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Auto-motivated
Fans revved their engines at annual car show. Pull-out section, **Pages 15-18.**



Unexpected blessing
Her daughter's love made a lifesaving difference for Tempe mom. **Page 10.**



Bridle path solution?
Resolution may be coming to neighborhood dispute. **Page 14.**



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May 1 - 14, 2021 • Volume 31, Number 9

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WRANGLER NEWS

This issue's top story:
Tempe confronts feral cat concerns • Page 3

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TEMPE & WEST CHANDLER

WRANGLER NEWS

THE PLACE WE CALL HOME



PAGE 3



Your Home Page for Tempe & West Chandler Neighborhood News

Funding OK'd for independent noise study on Loop 101

By Lee Shappell
wranglernews.com

Funding has been approved for an independent noise study on Loop 101 through Tempe, Chandler and Mesa after several neighboring residents complained of increased noise after a widening project last summer was not topped with the rubberized asphalt that had been on the surface prior to construction.

The Maricopa Association of Governments Regional Council Executive Committee has approved \$200,000, available from the allocation of transportation sales-tax revenues, for the Freeway Noise Analysis Study on Loop 101 from Baseline Road to Loop 202. The study tentatively will be complete and results presented by November.

Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, an independent not-for-profit firm that has a history of work with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, was recommended to do the study.

Arizona Department of Transportation, with approval of the Maricopa Association of Governments, which oversees the Valley freeway system, had approved a less-expensive noise-abatement treatment known as diamond grinding, in which grooves are cut into the concrete finish.

ADOT had conducted noise surveys after the project was finished and said readings were within federally acceptable levels.

Homeowners who live near the freeway, however, disputed that and said noise levels were much higher than acceptable. Several

— 101, Page 6

Dollars proposed for animal welfare and feral cat control stir opposition

By Tony Gutiérrez
wranglernews.com

Tempe City Councilmember Lauren Kuby remembers knocking on doors during the 2018 city elections and smelling a strong odor in one of the neighborhoods.

She learned from a resident who answered that the smell came from feral cats that had marked the territory for their own.

"I've become more and more aware of this issue as time has gone on," Kuby said.

Since 2017, Kuby has been serving on the City Council's Sustainable and Livable Communities Committee, along with Vice Mayor Randy Keating and Councilmember Jennifer



— Contributed photo

Adams.

Among issues being tackled by the committee are animal welfare concerns, including feral cats, and whether approving an allocation of \$148,000 to address the problem is justifiable during coming budget-study sessions.

As to the resident who spoke with Kuby during door-to-door visits in the last election campaign, Kuby felt the conversation helped provide insight into a problem that figures indicate has worsened.

Kuby provided Wrangler News with an email from Tempe resident Megan Rakaric who has had first-hand negative experiences with feral cats.

Even though Rakaric said she has no ill-will toward cats — she'd probably own one if she wasn't so allergic, she added — cats urinate on her outside furniture and leave feces for her two elderly dogs to ingest.

"With senior dogs, you get extra vet visits, medicines to help clear their systems, special diets to

— CATS, Page 8

Brisas among schools to share in \$21m grant

Will reduce state's counselor shortfall, among worst in U.S.

By Peter Coronel
wranglernews.com

A portion of a \$21 million grant that will fund the School Safety Grant Program's waitlist for school counselor and social worker positions in Arizona is set to bring a social worker to Kyrene de las Brisas Elementary in West Chandler.

Additional funding from the state will reach schools across the state.

As passed by the Legislature and implemented by the Arizona Department of Education, the School

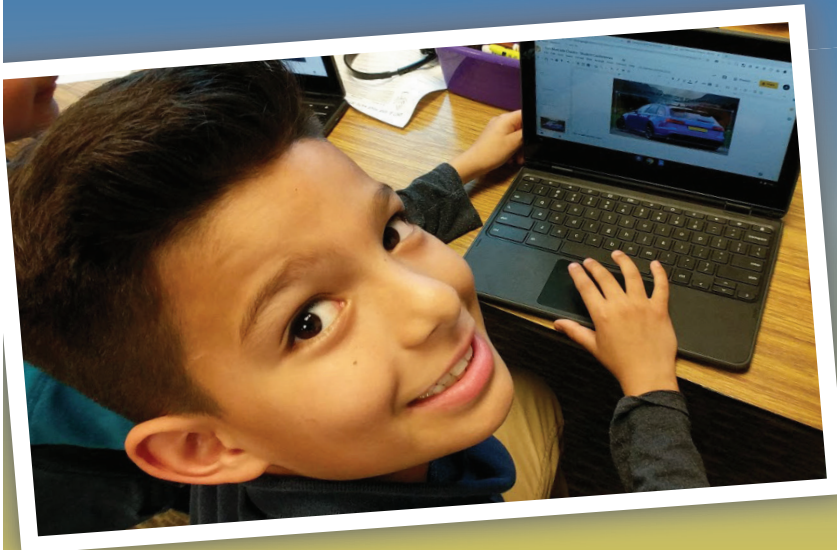
Safety Grant program has brought more than 260 social and emotional support professionals to schools in an effort to reduce the state's student-to-school-counselor ratio, one of the highest in the nation.

Despite these gains, demand outstripped program funds, leaving many schools on the waitlist.

The new funding will be available immediately to approved schools, including Brisas and another Kyrene school in Phoenix. Kyrene School District

— COUNSELORS, Page 27

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A Nurses Day tribute

An incredible job, yet to her it's 'No Big Deal'

Editor's Note: International Nurses Day is celebrated around the world May 12, the anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth. There are more than 70,000 registered nurses and nurse practitioners across Arizona. Below is our tribute to one such health care professional.

By Joyce Coronel
wranglernews.com



Joyce Coronel

They are there when life throws you a nasty curve ball: Nurses, with their tidy scrubs, funky gym shoes and ever-present stethoscope wound around their necks, are there to serve.

Janna Ellsworth graduated from nursing school 12 years ago and spent her first year doing home health care so she could stay home with the first of her three daughters. A year later, she began working on an oncology floor. Six years ago, Ellsworth transferred to the Emergency Department at Chandler Regional Hospital.

"I often think to myself while driving into work, 'What an incredible job I have,'" Ellsworth says of her work in the emergency department, calling it a "privilege and honor" to take care of patients in their most vulnerable state.

"We get to hold people's hands that are just scared to die, or provide lifesaving medication to someone that can really help them and bring them back.

"It can be as simple as giving someone a warm blanket or, as I say a hundred times a day, 'Hi. My name is Janna. I'll be your nurse today and I'll be caring for you.' Just to let them know that I am there to help and care for them on their terrible day and that there's something I can do to make them feel a

— CONTINUED on facing page

little bit better.”

The gym shoes, she says, are because on average, she walks about 8 miles during a 12-hour shift at the hospital. “You’re just moving, moving, moving.”

Those comfortable scrubs nurses wear allow them to “get down the floor and pick a patient up or put an IV in on your knees,” Ellsworth says.

“You’ve always got to have a ponytail holder to put your hair up, that’s for sure. You can’t wear hoops in your ears—you have to be strategic with your hair and your nails and your earrings,” she chuckles. There’s no time for a leisurely lunch with co-workers either. A nurse is lucky to be able to slam down one meal during a 12-hour shift.

As Ellsworth pauses to contemplate her years working in the hospital, many patients she’s cared for come to mind. “I’ve been a part of these people’s stories and whether they remember me or not, I remember them and they stay with me for such a long time.

“They will forever impact my life and why I do what I do—it’s because of them,” Ellsworth says.

