

WRANGLER NEWS

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Bike safety: Tempe ramps up its focus on cycling, alternate modes of transportation. **Page 3**



Saving orphans: W. Chandler woman, priest, others bring new hope to students in Uganda. **Page 3**



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FRIDAY FOOTBALL FUN — Students, families pack the stands for Corona's first game of the season. *Story and more photos starting on Page 15.*

— Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

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FIND NEW ROADS™



A cyclist navigates his way down Mill Avenue. Tempe has added more than 200 miles of bike lanes over the last 20 years.

— Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

Tempe expands efforts to elevate ranking among best cities for alternative transit

By Andrew Lwowski

Tempe is aiming to lead the state in bike safety, at the same time moving toward promoting alternative modes of transportation.

Over the last two decades, the city has dedicated millions of dollars to bike infrastructure and added more than 200 miles of bike lanes and paths.

The funding for this comes from a half-cent sales tax authorized in 1996—roughly \$45 million per year—earmarked as a dedicated transit tax used for transportation and streetscapes.

TaiAnna Yee, public information officer for Tempe, said the city has bike lanes or paths on nearly every

street and is working on improving and adding more with future projects.

“As we go into designing roads or updating any construction projects, we try to do it with bicyclists in mind because streets aren’t just for cars,” Yee said.

“We have pedestrians, scooter users and skateboarders that also share the road.”

With so many different users sharing the road, maintaining safety for all on the road is a key component.

“Our goal is to make sure that we have the infrastructure for all of these other different users and not just a focus on vehicles,” Yee said.

— RIDERS, Page 12

Area pastor helps starving Ugandan kids gain new homes, hope, lives

By Joyce Coronel
wranglernews.com

It’s something unimaginable for residents of Tempe and West Chandler, but for Michael Scaramella, it’s a tragedy that’s never far from his mind.

“None of us have been on the street. None of us have been starving. These kids unfortunately have.”

Scaramella is referring to children in Uganda, where inhabitants struggle amid grinding poverty, not to mention ongoing tribal warfare and religious persecution.

For millions, education is simply out of reach. As the new executive director of E3 Africa, an organization devoted to educating, enriching and empowering young Ugandans, Scaramella is eager to talk about its mission.

The Rev. Robert Aliunzi, A.J., one of the

co-founders of E3 Africa, is a native of Uganda and is the pastor of St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church in West Chandler, where parishioners have stepped up to support the effort to assist Ugandan children.

Scaramella pointed to the many E3 Africa sponsors who, for \$70 a month, pay for the schooling, and in some cases, the room and board for children, many of whom are orphans. In 2016, the organization broke ground on a school,

— ORPHANS, Page 30

The Rev. Robert Aliunzi regularly visits his homeland of Uganda to check on the progress of E3-Africa, an organization he co-founded to assist needy children, many of whom are orphans.

— Photo courtesy E3 Africa



Online sports betting moves into high gear

Gila River casinos prepare for planned November startup

By Lee Shappell
wranglernews.com

It's a sure bet: Folks in West Chandler and South Tempe won't have to go far to find a newly legal sportsbook.

Gila River Hotels & Casinos has joined forces with the Arizona Cardinals and BetMGM to operate four sportsbooks—three at Gila River Indian Community casinos and one at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, where the Cardinals play.

BetMGM is the sports-betting division of MGM Resorts International.

Sportsbooks in Arizona became legal Sept. 9, amid a blitz of advertising, coinciding with the National Football League's season debut.

The three Gila River Indian Community casinos — Wild Horse Pass Casino, across the Interstate 10-Loop 202 interchange from Chandler; Lone Butte Casino, just south of Chandler at Loop 202 and Kyrene Road, and Vee Quiva, on Loop 202 near Laveen — will have sportsbooks, including a luxurious

10,000-square foot book at Wild Horse Pass Casino, which essentially will become a sports-viewing, gaming, upscale dining and adult-beverage haven for customers.

Gila River's sportsbook partnership allows BetMGM to bring not only retail sports betting to the casinos, where custom-built BetMGM Sportsbooks are nearing completion, and the stadium but also its industry-leading platform online.

While the tribe and BetMGM opened online wagering on Sept. 9, it could be two more months before the brick-and-mortar facilities are ready.

The sportsbook at the stadium likely will open for the 2022 football season.

"This is a tremendous opportunity to build upon our long-standing relationship with Gila River and launch a new one with BetMGM," said Cardinals owner Michael Bidwill.

"They are best-in-class partners, whose excellence and expertise in this emerging space will provide a new and innovative way to engage and interact with our fans."

Sports betting became legal in Arizona this year

when gaming compacts between the state and Native American populations were revised.

The tribes agreed to allow sportsbooks to operate beyond their casinos, such as at the Cardinals' stadium, in exchange for tribes being permitted to add high-stakes table games, including baccarat; to expand other gaming, like slots, that are already on their properties; and to build more casinos.

Each tribe also may operate a sportsbook at their casinos.

"Gila River Hotels & Casinos and the Arizona Cardinals have an everlasting partnership, offering guests exclusive experiences and remarkable rewards," said Kenneth Manuel, Gila River Hotels & Casino chief executive officer.

"As we explored our partner in sports betting, the unity with BetMGM, 'The King of Sportsbooks,' ensures we deliver beyond all expectations.

"There is no doubt in my mind these three industry-leading brands unifying will deliver the ultimate experience in Arizona sports betting, solidifying Gila River Hotels & Casinos as Arizona's sports headquarters."

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A sportsbook is coming to Gila River Casino, southwest of the Interstate 10-Loop 202 interchange, as part of a three-way deal with the Arizona Cardinals and BetMGM.

Gila River Hotels & Casinos photo

Stephen Lewis, governor of the Gila River Indian Community, called the turn of events “an excellent development.”

“I want to thank Ken and his team for leading the way again for our community on this innovative partnership with our great friends, the Cardinals, and our new partner BetMGM,” Lewis said.

“Building on the successful launch of our new table games at Wild Horse Pass, this new sports-betting operation will now continue our successful implementation of our historic new

compact arrangement.”

Gov. Doug Ducey signed legislation this year that allows 10 sports-betting licenses to sports teams, 10 to tribes and 10 limited licenses to horse tracks and off-track betting sites as long as they partner with one of the 20 other licensees.

“Gila River Hotels & Casinos and the Arizona Cardinals represent the state’s premier casino destinations and sports franchise, making them the ideal partners for us,” said Adam Greenblatt, BetMGM chief executive officer.

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Wheels up: School bus driver says job brightens his day(s)

By Gabrielle Dunton

If you're around the age of considering retirement, but you're not quite ready to throw in the towel, you might want to consider a career as a school bus driver.

According to a recent study by the Transamerica Center for Retirement Studies, the majority of American workers (55 percent) plan to continue working in retirement, with 41 percent going part time and 14 percent full time. AARP compiled a list of top 25 part-time jobs worth considering for retirees, and the school bus driver position made it to number four on the list.

Being a school bus driver can not only make you feel young again spending time around kids, but you can also take advantage of appealing benefits and pay.

Tempe Elementary School District is hiring part-time school bus drivers with a starting wage of \$17.26 per hour with benefits and paid training.

Mario Yanez, or "Mr. Mario," as students like to call him, has been a school bus driver for the Tempe Elementary district for the past five years.

Yanez started his career with Tempe Elementary after many years of driving, recently retiring from the city of Tempe as a solid waste equipment operator and previous to that as a semi-truck driver.

"To tell you the truth, I wasn't expecting much from this job, but it's a lot more rewarding than I ever thought it was going to be," said Yanez.

