

WRANGLER NEWS

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ESCAPE TO PARADISE . . . LONGTIME TEMPE RESIDENTS MARK MOOREHEAD AND HIS WIFE LYNDA EXLEY LONGED FOR COOLER CLIMES AND RELOCATED TO SEDONA EIGHT YEARS AGO. READ HOW THEY'VE FARED, WHAT THEY MISS MOST . . . AND WHAT THEY LOVE ABOUT ARIZONA'S MYSTICAL RED ROCKS.

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Virtual town hall rolls out school reopening plan . . . for now

Doctor joins district staff in outlining new procedures, safeguards

By Joyce Coronel

Editor's Note: Related coverage on Pages 4 and 5. For the longer version of this article, visit wranglernews.com

Town Hall meetings typically draw a crowd, with audience members eager to take to the microphone, make their point and ask a question. Applause and jeers regularly interrupt.

Of course, this is anything but a typical year and the Tempe Union High School District's town hall meeting July 14 took place virtually with a panel of TUHSD staff and leadership responding to questions that were emailed earlier.

Megan Sterling, executive director of community relations for TUHSD, moderated the event and said the district set up an online form for interested parties to submit questions that could be "potentially answered."

"We received close to 700 submissions—699, to be exact—and the majority of them were from parents," Sterling said. A table provided by the district showed 517 questions were submitted by parents. The rest were

sent by students, teachers, staff members and others.

Let's just say the community had a few questions after the way the fourth quarter ended last spring. "Keep Our Kids in School—Tempe Union," a Facebook page that sprang up several weeks ago, has proven to be a hotbed of comments expressing the frustration and anxieties of parents faced with trying to balance their children's educational needs with genuine safety concerns. Many members of the group tuned into the TUHSD YouTube channel to watch the 40-minute town hall meeting.

Dr. Kevin Mendivil, TUHSD superintendent, took to the podium first.

"Before we begin asking questions, I want to frame our session tonight. First, Gov. Ducey's executive order from June 29 delayed the start of



Dr. Kevin Mendivil at TUHSD town hall.

in-person instruction until Aug. 17," Mendivil said.

"At this time there is also a very reasonable expectation that this delay may be extended as COVID-19

numbers fluctuate. The statewide mandate is an important underpinning to the answers presented tonight."

He emphasized that if viewers' questions were not answered, they should contact their individual school's administration. The goal of the forum, he said, was to clarify the available options, however other issues also were addressed.

Classes are scheduled to begin online Monday, Aug. 3, with in-person instruction available Monday, Aug. 17—at least for now. "We remind you that all information we share tonight is current as of today," Mendivil said.

A July 13 letter signed by 100 members of the Arizona State School Board and health care professionals urged Gov. Doug Ducey and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Kathy Hoffman to delay the start of in-person classes until at least Oct. 1.

Mendivil alluded to the escalating number of COVID-19 cases in the state. "At this time, there is also a very reasonable expectation that this delay [until Aug. 17] may be extended as COVID-19 numbers fluctuate. The statewide mandate is an important underpinning to the answers presented tonight," Mendivil noted.

Parents are faced with two choices for the coming school year at TUHSD: A completely online, virtual model or in-person instruction. Students will be allowed to switch between the two models at the end of the first semester.

Sean McDonald, the district's assistant superintendent for operations and student safety, said that all students and staff on campus will be required to wear face coverings. A shield may be used but only in conjunction with a mask.

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Parents react to latest plan for coming school year

By Joyce Coronel

The Tempe Union High School District's virtual town hall meeting generated a wide array of commentary, as seen on the Keep Our Kids in School Tempe Union Facebook page. No parent or student representatives were allowed to attend the meeting, but hundreds watched it unfold via the district's YouTube channel.

Lori Bastian, a school board candidate and the mother of three Corona students, was one of those who took in the 40-minute forum.

"I thought the information was a good start, but I was surprised it didn't last longer so they could answer more questions," Bastian said. "I heard from many parents who said many of the questions they asked weren't addressed, leaving many of us frustrated. I'm hoping that the communication between the district and parents improves substantially."

Bastian thinks the district's plan to have learning that heads each school's bell schedule will be more engaging and will push students to get up early and participate. "Families with multiple children could find it challenging accessing the internet all at the same time, though. Not to mention having that many devices available."

Megan Sterling, executive director of community relations for TUHSD, said that prior to the closure of schools in March, the district distributed about 2,400 laptops to students in need.

"During the past few weeks, we have been in the process of having the laptops returned and checked in, so they can be re-imaged, updated and ready to go for the 20/21 school year," Sterling said. And, she noted, this year's incoming freshman class will receive laptops they are to use while they are TUHSD students.

"We'll do this on a rolling basis for the next four years, so that by the time this group of incoming freshman are seniors, every student in TUHSD would have their own district-issued device," Sterling said.

Jon Ladd's son Kobe, who is autistic, will be a sophomore at Corona this year. Ladd says the high school experience for Kobe has been a positive one so far. "He got all A's and B's in the classroom for the first time in his life.

"He was a starter on both of the football and the baseball teams. He was invited to birthday parties for the first time in his life and even took a date to the homecoming dance," Ladd said.

Once school was suspended last spring due to the pandemic, things started to fall apart and "all of those great relationships he had built went dormant until club baseball and high school football workouts started this summer," Ladd said.

"I don't think I realized how down he was mentally until I saw how happy he was to have his friends back. This is where the town hall came up short for me."

Ladd said it's common knowledge that autistic teens require structure and routine in order to function in life. "The district still has given us no idea of what it will take for them to feel it is safe enough to return to school," Ladd said. "If they at least told us the rules or guidelines that would allow school or keep us at home I could make an informed decision on what is best for my son."

TUHSD Superintendent Kevin Mendivil noted at the meeting that the pandemic is a fluid situation and the district's plans are subject to change. If the start of in-person instruction is delayed, classes will continue in the online until students are allowed to return to campus. Arizona schools chief Kathy Hoffman, in a press conference July 15, said she is "not optimistic" about an Aug. 17 start date for in-person instruction.

Online learning, however, would be impossible for Kobe, Ladd said. "He is up past midnight most days during regular school just to keep up." Kobe goes to school early many days to seek help from teachers on the material he doesn't understand.

Ladd says he does worry about Kobe getting the virus or bringing it home to him, but there are inherent risks with both online and in-person instruction. He says each family's situation is different and each needs an opportunity to decide what's best. With a relatively low risk of death from COVID-19 for those under age 20, in-person instruction is a chance Ladd is willing to take for



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Kobe's sake.

"The risks of him not being able to support himself if he doesn't complete a high school education are extremely high."

Bastian pointed to the Oct. 1 start date the Arizona State School Board is advocating.

"I'd like to know why the governing board members picked that date. It seems arbitrary and premature to push the start date out that far for on-campus learning," Bastian said.

"The whole discussion has become highly politicized and divisive. Instead of listening to their whole community and working towards a compromise, many Arizona governing board members seem determined to divide the community."

Governing board members, she noted, take an oath to be non-partisan. "I pray that we can eventually unite and come up with solutions that will work for everyone."

Ladd said he's still not sure what path he will choose for his son. He's considered sending Kobe to a private school but he doesn't want to take him away from his friends. Then there's the significant financial cost of a private education. "My son has big plans to be a college baseball pitcher. He works four hours a day to achieve that goal and stays up past midnight multiple nights a week to maintain the grades it will take to get there. I just wish we had the information to make the educational decisions we need to make," Ladd said.

About 2,700 students attended Corona last year. So far, about 600 are signed up for the online learning model at the school.

Some 1,400 students attend Marcos last year. At press time, 267 were signed up for Tempe Union Online. All TUHSD students will attend class virtually during the first weeks of school.