And then there are the heartbreaking moments when a patient is lost.

“When you have a hard patient and maybe it’s devastating and something happens, we

are there to help each other out and we take moments for ourselves and really allow that time to heal and to move on to the next patient.

“You’ve got three other patients to take care of. It just really gives me that determination to help other people.”

Working in crisis mode, Ellsworth says she has gained a unique perspective in life. She’s learned not to sweat the small stuff.

“ER nurses have a unique perspective on life because we’re with people who may not have that next tomorrow. So everybody at work has that positive attitude and just a joy to be alive and full of life because of them.”

Ellsworth says she tells her daughters, “It’s no big deal. One of my mottos is NBD—it’s no big deal. What’s a really big deal to most people? I see the really big deals in the ER.”

Working on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ellsworth says, was a bit scary at first. She wondered if she might inadvertently take the virus home to her loved ones or if she might get it herself.

“However as a nurse, especially in the ER, when I walk through those ER doors, something would change.

“I felt a sense that I was needed and those fears—that feeling of being needed—was greater than any of my fears and worries. And so those would disappear and I would just go head-on.”



Janna Ellsworth, a Dignity Health Chandler Regional Hospital Emergency Department nurse, reflects on her career ahead of International Nurses Day May 12.

— Photo courtesy Dignity Health



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101

From Page 3

people produced videos and still photographs with their own noise-meter readings as evidence.

In February, the MAG Transportation Policy Committee agreed to break the impasse by commissioning an independent noise study. While neighborhood activists were pleased with the decision to get an independent assessment, one, Lisa Zyriek, said she still has some questions and concerns.

"It does not look like any of the study will be done during the cooler months and it is unclear ... if noise will be evaluated at the second-story level of a home and how far away from the 101 noise will be analyzed," she wrote in an email to *Wrangler News*.

"For example, will they broaden ADOT's parameters to include distances from ½ to 1 mile away?"

Tentative schedule for the study

May – Technical memo outlining

the study approach will be drafted.

June – Technical memo will be presented to MAG Transportation Policy Committee.

July – Preliminary sound readings.

September – Update to MAG Transportation Policy Committee on readings and study work to that point, as well as start of the full sound readings.

November – Update to MAG Transportation Policy Committee on full sound readings and study findings.

"While the timeline may seem a little protracted, we believe this timeline has the opportunity to provide the most accurate readings," Tempe Mayor Corey Woods wrote in an email to those living near the freeway.

"With rates of COVID cases beginning to decline, increased distribution of vaccines, more people going back to the office, and schools starting in-person learning, this timeline will be a more true representation of the amount of traffic, and therefore noise, being experienced by the homes impacted by the repavement of the 101 Freeway."

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Cats

From Page 3

help get them back on track. It's not something they shake off quickly," said Rakaric.

"My dogs have been sick several times from that, and they're old, and I worry that one of the times they're not going to recover."

There are times during the year, Rakaric says, that she can't open the windows because the odor is so pungent.

She says she has had to tear out the landscaping in her yard because cats were using it as their own personal litter box, and she started wearing masks outside before the pandemic.

Rakaric said that while she isn't opposed to the existence of feral cat colonies she wishes that her neighbors that have been feeding and caring for them would take the extra step to spay and neuter them to prevent overpopulation.

"I have to assume when I see the cats running around that are considered to be feral and their ears are not clipped, that they're not fixed, and that's the majority of what I see in my neighborhood," she said.

"There are people out there in the community who are doing a great job trying to keep this population in check, but there're others who are working against them, whether consciously or not."

Fix.Adopt.Save (FAS) — an initiative of Valley animal welfare groups — has been partnering with the city of Tempe in implementing a Trap, Neuter and Release program to curtail the feral cat population since March of last year, said project manager Sonja Hernandez.

"It was easy to partner with them in doing this because it's a very comprehensive," said Hernandez. "With the program being managed as well as it is, it's focused to neighborhoods, it's providing a solution to the community, while also educating on multiple aspects of the feral cats in the community."

Because the weather in the Valley doesn't trigger hibernation like in other parts of the state or country, cats reproduce throughout the year, Hernandez said, noting that one female cat can produce up to three

litters per year.

FAS provides logistic support for mobile events sponsored by the city. Residents will trap the cats and bring them to the mobile veterinary clinic where a veterinarian and technicians, facilitated through FAS, will perform the spaying and neutering procedures. After being held for a couple of nights to ensure there are no complications, the cats are returned to their colonies.

"The city of Tempe is the only city that we're doing this type of program with," she said.

**'I love my neighbor,
he's such a caring person,
but I also have a husband
who's not too happy about
having cats eating the
vegetable garden.'**

— Councilmember Lauren Kuby

"That is because of how well-managed their program is and what they're seeking to accomplish."

So far, the city has TNR'd 381 feral cats, according to reports. Kuby herself has participated in the effort. She notes that she helped her neighbor trap eight cats the week of April 11.

While she was expecting trapping the cats would involve chasing them with a net, the trap is a simple cage with papers and food on the floor that triggers the door closed when the cat walks in, she said.

The city has invested in 100 traps for residents to use in their own TNR efforts, and FABRIC has donated trap covers to calm down the felines.

"I love my neighbor, he's such a caring person, but I also have a husband who's not too happy about having cats eating the vegetable garden," Kuby said.

"My neighbor is happy to take care of them, but he doesn't want them to have babies. He was delighted to have help. We gathered and set them out at night, and every hour we caught more."

Part of cat colony management is education, Kuby said, and organizing colony caregivers into communities to assist each other.

Caregivers are asked to keep a database of their colonies, and to have

a set coordinated feeding time so the cats don't wander from home to home looking for more food. Having the community also allows caregivers to take care of each other's colonies so that others can take vacations.

"There was one gentleman who didn't understand why we returned the cats. To manage the colony is to manage the actual colony, and you have to treat it as a colony, and by the end, he offered to build a community feeding station," said Kuby.

One solution being considered is hiring an animal welfare coordinator in the city who would serve as a liaison to all of the city's departments for animal-related issues, from the feral cat situation, urban wildlife such as javelina herds or barking-related noise complaints.

"There's a lot of departments that touch on animal issues in some way, but there's not professional animal expertise that will holistically look at animal welfare or the human-animal connection," Kuby said.

"We have an education liaison, we have a sustainability liaison. This person would be a primary point of contact [and] advise the council and city manager."

However, others, such as Vice Mayor Keating, are concerned about the costs associated with creating a

new staff position for the city. While he said he values the city's TNR program and hopes to see it continue, he plans to oppose the proposal.

"It's safe to say every member of the Tempe City Council supports animal welfare and values the TNR program," Keating said in an email to Wrangler News.

"That being said, we are currently in a budget crunch due to COVID-19, and we still have 50 frozen staff positions left unfilled and hundreds of part-time employees who were laid off at the start of the pandemic.

"I'm not convinced a director-level position, created outside of the normal budget process, is the most cost-effective way to ensure our wonderful TNR efforts continue."

Kuby said she plans offer several proposals to the council to consider, including looking into ways to fund the position with outside support.

"I think everyone's an animal lover. I think people see the value of this, it's just we have to figure out a creative way to fund it in a time when there's a lot of needs in the community right now," she said.

"We have to see if we want to put staff on this very successful program. I respect that the council has to consider a lot of variables."



