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*More stuff ...*



#### Single mom on a lifesaving journey

For young cancer patient, the best Christmas gift ever. Page 4.



#### Pandemic won't stop churches' giving

How faith communities are helping others this Christmas. Page 8.



#### Lighting up the holiday

A family's bright welcome to Hanukkah. Page 18.

# WRANGLER NEWS

*Holiday photo edition*



## *The taste of Christmas, baked to order*

What makes the holiday season so special? Family, friendship, our places of worship and, of course, those lovingly created treats from our neighbors at Great Harvest Bakery.

*Photo by Billy Hardiman for Wrangler News. More, Pages 16 - 17.*





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# How our print origins thrive in a digital world

*As online viewership grows, we hope you'll join the trend . . . and tell others*

By Don Kirkland, Publisher  
*wranglernews.com*

Having described in previous issues the response we've had to the growth of our online viewership in recent months, I wondered if mentioning it again might be thought of by our readers as pushing the boundaries of excess.

But when Joyce and I met the other day with Lee Shappell, our gatekeeper of things digital, what he reported was so noteworthy (to us, at least) that I felt you might be interested in hearing some of those successes and how they relate to the future of little community newspapers—like ours.

While we know that many readers still appreciate the tangible pleasure of retrieving a newspaper from their driveway, and holding it in their hands as they skim through the pages to find a familiar face or business, the trend unquestionably is leading toward getting our news online, on social media or simply on the screen of the increasingly ubiquitous cellphone or tablet.

And even though we believe that print newspapers will be with us in one form or another for a long time to come, we would be avoiding the certainty of change if we didn't move into the inevitability of a digitized future.

That's why the results of Lee's statistical detective work were so pleasantly remarkable, and the impending changes imbedded in them so exciting.

## The journey from print to digital

A bit of background: Joyce, Lee and I are the product of print journalism. Now, the processes involved with news reporting that we assumed in our early days would be around forever have taken a nearly 180-degree turn in a new direction. That, of course, being the global conversion of media sources that continues to accelerate into the realm of technology.

As to us, I suppose you could say we're somewhat sad to see those days of old fade into memory. But at the same time we're excited about the new opportunities that 21st century tools offer us as reporters and editors.

Which again, full circle, leads to the steps we've taken to assure our continuing days as a community newspaper and to be a knowledgeable, eager proponent of both print and digital publishing.

Lee's numbers—he tapped into the best analytical sources available to our industry—show that more and more of our Wrangler News readers are moving

to the cyber world to follow events within days, hours or minutes after they're reported, not every couple of weeks as we do with our still-popular, still eagerly awaited print editions.

That, as mentioned earlier, is not in danger of going away, just as our commitment to community news and features is here to stay.

Here's why we're newly energized with what some of Lee's studies have shown:

- Our latest reported page views, through Dec. 15, had nearly doubled those of November, which in turn were up 170 percent over the previous 30 days.

- The length of time that viewers are staying with a story also is on the rise, and seems to be increasing weekly.

- Similar growth is also being recorded on our Facebook page.

**Most important of all**, you are engaging with us on our website and social media.

We appreciate your shares, likes and comments, and encourage you to interact with us.

And, of course, we hope you'll not only continue to look to Wrangler News as your source of neighborhood news but tell the businesses you patronize about us and our three decades of serving this community.

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## 'A Miracle of Life'

# Best gift from the Miracle of Christmas

By Lee Shappell  
wranglernews.com

With each gift that little Morgan Bell opens under the tree on Christmas morning, the family of the 9-year-old West Chandler girl will give thanks and appreciate an even greater gift.

"Every moment, every day we make sure we're thankful for that," said Morgan's mom, Bridgette Bell. "Special moments like that, big moments like that—it's just indescribable.

"Your heart's just so full of joy."

Too often, we take the daily miracle of life for granted, until some stunning event slaps us into reality. That slap hit the Bells about two years ago. Morgan wasn't feeling well. She had a fever, but tests ruled out strep throat and the flu. Her bloodwork was normal.

"But she had a fever that just wouldn't go away," Bridgette said.

In December 2018, Bridgette, a single mom, took Morgan to the Phoenix Children's Hospital Emergency Medicine Department, where she underwent a CT scan.

The scan revealed that Morgan had peripheral T-cell lymphoma, a very rare and aggressive type of non Hodgkin lymphoma, a blood cancer.

How rare?

"It's 1 in a million," said Dr. Alexandra Walsh, the PCH oncologist who treated Morgan.

And the prognosis for those who get it?

"There are only a handful of cases where the patient actually survives," Walsh said.

Morgan immediately was admitted to PCH.

"When she first came in was the most difficult time," Walsh said. "She had fluid on her lungs, had fluid on her heart. That had to be drained at different times. She

was in the intensive-care unit for quite a while.

"Hopefully, I didn't convey to the family how worried I was and how difficult this was. It's very rare and very aggressive."

Morgan recalls learning that chemotherapy was coming in late January, 2019.

"I mean, I didn't really care at the time," Morgan said. "I was like so sick I just wanted to get better."

Because the disease is so rare, there are not many case studies available.

"Regular T-cell lymphoma is more common and more easily treatable," Walsh said. "We started treating Morgan with that type of treatment, but it didn't work. So we had to significantly increase intensity of treatment and try some more unique and novel therapies.

"With something like this you kind of have to use your judgment and ask a lot of experts. We tried a bunch of different treatments, some of the newer agents, newer therapies, that target different proteins on the surface of the cancers. We used a combination of those over five or six cycles. We sort of threw everything at it to see what would work. She's such a trooper. She tolerated everything really well and had a great attitude."

The worst part?

"The feeding tube," Morgan said.

The tube in her nose and throat caused issues, her mom said.

"During that time, she didn't talk much when it was uncomfortable," Bridgette said. "That was the hardest time, to see her when she was not really herself. She handled it better than anybody and everybody with her spirit and her attitude in general. And that's how she's always been."

Walsh said that Morgan, then 7, might have benefitted from her youth.

"I think it actually helped us because most patients who have this are adults



and they're less able to tolerate the intensive types of treatments that we used for her. I think we are lucky in pediatric oncology because kids' organs, by and large, are pretty healthy so they can tolerate the intense therapy really well."

No matter how aggressive the treatment, peripheral T-cell lymphoma is so aggressive that most of the patients die without getting to remission, according to Walsh.

But Walsh and the PCH team were able to get Morgan into remission in 2019.

A bone-marrow transplant followed soon in July of that year.

"That is quite rare for lymphomas, especially when we're just starting to treat them versus having them coming back," Walsh said. "The purpose of the transplant is not only so we can use higher-intensity chemotherapy that your body wouldn't recover from if we didn't do the transplant, but you're also actually giving someone a new immune system so that system hopefully will keep the cancer at bay, too, to help ensure that the cancer never comes back.

"We usually use the patient's own immune system, but in her case, we decided to use somebody else's."

Morgan's final chemotherapy treatment was in January of this year.

"So she got to ring the bells," Bridgette said

She'd been out of school and isolated from other kids at Kyrene de las Brisas, near the Bell's home in the McClintock Drive/Ray Road area in Chandler, during this year-long episode.

"The kids were nice," she said. "They made me cards, and called and texted me."

She was cleared to return to school in February.

"They threw a party for me at school," Morgan said. "It was so nice."

Two weeks later, the COVID-19 pandemic hit and soon schools were closed.

"It was a big bummer for everybody, but for us, before this she had to be in a bubble," Bridgette said. "She wasn't at school. We weren't around people. We'd already been in our own quarantine for a year on top of this. She was still just trying to be a kid through it all."

In July, Morgan reached the one-year mark of her bone-marrow transplant. She still is in remission. She's now on three-month appointments for scans, assessments and lab work. She had been going weekly.



It's going to be a joyous Christmas for Bridgette Bell and her 9-year-old daughter, Morgan, who beat peripheral T-cell lymphoma, a very rare and aggressive type of non Hodgkin lymphoma, a blood cancer. Odds of getting the disease are about one in a million. Very few survive it. —Bell family photo

When schools opened back up in October, Morgan was ready. She'd been out for too long.

