



WRANGLER NEWS

SEPT 24 - OCT 7, 2022 • VOL 32, NO 18



Kids are being asked at increasingly younger ages to experiment with drugs, including those containing brightly colored fentanyl, which is 50 times more potent than heroin. PAGE 12.



Tempe Councilmember Arlene Chin shares some of her favorite go-to places, offering a range of products and services from kettle corn to pool supplies. PAGE 9.



¡Una fiesta grande! Chandler observes Hispanic Heritage Month with a swoosh

City aligns with Fortis Femina as a way to celebrate women and their pathway to a brighter future. More on Pages 16-17

Wrangler News photo by Billy Hardiman

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FIND NEW ROADS™



HOPE teams venture into city areas frequented by people experiencing homelessness to develop housing, other services.

— Tempe photo

Tempe HOPE team brings respect, dignity to homeless 'You are drowning, and all of a sudden, there's a life jacket'

By Janie Magruder
Special to Wrangler News

Mary Forrester was in anything but a celebratory mood shortly before her 70th birthday last January. COVID-19's latest variant had worsened an already unstable housing situation for Forrester, whose fixed income was insufficient to cover her bills.

Alone and on the cusp of running out of money and losing the roof over her head, Forrester called Arizona's 211 help line and learned about the city of Tempe's HOPE — Homeless Outreach Prevention Effort.

"When you think of being homeless, you are out there, you might starve or someone might try to

hurt you," said the Philadelphia native who moved to Arizona 13 years ago.

"If I was 30, maybe I would have felt a little stronger, but I wasn't sure what was going to happen to me. I felt like I wasn't going to make it at my age."

When the city's HOPE team contacted Forrester almost immediately, and told her they could help, she was filled with hope of her own.

She is among hundreds of people experiencing homelessness who have been helped this year by Tempe's Homeless Solutions.

"You are drowning, and all of a sudden, there's a life jacket," she said. "They treated me with kindness, with respect and dignity, they didn't look down on me. And in less than a day, they had me. I

was in the hands of HOPE."

Two days before Forrester's birthday, the team helped her move into a clean, natural light-filled, one-bedroom apartment near Arizona State University. It was modestly furnished with a twin bed and a large sectional, and it left her speechless. "It's a mansion," she said. "It's mine."

Two decades of outreach

For more than 20 years, Tempe has had formal programs to address homelessness and help individuals and families ensnared in it.

Late last year, the City Council approved \$1.3 million in funding to enable a quicker

— HOPE, Page 4

HOPE

From Page 3

implementation of a comprehensive strategy to launch an innovative mental health response team and to keep city parks more safe.

But homelessness is on the rise across the U.S., and Tempe is no exception, according to the point-in-time count, a, single-night, unduplicated tabulation of people in a community experiencing homelessness, both sheltered and unsheltered.

Tempe's January 2022 count was 383, a number that rose to 515 in June. The city attributes the increase to HOPE staff efforts to locate more individuals needing help, with 6,800 reported HOPE engagements since last April alone.

New outreach tools

In August, Tempe announced four new tools that further prioritize safety and public health, connect people with housing options and services more quickly, give residents ways to help, and addresses encampments faster.

They are:

The CARE & HOPE line, which residents may call 24/7 to report people needing help, whether in crisis, homeless or having other issues. The number is 480-350-8004. Or email HOPE@tempe.gov.

“Even though our HOPE and CARE 7 teams are out in the community every day engaging with people, there will always be people we’ll never know about who might be struggling,” said Kris Scharlau, Human Services manager who oversees the teams.

The CARE and HOPE line “is a resource that anyone can call to tell us about someone who needs help, like Mary when she lost her home,” Scharlau said.

“It’s also the number people can call when they need help for themselves.”

An online encampment reporting form, previously used only by city staff to gather information about numbers of people, locations, possible hazards and other data regarding encampments, now is available to community members. Find the form on the Tempe 311 app or by visiting tempe.gov/311.

The HOPE team visits these reported encampments, assesses needs there and offers

resources for housing and other services to individuals.

An enhanced encampment response was developed with some of the city’s nonprofit partners to prioritize safety and public health in parks, vacant lots and other places in Tempe.

For example, a temporary “resource village” was open for two weeks in August in the Salt River area near Tempe Town Lake.

A variety of assistance — from pet care and storage of belongings to identification card replacement and immediate shelter — was provided, as were medical care and mental health resources.

However, remaining in no-trespass areas such as the river bottom isn’t an option because of flooding, fire and other public health risks, city officials say. Individuals in these areas were notified that they could be cited or arrested for trespassing after Aug. 31.

Now through through December, the city will dispose of debris and hazardous material and address overgrown vegetation.

After this, the city will continue vegetation

— HOPE, Page 31

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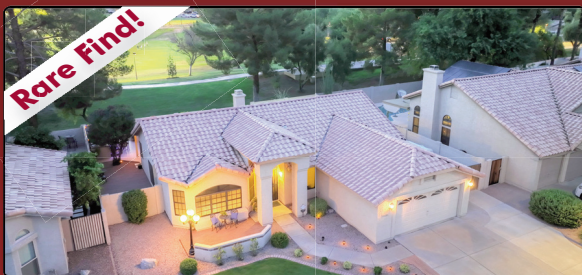
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Celebrating our Hispanic community

At Desert Dry Clean, keeping the business going is a family affair

By Mark Crudup

To Rosalba Cabrera, the future looks rosy, even in an economy that's been consistently wilting for the last few years.

Known as Rosie by most of her customers, the owner of Desert Dry Clean has proven that she understands exactly how to make a business work. With more than three



decades of experience in the industry, Cabrera has not only survived but thrived, all while she and her husband reared two children.

She worked at the South

Tempe store through three previous owners, and finally had a chance to purchase the business in 2008.

"When the first owners opened, my kids were little and they needed me more," Cabrera said.

"Then eventually the third owner came, and he said, 'You know what: I have to go. But I'll tell you for sure, you are the one that can buy it, because I think it is a perfect opportunity for you right now.'"

After running the company full-time for the first year, Cabrera said she realized there were opportunities to save money and, at the same time, help keep prices stable for customers, despite peoples' withering finances at the time.

