



# Maricopa

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September 2020

## GOVERNMENT

For MPD,  
body-worn  
cams a matter  
of 'record'

## FAMILY

New MHS  
principal  
greeted with  
challenges

## PEOPLE

Where are  
they now?

# ENGINEERING A WIN

Bob Marsh works his way to council

## SCHOOLS

MUSD  
Governing  
Board  
candidates

 Business  
Directory

# GRAND OPENING

# GRAND OPENING

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## Change is a constant

Welcome to September. Still working to return to a semblance of normalcy, Maricopa is in the middle of election season, schools expecting to bring students back to campus and new construction continuing at a strong pace.

Is life getting easier or more complicated in the era of COVID-19?

A certainty is the changed makeup of the city council this year, and one new face is our cover subject, Bob Marsh. He was elected outright in the primary, along with Vice Mayor Nancy Smith, while other candidates await their fate. He brings experience from the four corners of the country as a tech engineer and leans on his wife Cynthia to help him with “social skills.”

Maricopa Unified School District principals share how they have coped during Distance Learning and are preparing for in-person education. MHS senior athlete Mister Chavis

explains how the new year has worked for him so far as a new athletic director juggles a constantly changing approach to competition.



Also in this issue, take a look inside Maricopa Police policy for body-worn cameras and how that program has worked so far. Catch up with one-time vice mayor and Maricopa Historical Society president Brent Murphree in Tennessee. And see where new homes are being built in town.

Topics are wide-ranging this month, proving that even beyond a pandemic, life in Maricopa is complex.

Happy reading.

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**RITA BRICKER**  
A Master Gardener and 33-year resident of Maricopa, her favorite song is “Harvest Moon” by Neil Young.



**RON SMITH**  
An aging-in-place advocate, he is a Subaru Ambassador (with two in the driveway) and loves to talk about cars.



**KYLE NORBY**  
A multimedia journalist, he is a fan of standup comedy and hopes to perform at an open-mic some day.

**ON THE COVER:** Bob Marsh in City Council Chambers, where he will help guide the city for the next four years.  
Photo by Victor Moreno



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Kyle Norby



### Changing landscape

The 1917 perspective of what used to be the town center no longer exists but for the top of the ever-present water tower. The railroad station is to the right of the tower in front of the McCarthy Hotel. Maricopa Irrigation Land Company was in the building in the foreground, which was later a house. Today, the overpass has created a different landscape.

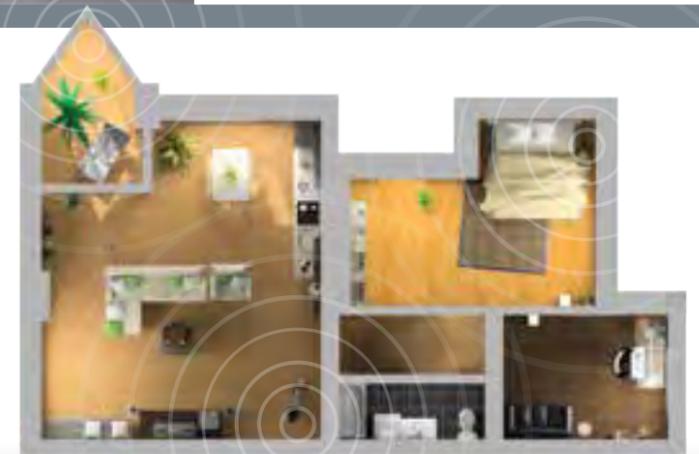
Maricopa Historical Society

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# City Drivers

It's not always State Route 347. The streets of Maricopa saw more than 600 traffic collisions in 2019, according to Maricopa Police Department, including 87 accidents with injuries. MPD identified the most dangerous intersections, most of which were on John Wayne Parkway, which, of course, is SR 347.



## Top Traffic Accident Locations

<b>1</b> Cobblestone & John Wayne Pkwy.	<b>2</b> Lakeview & John Wayne Pkwy.	<b>3</b> Smith-Enke & John Wayne Pkwy.
<b>4</b> Edison & John Wayne Pkwy.	<b>5</b> Honeycutt & Porter Roads	<b>6</b> Honeycutt & White & Parker Roads

**Most Common Parking Lot Accident Location**

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# In Maricopa, it's up to officers to hit 'record' on body cams

Story and photos by Kyle Norby

If you watch online videos, read news reports or take even an occasional look at your Facebook feed, it's obvious our country is now more divided than ever.

That division has sharpened in the months since George Floyd died in the custody of Minneapolis police, the deadly arrest captured on video by a bystander. In the aftermath, huge groups have gathered nationwide to protest institutional racism and police brutality.

In response to those protests, police departments across the country have taken tangible steps to reform the policies and procedures that guide their interactions with civilians. Dozens of cities, including Phoenix, have banned chokeholds, for example.