"It's fun. I made honor roll," Morgan said, adding that she hopes to become a singer or dancer.

It all worked.

"We don't say you're a long-term survivor until five years off treatment," Walsh said. "The more aggressive the cancer is, the more likely it is to come back quickly, so I think we're really in a good spot with her since she's more than a year now.

"It's really amazing that she's here and she's doing amazingly well. To see her just be a little girl and be so vibrant, makes my job worthwhile. It's worth fighting for. I tell a lot of patients that they're my favorite but I think Morgan really is. She's just ray of sunshine. Sometimes my job has difficult days but I think the benefit is I don't take anything for granted. I don't take my own kids for granted. Some people's Christmases will not be as good as Morgan's, that's for sure."

The episode took a toll on Bridgette, a single mom, as well, as hit after hit came while Walsh and the PCH team tried to find something that would save her

— GIFT, Page 10

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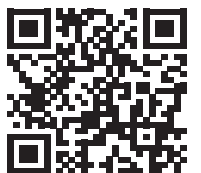
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# Dignity Health injects hope for frontline health workers

By Joyce Coronel  
wranglernews.com

Chandler Regional Medical Center frontline health care workers will be among the first to receive a long-awaited vaccine for COVID-19.

Hours after experts recommended that the Food and Drug Administration authorize the vaccine, Dignity Health held a dry run of the roll-out at Chandler-Gilbert Community College.

In collaboration with state and county public health officials, the CGCC site is one of five locations in the Valley where designated frontline health care workers—and not exclusively Dignity Health employees—will be able to receive the vaccine in the first phase of the effort to inoculate the masses.

The first doses of the vaccine are tentatively set to be given Dec. 21 at CGCC.

Heather James, director of nursing and quality assurance for Dignity Health Medical Group, spoke with local media about the particulars of what the massive vaccination effort would entail.

The dry run, James said, was “just to be sure that logistically we can get the volume through here that we anticipate and have it as smooth as possible.”

“We are anticipating up to 36,000 folks over a 10-day period.” Health care workers will register ahead of time to receive the vaccine and will be guided

through an algorithm to make sure they qualify. Recipients will need a second dose three weeks after the first and will register to receive it before leaving CGCC.

“It’s a whole new type of nursing. It’s not something I’ve done before,” James said. About 120 people will be needed to run the 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. vaccine distribution at CGCC.

## Precautions taken

“Thirty-six hundred vaccinations a day is a lot. This type of event, you’re trying to get everybody in and vaccinated as quickly as possible.” One purpose of a dry run, she said, was to see how long it takes someone to get through “making sure we don’t forget our standard nursing processes” which could result in injury.

Of course, there are the possible adverse reactions to the vaccine. Those are possible with any vaccine, James said, and that’s why EMT crews will be on hand as each of the 36,000 vaccines are given. Each recipient will need to wait for 15 minutes before leaving the premises.

“As with any vaccine, you worry about anaphylaxis, somebody stopping breathing or having an allergic reaction primarily,” James said. She noted that there’s

“a lot of misinformation out there” and urged the public to visit the FDA website for the facts about the vaccine instead of relying on social media.

“It’s a new vaccine no one has ever received—any other vaccine we’ve had comes to the market and you take your standard precautions, but even when my pediatric clinic is giving routine vaccinations to kids, we are prepared for an anaphylactic reaction. That’s just standard for vaccines.”

“People with extreme allergic reactions should avoid this until their doctor tells them they should have this.”

Complicating the distribution, the Pfizer vaccine requires subzero storage. “Logistically, we worked on that but I don’t want to go into details,” James said to protect security of the vaccine.

“They’re going to require several freezers to accommodate the volume.”

“Right now we just have Pfizer but if we get Moderna that opens it up because in a community setting, you don’t have a deep tissue freezer in a doctor’s office. It’s just not something you have.”

Dignity Health has partnered with CGCC police to ensure security of the vaccine distribution effort. “They’ll be onsite and we also have Chandler Police Department and the National Guard onsite so it’s a

—VACCINE, Page 10

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# With the passing of 2020, giving arrives as a Christmas blessing

By Joyce Coronel  
wranglernews.com

In a year that's seen a public health crisis, job losses, business failures and social unrest, the holiday season might seem a bit subdued in 2020. Less traffic. Less bustle.

You wouldn't know it if you happened upon three burgeoning faith communities in Tempe and West Chandler that have adapted to the conditions and risen to the challenge of making a difference in countless lives despite a cruel pandemic.

From providing food boxes and Christmas dinners for the struggling to purchasing gifts for the incarcerated to give their children, and shopping for pajamas for needy moms and babies, volunteers and people of good will have opened their hearts and stepped forward to help.

## First Baptist Church of Tempe

Linda Bisjolie of First Baptist Church of Tempe has been involved with the Angel Tree project at her church for three years. The ministry is part of a nationwide effort that helps incarcerated individuals provide a Christmas gift to their sons and daughters. Founded in 1982, Angel Tree has delivered more than 11 million Christmas presents to children of prisoners across the country. First Baptist Church of Tempe has been participating in the effort for three decades.

"We get a little angel and it has their name and their age and what they like, and then we call the

In years past, members of the congregation purchased gifts they wrapped and then returned to the church with the Angel tag attached. Bisjolie and other volunteers then delivered the packages. In light of COVID-19, First Baptist decided to switch to \$25 gift cards this year.

"Each child gets two angels, so they get two gift cards," Bisjolie said. This year, the congregation took on 23 families and 51 children.

Bret and Tasha Ryan and their 13-year-old son Jack participate in the Angel Tree program every year. They try to find an Angel who is the same age as Jack.

"I like picking people that are my age because I can understand how they feel and what they'd like and what they wouldn't like," Jack said. "And I like to help out people that don't get a lot in life like I do."

"We usually give athletic equipment—a football, basketball, baseball or whatever," Tasha said.

"Whatever they are there for, I don't know. I can't judge," Bisjolie said of the imprisoned parents. "I don't know what they feel inside there, but maybe it picks them up and they say, 'Hey, I got something.' And that little kid, whether they are 3 or 15, they call and they have contact with their mom or dad in prison they can say, 'I got a gift. Thanks, Dad.'"

## Arizona Community Church

At Arizona Community Church in Tempe, a food pantry for the needy that's stocked all year long goes into overdrive during the holiday season, providing a festive meal at both Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Karen Goetz, office manager at the church, answers calls from members of the congregation and the wider community inquiring about assistance. It's a humbling experience for many.

"I always try to reassure them that there's a time in everyone's life when they need help," Goetz said. "We are a community that is here for people when they need it."

Goetz arranges a time for recipients to pick up the food items confidentially. She knows all too well what it's like to have to ask for help. Early in her marriage, her husband was out of work for 15 months and they had two young sons to support.

"Thankfully we had a church there that was very supportive and helpful. It was difficult, but we needed the help and we were so glad they were there for us. You have to just kind of know that is what the community of believers is for."

Nancy Pruitt, the food pantry coordinator at Arizona Community Church, can relate. She said her family also received assistance years ago and that she once taught at a school where many students were homeless. "I do understand," Pruitt said. Some recipients of the church's food boxes were just a paycheck away from financial ruin—and that was

before the pandemic. "A lot of people are barely surviving."

For both Thanksgiving and Christmas, the church provides a turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, rolls, margarine and pie, plus a roasting pan and foil—everything needed to have a festive culinary celebration.

