



WRANGLER NEWS

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Area neighbors drain hopes of oil-change-site proponents

Story and photo by Lee Shappell

Opponents of a proposed Valvoline oil-change facility at McClintock Drive and Warner Road won another rousing battle on Nov. 7 when the Tempe City Council unanimously denied an appeal by the property owner of an earlier slap-down by the city's Development Review Commission.

On Sept. 24 the Use Permit and Development Plan Review were denied unanimously by the commission after an outpouring of opposition from neighbors.

Diversified Partners proposes the oil-change shop on the dirt lot at Alta Mira Plaza, on the southeastern corner of the intersection, formerly the longtime home of Shell service station. The new development would consist of a single-story building with three drive-through service bays.

Disruptions mark hearing

The owners appealed the DRC commission's decision, saying that their proposal meets every requirement.

With city fire inspectors at the door turning people away when the Tempe History Museum Community Room reached its 120-person capacity, neighbor after neighbor addressed the council to express displeasure with the plan.

Instead, the neighbors want a restaurant with patio dining on the site, similar to development a mile away at Rural and Warner that revitalized a former convenience-store space.

Further contributing to a raucous atmosphere was a large anti-police-brutality demonstration outside. Chants and speakers with bullhorns often disrupted proceedings inside.

Denial rationale questioned

Attorney Alexander Kolodin, representing the parcel's owners, reminded the council that the property already is zoned for an oil-change facility and that it would have a positive impact on South Tempe, being less disruptive than a loud tire shop already in the center.

— VALVOLINE, Page 6



Neighborhood activist Matt Smith addresses Tempe City Council members regarding the controversy over the parcel of land on the southeast corner of McClintock Drive and Warner Road.

MCC's EMT expansion draws kudos

Starting next spring, Tempe and West Chandler students planning careers as emergency medical technicians will have expanded EMT training available, thanks to a new schedule announced by academic planners at Mesa Community College.

Wyatt Bell, a Tempe resident and current MCC student who completed the program and EMT-Basic certification, hails the expansion.

"The MCC program is great," he said, "with its encouraging, no-nonsense instructors, who've worked in the field and deliver real-life scenarios that always keep students interested and involved. The program is interactive, well-led and student focused."

As a previous first responder in the military, Bell said he has been inspired to go on and take the more

— MCC, Page 11

Pilot program focuses on feral cats

In response to requests Tempe officials say they have received from residents, a limited pilot program has been launched in four neighborhoods—Pepperwood, Kiwanis, Brentwood Cavalier and Tempe Gardens—to provide education, best-practice suggestions and colony management of feral cats.

The program, also aimed at reducing the negative impact such cats can have on a neighborhood, currently is open only to residents living in those specific areas, according to the report.

For neighborhoods participating in the pilot initiative, local rescue organizations have agreed to

provide trap-neuter-return, or TNR, services for the entire local colony.

In 2017, according to the announcement, a city agreement with Animal Defense League of Arizona created a Tempe-specific donation fund that included TNR programs.

The city's report indicates 223 cats were processed through the TNR process; 236 were taken to clinics, 13 of them previously sterilized and one returned to its owner because it was microchipped.

Of the cats involved, the report listed 107 males and 116

— CATS, Page 9

How history shaped his future

Survivor shares a sobering tale of Holocaust horrors

Story & photo by Janie Magruder

His talk was geared to meet the emotional maturity of fourth- and fifth-graders at Kyrene del Cielo Elementary who sat at his feet with rapt attention. There were no grisly photos of Holocaust victims, nor grim descriptions of their murders.

But Oskar Knoblauch's 90-minute message about respect, goal setting, standing up for yourself and others—smiling all the while—was sobering nonetheless, for the 150 students, staff and parents assembled at the West Chandler school.

"The Holocaust was all around us, no matter where you went," said Knoblauch, a German-born Jew who, at age 11, fled to Poland in 1936 with his parents and two siblings.

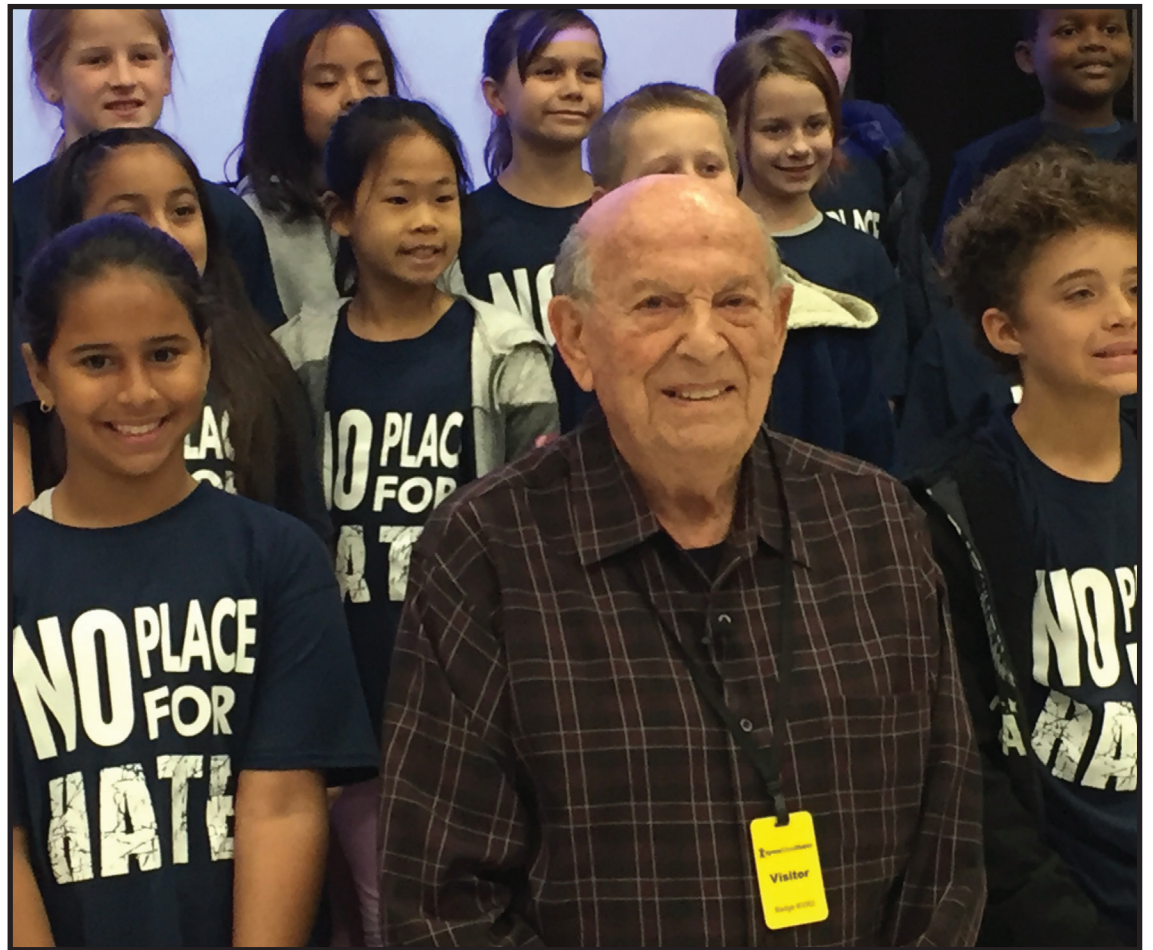
Two years later, the Nazis seized the boy's new country, upending his life all over again.

