



Childsplay move part of plan to grow, diversify audiences

A member of Tempe's performing-arts family has decided to leave the comforts of home.

Childsplay, a homegrown arts organization established here 40 years ago, will relocate most of its productions to Herberger Theater Center in Phoenix in June 2019, when the group's current contract expires at Tempe Center for the Arts.

Arts classes, including summer day camps, will remain at Tempe's city-owned Mitchell school, now known as the Sybil B. Harrington Campus for Imagination and Wonder. The group's headquarters also will stay in Tempe.

According to Nikki Ripley, the city's communication and media relations manager, the move is being made to help accommodate larger audiences for Childsplay's child-friendly shows.

TCA has a 600-seat main theater; Herberger has an

— CHILDSPLAY, Page 12



ALL IN FOR BLAKE

Banding together for the fifth annual fundraiser for the Blake Norvell Smile Scholarship, Norvell's closest friends dedicated an annual trip back home to raise money and awareness for the cause. "No matter how far we drift, the scholarship keeps bringing us back together," said Chris Pham, one of Norvell's closest friends. — Photo by Chelsea Flood. Story & more photos on Pg. 8.

Find a page-by-page listing of ads for your (and our!) favorite providers of quality products and services on Pg. 24

Oktoberfest rebound boosts Sister Cities scholarships

By Maddie Johnson

Last year posed a challenge to an organization that had been growing strong for the past 46 years. Tempe Sister Cities, one of the nation's top student exchange programs, was thrown for a loop after changes to its highest revenue-earning event resulted in a drastic loss of funding.

The Sister Cities organization has used Oktoberfest to fund almost 700 student exchange participants since the early 1970s.

Last year, organizers turned over their big event, Oktoberfest, to a new producer for its 2016 run at Tempe Beach Park.

The change in planning and oversight resulted in not only a loss of funding but in the traditional atmosphere that was substantially different from previous years, according to planners.

"It would be fair to say that last year it took a turn that was a little less family friendly," said Mike O'Hara, one of the event's governing board members.

"That gets lost when you go to a paid company that isn't really associated or attached," O'Hara said.

"For an organization or event that took a dip like that, it's very unusual for it to come back," said Larry West, who has helped plan the event for years.

At the 2016 Oktoberfest, attendees were charged a \$10 fee at the door, replacing what had been free admission in the past

— OKTOBERFEST, Page 14

Our jaunt into the realm of video story-telling

By Don Kirkland

For any who've followed my ramblings about the olden days of newspapering, you surely may wonder if we still use hot-lead type and Linotype machines to put our pages together. We don't.

That doesn't mean, though, that I'm fully out of the woods compared with some of the young graduates who come to us from ASU's Walter Cronkite

School of Journalism & Mass Communication and other equally reputable college pursuits. I mean, these people are good.



Yeah, when they pull out their cellphones to take a photo, I've been known to regale them with stories about the camera I used in the late 1950s—one of those huge, boxy things, just like in the movies you've seen

of guys with PRESS cards stuck in their hatbands.

(And, yes, I really did chase Lana Turner and daughter Cheryl Crane across the tarmac at Lockheed Burbank Airport one summer night as they ran from Johnny Stompanato, a sometimes enforcer for the notorious gangster Mickey Cohen. I got photos of that flashbulb-illuminated encounter just in the nick of time: Johnny was stabbed

— ONLINE, Page 7



Advocates say home values, teacher salaries will get a welcome boost
School override measures coast to easy victory
Community Reels Against Tragedy Strikes Again
By Joyce Cascard
It's the kind of home primer that sends a shiver down the spine of anyone who's ever been in a home that's been hit by a disaster. It's the kind of home primer that sends a shiver down the spine of anyone who's ever been in a home that's been hit by a disaster. It's the kind of home primer that sends a shiver down the spine of anyone who's ever been in a home that's been hit by a disaster.

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Tempe woman celebrates century mark

Vitamins, love of family fuel 100 years of life

By Joyce Coronel

Woodrow Wilson was president of the United States. Women celebrated winning the right to vote in New York. World War I raged on. This was what was happening on Nov. 18, 1917. It was also, coincidentally, the day Pearl Fern Lawson was born.

While some of those milestones may long since have faded from memory, Pearl Fern Lawson's still hasn't. At least not yet nor apparently any time soon.

Surrounded by family and friends at Westchester Senior Living in Tempe, the 100-years-young Fern sat quietly in her wheelchair, watching contentedly as a party in her honor unfolded. A display at the front of the room featured a poster with photos of her throughout her long life which began on a farm in South Dakota and eventually wound up in southern Arizona and, ultimately, Tempe.

Fern has outlived two husbands, including the father of birthday party organizer Nancy Orvis, now 72. "She married my dad in 1976 and they lived in Green Valley for 30-some years, south of Tucson," Orvis said.

"We finally convinced them when my dad was 98 to move up here so we could be closer to take care of them." Orvis' father died when he was 99½, and that's when Fern moved to the care center at Westchester.

"She's social," said Dawn Dunn-Rice, activities



Pearl Fern Lawson, 100, left, alongside Edna, 102.

director at the Tempe senior-living facility. "She likes the modified bowling that we do—birthday parties and our no-cook cooking class. Anything social—she's there."

Then there are the glamour shots. Yes, glamour shots. Seems that Fern, alongside other residents, enjoys those too. The ladies recently gathered for a makeover that included hair, makeup and photos. A framed image of Fern at her stylish best stood at the front of the hall during the festivities.

So how did Fern manage to make it all the way to her 100th birthday party?

"Vitamins. Shaklee vitamins. We took 'em for 30 years," Fern said. She also credited the love of her parents and a marriage late in life.

"I married a man after we were both 65 and we

were married for 35 years."

Her happiest memories are centered around her parents, life in the Black Hills, Mt. Rushmore and her first marriage that took place when she was 25.

Fern's birthday also managed to capture the attention of Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell, who issued a proclamation declaring Nov. 18 Pearl Fern Lawson Day.

The roomful of friends and relatives, some of whom had traveled from as far away as New Mexico and Iowa, applauded as Don Orvis read the proclamation.

Nancy Orvis thanked the crowd for their attendance. "I know that Fern appreciates all of her friendships here at Westchester and beyond. Our family is small but mighty."

The century mark doesn't come around too often for most folks, so it only seemed right to have two cakes to celebrate, one chocolate and the other white, both festooned with colorful roses. Then there was the candle in the shape of 100. It took Fern only two blows to extinguish it.

Ballard said Fern isn't the only centenarian at Westchester—Edna, 102, lives in the independent-living apartments.

Added Ballard:

"She is a force of nature and still plays the old time hymns on piano for vespers."

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And as always, "le bon temps roule".



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Comments sought thru Dec. 6 Fishing ramada re-do



Online comments related to designs being proposed for renovation of the fishing ramadas at the lake at Kiwanis Park are being sought through Wednesday, Dec. 6.

Residents and park visitors have been invited to take an online survey now through Wednesday, Dec. 6, at www.tempe.gov/ParkUpdates.

The improvements will be funded out of the city's Capital Improvement Program budget as part of the Parks Improvement Plan, which is reinvesting more than \$30 million into Tempe parks over the next few years.

Construction is expected to begin in summer 2018.

Work starts on industrial center



— Wrangler News photo

Construction is underway on a \$10 million Chandler Corporate Industrial Center, predicted to become a world-class institution that will enhance the city's reputation as a focal point for business and commerce.

The 100,018 square-foot project is being developed at 370 N. Juniper Drive, on the northwest corner of Chandler Boulevard and McClintock Drive.

Construction is scheduled to be completed sometime next summer.

Overseeing construction is Desert Palm Management Group LLC, which is partnering with LGE Design Build.

LGE President and CEO David Sellers said the goal for the project is to create a striking, state-of-the-art corporate facility that can set a standard for similar projects in the region.

"An undertaking of this magnitude can do tremendous things for the city of Chandler, from creating new job opportunities to leading more and more people to live, work, dine and shop in the city," Sellers said.

From our readers

Editor:

Loved your recent oped on news and sales. Starting out as a broadcast news producer, I never thought I would have to toe that line.

Then I was challenged with producing our station's first program featuring paid advertisers. And now here I am, fully planted on the other side.

I have seen the very sticky evolution of our local newsrooms, and while "scary" may not be the right word—as most local companies looking to leverage advertising are mostly good—"concerning" might be an understatement.