## St. John Bosco Catholic School

Student leaders known as Ambassadors at St. John Bosco have long supported the moms, baby and staff who live at Elizabeth House in Tempe. The house is part of a network of homes operated by Maggie's Place, an organization that brings young women together to live in community: pregnant moms with nowhere else



Jared Wade helps stock the pantry at Arizona Community Church. —Wrangler News photo

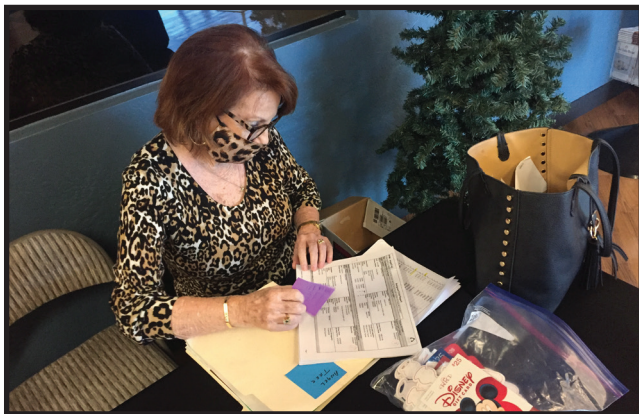
to turn and the staff who mentor them. Five moms and babies are living at Elizabeth House currently alongside staff. And they're about to receive a cozy gift from the kids at St. John Bosco.

Terri Lisi is grandmother to some of the St. John Bosco students involved in the project.

"The Ambassadors started a tradition several years ago of buying all the moms, babies and core members pajamas for Christmas morning. The students usually earn the money to pay for the PJ's by working at the school carnival," Lisi said.

Jena Gump, a first-grade teacher at the school, is the faculty advisor to the Ambassadors. "Typically what we do is we sell cotton candy at our harvest festival but obviously that couldn't happen this year with COVID so they are using their own money," Gump said.

The idea of giving matching pajamas to Elizabeth House arose out of the students' own family traditions. "They don't need this but I think our ambassadors just wanted the moms and the core workers to have a special tradition of their own," Gump said. "Service to others is ingrained in the students from the time they're in kindergarten."



Linda Bisjolie reviews the list of participants in the First Church. —Wrangler News photo

caretaker here and we get more specifics—the colors they like, their sizes. They get a fun gift and a clothing gift," Bisjolie said.

Christmas trees in the hallway outside the sanctuary are adorned with angel-shaped tags that include details like the child's age and size. Church members choose one or more tags.



# Brothers find reward when idea to honor heroes pops into their minds, lives

By Lee Shappell  
 wranglernews.com

Rudi Sinykin and his brother, Aaron, have a kernel of wisdom to share with those who feel they are on a soul-less, corporate-America fast track to nowhere: Get off. And be kind.

In the seven years since creating Tempe-based Kettle Heroes, a kettle popcorn business that seeks out everyday heroes to honor, as well as its next-door sister entity, Devoted Guardians, a medical home-care service, they've shown that success in business and having a heart as corporate citizens are not mutually exclusive.

It's been a pleasant change from their big-time corporate paths.

"We both were getting kind of demotivated," Rudi said.

Rudi had been a product manager at an international corporation that manufactures home-organization products. His brother worked at an international computer-chip manufacturing company.

They decided to team up. They quit their jobs and bought 13 national-chain sandwich shops around the Valley. They learned about the food industry, but they still felt empty.

"Even as franchisees, we didn't have a lot of control, plus on the local level we weren't supporting the local community as much as we wanted to," Rudi said.

So they sold the shops and used the money to create Devoted Guardians and Kettle Heroes. The popcorn side started with a half-dozen food trucks that took them on a four-year journey to their brick-and-mortar store in Tempe, at 1705 W. Ruby Drive, Suite 107, across from IKEA.

The Sinykin brothers sent their fleet of trucks around to fall festivals that schools were holding, to farmers markets, to Walmart parking lots and to Cardinals home games.

"I don't know if it was fate or what, but the Basha family, Trey Basha, and his family were at Gilbert Farmers Market and happened to taste our product and really loved it," Rudi said. "They asked if we could make packaged popcorn for the Bashas' stores. We jumped on the opportunity, and that kind of changed our direction completely into more of a packaged consumer-goods company."

Their kettle corn now is sold in nearly all Fry's locations throughout Arizona, and at Sprouts, Whole



Rudi (left) and Aaron Sinykin have made giving back to the community part of their corporate culture at their Tempe-based businesses.

Foods and AJ's.

Rudi, who handles everything from popping and packaging the corn to new-product development and marketing, is chief operations officer of Kettle Heroes. Aaron is chief executive officer of Devoted Guardians. The brothers have joint ownership in both ventures.

"Our core ethos was that we wanted to hold ourselves to a higher standard," Rudi said. "We wanted to be giving back with everything we're doing."

"We were trying to find something meaningful to us in our daily lives. We felt that with these businesses we would be able to give back in a greater way and make us feel good about doing something good in the community at the same time."

Who are their "everyday heroes?"

"It's the people who see themselves as part of a community or greater good," Rudi said. "Life isn't just about themselves, it's what they can do to better humankind. It's people who step forward and show what America can be like when people put the greater community before themselves."

The Sinykin brothers, themselves, might fall into that category.

Devoted Guardians, which started nine months before Kettle Heroes, has 600 caregivers, CNAs and RNs in the field helping people live independent lives at home. They assist seniors with daily living activities, such as bathing, changing clothes, meal prep, medicine reminders and transportation to appointments. They also assist disabled and quadriplegic people.

"It's all designed to keep people home as long as possible, where they feel the safest and most secure, especially during COVID times," Rudi said. "The pandemic has heightened the need. People see that going into an assisted-living facility is not always the best option for people most vulnerable."

The brothers' spirit of service and philanthropy comes from their upbringing in Wisconsin, Rudi said.

"Our father, especially, was a very generous person," Rudi said. "That kind of set the benchmark."

That was reinforced on Rudi when he was in Madrid working on his MBA. He said he discovered "kind of a different mentality in Europe, where corporations are not just about profit, but also about corporate social responsibility and trying to support

their community at large."

"I think that kind of shapes my philosophy, as well," he continued. "We want to make sure philanthropy is not just a secondary aspect of the business, it's a driving part of doing more in the community versus just taking from the community."

To make all of their good-doing work, though, their kettle popcorn has to be good. Kettle Heroes serves it up in a multitude of flavors, ranging from Hatch Green Chile Cheddar, to Sea Salted Caramel, to Cinnamon Sugar, to Prickly Pear, among many. At their Tempe shop, custom-labeled popcorn, party boxes and gift tins also are sold.

"We try to use the best ingredients in everything we make," Rudi said. "We want a great-tasting product but we also want it to be with clean ingredients that are going to be non-GMO-project verified, gluten-free certified, kosher and nut-free."

"We try to remove any dietary restrictions that would keep people from having a great-tasting snack, so it's something they can give to their kids. I have two boys in elementary schools and there are so many restrictions on what can be brought to school. We wanted something moms and dads can feel comfortable that the kids can take to school and give to friends."

That was just the beginning. From the simple popping of a kernel of corn sprang charitable partnerships with the Pat Tillman Foundation, Breast Cancer Research Foundation, Phoenix Children's Hospital and many fundraisers for schools and organizations.

"My brother was a student at Arizona State University at the same time as Pat Tillman," Rudi said. "He went to football games and saw what an inspirational figure he was."

"So when we were thinking about trying to choose a charity to support, and there are so many out there that are deserving, we just felt that he represented a lot of the ideals that were important to us: being selfless and giving of himself. On all of our bags at grocery stores, we're giving a portion of our proceeds to the Pat Tillman Foundation."

In October, in support of breast-cancer awareness, Kettle Heroes had an online fund-raising sale and the brothers had a mammogram truck come onsite to offer services to women who otherwise wouldn't have gone to a clinic to get a mammogram during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kettle Heroes' one remaining food truck goes to schools, where 50 percent of profits are donated.

"We're privileged to be where we are at, especially in these times," Rudi said. "It's our team working hard to get us where we are. It's an ongoing marathon. We keep taking steps to improve."

"Our message is one of appreciation to be able to operate when so many are less fortunate than we are right now."

Information: [kettleheroes.com](http://kettleheroes.com) and [devotedguardians.com](http://devotedguardians.com).



## Gift

From Page 5

little girl. “When you’re going through it, it seems like it’s never going to end,” Bridgette said. “You just try to focus on the big picture and that we’re going to look back on this eventually and it will be one of the chapters in the whole book.

