



**WRANGLER
NEWS**

**MAY 6 - 19, 2023
VOL 33, NO 8**

**MUSIC TO
LIGHT UP
THE NIGHT**

Page 12

Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

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FIND NEW ROADS™



Omni hotel opening adds dimension to Tempe's appeal as destination city

Coyotes OK could boost visitor count even higher

Airport ease of access, likely approval of a new professional hockey entertainment district, and and what might be described as a visitor checklist of dream-come-true lodging offerings were happily described for celebrants at the opening of Tempe's newest hotel, the \$125 million Omni at ASU. On hand for the occasion were Mayor Corey Woods, ASU President Michael Crow, hotel execs and 100 or so guests eager to welcome the addition to an already bustling Tempe downtown.

Only steps from the ASU campus, the new upscale lodging super-star features 330 guest rooms, 11 suites, four dining outlets, a massive pool deck, retail and nearly 36,000 square feet of flexible indoor and outdoor meeting spaces on the southeast corner of University Drive and Mill Avenue, home to one of the area's busiest intersections.

A 9 a.m. ribbon-cutting ceremony previewed the occasion, just days ahead of the official opening that took place April 27, heralding yet another addition to the city's already reputed favor as a visitor destination. In addition to local officials, Omni Hotels & Resorts Chairman Peter Strebel and General Manager Todd Gagnon were on hand to welcome a who's-who of grand-opening guests.



Top, from left: ASU President Dr. Michael Crow, Mayor Corey Woods, Omni execs Peter Strebel and Todd Gagnon. Above: Woods speaks to media after ceremonial ribbon cutting. — Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski

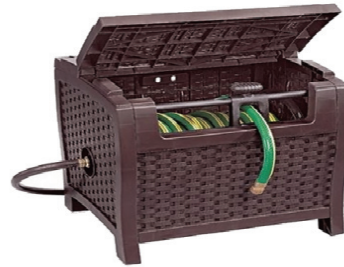
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Tempe-based Solari approaches mental health with kindness, compassion

How the nonprofit is providing support and resources for people suffering from a crisis

By Meghann Sepulveda

You are not alone. Those four words can have a powerful and profound impact on someone experiencing a mental health crisis.

Did you know that hundreds of trained professionals are standing by 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to not only to share those encouraging four words, but to also listen, provide resources, and offer support?

If you're amid a crisis of any kind, don't hesitate to call 988, the national suicide and crisis lifeline, staffed by Solari Crisis & Human Services, because

help is available.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month

This month, organizations around the country are teaming up to raise awareness around mental health. More conversations are necessary to continue to educate the public and advocate for policies that support those with mental illnesses and their loved ones.

Research shows that a staggering 1 in 5 adults experience mental illness each year, but therapy, medication, and self-care can make a difference.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is utilizing the month of May to help people identify the signs and symptoms of mental illness, explain the different mental health conditions, and offer treatment and support.

Local crisis response network

Here in Arizona, Solari is trying to eliminate the stigma associated with mental health and encourage those in need of mental health support to reach out.

And the need is evident.

The organization received more than 38,000 calls statewide just in the last 30 days from individuals experiencing a mental health crisis including self-harm or suicide ideation, anxiety, substance abuse, depression, and/or domestic

violence.

"We always have someone standing by to answer calls," said Laboraex Abeita, manager of marketing and communications at Solari. "All calls are free, and individuals can remain completely anonymous."

In addition to the hotline, people can text 4HOPE or access the crisis chat function on Solari's website.

"It's so important for people to know that they don't have to suffer alone, and help is available," Abeita added.

Not only does Solari facilitate calls, texts and chats, they also operate a mobile crisis team which can be dispatched if someone requires urgent intervention.

"Sometimes an individual needs to talk to someone in person or would like to be transported to a safe place," Abeita said. "We have the resources available."

Abeita said that Solari has seen an increase in the mobile team dispatch volume. Their public crisis dashboard indicates there have been between 4,000 and 5,000 calls for the mobile team to be dispatched during the last six months.

Partnering with First Responders and the City of Tempe

In 2022, Solari launched a partnership with

— Please turn to Page 16

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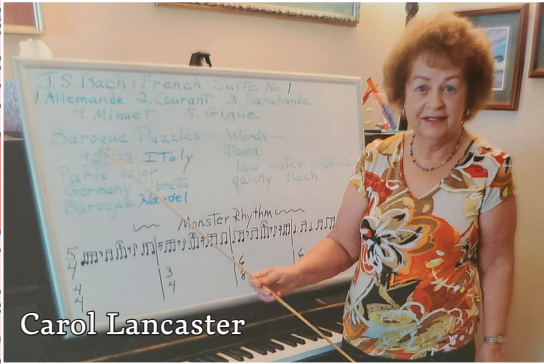
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Arts and culture are thriving in Tempe

By Berdetta Hodge

As a lifelong Tempe resident and mother to two boys, arts and culture hold a special place in my life. Both my sons were musicians at McClintock High School. My family and I loved visiting exhibits at Tempe Public Library, Tempe History Museum and the Gallery at Tempe Center for the Arts. We were grateful that art held such an esteemed place in our city. The creativity exhibited by our fellow Tempe residents awed us.

While serving on Tempe City Council for the last year, I have learned more about the importance of art in all its forms in Tempe. Residents truly treasure it.

This year, as winter turned to spring, I visited numerous celebrations centered around art and music across Tempe. Organized by the Community Arts team, these events, known as "Arts in The Parks," bring families, friends and neighbors together to connect with one another, participate in outdoor activities, listen to local musicians, paint and even tie dye shirts!

The smiles I see and the laughter I hear fill my heart with joy. There have been more than 20 events over the last several months. Each has been unique. At one Arts in the Parks celebration, a hula dancer dazzled attendees with her dexterity. At another gathering, a local band, The Psychedelephants, soothed us with their harmonious melodies as we came together at Indian Bend Park beneath a setting desert sun. These are the memories I cherish and reflect on during my daily work serving Tempeans.

In March, a total of 115 Tempe Union High School District students displayed ceramics, paintings, sculptures and other works of art at Tempe Center for the Arts. Hundreds of Tempe residents came together to



laud these young art aficionados. A few weeks later, the Spring Tempe Festival of the Arts brought thousands of visitors from across the United States to Downtown Tempe over the

course of several days. There were more than 300 artist booths along Mill Avenue. What other city goes to such lengths to embrace artists of all ages and backgrounds?

I'd also like to draw attention to public art, both temporary and permanent, that exists across our city. Every year, Tempe Public Art works alongside other city departments to install art along our roadways, parks, trails and paths, in front of city buildings and even at bus shelters!

At a recent Council Meeting, our Community Services Department presented plans to install art on a non-descript (and rather boring) underpass along Mill Avenue.

I can't wait to see what will be unveiled next year. Also, in 1991, our leaders adopted a groundbreaking Art in Private Development Ordinance. For over three decades, this measure has promoted the development of nearly 100 diverse, privately-owned artworks in Tempe. Check out an interactive map at tempe.gov/PublicArt.

Arts and culture in Tempe enrich our lives and enhance the city's natural beauty.

Let's continue to increase their visibility and accessibility so that all may benefit.

Please feel free to connect with me any time with questions or comments at berdetta_hodge@tempe.gov or 480-350-8748.

— Berdetta Hodge is a member of the Tempe City Council

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Showering new moms with love ... and diapers

By Janie Magruder

This Mother's Day, Tempe and Chandler families have opened their hearts and wallets to help new moms and families in need welcome little ones into their homes.

A lengthy list of baby items, collected by them for the annual community baby shower project of Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSS-SW), reads like a modified version of "The Twelve Days of Christmas":

Twelve noisy rattles, 10 cuddly blankets, six baby books, five diaper creams, four soothing lotions, one pair of booties and 25 hand-knit caps — plus 25 Onesies, umpteen boxes of wipes and other items donated by Desert Cross Lutheran Church in Tempe.