Kudos to you and your team as you've upheld high standards and continued to grow. It's very admirable!

— Jennifer McFarren

Editor:

Here are some random recollections about The Tempe Daily News, which once was our only newspaper.

Frank Connoly owned it. Skip

Bryant knew all of our Tempe and ASU Athletics. Peg Bryant and Veda Lansberry wrote for it. One shot (Jan Young) with her Camera and her trenchcoat took only one shot for each story for the paper. Later, Paul Wolfe was the editor and Lawn Griffiths wrote for it. So sad we have lost our longtime daily paper.

Today the Wrangler News does a good job us, and we greatly appreciate them. Thanks to them for publishing it for 30 years and to all of the rest of you who read it.

— Doug Royle

From Facebook

Douglas Black — "I can't help but pick a copy. Local news is the best news!"

From the editor: Let us hear from you! Email editor@wranglernews.com. We'll print selected comments as space is available.

Dec. 15 is deadline to enter Teen talent to be showcased



Teens interested in showcasing their talents for cash prizes have until Friday, Dec. 15, to enter Chandler's Teen Talent Competition to be held in January at Chandler Center for the Arts. The competition is open to young adults ages 13 to 17 who can sing, dance, rap, play an instrument or have a talent to share with the world.

Cost is \$30 for each performing act. To sign up online, visit chandleraz.gov/registration using code 2YT001, or contact shawn.peoples@chandleraz.gov or call 480-782-2746.

The talent competition brings out artists including vocalists, bands, dancers (individual and groups) and even magicians.

"Our intermission act this year will be something 'magical', so you don't want to miss it," said Shawn Peoples, a recreation department coordinator.

First place performance in each category will receive a cash prize. The public is invited to attend; general admission tickets are \$5 at the door.



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No water? No problem. These hardy denizens stand tall anyway



Thinking of Arizona, what's the first image that pops into your head? The Saguaro cactus, of course. It's the universal symbol of the American West. And it's nearly impossible to live a day here and not catch a glimpse of one of these thriving desert xerophytes standing tall, as if assuming the role of protector over these lands.

The city of Chandler has taken action this year to provide desert aesthetics to a stretch of Arizona Avenue that had declined in appearance over the years. The twist? These cacti are made of metal.

Now, two of the landscaping projects that have beautified areas of Chandler have received awards from the Arizona Landscape Contractors Association.

The Arizona Avenue project involved the installation of 70 decorative metal cacti in highway medians between Chandler Heights and Riggs roads.

The city typically would install real plants, said city spokesman Jim Phipps, but there was no available water supply. To bring a water main and install an irrigation system to the median would have cost over \$400,000. The steel versions represented one-tenth the cost.

The installation of decorative metal cacti received the association's highest recognition, an Award of Excellence, given to projects that demonstrate outstanding levels of workmanship and creativity.

The other award-winning project involved 1,200 linear feet of wall and landscaped frontage along Knox Road in central Chandler. Landscape elements included a plant palette of shades, colors and textures that were easy to maintain, cost conscious and beautiful to behold.

The 6-foot-tall, heavy-duty, grout-filled wall features decorative block with intermittent columns trimmed with red-glass tile topped with a precast pier cap. Between the columns is a decorative 'V' pattern designed with precast block.

The wall received ALCA's Award of Distinction, presented to projects of superior workmanship. Both projects were designed by Bart Brown, the city's landscape maintenance and design coordinator.

—Chelsea Flood

Online

From Page 1

to death shortly thereafter, and the Turner-Crane-Stompanato odyssey reached an inglorious finale).



Kody Acevedo



Chelsea Flood



Billy Hardiman



Alex J. Walker



Yusef Sabri

These, along with other similarly fascinating bits of the odd and offbeat, are among the memorable highlights of those olden days of newspapering mentioned above.

But I digress. The new crop of young people we see today bears little resemblance to us media swashbucklers of the 1950s and '60s, but rather who view the future of mass communication through the lens of technology and creative innovation.

Which brings me to some of the explorative sidetrips we've been taking lately into the realm of the online delivery of stories and film via Facebook and YouTube, also accessible on our Wrangler News website.

Behind these innovative ventures into our electronic outreach are some of the young people

I mentioned earlier: Kody Acevedo, Chelsea Flood, Yusef Sabri, Billy Hardiman and Alex J. Walker. While I'm sure I thought of my early days as the primetime of breaking-news

journalism, what this new crop of explorers is embarking on has the potential for much more lasting relevance.

And with them at the reins of that process, we're delighted to have ventured into some exciting new territory.

So watch for the imprint of these young people as our little hometown paper steers—or possibly self-navigates, considering the state of an increasingly driverless society—toward some fresh and no doubt wonderous destinations.

In the meantime, we hope you'll join us on Facebook, You Tube and other jaunts across the vast parking lot of new technology—no flashbulbs or Johnny Stompanatos to slow us down.

Cronkite video grad pioneers Wrangler online video feature

Wrangler News is pleased to announce our latest ongoing project, a community video series highlighting local profiles, business features, and news stories.

We want to take a moment to introduce the man behind the camera and our creative mind, Wrangler's videographer Kody Acevedo, 22, a recent graduate of the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Acevedo, a native of Redlands, Calif., has worked with Wrangler for roughly two years, meaning he is no rookie when it comes to all things local.

He has quickly sharpened his videography skills over the past couple years through his internship with the Diamondbacks and Fox Sports AZ.

We're sure you'll find value, and enjoyment, in Kody's ongoing video series as much as we look forward to tapping into his talents.



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Popular student's legacy kept alive with scholarship

By Chelsea Flood

As the five-year anniversary approaches for the Blake Norvell Smile Scholarship, a reflection on the overall growth and impact of the community-oriented project is owed during this milestone.

The scholarship was established back in 2013 by friends and family after the unexpected passing of Blake Norvell, a beloved Aztec alumnus.

Norvell's mother, along with some of his closest friends, felt the scholarship was the best way to continue his legacy while providing an opportunity for aspiring Corona students who exhibit leadership qualities similar to those that Norvell possessed.

Since the program's inception, community support behind the scholarship has been overwhelming and consistent, Norvell's mother Stephanie says.

"We have built excellent rapport with the local businesses here," she said. "The best part about staying local is that the business owners are dedicated to supporting and giving back to the community.

"It's simply amazing to witness."

Blake's presence continues to thrive in the surrounding Tempe area, as witnessed by Stephanie when she fundraises.

"When I enter a local establishment to discuss the scholarship, on more than one occasion the manager immediately recognizes Blake's photo and remembers him with a smile on their face," Stephanie said. "Making long-lasting connections was his specialty."

This year the fundraiser transitioned back to its home roots at Zipps Sports Grill the night before Thanksgiving because the group felt it embodied the best local atmosphere in the area, Stephanie says.

"It has always been a great success. All of Blake's friends love coming back to town for the chance to get together and catch up, while reminiscing on heartfelt memories of Blake," Stephanie said. "Blake was always the glue bringing everyone together when he was alive; now that he's passed he's still doing that same exact thing."

Well over 30 businesses donated to the cause this year, including Great Harvest Bread Co., Garcia's The Keg, Charleston's, Kneaders and Jimmy and Joe's Pizzeria to name a few.

According to Stephanie, attendance was in abundance at the event, where donations continued to flood by offering each participant a "Smile" wristband for a \$5 contribution, raffle tickets for purchase, and a silent auction.

So far, the grand total has reached \$4,000 this year.

"As the fund continues to grow, we are confident that the scholarship will see longevity at Corona long after we slow the fundraising portion down," Stephanie says. "I'm pleased to know that future students will be given the chance to use the scholarship to continue making a difference in their community by leading the way."

This year, the fund will award two \$1,000 scholarships to Corona seniors.

The scholarship is designed to reward a specific type of student.

"During these hard times that we're facing, I want to spotlight those young individuals that are making a difference at their school to help their peers," Stephanie



Top: Dollars for Scholars board members Wendy Kozloski and Nori Cannell, alongside DV Engineering teacher Dan Zavaleta. Middle: From left, Zack Kreisheimer, Aaron Kuhl, Lindsay Kuhl, Chris Pham, Sean Imadiyi, Randy Miller, Brett Miller, Jenny Werdean and Leah Variano. Bottom: From left, Tim Martin, Matt Altoff and Brett Miller.



said. "I want to celebrate the kids that are actually making a difference at Corona by giving back. If Blake could meet these kids, I know he would be so proud."

