in Building G at the church.

A special message to our neighbors (you!)

Hi, neighbor! We don't think a couple of simple words like that should need much explanation, but in today's world of print-media companies trying to salvage a declining readership, it seems like we're hearing more and more promises to give you news that is local and thereby relevant to your day-to-day experience.

It doesn't take long, though, for most of us to realize that their word "local" includes happenings in places like Mesa, Gilbert, Ahwatukee, Apache Junction — in other words, almost any place where you don't have to book a flight to get there.

You know us because we actually are your neighbors. You see us dropping off our kids at Aprende Middle School, picking them up at Corona, walking our dogs in the neighborhood around Waggoner Elementary and Kyrene Middle School, shopping at Safeway or Fry's, having lunch at Great Harvest Bakery, Babbo's or La Casa de Juana.

That's because we're your neighbors, and

you're ours. And because we see the same people, visit the same places, enjoy the same friends. Our contributors have attended the same schools, been members of the same churches, done business with the same small and large businesses.

It's why, during these past 25-plus years, we've tried hard to remain part of your everyday experience—a pleasure we look forward to, count on and take seriously.

As we mentioned above, almost everywhere you look these days, someone is promising to provide you with news about your local community. It's what, in publishers' parlance, has come to be known as "hyper-local."

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From our earliest days, we promised to provide you with news, photos and feature stories exclusively about what was happening in your neighborhood. We've never changed our direction and never will. And, of course, to do it in a skilled, intelligent way

that stimulates your conversation and causes you and your family to look forward to each issue.

While some in the media look at "local" news as a way to make you think they care about you and your interests, what they seem to care about mostly is the appearance of expanding their reach. That, they have learned, boosts advertising revenues.

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Kyrene Rotarians lend a hand with Habitat project to give family a new home

While many South Tempe and West Chandler residents spent last weekend relaxing and enjoying spring-like weather, volunteers representing the Kyrene Rotary Club were hard at work.

That's because members of the group were helping out at a work site for Habitat for Humanity in Chandler. Rotary International builds homes for low income families as one of its community programs, and since its founding in 1976 has helped millions around the world.

Machel Considine of Kyrene Rotary said Rotarians have also spent much time recently helping to feed the hungry by organizing a food-sorting project with United Food Bank and other Rotary groups.

"There were 30 volunteer Rotarians and friends for a total of 120 community service hours, nearly six tons of food sorted, which will provide nearly 10,000 meals. That's nearly 327 meals per volunteer," Considine said.

"United Food Bank was wowed by Rotary's mission, turnout and productivity."

The group meets at 12:10 p.m. for lunch every Monday, except for holidays, at Kobe Japanese Steakhouse in Tempe.

"If you're a busy person who wants to have fun while making a difference, then be our guest for lunch," Considine said.

"We are men and women in our 30s to retired. Information: KyreneRotary.org."



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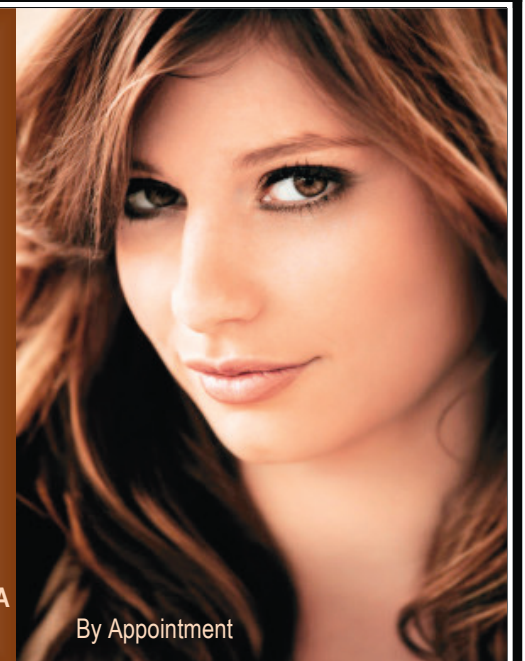
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By Appointment



Chief

From Page 1

The Cerritos Police Department's official blotter lists crimes such as vandalism, robbery and DUI, with theft the most frequently reported offense.

There were no reported murders or rapes in El Cerrito in 2013 and the city's crime rate has dropped significantly since 2001 when it was in the high-crime range, according to City-Data.com.

In Tempe, the violent crime rate declined in 2014. The number of violent crimes in the city fell from 831 in 2013 to 799 in 2014.

In announcing the appointment, Tempe City Manager Andrew Ching said Moir is the first externally appointed chief the city has had since 1968. In addition to her job in El Cerrito, Moir served as a commander in Menlo Park, Calif., and held various roles in the Sacramento, Calif., Police Department.

Moir has a Master of Arts in Organizational Management from the University of Phoenix and will be awarded a Master of Arts in Homeland Security and Defense from the Naval Postgraduate School in March.

"Chief Moir distinguished herself through an exhaustive interview

process for her intellect, judgment, compassion, enthusiasm and ability to engage employees and community members," said Ching.

Said Moir:

"I am excited and honored to join the Tempe team—to build upon the tradition of superb policing that Tempe is known for; promoting positive organizational change and strengthening our partnerships will be my immediate focus."

Following the retirement of Police Chief Tom Ryff on Dec. 1, Tempe invited applications from internal and external candidates, and received a wide array of responses.

Ching praised the expertise and poise of the other two finalists, Tempe's Acting Police Chief John Rush and Christopher Vicino, assistant police chief in Riverside, Calif.

Tempe hosted public forums at the beginning of the search process to seek input on residents' priorities for public safety.

In January, the city conducted two employee forums and one public session with the three finalists. An online survey and hardcopy evaluation forms also were used to gather input.

Moir is expected to start work in Tempe on March 21, following her certification as a peace officer in Arizona.



Tempe resident registration opens
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This year, rescue your Valentine's Day doldrums with a furry housemate *They'll love you for it.*

By Deborah Hilcove

Looking for that new “leash on life?” How about a “fur-ever” friend? Perhaps it’s time to reconsider “puppy love.”

As popular as Paul Anka’s and Donny Osmond’s soulful versions of “Puppy Love” were—and the millions of swooning teenage girls—the affection showered on rescue dogs is even greater.

Consider the overwhelming response—more than 2 million shares on YouTube—of Budweiser’s 2014 Super Bowl commercial, “Puppy Love,” between a Labrador retriever puppy and the Clydesdale that adopted him.

Yup. Dogs are definitely cool. More than 44 percent of American households have at least one dog, totaling 77.8 million of the furry critters.

Of these, 37 percent have been adopted from a shelter or rescue, another 34 percent from a breeder, and the remainder taken in as a stray or from friends or relatives.

A quick search for “Rescue Dogs” yields many possibilities, ranging from “Akita” to “Yorkie,” which can leave a potential adoptive puppy-parent confused.

However, about 15 years ago, Phoenix author and animal advocate Bari Mears recognized the need to unite rescue organizations throughout Arizona with the goal of saving animals.

She founded the Phoenix Animal Care Coalition (PACC911) that partners with more than 125 organizations following a prescribed code of ethics.

While many pet stores offer adoptions—and some make real efforts to improve the living conditions for the dogs they sell—it is an adoption source where you need

to be very careful. Often simply handing over a credit card buys a pet, but profit is the prime concern and not necessarily in the best interests of the dog or the adoptive family.

