



# WRANGLER NEWS

OCTOBER 22 - NOVEMBER 4, 2022 • VOL 32, NO 20



The Aztecs proved they're a 'force to be reckoned with' after a statement win over rival Mountain Pointe. Coming up next: Desert Vista. PAGE 14.



For Rodney Hu, Yucca Tap Room is deeper than just a business: It's a promise. Hu plans on turning the place into a dynamic new hub. PAGE 3.



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**HAPPY  
HALLOWEEN**

A frightfully fun foto feature  
by Billy Hardiman for Wrangler News

Pages 22-23

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# A heritage, a promise and a vision for the future

## Landmark '60s center due for huge remake

By Janie Magruder

If the shabby buildings and empty storefronts at Danelle Plaza in South Tempe could talk, they'd share 60 years of vivid stories and rich memories about a cowboy bar-turned-iconic tap room, a cutting-edge music scene, Mom and Pop shops, and a link to JFK.



Janie Magruder

They'd remember a nightclub hosting The Go-Go's and the Meat Puppets near a restaurant owned by the Cervantes family whose stellar generational reputation for mariachi music prompted an invitation to perform for President John F. Kennedy during his visit to Phoenix in 1961.

They'd look back on utility customers paying their bills at the temporary Tempe Municipal Complex by day, and hundreds of teenagers cramming at night into a no-alcohol venue to hear local garage bands inspired by the "British invasion."

And revisit an Italian deli, an appliance repair store named after a guy called Walt and a hip record store.

But as with many strip malls that over the years have been edged out by big box retailers, shopping malls and chain restaurants, Danelle Plaza has fallen on hard times. The 14-parcel on the southwest corner of Mill and Southern avenues,

recognizably the longtime home of Yucca Tap Room, today is mostly vacant.

A group of developers is hoping to breathe new life into the site, however, and the Tempe City Council recently authorized staff to begin negotiations on its redevelopment.

For one of the developers, Rodney Hu, president of Hu Commercial Properties, the project is an extension of a promise he made to his father, the late Peter Hu. From 1972 until his death in 2006, Peter Hu was the proprietor of Yucca Tap Room, Danelle Plaza's anchor.

"He told me before he passed that the big thing is to keep the Yucca Tap Room going," said Hu, a Tempe native, ASU graduate and the plaza's majority property owner.

"But I want to do more than that."

### A plaza for everyone

Built in the 1960s when much of the surrounding land was agricultural but for a small college down the street, Danelle Plaza originally was envisioned as a modern, suburban, freeway-oriented commerce center. A new freeway, the Superstition, was coming in a mile to the south of the plaza, and I-10 was just a few miles to the west.

In 1963, Danelle Plaza was advertised as "the heart of Tempe's new downtown," and a year later, Byron's Town House, a dining/cocktail lounge opened with music from a Hammond organ and free orchids for the ladies. The Tempo Ballroom was launched in 1966, and a country bar, Frank's Yucca Lounge, soon followed.

Tempe operated a temporary City Hall and Municipal Complex at Danelle Plaza from 1969 to 1971 while new government facilities were being built, and myriad small businesses came and went over the years. From auto glass, hair salons and macrame to record stores, tattoo parlors and taxidermy, the center had something for everyone.

Notable restaurants included Byblos Mediterranean Restaurant, open for 36 years until 2020 when it closed due to COVID-19, and Capistrano's Italian Delicatessen, whose owners opened a bakery and eventually moved their enterprise to South Phoenix.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, an eclectic music scene flourished, with punk and new wave coming to The Star System and Merlin's (now Q & Brew, home to reputedly the oldest pool hall in Tempe). Other small live stages popped up around the plaza, and Yucca Tap Room expanded from its country roots to offer local alternative music. The



—Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

opening of Cervantes Mexican Restaurant in 2000 brought live mariachi music to the plaza.

"Like the Cervantes family, there's so much more about Danelle Plaza to know," said Tempe native Rob Moore. "If you build the wrong thing here, you're going to undermine its authenticity."

### Cost pegged at \$60 million

Several efforts by the city of Tempe and various developers to revitalize the well-placed corner have failed. Plans more than 10 years ago extend Tempe's street car south on Mill Avenue to connect to neighborhoods and downtown didn't materialize, leaving the city with a 3-acre parcel at the plaza on which it had intended to build a park-and-ride.

But new plans for a \$50 million, mixed-use project now are in the making, led by Hu, Desert Viking Development and Guina Affiliated Developers.

Their aim is to preserve the site's culture, improve existing mid-century construction and attract a rich array of small businesses, artists and musicians, Hu said.

"There's never been a time before when I felt that everybody was aligned with the city, the developers and the older property owners, to do a big project like this," he said. "We still have a lot of



## Plaza

From Page 3

work to do to get everyone to see eye-to-eye, but I'm hopeful."

The developers want to create spaces for historically and culturally significant food and beverage venues, live performances and community activities and gathering spaces.

They envision a variety of pedestrian-friendly retail space to connect with the surrounding

neighborhoods. And although it's early in the process, the plans propose a mix of affordable residential, perhaps including senior assisted living and workforce housing.

