

Wrangler NEWS

Think Local. Read Local.

Nov. 15 - Dec. 5, 2014
Vol. 25, No. 20



.....
For Rose Courtney, the backyard pool was no rose garden, so she and her fiancé decided to convert the unused and bothersome pit into an organic garden. *Story, Page 4*

Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman



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PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT



Her back yard pool succumbed to Rose Courtney’s desire to eat more healthfully.
— Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman

Cover story: A classic case of repurposing Onetime pool now an organic garden

“I’ve always had just a little patch of a garden,” says Rose Courtney. “Here, I thought, I’m going to do it all the way.”

The trouble was, her back yard wasn’t exactly set up for the enjoyment of the green-thumbed. Sunk into the middle of it was a pool. And, as the saying goes, there’s no pool like an old pool (sorry).

“It was a 27-year-old pool,” says Courtney. “It was getting a little dilapidated.”

So the owner of Fitness By Rose decided not to put any more time or expense into “the maintenance of something that wasn’t giving back.” She and her fiancé set to work breaking up and filling in the pool, and reworking the yard so that it would indeed give something back: specifically, to her kitchen.

“I like to eat organic, and organic is pricey,” notes Courtney. “Now I have five produce gardens and 10 fruit trees.”

The gardens are providing her table with tomatoes, radishes, onions, peppers and lettuce, while the fruit trees yield mangoes, figs, peaches, apples, key limes, grapefruit and two types of oranges.

“It’s almost finished,” says Courtney. “I want to put in grapes and blackberries.”

the real gifts of Courtney’s new back yard are spiritual.

She sees her new garden as a tribute to her late father.

“I’ve been gardening since I was a kid,” recalls the former Texas resident. “My dad worked for the government, one of those jobs he didn’t enjoy that much, and when he came home his joy was putting on his old jeans and his garden shoes.

That became a time, Courtney figured, when her frequently preoccupied dad could relax—and when she could corral him, at least briefly, for some of the conversation for which she longed.

So she worked up a modicum of courage on one of the gardening days and confronted him matter-of-factly with the idea this could become their time to talk.

“This is my time,” advised Dad, leaving little likelihood of further discussion. Undeterred, Courtney recalls, she shot back: “What if I don’t talk?”

And so was broken the rule of silence and the door opened to a remaining lifetime of man-and-daughter communication, which to this day Courtney reveres as what she’d long desired: “A chance to bond.”

— M.V. Moorhead

STEM 'Superhero' inspires kids with real-life champions

By Diana Whittle

Kids in the Kyrene school district will focus their learning on STEM subjects, if educator Monica Crowder has any say about it.

As a curriculum specialist for the district, Crowder actively works with teachers at all 25 of the Kyrene schools to integrate STEM into classrooms.

STEM is a curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific disciplines — science, technology, engineering and mathematics — in an interdisciplinary and applied approach.

Rather than teach the four disciplines as separate and discrete

'I believe that the computer itself is a device or tool, but the idea of technology can be much more encompassing... anything human-made that is created to solve a problem or fill a need.'

— Monica Crowder

subjects, STEM integrates them into a cohesive subject based on real-world applications. Though the United States has historically been a leader in college education in these fields, fewer students have been focused on these topics in elementary and middle schools.

Crowder hopes to change this by introducing younger students to technology through learning opportunities; and, according to a group of her fellow educators at Kyrene, she's succeeding.

Her peers, Kathy Clark Couey, Elizabeth Snyder and Tara Dale, nominated Crowder for the 2014 STEM Superhero Award, which is sponsored by the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee. She recently was notified that she is a finalist in the competition.

In their nomination, they emphasized her enthusiasm and willingness to collaborate on STEM

projects for students at many Kyrene schools. They also mentioned, "Her approach to introducing technology to students by borrowing inspiration from people in the field and famous role models like Chris Bosh and Will.i.am, who challenge the stereotype that coding is just for nerds."

What separates STEM from the traditional science and math education is the blended learning environment and showing students how the scientific method can be applied to everyday life, says Crowder.

"It teaches students computational thinking and focuses on the real-world applications of problem solving," said Crowder.

"I believe that the computer itself is a device or tool, but the idea of technology can be much more encompassing. I use the definition of technology as being anything human made that is created to solve a problem or fill a need."

Crowder received her Bachelor's of Science in Elementary Education from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and her Master's of Science in Elementary Education—Science Specialist Option from Arizona State University.

She has over 25 years of teaching experience, including 20 in the Kyrene District including at Kyrene Middle School, Sierra Elementary School, and Altadena Middle School where she has primarily been a math and/or science teacher.

She also offers professional development for teachers in technology topics. She was instrumental in providing professional development for teachers on STEM related topics, training 4th grade teachers on "Engineering is Elementary" and provided a school kit with all the resources necessary to share with students.

"I've taught classes on how to introduce students to computer programming and coding. I also assist teachers when they are ready to try this with their classes," said Crowder.

"I am so happy to be able to work for an incredible school district that values professional development for teachers and a 21st Century curriculum for students."

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Super Bowl XLIX marks big No. 31 for this diehard fan-atic

For longtime Tempe entrepreneur John Bebbling, Super Bowl XLIX is more than just another high-profile, high-energy sporting spectacular.

It's Chapter 31 in the history book of pilgrimages made by his group of Super Bowl fans—veteran diehards, it must go without saying.

Whether it's Green Bay, San Diego or New Orleans—or any of the other sometimes farflung sites of the NFL's annual lovefest involving each season's top two teams—Bebbling and friends are sure to be there.

"People don't realize the number of events that happen around Super Bowl, wherever it is," said Bebbling, founder of Arizona Flooring & Interiors, which is celebrating its 40th year in Tempe and Valley-wide.

As an example of how Super Bowl can engulf entire regions, Bebbling recalls fabulous meals by top chefs, skeet shooting with NFL alumni, 4-night minimum stays at 5-star hotels, and queues of weary Sunday-night travelers waiting for flights home as the festivities wind down.

One of each host city's top events, notes Bebbling, is the annual "Taste of" celebration, which at the coming Super Bowl will be headquartered at Tempe Center for the Arts.

"There are so many great cooks at these events, and there's always a former outstanding player who attends." One such "Taste of" occasion was attended by "Donny" Anderson, a former halfback and punter

for nine seasons with the Green Bay Packers, whom Bebbling met and has called "a great personal friend" ever since.

This year, as in the lead-up to previous Super Bowls, admission will carry a hefty pricetag. Tickets typically run in a range of \$800 to \$1,200, more after they fall into the hands of brokers. One such enterprising ticket vendor has been the holder of 14,000 game-day tickets, and likely will have a similar stockpile again this year, according to Bebbling.

Meanwhile, according to Super Bowl publicist Kathleen Mascarenas, excitement is building among Tempe and west Chandler residents, as well as their Valley-wide neighbors, for the game's Feb. 1 kickoff, which now can be counted in days instead of months.

Festivities, says Mascarenas, already are underway. As of last week the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee and Visit Phoenix had unveiled a super-sized football mounted in downtown Phoenix, which will serve as the cornerstone for Super Bowl Central.

Towering more than 20 feet high, it measures more than 32 feet around, and weighs in excess of 7,000 pounds.

"This massive installation stands for the fun and lasting memories in store for fans, and for the heightened profile and lasting benefits for Arizona as we welcome our third Super Bowl in 19 years," said Jay Parry, committee president and CEO.

Located at the northwest corner of Washington

Street and Central Avenue, the enormous football made of 7,000 pounds of steel, as well as wood and foam, is 2,000 percent larger than a regulation football.

"Super Bowl Central is a postcard from downtown Phoenix to the world," said Win Holden, chair of Visit Phoenix.

