



WRANGLER NEWS

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A summer treat, sprinkled with love

Caydence Walz, 10, found the perfect way to cool down her search for a tasty diversion from the blistering heat. Her solution: sweet temptation at S&S snack bar, a newly opened So. Tempe ice cream store.

— Wrangler News photo by Andrew Lwowski

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Officials say an estimated 1,000 victims of homelessness have been helped this past year.

— Wrangler News file photo

Tempe outreach brings hope to 14,000 homeless

For those experiencing homelessness in and around Tempe, hope—and help—are on the way.

Related to the city's ongoing efforts to broaden access to emergency shelter and increase longer-term support, officials say the city's initiatives are at the same time enabling people to reconnect with family and have better access to medical care.

Through approximately 14,000 engagements reported so far, an estimated 1,000 people have

been helped off the streets in just over a year, say officials.

Mayor Corey Woods, who has been among City Council advocates for increased services to a widely underserved population, praised the efforts of city staff involved in the program.

"In Tempe, we are heavily invested in the health and well-being of our unsheltered population and the broader community," said Woods.

"Working together with our residents, business community and nonprofit partners, we are continually enhancing our response to meet more needs and make homelessness a rare, brief and one-time experience."

Vice Mayor Jennifer Adams was equally enthusiastic about the results of the program so far, and the work being done to accomplish it.

"I am enthusiastic about the direction our city is taking regarding the unsheltered. We are connecting those in need with resources that will greatly improve their lives.

"We will continue to reach out to our neighboring communities with the goal of a more regional approach to joining resources in order to positively effect the entire east valley community.

"I am proud of our staff and our partners in the nonprofit community for working so closely together to improve the lives of members of our community."

As part of Tempe's pursuit of solutions to the challenges of homelessness, a program known as Tempe Works connects unsheltered people with jobs in the city's Municipal Utilities and Community Services efforts.

Through the program, they can get help accessing shelter, housing and social services.

Established in 2017, Tempe Works is actively seeking local employers to expand jobs.

Adding new opportunities means more pathways out of homelessness for people like Jeffery Wessell, 63, a Tempe Works graduate who now has housing and works 40 hours a week for the city.

A serious back injury left the truck driver unable to work and pay his rent. He dipped into retirement and scraped by with help from family and friends, but ultimately was evicted from his existing lodging.

After years of steady employment and independence, Wessell found himself living in his truck in Tempe. He connected with I-HELP, a nonprofit Tempe shelter program, and then the city's Tempe Works jobs program.

After working for Municipal Utilities, Wessell graduated from Tempe Works and began another job with the city, helping maintain the city's Double Butte Cemetery and assisting with funeral services. His steady paycheck covers rent for a one-bedroom apartment, he says – and buys peace of mind.

"I have my own little space and I'm trying to get back on my feet," Wessell said.

"It's nice. I can stretch out, put my feet up. I have my television. I can fix meals. I can take a shower any time I want. I can go wash my clothes and not carry them around with me and wait for the opportunity to exist.

"I can relax. I don't have as much on my mind," he said. "I didn't know if I'd be able to work again because of the condition of my back. It feels good."

Employers interested in Tempe Works can email the program coordinator at Lilliana_Urenda@tempe.gov

— SEE MORE ABOUT HOMELESSNESS ON PAGE 9



JULIET RIFFENBERG



DR. MARK ELEY



KRISTIN KINGSLAND



EMILY PIEPER



MELISSA GRADNIGO-TAYLOR



TERESA STERICKLING

New faces in this year's crop of Kyrene principals

Six new principals will be coming to Kyrene schools this year, as longtime leaders retire or move into new roles.

Four of the new assignments involve Kyrene assistant principals who are advancing in position. Two of the new principals are experienced leaders joining Kyrene from other Arizona districts. Each was selected through a rigorous process Kyrene uses to identify strong leaders and with community input to match leaders to schools.

Altadeña Middle School: Principal Juliet Riffenberg — Altadeña Middle School Principal Juliet Riffenberg is new to Kyrene, having spent the last six years in leadership at a K-8 school in Phoenix. Mrs. Riffenberg has served as an assistant principal and has taught multiple grade levels from first to sixth at a combination of Blue-Ribbon award winning, Title I and A+ schools. She also worked for ASU, serving as the campus administrator for the Fulton School of Engineering's Summer STEM camps. Mrs. Riffenberg received her Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Arizona State University and her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Brigham Young University. Mrs. Riffenberg thrives on building relationships with those she serves and is excited to foster those connections with the Altadeña community.

Kyrene de los Cerritos: Principal Dr. Mark Eley — The new Principal of Kyrene de los Cerritos

Leadership Academy has roots in Kyrene. Dr. Mark Eley previously served Kyrene as a teacher and as Assistant Director of Community Education. Since that time, he has held a variety of leadership roles, from elementary and K-8 principal to Arizona Department of Education director. He brings 30 years of experience to the Cerritos Principal position. Dr. Eley holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Grand Canyon University (where he has also served as an adjunct professor), a master's degree in education from NAU, and a doctorate in education leadership and policy studies through ASU.

Kyrene del Cielo: Principal Kristin Kingsland — Kyrene del Cielo students will have a familiar face in the principal's office. Cielo Assistant Principal Kristin Kingsland is stepping into the principal role, following the retirement of principal Tammy Thaete. Mrs. Kingsland has been a Kyrene

— Please turn to Page 12



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Open house to meet your Tempe staff leaders

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City Manager e-newsletter

Thirty-year employee Rosa Inchausti was named permanent City Manager during a June 27 vote of the City Council. She is the first female City Manager in Tempe's history.