Since taking over Yucca Tap Room in the early 2000s, Hu has expanded it to include Electric Bat Arcade, with a cool tiki bar, and Bao Chow, featuring Asian fusion cuisine. The center of the bar has a stage and dance floor to accommodate live music, comedy acts and other events several nights a week. On the other side are pool tables and shuffleboard, and every kind of beer from Coors Light to Pumpkin Spice Yeti.

Repurposing condemned building spaces and exterior walls as art installations, this community experiment at Danelle Plaza honors the existing local small business, arts and music scene while encouraging the city to respect the plaza's creative energy and heritage within its redevelopment goals for the property.

Hu also negotiated with the city to light and display the works of local artists in the windows of a condemned space south of Yucca Tap Room. And he has provided incubator space for micro businesses to learn and grow.

"What we are trying to do is help give small businesses the opportunity to do something in Tempe that they may not have the ability to do in other cities," he said.

The developers have engaged residents in neighborhoods surrounding Danelle Plaza to obtain their input. One of them is Neil Miller, who lives in the Brentwood-Cavalier neighborhood to the east and is the chair of its association.

"It's been a real, sort of weight around the city's neck," said Miller, an attorney who has lived in Tempe for 30 years. "What I hope is that we don't get a Mill Avenue makeover — a lot of high rises and nothing of interest."

"I like the adaptive reuse idea of not ripping everything out, but of preserving and adapting the

— PLAZA, Page 6

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But more are needed to make nutritious, home-baked bread

## Tempe Community Action Agency hails the work of vol breadmakers

Rise & Shine Bread, a volunteer organization that bakes bread and provides it to Tempe charities that feed the food insecure, is looking for more volunteer bakers.

The organization provides 50 full-sized loaves and 50 individual loaves to Tempe Community Action Agency food distribution center each week.

Bakers are asked to volunteer one to four times per month, using the organization's website to sign up.

Volunteers are provided a standardized recipe for honey oat wheat bread along with bread bags, ties and labels. Each recipe makes three full-sized loaves or 12 mini-loaves.

The website includes videos about the project and an instructional video on how to bake the bread.

Volunteers are asked to purchase their own ingredients and equipment, but there is a fund to defray the cost if a baker needs assistance. Financial donations can be made at [riseshinebread.org](http://riseshinebread.org).

"It's a pleasure to provide nutritious and delicious home-baked bread to those in need," said Rise & Shine founder Andrea White.

"Bakers are making a difference in their communities."

"The response from staff and clients has been great; everyone likes the bread and the mini loaves are perfect for our homeless population," said Tyler Haskell, food pantry manager for Tempe Community Action Agency.

"We use the full-sized loaves in our food boxes, and fresh bread is a special treat."

Modeled after similar projects in other communities, Rise & Shine worked with Rio Salado Café to develop a recipe that includes only bread flour, whole wheat flour, oatmeal, yeast, honey and salt.

The organization has provided more than 2,500 mini-loaves and more than 1,500 full-sized loaves for distribution in the area.

## Plaza

From Page 4

older buildings, like at Melrose on 7th in Phoenix," she said.

"I'd like it to honor the history of Danelle Plaza, Cervantes, the deli, and make it affordable for smaller businesses to be there."

A year ago, "hugely invested and motivated" residents of the surrounding neighborhoods got involved to defeat the plan to build higher-density housing at Danelle Plaza, Miller said. She's optimistic their involvement will make a

difference again this time.

"It takes people in the city standing up and saying, 'This is what we want,'" she said. For Hu, it's both personal and professional. "This is a family legacy project that I want to see through," he said. "When we're all finished, hopefully, the residents of Tempe, artists, people who have supported us throughout the years feel proud, that this is still a place that they can call home."

To read more about the history of Danelle Plaza visit the [danelleproject.org](http://danelleproject.org).

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## Where do we go from here?

Commentary by Don Kirkland

Several weeks ago on these pages we suggested that Wrangler News and other small, community-based newspapers are pondering their future as it relates to the in-depth coverage of local news.

This, we observed, is due to the decline of many big-city dailies, which have for years been the go-to source for news content that relates to government, schools and the wide-ranging, day-to-day events that all of us as citizens need to know about.

What prompted our first series of comments was the report that Gannett, publisher of more than 200 daily newspapers around the country, including the Arizona Republic, had laid off 3 percent of its workforce, causing us and others to wonder how we would—or should—find a way to help fill any resulting void in local coverage.

Last week, as of the latest edition of Editor & Publisher, the nation's premier, 100-plus-year-old journal of newspapering, we learned that an even more dire announcement was made Oct. 13, forecasting yet more imminent budget cuts.

In an email to staff, Gannett CEO Mike Reed told employees that the company faces continuing economic “headwinds” and needs to take immediate action to curtail further losses.

What this portends for the Republic is not entirely clear, and so reaction on our part at this time, if any, would be indeed premature.

No matter what the outcome, however, several worrisome changes appear to be self-evident.

One of those is that local news is vital to our knowledge of the management underpinnings of our communities—to our ability as residents to monitor and react to actions by local governance that we might perceive either as beneficial or contrary to the public good.