An additional 8,000 disposable diapers were brought to school in April by students at St. Mary-Basha Catholic School in Chandler for delivery at four baby showers this month at LSS-SW's Family Resource Centers in Mesa and Phoenix. An outpouring of donations made it possible for the nonprofit to provide gifts to 60 families, from cribs, strollers and car seats to daily necessities.

One of the core tenets of our faith is social justice, so we do drives every month — socks for people experiencing homelessness, food drives — so this just fit with our culture," said Caitlin Gonzales, whose children, Cesare, a fourth grader, and Vittorio, a first grader, attend St. Mary-Basha.

There, 18 classrooms of kindergartners through eighth graders brought in scores of boxes of diapers during a 10-day campaign. The deal was sweetened with the prize of a "free dress day" to the class donating the most.

"Because our kids wear uniforms, that's a big deal," said Gonzales of the no-uniform prize.

More importantly, perhaps, is the opportunity for children to think about people with fewer advantages than they and then to act to help.



St. Mary Basha's students joined in efforts to provide needed items for new moms.

"It's important to have kids begin to understand that not all paths start at the same starting line," Gonzales said. "As humans, it's up to us to help those in need, and to realize the impact of a lot of small actions, that they can build up to big impacts."

The LSS-SW baby shower guests are new parents expecting their first child, those whose babies are under six months old and parents adopting a baby into their family. They may be struggling financially, or far from their home countries and unable to celebrate with family and friends.

"People sometimes don't understand because, when we have a baby, we are given a baby shower and our family and friends give us all these nice things," said Sue Smith, a Chandler resident who organized Desert Cross' drive with fellow church member Sandie Tignor. "But the moms who receive these gifts, they are often isolated because they are far from home, or their families don't have the resources to give them a good start."

The gifts received by families new to the FRCs are just the icing on the cake, Smith said. "It's not just the tangible resources, but the opportunities to develop relationships with other parents, to obtain educational materials, parenting helps," she said. "Some people may think of this event as a one-and-done, but it's really more. It's getting these parents off to a good start, and the ripple effect of that good start — we hope they will become better parents, and that their children will be better parents someday, too."

The baby showers serve as entry points for families to become connected to the FRC and learn myriad free services for children ages birth to 5 and their parents. These range from infant massage workshops, breastfeeding support and developmental screenings to parenting education/coaching and outside resources and referrals.

Despite the challenging COVID-19 pandemic, LSS-SW has hosted community baby showers for moms in need each spring for the past six years. Because the nonprofit's centers were closed during the pandemic, it hosted virtual baby showers and caravan events in which volunteers loaded up their cars and drove to families' homes, stopping outside to deliver gifts and love.

Whether in-person or virtual, the emotions and gratitude run high, said Chandler resident Abril Coronel, LSS-SW's FRC program manager for the Southeast Maricopa Region.

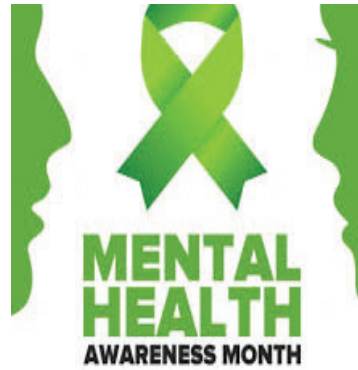
"Our families are so grateful, because they can see how, not just the Family Resource Centers, but churches and communities have come together to support them and to let them know they are not alone," Coronel said. "Even if they don't have family here in this country, the community supports them."

Throughout the year, many volunteer opportunities are available at LSS-SW, including childcare and mentorship.

To learn more, email volunteers@lss-sw.org or call 480-396-3795.

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and Tempe is bringing the community together for a 5k to learn ways to care for our bodies and brains

What: This is a family-friendly 5k walk/run you can complete at your own pace. No racing experience is necessary!



When: Saturday, May 6, 2023, from 8 am to 12pm.

Packet pick-up will begin at 7 a.m.

Race will start at 8:15am

Where: Kiwanis Park - Starting on the North side off Baseline Rd. and Ash Ave.

Cost: FREE!

Hang out after the 5k to learn more about resources available in Tempe schools and the community. Grab a sweet treat or a bite to eat with local vendors! registrations will be allowed on the day of the event, but supplies will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. To maintain safety and cleanliness, there will be NO PETS allowed on the course.

Join us and learn ways to take care of your body and brain!



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COVER STORY

Performances by band members from Corona del Sol, Marcos de Niza, McClintock, Tempe and other area high schools were among the attractions at Music Under the Stars, a free program at Tempe Diablo Stadium. The program also featured members of Tempe Winds and Arizona Wind Symphony.

Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski





FROM OUR PUBLISHER

A departure from our 30-year tradition: VOTE YES

Wow, we have been overwhelmed with letters and commentaries from both sides of the Tempe Entertainment District issue (TED)!

In the past few issues we have devoted at least 10 pages to this ballot measure, not to mention the campaign ads purchased by both sides. No past campaign has demanded this much attention from Wrangler News, nor have we advocated on behalf of a particular viewpoint. This time is different.

We pride ourselves on being a community newspaper, covering your schools, your children, your businesses and your neighborhoods.

In this instance, an important community vote, to approve or not to approve a development agreement with the Arizona Coyotes, is under consideration.

This is a huge decision, one with long-term financial considerations for Tempe.

Tempe City Council unanimously approved this development agreement following their own extensive analysis.

The opposition to this agreement,

Tempe First, has advocated to deny approval for the TED based on strongly held philosophical concerns regarding the developer, the financial tool and economic potential of the deal, and the condition of the property.

Their views were undergirded by an economic analysis offered by a Grand Canyon University study that supported their view that the project would not provide the rosy return on investment suggested by the Coyotes and City's own analysis.

A competing economic analysis by the Seidman Institute of Arizona State University, one that considered all income-producing aspects of the TED and not just the Arena and performance venue, found that eventual revenues from the project might be even greater than suggested by the Coyotes' and City's studies.

Tempe First believes this study is unreliable, "bought and paid for" by Tempe Wins (the Coyotes), an organization they believe caused Glendale to make a huge mistake, one that they don't wish Tempe to repeat.

Yet this is a different team owner and this deal requires the Coyotes to

buy the land, clean it up and pay for their own arena.

We at Wrangler News are persuaded that all four prior mayors of Tempe back to the 1980s believe this deal is in Tempe's best interests and is "the highest and best use" of the property, a landfill created over 60 to 70 years from accumulated debris...30 feet or more deep.

We believe the current City Council, these former mayors and the 11 other former elected officials who stand with them, have sufficient experience and analytic and legal support to concur that this development agreement protects Tempe taxpayers from liability and provides an opportunity for new revenue to our city.

We trust our readers to make their own reasoned decisions in this matter.

Those of us at Wrangler News will be voting Yes on Propositions 301, 302 and 303.

We appreciate all of our readers, on either side, who so passionately followed the debate on this important ballot issue.

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Sunset library to join in celebrating Asian American, Pacific Islander heritage

West Chandler's Sunset branch of the library system is joining a citywide observance during Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month of what officials are calling the city's fastest growing population.

The Ray Road library location will be hosting a Family Storytime, as will each of the other city branches. Each program is designed to be appropriate for all ages that includes an interactive storytime with a special guest reader and a craft station.

The observance is being overseen by Chandler's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division.

Other events celebrating Chandler's Asian community and culture will be held throughout May, including:

- **Saturday, May 20** – 2nd annual Asian American Community Conference at Tumbleweed Rec Center, 745 E. Germann Road, 8-11:30 a.m.