Corona football fundraiser Saturday, May 15 — The inaugural Corona Football Alumni Bags Tournament is 10 a.m., Saturday, May 15, at 9103 S. Kenwood Lane in Tempe. Registration is required. Entry fee is \$100 per two-player team, which includes burgers and hot dogs and beverages at the adult refreshment area. Proceeds benefit the Corona del Sol Touchdown Club. Non-players may enjoy food and refreshments for \$30. There will be raffles and prizes. Sign up or register at Signupgenius.com. Sponsorships are available. Information: Nick Bastian at 480-463-4514 or cdstouchdownclub@gmail.com.



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'I needed her, and she needed me.'

Unexpected turns for Tempe mom produce a lifetime of blessings

By Janie Magruder
wranglernews.com

Like many moms-to-be, Pat Little-Upah spent the better part of her first pregnancy imagining life with baby. As her belly grew, her dreams did, too.

Pat just knew this child would be a girl, perfect in every way, and she looked forward to shopping excursions, proms, a wedding, all those things mothers and daughters share.

On Jan. 20, 1973, Lisa was born 3 weeks prematurely and weighing in at about 4 pounds, prompting the medical team at the small rural hospital in Circleville, Ohio, to whisk her away to an incubator. Lisa had a hole in her heart and difficulty feeding.

Pat was shocked to learn three days later that Lisa had been diagnosed with Down syndrome and would be transferred to a neonatal intensive care unit in Columbus, Ohio.

"They said, 'You might have to put her in an institution, and that was kind of it,' the Tempe woman said. 'I had never even had an interaction with a person with Down syndrome.'"

The first night after Pat was discharged from the hospital, she sat all night in her rocking chair, thinking about the plans she'd made.

"And in some way, I buried the child I dreamed about for nine months, and I accepted the child that I had been given," she said.

Eight years later, Lisa would save her mother's life.

A life of service to country

Pat grew up in a military family — her father was in the Navy, her mother in the Army, and both served in World War II. "My mom was my role model," she said. "She was an amazing nurse, and I wanted to be just like her."

After nursing school, Pat enlisted in the Army and was on active duty in Vietnam in 1968, caring for wounded American soldiers and Vietnamese civilians. After 10 years in the military, she became an ER nurse in Cleveland and then went into psychiatric nursing.

Pat moved to Tempe in 1981 and began building a career with Banner Health. But in 1991, while in the Army Reserve, she was activated to serve for six months during Operation Desert Storm. That required the creation of a patchwork of care among Lisa's father, her stepfather and her teachers.

"I went off to war, and of course, Lisa didn't understand," Pat said. "When I came back, she refused to see me at first."

After serving for 30 years in the Army Nurse Corps,

Pat retired in 2004 at the rank of colonel, and she has since collected numerous civilian and military awards. They include the Armed Forces' Legion of Merit in 2008 and the 2012 YWCA Women in Leadership Award for military service. In 2014, she was inducted into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame, and currently is vice president of its society.

Pat retired in 2012 after 10 years as the CEO of Banner Behavioral Health Hospital, the Banner Psychiatric Center and the Wendy Paine O'Brien Adolescent Center.

Since then, she's been volunteering and developing programs for local veterans' organizations such as Honor House, of which she is its board president, and on the board of Veterans First. She has served on committees to improve services at the VA Medical Center in Phoenix, and is working to build a Fisher House in Phoenix, where family members of veterans hospitalized at the Center may stay.

"So many veterans from Vietnam, Desert Storm, Iraq, Afghanistan, they don't know where to turn sometimes," said Pat, noting issues of homelessness and suicide, especially, are on the rise.

A life of service to individuals with disabilities

She also volunteers at The Centers of Habilitation



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in Tempe, which provides daily social, recreational and educational opportunities to adults with developmental and physical disabilities.

Lisa, now 48, spends her weekdays at the center, working on independent skills and enjoying community activities. She looks forward to seeing her friends and teachers, and to being in the sensory garden. It's a beautiful shady space with flowering trees, raised garden beds, a water feature, swings, hanging ribbons and wall murals that guests helped paint.

"Many individuals with disabilities find a sense of calm when out in nature," Pat said. "Lisa particularly likes the swing — she's always liked to rock to music."

The center was closed for much of the past year's COVID-19 pandemic, and that was challenging for Pat and, especially, for Lisa who doesn't understand the concept of time.

"I would drive her to the center, and through the parking lot, so she could see that the backyard was empty, and that there were no cars or clients, and she would understand then," Pat said.

Since the center reopened on April 1, Lisa has become more like her old self, more talkative and social. She loves music, and doesn't think twice about grabbing a live microphone in the center to sing "God Bless America." Other favorites — anything by Whitney Houston, "C is for Cookie" by Sesame Street's Cookie Monster, and "You are my Sunshine," which mom and daughter sang all the time years ago.



A life of service to Lisa

Pat feels blessed that Lisa has been relatively healthy all her life, that the hole in her heart spontaneously closed in toddlerhood, and that she recently survived pneumonia after being placed on hospice care.

"God truly blessed us when He allowed her to live and continue to be part of our lives and continue to grow old together," she said.

As a child, Lisa surprised her mother every day, not fitting the mold of the quiet, docile individual with Down syndrome that Pat had read about. "She was a very loving child, but she was mercurial, and she had some ups and downs and real struggles."

Lisa attended special-needs schools in Ohio, Tempe and Phoenix, graduated from high school at 22, and moved into a group home a year later. Placing her there was one of the hardest things Pat ever did.

"When you have a child who cannot speak and defend herself, and you put them into the care of essentially strangers, it is very difficult. You worry, you don't know what will happen, you don't know if you made the right decision for your child or not," she said.

"Lisa now lives in a group home where she has 24/7 care, with two other adult women, who are like big sisters to her," Pat said. "She has chores, independence, friends."

On Mother's Day, as she does every year, Pat will celebrate her daughter's milestones — mountaintops, she calls them. A visit to the park is likely because Lisa loves listening to music and watching kids on the playground.

And Pat undoubtedly will think, as she does every Mother's Day, of D.J., her second born, a boy, born a year after Lisa. He was struck by a car and killed when he was just 7 years old.

"I look at Lisa, and in some ways, she saved my life," she said. "After my son was killed, I was emotionally wrecked, and at times very depressed. I didn't want to get out of bed, I didn't want to continue, but I had to, because of Lisa. At times, she would hug me and sing, 'Jesus Loves Me.' I needed her, and she needed me."

None of this was part of Pat plan's for motherhood, but she doesn't dwell on what could have been.

"You celebrate more of the little things, you realize how precious life is, particularly when you've also lost a child," she said. "Every moment is precious."

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With Alex Zener

Feeling 'amazing' as Aztecs return from a long dry spell

The Corona del Sol baseball team, currently with a 12-4 overall record and 6-3 region record, are trying to recapture the dream the 2020 team had of playing for the 6A state championship before their entire season was cancelled due to COVID-19.

"It feels absolutely amazing for our guys to be back playing baseball this season," said head coach **Dave Webb**.

"It was the greatest heartbreak last spring for our players to lose an entire season when we felt we could once again have a good chance to be able to compete for the state title."

"To be back on the field dulls the pain a little, especially for our senior players who would have played last season as juniors."

Corona, currently ranked No. 7 in the 6A conference, has won eight games in a row, outscoring their opponents 70 runs to 32.

"We have some great hitters in the batting order who help us score the runs we need to win including seniors **Zach Kress**, catcher; **Marcus Harrison**, short stop; **Quade Swearingen**, center fielder; junior **Jalen Seward**, third/first base; and sophomore **Cole Carlon**, first base and left-hand pitcher," said Webb.

On defense, the Aztecs have a bevy of pitchers available to put on the mound at any time.

