

WRANGLER NEWS

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Covering Tempe & West Chandler for 30+ years



Photo by Sam Voas for Wrangler News



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Cover Story

A visit from Honest Abe

Barrister with a penchant
for channeling our 16th
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Excellence a lesson in
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State, county agree
to review noise
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**Spring into spring
training** Tempe Diablos
will host parking at Diablo
Stadium. **Page 4**



Change of plans
Oil facility will proceed,
despite earlier protests.
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PAGE 3

Your Home Page for Tempe & West Chandler Neighborhood News

Outcry over Loop 101 noise forces independent study

Third-party experts will review complaints about new-technology road surfacing

By Lee Shappell
wranglernews.com

The Maricopa Association of Governments and Arizona Department of Transportation, at the request of Tempe Mayor Corey Woods, have agreed to an independent noise study and analysis of a new finish used on a widened segment of Loop

101/Price Freeway through Tempe, Chandler and Mesa after hundreds of complaints about increased noise.

MAG Executive Director Eric Anderson said the agency would commission the independent look into the new technique, diamond grinding, in which grooves are cut directly into the concrete for noise

abatement rather than applying the traditional inch-thick rubberized asphalt found on the bulk of the metro Phoenix freeway system.

Anderson acknowledged that height is a factor in noise readings in a nod to complaints about second-floor noise being greater than at ground

— LOOP 101, Page 10

Lawyer morphs to modern-day Abe, honestly

By Samuel Voas
wranglernews.com

Glynn Gilcrease sits in a booth at a Tempe coffee shop, Steve's Espresso. On the table before him sits a tattered paperback. The cover is held on with layers of scotch tape. Between the tears and creases, a pensive Abraham Lincoln gazes into the distance. "GREAT PEECHES," reads the gold fat-face letters on the cover. The "S" has worn away.

"Let's see; how many times have I been through it?" Gilcrease pauses to think. "This is the second book. The other one is worn out more than this one," he chuckles. "I would say, this one, probably around 500 to 1,000 times."

— ABE, Page 16



Work is scheduled to begin on controversial McClintock/Warner site.

— Wrangler News photo

Opposed oil-change site to proceed

The chain link fence that for months surrounded the property at the southeast corner of McClintock and Warner has been removed, paving the way for construction of a long debated oil-change center at the site.

The lot was once home to a gas station before it was demolished.

Neighbors in the vicinity were up in arms when it became known that Valvoline planned to build an oil-change operation on the vacant land. Tempe City Council heard their plea and denied a use permit for the project.

After the decision, the site's owners filed a notice of claim against the city of Tempe for \$2.1 million plus legal fees, followed by a suit against Tempe in Superior Court. The negotiated

— OIL, Page 8

N. Tempe annexation said to remove blight, add upscale amenities

Staff Reports

For the first time in over a decade, Tempe is extending its borders by annexing a portion of a long-existing county island in North Tempe. The expansion involves about 17 acres south of east Curry Road, west of north Miller Road and north of east Gilbert Drive.

Tempe officials have said the move will allow Tempe to make road and infrastructure improvements, which they indicate are sorely needed. A new 650-unit residential development, Banyan North Tempe, is also planned, as is expected retail growth.

The property being annexed is said to have experienced substantial amounts of graffiti, litter and weeds. Some of the buildings are dilapidated and there are problems with flooding on area streets.

— ANNEX, Page 8

Tempe Diablos welcome LA Angels in their Cactus home opener; tickets on sale now

Spring training tickets for Los Angeles Angels' Cactus League games at Tempe Diablo Stadium are now on sale.

Besides being a looked-forward-to areawide attraction, the games generate important funding for the charitable work performed every year by the Tempe Diablos service organization, which has awarded more than 1,200 scholarships amounting to more than \$5 million. The group provides more than \$240,000 per year in Arizona State University scholarships to students from the Tempe Union High School District.

Tickets may be purchased at cactusleague.com/angels.php.

The Angels face the Colorado Rockies in their home game at 1:10 p.m. on Saturday, March 6. They also have a home game vs the Seattle Mariners on Sunday, March 7.

The Diablo Stadium experience will be different this year for the health and safety of fans during the COVID-

19 pandemic.

New safety measures

- Player encounters will be limited.
 - Ticket sales limited to 25 percent of stadium capacity, or roughly 2,000 per game.
 - Face coverings required at all times inside the stadium except while eating or drinking.
 - Lawn seating marked in pods for physical distancing.
 - Stadium seating to be spaced between groups.
 - Restrooms and other common areas to be cleaned more frequently.
 - Stricter food and cleaning vendor policies.
 - No-bag policy to allow quicker, no-touch check-in.
 - Stadium staff available to ensure that protocols are being followed.
- Spring training, an important economic driver in Tempe, infuses millions of dollars into the local economy.



Tempe Diablos volunteers will be on hand as the Los Angeles Angels' Cactus League spring-training games get underway at Tempe Diablo Stadium, where heightened safety protocols will be in effect this spring during the COVID-19 pandemic. — Photo courtesy Tempe Tourism Office



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Girl's case proves volunteering can be as valuable as dollars

By Samuel Voas

wranglernews.com

Danitza Guerra was 9 years old when she first visited the St. Vincent de Paul dental clinic. It was the first time in her life she had visited a dentist. Danitza was born with a cleft palate and lip.

"She was a pretty girl. Her mother told me that (Danitza) used to sit in front of the mirror every day and cry; she didn't want to go to school because she was ugly," said Dr. Ken Snyder, dental director at the SVDP clinic.

Danitza's family did not have the resources to pay for expensive corrective surgery, so she was forced to live with the insecurities that came with her condition.

But thanks to Snyder and the SVDP clinic, Danitza received treatment free of charge. Had it not been for SVDP, say those who know the story, Danitza would probably be living with her cleft palate and lip to this day.

"We call it 'the clinic of last resort,'" says Snyder. "If they don't get treated here, then they are probably not going to be treated at all."

After painting a mural for the SVDP clinic, Tempe artist Ray Cannizzaro was inspired to help make dental care a reality for the less fortunate. He said of his visit, "I was just overwhelmed by how much need there was and what St. Vincent de Paul was doing for the underserved in our community. I left there in tears. And as I got more involved in the different things they were doing, I just wanted to be part of that family."

He remembers being struck by the line of "hundreds of cars" waiting outside the clinic. He knew the vast majority of them would not receive treatment. The clinic can afford to treat only about 30 patients a month. At that moment, Cannizzaro dedicated himself to helping the people in those cars.

Cannizzaro is the founder of the successful art and design company artdecoranddesign.com. His work can be found in the aisles of retail giants Target and Walmart. Over the last three years, the artist has donated \$7,000 to SVDP's dental clinic. In September, he plans to launch a new company called Giving Arts, which will donate 50% of its net profits to charitable organizations.

Stories like Danitza Guerra's are made possible by the generosity of everyday people like Ray Cannizzaro.

St. Vincent de Paul dental clinic, at 420 W. Watkins Road, Phoenix, receives no government funding. They are funded entirely by grants and charitable donations.

Cannizzaro says he is in a position to offer financial support to charities like SVDP. He knows not everyone has the disposable income to contribute to the less fortunate, but he notes that there are other means of serving charitable organizations.

"Not only is money a valuable resource, but also our time. People forget that sometimes. These organizations rely on volunteerism. If you can donate your time, it's such a valuable gift. I want people to know that."



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Oil

From Page 3

settlement granted the use permit and development plan review for the Valvoline property to be built.

Property enhancements that had been recommended by the same staff that Valvoline had originally declined to incorporate into the project, such as setback service bays and improved paving near walkways, were agreed to. The city will not pay out any money as a result of the settlement.

Kris Baxter, a public information officer for the city of Tempe, addressed the issue in an email to Wrangler News.

"It's important to note that Arizona has some of the strongest property rights laws in the country. Rather than fighting a lawsuit that the city would be unlikely to win, we are working

to be good stewards of tax dollars for all our residents and have the best possible business of its type in that location," Baxter wrote, adding:

"During the process, we heard questions from residents about the validity and use of the Character Area Plan.