"You could have been in your apartment, and you go to work in the morning and come home in the evening, and half your family has disappeared, without cause or reason," said the 93-year-old old Phoenix resident, author of *A Boy's Story—A Man's Memory: Surviving the Holocaust, 1933-1945*.

"You didn't have to be in a camp to be in the Holocaust."

Knoblauch's appearance was tied to Cielo's participation in No Place for Hate, a national student-run initiative sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League. To be recognized as a designated

— HOLOCAUST, Page 10



In an appearance at Kyrene del Cielo Elementary School, Holocaust survivor Oskar Knoblauch shared the story of his family's survival amid war and hateful ideology.

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\$100k annual sales boost success of Tempe library's 'Friends'

Story & photo by Joyce Coronel

Walking into the Tempe Public Library on an average Wednesday morning was less like a venture into a whispers-only sanctuary and more like a visit to a bustling community center.

Two women seeking signatures for a petition, alongside a local organization that helps the homeless, were on hand—and that was before patrons even reached the front door.

Just inside the entrance, Friends of Tempe Public Library operates a used bookstore. We're not talking about a few dusty shelves of outdated books here. Vicki Linoff, who manages the enterprise, disabused *Wrangler News* of that notion immediately. The bookstore generates a whopping \$100,000 in revenue each year. That includes online sales.

"We carry about 5,000 titles," Linoff says. "We try not to put



Vicki Linoff, who helps run the used bookstore at Tempe Public Library, says most funds raised go to support the children's section of the library.

anything on the shelf older than 2016."

With a crew of 55 volunteers, the bookstore is highly organized and stocked daily. Novels are shelved by author, non-fiction by category.

— LIBRARY, Page 11



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Valvoline

From Page 3

"Staff's reasons for recommending denial were that the proposed project did not meet approval of the criteria for the use permit and development plan review and did not conform with the Corona-South Tempe Character Area Plan," Kolodin told the council, which was acting in a quasi-judicial capacity to hear the appeal.

"We don't believe that to be true. The truth of the matter is if this service shop does not meet the requirements of General Plan 2040 then no auto-service shop ever again will be able to be built in the city of Tempe. My clients have made extreme efforts and bent over backward to try to accommodate the neighborhood, as well."

Proposed use cited as 'wrong space'

The proposed building would feature brick architecture, a heavily landscaped perimeter that includes trees that somewhat block the view of the building from the intersection, upgraded paving for pedestrian connections and a bush shelter.

"We reached out to no fewer than 16 restaurant operators and they all said this was the wrong space for that use, and it makes perfect sense because the only traffic in that center is from a Discount Tire and Walgreens," Kolodin said.

"The owner even met with the managing director of The Vig and he said no way."

Kolodin also pointed out that the site is not in a residential neighborhood. The intersection has four strip malls.

"Not everywhere in Tempe needs to be Mill Avenue," Kolodin said.

Neighborhood activist Matt Smith, who spearheaded opposition to the project, acknowledged that Diversified's appeal to the council "is reasonable." He and other opponents, however, said that their objection is based on their vision for another use for the site. Most want the patio-restaurant use, Smith said.

96.9% cited as opposed to plan

Smith pointed out that of 772 respondents to the Development Review Commission's request for neighborhood input, representing 11 South Tempe neighborhoods in the

85283 and 85284 ZIP codes, 96.9 percent oppose the Valvoline plan.

"I hear the appeal. I think their appeal is reasonable," Smith said.

"But I also have deep skepticism of some key points. You can't dismiss the neighborhood as damaged goods because there's a Plato's Closet or a Zippo's Sports Grill there because at the same time Valvoline can't wait to have access to the demographic because it is one of the top three ZIP codes in the state," Smith said.

"I'm also skeptical about the idea that we are stuck with this dirt lot. It was the tearing down of the existing structure that prompted this process that allowed neighbors to say, 'Hey, this is what I'm looking for in my neighborhood. There are always partnerships that can be made to secure tenants, so to say all these restaurants are unwilling to touch south Tempe - I'm a little incredulous."

Property owner Walt Brown emphasized that he followed every city procedure and met every city standard in his use request for the site, which he values at about \$2.1 million.

"There is a lot of passion in this room," Brown said. "I've invested in this corner because I like South Tempe. We're very passionate about the site. We want to do the right thing. Valvoline is a 155-year-old company that decided through our negotiations to scrape the entire site, landscape it, hide this new building, agreed 100 percent with city staff stipulations and then they didn't put us on (City Council consent agenda) because of the neighbors. We understand it."

"It's amazing to me that the planner isn't here tonight for some reason, so there is some stuff there that I think we need to talk about the facts. I can tell you we worked our butts off. Tried to do the right thing. We're here hat in hand to try to convey that."

In denying the appeal, Council members said they were moved by the overwhelming opposition of the neighborhood.

The appeal denial might not yet be the end, however.

Brown could pursue legal action. Kolodin refused to speculate on whether any further action might be forthcoming, saying he was not authorized to divulge information.



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Founder's program grows with a \$5k grant

Tempe Elem staffer uses pen-pal solution to help minimize seniors' loneliness

By Robyn Martinez

Loneliness increasingly poses a challenge to older adults, a concern that's being confronted by the Tempe Elementary School District's Pen Pals for Seniors program.

Thanks an economic boost from Tempe Community Council's first Connector Awards program, the district's efforts to provide a platform for people coming forward with ideas to combat social isolation and loneliness now have some deserved recognition.

After applying and presenting her own idea, Amy Garza, a senior visual communication specialist and the district's Pen Pals for Seniors founder, was awarded \$5,000 to continue to grow and enhance the program.

With the extra funds, Garza says she plans to focus on expanding the program to individuals who do not live in a senior center or who do not have access to a facility where a program like this is organized for them.

The funds will also be used to purchase stamps and envelopes, funding field trips to connect the pen pals face-to-face and creating writer starter packs, kits of notecards, stamps, pens and pencils to encourage them to write letters.

I am "so thankful to hear from people participating in the program that it has made an



Amy Garza, who helped develop the Pen Pals for Seniors program, was honored with the Tempe Connector award from Tempe Community Council.

— Photo by Gabrielle Dunton

year, the program has pen pals from Arredondo Elementary, Hudson Elementary and Ward Traditional Academy. Westchester Senior Center,

impact in their life. Receiving this award will allow this program to do more," Garza said.

Though Garza asked for just over \$3,000, committee members said they believed so much in what she was doing that they increased their contribution to \$5,000.

"Receiving more than I asked for was surprising, but was also a nice confirmation that what we are doing with this program is adding value to the community," Garza said.

In its third

Oakwood Creative Care and Friendship Village are current participating senior centers, with Elmcroft Senior Living soon to be added.

In the 2018-2019 school year, there were 172 pen pals (60 seniors and 112 students), with 800 letters exchanged.

Garza said she and her late grandmother wrote letters back and forth for years, part of the inspiration behind the program. She is grateful to be carrying on her grandmother's legacy in Tempe through the program, she said.

"Every letter written, every letter opened and read, every interaction, every face-to-face meet-up means one less lonely, isolated senior or student in our community. This program has touched more lives than I ever imagined," Garza said.