“For whatever reason, we feel compelled to share our story in hopes that it helps others, because a lot of people’s stories helped us get through it. Now, seeing Morgan getting back to being herself and being able to be a kid again, has been the best thing. It definitely gives you a reason to go through life with a different perspective than most.”

Morgan is among more than 400 kids who receive cancer care at Phoenix Children’s Hospital. The PCH Foundation’s Step Up, Stop Cancer campaign raises funds for care, research and treatment at the hospital’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders.

For more information or to contribute: [phoenixchildrensfoundation.org/programs/step-up-stop-cancer](http://phoenixchildrensfoundation.org/programs/step-up-stop-cancer).



Dignity Health employees gather at Chandler-Gilbert Community College for a dry run of upcoming COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

## Vaccine

From Page 6

very secure location,” James said.

After months of waiting and thousands of lives lost, the momentousness of the vaccine’s imminent arrival is not lost on James.

“It got very real, very quickly. We didn’t know what was going to

happen...I equate it to planning a wedding for 36,000 of my closest friends, but I don’t know who the groom is and I don’t know when it will be, but I know where it’ll be.

“That was the difficult part. So that actually is a blessing to know exactly what’s going to happen now.”

James asked the public to pray for healthcare workers. “This is the thing we’ve been waiting for but they are all very tired. Our front line workers, our

ICU staff, our nurses—they’re just tired. They’re going to take care of anybody who comes in and all of our COVID patients, but people don’t stop having heart attacks and cancer at this time. So all of our work continues plus this added work.

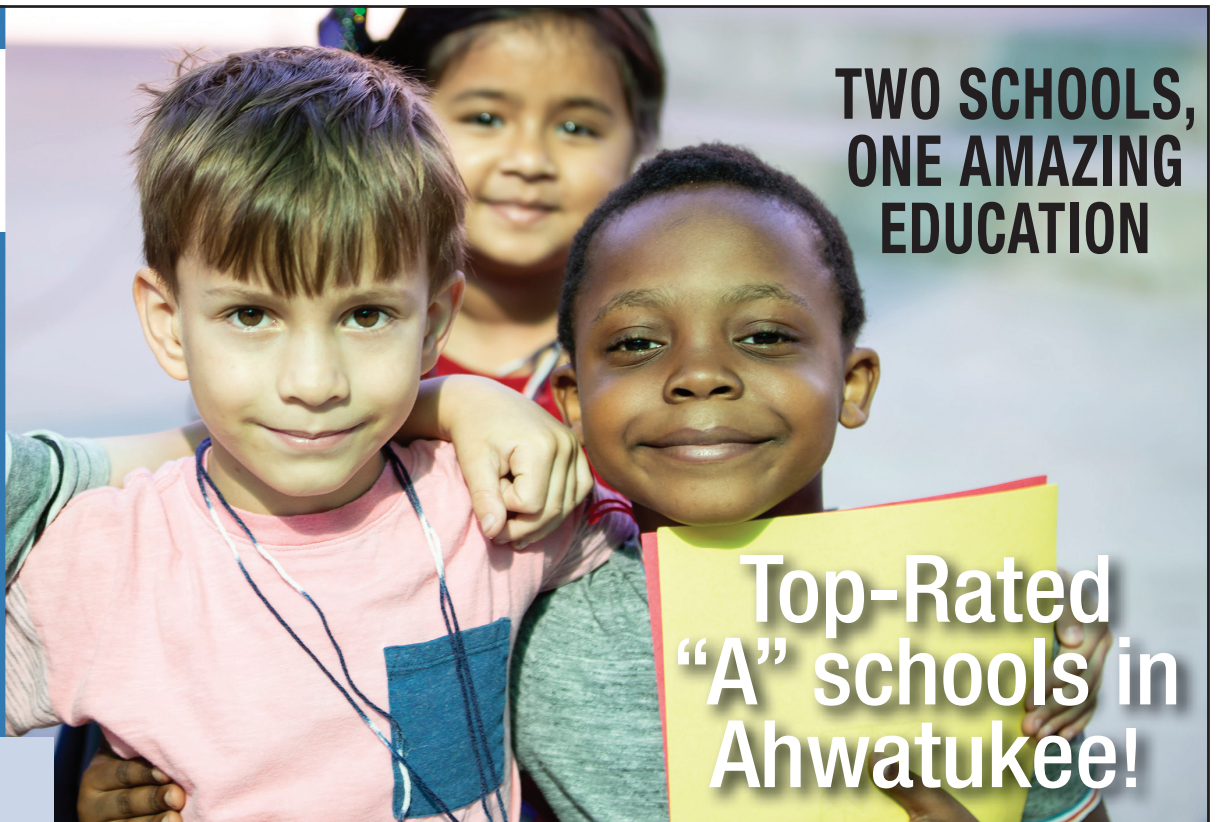
“So wear your masks, wash your hands, social distance—really abide by that because that in the long run is going to help us get out of this.”

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# BRIEFLY

## W. Chandler site for 3-D vehicle technology

Local Motors has signed a 10,000-square-foot lease at Chandler Tech Center, 7400 W. Detroit St. in West Chandler.



The new headquarters location will have 80 percent of the building dedicated to office space with the remaining 20 percent reserved for research and development.

Local Motors is developing the Olli, a 3-D printed, autonomous, electric shuttle. The vehicle has been deployed at locations around the globe, including hospitals, campuses, bases, and universities.

Chandler has developed a growing cluster of automotive technology companies, with technology giants like Waymo choosing Chandler to test autonomous vehicle technology.

There are multiple other companies in Chandler involved in various stages of the automotive technology supply chain, such as NXP, Garmin, Maxim Integrated, Intel, Rogers and ARM.

## Input sought on marijuana regulations

The passage of recreational marijuana initiative Prop. 207 was the first step in creating new rules, licensing procedures and land use regulations regarding marijuana.

Residents are being invited to take a survey regarding the aspects of the ordinance that Tempe can regulate.

The survey will run through Monday, Dec. 21. Visit [tempe.gov/forum](http://tempe.gov/forum) to get additional information and to respond.

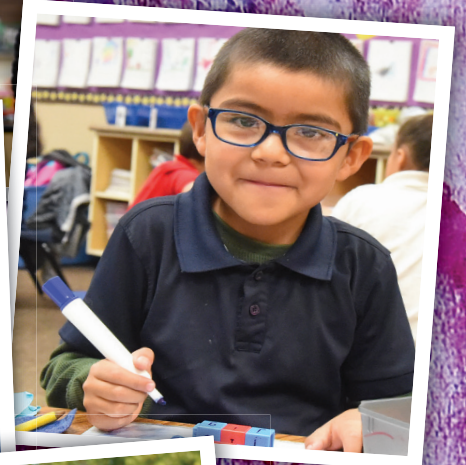
Once results are tabulated, a proposed ordinance will be crafted and sent to both the Development Review Commission and the Tempe City Council.

Anyone who would like to watch these meetings or participate in them should visit [tempe.gov/clerk](http://tempe.gov/clerk) for details.

Meeting dates are as follows:

- 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 12, Development Review Commission;
- 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, Tempe City Council Special Meeting, First Public Hearing
- 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, Tempe City Council Regular Meeting, Second and Final Public Hearing.

# Tempe Elementary Kindergarten Program Where Bright Futures Begin



If your child turns 5 between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31, 2021, contact the school to schedule a screener BEFORE enrolling.

*Your child's future is meant to be bright. We offer free, full-day instruction from passionate teachers delivering high quality curriculum with before- and afterschool care, too!*  
*Begin your child's love of learning in a Tempe Elementary kindergarten class.*

## Kindergarten Registration for 2021-2022 Begins Thursday, January 14, 2021!

**5-6:30 p.m. at all elementary schools, including Laird, Meyer and Ward\***

\*social distancing measures will be in place and masks are required – to enroll online, visit [www.tempeschools.org/enroll](http://www.tempeschools.org/enroll)

[www.tempeschools.org/kinder](http://www.tempeschools.org/kinder) • (480) 730-7101



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Happy Holidays!