Maricopa police Chief Steve Stahl has been on the frontlines of local protests, kneeling in solidarity and calling the Floyd incident a "horrific" act of violence. He and other officers have made a point to hear the concerns of people in the city, and Stahl remains optimistic in the trust built by his department with city residents during these turbulent times.

"I'm extremely proud of the community and our officers for getting together, peacefully listening, talking, sharing ideas," Stahl said. "I'm not a fool in thinking that we are perfect. We never will be. Humans do policing. But how can we collectively continue to do better?"

One popular tool to help keep police accountable in their interactions with the public are on-body cameras. All 70 sworn Maricopa officers wear the cameras, but they don't capture those interactions unless the "record" button is pushed by the officer.



All Maricopa police officers are outfitted with Axon Enterprise body cameras.

The department's body-cam policy states: "All members assigned a BWC (body worn camera) shall make every attempt to activate the device to record all contacts with citizens in the performance of their official duties (e.g., calls for service, traffic incidents, supervisors contacting citizens regarding complaints, etc.). Members shall also activate their BWC during emergency or pursuit driving situations, when practical."

### Manually activated body cameras only

	Maricopa PD
	Mesa PD
	Phoenix PD
	Chandler PD
	Tucson PD
	Dept. of Public Safety

**"I'm not a fool in thinking that we are perfect. We never will be. Humans do policing. But how can we collectively continue to do better?"**

Chief Steve Stahl

Some question policies that leave it up to officers to make sure the camera is recording, specifically in use-of-force situations. But activating a body cam may not be practical, Stahl suggested, in situations where an officer arrives on a dangerous scene, for example.

"I drive up on you and you're pointing a gun at me. Am I going to point a gun back at you or am I going to turn on my body camera?" Stahl said, intensely. "So immediately they're violating policy just because they didn't have time to turn on their own body camera? That's like playing Catch-22 and that puts our officers at a disadvantage."

Many police agencies share Stahl's sentiment on manual activation. In response, manufacturers have worked to advance the technology of BWCs. According to the Electronic Frontier Foundation, new camera models include real-time video streaming and automatic activation of cameras triggered by sirens, the speed limit of a police cruiser, and even gunfire.

Axon Enterprise, a Scottsdale-based company that sells BWCs and Tasers to law enforcement agencies nationwide, including the Maricopa Police Department, offers a wireless gun holster sensor that will activate an officer's camera as soon as it is drawn. Axon did not respond to numerous requests for more information about its BWC products.

The Maricopa force was the first in Pinal County to fully deploy the use of BWCs as standard practice. More than 5,300 pieces of digital evidence were collected by the



Officer Daniel Rauch was instrumental in bringing the body worn camera program and policies to Maricopa.

70 cameras in 2019. Other cities are sifting through even more data and footage. In 2018, the city of Duluth, Minnesota — population near 86,000, about 59% larger than Maricopa — was generating from 96,000 to 120,000 pieces of digital evidence annually from only 11 BWCs in use by the police department, Government Technology Magazine reported. Duluth police have a manual activation policy in place.

Maricopa pays about \$900 for each BWC unit, but the real costs of the program are related to storing the video in the cloud, about \$110,000 to kick off the program and an annual cost of \$45,000. Always-on body cameras would drive up those costs significantly, said Stahl. Those high costs are a concern echoed by law enforcement agencies all across the country.

“Only two states, Nevada and South Carolina, require all law enforcement agencies to use the cameras,” according to The Pew Charitable Trusts. “Both states have faced challenges in reaching universal compliance. To help cover the cost, the law allowed county governments to increase 9-1-1 surcharges on phone bills.”

Additional concerns cited by Stahl include the limitations of the camera batteries — he said the Maricopa units only last about eight hours — as well as human error and privacy concerns.

“I don’t see how you can make it mandatory,” he said. “Making it mandatory means the on-body camera is on all the time, never shut off. You still have a human element to this. You still have to remember to turn the body camera on.”

At the state level, Gov. Doug Ducey’s proposed fiscal 2021 budget includes \$5 million to outfit all sworn officers in the Arizona Department of Public Safety with BWCs. A law passed in Arizona in 2015 allows law enforcement agencies to decide



**Maricopa Police Chief Stahl takes a knee with peaceful protesters during a demonstration at City Hall.**

**“Making it mandatory means the on-body camera is on all the time, never shut off. You still have a human element to this. You still have to remember to turn the body camera on.”**