"In many parts of the world, loneliness and social isolation are being considered a public health issue, and so many municipalities already know strong resilient communities are an effective way to tackle the issue," Tempe Community Council said about the purpose of the Connector Award.

Tempe Community Council is investing up to \$50,000 to help bring ideas to preventing loneliness to reality.

Information: tempeschools.org/penpals or amy.garza@tempeschools.org.

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Tempe Diablos join effort to help the homeless

Nationwide, studies show that 14 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. In Tempe, that number increases to 21.34 percent.

The startling statistic provided motivation for members of Tempe Diablos to partner with St. Joseph the Worker, a non-profit whose mission is to assist homeless, low-income and disadvantaged others, to develop the Employment Heals Tempe program.

Thanks to the program, say its planners, over 130 disadvantaged job seekers have been connected with valued employment through the non-profit's Mobile Success Unit, Arizona's first transportable job-development office.

Diablos President Bill Ottinger said his group's involvement in the program has been a perfect complement to its members' community work.

"The Tempe Diablos are grateful for organizations such as St. Joseph the Worker and the invaluable contributions they make in our community," said Ottinger.

"Their work fits right into the heart and soul of the mission of Tempe Diablos Charities, which is to enhance the community of Tempe by supporting meaningful and lasting solutions that will change lives for the better."

Grant applications for other community-focused organizations are now being accepted by the Diablos through 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 15.

SJW Executive Director Brent Downs was likewise pleased with the collaboration.

"With the support from Tempe Diablos, we are able to step in with our resources to help those who want a job but may not have the tools to get there,"

said Downs.

"Homeless and other at-risk job seekers often face daunting issues like not having a phone, mailing address or internet access."

These limitations are addressed by the grants initiative, he noted.

"They may have limited work experience, insufficient funds for employment prerequisites and little or no access to childcare or transportation. This is where we come in and eliminate these barriers to give them a fair shot at employment."

The organization's (mobile unit) is designed to take employment supplies and resources to job seekers anywhere in the Valley and provide access to hundreds more men and women than would be possible otherwise, Downs said.

As a result, job seekers are provided with online and phone access, a computer lab, a mailing address, one-on-one employment-search support, job leads, employer referrals, resume development, mock interviews, professional clothing, hygiene items bus passes and more, Downs noted.

Once jobs are secured, St. Joseph staff also provide needed uniforms, required work shoes, tools and financial assistance for professional certification/license fees.

SJW has partnerships with over 83 agencies in the Valley, resulting in employment for nearly 3,681 job seekers in fiscal year 2018/2019.

The MSU is stationed monthly at the Tempe Public Library and at Tempe Community Action Agency, 2146 Apache Blvd.

Information: sjwjjobs.org.

Cats . . . from Page 3

females.

An online update on the TNR program says that Tempe residents have voiced concerns about outdoor cat colonies and the issues that arise as a result, including fighting, howling or spraying; animal waste; kittens; and attracting unwanted wildlife, among others.

The pilot TNR project TNR involves the humane capture of feral cats, followed by spaying and neutering, then returning them to the same place where they were captured.

According to the city's report, TNR is becoming recognized as the most effective approach to decreasing free-roaming cat populations. Because free-roaming cats are sterilized in large numbers, the process is said to reduce the number of kittens born and, over time, diminish the size of a community's free-roaming cat population.

It also results in a decreased flow of cats and kittens to local shelters, helping to lessen overcrowding. In addition, they say, shelters save costs and staff time because fewer cats need to be housed, euthanized and disposed of afterward.

An additional result of the city's TNR program, say officials, is that cats are returned to their original territory rather than released in any location. If placed in unfamiliar territory, free-roaming cats may try to go back to their established colony and become lost, they say. Also, releasing cats at a location where they will not necessarily be provided with ongoing care may be considered a form of abandonment. The city of Tempe will not be providing these services, but will refer all feral cat complaints to the ADLA nonprofit.

Residents or businesses can donate to the Tempe-specific fund by contacting ADLA at 602-265-7729, ext. 101, or clandwerth@adlaz.org.

For more information, contact Tempe 311 at 480-350-4311; visit www.tempe.gov/outdoorcats; or check out the ADLA website at adlaz.org/

To request assistance with TNR services, visit adlaz.org/spay-neuter-hotline/outdoor-cats/new-request-for-tnr-services/

For those wishing to ensure pets are microchipped if they spend time outdoors, the Humane Society provides the service at vaccination clinics for \$20; Maricopa County Animal Control offers it at three Valley locations.



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Holocaust

From Page 4

partner, schools must host at least three events per year focusing on inclusion and anti-bullying, said Principal Tammy Thaete. Cielo's club advisers, teachers Hope Massar and Lauren Stewart, helped students invite Knoblauch.

"We need to share his personal story to help ensure the atrocities of the Holocaust never happen again," Thaete said. "Hearing a firsthand account is extremely meaningful for students, and they tend to think about the message long after the presentation is over."

Knoblauch's early childhood was happily filled with school, play time, sports, friends and the love of family. His father Leopold was a World War I veteran who was self-employed, and his mother Ruzia was a homemaker. The couple raised their children to give "110 percent" to everything, to hate no one and be proud of their heritage.

As Adolf Hitler came into power with his poison messages of fear and hatred, Knoblauch was just finishing third grade.

"The rhetoric started," he said. Referring to the oft-quoted line that a lie told often enough becomes the truth, he noted: "Hitler and the Nazis were expert liars."

Across Germany, free speech was threatened, books were burned and concentration camps were built, even as Hitler promised to "make Germany

great again," Knoblauch said.

The boy was threatened by bullies many times, but he refused to beg or cower. Rather, he said, he stood tall, asserted his pride and smiled widely.

Eventually, the bullying stopped.

In 1936, the Knoblauchs fled Germany for Poland and, for a time, their life was fairly normal. "Poland was my proving ground," he said. "I learned a lot, including to speak Polish, and I learned you can achieve anything you set your mind to."

But when the Nazis occupied Poland, the family was forced into the Krakow Ghetto, where they lived in a tiny apartment without showers, heat or blankets and very little food. They faced hard labor and the constant fear of death.

Knoblauch's parents pulled their children from school, and for 18 months they stayed in the apartment, except for Leopold, who rode his bicycle to work.

"A 10-year-old boy in a Nazi uniform said to my Dad, 'Get off that bike, that bike is mine,'" he said. "A 10-year-old boy had more power than a World War I veteran."

Knoblauch eventually went to work retrieving garbage from the streets of Krakow. He met various "upstanders," other prisoners and even Nazi soldiers who stood up for the persecuted at great risk to themselves. They gave him bread for his family and kept him out of the Nazi death camps by persuading authorities to give him work.

Not everyone was as fortunate, he noted, showing the Cielo community a photo of rail car in which Jews were transported to the horrific camps. The image brought a flood of emotions to parent

Matthew Figueroa, who's visited the Auschwitz camp in Poland, as well as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

"Seeing the rail car was tough," Figueroa said, turning to his fifth-grade daughter Sienna. "In the museum, you can walk through one and see the fingernail marks of people who were scratching to get out."

Knoblauch's dramatic memories were peppered with lessons that are as applicable today — to children and adults — as they were 80 years ago.

"Every day is a good morning, even if it's cloudy or raining," he said.