## Holiday solid waste collection dates

Christmas Day is Friday, Dec. 25, and is not a normal collection day, so it will not be affected.

New Year's Day is Friday, Jan. 1, and it will also not be affected.

All other collection days will remain the same.

You can always call Tempe 311 (480-350-4311) if you have questions or visit [tempe.gov/SolidWaste](http://tempe.gov/SolidWaste).

## City partners with ASU to offer COVID saliva tests

The City of Tempe and ASU are offering free COVID-19 saliva tests every Tuesday at Cahill Senior Center, 715 W. Fifth St. The university's free saliva-based COVID-19 test is quick and easy, with results in 24 to 48 hours.

Visit [tempe.gov/testing](http://tempe.gov/testing) to register for a test at Cahill Senior Center or find links to other testing dates and locations.

About 40 percent of people who contract COVID-19 never experience symptoms, so even those who feel fine should consider getting tested to stop the unintentional spread of the virus. In addition, people should be tested if they have: spent more than 15 minutes within 6 feet of unmasked people not in their core group; traveled by air; or been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.

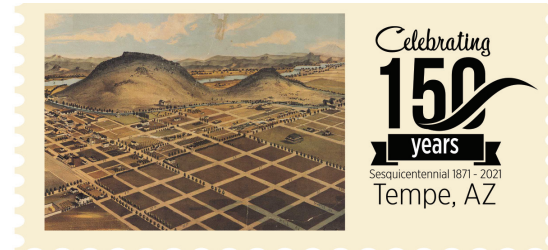
The City of Tempe has an abundance of pandemic information and resources at [tempe.gov/coronavirus](http://tempe.gov/coronavirus). Twice a week, we put out a COVID-19 focused email update – sign up to receive that or any other types of city emails at [tempe.gov/enews](http://tempe.gov/enews).



## Get your 2021 Loyal-Tee card today!

Tempe residents get can a new Loyal-Tee card for just \$29 and access the guaranteed lowest green fees, discounts on the driving range, restaurants and pro shops.

Visit [tempe.gov/GolfTempe](http://tempe.gov/GolfTempe) for more information or ask staff at Ken McDonald and Rolling Hills golf courses.



## 150 years looks good on us

This new year marks Tempe's 150th birthday, also known as our sesquicentennial. We will not ask you to say that word three times fast.

For 15 decades, Tempe has innovated, explored, grown and become more diverse. Now, a year-long celebration of Tempe's past, present and future is underway. Our sesquicentennial will bring together businesses and organizations to showcase Tempe through a variety of events and interactive digital opportunities.

Tempe History Museum will unveil its new feature exhibit, "Tempe 150," which will bring to life photos, videos and artifacts dating back to our city's pioneer founding in 1871.

It all culminates with a community celebration in November.

Connect to Tempe's sesquicentennial events and exhibit at [tempe.gov/tempe150](http://tempe.gov/tempe150), or call the Tempe History Museum at 480-350-5100.

## Recognize great neighbors

Now, more than ever, compassionate, close-knit neighborhoods are a wonderful comfort. Every neighborhood has people, properties and practices deserving of thanks and recognition. Help us celebrate them by nominating a neighbor for a Neighborhood Award in categories including Neighbor of the Year, Property Beautification, Alley Upkeep, Sustainability and Water Conservation. Individuals or groups can nominate.

The submission deadline is Wednesday, Feb. 17. All nominees and category winners will be celebrated at the 2021 State of the Neighborhoods Awards and Workshops on Saturday, April 17.

Go to [tempe.gov/StateoftheNeighborhoods](http://tempe.gov/StateoftheNeighborhoods) for nomination forms and event details as available.

## Utility rate adjustments will begin in January

Following a public rate study and City Council approval, new rates for water and solid waste services go into effect Jan. 3.

The rates are expected to increase the utility bill for the median single-family home by about \$5.19 a month – \$3.25 for water and \$1.92 for solid waste services.

These rate adjustments will help ensure the reliability and affordability of basic water and solid waste services. They will also help support the replacement of aging infrastructure, which will mean fewer water main breaks and interruptions to service.

The increased solid waste collection rates will help us continue to address important issues like alley conditions, recycling diversion and growing the city's green organics program, all of which provide a better quality of life and long-term cost savings to residents.

Wastewater rates will remain the same.

Water and solid waste services are fully funded by ratepayers. Since city sales and property taxes do not fund these services, the costs must be recovered through residents' monthly fees. The 2021 rate adjustments are based on a detailed cost of service analysis to ensure that each utility customer class pays its proportionate share of the cost to provide those services.

If you have questions about the rate adjustments, contact Customer Service at 480-350-8361, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. More information about the rates and the public process to adjust them is at [tempe.gov/UtilityRates](http://tempe.gov/UtilityRates) – click on "2020 Utility Rate Study" in the left navigation bar.



# DIVERSIONS

## Kyrene alumnus, now 34, finally reaches his 'cloud 9' achievement of filmmaking

By M.V. Moorhead  
wranglernews.com

"Nice shirt." So says a passerby to a guy in a park. It's just a passing compliment to a stranger, but it sets off a strong reaction in its recipient:

The guy in the purportedly nice shirt is having a bad day, and the shirt somehow represents the frustrations in his life. He angrily pours his heart out to the passerby.

This is the plot of the aptly titled *Nice Shirt*, a short film made in Tempe that premiered recently at this year's pandemic-delayed edition of Phoenix Film Festival, slated for March, but not actually held until Nov. 12 through 22.

"It's a microshort," says Johnny Ysaguirre, the Kyrene del Norte alumnus and writer-director of the two-minute opus. As the film is still on the festival circuit and not available to view, the synopsis above is

based on the 34-year-old filmmaker's description. "It was one of seven selections in the Native American Directed Shorts [program]."

"We shot it in June of 2019," says Ysaguirre, who is of Yaqui heritage.

"We shot it at Kyrene del Norte, at Redden Park. There was a bench there that's perfect. Then we edited through the summer, and it was accepted by Phoenix Film Festival."

Then, of course, as it did to so many other best-laid plans, 2020 interfered. "COVID happened, so it didn't get shown until November."

Of the inspiration for his film, "I grew up watching the Spike Lee films," says Ysaguirre. Lee's deliberately provocative style was an influence.

"So having a character ask challenging questions, and another character not get it, that's the bar I wanted to set. Films should entertain and make you think; I wanted this one to make you think first, and entertain second."

This approach apparently worked for the Phoenix Film Festival crowd. Despite the masks and social distancing necessary at the event, the film was well-received.

"I still haven't come down from cloud nine," says Ysaguirre of the experience.

But an even bigger thrill awaited the filmmaker at the end of the festival: *Nice Shirt* won the Donor's

Choice Award for Best Short Film, alongside *Planet George*, which won for Showcase Feature, and *Max Winslow and the House of Secrets*, which won in the category of competition feature.

"That was another cloud 9," he says.

Along with filmmaking, Ysaguirre also counts music among his creative pursuits.

"I make music on my phone, and upload it to my computer for post-production," he explains. "I financed the movie on the proceeds from my music."

Ysaguirre credits a Kyrene del Norte teacher, Richard Moffet, for being one of the sources of his creative spirit.

"Mr. Moffet, that's my guy; I love Mr. Moffet," he says fondly. "He was my teacher in 3rd, 4th and 5th grade."

How's that again?

"He was our teacher in 3rd grade, then he moved up to 4th grade with us. Then he wrote a letter saying, I love these kids, I think if we had one more year together we could really do some great things."

Among these "great things," says Ysaguirre, was venturing out in to the world together. "We went to ASU on the public bus. We went to Gammage."

These free-spirited excursions were formative to Ysaguirre, who has written a feature film script, as yet unproduced.

"Mr. Moffet is a cornerstone for what I do."