"This super-sized football not only marks the epicenter of downtown Phoenix's fan experience, but it's destined to star in scores of selfies and social-media posts."

Fans are invited to take their photos in front of the newly installed giant football and share them on social media using #SB49.

Super Bowl Central will be a free, family-friendly, football-themed fan campus featuring street-level merchants and restaurants, local food trucks, beer and wine gardens, a concert stage, network broadcast stages and a nightly fireworks show.

The 12-block area in downtown Phoenix will be the hub of fan activities for Super Bowl XLIX from Wednesday, Jan. 28 through Sunday, Feb. 1.

The Super Bowl is America's number one watched television program and culminates the NFL football season.

Arizona will host its third Super Bowl in 19 years on Sunday, Feb. 1 at the University of Phoenix Stadium.

For more information, visit www.nfl.com/superbowl/49.

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Stress-free holiday gift-sending? Meet this pair of shipping wizards

By Michelle Hirsch

Holiday shipping doesn't have to cause more holiday stress.

Remember these tips to ship:

Save time and hassles by going to a mail services store like Mail Plus at McClintock and Southern. Ada Wilson and Alana Upshaw are experienced at packaging and shipping to find the right box. They'll also tape at no extra charge and help determine the best shipping method to ensure gifts arrive intact and on time.

Holiday cards and wrap also are available for a nominal charge.

If re-using a box, cover or black-out any previous labels or markings on the box.

Remove batteries from electronic toys and gifts and wrap separately.

Newspaper, bubble-type wrap, packing peanuts or even old towels or shirts can help wrap and secure items inside the right box.

Use clear or brown 2-inch-wide packaging tape. String or other types of tape get stuck in automated machinery.

Contents shift in transit, so check the box with a gentle shake back and forth to make sure contents are secure inside before mailing.

The U.S. Postal Service advises placing a card with the destination address inside the package in case the box or outside label is damaged during transit.

Consider insurance for valuable items, and tracking to help ensure packages arrive to the correct destination.

Weigh packages at home, and then go online to compare shipping costs and prices with the variety of options such as UPS, U.S. Postal Service or FedEx.

Only items weighing less than 13 ounces can be placed in the blue U.S. Postal Service collection boxes or handed to a mail carrier.

Avoid long lines at the post office by going to a convenient U.S. Postal outlet located inside nearby retail stores like Arizona Flooring at Guadalupe and Rural roads or Diane's Hallmark at Rural and Ray roads.

Do not send beer, wine other liquors; prescription drugs; cigarettes; smokeless tobacco; or firearms through the mail.

Perfume containing alcohol can only be sent domestically via ground service.

Perishable items include anything that can deteriorate or cause an odor. Examples include food items and plants. Check with the U.S. Postal Service or mail service for requirements and restrictions before packaging perishable items.

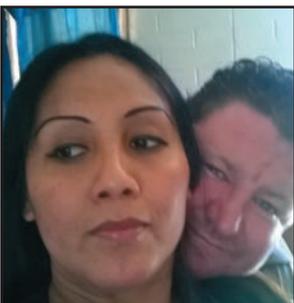
When sending packages to loved ones in the military, especially overseas, there are specific requirements and restrictions. Packages must include service member's full name, unit, and APO/FPO/DPO with the 9-digit ZIP Code (if assigned). Addressing mail to "Any Service Member" is no longer permitted.

Always include a return address. Each country has different customs restrictions on incoming mail, so be aware of the restrictions before sending a package overseas.

Package and send gifts early to avoid longer lines and higher costs, or consider online shopping and direct shipping.

And most of all, remember: It's the thought that counts.

Services for popular restaurant staffer; fund-raiser launched to help wife, child



Memorial services are scheduled Nov. 29 for Aaron Schediwy, a member of the counter staff at AZ Bread Co. in Tempe, who died unexpectedly Nov. 3. He was 38.

Coworkers have launched a fund-raising campaign to help Schediwy's wife Teresa with burial and other expenses.

In addition to his wife he leaves a 6-year-old son and a brother, David O'Shaunesy.

An avid skateboarder, Schediwy was born in Monrovia, Calif., and had been in his current position for 1½ years. Information is available by calling 480-831-1300.

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A longtime favorite gets a long-deserved recognition

Popular Tempe musician Walt Richardson became the first inductee into Mill Avenue's new Walk of Music, a tribute to the many contributors to the Valley scene 'who have made a true difference in the culture of music,' noted Tempe Councilman Joel Navarro. Richardson opted to reward one of his fans with a guitar (bottom, right), which originally had been destined to be ceremonially smashed but was spared to the young recipient's delight.

— Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman





Iconic Mill Avenue eatery closes Nov. 17 after a nearly 60-year run.

To many, our writer included, a sad farewell to a familiar haunt

By M.V. Moorhead

“This is my last chance to walk down the creepy hallway!” That was the lament of the teenage girl in the Dr. Who t-shirt in line ahead of us, as the doors to Monti’s La Casa Vieja opened a few minutes after 11 a.m. last Sunday.

I was pretty sure I knew what passageway she meant, and I was sad at the thought of my last walk through it, as well.

Her sister, who was also wearing a Dr. Who shirt, had an idea. “Let’s all order about 80 steak sandwiches to go.”

A long line was waiting to be admitted, but my kid and I had gotten there a half-hour early, and were near the head of it. Even so, as we shuffled in after the Dr. Who girls and their family, we were told that our wait would be about 30 minutes. People just a few places back in the line from us were being warned of a two-hour wait.

Some of them weren’t happy about it. Since Monti’s announced it would be closing on Nov. 17, people have been flocking to the venerable Tempe steakhouse for one last filet or burger or plate of spaghetti.

They’ve stopped taking reservations, and I heard one of the beleaguered hostesses tell a customer, disgruntled at the wait he was facing: “We’re just so understaffed. We never expected this.”

I think I could have expected it. Monti’s isn’t just any eatery. Housed in Charles Hayden’s 1871 hacienda, the place lays claim to being the oldest continuously occupied building in the Valley, and, since it

was serving food by at least the 1890s, also the area’s oldest continuously operating restaurant. It was taken over by Leonard “Lenny” Monti in 1956, and Lenny’s son Michael and Michael’s business partner Eddie Goitia took it over in the early ‘90s.

Once my daughter—at 12 a veteran of dozens of lunches and dinners at Monti’s—and I were seated and ordered, I got up to take a last stroll around the place. I headed for what I presume the Dr. Who girl referred to as “the creepy hallway”: the dim, winding area just east of the bar, leading past the restrooms and through the oldest part of the building.

The walls there are adorned with an assortment of Western and Victorian pictures—the Dr. Who girls and their family were sitting under a scene of bathing sylphs—as well as bric-a-brac ranging from rifles to framed photos, letters and newspaper stories, and weird fluorescent murals depicting pre-Columbian scenes.

Then I wandered over to the building’s west side, with its corny cowboy posters—*Double Deal at Diamond Mesa*—and vintage ad art, or its tiny covered wagons adorned with the legend MONTI’S OR BUST.

But then it was time for lunch—spaghetti with a side of asparagus for my kid, filet with fries and spaghetti for me, plus a cup of clam chowder to split. I was well into the meal before I realized that something was missing—no “Roman bread,” Monti’s signature rosemary-sprinkled complimentary appetizer!

— MONTI’S, Page 12

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Tutor time

Members of Corona del Sol's SPOK Club — an acronym for Students Passing On Knowledge — have done just that with a group of kids from Aprende Middle School. The mentors have attracted a considerable following, not only among the Aprende students but among the high-schoolers and the school principal, who see the initiative producing results.

— Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman



Mentors, protégés hold an afternoon learning fest

Middle-school students lining up for help from Corona tutors

Story by Michelle Hirsch

Photos on facing page by Billy Hardiman

You don't have to be a Star Trek fan to look forward to SPOK on campus at Aprende Middle School. That's because all students are welcome to visit SPOK, formally known as Students Passing On Knowledge.