"The kids are fantastic and I'm having a blast."

A positive work environment, a supportive network of school staff, and building relationships with students are just a few of the

highlights that Yanez says he has found in his career as a Tempe Elementary driver.

"Not only does it get me out of the house with something to do, it's rewarding because I really build relationships with these kids," said



Mario Yanez became a school bus driver five years ago after retiring from the city of Tempe. — Photo by Gabrielle Dunton

Yanez.

"If they're having a bad day, I try to interact with them and help them feel better about themselves. I like being able to brighten their day."

Every morning, a little girl that Yanez used to pick up for school would bring him a flower, which he said he would clip on his bus dashboard.

This small act of kindness is just one of the reasons why he says he feels great about the job.

Yanez recalls his decision to join the district based on a recommendation from a friend, and has been spreading the word to his friends and family who are near retirement.

"This job is especially great for previous drivers who already have their Commercial Drivers License," he noted.

"But even if you don't have one, the district will help you with getting one, and pay for your training, too."

Gabrielle Dunton is Strategic Communication Coordinator for the Tempe Elementary School District

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Commentary . . . from Keep Kyrene Strong PAC

No-tax budget override seen as critical to vital services for Kyrene students, teachers

Voters in the Kyrene School District will have the opportunity to continue the existing Maintenance and Operations (M & O) budget override this coming November, with no tax-rate increase.

M & O Override dollars represent approximately \$13.8 million in the District's budget.

These critical dollars are used to reduce class sizes by funding the equivalent of 200 additional teacher positions, to fund special area instruction in art, music foreign language, and PE, and to provide student support services such as counselors, psychologists, occupational and physical therapy, academic and behavior support, speech, vision and hearing services.

In 2017, voters approved continuation of the override by a vote of 63% to 37%. This existing budget override expires in 2024, however, if not renewed, the funding is incrementally reduced starting in 2023.

Kyrene's budget, like other districts across Arizona and the United States, has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Federal relief dollars are intended for very specific use, and are limited in their availability, that is, those dollars cannot be counted upon in future years to fund key academic services.

In spite of budget challenges, Kyrene continues to rank as one of the highest in the state for directing funds to the classroom, (75.1% according to the FY20 Auditor General's Classroom Spending Report), and consistently outperforms peer districts.

In administrative costs, Kyrene is consistently lowest in administrative costs per pupil in the state.

"Kyrene has been providing excellence in education for more than a century, and excellence can only be achieved through the support of the entire community.

'Override dollars help Kyrene retain the very best educators, offer a wide variety of programming, and provide the support services that sustain our District's reputation for excellence," said Kyrene Superintendent, Laura Toenjes.

Kyrene voters have demonstrated that they value quality education as critical to economic development and in maintaining high property values. Local real estate agents report that many families move to Kyrene because of the District's reputation as a high-performing district.

This override campaign has already received endorsements from Tempe and Chandler Mayors

Corey Woods and Kevin Hartke; all three legislators from LD18— Sen. Sean Bowie, Rep. Mitzi Epstein, and Rep. Jennifer Jermaine; Congressman Greg Stanton and former Kyrene Superintendent, Dr. Ben Furlong.

Kyrene parents Triné Nelson and Ivan Alfaro are co-chairs for the Keep Kyrene Strong political action committee that has supported bond and override elections for the past two elections.

Nelson stated, "Strong community support is a key driver in the success of the Kyrene School District. I know that ensuring we maintain quality educators and critical support services is something we can all support."

Kyrene is one of the few districts on the ballot this election cycle. Tempe Elementary and Tempe Union High School District don't have override or bond measures on the ballot, and voters in Chandler Unified's boundaries have a continuation of their M & O budget override on the ballot.

The election will be an all "mail-in" ballot election, with voters receiving their ballots in early October.

For more information and updates, please follow Keep Kyrene Strong on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KeepKyreneStrong



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chandleraz.gov/BondElection





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'Cool' idea the brainchild of Tempe activist Jenny Norton

Jenny Norton never forgot her days growing up in a South Phoenix trailer park, where schoolmates would often gather to enjoy the common area and cozy pool. In fact, those memories were behind Norton's idea—propelled many years forward—to provide a mobile cooling center for those experiencing homelessness in the community.

The result is Tempe's recent launch of what's being called Jenny's Trailer, a solarized 20-foot travel trailer that represents a collaboration among the city, Norton, and Arizona State University.

Staffed by the city's HOPE homeless outreach specialists, the trailer is designed to provide respite from extreme heat and a place to connect to housing and social services.

"Arizona's summer heat can be deadly, and those living outdoors need access to places like Jenny's Trailer, where they can cool off and get a cold bottle of water," said Tempe Mayor Corey Woods.

Councilmember Lauren Kuby, who works at ASU's Stardust Center and brought the partners together, said:

"The city is grateful for our long-time collaborations with Jenny and her husband Bob Ramsey and Arizona State University, and for our shared desire to serve individuals in need during the most difficult and dangerous months of the year."

Norton, a longtime philanthropist, activist and community advocate for the homeless, donated \$15,000 to the city's HOPE homeless outreach program to purchase the trailer that ASU's Engineering Projects in Community Service, or EPICS, students converted into a mobile cooling center.

Jenny's Trailer will be open on extreme heat days. Following this year's pilot program, the city will operate the trailer during the summer months at locations like parks across the city. Two HOPE outreach special-

ists will provide onsite connections to temporary shelter, housing programs, the city's Tempe Works jobs program, community medical services, and more.

During cooler months of the year, the HOPE team will continue using the trailer as a means of providing connection to services, shelter, and housing.

"Here in our hometown of Tempe and across the greater Valley of the Sun and beyond, we know that there are many who need that small bit of assis-

tance that can ultimately feel so immense," Norton said.

"This is why it is my honor to collaborate with the city, ASU and those who are experiencing homelessness to provide a new place, our little trailer, offering safe harbor as well as access to some cool drinks, wi-fi and welcoming friendship."

ASU's Healthy Urban Environments initiative worked to ensure the trailer design would fulfill the mission to provide a welcoming, sustainable location for unhoused individuals to escape the heat.

HUE's Project Manager, Liza Oz-Golden, worked with EPICS students and city of Tempe staff to create a quality space that people would want to visit. Solar experts with Sun Valley Solar Solutions ensured that the renewable energy system would be able to keep the space cool during hot summer months without creating a negative impact on the environment.

"It was a high priority for us to reach out to the unhoused individuals where they live and to create a mobile cooling center that provides heat relief but doesn't contribute to poor air quality. Using solar power was an alternative to a dirty diesel generator," Oz-Golden said.

"As a result, Jenny's Trailer provides a healthy environment, and we hope it will help improve their quality of life and provide relief from the heat."

Information: tempe.gov/beatrelief. HOPE program: tempe.gov/endinghomelessness.



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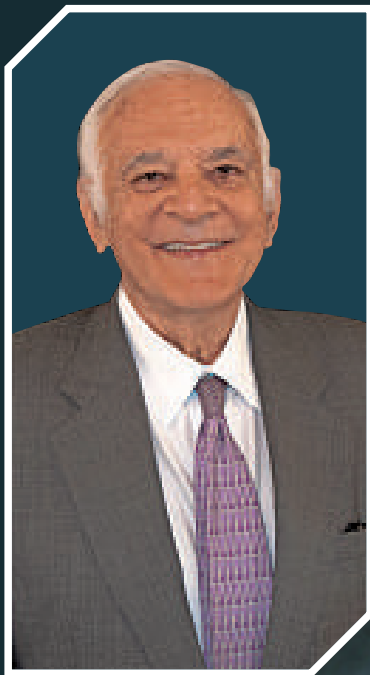
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Downtown Tempe, with its proximity to the ASU campus and businesses, sees both vehicles and alternative modes of transportation such as skateboards and scooters. Area intersections downtown and other heavily trafficked intersections have green paint to signal bike boxes.

— Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski

Riders

From Page 3

According to The League of American Bicyclists, a national organization that pushes for safer roads and stronger communities for cyclists in America, Arizona ranks 23rd out of all 50 states for being cyclist friendly.

Arizona is also listed as having 11 bicycle friendly communities, 17 bicycle friendly businesses, and six bicycle friendly universities, one of which is the Arizona State Tempe campus.

Both the city of Tempe and the ASU campus are ranked gold level among categories including bronze, silver, gold and platinum.

When ranking, the league takes into account what bike safety programs a city has, what the infrastructure is like and what laws are in place to protect cyclists and vehicles.

Downtown Tempe, it was noted, is the hub of traffic for both vehicles and alternative modes due to business offices and the ASU campus. The intersections of downtown Tempe and other heavily trafficked intersections have vibrant green paint to signal bike boxes.

“The purpose of that is really just to alert drivers that there will be bicyclists,” Yee said.

“It’s more to gain the attention of drivers than



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anything else.”

Due to the seasonal heat in Arizona, the green paint fades quickly and it is expensive, so those green bike boxes will, in all likelihood, remain at high traffic intersections, she said.

With the density of commuters downtown, there will be more crashes, which is what Tempe is aiming to decrease, according to Yee.

While the overall number of bicyclists and pedestrians killed by vehicles has been steadily increasing since 2009, according to pedbikeinfo.org, Tempe has safety programs to counter this trend.

Additionally, by partnering with those involved in parking and transportation services at ASU, planners have the ability to provide safety tips and focus on elements they can control, including the education of bikers and commuters. This issue arises every year as ASU receives an influx of new students to the area, a number of whom are uninformed regarding local laws and best practices.

When Tempe updates its rules for scooters and bike users, planners say ASU will share those on its social media and send emails to all students. Tempe also works with the dean of students office and offers seminars for international students. Meetings for members of Greek row and off-campus housing newsletters are sent out as well. Thus, ASU and Tempe work hard to be in ongoing communication regarding bicyclist and motor-vehicle safety.

In her comments about the effort, Yee, the public information representative, also mentioned a city program called Vision Zero, which aims to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injury collisions.

“We know crashes will happen, but we want to lessen the severity of them,” she said.

“There are several ways we can go about this,” Yee noted. “Engineering: designing the roads to make it

comfortable for all users. Education: being mindful of your areas and vehicles knowing cyclists and pedestrians are present, especially if you’re downtown.

“Emergency services: If something does happen, our emergency services can respond quickly. We have Vision Zero policies to make this goal happen. We just installed flashing lights around school zones that draw attention and we also did these high visibility crosswalks for the students that walk or bike to school.”

Vision Zero operates an information dashboard that plots where collisions have occurred since 2012, and city planners strategize their safety plans around their data, according to Yee.

‘If something does happen, our emergency services can respond quickly.’

“Tempe is currently working on a Transportation Demand Management project as well as mobility hubs,” Yee said regarding plans being considered for the near future.

TDM is focused on adjusting traffic flow within the inner city and promoting carpooling or

alternative modes of transportation to limit congestion, she said. The Tempe population practically doubles during the day due to major employers and ASU, according to studies she referred to.

Yet another project is a mobility hub is in which planners pinpoint target areas where commuters can hop off light-rail, then have available scooters instead of driving into town.

While traffic problems will increase every year, Tempe is pushing to stay ahead of the curve.

Said Yee:

“Our future is to create something more sustainable, and adding roads and increasing capacity for cars is not it.”

She also indicated there is no timetable for completion of the various projects, but there will be more meetings in the fall.

For more information, visit Tempe.gov/transportation.

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SPORTS

More 'normal' times improve swim team's outlook for season

By Alex Zener

After a shortened season, with distancing restrictions during practice and at meets last year, Corona's swim and dive team is happy and excited to be back in the water practicing and competing in a more normal environment.

Head coach, **Ron Musgrave**, in his 12th year, is thrilled to have 31 returning swimmers and four divers along with 28 new swimmers and five new divers as part of Corona's swim and dive team this season.

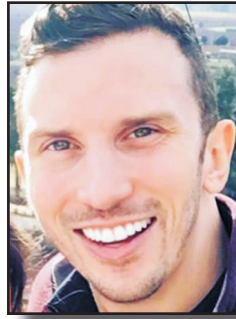
Some of his returning talent on the boys team include seniors **Cedric Brooking**, **Eric Herrera** and **Joel Valdes** plus juniors **Reed Lucero**, **Ryan La Ra**, **Colin Campbell**, **Walter Moffatt**, **Cabhan Kelleher** and **Paulo Guerrero**.

For instance, in the first meet of the 2021 season, a dual meet against Mountain Pointe held on Sept. 2 at Nozomi Swim Center, Corona's boys team defeated the Pride 139 to 36.

The Aztec took first place in every individual and

relay race with Brooking taking first place in the 200-yard Freestyle, 100-yard Backstroke, and as the swimmer of the first leg in both the 200-yard Medley relay and 400-yard Freestyle relay races.

"Cedric is one of our team captains who hopes to continue swimming at the next level," said Musgrave. "He is currently narrowing his options between alternatives including Texas, ASU and the University of Hawaii. He is even considering the Naval Academy. He plans on majoring in mathematics or science."



Alex Zener

Lucero took first place in the 200-yard Individual Medley, 100-yard breast and as the second leg in the 200-yard Medley relay and third leg in the 200-yard Freestyle relay.

"Reed shaved off a lot of time during his workouts in the off season and I expect him to break into the top 10 at state in both the 200-yard Individual Medley and 100-yard Breaststroke," said Musgrave.

La Ra came in first place in the 100-yard fly and swam the third leg of the 200-yard Medley relay while Kelleher was first in the 100-yard Freestyle.

Campbell was first in the 500-yard Freestyle and swam the second leg in the 400-yard Freestyle relay race while Valdes swam the last leg in the 200-yard Medley relay and second leg in the 200-yard Freestyle relay.

Moffatt swam the last leg in the 200-yard Freestyle relay and the third leg in the 400-yard Freestyle relay while Herrera came in second in the 100-yard

Breaststroke.

Some of the younger swimmers on the boys team also made a splash at the Mountain Pointe dual meet including sophomore **Tristin Lo** who took first place in the 50-yard Freestyle and swam the first leg of the 200-yard Freestyle relay and sophomore teammate **Adam El-Rabaa** who swam the last leg of the 400-yard Freestyle relay.

The boys team may be helped in the sprinting events by the transfer to Corona by a senior swimmer.

"Senior transfer student athlete **Corbin Bray** has excellent sprinting skills and maturity that we are really excited about," said Musgrave. "Watch for him to excel after the first half of the season. I am expecting him to be competing at the state meet in the 50-yard Freestyle and on our relays."

The girls team also had some talented swimmers return this season including seniors **Samantha Arrendondo**, **Ashley Byron**, **Ana Erskine** and juniors **Daytona Duggan**, **Macy Haugland**, **Kennedy Farnsworth**, **Kristen Marquis**, **Isabel Silva**, **Giada Schmidtknecht** and **Callista Baluha**.

"Sammy Arrendondo, one of our team captains, can swim almost any race for us and do well," said Musgrave. "She is an all-around phenom who is able to make a state-qualifying time in any event she wants but is limited to only being able to choose two individual events to enter at the state meet."