Many of these dogs come from commercial kennels, brokers and backyard breeders. There may be socialization problems, as well as health issues, since many are the result of poor breeding practices.

Adopting a rescue dog means adding another member to the family and requires some thought. Many organizations require an interview, questioning the dog’s care and reminding the prospective adoptive parent of the cost, time and space commitments.

Most importantly, they’ll ask why you want to add a dog to your family. Says AZ Beagle Rescue: “If you save one dog, you won’t change the world, but surely the world will change for that dog.”

Of course, there are benefits to becoming a dog owner, the guardian and caretaker of another living being. Some of these might be medical reasons. Guide dogs lead the blind and hearing dogs help the deaf or hearing impaired. There are service dogs trained to assist the wheelchair-bound, as well as those responsive to seizures or mental health issues, such as PTSD, panic disorder or depression. A scent-trained dog can help monitor a diabetic’s blood sugar.

Tempe resident Miriam Miller relies on her therapy dog, a golden retriever named Abby, to alert her if her blood pressure falls.

“I had several medical incidents before I got her.

— Continued on facing page





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She'll paw me, gently, to let me know something's wrong. If I ignore her, she'll nudge me with her head, even nudge me over to a chair. If I don't listen to her warning, she'll give a low whine, even a short bark. She's persistent. I've had to learn to pay attention to her, because she's well-trained and knows her job."

Other health benefits are noted in *Pediatrics Journal*, pointing out that children who live in a home with a pet are more likely to be healthier and better socialized than those without pets. Dr. Danielle Fisher of St. John's Health Center in Santa Monica, Calif., notes that exposure to pets in early life can stimulate the immune system,

leading to 31percent fewer respiratory tract infections, 44percent fewer ear infections and therefore fewer antibiotics.

And Jessica Gross writes in *The Huffington Post* that dog ownership has been proven a mood-booster, leading to increased self-esteem, less loneliness and more exercise. PetSmart and the online dating site, Match.com, partnered in a study released by *Men's Fitness* magazine, and discovered that men and women are more likely to be attracted to someone who owns a pet.

So this Valentine's Day, remember the flowers and chocolate—but take a hint from man's best friend: lace up your sneakers and grab a leash.

Valentine's Day plus Chinese New Year: something for everyone to celebrate

By M.V. Moorhead

This issue of *Wrangler News* encompasses both Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day. It also encompasses Super Bowl Sunday, but here in the Valley, sad to say, most of us now have far less interest in that date than we did a couple of weeks ago.

As for Chinese New Year, the celebration kicks off on Monday, Feb. 8. This year we're saying adieu to the Year of the Ram and ringing in the Year of the Monkey.

According to a brochure for the city of Phoenix's Chinese Week celebration, people born under the sign of the Monkey are "clever, intelligent, quick-witted and versatile."

Better still: "Their gentleness and honesty bring them an everlasting love life."

For those who wish to celebrate the Year of the Monkey more formally than a trip to your favorite Chinese restaurant or market, Phoenix Chinese Week offers a slate of activities starting with a reception at the City Hall Atrium at noon on the 8th, followed by a Grand Opening Ceremony at noon Friday the 12th at Margaret Hance Deck Park, which will also host the Chinese Week Culture and Cuisine Festival on the 12th, 13th and 14th.

Among the attractions at the Festival at Hance Park will be art, photography and history exhibits, a dragon boat display, a koi fish exhibit, children's activities, a food pavilion, beer garden and musical performances.

While you're there you can visit the Golden Panda statue at Hance Park's southeastern end, a gift from Phoenix's Chinese sister city of Chengdu.

Go to phoenixchineseweek.org for details.

On the other hand, if you'd prefer to keep your celebrations here in the East Valley, you could wait until later in the month and go to Chandler Center for the Arts.

At 4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 28, that venue hosts the 2016 U.S. American-Chinese New Year Festival Gala, a family-friendly show from Eastern Arts Academy featuring traditional music, dancing and martial arts.

Tickets are \$30; call 480-696-0190 for details.

But what about Valentine's Day? At a glance, the Western holiday celebrating romantic love doesn't seem to have much more in common with Chinese New Year than a tradition of red envelopes—filled with money (in even amounts) for kids on New Year's, and with cards full of endearments to lovers on Valentine's.

My wife and daughter, however, managed to elegantly connect both romance and the Chinese Zodiac in a recent craft project.

Trying to come up with a gift for a long-married couple we know, they hit upon the idea of creating a graphic, combining images of the couple's Zodiac signs—she's Year of the Boar, he's Year of the Monkey—with some text about their sign's supposed traits, all on some nice paper stock.

The results were, well, suitable for framing, which is what they did. The gift was inexpensive, fun and a big hit.

According to the local Chinese Week brochure, however, the Boar and the Monkey are not regarded as a good match.

The Wife and Kid left that tidbit off of their project, I'm glad to say.



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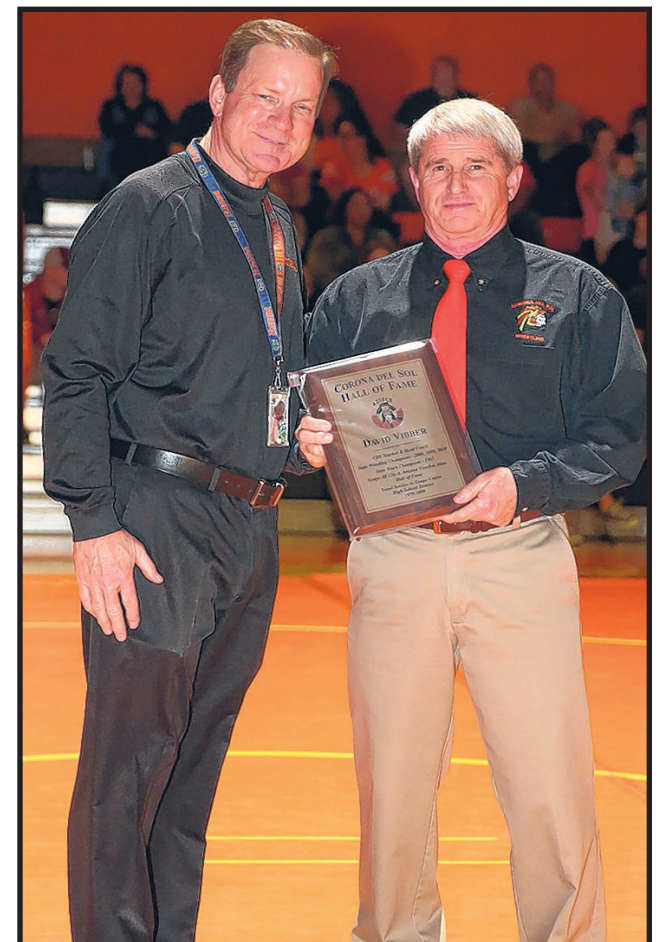
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Sports

By Alex Zener

Aztecs pay tribute to top coaches, athletes



Retired Corona wrestling coach Dave Vibber, right, was inducted into the Aztec Hall of Fame by current athletic director Dan Nero.

— Photo by Kris Cartwright for Wrangler News

Feb. 6 was scheduled to be when our area high school wrestlers were due to compete in sectional tournaments to determine who qualifies to compete in the individual state championship tournaments and who watches from the sidelines.