High school seniors wishing to be considered for a Smile Scholarship should go to www.tempe.dollarsforscholars.org, click on the Students and Parents tab toward the top of the screen, then follow the red arrow link ("Click to Login") and create an account. Then, type in the name of your school and click choose. Make sure you have completed the information in all of the sections. The computer will match you to all the scholarships you qualify for. To apply for scholarships, click on my scholarships on the left-hand menu. Enter the essay responses and then click the submit application button. The deadline for the online application is Feb. 5. To make a donation, go to www.tempe.dollarsforscholars.org and designate Blake Norvell Smile Scholarship.





Connect with Councilmembers

Want to discuss your ideas and input about Tempe? Join these Councilmembers as they host conversation events to connect with community members:

Java with Joel – Join Councilmember Joel Navarro on Saturday, Jan. 27, at 10 a.m. in the Connections Café at the Tempe Public Library, 3500 S. Rural Road.

Community Roundtable – Join Vice Mayor Robin Arredondo-Savage and Councilmember Randy Keating on Tuesday, Jan. 23, at 6 p.m., at The Watershed, 5350 S. Lakeshore Drive, or on Monday, Jan. 29, at 6 p.m., at the North Tempe Multigenerational Center, 1555 N. Bridalwreath St.

For more information about the whole City Council, visit www.tempe.gov/elected.



New \$75 fee for recurring code violations

Beginning Jan. 1, the City of Tempe may charge a \$75 fee to property owners accumulating two cases of the same violation within a 365-day period.

Over the last several years, residents have expressed their concern in the annual community survey over the enforcement of City Code. Code Compliance has been working to increase enforcement efforts along with assistance and education programs.

Visit www.tempe.gov/code for information about the City Code and Code Compliance programs.

Preparations underway now for 2018-19 fiscal year city budget

The City of Tempe is beginning the annual process of developing its operating and capital budgets for the 2018-19 fiscal year.

The Mayor and City Council would like public input on daily operations and city assets and infrastructure, such as streets, community centers, pools, lighting, parks and more. Where do you think the city should focus its limited funds to provide the greatest benefit to the community?

The city's operating budget covers everyday expenses, such as employee salaries and health benefits, while capital projects range from major equipment replacements and street improvements to new facilities and building updates.

The two categories of expenses are budgeted separately.

For details on the formulation of budgets for the 2018-19 fiscal year, as well as projected dates for City Council discussions and the public forum on both the operating and capital budgets, visit www.tempe.gov/budgetplan. Also on the webpage is a link to an online survey to gather residents' budget feedback.

The survey is active through March 31.

Spring 2018 city elections will be all Ballot by Mail

Three open City Council seats and three ballot propositions will be decided by voters this spring in Tempe. Voter registration is taking place now.

The Primary Election is March 13 and the General Election is May 15.

This is the first Tempe election that will be Ballot by Mail, which means that every registered voter will automatically get a ballot.

Voters can drop off their voted ballots or get replacement ballots at either of the two ballot centers in Tempe or at the Maricopa County Recorder's Office.

Information about the elections, from voter registration to finding the results, can be found at www.tempe.gov/election or by calling 480-350-4311.

Background information about Ballot by Mail is at www.tempe.gov/BalotbyMail.

Prospective candidates have until Dec. 13 to file their completed paperwork, at which time they will be certified for the ballot, or not, by the City Clerk's Office. Names and contact information of candidates certified for the ballot will be posted on www.tempe.gov/election.

According to the Tempe City Charter, Section 7.01, the Primary Election is held to nominate or elect candidates.

If there are no more than two candidates for each vacancy, the Primary Election is eliminated and the General Election is held on that date. In the case of the 2018 elections, if there are six or fewer total candidates, there will be one election, which would take place March 13.

On Nov. 9, the City Council approved three propositions for the March 13 ballot: one would amend the City Charter to declare Tempe's portion of Papago Park a preserve; one would amend the City Charter to require the disclosure of the origins of major contributions used to influence local city elections; and one would raise a state-imposed spending ceiling for cities enacted in 1980, so the city can spend the revenue it brings in.

The deadline for submitting arguments for or against any of the ballot measures, which will be printed in the publicity pamphlet is Dec. 13. Arguments must be submitted to clerk@tempe.gov; they cannot exceed 300 words including argument title; and must include a sworn statement from each sponsoring person. The cost per argument is \$100 to offset a portion of the cost of the pamphlet printing. Register to vote by Feb. 12 for the March election, and by April 16 for the May election.

Ballots will be mailed Feb. 14 for the March election and April 18 for the May election.



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Onetime Cardinals cheerleader shares passion for fitness

By Deborah Hilcove



Andrea Kaye Goodman is on a mission to help women get fit while building friendships in the process. Her fitness workouts, offered in the relaxed, open-air setting of Tempe and other city parks, don't stop there, though.

They revved up at Desert Breeze Park in West Chandler in October, and participants already pursue such widely diverse ventures as the Pat Tillman race, charity and community events, birthday dinners and family hikes.

The birth of Goodman's passion for fitness dates back to her days as an Arizona Cardinals cheerleader, of which she recalls:

"It was an amazing experience. The rush and adrenaline of being on the field is something that is hard to explain. To a performer, it is addicting. I love to dance. It was a lot of hard work, but well worth it. Practices three times per week, all-day commitment on game days and multiple community service events throughout the season...But I loved it.

"The beautiful women I had the privilege of dancing alongside became my closest friends and many of us are still in contact today."

Following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Goodman hung up her cheerleading outfit and was hired as part of a government-sponsored entertainment group.

"We flew military air, had bodyguards and slept and ate on all different types of bases," said

Goodman. We slept in (the troops') quarters and showered in their facilities, and we experienced first-hand how they live day-to-day."

Reflecting again on the experience, Goodman continues:

"During my tours, we participated with the military during their morning fitness training. What a challenging and inspiring way to get fit. It felt so great to get up early and train outdoors. Little did I know this tiny seed that was planted during my tours would lead to an entire business.

Fast forward to 2017, with Goodman's new venture creating an ongoing means for her to share some of what she learned with other women.

"The camaraderie of a group, bonding together as we push ourselves to accomplish the workout and the amazing feeling of accomplishment when we are finished, are guiding principles I use in my classes."

Explaining the name of her business, Bootcamp for Babes, Goodman recalls how the idea came to her while attending Bible study during which her classmates jokingly called themselves Bible Babes.

"As I brainstormed (about my new idea), it was important to me that the culture of my company would involve women bonding and feeling like they are part of a team. It seemed only fitting that the group of women I would be bringing together would-be 'babes' also. And that's how Boot Camp Babes was born."

Although she and her husband Dan, along with their three young children,

are active in sports, she says, "We are a self-proclaimed 'Disney-freak' family. We have annual passes and go as often as we can to Disneyland."

While the family eats "clean" and favors simple meals, Goodman says, "I do *not* love to cook. But I *do* love to bake cupcakes and treats. The kids love to help bake and decorate. My son prefers to just lick the bowls and be the 'taste-tester' for all my frostings."

Admitting to a busy life as mom, wife, friend, coach and primary caregiver for her father, Goodman says, "I always thrive when my schedule is full. I am very type-A and organized."

She suggests that would-be entrepreneurs should "Just go for it; fail along the way—who cares? That is when the growth happens. I would rather fail at something I love doing every single day than succeed at doing something I hate.

"Also, seek out mentors that motivate," she says, listing fitness and lifestyle coaches Angelike Norrie and Lori Harder as "two amazing women."

Finally, says Goodman:

"Confidence is where everything needs to begin. Everything—doesn't matter what gender or nationality. Smile first, then get it done."

Classes are held at Desert Breeze Park in West Chandler at 9 a.m. Mondays and Wednesdays, 660 N. Desert Breeze Boulevard.

Childcare is available.

Information: www.bootcampbabes.com

Tempe pet rescue's auction coming Sunday, Dec. 3

Tempe-based Lost Our Home Pet Rescue will hold its 7th annual Holiday Champagne Brunch & Auction, featuring gifts for everyone's holiday shopping list, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Omni Scottsdale Resort & Spa at Montelucia.