"She is being sought after by several universities this year and is taking her time to select the best match for her," said Musgrave. "She would be a valuable asset for any college swim program."

ZENER, Page 18

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New artificial turf 'feels great' but offset by upset loss for Corona

Story and photos
by Andrew Lwowski

wranglernews.com



Andrew Lwowski

Corona del Sol, among the two most recent high schools in the Tempe Union High School District to receive artificial turf in their football stadiums, along with McClintock, got favorable reviews of the new surface in their season opener even though the Aztecs dropped their first regular-season game in more than a year.

Installation of the Shaw Sports Turf field at Corona finished just days before the game on Sept. 3 against Mountain Pointe, giving the Aztecs' freshman, JV and varsity teams just two chances to practice on it.

According to David Huffine, the TUHSD athletic director, Shaw Sports Turf has been installed on the fields of the Arizona Diamondbacks, Detroit Lions, Las Vegas Raiders and University of Nevada-Las Vegas. Corona

became the latest to show off its new Shaw field with their new varsity quarterback, sophomore Connor Ackerley, at the helm.

The Aztecs trailed by two touchdowns midway through the fourth quarter, rallied and then fell, 34-33, after their two-point conversion attempt to possibly win the game was stopped by the Pride and their ensuing onside kick attempt rolled out of bounds. The Pride took over and ran out the clock.

After the game, Jeff Lambert, a senior linebacker and receiver, said that the new turf felt "great."

"It felt soft," Lambert said. "I felt like I could plant deeper and move better."

Ackerley, in his varsity debut following the graduated Quade Swearingen, focused for nearly the entire first half on establishing the running game behind a dominant offensive line. He did not throw a pass until 2:18 remained in the first half.

"We wanted to establish the run game to start the game, and that's how we were going to do it," Ackerley said. "It helped me ease into varsity, too. They (the coaching staff) didn't want much pressure on me, so they were going to ease me into it and run the ball."

The Aztecs' offense opened up in the second half and Ackerley seemed acclimated to the pace at the varsity level compared to JV last season.

"Oh, yeah, it's a lot faster," Ackerley said. "We played Mountain Pointe last year. They're a lot bigger this year — and a lot faster."

After trailing 34-20 early in the fourth quarter, Ackerley fought to bring the Aztecs back with a heroic diving touchdown. Marching the Aztecs down the field again with just over 2 minutes remaining, Ackerley connected with Lambert for a wide-open 11-yard touchdown pass. Down 34-33 with little time left, Corona decided to go for the two-point conversion to take the lead. Unfortunately, the Aztecs came up a yard short on the play.

"The difference in the game was the fumbles," Ackerley said. "If we just eliminate the little things, we'll be fine. The offensive line held up well. Our whole goal was to carry off the offensive line."

The Corona football program is heading in the right direction, the players said, especially after showing heart and grit in a near comeback.

All three football teams — freshman, JV and varsity — were undefeated last year.

However, the Aztecs fell to 0-2 with a cliff-hanging loss 30-28 to Notre Dame Prep in Week 2 going into their Sept. 17 home game against Red Mountain.

More on Pages 16-17



Football Fever

Corona del Sol's Aztecs football team, carrying the U.S. flag aloft, took to newly installed artificial turf field for the first game of the season; the extreme heat drove players to down sports drinks on the sidelines; a heroic diving, fourth-quarter touchdown by quarterback Connor Ackerley, No. 10, proved an emotional moment for players, but in spite of the surge, the Aztecs missed victory by one point.



Wrangler News photos
by Andrew Lwowski





Corona’s swim and dive team before first meet of the season. The Aztecs have 28 new swimmers and five new divers this year. — Photo courtesy Corona swim coach Ron Musgrave

Zener

From Page 14

Freshmen and new athletes are always welcome on the team especially ones who show promise to replace athletes lost to graduation or transferring.

“We are developing several new athletes who did not swim last year due to COVID and the uncertainty plus we

have a large group of freshmen who have had some formal training but lack experience swimming at the high school level,” said Musgrave. “They are all a pleasure to work with and have a passion to improve daily.”

Corona’s team has a bevy of freshman who may fit this description on the girls team.

“We lost one of our young female sprinters who transferred to another school that we hope to replace with freshman **Alexandra Burnes**, in the Freestyle and

Butterfly events, and freshman **Ardyn Schmidtknecht**,” said Musgrave.

“We are a bit thin in the distance events, especially after **Lauren Swindler** graduated last spring, but freshman **Bella Ross** may be able to provide us with a spark in the 200-yard and 500-yard Freestyle events,” said Musgrave.

— ZENER, Page 19

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From Page 18

Corona's girls team defeated Mountain Pointe in the first meet of the season 151 to 31 where the team also took first place in every event including a first place for Byron in the 200-yard Freestyle, for Duggan in the 200-yard Individual Medley, for Burnes in the 50-yard Freestyle and 100-yard Butterfly, for Arrendondo in the 100-yard Freestyle and 100-yard Breaststroke, for Duggan in the 100-yard Backstroke and for Ross in the 500-yard Freestyle.

The results are just in from the 2021 Croswhite Invitational held at Chandler High School on Sept. 11.

The boys team took third place with a score of 195 while competing against 27 other teams.

Some of the highlights include a fifth place for Brooking in the 200-yard Freestyle, a fifth place for Lucero in the 300 Individual Medley, a ninth-place finish for La Ra in the 100-yard Butterfly, an outstanding third place finish for Campbell in the 500-yard Freestyle, a seventh place for Brooking in the 100-yard Backstroke and a Corona record-setting time along with a third place finish for Lucero in the 100-yard Breaststroke.

"I just learned that Reed captured the Corona 100-yard Breaststroke Record at the Croswhite Invitational with a time of 58.16," said Musgrave.

The Aztec relay teams competed well against over 30 relay teams where they all finished in the top six spots starting with the third-place finish for the 400-yard Freestyle relay team of Kelleher, Campbell, Brooking and Lucero with a time of 3:20.19.

Followed by the fourth-place finish for the 200-yard Medley relay team of Brooking, Lucero, La Ra and Valdes with a time of 1:39.23.

The 200-yard Freestyle relay team of Lo, Kelleher, Moffatt and Valdes finished in sixth place out of 38 teams with a time of 1:32.54.

Corona's girls team finished 11th out of 29 teams at the Croswhite Invitational.

Some of the highlights from the girls team include a second-place finish for Arrendondo in the 100-yard Freestyle and a second-place finish in the 100-yard Breaststroke, an eighth-place finish for Duggan in the 100-yard Backstroke and a 15th place finish in the 200-yard Individual Medley, a 17th place finish for Marquis in the 50-yard Freestyle, and an 18th place finish for Burnes in the 100-yard Butterfly,

Corona's 200-yard Freestyle Relay team of Silva, Byron, Burnes and Arredondo finished tied for fifth place with a time of 1:43.29.

The Aztec 400-yard Freestyle relay team of Marquis, Baluha, Byron and Duggan took ninth place out of 39 teams competing this this event.

Corona's dive team is led by second-year coach **Kacee Hoffer** who was a former scholarship diver at Boise State.

"Kacee has done some amazing work with our divers already," said Musgrave. "I look for our dive program to take off this year and beyond."

Two divers from both the boys team and girls team have been diving well at the meets so far this season.

Sophomore Gavin Buttram, who placed in the top 10 at the state meet last year, has taken first place at both Corona's dual meet with Mountain Pointe and with Hamilton on Sept. 9.

Buttram's highest score so far this season was 395.55 in the finals at the Croswhite Invitational where he took third place out of 32 divers who competed.