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4:30pm & 6:00pm

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## Lakeshore Music cancels 2021 season

Tempe Center for the Arts' closure due to COVID-19 pandemic forces difficult decision; refunds to begin to jazz-concert series subscribers

Tempe-based Lakeshore Music, Inc., has canceled its entire six-concert 2021 winter-spring season due to the continued closure of Tempe Center for the Arts brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lakeshore president Woody Wilson said that those who purchased season subscriptions will have their money refunded. Subscribers are being contacted with details.

Lakeshore plans to return in September, 2021, with a 10-concert schedule that will run through May of 2022.

"COVID has resurged with a vengeance, and the bulk of our 2021 season at TCA has evaporated with it," Wilson said. "As of last week, City of Tempe management has appropriately decided that the Tempe Center for the Arts will not be open for live indoor performances in January, February and possibly March.

"Who knows what comes after March and into the spring months? Trying to rush a rebound from a global pandemic by scheduling live shows has been a humbling exercise in futility."

Lakeshore lost the final three shows of its 2019-2020 season last spring due to COVID. After the TCA remained

shuttered into fall of 2020, Lakeshore retooled its 2020-2021 lineup into a six-show series that was to have begun in January 2021 and run through May, including a live-streaming option to season subscribers who were uneasy about attending shows during the pandemic.

"For 12 years, Lakeshore Music has been about creating an inviting and inspiring musical community for our patrons and artists," Wilson said. "Like an art gallery, we hang a new show once a month and invite our friends to come and enjoy it with us.

"In the process, a welcoming social scene has evolved at the TCA, where friends meet for an elegant evening of live jazz in a beautiful setting. This season would have been our best in every respect. But, the vagaries of life intervened."

Wilson said that he has commitments from artists or groups for the 2021-22 season and is in the process of reconfirming and rebooking dates with them. The new series

will go on sale in May 2021.

"And, barring another planetary catastrophe, there will be a next season," Wilson said. "We are not alone. Venues and presenters throughout the world, large and small, are faced with the same realities. When it comes to live performances, everything is an experiment for at least the next year. We've survived two global economic meltdowns and a pandemic. After 12 years, I have no intention of stopping any time soon."



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You should call 911 or go straight to the emergency room if you feel that you might hurt yourself or someone else. All patients will receive a medical screening exam at the emergency room regardless of ability to pay. (This does not apply at urgent care centers.)





**Well bread** . . . For those whose growing-up years meant special meals, artfully prepared for the holiday season, no Christmas was complete without the tradition of home-baked bread, muffins and cookies. It was one of the ways Mom instilled in her brood an appreciation for the good things in life — including sitting at the table together, sharing stories and saving what was to become a lifetime of memories. That's why the folks at Great Harvest Bakery in South Tempe look forward to their busiest season. And, of course, the chance to reconnect with those who never seem to forget one of their most enjoyable times of the year.

*Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman*











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[www.kyrene.org/discover](http://www.kyrene.org/discover)

**Enrollment begins January 12**

## W. Chandler light display brightens family's Hanukkah celebration



By Joyce Coronel  
[wranglernews.com](http://wranglernews.com)

A towering inflatable dreidel, sparkly Stars of David and menorahs in green laser lights, plus foot-high, blue letters proclaiming “Happy Hanukkah” sprouting from the front yard of a home in West Chandler made it clear: The time for the annual Jewish eight-day celebration was at hand.

Hanukkah, which this year began at sundown Dec. 10 and runs through Dec. 18, marks the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem around 200 B.C. The first candle on the menorah is lighted on the first evening of Hanukkah.

Jed and Danielle Wiltchik, parents of two young sons, moved into the neighborhood last spring and quickly became known for their elaborate holiday yard decorations. Their street had never had a Hanukkah light display. That is, until now.

“Hanukkah—it’s tradition,” Jed explained. “We both were raised in families that are deeply rooted in Jewish tradition and it’s why we met on JDate.”

The Jewish dating website has paired thousands of Jewish couples over the last two decades, including Jed’s brother and sister-in-law.

“Hanukkah is a minor holiday so it’s really about festivities and having fun and teaching the kids about the history of our people,” Danielle explained. “The story is very important. You read the story and you explain to them about Judas Maccabeus and you explain to them about the battle of allowing yourself to believe in one God.”

Inside their home, blue tinsel

wraps around the bannister and Stars of David are still further reminders of the family’s faith. Then there are the culinary delights of the season: latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly doughnuts) among them.

“The word ‘Hanukkah’ means dedication, so you dedicate yourself back to believing in one thing, which is our God,” Danielle said. “We do that through the festivities of playing dreidel, eating latkes, sufganiyot, lighting candles, singing songs and saying our prayers.”

Garrison, 11, and Griffin, 9, receive gifts, too, as part of the holiday fun.

Though it comes during the same month as Christmas this year (some years it falls in November) the Jewish celebration of Hanukkah, the family noted, is not a substitute for the Christian holiday.

“It is not something that we’re in a competition, but everyone has their own beliefs and their own religion,” Danielle said. “We teach our children to respect all religions and we teach them by explaining to them and answering any questions they have about it.”

As for the light-filled Hanukkah display in the Wiltchik’s front yard, it’s definitely been noticed.

“A lot of people have been stopping by,” Jed said. “They tell us, ‘We love your display!’”

Other Jewish holy days, such as Yom Kippur, are solemn affairs. Not so with Hanukkah.

“We always go over the top,” Danielle said, chuckling. “For us, it’s a minor holiday and a joyous holiday—so many times you don’t get a chance to just celebrate, have fun and enjoy.”



## Tempe helps its residents navigate financial challenges

During the holiday season, it's not uncommon for people to spend a little more than usual, sometimes exacerbating an already precarious financial situation. The economic difficulties brought on by the pandemic have made 2020 even more challenging than usual.

There is help sorting out financial worries via a no-cost Financial Navigator Program that began last October and is still going strong. The program helps Tempe residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic connect with financial resources, understand how to work with creditors and maximize their income.

Residents receive one-on-one assistance over the phone and can tailor a plan to their specific needs, everything from applying for rent assistance to managing college loans to finding free tax help.

The city of Tempe launched the program in partnership with the national nonprofit Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund.

The city's human services department has been awarded an \$80,000 grant to implement the program; Tempe is the only Arizona city awarded the CFE Fund grant.

"We know that many of our residents have been impacted financially by the pandemic and are overwhelmed right now trying to sort through all of the information about available programs and services," said Tempe Mayor Corey Woods.

"Having access to a financial navigator who can provide one-on-one guidance is really critical. We want any individual or family to reach out and get the help they need quickly during this difficult time."

Information: [finnav.org/tempe](http://finnav.org/tempe).



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## Gerald Philpot There has been a petition for grandparental rights case no. D0201400339.

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## Tempe earns 'perfect' score on equality index

Tempe was honored by the Human Rights Campaign for its perfect score of 100 in the 2020 Municipal Equality Index, extending the city's seven-year run of perfect scores in the measure of inclusive policies for the LGBTQ community.

"Equality is a central value to all who live and work in the City of Tempe," Mayor Corey Woods said.

"We are proud to have achieved a perfect score on the MEI consistently since 2014.

"The Tempe City Council looks forward to continuing to advance

equality in every service, program and policy to ensure we are a welcoming city to all."

The MEI examines how inclusive municipal laws, policies, and services are of LGBTQ people who live and work in a municipality.

Cities are rated based on non-discrimination laws, the municipality as an employer, municipal services, law enforcement and the city leadership's public position on equality.

The 2020 MEI analyzed 506 U.S. cities. The national average city score was 64.

Phoenix and Tucson were the only other Arizona cities to score 100.

Tempe also earned nine bonus points for its domestic-partner benefits program, for providing services for LGBTQ youth and homeless people as well as for those living with HIV/AIDS.

Points were awarded for LGBTQ leadership in Tempe.

Information: [hrc.org/resources/municipal-equality-index](http://hrc.org/resources/municipal-equality-index)

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## WE HEAR YOU

Much has happened in the last 9 months, and many in the community have been upset by the response of area school districts. Concerned with the direction of the Tempe Union High School District, I decided to act and run for the Governing Board.