"Our pitching staff goes across the spectrum as far as it goes," said Webb. "**Wyatt Bauer** is our most prominent veteran as a three-year starter. He is a left-handed pitcher who loves to carve hitters up with spotted fastballs and terrific off-speed pitches."

Bauer, who has started five games, is credited with an earned run average of 2.02 pitching in 17 innings while striking out 13 batters.

Corona, though, has seven other

capable pitchers who have seen time on the mound this season, including junior **Austin Balmes**; Carlon; senior **Luke Bashford**; senior **Jackson Doren**; Swearingen; senior **Michael Fuller**; Seward; and sophomore **Trey Anderson**.

Balmes, who has started four games, has pitched in 12 innings, striking out 13 batters, while Swearingen and Carlon have both pitched seven innings, where they have struck out nine and seven batters, respectively.

Playing in the outfield on defense for the Aztecs this season are seniors **Drew Mathews** and **Caden Griffin**, junior **Ayden Crouse**, and sophomores **Justin Corless** and **Owen Janssen**.

Infielders include seniors **Garrett Merdich** and **Marcus Harrison** and sophomores **Zane Coggins** and **Conner Bigelow**.

Additional players covering the bases include senior first baseman **Wyatt Bauer**, third and first baseman junior **Keaton Walker**, first baseman junior **Braeden Schnabel** and sophomore catcher **Landon Springmeyer**.

The Aztecs, ranked No. 1 in their 6A Central Region by winning 76 percent of their games, and No. 7 in their 6A conference, have only three games left to move up in the rankings before the 6A state championship tournament starts May 8.

Corona was scheduled to play the No. 1 team in the 6A conference, Hamilton, on April 29, as their last home game where the seniors will be honored.

The last two games will be at Mountain View on April 30 and Mountain Ridge, May 3.

If everything stays the same, the Aztecs, currently ranked No. 7, would play the No. 10 ranked team, Sunnyslope, in the first round of the 6A state championship on

May 8.

Corona softball

The Aztecs, currently ranked No. 16 in their 6A conference, are in a position to move up in the rankings if they can win a few of their last four games on the schedule or potentially move out of the playoffs if they do not.

Only the top 16 teams in each conference get to play in the state championships this year.

The Aztecs will need to rely on their top batters, seniors **Arianna Tammaro**, **Tristin Jamar** and **Alex Reeve**; juniors **Megan Ireland** and **Bella Cummins**; sophomore **Jaclyn Ibarra**; and freshman **Mia Rodriguez**.

Ireland is the top batter on the team with a .407 batting average with 22 hits, 13 RBIs and one home run while scoring nine runs.

She is followed by teammate Tammaro, who has a .389 batting average with 21 hits and 10 RBIs, one home run, and three stolen bases while scoring 20 of the team's 107 runs this season.

Jamar, playing in only 11 of the 15 games, has the highest batting average with a .577 with 15 hits, 14 runs and eight RBIs.

Reeve has 12 hits and 11 REBs with a .364 batting average while at bat 33 times.

Cummins has 12 hits with a .414 batting average with two stolen bases in 12 games and Ibarra, batting in all 15 games, is credited with 13 hits and two stolen bases.

Rodriguez has a 4.38 batting average with seven hits and nine RBI's while batting in 12 games.

Out in the field on defense, Cummins and sophomore **Jacqueline Tom**, lead the team in putouts with 68 for Tom and 67 for Cummins followed by 51 for sophomore **Isabelle Freund** and 25 for sophomore **Allie Pequeno**.

Ireland leads the team in assists, with 24, followed by Freund with 22, junior **Alani Beltran** with 21, junior **Emmalyn Brinka** with 19 and sophomore **Madison Romero** with 13 assists

Senior **Jordan Thorpe** has a 1.000 fielding percentage putting out the runner every time she had a chance while playing in five games while junior **Teagan Neumann** has played in all 15 games putting out 11 runners.

The Aztecs have three pitchers who have seen action on the plate this season:

Brinka, Ibarra and Rodriguez.

Brinka has played in the most innings, 61, and is credited with five of the seven wins where she struck out 68 batters to be credited with a 2.96 ERA.

Ibarra is credited with the other four wins pitching in 37 innings striking out 43 batters earning a 2.65 ERA.

Rodriguez has three appearances on the pitching mound where she pitched in six innings.

The Aztec were scheduled to play Hamilton, the No. 2 ranked team in the 6A conference, April 29 followed by at game at Mountain View on April 30.

The last two games of the season Corona will be on their home field first against Mountain Ridge on May 3 and then for senior night, on May 4, against Mountain Pointe.

Marcos de Niza Baseball

The Padres, currently ranked No. 13 in the 4A conference, have four regular season games left to improve their ranking for the state championship playoff which start May 8.

Marcos was scheduled to play Dysart, with a 0-12 record, on April 27 at home before playing a non-conference game against cross-town rival McClintock on April 28, then at Deer Valley on May 4 and at home against Apache Junction on May 5.

The Padres will be relying on their top hitters seniors **Alex Denham**, **Rafael Armenta**, **Antonio Hernandez** and **Jacob Irick** along with junior **Noah Gutierrez** to have the hot bats in order to score the runs needed to win their last four regular season games.

Denham, with a .435 batting average, leads the team in hits with 20 along with 14 RBI, two home runs, four stolen bases and 16 scored runs.

Armenta and Hernandez both have 16 hits, Gutierrez has 14 and Irick has 13.

The Padres have seven pitchers who have seen action on the mound this season including sophomore **Dallas Vacaneri**, seniors **Daniel Rodriguez**, **Zachery Paiz**, **Rafael Armenta**, **Gage Olson**, Denham, and Gutierrez.

Vacaneri has the most appearances with eight including four wins and two losses pitching in 24 innings.

Armenta is credited with two wins and one loss but has pitched in the most innings with 35 followed by Paiz with 19 innings.

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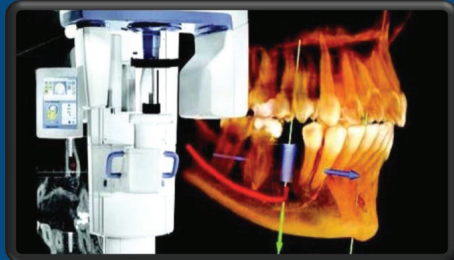
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Rebecca Owens rides her horse near the block wall erected on the equestrian trail that winds through the Buena Vista Ranchos, Sunburst Farms and Calle de Caballos neighborhoods. — Wrangler News file photo

Signs of resolution seen in S. Tempe wall dispute

By Joyce Coronel
wranglernews.com

The controversy over a nearly 7-foot-high, 328-foot-long block wall built more than a year ago by a Shady Lane Estates homeowner soon may be coming to a resolution.

Nearby residents say the structure impinges on an equestrian trail in the area.

A number of Sunburst Farms, Calle de Caballos and Buena Vista Ranchos residents fear the structure sets a precedent that endangers their rural way of life.

The wall was built just inside the Shady Lane resident's property line but takes away 10 feet of width from a bridle path adjacent to the owner's lot.

Disgruntled neighbors have been concerned that the wall would set a precedent, allowing other homeowners to take back their easement with no consequences.

As portions of the path are lost, property values could be negatively affected, according to their claim.

Tempe City Councilmember Jennifer Adams, reached via text messaging, said she has been working on the matter for many months.

"My hope is that the wall will come down and respect the will of the residents and the easement of the bridle path. I'm not an expert on such matters but feel it is the appropriate course of action," Adams wrote in her response. "Of course, I will follow the legal recommendations made regarding the matter."