Jon Ladd and his son Kobe, an incoming sophomore at Corona del Sol High School. — Photo courtesy Jon Ladd



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COVID survivors offer a lifesaving gift to other victims

By Janie Magruder

When Sally and Tom Hartley celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary in New York City in early March, the new coronavirus had not yet taken a bite out of the Big Apple. Social distancing, frequent hand sanitizing and masks were not the norm, and the city was open for business.

The Scottsdale couple dined with friends in typically crowded and small Manhattan restaurants, and enjoyed "Ain't Too Proud," a Broadway musical. Tom, an avid cyclist, thought nothing of taking a spin class in a Peloton studio packed with panting, sweating bike enthusiasts.

But on March 12, as the Hartleys prepared to return to Phoenix, everything changed: COVID-19 cases were starting to spike in New York City, and everything was shutting down. The couple hoped they'd gotten out in time, but once home, they still took precautions of leaving their luggage, shoes and clothing in the garage for scrubbing, sorting and laundering.

That was Thursday. Two days later, Tom developed mild symptoms of the virus followed by a quick and nasty progression — 103-degree fever, terrible headache, ragged cough, achiness and fatigue. Sally began to disinfect their home, preparing their guest room for herself so Tom could quarantine in the master bedroom.

Turns out she needn't have.

"It hit me like a thunderbolt on Sunday night,"

Sally said. "I had an asthma attack, I starting spiking a fever, my nose began running, I had a sore throat and a terrible cough."

In both Sally and Tom, COVID-19 — which was confirmed in testing two weeks later — raged for about five days. Sally, an asthmatic who has survived two brain surgeries, slept 20 hours a day, while Tom couldn't get off the couch and lost his senses of taste and smell, an issue that plagues him to this day.

"It was as sick as I've been," said Tom, 70.

The Hartleys were fortunate, though, in that neither required hospitalization and both have recovered. The couple wanted to help other COVID-19 patients and soon learned through testing that their blood carried the antibody to do so.

They are among more than 370 individual donors who since April 15 have donated convalescent blood plasma at Arizona Vitalant, formerly United Blood Services. The plasma is removed from the blood of people who have recovered from, in this case, COVID-19, then transfused into patients still battling it.

The Food and Drug Administration has identified and approved this plasma treatment as an "emergency investigational new drug," in the absence of vaccines and proven treatments for COVID-19. It is viewed as a promising new tool that may give a seriously ill person more fight against the disease by using antibodies that are active against it.

As COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths

have risen in Arizona over the summer, the need for convalescent plasma is critical.

"The requests from hospitals in Arizona for convalescent plasma is currently outpacing donations by 400 percent, so more donors who have recovered from COVID-19 are desperately needed to help save the most gravely ill," said Sue Thew, a Vitalant spokeswoman.

Vitalant, Dignity Health in Arizona and other organizations have joined forces in a federal government-funded program led by Mayo Clinic to collect and provide convalescent plasma to hospitalized patients. As of July 16, nearly 39,000 COVID-19 patients around the country had received the therapy, according to Mayo Clinic.

The therapy has been demonstrated as safe for patients, said Dr. Omar Gonzalez, infectious disease consultant and hospital epidemiologist for Dignity Health in Arizona. Its efficacy has yet to be proven, however.

"We offer our patients the option to be part of the plasma study, and a lot of them are very interested," Dr. Gonzalez said. "Many of them already know about it and come in with the idea in their mind that they would like this intervention."

A plasma donor must meet eligibility criteria, such as having had COVID-19 documented by a lab test, an antibody test or clinical diagnosis, and being symptom-free for at least 14 days. The collection

— GIFT, Page 8

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Gift

From Page 6

process takes a little longer than a typical blood draw, but otherwise isn't much different, Tom Hartley said.

He and Sally read about the convalescent plasma program as they were getting well and decided they wanted to pay it forward to people who became much sicker than they did.

"Those of us fortunate to get through this and come out on the other side safely have something to give," Tom said. "It's the one thing we can do to really help people who end up in the ICU."

They have donated plasma five times, and hope to be able to do more. However, researchers are learning that the antibodies fade possibly within 90 days, so time is of the essence.

"People who have recovered from COVID-19 need to start donating convalescent plasma as soon as possible and do it as frequently as possible," he said.

Those who haven't been hit by the virus still can do their part by donating blood, which helps accident and burn victims, patients facing heart surgery and organ transplants, and those battling cancer.

By mid-March, nearly 2,700 blood drives had been cancelled across the country due to concerns about congregating amid the outbreak at workplaces, college campuses and schools, the American Red Cross reported. This resulted in an estimated 86,000 fewer blood donations. And that was four months ago.

"It's also very important for members of our community to take personal responsibility, to know the importance of practicing social distancing, wearing a mask and practicing good hygiene," Dr. Gonzalez said. "These things are so important to mitigating the infection and disease." He added that nobody should still think that young people are immune to the disease.

The Hartleys lost six weeks to COVID-19 last spring, and they don't want to go back down that path again. But there's no guarantee they won't be re-infected, so they continue to stay home, wear masks when out, social distance, wash their hands often and disinfect their home.

If COVID-19 darkens their door again and hospitalization is required, there's no doubt where they stand on receiving convalescent plasma therapy.

"In a New York minute," Sally said.

To learn more about donating convalescent plasma, visit uscovidplasma.org, vitalant.org/



Dr. Omar Gonzalez, an epidemiologist and infectious disease consultant for Dignity Health in Arizona.
— Photo courtesy Dignity Health

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Tempe, Chandler home sales ignore pandemic slump

Special for Wrangler News

The recent pandemic-induced slump temporarily slowed the spring housing market in Tempe and Chandler, but the area is catching up fast.

In fact, looking at the year-over-year total sales through mid July, there is hardly a difference. It seems that even the virus can't slow down this train.

The big story is inventory or the lack thereof: down over 20 percent since just last month and down over 40 percent since this time last year.

For sellers this is great news as the supply-and-demand model is pushing home values to record highs locally and across the Valley.

This week Tempe had only 98 single family detached homes actively for sale.

Compare this to 165 homes for sale one year ago. The median sales price this month is \$386,000 compared to \$348,500 last year, a 10.8 percent year over year increase.

Days on the market keep decreasing while the list-price-to-sales-price ratio moves ever higher.

"We recently listed a home for \$325,000 in Tempe's 85283 zip code," said Realtor Erika Lucas-Goff of Lucas Real Estate



"We felt that we were pushing the price a bit, but we had four offers over asking price in the first 48 hours," she noted. Chandler had only 187 single family detached homes actively for sale in one recent week.

"Compare this to 237 homes just last month and 444 homes one year ago."

The median sales price this month is \$390,000 compared to \$352,000 last year, a 13.6 percent year over year increase. In 85226 the average price per square foot is \$209 compared to \$184 last year.

While this is tough news for buyers, the pain is

softened by decreasing mortgage rates which provide more purchasing power.

Just this week the average 30-year mortgage hit historic lows below three percent.

Said Lucas-Goff: "We hear whispers of foreclosures due to the rising number of forbearances, but we don't see that happening anytime soon."

"Homeowners are sitting on too much equity to be forced into foreclosure. They can simply sell at a premium if they get too far behind."

The fall housing market is right around the corner, according to records. This is usually a popular time for sellers to list their homes as the heat gives way to cooler weather. "It will be interesting to see if this rare summertime surge in sales can continue into the fall," said Lucas-Goff.

"Hopefully we'll get some more inventory to the market to help offset some of the overheated demand." As for how Realtors are handling the new normal: "We are taking precautions with new technologies, more virtual meetings and distanced showings. It's definitely different, but we feel lucky that we are able to be open for business and to continue to help our clients buy and sell real estate," Lucas-Goff said. *Information: Erika Luca-Goff, the LucasGroup.com or 480-390-4992.*

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Little 'normal' as high schools kick off 2021 sports season

By Lee Shappell

High school football practice fields across Tempe and Chandler look like boom towns gone bust after the oil ran dry.

