

Wrangler NEWS

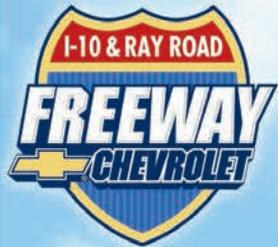
Feb. 7-20, 2015

Vol. 26, No. 3



As Valentine's Day nears, floral designer Barb Rickli applies her creativity to the blooms that already have arrived at Bobbie's Flowers in Tempe. But the rush isn't over, says owner Jimmy Davis. Trucks loaded with 10,000 fresh roses and other blossoms will continue to arrive until the big day, meaning more work for Rickli and others like her, for which the pace of hiring still has not slowed.

Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman



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An appetite for art: Diners will feed on restaurants' generosity

By Joyce Coronel

Chandler has come up with a delicious way to support the arts, local businesses and youth programming all at the same time.

"Eat Your Art Out Chandler" involves 11 local restaurants that have agreed to donate a percentage of their Tuesday, Feb. 24 proceeds to Chandler Center for the Arts.

Debbie Rubenstrunk, who runs the center's Youth Advisory Council, hopes many area residents will participate in the savory celebration.

"It's a great way for us to go outside the walls of Chandler Center for the Arts and into the community to support the arts," Rubenstrunk said.

The Youth Advisory Council Rubenstrunk directs is just one of several youth initiatives that are poised to benefit from the Feb. 24 event.

The leadership-development program offers teens ages 13-18 the opportunity to learn key concepts and

skills such as resume writing, social etiquette and how non-profits are structured.

"What's so exciting about this program is that these are young leaders," Rubenstrunk said. "These are people who are going to be on boards — they are going to be our future decision-makers."

Some 15 teens serve on the council from October to April each year, and Rubenstrunk said many return as alumni to attend sessions or help interview potential candidates.

Students from all over the Valley apply to serve on the council and many of them, Rubenstrunk added, might not have spoken to each other had they attended school together.

"What I love to see happen is that this program is like the great equalizer," Rubenstrunk said.

"It breaks down some barriers and that's what we end up with when we go off to work in the real world."

Chris Gummow, a senior at Chandler High School, served on

the Youth Advisory Council during 2012-2013. He found the experience so fulfilling that he returned to the program as an alumni.

Today, he works as an intern for the general manager at Chandler Center for the Arts, learning the behind-the-scenes, administrative side of the facility.

He hopes to attend Harvard University in the fall and said the skills he gained serving on the Youth Advisory Council proved invaluable.

"There's just so much that we learned," he said. "It's a really great program."

Ernie Serrano, vice president of

restaurant operations for Serrano's, one of the restaurants participating in the event, served as president of the board for Chandler Center for the Arts for three years.

"When this event came around for kids, I felt like we've been blessed, so why not give back to our community?" Serrano said.

"Eat Your Art Out Chandler" also supports the free summer concert series and the Connecting Kidz programs at the Chandler Center for the Arts.

For a complete list of participating restaurants, visit chandlerarts.org.

Millennials: Area's new demographic

Millennials in their own right have become a driving force that often determines the social, professional and geographical attractiveness of a city.

And, if consumer finance website Nerd Wallet is correct, Chandler and Tempe rank first and third among Arizona cities that appeal most to millennial job seekers

The site's analysis also revealed

that:

Maricopa County is No. 1.

Four of the state's top five cities for millennials — Chandler, Scottsdale, Tempe and Phoenix — are located in the state's most populous county.

Growth is high in smaller cities. The millennial populations in Douglas, Sahuarita and Prescott all grew over 10 percent from 2010 to 2013.

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An inside look Homeschooling to be focus of Tempe library workshop

By Joyce Coronel

Kris Hansen has a master's degree in biology and teaches online courses through Mesa Community College, but she's also got a more unconventional teaching gig.

The mother of five teaches chemistry, natural science and biology to children, all from a friend's spacious kitchen. The endeavor is part of the homeschooling movement, and the Tempe Public Library is offering a workshop Feb. 11 to assist parents like Hansen who educate their children at home.

"Whatever my kids are learning that year in science I offer it to my friends' children who are a similar age," Hansen said.

"I don't think you should homeschool in a bubble and do everything yourself. Sometimes you need to reach out and get help. I would not hesitate to outsource what I can't do well."

Hansen's children are part of a growing trend nationwide.

According to Nancy Manos of Arizona Families for Home Education, more than 32,000 Arizona students are learning at home rather than traditional schools.

Manos, the mother of two grown daughters who were entirely homeschooled through 12th grade, serves on the board of AFHE. She's offering a "Homeschooling 101" workshop Feb. 11 at the Tempe Public Library that will delve into curriculum approaches.

Last month there were workshops that taught how to get started homeschooling and featured tips for success.

"The whole thing with homeschooling is it's the parent taking full responsibility for their child's education," Manos said. "Nobody is going to hand you a program and say this is what you need to do."

Both Manos and Hansen say that there are many benefits to educating a child at home—benefits that others might not readily see.

"I really didn't want to send them away for seven or eight hours a day and then get the leftovers at the end of the day," Manos said.

"I had the day with them to explore the joy of learning. It was really fun."

"It's made for a stronger family," Hansen added. "You're together all the time so you have to get along. They don't know any different — they don't know that, in a regular school setting, sometimes your only friends are the same age."

Hansen's oldest daughter is taking a foreign language class at a community college—not an unusual practice among homeschooled families. Two other children, a 9th and an 11th grader, play

basketball together on a public high school team. Homeschooled children are allowed to participate in public school extracurricular activities such as sports or band.

"It's not abnormal for them to hang out with friends together. My older sister and I never did that," Hansen said.

Manos said one of the benefits of homeschooling is the one-on-one help students receive. If they need more assistance to master a concept, there's time to do so, and if they excel in other areas, parents can pick up the pace.

"In those moments where they struggled with a topic and then all of a sudden would get it, being able to be part of that was really special for me as a mom," Manos said.

"It helped create closeness in our family."

And while homeschooling was once viewed somewhat suspiciously by some, it's gained more mainstream acceptance as well as support through the years.

The Eagleridge Enrichment Program in Mesa offers homeschooling families the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of classes and activities during the week. Music, physical education and field trips are some of the resources available to homeschooled children.

There's also an annual statewide homeschooling conference at the Phoenix Convention Center each July that attracts families and vendors from around Arizona and the nation. Last year, 5,300 people attended, Manos said.

Some 40 people participated in the last homeschooling workshop at the Tempe library, and Manos hopes for another strong turnout Feb. 11.

"We'll be talking about the different methods of teaching, such as the textbook-based, traditional approach or an eclectic approach," Manos said.

"The whole point is to help parents figure out, knowing their children, what the best approach might be."



What: Homeschooling workshop

When: 6 p.m. Feb. 11

Where: Tempe Public Library
3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe

More: (480) 350-5500

tempe.gov /city-hall/community-services/tempe-public-library

Arizona Families For Home Education: afhe.org

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Andrea Yocum, a teacher at Summit School of Ahwatukee, has been recognized —again— for her skills at drawing students into advanced concepts of science.

Her inspirational approach earns teacher top honors for a 3rd time

Can an eighth-grade physics class be fun? Yes, if Andrea Yocum is the teacher.

The proof: Yocum, a middle-school science teacher at Summit School of Ahwatukee, is a now-three-time recipient of a Golden Gator Excellence in Teaching Award from Xavier College Preparatory High School.

The award recognizes junior-high teachers who have been inspirational to Xavier's freshman students.

Her secret? According to the judging panel, over half of Yocum's classes engage students in advanced concepts through experimentation.

The judges say the genuine care she shows for her students, along with the obvious love she has for teaching, also helped guide them to this year's selection.

If more evidence is needed, just ask Lauryn Scussel, a student in Yocum's seventh-grade class and a Tempe resident.

"I never knew science could be so fun until I started taking Mrs. Yocum's class. She's such a great teacher and makes you want to learn more."

Lauryn isn't the only one intrigued by Yocum's classroom success.

Those who walk into the teaching

lab at Summit may find it filled with roller coasters made by eighth-grade physics students that require them to calculate velocity and momentum with such advanced theories as kinetic and potential energy to make sure a marble stays on track through loops and turns.

Yocum's seventh-grade biology class has students dissecting brains and eyes, and making 3-D models that reflect the relationship of the rods and cones in the students' own eyes.