Corona del Sol sophomore Nomith Murari says he started the tutoring club after he noticed that Corona has several programs that involve peers helping each other.

So why not, he thought, start a club of high school students working with middle school kids.

Nomith approached Aprende principal Jim Verrill, who was receptive to the idea, and SPOK was born.

Corona students now meet with the kids from Aprende once a week after school, helping with homework and assignments.

Aprende sixth grader Indigo Cadogan said she loves to write, but admits she isn't good at it.

"You don't have to be good at what you love to do," Indigo said, but she appreciates the help she gets from Corona sophomore Haley Shaffer in making her writing better.

"She gives me different ways to think about emotions and scenarios to write my stories," Indigo said.

Haley enjoys working with the students and says it's fun to see them each week.

Aprende sixth grader Yuliana Noriega said she has trouble with math, "and they [Corona tutors] help a lot; they show me different strategies and help me get it."

Corona sophomore Rachel Klein joined the club for the opportunity to help younger students.

Another sophomore, Avinda De Silea, excels in math and says he wanted to help the younger group excel as well.

Aprende sixth grader Alex Agnick said his highest priority is getting good grades, and Avinda has helped him work through and understand math problems.

Said Aprende sixth grade language arts teacher Greg Broberg:

"This program is amazing; the students love it."

Nomith sees more students show up week after week and says they seem to appreciate the tutoring help from Corona students, adding that he hopes to expand the program to Pueblo and Kyrene middle schools in the future.

Medicare counseling available as Dec. 7 deadline nears

By Michelle Hirsch

Most people 65 years and older qualify for Medicare, although not all know their options or the best plan for their circumstances.

Factors such as health status, frequency of travel and doctor visits can determine which plan is best for each individual.

A Tempe resident for 22 years, Roberta Robenstein, with TBR Insurance Services, has been specializing

in helping people select Medicare plans to best meet their needs for more than eight years.

Current Medicare members, as well as those new to Medicare, have until Dec. 7 to switch or choose a new plan during the open enrollment period.

"Many people don't know there are options such as zero-dollar copays for primary care visits and generic medications," said Robenstein. "If they're not happy with their current plan, or want to know what options are out there, I can help."

Robenstein welcomes inquiries year round for those who relocate, have a change in circumstances or are reaching their milestone 65th birthday.

Information: 480-201-3527; robertarobenstein@gmail.com

Watch for your next Wrangler News on Dec. 6

Please note that this is one of the times each year when there are 3 weeks between our issues instead of the usual 2 weeks.

Our offices will remain open 9-5 Monday-Friday and we'll be glad to hear from you any time. News, photo and advertising-space deadline is **5 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 26.**

Feel free to call Publisher Tracy Doren at 480-966-0845 for information.

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Tempe offering free dropoffs at Nov. 15 recycling event

Saturday, Nov. 15, will fade quickly into history, but not before residents have a chance to appreciate—and take advantage of—this year’s observance of America Recycles Day.

It’s an opportunity that rolls around each November for people to jump on the bandwagon to show off how green they can be—a ritual that officials say seems to be more of a year-round culture these days than a once-a-year celebration.

One great example, say officials, is the availability of Tempe’s Household Waste Collection Center, where residents can recycle just about anything.

Best of all, it’s free, and everyone benefits. In fact, many of the collected items are inspected, repackaged and given away for reuse.

Here are some reasons for Tempe residents to consider a visit to the collection facility on America Recycles Day:

It’s like a really simple, cool science project that gives residents free stuff. City workers collect, analyze and repurpose products like household cleaners, insecticides and

pool chemicals. Some items are mixed together based on their chemistry and shipped off for proper recycling and disposal. Others – like household cleaners – are given away to residents once they pass inspections.

Recycled paint that’s used for art and home improvement projects is also given away. Paint, is collected, repackaged, then given to Tempe residents and art students. City staff even uses it for graffiti cleanup.

Oil is turned into fuel. Used or excess oil is transported to places where it’s turned into energy.

It’s a one-stop shop for everything residents know shouldn’t go in their regular bin. People can drop off all these items at one place, making it really easy to do the right thing.

Tempe’s Household Products Collection Center is at 1320 E. University Drive, on the northeast corner of University and Dorsey, directly in front of the Tempe Fire Training Center.

Hours are Friday 7 a.m. to noon and Saturday 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

— Contributed by Melissa Quillard

Monti's

From Page 9

I asked our excellent young waiter, who regretfully told me they weren’t serving it anymore. But a few minutes later he returned to the table bearing a little basket holding a few precious pieces of it, warm, soft and delicious as ever.

He got a very good tip.

Even so, he’s out of a job soon, and he told us that he hadn’t turned anything else up yet. Neither had the 21-year-old who waited on me and my friend Richard, a silent-film historian and cranky chain-restaurant-loathing Luddite with whom I’d had lunch at Monti’s the previous Friday. “Where else has red-leather seats?” asked Richard, gesturing sadly at the upholstery in our booth.

Richard has been coming to Monti’s since 1965, and I, a relative Johnny-come-lately, had my first meal

there in 1992, which meant, we glumly realized, that we both had been Monti’s patrons since before our waiter was born.

I wondered out loud what would become of all that memorabilia on the walls. “It’ll end up on eBay, or in somebody’s garage, or in the Dumpster,” muttered Richard.

Not so, says Eddie Goitia. There will be an auction for sentimentalists, he says, date and time TBA.

For that matter, some of the building will remain, he claims.

“Everything forward of that,” said Goitia, pointing at the bar, “the historic part, isn’t going anywhere...It will probably be a restaurant again, but not a Monti’s.”

And what about Goitia and Michael Monti themselves?

“Well, I’m a minority partner here, but I’m chief financial officer at Tilted Kilt.

As for Michael, I’m not sure what he’s going to do. Enjoy his kids, I guess.”



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Longtime transportation chief honored for her dedication Tempe memorializes a driving force in transit

Tempe offered a quiet salute to the memory of Mary O'Connor, a longtime resident and transit manager, with dedication ceremonies of a new bus shelter adjacent to city hall.

O'Connor devoted much of her career and personal life to improving transportation alternatives for people who live in Tempe and well beyond its borders.

"Mary O'Connor changed the way thousands of people move from one place to another in our Valley," said Harry Mitchell, former U.S. Representative who was elected to Arizona's 5th congressional district in 2007. He held the post until 2011 and was Tempe mayor from 1978 to 1994.

"Anyone who has taken a bus, rode the light rail, pedaled a bicycle or strolled to work in the Valley can thank Mary O'Connor for her vision and tenacity in making the places where we grow as people more transit friendly."

As Tempe's transit manager from 1990 to 2004, O'Connor was responsible for implementing the city's transit plan, which included adding late-evening and weekend bus and dial-a-ride service; starting Tempe's first neighborhood circulator route; creating an alternatively fueled transit fleet; implementing light rail; adding dozens of miles of new bikeways; and

building neighborhood pedestrian facilities.

Under O'Connor's leadership, transit ridership in Tempe increased from 1.2 million boardings in

1996 to 7.1 million in 2003.

"Mary genuinely cared about everyone's well-being, from close friends to people she had never even met," said Councilmember Shana Ellis.

"She made lasting contributions, at a community level and individual level, that have enhanced the lives of so many Tempe residents."

Shortly after O'Connor passed away in 2010, a vast network of friends and colleagues set to work raising funds and looking for a way to honor her memory. The design concept for the bus shelter was created pro bono by a team of architects from local firms Architekton and Asteriskos.

Using interweaving strips of perforated material, the design is meant to represent O'Connor's generosity.