Now there are two opportunities for all community members to learn more about her city leadership and to connect with Rosa.

Get to know our city's staff leadership at an open house from 4 to 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 22, at the Tempe History Museum, 809 E. Southern Ave. Stop by for free refreshments and conversations with Rosa, our Deputy City Managers, Police Chief Ken McCoy, Interim Fire Medical Rescue Chief Darrell Duty and department directors. Details are at tempe.gov/CityManager. Rosa also is launching an e-newsletter to keep residents and businesses updated about city priorities, initiatives and progress. The first edition focuses on improvements to public health and community safety, alleys and streets, neighborhoods and more. Visit tempe.gov/enews and sign up for the newsletter.



Around Our Town

Tempe goes back to school

The new school year begins this month, thanks to new year-round schedules at the local district schools.

The City of Tempe, local schools and community partners want students and families to be armed with helpful resources as they head back to the classroom.

Students from pre-school through graduate school can access tips and information on student safety, educational resources, transportation options and opportunities to get involved in the community.

Learn about Kid Zone's before- and after-school programs. Sign your child up for a free Youth Transit Pass. Find out where to get free mental health resources. Discover the wide array of online homework and research tools available through the Tempe Public Library and Tempe History Museum.

All of these resources and more are available at tempe.gov/BackToSchool.

Track your water use

Log in to WaterSmart Portal to receive customized recommendations for how to save water and improve water use history estimates. Simply navigate to the Track tab.

Select the Update Profile button located at the bottom of the page to review the household profile

for a specific property. Learn more at tempe.gov/WaterSmart or call Tempe Water Conservation at 480-350-8351.

Zero Waste Day heads to Kiwanis Park July 29

Residents are encouraged to bring unwanted items for reuse, recycling or repurposing to Tempe's next Zero Waste Day from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, July 29, at Kiwanis Park, 6111 S. All-America Way.

Accepted items include paper for secure shredding, tires, electronics, household items, scrap metal, bikes and household hazardous waste.

Food and pet supplies donations will also be collected. Participants must live in Tempe or Guadalupe and provide proof of residency.

For the full list of items accepted, visit tempe.gov/ZeroWaste.

Help available 24/7 to help reduce homelessness

While officials say Tempe leads with resources, services and shelter options for people experiencing homelessness, its 24/7 outreach also works with nonprofit and community partners to meet the needs of those who are unsheltered.

As of now, Tempe is expanding shelter and services to help more people off the streets and into more permanent housing, fueled by state and county partnerships.

Through a nearly \$930,000 grant from the Arizona Department of Housing, the city is hiring two new case managers to help connect clients at its emergency shelter with housing options and social services.

The city will also rehabilitate four shelter rooms damaged during a fire and purchase more mattresses to double occupancy at the shelter, formerly a motel now called Sue's Espacio.

Mayor Corey Woods says it's another way Tempe is meeting the challenge of homelessness.

"This hotel-to-housing model works; we see it every day," he said.

"Since purchasing Sue's Espacio, we've sheltered approximately 300 people and about 210 have successfully transitioned to their own apartment unit, are living with family or friends or have moved into a longer-term shelter to address needs that can help them plan for their future."

Now the city is planning to purchase a second emergency shelter and transition from a leased facility. This transition will stabilize the city's commitment to providing emergency shelter

services in Tempe through a more cost effective and permanent solution.

In May, Maricopa County awarded \$7.3 million in funding to purchase a motel for this shelter. The city will contribute \$3 million in federal funds. The future purchase could add as many as 60 motel rooms, with occupancy for as many as 120 people.

In yet another initiative, the city's 24/7 CARE & HOPE Line continues to be a go-to resource for residents and businesses in Tempe. Developed last year as part of a suite of new homeless solutions tools, the line has assisted approximately 5,000 callers.

People can call 480-350-8004 to talk with a CARE 7 specialist to get help for themselves or to let the city know about a person who needs assistance.

As part of Tempe's fiscal 2023-24 budget, the city is investing in the sustainability of the CARE & HOPE Line with permanent funding for two positions that had been funded temporarily.



Greg Ruiz

Deputy City Manager Greg Ruiz, who oversees Community Health and Human Services, said the availability of funds is one more step toward the goals of city planners.

"We know that innovation is key to accelerating our homeless response and the success of our CARE & HOPE Line reaffirms our pioneering approach," said Ruiz.

"We developed a dedicated line with specialists available 24 hours a day who triage roughly 100 calls a week. This model allows the community to connect with the city directly and gives us an entirely new strategy for collecting data that guide our decision making."

In August last year, Tempe leveraged innovation to develop three other community tools designed to help those experiencing homelessness and to track the city's progress. In addition to the 24/7 CARE & HOPE Line, those are:

- Encampment reporting form—Lets the city know directly about encampments so specialists can assist people onsite and address the encampment.

- Public dashboard—Makes available data related to the city's outreach, shelter and housing efforts, emergency response and more on a Homeless Solutions dashboard.

- Data-driven services — Officials say Tempe is recognized for using data and evidence to track progress and inform decisions citywide to meet City Council strategic priorities. New dashboards have been developed as the city expands its affordable housing strategies and homeless solutions.