The featured keynote speaker is Lily Chen, R.N., certified by the National League of Nursing as a nursing educator. She is a lecturer at the Department of Nursing, North Carolina Central University, and a Ph.D. student at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

An experienced panel of experts will discuss several important topics impacting the AAPI community and attendees can participate in roundtable discussions with other community members and city leaders. Panelists include Chung Trinh, chief executive officer, Lighthouse Psychiatry; Lan Hoang, operations director, Arizona Asian

American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander for Equity; Tanushree Ghosh Dhall, author/advocate; Dr. Lionel Lee, emergency room physician.

Seating is limited and those wishing to attend must register online at chandleraz.gov/AAPI.

A light breakfast also will be provided.

- **Friday, May 12** – Asian Heritage Family Storytime at Basha Library, 5990 S Val Vista Drive, from 10-10:45 a.m.

- **Tuesday, May 16** – Asian Heritage Family Storytime at Sunset Library, 4930 W. Ray Road, from 9:15-10:15 a.m.

- **Wednesday, May 17** – Asian Heritage Family Storytime at Hamilton Library, 3700 S. Arizona Ave., from 10-10:45 a.m.

- **Thursday, May 18** – Asian Heritage Family Storytime at the Downtown Library, 22 S. Delaware St., from 10-11 a.m.

Chandler library staff also maintain a list of book picks at chandleraz.gov/AAPI.

Those interested in the various library programs and services may contact Adrianna Erickson with the city's DEI Division at 480-782-2224.


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ASU President Dr. Michael Crow
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**OH, AND ONE MORE BONUS:
HAPPILY AFFORDABLE RATES**

Continued from Page 6

police departments across the state, including Tempe Police Department to train officers and 911 operators how to identify and respond to a mental

health crisis.

“Our partnership is critical to providing evolving needs and services to our community,” said Sergeant Hector Encinas, Tempe Police Department. “We have a collaborative effort.”

The two organizations work together to determine how to best handle a crisis.

“We have staff who are physically onsite to advise and educate 911 operators when a potential mental health crisis call comes in,” said Matthew Moody, director, contact center operations and clinical services for Solari. “We are working towards a cultural shift in 911 call centers to help law enforcement determine alternatives to resolving a mental health crisis.”

By directing mental health calls made to 911 to Solari also frees up police resources who could then be dispatched to another emergency.

“From January through March of this year, Tempe Police Department has had 68,881 calls for service and 266 of have been diverted to Solari,” Encinas added.

The City of Tempe has implemented various programs in collaboration with both Tempe Police and Tempe Fire Medical Rescue including CARE 7, a crisis response service that provides support, assistance, and referral throughout healing, and

recovery. A dedicated YouTube channel features stress management techniques, and certified youth specialists visit local schools to provide mental health outreach.

“We have trained 100% of sworn officers on de-escalation techniques,” Encinas explained. “We have a full-time wellness coordinator who has a direct impact on improving the way law enforcement interacts with people facing mental health and addiction challenges. Having these resources also provides increased mental health and substance abuse literacy, empathy, and compassion.”

Additional Community Support

Two other ways Solari is providing resources to Arizona residents is through its community support network to help people in need of food, housing, and mental health resources, and with 2-1-1 Arizona, an information and referral services program staffed with live operators who can connect callers to resources for rental and utility assistance, health care, heat relief, and transportation.

Most Solari employees have personal mental health experience and possess a great deal of empathy and grace.

“Our team is standing by to address the needs of our communities and offer hope,” Abeita said. “You are not alone.” Learn more about Solari and the services available at <https://solari-inc.org/>.



LANDFILL ^{TO} LANDMARK | YES ON

301 ✓

302 ✓

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RETURN YOUR BALLOT ON OR BY MAY 16TH!

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- ✓ \$14B in New Wages in Tempe
- ✓ \$693M in Net Benefits to Tempe
- ✓ \$33M for Tempe Public Safety
- ✓ New Revenues for Social Services, Parks, and Education



This old landfill next to Tempe Town Lake has caught fire and threatens Tempe's environment. It currently generates ZERO revenue for Tempe and would cost taxpayers hundreds of millions to clean-up and remediate.



A YES vote on Props 301, 302, 303 will transform this environmental hazard into the first privately funded entertainment and sports district in Arizona with new housing, shops, restaurants, office space, entertainment, and a permanent home for the Arizona Coyotes, creating jobs and economic opportunity.

A YES vote on Props 301, 302, and 303 will not raise taxes or cost the City. Tempe and its taxpayers are not paying for any development or construction, not guaranteeing any of the bond payments, and property taxes won't increase.

Paid for by Tempe Wins, sponsored by Bluebird Development LLC, with 0% out-of-state contributors. Not authorized by any candidate. Top donors: Bluebird Development LLC and Arizona Hockey Co., LLC

JOIN TEMPE AND COMMUNITY LEADERS IN VOTING YES ON 301, 302 AND 303!

UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY MAYOR WOODS AND THE TEMPE CITY COUNCIL!

- Former Tempe Mayor and Congressman Harry Mitchell
- Former Tempe Mayor Neil Giuliano
- Former Tempe Mayor Hugh Hallman
- Former Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell
- Former Tempe City Councilwoman Pam Goronkin
- Former Tempe City Councilwoman Shanna Ellis
- Former Tempe City Councilwoman Robin Arredondo-Savage
- Former Tempe City Councilwoman Onnie Shekerjian
- Former Tempe City Councilman Joseph Lewis
- Former Tempe City Councilman Dennis Cahill
- Former Tempe City Councilwoman Linda Spears
- Former Tempe City Councilwoman Barbara Carter
- Former Tempe City Councilman Joe Spracale
- Former Tempe City Councilman Hut Hutson
- Former Tempe City Councilman Don Cassano
- Carpenters Union, Arizona Local 1912
- IBEW Local 640
- Painters and Allied Trades DC36
- David Adame, CEO, Chicanos Por La Causa
- Max Gonzales, Chicanos Por La Causa and lifelong Tempe resident
- International Association of Firefighters Local 493
- Bob Ramsey & Jenny Norton – Ramsey Social Justice Foundation and former legislator
- Monica Villalobos, President & CEO, Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Jim Hayden, CEO, Board Developer
- Joel Stern, Neighborhood Association Leader
- Karyn Lathan, Constable
- Jerry McPherson, Director of Economic Development Greater Phoenix Urban League
- Robin S. Reed, President & CEO Black Chamber of Arizona
- Glenn Williamson, Founder and CEO Arizona Canada Business Council
- Judy Aldrich, Community Leader
- Dr. Janie Hydrick, Community Leader
- Michael Monti, Former Owner of Monti's La Casa Vieja
- Nick Bastian, Tempe Business Owner
- Paul Kent, Small Business Owner
- Sharon Doyle, Owner, SS Doyle Enterprises, LLC
- Shereen Lerner, Educator
- Tempe Chamber of Commerce
- John Skelton, Tempe Business Owner former Arizona Cardinals quarterback
- Jim Scussel, co-founder of Four Peaks Brewing Company
- Dick Neuheisel, Past President Tempe Sports Authority
- Dr. Loui Olivas, Emeritus Professor, ASU

LANDFILL ^{TO} LANDMARK | YES ON

301	✓
302	✓
303	✓

ASU Seidman Research Confirms: Millions More For Social Services, Public Safety, And More While Cleaning Up A Polluting Landfill

An independent review conducted by ASU's Seidman Research Institute at W.P. Carey School of Business confirms the Tempe Entertainment District will generate hundreds of millions of dollars for the City of Tempe and residents won't have to pay for it – a first in Arizona's history.

Key findings from the Seidman Research Institute review:

- Both the Hunden and CSL reports underestimated the revenues that would be generated for the City of Tempe by the Tempe Entertainment District.
- The Tempe Entertainment District requires no new tax revenue streams and no general fund obligations for Tempe taxpayers.
- The Coyotes Arena will be the first sports facility in the history of Arizona to pay property taxes.