Auction-tainer Letitia Frye will oversee the event, expected to attract hundreds of pet lovers and provide inspiring stories. The event raises important funds for the nonprofit, no-kill shelter.

KEZ 99.9 DJ Melissa Sharpe will be the emcee and Lost Our Home will present its Pet Champion Excellence Award to Sandy Day, vice chairman of Lulu's Fund, part of the Timothy T. Day Foundation. The award recognizes a person,

organization or company that has made an extraordinary contribution to pets in Arizona.

"The brunch is our most important event of the year," says Jodi Polanski, Lost Our Home Pet Rescue's Founder and executive director. "Our costs have increased this year as our intake of animals has increased.

"We appreciate the support from our community and corporate sponsors that make it possible to help needy pets and pet parents in our community."

Brunch tickets are \$85, \$850 for tables. Sponsorships range from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

To purchase tickets online and pre-register for the silent auction visit www.lostourhome.org.

Lost Our Home was founded in 2008 in response to the thousands of pets that were in need as a result of the economic downturn in general and the Valley foreclosure crisis in particular.

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Childsplay

From Page 1

800-seat center stage.

“This is bittersweet,” said Tempe Mayor Mark Mitchell, “but we understand Childsplay’s desire to try to grow into a bigger space. The city has proudly embraced Childsplay as a key contributor to the cultural life of Tempe and we wish them all the best,” said Mitchell.

How it started

In launching its Arts and Culture Plan in 2015, the city and a group of about 900 arts devotees envisioned a continuing role for Childsplay in Tempe, emphasizing what they considered the importance of theater and arts opportunities for children.

At the same time, some planners wanted the city to diversify its performing-arts offerings at TCA to include more variety for adults, planning for which has been ongoing since the July 2016 hiring of Ralph Remington as TCA’s artistic director.

In a Page 1 interview by Wrangler News correspondent M.V. Moorhead following the new director’s arrival, Remington said he hoped to see Tempe moving toward reinforcing its arts scene.

He said he looked forward to involving TCA in “new play development, by the newest, brightest playwrights in America, and choreographers, and musical groups.

“You want to have [these productions] overlap, so that it’s not just one after the other, but the dance companies get exposed to the plays.”

As an example of progress toward that goal, audiences were treated to a first-ever Disrupt FEST, including a

play directed by Remington. And, with such initiatives continuing to move forward, Remington seems to have helped further propel TCA’s pursuit of audience diversification.

A youthful audience

During much of its time in Tempe, Childsplay became a nationally and internationally respected professional theater company whose chosen audience is children. The overarching premise, according to the organization, has been that young people deserve to experience challenging, thought-provoking theater of the highest artistic quality.

Said one of the group’s historical summaries:

“Our respect for children’s intelligence and creativity drives us to produce new and innovative works by theatre’s finest artists.”

That principle did not change through the decade that followed, and in fact was reinforced by evolutionary changes occurring in Valley schools.

“Our understanding of the challenges facing Arizona’s classroom teachers leads us to offer arts education resources in 40 communities annually. In the past 36 years, we have educated and inspired more than 4 million young people and families. We have grown to serve an average annual audience of 200,000 students, teachers, and families.”

Today, performing in schools remains a core Childsplay activity, with three annual touring productions that visit hundreds of schools throughout Arizona.

It is estimated that one in five Arizona K-6 students will see a

Childsplay production at their school. More than half of this audience lives at or below the poverty level.

By the numbers

As to financial arrangements involving Tempe's sale of the former Harrington school to Childsplay in 2006, spokeswoman Ripley said Childsplay—10 years later, in 2016—proposed selling the city its interest in the campus improvements it had made for the depreciated value of those improvements.

The city agreed to pay Childsplay \$1.9 million over five years and take back ownership of the property.

The city and Childsplay then entered into a 50-year use agreement for the property, with Childsplay paying to lease, maintain and make repairs at the campus over that time period.

"This community strongly values arts and culture, and the city of Tempe has always made these types of investments in quality of life," Mitchell said.

"Our residents generously approved the 20-year arts tax in 2000 that made TCA possible. Our investments in Harrington School will continue to help develop the artistic spirit of our young people."

This past May, the Tempe City Council agreed to explore continuing the one-tenth-of-a-cent sales tax for the arts beyond the levy's current expiration in 2020. Councilmembers agreed to place the issue on a future ballot for voter approval.

Freeway Chevrolet joins statewide bowling classic to benefit area kids

Freeway Chevrolet is reminding area residents to mark their calendars for the fourth annual Strikes For Kids AZ Bowling Classic, presented by AZ Priority Care, coming to Tempe on May 15.

Strikes For Kids is a national nonprofit that partners with 125 NFL and NBA players. Proceeds from the event will benefit The Strikes For Kids Backpack Giveaway Program.

The newly launched program was established in July and has rapidly grown over the last couple

of months.

"Over the course of 14 bowling events in 14 states, we provided almost 2,000 backpacks filled with school supplies to children in need.

Strikes For Kids provided 125 backpacks to the kids at the United Way for our third annual bowling classic that took place in July," founder Joseph Allen said.

The event, hosted by Cardinals standout Haason Reddick, will be taking place at Main Event Entertainment Center in Tempe.

Information: 559-241-4412. To register: www.strikesforkidsaz.com.

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Oktoberfest

From Page 1

four decades.

Activities that had been planned for the entire history of the festival were taken away, which critics said may have also caused a change in the atmosphere.

Despite the potentially detrimental turn that “took the event sideways,” the organization did not have to limit any number of exchange students who got to take what most consider a life-changing trip.

Enough was held in reserve to the weather any financial setback, according to the organization’s treasurer, Peter Ewen.

“I think what it did do is reenergize some of us to think, ‘Okay,’ we’ve got to get a little bit more structure on this,” he said.

The organization took a step back to its roots in planning 2017 Oktoberfest production.

It used an improved social-media base and word-of-mouth to let Tempe folks know that the old event was

back—and better than ever.

“It was a mixed blessing, where the outcome of two years ago was not great,” added O’Hara.

“I mean it almost ruined the organization but it allowed us to then go back to the drawing board.”

Event planners said that the comments from police officers on patrol at the 2017 event indicated that there was a restored feeling of a family event.

“We brought the old band back together to revitalize the event and put it on solid ground,” West said.

Though the lasting traditions were revisited, event planners say that this event will only improve from this point—along with careful planning to go with it.

“It really allowed us to go outside the box. There should never be a box, but we threw in a bunch of ideas and sorted through everything, and it was literally everyone coming together and finding a way just to push it forward” O’Hara said.

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Kyrene weighs its spending options on results-based funding

By Diana Whittle

The Kyrene School District is facing a good problem to solve—how to spend nearly \$1.2 million in results-based funding.

Members of the Governing Board discussed with staff various ideas on how best to use the money, which was a reward from the Arizona Legislature to individual schools for their high-performance levels on AZMerit tests.

Within the Kyrene District, nine schools earned the funds, based on their students' scoring in the top 10 percent of all schools statewide. The students were specifically graded on the mathematics and language arts portion of state-wide assessment tool.

Three of the elementary schools selected for the funding are in the Wrangler corridor, including Cielo and Brisas in Chandler, and Mariposa in Tempe.

Assistant Superintendent Laura Toenjes explained that the results-based funding was awarded directly to individual schools, so Governing Board approval was not required.

"But we felt it was right to present our plans to the members of the board so that the spending is transparent, since \$1.2 million is a significant amount of money. We want to use the funds in a way that will best impact all the kids in Kyrene," said Toenjes.

"One of the allowable expenditures is to take the best practices of the nine schools and to implement them district-wide."

In a show of team spirit, the nine principals of the top-rated schools gathered together and determined that the funds should be used to benefit all schools in the district.

Their proposal is a combination of both learning opportunities for teachers along with curriculum work. This also is in keeping with the allowable expenditures, which can be used for teacher salaries and their professional development.

Board President John King said he appreciated the approach to the use of the funds district-wide and called for a vote by the Governing Board. Though not unanimous, the board did give their approval on moving forward with finalizing a plan to include district-wide professional development pathways and results-based curriculum planning.

Arizona's results-based education funding program is new this year; and, Kyrene officials are unclear if it will be extended into another school year.

Statewide, the results-based funding program allocated \$400 per student to high-performing schools with high percentages of students whose families qualify as low-income based on the federal free and reduced-price lunch program.