Through another pilot program, the city also is offering intensive outreach to a small group of people who are frequent users of emergency systems. The new effort is designed to help people who typically have serious medical and mental health needs by connecting them with stabilizing resources, which can reduce their need for emergency services. As trusting relationships are a key component in the service to the community, this initiative enhances the engagement time and effort by staff to individuals facing significant challenges.

In June, the city opened a cooling center at its EnVision Center at Apache Boulevard and Dorsey Lane, with \$50,000 in heat relief support from Maricopa County. Open to anyone who needs respite, the center offers a new connection point for visitors who are homeless to access resources.

To reinforce the efforts now underway, a spokesperson for Tempe says the city is seeking volunteers to learn more about homelessness and assist the HOPE homeless outreach team in the field.

No formal experience is needed. Application details are available at tempe.gov/EndingHomelessness. More information about the ongoing program to address homelessness is available online at tempe.gov/HomelessResponse.

Tempe involvement with 'Vision Zero' targets reducing traffic deaths, major injuries

Tempe is part of a growing world-wide initiative called Vision Zero which aims to zero out traffic fatalities and serious injury crashes through a combination of engineering, enforcement and education.

In July, city planners have focused on speed as one of the causes of death, injuries and destruction of property.

Speed is a behavior that motorists can change to help save the lives

of the drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists who share our city streets.



As part traffic enforcement, Tempe created four safety corridors based on statistical analysis of a higher propensity for collisions.

Corridors targeted for strict enforcement and engineering analysis. The selected areas are also marked by Vision Zero signage.

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GENERAL PLAN 2050

Give your comments on draft General Plan 2050 online at tempe.gov/2050 or at any of these meetings:

Tuesday, July 25 at 6 p.m.
 Development Review Commission

Thursday, Aug. 10 at 6 p.m.
 Tempe City Council Regular Meeting

Thursday, Aug. 24 at 6 p.m.
 Tempe City Council Regular Meeting

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Continued from Page 4

educator for nearly 30 years. She began her career as a special education teacher and has served as a classroom teacher, a Structured English Immersion Coach, a Student Advisor, and for the last eight years as an assistant principal. Mrs. Kingsland is an ASU graduate and holds a Master of Education in Counseling. She believes all students need to feel welcomed, cared for and inspired at school, and she will strive to ensure that every child at Cielo receives optimal learning opportunities and feels connected to the school community.

Kyrene de la Colina: Principal Emily Pieper — Kyrene de la Colina will also see continuity in leadership as Assistant Principal Emily Pieper takes over as Principal of Colina. Mrs. Pieper has served as Colina's assistant principal for the last seven years and is a strong supporter of the school's Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) initiative. Prior to joining the Colina leadership team, Mrs. Pieper was an instructional coach and an elementary classroom teacher. She earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education from Arizona State University and holds a master's degree in educational administration. She is passionate about building positive relationships

with students and families, and she looks forward to continuing those connections in her new role.

Kyrene de las Manitas: Principal Melissa Gradnigo-Taylor — Also rising through the Kyrene ranks is Melissa Gradnigo-Taylor, the new Kyrene de las Manitas Principal. Mrs. Taylor brings 25 years of educational experience to Manitas, having taught first through eighth grades in both private and public schools, and in rural, urban and suburban settings. She has been a teacher, a student advisor, and an administrator in schools across the country. For the last seven years, she has served as the assistant principal at Kyrene de las Lomas. Mrs. Taylor earned both her master's degree in educational leadership and her bachelor's degree in English from Louisiana State University. She is passionate about redefining and redesigning the educational experience of all students, to inspire them to find their purpose and ignite a passion for learning.

Kyrene Monte Visa: Principal Teresa Strickling — It's a homecoming for the new Principal of Kyrene Monte Vista, Teresa Strickling. Strickling previously served as Monte Vista Assistant Principal for four years. Mrs. Strickling's passion for education began in the classroom, where she held positions as an elementary teacher, a math and

reading coach, and a Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) supporting school administrators. She is a graduate of the University of Arizona and holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in administrative education. Mrs. Strickling is committed to ensuring students are challenged and engaged in learning opportunities that will continue to help them thrive. She looks forward to reconnecting with students and families as well as making new connections.

Erin Helm, the district's executive director of communications and engagement, noted that the district continues to create opportunities for growth through what is known as Kyrene Aspiring Leaders Academy and to promote leaders from within.

Prior principals Amy Gingell (Cielo), Kelley Brunner (Colina), Dr. Garth Cupp (Monte Vista) and Dr. Sarah Collins (Manitas) will remain with Kyrene in district leadership roles, with oversight of areas including curriculum, innovation and schools.

According to Helm, Kyrene Superintendent Laura Toenjes and the Kyrene Governing Board have repeatedly stressed the importance of retaining high quality, experienced staff. For the third year in a row, she noted, the board has approved stipends for employees who return and remain with the District this school year.

Role as student teacher led newly annointed 'Mr. McLarnon' to full-time kindergarten slot

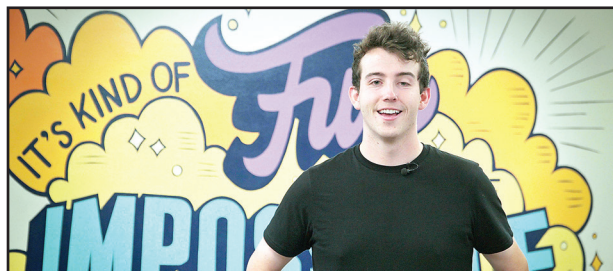
By Carolyn Wood

Finnian "Finn" McLarnon may still be a new teacher, but he's a familiar face to the students and staff at Kyrene de las Manitas Innovation Academy as he returns for a third year in a row—this time as a kindergarten teacher.