In the summer of 2022, the Coyotes' development team submitted an economic impact report to the City of Tempe from the firm CSL, which has more than 25 years' experience.

In addition, Hunden Strategic Partners provided the City of Tempe with a third-party analysis of the development project, and a review of the CSL report. The Hunden analysis and review was the basis for the Tempe city staff's decision to recommend the Coyote's proposal, and the basis for Tempe Mayor Corey Woods and the Tempe City Council's decision to approve the project and deal by a unanimous 7-0 vote.

To dispel any doubts, the Coyotes' development arm, Bluebird Development, commissioned an independent peer review of the CSL report, and a review of the Hunden report by the Seidman Research Institute at the ASU W. P. Carey School of Business.

The Seidman review concluded that the CSL report was conservative in key assumptions for new revenue creation and tax generation in Tempe.

Seidman concludes that the average earnings per new job will be 35% higher than CSL report estimates (\$100k per year vs. \$73k per year). Seidman also concludes that the CSL report estimates for new tax revenues are significantly understated.

Just as important, the Seidman review also confirms there are no costs to the City of Tempe and the project is privately funded unlike every other sports facility in Arizona. Notably, the Coyotes' arena would be the first sports venue to pay property taxes in the history of Arizona. All Tempe Entertainment District facilities are exclusively paid for by the developer and users of the facility. Tempe general fund dollars are not being used to pay for any portion of the project,

The Seidman review confirms Tempe general fund dollars are not being used to pay for any portion of the project, nor does the development require the imposition of new taxes - ever.

nor does the development require the imposition of new taxes - ever. The project includes a voluntary surcharge on purchases within the limited boundaries of the new entertainment district. Those who don't shop, eat, or purchase in the district would pay NO surcharge. Revenues from the surcharge would be used exclusively for landfill cleanup and public infrastructure.

"The leading economic researchers at ASU did an extensive financial analysis of the Tempe Entertainment District and a review of the development agreement and concluded that no public dollars will be used to fund this project, while creating new revenues and new jobs in Tempe," said Xavier A. Gutierrez, President and CEO of the Arizona Coyotes. "We took the extra step of an independent review of our own third-party analysis and of the City's third party report to ensure voters have all the facts as they prepare to vote on Propositions 301, 302, and 303," concluded Mr. Gutierrez.

If approved, the Coyotes' development arm would buy the old, unlined, polluting landfill near Tempe Town Lake for \$50 million and clean-up the site. The team would spend more than \$2.1 billion to create the Tempe Sports and Entertainment District, which will include new restaurants and retail, multi-family housing, and a new state-of-the-art arena for the Arizona Coyotes. The cost to Tempe is ZERO. This is the first sports facility in Arizona history to be privately funded. For more information go to www.tempewins.com.

Op-Ed: A Development Proposal From An American Success Story Makes Sense For Tempe And Would Make History For Arizona

By David Adame, President and CEO, Chicanos Por La Causa



Chicanos Por La Causa signed on as an early supporter of Propositions 301, 302, and 303 because the development project provides much-needed jobs and tax revenue for Tempe by turning an old landfill next to Tempe Town Lake into an entertainment district that includes new housing, new retail, nearly 7,000 permanent jobs, and a new sports & entertainment arena.

CPLC also has great faith in the man behind the proposal: Arizona Coyotes Owner Alex Meruelo, the first Latino majority owner in the history of the National Hockey League. The private development group is led by Meruelo, whose parents came from Cuba to the United States seeking a better life. Now Mr. Meruelo is proposing a project that offers Tempe a better quality of life.

For more than 50 years CPLC has been advocating for the rights of the Hispanic community in Arizona and across the U.S. It is inspiring to see the son of immigrants, and a true American success story, step up and propose an unprecedented investment in Tempe that will create a new entertainment district and sports arena, and the significant economic impact that comes with it. This project represents both opportunity for Tempe, and progress for the Latino community.

Meruelo is willing to invest \$2.1 billion in the project, while cleaning up a hazardous landfill, which is currently a \$210 million liability for the City of Tempe. And it won't cost the taxpayers a dime. But beyond the dollars and common sense of the proposal, this project represents a milestone for the Hispanic community. It's a symbol of our community's growth and success, and it proves we have arrived as an economic force in Arizona.

Meruelo is willing to make a smart investment in Tempe because he is a smart businessman with a track record of success. In addition to being the majority owner of the Coyotes, he has major real estate holdings, founded and owns one of the largest Latino-owned banks in the country, and owns one of the largest sushi franchisors in the

He has been in business over 40 years, thriving through multiple economic cycles, all while operating in highly regulated industries.

That is why it is both disappointing and insulting when critics of this project focus not on the merits of the development, but rather personally attack Meruelo, disparaging his character and questioning his business acumen. These attacks do not belong in discourse about the project. But just as he has faith in Tempe with his vision and this project, I have faith in Tempe voters to see such negative attacks for what they are. We instead will focus on the positive and the positive attributes of this project.

Mr. Meruelo is a role model for the community and has proven to be a stabilizing force for the Coyotes. His businesses create jobs and tax dollars. The proposed entertainment district is expected to generate \$215 million in additional tax revenues for the City of Tempe over a 30-year period. That's money that could be used for much-needed social services, parks, and public safety. Tempe's overall net economic gain over 30 years is more than \$680 million. And as a privately funded development, it won't cost taxpayers a dime.

Opponents of this project would have Tempe move backwards, limiting options for jobs and housing. Opponents are not interested in opening doors to create new opportunities. They want to close the books on progress and see Tempe remain a bedroom community rather than thrive as a city with housing and opportunities for all. The progressive leadership at City Hall, however, unanimously voted to send these propositions to the ballot in order for Tempe voters to have the final say on this project and the bold vision of this unique development.

This is a historic opportunity for the City of Tempe and a big step forward for all of Arizona. Please vote YES on Props 301, 302, and 303 on or before May 16.

Learn more at www.TempeWins.com

Coyotes Community Corner: Arizona Coyotes & Foundation Invest \$1.2 Million Into Valley Community



The Arizona Coyotes and Arizona Coyotes Foundation have invested over \$1.2 million into the Valley community during the 2022-23 season. The total includes the Arizona Coyotes Foundation awarding grants to over 50 non-profit organizations that support underserved and under-resourced communities and programs throughout Arizona; providing scholarships to the Arizona Kachinas girls hockey program; holding "Raise the Pack" hockey clinics throughout the state; working with Valley schools as part of the Coyotes Reading Program; and numerous event sponsorships and donations.

"The Arizona Coyotes are committed to being leaders in our community with a mission to use the incredible power of sports to make an impact," said Coyotes President & CEO Xavier A. Gutierrez. "We are very proud to support all of these incredible organizations and programs in Arizona that help so many people in need, help grow our great game, and make a difference in the lives of so many individuals and families."

"Junior Achievement of Arizona is extremely grateful for the support we received from the Arizona Coyotes Foundation," said Eddie Mehta, Development Officer for Junior Achievement of Arizona in Tempe. "With the funding we received, we will be able to provide our critical JA BizTown program to 172 primarily low-income students throughout Arizona. We would not be able to provide our critical financial literacy, workforce readiness, and

entrepreneurship programs to our students without generous partners like the Arizona Coyotes."

"With access to essential personal hygiene items and clothes, Tempe Community Council knows a student is more likely to feel more confident, increase attendance and achieve academic goals thanks to the support from the Arizona Coyotes Foundation," said Octavia Harris, Executive Director of the Tempe Community Council. "We are very grateful for everything they do for us and our programs."