A latecomer to the race, I gathered almost 4 times the required signatures in just over two weeks.

In the end, I received over 40,000 votes, coming in 4th out of 8 candidates - narrowly missing a seat on the Board. I am so thankful for the community's support! We can be proud of our efforts to take a stand for students and families.

Recently, Tempe Union made the decision to return to 100% virtual learning, further discouraging families already struggling in the hybrid format. Unfortunately, in an article he wrote for the last edition of the Wrangler News, writer Tony Gutierrez failed to identify the true concerns of parents frustrated with this decision.

By focusing on side issues, Gutierrez missed the whole point of why parents are concerned about the return to virtual learning. We are exasperated because many of our kids NEED to be in school. Children are failing classes at an alarming rate, and

their mental health is deteriorating. Experts have stated that schools should not close; that the safest place for kids is in school. Yet our administrators refuse to acknowledge that recommendation.

Districts say they are led by data, but the data shows that schools are not super-spreaders. Schools should be the absolute last thing to close, but instead, area school districts have taken the opposite approach. Families need schools to provide learning options for the whole community - particularly marginalized students who are less likely to have the resources and the support of engaged adults who can advocate for them.

Parents have been begging Tempe Union to give students the OPTION for full-time in-person learning since June. TUHSD was the only hold out in the East Valley - the only district not giving students a 5-day option. Consequently, students are not engaged, they are not learning, and their grades are suffering. Faced with the educational malpractice of the district, many families will leave to find schools that are committed to doing their job. Other families have resolved to not go away quietly. One way or another, parents will continue to push back until our kids get the education they desperately need.

— Lori Bastian

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## UA Chandler master's studies said to be ideal fit for city's growing Price Corridor

The Chandler Economic Development Division and the University of Arizona's James E. Rogers College of Law have announced a Master of Legal Studies program, offering flexible online coursework and the option to meet in-person weekly in Chandler.

The program is designed to equip the Chandler workforce to address a growing need for professionals with legal training in business, government and nonprofit settings, at the same time creating a stronger workforce.

Chandler's business environment and world-class labor force have made it an attractive location for companies of all sizes and industries, especially along the recently honored Price Corridor, according to officials.

"The University of Arizona's commitment to delivering quality higher education options in Chandler has played a key role in building our talented workforce," Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke said.

"I look forward to supporting the University of Arizona's continued expansion as our community continues to attract world-class companies in need of a diverse labor force."

Marc Miller, UA dean and professor of law added that the Master of Legal Studies degree delivered at UA Chandler is a natural expansion of one of the college's fastest-growing and most adaptable degree programs.

"We are excited to bring to Chandler our exceptional faculty and wide range of courses, as well as opportunities for professional development and connection to the large law school and huge University of Arizona Phoenix-area alumni base," Miller said.

The course consists of a 30-unit, flexible graduate program focused on building legal and critical-thinking skills, along with expertise in such areas as regulation, compliance, negotiations, human resources, law enforcement and working with corporations, public agencies and tribal governments.

Miller noted a growing demand for professionals with legal training.

"The degree provides students with legal foundations which can support their current work in a wide range of industry and public settings," Miller said.

"For others, it will be a lever to advance their career paths."

The Master of Legal Studies program is headquartered at UA Chandler, 125 E. Commonwealth Ave., on the second floor of the Community Center.

On average, students complete the program in 21 months, officials say, and course schedules can be customized. There are spring, summer and fall semester starts and offerings.

Beginning in spring 2021, the program will offer the option of in-person class meetings on Thursday evenings, safety permitting and consistent with University of Arizona re-entry directives.

Information: [chandler.arizona.edu/programs/graduate](http://chandler.arizona.edu/programs/graduate)

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## SPORTS . . . with Alex Zener



Corona del Sol qualified 15 girls and took 14th place in the AIA Swimming and Diving DI State Championships last month at Skyline Aquatic Center. Samantha Arredondo, a junior, took sixth in the 50- and 100-yard freestyle races. She set the school record in the 50 free with 24.27 seconds. Swimmers from the McClintock High School State Qualifier Meet include, Bottom row, from left: Ashley Byron, Annisa Rios, Lauren Swindler, Macy Haugland, Alexis Pyatt, Callista Baluha, Samantha Arredondo. Top row: Kennedy Farnsworth, Natalia Bengoa, Julie Bengoa, Giada Schmidtkecht, Kirsten Marquis, Jenna Johnson, Danielle Bertout, Daytona Duggan. Not pictured: Isabel Silva, Brea Zandt, Karina Van Der Geest.

## Looking back at prep fall sports

Arizona high school fall sports seasons were delayed and for the most part shortened due to COVID-19 but the AIA was able to organize and, in some cases, modify state championship games or tournaments.

Here's how area teams fared:

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## Corona del Sol cross-country

Corona del Sol High's boys team took fifth place in the Division I Southeast at the AIA Sectionals Crossroad meet in late October with 166 points.

Sophomore **Tyler Tisinger** was the first Aztec to cross the finish line, in 10th place, with a time of 17 minutes, 3.8 seconds. He was followed by junior **Diego Diaz** in 30th place, junior **Callum Rohrer** in 35th, freshman **Zachary Wiesner** in 40th, sophomore **Diego Frausto** in 51st, junior **Bennett Gunning** in 60th and sophomore **Grant Murad** in 61st among 94 runners.

Tisinger was the only runner from Corona in the AIA State Cross Country Division I 5,000 Meters Championships Nov. 12 at Crossroads Park in Gilbert, where he finished 24th with a time of 16:26.3.

At the Southeast Division I Sectionals, the Corona girls team placed fifth with 125 points as seven runners finish the 5,000-meter race in the top 32 among 83 runners.

Leading the way was freshman **Angelina Hickey**, who took ninth place in 21:17.0. Corona's next six runners were not far behind with senior **Dalee Higgins** in 23rd place, freshman **Paige Davies-Boerner** in 25th, sophomore **Kimberly Musgrave** in 27th, junior **Ashlinn Aguayo** in 29th, senior **Peyton Burnside** in 31st and junior **Ashley Lutes** in 32nd.

In the AIA State Cross Country Division I Championships, Hickey took 47th place in 20:06.5, followed by Higgins in 54th place, Musgrave in 66th,

Burnside in 69th, Aguayo in 74th, Lutes in 75th and Davies-Boerner in 81st among 97 runners.

## Corona golf

Corona had five girls qualify and play in the 2020 AIA Division I State Championship golf tournament Oct. 26-27 at Tucson National, where the Aztecs took ninth place.

**Caroline Formisano**, in 27th place, was Corona's top golfer. She was followed by **Karissa Flores**, who tied for 48th place, **Ashlyn Carpenter**, tied for 50th place, **Bellamaria Martini**, 53rd, and **Elizabeth Iverson**, 54th.

Corona's boys had three golfers qualify for the 2020 AIA Division I State Championships Oct. 28-29 at Tucson National.

**Nick Morrow** placed 14th among the 96 golfers. Morrow fired a 75 the first day. On the second day, he shaved six strokes to card 69 for a 144 total.

**Alex Seibal** placed 65th with 170 and **Jordan Turner** 68th at 172.

## Corona badminton

Corona was represented by **Merilyn Li**, the No. 7 seed, in singles Nov. 7 at Independence High School. Li defeated a Valley Vista player 21-10, 21-12 in the first round but lost a hard-fought battle to the No. 2 seed from Perry in the quarterfinals, 21-19, 20-22, 21-17.

**Kayla McDonald** and **Megan Kirchhardt**

qualified to play in the doubles championship. Entering the tournament unranked, they took on No. 3 Mountain Ridge. McDonald and Kirchhardt played a competitive first game, losing, 22-20, but lost their momentum in the second game and fell, 21-15.

Ranked No. 16, with a 5-7 regular season record, Corona qualified for the team portion of the state tournament but unfortunately had to play Perry, the No. 1 team, in the first round on Nov. 9, and lost, 5-0.