Nikki Ripley, communications manager for the city of Tempe, responding to an inquiry from *Wrangler News* about the current status of the dispute, said the Shady Lane Estates resident who built the block wall has not been told the structure needs to be removed.

"Beyond that, I do not have additional information for you at this time."

A South Tempe resident who did not wish to be identified told *Wrangler News* his understanding is that the city of Tempe hired an outside law firm to look into the matter.

The attorney reportedly recommended the wall be removed and relocated to its original position, where it did not encroach on the path.

At press time, the Tempe City Attorney's office did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Matt Schmehl, a Sunburst Farms resident who has been a spokesman for neighbors upset about the wall, commented briefly.

"We know the city is still actively working on it. We believe they're being objective and we have high hopes," Schmehl said.

Ajaysingh Nirwan, M.D., the homeowner who is said to have had the wall built, declined to comment when reached by *Wrangler News* at presstime.

This is a developing story. Look for further developments at wranglernews.com and in our May 15 print edition.



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Exhibitors didn't need to hear the order 'Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines.' The excitement of Arizona Community Church's 15th Motor Sports Day and annual car show had already ignited the usual 0-60 roar of excitement. Hundreds were on hand as ASU ROTC color guards got the event off to an engine-revving start. *More photos inside.*



A special pull-out section with photos by Billy Hardiman



Cars, kids, fun ... and a sunny spring day

Who could have asked for more as Arizona Community Church rolled out its 15th annual crowd-pleaser, proving that in these post-COVID days, hardly anyone is auto-immune.





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Rotary Club member Cori Christensen was on hand to help dig up weeds and clear brush that had invaded the garden at Kyrene del Cielo Elementary.

— Photo courtesy Rotary Tempe Downtown

Growing interest by Downtown Rotarians brings new life to untended school garden

Wrangler News staff reports

When the COVID pandemic led to the shutdown of schools in Tempe and West Chandler, the last thing on anyone's mind was the condition of campus gardens.

A year later, when students were back in school and millions of Arizonans were vaccinated, members of three Rotary clubs, alongside their non-Rotarian friends, attacked the tangle of weeds and brush that were choking the garden at Kyrene del Cielo in West Chandler.

For 2½ hours, the volunteers worked hard to re-establish four garden beds and clear the overgrown paths leading to them.

It was all part of the Rotary District 5495 Week of Service.

Marni Anbar, of the Rotary Tempe Downtown Club, said Cielo Principal Tammy Thaete was one of those who rolled up her sleeves to help get the job done.

Also on hand were members of the Gilbert Rotary Club; Laurel Gwilliam, a 4th grade teacher at Cielo; Nicole Leonardi of the Cielo Parent Teacher Organization; Dan Leonard,

Cielo staff; and Dave Kurckhard of the Rotary Tempe Downtown Club.

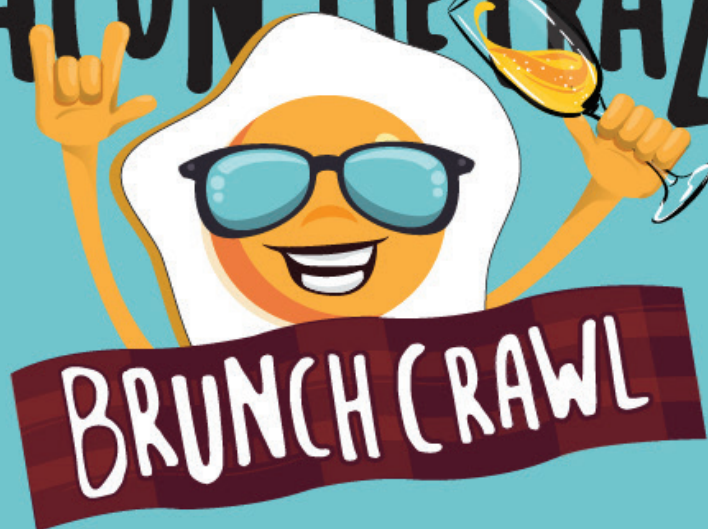
"Our mission is to work together to maintain and expand the Cielo garden so that it can be fully utilized by the school community," Anbar said.

"We will be doing this through regular clean-up and planting days, as well as working collaboratively with master gardeners from the Maricopa County Cooperative Extension, the Kyrene School District and the Cielo PTO to plan and fundraise for maintenance and expansion."

Anbar said a Rotary Community Corp was formed that consists of members of area Rotary clubs plus non-Rotarians, working together under the Rotary umbrella to maintain Cielo's garden and keep it ready for learning once school resumes in August.

For those less inclined toward the intensities of outdoor gardening, volunteers from Rotary and the community worked at a home near Cielo to assemble 220 feminine hygiene packs for homeless and low-income women served by Tempe Women 4 Women, along with 26 kits for the Justa Center.

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Recollections by Wrangler News film contributor M.V. Moorhead: He stays to the (happily!) not-so-bitter end of COVID drama

Valentine's Day fell on a Sunday this year. In the week that followed, I developed a bad cough.

By Wednesday afternoon, it had gotten severe and constant enough that I left work early. The Wife was also feeling ill, so on Thursday we went an Urgent Care near our house and both got tested for COVID. It came as no surprise at all when, Saturday morning, we were told that both tests were positive.

The Wife shook it off after a few days of relatively mild flu-like symptoms.

I did not. Throughout the week that followed, I was sleeping 20 to 22 hours a day, though it was a restless, dream-troubled, unsatisfying sleep.

For a couple of hours a day, I would drag myself to the couch to watch reruns of *The Andy Griffith Show* or whatever, but sitting up gave me a headache that felt like somebody splitting my head open

with a hatchet and then ladling purple lava—in my imagination, the lava was always purple for some reason—into the crack.

I never lost my senses of taste or smell, as so many people report, but I did lose my appetite. Looking at food made me feel ill.

I was getting down maybe a piece of toast or a slice of cheese a day. I would think about getting up to do some work or answer some emails, but after dragging myself out of bed to go to the bathroom or get a drink from the fridge, all I could do was collapse into bed again.

A kind friend sent me a little fingertip pulse-oximeter, and I was told that if my blood's oxygen saturation level fell below 88, I should go to the emergency room.

By Thursday of the second week, my readings were in the 84 and 85 range. By Friday they were in

the high 70s. The Wife called 9-1-1, and I was loaded into an ambulance and driven to the hospital.

I anticipated a nightmarish ordeal waiting to be seen to at the ER; it wasn't the case. I was placed in a comfortable private waiting room with a TV, an oxygen mask was put on my face, and I lay there for hours watching Eddie Murphy and Arsenio Hall in the original *Coming to America* while sweet young nurses came in periodically to check on me.

A nice chatty technician came in and took an x-ray of my chest. A while after that, a young ER doctor came in and said "Yeah, we're going to admit you; your lungs look like crap in that x-ray."

Bluntly put, no doubt, but I appreciated the candor.

I hadn't stayed in a hospital as a patient since I was six years old and got my tonsils out. But I spent the next eight days alone in a room, hooked



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up to IVs and wires, with oxygen tubes up my nose, watching Turner Classic Movies.