"You can breathe, you are alive, and you realize that life is a gift. It was given to you, and you have to cherish it."

Knoblauch emphasized the importance of words, that they matter, and he urged the students to always tell the truth. He encouraged them stand tall, be proud and keep a positive attitude. He reiterated the value of respect, of being an "upstander," and of contemplating and setting high goals.

That resonated with Sienna Figueroa, who hopes to become an actor.

"I feel like I want to take my goals and try harder in life," she said.

A special father-daughter moment happened when Knoblauch reminded the students to do their best because their parents won't always be around to take care of them.

"Sienna made eye contact with me when he said, 'I'm not going to be here forever,'" said Figueroa, tears in his eyes. "I was just telling her that this morning."

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Library

From Page 5

professors who no longer have room, people who are downsizing to a retirement home and a local used bookstore help keep the inventory flowing. Linoff acquired 40 boxes of art books from a former professor who was moving out of state.

"Private individuals are real good mainstays," Linoff noted.

About 15 percent of the titles come from the library itself and include books that no longer get checked out or that the library has multiple copies of and no longer has room to shelve.

A selection of books from the bookstore is also available in the Connections Café. The Barnes and Nobel/Starbucks vibe draws more than a few customers, including a contingent of regulars. "A brother and sister come here every week to play pinochle just to get out of the house," Linoff says. "There's a mystery book club that meets here too."

An adjacent classroom hosts lectures on a wide range of topics and packs a crowd.

Revenue from book sales sponsors the summer reading program and helps support the children's section of the library housed in the basement. From new books to replace worn copies to updating the play area and adding a conference room, the funds are put to good use.

But used book sales at Tempe Public Library weren't always the steam engine they are today. Years ago they consisted of a little nook in the back where patrons were on their honor to leave a donation in the money box after choosing a book. A few times a year, the volunteer charged with the operation held a large sale in the basement.

Friends of Tempe Public Library came to be in 1980 and the bookstore opened in 1990. Linoff, who alongside her husband once owned and operated an antique and book store on Mill Avenue, is in her element at the helm of the library's retail space.

"I love it—I love books," Linoff says. "You learn things you never knew about."

That includes what kind of books appeal to buyers. "Every day we never know what's going to come in the door," she notes. A medical book still encased in shrink wrap brought in \$500 that day. Three times a year, the store holds a bag sale. "We sell a bag full of books for \$10 and the last sale I think we sold 215 bags. So that's a good boost."

The next bag sale takes place Thursday, Dec. 5 through Sunday Dec. 8. There is a limit of five bags per day. Each week Linoff pens a poem that goes out to her email subscribers and tells them about upcoming sales.

"Whatever you can do to get people in the door," she laughs. "There are people who look forward to reading the poem."

Information: tempefriends@yahoo.com.

MCC

From Page 3

advanced pre-paramedic foundational courses and paramedic coursework, with his goal to get a job as a flight medic on emergency helicopter transport.

MCC's twice-weekly class will be held at its Red Mountain Campus, in addition to courses offered at its Southern and Dobson and Downtown Center campuses.

The program leads Arizona in the number of EMT candidates it readies for National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician certification and in the number of candidates passing the exam on their first attempt.

"The new (Red Mountain) facility is based on the best aspects of the EMT classroom and hands-on experiences used on the other campuses," said Chris Burrows, EMT

program director.

"This expansion is part of MCC's effort to locate medical programs to a new, 1,646-square-foot facility being created by a renovation of Acacia Village building on the Red Mountain Campus."

Information: 480-461-6309 or christopher.burrows@mesacc.edu.

A MESSAGE TO OUR READERS:

Please note that this issue represents the start of the second scheduled break in our year-round every-other-Saturday publication calendar.

The next issue you read will be published on Saturday, Dec. 7 — just in time for pre-Christmas shopping.

See you then!



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Bright holidays coming to Tempe arts center

The holidays just got brighter with an offering of free holiday events at Tempe Center for the Arts. Movies, a holiday art boutique and a selection of newly announced shows await those looking for a joyous spread of entertaining holiday cheer.

Dec. 7, 4 p.m., free — *A Christmas Story*, humorous tale of Ralphie Parker and his Red Ryder air rifle, or at least his efforts to get it. Rated PG.

Dec. 14, 4 p.m., free — *A Muppet's Christmas Carol*, in which Muppet characters retell the Charles Dickens classic, *A Christmas Carol*. Rated G.

DIVERSIONS

Dec. 21, 4 p.m., free — Double feature: *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, 1964 classic featuring a misfit reindeer and his friends as they look for a place that will accept them, rated G, and *Elf* — After discovering he is a human, a man raised as an elf at the North Pole decides to travel to New York City to locate his real father. Starring Will Ferrell (Buddy) and James Caan (Walter Hobbs). Rated PG.

Dec. 14 & 21, 3-9 p.m., free — Shop the TCA Holiday Art Boutique and discover made-by-hand holiday ornaments and cards, stocking stuffers, fine and craft jewelry, glass and metal work, scarves and mosaics, created

by local artists representing a collaboration with TCArt Shop.

Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m., \$25, \$35, \$45 adult / \$20 child (12 and under) — *Rhythmic Circus: Holiday Shuffle* A wildly imaginative, “not-so-silent night” featuring a perfectly untraditional holiday experience for the entire family — four world-renowned hoofers and a swingin’ seven-piece band inject the signature Rhythmic Circus style of rapid-fire tap into upbeat holiday classics. The troupe has performed its productions in more than 250 cities worldwide. Notable national performances include the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., an extended off-Broadway run at New York’s New Victory Theater, and the American reality television series *America’s Got Talent*.

Dec. 21, 7:30 p.m., \$25, \$35, \$45 adult / \$20 child (12 and under); VoicePlay: Warm-Up Dec. 21, 7:30 p.m. 6 p.m. pre-show reception included with ticket — The enormously entertaining five-piece a cappella group *VoicePlay* brings magic to the season with its unique sound. With creative twists on holiday classics, inventive renditions of modern hits and imaginative and hilarious theatrics using nothing but the human voice, *VoicePlay* rocks the house with an explosion of holiday fun and the promise of an evening filled with harmony, humor and heart.

Additional holiday programming available at TCA, for tickets visit tempecenterforthearts.com/holiday or call 480-350-2822.

Dec. 2 — Tempe Symphony Orchestra – Holiday Concert 7:30 p.m., free.

Dec. 3 — Performance with a View: ASU Saxophone Studio 10 a.m., free.

Dec. 5 — Arizona Wind Symphony: ‘Tis the Season Holiday Concert 7:00 pm | \$12 & \$15

Mike Massé in concert 7:30 p.m., \$30.

Dec. 5 — Flat 9 Entertainment: Phoenix Amplified Jazz Experience presents Ken Ford 8 p.m., \$40.

Dec. 8 — Hayden’s Ferry Chamber Music Series: Jasper Quartet 2:30 p.m., \$30 adults, \$10 students.

Dec. 13 — Tempe Comedy Series: Jonathon Gregory and special guests 7:30 p.m., \$10-\$25.

Dec. 20 — EDGE: *When I Fell in Love with Black Women: Holiday Edition* 6-7:30 p.m., free | Tempe Comedy Series: *Class Clowns*, 7:30 p.m., \$10-\$25.

Information: tempecenterforthearts.com or Facebook: @tempecenterforthearts. Twitter & Instagram: @tempearts.