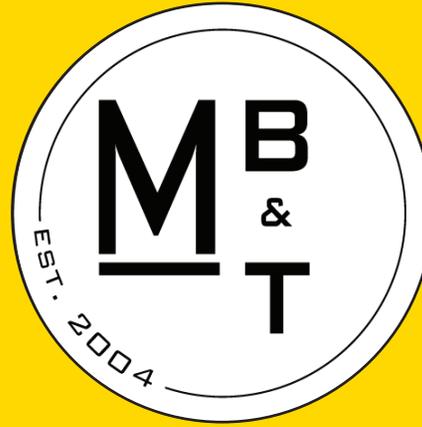
Sixth-graders design solar ovens, deciding what variables will let them be successful in baking a cooking in earth-science class.

This is not the first time Yocum's talents have been recognized. In 2009 she was selected as one of 272 teachers from 19 countries across the globe to participate in the Honeywell Space Academy for Educators at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center.

She also has been honored with a Gator award in 2014, 2012 and 2009.

Yocum currently is taking courses through the National Math and Science Initiative, and was selected to be a member of the University of Arizona Water Education Cohort.

Recently, she helped as a science educational consultant for an exhibit at the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art.



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Chandler Regional Medical Center/Barrow Institute neurologists Drs. Javier Cardenas, left, and Taro Kaibara at pre-Super Bowl game. Photo courtesy Chandler Regional Medical Center

Chandler Regional neurosurgeons prove a winning team, off and on the playing field

Dr. Taro Kaibara, director of neurosurgery at Chandler Regional Medical Center and a neurosurgeon at St. Joseph's renowned Barrow Neurological Institute, may have appeared to be behind the scenes at Super Bowl XLIX, but that didn't stand in the way of him tackling serious medical concerns when they occurred on the playing field.

Although patient confidentiality rules precluded a discussion of how Kaibara and his neurological colleague Dr. Javier Cardenas were called into duty, Carmelle Malkovich, a senior corporate communications specialist for Dignity Health, said the two were "actively involved" in player evaluation and care throughout the game.

Kaibara was selected by the National Football League to provide concussion expertise on the sidelines during the game.

The appointment is part of an NFL guideline that places independent medical specialists on the sidelines at all games to better address concussion.

Kaibara and his Chandler Regional/Barrow colleague, Dr. Javier Cardenas, were on the sidelines to provide neurological specialty support to the physicians of the Seattle Seahawks and the New England Patriots.

The CRMC/Barrow physicians were selected for the NFL's Unaffiliated Neurotrauma Consultant program

based on Barrow's neurological treatment of brain and spinal cord injuries, including concussion.

Kaibara and Cardenas, who also is medical director of the Barrow Concussion and Brain Injury Center at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, provide the same services at home NFL and Arizona State University football games.

"I was very excited to be part of this year's Super Bowl," said Kaibara. "It's important to quickly recognize and treat football players who have suffered a concussion so that they don't immediately return to the game and put themselves at risk for a more serious brain injury."

Drs. Kaibara and Cardenas remain on the field to examine players immediately after they return to the sidelines if they show concussion symptoms.

If it's determined a player has suffered a concussion, the physicians discuss appropriate treatment.

The move is part of the NFL's vigilance in limiting the number of head injuries and addressing them earlier during games.

"Concussion needs to be taken seriously and we're happy the NFL has initiated these guidelines to help protect their athletes against brain injury," said Kaibara.



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Michael
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Some 'oldies' your sweetheart will love on that special day

Compilation by M.V. Moorhead

Once again Valentine's Day is upon us, and once again I'm going to take it upon myself to make a few suggestions for romantic silver-screen choices.

But what is Valentine's Day if not a day for sentiment? And what's more sentimental than an anniversary? Here, therefore, are three love stories enjoying landmark anniversaries this year:

30 years old — *Murphy's Romance*

The word "romance" is right there in the title of this one. James Garner represents the title's other half, Murphy, a mildly curmudgeonly widower who runs an old-school drug store in small-town Arizona (the film was shot in Florence).

He falls in love with a much younger newcomer to the community, a broke single mother named Emma (Sally Field), who's struggling to start a horse farm outside of town.

Murphy buys a horse and takes up riding just to be close to her, but soon finds himself competing for her with her irresponsible ex (Brian Kerwin).

Based on a Max Schott tale and directed by Martin Ritt, the film is relaxed, charming and believable, and the stars have a lovely rapport.

Garner was nominated for an Oscar for his performance, but he is said to have received an even higher honor:

Field supposedly claimed that his was the best onscreen kiss she ever received.

20 years old — *French Kiss*

Meg Ryan, as an American living in Canada, follows her doctor fiancé Timothy Hutton to Paris, where he's wandered away from their engagement after a sultry young Frenchwoman.

Ryan's bags are stolen, but she gains the alliance of the unkempt, shady Frenchman, played Kevin Kline, who sat next to her on the plane.

He promises to help her regain the doctor's affections.

You can probably guess what happens, but watch the movie anyway.

Ryan gave the best performance to date of her movie career in this one—detailed, delicately witty—and Kline gave one his best, too.

Directed by Lawrence Kasdan from a carefully constructed, mature script by Adam Brooks, this may be the most insufficiently celebrated American love story of the last 20 years.

10 years old — *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*

For several years I've been telling a female friend that this film isn't the crude farce she thinks it is, and that she'd enjoy it, and she's repeatedly seemed unconvinced.

And she's not altogether wrong, perhaps.

The film, decidedly not for the kiddies, *is* full of raunchy gags and language—indeed, it's one of the most honest depictions I've seen in a mainstream movie of the way men talk about sex.

It's also got a lovely romance at its core, expertly played by Steve Carrell as the fellow who finds himself in the title state and Catherine Keener as the woman for whom he's very understandably fallen, and to whom he's ashamed to disclose his shocking secret.

The large supporting cast includes Seth Rogen, Paul Rudd and Romany Malco as the coworkers who give Carrell hilarious, atrocious advice.

Along with director Judd Apatow's *Knocked Up*, from two years later, this is one of the best popular American comedies so far this century, and for all its off-color gags, it casts a surprisingly romantic spell.

Happy Valentine's Day, everybody!



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Chandler fest gives insight to everyday science

By Rick Heumann

The fourth annual Chandler Science Spectacular event continues on its successful path and will return to downtown Chandler later this month.

The two-day event highlights the world of science as it relates to art and everyday technology.

This year, I'm excited to announce that the event will be held in conjunction with the first annual E.P.I.C. Fest, which is being coordinated through the Downtown Chandler Community Partnership.

These events provide an opportunity for everyone to get excited about science with engaging hands-on activities.

The festivities begin on Friday, Feb. 20, with the monthly Art Walk. It will be a Night of Art and Science in downtown Chandler from 6-10 p.m.

Local artists will showcase their creations, while residents learn about the science and technology behind the tools and processes used.

Attendees can expect to learn about the art of craft brewing,

the science of lotion making, and watch LEGO robotics demonstrations.

New this year is the E.P.I.C. Fest, which stands for Explore, Play, Imagine, Create. Chandler supports the maker movement, and this event will provide displays, demonstrations, and the opportunity to purchase work developed by local makers.

It's exciting to me to see the various types of do-it-yourself projects and prototypes that may be developed in someone's garage and then become a necessity in our daily lives.

It's truly science and technology in our own back yard.

On Saturday, Feb. 21, the Chandler Science Spectacular and E.P.I.C. Fest events will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in downtown Chandler.

More than 60 participants will provide interactive demonstrations and educational opportunities for people of all ages. Residents can learn about recycling, 3D printing, solar power and internal combustion.

An exciting addition to

Saturday's event is the Star Wars Stormtroopers, who will make an appearance and will be available for photos.

With the support of local businesses, educational institutions, non-profits and various city departments, we are able to continue to offer these free, family-friendly events and provide experiences for everyone. Intel has graciously offered to sponsor this event for the second year, and I can't express enough how much I appreciate its continued support.

Since the creation of this event through the Chandler Education Coalition, I am very proud of how it has grown each year. The more learning opportunities provided to our youth, the brighter futures they will have. This is a fun way to learn about the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

Information: www.chandleraz.gov/science.

Rick Heumann, a longtime west Chandler resident, is a member of the Chandler City Council.