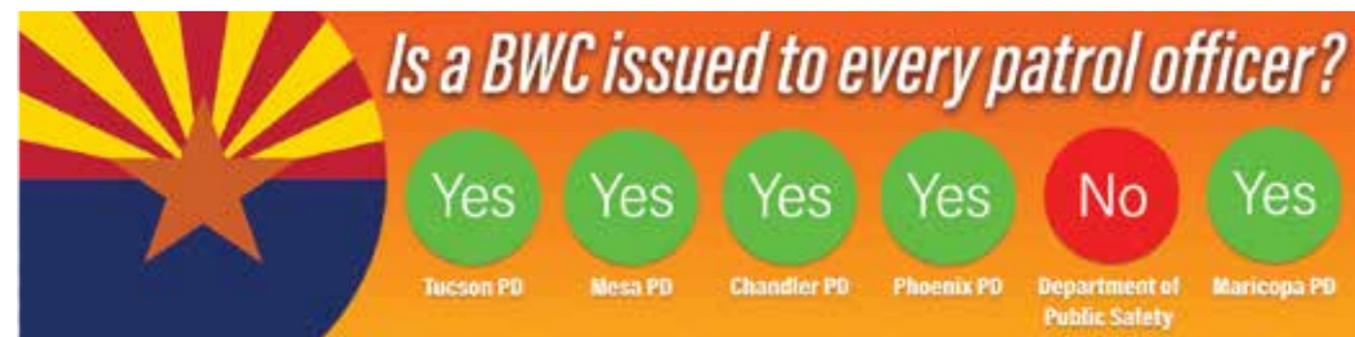
*Chief Steve Stahl*

whether the cameras are always-on or manually activated. It also gives agencies the ability withhold footage, as it is not legally public record.

MPD was the youngest police department in the country to be certified by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), a credentialing authority that assesses compliance with a body of standards.

“Not only does that tell all of you and all of the citizens that our policies are some of the best in the country, but we do what we say we do right,” Stahl said. “You know, people are longing for having that face-to-face discussion. And it’s those communications that have to continue to happen.”

“Make no mistake about policing, (it) is a difficult thing to do,” he added, “you’re dealing with human dynamics under emotional situations all the time. If you wait until something like the George Floyd incident happens, you are behind the curve.”



# SUCCESS YOU CAN SEE: DOMINATING RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION



## City of Maricopa

It’s no secret, residential construction is booming in Maricopa and the numbers can attest to that growth. Over the last decade Maricopa has become one of the state’s fastest growing communities.

For home buyers on the hunt for new construction, Maricopa is the place to be. Home builders have been busy this year, particularly in the month of July with record breaking numbers. One hundred seventy-seven (177) building permits were issued for single-family homes - and the numbers for August are headed in the same direction.

Maricopa will also have other home options available soon, with one apartment complex currently under construction which will add 120 housing units to the city. Other planned projects include an addition of 196 townhomes and 200 condos.

Adding new homes is key to a city’s economic health. New construction is accompanied by infrastructure improvements and the economic impacts of developing housing extend beyond the construction stage. The increased pride and responsibility that the residents feel for their new home often results in the consumption of goods and services within the community. This reflects Maricopa’s continued material improvement in the city’s tax base, fostered by rapid development and population growth.

Maricopa was recently on the cover of Business View Magazine in their focus on Growth in American Cities-August Issue; showing further that Maricopa is the place to be!

*“Builders continue to build in Maricopa because people want to live here!”*

Nathan Steele, Director of Economic & Community Development, City of Maricopa

## Permits issued for New Homes in Maricopa

**993**

PERMITS IN 2018

**987**

PERMITS IN 2019

**722**

PERMITS IN 2020 TO-DATE, WITH 201 OF THOSE COMING IN JULY ALONE

- #1** MOST DIVERSE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE PHOENIX AREA (2020) - Niche
- #2** BEST PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY (2020) - HomeSnacks
- #3** FASTEST GROWING CITIES (2020) - HomeSnacks
- #6** SAFEST CITIES IN ARIZONA (2019) - National Council for Home Safety and Security



## Meet the candidates for MUSD school board

This year, terms end for three members of the Maricopa Unified School District Governing Board, and all three are seeking re-election. Four candidates will appear on the general election ballot in November. **AnnaMarie Knorr**, **Torri Anderson** and **Jim Jordan** are currently on the board, with Jordan appointed this year to fill a vacancy. **Tracie Armstead-Payton** is challenging the incumbents.



Submitted

### Torri Anderson

**Residence:** Anderson Palmisano Farm  
**Age:** 59  
**Occupation:** Former teacher  
**How many years in Maricopa?** 49  
**Hometown:** Maricopa  
**Family:** Married to Kelly Anderson with 3 sons: Calder, Ian and Jackson.  
**Education:** B.A. – Education/Kinesiology, K-12 Physical Education; Arizona State University; 20 hours graduate work; Administration, Budget Maintenance, Planning and implementing student IEPs, Adventure programming, Diversity & Tolerance within the classroom.  
**Political experience:** Elected to serve as MUSD Governing Board Member; elected to serve ASBA as Pinal County Director; elected to serve ASBA as Executive Committee; chaired ASBA Legislative Committee.