Both Marcos de Niza and McClintock wrestlers compete in Division II Section III. These wrestlers will be competing in the Section III tournament on Feb. 6 at Campo Verde High School, 3870 S. Quartz in Gilbert.

Individual wrestlers from both teams will be competing against wrestlers from 11 other Section III high schools in 14 different weight categories to see who gets to compete in the Division II state tournament on Feb. 11-12 at the Prescott Valley Event Center.

Corona de Sol wrestlers will be competing on Feb. 6 in the Division I Section II tournament at Valley Vista High School at 15550 W. Parkview Place in Surprise.

The Aztecs will be competing against eight other high schools including Cibola, Desert Vista and Mountain Pointe to determine which of their wrestlers will qualify to compete at the state tournament, also held at the Prescott

We the People

From Page 1

become a high school social studies teacher.

"Who knows, maybe I'll come back to Corona and have a classroom of my own next door to Ms. Rund," Butler quips.

In addition to the entire team perpetuating the school legacy with its fifth trip in a row to nationals, one member of Corona's group is continuing a family legacy of his own.

"My dad went to Corona and he was on the first Competition Government team that competed in nationals back in 1987. I think he's pretty proud of

me and excited that I'm getting the same opportunity he got almost 30 years ago," said Marco Lohavanijaya. "I really like to learn about how our government works; Comp Gov has been a great experience for me and we really worked hard to get this far."

So far every Corona team over

the past five years has been able to fundraise enough to attend the national tournament held at the University of Maryland.

Corona's tight-knit group, along with the determination of their coach, suggest that the generosity of local community members and businesses

will come through for them once again.

Aside from that, there always are other options. After hearing them from Alex Butler, I'm convinced that this team will surely find a way to get to D.C. somehow.

"I'm willing to do anything: mow lawns, walk dogs, make beds—you name it," insisted Butler. "I really want us to be able to go!"

Reporter's note: Those interested in contributing to the campaign can visit www.youcaring.com/corona-del-sol-we-the-people-502234. Tax credit donations can be made to Youth in Government Club c/o Alison Rund, 1001 E. Knox Road, Tempe, 85824.



Summit school to host display of student art; was named among U.S. best in previous run

A student art exhibit, the 2001 forerunner of which was named Best in the U.S. by the nation's architects, will have a 2016 rebirth Tuesday, Feb. 9, at Summit School of Ahwatukee.

The exhibit, which runs 5-7 p.m., will again feature the school's Vitruvius art program, which was hailed by the Association of Architecture

Organizations the first time it was presented.

Part of the school's open house, the exhibit gives parents a chance to view special presentations for either middle school or kindergarten from 5-6 p.m., followed by self- or student-guided tours of elementary, middle school and preschool from 6-7.

Summit is a nationally accredited private school,

hailed for offering an academically challenging, extensive liberal arts curriculum, small class sizes and hands-on learning.

Summit School of Ahwatukee is at 4515 E. Muirwood Drive.

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For Valentine's Day 2016, grieving mom gains a new perspective on life

Story and photos by Joyce Coronel

Brenda Vanderbur sits inside Ragtops Salon in south Tempe, awaiting a pre-Valentine's Day makeover session with stylist and co-owner Ginger Braaten.

Vanderbur, whose 18-year-old son Ridge died last April after a hard-fought battle against cancer, didn't have any plans for the upcoming Valentine's holiday and was thinking she would just as soon skip it.

"Last year on Valentine's Day, Ridge was in the ICU. It was around that time that it became apparent he was not going to make it," Vanderbur said as her blue eyes clouded with tears. "So, we would love to ignore Valentine's Day, but that's not going to happen."

She continued:

"The truth is, it's a day of love and not necessarily of sweethearts, but love in general. We've talked a little bit about what we could do to help somebody else, to show our love for another person."

Sitting before the mirror with Braaten, Vanderbur raked her fingers through her long, blonde hair. "I've lost a lot of hair," she said matter-of-factly. The stress of burying a child had taken its toll on her tresses.

"Nah, you're fine," Braaten said. "You're in good company."

Women tend to lose hair as they age, she noted, so "the rest of us are in the same place. You just started out with such a nice big head of hair that you're in better shape than most of us."

Vanderbur smiled. Her perspective on things has shifted since losing Ridge, she said.

"I see a lot of girls who don't have any hair or who have lost 80 percent of their hair. I recently met with a girl who has just started her chemo, and she has chosen at this point not to shave her hair. But most of it's gone, and I think, 'What am I complaining about, losing my hair?'"

Braaten ran a wide-tooth comb through Vanderbur's locks and stood back.

"I think it would be very pretty to bring this down a little more," she said. "You have lovely cheekbones and big, beautiful eyes. You have very long hair so if we take four to six inches off it's still long."

"I'm OK with that," Vanderbur said. She wants to be able to still pull her hair into a ponytail for exercise, something she said



Ginger Braaten, co-owner of Ragtops Salon, designs Brenda Vanderbur's new hairstyle for a pre-Valentine's Day makeover.

she's trying to do a bit more of these days. "It's helping with my stress."

"We're going to reshape the bangs a little bit and add some layers. Nothing that's going to be demanding and add work," Braaten said. "We need to keep you in a nice easy, playful, easy-to-care-for style. You're young and beautiful and we want you to feel like you're 25 because you look like you're 25. I don't

want you to be nervous that we're going to do something drastic."

"It's really funny, after everything I've been through, my perspective has changed," Vanderbur said. "I don't sweat the small stuff. I guess I never got that before. I mean, it's hair. It will grow back."

Country music plays softly in the background and a gaggle of women sits under

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Vanderbur admires her new, easy-to-maintain look.

the bank of dryers flipping through magazines. Braaten applies color to sections of Vanderbur's hair, then painstakingly wraps the newly curled locks in foil.

After the cutting and coloring and conditioning are through, Braaten wields the curling iron and then pins Vanderbur's hair up in a half chignon. "You have a beautiful jawline so it's perfect for you," Braaten says as Vanderbur beholds her new look in the mirror.

After decades in the beauty business, Braaten has seen her share of women bearing grief.

"A hairdresser knows more than a counselor," Vanderbur quipped.

So does a little pampering and a new look help women cope with heartache?

"I think at some point it does," Braaten said. "Nothing softens the pain initially, but at some point you've got to get on with your life. I think hair is a really important aspect of our lives. Having beautiful, healthy hair makes us feel better about ourselves."

"Some days are better than others," Vanderbur muses. "Some days you get it. Another day, you can't make yourself get it. So putting on makeup and getting your hair done and wearing something other than pajama pants or sweats is a step in making you look normal."

There are times she runs into a friend or acquaintance and it's a sweatpants/pajama kind of day.

"And that was really the best that you could do that day," Braaten says softly.

"That was the best I could do that day. So, yeah, it does feel good," Vanderbur says.

Braaten, who co-owns Ragtops Day Spa and Salon with her husband Terry and Jeanne Dankert, is a master haircutter. The south Tempe business offers an array of services, including manicure, massage, facials, waxing and permanent makeup.

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Filmmaker's stunt turns into winning formula for 'Pride and Prejudice'—and Zombies — spin-off

Back in 2009 Jane Austen collaborated with another young writer. A fellow named Seth Grahame-Smith added cannibal ghouls and martial arts action scenes to Austen's 1813 masterpiece *Pride and Prejudice*, and called the results *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*.