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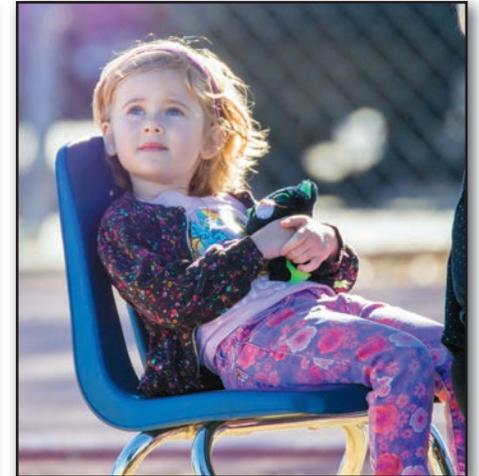
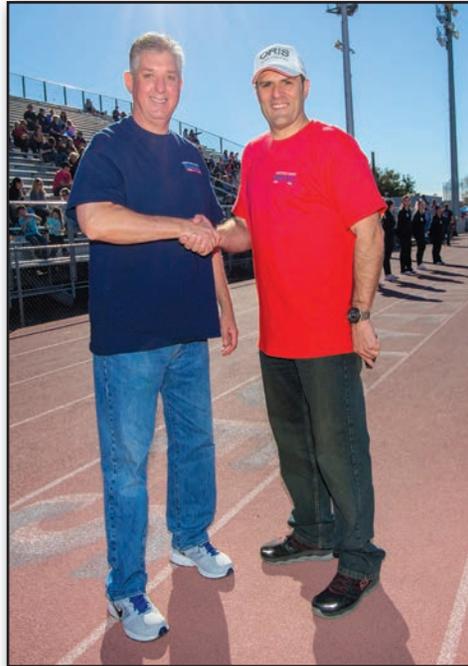
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Red vs. Blue: one more super game to remember



It was Bowl Game XIV for Tempe public safety. Competitors from the city's Police and Fire Medical Rescue departments battled for football glory and bragging rights at the two teams' 14th annual flag football game at Tempe High School. While admission was free, donations to the city's Public Safety Memorial Fund proved that those on the sidelines were not only appreciative but generous, as well.

More than 500 attended.

Aside from an uncharacteristic injury to one of the game officials (photo at center left) the adults and their offspring appeared to be having a great time. The kids, besides being observers of the on-field action, leaped skyward in a bounce house, sat still (briefly, anyway) for face painting and just generally had a bundle of fun.

As it turned out, the results of this year's game meant more than the joy of winning. Police Chief Tom Ryff and Fire Medical Rescue Chief Greg Ruiz had a bet: The losing chief and assistant chiefs must cook dinner for the winners.

And the winner is, by a score of 21-14, Tempe PD. Bon appetit, all.

— Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman

Tempe series offers aspiring writers a voice

The next J.K. Rowling or Stephen King could be discovered at the Tempe Public Library.

In fact, the library could be their first publisher.

Tempe Public Library and Arizona State University have teamed up to encourage local writers and give them voices.

The library offers a variety of programs designed to polish writing skills and help people share stories.

Among the offerings:

Writing Family History series

— Teaches ways to turn favorite family memories into compelling stories that everyone loves to read. The workshop, led by ASU's Dr. Duane Roen, meets at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 14, and 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 18.

Writers on Writing — This series is guided by local authors who share helpful hints on writing, publishing and getting started. Authors also discuss their latest books and sign them. The next installment features Comics Waiting Room founder Marc Mason on the topic of graphic novels and takes place at 11 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 28.

Writers Connection — A drop-in writing group, the workshop brings together writers of all levels share their writing, discuss

techniques and to help each other. The library hosts this gathering four times monthly. Writers are encouraged to come whenever they like without the pressure of a regular commitment.

Many writers use the group as an opportunity to refine their writing prior to sending it to potential publishers. Others say they like the audience for sharing.

Tempe Community Writing Contest — As an ultimate incentive, Tempe Public Library and ASU are sponsoring a community writing competition.

Winners will be published in a book that will be available online as well as on library bookshelves.

Librarian Jill Brenner is one of the team members who has been actively involved in the program's creation and management. She, along with librarian Rolf Brown, also oversees the writing programs at the library.

Says Brenner: "Books are such an important part of a library, and we need people to write them." Winning authors will be invited to read from their submissions and will receive a copy of the book containing their entry, "The Tempe Writer's Forum, Vol. 1."

An authors' reception is open to the public.

Addressing reaction to the competition and how it was born,

Library Manager Tracy Gray said reading tends to spawn writers.

"Often, people who love to read love to write. This contest is one more way to acknowledge and encourage writers in our community,"

Deadline to enter is Sunday, Feb. 15. Tempe Public Library cardholders, Tempe residents and ASU students may participate.

Anyone who lives in Maricopa County is eligible to receive a Tempe Public Library card.

The contest includes three types of writing categories — poetry, fiction and nonfiction — and three categories of authors—high school students, college students and adults not attending school.

So far, about 50 online entries have been received for the contest, said Brenner.

Mayor Mark Mitchell says he supports the program because of its positive effects on Tempe.

"Tempe's creative spirit influences every aspect of this community," he said.

"It's enabled our city to be one of the most forward-thinking cities in America. Contests such as these encourage the kind of innovation that our city values.

"Good luck to all who enter." Visit www.tempe.gov/library to enter the contest.

— Kris Baxter-Ging



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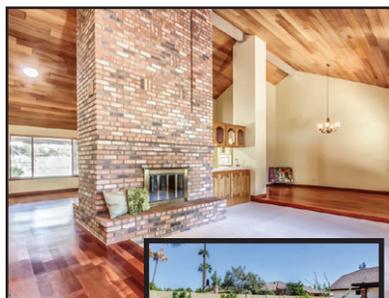
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Corona Girls Varsity Soccer
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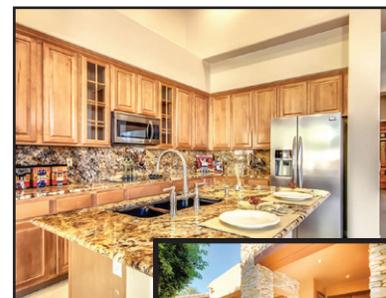
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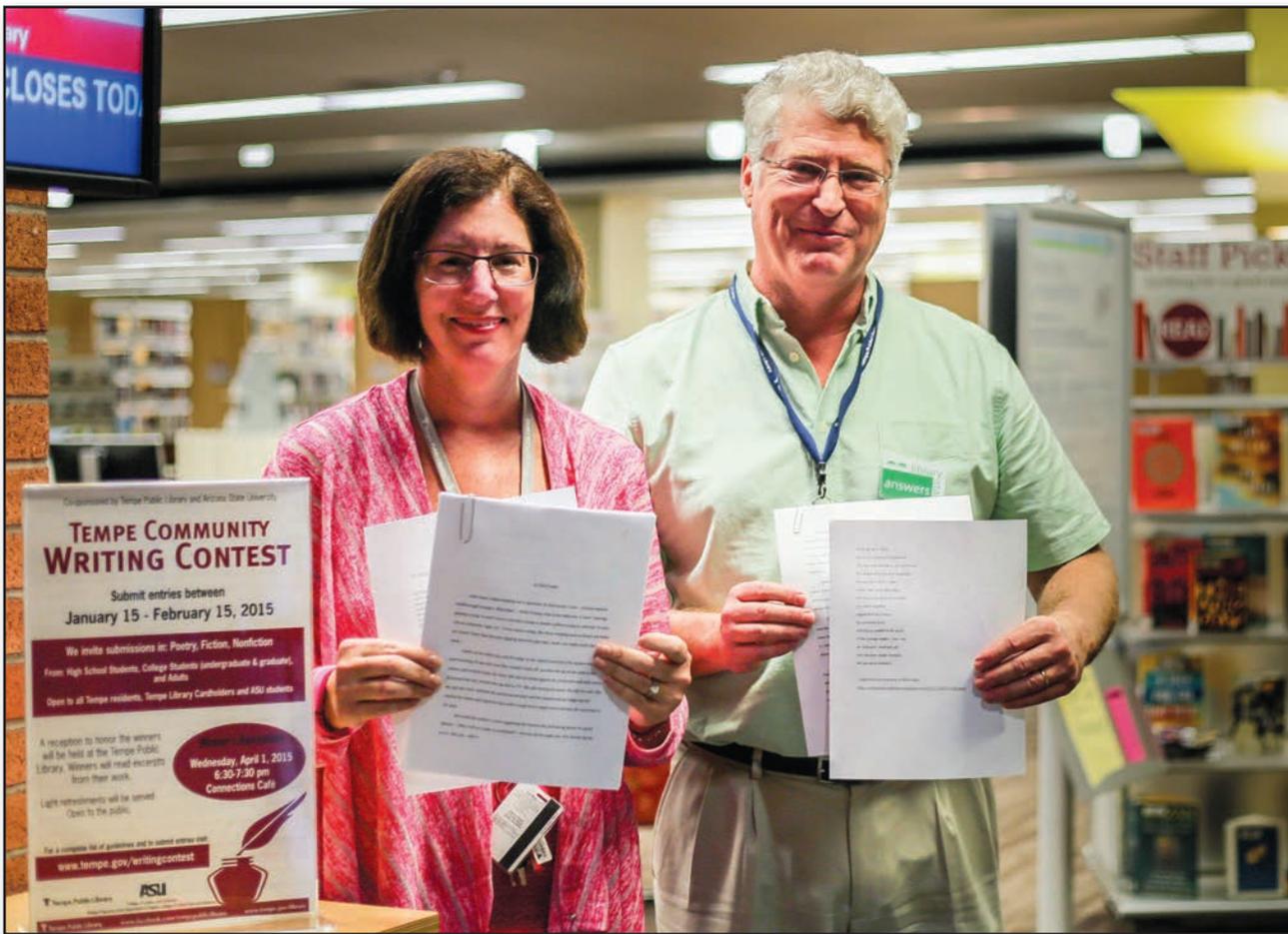
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Tempe Librarians Jill Brenner and Rolf Brown display some of the early entries in a writing competition open to all ages. Entries must be received by Feb. 15.