School gyms are locked, the volleyball nets still in storage closets. Running trails are used only by rabbits and coyotes.

There is no normal. There hasn't been for months in high school sports since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Training camps for fall sports – football, cross country and girls' volleyball – should be in full swing now with the first competitions less than a month away.

As with the balance that politicians must weigh between public safety and survival of the economy, there is a balance, too, with high school sports. Thousands of people in Arizona have paid with their lives during the pandemic. High school athletes paid only with their canceled spring sports seasons. They now have a wary eye on the upcoming fall sports seasons that have been delayed and could be delayed further – or even canceled.

High schools do not have the resources that professional and big-time college sports have to isolate athletes and frequently test them for the virus as they attempt to proceed with their seasons.

So the prep warriors are losing team training as well as recruiting opportunities as the fate of their upcoming seasons remains out of their control. The Arizona Interscholastic Association, which is the governing body of sports in the state, along with

school district and athletic officials and health-care professionals continue to evaluate and revise best practices and time lines. What's feasible? What's safe?

The Seton Catholic Prep athletic department is representative of the limbo at high schools across Chandler and Tempe.

The athletes, for whom an athletic scholarship might be the only way they get a college education, the waiting game is excruciating.

Typical of them are volleyball player Rachael Martinez and baseball player Rocco Gump.

The 5-foot-8 Martinez, 16, of Chandler, made the varsity as a freshman two years ago. Last season as a sophomore, she was named 4A Desert Sky defensive player of the year and all region at libero by AZPreps365.

She also is an outstanding student. Martinez already has the eye of college recruiters. She has been in contact with NCAA Division 1 Power 5 schools and Ivy League schools.

She does not yet have a firm offer in place. She

was counting on summer exposure in club camps, which were canceled, as well as in the upcoming season.

"I am looking for academic and athletic supplements to my college tuition," she said.

Athletes can self-promote on HUDL and MaxPreps, online services where video of past seasons can be posted for college recruiters.

"I'm having some difficulty with that right now because the last time I played in a major tournament was last season, 2019," Martinez said. "Recruiters like to see the athlete in person, what the person looks like and how they play, their body language, things like that that are really important."

Live scouting can better tell recruiters what kind of teammate a player is, how they take coaching and what their temperament is when things aren't

going the best.

"At Seton, one of the things we really focus on as a team are soft values – grit perseverance, determination – on every single play," Martinez said. "I think that's what recruiters look for because



Rachael Martinez

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they want to recruit a kid that's going to have a positive impact on their program, someone who wants to go in a gym and work every day. Those intangible aspects of their personality are something that you can't recruit off of HUDL."

Currently, the AIA has set Aug. 17 as the first day that teams can begin practice for fall sports. The first week that competition may begin is Sept. 7.

But those are moving targets, based largely on directives by Gov. Doug Ducey. Football teams already have canceled early-season games in August, typically against out-of-state schools.

Gump and his Seton baseball teammates have more time because theirs is a spring sport. However, the 6-foot-2 Gump, 17, of Chandler, goes into his senior year after having just lost his junior season last spring that could have been critical to his recruiting fortunes. He was just coming onto the scene after a fabulous sophomore season on varsity, where he hit .453, had a .513 on-base percentage and stole seven bases. AZPreps365 named Gump to the 2019 4A Desert Sky all-region first team at shortstop and to 4A second-team all-state. He has interest from Grand Canyon, San Diego State, University of San Diego, California-San Diego and Loyola Marymount.

"I'm still looking to find the right fit for me," Gump said. "It's definitely been difficult. Junior year was going to be big for me in terms of recruitment."

"I continue to put in my work on my own and keep encouraging our younger guys to stay socially distanced but still get their work in. That's kind of all we've got right now."

Those hurt most by the pandemic are underclassmen – juniors, sophomores and freshmen – who are trying to make their mark. Recruiters knew most of the incoming seniors years before the pandemic hit.

"The pandemic is an experience that's new to everyone," Martinez said. "College recruiters are trying to figure it out just as much as the athletes are, so it's important to really recognize that the best way to go through this process is to just be patient and communicative with all the coaches. We're all just playing it by ear right now."

James Johnson, the Seton Catholic girls' volleyball coach, has about a half-dozen college prospects on his team, including Martinez. He is keenly aware how important sports are in the lives of his young athletes, with whom his communication is largely via email or Zoom.

"With us, it's student-athlete, it's not athlete-student," said Johnson, the 4A Desert Sky region coach of the year

last season. "They are students and they're using volleyball to get to their schools. In theory, that player may not have the money to go to the school that they want to go to, so it's a big challenge among the many challenges that COVID-19 is showing us right now."

"My message to them, and it's a simple message, is be better today than you were yesterday. I tell them that life is going to throw you curves, and this is one of those curves. You need to keep focused on being better, being better in school, being better as an athlete. Sometimes that involves your workouts at home and taking the time and the discipline to get up off the couch to go out in your driveway, your backyard or a park by yourself."

Gregg Buchanan, the Seton Catholic athletic director, believes that by following guidelines with social distancing, hand washing and mask wearing that there is a good chance fall sports will proceed, albeit with a late start and shortened schedules, even if students are at home taking their classes online in the fall.

"I want what's best for our kids," Buchanan said. "Athletics mean so much to several of our students and students across the country. It's a huge, big piece of their learning environment, it's a huge, big piece of their life skill sets. We just pray that we will have that opportunity to go forth."

Martinez and Gump understand that public safety is the guiding factor in decisions regarding high school sports in the 2020-21 school year.

"Obviously, the safety of the country is of the utmost importance," Gump said. "But I think sports help a lot of people, not just in our area but all around the world. Sports have an amazing impact on people. I know people who wouldn't be the people they are without sports. That's very important and shouldn't be looked past."

Martinez agrees that sports teach kids about confidence, leadership and communication skills.

"Being part of a team has definitely taught me so many life lessons that you can't teach anywhere else," she said. "That's what I really miss from volleyball, for sure, being with my team, that close connection."

"Even though the season is coming up there is still a lot of fluctuation going on with the COVID numbers. So it's a really tough call to make. If there is a way you can prevent the spread as much as possible I'm all for going back to play, but I also have concerns about the better health of the world. If we all work together, we can make it happen."



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Moorehead, above, points to well-known vortexes; Exley, right, finds serenity in couple's backyard labyrinth; offroading, below, to a new adventure.

Reflections . . . From turmoil to tranquil, move brings new perspective to lives of former Tempe couple

Article by Don Kirkland | Photography by Billy Hardiman

IMark Moorehead and Lynda Exley might have been described during their days in Tempe as the typical Valley success story. He a well recognized adjuster for USAA high-value insurance claims, she a doctoral-degreed writer/editor, including a stint editing sections of Wrangler News. Their son, Michael, grew up in Kyrene schools and graduated from Corona del Sol, later himself to travel along his mom's educational pathway to become a Ph.D nuclear engineer.

So their home in Pecan Grove Estates seemed the perfect environment in which to spend their future days in retirement, a time not far from becoming reality.

Only a couple of problems: The area's growing congestion, the summer heat, the increasing demands on the leisure time of friends and family—all formed the talking points for an ongoing discussion about the possibilities of relocating to, well, a better place.

What emerged within the ensuing months was the couple's decision to buy a home in Sedona, visit it regularly for the foreseeable future and then, when the time for retirement finally arrived, to move there permanently.

And so it has been for a nearly a decade now. The couple commuted to the Village of Oak Creek for the

first five years, home to their weekends-only visits, then to a rambling ranchstyle home with a breathtaking red-mountain view. Which is where they now live full time.

So how have these past few years been? Have they missed the energy, convenience and big-city lifestyle they left behind?