McLarnon is an example of the Kyrene district's innovative recruitment and retention efforts in action. Kyrene has managed to stay ahead of the curve as schools and districts across the country grapple with a growing teacher shortage. However, the district demonstrates that it's not waiting for a crisis to arrive, and has been proactive not only about recruitment but also about reimagining school staffing.

McLarnon joined the Manitas team as a student teacher in 2021 while finishing his degree in Early Childhood Education and Special Education from Arizona State University.

Manitas, as it turns out, is home to a unique staffing model, designed to surround students with educators ranging from student teachers and those on early-career paths to experienced classroom teachers and a so-called teacher executive designer. Originators of the plan say the model creates a pathway of career growth for educators that is designed to attract and keep top talent.



McLarnon says he quickly fell in love with the team teaching model and the learning studios that reimagined traditional classrooms. It's an environment he feels he may have benefited from himself when he younger, when struggles with dyslexia and attention-deficit disorders presented challenges in the standard school setting where he didn't always feel understood.

It's part, he adds, of what drew him to teaching. "School wasn't really enjoyable for me until I started taking education courses in college," McLarnon says. "I had a hard time staying engaged, and it was a frustrating experience for (both) me and my teachers."

Those experiences, he says, are what led him to teaching, and what keeps him at Manitas.

When there weren't teacher vacancies at the school during the 2022-23 school year, McLarnon

stayed on as an instructional assistant. In May, he accepted a position as a kindergarten teacher and adds that he is thrilled to be teaching within the innovative Manitas environment.

"Our goal is to serve kids in the best way we can," McLarnon said. "This model just provides a level of collaboration and creativity to the process that you don't always see in regular classes."

The team-based approach allows educators more opportunities to collaborate with and support each other than are possible in a standard one teacher per classroom set-up.

"I can't imagine being a first-year teacher anywhere but Manitas," McLarnon shared, noting the overwhelming support he has received from his co-teachers. "More than anything, I am excited. To know that even on the hard days, I contributed to the success of our students. Nothing beats that."

The new school year brings what McLarnon defines as both excitement and trepidation for McLarnon, who says he's a little anxious about meeting all his new families.

So, if your kindergartener is nervous about the first day of the new school year, tell them not to worry.

Mr. McLarnon gets nervous too, but together, they're going to have an awesome year.



MEET THE TEACHER

**A Wrangler News
Back to School photo
essay, Pgs. 13-16**



Meet the Teacher events heralded this year's return to school for students in both Kyrene and Tempe Elementary districts. Wrangler News photographer Andrew Lwowski was on hand at Kyrene Traditional Academy (this page) and Arredondo Elementary (next page), where Cardinals cheer leaders made a surprise appearance.





Top left, seventh-grade ELA Teacher Shea Catero, starting her first year of teaching, poses with Student Eduardo Mendoza Escobar at Fees Middle School.



Top right, first-Grade Teacher Ashley Petross smiles while meeting her students for the 2023-2024 school year during Wood Elementary School's Meet Your Teacher back-to-school event.

Photo at right, kindergarten Teacher Christina Moore laughs with one of her new students during Wood Elementary's School's Meet Your Teacher event.



— Photos by Amy Garza, senior visual ecommunication specialist for Tempe Elementary School District, for Wrangler News



SPORTS NOTEBOOK

with Alex Zener

Aztecs, Padres shine at awards banquet

Corona had 20 athletes honored for their achievement in seven of the eight sports categories at the 42nd Tempe All-City Spring Sports banquet, while Marcos de Niza had two.

Four from Corona also were selected to receive an award for boys volleyball, including three seniors: **Cade Banks**, **Jonathan Seddon** and **Oliver Hinder** and one junior, **Luke Vleck**.

Banks was awarded for his exceptional performance at the setter's position. It was the third time he had received recognition from the Tempe All-City Association. He is ranked No. 8 in the 2023 Arizona Boys Volleyball Assists Stat Leaders list with a total of 859 assists in 96 sets resulting in an average of 8.6 assists a set.

Banks was not just a setter. He was second on the team in total blocks with 55, eight more than starting middle-blocker senior **Toby Lim**, who had 47. He was second on the team in service aces with 27 and third on the team in digs with 177.

"Cade had been with our program as a four-year varsity starter for so long and had such an impact with his quiet leadership and calm demeanor on almost every aspect of our game, that it is going to hard to replace him," said head coach **Geoffrey Horewitch**.

Seddon, recognized for his play at the outside hitter position, is a perfect example of what a player in that position by working at it.

For instance, he led the team in kills per set with 2.9 with a hitting percentage at 0.272. He amassed 276 kills, 142 more than the next player, senior **Nathan Magro**, who had 134.

In addition, he led the team in service aces at 35 and was second to libero Vleck in digs per set at 2.6 or a total of 246.

"Jonathan participated in almost every point we played, whether it was serving, hitting, digging or blocking, plus he was an excellent team leader," said Horewitch.

Hinder, at 6-ft-10, was awarded for his play as an opposite hitter. He was the third leading hitter on the team with 109 kills with the third best hitting percentage of 0.167, but his blocking at the net is where he excelled this season, leading the team with 59 total blocks.