**Public service:** Against Abuse Inc. board of directors; advocate for the establishment of La Casa de Paz, Maricopa domestic violence shelter; community advocate.

### Why should you be re-elected?

“I believe we have three issues we need to continue to address as a district:

- Improve community perceptions – it is important to foster positive community relationships.
- Retaining teachers – it is important to support our students through effective long-standing teachers and sensible class sizes.
- Responsible budget decisions – MUSD will continue to have difficult budget decisions to make. It is important to listen to all the ideas and opinions and at times agree to disagree, but always focused on providing an equitable education for all our students.”

### Tracie Armstead-Payton

**Residence:** Senita  
**Age:** Over 18  
**Occupation:** Human resources director  
**How many years in Maricopa?** 2.4  
**Hometown:** Highland Park, Michigan  
**Family:** Married 24 years, with one adult child who has completed her Master of Business Administration degree and three teenagers in high school.  
**Education:** Bachelor of Science, Michigan State University; Master of Arts, University of Phoenix  
**Political experience:** “I previously served as a board member in my hometown for over three years. My other roles were ensuring the district was fiscally responsible with all revenue streams, approving educational programs to help close achievement gaps, and most

importantly, ensuring that both staff and students had the tools they needed.”  
**Public service:** Meals on Wheels volunteer; Block Club chairperson; Library Steering Committee chairperson; School Finance Committee.

### Why should you be elected?

“I love helping students succeed and develop into productive, contented and satisfied citizens. Their energy and excitement motivate me to want to do more to be a positive, admirable, and respected role model for them. My deepest hope is that students come back into their Maricopa communities and contribute in any positive way they can. I want students and staff to say Ms. Tracie on the school board listened to us and helped us! I want to be their advocate in as many ways as I possibly can.”



Submitted



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Raquel Hendrickson

**Jim Jordan**

**Residence:** Sorrento  
**Age:** 73  
**Occupation:** Retired  
**How many years in Maricopa?** 9  
**Hometown:** Winslow  
**Family:** I have a wife, 3 adult children and 2 grandsons  
**Education:** Master's degree in Business

**Political experience:** "I ran in two campaigns for state representative in Kansas. I have held a leadership position in a political organization."  
**Public service:** Volunteer who transports food and clothing to missionaries in Mexico; MUSD 20 School Board; City of Maricopa Transportation Advisory Committee; coordinator of Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University classes.

**Why should you be elected?**

"I believe in Excellence in Education. We have an obligation to prepare students for success in life. Financial literacy is one area that is often ignored but is critical for success. Students need to be educated in the use of money so they do not experience financial failure. I want to see young people get that kind of knowledge before they graduate from Maricopa High School."



Submitted

**AnnaMarie Knorr**

**Residence:** Cobblestone Farms  
**Age:** 40  
**Occupation:** Government affairs  
**How many years in Maricopa?** 15  
**Hometown:** Buckeye  
**Family:** Four children: Robert (14), Jake (11), Averie (8) and Juliette (5)  
**Education:** Bachelor of Science degree in Business Management from Arizona State University  
**Political experience:** Current president of the MUSD 20 Governing Board.  
**Public service:** Seven years on the school board.

**Why should you be re-elected?**

"Our children are the most important part of our lives. I want the very best educational opportunities, not just for my children, but for every child in Maricopa. The children we are educating today are tomorrow's leaders, business owners and future employees. I want to ensure that they have a solid K-12 foundation to achieve their dreams and make the world a better place."



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# Farewell, Kazi

After 15 years of helping to plan Maricopa, Kazi Haque announced his retirement in July. Arriving shortly after incorporation, he guided the city through the dramatic rise and fall and rise again of development. He wore several hats during his tenure at City Hall, include zoning specialist, manager and then director of Development Services, finishing as deputy city manager. Longtime colleagues and residents paid tribute.

**“It’s been a pleasure. It’s been a long journey. As I walk into the sunset, I know you’re in good hands.”** KAZI HAQUE

**“I had the pleasure of working with Kazi for the entire time he was with the City. He loved the city of Maricopa! Although we never worked in the same department, I witnessed his dedication and work ethic. He was instrumental in starting the Planning Department from the ground up. His contributions have been tremendous and all for the betterment of the city. He will be truly missed.”**

VANESSA BUERAS, City Clerk



From left, former mayor Kelly Anderson, Kazi Haque and Mayor Christian Price.