O'Connor was dedicated to her community in many ways, serving on the boards of directors for the Tempe Community Council and Friends of the Tempe Center for the Arts. She was active in Free Arts for Abused Children, Women's Transportation Seminar, the US Access Board and the American Public Works Association.

Funding for the shelter was raised by Tempe Community Chest. Major contributors include Urban Solar Corp. and 180 Degrees.



Celebrating new bus shelter's installation are, from left, Shana Ellis, Linda Spears, Robin Arredondo-Savage, Neil Giuliano, Corey Woods. — Photo courtesy City of Tempe

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16 Alpin Hong . . . 7:30pm
18 African Children's Choir . . . 3pm
25 Travis Tritt . . . 7pm

FEBRUARY 2015

7 The Midtown Men . . . 7:30pm
4 Stars From The Original
Cast Of Jersey Boys
8 Of Legends and Lovers:
Doc and Kate . . . 3pm
14 Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana:
The Soul of Flamenco . . . 7:30pm
21 An Evening of Classic Lily Tomlin . 7:30pm
22 The World Famous
Glenn Miller Orchestra . . . 7:30pm

MARCH 2015

1 Neil Berg's
100 Years of Broadway . . . 2:30pm
7 Cesar Millan Live! . . . 7:30pm
8 Michael Londra's Celtic Fire . . . 2:30pm
20 Garibaldi . . . 7:30pm
28 Paul Williams. . . 7:30pm



Kyrene Middle School was among Nov. 4 voting sites in the southeast Valley. Only about 23 percent of the state's population turned out. — Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman

Briefly . . .

Holiday grief workshops

Death and divorce are difficult, and dealing with those emotions during the holidays can be more even difficult.

Arizona Community Church is offering workshops to help people survive the holidays when they've experienced a recent divorce or death.

The workshops are open to anyone in high school or older, and there is no charge to learn practical ways to deal with loss and help feel less lonely or sad during the holidays.

"Participants will receive hands-on materials and practical steps to help them understand how to deal with the emotions they'll be facing and help them get through a difficult time," said Scott Foster who leads the Grief Share workshop.

Divorce Care and Grief Share workshops are 9:30 - 11:30 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 6, at the church, 9325 S. Rural Road, Tempe. Registration is helpful for seating and refreshments, but not required.

Information: 480-491-2210.

— Michelle Hirsch

Tickets on sale for 2014 Block Party

Ring in 2015 in downtown Tempe with the Block Party on Mill.

That's when the popular destination will be transformed into a celebration like few others. Visitors will have an opportunity to consume a ton of fun, with interactive games and activities.

Live music and entertainment on multiple stages will invite revelers to dance the night away, and a New Year's

Eve celebration dinner is within a quick walk to an array of restaurants.

Beer and champagne gardens, dance stages and gourmet food trucks are just a few of the other enticements.

Guests with young children will be able to enjoy the Family Fun Zone until 11 p.m. this year. Children 12 and under can also take advantage of free admission.

Tickets are available at Circle K stores at a discounted price.

Tempe resident tickets will be available Dec. 1-24 for \$10 at city of Tempe locations. Sites are listed at www.blockpartyonmill.com.

Tickets are available at the [blockpartyonmill](http://blockpartyonmill.com) website now through Dec. 7 for \$15; Dec. 8-30 for \$20; and on Dec. 31 for \$25. Also via www.facebook.com/blockpartyonmill.

Chamber turkey drive Nov. 18

The AlphaGraphics store at Eliot and Kyrene will be collecting frozen turkeys for the United Food Bank's Thanksgiving Turkey Drive on Tuesday, Nov. 18, during a Tempe Chamber of Commerce networking mixer.

A refrigerated truck will be on-site to keep the birds fresh until they are given to a hungry, needy family on Thanksgiving. Donors will be entered into a drawing for a one-night stay and dinner for two at the Embassy Suites in Tempe.

The networking mixer is open to the public and provides an informal atmosphere for business people to meet and network with fellow members of the business community.

Information: 480-967-7891.

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Cutting the ribbon for TUHSD office renovations, above, were, from left, Board members Michelle Helm, Sandy Lowe, President Mary Lou Taylor and District Superintendent Dr. Kenneth Baca.

— Photos courtesy Tempe Union High School District



\$1.5 million renovation coincides with high-school district's new focus on partnering with business

By Michelle Hirsch

Tempe, Chandler and Ahwatukee residents joined staff, students, elected officials and business partners for a gala ribbon-cutting celebration signifying the completion of a \$1.5 million renovation project at offices of the Tempe Union High School District.

District Superintendent Dr. Kenneth Baca joined Governing Board President Mary Lou Taylor, Vice President Moses Sanchez and board members Michelle Helm, David Shapira and Sandy Lowe to offer the district's thanks to business and community members for their support of students and district programs.

Mary Ann Miller, president of the Tempe Chamber of Commerce, which sponsored the celebration, talked about the 20-plus-year relationship between the district and the chamber.

"Tempe Union is a vibrant, healthy, well-managed school district, which is critical to us making sure tax dollars are well spent," said Miller. "Thank you so much."

Miller also complimented the district's newly developed [IN]CORPORATED program for the ways it allows district schools to connect with businesses to benefit students and the community.

Using the program, high schools build partnerships with businesses to help students identify college and career paths and provide them with opportunities to preview job markets and gain opportunities for job shadowing and mentoring.

The program also helps students gain an understanding of the connections between the skills they learn in school and applications in the workplace.

Linked to the program are career and technical education programs, designed to help students undertake career exploration for workforce success.

Unveiled during festivities in the district's governing board room were upgrades designed to increase safety and improve energy efficiencies, at the same time decreasing maintenance costs—all

funded through a bond measure approved by voters in 2012.

Corona del Sol High School culinary arts students prepared and served refreshments. Guests could also view "[IN]spiring Our Students" teacher-produced artwork displayed in the board room, and meet the teacher artists. The artwork was offered for sale, with a portion of the proceeds going toward a fine-arts student scholarship from the Tempe Union High Schools Foundation.

Baca, the district's superintendent, asked the culinary-arts students to notice the number of community members, business partners, teachers and staff in attendance and who represent the people in the community working together in support of student learning.

Tempe/Kyrene Business Advisory Council co-chairs Cathleen Barton from Intel and Ed Tobin from Ed Tobin Insurance Agency thanked business and community members for their commitment to students and for helping the district to achieve its goals.

Barton and Tobin also commented about the work of TKBAC, inviting businesses, large and small, to participate in programs that benefit students, and ultimately, help guide the future of the community.

During the celebration, business representatives were presented with an "I'm [IN] Tempe Union" vehicle shade-screen, also receiving applause in appreciation of their support.

Baca concluded the celebration by thanking taxpayers for their support of voter-approved bonds which are allowing the district to make renovations that increase energy efficiency and provide for safe buildings that are conducive to an effective learning environment.

The funds also were used to create a newly designed governing board room that the district says better conveys a sense of community connection to conduct the business of the district and support its mission of excellence in teaching and learning.

For information about business partnerships in the Tempe Union district, contact Dianne Welling, coordinator of business and community partnerships at 480-345-3764.

The flights are booked. Swimsuits are packed.