"It was great that Oliver was able to be

recognized by the Tempe All-City Association for his performance as an opposite hitter since this was his first season playing that position and only his second year playing volleyball," said coach Horewitch.

Vleck received his Tempe All-City award for his proficiency at the libero position. He is ranked No. 10 on the 2023 Arizona Boys Volleyball Digs Stat Leaders list with 365 digs or 3.8 digs a set.

"Luke has proven he is one of the best liberos in the state and we are so lucky to have him one more year in our volleyball program," said Horewitch.

Three Aztecs were recognized for their baseball skills including senior **Cole Carlon**, junior **Myles Harrison** and sophomore **Jaiden Lo Re**.

It was no wonder the association chose to recognize Carlon for his expertise as a pitcher seeing he had an ERA (earned run average) of 1.95 making 12 appearances on the plate where he started in 11 games. He was credited with eight wins and only two losses to end the season with an 80 percent win percentage.

Cole could have easily been recognized for his expertise in another position, as he led the Aztecs in other statistical categories including home runs with five, hits with 33, RBI's with 28, slugging percentage at 0.693, and triples with three.

Cole was also second on the team with a 0.375 batting average, with a 0.486 on base percentage, with 10 stolen bases, with 23 scored runs and nine doubles.

Harrison was awarded for his infield skills at first base but he was also a right-handed pitcher for the Aztecs.

Harrison played in 28 out of the 29 games where he either put out or assisted on 80 of the 85 chances he had to put out a runner.

While at bat, he led the Aztec in batting average at 0.413, on base percentage at 0.486 and doubles with 10. He was second in RBI's at 19 and slugging percentage at 0.619.

Recognized also for his infield skills was Lo Re who, as only a sophomore, led the team in scored runs at 31, and stolen bases at 19, which is nine more than the next player, Carlon, who had 10 stolen bases.

Lo Re was third on the team behind Cole and Harrison in a number of categories including hits with 28, RBI's with 16 runs batted in and slugging percentage at 0.493.

Corona had five softball players awarded for their skill on the softball field including seniors **Jaelyn Ibarra** and **Madison Romero** along with

juniors **Siena Meraz**, **Abby Ritchhart** and **Olivia Rios**.

Ibarra was recognized for her exceptional play in the outfield but where she excelled was as a pitcher and at bat.

Ibarra was on the pitching mound in 21 games where she pitched in 110 innings to end her senior year leading the team in ERA (earned run average) at 2.99.

When at bat, she led the team in three statistical categories including batting average, 0.455, on base percentage, 0.561, and hits with 30.

Romero, Meraz, Ritchhart and Rios were all recognized for their infield expertise.

Romero, playing second base, had a fielding percentage of 0.842 where she put out 41 runners and assisted on 33 others during the 24 games she played.

Romero was second to Ibarra in batting average at 0.375 and on base percentage at 0.526. She was second in stolen bases with six or one less than freshman **Brooke Sheehan** who had seven.

Playing first base, Meraz led the team in put outs with 124 out of 130 chances including three double plays. Her fielding percentage of 0.962 put her second on the team in fielding percentage just behind senior catcher **Jacqueline Tom** at 0.993.

Ritchhart, playing shortstop, put out 37 base runner and assisted on 17 for a fielding percentage of 0.947.

When at bat, Ritchhart led the team in doubles with eight and triples with two and was second on the team with 23 RBI's, a 0.657 slugging percentage and four homeruns.

Rios, at third base, played in 27 out of 30 games, putting out 25 batters and assisting on putting out 33 others.

At bat, she led the team in RBI's with 27 and was third on the team with a 0.372 batting average and an on base percentage of 0.520.

Corona's girls track team had two athletes recognized for their expertise on the track and in the field events.

Senior **Ena McMahon** has definitely left her mark on Corona's record books with numerous accolades including being recognized by the Tempe All-City Association for her proficiency in three events.

McMahon was awarded for her successes in the 100 meters, 110-meter hurdles and the long jump.

McMahon's 12.03 finish in the 100-meter race at the AIA Division I State Championships

has placed her in the top ten 2023 Arizona High School Women's 100 Meters Rankings and No. 6 in Division I rankings.

In the 110-meter hurdles rankings, McMahon is No. 3 in the 2023 Arizona High School Women's 100-meter Hurdles Rankings based on her personal record time of 14.06 attained at the Westwood Hohokam Invite on April 14. She is ranked No. 2 in Division I rankings.

Her 19 ft. 5.5 in. jump on April 11 at the Top of the Mountain track meet ranked her No. 2 in both the state records and Division I.

Senior **Sofia Wyatt** was awarded for her success in the triple jump event after taking first place at the Tempe City Meet on April 20 with a 32 ft.8 in. jump.

Corona's boys team had two athletes recognized for track and field including senior **Tyler Tisinger** and senior **Alexander Lutz**.

Tisinger typically ran the longer races in track meets and was recognized for his expertise in the 800-meter and the 1600-meter races.

Tisinger is ranked No. 4 in the state for his personal record time of 1:52.09 for a first-place finish in the 800 meters at the Tempe City Meet.

Tisinger also finished first in the 800 meters at the Aztec Invitational, the Scottsdale Distance Classic and the Top of the Mountain meet.

He is ranked No. 11 statewide for his first-place finish time in the 1600-meter race of 4:19.12 at the same Tempe City Meet. He also finished first in two other meets during the season.