Simply stated, we need to know what our public officials are doing, and the only way to track that is through efforts of the trained, diligent news media. Like the Arizona Republic has provided us for many years.

Which brings us to the second of our concerns. Most small, locally owned publications like Wrangler News and others do not have the capacity to pick up and respond to the gargantuan responsibilities of providing full, daily news coverage, should that be the only answer.

What's more, we're not sure this kind of reporting would fit with the interests or needs of those who read community newspapers. Again, like Wrangler News.

In fact, we were discussing a couple of hard-hitting commentaries that have appeared in our paper in recent months, and some among us wondered if such viewpoints, while undeniably valid, are in sync with a newspaper that has always tried to tell the

positive side of what's going on around us.

So what do you think?

Where should we go from here? If in fact there are fewer sources for all of us as neighbors to know the occasional questionable sides of governance, are we telling the stories—all of the stories—that newspapers have accepted as an important part of their historic responsibility?

We have a great staff of dedicated, talented writers and photographers at Wrangler News. We love what we do and look forward to each assignment, each day, each of the thousands of editions we have published every two weeks for 30 or more years.

If you feel it's important that we continue pursuing this labor of love, suggest to the business people you're close to that they consider Wrangler News as part of their marketing budget.

We're going to keep doing it no matter what, but it would be great to have the added resources to do even more. Even better.

Especially, we suppose, if you also tell us that you see value in us picking up some of the heavy lifting that appears likely to be left behind as the traditional news media face economic challenges.

Just a thought for all of us to consider. Send an email to [editor@wranglernews.com](mailto:editor@wranglernews.com). It would be a big help for us to hear your ideas. And, oh yeah...thanks!

— Don Kirkland is the publisher of Wrangler News

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# Need to conserve water remains vital

Commentary by Kevin Hartke

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Over the years, we have made smart investments in infrastructure, diverse water supplies, water reuse, storing water underground and conservation programs. That's why the City is in such good shape as we face serious drought conditions across the state.

The United States Bureau of Reclamation declared a Tier 2 Colorado River Shortage effective 2023. The shortage on the Colorado River does not mean a shortage at your tap. But that doesn't mean our work is done.

I encourage everyone to continue their water

conservation efforts. Because of your commitment over the years, the average household in Chandler is using 20% less water today than it did 25 years ago. Keep up the great work. We have several ways you can continue conserving.



Kevin Hartke

First, did you know you can see how much water you are using in your household by utilizing an online calculation tool on our website? Or that you can get a free water audit conducted by City water experts to find leaks and analyze your water usage? Nationwide, household leaks waste 1 trillion gallons of water annually. Finding those leaks is a great way to conserve water and to save money.

The City of Chandler also offers rebates and incentives for residents for removing grass, installing low water use landscapes at newly constructed homes, or installing a smart controller.

As summer is ending and monsoon season is almost behind us, now is the time to start thinking

about creating a unique landscape that is easy to maintain. You can save water and get rebates for taking part in City programs such as landscape consultations, low water use demonstration gardens and water-wise workshops.

As a reminder, this year is not a good year to plant winter grass. One solution is to learn more about xeriscape landscape installation and receive a rebate. If you're not sure which plants are low water use, we have several resources to help you find the perfect landscape for the Arizona desert.

If you are interested in a little light reading, check out the water conservation brochures for more helpful tips to conserve water in your home and your landscape.

I encourage everyone to continue their water conservation. Your efforts will help ensure a better tomorrow.

Find all water conservation programs at [chandleraz.gov/waterconservation](http://chandleraz.gov/waterconservation).

*Kevin Hartke is the mayor of Chandler.*

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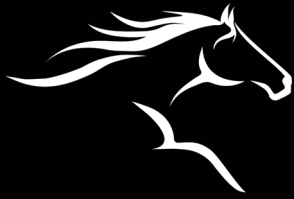
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# SPORTS + MORE

8-PAGE PULL OUT SECTION



**TIPTOEING TO THE TOP OF 6A**

**PHOTO BY BILLY HARDIMAN  
FOR WRANGLER NEWS**

**DETAILS BY ANDREW LWOWSKI ON PAGE 16**



Phoenix Rising games are the way to go with passionate fans, great atmosphere and food.

— Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

## A few words about soccer from someone who confesses it's not his favorite game

By M.V. Moorhead

That the game we call soccer in America, and the rest of the world calls football, is a great sport is beyond serious doubt. Too much of the rest of the world loves it fervently for us to believe that this country's traditional indifference to it means anything but cultural myopia. And even here in the U.S. soccer's popularity has greatly increased in recent years as a couple of generations of suburban kids have grown up playing it, and as Latino culture's influence has broadened here.

But I confess it's not my game. The few times I've watched a minute or two of "futbol" while channel-surfing, the vantage point has seemed to be from a

hovering blimp, and the players looked like insects scurrying around.

It's weird how that works. To the meager extent that I'm a sports fan at all, I'm a baseball fan. I can happily sit and watch pudgy guys throw, bat and catch for hours on the diamond. One friend of mine compares it, as entertainment, to watching paint dry. But somehow to me a baseball game has a narrative; characters, suspense, plot twists.