"I haven't changed any prices for about four years now, even with the economy," she said. "We tell our customers that we have to pay a lot for supplies, so if you could help by recycling the hangers, we can keep the prices the same."

Almost every customer at Desert Dry Clean follows up with the

request.

"I give them a box, and they bring it back with their hangers," she said. "At some other dry-cleaning services, they use brand new hangers every time. That just hurts everyone – it's a waste." Prices of the dry-cleaning fluid used in most stores, perchloroethylene, or perc as it's known in the industry, also keep increasing and soon could rise to double the cost, Cabrera said. To keep expenses at a minimum, she uses a sterilizing process to get as much dry-cleaning use with the smallest amount of perc.

"We also purify the perc – we call it a 'cooking' system," she said. "So, we separate the dirt from the cleaning supplies, purify it, and reuse it to save costs. But, we reuse it 100 percent clean."

Using this method drastically reduces the amount of perc used for dry-cleaning. "It's another way to keep the prices the same for customers," she said. "We're also making an effort to be more environmentally friendly, by trying to avoid using unnecessary chemicals."

And the customers keep coming back, Cabrera said.

"I have customers from Queen Creek, north Phoenix, Casa Grande and even Tucson," she said. "Even if they move away, they still come back."

Running the dry-cleaning business is a stressful, full-time endeavor, Cabrera said.

"My whole family works here; my husband is an electrician during the day, and comes in during afternoons and evenings to help," she said. "And, my two kids come in after school."

"Being in the business for so long, I absolutely love it," she said. "I love everything about my job – talking to customers, cleaning and everything in between."

Desert Dry Clean: 480-491-1107, northeast corner Rural and Warner roads, behind Postino.

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A So.Tempe shopping list: Local businesses to love

By Arlene Chin

There's nothing like the experience of walking into **Donut Parlor** on a weekend morning. The fresh-baked smells envelop me, and soon I am buying more glazed goodness than anyone should. I cannot resist.

Same for stopping at **Kettle Heroes Artisan Popcorn** – Aged White Cheddar flavor, please – as well as enjoying a truly gourmet brunch at **Crepe Bar**.

Or, if you see me at **B&B Pools** picking up some chemicals and supplies, wish me luck because it means I am engaging in some at-home chemistry.

These are just a few of my favorite south Tempe go-to businesses. Because I grew up here – including graduating from Corona del Sol high school and ASU, I have a long list of favorites! It makes me happy to shop and eat local – and I know you prefer it too.

When I was on the campaign trail running for Tempe City Council, I knocked on so many of your doors and had great conversations with you. I



frequently heard that south Tempe residents want even more restaurants and small businesses nearby. You told me that you wished you didn't have to leave our Tempe borders to access things you want and need.

The City of Tempe also wants you to be able to keep your business local. It benefits all of us when we have plentiful employment options and when our sales tax dollars stay right here and are reinvested in city services. According to Local First Arizona, for every \$100 spent at a locally owned business, \$43 stays right here in the local economy

versus \$13 for national chain businesses.

Our Economic Development team and your City Council are working hard to attract new businesses to south Tempe and to help aspiring entrepreneurs get established. Importantly, you can also help us in this pursuit.

South Tempe residents can play a role in business attraction and ensuring a healthy environment for local shops and restaurants. Patronizing them regularly is one way, and so is spreading the word. Tell people far and wide about your favorite businesses! We can be south Tempe tour guides and referral sources to our friends and family.

With beautiful Arizona patio season right around the corner, it's time to get out and about and see more of each other. Maybe I'll run into you this fall at **The Craftsman** – I have been looking forward to trying it. Do you have favorite south Tempe businesses or suggestions about what you want to see here? Please reach out to me anytime at .

More information about me is at tempe.gov/chin. Please connect with me on social media, too: @TempeArleneChin (Instagram and Twitter) and /TempeArleneChin on Facebook.

— Arlene Chin is a member
of the Tempe City Council

From our Publisher

'False?' 'Erroneous?' Why the origin of this denial causes us to wonder

By Don Kirkland



Back in the days some 30 years ago when we started Wrangler News, then Warner Wrangler, we made a pledge to ourselves and others that we would tell positive stories about our community as a way to reinforce the sense of neighborhood that we enjoy and believe in.

That, of course, was in the days when there were plenty of others—somewhat an over-abundance, as I recall—of media sources willing to dig for and dish out the not-so-upbeat stories regularly sprinkled throughout their pages.

Not so much nowadays. Not many others at all, in fact, to share our community's good news. So, like it or not, we find ourselves in a position

where we seem to have become a go-to source for our neighbors to report all sorts of current issues, mostly good, some not.

This, we assume, is why we received a phone call from a prominent, well-connected member of our community who reported hearing from an inside source at the Tempe Police Department that staffing shortages had caused a temporary reduction in officers' ability to respond promptly to routine calls for service in the South Tempe coverage area.

Really? While our caller's motivation was indeed beyond doubt, the information was so unlike anything we'd heard before that we went immediately to one of the city's highest-ranking, most credible officials for verification.

What we heard during that discussion, once again with someone all would recognize as a thoroughly reliable source, was even more surprising: The Tempe City Council, it seems, had allocated funding to the city manager's office some time ago to hire needed police officers, but none of that available funding had yet been used.

So, at 5 a.m. on a Friday morning prior to a weekend, without contacting the city's PR director as we sometimes do with routine coverage, we issued a brief text-message advisory to about 50 of

our Wrangler News eEdition recipients to be aware of a possible cutback in police response times for non-emergency calls.

Do we need to tell you what happened as a result?

The city's PR director called us wanting to know why we didn't notify that office before taking what we considered part of our responsibility as a recognized South Tempe information source.

That was followed a few days later by phone calls and an email to an unknown list of recipients from the city's neighborhood services director labeling our text message "erroneous," "false" and relying on "an unnamed source."

Although we have offered to print a timely response to all of this from someone directly involved in it, the best we've seen is that lengthy denial from the Neighborhood Services director. As one of our original sources noted after learning of such an oddly attributed messaging attempt: Was it a clarification or a cover-up?

Like at least one other confrontational issue we've experienced with Tempe, in which we issued a Freedom of Information request that was never responded to, we're not overly optimistic that we'll ever know the real story.