— Wrangler News / Billy Hardiman

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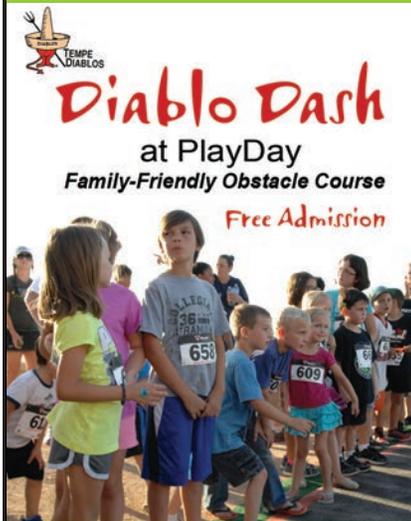
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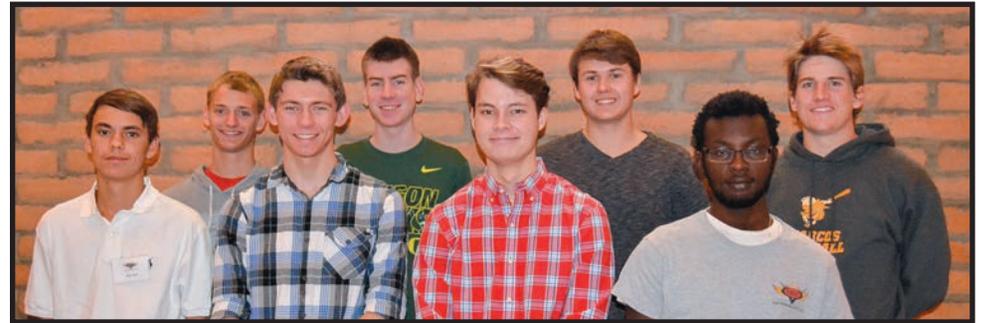
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East Valley Boys Service Club
Member drive extends thru February



Members, from left, back row: Andrew Eversden, Jonathan Mundine, Kyle Pickard, Matthew Langmack; front row: Alex Hart, Max Pickard-Brown, David Morgan, Ross Wheelless.

Their successes may take place outside the limelight, but the size of their philanthropic gestures is as big as their hearts.

Members of East Valley Boys Service Club, a parent-son philanthropic group comprised of young achievers, support more than a dozen local organizations with more than 4,000 hours of community service.

Committed to providing opportunities to young men and their parents to help foster a lifelong desire to give back, the club is composed of 160 boys in grades 6 through 12.

During the 2015-2016 membership season, the members will focus their efforts on Arizona Special Olympics; Back to School Backpacks; Cystic Fibrosis; Feed My Starving Children; Harvest for Humanity Garden; Junior Achievement; Kyrene Family Resource Center; Paz de Cristo; Race for the Cure; Rock & Roll Paint-A-Thon; Ronald McDonald House; Salvation Army; St. Vincent de Paul; St. Mary's Food Bank; Tempe Park Beautification;

and Tempe Sister Cities.

Erika Lucas-Goff, a longtime area Realtor who helps generate recognition for the boys' initiatives, says the work they do helps bring sons together with their parents for a shared goal: helping others.

"Depending on their grade level, the boys complete service hours to any of our current philanthropies by attending two general membership meetings, which typically include a guest speaker and projects designed to support one of the target organizations," said Lucas-Goff.

For the January meeting, she noted, items were collected to benefit the Kyrene Resource Center, and Grey Ruegamer, a two-time Super Bowl champion and Rose Bowl winner while playing for ASU, delivered a message on life and teamwork.

The group's current membership drive will run through Feb. 28.

Information and membership application is available by visiting www.evbsc.org

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Sports . . .

'Mental toughness' key to Aztecs' winning resolve

By Alex Zener
Photos by Billy Hardiman

Corona's No. 1-ranked basketball squad has faced six teams since defeating Putnam in Springfield, Mass., last month. Each opponent has literally taken its best shot at being the first team in Arizona to beat the Aztecs since Jan. 29, 2013.

"Putnam was a challenging but great experience for our team," said coach **Sammy Duane**. "Dane (Kuiper) played well against Putnam and was awarded the most outstanding player of the game. Tyrell (Henderson) hit the game winner and Marvin (Bagley) had a very good game as well."

"It was a great challenge playing at Putnam in front of a sold-out gym all rooting against us but I think it made up a more mentally tough team." The Aztecs have used that mental toughness since returning to take on everyone's best shot and still stay



Record crowds take over the Corona gym in the game against DV

unbeaten.

Desert Vista tried Jan. 27 when both teams had identical 20-1 records and were ranked No. 1 and No. 2 in the state, only to lose 71-57 in a beyond-capacity Corona gym where people lined up over two hours before game time only to be turned away because it

was sold out.

"Desert Vista is very athletic and challenging to defend," said Duane. "But we did a good job and most importantly we answered every run they made at us, which is what great teams do."

In that game it was

— SPORTS, Page 15

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Corona earns a shot at 16th win in highly competitive 'We the People' U.S. finals

Scoring a win at last year's coveted *We the People* competition in the nation's capital represented more than just another chapter in Corona del Sol's academic history.

It was yet another grueling, highly contested road that has led Corona to 15 victories since the program's first appearance in 1987.

Now, with the 28th

annual *We the People* National Finals coming to George Mason University in Washington D.C., April 24-27, the level of anticipation has once again reached a high pitch, say planners.

Along with 15th state title earned recently, the team has had six top-10 finishes at the U.S. finals, including a ninth-place in 2014.

The Citizen and Constitution Program, commonly known as *We the People*, is designed to promote civic competence and responsibility. Students study the challenges that face today's society and then prepare for a "simulated congressional hearing" in which they present a four-minute statement followed by six minutes of follow-up questions from a panel of legal scholars.

Corona's team of 29 students is led by social studies teacher Alison Rund, who said the students gain valuable speaking and critical-thinking skills while becoming educated and active citizens.

"I could not be more proud of them," Rund said.

"Yes, they achieved an amazing feat of a fourth straight state title, but the individual growth that each student has experienced is what is most impressive. They now know more about American history, philosophy and Constitutional law than most first-year law students."

Participants include Michelle Chiang, Aashini Choksi, Natalie Crawford, Rebecca Ericson, Pragathi Gopal, Ashleigh Heinze, Katie Holste, Niharika Jain, Cindy Juarez, Jinoh Lee, Joanne Lee, Eric Lin and Noah Livingston.

Also, Samantha Lyons, Jordan Mitchell, David Morgan, Kristina Nedlkova, Jaswant Pakki, Joseph Park, Kayleigh Porritt, Amberly Ricks, Amol Sachedeva, Evan Solomon, Atreya Tadepalli, Sonya Tao, Marina Tian, Tanner Wilson, Tanner Wolfram, Max Yang.