Moorehead has to pause a moment while he ponders an answer.

"Well, we miss the Pollack discount movies, the quick and easy access to healthcare—and Yupha's Thai restaurant." He laughs. "Really, there are some things you just don't ever get used to not having," he admits.

In the place of those familiar underpinnings, however, have come new favorites.

The friendly atmosphere of a small town, the pleasure of a slower lifestyle, the freedom from bumper-to-bumper freeway traffic, even the dark-sky rules that open a nightly panorama of star-studded heavens overhead.

It was the latter, though, that seemed to provide the best glimpse of what is perhaps Sedona's most inviting phenomenon: a sense of what both Moorehead and Exley see as an environment that wraps its residents in a blanket of communal beneficence, not to mention what they consider a oneness with nature.

Moorehead became so enamored, in fact, of the area's efforts to retain its natural beauty that soon after



relocating he ventured out to several environment focused volunteer groups such as Keep Sedona Clean that works to minimize litter; another involved with reducing light and noise pollution; and yet another that helps guide Yavapai County's future growth.

In his resultingly limited spare time, Moorehead made new friendships, joined hiking groups, developed an interest in gems and minerals; even explored the remote, antiquity-laden hideaways that once had led the home to the pre-Colombian Sinagua Indian tribe and its remarkable cave dwellings.

Lynda, in the meantime, became an increasingly avid student of Sedona's legendary vortexes, described



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as swirling centers of energy that are said to be conducive to healing, meditation and self-exploration. Like other devotees, she says she feels inspired, recharged and uplifted after experiencing the mysterious cosmic forces that are said to emanate from the red rocks. So much so, notes Moorehead, that they constructed a rock-encircled therapeutic garden in which they relax, meditate and ponder the wonders of their new world. A far cry, it goes without saying, from the bustle they left behind nearly a decade ago.



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'Incredible' women give back to AZ kids

Throughout her nearly three decades living in West Chandler, Leslie Burchi never lost her passion for friendship, personal development and a desire to help those in need.

And thereby lies Burchi's connection with Women In Networking and Service, better known as sheWINS, an East Valley group of business professionals whose efforts are focused on giving back to Arizona children by raising funds and donating critical items to Childhelp.

The nation's oldest and largest nonprofit advocating for abused and neglected children, Childhelp focuses on helping to diminish the ranks of the estimated five children who die each day from abuse and neglect in the United States. Childhelp has worked for over 60 years to combat this epidemic.

Locally, SheWINS is a group of professional women of all ages and industries who come together each week to support each other, network and give back to the community. In early 2020, SheWINS selected Childhelp as the beneficiary of their annual gala taking place in April 2021.

Lynn Fordham, co-founder of SheWINS, said her group's efforts have become a rewarding enterprise for all involved.

"Because of our passion to give back, the decision to support Childhelp was unanimous. After touring the advocacy center in central Phoenix, an emotional

experience to say the least, we moved forward at full-force to support their mission and the children they serve."

As the coronavirus pandemic peaked, Fordham said, SheWINS recognized Childhelp's dire need for face masks as they struggled to keep up with the demand of the hundreds of children a month walking through the doors of the Childhelp Children's Advocacy Center of Arizona Dedicated to Linda Pope. To date, SheWINS has donated over 400 handmade masks for the staff and children brought to the advocacy center for services, Fordham noted.

Since 1998, in Arizona, CCCAZ has served over 140,000 abused and neglected children by providing treatment, intervention and investigation services. Recognized as a best practice agency, it continues to serve as a model for advocacy centers nationwide.

"In addition to choosing Childhelp as the beneficiary of their next event and donating beautiful handmade masks, the SheWINS women have visited the advocacy center with their cars loaded with food, toys and brand new clothes for the children," said Kathy Emig, director of Wings and Arizona chapter coordinator at Childhelp. "These incredible women have given so much during these trying times and we could not be more grateful for their love, passion and support."

Information: childhelp.org.



2,000 new jobs coming to W. Chandler

The arrival in West Chandler of nearly 2,000 new jobs is the forecast offered by officials from The Douglas Allred Company, which has now broken ground on two additional office buildings at its Park Place Development in the Price Corridor.

Both of the three-story buildings will cover 150,000 square feet and be located on the northeast corner of Price and Willis roads.

In the past few years, officials say, the Douglas Allred Company has completed multiple significant leases in Chandler at the Park Place Development.

Some of these leases include Northrop Grumman with 633,000 square feet; Voya Financial and Allstate, each with 150,000 square feet; CVS Health with 98,000 square feet; Toyota Financial with 63,000 square feet; and LoanDepot with 53,000 square feet.

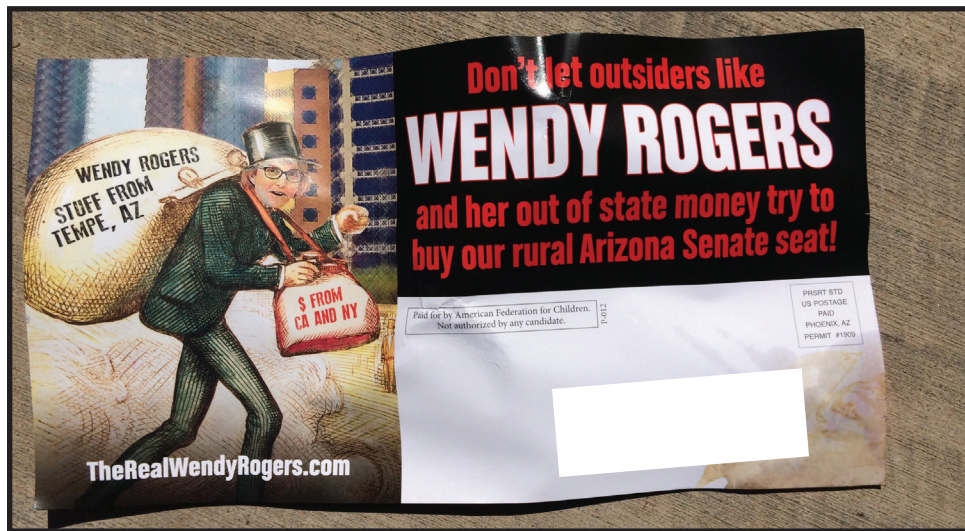
"We would like to thank the Douglas Allred Company for their continued

investment in Chandler and the future employment opportunities these office buildings will bring," said Mayor Kevin Hartke.

"Chandler's ability to develop talent locally and attract talent from around the world is a significant factor in the continued corporate site selection momentum we are experiencing."

Designed by Balmer Architectural Group, this project marks yet another partnership between Willmeng and Douglas Allred Co., adding to the already planned and built 1.53 million square feet in Park Place, comprised of office, manufacturing and retail buildings. Willmeng Construction was selected as the general contractor.

The project will include two three-story buildings totaling 300,000 square feet and an 800-stall parking structure. Upon completion, the project will offer 10- to 12-foot ceiling heights, high-quality finishes and a six per 1,000 parking ratio.



A political mailer received in northern Arizona household takes aim at Wendy Rogers, who is running for the District 6 seat in the Arizona Senate; campaign signs in Payson tout Rogers' support for President Donald Trump.

— Wrangler News staff photo

Tempe link ignites war over candidate's home

Political activists in Arizona Legislative District 6 have stirred a pre-election hornet's nest over a run by candidate Wendy Rogers for the a seat in the State Senate, based on claims Rogers' legal residence is Tempe rather than the Flagstaff address she claims.

An open letter received by district voters notes that Rogers has campaigned for several local and U.S. offices over a number of years, so far without success.

The letter, which was sent to residents of Yavapai, Coconino and Navajo counties, accuses Rogers of running "ruthless" campaigns and of living in a small mobile home in Flagstaff rather than in Tempe, where detractors say she owns a large home and operates a home inspection business, shown on her LinkedIn page as HouseMaster.