BUSINESS

A woman's view helps guide company's move to expand, diversify

Special to Wrangler News

Tempe-based Johnson Carlier, one of the nation's largest general contractors, has announced a new move to diversify its offerings, plus a different name to help tell its story.

The rationale for the move is described by South Tempe resident and Southwest regional vice president Laura Shivers.

"To our team members, clients and partners, being the most sought-after means offering the services of a company that can deliver on and believes in the next 100 years," she says. "We feel that changing the name accomplishes more of that alignment and reaching that goal."

Now Big-D Construction Southwest, the company already has been a building powerhouse all over the Western U.S., with thousands of completed projects and over \$2 billion in annual revenue.

Headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, the company has been in Arizona for nearly five years, but only earlier this month changed its name.

According to Shivers, the company believes that the pivot to the new brand indicates a strong commitment to the company's future in the desert.

Not to mention, she notes, it'll make things a lot easier for clients and partners to understand what Big-D Construction has to offer in the area. Whereas Johnson Carlier had a reputation as an outstanding builder of automotive-type projects, Big-D Construction Southwest will be able to offer potential partners a much wider portfolio.

The company's footprint has expanded to completed work not only in Utah and Arizona, but also in California, Idaho, Nevada, Montana and Wyoming, across many different industries.

Although Shivers refers to the company's commitment to an Arizona legacy over the next century, Big-D Construction Southwest's senior vice president and managing director Carl McFarland, suggests that rapid change might be coming to the construction industry even faster than that.

"The next 10 years are going to be the most transformational 10 of the last 100 years in our industry, guaranteed," McFarland projects. "If you're not enhancing your culture for the next generation that'll be running our industry, your time is limited."

Enhancements include more remote work opportuni-



Tempe resident Laura Shivers thrives as a female exec in a male-dominated industry.

ties, digital innovations—even a sweeping mindset shift in recruiting, McFarland says.

The workplace itself may see a lot of changes too, in terms of appearance and personality.

Shivers, who works as a female executive in a male-dominated industry, agrees that changes are coming and that they may have been overdue for a while.

"I hate that it's still news," she says when asked about the challenges of being a woman in the construction industry. "I think our industry has a big opportunity to concentrate a lot more on not just females, but also diversity and inclusion efforts."

McFarland adds that Big-D is making an attempt not only to talk more about diversifying the workplace but in actually making the shifts necessary to survive in the modern era.

"It's a conscious effort," he says. "You must make very strategic and tactical moves if you're going to be diverse and inclusive. It's not just a sticker on your hard hat."

So, with a new name and a commitment to evolving into a more progressive general contracting firm, Big-D Construction Southwest is

eager to build on the success it has already found in Arizona, notes Shivers. The leadership at the very top says they do so knowing how incredibly competitive the Phoenix-area market is.

"With a growing number of national clients, coupled with our geographical coverage of now 15 separate business units, Big-D Companies are well positioned to serve our clients' needs in a multitude of market sectors throughout Arizona and other locations around the country says Chief Operating Officer Troy S. Thompson.

Still, she says, when it's time to throw on the hard hat—both literally and figuratively—and get to work, she's confident that Big-D Construction Southwest can find even more growth and success in Arizona.

New name and all.

"I think markets like Phoenix, Austin, Dallas, Denver—all of those markets are extremely competitive," she says.

"Competition is good for our business. The need to diversify, differentiate and innovate truly strengthens who we are."

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Tempe Coalition on a mission to combat substance misuse

The organization is partnering with local schools to provide education and outreach

By Meghann Sepulveda

It took just one bad hit from a strawberry kiwi-flavored electronic cigarette that led Dante Sanmiguel, the (then) 18-year-old Tempe student, fighting for his life.

Hours after succumbing to peer pressure to vape, Dante experienced a high fever and extreme lung pain. The healthy teen was admitted to the hospital and spent three weeks in the intensive care unit.

Doctors told him he would likely need a lung transplant and shared a grim outlook: a five-year life expectancy. Miraculously medical intervention worked, Dante's lungs healed, and he had a full recovery. But many teens across the country aren't as lucky.

Alarming statistics nationally and locally

Substance misuse often occurs in social settings and includes vaping, marijuana, alcohol, and opioids, and can result in drug addiction, serious impairment, illness, and

even death.

The National Survey on Drug Use and Health showed that in 2015, more than 1 million youths in the United States between the ages of 12 and 17 are addicted to drugs.

"In Arizona, the average age for marijuana use is 13 years old," said Shelly Mowrey, demand reduction coordinator for Arizona High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area. "And now that marijuana is legal in the state, we're seeing high levels of THC that can have dangerous outcomes."

That number may seem startling, but what's even more concerning is the National Institute on Drug Abuse reports that prescription drugs are the most commonly abused substances by Americans age 14 and older.

Early education is key

A huge hurdle in the fight against drugs is how teens are introduced to these substances.

"Kids are being asked to use at such a young age," said Bernadette Coggins, program director for Tempe Coalition, an organization on a mission to reduce underage drinking and drug use. "They're offered drugs through social media apps like Snapchat and various online platforms."



Most recently, brightly colored (“rainbow”) fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine, is being distributed in various forms including pills, powder, and blocks that resembles sidewalk chalk to lure children, according to the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

“What’s frightening is the current landscape of how fentanyl is being laced into many drugs,” Coggins said. “Research shows that only 50 percent of eighth graders know what it is and what it looks like.”

Awareness and outreach

Tempe Coalition, which is comprised of residents and professionals who live and work in the community and strive to collectively improve the city of Tempe by advocating for the reduction of youth risk behaviors, is using grant funds to educate students about substance mis-

use at Kyrene School District and Tempe Union High School District.

“Opioid awareness is critical,” Coggins explained. “Our priority is to inform youth in our community about how just one pill can contain a deadly dose of fentanyl.”

As part of Tempe Coalition’s outreach efforts, Kyrene School District is offering a series of parenting courses to discuss topics such as internet safety, bullying, and the dangers of vaping.

At Tempe Union High School District, the organization is providing information surrounding opioid awareness in presentations for students taking health and physical education classes.