The stunt was a hit, giving Grahame-Smith a career, and starting a less-than-welcome vogue for such literary or historical "mashups"—*Sense and Sensibility and Sea Monsters* followed, for instance, as did Grahame-Smith's own *Abraham Lincoln, Vampire Hunter*.

Even though her participation was posthumous and without consent, from a literary point of view Austen was the winner in this odd collaboration.

I listened to the audiobook of *P&P&Z* (excellently read by the droll, deadpan Katherine Kellgren) some years ago on a road trip, and as it went into its homestretch, I noticed myself sighing with impatience every time the text shifted to a horror scene.

Such are Austen's chops that I would have preferred to drop the ludicrous zombie gimmick and just hear how her story turned out—even though I'd

Film Fare

with M.V. Moorhead

already read it.

Still, on its own terms, the one joke on which this book was based was a reasonably funny joke, and now it's been made into a fairly lavish movie.

Adapted and directed by the American Burr Steers (of *17 Again*), it departs freely from Grahame-Smith's storyline, but considering what he did to Austen, Grahame-Smith hardly has grounds to complain.

Wary-eyed Lily James of last year's *Cinderella* plays heroine Elizabeth Bennett. As in the book, Lizzy and her sisters are in the market for well-to-do husbands, but they have also been trained in the fighting arts of the East, allowing them to wield swords and dismember any hungry undead that should wander into a country dance or accost them as they're on their way to make a social call.

Sam Riley, excellent as the title character's sidekick in *Maleficent*, here plays Darcy, who can't help but fall for Lizzy despite his pride.

Most of the other major characters are retained, though often in wildly different form.

The scoundrel Wickham (Jack Huston), for instance, is a proponent of a zombie appeasement scheme, while haughty Lady Catherine (Lena Headey) is a formidable zombie-hunter with a chic eyepatch.

Charles Dance gets to play Mr. Bennett relatively straight, but Matt Smith camps up Mr. Collins to a

sketch-comedy degree.

In short, *P&P&Z* the movie is outrageously silly. It isn't very scary, but the squeamish should be forewarned that unlike 2013's *World War Z* it is quite gory at times, with some inventively gruesome sight gags.

Overall, I thought it sustained itself for its entire length a little better, maybe, than the book, because it brings the material more of a sense of...well, female empowerment.

Masterly as Jane Austen's works are, there's something troubling about the way these tales of near-powerless women anxiously waiting for husbands are often used by modern readers as fantasy fodder—a romanticizing of social and economic strictures to which Austen, for all her talent, had no choice but to conform.

It would be a little much to call *P&P&Z*, by contrast, a feminist film.

Admittedly, the warrior-woman archetype comes with its own set of male fantasies and presumptions. But something about the movie's Regency-era ladies arming themselves under their Empire-waist gowns feels bracing and liberating.

It seems possible, somehow, that Jane would approve.

Pride and Prejudice and Zombies is rated PG-13 and plays at Tempe Marketplace, Arizona Mills, Chandler Fashion 20 and other multiplexes Valleywide

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Sports

From Page 10

Valley Event Center Feb. 11-12.

"Our team is prepared for sectionals or the state qualification tournament this weekend," said coach **Jim Martinez**. "There is the expectation of taking care of business so that the wrestlers can get back to work Monday to be ready for the state tournament the following weekend."

Some of Corona's wrestlers have participated in previous state tournaments and hope to qualify again this year.

"We anticipate a great deal of success among our wrestlers at the sectionals," said Martinez. "**Ryan and Marc Farina, Hunter Carmona, Diego Fill and Dylan Conner** should be our highest seeds."

The Aztecs honored three seniors and recognized former long-time coach **Dave Vibber** at the last home match, Jan. 27, against Willow Canyon. Corona won 60-18.

The seniors honored are a set of triplets, Anthony, Marc and Ryan, from the same Farina family. The Farinas have had an impact and been a positive influence on the Aztec wrestling program the past six seasons. Older brother Glenn is now competing at Cal Poly.

two years, has planned and prepared for his final two weeks of high school competition," said Martinez. "Give him a challenge and he will find a solution for overcoming it."

Vibber was inducted into the Corona del Sol Hall of Fame earlier at a boys basketball game but was recognized at the last regular wrestling match of the season as well.

"It was an honor to have Coach Vibber's induction take place at our last home match," said Martinez. "It was where his induction belonged. Our program owes so much to him for all he did to start us on the road to success!"

Corona Girls Soccer —

Corona's young but determined girls soccer team is hoping to replicate the 2009-10 Aztec team which entered the state tournament as the No. 15 seed but refused to lose until they climbed from the bottom up to the playoff ranks to fulfill the team's goal of playing in the championship finals.

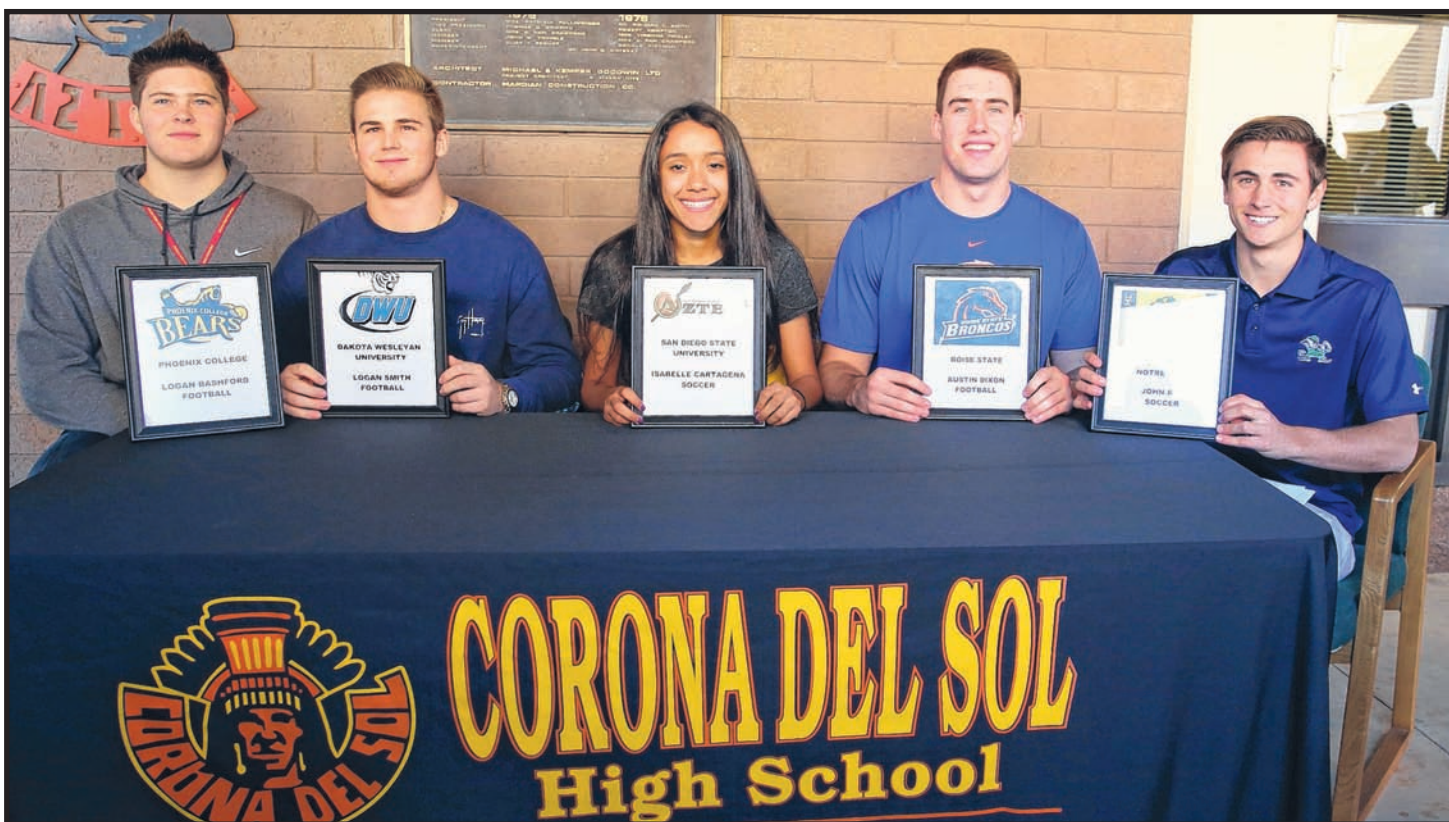
"This year's team reminds me a lot of the 2010 team that made a long playoff run in the state tournament," said long-time head coach **Matt Smith**.