'I expect Gavin to break into the top five this year. He battled some injuries last season but is currently healthy and diving well.'

— Coach Musgrave

"I expect Gavin to break into the top five this year," said Musgrave. "He battled some injuries last season but is currently healthy and diving well."

Coming in second at both dual meets is junior Gabriel Calderon. Calderon took 18th place at the Croswhite Invitational with a score of 241.85 in the finals.

On the girls team, junior Ivy Stewart and sophomore Isabella Meyers are the two divers who have competed at the meets so far this season for Corona.

"Ivy should be on track to dive at the state meet this year," said Musgrave. "She is ahead of her dive routines and just needs to get some meet experience."

At the Mountain Pointe dual meet, Meyers took first place with a score of 148.49 and Stewart took second place. At the Hamilton dual meet, Meyers once again took first place and Stewart took second place scoring just 1.2 points behind Meyers.

At the Croswhite Invitational Meyers finished in 16th place out of 40 divers with a finals score of 294.85.

Corona is scheduled to have a dual meet at Perry on Sept. 16 and then will compete in another dual meet on Sept. 23 against Chandler before finishing off the month with a dual meet at Chaparral on Sept. 30.



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DIVERSIONS: What's happening in your Wrangler News neighborhood

Diverse film offerings added to Chandler's cable TV monthly lineup

West Chandler residents and their citywide neighbors are in for a cinematic treat now that CineTime, a diverse collection of regional and international short films shared over a five-episode season, has returned to the screen.

A new film will air on the first of each month on the Chandler Channel—Cox Cable Channel 11 and Orbital Cable Channel 20 (Sun Lakes). Air times are 8 p.m. every day of the week. The films also can be streamed live at chandleraz.gov/video, and will continue throughout the month until the next debut.

Episode 1 (one film): **"In Full Bloom"** – Opened Sept. 1

• "In Full Bloom" is a surrealist short film about overcoming the loss of a partner. After her husband's death, Cecile becomes an agoraphobic hoarder, practicing what she loves – gardening indoors – without the help of direct sunlight. She

orders worms to grow a rare flower. Though they help the flower grow, the development comes at a heavy price.

• Episode 2 (one film + Q & A): **"A Home For Curiosities"** – Debuts Oct. 1

"A Home For Curiosities" is about a young boy who discovers a house full of forgotten imaginary friends. Along with his friend Alice, Wallace helps bring these curiosities back to the real world to meet new human companions.

• Episode 3 (two films + two Q&As): **"KOPS: Kids on Patrol"** and **"Blue Birds"** – Debuts Nov. 1
KOPS: Kids on Patrol is about a neighborhood's kid police force that goes on patrol to stop one stinky crime. Blue Birds is about how two young men spend the day with one another at the park.

• Episode 4 (one Film) **"Queen Marlene's Toy Museum and Friends: Traffic Safety Toys"** – Debuts Dec. 1

"Queen Marlene's Toy Museum and Friends: Traffic Safety Toys" is produced by The Toy Museum of New York as a pilot episode for a new series called "Queen Marlene's Toy Museum and Friends." In this episode, Rainbow Sparkles learns the meaning of different traffic signs. In addition, the two twin

guards of the museum are excited to use the red and green traffic lights where viewers can learn about stop and go.

• Episode 5 (two films): **"The Crow and the Pitcher"** and **"The Chair"** - Debuts Jan. 1, 2022
"The Crow and the Pitcher" is an animated story about a thirsty crow and her ingenuity. It's brought to you by producer Charles Pearce, a filmmaker out of Austin, Texas. "The Chair" is about how a woman encounters a chair with strange properties. It was created old-school style using only pen and paper and is made up of 2,700 individual drawings.

CineTime features selected films for the community to enjoy through a partnership among Chandler's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division, the city's Communications and Public Affairs Department, and the Chandler International Film Festival. Those interested in watching additional short features with an international flair can look forward to the annual Chandler International Film Festival scheduled Jan. 17-23. Information: 480-782-2214; chandler.diversity@chandleraz.gov; or chandleraz.gov/CineTime.

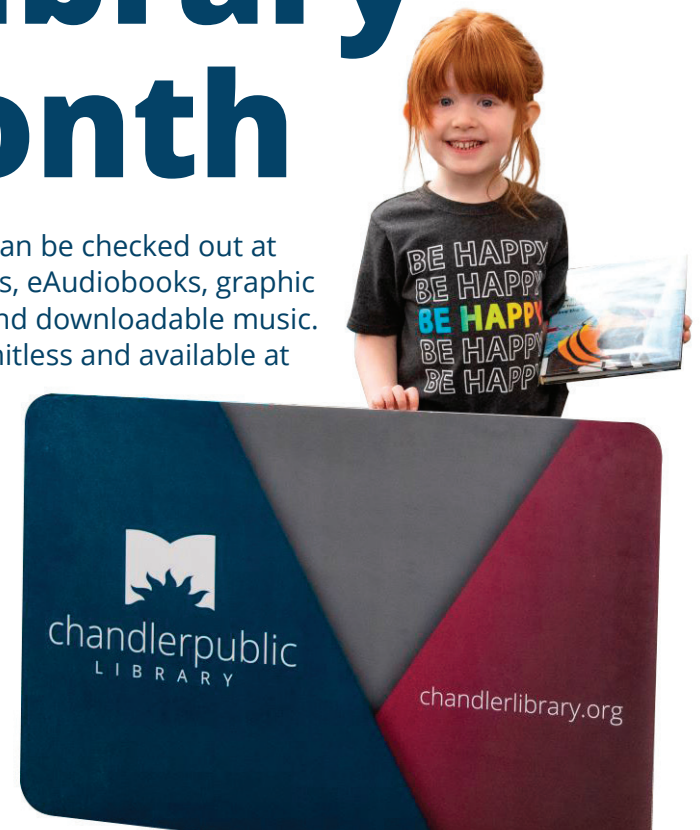
— More DIVERSIONS pages 21-23

September is Library Card Sign-up Month

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Film Fare: 'Eyes' brings back memories of our movie guy's chowdown with Tammy Faye

By M.V. Moorhead

One day in 2001, I spent about an hour with Tammy Faye. She was Tammy Faye Messner by that time, not Tammy Faye Bakker.

We chowed down together while I interviewed her at the food court at an outdoor swap meet in east Mesa where she was signing her memoir *Tammy: Telling It My Way*. The copy I got that day is still on my bookshelf; she signed it "God bless you Mark—Love, Tammy Faye."

For those who may not remember: Tammy Faye was a star of evangelical TV in the 1960s, '70s and '80s.

Growing up poor in International Falls, Minn., she married aspiring preacher Jim Bakker, who she met at Bible college and who believed that God wanted us—especially him—to be prosperous.

They had a traveling Christian puppet show with which they broke into TV through Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (Jim was the original host of *The 700 Club*). Then they struck out on their own, founding the enormously lucrative PTL Satellite Network and other ventures such as the theme park Heritage USA.

She was the life of the party on their show, and they lived in conspicuous and kitschy luxury funded by viewer donations.

Financial improprieties and sex scandals deflated the PTL enterprise in the late '80s; Jim Bakker went to federal prison for years. Tammy Faye divorced him, remarried developer Roe Messner, and then, well, she had lunch with me. Did I mention that?

By the time I met her, Tammy Faye was on a roll

thanks, in part, to a feature documentary of 2000 by Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato called *The Eyes of Tammy Faye*; probably initiated to mock its subject, this film helped her rehabilitate her image into a lovable media personality and pop-culture icon.