For districts with lower percentages of low-income students, such as Kyrene, \$225 was allocated per student.

In the past, state and federal school-funding formulas have provided funding based on the number of students and not how successfully they are learning, with additional funds focused on underperforming schools.



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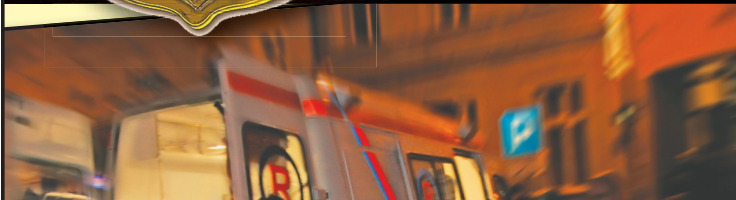
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Sports

With Alex Zener

Excitement builds as new players, wins lead Aztecs' 2017- 18 basketball season to a promising start

After graduating eight seniors last spring, including **Alex Barcello** and **Saben Lee** who are now playing at Division I schools, the Aztecs, with only three returning players from last season's 6A State Championship second-place team, started the 2017-18 season going 3-1 at the Fear the Hop Tournament held Nov. 20-25 at Mesa High School.

Corona defeated Mountain Ridge, 71-59; Skyline, 62-51; and Highland, 56-53, but lost to Hamilton, 63-51.

"We are excited about this season," said head coach **Neil MacDonald**. "We have a lot of new players on the varsity squad and are ready to see what this group can accomplish."

The sole returning starter, 6-foot-2 senior forward **Melek Alexander**—along with the two other returning players, sophomore guards 6-foot-3 **Dalen Terry** and six-footer **Eric Blackwell**—have helped get the team off to a good start.

"All three of the returning players from last season's team, Melek, Dalen and Eric, played significant minutes last year and have emerged to be our three best offensive players so far this

season."

As far as defense goes, every player is expected to play tough defense, according to MacDonald.

The team is also fortunate to have several players from last season's JV team who only lost one game all season.

"**Miles Allen, Keb Summers, Derek Zarate, Kobbie Marion, Sha-Vere Yarde** and **Hale Samuelson**, who were on our 17-1 JV team last season, are now playing on our Varsity team," said MacDonald.

"These players will have significant roles this season."

Other members of the team expected to contribute to the team's success on and off the court are **Mitch Laukonen, Vince Dhouti, Jason Reval** and **Illen Ortet**.

Once again Corona basketball will center around more than just winning.

"Our expectations are the same every year for all of our players," said MacDonald. "Our program revolves around attitude and effort, not outcomes."

— SPORTS, Page 19

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Besides attitude and effort, MacDonald feels his team's depth will prove to be the Aztecs strength as the team is scheduled to play 26 games this season before the sectionals and state playoffs start.

Corona was scheduled to play at Mesa Mountain View on Nov. 28, at home against North on Nov. 30 and then Boulder Creek on Dec. 5 before playing at Copper Canyon on Dec. 7. All games are scheduled to start at 7 p.m.

During the winter break, the Aztecs are scheduled to play Windward, out of Los Angeles, on Dec. 16 at the Desert Classic held at Rancho Solano Prep before playing at the McClintock Shootout Dec. 26-29.

Marcos de Niza Boys Basketball

The Division 4A Padres started the 2017-18 season playing against last year's 6A state championship team, the Basha Bears, in the Salpointe Catholic Tipoff Classic, Nov. 20, held in Tucson.

Although Marcos lost to the Bears, 51-43, six players scored points in the game, including 6-foot-1 senior forward **Janathon Bolds** who made six out of his eight two-point attempts to shoot 75 percent. Bolds scored a team high 17 points.

Junior guard **Lovonne Brunson**, at 6-foot-4, was next with 10 points and eight rebounds, while 6-foot-1 senior guard **Orion Bryant** pulled down six rebounds.

The Padres lost two more times—86-70 against Mesquite and 63-43 against Cholla—but they did defeat North 74-58 and Rincon University, 69-65 at the Classic.

Nine Marcos players scored against North, with Brunson and Bolds once again leading the team in points. Brunson ended the game with 24 points and 13 rebounds while Bolds scored 22 points, shooting 10 for 10 in two-pointers or an incredible 100 percent from the field. His two other points were from free throws.

Junior **Torren Union** pulled down six rebounds against North and scored 10 points in the Padres win against Rincon. Union hit both

his three-pointers to shoot 100 percent, along with pulling down five rebounds.

Marcos had four players score more than 10 points against Rincon, including Brunson who led all scorers with 27 points. Bolds put in 13 points while Bryant scored 12 and Union 10.

Senior **Chris Terrell** and junior **JJ Hill** both had blocks against Rincon, while Union and Bryant led the team in assists with four each.

Other members of the team contributing on and off the court include seniors **Jalen Porter, Charles Newton** and **Sunny Ozuna**; junior **Ty Frazier**; and sophomores **Russell Lingruen** and **Tommie Lingruen**.

The Padres have three away games to start the regular season. They were scheduled to play at Bradshaw Mountain in Prescott on Nov. 28, at Combs in San Tan Valley on Nov. 30 and at Cortez on Dec. 1.

Marcos then had three home games scheduled—on Dec. 5 against Buckeye, Dec. 7 against Shadow Mountain and Dec. 12 against Cactus Shadows.



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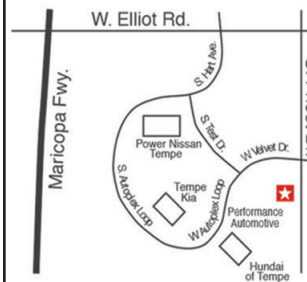
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Still time to apply for teen leadership academy

Time is running out to submit applications for Mayor Jay Tibshraeny's Teen Leadership Academy. Chandler residents who currently are enrolled in high school or a similar-level home-school program are encouraged to apply.

Applications for the program are available online at chandleraz.gov/connect and must be submitted by Friday, Dec. 8.

During the five-day program, students will meet with elected officials, managers and staff from most city departments to better understand how Arizona's fourth largest city is run.

The free academy will run from March 12-16, from approximately 9 a.m. to noon. Students must have transportation to and from City Hall during the duration of the program.

Completed applications may be mailed to: Dave Bigos, Mayor and Council Assistant, Chandler City Hall, 175 S. Arizona Ave., fifth floor, Chandler, AZ 85225. Applications also may be submitted via email to david.bigos@chandleraz.gov.

The selection process will occur during the month of December, and the new class will be introduced during the Mayor's State of the City on Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2018.

For the fourth year in a row, the academy is being funded in part by the generosity of the Chandler Kiwanis Club.

For more information about the program, contact Dave Bigos at 480-782-2222.



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Arts (and music!) in the Park . . .



Members of the Chandler Children's Choir were among several musical ensembles that performed at the Arts in the Park event at Estrada Park. The day of family fun featured art demonstrations, an array of fare from local vendors and performances from Sugar Thieves and the Mill Avenue Singers. The Estate La Colina Neighborhood Association hosted the celebration. See our [Wrangler News Facebook page](#) for online video. — Wrangler News photos by Kody Acevedo



Improving market, seasonal history suggest it could be a good time to sell. Here are some tips:

Jeff Lucas, one of the area's most familiar names in real estate sales, knows whereof he speaks when he recommends that home sellers consider following the lead of recognized experts before putting their home on the market.

Lucas has been active in the Tempe/West Chandler market for 20-plus years, and he notes that fall has become one of the year's favorite times to list a property for sale.

In Lucas' latest newsletter, sellers are advised that staging their home can be a significant step in getting it sold, even though a full range of possible updates and improvements can derail the home's affordability.

Luckily, says Lucas, there are some ingenious strategies employed by professionals that can make your home look brighter, bigger — and, of course, more eye- and sale-appealing — without overstretching your budget.

Here are a few suggestions:

Fix up your floors — Don't want to pay to replace or refinish your floors? No prob. Grab a brown crayon to fill in divots. A one-to-one mix of olive oil and vinegar rubbed directly on scratched areas will also help make it look new. You can also use canola if you don't have olive, but then use a one-part vinegar, three-part oil mixture. Or, try this hack that uses walnuts to fix scratches. No, seriously.