The Aztecs, seeded No. 9 this season with a 9-8-1 record, were set to face off against No. 8 Campo Verde on Feb. 2 at



Parents, left, of Corona athlete Susan Mortensen received posthumous Hall of Fame recognition for their daughter. Others who received plaques were Brittany Cole, a soccer standout; Bob Gilbert, a longtime coach represented by his son, above, and Ron Davini, retired Corona baseball coach.

— Kris Cartwright for Wrangler News



Aztec standout athletes who signed letters of intent on Feb. 3 were, from left, Logan Bashford, Phoenix College; Logan Smith, Dakota Wesleyan University; Isabel Cartegena, San Diego State; Austin Dixon, Boise State; and John Rea, Notre Dame.

— Kris Cartwright for Wrangler News

"Anthony has been a true team member all four years," said Martinez. "I don't know of anyone more liked and personable than Anthony."

"Marc has been one of the most driven wrestlers in our program," said Martinez. "He will outwork anyone to achieve his goal of becoming a state champion."

"Ryan, who placed at state the past

Campo Verde.

If they keep their hopes of playing once again in the finals alive by defeating the Coyotes in the first round, the Aztecs will most likely play Xavier, the No. 1 seed in the tournament, in the second round on Feb. 6 at Xavier.

If that scenario plays out, it would be a rematch of the 2010 state championship

final match.

Senior leadership has helped Corona's younger players improve over the season and become more competitive playing against some of the toughest teams in the state.

"We have done a great job of sticking together and supporting each other as we have played a very tough schedule," said

Smith. "We are starting to figure out how to win!"

"We will have played 13 of the 16 teams in the state playoffs, so by now we should have a great idea of what we need to do in the state playoffs," said Smith.

The defense has played well all season, according to Smith.

"Seniors **Izzie Cartegena** and **Lexi Reynosa** have been strong on the back line," said Smith. "With their senior leadership, the entire back line has been strong all year."

Several young players have had an impact on the team's offensive performance, as well.

"Sophomore **Olivia Nguyen** is tearing it up, with great support of fellow sophomores **Abby Robertson** and **Skylar Byrnes**," said Smith. "Then **Samantha Scheurer** has stepped in as a freshman and been exceptional, playing a variety of positions, but often in the center back."

Nguyen leads the team in goals with 11, followed by Byrnes with 7, Robertson and junior **Sienna Firestone** with 4 each, and junior **Nikki Hoey** and freshman **Riye Torrance** with 3 each.

Byrnes and Nguyen are the assist leaders on the team with nine and eight assists respectively, but juniors **Laney Gordon** and **Elizabeth Velasquez** are next in line with four assists.

Junior starting goalkeeper **Jordon Freese** and freshman **Maya Benedict** have only allowed 13 goals to be scored against the Aztecs while saving 151 attempts over the regular season.

Corona's five seniors, **Bailee McCook**, Cartegena, Reynosa, **Macala Montemarano** and **Ama Garcia** were honored at the last home game of the season.

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Sports

From Page 15

Other players contributing on and off the field to Corona's success are freshman **Karyme Perea**, sophomores **Destini Romero** and **Mia da Rosa** and juniors **Brooklyn Marois**, **Grace Rayburn**, **Emily Ramsland**, **Lauren Lambert** and **Alyssa Baca**.

Athlete Letters of Intent

— Corona had three athletes sign letters of intent Feb. 3 outside the front office.

Isabelle Cartagena signed to play soccer at San Diego State next fall while **John Rea** will be playing soccer as well at the University of Notre Dame.

Cartagena is one of Corona's best defenders on the girls team while Rea is leading the boys team in both goals, with 26 goals on the stat sheet, and assists with 15.

Austin Dixon, who played all 11 games for Corona's football team this season, signed to play football on Boise State University's blue field this fall. The 6-foot-7 265-pound tackle also played middle blocker on Corona's boys volleyball team.

Logan Bashford signed to play football at Phoenix College and teammate Logan Smith signed to play Dakota Wesleyan in South Dakota.

Corona Basketball — The Aztecs, despite a 9-5 record as of Monday, Feb. 1, are currently ranked No. 1 among Division I boys basketball teams with a 15.9679 rating and could potentially get the No. 1 seed with home court advantage in the state tournament.

Ranked at No. 2 was Basha with a 13.8472 rating, then Mesa with 13.4880, Mountain Ridge with 13.1013 and Gilbert with 12.8825.

The Aztecs defeated Basha, Jan. 20, 62-59, but who knows how that win will figure into the final ally.

Corona, at press time, had four remaining games: Feb. 2 at home against Mountain Pointe, Feb. 4 at Chandler, Feb. 8 at Dobson and Feb. 10 at home against Gilbert.

The only one who appears to be a threat as far as ranking points is Gilbert. Mountain Pointe is currently No. 15 with a 7.8684 ranking while Chandler is No. 9 with 10.1402 and Dobson No.10 with 9.9774.

If the Aztecs win all four of their last regular season games, it appears they will be the No. 1 seed. But as anyone who has tried predicting the final AIA power point rankings, anything can happen.

The Aztecs seems to be peaking at the right time, though, winning six of their last eight games and plan on fiercely defending their state championship trophy when the state tournament starts Feb. 18.

"We have worked hard to put ourselves in a good position going into the last part of the season, but we realize the importance of staying focused on each individual opponent, as there are no nights off in Division 1 this season," said head coach **Neil MacDonald**.

"We are happy with our progress, and feel confident that we will be playing our best basketball when we need to be this month."

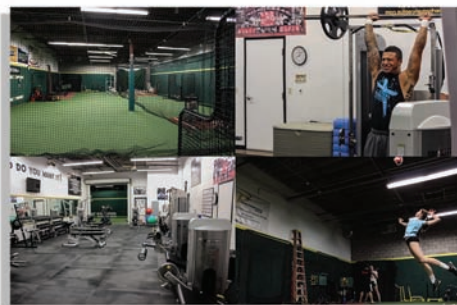


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Legacy

From Page 1

during difficult financial times, when the economy in the state was headed for a sharp decline, along with rising unemployment and a drop in home values.