"The city of Tempe and residents produced a Character Area study for this area several years ago and that plan was consulted for this project. While these documents are consulted by staff and elected officials, they are guidelines and can never be used in place of Tempe's Zoning and Development Code, City Charter, Arizona State law or federal law."

According to Baxter, speaking on behalf of the city's plans, no public hearings on the development are now scheduled beyond those already held last year.

The site developer is said to be Take Five Oil Co.

Annex

From Page 3

By annexing the area, say planners, Tempe can begin to correct these issues.

Tempe Councilmember Jennifer Adams traced the history of the annexation process, noting that it spanned a lengthy time period.

"It was something I worked on with (Vice Mayor) Randy Keating and Councilmember (Joel) Navarro. I headed up the team that worked on this, and we successfully annexed 17 acres of 78 acres.

"It's in a great area because it's north of (Loop) 202 and Tempe Town Lake, and south of ASU's Skysong, so it's like a perfect location."

As to the work that's being planned, Adams said transformation will bring significant changes to the neighborhood.

"It's been an eyesore for many years, as long as people can remember, so now we're going to start transforming that area.

"The county doesn't have any regulations against graffiti, so they just let it go. There are quite a few

homeless camps (there), and we're going to completely change the area. I've worked closely with North Tempe residents on it and they are super excited. We have a lot of buy-in from everyone, and there was a 7-0 vote on it," said Adams.

As to the fate of those homeless individuals now occupying the area, Adams said work is already underway.

"We've expanded the homeless-assistance effort. We're going to try to get them housed, quite frankly. We're getting them services; we're not going to just throw them out—they're already on the street.

"We're going to try to get them hooked up with services."

According to planners, the apartment complex described by Adams will include 651 units, one to four bedrooms, 'first-class with two swimming pools, a large dog park, lots of trees, lots of shade."

And, she emphasized:

"It's going to be nice. If you had an apartment you might want to live there because the location is awesome too."

A public meeting on this and other matters of interest to the residents of Tempe Character Area 1, which now includes the newly annexed sections, is scheduled for Monday, March 15.

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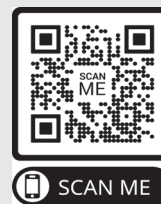


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Loop

From Page 3

level. He added that an independent study would look into more locations than ADOT's readings. It also would consider tire wear on diamond grinding and the pitch of the noise at homes near the freeway.

"We can certainly launch an independent study of this issue fairly quickly," Anderson said.

MAG and ADOT last year created a three-year, diamond-grinding pilot project involving three segments of Valley freeways after determining that the technique is far less expensive over a roadway's life cycle than rubberized asphalt. Further, MAG and ADOT claimed that diamond grinding is only a few decibels louder than the rubber treatment, yet still well within the federal maximum of 67 decibels for noise mitigation.

The Price Freeway is the first, and thus far only, stretch to be completed using diamond grinding. Noise complaints began rolling in to ADOT, MAG and city officials almost from the day that traffic began rolling in September on the widened stretch from Baseline Road south to Loop 202.

Residents who live adjacent to the freeway complain that they must turn up the volume on their televisions to drown out freeway noise and that sleeping in upstairs bedrooms is nearly impossible due to the din. They've also complained that use, enjoyment and value of their properties have declined as a result. Some have produced photos and videos from their backyards of handheld decibel readers registering well into the 70s.

This runs sharply counter to ADOT's noise readings taken just after the freeway opened and again on courtesy checks a couple of months later at homes where complaints were logged. All of those readings were in the mid-50s decibel range, ADOT said.

Because of the disconnect, Woods proposed an independent study, which was seconded by Mesa Mayor John Giles.

Tempe Mayor Corey Woods requested an independent noise study

in neighborhoods adjacent to Loop 101 after a disconnect between ADOT readings and residents' readings.

"I understand the concern about quality of roads and being cost effective when it comes to our taxpayers to not overspend," Woods said at a MAG Transportation Planning Committee meeting on Feb. 17. "However, much of the pilot project is to be conducted along commercial portions of Loop 101 and one of the only areas where it is to be conducted directly adjacent to a neighborhood is in the southern area of Tempe. We've now received over 250 complaints."

Woods also pointed out that ADOT noise readings on Oct. 5-6, which ADOT said were similar to those taken years earlier in the same locations on rubberized asphalt, may have been skewed because there was not as much traffic on the road due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many families were on school fall break in early October, potentially further reducing traffic, he said.

Woods suggested broadening the locations from ADOT's readings so they are closer to homes adjacent to the freeway. He added that MAG might consider "pumping the brakes" and not expanding the diamond-grinding project until more information is gleaned from the Loop 101 study.

"I would like to see if we can find a way to have an independent firm come in and conduct a noise study and analysis of the Price Freeway where the diamond-grind technique has been put in," Woods said. "I would like to see MAG oversee or run the study."

"I do think an independent study is needed given the over 250 comments from South Tempe residents living directly adjacent to the freeway. We're all dealing with a crisis when it comes to quality of roads and, frankly, not having enough money to do what we need to do. We should explore other techniques that might cost less, but not at the expense of the quality of life of our residents."

In seconding Woods' independent-study proposal, Giles added that residents are complaining not only about decibel levels but also about the pitch of the noise associated with diamond grinding, which is "a particularly irritating pitch."



This screen grab from a Chandler video shows the diamond-grinding finish on recently widened Loop 101 through Tempe, Chandler and Mesa is drawing noise complaints from residents who live adjacent to the freeway and say rubberized asphalt was quieter.

“I’d like to see MAG get directly involved in a study done on the findings of ADOT,” Giles said.

Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke said that he, too, has received numerous noise complaints about the new surface on Loop 101.

ADOT agreed that at the request of the Transportation Policy Committee, MAG will conduct the independent noise study and that MAG will make decisions about the use of future pavement-surface treatments along the regional freeway system.

Two other stretches in the diamond-grind pilot project are Loop 101/Pima Freeway, which is being widened from Interstate 17 east to Pima Road in the North Valley, and a future Loop 101/Agua Fria Freeway widening project from I-17 west to 75th Avenue. Based on results, MAG will plan how future capital investments in pavement surfacing will proceed.

The key words in the controversy are “capital investments.”

“We have a bit of an impending crisis coming in the Valley, where rubberized asphalt is well over the 10-year mark,” Randy Everett, senior division administrator for ADOT’s Central District, which serves the metro Phoenix area, told the MAG

Transportation Planning Committee.

Everett estimates the expense to be hundreds of millions of dollars to mill and re-overlay rubberized asphalt as it breaks down.

It gets worse.

“The region is facing greater than a billion dollars in capital costs to upkeep the rubber that we have out there over the next several decades,” Everett said. “ADOT believes that diamond grinding is a very viable and less expensive alternative to this rubberized asphalt dilemma.”

He added that rubberized asphalt maintenance is costly. It must be sealed every three years. At 10 years, potholes must be repaired. At 15 years, where many miles of Valley freeways are now, “it throws rocks and really begins to fall apart.” Where other states report about a 1 percent annual rise in windshield repairs, Arizona has about a 27 percent rise in windshield claims, according to Everett.

Nearly every mile in the metro Phoenix freeway system has a rubberized asphalt overlay. It was selected for its smooth ride and noise abatement. According to ADOT, rubberized asphalt noise levels increase as the surface breaks down during its lifespan.

Many miles are well beyond the 10-year lifespan already because there was no plan for paying for rubberized asphalt replacement costs and at present there is no funding source identified to repave the system with rubberized asphalt.

So MAG and ADOT last year set out to find an alternate freeway finish less expensive than rubberized asphalt and still within federal noise standards.

John Bullen, MAG Transportation Economic and Finance Program Manager, said MAG and ADOT were “particularly attracted to diamond grinding because it is pretty standard across the country.”

According to ADOT, preliminary results show that diamond grinding, in which specialized machines with diamond-tipped blades on rotating drums remove a thin layer of concrete roadway to create small grooves that limit vehicle tire noise, is meeting ADOT’s requirements for ride quality and costs.

“There is not enough capital funding to keep 1-inch rubber,” Everett said. “We landed on diamond grind, which goes above and beyond noise regulations and delivers a smooth ride and it has potential to far outlive rubberized asphalt.”