Floors look great but don't sound so hot? "Fix creaky wood floors with a generous dusting of baby powder," said One Crazy House. "Work it into the cracks until the floor is no longer noisy."

Make it sparkle — Presumably, you already have cleaning supplies, sponges, and paper towels in the house. Now all you need is some elbow grease to make your home look shiny and new.

When selling your home, you need to take the cleaning beyond your typical weekly run-through. Think "Spring cleaning" turned up a notch or two. Remember that potential buyers will be looking everywhere, including inside drawers and cabinets. Make sure they're crumb-free and well organized. They may also open your refrigerator. While this can seem intrusive, you don't want to give them a reason to walk away, so make sure to tidy up the inside, wipe up any spills, throw away rotten food, and put a nice big box of Baking Soda in there to absorb any leftover smells.

Let the light in — Everyone is looking for "natural light," so show off what you've got by opening up those blinds and drapes. Did you just reveal a bunch of dirty windows and sills? Ewww. Grab that cleaning spray and make them shine. An old toothbrush is a great way to get gunk out of corners and in window tracks.

If your place isn't light and bright, even with all the blinds and drapes drawn, you'll need to depend on artificial lighting. This is no time to have lightbulbs out. Go hit that stash in your laundry room cabinet and switch out for fresh bulbs.

Declutter — Home stagers will tell you there is no more important step when preparing your home for sale. "If you are serious about staging your home, all clutter must go, end of story," said Houzz. "It's not easy, and it may even require utilizing offsite storage (or a nice relative's garage) temporarily, but it is well worth the trouble."

Do a walk-through with an outsider's eye, or ask a friend or family member to help since they'll be more objective. Anything that isn't used regularly or is taking away from the open feel of the house can be packed away. Small appliances and anything else hanging out on countertops can be put in a cabinet if you're not ready to stick it in a box. You want people to see the bones of the house, not your blender.

Depersonalize — While you're decluttering, keep personalization in mind. Buyers want to be able to picture themselves living in the home, and they might not be able to do so if they can't take their eyes off your wall of taxidermy.

Create closet space — Even if you have the world's largest walk-in closet in the master bedroom, you can give buyers the impression that there isn't enough space by overfilling it. Stagers recommend taking half of your clothes and shoes out and packing them away to create some airiness. Does the idea of packing up your stuff freak you out? You're going to have to do it when you move, anyway. This is just giving you a head start.

Remove the stink — Does your home greet guests with a big whiff of cat box? Potential home buyers might just turn right back around and get in the car. You also want to make sure your animals aren't irritating those who are touring or impeding them from entering certain rooms. Don't want to board them? Surely you have a friend or family member who'd love to watch your pets during showings, right?

Pull those weeds — You really can't overestimate the importance of curb appeal today. Even if you don't want to spring for a few bags of mulch and some colorful flowers to frame your door, there are easy and free steps you can take to give buyers a great first impression. Dispose of any visible weeds, leaves, and other unwanted stuff hanging out in the yard. Give your bushes a trim and mow the yard. If you can't power wash your home, at least wash the outside of the exterior windows that are within eye level.

And don't forget about the area closest to your front door. Sweep that stoop and make sure your welcome mat is actually welcoming, instead of dusty and dirty.

Address your furniture — Some of the most common problems in homes when it comes to furniture: 1) It's ugly; 2) It's old; There's too much of it; The arrangement is uninviting. Ugly and old might be hard to overcome when you're trying not to spend money, but the rest you can do something about.

"Sometimes when sellers are trying to make a small room seem like it's more spacious, they have a tendency to push all of their furniture against the walls to leave a big open space in the middle. This type of arrangement may leave a lot of open space, but ultimately leaves the interior design looking unfinished -- a big turn off for buyers. In this situation, it's better to create furniture groupings. First, envision the way the space should be used," said one industry newsletter. "Do you have a huge flatscreen TV that requires a lot of seating? Is there a corner in your living room that would serve perfectly as a reading nook? Group the furniture in ways that would make sense for the intended use. Then, make sure that there are clean and direct pathways through the room. You want potential buyers to be able to envision themselves living in your home and one of the quickest ways to do that is by creating a cozy seating area that's fit for conversation."

If the problem is that you've created a crowded space by using too much furniture, ditch a few pieces in a friend's garage for the time being (or, even better, donate them!) to create an intimate seating area. You can always bring those pieces back into your new home.

Borrow stuff — If, at the end of the day, your home still isn't looking show-ready, maybe it's time to raid a friend's house. Have a loved one who has an extra couch that's more neutral than yours or a couple of great accessories? It's time to test their love for you.

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'Always an artist'

Sculptor's vision turns art into a part of daily life

By M.V. Moorhead

Most of the time, most of us pay little attention to it. Now and then it might catch our eye, we might spend an idle minute or two reading a plaque, or admiring the craftsmanship of a statute or mosaic. And now and then pieces might get pulled into a public controversy. Otherwise, we tend to let public art blend into the scenery, like the trees or the buildings; it becomes part of the backdrop of our lives.

Nonetheless, public art, in the form of sculpture and monuments, has been a part of people's lives, especially in urban areas, since ancient times. And it has often been a source both of civil pride and of civil conflict, both for economic and ideological reasons.

Sculptor Arthur "Art" Norby thinks this is healthy. "It's good for the psyche to look at art," says Norby. "Even if you don't like it, you have to think about *why* you don't like it. Or you should."

Former Tempe Mayor Neil Guiliano famously crusaded for public art during his tenure (1994-2004), championing not only art installations throughout the city but also the founding of the Tempe Center for the Arts. But other cities around the Valley have shown a firm commitment to the muses as well, notably Carefree, Sun City West, Peoria and Mesa, all of which feature sculptures by Norby.

"I've probably always been an artist," says Norby, a native of southwestern rural Minnesota. "Before



Sculptor Art Norby puts finishing touches on one of his signature pieces of public art.

I was in kindergarten I had an aunt who taught me some artistic things, and all through school I was drawing pictures."

It wasn't until after his stint in the Navy and some years in the sporting goods business that Norby decided to pursue art seriously. He was self-taught: "I stole the best ideas and techniques from anywhere I could," he admits.

Norby's initial medium was scrimshaw, engraving images on cowbone and deer antlers. As his skills improved, he invested in whale teeth and walrus tusks, and eventually even paid \$900 for a mastodon tusk. But he abandoned this traditional form in 1980.

"I knew I didn't want to be categorized as a wildlife artist," he notes. "I went right from scrimshaw to sculpture."

It's in that form that Norby, who ran the Norby Gallery in Cave Creek from 1996 to 2007 (it's now based in New London, Minnesota), has had his most notable successes. He started with table-top sized projects: "One of my earliest works was a buffalo, bigger than a cantaloupe, smaller than a

watermelon," he recalls, and his Minnesota Heritage Collection included figures of "farmers, Indians, pioneers."

From these, Norby moved on to monumental-sized projects like *The Walkover*, a 1983 commission depicting a gymnast. "It ended up in the collection of an anonymous collector in Seattle who also had a Henry Moore, so I was in good company, although"—he adds with prompt Minnesotan modesty—"I'm not *that* good."

Eventually Norby would land public commissions throughout the country, from Windom, Minnesota to Trenton, New Jersey to the statue of Ernest McFarland in Mesa. Unsurprisingly, he's a supporter of public art.

"I think it's a necessity," he says. "We're in a period where public art is under scrutiny," referring to the recent protests for and against Civil War memorials. "I don't personally think that art should be destroyed because it is offensive, although maybe in an area where there's a lot of dissent against it should be moved to storage, or a museum. But the art itself shouldn't be destroyed or denigrated."

As for his own work, Norby claims to be apolitical: "In my art, I'm not for or against abortion, for or against war. I try to make feel-good art. I want you to feel good about what I've done."