"This led to less property tax collections and created a downward spiral in our budget, which resulted in program reductions," said Schauer.

When faced with several years of budget cuts, as a result of decreasing state funding, Schauer partnered with the district's Governing Board to minimize the effects on classrooms and student instruction. He also established all-day kindergarten, because he believes that the investment in early learning is critical for children to succeed.

As a result, when compared to other districts, Kyrene consistently scores in the top tier for the amount of money that is spent on instruction.

Fortunately, the economy is on the uptick and recent improvements in the state budget yielded a repayment of funds to the district. In turn, the Governing Board approved returning the money to schools for their immediate use.

"I feel really positive that we were able to do this, so that we can better support teachers and students," said Schauer.

His style of management includes frequent visits to the classroom, so he can actually see the learning in progress.

"This keeps me in touch with both the staff and the students," he explained. "I enjoy the enthusiasm for learning that I see in our classrooms.

"I'm also proud of the relationships I've been able to establish with our state legislators and regularly invite them to our schools and special events. They have demonstrated that they have a strong interest in education."

With Schauer at the helm, Kyrene established a reputation as an "A" school district.

Schauer successfully navigated through other challenges during his tenure, including responding to changes in state learning standards and testing assessment and reacting to increased competition from other educational institutions.

Kyrene's anticipated enrollment decline has stabilized as a result of aggressively marketing the benefits of a Kyrene education and by providing increased educational choices for families, such as more electives, Schauer noted.

He says that one of the key achievements during his tenure is his ability to create consensus among varied stakeholders.

"Bringing groups of people with varied interests and widely different perspectives together to work on behalf of all of the children in Kyrene has been important.

"When I first began in this position, this district had adversarial relationships with key groups of employees and parents. I was able to build bridges with these groups through educating them about the work of the district and encouraging everyone to take collective responsibility for major areas, such

as the impact of state funding on the budget and creating the best possible working conditions for our employees with limited resources.

He also counts creating a 'Strategic Blueprint,' a document with measureable goals, "as the defining roadmap to guide all of our work—and which has been critical to inspiring our success."

Schauer began his educational career as a third-grade teacher in Illinois after receiving a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Illinois State University. It was during this period that he observed that reading is "key to all learning experiences and that kids need structured pre-reading activities to get them ready for school."

He came to Arizona in 1996 to become the principal of Aprende Middle School, a position he held for six years.

In 2002, Schauer was selected as assistant superintendent for Instructional Services and served in that role until he was named superintendent of the district in 2006.

He says that the best part of being in the Kyrene community is that "the kids we serve are truly amazing.

"We have strong parental and community support for what we do and I could not ask for a better environment in which to work."

He remains passionate about education and says he is weighing several directions to pursue after retirement.

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February 2016

City of Tempe Page



City working to maintain Town Lake for future recreation, economic investment



The City of Tempe is building the country's largest hydraulically-operated steel gate dam system to hold back the waters of Tempe Town Lake.

The dam is expected to have a lifespan of 50 years. As part of the construction process, the water from Town

Lake will be moved into the SRP canal system so that crews can remove the previous dam. Tempe Town Lake will close for water activities from Feb. 10 to late April.

This timeline could change depending on weather and construction progress. All parks and pathways around

Town Lake are expected to remain open.

For safety reasons, no one is permitted to enter the lake bed during this time.

The city is working with experts to monitor for, and if needed, treat for mosquitoes and other insects.

Arizona Game & Fish has

lifted the limits on fishing for Town Lake anglers, in order to remove as many fish as possible.

Details about the project are at www.tempe.gov/damreplacement. In addition, follow @tempegov on Twitter or www.facebook.com/cityoftempe.

Annual charity baseball game March 3

Nothing can beat an afternoon of spring training baseball, rooting for the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim – except for the feeling of helping a great organization while you're at the ballpark.

Join the Angels and the Tempe Diablos for their annual charity game at 1:10 p.m. on Monday, March 7, against the Chicago White Sox. All proceeds from ticket sales, parking, concessions and merchandise will go to the Tempe Diablos

for local charities. For more information on the Diablos, visit www.tempediablos.org.

Tickets are on sale now at www.ticketmaster.com or at the Tempe Diablo Stadium ticket window beginning Feb. 20.

The Angels' home opener is March 3 against the Oakland A's. Tempe Diablo Stadium is located at 2200 W. Alameda Drive. Visit www.tempe.gov/diablo for information on games, tickets, stadium hours, directions and parking.



Nominations due for Mayor's Disability Awards

Nominate a business, agency, educator, individual, or student who demonstrates ability, advocacy, access and achievements for recognition at the 28th Annual Mayor's Disability Awards on April 12, from 3-5:30 p.m., at the Tempe Center for the Arts, 700 W. Rio Salado Parkway.

Nominations can be found and submitted at www.tempe.gov/disabilityawards. They are due by 4 p.m. Feb. 29.

Contact Michele Stokes at 480-350-2704 or via email at Michele_Stokes@tempe.gov for alternate formats, sponsorship opportunities or questions.

The geeks will be back in town on March 3

Geeks' Night Out returns on Thursday, March 3, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m., at Tempe City Hall, 31 E. Fifth St.

This free, family-friendly event will enable all of us to Discover the Science. Tempe has teamed up with the Arizona SciTech Festival for this annual event that celebrates science, technology, engineering, arts and

mathematics (STEAM).

Join us for interactive STEAM displays, the annual costume parade featuring Phoenix Comicon, pop-culture and sci-fi activities, and more.

The evening is a delight for proud geeks of all ages. Visit www.tempe.gov/geeks for more information.

Contribute views during February budget forum

The City of Tempe will hold a public forum to inform community members about the city's operating and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budgets, and to hear their priorities for the 2016-17 fiscal year and beyond.

The forum will be held at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 24, at 6 p.m. at the Tempe History Museum, 809 E. Southern Ave.

The city's operating budget covers everyday expenses,

such as employee salaries and health benefits, while CIP projects range from major equipment replacements and street improvements to new facilities and building updates.

The two categories of expenses are budgeted separately. For details on the formulation of budgets for the 2016-17 fiscal year, as well as projected dates for City Council discussions on both the operating and capital budgets, visit www.tempe.gov/budgetplan.

Submit feedback online through March 31 at www.tempe.gov/forum.

www.tempe.gov/newsroom

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At KMS, hands-on exploration replaces rote drudgery

By Jonathan Coronel

More and more these days, Kyrene Middle School administrators are saying out with the old and in with the new by implementing innovative technological and course changes to help accelerate learning.

The days of rote memorization and seemingly endless lectures are being exchanged for hands-on and independent learning as well as personalized classroom intervention to improve student behavior.

One such initiative having a measureable effect on Kyrene students is known as Leadership Course, an elective students take for one quarter of the school year to replace bad habits with good ones and help them improve both academic and behavioral performance.

"The class focuses on instilling good habits in our students," student adviser Sarah Sottile tells me. "The class textbook for seventh and eighth graders is 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens' and for some of our sixth graders 'The 7 Habits of Happy Kids'."