ADOT responds to questions from Tempe resident Dr. Donald Boles that appeared in the Feb. 20 edition of Wrangler News

From Daina Mann, assistant communications director, ADOT: Here are the responses to your questions about the diamond grinding.

1. *Were procedures followed to get community input prior to this "experiment?"* The diamond grinding pilot program was approved through the Maricopa Association of Governments' public process, which included presentations to MAG's Management Committee, Transportation Policy Committee, and Regional Council, who approved the pilot in June 2020. Each of those meetings was public and a notice was provided with an opportunity for public comment. MAG is the metropolitan planning organization for the region and comprises 27 cities and towns, 3 Native nations, Maricopa County, Pinal County and ADOT. The Regional Council is the governing and policy-making body for MAG and is composed of elected officials appointed from each member agency.

2. *Were the deciding ADOT officials free of vendor bias or incentives to take this course?* Yes. ADOT, in partnership with MAG, studied several

concrete-based surface treatment alternatives, ultimately recommending the diamond grind treatment alternative for this pilot program. The pilot program was approved by the MAG Regional Council on June 24, 2020. The two projects that have been diamond ground to date have different contractors performing the work.

3. *Was the contracting work for surfacing open to competitive bidding?* Yes, through a project delivery process. The bids for the Loop 101 (Price Freeway) and Loop 101 (Pima Freeway) construction projects were secured through a "design build" project delivery process whereby designers and contractors join together as a team to bid on a project. Diamond grind contractors are subcontractors on those teams. The contracts for design build contractors are competitively procured through ADOT through the design build process.

4. *Were the sound level measurements properly executed by an impartial expert third party?* The noise measurements along Loop 101 (Price Freeway) were performed by ADOT's professional staff and non-ADOT technical experts. Measurement procedures and methodologies were performed using federal guidelines and standards.

5. *Were the sound level measurements taken from second story windows as well as ground level?* No, in accordance with federal guidelines for performing noise measurements, ADOT conducted readings in yards and patios in areas at the edge of ADOT's right of way.

6. *Did it include continuous peak level monitoring for 24-72 hours?* In accordance with federal guidelines for noise measurements, ADOT took multiple noise readings for a duration of 10 minutes each. We do not conduct continuous noise monitoring as this is not an accepted methodology for freeway noise measurements.

7. *Was sound volume averaging used?* Yes, ADOT's reported noise level readings are based on the LeQ, or weighted average of the noise level, during each testing period.

8. *What are the background frequencies and waveforms observed?* We are not sure we understand the question. Background noise may be a result of a number of activities occurring in the area, such as airplane overflight, landscaping activities or traffic on arterial or neighborhood streets. Field measurements in the neighborhoods included all noise sources, the freeway noise and any other activity present at the time of the measurements.

9. *Are there special frequencies and waveforms characteristic of this surface treatment?* No special characteristics have been observed.

10. *If the Wrangler newspaper states that sporadic measurements taken by ADOT were only 2dB below the established objectionable level, and many residents with mobile digital apps were recording higher levels, would it not be indicated to check veracity, calibration and make further*

—RESPONSE, Page 26

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SPORTS . . . with Alex Zener

Upswing seen as Aztecs' season advances

This basketball season has not been easy for Corona del Sol High but things may be looking up heading into the last three games of the regular season as the team is starting to develop some chemistry and play better as the season progresses.



Alex Zener

"In many ways, it has been a challenging season," said head coach Neil MacDonald. "We have a lot going on besides having one of the five toughest schedules in the state where every game is going a challenge."

"Then you add in the COVID restrictions and the fact our players have not returned to campus but still are learning remotely, we have a lot

going on."

The Aztecs currently have a 4-11, 3-5 Central Region, record where several games were lost by four or less points including their game against Desert Ridge early in the season on Jan. 26 where they suffered a 52-51 heartbreaking loss.

"Our players have done a good job handling everything that's happened this season," said MacDonald. "Even when we were on the losing end of several consecutive close games, the guys continued to work hard to improve and try to win the next one."

The Aztecs did get their revenge for the one-point loss to Desert Ridge when they defeated the No. 9 Jaguars, 50-41, on Feb. 26, at home.

"As time has gone by, the players have continued to gel, so it was nice to finally beat a quality team like Desert Ridge," said MacDonald. "It was especially

"Our players have done a good job handling everything that's happened this season. Even when we were on the losing end of several consecutive close games, the guys continued to work hard to improve and try to win the next one."

— Coach Neil MacDonald

— SPORTS, Page 15

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Sports

From Page 13

encouraging to be leading from the opening tip to the end.”

The Aztecs have had different players contribute each game but there are a few that have had more of an impact.

“Seniors **Elijah McDaniel** and **Roberto Yellowman** to juniors **Quinn Thorne** and **Brandon Lee** have each stepped up at different times,” said MacDonald. “In addition, we have leaned on our one freshman and two sophomores for a lot of minutes this season.”

“Freshman **Preston Lee** and sophomores **Ollie Hinder** and **Michael Dehorney** have really contributed quality minutes to help us.”

The Aztecs hope to build off of that win over No. 9 Desert Ridge to defeat their last three opponents and move up in the rankings in order to have a chance to get into the state tournament which starts March 11.

Currently, the Aztecs are ranked No. 21 in 6A so they would need to win all three games in order to have a fighting chance to make it into the top 16 teams in the 6A conference.

Part of the COVID-19 restrictions include no tournaments this winter season including the usual Conference Play-In Tournament for teams ranked No. 9 to No. 24. These tournaments gave teams ranked No. 17 to No. 24 a change to play into the state tournament by defeating one of the No. 9 to No. 16 teams and thus moving up into the championship brackets.

Instead, only the top 16 teams in the 6A conference will be eligible to play in the state tournament.

“Of course, we wish we would have hit our stride much earlier in the season,” said MacDonald, “but the attitude and effort of our players has been excellent all along.”

“We are determined to finish strong,” said MacDonald. “If you

look up and down the program, it is obvious that the future is bright for CDS Basketball.”

The Aztecs were scheduled to play No. 4 Highland at home on March 2.

Next will be a March 4 home game against Cibola. This game will their last home game and senior night where they will honor, in addition to Yellowman II and McDaniel, seniors **Gabe Pesqueira, Jeffrey Maurer, RJ Richey** and **Talal Hasan**.

The potential last game of the 2020-21 season, which will be the third game in four days, is scheduled to be played at Queen Creek on March 5.

Marcos de Niza Basketball

The Padres won their last game, March 1, against Agua Fria defeating the Owls by 19 points to win 76-55 at home.

Senior night was scheduled for the last home game, March 2, against American Leadership Academy from Queen Creek, where Marcos will honor it is senior players including **Jase Langley, Nehemiah Washington, Mark Powers, Brennan Hill, Erik Hernandez**, and **Cameron Gaffney**.

Washington, the leading scorer on the team, averaging 12.7 points per game, has played in all games this season with a total of 46 rebounds, 32 assists and 21 steals over 15 games recorded in the stats.

Langley is the leading rebounder on the team with a total of 74 rebounds or 6.7 rebounds per game, 19 assists, 28 steals and three blocks over only 11 games. He averages almost 10 point a game.

Hill played in all games scoring an average of 4.1 points and 4.2 rebounds a game while Gaffney played in 13 games out of 15 games hitting 58% of his field goal attempts.

Hernandez has played in 12 out of 15 games grabbing 18 rebounds while powers has seen time on the court in eight games where he had three assists and three steals.

Another player who has had an



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Abe

From Page 3

Despite the countless hours he has spent leafing through the pages of the ragged book, Gilcrease continues to find edification in the inspired prose of the great orator.

"It was poetry. Just the elegance of it, the symmetry of it. There was nothing superfluous," he says.

Gilcrease's copy of Abraham Lincoln's *Great Speeches* fits nicely into his coat pocket. He keeps it with him at all times and reads from it daily. But to him, the little paperback is not simply study material. It is a script.

Gilcrease is a professional Abraham Lincoln impersonator. Donning a top hat, overcoat and prosthetic Shenandoah beard, Gilcrease recites Abraham Lincoln's most famous speeches, while weaving in historical context.

He has performed his one-man show for a diverse range of audiences, ranging from elementary school children, to college students, to members of local Rotary Clubs.