**“I was appointed to the Planning & Zoning Commission back in 2006-ish and became chair of P&Z in 2007. I honestly had no idea what I was really doing as far as Robert’s Rules of Order, and Kazi was the most patient man and would quietly remind me that I would need to call for a motion or ask for a second. He was also such a great advocate for businesses in Maricopa. If the P&Z board didn’t like something, he worked so hard on behalf of the business to come up with solutions to help that business get their zoning. He will be greatly missed and has been such a great asset to the City of Maricopa!”**

**COURTNY TYLER, State Farm Insurance**

**“When I first got here, what people told me about Kazi proved to be true. He’s a man of integrity. He keeps his word. He’s hard-working. And he’s very responsive to anyone who calls, even it means responding on a weekend or evening or anything else. He has left his mark on this community. No one can take that away.”**

RICK HORST, City Manager

**“Kazi has the right development and functions of emotion to allow him to live well and be happy. Although Kazi is easy to show facial expression of flushing and embarrassment, you’ll never find Kazi in a burst of anger. Working with Kazi was an honor; never to forget the fun times. Kazi has the vision of leadership to set out to achieve it. Kazi sees the potential for how the world should exist and then takes steps to get there. Kazi listens to what people are saying, to accept advice. Kazi knew his ideas were different with significant risk but acquired responsibility for his actions. We are not always lucky to find a good friend among colleagues. May our friendship remain even after a change of path. Wishing you all the best in the new challenges ahead of you. May God bless you with success.”**

**EDDIE RODRIGUEZ**  
Fire Marshal

**“Over 10 years ago, when I began representing Maricopa Flood Control District, there were people at the City who seemed to think the District was irrelevant and a waste of their time. However, there were some notable exceptions, Kazi being one. He learned my name immediately and always offered a warm greeting when we met. When I needed information or guidance, Kazi was a great resource. He was always respectful and willing to help first-hand or point me in the right direction. Today, the District and the City have come to see each other as assets, I think, each with important contributions to make to our mutual constituents. Kazi seemed to understand the potential of that cooperation from Day One. He is a class act and has represented Maricopa well.”**

DAVID ALLEY, District Manager  
Maricopa Flood Control District



From left: Daranne Thacker and Isela Hernandez of Development Permits, La Quinta owners Andy Bhakta and Ravikumar Balenalli, Kazi Haque, Bill Lahr of Building Safety, and Fire Marshal Eddie Rodriguez.

**“In January of 2018 Kazi Haque was forming the Housing Needs Assessment Committee. To get a better understanding of what the seniors needed, Kazi attended several meetings of the Age-Friendly Maricopa Committee. He made a very detailed presentation of the goals and vision of the Housing Needs Assessment Committee. He listened, very patiently, to our suggestions. Answered our questions. And came back several times with updates. Many of the suggestions given at those meetings can be found in the Housing Plan. I am very grateful to Kazi Haque. He not only listened, he did something. Most importantly he was always available to answer questions and offer help with any project I might be working on. Thank you, Kazi.”**

JOAN KOCZOR, Age-Friendly Maricopa Advisory Committee

**“I had the pleasure of working under Kazi for the past 13 years. I was fortunate to witness the love and dedication he has for the City of Maricopa and his level of commitment to better the city. Kazi has left behind a legacy of achievements and work ethic that will always be part of this city and those who worked around him. His experience, knowledge, dedication, and presence will be missed.”**

RODOLFO LOPEZ  
Deputy Director, Economic & Community Development



Haque (dressed in gear) during CERT training.

**“It would be cliché to say the city is losing a leader in Kazi, but then again, it would be short-sighted of me to say such a thing. I know Kazi has roots here in Maricopa that will keep him engaged and a force for good in the community. It has been a pleasure to have worked for and with Kazi the last six years, as he has shared many stories that will live on in City Hall as a part of the institutional memory. He also has some funny mixed idioms that will live on as well, such as, ‘It’s like a pig with lipstick.’ Farewell, Kazi!”** RYAN WOZNAK, Senior Planner  
**Economic & Community Development**

# Who's facing who in General Election?

Candidates are set for the General Election after the approval of the canvass from the August primary.

## CITY

Two of the six candidates for Maricopa City Council were elected outright. Vice Mayor Nancy Smith and Bob Marsh received a plurality of the votes to be guaranteed their seats. Two other candidates will compete in November, though Councilwoman Julia Gusse contends a county-level technical glitch may not have been fully rectified during early balloting.

**Amber Liermann vs. Andre LaFond**

## COUNTY

The Board of Supervisors District 4 seat being vacated by Anthony Smith had no primary competition, setting up a General Election showdown between a Republican and an independent.

**Jeffrey McClure (R) vs. Marlene Pearce (I)**

## LEGISLATURE

In the race for District 11 senator, JoAnna Mendoza defeated her Democratic rival, Linda Patterson, for the right to challenge the Republican incumbent.

**JoAnna Mendoza (D) vs. Vince Leach (R)**

With two seats available in the House, the Republican incumbents had no primary opponents and face a single Democrat in November.

**Felipe Perez (D) vs. Mark Finchem (R)  
Bret Roberts (R)**

## STATE

The Arizona Corporation Commission has three seats up for grabs, but Republicans were unable to gather enough signatures to put three candidates on the

ballot. Jim O'Connor gathered enough write-in votes to get the job done.