Now the same title has been given to a dramatized version of the story, directed by Michael Showalter from a script by Bailey and Barbato, and starring Jessica Chastain in the title role.

Based on my single brief meeting, I have to say that Chastain disappears into the part; this is the woman I met back in 2001. To what extent either that interview or this performance represents the whole person can be known only to those who knew her better than either Chastain or I did—Tammy Faye passed on, from cancer, in 2007 at the age of 65.

But as far as her public persona, Chastain nails it. She also gives us notes of the humor, the bold vivacity, the restlessness, the impatience, the lack of wifely subservience that made her a handful in the evangelical world of the time, and, more striking still, a sense of genuine spiritual exaltation that alienated her from the thievery.

Chastain will probably get award buzz, and it won't be undeserved.

Andrew Garfield plays Jim Bakker, and his excellence would be easy to overlook; there's poignancy in his dim, queasy realizations of his carefully self-justified avarice, and his guilty resentment of his wife's popularity. Cherry Jones is terrific as Tammy Faye's hard-nosed, no-nonsense mother, who smells trouble the first time Jim comes into

the house. Frederic Lehne makes his presence felt as her more easygoing, affectionate stepfather, and in the smallish role of Jerry Falwell, Vincent D'Onofrio has fun imitating the way the preacher would clamp down on terminal vowels: "JiMM."

Aside from the superb acting and period flavor, this *Eyes of Tammy Faye* is pretty good; not quite great. Bailey and Barbato simplify and streamline Tammy Faye's life, and maybe whitewash it a bit, too.

At one point, as things are falling apart, Jim screams at Tammy that he did what he did to satisfy *her* greed, but while she's clearly shown enjoying the glitz, we never see her ask him for anything other than conjugal relations (which he neglects).

It's unclear whether the movie's position is that she was greedy, or that he used her as an excuse for his own rapacity. The movie also gets a little shapeless in its final act; Bailey, Barbato and Showalter can't seem to quite figure out how to wrap it up, though Chastain is powerful in her closing scene.

Those who don't remember Tammy Faye on TV may think that these performances are caricatures, as many thought about the Coen Brothers' masterpiece *Fargo*, another movie with a dauntless, cheerful Minnesotan heroine.

But those who watched *The PTL Club* back then, or even those from an equivalent religious or cultural or even geographical background, will realize that this isn't an exaggeration at all.

The Eyes of Tammy Faye is rated PG-13 and plays at Chandler Fashion 20 and other multiplexes Valleywide.



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
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Month-long 'Chandler Contigo' events highlight city's Hispanic heritage



Chandler's celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month gets underway Oct. 15 and features numerous events, including traditional folk dancing as pictured here.

— Photo courtesy city of Chandler.

The city of Chandler's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division is launching "Chandler Contigo," a month-long program full of family and educational events and activities that honor and celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month which takes place through Oct. 15.

Events will be held in various locations throughout the city and include:

Friday, Sept. 24 - Chandler Contigo Festival at Galveston Elementary School, 661 E. Galveston St., from 5-9 p.m. Bring your neighbors and stop by for a vibrant and joyous festival that will showcase community, art, music and food from Chandler's diverse Hispanic community.

Saturday, Oct. 2 - 22nd Annual Chandler Mariachi and Folklorico Festival (presented by the Chandler Center for the Arts in partnership with C.A.L.L.E. de Arizona and Maestra Vanessa Ramirez) at Chandler Center for the Arts, 250 N. Arizona Ave. Join in for a Chandler tradition and experience the rich cultural history of Mexico through vibrant music and dance. The annual event features the music of Mariachi Tesoro de Tucson, Herencia Mexicana Arizona, and ranchera and mariachi soloist Sandra Guevara, along with folklorico dancers from Ballet Folklorico Quetzalli-AZ. Buy tickets: chandlercenter.org/events/ca-calle-de-arizona-present-22nd-annual-mariachi-folklorico-festival.

Chandler Contigo also will host a variety of events at Chandler Museum, located at 300 S. Chandler Village Drive. Admission is always free.

10 a.m. Monday, Oct. 4 - Chandler Contigo: Pre-School Storytime

6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 5 - Chandler Contigo: Toddler Time (time is pending)

2-4 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 6 - Chandler Contigo: Art Day will feature an art exhibit with photos from local Latino families and communities. Artist Miguel Gadoy will give a presentation on his cultural inspiration and art form.

4 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7 - Chandler Contigo: Adventures of Sophia and Pepe will feature award-winning author Albert Quihuis as he hosts a reading from his storybook series, "The Adventures of Sophia and Pepe," as well as a talk about heritage and the impact of cultural stories.

6-7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7 - Chandler Contigo: Treasure Map to Your Life and Legacy will feature award-winning author Albert Quihuis as he hosts an interactive presentation of his newly published Legacy Journal. Attendees will be able to follow the author while he shows them how to chart their own heritage and continue their heritages legacy. (time is pending)

7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 8 - Families of all sizes are invited to Chandler Contigo: Family Movie Night featuring "Coco" for this free viewing of a classic story about how a family is at the forefront of Latino culture. (time is pending)

1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 9 - Chandler Contigo: Salsa Dancing Demo will feature a salsa dancing performance from local dance group, as well as craft/ maker stations related to family and heritage.

Information: chandleraz.gov/DiversityEvents or 480-782-4367.

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Tempe economic development

Coyotes' future in Valley hinges on making a deal with Tempe

Hockey team takes first step in moving but still faces uncertainty in search for temporary home

Analysis

By Lee Shappell

It's no secret that Arizona's NHL hockey team has been skating on thin ice in Glendale for some time.

The Coyotes have been on a year-to-year lease of Gila River Arena since the city pulled the plug on a long-term arrangement five years ago.

Consequently, the Coyotes have rattled their sabers about moving out of town, gauging the interest of East Valley municipalities, most notably Tempe and Scottsdale, in helping them land a new home much closer to the bulk of their fan base, which also had been saying that it is not crazy about driving to Glendale a couple of nights a week to watch games.

Tempe listened carefully. It has side-by-side

city-owned parcels totaling 46 acres just south of the Salt River, at Rio Salado Parkway and Priest Drive, that it deems "underutilized."

Before Tempe could begin to formalize any arena plans with any entity, it had to put out a request for proposal. That went out in late July. The August deadline eventually was extended by two weeks. The RFP terms were Coyotes friendly, and so it was no surprise on Sept. 2 when the RFP deadline finally passed that a developer working with the Coyotes, Bluebird Development, LLC, was the only respondent.

The Coyotes confirmed it in a statement that read, in part, "We are pleased to have submitted a proposal to the City of Tempe. As regulations surrounding the RFP process dictate, we cannot comment any further at this time, but we remain incredibly excited about this extraordinary opportunity."

Alex Meruelo, the billionaire who has owned the team for two years, has said that his preference is to keep it in the Valley.

It then didn't take Glendale long to terminate the team's lease after the 2021-22 season, meaning that the Coyotes could go perhaps three or four

years without a permanent home – and that's if it can come to terms relatively quickly with Tempe on the massive project. "Relatively quickly" could be several months. It then could take three years in a best-case scenario to build the sports arena and entertainment district with 1,000 residential units, 200,000 square feet of retail space as well as public space with other amenities – although several sources say a signed contract by year's end would be no surprise.

That might be the easy part:

- The site would require environmental cleanup before any construction can begin. It is unclear how long that could take.

- Before the Arizona Cardinals of the NFL settled on a new stadium in Glendale next door to the hockey arena, it proposed a stadium in the general neighborhood of the proposed hockey project. Phoenix slapped it down, saying it was too close to the flight path at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. It is not known if Phoenix has given any assurance that it would agree to the Tempe location for a hockey arena.