Rogers reportedly has confirmed that she hopes a win in the Arizona Senate race would give her the momentum she would require to needs to pursue another campaign at the federal level. Again, detractors say Rogers' social media postings indicate no particular focus on issues that affect state governance.

According to one report, Rogers' campaign is heavily funded by out-of-state donors, resulting in it having become one of Arizona's most costly elections ever.

An open letter to area voters touches on several issues that the senders say form the basis for their opposition, an edited version of which says:

"In Arizona's Legislative District 6 and Arizona's Congressional District 1, we have watched firsthand for the past four years the

dirty, unethical campaign tactics of candidate Wendy Rogers, who has destroyed primary Republican opponents and cost our Congressional District the opportunity to defeat a weak incumbent Democrat.

"Rogers' first campaign in Arizona's Legislative District 17 in 2010, then in Arizona's Congressional District 9 in 2012 and 2014, and then in Arizona's Congressional District 1 in 2016 and 2018 and has never won a general election race.

"Rogers has slandered good Republican candidates in races she has run and is currently the subject of pending civil lawsuit accusing her of defamation and invasion of privacy. The lawsuit resulted from Rogers' unfounded allegations of sex trafficking against her Republican opponent in our Congressional District primary election in 2018. The Arizona Police Association held a press conference on August 9,

— LINK, Page 18

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From Page 17

2018, in support of her opponent and Arizona Congressman Andy Biggs, former Arizona Congressman Matt Salmon, former Maricopa County Attorney (and now Arizona Supreme Court Judge) Bill Montgomery and Andrea Kadar, a Shared Hope International Ambassador, denounced Rogers' sleazy, unfounded attacks.

"Now in 2020, Rogers is running in Arizona's Legislative District 6 primary race to unseat a proven, conservative Republican incumbent Senator and Chairman of the Senate's Education Committee, Sylvia Allen. Senator Allen has a distinguished track record of supporting education of Arizona children and more choice for Arizona parents, defending the Second Amendment, fighting for Arizona's border security, freedom of speech, the unborn, smaller government, less regulations, free markets, fair taxes, personal property rights, the mentally ill and the homeless.

Rogers claims her residence is a 600 square foot mobile home in Flagstaff; however, a search of Maricopa County property records reveals she owns in a 2,900 square foot home in Tempe which she has owned since 1996. This "primary" residence, according to Maricopa County property tax records, is less than a mile from her home inspection business on Rural Road also in Tempe. Why does where she lives matter? Arizona Revised Statute requires a candidate for legislative office live in the District

they are running to represent. In Rogers' case, she lives in Arizona's Legislative District 26, but is running in Legislative District 6. All three incumbent legislators in Legislative District 26 are Democrats. When Rogers was asked why she would not run in her "home" District, she responded she could not win there. Rogers does not understand our unique water, forest, ranching, access to public lands and recreation issues in rural northern Arizona and Legislative District 6.

"Why should District 6 voters support a candidate that is the polar opposite of the conservative values and ethics we hold dear? If Rogers is willing to engage in democrat-style, unethical campaign tactics to win, how can voters trust her as a legislator representing the good people of Arizona's Legislative District 6? The decision of who to vote for is yours and yours alone. Arizona's Legislative District 6 voters can send a powerful message to Rogers: you are an unethical "carpetbagger" and do not represent the values of our Legislative District."

In an email response to a Wrangler News inquiry, Rogers campaign staffer Eric Frizzell referred to a May 29 letter from the Arizona Secretary of State's office "validating Wendy's residency."

Additionally, Frizzell noted:

"Wendy lives in Flagstaff, votes in Flagstaff, her license is in Flagstaff, her VA clinic is in Flagstaff, she was awarded Veteran of the Year from her local VFW in Flagstaff. Wendy has a second home in Tempe that she goes to see her kids and grandkids from time to time. This is completely normal for Arizonians (sic) to have two homes."

Hot days, cool relief Contreras agency, United Way launch drinking water drive

With temperatures in Tempe and West Chandler soaring, area homeless and underprivileged face the deadly danger of dehydration with no means to alleviate it.

Mary Contreras State Farm Agency is partnering with Valley of the Sun United Way and Bryant Commercial Realty to address the need.

"We are especially hearing from the homeless shelters, schools and UMOM New Day centers of the critical need for pure drinking water for these precious people in our community during the hottest time of the summer months," Mary Contreras said.

"Please join us in this worthy cause and make it a community-wide event."

Donations of bottled water may be dropped off at Mary Contreras State Farm Agency, 2145 E. Warner Road, Suite 1, Tempe.

Boys & Girls clubs offering kids away-from-home study sites

The Boys and Girls Clubs of the Valley have stepped up to offer assistance is offering an extended program for distance learning is available for students ages 5 to 18 and offers.

Weekly program fees range from \$60-100 per week for members age 5-12. Members ages 13-18 can attend the Club for free. Financial assistance available. A Boys and Girls Club annual membership fee of \$30 is required to attend. Meals will be provided at no additional costs.

Students must bring their school-provided computer to the club and safely log into their virtual learning schoolwork. Masks required and safety measures must be followed. begins. *Information: bgcaz.org*

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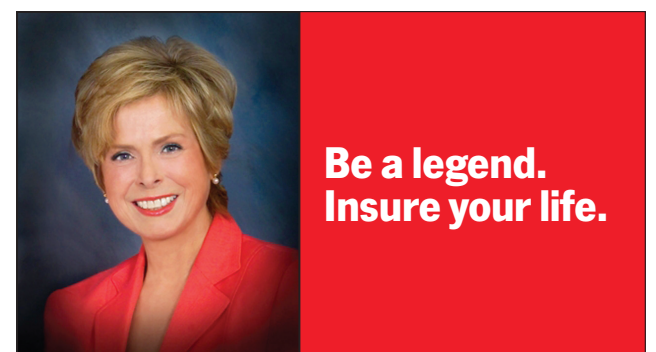
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Summer treat: A holiday from cooking



Great Harvest co-owner George Walston — *Wrangler News photo*

Christmas may not be on most people's minds these days, but Great Harvest Bread Co. is celebrating anyway.

From July 20 to July 25, the popular South Tempe bakery will be collecting food for those in need.

Customers are encouraged to bring canned or boxed food items to donate to the Salvation Army Food Bank. As a thank you, Great Harvest will give donors a free loaf of its cornerstone honey whole wheat bread.

Christmas decorations, holiday products and music, as well as such prize giveaways as gift baskets and free bread, will add to the festivities.

Tempe Great Harvest bakery is at 1730 E. Warner Road.

"During the holidays, we always hear about people who need help just putting food on their family table," says bakery co-owner George Walston.

"We want to bring the holiday giving spirit to the community year round and focus on those that need our help," he said. "So we're asking customers to donate non-perishable canned or boxed food items."

Also available for sale during the event will be products traditionally made during the holidays, like Ginger Cookies and Cinnamon Babka. Other special items will include Cranberry Orange Bread, Berry Christmas Swirl and Mexican Chocolate Cake Bread.

Holiday tunes will fill the store, which will be decked out with Christmas decorations and cheer, according to Walston.

The Walstons took over operation of Tempe Great Harvest in August 2008. The company is known for handcrafted breads made with freshly ground whole wheat purchased from family owned farms. The neighborhood bakery concept is designed to offer an array of legendary fresh baked breads and sweets, as well as specialty items during the holidays.

Great Harvest mills its whole wheat berries daily. The fresh flour is used within two days to guarantee the best taste and nutritional value.

Great Harvest is open 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 7 a.m.-5 p.m. on Saturday.

TempeGreatHarvest.com or on Facebook at Great Harvest Bread Tempe, AZ or @TempeGHB.