**Bill Mundell (D) vs. Lea Marquez Peterson  
Shea Stanfield (D) Eric Sloan (R)  
Anna Tovar (D) Jim O'Connor (R)**

## FEDERAL

Appointed to her position, the sitting U.S. senator had an easy primary win but faces a formidable Democratic opponent.

**Mark Kelly (D) vs. Martha McSally (R)**

The incumbent congressman from District 1 fended off a sharp attack from the left in the Democratic primary and now contends with a familiar face in the General Election.

**Tom O'Halleran (D) vs. Tiffany Shedd (R)**

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## Home baker's taste of success leads to grand opening of Sweet Cravings

By Bob McGovern



Bob McGovern

Three years ago, Karla Wear did her sister-in-law a favor, baking some apple-shaped cookies for Teacher Appreciation Week.

When photos were shared on Facebook, the cookies became a hit: she received 500 orders.

She had always baked for family and friends, but that taste of success nudged Wear, 29, to launch Sweet Cravings, a home-baked goods business, out of the single oven in her family kitchen.

Her business took the next step on July 29, opening a bricks-and-mortar shop in the Stage Stop Marketplace and drawing a long line of sweet teeth.

Wear bakes cakes — specialty and special orders included — as well as gourmet cupcakes, brownies and cookies. One of her featured offerings allows customers to mix-and-match favorite flavors with a six-pack of gourmet cupcakes, she said. She'll also offer gift boxes of baked goods.

Excited about the great response on social media to her new venture, she said she has added hundreds of followers on her Facebook page — now 2,737 and counting — in recent weeks.

"I think this will be an opportunity to get to know a lot more people, and for them to get to know me," she said a day before the opening.

Sounds like a sweet plan.

Sweet Cravings is at the Stage Stop Marketplace, 44301 Maricopa Casa Grande Highway, Suite 5C, in Maricopa. [📍](#)

[📖](#) For more on this story, visit [InMaricopa.com](http://InMaricopa.com).

## Bahama Buck's prepares for fall opening

Bahama Buck's, a shaved-ice franchise, is set to open this fall after steady construction progress. The location, 17470 N. Porter Road, is on the east end of the Walmart parking lot at The Wells. Founded in 1990, the company is based in Lubbock, Texas.

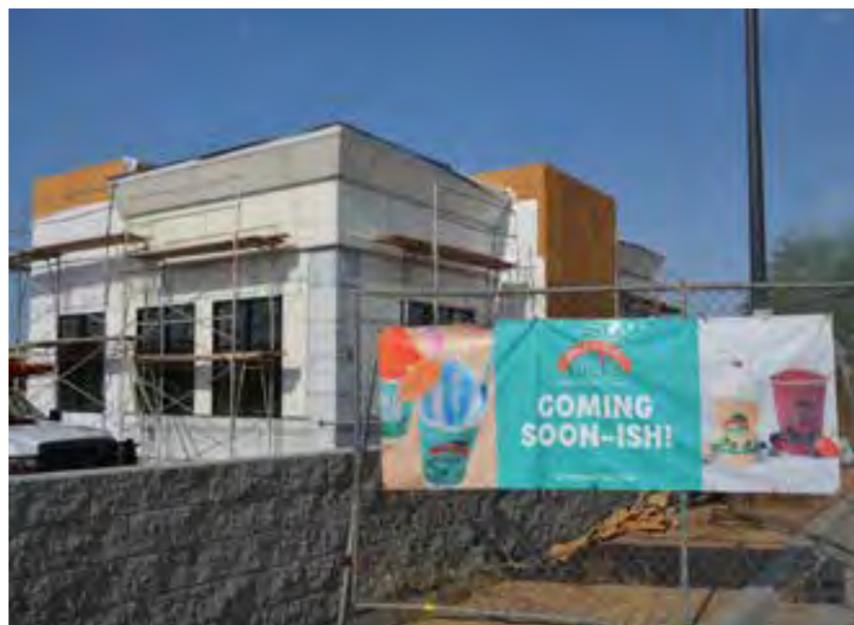
Opening is planned sometime between mid-September and late October, Communications Director Abie Rampy said.

"The construction process is going very well, very smoothly," she said.

The stand-alone eatery is 2,000 square feet on a little more than half an acre. The menu features gourmet shaved ice (registered name Sno), smoothies, lemonade and other soft drinks.

Rampy said architecture and construction crews like to give leeway on the timeline for all permitting to be fulfilled after construction is completed.

"The owner is very excited about this, and we are so excited, too," Rampy said. [📍](#)



Raquel Hendrickson

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## Evolve by INMODE

By Kristina Donnay, FNP-C

Looking for a non-invasive way to tighten loose skin, enhance muscle tone, smooth cellulite and contour your body? If so, it is time to Evolve. Evolve by InMode can tone, trim and tighten skin, all without an invasive procedure and with minimal to no downtime.