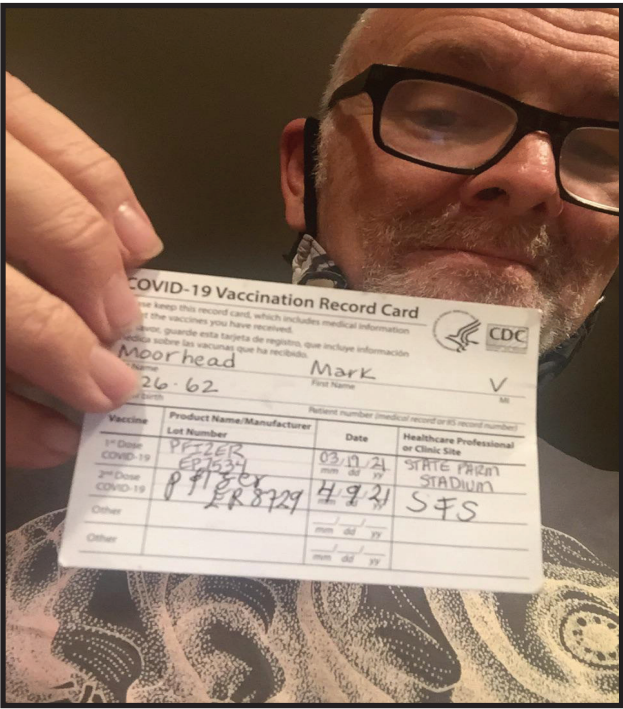
I was able to stumble to the bathroom once or twice a day, the wires trailing behind me, but could manage little activity beyond that. My big excursion out came when they took me to get a CT scan; it was startling to see the scary stern warnings posted on the outside door of my room.

I can't say that I felt sure I was going to die, but I did feel like it was possible. For the first few days I wasn't sure if I'd get out of the hospital; early on I wasn't even sure how much I cared.

In retrospect I can see that I had an uncommonly fortunate bout of this illness; I was never placed on a ventilator, for instance, which often indicates a plummeting chance of survival.

The care I got was excellent, skilled and kind. I was given daily treatments of the antiviral Remdesivir, as well as steroids, and gradually began to feel stronger.

Nurses took me for walks up and down the halls, and I showed enough improvement that I was sent home the following Saturday evening, with an oxygen concentrator.



About two weeks after I was released, I got my first vaccination at State Farm Stadium. By the end of March, I felt well enough to return to work. This past Friday I got my second shot.

I still get winded and fatigued easily, but the pulmonologist tells me that this is will likely continue for at least a couple more months.

My big takeaways from the experience?

One is gratitude for the first-rate treatment I received, both from the health care professionals and from my family and friends, who showed me so much support and encouragement through daily phone calls and texts.

Another was a new respect for the health care profession. At some level I probably always understood, but now have seen first-hand, that the nurses, doctors and aides do more for humanity on any given day they work than I've done in my whole life.

My other big takeaway is a concrete, non-theoretical respect for this virus that I didn't have before.

So that's my advice: wear a mask, stay socially distanced, and get your shots. As somebody who didn't get anywhere near the worst that this disease can give, I promise you that you don't want even the second-worst.

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Briefly ♦ ♦ ♦

Downtown Chandler 'Brunch Crawl'

'You're Bacon Me Crazy' Brunch Crawl, a self-guided activity that features 14 brunch spots in Downtown Chandler, is 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, May 15.

Participants may enjoy a \$7 food and drink special at each location with purchase of a \$20 ticket.

Registration will be staggered, with 10 a.m. and noon time slots. Masks are required. Branded brunch-crawl masks will be handed out at registration. Day of registration will not be offered. Registration is outside the Crowne Plaza San Marcos Resort.

To comply with social distancing, participants may take advantage of Chandler's Dine in the Park program in Dr. A.J. Chandler Park and the Courtyard, where beer or wine are available in sealed to-go containers in the park during posted hours.

"This is a fun opportunity for people to get a taste for all that Downtown Chandler has to offer – delicious brunch spots, expertly crafted drinks and live entertainment all weekend long," said Mary Murphy-Bessler, executive director of the Downtown Chandler Community Partnership.

Information: downtownchandler.org/brunchcrawl or Natasha@downtownchandler.org.

Heart arrhythmia center opens

Dignity Health Chandler Regional Medical Center has opened a Heart Arrhythmia Center, which can diagnose and treat patients suffering from irregular heartbeats, such as atrial fibrillation, the most common arrhythmia.

The center's team of physicians has the most-advanced technology available in its electrophysiology lab to determine what causes patients to experience abnormal heartbeats, in turn allowing them to develop an individualized care plan.

"The goal of the Heart Arrhythmia Center is to find solutions for patients suffering from irregular heartbeats and prevent them from developing a

serious heart condition or suffering a stroke," said Dr. Jaskanwal "Sonny" Bisla, an electrophysiologist at the center. "Our team has the tools and skills to meet this need in our community."

An arrhythmia is a change in the electrical impulses in the heart, leading it to beat inconsistently. This can impact the body's blood flow and can be life-threatening if left untreated.

"Our electrophysiology team specializes in a number of state-of-the-art procedures to treat complex arrhythmia conditions," said Dr. Osama T. Niazi, another electrophysiologist at the center. "Having these services available through Chandler Regional is a game-changer for patients."

Information: dignityhealth.org/arizona/locations/chandlerregional/services/heart-care-cardiac-services/electrophysiology.

Tempe Diablos raffling a '71 'Vette

The Tempe Diablos are raffling a 1971 Corvette Stingray at \$100 a ticket to raise money for their charitable work. Tickets are available at tempediabloscharities.org.

The winning ticket will be randomly drawn after the close of sales on May 31 and the name of the winner will be announced June 1.

Entrants must be 18 or older and in Arizona to purchase a raffle ticket. Purchase or use of a ticket will be confirmation of eligibility and that the entrant has read and agrees to raffle rules.

Net proceeds from the raffle will benefit Tempe Diablos Charities, the Tempe Diablos and their grant and scholarship recipients.

Purchase of raffle tickets is not tax deductible as charitable contributions.

The Corvette has a 454-cubic inch, 365-horsepower LS5 engine, which matches the vehicle's vehicle identification number, with 4-speed manual transmission.

It is among only 1,455 equipped with factory alarm.

It features air conditioning, power steering and removable rear window.

More than 1,200 scholarships amounting to more than \$5 million have been awarded through the Diablos scholarship program.

The group funds more than \$240,000 per year in Arizona State University scholarships to students from the Tempe Union High School District.



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Stick with me on my journey of thrills, chills and repose into alternative healing



By Lee Shappell
wranglernews.com



I was sitting around one day on one of my rare office appearances (being a semiretired curmudgeon, now reduced to gig work, more often than not I tend to not show up) and I noticed a bunch of emails piling up with a common theme.

When it comes to what ails you, and, trust me, I have plenty of things that ail me at this point, I tend to stick with what I know.

And yet, I'm still in possession of my curiosity, enough so to understand that often we don't know what we don't know.

So, alternative healing: There are many forms of it right in our South Tempe-West Chandler backyard.

There's acupuncture, where you can become the equivalent of a human pin cushion in the hope of feeling better for it.

There's cryotherapy, where you can subject yourself to a shoulders-down chamber that's way colder than an Alaska winter day – in your underwear – to get a burst of energy.

And there's sound therapy, where you can achieve inner peace in a sound bath, without needing a tub. Or water. This is not to be confused with a meteor shower.

I convinced the folks here at Wrangler News to let me take a look at them.

We start with acupuncture. Stick with me.

Those Chinese had it figured out a long time ago

I'd never done acupuncture. With arthritic knees and living in a two-story house, I was up for anything to seek pain relief. My practitioner was Anna Lunaria at Yin Rising Acupuncture, where one can also receive herbal medicine, therapeutic body work, cupping and therapies involving nutrition, yoga, hypnosis and aroma. But I didn't. Lunaria, 51, has been at acupuncture for five years. She was a massage and yoga therapist for more than two decades before.