This is far less true, for me, of football and basketball. But even those games hold more drama and tension than televised soccer. On the other hand, last week I had the opportunity to see the "beautiful game" up close, and...it *still* isn't my game, I'm afraid.

One night this summer, for a work function, I had occasion to attend a game of the Phoenix Rising FC, who just wrapped up a 12-6-16 season this month at their new open-air facility at Wild Horse Pass in Chandler. For the first half I was manning a booth outside the stadium but was able to follow the game on the enormous TV screen that gazes down on the lawn.

I enjoyed the friendly fans that braved the appalling heat; many of them were themselves kicking balls around on the grass, while others relaxed at the picnic tables with treats from the various food vendors. I myself enjoyed a *tripas* taco and a delectable *mulita* from a food truck there, and from another vendor, the most wonderful, refreshing shaved ice I've ever tasted, lime flavored. I wish I had one right now.

During the second half, after packing up the booth, I decided to go in and watch a bit of the game in person, eyeballs on the action. All through the first half, I had heard thunderous, repetitive drumming and chanting coming from inside the park, so constantly that I had wondered if it was a recording.

It wasn't. When I wandered inside, I found a seat behind the goal of the visiting team, the Rio Grande Valley Toros based in Edinburg, Texas.

This area was full of a corps of admirably passionate fans, some shirtless and tatted-up, many carrying drums: snares, bass drums, the works. Many who weren't drumming were chanting. It was pretty hypnotic.

This was late August, and the heat was terrible, which may be why the rest of the bleachers were relatively sparsely populated. But it was a pleasant after-dark setting nonetheless, with a nice view of the casino in the distance.

The stadium is more spare than many of the slick sports venues around the Valley, but I found it a nice place to be.

But as to the action on the "pitch?" I'm afraid it stubbornly refused to become exciting to me, philistine that I am.

It was just two sets of guys, in different colored outfits, running around. Magnificent athletes, no doubt, but still just guys running around.

This was clearly not how it was for the fans around me. The hung on every second of the action, and said things like "Beautiful pass!" and "Hey, ref, what about it?" There were older guys sitting in the rear bleachers, watching quietly and judiciously.

Despite my general confusion, I was glad I had the experience first-hand, and I was pleased that the Phoenix Rising were victorious over the Toros, 2-1.

Tickets start at \$22; the 2023 season starts in March, and runs through mid-October. If you avoid the hotter months, it could be a fun and fairly affordable family night out.

Go to [phxrisingfc.com](http://phxrisingfc.com) for details.



**WINNING SMILES,**

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The lady Aztecs have swept through the regular season. Now, with four games remaining and the number one team in the state with a 31-5 record, coach Ben Maxfield and his girls are looking to look to make a title run.

— *Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski*

# Respect is earned, not given . . . Aztecs earned their respect after a triumphant win over Mt. Pointe

Analysis by Andrew Lwowski

Corona del Sol survived Mountain Pointe, defeating the Pride, 35-28. Now at 5-1, the Aztecs hold the top 6A seed and have the throne in their region.

Corona and Mountain Pointe kicked off the first half of its game in what looked to be a high scoring shootout in the first half, trading scoring drive for scoring drive. Earlier in the season, Connor Ackerley attributed first-year coach Jake Barro for the spark in offense, saying it has become more diverse than years past. That change aided Corona in being able to trade blows with the talented Pride offense.

“Connor Ackerley had a really great game,” Barro said on the Aztecs’ success. “But the offensive line really stepped up tonight; we had some key guys missing and we just plugged some people in. They really made me proud.”

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Quarterback Ackerley and running back Jonathan Kubat led the Aztecs' offense, combining for all five touchdowns. Ackerley threw for 270 yards while finding the endzone once on the ground and twice through the air. Kubat ran for 86 yards while finding the endzone twice.

Then, the Aztecs flexed their muscles and shut down the Pride's explosive offense in the second half. Barro said he and his staff picked up on the Pride's tendencies, allowing for changes. "They're a great football team," he said. "But we saw some things that they were

doing and felt that we could seize the opportunity to try and help us shut them down. That really helped us in the second half."

Led by Trey Fanene and the stout defensive line, the Aztecs controlled the three-headed monster that Mountain Pointe possesses in its backfield. "It feels great," Fanene said. "Our line was run-commit the whole time. We were told hold our gap and we'll be fine." "Aside from the Pride's elite backs, their mobile quarterback was also part of the Aztecs' defensive gameplan. Fanene said exposure to mobile quarterbacks in

weeks leading up to tonight prepared them for sideline-to-sideline coverage.

After overpowering Mountain Pointe, Corona is the team to beat in its region and can control its own destiny for the postseason. Not only do the Aztecs hold the top seed, but they have introduced themselves as a dark horse team for the Open Division. "It's a really high honor," Fanene said. "We were doubted going into this game and nobody really had our backs. So to come out and shut down a team like that and prove that we are the best, we're a force to be reckoned with."

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In one of the most anticipated games of the season, the Aztec community helped guide Corona in its dramatic win over Mt. Pointe. Corona now is in the Open Division discussion.