When he is not attired in his top hat and overcoat, 76-year-old Gilcrease works as a trial lawyer. After completing his tour of duty in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1971, Gilcrease earned a J.D. degree from Baylor University School of Law. Shortly after graduating, the young attorney relocated from Waco, Texas, to Tempe, where he has lived and practiced law for 48 years and counting.

Gilcrease is also known for his over 40 years of volunteer work with the Boys and Girls Clubs of the East Valley, where he served as three-time chairman of the board of directors. For his service, he was awarded the National Service to Youth Award and was inducted into the Boys and Girls Club East Valley Hall of Fame.

In the context of his long and decorated career, Gilcrease's fervor for Abraham Lincoln is a relatively recent development. It began 15 years ago, when he picked up a book of Lincoln's speeches for some casual reading. He has yet to put it down.

He notes that as he immersed himself in Lincoln's works, "I just became even more and more amazed as to who he was and how he created this majestic language for all of America to share. So I became truly inspired. It was an inspiration different from just liking or liking very much, even. It transcended that into something that was a very special part of my life."

When Gilcrease began studying Lincoln, the thought of dramatizing the words of the great orator had not crossed his mind. He had no experience as a theatrical artist. His drama career began almost by accident.

Gilcrease spent countless hours poring over Lincoln's works. Then one day, he realized that he could nearly recite from memory Lincoln's second inaugural address.

"I found that I started to memorize them without even thinking that I was memorizing them," he remembers. "And then, I just coincidentally happened to be his exact height and weight when I started doing this."

Gilcrease saw an opportunity to reanimate the inspired words of the 16th President of the United States. So he tracked down a costume and began sharing Lincoln's timeless message of justice, honesty and charity.

To Gilcrease, Honest Abe's words are very much alive. As far as Gilcrease is concerned, Lincoln's political and personal doctrines remain relevant.

"Sometimes, just depending on what the issues are — what's going on — I will turn to Lincoln on a daily basis. I think he said things, wrote things... that are applicable to just about every issue that faces us today," he says.

For example, as political and social tensions continue to intensify in the United States, Gilcrease turns to Lincoln's as a model of unity. He references a passage of the president's first inaugural address:

"We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection."

While he wears his top hat and beard only during performances, Gilcrease aims to embody the ethos of Abraham Lincoln even when he is not in character. In his everyday life, he says, he often asks himself, "what would Abe Lincoln do?" And he draws that tattered paperback from his pocket. To Gilcrease, it's more than a primary source of history. It is a script.

Or perhaps, a scripture.

"With malice toward none with charity for all with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right let us strive on to finish the work we are in to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." - Abraham Lincoln from his Second Inaugural Address

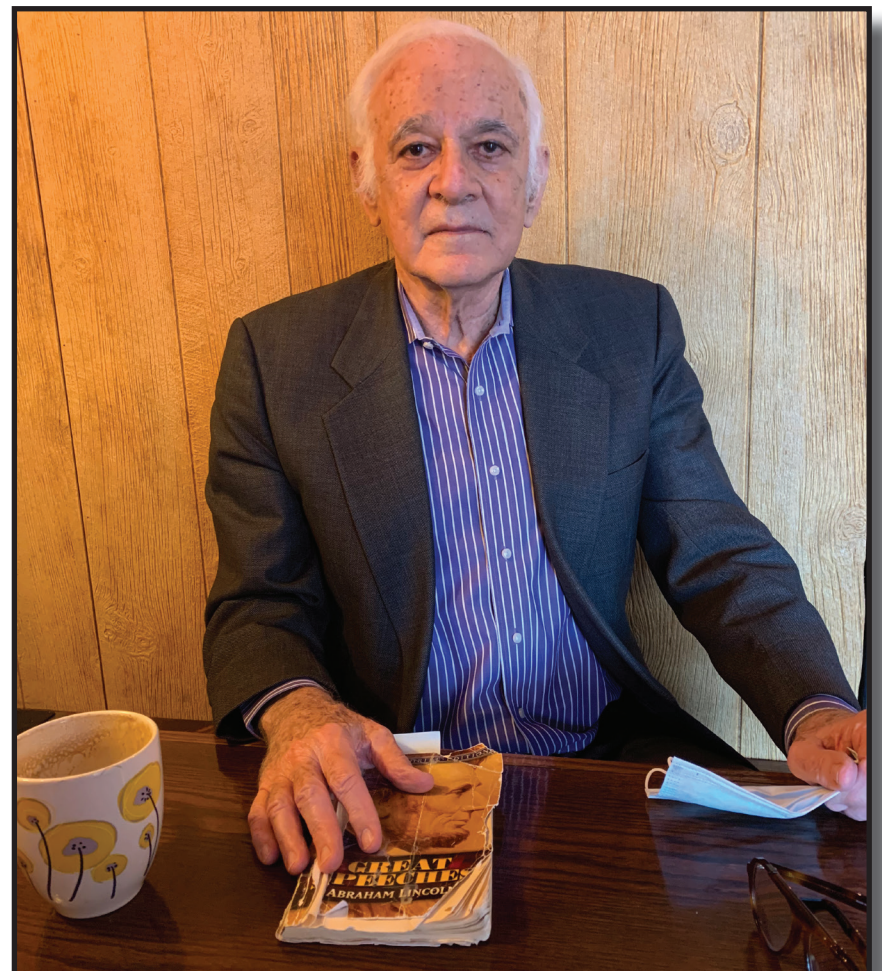


Presidential flair

Glynn Gilcrease, a trial attorney and professional Abraham Lincoln impersonator, strolls through the halls at Center for Educational Excellence, a K-8 charter school in Tempe.

Gilcrease gave two presentations at the school, one for older students and the other for the younger ones. His extemporaneous, engaging style had students hanging on every word as he regaled them with stories of Lincoln's honesty even under trying circumstances, his love for animals, and of course, the haunting words of the Gettysburg Address. Out of costume, lower right corner, sipping coffee at a local eatery.

— Wrangler News photos by Samuel Voas





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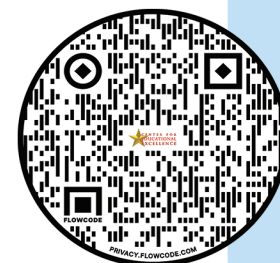
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Sports

From Page 15

impact on the Padres season is the second leading scorer on the team, 6-foot-2 freshman forward **Anthony Seumanu**, who has only played in 13 games but averages 11.2 points per game. Seumanu had a season high 20 points in the Padres 64-29 win over Goldwater Feb. 23 and scored 15 points in their loss to Saguaro on Feb. 17.

Other players who have had an impact on the team on and off the court include juniors **Tony Mottola** and **Wesley Salter** and sophomore **Jamaal Young**.

Mottola, who has only been able to play in 10 games, averages 8.4 points and 3.5 rebounds a game.

Salter has played in every game hitting 30 percent of his three-point attempts. His best game this season was in the Padres 57-54 win over Seton Catholic on Jan. 22 when he scored 11 points hitting five of his eight attempts or shooting 63 percent.

Young has played in every game averaging 7.7 points a game but had a breakout game against Vista Grande scoring his season high 17 points in a tight 74-73 win for Marcos.

Ranked No. 24 in 4A, before their win against Agua Fria, the Padres would have to win their last two games, in order to have a chance to play in the 4A State Championship starting March 11.

Unfortunately, their game scheduled for March 2 is against 4A No. 18 American Leadership Academy out of Queen Creek and their last game is at 4A No. 12 Tempe, who defeated the Padres 62-48 on Feb. 18.

Corona Girls Basketball

The girls basketball team, currently ranked No. 21 in 6A with a 4-9 overall record, recently defeated Chaparral,

62-34 and Skyline, 44-20, two of their best games so far except when they pulled out a 38-37 win over Basha on Feb. 11 at home.

In the Aztecs' win over Chaparral on Feb. 23, sophomore guard **Maddie Mitchell** scored a team high, plus personal season high, 20 points hitting eight of her 13 shots or shooting 62 percent.

Against Skyline, Mitchell once again was the top scorer with 12 points.

Junior guard **Megan Kirchhadt**, who leads the team in points per game with 10.3, had a double double pulling down 10 rebounds while scoring 16 points hitting 58% of her shots in the win over Chaparral.