Mine was going to be a quickie introductory acupuncture treatment for knee pain.

Lunaria specializes in helping people with chronic pain.

She asks if I have anything else going on besides knee pain. I rattle off a short list. Because I have low-back pain, I get another pillow under my legs on the table.

"A big part when working with patients is just getting them into a comfortable position because if

you are not comfortable and you can't relax, the treatment is not nearly as effective," Lunaria said.

The table warmer is on. The music is on. It sounds like R. Carlos Nakai on Native American flute.

"One of the things we do in Chinese medicine is we look at peoples' tongues," Lunaria said. "We can determine a lot about people from looking at the tongue."

I'm asked to present mine. I ask what my big reveal is.

"High blood pressure and high cholesterol."

Dang. Nailed it.

We continue chatting when she says, "You just had your first needle."

Really? I felt nothing going into my knee.

"Acupuncture is super good for arthritic joints because one of the first things that happens is your body gets busy turning on the immune system to decrease inflammation in the body," she said. "If your body decides to do that, tomorrow you may feel lethargic or tired because that's what happens when the immune system gets turned on. But then you should also have less pain in the knees. You may find that you sleep better after acupuncture."

That all proved to be true for me.

"The very first thing that happens after we put in an acupuncture needle is there is a combustion of ATP (adenosine triphosphate, which provides energy to drive many processes in living cells)," Lunaria said. "So we eat calories and then our body breaks down those calories in terms of ATP. So as soon as I put needle in, there's a burst."

Accordingly, it's a really good idea not to chug caffeine before receiving acupuncture. If only I'd known.

"So, now I'm going to put a few of them in your hands, one of the most powerful points," she said, after putting them in both knees and ankles. "My theory about why this is so powerful is because this is really what makes us humans. This nerve does a lot of different things, including helping with headaches. That's what it's most famous for. It also decreases our perception of pain

by up to 40 percent.

“Through MRI studies, we know that the hypothalamus is the area of the brain where we experience pain. The brain experiences emotional pain in the same place where it experiences physical pain, so acupuncture works not just on physical pain but also on the emotional level, as well. So it’s great with helping pain whether its physical or emotional.”

The needles come in sterile packages and they are incredibly thin.

“When I first started acupuncture, I said, ‘Well, gee, people aren’t going to want to come back if it hurts.’ I use the thinnest, finest needles I can,” she said.

The last needles she puts in are to quiet my mind with a few in my ears and one in the center of my forehead. Now, she leaves and I get 25 minutes of repose.

It was peaceful and relaxing. Very nice. And nothing hurt.

“That’s one of the things people are always fascinated by. It doesn’t hurt,” Lunaria said upon returning. “In fact, I don’t like to call them needles because compared to a hypodermic needle, I can put 10 of my needles inside one. Under a microscope, an acupuncture needle is really smooth, where a hypodermic needle is serrated because it is designed to shear through blood vessels. Our needles are designed to bounce off of blood vessels.

“People hear the word ‘needle’ and their only experience with one is getting an injection and that’s totally different. We call it dry needling. It’s to differentiate it from a wet needle, which is a hypodermic needle.”

Lunaria says she has a 96 percent patient-retention rate.

“People get relief here when they haven’t gotten relief anywhere else,” she said. “A lot of times, I’m their last stop. I hear that a lot, ‘You’ve given me hope again.’ That’s the number one thing I hear.”

Being an acupuncturist requires a master’s degree and more than 900 hours of clinical experience under supervision, followed by grueling exams that lead to national board certification and finally a license.

“The effects of acupuncture will keep unfolding,” Lunaria said. “You’ll notice some effects in two hours, some in 24 hours, some in 48, even some in 72. After that, the effects wane. So lot of my patients who are chronic-pain patients come see me two times a week so they are not yo-yoing. After a month of weekly treatment two or three times a week their natural endorphin levels do not fall back down. They’ll stay up for up to a year.”

Lunaria has made time for me on a day when she is treating 20 patients.

The litmus test: For three days afterward, I walked up and down the steps, pain free, without using the handrail.

“I wish people would try acupuncture first, but maybe if they did, they wouldn’t be as convinced as if they tried others things first,” she said. “The research just keeps confirming what I was taught in acupuncture school about all the ancient practices and theories.

“Those Chinese 2,000 years ago, they knew a lot of stuff without all the benefit of scientific advances. It’s amazing how they just figured things out.”

Details: Anna Lunaria, Yin Rising Acupuncture, 6101 S. Rural Road, Suite 112, Tempe, yingrising.com, 480-206-6199

Virtual visit to icy likes of Barrow has a happy ending for this geezer

Stories & photos by Lee Shappell

wranglernews.com

I have no particular popsicle wish.

While I lost my tolerance for the Valley’s summer heat years ago, I have no inclination to move to Utqia^{vik} – you might remember it as Barrow – Alaska.

That’s why it surprised even me that I would agree to endure 3 minutes in a chamber chilled to 230 degrees below zero – twice as cold as dry ice and 10 times colder than a nasty winter day anywhere in Alaska – in my underwear.

I do, however, have curiosity about cryotherapy, which is growing in popularity among elite athletes wanting to recover more quickly from workouts – and even among geezers like me, who can’t run to the refrigerator anymore.

I have West Chandler resident Kevin Freeland, 57, to thank.

Freeland has operated Body Focus Fitness & Performance on Kyrene Road just north of Warner in Tempe for 17 years. In 2019, he opened Cryo Tempe, the first such facility in the South Tempe-West Chandler area, as a side business within his gym.

Clients enter the liquid-nitrogen-infused chamber in their underwear (Freeland provides a changing room and a robe). They are required to wear manufacturer-provided stockings, slippers and gloves. The treatment is from the collarbone down. The head must be kept above the chamber.

Freeland opens the door and vapor rushes out, like something from a lab in a sci-fi movie.

“People are skeptical when they first hear about it,” Freeland said. “Some people are just downright terrified of it.”

I step in. The door closes. I hand the provided robe over the top to Freeland and put on the gloves.

It is cool at first, not chilly. I keep my feet, hands and torso moving gently as directed, like doing the Twist in slow-mo.

I’m just getting settled in as Freeland tells me I’m halfway through. It’s surprising how it really doesn’t feel cold. You’re not being blasted by Arctic wind. Ears are not exposed like a Midwest winter.

Soon, he says, 45 seconds to go, and for the first time I’m feeling a sting in my forearms and calves.

And just like that, it’s over.

I step out pleasantly surprised, uplifted and energized, more so than from my daily pot of coffee. My skin is red, a normal byproduct that disappears as the afternoon wears on.

Freeland, who holds a microbiology degree from the University of Arizona, agrees that it is helpful to watch a treatment before trying one.

“When you see somebody in there and they’re not screaming in terror or pain, then it’s not that bad,” he said. “When you sit down and go over the benefits, most are willing to at least give it a shot. And a lot of people come in actually looking for it. It’s growing.”

A 2017 *International Journal of Sports Medicine* review of studies on athletes suggests that



Lee Shappell prepares for a cryo-therapy session.

cryotherapy can be effective in reducing muscle pain, inflammation and cell damage, and suggests that athletes may recover more quickly. Exposure to subzero temperature triggers release of anti-inflammatory endorphins and increases oxygen circulation.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that cryotherapy is effective in combating anxiety and depression, according to an October, 2017, *Medical News Today* report. Cold exposure increases norepinephrine, similar to the effects of Wellbutrin and other serotonin reuptake inhibitors.