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Tempe Mask Maker member Deanna Smith; Councilmember Doreen Garlid; Vice Mayor Randy Keating; and Tempe Strategic Management Office team members Director Rosa Inchausti and Wydale Holmes kicked off the community outreach efforts at Tempe Community Action Agency.

Volunteers from TCAA stuffed more than 500 food boxes with masks, stickers and prevention information.

— Photo courtesy City of Tempe



Agency launches diverse virus campaign among city's most vulnerable

Tempe is using data and the accompanying analysis of people-focused values to do intensive community outreach to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

As of July 15, more than 2,000 packages of masks, stickers for the kids and bilingual materials for staying healthy were being distributed to people living near and within the Apache Corridor. While considered one of the city's most diverse neighborhoods, it is said to be among the poorest. It also is home to more than 3,000 students.

Kick-off for distribution of the COVID-19 materials took place at Tempe Community Action Agency, with volunteers stuffing food boxes. Materials also went to an area homeless facility.

Looking to its COVID-19 wastewater data dashboard, area demographics and zip code data of COVID-19 cases from the Arizona Department of Health Services, the city of Tempe identified a portion of the community to receive health and safety messages.

Tempe is thought to be the first city in the nation to use data analytics and community values to do targeted outreach.

The area involved is designated Area 6 on the COVID-19 wastewater dashboard. It spans from Rural Road to approximately Smith Road along Apache Boulevard.

According to city of Tempe public information officer Kris Baxter, more than 8,000 people live in this area in student housing, single family homes and apartments. There are also more than 200 businesses in the area.

While Area 6 is not showing the highest signal of COVID-19 presence in the wastewater on the dashboard, it is home to some of Tempe's most vulnerable residents.

Statistics reveal the following:

- People ages 20 to 44 have the highest infection rates for COVID-19. More than 3,200 students live in Area 6.

- Area 6 is very diverse, with 23 percent of the population classified as Asian, 21 percent Hispanic and Latino and more than 7 percent Black.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put some members of racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting COVID-19 or experiencing severe illness, regardless of age.

- People in Area 6 have a median household income of \$22,000 compared to Tempe's median household income of \$54,000. More than 60 percent of the children in this area live in poverty. Those with fewer resources often have less personal protective equipment.

"The City of Tempe has innovatively positioned itself to use COVID-19 wastewater testing as a way to identify specific areas of viral concentrations within its zip codes," said Rosa Inchausti, Tempe Strategic Management and Diversity Office Director.

"The science and data strengthen our ability to combat this virus and our city values provide the equity lens from which we lead," Tempe partnered with Arizona State University on posters and other student-oriented materials. Students will receive

maroon- and gold-themed reminders. Businesses can download some materials, such as floor decals or social distancing posters.

Noted Tempe Fire Medical Rescue Chief Greg Ruiz:

"We are taking this opportunity now to help those people in our community who may need it most – and helping the rest of the community that they come into contact with. We're reminding students that they can get this virus. We're reminding people to do the basic things the CDC recommends. We understand that this is not new information for most people, but it is a timely reminder from your community to put on that mask and to social distance."

Residents not living in student housing will also receive a list of places to go for human services support. As reports of drug and alcohol abuse have been on the rise, Tempe Coalition has provided some materials as well.

Tempe Community Action Agency has been called an important partner for this project. The non-profit located within Area 6 has a food pantry and a homeless relief center. Bags of masks, stickers and information will be handed out to people who go there for help.

Also, Tempe Mask Makers has crafted 200 washable masks for TCAA to distribute. The local group has made and distributed more than 2,000 masks. They accept donations and are looking for people to help them.

Information: tempe.gov/coronavirus or the COVID-19 dashboard at covid19.tempe.gov/.

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We hear you . . .

On our photo gallery of people at Tempe Town Lake:

Ugh, it is still too hot to paddle around the lake.

— Penny Donovan

Oh, boohoo. The rest of us can stay home, so can they.

—Kel Li

On our story about parents protesting at TUHSD:

Our classrooms are overcrowded as it is. Demanding five days a week means no social distancing. This puts both kids and teachers and administrators at risk. Why in the world would we expect staff to be willing to risk their lives for the crappy salaries they receive?

Proper protocols must be established to keep everyone safe. Attending in person one day a week with the rest online would be fine with me if that is what is determined by public health and scientific evidence—not by politicians. It's ludicrous to expect all schools to reopen at full capacity anytime soon. We need to get a grip in AZ and recognize that we are in the midst of a horrible wave of disease and death unlike anything anyone of us has ever seen before because too many people refused to wear masks and behave responsibly. It's time to get a grip and figure out the best ways to SURVIVE this pandemic.

— Anna Lunaria

On our exclusive interview with Tempe Police Chief Sylvia Moir:

I have worked closely with police departments in. Phoenix, Scottsdale and for the last thirty years of my career, in Tempe. My experiences were unique, in that I worked with all levels of the departments.

I know Chief Moir and many of the members of the Tempe Police Department. As a fifty year resident and retired city employee, I am very confident that our police were screened and have been well trained. What people may not understand, is that every single day, these officers face situations that are unexpected.

Their lives are on the line, requiring instant reactions.

While they have been thoroughly screened and trained, no one can predict what they will do in life threatening situations. We have seen too many situations that are unacceptable, resulting in abuse and even death. I am also aware of police officers losing their lives because of unanticipated events. Much needs to be done to make sure the events, like we have seen don't happen. The solutions are not simple.

We are dealing with human beings and spur of the moment situations. What we can and must do is to stop the racism that has been the cause of much of our problems.

— Ron Pies



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Film Fare . . . with M.V. Moorhead

Oldies better than ever as pandemic TV watching gains new popularity



M.V. Moorhead

Last week somebody sent me an email with the subject line "COVID goes to the movies." Inside were photos of movie theater marquees.

One of those, for a theater called The World, read "The World is Temporarily Closed"; another, "No close encounters of any kind." And yet another: "Cinema closed until

real life doesn't feel like a movie."

Perspectives from folks who, under normal circumstances, would be providing a way to momentarily escape the doldrums of our daily lives. Not so much these days, it appears.

It's also quite true that movie-going, for those of us who prize it as one of our favorite forms of recreation, is among the most painful of COVID-era prohibitions. Some of us are trying to adapt to the

proposed:

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes—Marilyn Monroe, who's certainly preferable even if she's not blonde,

cast too, from Mary Astor's femme fatale to Peter Lorre, Elisha Cook Jr. and the wonderful Sidney Greenstreet as the rest of the shady characters.

Shane—Alan Ladd plays the title character in this superb western by George Stevens; the debates it dramatizes over the place of guns in our society have yet to be satisfactorily resolved. The ever-hapless Elisha Cook, Jr. unforgettably meets with more misfortune again here, this time from scary gunslinger Jack Palance.

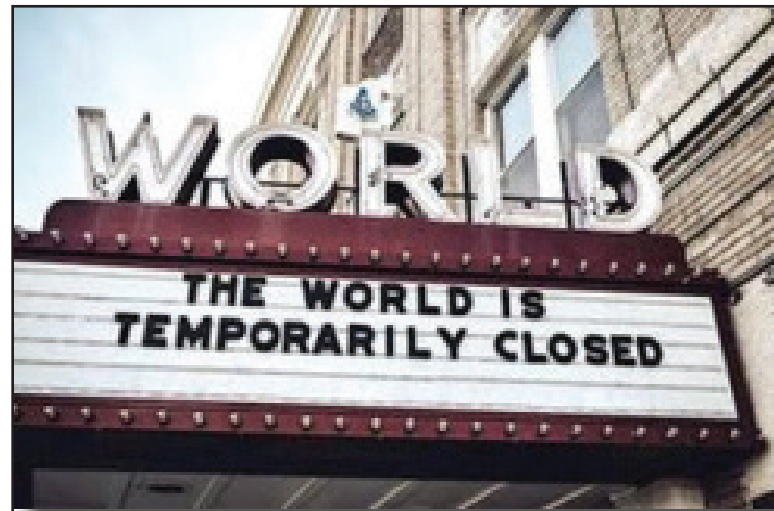
Rio Bravo—One of John Wayne's most persistently enjoyable westerns pits him, drunken deputy Dean Martin, youngster Ricky Nelson, oldster Walter Brennan and a few others against the forces of bullying evil. It was filmed at Old Tucson Studios.