— *Wrangler News photos*  
by *Billy Hardiman*





## Sports Notebook . . . with Alex Zener

# Aztecs appear headed toward recapturing their pre-Covid magic

See additional reporting by Andrew Lwowski starting on Page 16

Six games into the regular season with a 5-1 overall record, the Aztecs seem to have recaptured some of the magic they had two years ago when they went 8-0 in a shortened season, due to COVID, before losing in the post season to Hamilton.

Corona's only loss so far has been to Chandler in the second game of the season. The Aztecs rebounded after that 50-0 loss to the Wolves to defeat Perry, 21-13; Sunnyslope, 37-9; Shadow Ridge, 45-14; and Mountain Pointe, 35-28.

The Aztecs' 45-14 win against Shadow Ridge may have gotten the team noticed in the media, especially when the passing of junior quarterback **Connor Ackerley** and receptions by sophomore **Raiden Vines-Bright** and junior **Zuri Glenn** made the Maxpreps.com highlight reels for the weekend of Sept. 30.

Ackerley, who completed 15 of 22 passes for a total of 415 yards and six touchdowns against the Stallions, made No. 1 in Maxpreps.com's Longest Passes highlight reel for his 95-yard touchdown pass to Vines-Bright.

Glenn only caught two passes against Shadow Ridge from Ackerley, but both were big catches. His 71-yard touchdown reception from Ackerley made Maxprep.com's No. 1 in the Big Time Touchdown highlight reel. His second reception was an 80-yard touchdown pass.

Vines-Bright also had a second receiving touchdown against the Stallions, while juniors **Crew Swearingen** and **Cameron Guess** each had one receiving touchdown.

The Aztecs moved the ball on the ground over 100 yards against Shadow Ridge, with senior **Jovin Gomez** as the leading rusher with 13 carries for 55 yards.

Senior **Jonathan Kubat** carried the ball only four times but made big yardage averaging almost 11 yards per carry. His longest gain was 35 yards.

Corona's defense was active, holding the Stallions to only two touchdowns, with senior **Aalijah Burn** as the leading tackler and a total of nine tackles, followed by junior **Brandon Holmes** who had four solo and four assisted tackles for a

total of eight.

Three players had seven total tackles, including junior **Isaiah McKay** who led the team in solo tackles with six. Senior **Marcel McKay** had three solo and four assisted tackles, while junior **Elijah McKay** had two solo and five assisted tackles.

Junior **Ty Abella** and Isaiah McKay each had a quarterback sack, while junior **Key'von Thomas** had the only interception. Senior **Myles Larsen** recovered a Shadow Ridge fumble.

Senior kicker **Carston Kieffer** got to show off his kicking ability, scoring a total of nine points, six point-after kicks and one 45-yard field goal, while averaging 63.6 yards in six kickoffs where five of these six resulted in touchbacks.

The Aztecs needed to rely more on their ground game in their 35-28 win against Mountain Pointe on Oct. 14 with three of their five touchdowns scored running the ball.

Kubat was the leading rusher with 23 carries for 86 yards scoring two touchdowns, while Ackerley ran for 35 yards and one touchdown.

Ackerley was able to complete 17 of his 27 attempted passes for a total of 270 yards and two touchdowns.

Glenn caught three of those passes for a total of 87 yards and one touchdown while Swearingen caught six passes for 66 yards and one touchdown.

Senior **Bennett Marsler** was the second leading receiver on the team, catching five passes for a total of 76 yards or an average of 15.2 yards a catch.

Holmes gained 100 yards for the Aztecs on four kickoff returns where he returned one ball for a 33-yard gain while Thomas returned three Mountain Point punts. His longest was for 37 yards.

On defense, Burn led the team in tackles with five solo and six assisted for a total of 11 tackles followed by Gomez with 10 assisted tackles.

Senior **Tristan Shafer** had two solo and six assisted with two tackles for loss and a quarterback sack which resulted in an 18-yard loss.

Junior **CJ Suiter** had seven total tackles while seniors **Ryne Cook**, **Trey Fanene** and **Matt Orthmann** each had six total tackles.

Junior punt kicker **Malcolm Flynn** punted the ball two times against the Pride, averaging 37 yards a punt while Kieffer was five for five on PAT kicks.

With four games left in the regular season, three of those in Corona's 6A Central section, the Aztecs have a good chance to make it into the post season playoffs.

The Aztecs had what looked on paper to be a winnable game against Desert Vista on Oct. 21, but the Thunder will no doubt be motivated by the chance to spoil Corona's chances to make it into the playoffs.

Desert Vista currently has a 1-5 record only defeating Verrado from Buckeye. The Thunder has lost to two teams, Perry and Mountain Pointe, that Corona defeated.

One advantage Corona has is that the game against the Thunder on Oct. 14 was to be a home game as will Oct. 28 against Cesar Chavez.

Cesar Chavez has a current 3-3 record. The only team both the Champions and Aztecs have played is Mesa. Cesar Chavez lost to Mesa on Sept. 16, 47-28, while Corona defeated Mesa, 24-10, the first game of the season on Sept. 2.

The last two games of the regular season will be away games: Nov. 4 at Desert Ridge, a 6A Central section game, and a non-section game at Casteel in Queen Creek on Nov. 10.

The Aztecs will honor their seniors the last home games of the season, Oct. 28.