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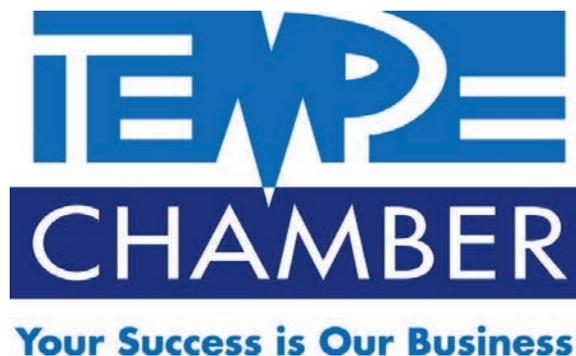
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Connect with the Business Community at these Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, November 18th — Business Before Hours

7:30 – 8:30 a.m., AlphaGraphics, 720 W. Elliott, Tempe AZ

On Tuesday, November 18th, we are collecting frozen turkeys for the United Food Bank's Thanksgiving Turkey Drive at AlphaGraphics on Eliot & Kyrene! A refrigerated truck will be on site to keep the birds fresh until they are given to a hungry, needy family on Thanksgiving. To thank you for your generosity, every turkey you donate gets you an entry into a drawing for a One Night Stay and Dinner for Two at the Embassy Suites in Tempe. This monthly networking mixer is free and open to the public and provides an informal atmosphere for business people to meet and network with fellow members of the business community.

Friday, December 12th — State of the Schools

11:30 – 1:30 p.m., Doubletree by Hilton, 2100 S. Priest Dr. Tempe, AZ

This event facilitates a meeting with a panel of educators to learn the condition of our educational institutions and determine how best to assist them in achieving their goals. Our focus this year is elementary education. The panel will feature representatives from Tempe Union High School District, Tempe Elementary School District, Rio Salado College, Arizona Board of Regents, Mesa Community College, Kyrene School District, Global Pathways Institute and Arizona State University. Cost is \$40 and \$50 for future members; \$450 VIP Table of 10

Thursday, December 18th — Hot Topics and Lunch:

ASU President Michael Crow

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Four Points by Sheraton Tempe, 1333 S. Rural Rd. Tempe, AZ

Please join ASU President Michael M. Crow as he shares insights on the advancement of the university's evolution, its significance to Tempe, and the need for ongoing, innovative collaboration. Hear firsthand how our hometown New American University is transforming 21st century higher education worldwide through its commitment to excellence, access and impact, and what's next as we look ahead to 2015. Cost is \$25 for members and \$35 for future members.



To register for any of these events, please visit www.TempeChamber.org.



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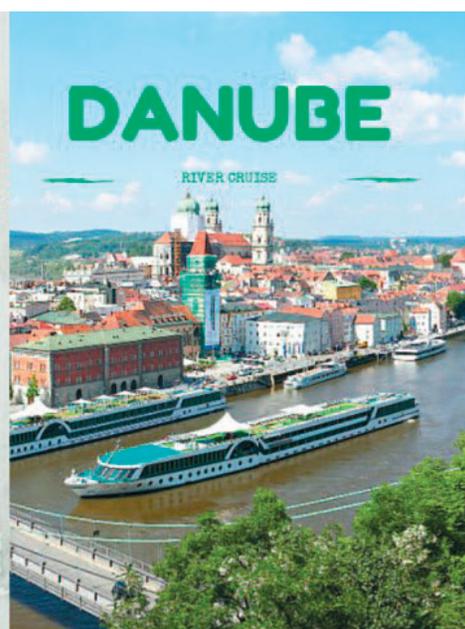
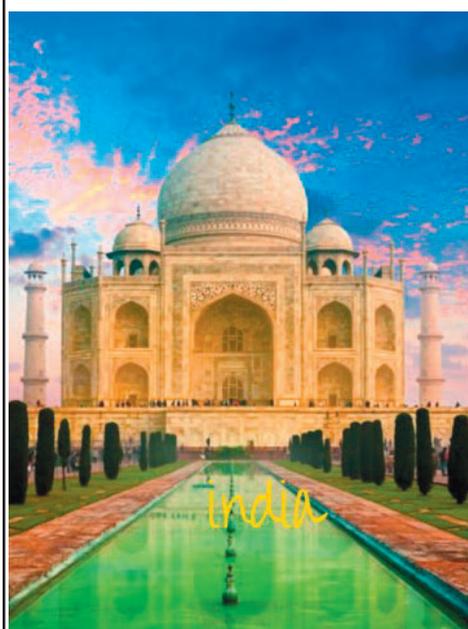
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AzMerit nearing implementation as AIMS replacement Changes seen as path to better education

By Diana Whittle

Next spring, Tempe students will demonstrate their learning achievements through a newly adopted test called AzMERIT - Arizona's Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching.

The Arizona State Board of Education has announced that AzMERIT will replace the AIMS Reading, Writing and Mathematics test.

For Kyrene students, say district officials, the

new assessment will provide better accountability, so that schools can demonstrate that students are learning what they should be, since the new assessment is based on CCRS, Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.

All Arizona public schools must teach all state-adopted standards.

Currently, the CCRS requirements are only two of several sets of adopted state standards—one for English and another for math.

These new standards outline what students should know and be able to complete at each grade level, and if they are on track to be college- and career-ready upon graduation from high school, according to Lorah Neville, Kyrene's director of curriculum and learning services.

"Since the formal adoption of the CCRS for math and English language arts, we have been working to align instruction and materials to the new standards," said Neville.

"In Kyrene, we are well-versed in the expectations associated with the CCRS, which will be assessed on AzMERIT.

"Three years ago we created district assessments to align to the CCRS, and our students have been taking them three times a year as internal measures of progress toward the new standards in grade 2-8 for English language arts and math.

To prepare teachers for the more stringent instructional requirements of CCRS, Kyrene has provided them with training.

"We are fortunate in Kyrene to have math and literacy coaches in all schools for grades K-8 to provide professional development, and who model and support teachers directly in the classroom with the implementation of the CCRS," said Neville.

More critical thinking

After adoption of Common Core in 2010, the Arizona state board of education renamed the state's standards as the College and Career Ready Standards, to better demonstrate that they are designed to be relevant to the real world and to reflect the skills needed for success in college and careers, explained Neville.

"Using the CCRS standards, learners are required to think more critically and to become more involved in justifying their responses, especially when answering higher-level questions," said Neville.

"Arizona believes that their CCRS will help to ensure a skilled workforce and more enlightened graduate."

Arizona public school students in third through high school will take AzMERIT in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Students in Grades 4, 8 and high school will still take the AIMS Science test.

Students in Grades 3 through 8 will take AzMERIT in English Language Arts and Mathematics at their grade level. Students taking high-school level English Language Arts and Mathematics will take AzMERIT End-of-Course assessments that will test their proficiency in these subjects near the end of the course.

Additional information about the test, including sample questions, can be found on-line at www.azed.gov

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-Alana Langdon, Kyrene Mom

Kyrene Kindergarten Information Nights December 2, 3, and 4

Program	Day	Date	Time	Location	Address
Kinder Info for all Kyrene schools					
Kindergarten	T	Dec 2	5:30 pm	Estrella	2620 E. Liberty Ln. Phoenix, 85048
Kindergarten	W	Dec 3	5:30 pm	Mirada	5500 W. Galveston St. Chandler, 85226
Kinder Info for Choice Programs					
Dual Language	Th	Dec 4	6:00 pm	Ninos	1330 E. Dava Dr. Tempe, 85283
Dual Language	Th	Dec 4	6:00 pm	Lagos	17001 S. 34th Way Phoenix, 85048
Traditional (KTA)	Th	Dec 4	5:30 pm	KTA-Sureño	3375 W. Galveston, Chandler, AZ 85226

 **KyreneSchoolDistrict**
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Correction

A caption accompanying photos of Tempe's First Crush event incorrectly identified three of the participants. The pair identified as Nick and Lori Bastian are Scott and Barb Harris.

A caption identifying Corey Woods was incorrectly labeled Corey Wood. We regret the errors.