Rebel Without a Cause—Nicholas Ray's eccentric melodrama about a youth who gets into trouble despite coming (gasp!) from a "good" home was one of the handful of lead roles by the brilliant, short-lived James Dean. He's pretty electric.

East of Eden—Dean was also powerful in this adaptation of the

John Steinbeck novel, from the same year (1955).

It's a Wonderful Life—Well, it's still July for a few more days; why not celebrate Christmas now by watching Frank Capra's bighearted tale of the incalculable value of every person?

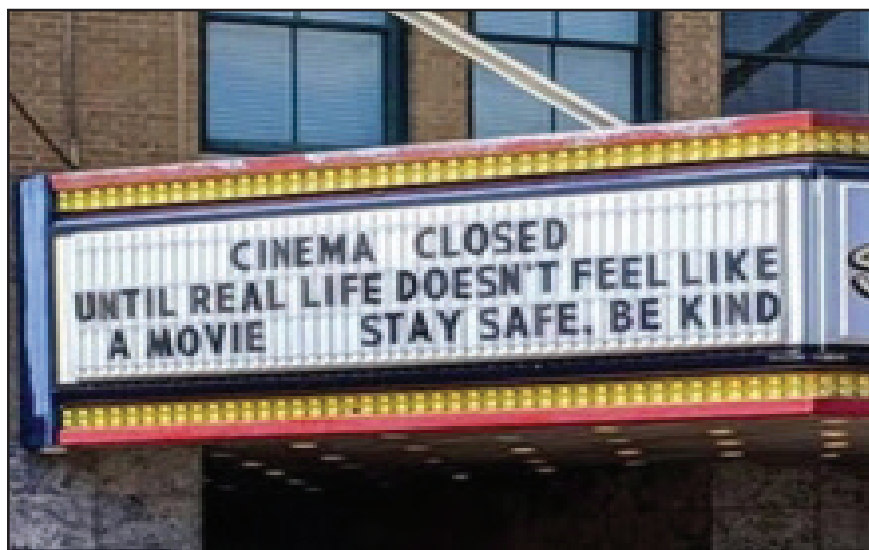


if you ask me, and Jane Russell get into mischief on an ocean liner in this 1953 musical directed by Howard Hawks. My wife loves this movie for the performance of child actor George Winslow as the croaking "Mr. Spofford."

Casablanca—Almost synonymous with "classic movie," this tale of WWII intrigue and magnanimity in the North Africa city hinges on the glamour of Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, of course. But

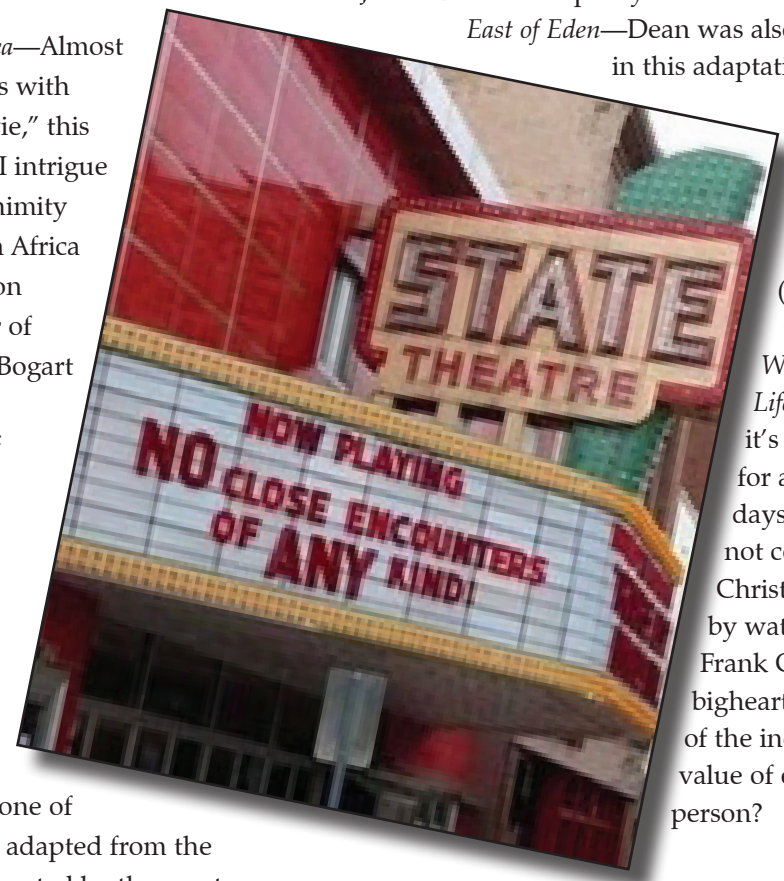
it gets much of its juice from the marvelous, multicultural supporting cast, especially Claude Rains as the cheeky police captain.

The Maltese Falcon—A slightly earlier display of Bogie's star power, this time in one of the prototypical noir mysteries, adapted from the Dashiell Hammett novel and directed by the great John Huston. This one has a great supporting



current shortage of new movies, not to mention the inability to go out and see them at the multiplex even if they were being released—by, among other things, revisiting some of the enduring classic films of earlier decades Or, in some cases seeing them for the first time if we hadn't yet gotten around to them. Best of all, they're all available on Netflix or Amazon. And... it's not a bad way to pass a pandemic.

Here are a few of the obvious greats, rattled off with a friend from the top of our heads; dozens or hundreds of alternatives could be just as validly



For information on Tempe's coronavirus response efforts, visit tempe.gov/reopening, tempe.gov/coronavirus or call Tempe 311 on weekdays at 480-350-4311.

Free counseling for community

Are you feeling anxious about the pandemic? Is your family experiencing a new level of stress? Is your teenager struggling with this new reality?

Free stress management counseling is available through the city's CARE 7 crisis response team. Residents can receive up to three sessions focused on understanding stress, developing coping skills and finding hopeful solutions to manage life in the time of coronavirus.

Call CARE 7 at 480-350-8004.

For more details: tempe.gov/CARE7.

Smart watering tips

As much as 50 percent of the water we use outdoors is wasted due to inefficient watering methods and systems. Help your landscape transition from the summer sizzle to fair fall with as little water waste as possible:

- Turn on your irrigation system and walk the yard to look for leaks and inefficiencies.
- Water established plants deeply and infrequently to

ensure deep root growth.

- Water before sunrise to reduce water loss from the sun and heat.
- Place rock or wood mulch over the soil surface to save water and reduce weeds.
- Gradually reduce watering frequency as we move into fall weather.

Visit tempe.gov/conservation or call 480-350-8351 to request a Landscape Watering Guide or schedule a free, virtual water consultation with a Conservation Specialist to discuss specific recommendations for your home and landscape and any rebates that can help.

WHAT WORKS CITIES GOLD 2020

Tempe lauded for using data in city operations

The City of Tempe has been recognized for achieving 2020 What Works Cities (WWC) Certification at the gold level.

WWC certification evaluates how effectively cities nationally are managed by measuring the extent to which city leaders incorporate data and evidence in their decision-making.

WWC is a national initiative launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies in 2015.

Tempe is one of eight U.S. cities and the only Arizona city to achieve gold certification.

In 2016, Tempe began the cultural transformation of using data to inform strategic policies and operational decisions.