"The Arizona Coyotes Foundation grant to Tempe Community Action Agency's Financial Success Center helps us to assist low-income households in Tempe with preparing for and securing better paying jobs, and navigating the resources they need to meet career and family goals," said Deborah Arteaga, Chief Executive Officer of the Tempe Community Action Agency. "Their volunteer involvement in our Community Garden last month furthers our ability to provide fresh, locally grown produce to our Food Pantry, which reduces food insecurity in our community."

The Arizona Coyotes Foundation supported over 50 non-profit organizations in 2022-23 and funded school-based programs including the Coyotes Reading Program. The Arizona Coyotes supported over 10,000 students through school programming, including 40 Title 1 schools. In addition, Coyotes players, alumni & front office staff logged over 1,000 in person volunteer hours in the community.

In conjunction with the NHL, the NHLPA and the League's Industry Growth Fund, the Coyotes supported the development of youth hockey in the Valley and State by funding hockey programs that introduced the sport to 8,000 boys and girls.

These programs include the Small Frys and Little Leightons girls hockey development programs/Arizona Kachinas girls hockey association; the "Raise the Pack" PE curriculum; and a field trip program that teaches STEM concepts through the game of hockey. The Coyotes also hosted close to 300 free youth hockey clinics in schools and communities across Arizona.

For more information on these programs, please visit

Coyotes Community Corner: Coyotes, Banner Health Providing Free Sports Physicals for Tempe Students

By Patrick Brown, Team Reporter, Arizona Coyotes

It's "Game On" for student athletes in Tempe.

The Arizona Coyotes and Banner Health, Banner Sports Medicine, and the Banner Health Foundation are providing free sports physicals to Tempe Union High School District student athletes as part of Banner's Game On: Youth Athlete Support Fund initiative.

The Coyotes are supporting the events with a \$20,000 grant to the Banner Health Foundation's "Game On" initiative, which will allow students in the Tempe Union High School District to receive required sports physicals and baseline concussion testing.

The first event was on Thursday, April 6 at Marcos de Niza High School, and subsequent events will occur on May 10 and July 21. Students can learn more about the opportunity to participate in Banner's Game On Fund program through their school's athletic department.

For the Coyotes and the Arizona Coyotes Foundation, sponsoring the events directly aligns with one of its key philanthropic pillars of service: Health and Wellness.



TEMPE, AZ, APRIL 6: Banner Health Game On Physicals Event on April 6, 2023 in Tempe, Arizona. (Photo by Isaac Torres/Arizona Coyotes)



"I hope these young people and their families know that we as an organization are here for them," said Coyotes President and CEO Xavier A. Gutierrez. "It starts with that."

The pre-participation exams include basic evaluations like height, weight, blood pressure, assessment of mobility, and a general medicine exam. The ultimate purpose is to assess injuries, illnesses, or other factors that increase an athlete's risk for injury or illness.

The physicals are required by school athletic departments before any students are allowed to participate.

Paperwork alone can cost 60 dollars or more to file with a family physician, and it's one less thing for families and student athletes to worry about.

For the Coyotes, being part of the service offering was an easy call to make.

"We assume the role of being a leader very seriously, and I hope these young people and their families know that," Gutierrez said. "This allows student athletes to be able to sit down with a doctor and be open with them about things that may be going on with both their bodies and with their mental wellness.

"I think it's incredibly important what we're doing today."

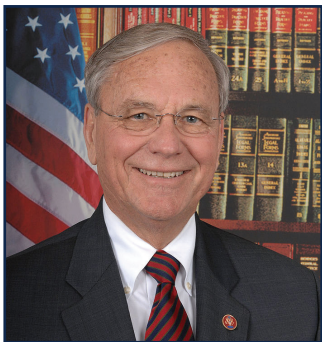
What Trusted Community Leaders are Saying:

YES ON 301, 302 AND 303!



"I'm going to be voting for this. And I think it's a great deal - we're talking about a site that's not generating any revenue right now. And if we have the opportunity to turn it into something that is a local, national and even international draw, and also generate money for much needed Tempe priorities that our residents tell me they need every day, I think that's a win."

- Tempe Mayor Corey Woods



"This project is a win for Tempe. The city ensured that there would be no cost or risk to the city, while also benefitting from the thousands of jobs, hundreds of millions in revenues, and billions in spending this project will bring. This is an important project and one that will have an impact on Tempe's future, and I hope voters join me in voting yes."

- Former Congressman and Tempe Mayor Harry Mitchell



"Voting Yes is a win/win for Tempe. This takes a landfill that generates no revenue for the City and turns it into a landmark that will create thousands of jobs and have billions of economic impact for the city and state."

- Colin Diaz, President & CEO, Tempe Chamber of Commerce



"This project is going to put a lot of our members to work with good paying union jobs, good wages and good benefits. It will open up a lot of doors and a lot of jobs for a lot of people. Please vote YES!"

- Fabian Sandez, President of Carpenters Local Union 1912

LANDFILL ^{TO} LANDMARK | YES ON 301 ✓ 302 ✓ 303 ✓

VOTE YES ON 301, 302 AND 303 AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR WILL:

- ✓ Invest \$2.1 Billion in Tempe
- ✓ Create 6,900 Permanent Jobs and \$14B in Wages
- ✓ Remove 1.5 Million Tons of Hazardous Trash from an Old Landfill

Some materials will be treated and reused, and the rest will be moved to a safe, lined landfill, which is one of the most impactful changes we can make to improve the environment in our community.

Let's Clean-Up a Landfill and Create Economic Opportunity

By Jen Adams, Tempe Resident



Before serving on the Tempe City Council, I had a long career as a City of Tempe employee, including working in the Public Works Department. For ten years I worked down by the landfill the Arizona Coyotes are seeking to remediate with their private dollars and turn into an entertainment district with housing, shops, entertainment, offices, and a new arena.

While there has been much debate about the landfill, I can tell you firsthand working next to it was difficult. I would get headaches and there were times the smell was so bad we would have to move offsite. The landfill was built without modern environmental safeguards and soil samples have found methane, lead and more – all materials that can threaten soil and groundwater if left alone.

The landfill is a literal headache and a fiscal one – it would cost the city too much to remediate on its own and until now, no other developer was willing to do it without taxpayer dollars because of the costs associated with remediation and clean-up.

That's why voting YES on Props 301, 302 and 303 is a win-win for Tempe. It's an opportunity to promote economic and environmental sustainability in our community. The Arizona Coyotes' development team will pay for the cost of an extensive environmental clean-up that includes removing and remediating 1.5 million tons of trash. That trash will be sorted – some materials will be reused, some will be recycled, and the rest will be moved to a safe, modern landfill. In addition to the environmental benefits, our city will also get thousands of permanent, good paying jobs and hundreds of millions in new revenues for critical city services, among other benefits. The kicker? Because it is privately financed – it will never raise taxes in Tempe and there is no risk to the City of Tempe because it's paid for with private dollars. I was proud to work on this deal that protects the citizens of Tempe and protects the environment. I hope you will join me in voting YES on Props 301, 302 and 303.

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Spring sports close out their season for coming playoffs

Corona volleyball

The no.11 ranked Aztecs avenged their loss to the no.12 ranked Desert Vista Thunder earlier in the season with a sweep of their own on senior night. Corona had a gym full of energized fans as they honored 12 seniors before taking the court.

The Aztecs tall front row, led by Jon Seddon, Zachary Jones and Ollie Hinder, made every big block while the defense, led by Luke Vlcek, created scrappy plays to easily overpower and overwhelm Desert Vista.

Four basketball players have joined the volleyball squad, bring a new dynamic for coach Geoff Horewitch. Bo Dolinsek stands at 6-foot-7-inches, Ollie Hinder at 6-foot-10-inches, Zachary Jones at 6-foot-7-inches and Andrej Mesihovic at 6-foot-5-inches.

However, where the team lacks in experience, they make up for in height and athleticism, and the Aztecs have managed to navigate the tough 6A division and secure a playoff spot.