## Corona football

Corona, after an 8-0 regular season, was selected to the eight-team Open State Championship, where only the elite teams are chosen.

The Aztecs, as the No. 7 seed, were noted for their high-scoring offense and their stingy defense as they mauled foe after foe during the regular season.

But in the Open Division quarterfinals, they were matched against No. 2 Hamilton on Nov. 27. The Huskies had lost only to nationally ranked and No. 1 seed Chandler during the regular season. The Aztecs experienced big-time Arizona High School football up close and personal in their 50-0 loss to Hamilton that ended their season.

Chandler and Hamilton, who seem to always be in the state championship mix, went on to play against each other in the championship game, where Chandler again edged Hamilton, 23-21, for the Wolves' fifth

— SPORTS, Page 31

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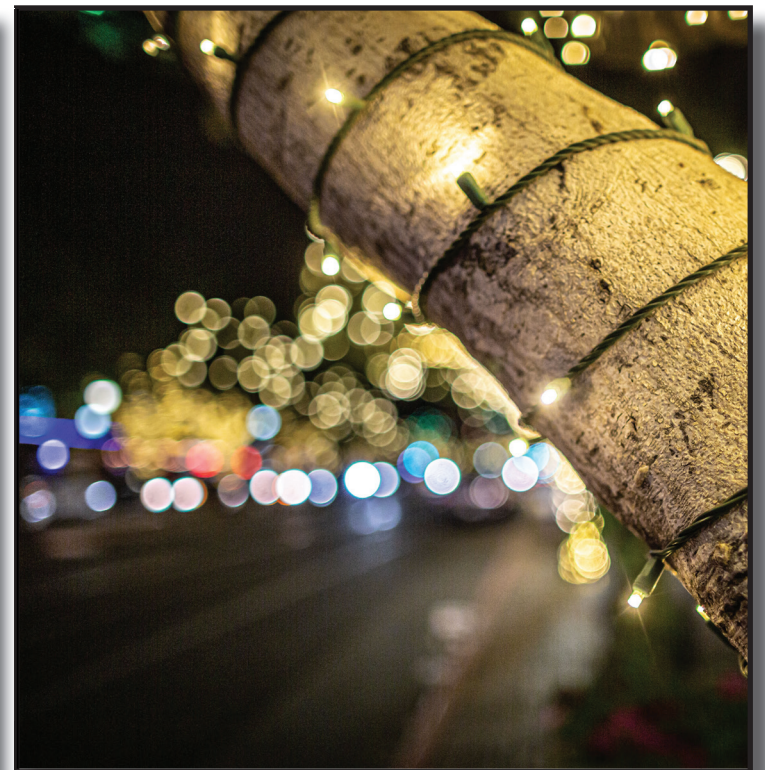
# Lighting up the holidays

Even though this year has dimmed some of our most looked-forward-to Christmas celebrations, the lights along Mill Avenue — and again, as in years past, the beloved display at Pollack Center, right, — brighten our spirits.

*Photos by  
Billy Hardiman for  
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The four live sessions will take place through an online platform weekly starting Friday January 22nd at 9:00 am with the final session on February 12th, 2021. To learn more and register, visit [www.tempechamber.org/events](http://www.tempechamber.org/events).



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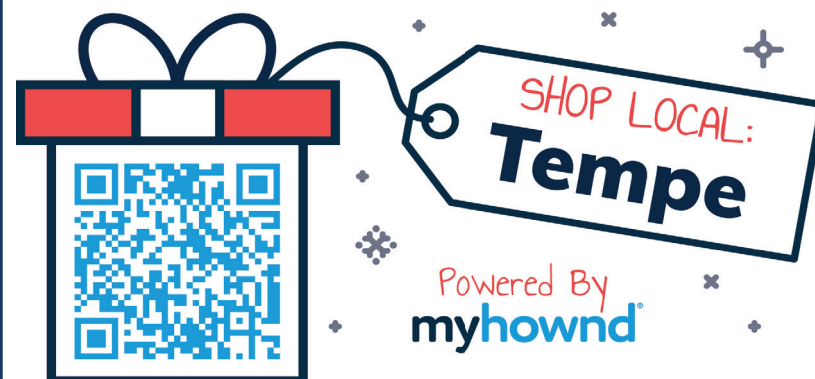


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## Sports

From Page 25

consecutive state title.

### Marcos football

Marcos de Niza, No. 10 in 4A with a 4-4 regular-season record, played No. 7 Northwest Christian in a 4A Conference play-in game for a chance to advance to the quarterfinals of the 4A state playoffs.

The Padres' quest ended in a 21-7 loss on Nov. 20. Marcos gained momentum after a touchdown in the second quarter on a 2-yard run by junior **Isaiah Williams** on his only carry of the game. Sophomore kicker **Damian Gonzales** made the PAT, and the Padres were down, 14-7 at the half.

Then Marcos stalled again in the second half. They rushed 188 yards, 109 of those from senior **Jayden Calderone** on 29 carries.

The Padres struggled passing the ball.

Sophomore quarterback **Juan Lopez**, starting only his second game, connected on four of seven passes for 28 yards.

On defense, Isaiah Williams led the padres with an amazing nine solo tackles and two assisted tackles, including three for lost yards. Williams also had three

quarterback sacks.

Although the season was short for to the 25 seniors due to the pandemic, it will be forever in their memory.

Quarterback **Antonio Hernandez** played in six games completing 70 passes for 1,017 yards and 13 touchdowns. He was the third-leading rusher on the team with 29 carries for 68 yards.

Calderon was the rushing leading with 147 carries for 895, or an average of almost 112 yards per game. He scored six touchdowns.

He also was the second-leading receiver with 10 catches for 52 yards.

**Nico Updyke**, playing in seven games, was the receiving leader with 34 catches for 499 yards and nine touchdowns. **Ralphie Armenta** was third with seven catches for 101 yards and one touchdown.

**Tracy Williams** scored six touchdowns rushing and had 495 yards on 65 carries in seven games, while **Jacob Irick** rushed for 107 yards on 24 carries, scoring one touchdown.

**Chris Ramirez** played in one game where he carried the ball one time rushing for three yards to score a touchdown for the Padres.

Additional senior offensive players include **Tyrik Jones**, with one carry for 86 yards and a rushing touchdown, **Erik Hernandez** with two receptions, and **Nathan Camarena** with four receptions for a total of 115 yards.

Senior standouts on defense include Irick, the second-leading tackler, with 58 tackles and four sacks; Treat Williams with 38 tackles, two sacks and one interception; **Jakob Vandorn** with 27 tackles, one interception and one sack; **Collin Gordon** with 22 tackles and one sack; **Kaybre Parker** with 13 tackles and one sack; **Daivon Nelson** with 17 tackles and one interception; **Isaiah Duncan** with 14 tackles and one sack; and **Noah Martinez** with five tackles and one sack in five games.

Additional senior players playing defense include **Karter Kane**, **Zachery Paiz**, **Schofar Hill**, **Kobe McConnell**, **Jaylen Thompson**, **Victor Mariscal**, **Enrique Ruiz**, and **Javen Mariscal**.

### Winter high school sports start delayed

Winter sports have been modified by the AIA. Competition begins Jan. 5 and ends the regular season no later than Feb. 19, including any play-in games.

Teams must have a minimum of 14 days of practice before any competition and there will be no scrimmages, invitational tournaments or regional tournaments allowed.

A complete list of the requirements and restrictions can be found online at [aiaonline.org/files/17250/2020-winter-sports-modifications.pdf](http://aiaonline.org/files/17250/2020-winter-sports-modifications.pdf).

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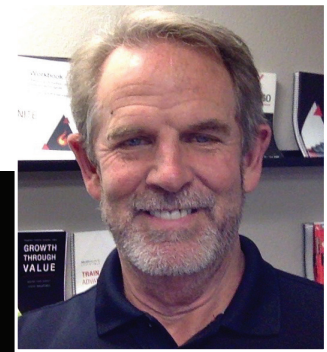


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