The elective has students make daily goals that they review with their teacher—certainly a habit that carries over to all aspects of kids' lives. Students are also expected to maintain good behavior in their other classes.

To exit the class after one quarter, a passing grade

of 75 percent is required.

This past year 90 percent of eighth graders passed on their first try; the other 10 percent passed on their second try.

To further cultivate students as leaders and responsible citizens, Kyrene also uses a new technology, Live Class, to reward students with virtual points when they exhibit good behavior or demonstrate leadership on campus.

Students can then use the points to buy things from the school's Public Behavior and Intervention Supports store.

In addition to teaching kids lifelong study skills and leadership, Kyrene is also bringing students' coursework to life with technology. A large "smart lab" is focused on hands-on technology-based learning.

Computers equipped with the latest programs allow students to design models. Various tools and materials allow them to make cars, models and dioramas for everything from science to history projects.

Teachers typically spend one day showing students how to use the various resources in the smart lab, then turn them loose to create and build things for their other classes.

Another unique opportunity Kyrene Middle

School students have is their daily broadcast program, KMS TV, which involves conducting a live television broadcast for the school every day.

"Students get to learn every aspect of broadcasting from production to directing to acting.

They learn how to edit videos and also since it's live they have to learn to improvise if they make a mistake," says Michael Davison, the KMS TV advisor and Kyrene's multimedia instructor.

In a rapidly evolving world, the way we educate our children is changing faster than ever.

The opportunities and technology available to Kyrene students largely did not even exist just six years ago when I was in junior high.

These technology skills and hands-on learning experiences will serve students well as they prepare to transition to high school and beyond.

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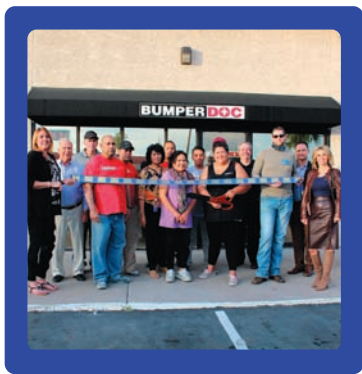
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Tempe Chamber Hosts Congresswoman Sinema for Annual State of the District

The Tempe Chamber of Commerce presents State of the District, a Federal Update with Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema on February 19. Join our audience of community, educational, political and civic leaders over brunch while the Congresswoman provides an update on federal issues affecting our district, state and country.

Kyrsten Sinema was re-elected in November 2014 as the U.S. Representative for Arizona's 9th congressional district. A member of the Democratic Party, she has served in both chambers of the Arizona legislature, being elected to the Arizona House of Representatives in 2005, and the Arizona Senate in 2011.



**Congresswoman
Kyrsten Sinema**

Seating is very limited. Please RSVP promptly to guarantee your spot. Once the event has sold out, no additional guests can be accommodated. We regret that no walk-ins will be permitted to enter the event.

To register for this event, please visit www.tempechamber.org or call our office at 480.967.7891.

EVENT DETAILS

**State of the District: A Federal Update with
Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema
Friday, February 19, 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Conference Center @ Rio Salado College
\$55 for Members | \$65 for Guests
Tables of 8 available**

CSI Workshop on Feb 18: Learn the Skills the Experts Use

**Hot Topics & Lunch, Sponsored by SRP
Thursday, February 18, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Dave & Buster's
Tempe Marketplace
2000 E. Rio Salado Pkwy. #1100
\$25 for Members | \$35 for Guests**

They say there's no such thing as the perfect crime. Melissa Beddow, MSFS, Director of the Bachelor of Science in Forensic Science Program at Grand Canyon University, tells us why.

This is a hands on workshop that will teach all guests how forensic techniques are used to solve crimes. Beddow will give a brief overview of three topics and then guests will break into groups. Each group will do an activity related to one of the three topics, and then rotate allowing everyone to complete each activity.



Attendees will learn:

- **Firearms and Ballistics** – An examination of firearms, bullet sizes and trajectory
- **Trace Evidence** – Collecting hidden evidence to reconstruct a crime
- **Handwriting Analysis** – Studying what's revealed by someone's handwriting and how to match text and signatures to an individual

To register for this event, please visit www.tempechamber.org or call our office at 480.967.7891.



Beddow has an MS in forensic science from the University of California, Davis with seven years of analytical laboratory experience and four years of experience as a DNA analyst. She is a court-approved expert in forensic DNA analysis.

This event is a tie-in with the Arizona SciTech Festival, a statewide celebration of science, technology, engineering and math held annually in February and March.



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As awards finalist, MCC will vie for \$1 million in 2017 prize money

MCC has been named among the nation's top 150 community colleges, landing it not only in prestigious company but as one of the potential finalists for a \$1 million top prize to be awarded later this year.

MCC's President, Dr. Shouan Pan, said the recognition pays tribute to one of MCC's longterm initiatives.

"MCC launched 'Mission 2020' in 2009, with the ambitious goal of increasing student completion of degrees and certificates by 50 percent by year 2020," said Pan.

"We are well on our way to achieve that goal, and are resolved to continue our pursuit of educational excellence."

The prize, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges and recognizes institutions for exceptional student outcomes in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and access and success for minority and low-income students.

The top 150 colleges are eligible to compete for the 2017 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and \$1 million in prize funds.

Ten finalists will be named this fall.

The Aspen Institute will then conduct

site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data. A distinguished prize jury will select a grand prize winner and a few finalists with distinction in early 2017.

Nearly half of America's college students attend community college, with more than seven million students – youth and adult learners – working toward certificates and degrees in these institutions across the country.

For the first time, the 150 prize-eligible institutions are also invited to nominate exceptional students enrolled in their best middle-skill STEM programs for scholarships.

Up to 50 Siemens Technical Scholars will be selected from programs that provide outstanding preparation for high-demand jobs in manufacturing, energy, health care, and information technology.

Scholarship winners and the programs that deliver rigorous training enabling their success will be announced in fall 2016.

The prize-winning community colleges were selected from a national pool of more than 1,000 public two-year colleges using publicly available data on student outcomes in three areas:

Performance (retention, graduation rates including transfers, and degrees and certificates per 100 full-time equivalent students);

Improvement (awarded for steady improvement in each performance metric over time); and

Equity (evidence of strong completion outcomes for minority and low-income students).

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20 Frankie Avalon. 7:30pm

21 Lee Ann Womack 7pm

27 Steppin' Out LIVE with Ben Vereen & Trio 7:30pm

March 2016

4 The Second City Fully Loaded . . . 7:30pm

5 Vicki Lawrence & Mama: *A Two Woman Show* 7:30pm

8-13 Tony n' Tina's Wedding Times Vary

18 Rita Rudner 7:30pm

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For more information: www.ChandlerCenter.org/EAT

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Mardi Gras is here . . . so let the good times roll in our own backyard

By Deborah Hilcove

Laissez les bons temps rouler! Let the good times roll—from now until Feb. 9, it's Carnival time! Long before Christianity arrived in Rome, pagan celebrations of spring were filled with excess and debauchery.

But with Christianity, religious leaders incorporated "Carnival" as the prelude to Lent. They marked Jan. 6 as Epiphany, when the three kings honored the infant Jesus, also calling it Twelfth Night, or Three Kings' Day.

Epiphany begins the last big fling of earthly delights before Ash Wednesday, this year being observed on Feb. 10, followed by 40 days of Lent before Easter.