Now, 16-15 and clinching a playoff spot, the No.10 seeded Aztecs will host No.23 Maryville on May 2.

Corona softball

The (13-15) lady Aztecs secured their play-in playoff win over the (9-14) Gilbert Tigers, 11-6, on their home field. Corona, who had lost its previous three matches against Gilbert earlier this season, were able to strike its first win over the Tigers when it mattered the most.

The Aztecs surrendered two runs to the Tigers in the top of the first, but answered right back with five runs of their own in the bottom frame, jumping out to a 5-2 lead. Just as any playoff game goes, it

was a rollercoaster of emotion and energy as the two evenly-matched teams traded leads.

After a four-run third inning, the Tigers were able to take a 6-5 lead, but that was short lived as Corona's bullpen stepped up and shut down the Gilbert offense for the remainder of the game.

Corona brought two home in the fourth inning, then four runs in the sixth for good measure, securing its playoff spot.

The No.14 seeded Aztecs kept their title dreams alive as they upset the No.3 seeded Sunnyslope Vikings, 7-2, in Glendale.

Corona will now face the No.6 seeded Red Mountain Mountain Lions in the second round. The Aztecs have a 1-1 record against Red Mountain this season and will look to break the tie and advance on May 3.

On track for State

The Tempe City Track meet was held at Desert Vista High School April 18-20 with Corona senior Tyler Tisinger leading the Aztecs in the track events, taking home first place in the 800 meters and 1600 meter races. Senior Alexander Lutz also took first place in the 110-meter hurdles.

Tisinger set a personal record time of 1:52.09 in the 800 meters, outrunning the next racer by over three seconds. Tisinger again set a personal record time in the 1600 meter race with a time of 4:19.12 while being challenged most of the way by another Tyler.

Lutz set a personal record time of 14.87 in the 110-meter hurdles, out running second place 0.36 seconds. Lutz finished eighth in the 300-meter hurdles as well.

Corona was senior Gabriel Gonzales who took home third place in the 3200-meter race.

One of Corona's other top performer was

sophomore Raiden Vines-Bright, who recorded a 10.82 100-meter race – setting a personal record.

Senior Miles Larsen set a personal record in the 100 meter race with 11.58, placing 15th while juniors Kambrel Walker and Quinton Bradley took 18th and 19th place, respectively.

Larsen was the the Aztec' top finisher in the 200 meter, placing 12th. She was followed by junior Zuri Glenn.

Larsen's 51.50 time in the 400-meter was his best finish at the Tempe City meet. He finished seventh. He was followed by sophomore Jaiideen Rubi in eighth place, Glenn in 11th place and junior Luke Holly in 14th place.

Rubi finished in sixth place and junior Evan Edwards in eighth place in the 800 meters along with senior Grant Murad in 15th place. Gonzales finished sixth in the 1600-meter race, setting a personal record time of 4:39.68. Edwards also set a personal record time in the 1600-meter with 4:57.37.

Sophomore Henry Yazzie finished in 10th place.

Corona had seven runners in the 3200 meters. Junior Stephen Brown, junior Sean Waters and freshman Jack Blackfeather finished 10th, 11th and 12th while Yazzie came in 14th.

Freshman Elijah Todacheene, Luke Goslin and Ethan Nash, also ran in the 3200-meter race for Corona.

Corona had three teams run in the 4x800 relay. The team with Edwards, Murad, Rubi and Tisinger won first place with a time of 8:26.93.

The team of Blackfeather, Miles Dickens, Charles Hammer and Blake Yosowitz came in fifth place, while the team of Christian Gonzales, Troy Satre, Aidan Weber and Zachary Wiesner finished in sixth

Continued on Page 21

FACING PAGE PHOTOS: Emotions for Corona girls softball were high as they sought to get their first win over Gilbert this season right up to the post season. Steady pitching down the stretch and high caliber offense allowed the Aztecs to seal their win late and hopefully move on toward the state championships.

— Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski





Senior night is always special for athletes, and it gets even better when you sweep your rival. The Aztecs were swinging for the wall – and putting up walls – in their 3-0 win over Desert Vista. Roars from the bench and crowd ignited the Aztecs as they were able to easily take down the Thunder.

— Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski

place. The Aztec 4x400 relay team of Lutz, Larsen, Tisinger and Rubi crossed the finish line in second place with a time of 3:25.02.

Corona had three athletes get top honors in field events, taking second place including junior Jay'Me Lott in the high jump, Glenn in the long jump and Vines-Bright in the triple jump.

Lott cleared 6-00.00 in the high jump event while Glenn jumped 21-05.00 in the long jump. Sophomore Domonick Ruiz took third place with a jump of 21-02.50.

Lutz participated in the long jump event taking fifth place with a 20-7.00 personal record jump.

Vines-Bright set a personal record with 41-00.50 leap in the triple jump. Corona junior Sebastian Martinez Moreno took sixth place and junior Cory Block finished in eighth place in the triple jump.

Senior Atzel Grau-Pavia was sixth in the shot put with a personal best throw of 39-04.00.

Ricardo Carrasco Manzo, Filipe Ma'ake and Aidan Strong participated in shot-put.

Ma'ake was Corona's top finisher in the discus with a throw of 118-10 for seventh place.

Senior Benjamin Martinez set a personal best record javelin throw of 115-08 to take ninth place.

Corona's girls top finisher was senior Ena McMahon, who placed first in the 100 meters and the 100-meter hurdles as well as the long jump.

McMahon set a season record time of 12.22 in the 100 meters and ran the 100-meter hurdles in 14.41.

Junior Reilly Speaks took seventh place and sophomore Sarai Enriquez was ninth in the 100

meters while Speaks was sixth and Enriquez seventh in the 200 meters. Junior Tajanae Hairston came in eighth and junior Anna Maney was ninth in the same race.

Sophomore Jenna Hatton, senior Kelsey Gunning and sophomore Sophia Mehall took sixth, seventh and eighth place respectively in the 100-meter hurdles.

Sophomore Sloan Guess and freshman Addison Stewart had the next best finishes in the track events for Corona.

Guess set a PR time of 11:58.75 to take third in the 3200 meters and Stewart came in third in the 800 meters with a PR time of 2:26.73.

Stewart was third in the 1600 meters with a time of 5:32.18 while Guess was fourth in the same event. Paige Buckley finished in fourth place in the 800 meters with 2:27.83.

Junior Mia Brannon crossed the finish line in eighth place. Junior Maria Gonzales finished in 12th place.

Freshman Aubrianna Horton came in seventh in the 3200 meters while senior Taylor McLane placed 11th.

Buckley was the top finisher in the 400 meters for Corona with 1:02.76, taking fifth. Corona senior Aja Lister in sixth place, Maney in ninth and Speaks in 10th.

The 4x400 relay team of Maney, Enriquez, Speaks and Melanie Lindenstruth placed second and was Corona's best finish.

McMahon had a first-place leap of 18-06.00 in the long jump event while Wyatt took first place in

the triple jump with a leap of 32-08.00.

Junior Paula Hoyos Martinez was second in the triple jump with 32-06.75.

Sophomore Morgan Beatty was third with a jump of 32-03.00.

Freshman Cristina Cooper cleared 10-07.00, taking second in the pole vault while junior Fiona Duffy placed third in the high jump, clearing 4-06.00.

Sophomores Surahya Hashim, Sofia Morales and junior Keira Schulman placed eighth, ninth and 10th respectively.

Morales finished fifth-place in the javelin throw while sophomore Ava Tice took fifth place. Sophomore Summer Reif, senior Andrea Taylor and junior Keira Schulman were seventh, eighth and ninth in the javelin.

Forty-seven schools participated in the Becky Matthews Last Chance Meet.

The Aztecs had one last chance to qualify for one of the top 24 spots in each event to compete at the Division I Championship meet to be held at Red Mountain High School May 4-6.