Additionally, Tempe Coalition is working closely with Tempe Fire Medical Rescue and the Tempe Police Department to support local schools, along with community partners such as

notMYkid.

Prevention tactics

While the topic can be a challenging one to talk about, experts say the best ways to prevent kids from experimenting with drugs – and keep them substance free – is to teach healthy coping mechanisms and have open, honest discussions.

“We know the biggest impact on teens is having a loving presence in their lives such as a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or even a neighbor,” Mowrey said.

And although it may seem like the words fall on deaf ears, Mowrey ensures these conversations with teens are effective.

“They are listening,” she explained.

Learn more about the Tempe Coalition and their outreach efforts, or sign up to become a member, at TempeCoalition.org.



EDUCATION



Students at Frank Elementary students frolicked during a fun morning of play at a mini training camp hosted by the Arizona Cardinals.

Arizona Cardinals bring mini training camp to Tempe elementary schools

Story and photo by Becca Smouse

The Arizona Cardinals brought a mini training camp to several schools in the Tempe Elementary School District for a fun morning of play.

On Monday, Sept. 12 at Frank Elementary School, 85 K-5 students who had perfect attendance since the start of the 2022-2023 school year were invited to participate in the camp.

The goal of the camps is to promote the NFL's Play 60 campaign, which encourages kids to get 60 minutes of activity each day.

"It was a great opportunity for the kids to get exercise and for us to really make an impact in the community," said Riczer Desvaristes, Arizona Cardinals Football Club youth & high school football manager.

Students started with a series of warm-up exercises and then rotated through a variety of drill stations that involved throwing, catching, and running around obstacles. School teachers, staff, and parent volunteers helped the students complete the drills throughout the morning.

"The best moment was the teachers being involved and the kids really being excited about it," said Desvaristes.

Along with the Cardinals youth and high school football staff, current Arizona Cardinal long snapper Aaron Brewer made a special appearance.

The Arizona Cardinals will be bringing their Gatorade Training Camp to several other Tempe Elementary schools, including Nevitt Elementary, throughout the school year.

MCC now teaches construction trades

There are many ways to make a living in the world, and not all of them require an academic degree.

The trades, for example, are very viable.

Mesa Community College recognizing, the industry need, has launched a construction trades program for the fall semester.

"We've seen tremendous success in our Construction Management degree and are expanding our support for the industry by adding a Construction Trade program," said David Cain, MCC Construction Trades program director.

"Our Construction Advisory committee stressed the dire need for both men and women to enter the workforce quickly at the ground level."

A Certificate of Completion in Construction Trades, with specialization in carpentry or

electrical, may be earned in two semesters. The CCL documents an individual's competencies for employers, which can enhance entry into career opportunities for those with specialized skills.

"Construction isn't just about swinging a hammer," Cain said. "Courses include, in part, learning to use construction calculations, blueprint readings and trade-specific codes. We dive deep into the study of construction planning and scheduling, design, leadership skills, problem-solving, ethics and, of course, OSHA 30 safety." (CON103), hand and power tools (CON104), construction calculations (CON105) and blueprint reading (CON107).

"Our goal is to expand our Construction Trades offerings in the spring to include plumbing and HVAC," Cain said.

More information: mesacc.edu/construction.

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In partnership with Fortis Femina, Chandler's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion office kicked off Contigo, the community's celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Opening day featured live performances, a DJ, food trucks, booths and cultural merchandise, plus resources, free activities such as face painting, crafts and more.

The event also was aimed at empowering women to join together and help their communities and families through personal and private enterprise solutions for overcoming obstacles, solving problems, strengthening relationships, encouraging others and working to build a brighter future.

Wrangler News photos by Billy Hardiman





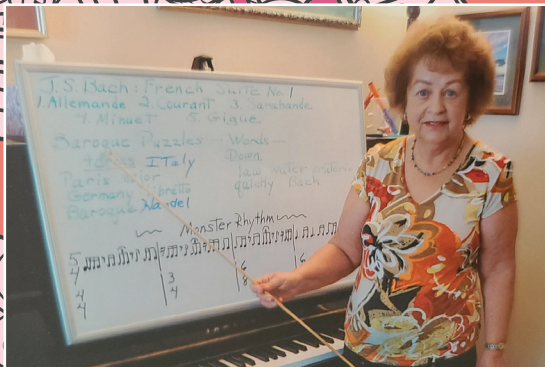
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DIVERSIONS

Vintage railroad cars part of rare display coming soon to Chandler



West Chandler train lovers, history buffs and others of all ages are invited to climb aboard and explore the glory days of local and long-distance travel on America's railways during a Fall Rail Festival rolling into town from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, at the Arizona Railway Museum, 330 E. Ryan Road.

The free public event is hosted each year by volunteers of the museum, which is located on the southwest corner of Tumbleweed Park in Chandler.

This year's event will include displays of artifacts and memorabilia, tours of vintage railcars and a large sale of railroad books, magazines, and timetables at affordable prices.

Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Visitors will learn about the historical importance of railroads from museum volunteers who will explain the type of work that is required to restore and refurbish these railcars to keep them "alive" as a testament to the glory days of rail passenger travel.

Several cars feature interior displays of the typical accommodations

for the travelling public, including seating, sleeping arrangements, and dining facilities, complete with custom-made railroad dining car china.

The museum's diesel locomotive will be open, affording visitors the opportunity to blow the horn, and Chandler's historic #2562 steam locomotive also will be on display.

Outdoor displays will include a wide variety of railroad signs, signals, and mining equipment.

The museum's standard entrance fee is waived for this event. However, donations from the public and local businesses are greatly appreciated. Visitors should access the event on Ryan Road, from Arizona Avenue or McQueen roads. Parking is free.

Although the display building and restrooms are ADA compliant, due to the historic nature of the equipment, access to the railroad cars is not.

The Arizona Railway Museum is normally open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, September through May. It is closed during the summer.

Information: 480-821-1108.

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*Sports Notebook . . . with Alex Zener***Corona takes top honors at prestigious Westwood tournament**

Corona's volleyball team won nine out of 10 tournament matches to be crowned champions at the prestigious 2022 Westwood Tournament of Champions Gold Bracket Sept. 9-10.