- And then, there are the taxpayers. How much of the project would be funded by the hockey team



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and developer, and how much, if any, by the residents like those who live in our South Tempe neighborhoods? At least one Tempe activist, Ron Pies, in a letter to the editor of Wrangler News, urged the city to step away and not get sucked into a deal that could cost it millions.

When Glendale pulled the plug on the Coyotes, team president and CEO Xavier A. Gutierrez released a statement, saying, “We are hopeful that they will reconsider a move that would primarily damage the small businesses and hard-working citizens of Glendale. We remain open to restarting good-faith negotiations with the City.

“Most importantly, the Coyotes are one hundred percent committed to finding a long-term arena solution here in Arizona, and nothing will shake our determination to do what is right for our organization, residents of the entire Valley and, most important, our fans.”

For that to happen, a Tempe panel, which could be aided by a third-party consultant, first will vet the

Coyotes/Bluebird RFP response, looking at such things as economic impact, job creation, public benefit, neighborhood considerations and traffic impact.

The vetting team then will make a recommendation to Tempe City Council whether to move forward or not.

If the Council agrees to enter into exclusive negotiations, that would trigger what could be another lengthy process to reach a Development and Disposition Agreement.

Finally, if a DDA is successfully negotiated, City Council would vote in a public meeting to accept or reject it.

The Coyotes could be in downtown Phoenix or at Veterans Memorial Coliseum for several years while that plays out. Who knows? Perhaps Glendale will come back to the table with a short-term lease to keep the team.

Either way, the ice on which the Coyotes are skating isn’t getting any thicker. If the Tempe deal falls through, they could be gone.



The Coyotes, through their developer Bluebird, were the only responder to Tempe’s Request for Proposal for developing 46 acres of city-owned land near Rio Salado Parkway and Priest Drive. — Photo courtesy National Hockey League

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY: AN UPDATE ON CHANDLER NON-DISCRIMINATION

Chandler is now the largest city in the state of Arizona without a non-discrimination policy. Join community leaders for a panel discussion on the social and economic consequences of not instating a non-discrimination ordinance, and an educational session on what a non-discrimination ordinance can do for our community.



October 26, 2021

8:00 – 9:30 AM

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4 Tempe agencies to benefit from Oct. 16 food drive

Tempe Neighborhoods Together, in cooperation with the city of Tempe, is holding a food drive Saturday, Oct. 16, at Pyle Adult Recreation Center's parking lot, 655 E. Southern Ave.

Donations of non-perishable food items, pet food and feminine hygiene products will be accepted from noon to 4 p.m.

Those who wish to participate are asked to wear face masks and remain in their vehicles. Volunteers will unload donations.

Organizations benefitting from the food drive include The Aris Foundation, Tempe Community Action Agency Food Bank, Lost Our Home Pet Rescue and Women4Women.

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These stories & more inside



June 19-July 5, 2021 • Volume 21, Number 18

WRANGLER NEWS

WET, WILD & COOL

With 100 degrees scorching us into summer hibernation, we're thinking this would be a great time for some water. But J.J. Ruppel has an even better idea: a special photo gallery featuring the most beautiful kids in Tempe.

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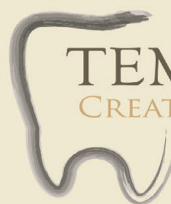
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Don't Wait. Vaccinate. Tempe urges anyone eligible who has not yet been vaccinated to get the COVID-19 vaccine. It is the best protection available today against the virus. Finding a location to get the free vaccine is easier than ever. Text your zip code to 438829 for the closest locations or call 800-232-0233. Free rides and childcare are available.

Wastewater data program receives \$1 million grant

Tempe's leadership in public health innovation for wastewater epidemiology is being funded by the State of Arizona with a \$1 million partnership.

This will expand the city's program and inform state and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) national best practices in the field of sewer surveillance for COVID-19.

The State of Arizona has received a federal Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Cooperative Agreement from the CDC to partner with the City of Tempe to expand its COVID-19 wastewater epidemiology program.

The CDC funds Epidemiology and Laboratory cooperative agreements annually. These have been critical to U.S. health departments' ability to combat

infectious diseases by funding states, local health departments and affiliates to detect, respond to, control and prevent infectious diseases.

Wastewater-based epidemiology is the science of studying community sewage for public health information. The City of Tempe has been involved with using wastewater as a tool to survey community health since 2018 when the City Council first directed funds to the Strategic Management and Diversity Office to partner with Dr. Rolf Halden of the ASU Biodesign Institute and his scientists to begin a Tempe-based program.

Since that time, Tempe has measured the presence of opioid concentrations and, since March 2020, COVID-19 signals, in the wastewater. For COVID-19, the City of Tempe gathers data from seven wastewater collection areas throughout the city, including the Town of Guadalupe.

Residents can see all the data at tempe.gov/indicators.



Help with resources

Do you or someone you know need help connecting with city and community resources?

Get help through the city's navigators, who serve individuals and families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic at no charge.

Human Services Resource Navigator program. Residents can get connected with resources to address their needs based on their current circumstance. Individuals can receive assistance online and over the phone and will have direct

contact with the Resource Navigators.

The goal of the program is to simplify the process for accessing the right resources and to support clients in becoming self-sufficient.

Get connected: resources@tempe.gov or 480-858-2021.

Human Services Financial Navigator program. Anyone in Arizona can get one-on-one assistance from our navigator to explore available resources such as funds to pay bills, how to work with creditors, ways to maximize incomes and more. Get started today: <https://finnav.org/tempe>.

City Council conversation opportunities

Join these Tempe City Councilmembers for their regular conversation opportunities out in the community:



Councilmember Jennifer Adams
6 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 13
Buena Vista Ranchos Park Ramada

This event will be geared toward topics of interest to residents within the 85284 zip code, though any community members are welcome. Police Chief Jeff Glover will be Jennifer's special guest.



Councilmember Lauren Kuby
10-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 23
Daley Park, 1625 S. College Ave.

There is no set topic this month; bring Lauren your questions, feedback and ideas!

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BethAnn Bader, left, a West Chandler resident, reads letters she's received from the two Ugandan children whose education she sponsors through E3 Africa. At right: A student in one of the classrooms at St. Thomas Aquinas, the new school E3 Africa continues to develop in Uganda. The school will eventually serve 800 children. — Photos courtesy E3 Africa

Orphans

From Page 3

St. Thomas Aquinas, in Uganda. A ribbon-cutting on the campus' multi-purpose room took place in 2016.

Construction is ongoing as the school expands. Some sponsored children live at and attend St. Thomas Aquinas while others live at home or attend classes elsewhere, endeavors funded by donors and benefactors. At this time, however, due to the pandemic, the government has shut down all schools and that includes St. Thomas Aquinas.

"You see videos of these kids crying because they can't go to school," Scaramella says. "For them, it's not a vacation. It's not a break. It means more and more suffering."

Part of that suffering is because E3 Africa provides meals for the students, so with school not in session, they are missing out. A big chunk of funds raised by E3 Africa goes toward food, but the organization has come up with an innovative solution. A portion of the land on the school is built is used to raise crops.

"Not only are we doing it for the students so they can feed themselves, they are learning agriculture and gaining skills. They will be taking the surplus to markets where they will also be sustaining the communities as well as reinvesting that money right back into the school," Scaramella says.

Aliunzi, even in the face of the difficulties posed by COVID-19, remains hopeful.

"Despite the crisis of the pandemic, this organization is the work of God," Aliunzi says. "He always brings us good-hearted people to keep it going. And for that we are so grateful."