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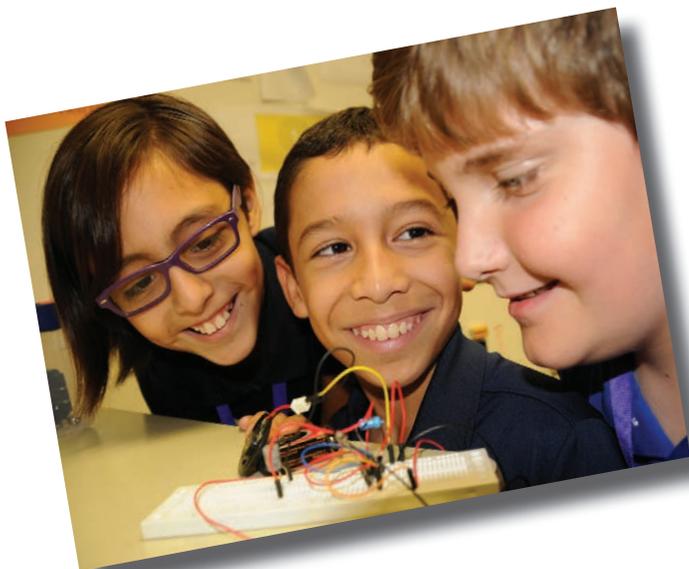
One-to-one computing
(Gililand)



Connolly Middle School



Fees College Preparatory
Middle School



Gililand Middle School



Sports

WITH ALEX ZENER

Only seconds hang in balance for dream victory

Corona del Sol's **Marcus Wheeler** fulfilled his lifetime dream of winning the Arizona State Division I Individual Cross Country Championship when he overtook Mesquite's Tyler Day in the last 200 meters on Nov. 8 at Cave Creek Golf Course.

Wheeler, who had been in a back-and-forth battle with Day for first place in every race they ran against each other this season, lost to Day for the second time in the Section 1 meet Oct. 31 at Crossroads Park in Gilbert by mere seconds.

At the state meet, it may have come down to who wanted to win the most in this championship race where there was no clear cut prediction on who would preserve and win the ultimate prize.

Wheeler, who finished at the state meet 22nd as a freshman running for Hamilton, did not run as a sophomore, finished third last season as part of Corona's 1-2-3 state finishers, was behind Day with

300 meters to go.

Digging deep mentally, while hearing the cheers from his Corona teammates and supporters who believed he pull a win, Wheeler passed Day and crossed the finish line with a time of 15:36:00, just 5 seconds ahead of Day's 15:41:00.

Wheeler's pre-race strategy to win the individual championship helped Corona take third place as a team behind Desert Vista and Mesa Mountain View but Desert Vista's team championship strategy involved a singular approach.

All five runners who were part of the Thunder's boys and girls state cross country championship teams did not run in the sectionals which took place one week before the state meet.

Runners on Corona's team at the state meet included **Slade Sumners**, who took 6th place with a time of 16:27. He was followed by **Alex Hart**, at 23rd, **Andrew Eversden** at 34th, **Lucas Ykema** in 62nd, **Graham Eversden** at 79th and **Liam Kovatch** was 90th.

Corona's girls team had senior **Kelly Naumann** run an incredible race to finish in 2nd place and lead the Lady Aztecs to a 6th place finish overall behind Desert Vista, Xavier, Highland,

Chaparral and Mesa Mountain View.

Naumann, who has been steadily improving since her 41st place state finish her sophomore year, crossed the finish line with a time of 18:33, 17 seconds faster than her 4th place finish in 2013.

"Kelly is the fastest female cross-country runner in Corona school history," said coach **Ari Rodriguez**. "She not only had an ideal season running personal bests on every course but was a true leader on and off the course."

Corona's second runner to cross the finish line was **Renee Clary** in 20th place, followed by **Alexis Artiaga** in 49th, **Mackenzie Harder** in 60th, **Sidney Bussler** at 79th, **Rachel Dietz** in 83rd and **Riley Wright** in 92nd place.

"Riley Wright probably improved the most over the season," said Rodriguez. "She came in as a freshman and steadily moved up to be one of our top girls at the end of the season. Unfortunately, her performance at the state meet was hindered because she was sick in the days leading up to the meet."

Marcos de Niza Cross Country — The Marcos de Niza boys cross country team placed 14th at the DII state cross country meet held at Marana



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High School on Nov. 1. **Gregory Janousek** crossed the finish line in 52nd place followed by teammates **Matthew Reeves** in 77th, **Christian Marquez**, 79th, **Dante Arellano Chavez**, 88th, and **Dominic Martinez** in 106th place.

The girls cross country team from Marcos de Niza had three athletes compete in the state meet on Nov. 1. **Kyra Hermanson** finished in 86th place, **Jocelyn Martinez** in 95th and **Nikki Janousek** in 105th place out of the 115 girls who competed.

McClintock Cross Country — Competing in DII, the McClintock boys cross country team took 6th place out of 31 teams.

Emmanuel Hidalgo lead the team winning 3rd place with a time of 16:07 followed by **Husen Husen** in 11th place, **Abdullahi Abdirahman** in 65th, **Ethan Clah** in 72nd, **Michael Rojas** at 113th and **Guillermo Morales** in 152nd.

Tempe Cross Country — Tempe High School's cross country team, competing at the DII level, finished the meet with the girls team taking 7th place out of 21 teams while the boys team was 8th out of 23 teams. **Fatima Islas** was the top finisher for the girls team crossing the finish line in 10th place followed by **Daisy Lopez** at 27th, **Victoria LeBario** in 46th, **Alexia Blanc** in 54th, **Stephanie Martinez** at 56th, **Sabrina Robles** in 63rd and **Danyiella Miranda** at 67th.

Top finisher on the Buffalos 8th place team was **Tony Tipton** in 39th, **Jason Marrufo** in 41st, **Ramiro Ortiz** at 42nd, **Jose Luis** at 67th, **Jose Garcia** in 70th, **Jonathan Ibarra** in 105th and **Pedro Rivas** in 147th place.

Corona Girls Golf — Corona's girls golf team, ranked No. 11 heading into the DI state golf tournament held Nov. 6-7 at Aguila Golf Course in Laveen, finished tied for 12th place.

The Lady Aztecs had two golfers, **Emma Lower** and **Mikaela**



Emma Lower

Hatfield, ranked in the top 25 plus three other golfers qualify for and play in the state tournament including **Taylor Granson**, **Lexie Baughman** and **Julia Cuendet**.

"We are a very young team with no juniors or seniors," said coach **Pat Reed**.

"I was very proud of the improvement over the season by everyone and especially by **Julia Cuendet** and **Taylor Granson** at the state tournament."

"Julia improved by 12 strokes and Taylor by 7 strokes from the first day to the second which helped move the team's finish up a spot."

Next season should be an exciting one for the Lady Aztecs, according to Reed, when current freshmen **Sarah Butler**, **Clare Dunnahoo** and **Elle Pots** along with sophomores **Courtney Conradi** and **Callie Stover** start pushing this season's starting five for playing positions.

Marcos de Niza Football — Who needs a running game when you have Marcos de Niza's 6-foot-2, 200-pound sophomore quarterback **Nazareth Greer** and a group of pass receivers who can catch the ball?

Greer, who averages three passing touchdowns per game for a total of 2692 total passing yards and 33 touchdowns through the air, recorded four touchdowns in the first round of the Division II state playoffs, Nov. 7,

when No. 5 ranked Marcos de Niza routed No. 12 ranked Deer Valley, 42-7.

Greer completed 20 of 28 pass attempts, for a total of 350 yards, to eight different receivers. The longest was caught by senior **Luke Nguyen** for an 80-yard touchdown reception.

Besides Nguyen, who had five receptions for 168 yards and two touchdowns, Greer threw touchdown passes to 6-foot-1 junior wide receiver **Anthony Trujillo** and 6-foot-4 junior tight end **Tanner Blankenship**.