On the first day of the tournament during pool play, the Aztecs defeated McClintock, Williams Field, Northwest Christian and American Leadership Academy—Gilbert North.

With a slow start the second day of pool play, the Aztecs who entered the tournament with an 8-0 season record, lost to Sunnyslope in the first match.

Corona regrouped and went on to defeat Horizon, Valley Christian, Liberty and Gilbert before facing Sunnyslope again in the finals.

The Vikings kept it close in the first set of the finals only losing by four points, 25-21, but the Aztecs dominated in the second set leading 24-8 at one point before Sunnyslope rallied to make the final score 25-14.

Corona's kill leader, outside hitter senior **Kierstyn Barton**, with 156 total kills so far this season or 4.9 kills a set, had eight kills in the finals and was named Westwood Tournament of Champions MVP.

In addition, Barton, with 89 digs is the third leading passer on the team right behind junior **Maggie Beauer** with 99 digs and sophomore **Alyssa Aguayo** with 96 digs.

"Kierstyn is doing a great job in all aspects of the game," said head coach **Ben Maxfield**. "She has become one of our leading hitters, passers and defenders. We can always count on her to deliver a kill when needed."

Senior middle blocker **Ella Lomigora**, at 6-foot-3, is an enormous contributor to Corona's current 14-1 record. She tied Barton with eight kills in the championship finals match.

Lomigora, whose main defensive objective is to stop the ball from crossing the net along with help from the two hitters on either side of her, is particularly good at her job. She leads the team in blocks with 51 where 19 of those blocks were solo.

On offense, Lomigora is very efficient in attacking. She leads the team in hitting percentage at .451 racking up 2.8 kills a set for a current total of 93 kills, second on the team.

Lomigora does not just block and hit, she leads the team in service aces with 23, just ahead of

Beauer with 21 and junior setter **Julia Owens** with 20. She also has 47 digs to her credit.

"Ella Lomigora is a tremendous leader both on and off the court," said Maxfield. "Her blocking is second to none and she always works hard to put herself in a position to hit. Her serving has improved greatly and it is very tough on opposing teams to get a good pass receive off of her."

Sophomore outside hitter **Alyssa Aguayo**, the third leading hitter on the team with 85 kills, is another notable young all-around player. She has consistently been among the top four statistic leaders in all categories including passing with three digs a set, serving with 18 service aces and blocking with eight solo blocks out of 10 total.

"Alyssa, like Kierstyn, is a great hitter, passer and defender," said Maxfield. "Alyssa brings a lot of power and control to her hitting, making very few errors. She is a quiet, steady presence on the court."

Corona's top hitters would not be as successful without the volleyball skills of junior setter **Julia Owens** who not only has 344 assists or 10.9 assists per set but is also third on the team with 20 service aces and fourth in both digs with 52 and blocks with 15.

"Julia had a fantastic tournament weekend!" said Maxfield. "She has really developed into a savvy setter, running a varied and diverse offense. She has taken on the role of a leader on the court which has made a significant difference in our success."

Junior **Maggie Beauer** is another one of Corona's hitters whose biggest contribution may be her defensive passing ability. She leads the team in digs with 99. In addition, she is second on the team with 21 service aces along with 43 kills and 17 blocks.

"Maggie reads the game really well and always plays calmly, not letting the stress of the moment affect her play," said Maxfield. "Besides her defense, she scores loads of points for us through her hitting and blocking. She is very versatile, able to play with success on either pin."

Freshman **Erin Clark** has taken on the responsibility of the libero position for the team and is currently leading the team in digs per set at 3.3.

"Erin did a great job this weekend anchoring the

back row," said Maxfield. "She has never played libero until this season (she's also a setter), but she has great ball control in serve receive and reads the game really well, allowing her to dig up an impressive number of balls.

Additional members of Corona's volleyball team include senior middle blocker **Natalie Mantini** who has played in 30 sets and is credited with 19 blocks, 14 digs and 17 kills, senior opposite hitter **Ella Swansiger** who is credited with 14 kills and 11 digs, senior middle blocker **Kendra Harrel** who has five kills and three blocks and senior outside hitter **Maddie Cohen** who has five aces and four digs.

Senior outside hitter **Brianna Mitchell** is a member of team along with senior setter **Geogia Lee** and senior defensive specialist **Kacie Bikofsky** who has played 19 sets and is credited with 57 digs and seven aces.

Other members of the team include sophomore defensive specialist **Emma Uribe** who has played in 10 sets and is credited with three kills, 10 digs and two aces along with freshman **Avery Lim** who has 24 assists, seven aces and nine digs playing in eight sets.

On Sept. 14, the Aztecs swept Desert Ridge in three straight sets, 25-13, 25-12 and 25-14.

On Sept. 20, Corona was scheduled to play Mountain View at home. Next the Aztecs were scheduled to play four more home games: Sept. 21 against Desert Vista; Sept. 22 against Highland; Sept. 27 against Gilbert; and Sept. 28 against Liberty.