No matter how active you are, you may find that loose, sagging skin does not respond to your efforts to tone, trim and tighten. Women and men alike feel self-conscious about loose skin or problem areas on the arms, legs, belly, and more.

Body contouring continues to be one of the fastest growing areas in aesthetics. This, combined with ongoing innovations in non-surgical treatment options, means it is an exciting time for patients to achieve long-lasting body sculpting results with little to no discomfort or downtime. Evolve by InMode offers non-surgical body contouring through its three different procedures: Evolve Tite, Evolve Trim and Evolve Tone. Evolve Tite, Evolve Trim, and Evolve Tone are hands-free devices to sculpt your body, tone your muscles and smooth your skin.



Medical Director  
Kristina Donnay

### What is Evolve Technology?

The Evolve technology uses radio-frequency (RF) energy to provide targeted skin tightening, cellulite reduction, and fat reduction. Evolve is effective for refining skin and reducing fat in the abdomen, flank, buttock, arms, hips and thighs. Evolve Tone uses an innovative solution to increase muscle strength in difficult-to-tone areas. Treatments are customized for a more defined appearance without incisions, scarring or downtime.

Electromagnetic energy stimulates involuntary muscle contractions to tone muscles and improve your natural physique. The Evolve System employs multiple technologies to activate adipose tissue, tone muscles, and remodel skin and tissue. Evolve can be customized and tailored to fit your specific needs without the need for surgery. All the procedures under the umbrella of the Evolve System require no incisions, pain or downtime. As a non-



invasive treatment, Evolve has been proven to be safe and effective for all skin types. Clinical studies show that Evolve reduces more fat per treatment than either CoolSculpting or SculpSure. But Evolve also has the added benefit of tightening the skin and smoothing out the appearance of the treatment area.

Patients generally find treatment with Evolve to be extremely comfortable. You will experience a warm sensation of the skin as the applicator technology identifies the optimal temperature for the thermal energy; otherwise, you should not feel any pain or discomfort. Additionally, Evolve was designed with the ultimate in application safety and patient comfort in mind. The technology utilizes built-in thermal sensors that allow practitioners to monitor the temperature of the skin's surface throughout treatment. If any discomfort is felt, patients can push a button that will pause the treatment and let their provider make any necessary adjustments.

There is no recovery period after your Evolve Tite, Evolve Trim or Evolve Tone treatment. Sessions last 15 minutes to 1 hour, depending on the treatment and treatment area, and then you can immediately get back to your day. Patients typically see results with Evolve treatment within 3 to 8 visits, when treatments are done once a week. Because Evolve is non-invasive, it's much less expensive than procedures like liposuction or skin lifts.

Maricopa Wellness Center is proud to be one of the first practices not only in Arizona but the entire country to provide non-surgical body contouring with Evolve by InMode.

Are you ready to take a step toward a more youthful appearance? Tighten up, smooth it out and tone it up with Evolve treatments at Maricopa Wellness Center. No matter whether you choose Evolve Tite, Evolve Trim or Evolve Tone, we can provide a customized treatment plan to help you reach your aesthetic goals. All three Evolve procedures are now available at Maricopa Wellness Center. Learn more about this exciting new non-invasive, thermal skin and body treatment. We offer free consultations. Call us at (520) 464-6193 to discuss how you can achieve optimal health with our licensed staff of professionals today! LIVE WELL BE WELL.

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## Podiatrist: Prevent this common foot ailment

By Dr. Alex M. Stewart DPM, FACFAS

Dr. Stewart of Maricopa Foot and Ankle Center is board certified by the American Board of Foot and Ankle Surgery.

He was recognized in 2018 by Top Doc Magazine as one of the "Top Podiatric Surgeons in Arizona." He received his Doctor of Podiatric Medicine degree from Midwestern University and completed his residency at The University of Texas Health Science Center — San Antonio in the department of Orthopedics.



Dr. Alex Stewart

His extensive training and current practice focus on foot and ankle trauma, diabetic care, reconstructive surgery, and sports medicine.

As a former collegiate baseball player and avid golfer, Dr. Stewart can relate to athletes of any age and performance level. Dr. Stewart has been at Maricopa Foot and Ankle for the past eight years and has experience in treating everything from minor ailments to major trauma.

### What are some of the most common conditions that you treat?

Some of the most common conditions treated are heel pain, ingrown toenails, ankle sprains, wounds and infections. There are many treatments we can do in the office to take care of these issues helping you to avoid long waits at the emergency room. In most cases, we can get patients in to see the doctor within 24 hours.



### How do I prevent ingrown, painful toenails?

Ingrown toenails are a very common problem. We recommend trimming your nails straight across instead of trying to trim deep into the corners. If any nail is missed it can cause infection and severe pain. If you do develop an ingrown toenail, there are several quick, in-office procedure's that can be performed to reduced pain and discomfort.