Coaches, in addition to Rund, are Justine Centanni and Lisa Adams.



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Sports

From Page 13

sophomore guard **Alex Barcello** who set the tone early on with two 3-pointers right out of the gate finishing with 31 points. **Dane Kuiper** had his typical solid outing with 16 points followed by **Tyrell Henderson** with 12, **Marvin Bagley III** with 7, **Cassius Peat** with 3 and **Isiah Bolton** with 2. “Alex was outstanding against Desert Vista and Tyrell also played a good game,” said Duane.

It was Corona’s game at Perry, on Feb. 2, that turned into more of a real knock-down, drag-out war between two teams—and most notably two point guards—who let the shots fly in a high-scoring game that seemed more like a track meet at times. Corona prevailed, defeating the Pumas 106-92 but not before Barcello scored a career-high 50 points against Markus Howard’s 47 points for the Pumas.

It was a roller-coaster ride with Corona leading by as many as 12 points before Perry went on a number of runs, one time getting as close as one point at 73-72, before the Aztecs went on their own run to create another lead.

This game had everything from slams, dunks, 3-pointers, fouls, blood, sweat, tears—you name it.

Barcello had to leave the court in the fourth quarter with blood running down his face after he sustained an injury above his right eye. They cleaned and bandaged his cut and he was back on the court to instigate another Corona run and help the Aztecs maintain the lead.

Even though Barcello scored close to 50% of Corona’s points, it was a team effort with Bagley blocking shots, stealing the ball, leading the fast break, dishing off to his teammates and scoring 19 points before he committed his fifth foul with over four minutes left

in the game and had to sit down.

Kuiper and Henderson played their typical stellar games and had the tough assignment of trying to contain Howard who was like a scoring machine from anywhere on the court. Bolton took Howard on at times as well and hit a big 3-pointer when Corona needed it in the second half.

Junior **Nate Marshall** was put into action when both **Cassius Peat** and **Sabin Lee** could not play and did an incredible job, including one amazing drive to the basket for a lay-up that the Pumas thought for sure he would dump off to the regular starters.

Corona had two more regular season games scheduled, Feb. 3 at home against Desert Ridge and Feb. 6 at Red Mountain, before the Super Sectionals start Feb. 11.

Seniors honored Feb. 3 included Peat, Kuiper, Bolton, **Trevor Davies**, **Sam Shultz** and **Tanner Millyard**.

The Aztecs still have the sectionals left before the state tournament but appear to be peaking at the right time.

“We feel we are a very good team that has played probably the toughest schedule in the state,” said Duane.

“Our guys are coming together. We are going to continue working hard every day and will focus on making a run in the state tournament.”

Corona should be playing at Highland High School in the Super Sectionals, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m. but check online to verify the time and location: www.azpreps365.com/brackets/basketball-boys/d1/2

The semi-finals are scheduled for Feb. 13, the finals Feb. 14. The state tournament is scheduled to start Feb. 19 for the first round. The second round is scheduled Feb. 21, with the first two rounds played at the higher seed. The quarterfinals are Feb. 25 at Wells Fargo Arena, the semifinals Feb. 28 at Grand Canyon University and the

— SPORTS, Page 16



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Alex Barcello shoots a jumper during the Corona vs. DV Game. Corona won 71-57.

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Sports

From Page 15

finals March 2 at Gila River Arena in Glendale.

Corona girls basketball — Heading into the last three regular season games, every game was crucial for the Lady Aztecs, who were striving to get into the Division I state playoffs for the second year in a row.

“We are looking good with three games to go, at No.19, with the top 24 teams making it into the state tournament, but we like our chances even better if we can win all three,” said coach **Andrew Strom**.

Defeating Perry at home, Feb. 2, was probably paramount on coach Strom’s mind when he called time out less than two minutes into the first quarter when Corona was down 7-0.

All it took was a quick reminder of what was a stake and the Lady Aztecs settled down to finish the first half even at 18-18 on baskets made **Leilani Peat, Hannah Lauer, Marin Ridge, Baylee Watson, Taylor Kalmer** and **Haley Langille**.

Corona came out firing on all cylinders in the second

half, going on a 13-3 run to lead 20-33 with less than a minute to go in the third quarter, ultimately defeating Perry 41-40 and keeping their chances of making it into the state playoff tournament alive.

Lauer had a monster game with a team-high 12 points. **Bri Bell** hit two free-throws to jump-start the second half, and scored a trey, while Peat and Kalmer each had 8 points, Langille 4, Ridge and Watson 2.

Corona has usually had to rely on Kalmer, close to 20 points a game and Peat at over 12, to carry most of scoring load but there are others who can score as well.

“The majority of our scoring comes from Taylor and Leilani, but we have some games where Haley Langille and Bri Bell will contribute double figure points,” said Strom. “When that happens, such as against Perry, we are really tough.”

On defense, Corona has been working on mixing up their defenses between man and zone this season.

“When we play man, Hannah Lauer has been doing a nice job of guarding the other team’s best player” said Strom. “When we play zone, it is a team defensive contribution.”

It’s a team contribution on rebounds as well with Leilani Peat grabbing the most, at over 10 a game, but the guards have been good at rebounding this year, according to Strom.

The last home game was

scheduled against Red Mountain, Feb. 6, where senior players were honored. “Our three seniors, Taylor Kalmer, Haley Langille and Piper Coralli, have all contributed to our basketball program at Corona,” said Strom. “I have really enjoyed coaching them, and they will be missed. We have had a lot of really good guards play at Corona over the years and I think Taylor, specifically, should be recognized as one of that group.”



Taylor Kalmer



Leilani Peat

Corona girls soccer — Corona’s girls soccer team entered the Division I state tournament as the No. 7 seed and were scheduled to play the No.10 seed Willow Canyon Feb. 3 at Desert Vista High School.

If they won that game, the Lady Aztecs would most likely face off against No. 2 Xavier Prep on Feb. 7 at a site to be determined.

After the winter break and leading up to the state tournament, Corona, with an overall 8-2-2 record, came on strong, winning five of their last six games

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outscored opponents 30-2.

“Our leading point producers are **Olivia Nguyen** and **Abby Robertson**,” said coach **Matt Smith**. “Senior captain **Emily Bordow** had a pair of game-winning goals in a couple of our 1-0 wins and has been a steady influence for our younger players.”

Only allowing two goals and coming away with a 0-0 tie Jan. 27 against No. 3-ranked Desert Vista was the work of a defense that has improved over the season.

“Defensively, our back line of senior captains, **Maddie Wolf**, **Jenn Carty**, junior **Izzie Cartegena** and sophomore **Nikki Hoey**, is the strength of this season’s team,” said Smith. “In addition, sophomore **Laney Gordon** was great early in the year, playing for an injured Nikki Hoey, and has been exceptional off the bench late in the year.”

Corona ushered in new goalkeeper this season after **Lexie Bounds** graduated and moved on to ASU.

“Sophomore **Jordan Freese** has been a tremendous surprise at goalkeeper, taking over the starting job about halfway through the year,” said Smith. “She has really risen to the occasion.”

In addition, it’s the midfielders who don’t often get the recognition that make a team successful.

“Midfielders **Lexi Reynosa**, **Brooklyn Marois** and **Siena Firestone** do a lot of

dirty work and gritty play without getting a lot of acclaim,” said Smith. “They make us a hard team to play against.”

Corona recognized its seniors by winning its last home game Jan. 29.

“Seniors **Milla Ozyerovich**, **Natalia Vicker**, **Maddie Primak**, **Kayli Riforgiate**, **Maddie Heywood**, **Emily Bordow**, **Jenn Carty** and **Maddie Wolf** were exceptional in last Thursday’s 3-1 overtime win over a tough Ironwood Ridge team,” said Smith. “This year’s seniors have provided exceptional leadership, not only from the captains, but from all the seniors about how to be an Aztec. They will be missed.”

Corona boys soccer — The Aztecs squeezed into the Division I state playoffs with a 14-6-1 record at No.16 and were set to play No.1 Alhambra Feb. 4 at Alhambra High School.

Winning five of their last six games, including a 5-0 win on senior night against Willow Canyon, Jan. 28, helped propel them into the last spot.