Against Skyline, Kirchhadt scored eight points where she was four for four on free throws. Kirchhadt also pulled down six rebounds, had three assists and four steals.

In the game against Chaparral, junior forward **Saraiah Ervin** blocked two shots and pulled down six rebounds.

Corona's last three games include two away games, March 2 at Highland and March 4 at Cibola and then senior night, a home game, on March 5., against Queen Creek.

Seniors honored at the March 5 game include forward **Amiya Hunter** and guard **Narcisse Triano**.

Hunter has played in 11 of the 12 games listed in the stat sheet where she is the second leading scorer on the team averaging 8.6 points and close to four rebounds a game.

Hunter's scored a season high points of 16 two times so far this season, first in the Aztecs 38-37 win over Basha on Feb. 11 and then Corona's loss to Desert Ridge on Feb. 26 where she hit 72 percent of her attempted shots.

Triano has played in nine of the 12 games listed in the stats where she averages 2.1 points a game and 1.4 rebounds.

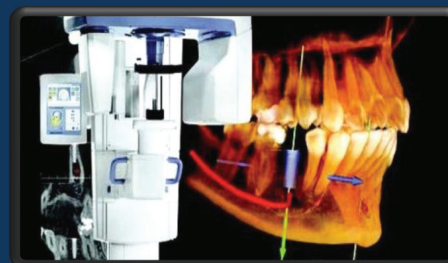
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Mayor touts city's diligence, strength in State of City speech

Staff Reports

Perseverance and community strength through the COVID-19 pandemic were the overriding messages during Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke's State of the City address.

The address, hosted by Hartke and the City Council, was delivered virtually due to the pandemic.

Hartke discussed innovative actions by the city, businesses and nonprofits to adapt, connect and serve residents during the trying times.

"We have shown that when we come together, we can take on anything," Hartke said.

"2020 was a year we will never forget. This past year was a year of learning, listening and adapting. We fought for our lives, for equity, for economic stability. The unparalleled challenges we faced tested Chandler's spirit, but we grew stronger together. Our first responders, frontline workers, nonprofits, community organizations, local businesses and so many residents worked tirelessly to support this city.

"Through innovative partnerships, acts of kindness and an overwhelming response from the community, we persevered."

Hartke announced that Honeywell has committed to a long-term lease of more than 150,000 square feet in West Chandler to produce N95 masks. Honeywell expects to hire hundreds of workers to support the manufacturing operations in the first year with the potential for growth in the coming three years.

"Fortune 100 companies like Honeywell can choose anywhere in the world to locate their manufacturing facilities like this and we are proud that Honeywell chose Chandler," Hartke said.

The mayor noted that Chandler was chosen to be among the few locations in Arizona for initial COVID-19 vaccine distribution, praising Chandler Fire and Police for their role.

The 2020 Chandler annual report, released in tandem with Hartke's address, details accomplishments toward City Council strategic goals, accolades received and measures taken during the pandemic. The report is available at chandleraz.gov/2020annualreport.

"Year after year, Chandler is recognized as a top city to live, raise a family, find a job, for women in tech and much more," Hartke said. "Some of my favorite new

accolades, unique to 2020, include being a top 10 city to be quarantined, work from home and as one of the happiest cities in the U.S. Amidst a year where our lives were turned upside down, it is a true testament to the strength and hard work from this community that our city was still nationally recognized for all of these things."

Other notable accomplishments in the 2020 annual report:

Business retention, expansion and attraction that is expected to create \$437 million in capital investment and more than 2,500 jobs over the next three years.

More than 4,200 building permits issued at a combined value of more than \$1.1 billion, a jump of 70 percent from the previous year.

Public Safety Training Center second phase completed, creating a state-of-the-art shooting range and judgement training for officers and an accredited paramedic training site.



Kevin Hartke

Three new aerial ladder fire trucks placed into service.

Treated and delivered 11.8 billion gallons of drinking water and 11.2 billion gallons of wastewater to A+ standards for reclaimed uses.

Developed master plans for transportation, technology, airport, facilities and parks.

Formed the Chandler Museum Foundation and unveiled public-art murals downtown.

The #WaterYouDoing water safety campaign earned national recognition as nearly 9,000 residents were taught swimming and water-safety skills.

Hartke acknowledged For Our City Chandler for collecting donations and identifying community needs in response to COVID-19, for acting as a hub for non-profit and resident resources, and for facilitating distribution of more than \$90,000 donated by Intel to Chandler nonprofits for services to people in need.

The mayor also noted that \$30 million in AZCARES Funding "put money back into the hands that needed it most: our vulnerable populations and the business community."

"Within our vulnerable populations, we focused on community outreach, providing food and clothing, assisting homeless and housing programs, providing services for our seniors, special populations, youth, and after-school programs, and funding PPE and cleaning programs," Hartke said. "Through the I Choose Chandler program we were able to distribute over four million dollars to Chandler businesses and will continue to award these vital funds

throughout 2021.

"We also hosted our first-ever job fair, virtually of course, connecting over 600 job seekers with a variety of Chandler companies. Our economic -development efforts in 2020 are expected to create \$437 million in capital improvements and more than 2,500 jobs over the next three years."

Hartke noted that:

City Council remains focused on innovation and technology, infill and redevelopment, mobility, neighborhoods and quality of life.

The city updated master plans that will guide investments for parks, facilities, transportation, the airport and technology, with more studies underway to make Chandler more mobile, bike-friendly and connected.

City Council formed a Citizen Bond Exploratory Committee to evaluate needs and recommend a bond package to support capital and infrastructure investments. That will come before voters this fall.

A historic-preservation ordinance enabled property owners to establish districts on private property and in neighborhoods to protect historically significant parts of the city from redevelopment, preserving the unique character of neighborhoods.

Looking to the coming year, the mayor said that "we will continue to ensure Chandler fosters a contemporary culture that embraces unity, celebrates diversity, boasts inclusivity and is a place of equal rights and opportunity for all."

He added that the city is working to develop a Community Court Program for homeless people who commit misdemeanors and would benefit from treatment and case management rather than incarceration; focus will continue on the "active-adult community," a high-quality park system, a multi-generational recreation center and adopting the parks master plan; Amazon's \$20,000 donation will launch a program to address neighborhood preservation needs of seniors, and final phases of the Veterans Memorial at Veterans Oasis Park is planned for completion for Veterans Day.

"Through adapting to the challenges of 2020, Chandler never stopped planning for the future," the mayor said.

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2-plus tons of donated food reach people, pets

Community energized by action agency's call to help the homeless

By Joyce Coronel

wranglernews.com

With the number of people experiencing homelessness and hard times on the rise, residents of Tempe stepped forward in a big way to lend their help.

Thousands of pounds of food were donated to help the less fortunate—including pets—in a span of just a few hours.

Tempe Neighborhoods Together, a group of individuals who advocate for neighborhood issues across the city, organized the drive to benefit Tempe Community Action Agency, the Aris Foundation and Saving One Life.

Judy Tapscott, a member of TNT, served on the planning committee for the drive. In the past, TNT has devoted itself to matters such as park improvement, code enforcement issues and development. The February food

drive was the first time members took on hunger.

"A huge concern was the condition of food insecurity in the community with homeless numbers on the rise and the 96 percent increase in homelessness Tempe in just three years," Tapscott said.

"TCAA has experienced a huge increase in the number of people they distribute food boxes to," Tapscott said. "Many people are coming for the very first time. They're very ashamed but they really need support. They've lost their employment—people are struggling."

Deborah Arteaga, executive director of TCAA, said staff was at the food drive and transported TCAA's share of food donations to the organization's pantry.

"TCAA's food pantry is currently serving close to 100 people each day, and community food drives are essential to ensuring we have enough food to meet the need," Arteaga said. "This event provided TCAA with enough food for more than 4,500 meals for seniors, adults and children in Tempe."

Cars began lining up in the parking lot at the Pyle

Recreation Center well before the food drive's official start time in order to drop off donations of non-perishable food or monetary contributions.

"It was a steady stream of cars," Tapscott said. "There were people continuing to come when we were closing up a little after 4. It was a huge response."

Donors brought "everything you can imagine. It was a shocking variety of things," Tapscott added.