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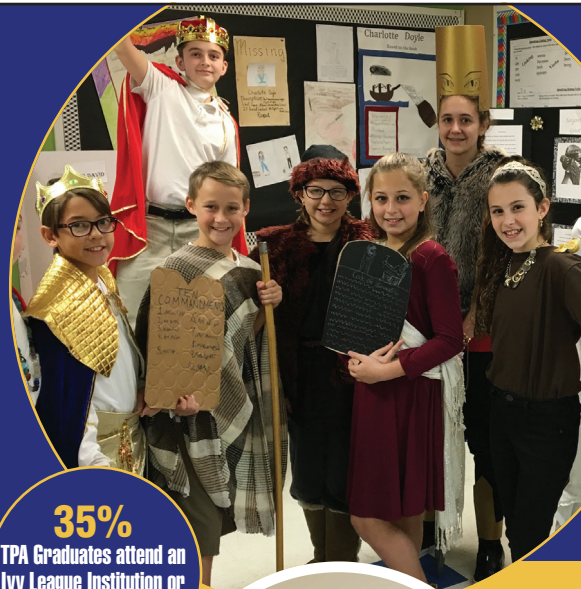
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Non-verbal strategies topic at Chamber fete

Developing skills in reading non-verbal communication, both in the workplace and with friends and family members, is the focus on a training seminar coming to the Chandler Chamber of Commerce on Tuesday, Nov. 19.

The program is designed to provide practical techniques, tools and strategies for understanding and using non-verbal communication for the highest impact and effectiveness.

Guests will hear tips on how to become a respected, influential and successful communicator, whether attending as a new or a seasoned leader.

Premise of the program is that the degree of career success one enjoys is virtually dictated by their skills in communicating with others on the job.

Objectives of the session include developing skills in reading non-verbal “tells” both in the workplace and with friends and family members; recognizing the limbic system and its role in non-verbal communication; dispelling the myth of “fight or flight”; spotting deception in any situation; and increasing positive communication designed to hit the mark every time.

Information: 480-963-4571.

Friday Night Live, Friday night fun

Members of Black Beards Delight band electrified the crowd as they took to the stage in Downtown Chandler for the premier of Friday Night Live, a new concert series that takes place the third Friday of every month, October through May at Dr. A.J. Chandler Park; the outdoor event drew many participants, such as the young family that settled in for a picnic and evening of music; other attractions, including a colorfully attired face-painter, also drew attention; from folding chairs to blankets, Downtown Chandler was the place to be for the first-ever Friday Night Live.

*Photo feature by
Billy Hardiman
for Wrangler News*



Don Kirkland

New Station #7 evokes memories

During the time I was a young reporter in L.A., I was assigned to cover two fires of historical proportion, one the disastrous Bel Air conflagration in 1961 that incinerated almost 500 luxury homes, the other four years later during the Watts riots that destroyed stores and changed thousands of lives.

At a wildfire of less intensity but equal peril in the South Bay area of Los Angeles County, I remember being among a group of reporters, photographers—and firefighters—who at least momentarily feared we might not be able to outrace the searing flames that had managed to surround us.

Luckily, the only loss was a fire truck that no one was able to salvage as we made our last-minute escape.

So my respect for fire of uncontrolled fury remains, even though advances in fire protection and fire readiness have greatly minimized the frequency and likelihood of similar disasters today.

Dropping by the opening ceremonies of Tempe's new Fire Station No. 7, on McClintock Drive just north of Warner Road, I couldn't help but realize how glad I am—not just for me but for those in nearby neighborhoods—that the response time of skilled, dedicated firefighters will now be faster than ever before.

Many of us know, of course, that some residents were opposed to the decision to use portions of a beloved city park as a site for the new station, feeling that they had every right to assert their early assumption—in fact, some felt it was a promise—that the open, grassy acreage adjoining their neighborhood would remain “their” park into perpetuity.

While those objections were being voiced, both before and after construction started, our office complex, directly across from GoDaddy, continued to be visited regularly by firefighters from a city of Chandler station that, as a result of longstanding mutual-aid agreements, were closer than those at the nearest Tempe station.

Mutual-aid agreements, in case you might not know, provide that firefighter/paramedic crews can be dispatched from whichever fire station is most closely available. That means, for example, that responders from Chandler can receive the order when a crew from the nearest Tempe station, either the one on Elliot Road west of Rural or the other on McClintock Drive south of Baseline, is on a call or otherwise previously assigned.

Simply said, in urgent situations, no one argues about what any local bureaucracy might have to say about whose responsibility it is to save lives and property.

As mentioned earlier, we observe regularly the arrival of Chandler-based emergency crews when a call comes for help from the kidney dialysis center in our Warner Century Plaza complex. We saw the same non-jurisdictional dedication to duty a year or so ago when a Ferrari sports car careened into our parking lot, smoke billowing from its mid-mounted engine and within seconds exploding into flames that left it a smoldering pile of carbon-fiber rubble.

While we are pleased—delighted, even—to now have our city of Tempe fire crews less than a mile away, we think it's important to extend thanks to those in neighboring West Chandler who, without ever considering whose job it was, were ready and willing to provide their property- and life-saving heroics without expecting any words of appreciation.

So now, belatedly, we say thank you Chandler...we wish we had said it earlier.





COVER PHOTO

The opening ceremony for Tempe's Fire Station #7 drew about 200 area residents as well as Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell, shown bumping fists with the day's smallest firefighter, young Christopher Collins. Also pictured, from left, Vice Mayor Lauren Kuby, Councilmember Joel Navarro and State Rep. Jennifer Jermaine, Dist. 18.

PHOTO SPREAD

The ceremonial ribbon cutting got underway; a young boy gets a better view sitting atop someone's shoulders; a child explores the new playground equipment at adjacent Estrada Park; a young boy and his family check out the fire truck parked at the new station.

SPORTS

With Alex Zener

All area high schools accepted in new AIA open-division playoffs

All four Tempe high schools made it into the state football playoffs, three with the help of the new Open Division championship playoff tournament voted into place last January by the Arizona Interscholastic Association Executive Board.

Basically, how it works is that during the regular season, all high school teams played as usual in their assigned division. At the end of the regular season, a combination of eight top teams in the big-school conferences were chosen from the 4A, 5A and 6A divisions to play in the Open Division Championship.

A computer-generated ranking system was used to determine the top eight 4A through 6A Arizona high school teams to play in the Open Division playoffs instead of in their originally designated division.

The team who wins the Open Division playoffs will be considered the overall

Arizona State Champion.

Each 4A through 6A division still has a 16-team playoff tournament with a Conference Champion named at the end but the shift of eight teams into the Open Division playoff tournament opened the door for eight teams who would normally not have made the playoffs, to play in the post season.

Corona, for instance, benefitted from the Open Division when four 6A teams, Chandler, Pinnacle, Hamilton and Chaparral, were selected to play in the Open Division Championship playoffs resulting in the Aztecs being the No. 16 seed.

McClintock moved up two places, to No. 11, in the 5A playoffs because only Centennial and Horizon advanced to the Open Division while Marcos de Niza and Tempe High School moved up to take over the No. 14 and No. 15 playoff spot,

respectively, in the 4A Division when Saguaro and Salpointe Catholic advanced to the Open Division.