## Marcos de Niza Football

Marcos de Niza's football team is off to a great start this season with a 6-0 overall record and 1-0 in the 4A Desert Sky section.

Without Saguaro on their schedule, the Padres have outscored their opponents 255-41, defeating Vista Grande 41-0, Fountain Hills 42-6, Deer Valley 63-6, Amphitheater 55-7, Flagstaff 30-12 and Arcadia 24-10.

The Padres have four players who have attempted passes, but junior **Braesen Leon** has the most attempts, completing 54 out of 88 passes for a total of 937 yards and 16 touchdowns.

Junior **Tegan Ligouri-Melendez** has completed six of nine passes for 63 yards and one touchdown.

Senior **Jamaal Young** is the leading receiver on the team with 23 receptions for 405 yards and eight of the 17 touchdowns.

Two other seniors, **Juan Lopez** and **Clinton Hopkins**, have caught 14 passes for over 200 yards each. Lopez has scored five touchdowns and Hopkins has scored three.

The last one of the 17 touchdowns was scored by senior **Mason Stromstad**.

The leading rusher on the team is junior **Lorenzo Alexander** followed by junior **Jamari Johnson**.

Alexander has carried the ball 73 times for a gain of 454 yards and five touchdowns, while Johnson is next with 27 carries for 136 yards and one touchdown.

Altogether the Padres have scored 11 rushing touchdowns. Quarterback Leon has scored three rushing touchdowns himself while Hopkins and Ligouri-Melendez have scored one each.

On defense, the Padres have four players who average over six tackles per game, including senior **Xavier Bueno** who averages over eight tackles a game followed by Stromstad with seven tackles per game, seniors **Damian Gonzalez** and **Marcus Jones** with over six tackles each per game.

Jones leads the team in quarterback sacks with four followed by Stromstad with two and seniors **Davien Henry**, **Luis Pichardo**, **Paul Bueno** and **Jacob Armenta** with one each.

The defense has come up with eight interceptions in five games. Senior **Paul Garcia** is the leader with three interceptions in the four games he has played gaining an average of 15.7 yards per interception.

Bueno has two interceptions while junior **Pat Villa**, senior **Jireh Watson**, and Lopez each have one interception.

On special teams, senior **Damian Gonzalez** has been busy kicking the ball off 38 times in the first five games for 2091 yards or an average of 55 yards per kickoff where 15 times his kicks have resulted in touchbacks.

Gonzalez has hit 29 of his 30 attempted PAT's and hit four out of four field goal attempts to score a total of 41 points for the Padres.

Gonzalez was selected the Special Teams Player of the Game in the Padres win over Amphitheater on Sept. 23 when he contributed 13 points out of

the 49 total points when he made seven PATs and two out of his two field goal attempts.

The Padres have been so dominant on offense that the punt kicker, Ligouri-Melendez, has only had to punt the ball 10 times. His longest punt was 52 yards, and his average was 38.4 yards.

The Padres have four games left to continue their quest to make it into the 4A playoffs.

Up next was Marcos' home game Oct. 21 against Combs, a team in the same 4A Desert Sky section.

Combs, from San Tan Valley, is on a three-game winning streak, having barely defeated Bradshaw Mountain, 36-34, then Maricopa 49-23 and most recently Benjamin Franklin, 54-23.

On Oct. 28, the Padres are scheduled to play at Poston Butte, another San Tan Valley foe. The Broncos are currently 4-2 but they are a non-section opponent so losing to Poston Butte will not have the same impact on the Padres' ranking for the playoffs as a team in the same 4A section.

Marcos will play a 4A Desert Sky team at Seton Catholic on Nov. 4 and then finish the regular season at home for senior night against another team in the same section, Arizona College Prep, on Nov. 10.

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## BE-WITCHED

As if our lives weren't scary enough these days, along comes photographer Billy Hardiman to throw a little extra fright into our lives with his travels around local neighborhoods in search of Halloween early-birds. But the search turned into more fun than fright, as evidenced by this collection of front-yard creativity, designed to capture some obviously not-out-of-the-box artistry, ranging from a glowering witch to a bunch of oddball characters scared up out of what must have been the depths of deranged minds.

Or just plain good humor. You can be the judge.





# DIVERSIONS



## Angela Lansbury: Columnist M.V. Moorhead shares his memories



**O**ur dog Othello was a fan of Angela Lansbury. My mother-in-law would often dogsit him, and she, like many people of her generation, was a devoted viewer of *Murder, She Wrote*, Lansbury's series that ran from 1984 to 1996 on CBS, and for decades thereafter in syndication.

So she and Othello would sit happily on the couch together and enjoy the adventures of mystery novelist and small-town sleuth Jessica Fletcher.

This is how many people will remember Lansbury. But her remarkable career is far from defined by the hugely successful *Murder, She Wrote*.

Sometimes the death of a famous person who has attained great age can be oddly more startling than that of a younger celebrity.

This was the case, for me, with Lansbury, who passed on Oct. 11 at 96. She was around so long, and so vitally, that she had become almost a symbol of geriatric health, agency and relevancy. She was on *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit* in 2005, and was still acting as recently as *Mary Poppins Returns* in 2018; reportedly she has a cameo as herself in the upcoming *Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery*. It

seemed like she might outlive us all.