Tempe Mayor Corey Woods and Councilmembers Doreen Garlid and Lauren Kuby volunteered at the drive alongside others on hand for the event.

All told, TCAA received 5,400 pounds of food; Aris Foundation, which is dedicated to serving the homeless, received more than 1,000 pounds of food; and animal rescue and sanctuary organization Saving One Life scored 800 pounds of dry food and 10 cases of wet food for its furry clients.

"We're so grateful for the food drive outcomes," Arteaga said.

Information or to volunteer: tempeaction.org



Tempe Neighborhoods Together held a food drive to assist three organizations that help those dealing with homelessness and food insecurity. The drive drew volunteers, including (from left) Tempe City Councilmember Doreen Garlid, Tempe Mayor Corey Woods, Tempe City Councilmember Lauren Kuby, plus Michele Brown and Judy Tapscott of TNT. — Photos courtesy of Hannah Mouton Belec

Hike around Tempe Town Lake promises adventure, help for neediest

St. Joseph the Worker, a Valley non-profit that helps those experiencing homelessness find good jobs, kicks off its annual Hike for the Homeless fundraiser Saturday, March 27. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event will look a bit different this year. Instead of hosting the hike at McDowell Mountain Regional Park as in years past, SJW is inviting all participants to hike any location of their choice. That includes Tempe's "A" Mountain and the trail that snakes around Tempe Town Lake.

Proceeds from the hike will directly fund SJW's mission to help individuals experiencing poverty, homelessness, or crisis find work and regain stability for their families.

Bruce Downs, executive director of SJW, didn't learn about homelessness from books. He himself experienced it. The trauma of living on the streets—of being beaten, robbed, and having things thrown at him—remains. Downs is passionate about helping people realize their

potential and regain their self-worth.

"Last year, Hike for the Homeless helped St. Joseph the Worker put 2,412 people back to work," Downs said. "By supporting this event, you're empowering individuals who are experiencing hardship to become self-sufficient through quality employment, allowing them to turn their lives around. Although we will miss hiking alongside everyone on March 27, we have worked hard to make sure the day is as fun as always."

The 2021 Hike for the Homeless will feature a new Adventure Hunt element that will provide opportunities for interaction within, and across, teams. Teams will work together to hunt and photograph as many items on the provided list as possible and post the photos on Facebook. A leaderboard will keep track of how well teams are doing compared to one another and encourage friendly competition.

All hike registrants will be entered into a drawing to win a vacation to Mexico and anyone who registers by Sunday, March 21, will receive a Hike for the Homeless souvenir. Following the event, trophies will be awarded for the Most Charitable Team, the Most Adventurous Team, the Most Spirited Team and the Coolest Team Mascot.

SJW's focus is on connecting job seekers to jobs by reducing or eliminating any barriers to employment. The organization provides one-on-one support, computer and internet access, professional clothing, resume development, mock interviews, financial coaching, certification and licensure fees, tools, safety equipment, and the transportation needed to obtain and sustain employment.

Information: www.sjwjobs.org or email bbell@sjwjobs.org

Irish heritage builds lifetime ‘ties that bind’ . . . *Commentary by Joyce Coronel*

We may have grown up in the desert, thousands of miles from County Cavan, but my Irish-American mother never let the five kids in our family forget our Emerald Isle heritage. Our ancestors, she told us, came to America to escape the misery of the potato famine which plagued Ireland from 1845 to 1852 and led to the deaths of over a million men, women and children. Another million were forced to flee for their lives, including our esteemed ancestor, Owen Clarke.

And that’s how the Clarke family wound up in rural Pennsylvania, working in the coal mines. At 9 years old, Michael Clarke had to quit school and become one of the myriad young boys with blackened faces who struggled to scratch a living out of the Earth in order to help feed his family.

Like any group of immigrants, education and hard work eventually paid off. My paternal grandfather became a chemist who worked for the paper mills but never forgot his roots. When I was in primary school, he would make me repeat this verse he’d impressed upon my young brain: “Ireland was Ireland when England was a pup. And Ireland will be Ireland when England is grown up.”

I had no idea what it meant but was vaguely aware it poked fun at the Brits. Later, as an adult, I discovered the line dated from the 1916 Easter Uprising which eventually led to the establishment of

the Irish Free State, today known as the Republic of Ireland. My parents and grandparents were able to travel there in later years, and they treasured those memories.

When I say our family deeply cherished its Celtic roots, I’m not exaggerating. We listened to the Irish Rovers and The Clancy Brothers. My parents not only had a St. Patrick’s Day party around March 17, they even celebrated something they called “Halfway to St. Patrick’s Day” in September.

My older sister, the one upon whom the name Clarke was bestowed as a middle name, still holds a St. Patrick’s Day party each year that features a potato bar and live Irish music. (We’re skipping this year, sadly, due to the pandemic.)

Big sis inherited the traditional party after our mother passed away in 2009. I still remember sitting with Mom at her kitchen table going over her mail with her just weeks before she died.

“Looks like you’re running low on return address labels. Shall we order some more?” I asked her. Her dwindling stash featured shiny green shamrocks.

“I won’t need them,” she said softly. She knew the end was coming and had already helped us then-grown children choose which portions of her delicate, shamrock-festooned Belleek china we would inherit. My nephew, Michael Kevin, was to receive the shillelagh, a walking stick (or weapon!) fashioned from a tree root. Mike’s a former Army

Ranger, so that seemed appropriate.

I wonder what Mom would say about my son’s tattoo. Peter was close to Grandmom and profoundly mourned her passing. In her honor, he had a Celtic knot tattooed over his heart.

She was old-fashioned, but I think Mom would have been touched at the gesture.

She was also close to my Venezuelan-born husband to whom she gave an “Honorary Irish” badge to wear each year on March 17.

The obituary I wrote for my mother asked those who attended the funeral to wear green in honor of her Irish heritage.

Nearly everyone did and I’m not sure there’s ever been a funeral quite like that since.

Today, our family includes members from various ethnicities. We’re proud of who we are and honor not only our Irish heritage but also our Venezuelan, Korean and Italian roots, too. Our DNA test revealed we’ve even got British blood flowing in our veins. (What would my grandfather say about *that*?)

Yes, “we’re stronger together” as the saying goes, but every year on March 17, I don green, munch on a little Irish soda bread and think of all the loved ones who have gone before me and paved the way to this very moment of my life.

I may just come up with my own verse to impress upon the grandkids’ minds. Something about the ties that bind.

Rolling along in a Rolls Royce in honor of St. Paddy . . . *Commentary by Patrick Cassidy*

For a man who was still making monthly payments on his lawn mower, imagine the joy of having a chauffeured Rolls Royce Limousine to take him and his buddies on his St. Patrick’s Day birthday into San Francisco with 17 dozen green carnations to pass about to lovely fair haired Irish Lassies on that special day of merriment.

That man was me, Patrick Michael Cassidy, and the year was 1975. Today, I’m Michael Pollack’s designated broker and marketing director, but all those years ago was when I first thought of the idea for something memorable and special to mark my birthday.

That day in 1975 was most eventful but not half as much as when I arrived home later at 3 a.m. to be greeted by my lovely Irish Lassie wife Donna (to whom I’ve been married for 55 years). She was relieved I was home safely but inquired how much the day and evening cost. “About \$5 in bridge fare, about \$10 spent in Irish pubs and \$16,500 in miscellaneous,” I told her. Donna was speechless knowing that we could barely afford our \$22 monthly payment for our lawn mower.

I’d contracted with the owner who served as the driver to purchase the 1961 Pearl White Rolls Royce



Silver Cloud and then would allow the company to utilize it in future limousine excursions that would pay for the Rolls. Two months later, the company went out of business, leaving me owing a monthly debt payment of \$675 on the Silver Cloud plus \$22 per month on the lawn mower.

Not wanting to say goodbye to the Silver Cloud, that younger version of me made arrangements with a friend to park the Cloud in the parking lot of a Shell gas station with a sign in the window that

said “Rent Me”. The phone never stopped ringing and with it was born a new business that would eventually lead to the purchase of four more Silver Clouds and become Northern California’s largest Rolls Royce limousine company.