During the yearlong certification assessment, the city demonstrated measurable advancements on foundational data practices, representing Tempe's commitment to advancing how the use of data improves services for residents.

Learn more at whatworkscities.org and open.tempe.gov.

Residents: we need your opinions

In August, about 4,000 randomly selected Tempe households will receive the city's annual resident satisfaction survey in the mail. An online response option will

also be available, at tempe.gov/CommunitySurvey.

Please take the opportunity to provide feedback.

Each year, the city asks residents about their satisfaction with everything from facilities and events to customer service and quality of life. These

surveys assist the City Council and city staff in setting priorities, dedicating resources and establishing goals to improve service.

The results of surveys from previous years are available at tempe.gov/surveys and the results of the 2020 survey will be posted later this year.

COVID-19 surveys

The City of Tempe invites residents to respond to either or both of two ongoing COVID-19 related surveys.

One survey aims to determine how

COVID-19 has affected the lives of residents who have had the illness, so the city can determine what help community members need. The other survey aims to learn about the virus' socio-economic effects on the community, such as job

loss. Results from the second survey will help determine topics for future virtual sessions of Tempe Listens, which is an ongoing series of dialogues about important issues. Both surveys, in English and Spanish, are at tempe.gov/diversity.



Your Business Advantage

We serve as the voice of business, a catalyst for economic growth, and a champion for a strong community.



2020 Sustainability Summit



On Friday August 7th, the Tempe Chamber will present a live broadcast of the 2020 Sustainability Summit, a part of the Emerging Issues series sponsored by SRP. The event will provide insights for Tempe businesses through success stories and expert advice.



Dr. Braden Kay, Sustainability Director, City of Tempe will help moderate several sustainability success stories provided by local Tempe Businesses like United Dairymen of Arizona, Chasse Building Team and Tech Data. In addition, viewers will hear from regional stakeholders like Central Arizona Project (CAP), SRP and Waste Management. The City of Tempe will also provide updates on their recycling and water conservation programs.



The event's keynote will be led by Mick Dalrymple, Director of University Sustainability Practices, Arizona State University. He will present tools and methods for creating a culture of sustainability within an organization.

For more information on how to register for the live broadcast, visit tempechamber.org.

Sponsored by

Tempe Chamber Launches New Business Academy

The Tempe Chamber has recently announced the new "Tempe Chamber Business Academy," an online curriculum developed by the Chamber's Business Innovation and Strategy Council. The council specifically designed the coursework to give businesses the knowledge they need to grow their companies and strengthen the community.

Academy participants will receive structured training in various disciplines ranging from customer acquisition, to marketing, to human resources, to finance. The 7-month session consisting of 90-minute classes will be taught by expert instructors. The first session starts Tuesday, August 11th with three consecutive weeks of courses geared towards pandemic and economic recovery for businesses. In September, the regular six-month session starts with one course a month held on the second Tuesday at 2:00 pm. Those who complete the Academy receive a digital badge and certificate of completion.

If you are interested in teaching a course or registering for the Tempe Chamber Business Academy, please call the Chamber Office at 480-736-8284.

The 2020 Leadership Conference is Back!

The 2020 Leadership Conference & Expo was originally going to be held in May but has now been rescheduled for Friday September 18, 2020. This half-day leadership event, presented by the Women in Business Council, will be a live broadcast featuring a full morning packed with inspirational conversation and storytelling.

The morning will start with a panel of 'Trailblazers' moderated by Jonae Harrison, Equity and Inclusion Manager with the City of Tempe. Next, a powerful interview with Gymnastic Champion, Marine Veteran and Orthopedic Surgeon Dr. Leah Brown. There will also be a special national guest to discuss the US Chamber Equality of Opportunity program and how businesses can get involved.

This virtual event will also include a virtual expo and a two-week online silent auction. Sponsorship and registration are available at tempechamber.org/events.

Presented by Tempe St. Luke's Hospital



The Chamber is collaboration

The Chamber understands the importance of collaborating and building coalitions. By working together, we can build a better tomorrow.

Local leaders and influencers work together at www.tempechamber.org



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Call 480-966-0837 for details. Note that ads appearing on this page expire with the date shown on your invoice. Please call 10 days in advance to ensure renewal.

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SRP will extend disconnects until Oct. 1

Salt River Project, which stopped imposing late fees and delayed disconnections, now says it will extend non-payment shutoffs until Oct. 1.

As October nears, according to a press release, the utility is developing flexible payment plans and finding financial assistance for customers.

"Further extending our COVID-19 disconnect moratorium was an important decision SRP made in order to help customers develop repayment and bill-assistance solutions that work for their unique situations, and our hope is they will call us sooner rather than later," said Jim Pratt, associate general manager at SRP.

"It is our goal to work with each customer who is having trouble paying their bill so we can help get them access to financial support and ensure they don't accrue more debt."

SRP works with customers on an individual basis to develop payment plans and identify available discounts

and support.

The utility also connects customers to partners such as local municipalities, community action agencies, and local and faith-based organizations that provide financial assistance to eligible limited-income households and business owners.

If customers with past-due electric bills have not called to set up a personalized payment arrangement by Oct. 1, SRP will place them on an eight-month payment plan to spread out repayment of their total balance.

Customers can call SRP to start or change their payment plan and discuss available financial assistance using the 24-hour SRP customer service line, 602-236-8888.

Although disconnections will not start until Oct. 1, late payment fees will resume on Aug. 1 except for those customers on SRP's Economy Price Plan.

By calling soon and setting up a payment plan, customers can start gradually paying past-due balances and avoid incurring late payment fees altogether.

Customers who call SRP can also discuss if they are eligible for SRP's EPP monthly discount which is available to limited-income households.

Those eligible can immediately enroll during the call.

Tempe Community Action offering \$3m in rent assistance

Layoffs, reductions in hours and business failures due to the pandemic have caused financial hardships for many Tempe residents. When it comes to pay the rent or mortgage, there may not be enough in the bank to do so, especially if Congress doesn't vote to extend the \$600 per week in extra unemployment benefits as was proposed at Wrangler News press time.

Now there's help available thanks to Tempe Community Action Agency and the Arizona Department of Housing.

With the statewide moratorium on residential evictions extended through Oct. 31, more rent and mortgage assistance is available to individuals and families who have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Emergency funds are available to renters and homeowners, as well as landlords who rely on income from tenants to help them avoid foreclosure.

Renters and homeowners who apply for assistance can expect to

provide some documentation, such as ID and pay stubs. Payments will be made directly to property owners and mortgage companies; applicants may qualify more than once for help.

Tempe Community Action Agency is offering more than \$3 million in emergency rent, mortgage and utility assistance to households in Tempe and Fountain Hills.

TCAA expects to help roughly 1,600 households, and each qualifying household can receive up to \$4,500 in rent/mortgage assistance.

TCAA is accepting applications all month long, not just during the first week of the month as is typical. Those who have previously received assistance are encouraged to apply again. Visit the tempeaction.org or call the hotline at 480-389-1375.

The Arizona Department of Housing is offering emergency rent assistance to income-qualified households.

Information: housing.az.gov

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Raintree	8133 S Palm Dr, Tempe 85284	3,138	5 / 3	\$605,000
Rhythm	7047 W Stardust Dr, Chandler 85226	1,942	3/3	\$437,000
Warner Ranch	6363 W Dublin Ln, Chandler 85226	2,850	4/3	\$524,000

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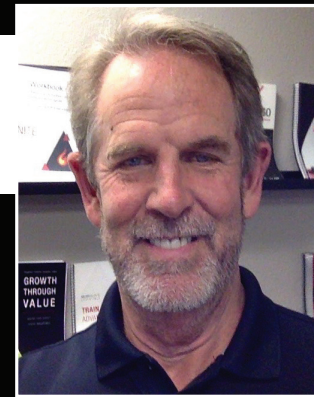
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