Each division will have championships that same weekend. The winners from each division will ultimately be merged into the State Championship.

Only 30 athletes will qualify to participate in each event.

The top six in each event from each division championship will automatically qualify to participate in the State Championship.

Athletes who qualified to compete at the State Championship will be announced May 10.



BASKETBALL



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BUSINESS

New name, goals for Carol Royse Realty

The longtime mother-daughter real estate firm of Keller Williams East Valley, launched in 1985 as part of the noted Realty Executives franchise, is now YourHomeSold Guaranteed Realty, still serving the area with Carol Royse and Vikki Middlebrook at the helm.

With a newly revised expansion of the company's long-successful marketing theme that for years has emphasized that the Royse firm guarantees it will buy the listing if it doesn't sell, the company says it provides four major reasons that clients should seek them out when buying or selling a home.

Among them:

- It sells its listings for more money.
- It sells homes faster.
- The listed home is more likely to sell
- Its database has buyers in a waiting mode

Said Royse:

"We're very unique in that we offer a lot of options."

According to Royse, the company moved from Realty Executives to Keller Williams in 2001, with her as the primary guiding influence over the company's planned growth.

Today, notes Royse, the firm employs 39 team members, 10 in administrative roles, the remainder operating in a sales capacity.

In describing the roles of the company's team members, Royse notes that she and daughter Vicki head the luxury-home division, with three generations and eight family members making it a truly family-owned company.

As to the roles of the various team members, Royse notes that son Tim Evans, serves as president of the company; Vicki, a Corona del Sol High School graduate, and her husband Eric oversee the luxury division; and Josh, Jared and Katy are wrapping up their studies for full licensing.

Tracing the firm's history, Royse notes she was a PTA president and a mother of two. Following the death of her husband, she says she needed a source of income to provide for her family, and a friend suggested she become a Realtor. She enrolled in real estate school and a month later was licensed and ready.

Her mission, and that of her team members, remains: "To Elevate Others to Prosper."

She and daughter Vicki can be heard from 2-3 p.m. Sundays on 550 KFYT or any time at www.carolroyse.com

The company is located at 7890 S. Hardy Drive, Suite 106. Phone: 480-605-4778. Email: carol@carolroyse.com.

Nominations open for Don Carlos awards

Tempe Community Council has announced that its 40th annual Don Carlos Humanitarian Awards are open for all nominations.

The awards ceremony is scheduled to be held Sept. 27 at the Salt River Project's Pera Club.

Nominations are focused on those who are looking to have helped change Tempe through volunteer work, humanitarian effort, philanthropic work or commitment to the community.

Awards categories include:

- Don Carlos Humanitarian
- Young Humanitarian
- Volunteer of the Year
- TCC Impact Award
- Philanthropy Award.

Information: www.tempecommunitycouncil.org/don-carlos/

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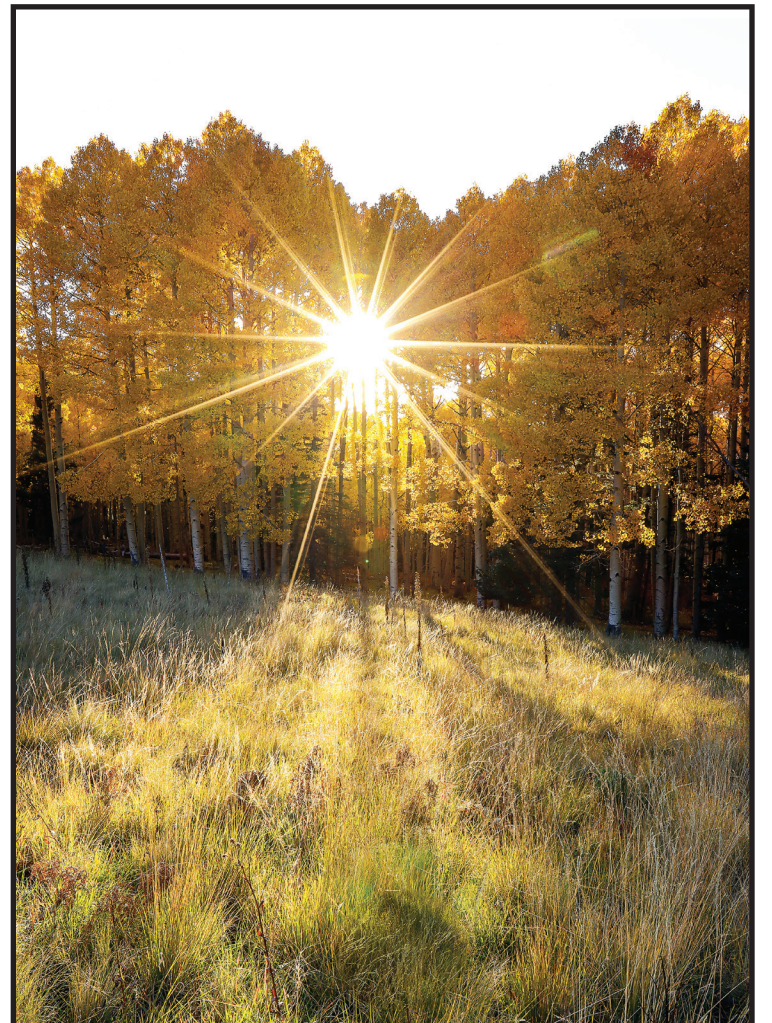
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DIVERSIONS

Film Fare . . .

with M.V. Moorhead

Classic 'Are You There, God' unfolds in 1st film adaptation



It begins with a shot of an adolescent girl, yelling with joy. She's literally a happy camper; we're seeing the summer before our heroine Margaret turns 12, and her life changes, inside and out. She comes home from camp to learn that her family--except for her adored and adoring grandmother--is moving from New York to small-town New Jersey.

She quickly falls in with a new circle of friends, all of whom are anxiously but eagerly awaiting their first periods. The child of a mixed, non-practicing Jewish-Christian marriage, Margaret is so anxious about this milestone that she nonetheless starts talking to God, politely pleading with the Almighty to let her start puberty and "be normal."

For half a century now, Judy Blume's classic, sometimes (absurdly) controversial 1970 coming-of-age novel *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret?* has been almost as much a rite of passage for American girls as the social and biological shifts it dramatizes.

But it's never been a movie before; reportedly Blume never liked a script until this adaptation by Kelly Fremon Craig of *The Edge of Seventeen*, who also directed.

Apparently Blume's instincts are good. The resulting film is a home run, sweet and low-key



yet cumulatively emotional. Abby Ryder Fortson is marvelously un-histrionic and endearing as Margaret; her spot-on line readings suggest the budding phase of a wary but observant and empathetic person. Craig's script slightly fleshes out the character of Margaret's frustrated-painter Mom, and Rachel McAdams gives the character her own hints of uncertainty; Benny Safdie works well as Margaret's good-natured Dad. Kathy Bates is showcased as the jolly Grandma, a fiercely pro-Margaret partisan who is overjoyed when her granddaughter asks to be taken to Temple.

Margaret's friends are a fine ensemble, led by the amusingly impudent Elle Graham as Nancy. Frizz-haloed Aidan Wojtak-Hissong makes an impression as the lawn-mowing Moose Freed; so does Isol Young as the towering Laura Danker, who has gained a reputation on the basis of nothing more than having bloomed early. Echo Kellum seems to have stepped directly out of the '70s as the earnest newbie teacher Mr. Benedict.

This is an example of Craig's best decision: to not update the material.

The movie is set in the year of the book's publication, and the production design and soundtrack invoke 1970 so vividly that it may feel like a flashback to those of us who remember it. The legion of grown-up fans of the book will likely be delighted by this fidelity.