There is growing evidence that cryotherapy is effective in weight loss. Extreme cold forces the body to work harder to burn calories.

Exposure to extreme cold can increase collagen production, rejuvenating skin.

Freeland’s Cryo Innovations XR has a heart-oxygen monitor that clips to the ear lobe. Freeland stands outside the chamber, constantly monitoring a suite of biometric readings.

Afterward, I am more alert. I slept really well that night. And, I could walk up and down the stairs without knee pain. I experience this for a couple of days. All in all, the experience is pretty cool.

Details Kevin Freeland, Cryo Tempe, 8400 S. Kyrene Road, Suite 107, Tempe, cryotempe.com, 602-849-5280

By the sound of it, there’s a unique way to relax and de-stress

If you go see Cheryl Sosnowski for a sound bath, you don’t need to bring your own soap.

“I’ve had people call in and ask, ‘Do I need a bathing suit?’” said Sosnowski, who owns Create Space Studio in Tempe.

The answer is no, but she’ll want to know a few

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Counselors

From Page 3

Superintendent Laura Toenjes will be overseeing the funding distribution on the local level. Toenjes addressed school administrators and the press via email following Hoffman's announcement:

"Social and emotional learning is about equipping students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, to maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions. These skills create a foundation for high academic achievement, reduce harmful behaviors like drug and alcohol use and bullying and help children to be well-rounded students and good citizens," Toenjes wrote.

This year's coronavirus lockdowns have had a major negative impact on funding but also added massive strain to family life, according to Dr. Sandra Laine, Director of Exceptional Student Services for Kyrene.

Laine said social workers' hours were drastically cut during the pandemic due to a lack of funding. The new grant money will allow for current staffers' hours to be increased back to pre-pandemic levels as well as bring on necessary new hires.

District officials do not have an exact amount of the grant money Kyrene will receive, but it is enough to fund a fulltime position at Brisas, as well as one at Esperanza in Ahwatukee.

Laine also offered her insight on some of the issues that have led to the need for more social-emotional support.

"The pandemic has had a pretty serious effect on

students and adults alike," she noted. "Things like change of employment status, change of housing status—our counselors and social workers have truly been able to support our families and connect them to social services.

"One thing they have done for a number of years but continued to do throughout the pandemic is connect those families to agencies that provide food services."

Scientific research and studies over the past 20 years have shown that students with access to nutritious food are more likely to succeed in their academic endeavors, an idea echoed by Laine.

"We connect families to the resources they need to ensure that their children remain safe and are able to come to school ready to learn."

A school counselor's main role is to support children throughout the school day by focusing on their social and emotional well-being, but another, often forgotten role is the task of connecting children's families to community resources. These resources include food, housing and rental assistance, psychiatric and medical care, and in some cases, to act as liaisons for law enforcement.

Laine is an Arizona native and has been working with the Kyrene School District's student counseling services for the past 4 years. Kyrene de las Brisas is located near Desert Breeze Park in West Chandler and is home to 700 students.

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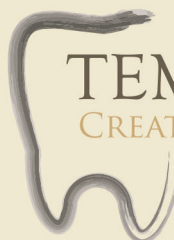
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Shappell

From Page 27

things about you: Do you have physical pain or stress? Aversion to any particular sounds? Chronic health conditions, especially heart conditions?

"So, I find out what's going on in your life and then I tailor a session based on your physical and emotional well-being," she said. "Then you lay down, close your eyes and I do my magic."

That consists of creating peaceful, relaxing sounds with drums, chimes, bowls and gongs.

Gongs?

"I don't smack it. I don't treat it like I'm in a rock band," she said. "It's more of bringing up the sound, bringing up the vibration, so the sound kind of raises and lowers in frequency. I do it in a way to get a powerful wave from that gong flowing through your body. It's really great for breaking up stuck energy patterns."

Sosnowski, 50, is a Science of Mind metaphysical reverend. She's also a UCLA-trained mindfulness trainer. Always looking for ways to shortcut the meditation processes for patients, she started looking into sound healing.

"When I began learning mindfulness, and that's why I went through UCLA as opposed to going to India, I wanted to understand how this is working," she said. "That automatically led me into this realm of working with the invisible forces that shape and rule all of our lives."

Sound therapy, called a sound bath because you're bathing your body and your mind, helps the muscles, brain and nervous system relax and reset.

"Our bodies and brains are mostly water, and water is a highly conductive source of vibration," Sosnowski said. "So sound can help you get out of the chronic stress that most people are under all the time, even if they are not aware that they are."

And how does sound do that?

"Your whole body actually is wired for sound," she said. "Everything has a frequency and a vibration in your body. Every single cell vibrates."

Sound passes through the ear drum to the vagus nerve, which, when stimulated, sends a message to the body that it's time to relax and de-stress.

"That's why when you're hearing sounds that are soothing and relaxing – nature, smooth jazz, or whatever helps you feel really mild and mellow – it helps your body to instantly relax," she said.

"Stress response in the nervous system constantly releases chemicals into our body. That ages you and causes you to be linked to the six leading causes of death in the world. Mood is influenced by music. So if you go out to a night club and there's dancing, they're not going to be playing meditation music."

But if you come to see Sosnowski, she will be. She uses a variety of instruments that create sounds associated with relaxation and healing with her array of instruments.

"I've seen people shift really fast out of stuck behaviors and stuck patterns, even after a couple of sessions," she said. "Sometimes they want to learn to meditate and they've tried and they can't. Sound therapy

helps them to be able to effortlessly drop into it."

Cheryl Sosnowski, Create Space Studio, 2125 S. 48th St., Suite 104, Tempe, createspacestudio.com, 480-729-4170



A sound bath helps patients relax at Create Space Studio in Tempe.

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Film Review. . . by M.V. Moorhead

In 'Mortal Combat,' R-rating means kids should stay away. Maybe you, too.

Introduced as a video game in 1992, *Mortal Kombat* became a feature film in 1995. It went on to spawn a variety of TV shows, animated and live-action, comics and other spin-offs. I never saw any of them.

I went to this new movie reboot with no real knowledge of or nostalgia for the series; my only emotional response at all was a slight cranky resentment that something from as recently as the '90s could *be* an object of nostalgia.

Attractive, athletic-looking warrior types of various races and genders do battle across various locations and dimensions.

Each of them is a master of martial arts or swordsmanship, but each also has his or her own distinctive superpower; one can throw flames from his hands, another can shoot a ray from his eye, another has a big metal hat that he can throw like *Oddjob's* bowler in *Goldfinger*, or Captain America's shield. Another, dubbed "Sub-Zero," can turn on the

chill like Elsa in *Frozen*.

There's a giant four-armed ogre that comes across like a Harryhausen monster on crack, minus the charm. Somehow the fate of the earth is at stake in their bloody clashes.



That's about as coherently as I feel like summarizing the plot.

How faithful it is to the game or to earlier dramatizations, I couldn't say.

The cast, entirely unfamiliar to me, is pleasant enough company overall, but the standout was an Australian actor named Josh Lawson, as the eye-laser guy; he spits out his vitriolic lines amusingly.

As long as debuting director Simon McQuoid keeps the action and carnage coming, it's possible to enjoy this nonsense, in a mindless sort of way.

The fights are staged cleanly and lucidly, and

with some degree of choreographic panache.

Be forewarned, however:

This movie isn't kidding with its R-rating. Dismemberment, disemboweling and other gory fates are graphically depicted throughout. And the language is full-blast obscene, too. It's not for the little ones, though adults are unlikely to be overly shocked by these splatter effects.

They don't have enough dramatic weight to seem truly mortal.



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