The Aztecs recognized 12 seniors in that last game:

Elias Saliby, **Angel Ramirez**, **Chris Baker**, **Shaye Busse**, **Callan Little**, **Mason Hoey**, **Jairo Santiago**, **Cole Richwine**, **John Zenzen**, **Dakota Summers**, **Ethan Venjohn** and **Nick Mitchell**.

If Corona defeats Alhambra in the first round, the Aztecs were scheduled to play the winner of No. 8 Tolleson Union versus No. 9 Sandra Day O’Connor on Feb. 7.



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City of Tempe Page



Tempe Diablos spring training charity game

Nothing can beat a nice afternoon outdoors watching baseball and rooting for your favorite spring training team...except for the feeling of helping a great organization while you're cheering on those Angels!

Join the Tempe Diablos for their annual charity game at 1:10 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, when the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim take on the Texas Rangers at Tempe Diablo Stadium, 2200 W. Alameda Drive.

Tickets are on sale now at www.ticketmaster.com or you can purchase them at the Tempe Diablo Stadium Ticket Window beginning Feb. 21.

Visit www.tempe.gov/diablo for information on games, tickets, stadium hours, directions and parking.

All proceeds from ticket sales, parking, concessions and merchandise from the game will go directly to the Tempe Diablos' local charities.

For more information on the Tempe Diablos Organization, visit www.tempediablos.org.

Kid Zone and Housing Offices have moved

City of Tempe Kid Zone and Housing offices have moved to a new location.

Housing Services is now located at the Tempe Public Library, which includes Tempe Section 8 Housing, Family Self-Sufficiency and Homeless Assistance.

The Library is located at 3500 S. Rural Road, on the southwest corner of Rural Road and Southern Avenue.

Kid Zone is now located at the Edna Vihel Center located at 3340 S. Rural Road, on the east side of the Library Complex.

For additional information, call 480-350-4311.



Take a look at YOUR Character Area plan

Residents of Character Areas 7 (Kiwanis/The Lakes) and 8 (Corona/South Tempe) are invited to review the finalized Character Area Plan for your area.

Hundreds of residents were part of the process of identifying what they love about their area

and what they would like it to become in the future.

During the next few years, the City of Tempe will repeat this process until every section of the city has a plan that has been fashioned by input from area residents.

To read the plans, visit www.tempe.gov/characterareas.

For more information, call 480-350-8096.

New lab to aid in making healthy water

Tempe recently broke ground on an 11,000-square-foot laboratory at the city's south water treatment plant that is expected to better enable Tempe's chemists and water sampling team to sample, test and analyze the water supply.

The process of testing and treating water involves stringent sampling protocols to ensure that drinking water, wastewater and stormwater meet all state and federal requirements.

Tempe is licensed to test for more than 165 contaminants, ranging from bacteria to arsenic

to cyanide.

Samples are collected from more than 100 locations, including drinking water plants, wells, stormwater outfalls and 60 locations throughout Tempe's underground drinking water distribution system.

The lab, expected to open this fall, is projected to cost \$4.5 million.

It will be paid for by the water and wastewater enterprise fund.

For more information, visit www.tempe.gov/water.

Contribute your views on Tempe city budgets

The City of Tempe will hold a public forum on Wednesday, Feb. 25, to inform community members about the city's operating and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budgets, and to hear their priorities for the 2015-16 fiscal year and beyond.

The forum will be held at 6 p.m. in the Community Room at the Tempe History Museum, 809 E. Southern Ave. The city's operating budgets cover everyday expenses, such as salaries, materials and supplies. Separately, the CIP covers capital expenses like major equipment replacements, street improvements, new facilities and building updates.

Spring classes begin this year in March

Spring into something new! The Spring 2015 Tempe Opportunities Brochure features hundreds of programs for every interest, age and ability, including health and fitness, art, dance, special interest, sports, aquatics, tennis and boating offerings.

The brochure will be available online and can be found at City of Tempe facilities beginning Feb. 12.

Registration for Tempe residents will begin Tuesday, Feb. 17, and Monday, Feb. 23, for non-residents.

Classes begin the week of March 16.

Visit www.tempe.gov/brochure or call the Recreation Administration Office at 480-350-5200 for more information.

Registration can be completed online, by fax or in person at most Tempe community centers.

By M.V. Moorhead

Plenty of undersea adventure at the movies these days. Opening this weekend:

The Spongebob Movie: Sponge Out of Water—The stakes are high in this second feature treatment of the adventures of Stephen Hillenburg's insistently cheery denizen of the deep—it follows 2004's *The Spongebob Squarepants Movie*.

The top secret recipe for Krabby Patties vanishes, and it's revealed that these burgers, which the title character spends his days happily flipping, aren't just the livelihood of his avaricious boss Mr. Krabs, they're also the glue that holds Spongebob's hometown of Bikini Bottom together.

As soon as the town becomes aware of the Krabby Patty shortage, mob rule and apocalyptic violence commence almost immediately.

To the extent that Bikini Bottom may be seen as an allegorical Anytown, this movie suggests, not for the first time in the cartoon's history, a certain skepticism about how durable civility is in human affairs.

Spongebob and the diminutive, cyclopean villain Plankton must team up to recover the recipe, which is now in the hands of a manic pirate captain (Antonio Banderas in a live-action strand).

Teaming up is tough on Plankton, to whom the concept of cooperation is so alien that he isn't even sure how to pronounce the word "team."

The ensuing saga involves time travel, space travel, a dolphin with a clipped British accent and many other aspects.

Too many, perhaps. It's possible that this sort of relentless, undiluted silliness works best for five to eight minutes at a stretch, and doesn't sustain well at feature length.

In any case, *Sponge Out of Water* comes off as, of all things, overambitious, and it drags a little.

My 12-year-old (who may, admittedly, be getting a bit too cool for this sort of thing) thought the film was too long, and that the climatic live action/CGI confrontation between Spongebob and his pals and Captain Banderas should have been arrived at sooner.

I thought the film had plenty of laughs, but I'll grant that shaving eight to 10 minutes from the movie's length wouldn't do it any harm. The *Sponge* could stand to get out of the water a little more quickly.

Film Fare . . .

Still in theaters

Black Sea—Submarine pictures almost always work, even the bad ones.

There's something inherently dramatic about that setting with its inescapable allegorical resonances about the utter hostility of the environment outside the fragile cosmic and social bubbles in which humans live, and the terrible interdependence required for survival even within those bubbles.

Corny dialogue and laborious dramatics usually can't defeat that atmosphere.

When a submarine movie has strong actors and dialogue, so much the better. Happily that's the case with *Black Sea*, directed by Kevin Macdonald from a script by Dennis Kelly.

The star is Jude Law, spitting an indignant Scottish accent. He's Robinson, a sub captain who's been laid off, with a pathetic severance, from the salvage company to which he's given his post-Navy career.

He gets financing to take a rust-bucket ex-Soviet sub to the bottom of the title body of water, in search of one of

the traditional adventure-movie McGuffins:

Nazi gold! There's a sunken U-boat down there, see, containing a fortune in bullion extorted from Stalin just before the war heated up.

Robinson's crew is, again traditionally for the genre, "ragtag"—a scruffy assortment of Brits and Russians, along with one American, a repellent corporate rep (Scott McNairy).

Weary after years of risking his life to make rich people richer, Robinson is determined that each member of his crew will get an equal share, as all are equally risking their lives.

The American creep warns him that this naive egalitarianism will cause trouble, and alas he's not wrong. *Treasure of Sierra Madre*-style greed, suspicion and resentment soon arises, and spirals into violence.

Black Sea is like some freaky hybrid of Clive Cussler and Noam Chomsky, and its overt, rather fatalistic economic didacticism is often in danger of tipping over into heavy-handedness. But it doesn't, quite.

Many episodes—transferring the treasure across the ocean floor from the wreck to Robinson's sub, for instance, or trying to steer through a narrow canyon—are tense, nerve-jangling showpieces, and the cast is an appealing rabble of grizzled seadogs that keep the drama personal and vivid.