A native of London, Lansbury came to the U.S. in her teens when her family fled the Blitz. She studied at the American Theatre Wing, then made her movie debut, at the age of 17, in support of Ingrid Bergman and Charles Boyer in 1944's *Gaslight*. Her role as a shifty maid in that film got her the first of three Oscar nominations.

The second came a year later, when she played Sybil Vane in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

Many other film and television roles followed, but in the '60s and '70s Lansbury ascended to legendary stardom on the Broadway stage, with leads in productions of *Mame*, *Gypsy*, *Sweeney*

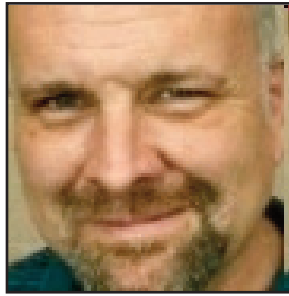


Todd and others.

She won a total of six Tony Awards, from eight nominations. In the '90s, she provided the voice of Mrs. Potts in Disney's animated *Beauty and the Beast*, probably the role by which younger audiences know her the best, and sweetly sang the title song.

It's a great, impressive career by any standard. But none of the above achievements are what I think of first when I think of Angela Lansbury. No, for me her most memorable role is the one that brought her a third Oscar nomination, in one of my top all-time favorite movies: that of Eleanor Iselin, mother of poor Laurence Harvey's hapless brainwashed Raymond Shaw in John Frankenheimer's 1962 political thriller *The Manchurian Candidate*.

Lansbury's Eleanor is the true power behind the title character, buffonish McCarthy-esque Red-baiting Senator Johnny Iselin (James Gregory), and she's more than willing to conspire with Communists and to



M.V. Moorhead

sacrifice her son Raymond's mind and heart to steer Johnny to the White House. Her performance is hard-edged and scary and despicable, but also strong, intelligent and witty, with a touch of lechery toward her husband and an unsavory Oedipal undercurrent toward her son.

It's strange to think that the same Angela Lansbury who played Jessica Fletcher and Mrs. Potts could also have created one of the best villains in American movies.

But watch *The Manchurian Candidate* and you'll see the iron behind the sweetness.

*M.V. Moorhead, a onetime New Times film columnist, writes regularly for Wrangler News*



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## Tempe VFW Auxiliary readying campaign for holiday gifts to service members overseas

As the holidays are approaching, those at the Tempe VFW Auxiliary are collecting donations of items and money to send to community members overseas.

The VFW Auxiliary has a paypal ([paypal.me/3632vfwwaux](https://paypal.me/3632vfwwaux)) and Amazon wishlist, [a.co/byQfOpB](https://www.amazon.com/s?ref=ast_seller), with items that will be packed and shipped in November so they are received during the holidays.

Not only are hygiene products packed and shipped, but so are cards from local elementary schools thanking those for their service.

“Our goal each year has been 100 boxes to ship to our military that are overseas,” Amy Bennett, who helps run the annual event, said.

“We’ve sent to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany—any place where our military are overseas.

“We collect addresses that we know are from

Tempe or the surrounding area. We love to send boxes to people we know in our community.”

On Nov. 12, the Tempe VFW post will host a boxing party that includes music, food and a fun atmosphere while putting the care packages together.

However, this year, the Tempe VFW Auxiliary is short on donations and is calling for your help to support our troops during this time of the year.

To donate or contribute, please see the aforementioned donation links or reach out to any 3632 VFW Auxiliary members for details.





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# Cooler days signal return of migratory birds

*A special report by Sally Mesarosh*

**Y**ou don't have to be an expert birder to take pride in the fact that Arizona tops the list of bird diversity in the United States, second only to states with a coastline, specifically California, Florida and Texas. Our state is an incredible place to see Gilded Flickers, Great Horned Owls, Egrets, Great Blue Herons, Vermilion Flycatchers and even Northern Cardinals.

And, as summer temperatures begin to decline, the bird migration to Arizona will soon begin, bringing birds that travel southward for the winter. Additionally, neotropical migrants that migrate to Arizona from South and Central America (Tanagers, Orioles, Warblers, and others) will depart.

We reached out to experts at Audubon Southwest to learn more about Arizona birds and Important Bird Areas in our state.

Steven Prager, Outreach Biologist, and Corey Lycopulus, Senior Education Coordinator, shared the following insights with us.

## Migration

Migration seasons, both in the fall and spring, are among the most exciting times to be a birder. As the season changes, pay special attention to open water and the adjacent shoreline, even in your local neighborhood parks.

Soon, some of our winter residents like Northern Pintail and Long-billed Dowitcher will abound.

## Important bird area designation

IBAs are significant because they conserve areas that are vital to birds and other biodiversity. The locations of IBA's are data-driven using data compiled from formal surveys and community science efforts. and it is unlikely new sites will be designated in the future.

Two important bird areas in the Phoenix-Metro area are the Lower Salt and Gila Rivers Ecosystem IBA in Avondale and the Gilbert Riparian Preserves IBA in Gilbert.