Lutz was awarded for his skill running the hurdles, namely the 110-meter hurdles where he is ranked No. 7 in the state with his fourth-place finish at the AIA State Championship on May 12 with a personal best time of 14.47.

Lutz has also crossed the finish line in first place at the Shadow Ridge Showcase meet and the Tempe City Meet.

In the girls tennis category, the doubles team of senior **Ariana Van Der Geest** and junior **Madison Wasson** were recognized for their doubles play.

Van Der Geest and Wasson qualified to play in the 2023 AIA Girls Tennis Division I Doubles Championship where they defeated a doubles team from Horizon in the first round but lost to a team from Chaparral in the second round.

Seniors **Kierstyn Barton** and **Ella Lomigora** were chosen to be awarded for Beach Volleyball Pairs. Both Barton and Lomigora were also recognized by the Tempe All-City Association for their indoor volleyballs skills at the fall banquet.

Barton and Lomigora were the No. 6 ranked pairs team entering the 2023 AIA Beach Volleyball Division I Pairs State Championship but lost in the

second round to a team from Desert Mountain.

Marcos de Niza had two athletes recognized at the Tempe All-City Spring Sports banquet for their baseball skills.

Senior **Noah Heyn** was awarded for his defensive skills in the outfield but his skills at bat may have helped him get noticed.

Heyn led the team in five offensive categories including batting average, hits, RBI's, slugging percentage and stolen bases. He was second on the team in on-base percentage, homeruns and doubles.

He had a 0.444 batting average combined with a 0.555 slugging percentage that led to 36 hits which gave him a 0.526 one-base percentage. His success while at bat resulted in his ability to lead the team in both runs at 29 and RBI's with 18.

In addition, Heyn had one homerun, six doubles and five stolen bases.

Senior **Dalla Vacaneri** was recognized for an infield position but he was the leading pitcher for the Padres baseball team.

He had the lowest ERA, 2.71, out of the 10 players who pitched for Marcos. H was identified as the starting pitcher in 10 games but was on the mound for 49 total innings.

During those 49 innings, Vacaneri pitched three shutouts and struck out 46 batters.



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Hope grows for return to more birds in flight

Opportunities to reverse bird decline

Story and photos by Sally Mesarosh

The priorities of our Kyrene Corridor neighbors during these blistering summer weeks focus on little more than finding a weekend destination where, if only for a welcome few hours, they can enjoy the pleasures that only Mother Nature can provide.

For those so inclined, the possibilities include a trip to watch the graceful glide of a bird soaring overhead, a terrific way to bring about a connection to nature and enhance one's quality of life.

Yet recent studies have found that wild bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada have declined by almost 30 percent since 1970.

Tice Supplee, director of bird conservation for Audubon Southwest, termed these statistics distressing, but noted there are abundant opportunities for bringing birds back.

The study's statistics are based on two major efforts by the National Audubon Society over the past 100 years, with information gathered by volunteer birdwatchers during the yearly events.

The first is the yearly Bird Count, which will be coming up again this year from Dec. 14 to Jan. 5. It's the nation's longest-running community science bird project that fuels Audubon's work throughout the year. The second is the North American Breeding Bird Survey, initiated in 1966 when synthetic chemical pest control usage began as a way to monitor bird populations over large geographic areas.

Each year thousands of citizen scientists collect data on bird routes throughout our area and the rest of North America, allowing Audubon to better understand bird population changes and manage them.



White-winged dove

She said we all need to pay attention to the information gathered. "I find some of these statistics a little startling," Supplee said. "I've lived in the Southwest since the '70s and we're really experiencing a changing landscape." She said the major contributors to bird decline in Arizona include urbanization, loss of agricultural land and decline of family farms. There are also fewer hedgerows (plantings of dense vegetation along the edges of agricultural fields that offer warmth), protection and a place to nest for birds, butterflies, bats and other species. Additionally, birds run into problems when encountering power lines and plate glass windows in new houses instead of window panes that old houses had. Birds are injured, in some cases fatally, by striking the windows.

Supplee said some people have done a few things right, though. For example, the number of bald eagles has increased with the banning of DDT. She recommends people become involved and encourage others to pay attention to what's happening with the bird population decline. Residents can plant native plants in their yards and refuse to use pesticides. Birds eat insects and pesticides that can be deadly.

Arizona's many years of drought have been a factor for bird decline as well, but this past winter had more hospitable, moist weather. "Our desert birds are clever," Supplee said. "They will nest more than one time in good wet weather. In a drought, they may not nest at all."

Charles Huff, an avid bird photographer in a nearby Valley community, said keeping the bird population healthy is an important goal for future generations. "As a child I was always interested in nature," Huff said. "(I remember waiting for flocks of birds that would pass through the fields each spring. As I've gotten older, I



Kestrel

have cultivated a deeper appreciation for all manner of animals, and find photographing birds not only a challenge, but for me, it's a sport. Locating them, positioning myself to get a decent shot with proper lighting, waiting for the right second to press the shutter—it's just a great activity for anyone with a little time and patience." Supplee recommends checking out the Audubon site for home garden for events and bird walks at southwest.audubon.org/events.

Additionally, Bird Migration Explorer is an interesting guide to the heroic annual journeys made by over 450 bird species, and the challenges they face along the way. Visit explorer.audubon.org/home?legend=collapse&layersPanel=expand.