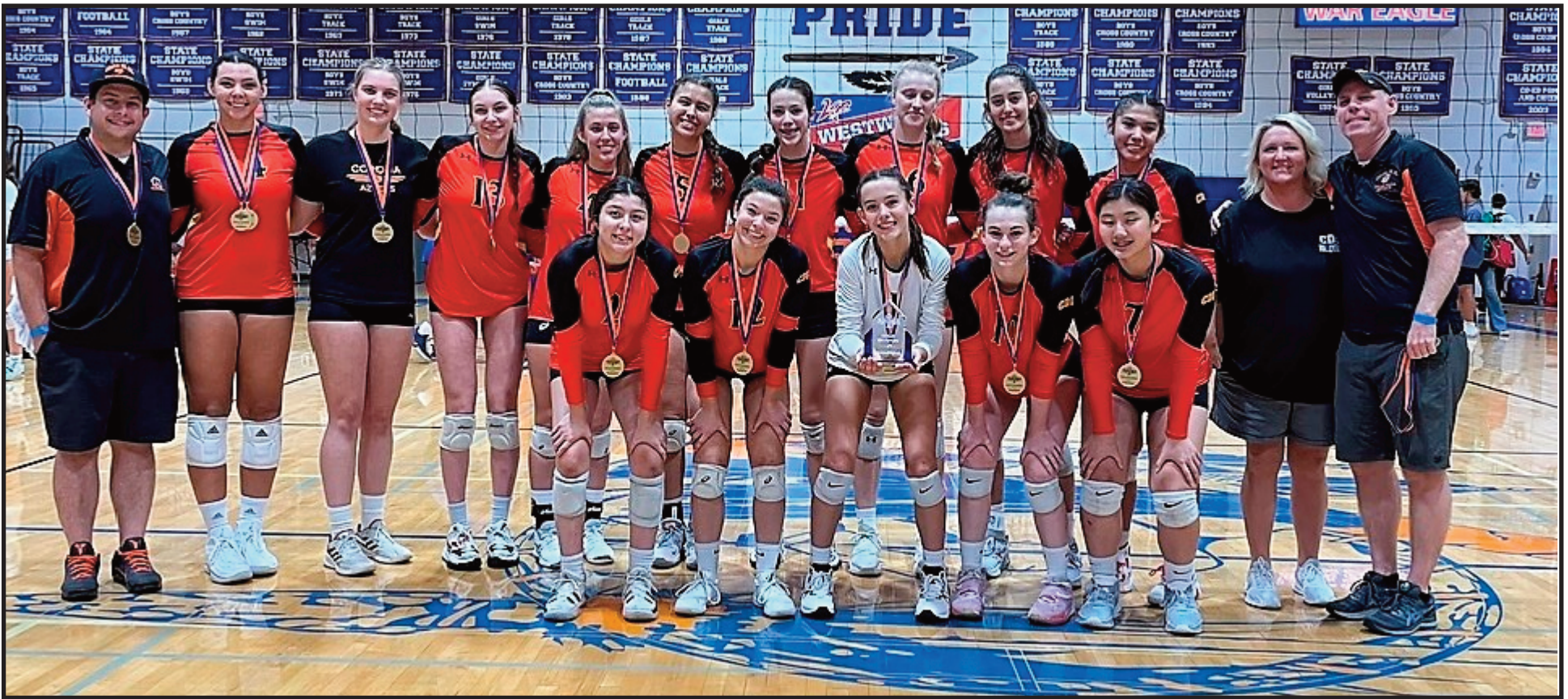
Corona Football

Corona defeated Perry High School, 21-13, at Perry on Sept. 16, to go up 2-1 for the season.

The Aztecs started strong scoring two touchdowns in the first quarter to go up 14-0 and never looked back.

The first touchdown was during their first possession of the game with a pass from junior quarterback **Connor Ackerley** and the second was a rushing touchdown by senior running back **Jovin Gomez** putting Corona up 14-0 at the end of the first quarter.

Perry scored a rushing touchdown at the beginning of the second quarter after the Pumas intercepted an Aztec pass late in the first quarter.



Front row, from left: Emma Uribe, Erin Clark, Julia Owens, Avery Lim. Back row: Geoff Horewitch, Kierstyn Barton, Georgia Lee, Ella Lomigora, Stacy Noble, Ben Maxfield. Missing: Kentra Harrell. Photo by Mirela Lomigora

Their two-point conversion failed giving the Aztec an eight-point lead at 14-6.

Corona scored a passing touchdown just before the end of the first half after a long pass from Ackerley to **Raiden Vines-Bright** moved the Aztecs to the 32-yard line.

Kicker **Carston Kieffer** made his third point-after-kick to make the score 21-6 heading into half-time.

Perry scored a 35-yard rushing touchdown late in the third quarter to make the score 21-13. The Pumas kept the Aztec scoreless the entire second half but were unable to put up any points themselves resulting in a 21-13 final score.

Up next, the Aztec are scheduled to play a home game against Sunnyslope on Sept. 23 and then at Shadow Ridge in Surprise on Sept. 30.

The Sunnyslope Vikings are 2-1 but have outscored the Aztecs on average more than double per game, 38-15, but Corona's scoreless loss to Chandler, 50-0, had an impact on the average points per game.

The Shadow Ridge Stallions, although 0-3, have shown they can be competitive and score points

while still losing to Shadow Ridge in Las Vegas, 43-24, Mountain Ridge in Glendale, 38-27, and Boulder Creek 34-27.

Both teams could be a challenge for the Aztecs.

Marcos de Niza Football

The Padres have won their first three games of the season big outscoring their opponents 146 to 12.

On Sept. 3, Marcos defeated Vistal Grande in Casa Grande, 41-0. Junior quarterback **Braesen Leon** completed 14 of 24 attempted passes for 198 yards and four touchdowns.

Senior **Juan Lopez** had five receptions for 111 yards and three touchdowns while senior **Mason Stromstad** scored the fourth touchdown on a 10-yard pass. Senior **Damian Gonzalez**, the Padres kicker, scored 11 of the 41 total points on five point-after-kicks and two field goals.

Stromstad tied with senior **Damarques San Agustin** and senior **Xavier Bueno** for the most tackles at eight. Stromstad had one quarterback sack while Lopez and senior **Jireh Watson** each had an interception.

On Sept. 9, the Padres defeated Fountain Hills 42-6, holding the Falcons scoreless in the first half while scoring six touchdowns and all 42 points in that same first half.

Leon completed five out of his six pass attempts scoring two touchdowns for a total of 112 yards. Senior **Jamaal Young** caught four of these six passes for 133 yards and two touchdowns.

The Padres scored three rushing touchdowns on offense and one touchdown by the defense.

Senior **Clinton Hopkins** and junior **Lorenzo Alexander** each scored a rushing touchdown as did Leon while Xavier Bueno recovered a fumble and rushed 25 yards for a touchdown.

Gonzalez scored six point-after-kick points.

On defense, Bueno had the only interception and was the leading tackler with six solo and three assisted tackles for a total of nine tackles. Senior **Marcus Jones** and Stromstad each had a quarterback sack

On Sept. 16, the Padres defeated the Deer Valley Skyhawks, 63-6, on the Skyhawks home field. No statistics were available at print time.