The question, of course, is what the film will mean to audiences Margaret's age. I recently

asked a mom of two daughters if girls are still embarrassed about their periods; she assured me that they are.

But it's hard to say if the novel's candor on that subject is as unusual as it was in 1970.

It should be noted, of course, that menstruation, or even the issues around adolescent crushes and friendships, are far from the only themes here.

A family move that you don't want but are helpless to stop, for instance, is a relatable strife for kids regardless of gender, and when Margaret looks out her bedroom window at her bustling New York neighborhood, Craig makes us feel what a loss this will be.

The story also transcends mere health class manual utility in its treatment of Margaret's religious explorations.

Her gentle, personal, terror-free, open-hearted conversations with God—as in *Whoever is Listening*—are in healthy contrast to the stress and guilt and family conflict she experiences in connection with organized religion. ⁶The movie makes a case for a secular upbringing, even for theists.

Are You There God? It's Me Margaret is rated PG-13 and plays at Harkins Tempe Marketplace, Harkins Chandler Fashion 20, Harkins Arizona Mills 18, AMC Abwatukee 24 and other multiplexes Valleywide.



Rover Elementary School's music theater team put on an impressive production of Willy Wonka Kids. Students and staff worked on the show starting in October. The group put on several performances for family, friends and the school community.

— Photos by Amy Garza

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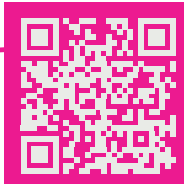
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Zita Johnson: A loving community remembers

Editor's note: Rarely do we see such an outpouring of community sentiment over the passing of one of our longtime residents and friends as that which we received regarding Zita Johnson, who was the subject of a full-page obituary in our March 25 issue. The following correspondence demonstrates the depth of that sentiment from those who knew and loved her. We print these comments with the same degree of respect and sadness.

Zita touched many lives through her community service and we are a much better community because she lived and served among us.

Neil Giuliano, former Mayor of Tempe

Zita Johnson's smile would light up every room she entered. She was known for her passion for helping others, love for her community, and her ability to connect with anyone with whom she interacted. Zita impacted countless lives through her work in the field of education and in numerous charitable causes. I will never forget her guidance and mentorship, and I am thankful I knew Zita. Though she is gone, her legacy endures.

Berdetta Hodge, Tempe City Council, Tempe Union High School Governing Board

Zita Johnson was a mentor and friend to many women in our Tempe community. I met Zita in 2001 during her service on the Human Relations Commission. She supported, encouraged and challenged me through my first years as the City's first Diversity Director in 2002. Zita was confident, hard-working, unafraid to stand up for what she believed in and fiercely loyal. I recall having many conversations about developing a diversity roadmap that created ordinances, policies and practices to a more inclusive and welcoming community. It was through that work on the roadmap that I realized she was actually paving the way for women like me and many others! But while Zita was fiercely passionate about her diversity work, her



Zita Johnson and husband Pen

most endearing characteristics were her warmth, compassion and genuine love for Tempe.

Zita's legacy shaped our community.

Rosa Inchausti, Deputy City Manager, Tempe

Zita was truly one of a kind. Her commitment to her community was vast. Young children benefitted from her commitment to early childhood development. Teenagers benefited from her commitment to high school education. Her involvement with Tempe's Human Relations Commission reflected her commitment to our community at large. But her greatest commitment was to her family and friends. We are all better people for having known her.

Linda Spears, Former Tempe City Councilmember, Prior Don Carlos Awardee

Zita was an amazing mentor to me. My first service on a board was the Tempe Human Relations Commission when I was in my 20s and Zita was Chair. Two years later she encouraged me to run for Chair. I had never served in a leadership position and I was terrified. Zita assured me I would do well and she would be there for me. And she was. I leaned on her

countless times during my two years as Chair while the Commission took on some tough issues. I attribute many roles I have taken on over the years to Zita giving me the confidence to lead.

Sbana Ellis, Former Tempe City Councilmember, Former Chair Tempe Human Relations Commission

Zita Johnson touched our lives in many different ways. When we first got to know Zita, she was head of the Psychology Pre-school at ASU. Zita helped us navigate our decision on what the right time would be to send our daughter Jill to kindergarten. We were not sure the best direction to go, and with Zita's expertise she helped us devise a plan that was best for Jill's development; it turned out to be the best education decision for our daughter. Years later my husband Mike was on the Human Relations Commission with Zita. He always remarked that she had the innate ability to make everyone feel important and included in the decision-making process. Zita Johnson was a true gift to our family and the City of Tempe.

Terri (and Mike) Lisi, Tempe Residents and (Mike) Former Member Tempe Human Relations

We served together on the Adolescent Pregnancy Parenting Program (APPP) Advisory Board for the Tempe Union High Schools. With her background in early childhood development, she knew how hard students struggled to be successful as both a full-time student and parent. She would say to say to those supporting these students that “If you can positively impact and change for the better the life of one young person, that can be enough.” Zita impacted so, so many more.

Sharon Doyle, Former Teacher Tempe Union High School District; Lt. Gov. Kiwanis Southwest District, Div. 10

Zita was an outstanding servant-leader, always willing to debate issues, meet with people, listen kindly and be gracious to everyone. She was so good at collaboration and bringing people together! Serving with her for 8 years on the Tempe Union High School Board, I learned the importance of being fair; the importance of asking hard questions; and the absolute necessity to carefully read and prepare myself for every board meeting. What an excellent role model and friend she was to me! Years later, she and her husband encouraged and supported me when I ran for City Council; my own preparation and governing style in that role derived directly from what I had learned from Zita. I was privileged to forge a friendship with her that lasted over 20 years, sitting around her table, talking, laughing, crying and just enjoying each other. She

truly CARED about people. She truly cared about me. How I will miss my dear friend Zita Johnson.

Robin Arredondo-Savage, Former Tempe Union High School Governing Board, Former Tempe City Councilmember

Underlying Zita’s leadership qualities was a fierce passion for Tempe that shone through as she led us on the Human Relations Commission to adopt a motto for our work and our community: “Together We’re Better.” In her work at the ASU Psychology Child Study Lab, she wove her educational insight into her compassionate counsel with parents about the welfare and growth of their children. On Tempe’s High School Governing Board she lent her strength and resolve to her associates and a community of parents as they faced...and faced down...numerous challenges. Zita was a monolith of excellence in Tempe, an inspiration to all who knew her. Yet she remained genuine... cloaked in kindness, good cheer, humility, service and dedication to her community and her family. We are all indeed “better” whenever people like the unforgettable Zita Johnson grace our efforts.

Pam Goronkin, Former Tempe City Councilmember, Former Member Tempe Human Relations Commission

Zita and I became acquainted through Tempe Leadership, particularly serving together on the Tempe Leadership Board of Directors for a few years. During a portion of the time Zita served on the TUHSD School Board, I was in a leadership role with the TUSHD Teachers Association. She was so well-liked by teachers, administrators, and parents. Not only was Zita an excellent leader for the District, but also for our teachers and specifically for our students. She was one of the few board members who ever came to campus to visit with students and teachers. The Johnsons opened their wonderful home frequently for so many organizations and so many who sought her help with their own quests for elected office, including helping me when I ran for City Council. When we traveled to Atlanta for the All America City Competition, Zita furnished tote bags emblazoned with the “Together We’re Better” logo she helped coin while she chaired Human Relations Commission, part of our presentation there. Throughout her career, Zita fought for children, minorities, the poor, the homeless and all diverse groups in Tempe. Her work helped weave the wonderful and colorful tapestry that is Tempe. It is so sad to lose Zita and her many gifts.

Barb Carter, Former Tempe City Councilmember, Former Corona del Sol Teacher and Teachers Association Leader



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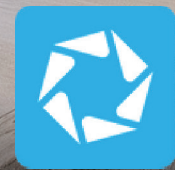
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