Altogether, Greer managed to hit **Shaun Richards** with four receptions for 51 yards and **Avery Sanders** with two receptions for 28

yards. **Kylee Lawrence**, **Nick Sweet** and **Dedric Jones** were each credited with one reception.

To compound his threat to opposing teams, Greer has carried the ball 78 times this season and scored five of the Padres 16 rushing touchdowns. Two of these five rushing touchdowns came at the expense of Deer Valley in the first playoff game.

Greer carried the ball six times for a total of 44 yards and two touchdowns against the Skyhawks.

Only Richards, with seven carries, carried the ball more times

—SPORTS, Page 24

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In Fall . . . In Fashion

By Michelle Hirsch

It's the perfect time to update your wardrobe for fall, now that the weather has cooled.

Local boutiques and resale shops offer many fashion choices minus the inconvenience of mall parking or the expense of department stores.

Joy Yurcaba, store manager at Lizard Thicket, located in the Boulevard Shops on Chandler Boulevard outside Chandler Fashion Mall, says patterned leggings, scarves, tunics, vests, hats and other accessories are in style and affordable this year—perfect for updating your fall wardrobe.

Julie Tenney, owner of the new Lorelei Boutique at McClintock and Guadalupe in Tempe, suggests layers for fall to adapt to the changing temperatures—cooler in the mornings and evening, warming up during the day.

Start with a lightweight top or tank and add a denim shirt or lightweight jacket. A denim shirt is a must, and can be buttoned up for a casual look over leggings or a skirt, or layered over a cute tank top or sleeveless blouse.

Another good layering choice is a vest – worn over a short- or long-sleeve top.

Uptown Cheapskate, a resale shop newly arrived in Chandler, offers a variety of fashions and accessories without breaking the bank – boots to wear over leggings or skinny jeans, denim jackets to wear over a summer dress or long tunic top, and lots of scarves and accessories.

Clean out your closet, sell some pieces you're tired of, and check out Uptown Cheapskate's ever-changing selections to refresh your closet.

Information: Lizard Thicket, 480-821-4611;
Lorelei Boutique, 480-491-1230; and
Uptown Cheapskate, 480-786-0043.



Photos & page layout by Billy Hardiman



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Sports

From Page 21

than Greer while Sanders, who had a 50-yard breakaway, rushed for more yards than Greer gaining 62 yards on three carries.

These incredible stats may be harder to come by when the Padres, at 7-4, match up against No. 6 ranked Cienega in the quarterfinals Nov 14.

The Bobcats have only lost one game all season and are currently 10-1.

If the Padres do defeat Cienega, they will play in the semifinals against the winner of the No. 3 ranked Liberty and No. 4 ranked Paradise Valley quarterfinal game.

Interestingly enough, Paradise Valley defeated Saguaro, the team the Padres lost to 35-61 in their last regular season game.



Karilyn Quon finishes 6th in state.

Corona Swim and Dive —

Members of Corona's swim and dive team competed in the DI state meet held at Mesa Aquatics Club on Nov. 7-8.

The girls team had six swimmers qualify for state and finished in 17th place while the boys team finished 26th out of 33 DI teams.

In the individual events, junior **Karilyn Quon** took sixth place in the 200 Individual Medley race and 13th in the 500 Freestyle. **Nicole Holly** placed 19th in the 100 Butterfly.

Quon also swam as part of the girls 200 Medley relay team with **Hannah Watts**, Holly and **Tessa Martinson** which finished in 14th place as well as part of the 200 Freestyle relay team with Martinson, **Liliane Stewart** and **Ericka Boeger** finishing in 12th place.

Boeger, Watts, Stewart and Martinson swam in the 400 Freestyle relay race taking 17th place.

Corona's boys team had eight swimmers and one diver qualify for the individual and relay events.

Warren McElroy was the top finisher on the boys team when he took 9th place in the 1 meter diving event.

Three Aztecs qualified in the 100 Breaststroke with **Jacob Stewart** finishing highest on the team in 13th place. **Simon Werkhoven** came

in 25th and **Andrew Zhou** was 30th.

Stewart was 22nd and **Bryce Arrington** 29th in the 100 Freestyle while **Benjamin Quon** was 19th in the 500 Freestyle and his older brother, **Nicholas Quon**, came in 20th in the 100 Backstroke.

Both Quon brothers, Benjamin and

Nicholas, were part of Corona's 400 Freestyle relay team that included Arrington and Stewart which finished in 17th place.

Corona's 200 Freestyle relay team of Arrington, **Axel Floyd**, **Drew Ketterman** and Werkhoven finished 19th.

Four Marcos de Niza swimmers qualified for the D1 state swim meet.

Jesse Arroyo, **Jarod Jenkins**, **Michael Reyes** and **Andrew Gorman** placed 12th in the 200 Medley relay while the same teammates were 21st in the 400 Freestyle relay.

Jenkins and Arroyo both qualified for individual events with Jenkins taking 31st place in the 100 Breaststroke and Arroyo was 25th in the 500 Freestyle.

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It was a chance for kids from all six Kyrene middle schools to try out for one of the district's winter sports teams, including boys basketball, girls softball and soccer, wrestling and cheerleading. The tryouts, at Pueblo Middle School, were designed to give student athletes an opportunity to make one of the teams. Winter sports competition begins the week of Nov. 24. Similar opportunities are offered for spring sports season (early February) and fall (during August). Coaches evaluate qualifications for the so-called "cut" sports, defined as those requiring competition to participate. "Non-cut" sports are also available, including cross-country, wrestling, track & field. Parents wishing information can contact Community Education and Outreach Services ([www.kyrene.org/outreach services](http://www.kyrene.org/outreach-services)) or call 480-541-1508.

— Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman





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Diversions

Film Fare

Minor flaws don't rule out pair of current offerings

One and two at the box office last week are both worth seeing:

Big Hero 6 — Set in the conflated city of “San Fransokyo,” this Disney computer-animated adventure is an origin story loosely based on the Marvel Comics superhero team of the title.

Hiro, a robotics whiz-kid, loses his older brother Tadashi in an explosion at a tech school. Later, he encounters a supervillain in a kabuki-like mask, marshaling the shape-shifting legion of mini-robots that Hiro invented.

Against this mystery man, Hiro organizes a team consisting of himself and four of Tadashi's friends, each with his or her own specialty power.

The sixth *Big Hero*, however, is the life of the movie's party: Baymax, a robotic personal healthcare provider invented by Tadashi.

An inflatable white body with distilled dot-and-line facial features, Baymax speaks (in the voice of Scott Adsit of *30 Rock*) with unflappable bland courtesy edged with the faintest undertone of maternal nurturing impatience, and moves with a sweetly deliberate gravity.

He's like Jacques Tati crossed with the Michelin Man, and he's by far the most imaginative and original element of *Big Hero 6*.

The movie is solidly enjoyable overall, with its mix of Marvel and anime/manga flavors, but Baymax is an instant cartoon classic.

Interstellar — Christopher Nolan's sci-fi saga looks, in its first stretch, more like John Steinbeck than Ray Bradbury or Robert Heinlein.

Earth of the future has become a dustbowl, wheat has become extinct, billions of humans have died, and farming is understandably the most respected of all professions. Corn is still abundant, but it's only a matter of time before it goes too, and when it does humankind is done for.

Former NASA pilot Matthew McConaughey has turned farmer though he doesn't really like it. But he gets the chance to go back to work for his now-disreputable former employers, flying a spaceship through an inter-dimensional “wormhole” to another galaxy, at the other end of which three planets, each a possible candidate for human colonization, have been discovered.

What ensues is a tale, complex in the Nolan manner, of space travel, time travel, paradoxes, robots, brave new worlds, rationality versus love, survival weighed against worthiness for survival.