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Business met government when the Chandler Chamber hosted the 2015 Meet the Elected Officials Breakfast. Stephanie Salazar, from ASU talks with Linda Grady and John Ballard from SRP



2015 Women in Business Chair, Kate Vaughan from PayPal (left) welcomed keynote luncheon speaker, Gloria Peterson, founder of Global Protocol, Inc, at the January



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The Chandler Chamber Ostrich Festival is Right Around the Corner

One of the Chandler Chamber's most popular signature events, The 27th Annual Ostrich Festival, is set to kick-off March 7 with the **Mayor's Fun Run** presented by Garmin, Chandler Unified School District, Dignity Health, Dana Tire & Auto Service and the Chandler Chamber Community Foundation. **The Parade**, sponsored by Thorobred Chevrolet, will follow the Fun Run on Saturday, March 7. The Ostrich Festival will run March 13, 14 & 15 attracting over 100,000 people over the three day period. Main Stage headliners include Friday Alice Cooper backed by CO-OP, Saturday Grand Funk Railroad and Sunday duranguense group, Conjunto Artardecer. Disney star, Laura Marano, "Ally" of *Austin & Ally* will hold a meet and greet on Sunday, March 15th. For more information visit www.ostrichfestival.com.

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, February 11, 7:30 am to 9 am

Wake Up Chandler

Aarons Sales & Lease, 2670 E Germann Rd, #1, Chandler, AZ 85286

Start the new year by making new connections. Bring business cards and a door prize to showcase your business.

Monday, February 16, 11:30 am to 1 pm

Chandler Chamber Lunch Club

Tony Sacco's, 4960 S Gilbert Rd, Chandler, AZ 85249

Let's do lunch! Enjoy one of Chandler's restaurants while networking your business. Enjoy a special \$10 Lunch Club menu.

Tuesday, February 17, Noon to 1:30 pm

Women in Business Luncheon

Keynote speaker Emma Zimmerman, started out as the Hayden Flour Mill's first miller and now heads marketing, promoting the business through creative avenues. She was recently in *Marie Claire* as an influential woman in the food world. Register at www.chandlerchamber.com



Hyatt Place hosted the January Business After Business Mixer with over 100 Chamber members in attendance.



Maricopa County Supervisor Denny Barney spoke at the January Public Policy Meeting



The next Chamber 101 breakfast will be Feb. 26 @ 7:30 am in the Chamber office at 25 S Arizona Place

Megan Chen, a 7th grader from Altadeña Middle School, placed first in the Kyrene District Spelling Bee held at the District Office on Jan. 21. Megan is one of six students who will move on to the Regional Spelling Bee scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 21, at the Kyrene District Office. The competition went 14 rounds and the championship word was "disquietude." Winners, in addition to Megan, were Rhegan Crabtree, 5th grade, Colina, 2nd place; Tommy LaPenna, 7th grade, Kyrene Middle School, 3rd place; Janelle Alvarado, 7th grade, Pueblo Middle School, 4th place; Shoba Lakshminarayan, 7th grade, Aprende, 5th place; and Angela Wang, 4th grade, Cerritos; 6th place.

— Photo courtesy Kyrene Schools Public Information Office



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Wrangler News is celebrating its 25th year of publishing, and it's been a fascinating journey. Happily, the growth that has accompanied us during that nearly quarter of a century illustrates that news **BY** local people **ABOUT** local people remains a powerful incentive for those of us who disagree with the occasional suggestion that 'print doesn't work.' Based on nationally accepted formulas, Wrangler News reaches 46,500 prospective readers every time it's printed — quite a change from the meager 5,000 papers we delivered to homes back in 1991. We're looking forward to continuing our reign as this community's favorite newspaper, and we hope you'll join us in what we think is a deserved celebration.

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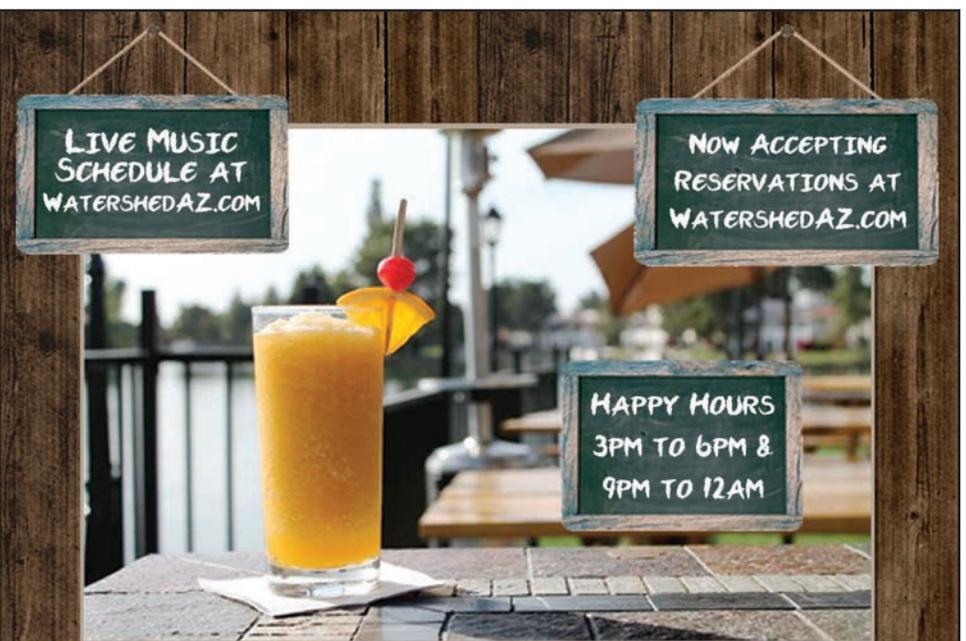
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Taking a break from regular workouts at Elite Sport & Fitness Center are, from left, Tyler Schachter; trainer Trevor Bertlesman; Alex Cogswell; trainer Duce McMillan; and Leif Munson.

— Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman

No excuses for missing a workout with fitness center's 24-hour access

By Mary Hickey Reynoso

It's no surprise that the number-one resolution Americans made this year was to lose weight.

And, just in time, a new west Chandler fitness center has arrived to help keep those resolute losers on target.

Chris Runyon, owner of the new Elite Sport and Fitness center, says that with his approach to fitness comes an incentive not to skip daily workouts: access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

"We listened to our clients, and one of the things they asked for was access to the gym at unconventional times.

"It was a no-brainer to stay open around the clock," he said. Now people can work out when it's convenient for them."

The gym increased its security measures and is located next door to the Chandler westside police and fire stations, giving clients an extra sense of security at night.

This isn't the first time Elite listened to its clients, notes Runyon.

The gym is known for spending individualized time with each one. Members receive an initial consultation when they sign up and meet every 60 days to discuss progress.

Also, 13 professional trainers help ensure that gym-goers are executing what has been determined to be the best possible workout.

"We really want our clients to reach their goals. We meet with each client to talk about routines, nutrition and

anything that will lead them to the best results."

The gym, on Chandler Boulevard west of McClintock, has become what Runyon describes as a focal point for athlete-performance training, offering small-group and personal-training options.

A number of standout athletes from Corona del Sol High School already train there and have experienced noticeable success, he says.

The center recently has expanded its services to include a training club with 23 classes per week.

Training club sessions consist of 12 to 15 participants in a circuit-style workout—perfect, says Runyon, for people who are serious about keeping their New Year's resolution.

With over 12,000 square feet of space, Runyon points out that Elite offers modern, clean and innovative equipment.

He says the gym works to serve all people, from high school students to senior citizens.

Runyon's commitment to the community also includes offering summer camps to kids, sponsoring youth baseball tournaments and hosting an upcoming community BBQ.

"We want to get to know more of our neighbors and invite them over for food and fun."

The BBQ will be held from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 28, with gym specials and giveaways thrown in as an added incentive.

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Briefly

Empty Bowls sale aids fight against hunger

For the hungry in Tempe, an empty bowl signifies a lack of food. At this year's Empty Bowls event Feb. 20-21, it will signify a chance for members of the community to help fight the hunger that confronts those who are less well off.

With each \$10 purchase of a hand-made bowl will come a simple meal of soup and bread, symbolic of the caloric intake that must sustain many for an entire day. For the 15th year, the meal will be provided by Whole Foods Market.

Proceeds benefit Tempe Community Action Agency, Escalante Community Garden and United Food Bank's Kids Café program. More than \$14,000 was raised last year.

This year's event will be held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on both days: Friday, Feb. 20 at 6th Street Park (just south of City Hall in Downtown Tempe), and Saturday, Feb. 21, in the Community Center Courtyard, 3500 S. Rural Road between Tempe Public Library and Vihel Center.

Hand-crafted bowls, planter pots, mugs, necklaces, platters and vases, made by potters involved with the city

of Tempe ceramics program, local artists and children ranging from elementary to high school students, will be available for purchase.