St. Thomas Aquinas College will eventually educate and house over 800 students a year and employ over 50 teachers, administrators and staff. The chief architect on the school, James Ambayo, is an E3 Africa graduate.

BethAnn Bader, a former school principal who belongs to St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in West Chandler, became a sponsor back in 2018.

"I know how important education is. These kids, they hunger for it," Bader said. "They are so eager to learn."

Three years ago, Aliunzi spoke to St. Andrew's parishioners about E3-Africa and its efforts to save the children of his homeland. Bader was so moved by Aliunzi's plea, she decided to get involved. It's hard not to be touched when one considers the obstacles Aliunzi overcame in his quest to become a priest. He himself was orphaned at a very young age and raised by his elder siblings.

As in many developing nations, the government provides only the most basic education, and then only until sixth grade. After that, parents must pay school fees. In a country where nearly half the population survives on less than \$2 a day, education just isn't possible for many children, particularly if they are orphaned. When he was still a young boy, Aliunzi's teachers knew he was bright and would hide him from the school principal who visited classrooms to ensure students' tuition was paid.

With no way to fund his schooling, it seemed Aliunzi's dream of becoming a priest was not to be. That's when a Spanish priest took pity on him and sponsored his education. When Aliunzi was ordained, he himself became a school principal with the dubious distinction of sending away students who couldn't pay.

He turned to cultivating vegetables in order to

make up the difference for impoverished students. Fast forward to 2004. By then, Aliunzi was serving in Arizona. A parishioner, Rosalie Weller, asked him how she might show her gratitude to God for preserving her daughter's life after her daughter survived the tsunami that struck off the coast of Indonesia that year killing 230,000 people.

Aliunzi told Weller about his efforts to sponsor the education of needy children in Uganda and the two came up with the idea of co-founding E-3 Africa. Weller died Aug. 16, but her legacy and the work of E3 Africa continues.

Scaramella says the organization has sponsored around 100 children who have already gone through the program and graduated. "In total, we've helped around 350 kids," he said.

The first student E3 Africa sponsored was Richard Opi. Born without arms, the village chief told his parents to kill him because he would be useless to the tribe. With sponsorship from E3 Africa, Opi went on to receive his diploma in industrial arts in 2015.

Bader sponsors 17 year-old Lucy, who wants to become a nurse, and Anthony, who is 14 and wants to become a doctor. She receives letters from both, thanking her profusely for helping them achieve their dreams.

"Anthony's father abandoned him when he was 1 year-old. He wants someone to mentor him and show him how to be a godly man," Bader said. "That really touched my heart. He's thankful to be able to go to school—his mom can't [afford to] send him."

Bader says her goal is to sponsor more children. "I've been blessed with so much. Here's a real tangible opportunity for me as an American woman to help children who have so very little."

Information: E3africa.org.

Tempe investing in streets and parks throughout city . . . Commentary by Jennifer Adams

The City of Tempe is continuing to make investments throughout the community that are designed to improve residents' quality of life. Among those investments are streets and parks improvement projects. Let me tell you about some of the projects that have been going on around town.

Streets improvements

Safe roads are of paramount importance and that is why we have made strategic investments in our streets that require short-term tolerance in exchange for long-term gain.



Jennifer Adams

One area of work has been around the downtown area, along University Drive, as well as around Tempe Marketplace, to ensure those employment, retail and education-related corridors are functioning well now and in the future.

The opening of Tempe Streetcar in the coming months will provide another layer for our public transit system and make downtown and ASU mobility even better.

Tempe also has adopted a Vision Zero initiative to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injury crashes, for the benefit of drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists.

As part of this goal, over the summer, we installed more traffic safety devices around Kyrene and Tempe schools. These included high-visibility crosswalks and flashing speed limit signs to keep kids and families safer.

Across Tempe, we also have been undertaking pavement improvement projects.

In fact, more than \$15 million has been budgeted this year and we plan to invest \$55.5 million in these improvements over the next five years.

Pavement maintenance is vitally important, as anyone who has driven over a pothole can attest. When you visit tempe.gov/TempeinMotion, you can track all of our pavement, streetscape, transit and bicycle/ pedestrian improvement efforts.

Parks improvements

City parks matter, and that is even more true today. Throughout the pandemic, they have provided much-needed escapes from home, offering safe environments when all COVID-19 protocols are followed. Parks are the focal points of neighborhoods, improving the health of residents through recreational and fitness activities.

That is why my City Council colleagues and I remain fully committed to the Parks Capital Improvements Plan, which is a \$60 million investment in city parks over several years.

Many parks in south Tempe have already been given makeovers. Celaya Park received a new playground, ramadas and trees.

Corbell Park reopened two weeks ago, featuring new ramadas, drinking fountains, picnic tables and a park grill. Redden and Waggoner parks will get new playgrounds over the next two years.

Harelson and Goodwin parks will get new ramadas and other upgrades. All renovations are ADA-compliant, providing inclusive, safe spaces for residents of all abilities. Check out tempe.gov/ParkUpdates for an amazing 2020-2021 year in review about all that was done last fiscal year.

Staff finished six new park playgrounds, installed 643 new LED light fixtures, installed four new smart irrigation systems – and much more.

The best part is that residents around every park are involved in the decision-making processes.

The city reaches out and invites neighbors to select the amenities they want to see for their families.

As projects begin on parks in your neighborhood, I strongly encourage you to participate in the process. Please reach out to me with your ideas and feedback.

I can be reached at jennifer_adams@tempe.gov or 480-350-8835. You can also find me on Facebook at JenniferAdamsTempe.

My next Join Jennifer gathering is at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 13, at the Buena Vista Ranchos park ramada.

Police Chief Jeff Glover will be our special guest. We will be focusing on topics of interest in the 85284 zip code.

Jennifer Adams is a member of the Tempe City Council.

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when banks
compete!**

How to Sell Your Home Without Becoming Homeless

Dear South Tempe Neighbor,

We're writing you because there are only 30 homes for sale in the 85284 and 85283 Zip codes. It's a shockingly low number since last year there were about 315 homes for sale! Would you have any interest in selling your home? Our phone is ringing off the hook with buyers willing to pay over asking price for a home in South Tempe. Your sale would be quick, simple, and very profitable right now. With a brief Zoom or Facetime call, we can look at your home and tell you what it's worth today for free. It's a more accurate price this way than what you'll find online. It will take 15 minutes. I'm certain you'll be pleasantly surprised at its value. You're also likely thinking... "That's great, but I don't want the hassle of dealing with showings and how do I time the sale to buy my next home in this market?" We have a lender who will give you the money upfront to make an all-cash, noncontingent offer on your new home today (this will also help you win the home you love in this competitive market). Then, we'll sell your home once you've moved out. You get a Flexible close date, your home sold for full market value, and plenty of time to find your next home.

**Please call our cell or text us for
a quick response at 480-797-2892**

Scott & Patti

Scott and Patti Agnew



Michael Scott Patti Scotty

Sell Your Home for a Record Price in 2021!

"The Agnew Team is amazing to work with! Professional and knowledgeable. Great communication and always available. They made the entire process effortless for me. Coordinated photos, listing and showings quickly and at my convenience. I loved the enthusiasm and energy Patti and Scotty brought to the sale. They both are well connected in the area and brought many potential buyers to see my property immediately in under 48 hours!"

--Sam C.

"Scotty is very kind and caring person and his service was exactly who he is. He always communicated and responded right away. I felt like he was treating us as one of his family members. Thank you, Scotty, for selling our home successfully!"

--Tomomi T.

www.theagnewteam.com
Get your free quote!