Corona Football

It took a tremendous double overtime, 34-33, victory over cross-district rival Mountain Pointe on Nov. 1 to give the Aztecs a shot at their first post-season game since 2015 when they were classified as Division II for one season and lost to Marcos de Niza in the first round.

Otherwise, the double overtime win against Mountain Pointe resulted in qualifying the Aztecs for their first playoff game in over 10 years and was one well-deserved by the Aztec team and their fans.

The game against Mountain Pointe was a tight one with both teams tied at the end of each of the first four quarters and first overtime.

After **Jake Schmitt** returned a fumble to score a Corona touchdown, the rest of the scoring came in the second half when the Aztecs and Pride were tied at 7-7 entering the third quarter.

Corona scored first in the second half to go up 14-7 with around nine minutes to go in the third quarter.

The Pride quickly scored their own touchdown to tie the score at 14-14 midway through the third quarter.

With both teams pushing to score, Corona's senior defensive back **Tyson McLain** intercepted a Mountain Pointe pass with four minutes to go in the third

quarter.

Unfortunately, Corona's offense did not have much time to capitalize on the turnover before Mountain Pointe turned around and, almost immediately, intercepted an errant Aztec pass.

Still tied at 14-14 with less than four minutes to go in the fourth quarter, the Aztecs stopped Mountain Pointe on the 26-yard line forcing the Pride to attempt more than a 40-yard field goal which they missed turning the ball over to the Aztecs on downs.

The Aztecs took advantage of the momentum to move the ball down the field to their own 38-yard line before the two-minute warning sounded.

With less than a minute to go, **Anyale Velazquez** completed a pass to **Quade Swearingen** for a touchdown but a missed PAT put the Aztecs up 20-14 with under a minute left in the game. Enough time, apparently, for the Pride to score a touchdown and attempt to win the game on the PAT.

Mountain Pointe was able to not only survive a fourth down on their own 45-yard line trailing 20-14 with less than a minute to play, but also managed to complete a pass for a touchdown and possibly their only second win of the season.

With the game on the line, Mountain Pointe missed their PAT sending the game into overtime.

To add to the drama, the lights went out and it took 20 minutes to get them back on and continue the game.

The Aztecs, who had the ball first,

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scored on a passing touchdown and PAT to go up 27-20.

Mountain Pointe, on their possession, completed a five-yard pass to score a touchdown on fourth down. The Pride tied the game at 27-27 with a successful PAT sending the game into the second overtime.

Mountain Pointe got the ball first and scored a rushing touchdown but missed the PAT kick to go up 33-27.

The Aztecs came back with their own rushing touchdown to tie the game at 33-33.

Jazzy Schineller made her fourth PAT to help Corona win their last regular season game, 34-33, and make it into the first round of the 6A playoffs.

It was a great game for senior night and one the team and fans will remember until next season.

Corona's offense played well. Swearingen completed 14 out of 31 passes for 156 yards and Velazquez completed just one pass but it was a 40-yard pass to Swearingen for a touchdown making Swearingen the leading receiver on the team.

Swearingen used a total of seven receivers to catch his passes including **Eric Blackwell** who caught four passes for 48 yards and one touchdown and Schmitt who caught four passes for 47 yards.

The other five receivers included junior **Mitchell Coakley** who caught one pass for 17 yards, **Eric Brice** caught two passes for a total of 18 yards, **Bryce Douglass** one pass for 12 yards, **Jack Farley** one pass for 10 yards and Velazquez one pass for four yards.

Velazquez was the leading rusher on the team with 21 carries for a total of 64 yards and one touchdown.

Corona scored five touchdowns against the Pride. Two rushing touchdowns, one by Velazquez and one by junior **Scott Musgrave** and two receiving touchdowns, one by **Eric Blackwell** and one by Swearingen. One touchdown after a recovered fumble by Schmitt.

Senior **Jean Boyd III** had a kick-off return for 61 yards. Sophomore kicker **Jeff Lambert** averaged 35.5 yards on his four kickoffs and Velazquez punted the ball three times for an average of 23.7 yards per punt.

Corona's special teams may not have been as successful kicking punts and extra points without the specialist skills of senior long-snapper **Jack Bullard** who broke his foot early in the Mountain Point game but continued to play as the Aztecs' long-snapper for every kick, including the game winning PAT.

On defense, **Miles Sheppard**, Schmitt and **Alex Rafalski** led the team in tackles. Sheppard had four solo and eight assisted tackles for a total of 12 tackles while Schmitt four solo and six assisted for a total of 10 tackles. Rafalski had four solo and five assisted for a total of nine tackles.

Senior defensive lineman **Alden Moody** sacked the Pride quarterback one time and junior **Tudor Georgescu** was credited with one quarterback sack and one blocked punt against Mountain Pointe.

Unfortunately, as the No. 16 seed, the Aztecs played and lost at No. 1 seed, Red Mountain, 43 to 14 on Nov. 8 as part of the 2019 AIA State Football 6A Championships.

Highlights included Swearingen completing 18 for 31 passes for a total of 168 yards and one touchdown while senior **Issam Zrek** completed two out of four passes for 31 yards and one touchdown.

Blackwell caught one pass for a touchdown and Schmitt caught the other. Brice scored two points with a rushing conversion after the second touchdown.

On defense, senior defensive back **Demetrius Rock** led the team in solo blocks with five.

Corona finished the 2019 season 4-7, 2-3 in their section, ranked No. 19 in the 6A Conference.

Swimming & Diving State Tournament Results

Corona had 21 swimmers qualify for and compete in the Division I state tournament held Nov 7-8 the Kino Aquatics Center in Mesa where the girls team finished 14th out of 22 schools and the boys team placed 18th out of 24 schools.

The top individual finisher on the girls team was sophomore **Samantha Arredondo** who took sixth place in the 100-yard freestyle race and ninth place in the 50-yard freestyle race.

"Samantha will be honored at the Tempe All-City banquet for winning the 100-yard freestyle event at the Tempe All-City meet on Oct. 31," said Corona's head coach **Ron Musgrave**. The girls had relay teams finish in the top 15 spots, including the 200-yard freestyle team with **Aspen Smith**, **Kirsten Marquis**, **Hannah Latto** and Arredondo, who finished in 9th place at 1:42:12.

The 200-yard medley relay team of **Daytona Duggan**, **Hannah Latto**, Smith and Arredondo took 15th place with a time of 1:57:17.

Duggan, a freshman, qualified and competed in the preliminaries in the 200-yard individual medley and the 100-yard backstroke.

Smith, a senior captain, qualified for and competed in the preliminaries in the 200-yard freestyle and the 100-yard butterfly while fellow senior, **Emma Stewart** qualified for and swam in the 100-yard butterfly preliminaries.

Lauren Swindler competed in the 500-yard freestyle preliminaries while **Dalee Higgins** and **Sofia Magana** qualified in the girls diving event.

The Aztecs top individual finisher for the boys team was senior **Tres Walker** who finished sixth with 405.20 points in the diving event at state.

"Tres is one of our senior team captains," said Musgrave. "He won the diving event at the Tempe All-City meet."

Sophomore **Cedric Brooking** placed 13th in the boys 200-yard individual medley race.

"Cedric had a great season," said Musgrave. "Besides swimming the 200-yard individual medley race, he had an opportunity to swim in a second individual race, the 100-yard breaststroke where he tied for 16th place. He

— Continued on Page 19



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unfortunately lost in the rare swim-off race, even though he swam a good race but was out-touched at the finish line and, therefore, finished in 17th place.”