IBAs can be designated for containing large swaths of unique habitat like our Sonoran Desert, or for supporting populations of birds of conservation concern, like Abert's Towhee or Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, or they could be designated for their value to education and avian science, like Boyce Thompson Arboretum IBA.

## Local Bird Spots close to Tempe and Chandler that are great for birders but not necessarily IBAs

1. Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area (home of the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center)
2. Riparian Preserve at Gilbert Water Ranch (Gilbert Riparian Preserves IBA)
3. Tres Rios Wetlands (Lower Salt and Gila Rivers Ecosystem IBA)
4. Tempe Town Lake
5. Cave Creek Ecosystem IBA
6. Lower Salt River (Salt and Verde Rivers Riparian Ecosystem IBA)

## How Tempe and Chandler residents can support these efforts

To maintain Arizona's IBAs, the IBA Program depends on people who are willing to visit the sites, count the birds, and report their data. This helps the program keep an eye on the sites, draws attention to potential problems, and informs their conservation and advocacy efforts. Sightings can be The lists are shared with Tucson Audubon, a partner organization that helps manage the Arizona IBA program, for inclusion in future analysis.

The Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center has an upcoming plant sale taking place on Saturday, October 8th to kick off Urban Migratory Bird Day. Planting native plants in your garden at home or community is an easy and impactful way to help birds by providing sources of food and shelter. The center also hosts Conservation Workdays to take a hands-on approach to habitat conservation, or residents can always donate to support the efforts. For more information regarding upcoming events, please email .

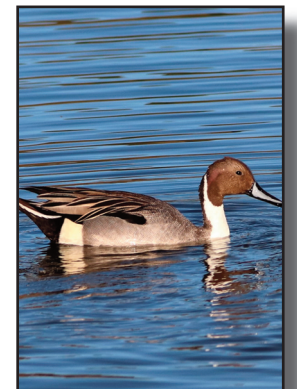
## Tips to make a bird-friendly sanctuary in your own yard

Inviting birds to your outdoor spaces is as easy as providing resources and reducing hazards. Native plants, or plants historically present in our region, are the single best resource to provide birds, as well as save resources such as water and combat climate change. Locally native plants are filled with nutritious insects, berries, nectar and seed giving birds the vital food and refuge they need to thrive. There are six easy steps to create and maintain a bird-friendly sanctuary in your backyard:

- Select a site that's practical to convert into a garden and allows room to expand.
- Plant in the spring or fall, and on cooler days.
- Prepare your garden ahead of time.
- Plan for a variety of shapes, sizes and kinds of plants to give vertical structure to your garden.
- Steward your native plant garden with tender loving care.
- Focus on plants that support high variety and quantity of bird food.

We live in an incredible place to bird, so go ahead, get out there and visit your local IBAs!

Photos, clockwise from upper right: Dowitcher, Northern Pintail, Northern Cardinal, Osprey, Burrowing Owl





## Your Business Advantage

*We serve as the voice of business, a catalyst for economic growth, and a champion for a strong community.*



### Tempe Chamber Candidate Endorsements for the November 2022 General Elections

The Tempe Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, through interviews and analysis, voted to endorse 5 candidates running in the November 2022 general election at their monthly board meeting. The endorsement is a declaration by the Chamber that these candidates understand the interests of the Tempe business community and, if elected will champion policies supportive of economic and community development.



Melody Hernandez  
State Representative District 8



Roxana Holzapfel  
State Senate District 8



Terry Rowe  
State Representative District 12



Stacey Travers  
State Representative District 12



David Richardson  
State Senate District 12

"We are fortunate to have had close working relationships with our elected officials in the past. It is important that we support those that understand how policies in pending legislation may impact the Tempe business ecosystem and community," said the President/CEO of the Tempe Chamber, Colin Diaz, ACE, IOM. "As the voice of business in Tempe, we intend for our Chamber to expand its efforts to promote a positive business environment through the endorsement of candidates who support the growth and success of Tempe businesses."



### Tempe Leadership Welcomes Class XXXVIII

Tempe Leadership is a program of the Tempe Chamber of Commerce Foundation, and more than 700 diverse, dedicated individuals have participated in Tempe Leadership since its inception in 1985. Tempe Leadership brings together community-minded individuals in the community to engage and challenge one another, learn more about the ins and outs of Tempe, and most importantly, make a real difference in our community.

The new class will attend bi-weekly program days, design and complete a class project to benefit the local community and grow as individual leaders during the nine-month program. Learn more about Tempe Leadership at [www.tempeleadership.org](http://www.tempeleadership.org)

Pictured: (Bottom Row - Left to Right) Becky Owens, Gina Chacon, Melissa Harlan, Andrea Vasile, Michael Johnson (Middle Row) Joe Forte, Dani Godreau, Dusty Snow, Gabe Hagen (Top Row) Abel Gunn, Christopher Morley

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE TEMPE CHAMBER: [WWW.TEMPECHAMBER.ORG](http://WWW.TEMPECHAMBER.ORG)**



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Dear South Tempe Neighbor,

We're writing you because there are 82 homes for sale in the 85284 and 85283 Zip codes. It's a shockingly low number since last year there were less than 200 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, non contingent 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

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