In addition to Whole Foods Market, support for the program comes from Digg's Logo Products, Printing Specialists, city of Tempe, Marjon Ceramics, Laguna Clay Co., Palmer Designs, Tempe Elementary School District, Tempe Union High School District, Randy Olson & Friends, and Walt Richardson.

Information: www.facebook.com/tempeemptybowls

History Museum will show off Treasures of Past

A smaller, localized program that could be called a takeoff on the popular PBS series Antiques Road Show will be coming to Tempe History Museum from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 18.

The event, Treasures from the Past, will be sponsored by the Arizona chapters of Questers, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the study, conservation and preservation of historical objects.

Admission is free. Appraisals (verbal only) by Sean Morton will be available at \$15 per item, with a limit of two items—no guns, coins or stamps. The event is designed to showcase interesting and educational displays of antiques and collectibles, which spokeswoman Essie Mae Allbritton calls the group's passion.

Tempe History Museum is at 809 E. Southern Ave.

Sign up for HOA leadership session by Feb. 9

West Chandler residents and their area-wide neighbors have until Monday, Feb. 9, to register for a leadership-skills workshop designed to stress the importance of effective leaders in the management of community associations.

The HOA Mini Summit, planned from 7 to 8 p.m. Feb. 10, will be presided over by Chandler Mayor Jay Tibshraeny and is in partnership with the Mulcahy Law Firm P.C. It will be held in the Cotton Room at Chandler's Tumbleweed Recreation Center, 745 E. Germann Road.

City officials say the program will be part of Tibshraeny's focus on sustainable neighborhoods and developing neighborhood leaders. It is designed to complement his Listening Tours and ongoing HOA and Traditional Neighborhood academies.

The evening's program includes discussion by the Chandler PD of community-wide trends; a presentation by the Mulcahy Law Firm entitled How to be a Better Leader for Your Association; an update on legislative actions and their potential impacts on HOAs; and a general question-and-answer session. Attendees also will be able to pre-register for a four-week HOA Academy that begins in March. Residents must pre-register by calling 480-782-4354 or emailing neighborhood.programs@chandleraz.gov. Enrollment priority will be given to Chandler residents.

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The Last Word

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Schools weigh in on Ducey's thoughts about education

By Diana Whittle

Editor's note: While it remains early in Doug Ducey's term as governor, a few high points have emerged relating to how the state might address the education Arizona students receive, what types of schools might best serve their needs, and where funding will come from. Education writer Diana Whittle asked representatives of two local school districts and two of the state's premier professional organizations to comment on some of the discussion which has taken place so far. What follows is an effort to bring some of the ongoing issues into focus. We'll provide more details as the process continues.

When a newly elected governor takes office, new ideas and shifts in programs can be anticipated. So when Gov. Ducey announced proposed changes in education during his inaugural speech, it was not unexpected.

The surprise was that, in many of Ducey's comments, charter schools appear to be getting a lot of the governor's attention, said Tim Ogle, executive director of the Arizona School Board Association.

This emphasis despite the fact that more than 80 percent of Arizona children attend traditional schools, mostly operating within established local school districts.

Throughout the state, more than 1,400 school districts and 600 charter schools are presently in active operation.

Ogle's group plans to pursue an agenda during this legislative session that continues to advocate for local traditional schools, which remain the first choice of Arizona parents,

in a state that offers more education options than any other in the nation, according to the latest analysis.

School administrators in both the Kyrene and Tempe Union school districts also are paying close attention to any changes that could impact their educators' ability to continue to deliver what they believe to be a high-quality learning environment.

Both districts, which are currently "A" rated, continue to closely monitor the ebbs and flows of school funding.

Wrangler News asked officials of both of those districts to review some of Gov. Ducey's proposals and to comment on how, if implemented, they might impact their operations.

The comments from the Tempe Union High School District came from Jill Hanks, executive director of Community Relations. Kyrene's replies came from the district's chief financial officer, Jeremy Calles, and from Nancy Dudenhofer, assistant director of Community Relations.

Classroom initiative

Ducey's "Classrooms First Initiative" is a study of state statutes to save more money in education, which in turn can be returned to the classroom. He expects to have this report available by December.

However, he makes no suggestion as to where the money will be found, and in most school districts the administrators have been making cuts over recent budget cycles.

Tempe Union: We are currently reviewing how the proposed budget would impact our district and which areas would be impacted."

Kyrene: We are already planning

on cutting \$5.2 million from our budget. We are one of the best districts at putting dollars into the classroom, while we run thin in all other areas.

Because of our focus on classroom dollars, it means when we have to make a significant cut—while we do our best to keep it from impacting students—ultimately a good portion of it ends up having an impact on schools to achieve that balanced budget figure.

Each year we work with our governing board and superintendent to finalize a balanced budget. As we start the work this year, we are getting decision-making input from our schools on a portion of the cuts. Those ideas will be discussed at Governing Board meetings in about a month.

Working with charters

Ducey's idea is to "loan" parts of school buildings that are currently empty to charters. A similar bill last year never made it out of the state Senate, which was to mandate that districts with space that has been vacant for two years to lease or sell it to charter or private schools.

Tempe Union: Currently Tempe Union does not have any unused space that could be allotted for this purpose.

Kyrene: Kyrene does have a few classrooms in some of our 25 schools that are not in use in a traditional way.

However, we make great use of that space in some cases by providing preschool or early learning centers for children ages 3-5. In other locations we provide intervention or enhanced learning opportunities in those spaces.

We will also take advantage of space to offer award-winning out-of-school-time experiences, including Kyrene Kids Club, which allows students to extend their school day in a safe, fun environment and can help youth develop new hobbies, interests and 21st Century skills.

All programs and after-school classes work hand-in-hand with teachers to support student achievement, and we often work with community vendors to offer these programs.

Pending litigation

Regarding the ongoing legal negotiations between school districts and the legislature, in which the Arizona Supreme Court ruled that schools are owed \$336 million in

back base funding, Ducey suggests a settlement.

Tempe Union: We believe school districts have been and continue to be very reasonable and very patient.

We also believe the voters of Arizona clearly support adequate funding for public education.

Kyrene: It seems that when a legal battle has carried on for years and a Supreme Court justice has issued an order, then we should abide by the order, which would cost the state \$1.6 billion.

However, the state could have settled this case a long time ago by accepting an offer to waive \$1.3 billion in back pay and have the state reset school funding for a total cost of \$317 million.

The current offer from the state would equal a \$1.2 million increase for Kyrene. Additionally, the governor's budget calls for cutting Kyrene by \$2 million in capital dollars.

In Kyrene, settling would mean forgiving \$19.5 million in back pay, which equals \$1,150 per student, and we would receive \$5.2 million for the current year. The ongoing increase would erase Kyrene's current deficit.

Another advocacy group for educators, the Arizona Education Association, also issued a release to respond to some of Ducey's statements.

The AEA represents more than 20,000 teachers and education-support professionals, and is the state's largest professional organization.

AEA membership is open to all public school employees, and they do have some charter school employees as association members, according to Sheenae Shannon, AEA communications director.

AEA President Andrew F. Morrill said that any cuts to traditional school districts will "leave over a million students in Arizona's neighborhood public schools further behind."

He added:

"At a time when our state faces an education crisis from massive cuts and an exodus of good teachers, our students deserve better from our state's leaders.

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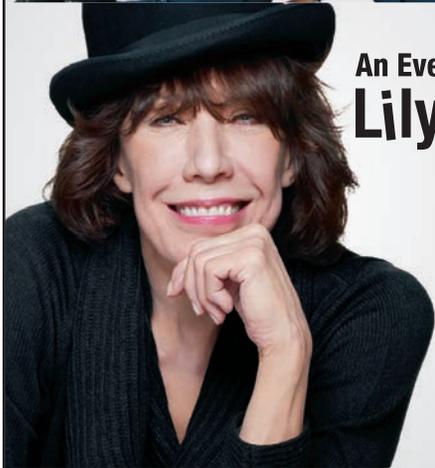


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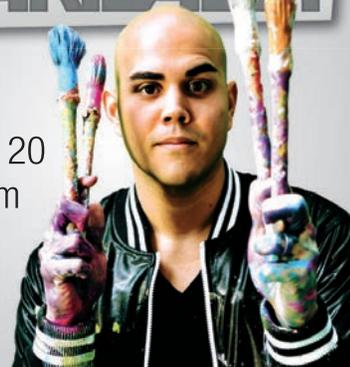
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