Now going into its 41st year, the Tempe Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee held its annual fundraising event at Tempe AMF lanes with just under 200 ready to roll. Chamber President and CEO Colin Woods said the event covered more than double the target dollars raised. The goal is to aid in veteran employment opportunities and veteran owned and operated businesses, with proceeds going toward scholarships and internships. While there are over 50 businesses that partner with the committee, Penguin Air and Plumbing, Beauty by Andrea hair salon and the Tempe City Council were among those present. 'Bowling's just fun, said Diaz. 'You're able to bowl, you're able to support a good cause, you're able to see great people, and I think that's a no-brainer.

— *Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski*



Bowlers included, from left, Deputy City Manager Keith Burke; Councilmember Arlene Chin; Former Councilmember Robin Arredondo-Savage; Councilmember Doreen Garlid; Chamber President Colin Diaz; Veterans Service Coordinator Abe McCann; Councilmember Randy Keating; and City Council Aide Tonya Gray.





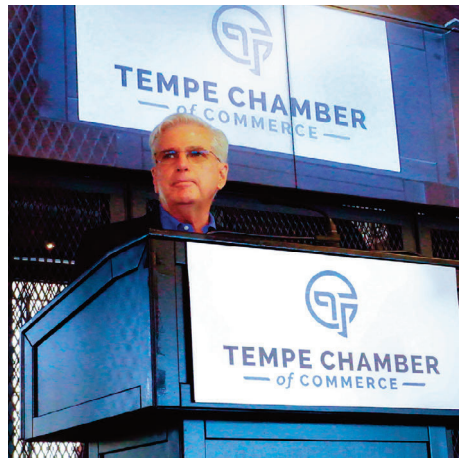
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Pictured: Coach Herm Edwards (left), Colin Diaz (center), Ray Anderson (right)



Tim Healey, Voice of the Sun Devils

Sparks fly at the 2022 Sun Devil Kickoff Luncheon

The Tempe Chamber of Commerce proudly hosted the 2022 ASU Sun Devil Football Kickoff Luncheon presented by San Tan Ford on August 26, 2022. The Luncheon was held at the San Tan Ford Club perched high above the Sun Devil Stadium field.

Amidst a sea of maroon and gold, the event was packed full of fun and special guests as Sun Devil Football builds momentum for the start of Coach Edward's 5th season at the helm. Tim Healey, voice of the Devils, started it off with a spirited round of Q & A with coaches and players. Many of the Sun Devil football rising stars were in attendance filling the room with contagious team spirit and projecting dreams of breakout campaigns in an exciting season to come.

"This event is important because it provides a chance for the business community to get behind the Sun Devil Football team. Their fans go far beyond the ASU students and reaches the entire Valley," said Colin Diaz, ACE, IOM President/CEO of the Tempe Chamber. "It also is the perfect vehicle for the team itself to gain a little swagger and start building confidence because everyone in that room is cheering for their success."

Fans heard passionate words from Head Coach Herm Edwards explaining their process and preparation. Attendees met many of the 2022 team and enjoyed photo opportunities with players, Sparky, the Sun Devil Mascot and ASU spirit squads.

Photos by David John Key



STATE OF THE CITY

Mayor Corey Woods

24th Annual State of the City

In its 24th year, the State of the City provides a valuable opportunity to enjoy a breakfast with civic, business and political leaders of the Valley. This year's State of the City is presented by Edward Jones, and will be held at the Marriott Phoenix Resort Tempe at the Buttes on Friday, December 2.

Mayor Corey Woods will deliver this year's State of the City address, which will highlight key business development initiatives, provide strategic municipal progress updates, address challenges and opportunities, and provide a glimpse into the city's future. The address will be followed by a fireside chat with Tempe Chamber President & CEO Colin Diaz, ACE, IOM.

Tickets: www.tempechamber.org/events

Contact david@tempechamber.org if your organization is interested in sponsoring the event.

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Bipartisan bill will streamline prior authorization, strengthen Medicare Advantage

Commentary by John Skelton

As more and more seniors continue to move to the Grand Canyon state, it has never been more pressing to increase access to affordable, high-quality health care for Arizona seniors and those living with disabilities.

That is why Medicare Advantage plays such a critical role in our health care system; through it, tens of millions of seniors nationwide are able to access vital preventative and wellness services that

help them lower their costs, improve their health care outcomes, and live fuller, more active lives.

The more than 660,000 Arizona seniors and persons with disabilities that rely on Medicare Advantage should be glad to hear that Congress is considering bipartisan legislation that would modernize the program—specifically, the way in which it uses prior authorization to coordinate beneficiaries' care. As someone who works in senior-focused health care, I'm particularly grateful to Senator Kyrsten Sinema for her leadership as one of the lead authors of this bill that will make Medicare Advantage even stronger and more responsive to the needs of the patients it serves.



Arizona seniors can rest easy knowing they have a champion like Senator Sinema to fight for them.

Once passed, the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act will streamline prior authorization for patients and providers alike.

This legislation builds on the work that those of us in the Medicare Advantage community have been putting in to make the program as efficient and effective as possible. Already, Medicare Advantage saves patients nearly \$2,000 in out-of-pocket costs

and premiums when compared to traditional, Fee-For-Service (FFS) Medicare. This bill will simply raise the bar one notch higher when it comes to access, affordability, and quality of coverage as well as care.

Notably, the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act will leverage the latest technological advances—including electronic prior authorization tools—to modernize and streamline the entire prior authorization process, saving beneficiaries and providers both valuable time and money. For the health care community and the communities we serve, these changes will make a world of difference, helping ensure we are connecting patients to the right treatments and services in a timely, efficient manner.

Thanks in large part to Senator Sinema and other Medicare Advantage champions in Congress, the Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act now has been co-sponsored by more than a third of the U.S. Senate.

In order to ensure the Medicare Advantage program remains as strong, effective, and wildly popular as it is today, I urge Senator Sinema's colleagues in both chambers—and on both sides of the aisle—to vote a resounding "yes" on this much-needed legislation.

John Skelton is a former Arizona Cardinals quarterback and the owner of Senior Helpers of Tempe.

We hear you . . .

A copy of the following letter to Corona del Sol Principal Nathan Kleve was emailed to Wrangler News. The letter was lightly edited prior to publication.

At the last home game Sep. 2 enormous amounts of trash were noticed specifically in the student section.