Future birthday journeys to San Francisco became second to the real joy of celebrating St. Patrick’s Day with visits to a special needs facility for children ages 4 to 16. Having had polio as a young boy myself, I was told I would never walk again.

That gave way to a desire in me to bring joy and happiness to youngsters who had special challenges in their own lives.

I would arrive with 100 McDonald’s Green Shamrock Shakes and Ronald McDonald himself to spend the better part of St. Patrick’s Day with the children handing out laughter, memories and those Shamrock Shakes.

Looking back to those days from 1975 thru 1983 brings many wonderful St. Patrick’s Day memories but none like the ones with the children who brought me the true blessing and understanding of the real joy of living that God intends for all.

Oh yes, Donna and I did eventually pay off that lawn mower.

Hi-tech IT firm relocates; plans expansion, hiring

VIAVI Solutions Inc. is bringing its corporate headquarters and an optical-security and performance-products manufacturing facility to Chandler this year to support growing demand for its technologies, with "a significant number" of hires anticipated.

VIAVI plans to transition its San Jose, Calif., headquarters to the new facility, which is anticipated to house at least 100 employees by 2022.

In preparation for the move, the company already has relocated its corporate headquarters to a temporary office in Scottsdale. Its San Jose office will continue to operate as a functional center of excellence and sales office.

"While equipment will be installed and manufacturing will ramp starting in spring of 2022, hiring will be initiated in summer or fall of 2021 so employees can be placed and trained in advance," Amit Malhotra, VIAVI global lead for communications, wrote in an email to *Wrangler News*.

While there will be a few transfers for the headquarters, the majority of personnel in Chandler will be dedicated to the manufacturing facility, and as this is a capacity expansion rather than a relocation of an existing plant, we expect a significant number of hires from the local talent pool.

VIAVI is a global leader in network test, monitoring and assurance solutions for communications-service providers, enterprises, network-equipment manufacturers, government and avionics.

"The facility combines our headquarters and manufacturing facility, and will be subject to government security requirements due to the nature of manufacturing taking place, and so we ... need to be very careful about sharing the details," Malhotra said, declining to provide a specific address yet.

"It will be an existing building."

It also is a leader in light-management solutions for 3D sensing, anti-counterfeiting, consumer electronics, industrial, automotive and defense applications.

VIAVI generated \$1.14 billion in revenue in fiscal year 2020, and has more than 3,600 employees in 50 locations throughout North America, Central America, South America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific/Japan/China.

"As a global company, the right locations have been critical to our business success, and we have always contributed to the communities where we operate," said Oleg Khaykin, VIAVI president and chief executive officer.

"We are excited to establish a major new hub in Chandler and expand our involvement in the state's optics ecosystem."

Sandra Watson, Arizona Commerce Authority president and CEO, added that "Now, more than ever, communications and optical technologies are critical for businesses, schools, governments and residents. Arizona provides the ideal platform for VIAVI to continue advancing its innovative products and serving customers worldwide."

Deadline for content, photos and advertising space reservations in our March 20-April 2 edition is 5 p.m. Friday, March 12.

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Briefly

Arizonans may now renew driver licenses online

Renewing a standard Arizona driver license and a commercial driver license now may be completed with a few clicks on a website.

As Gov. Doug Ducey's Executive Order on deferring standard driver license expiration dates ended on Feb. 28, Arizona Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Division is giving many Arizonans the ability to renew their licenses online. Previously, renewals could be processed only during an office visit.

"Most Arizonans with a standard driver license must renew their license when they turn 65 years of age and every five years thereafter," ADOT Director John Halikowski said. "During the pandemic, ADOT wants to continue Gov. Ducey's efforts to help protect our most vulnerable and we're pleased to be able to offer a contactless renewal option so people can continue making healthy choices."

An in-office visit is required to renew a standard Arizona driver license if an individual's photo of record was taken more than 12 years prior to renewal. Most Arizonans may renew their license without visiting an MVD office. Driver license-holders can log in to their account at AZMVDNow.gov to see their eligibility for online renewal.

To renew a CDL online at AZMVDNow.gov. An individual's address must remain the same, a valid primary document is on file with MVD and their current credential must be in good standing. CDL holders with a hazmat endorsement may not renew their license online.

This streamlined renewal was made possible, in large part, when MVD implemented a state-of-the-art computer operating system last spring.

Go to AZMVDNow.gov and sign-in to your account. If you need to activate your account – everyone with an Arizona driver license has an account – follow these steps:

- After logging in, select "Renew Now" in the "My Credential" section and follow the instructions.
- Allow about 15 days for processing and mail delivery of your new driver license.

United Food Bank seeks volunteers for food distribution

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer at United Food Bank, 358 E. Javelina Ave. in Mesa, or partner agency may now sign up at www.united-foodbank.org.

Volunteers are essential workers to United when it comes to distributing food to people in

need. The organization's Volunteer Center relies on nearly 200 people each week to staff two-hour volunteer shifts to sort food donations and pack emergency food bags.

In addition, 50 volunteers are needed each week to cover 4-hour shifts at weekly food distributions.

Workplace groups, traditionally a great source of volunteers for United, have not returned to volunteering since the COVID-19 pandemic began, leading to an ongoing challenge in filling volunteer spots.

United Food Bank has provided hunger relief to people in the East Valley and eastern Arizona since 1983. As a Feeding America member food bank, it collects, acquires, stores and distributes food to more than 220 partner agencies and programs, serving more than 345,000 households annually in five counties. In 2020, due to COVID-19, United Food Bank distributed more than 27 million pounds of food, providing 22.5 million meals, a 20 percent increase over our distribution in 2019.

Community bike ride April 10-18 with emphasis on physical distancing

The 2021 Chandler Family Bike Ride returns April 10-18 with an invitation to the community to get out on city bike paths, trails and streets for fun and health. As with last year's ride, this year's expanded nine-day format encourages more bike rides in order to share the experience with the community through personal social media and the city's event page on Facebook.

"We may not be able to gather in large groups like we have in previous years, but we can still bond as a community on social media and share our Chandler spirit and pride with friends and neighbors," Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke said. "You can ride solo or share a bike ride with others, and I encourage everyone to be safe by wearing a bike helmet, checking your tires and other equipment and following physical distancing guidelines with other riders."

Hartke added, "Don't forget to add to the fun by posting your photos and videos before, during and after your ride using the hashtag, #BikeChandler."

Registration opened March 1 at chandleraz.gov/familybikeride.

As a bonus, those who register by March 31 will reserve a goodie bag with an event T-shirt, water bottle and other items from bike-ride sponsors. Supplies are limited so register early.

The Chandler Family Bike Ride is presented by Chandler's Transportation Policy Division, with support from various city departments.

More information: Nancy Jackson at 480-782-3442 or nancy.jackson@chandleraz.gov, or on the web at chandleraz.gov/familybikeride.

New jobs forecast as company announces \$10M expansion in West Chandler

New Mexico-based Rinchem announced a 50,000-square-foot expansion of its building at 6805 W. Morelos Place.

Construction of the shell is nearly complete and the company plans to begin operating in it by June 2021.

Rinchem is a chemical-management company that provides high purity, pre-packaged chemicals and gases. Rinchem's primary industries include pharmaceutical, biotech, semiconductor and aerospace.

Rinchem's existing building on this site is 100,000 square feet and was completed in 2015. This \$10 million investment will lead to approximately 25 new jobs with room for additional expansion in the future.

"Rinchem is in a great location for growth with the Loop 202 South Mountain Freeway expansion providing further access to talent for West Chandler employers," Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke said. "Our West Chandler employment corridor is home to nearly 30,000 employees and we are thrilled to see hiring growth from Rinchem."

Chandler undertakes initiative to seek resident comments on budget priorities

Chandler is launching a campaign March 5-11, to gain more insight and provide residents with another opportunity to share their thoughts on trending topics that could impact how budget dollars are allocated for the next fiscal year.