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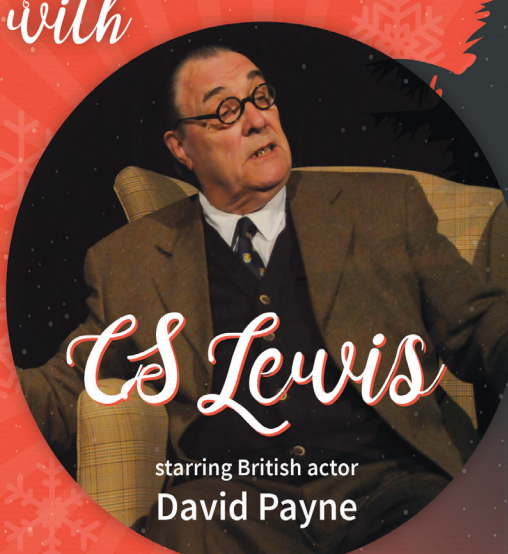
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Lost Gold

Popular East Valley adventurers Josh, left, and Jesse Feldman, topic of a 2016 Wrangler News feature on their 3-year television series *Ice Cold Gold*, have ventured onto the airwaves again with a Travel Channel pilot called *Lost Gold*, described as "an adventure through the Old West that will uncover history and lead them (and, vicariously, viewers) on a trail to treasure. The show premieres at 9 p.m. on the Travel Channel. Check your provider's listings for the exact time of showing.

— Wrangler News photo



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Diversions... with M.V. Moorhead

Father of Yuletide classic comes to life in screenplay



Now in theaters:

The Man Who Invented Christmas — The man in question is Charles Dickens, played by Dan Stevens in this adaptation of Les Standiford's 2008 nonfiction book. Standiford's thesis is that by writing his "Ghost-Story of Christmas" *A Christmas Carol* in 1843, Dickens helped to bring the holiday, which had fallen somewhat into disuse in Britain, to something of the social importance it now holds, and particularly to its association with charity and liberality.

If this is true, then I think we can forgive him for the long-term downside of this. It's doubtful that Dickens, with his genial vision of helping the needy and partying with family and friends, could have foreseen Black Friday riots and holiday depression.

This is a fascinating story, but while the movie, adapted by Susan Coyne and directed by Bharat Nalluri, is watchable and amusing enough, it seems to me to have been dramatized in the most conventional and heavy-handed way. Like *Shakespeare in Love*, the film depicts literary inspiration as a direct line from what an author witnesses or overhears on the street to what he

immediately runs home and scribbles into his work. But while *Shakespeare in Love* made a borderline-campy joke of this idea, *The Man Who Invented Christmas* suggests that it's getting at the Dickens psyche, as the author's imagination conjures up Scrooge, Marley, Fezziwig and other figures, and gets heckled by them.

The film tries to generate suspense over whether Dickens will allow Scrooge his change of heart and spare Tiny Tim at the end of the story, and further tries to link the Scrooginess in the author's own personality to his lifelong conflict with his big-talking, perennially broke father. Both of these ploys feel thin—it's hardly likely that Dickens ever conceived of *A Christmas Carol* ending with Scrooge unrepentant.

Still, there is plenty of enjoyable acting here. Christopher Plummer, who lent his voice to Herod the Great in *The Star*, is such a natural as Scrooge that it seems odd he's never played the part before. Stevens is exuberant as Dickens, and gets across some of the frustration that anyone who writes for a living feels at interruption. Justin Edwards is likable as the long-suffering Dickens pal John Forster, and it's great to see vets like Miriam Margolyes as a housekeeper and Simon Callow as the illustrator John

Leech. The best performance, however, is by Jonathan Pryce as the sweet, cadging fraud John Dickens, genuinely pained by his son's shame over him, but not about to let it stop him from having a good time.

Roman J. Israel, Esq. — The title character is an L.A.-based civil rights attorney who makes a bad first impression. With thick glasses and a sad, mopy Afro, dressed in an ill-fitting old suit and clip-on tie, making unfiltered (if usually justified) insulting remarks, barking loud derisive laughter, Roman is a brilliant lawyer but a socially awkward misfit without family or close friends.

When his beloved, legendary partner dies, Roman lands at a hotshot criminal defense firm run by the slick Colin Farrell. Farrell's exasperated by his new associate, but too aware of his gifts, and maybe too conscience-haunted about his own lost idealism, to get rid of him. When one of Roman's cases goes tragically wrong, he yields at long last to the temptations of cynicism, and winds up in real trouble.

Writer-director Dan Gilroy is trying for a gripping legal drama in the vein of *The Verdict*. But while the story has its interesting aspects, it's too loosely structured and rambling to keep us on the edge of our seats, and Roman's plight in the movie's final quarter is unconvincingly dramatized.

While the film falls short as a thriller, however, it succeeds as a character study. Washington taps the prickly side of his own persona to create this maddening and lovable nerd-warhorse, who decides, disastrously, to try wealth and luxury on for size. If the plot were as vividly rendered as the title character and his moral lapse, *Roman J. Israel, Esq.* could be a classic. As it is, it's an interesting misfire.

The Man Who Invented Christmas is rated PG and *Roman J. Israel, Esq.* is rated PG-13. Both play at *Tempe Marketplace, Chandler Fashion Center* and other multiplexes Valleywide.

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Commentary from Tempe Councilmember Lauren Kuby

The City of Tempe is committed to transparency, and we are making strides to improve the ways our community members can connect to their city's work.

Perhaps the first major way we opened up city operations is still a hallmark of transparency today: broadcasting public meetings. Your City Council meets in Work Study Sessions (where we discuss ideas and initiatives) and Regular Council Meetings (where we vote on budgets, ordinances, and resolutions). Tempeans can participate in the City Council Chambers, stream meetings at tempe.gov/tempe11, or watch Tempe 11 on Cox Communications (Ch. 11) or Century Link (Ch. 8012). Agendas are posted at tempe.gov/clerk.

Other public meetings are held regularly to collect input on services, initiatives, and infrastructure improvements. How do you find out about your areas of interest? Sign up to get city emails at tempe.gov/enews and follow us on social media.

In these times of historic distrust in government, however, we must go beyond public meetings and offer other ways to focus a clearer lens on the people's business. Working together, the City Council and staff have created six newer transparency initiatives:

1. City Council Priorities – Each year, the Tempe City Council refines our five top community priorities, and then staff measures the work that relates to those priorities. This year, we are building a dashboard to display those goals and our efforts to reach them. The dashboard will be available soon at www.tempe.gov/CouncilPriorities.

2. OpenBook\$ – Using this accessible tool, residents can dive into the city's financial data, review revenues

and expenses, and even look at specific purchases. Users can create or view existing charts that explain our budget, capital improvements, costs of services and more. View this transparent budget tool at tempe.gov/OpenBooks.

3. Open Data Portal – Tempe offers data in 40 different categories of city services, such as medical emergency response times, approved commercial sign packages, and more—without the need for a public records request. The data can be a launching point for new apps and research. More datasets will be available soon at tempe.gov/open-tempe.



4. Campaign Finance Reports – The City Council created a campaign finance reform working group to shine a light on our City Council elections, held every two years. That group effort resulted in a searchable, online resource that displays donors and contributions, which Tempe voters limited to \$500 in our last election. To view these reports, go to: tempe.gov/campaignfinance.

5. Lobbyist Registry – For the first time in our history, lobbyists doing business with the City of Tempe (City Council, Boards & Commissions/Hearing Officer) must register with the Cand report on their spending or face a civil penalty. You can see who they are at tempe.gov/clerk.

6. Lobbyist Donations – Tempe's latest transparency initiative streamlines records associated with lobbyist

donations to Mayor and Council candidates. Instead of needing to compare the lobbyist registry to campaign finance reports to track lobbyist donations to the candidates, residents will be able to see both in one place. While lobbyist campaign contributions are legal, that information should be easy to discover.

7. Dark-Money Disclosure: This month, the City Council voted unanimously to refer a ballot measure to the March 13th City Council Elections. Should the voters approve the "Keep Dark Money Out of Local Tempe Elections," Tempe will lead the way in shining the light on dark-money groups trying to influence our elections by requiring them to reveal their original source donors.

Tempe is maximizing transparency, but we are by no means finished. We must continually take responsibility for providing complete information and communicating more clearly so that you can engage in your city. We invite you to use these resources and join the conversation.

How do you think we're doing? What ideas do you have for us to bring more transparency to city government? Reach out to me at Lauren_Kuby@tempe.gov. Reach the entire City Council at councilcommunicator@tempe.gov.

Lauren Kuby is serving her first term as a City of Tempe Councilmember and helps lead the Council's Campaign Finance Reform Working Group. Read more about Lauren at www.tempe.gov/city-hall/mayor-and-city-council/lauren-kuby-councilmember

— Tempe Councilmember Lauren Kuby, 602-790-2156

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Briefly . . .