In other words, it touches on just about every classic theme in sci-fi, none of them all that new since Philip Wylie and Edwin Balmer wrote *When Worlds Collide* and *After Worlds Collide* back in the '30s.

But Nolan's treatment of them is absorbing, tense and urgent, and full of hushed, eerie visual beauties that recall such atmospheric '60s and '70s sci-fi favorites as Kubrick's *2001*, Tarkovsky's *Solaris* or Douglas Trumbull's *Silent Running*, without seeming imitative. At nearly three hours *Interstellar* is, I suppose, a lot of movie, though I can't think of any point at which I was bored.

Be forewarned though: despite a cast that includes Anne Hathaway, Michael Cane, Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Casey Affleck, Topher Grace, Wes Bentley, Ellen Burstyn and the terrific David Gyasi, this movie is very heavy dose of Matthew McConaughey—he's onscreen a lot, and his singsong Texas drawl is heard a lot.

If, like me, you're OK with that, *Interstellar* may be for you.

If not, it'll be one long space odyssey indeed.

Big Hero 6 is rated PG; *Interstellar* is rated PG-13. Both play at Harkins Arizona Mills, Tempe Marketplace, Chandler Fashion 20, and other multiplexes Valleywide.

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Man-Cat: A band or a cult?

The Scene . . . By Chase Kamp

Man-Cat mischief makers due Nov. 21

Man-Cat is a band, but it could also be a cult. The Tempe-based culture-jamming quartet performs anonymously, wearing masks onstage and generating most of its music by mangling snippets of hit songs and carving them back into warped synth-driven pop, all the while propagating slogans like “Conscious Consumption” and “Identity is Irrelevant.”

The group is also responsible for bizarre performance demonstrations, like a staging at a 2012 Justin Bieber concert in Glendale.

One of the band’s online stunts, which involved a racy Lana Del Rey lyric and Pepsi-Cola, quickly drew a cease-and-desist complaint from the soda pop conglomerate.

The band will celebrate its newest album of bit-crushed synth pop, *Classic Rock*, at a CD release show on Nov. 21 at Trunk Space in Phoenix, where attendees can expect a stage strewn with televisions in what the band intends to be a disorienting amount of distraction.

“Our goal is that you won’t know where to look,” a Man-Cat member said.

Two members of the band agreed to a telephone interview on the presumption of anonymity. One of them tended to answer most of the questions concerning the band’s multimedia concepts and overall vision. The other took the reins on questions about the band’s musical style and technical recording

approaches, but apparently left the room without a word halfway through the chat.

Inspired by the likes of conceptual artist Christian Marclay and audio pranksters The Residents, Man-Cat follows a very specific procedure when crafting their songs.

Each one begins with a bed of samples taken from random pop songs, which are manipulated beyond recognition with effects and processing.

“Sampling has such a bad rap,” a member said, again anonymously.

“At what point does it become original?”

His cohort cited the work of Andy Warhol, who famously co-opted imagery from brands and celebrities. “In the art world, this process is acceptable. In music, it should be on the same plane.”

The group then takes lyrics from random Billboard Hot 100 songs and puts them through Google Translate at least 10 times.

By filtering pop songs with American English slang, innuendo and metaphor through automated translations of other languages, and back again, the lyrics become absurd declarations, awkward and stilted anthems.

“Slang terms only need to take two steps to the left” to be rendered bizarre, a member said.

While *Classic Rock* is full of queasy samples and glitchy textures, added to the smatter are buttoned-up indie rock guitar rhythms, DEVO

sloganeering and cheerfully robotic hooks which render it oddly danceable. The band insists that they love pop music, but aim to give it greater goals beyond commercialism and vanity.

The interview was occasionally plagued by bad cellphone reception, the voices of the Man-Cat members at times cutting out in momentary spurts.

Yet the timing of this seemingly arbitrary interference was curious. Asked what the new record sounds like, one member of Man-Cat calmly reflected through a dingy signal.

“It’s very blown out...it’s an exhausting listen...has a very harsh... more down-tempo...it’s an absolute mess.”

Was this another bit of creative cut-and-paste?

Was the band, perhaps, intentionally jamming the phone? It’s likely that the service was just spotty. But it’s hard not to think twice when dealing with Man-Cat, a band constantly tweaking expectations through its tightly orchestrated transmissions of mischief.

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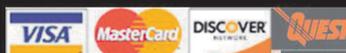
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Around the 'hood



A compendium of photos from our Wrangler News staff and our near- and far-flung neighbors

Have you contributed yours? email editor@wranglernews.com

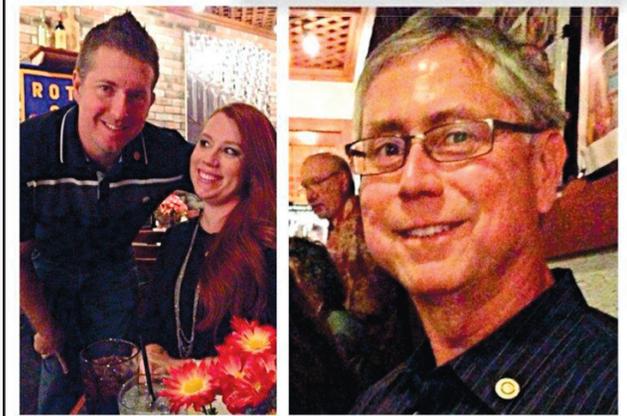
Clockwise from top right: Contact Zonies, an affiliate club of the U.S. Dog Agility Association, welcomed furry and unfurry competitors from around Arizona when it held its November meet at Tempe Sports Complex. There was plenty of enthusiasm among the entrants and lots of love to be shared among all.



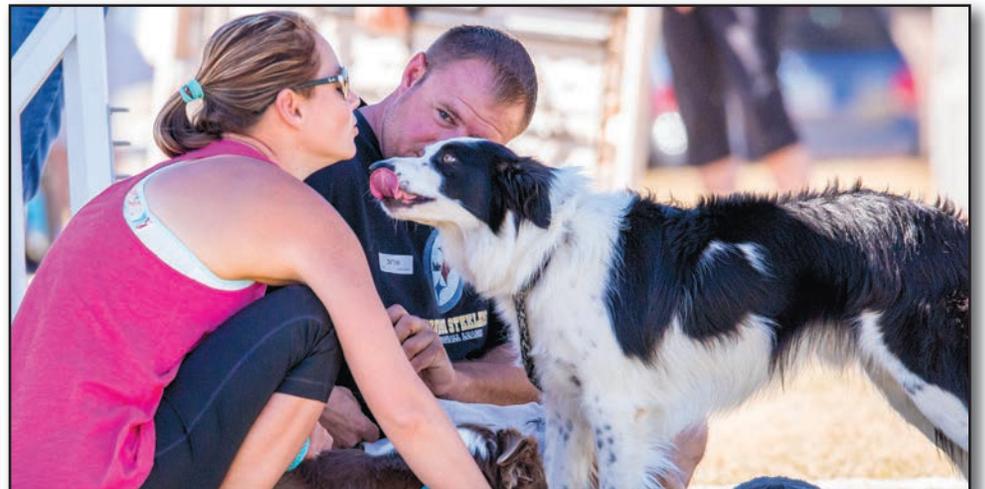
Mary Contreras, below right, with Kyrene Corridor Rotarian Kyle Maki selling raffle tickets during Contreras' annual State Farm pumpkin patch celebration.



Kyrene Corridor Rotary members who received coveted Paul Harris recognition were Gary Contreras, right; Kyle and Bethany Maki; and Harry Short, top.



Tempe Chamber of Commerce ribbon-cutting ceremonies attracted well-wishers at Garcia's Mexican Restaurant. The new Tempe location is 1706 E. Warner Road, at McClintock.





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