Our family was attending the first home game on Friday night. Our daughter...is a freshman at Corona and performs in the color guard. Our other little blessing is in second grade and had a school project to "help out."

She woke up early on Saturday and wanted to help pick up trash at the stadium on Sep. 3. We brought two small white bags but ended up filling 10 large black bags.

Several of the football players stayed after prac-

tice to help us. We ended up working two and half hours (not to mention the custodian was right there by our side the entire time).

I'm only sorry I do not remember the exceptional gentlemen's names and my camera was blurry from sweating that morning. There was another gentleman who helped for half an hour but had to leave for a prior appointment. The three men...are amazing examples of what I hope my children will be – showing positive examples for their school and community ensuring things are kept nice and clean.

I wanted to give a HUGE shout out to these kind men who helped us. I couldn't believe after practicing all morning they stayed over an hour to pick up all the trash in the bleachers, under bleachers and outside the concession stands.

We truly would value looking into sharing this experience with the Girl Scout troops to help after games; (they) are always looking for ways to help the community.

—Nadine Armstrong, Corona class of 97



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Founder/Publisher: Don Kirkland

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Volunteers help organize contributions to Assistance League of the East Valley for a coming sale.

— Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski

Thrift store proceeds help provide clothing for 10,000+ students

Assistance League volunteers readying plans for major fund-raiser coming up Oct. 22

Assistance League of the East Valley is coming up again on one of its busiest seasons, and Kyrene Corridor residents are reminding neighbors about the group's thrift store and the work it does in the community.

Although the operation serves a wide range of East Valley cities, the store on Alma School Road between Elliot and Warner roads has for many years been a convenient, easy-to-reach destination for residents of South Tempe and West Chandler.

According to spokesperson Julie Graham, the group is 100 percent volunteer-run, mostly by women over 55—with a few in their 90s.

According to Graham, many programs based on money raised from the thrift store, along with membership and grants, goes to helping provide clothing for more than 10,000 students each year, along with other needed support.

One volunteer, Sue Niesz, noted that in comments several years ago, that without paid staff, the group also raises enough money to support 300 homeless teens with essential items. Over 5,000 assault survivor kits with size/gender-specific clothes, along with hygiene supplies, are put together and distributed to hospitals, fire and police stations and more.

Hundreds of individuals are celebrated monthly at a day care facility. Scholarships for college are awarded to approximately 12 students each year. The organization does all this by requesting grants, conducting fundraisers and making money at the thrift shop, which many say is the best of its kind in the East Valley.

Also coming up, said Graham, is a Mad Hatters tea event on Oct. 22 that promises to pay special recognition to events surrounding the current changing of royalty in the United Kingdom.

Information: assistanceleague.org/east-valley/



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Cigna name change is evident at the healthcare provider's site on Baseline Road just east of McClintock Drive in South Tempe.

— Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

Name change corresponds with expanded service level

Cigna Medical now Evernorth Care Group, recognizing link to Valley, nationwide service

Cigna Medical Group has changed its name as part of Cigna's new health services business. In addition, Evernorth Care Group will begin expanding access to its health care services to more people in the community through partnership with additional health plans.

"We are excited to introduce our new name to the community where we have been providing health care services for over 50 years," said Jeff Holt, president and general manager for Evernorth Care Group.

"Improving access to affordable, high quality health care has never been more important. We look forward to serving more people and partnering across Evernorth to offer a wider range of health services, including home care and enhanced digital capabilities, to our patients."

Evernorth Care Group is nationally recognized for high quality care and exceptional service with a 96 percent patient satisfaction rating. The group includes 20 health care centers located across the Valley providing primary, specialty, urgent care and

virtual care, as well as onsite pharmacies, vision and hearing centers, lab services, and an outpatient surgery center.

Patients will continue to receive the same trusted care and service they've come to know from the same doctors and care teams, and will continue to have access to Evernorth Care Group as an in-network provider for Cigna insurance plans.

In celebration, there was a name unveiling ceremony today at the Phoenix Central Multi-Specialty Center and Urgent Care located at 3003 N. 3rd St. in Phoenix. Signage on the 20 health care center buildings will begin to change to Evernorth Care Group later this month.

In support of the health and well-being of the community, Evernorth Care Group will have a school supply and snack drive throughout the month of September at all of its centers.

Employees and patients can donate supplies and snacks that will be provided to students and families at Title 1 schools across the Valley through a partnership with (HELP).

About Evernorth Care Group

Evernorth Care Group, the medical practice division of Cigna HealthCare of Arizona, Inc. is a multi-specialty group practice that is nationally recognized for providing high-quality, personalized primary, specialty, virtual, and urgent care to people through all ages and stages of their health journey.

The group has been caring for generations of individuals and families in Arizona for more than 50 years. With 20 health care centers located throughout metropolitan Phoenix, four urgent care centers and virtual care appointments, care is conveniently available when and where it's needed. The majority of health care centers are equipped with several medical services under one roof, so patients can see their doctor, fill prescriptions and have lab work done all at one location.

Behavioral health services, dermatology, imaging, vision and hearing services are also offered at select locations, as well as an outpatient surgery center.

HOPE

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maintenance and monitoring the area to keep encampments from returning.

Finally, a homeless solutions dashboard was created to enable residents to view the city's work with those experiencing homelessness and in addressing encampments.

It shows current information about reported encampments, progress in addressing them and other data, and can be found at homeless.solutions@tempe.gov

Moving forward

Forrester had long ago lost her birth certificate and Social Security cards, but the HOPE team was able to help her replace both.

The city obtained a housing voucher for her, which helps offset her rent, and also paid her security deposit.

Today, she is getting to know the city better, riding the bus to visit the Tempe History Museum or to play bingo at Pyle Adult Recreation Center. She is meeting and greeting her neighbors, including ASU students about whom Forrester says, "I might remind them of their grandma."

Her apartment is dotted with houseplants and other special touches, a small altar with a Bible and wooden cross, a blue "home sweet home" cup and her crocheting, taken up after 40 years of dormancy.

"I do wonder what would have happened if I didn't have HOPE," Forrester says.

"I'm grateful to God. He put Tempe in my life, and without them, I honestly don't think I would have survived."



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