Vermillion flycatcher



Red-winged blackbird



West Chandler's Nozomi pool swim schedule announced

Aqua Fit Shallow – High Intensity Interval Training class performed in the water (3.5-5 ft. deep). Classes Monday and Wednesday evenings (no class on 9/4) 8/28 through 11/29. Registration is required and the fee is per class. Chandler residents: \$5 per class/ Non-resident: \$7 per class

Aqua Fit Deep – Improve cardiovascular endurance and build muscle strength using deep water jogging and exercises while suspended in 6-12 feet of water.

Classes 7/24 through 11/30, Monday through Friday evenings (no class on 11/23). Registration is required and the fee is per class. Chandler residents: \$5 per class/Non-resident: \$7 per class

— Wrangler News photos by Andrew Lwowski







DIVERSIONS with M.V. Moorhead

'Theater Camp,' 'Miracle Club' worthy as summer film viewing

Joan, the founder of "AndironDACTS," a slightly gone-to-seed theater camp in upstate New York, has fallen into a coma. The job of keeping the struggling camp afloat falls to her decidedly non-theatrical "crypto bro" son Troy.

Meanwhile the devoted instructors work with the exuberantly happy campers to mount the shows, including an original musical about the life of poor comatose Joan (Amy Sedaris). Needless to say, all does not go smoothly.

The creators of Theater Camp, a Waiting for Guffman-esque "mockumentary" comedy, are Molly

Gordon, Nick Lieberman, Ben Platt and Noah Galvin. They know the world they're depicting well; all of them have been doing theater, often together, since they were small children. Gordon and Lieberman co-directed, from a script by all four; Platt and Gordon play Amos and Rebecca-Diane, the utterly enmeshed, co-dependent acting instructors and Galvin plays the low-profile tech director.

They capture the camaraderie and the sense of belonging that theater can give kids, and their affection for that world is unmistakable, but they're careful not to get too sentimental.

The envies and resentments and passive-

aggressive denigrations among theater folk, especially at this often professionally frustrated level, are vividly represented.

Getting laughs from the self-important vanities of theater people is pretty low-hanging fruit, I suppose, but Theater Camp is nonetheless often hilarious. The film also manages to get a little deeper at times, touching on the irony that while theater can create a haven and a community for misfit kids, this can generate its own clannishness and exclusionary snobbery, as in Amos and Rebecca-Diane's coldness toward the imbecilic but well-intentioned Troy, charmingly played by a sort of poor-man's Channing Tatum named Jimmy Tatro.

Free Summer Concert Series presented by Intel

Join us at the Chandler Center for the Arts (CCA) on Friday nights, July 28 - Aug. 25, at 7:30 p.m. for a free summer concert featuring some of Arizona's best local bands. While you're here, explore The Gallery at the CCA after hours to see the latest exhibit.

No ticket required, but RSVP is requested. Seating is first-come, first-seated. Concerts are also available live streamed online.

chandlercenter.org/summer2023



The real joy in Theater Camp, of course, is the acting: Platt, Gordon, Tatro, plus a few vets like Sedaris, Caroline Aaron and David Rasche bring the material to life. But as Glenn, the long-suffering backstage drudge who really ought to be onstage, Noah Galvin, who replaced Platt on Broadway in Dear Evan Hansen, is the revelation among the adults in the cast. He's a knockout.

The revelation among the kids playing the campers is, well, pretty much all of the kids playing the campers. There are some real singing, dancing and acting prodigies in this company. If there was a real theater camp somewhere with this kind of talent, their shows would sell out.



'The Miracle Club'

At the beginning of The Miracle Club, after many decades in Boston, Chrissie has returned to her working class neighborhood in Dublin in 1967, after the death of her long-estranged mother. She gets a cold reception from her old friend Eileen (Kathy Bates) and from Lily (Maggie Smith), the mother of her teenage lover who later died by drowning.

Lily and Eileen are about to leave on a trip to Lourdes; somehow Chrissie ends up on the bus as well.

Also on the trip is Dolly (lovely Agnes O'Casey; a descendant of Sean, no less!), a young mother hoping the waters at Lourdes will heal her little son Daniel, who hasn't started speaking yet.

This comedy-drama doesn't push too deep into the psychology and theology of pilgrimages to holy places and the search for authentic supernatural miracles. About as far as the exploration goes is the pronouncement of the priest (Mark O'Halloran) that "You don't go to Lourdes for a miracle; you go for the strength to go on when there is no miracle."

Mostly the pilgrimage is used as a device to gradually tease out the poignant backstory of the characters, and to give them a symbolic redemption. There's also a good deal of comedy derived from the bumbling husbands, including Stephen Rea as Eileen's not-much-better half, cluelessly trying to manage back home without their wives.

So the movie is slight, despite being adjacent to some provocative themes.

But if you appreciate fine acting, can you really afford to miss this ensemble? Between the quietly intent Linney, the bitter and frightened Bates and the chastened, open-hearted Smith, trying to decide who carries the most grandeur is not a critical task I find myself up to. Their talent is, you know, miraculous.

Theater Camp is rated PG-13 and plays at Harkins Camelview; The Miracle Club is rated PG-13 and plays at Chandler Fashion 20, AMC Mesa Grand and other multiplexes Valleywide.