Freshman **Colin Campbell** finished in 14th place and fellow freshman **Reed Lucero** took 16th place in the 100-yard breaststroke. Both also qualified for and swam in the 200-yard individual medley preliminary race.

“Colin made a courageous comeback from shoulder tendonitis, which limited his training for nearly two months during the season,” said Musgrave. “We are hoping for a pain-free 2020 and have high hopes for his success next year and beyond.”

“Likewise, Reed, a training friend of Colin’s, also suffered with shoulder tendonitis for six weeks this season,” said Musgrave. “He performed quite well this season, as well, despite his limitations.”

The Aztecs 200-yard freestyle relay team of **JJ Ragsdale, Joel Valdes, Jack Miller** and **Lukas Floyd** finished in 12th place with a time of 1:33.28 at the state meet.

Five other members of Corona’s boys team qualified for and competed in the preliminaries but did not finish high enough to swim in the finals.

Miller, one of our senior captains, qualified in the 100-yard freestyle, the 100-yard backstroke and the 50-yard freestyle.

“Jack, as one of our senior captains, was very supportive of the 200-yard medley and 200-yard freestyle relay teams,” said Musgrave.

“**Jacob Flores** was another senior captain who, as a distance freestyler, swam in the 500-yard freestyle event,” said Musgrave. “He won his heat in the preliminaries and finished 22nd overall.”

“Senior **Carter Janssen** swam in the 100-yard butterfly and swam that same stroke in the 200-yard medley relay. He was also on our 400-yard freestyle relay team,” said Musgrave.

Erica Herrera qualified for the state meet and swam the 500-yard freestyle and the 100-yard breaststroke in the preliminaries.

Elijah Stewart qualified in the diving event from Corona.



Coach Joe Sverev, Sam Supriyaslip (Fr., Backstroke), Ethan Arroyo (Sr, Freestyle) Hayden Porter (Jr., Breaststroke), Corbin Bray (So., Butterfly) and Eli Allen (Sr., Alternate.)
— Photo courtesy Ryan Bray

Marcos de Niza Swim and Dive Team

The Padres had the boys 200-yard medley relay team of senior **Ethan Arroyo**, junior **Hayden Porter**,

sophomore **Corbin Bray** and freshman **Sam Supriyaslip** qualify for and compete in the Division II AIA Swim and Dive State Championship preliminaries held Nov. 7 at Skyline Aquatic Center in Mesa.

It has been several years since Marcos has had swimmers compete at the state level so the team was hoping to place high enough in the preliminaries to qualify for the finals on Nov. 8.

Unfortunately, the team finished with a time of 1:48.77 which was much faster than their seeding time of 1:49.67 but just outside the window to qualify as one of the top 16 teams to compete in the finals.

The team made the alternate list but was not called upon to compete in the finals.

Two members of the 200-yard medley relay team also qualified for individual events at the state meet.

Bray qualified for the 100-yard butterfly preliminaries as the first alternate and was selected to swim. He finished the preliminary race with a time of 00:59.26 which was a personal best for him but not fast enough for him to qualify to swim in the finals the next day.

Supriyaslip swam in the 200-yard individual medley preliminary race and finished with a time of 2:10.47 which was not fast enough to swim in the finals.

Freshman **Michael Flaherty** qualified in the diving event but did not make it into the final dives.

Corona Volleyball

Corona’s girls volleyball team finished the 2019 season with a 34-9 overall and 9-1 section record making it all the way to the semifinals of the AIA 6A State Championships as the No. 2 seed before losing in the semifinals on Nov. 9 to Basha, the No. 3 seed in straight sets, 25-12, 25-15 and 25-19.

The Bears came out swinging and the Aztecs looked to be caught on their heels and never seems to be have an answer or be able to recover enough to put together much of an attack.

Corona was led in kills by senior outside hitter **Mady Noble** who had eight kills while fellow senior outside hitter **Nicole**

Newlin had four kills compared to the Bears two hitters, one a recent transfer, who put down 13 kills on 24 attempts hitting .375 while her senior teammate hit .409 with 11 kills on 22 attempts.

Senior **Morgan McNulty** was credited with two kills in only two sets while junior opposite hitter **Anna Jackson** had four kills.

The team, overall, had eight block assists. Two each by senior middle blocker **Sadie McRae**, sophomore **Anita Babic** and freshman **Ella Lomigora** then one each by McNulty and Jackson.

Sophomore setter Babic had 16 assists and one service ace while senior setter **Ashley Hayden** had the other service ace.

Senior libero, **Becca Morse**, led the team, as usual, in digs with 11 digs.

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More **DIVERSIONS**

L.A.'s Fairfax district was home to epic Thanksgiving Day film

By M.V. Moorhead

For nearly 20 years, it's been a Thanksgiving tradition in our house, once the massive portions of food have been ingested and we've collapsed on the couch, to watch the 2000 film *What's Cooking?*

It's an ensemble piece, set on Thanksgiving in L.A.'s Fairfax neighborhood, which cuts between four families of different racial and ethnic backgrounds—Vietnamese, Hispanic, African-American and Jewish—as they prepare the big dinner and navigate family drama and revelations.

Funny, sweet and poignant, the movie is at least as refreshing and meaningful now as it was when it was made.

What's Cooking? was directed and co-written by Gurinder Chadha, a Kenyan-born Brit of Indian descent. Needless to say, cultural diversity is a recurrent theme in her work. This year, on Tuesday, Nov. 19, another film directed by Chadha will be released on video: *Blinded by the Light*, an exuberant coming-of-age comedy-drama-musical set in Luton, England.

Based on the youth of writer Sarfraz Manzoor, it's the story of teenage boy, Javed (Viviek Kalra), in a traditional British-Pakistani family in the '80s who was inspired to a career as a writer through his enthusiasm for the lyrics of Bruce Springsteen.

Despite the film's modest budget, Springsteen allowed the filmmakers to use his music, and Chadha ingeniously turned the Jersey legend's work into the soundtrack for a Brit adolescence.

I had the chance to chat with Chadha when she visited the Valley recently in connection with the release of *Blinded by the Light*, and she described the balancing act of her directorial approach:

"I've always worked with music a lot in my films; I love music. The challenge here was in making a film about a writer, and making that cinematic. But at the same time I had a big responsibility to Bruce, not only because he gave me carte blanche on his catalog, but also because all those songs mean something to him, and Bruce fans. So my challenge was to direct a movie where I used the music so that it stood up to what the intention was of the songs in the first place, so I didn't disappoint Bruce, and didn't disappoint Bruce fans. But at



the same there are a lot of people who aren't Bruce fans, so I had to make sure it wasn't just about the music."

Even though she was there to talk about *Blinded by the Light*, I couldn't resist asking Chadha about the scene in *What's Cooking?* that brings tears to my eyes every year, when we hear an a cappella version of the Beach Boys song "Wouldn't it Be Nice?"; in the movie's context the lyrics take on an unexpectedly moving, emotional cultural resonance. Said Chadha:

"I found that version, and I really wanted to play it at the end of the movie. Everyone was like, it's never going to happen. You're not going to be able to afford a Beach Boys track. You'll have to get permission from Brian Wilson...so I wrote him a letter, based on what my movie was about, what I was trying to do. I was trying to show different communities in L.A. Movies show people not getting on; I saw people getting on around me in L.A. It was my first time in L.A., and I saw that and I was struck by that. The letter went out as a fax, and everyone was like, you'd better have a Plan B, and blow me down, I think it was like an hour later, not even a day, we got a fax back saying sure, she can use it. It was incredible. It turned out he's from L.A., and he really liked the sentiment."