Pollack Chabad Center for Jewish Life will host a night of wine, shopping and fun from 6 to 9 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3, at the center—designed to be just in time for Chanukah gift-giving.

Over 25 vendors will be on hand, offering items including bath and body products, home décor, food and drink, clothing and accessories, plus more.

Planners say it's a perfect time to buy holiday presents for friends and family, all while supporting a deserving cause. Also scheduled is a Chinese auction with prizes such including gift cards, a free month at the Village Health Club & Spa, two family passes to the botanical gardens, and more. Admission, at \$10, includes one wine ticket and one auction ticket. Additional auction tickets are available: one for \$2, 3 for \$5.

Pollack Chabad center for Jewish Life is at 875 N. McClintock Drive, Chandler.

The city of Tempe's Professional Development Network will present a motivational event packed with humor and stories aimed to motivate and inspire professionals. "Laugh, Learn, Love and Live with Tom Dressen" takes place at 11:30 a.m. ,Wednesday, Dec. 6 in the Lakeside Room at Tempe Center for the Arts, 700 W. Rio Salado.

Dressen had dozens of performances on The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson and Late Night with David Letterman. He also toured with Frank Sinatra and appeared on television shows such as *Columbo*, *Murder She Wrote* and *WKRP in Cincinnati*.

Tickets are \$25 plus fees and a buffet lunch included. Information: tca.ticketforce.com/

Mary Contreras State Farm Agency is channeling their energy this winter into the true meaning of the holidays: the gift of giving. Mary's agency alongside Bryant Commercial Real Estate and Franchise Me Next will be hosting a Toy Drive until Dec. 14.

They are seeking \$10 or less donations of new unwrapped toys that will go directly to grade school kids at Chandler's own Hartford Elementary, a Title 1 school. Donated items such as: balls, legos, Hot Wheels, action figures, nail polish, fragrant lotions, costume jewelry, art supplies, gift cards to Target or Wal-mart, stuffed animals, etc. will be acceptable.

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Published since 1991 by Newslink LLC
 Don Kirkland, Founder & President

Editor: Joyce Coronel
Photography: Alex J. Walker, Billy Hardiman
Community Relations Director: Ron Walters
Contributors: Alex Zener, M.V. Moorhead, Diana Whittle, Chelsea Flood, Kody Acevedo

Offices: 2145 E. Warner Road, Suite 102
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THE FINAL WORD

Fire station at Tempe's Estrada Park 'a big mistake'

By Mckell Keeney

Is there no one at Tempe City Hall or in the Tempe community who wants Tempe to be known as a city that values and protects parkland? No one who will fight to save green space in our landlocked city, or speak up to honor the 1983 dedication of Estate La Colina Unit 3 land (Estrada Park) to be a permanent park and retention basin? I would love to hear one city council member or the mayor say, "It is really a shame Tempe is set to rezone Estrada Park on December 12, 2017 from single-family residential use to civic facility construction, and repurpose about 2 acres or 1/4 of Estrada Park to be a fire station, fenced off for safety reasons from the rest of Estrada Park. We can't replace this green space anywhere in the city, unlike Mesa which built three amazing new parks for its citizens, besides a showplace playground, when they built the Cubs facility."

Unfortunately, this is the gist of what we hear from city council members, and even the parks director, who you would think would defend our parks: "This is a great idea! We don't need this two acres of green space in Tempe! In fact, this has been planned for over 20 years; we just didn't tell people who were buying houses by the park!"

Fact: Unit 3 of Estate La Colina (aka Estrada Park) was dedicated to the City of Tempe by Continental Homes as a park and a retention basin. To my understanding, law precedent is that this type

of dedication is irrevocable. Tempe Fire Chief Greg Ruiz responded: "The City has determined that the fire station may legally be constructed on a portion of the park." My reaction: Just because something might be legal, doesn't make it the right thing or best thing to do.

While we are not opposed to a fire station by our neighborhood, we are very opposed to this process of taking irreplaceable green space in our landlocked city for a fire station. My husband Dave and I respectfully object to the rezoning or Use Permit being sought at the Development Review Commission on December 12 to allow public use (civic facility) in an R1-7 Single-family residential zoning district for a 10,699 square foot fire station.

I could get hundreds of neighbors to sign an objection petition about the rezoning or use permit, but many residents feel there will be no stopping this train. Still, it is important to note the vast majority of citizens are not in support of unnecessarily losing a large chunk of green space that is several degrees cooler than the streets at the top of the retention basin.

If the reason for this park repurposing is to save money by not buying land to use for a station, is saving money more important than saving lives by locating each fire station in Tempe at the places determined to give the best response times? The fire department's modeling showed the optimal location for best response times for the citizens of Tempe was to locate Fire Station #7 closer to Elliott Road and McClintock, and move Station 4 on Elliott Road to the west.



How much money is going to be saved by not making any *offers to buy land for Fire Station #7? I don't think citizens have been given any estimated savings, but we have some of the projected building costs.

Our Tempe Fire Chief shared estimates for many of the costs for Fire Station #7. Building cost: \$3.2 million. Surveying: \$6,600. Construction cost to regrade the park and retaining walls is a preliminary number, as civil engineer has not finished final grading design. Preliminary number: approximately \$35,000 for Station #7 pad grading, \$130,000 for grading in Estrada Park, and \$80,000 for retaining walls in Estrada Park. On-site improvements will be about 40% of the building cost since import soil will have to be brought in to construct pad for building and parking lot. On-site improvements also include paving, demolition, utilities, landscaping, etc. = approximately \$640,000.

Ron Pies, former Community Services Director, wrote a letter to the City Council voicing his support to give up irreplaceable green space by building a fire station in Estrada Park.

He confirms the park and preliminary development were provided at no cost to the city of Tempe, and says our parks have been strategically located in neighborhoods throughout our community, for the benefit of nearby citizens.

He says that normally, he wouldn't support a proposal to use part or all of a Tempe park in this fashion, and then gives these reasons he supports it:

1) Mr. Pies says that having a fire station next to a park provides security. I was not aware that firefighters provide security for a park. Their station will front McClintock Road and will be fenced off from the park on the sides and back of the station.

Plus, how much security does Estrada Park need? Some Tempe Police officers call Estrada Park "Mayberry" because it has few problems. On November 18th, our Estate La Colina Neighborhood Association hosted a successful music and art festival at Estrada Park that attracted over 500 people over the course of the afternoon. No extra security was needed for that neighborhood event, so it is doubtful that most people feel a need for more security for day-to-day playing in the park.

2) Mr. Pies says he reviewed the site plans and that the fire station will be integrated into the park, and firefighters and neighbors will interact. As it is designed, neighbors can't easily get to the station and vice versa, so I'm not sure how that is integrated. For residents to get to the station, we'd have to go to the northwest corner of the park, and walk down the existing city sidewalk along McClintock to the station by the shopping center.

3) Mr. Pies says the station will complement the park's use, but how in the world will it do that? We would like to make our music and art festival an annual event, but the fire station and relocation of playground will take away a good portion of open play park use, limiting how many people will be able to attend events and music concerts at Estrada Park. The high attendance for a first time event showed how many people in south Tempe will come out to music and art events in our parks. To my understanding, the park will be closed for a year to a year and a half for the regrading needed for the fire station.

I do agree with Mr. Pies's statement that having firefighters close by increases chances of better response times to emergencies in our particular neighborhood, but I would hope that firefighters at a station even two to three miles from a call can get to the call very quickly.

*Many new restaurants and other businesses have been built/remodeled within a mile of Elliott and McClintock in the last few years. Of course it is possible for the City to buy one to 1 1/2 acres of flat, commercial property in this area for a fire station if they want, including anytime in the last 35 years. The city hired a realtor last year to see if any land was for sale in the area. Saying no suitable land for #7 was on the market at the time they hired a realtor is quite different from making an offer to buy land for Fire Station #7 - the city did not do that, and the Fire Chief confirmed that.

I believe that in the future, this unnecessary loss of parkland will be seen by most people as a big mistake. Green space in our city is golden, and should be protected by those with oversight.

Mckell Keeney is on the Estate La Colina Neighborhood Association Board and on the Tempe Leadership Board. She is a genetic genealogist, specializing in interpreting DNA test results. All views are her own.

Wrangler News encourages submissions to The Final Word. Publication of such submissions is at the sole discretion of the editors.

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