Sometimes the preceding day is called Shrove Tuesday, from Middle English, meaning to "shrive" or receive absolution through confession.

Other times, it's called Pancake Tuesday—or Mardi Gras, translated from French as "Fat Tuesday," and referring to the practice of using up the sugar, butter and "fats" before Lenten abstinence.

Early settlers brought Carnival traditions to America from Canada and Europe.

This year's Mardi Gras celebration starts Feb. 9.

Probably the best known American celebrations occur in New Orleans, during the weeks between Epiphany and Mardi Gras.

Raucous parades feature elaborately costumed participants—wearing elegant, sometimes gaudy, even bizarre or raunchy creations—with feathered and spangled masks and towering headdresses.

The city glitters with Mardi Gras colors of purple, green and gold, representing justice, faith and power.

Royalty and costumed "krewes," members of private social clubs, ride lavishly decorated floats

and toss out colorful beads, trinkets and candy to spectators, many perched on gaily decorated ladders. "Throw me something, Mister!" echoes along the parade route, drowned out by noise-makers and impromptu jazz.

The hallmark, though, of Carnival is the glorious food—jambalaya, gumbo, crawfish *étouffée*—even alligator with sauce piquant, exotic-sounding dishes that often start with the directions, "First you make a roux, then add the 'trinity.'"

To Cajun cooks, that means chopped onions, celery and bell pepper.

In France, the season begins with an Epiphany cake, a *Galette des Rois*.

Here in Tempe, Eugenia Theodosopoulos, executive chef of Essence Bakery, creates these Parisian cakes from puff pastry filled with frangipane, a delicate almond-flavored custard.

Other local bakeries, such as HoneyMoon Sweets, make traditional New Orleans King cakes, which are braided, cinnamon-laced, brioche-like cakes, iced and decorated with alternating sections of purple, green and gold sugar.

Usually a tiny plastic baby is hidden in the cake, symbolizing the infant Jesus. Whoever finds the baby will be honored as "royalty" and may provide the next King cake.

If you're missing Mardi Gras in New Orleans, you might enjoy hosting a party.

Decorate invitations with a jester's tricorne and ask guests to wear masks and costumes. Center your table with a silvery table runner and a small golden treasure chest, overflowing with beads, gold-foil doubloons and bright flowers. Favors might include gold and silver-glittered masks.

To create a festive mood, play Dixieland jazz, Cajun and zydeco music and serve guests sparkly nonalcoholic spritzers or elegant cognac and champagne French 75 cocktails.

Your menu might include chicken, shrimp and andouille sausage jambalaya or seafood gumbo, followed by Bananas Foster, redolent of brown sugar and rum, or King cake served with *café brûlé*—rich, dark coffee, flamed with brandy, orange peel and spices—enjoyed straight, without milk or cream.

If you prefer letting someone else cook, several local restaurants celebrate Mardi Gras.

In Tempe, Fat Tuesday's is a college-area restaurant-bar with a Bourbon Street vibe, offering fried alligator or catfish nuggets with *rémoulade*.

In nearby Mesa, Pier de Orleans serves pecan-crusted shrimp and "tender, meaty petite frog legs," as well as fresh Louisiana oysters. Entertainment is provided by Cheryl Thurston's Mardi Gras band.

Another Mesa restaurant, Baby Kay's Cajun Kitchen, skips okra but has crawfish shipped from Louisiana twice a week.

Finally, if you're fortunate enough to have a King cake—and even more fortunate to have leftovers—dip slices into a cinnamon-laced, egg-cream mixture and fry lightly in butter.

Sprinkle powdered sugar on the French toast, pour yourself a cup of fragrant French roast coffee, sit back and *laissez les bons temps rouler!*

Find more Mardi Gras information on the NOLA.com website, as well as the following:

- Baby Kay's Cajun Kitchen, 2051 S. Dobson Road, Mesa, www.babykayscajunkitchen.com;
- Essence Bakery, 825 W. University Drive, Tempe, www.essencebakery.com;
- Fat Tuesday, 680 S. Mill Avenue, Tempe, www.fattuesdaytempe.com;
- HoneyMoon Sweets, 606 W. Southern Ave., Tempe, www.HoneyMoonSweets.com;
- Judy Walker, *The Times-Picayune* (New Orleans newspaper) www.NOLA.com; and
- Pier de Orleans, 61 E. University Drive, Mesa, www.pierdeorleans.com.



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Chandler Children's Choir takes center stage at 2016 celebration of Chinese New Year

By Susie Steckner

Singer Audrey Burnett lights up when she talks about the upcoming Chinese New Year celebration. She likes the variety of performances, the colorful costumes and the significance of the celebration to her family.

This year, she's excited to add one more "like" to her list: her role as soloist.

Audrey is one of three soloists performing with the Chandler Children's Choir on Saturday, Feb. 13. The young singers—Audrey, 12; Kate Xie, 8; and Elizabeth Lee, 7—and their choir will perform *Cai Diao*, a Chinese folk song full of playful riddles.

The group's founders say the girls are eager to take part in the Chinese New Year celebration, for which practice sessions are now underway at Desert Cross Lutheran Church in south Tempe.

"I like doing the solos a lot," Burnett said. "And it's really fun to sing to a big audience like that. But I like everything about the show."

This is the third year that the choir has performed at the Chinese New Year show, currently held at Mesa Arts Center. The community choir, in its eighth season, performs at venues and special events throughout the East Valley.

It serves nearly 140 children and teens, and includes a broad mix of singers, including many Chinese families.

"We have a very diverse choir," said West Chandler resident Aimee Stewart, the choir's



co-founder and artistic director.

"Singers come from around the East Valley, from different neighborhoods, schools, cultural backgrounds."

"Just like the many voices in our choir, this diversity blends together to make one beautiful sound," she said.

The Chinese New Year show gives singers the chance to celebrate different cultures but also tackle a challenging song, Stewart said.

Cai Diao, or The Riddle Song, is fast and fun with plenty of tongue twisters. The choir's second song, *A Day in Spring*, is slower and lyrical, with a melody about springtime, friendship and music.

Jing Lee, who has three children's-choir singers, says she appreciates the choir's commitment to performing songs from different cultures. She's also seen her daughter Elizabeth's confidence grow through the relationship, giving her the courage to try out for solo roles.

Xie, another young soloist, is looking forward to performing at the celebration.

"I like singing Chinese songs," Xie said. "Last year the song had a story. This year, there are riddles. It's fun."

Cindy Lin has two daughters performing with the choir, including soloist Audrey.

"I am Chinese, and it is great to see my kids enjoy the Chinese holiday," Lin said. "Performing in the local Chinese New Year event is almost like a holiday tradition for them."

The Chinese New Year show will be held at 7 p.m. at Mesa Art Center's Ikeda Theater in downtown Mesa. Information: www.chandlerchildrenschoir.com.

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In Downtown Chandler, love was in the air



Sweethearts planning to tie the knot strolled through Chandler's historic colonade during the Chandler Wedding Walk, visiting with vendors and ending the evening with a make-believe reception at SoHo63. The event featured an array of prizes, including gift certificates for bridal gowns and photography services. Event was a pre-season bridal 'familiarization tour' sponsored by Downtown Chandler Community Partnership.

Wrangler News photo feature
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