As part of its annual budgeting process, city staff obtained feedback regarding various city functions and services through a resident feedback survey last November. Those results have been analyzed and the top trending topics of interest from residents were identified as:

Chandler Amenities, Parks and Facilities, Crime Prevention, More Transit Options, Environmental Sustainability, Bike and Pedestrian Improvements and Multi-Family Development

Every day during the study, one of these trending topics will be featured in a one-minute video hosted by a member of the City Council. The videos will be available on the city's social media platforms and at chandleraz.gov/budget. Residents will then be given an opportunity to provide additional comments on each topic via an online feedback form at chandleraz.gov/budget. Once the campaign is complete, all of the comments will be reviewed and provided to the City Council to assist in making final budget decisions.

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- Direct, driveway delivery to 14,000 households in the affluent South Tempe 85284 ZIP code, including the upscale 85283 neighborhoods of Galleria, Oasis & Round Valley, and throughout West Chandler's 85226 neighborhoods. Using analytics relied on nationally, this translates to 28,000 +/- print-edition readers, many of whom have been eagerly awaiting the arrival of their bi-weekly "hometown" newspaper.

- A robust online presence at wranglernews.com, emailed newsletters, daily updates, Facebook and popular social media sites. In a recent one-day reporting period, more than 5,000 visitors sought out and read coverage of one of our lead articles.

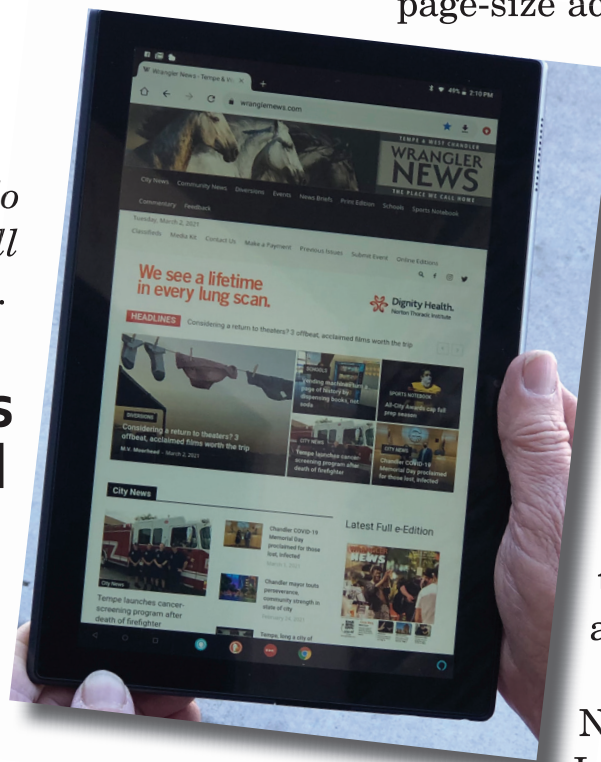
Our analytics similarly showed almost 126,000 impressions for a full page ad for Dignity Health Chandler Regional Medical Center. A digital quarter-page-size ad for Tempe-based Mary Contreras State Farm drew a whopping 41,000 impressions.

- A consistently growing number of hits to the adsites of our advertisers through the paper's unique PageFlip process, which allows readers to not only turn the online pages as though they were thumbing through a printed edition but to **CONNECT DIRECTLY** with the websites of every advertiser in that edition. The addition of scannable QR codes increases that capability even further! In both cases, at **NO ADDED CHARGE** to the advertiser.

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Response

From Page 12

measurements? ADOT and our noise consultant experts use sophisticated, factory-calibrated noise monitoring equipment approved for use by the Federal Highway Administration. This equipment was used to measure noise levels in locations where residents were reporting higher levels through smart phone noise monitoring applications.

11. Are the towns bordering this "experiment" also liable for the damages this "experiment" will cause for diminished property values, and will property taxes be downwardly adjusted to reflect these changes? If so, how will community services be impacted? Our findings indicate that the current noise levels are below federal and ADOT thresholds, and that

readings are comparable to those taken in 2013 with rubberized asphalt.

Properties in proximity to a freeway can expect to have some level of noise. There is no state or federal statute that compensates property owners for freeway noise or roadway noise.

12. What measures of noise abatement are under consideration to ameliorate this failed "experiment?" Current noise levels are verified to be below ADOT and federal thresholds to consider additional noise abatement measures.

13. Will the public be part of the decision process for which noise abatement method is used? In coordination with MAG and its policymakers, diamond grinding will be evaluated based on three characteristics: 1) ride quality, 2) sound levels, and 3) life cycle costs. Public feedback also will be considered.



Young wordsmith proves he's, harrumph, bee-worthy

Kyrene's annual district-wide spelling bee may have taken a different format this year, but students were still eager to put their knowledge to the test and out-spell their peers, according to a district spokeswoman.

Twenty-seven finalists from elementary, middle and K-8 campuses participated in the virtual competition.

Spellers had 24 hours to complete the online test developed by the Scripps National Spelling Bee organization. During the test, students tackled difficult words such as "kaleidoscope," "quiescence" and "harrumph."

Drew Passmonick, a 7th grade student from Kyrene Digital Academy, earned the title of District Bee Champion.

In second place was Lincoln Trembath, a 5th grade student from Kyrene de los Lagos; tying for third place were Kyrene de los Cerritos 5th grader Conner Trynosky and KDA 5th grader Christopher Humanski.

All four advanced to the regional bee, which was the next step before the Arizona State contest.

Drew took second place and will join students from other districts at the Arizona State Spelling Bee later this month.

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Driftwood Ranch	171 N. Gillette Court, Chandler 85226	2,493	4 / 3	\$515,000
Duskfire	206 W. Greentree Drive, Tempe 85284	1,893	3 / 2	\$540,000
Estate La Colina	1948 E. Los Arboles Dr, Tempe 85284	1,854	3 / 2.5	\$510,000
Oasis at Anozira	1883 E. Dava Dr, Tempe 85283	2,445	4 / 2	\$580,000
Rain Tree	142 E. Secretariat Dr, Tempe 85284	3,716	4 / 3	\$750,000
Wild Tree	4633 W. Erie Street, Chandler 85226	3,070	5 / 3	\$597,000

Demand is high, and inventory is low.
Call us today to get up-to-date information on your home's value.

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TEMPE REAL ESTATE

BY CAROL ROYSE, REAL ESTATE EXPERT & LOCAL RADIO HOST

480.776.5231

www.CarolRoyse.com

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Carol Royse, Real Estate Expert and Radio Show Host, announces her “Unlock the Home Inventory Program”

Sellers I talk to today would love to be a buyer, that is sell their current home and move into a different home. Many have children who have left for college or moved on and living in large square footage just does not make sense. With the housing inventory being very tight, sellers are concerned they might not be able to find the right home to buy.

Carol Royse and her Team of Experts have the Key to Unlock the Housing Inventory. Most Real Estate Agents simply go to the Multiple List Service to find a home for a buyer. With less than 3000 homes for sale in Maricopa County, discouragement soon follows. Royse and her Team know where to look to find homes not readily available on the internet or in the MLS. With these skills, Royse’s home sellers have found great homes that meet their needs and budget in a timely manner.

Do not let the seemingly lack of housing on the Multiple List Service keep you from realizing your dreams downsizing, up-sizing, or moving to a different area to fit your lifestyle. Call Carol Royse today and let her show you how she can unlock the housing inventory for you and your family.

Listen to The Carol Royse Real Estate Show each week on KFYI 550, Carol is an expert in Real Estate Sales, and brings accurate, local real estate information to Tempe and the surrounding Valley. Carol is a sought after speaker and trainer on Real Estate and considered a leading authority in the Arizona Real Estate Industry.

For more information on home values in the area, call Carol Royse, 480-776-5231 and experience her ability to show you hard to find homes for sale.

Selling Your Tempe Neighborhood

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Enjoy the lifestyle in this fabulous home with private courtyard entry, and amazing backyard with pool, spa, RV parking area. Featuring over 6000 sq/ft, 4 BR, den, rec room and air conditioned workshop inside the oversized garage w/parking for 8 vehicles. Call today for your private showing!

**Tune in Every Sunday from 2 to 3 pm
on 550 KFYI to hear the
"Carol Royse Radio Show" or go to
CarolHasTheBuyers.com to listen to our Podcast**



I can help you to better understand what to do to get your home market ready. Call Carol today for a no obligation consultation.

I am here to serve you and the needs of our community at the highest level.

Carol Royse, Keller Williams Realty East Valley

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