It seems like a Thanksgiving showbiz miracle, but the current Chadha project experienced a similar generosity; notes Chadha:

"The way that Brian responded to my letter was similar to the way we got permission from Bruce on *Blinded by the Light*."

If you're looking for a pleasant after-dinner Thanksgiving video double feature, *What's Cooking?* and *Blinded by the Light* might just leave you thankful.



Ty Ng of Twin Tiger Films, Thai beauty pageant queen Anna Aleeza and Michael Pollack at the Asian International Film Festival Arizona press screening at Pollack Tempe Cinemas.

— Photo courtesy Asian Media Network

Pollack Cinema hosts Dec. Asian Film Fest

Valley real estate entrepreneur Michael Pollack plans to bring a first-of-its-kind celebration to town Dec. 6, 7 and 8 when Pollack Tempe Cinemas hosts the first annual Asian International Film Festival Arizona.

Award-winning and acclaimed films from 10 Asian countries will be screened, including the opening-night presentation of *Dark is the Night*.

In addition the showing of this film from the Philippines, introduction of its director and three of the actors is also anticipated. Similarly, actors and directors from other foreign films to be featured at the festival are expected to attend the groundbreaking event.

"We are thrilled to host the first Asian International Film Festival Arizona at Pollack Tempe Cinemas," said Pollack. "We have a vibrant and growing Asian community in the Phoenix area. This will be a great event for the community and highlight some of the best films being produced in Asia."

The festival will feature films from countries including India, South Korea, Afghanistan, Japan, China, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, the Philippines and Kazakhstan.

In conjunction with the Pollack Cinemas event, AIFAA also launched My Film, a new short production competition geared toward film students and aspiring moviemakers submitting short films shot on their mobile phones.

A first prize of \$1,500 will go to the winner.

"We want to highlight the creative, thought-provoking and inspiring films being developed throughout Asia and bring that artistry to Arizona," said Ihman Esturco, CEO and founder of AIFAA and an award-winning photographer.

"We plan on building upon this first-year event and make our event one of the top Asian film festivals in the country."

Additionally, the organization plans to use its December film festival to launch First Edition, an international competition seeking submissions from filmmakers highlighting the Asian continent.

Information: www.pollacktempecinemas.com or www.aiffa.org.

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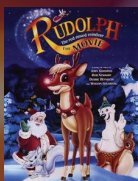
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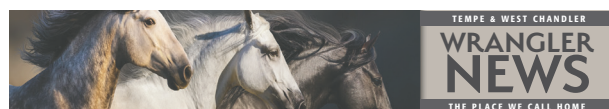
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Mission del Sol hosts Nov. 17 safeTALK stress workshop

By Nicholas Johnsen

Any loss of life is tragic—suicide, especially so. Though it's a difficult subject to ponder, with even more difficult conversations involved, members of one well-known Tempe institution are showing the community exactly how big an impact awareness can make.

Mission Del Sol Presbyterian Church, located just west of McClintock Drive on Warner Road, plans to hold a safeTALK training workshop 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 17.

The workshop is designed to educate community members about how to effectively intervene in a potentially life-threatening situation, and how to handle symptomatic signs that could lead to suicidal ideation.

The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention cites suicide as the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S., with over 47,000 Americans counted as victims in 2017. The East Valley is in no way exempt from these somber statistics, and the Mission del Sol community is trying to get ahead of the curve. Church Pastor David Hodgson notes that there are actually two church events occurring in response to the suicide epidemic, the first one a sermon on the wounds of war.

"Post-traumatic stress is important to focus on for the military and police," he said. The connection between PTSD

and suicidal thoughts is clear, he says, and it's crucial to show compassion in any way possible. Hodgson is conducting the sermon with Tempe Coalition program director Hilary Cummings, who has a strong personal stake in the complex issue. The coalition is dedicated to "reducing youth risk behaviors and promoting health & wellness" per its mission statement.

Cummings explained that, recently, the organization underwent a shift to be more encompassing of anything detrimental to the mental or physical health of the community.

Cummings will be leading the safe-talk workshop planned for the 17th. Cummings began working in suicide prevention and intervention in 2005 within Native American communities across Arizona, and has since grown deeply connected with the issue.

"When someone is in crisis, they can't see what is going on. Something as simple as asking 'how are you' and listening for the answer makes all the difference," she told us.

Cummings said she couldn't emphasize enough the importance of this mindfulness. In the majority of cases, engaging in a caring dialog allows those struggling to feel loved. She added that if someone is in an apparently dangerous time of crisis, emergency services should be contacted without hesitation.

Mission del Sol and its tightly woven community have emerged as an ideal place to encourage this type of dialogue. Nobody is safe from the occasional bad day—Tempe Coalition and the church are partnering to make sure that day doesn't result in events that become life-changing for all those involved.



Just dropping in for the party . . . The dramatic arrival of a cadre of military parachutists seemed to capture perfectly the space-age significance of dedication ceremonies for Northrop Grumman's new, futuristic missile-defense development site. Crews had recently put finishing touches on the 633,000-square-foot facility, which will provide space for 2,500 employees, many of whom live in nearby Tempe and West Chandler. Gov. Doug Ducey was on hand for the event, officially recognizing the expanding company's worldwide initiatives in design, manufacturing and testing of space-launch vehicles.

— Photo by Billy Hardiman for Wrangler News



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Briefly . . .

Dog friendly event Dec. 1 at Watershed

The Watershed, 5350 S. Lakeshore Drive in Tempe, will host Dog Day Afternoon from noon until 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 1.

Owner Dan Scott says all dogs are welcome to join their owners for an afternoon on the waterfront patio. "We literally have the best dog-friendly patio because we have a lawn," Scott said.

The event will feature a special dog treat menu plus giveaway items from Four Peaks.

"It's the biggest, best dog patio in the city," Scott said.

"I can fit 300 people out there so 300 dogs, too. Bring your dog."

Tax-season volunteers being recruited

Tempe Community Council's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program is in need of volunteers for the 2020 tax season.

VITA is a free service for low- to moderate-income taxpayers that operates a supersite in partnership with the city of Tempe, Arizona State University's W.P. Carey School of Business and the Internal Revenue Service.

Available volunteer positions include tax preparer, greeter, screener, quality reviewer and interpreter. Diane Watkins, VITA program coordinator, noted that every hour volunteered returns \$500 in federal refunds to a low-income taxpayer.

Editor's note: After receiving many inquiries over the years, Wrangler News is now making space available for obituary placements. Please email editor@wranglernews.com or call 480-966-0837 from 9-5 M-F for format requirements, deadlines and rates.

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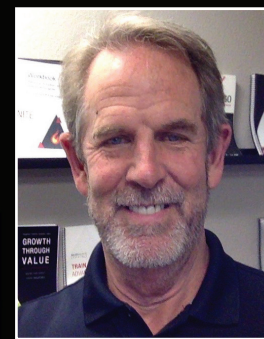
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