Coming Up at Tempe Center for the Arts

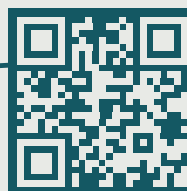


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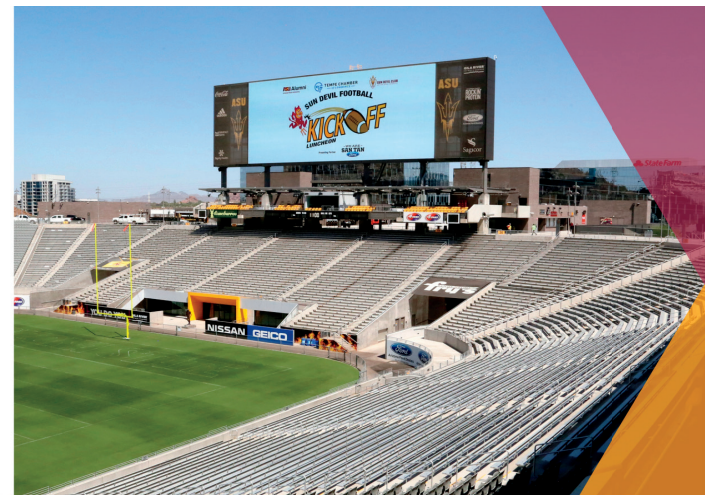
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Tempe Chamber hosts 2023 Sun Devil Football Kickoff Luncheon at Sun Devil Stadium

Celebrating its 22nd year, the Tempe Chamber of Commerce and ASU Alumni are proud to partner with the entire ASU Sun Devil Football organization to help celebrate the start of the 2023 season with the Sun Devil Football kickoff luncheon, presented by San Tan Ford! The event will be Friday, August 25th and will be held at the San Tan Ford Club inside Sun Devil Stadium!

With views of the field and “A” mountain, this venue will make you feel like you are part of the game! Highlights include emcee Tim Healey giving his insights into the upcoming year, an interview with starting players, and Coach Kenny Dillingham. You’ll also hear from the leadership of the ASU Alumni Association and ASU Athletics.

This event is open to the public, with Tempe Chamber of Commerce members receiving discounted admission. Registration is now open at www.tempechamber.org

Please contact david@tempechamber.org for sponsorship packages.

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**2023
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ACHIEVE



New ranger jobs will focus on rules, park awareness

Tempe is launching a new ranger program with 14 fulltime, soon-to-be-hired employees who not only will enforce the rules but serve as ambassadors for the city's parks, preserves and green spaces.

The program, due to start this fall, was made possible as a result of a Tempe City Council-approved budget allocation for fiscal 2023-24.

Tempe's strong financial position and favorable economic outlook has allowed for increased funding of programs and services to meet the needs of residents, say those who approved it. The program will reside within the Community Services Department.

The city is asking for community input so that the program truly reflects the parks and neighborhoods where the rangers will be serving.

A public meeting will be held 6-7 p.m. Monday, July 24, in the lower level of the Tempe Public Library, 3500 S. Rural Road.

An online survey is also available at tempe.gov/forum through July 31 for community members to submit feedback.

As the program was envisioned, the rangers will provide resources and information, as well as education about park rules. They will have the ability to issue city citations, though they will not carry firearms, according to a city spokesperson. Their focus will be on education first. Rangers will use a service-oriented approach and be the community's connection for information and questions.

Tempe had a park ranger program many years ago, however it was discontinued during the Great Recession due to resulting budget cuts. Now, the City Council has okayed bringing the program back with what are said to be adjustments and improvements to make the service even better.

The newly hired rangers will be aimed at having a focused approach on building connection among community members and providing information about resources and services. Tempe is home to more than 50 neighborhood parks, community parks and preserves.

Positions for the park ranger program will be posted throughout July at tempe.gov/jobs. The city is seeking candidates who feel a passion for parks, want to build relationships among neighbors and can represent the wide diversity of the Tempe community.

Information: tempe.gov/ParkRangers.

The combined property tax rate consists of primary and secondary rates. The primary property tax rate of \$0.2226 per \$100 of assessed value funds the general operations of the city. The secondary property tax rate of \$0.87 per \$100 of assessed value funds debt service payments on outstanding general obligation bonds used to pay for capital improvement projects. The city of Chandler represents roughly 11 percent of the total property taxes paid by residents. Public schools and community college districts account for roughly 70 percent of a typical property tax bill in Chandler, while Maricopa County

It's official: Tempe has its first female city manager

Tempe officially has named its first female city manager with a vote for Rosa Inchausti, who had been serving in an interim capacity since the departure of Andrew Ching.

Inchausti is a 30-year city of Tempe employee, having previously served as chief deputy city manager, overseeing the areas of economic development, community health and human services, community development, information technology, and strategic management and innovation.

Said Mayor Corey Woods of the appointment:

"Rosa will be a tremendous city manager who works alongside the City Council and all city staff to serve the community members of Tempe.

"Her extensive experience and time with the city will be reflected in her decisive but thoughtful decision-making ability and her talent for connection with community members in solving tough problems."

Inchausti was likewise enthusiastic about the appointment.

"Never would I have dreamed on my first day at the city of Tempe 30 years ago that the city would offer me the career opportunities I've been given to grow and apply my talents," said Inchausti.

"I am incredibly grateful to the Mayor and Council, to all city employees and to all residents for this chance to continue growing and giving back to Tempe."

Chandler tax rate goes down for 8th year in a row

Chandler City Council has lowered the city's primary property tax rate for the eighth consecutive year to help minimize what officials say is the impact of increased property values.

The one-cent rate reduction brings Chandler's combined property tax rate to \$1.0926 per \$100 of assessed property value for fiscal 2023-2024, which began July 1.



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