We at Maricopa Foot and Ankle understand that even a small foot issue can be very painful and debilitating, so give us a call and let us help get you back to your activities pain free!

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## County considers new development fees

The Pinal County Board of Supervisors intends to assess 2020 New Development Fees. The supervisors will approve or disapprove the fees at their regularly scheduled meeting on Sept. 30 at 9:30 a.m. in the hearing room at the Administrative Complex.

The development fees are assessed on residential and commercial construction in

the unincorporated areas of the county. A copy of the adopted written report of the Land Use Assumptions and Infrastructure Improvements Plan and the proposed 2020 New Development Fees is available at the Pinal County Community Development Department at 135 N. Pinal St. and on the County website at [www.pinalcountyaz.gov](http://www.pinalcountyaz.gov).

## Development around town

**Maricopa Fire Department's** new administration building, 45695 W. Edison Road, received a certificate of occupancy July 27. It also received a permit for an automatic gate.

The **City of Maricopa** acquired a permit to make interior alterations for a new conference room in City Hall. It is to be 324 square feet. The project is valued at \$49,000.

Construction continues at the new **Pinal County complex** at 19955 N. Wilson Ave., where the project received a permit for temporary power to the building.

**Sequoia Pathway Academy** was granted a new commercial permit for a planned classroom building at 19265 N. Porter Road. The building is to be 14,732 square feet. The project is valued at \$2.2 million.

**Sonoran Creek**, a planned commercial development at 20300 N. John Wayne Parkway, conducted a hydrant flow test on the property.

**Duncan Family Farms**, which leases agricultural property from the City of Maricopa, received a zoning permit for an office trailer at 17331 N. High Lonesome Drive.

## Food inspectors tag one Maricopa restaurant

Only one eatery inspected by Pinal County health inspectors July 16-Aug. 15 received a markdown. True Grit Tavern received a rating of satisfactory rather than excellent because a walk-in refrigerator was not holding cold items at 41 degrees or lower. The inspector found lunchmeat, shredded chicken and raw chicken all at 49 degrees. The affected foods were discarded.

### EXCELLENT [No violations found]

- 99 Cents Only
- Ace Vending at Central Arizona College
- Ace Vending at Volkswagen
- Aliberto's
- Arby's
- The Box Meat Shop
- Children's Learning Adventure
- Culver's
- Francisco's Mexican Food
- Jack in the Box
- McDonald's – John Wayne Parkway
- McDonald's – Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway
- Panda Express
- Pizza Hut
- Sonic Drive-In
- Taco Bell
- Walgreens – John Wayne Parkway
- Wendy's
- Yogurt Jungle

### SATISFACTORY [Violations corrected during inspection]

True Grit Tavern

### NEEDS IMPROVEMENT [Critical items noted during inspection cannot be corrected immediately requiring follow-up inspection]

None

### UNACCEPTABLE [Gross, unsanitary conditions necessitating the discontinuation of service]

None

## ED3's Verges appointed to MEDA board

Maricopa Economic Development Alliance announced the appointment of Brian Verges to its board of directors.

Verges recently joined Electrical District No. 3 (ED3) as general manager. Prior to ED3, he served for about 10 years as the city administrator/utilities manager for Plymouth, Wisconsin, and as the chief administrative officer for all of city government including operations of Plymouth Utilities (electric, water, sewer and stormwater).

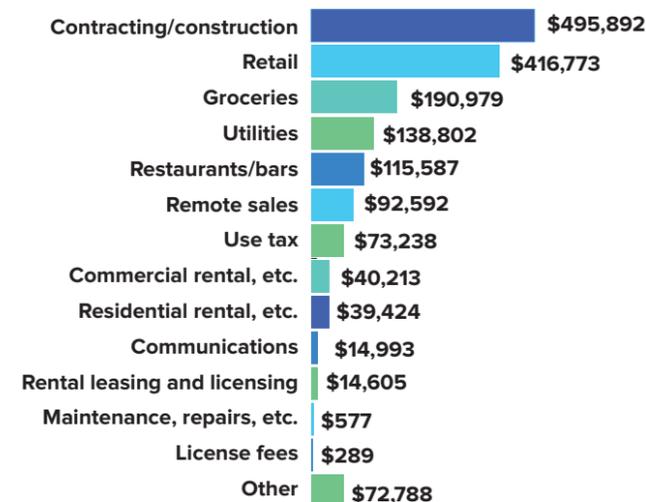


Brian Verges

He has master's degrees in public administration and urban planning from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as well as a Bachelor of Arts from Wisconsin Lutheran College, where he double majored in political science and communications. He holds the American Institute of Certified Planner (AICP) designation, completed the Economic Development Finance Professional (EDFP) certification program through the National Development Council (NDC), and holds the International City County Management Association's Credentialed Manager designation (ICMA-CM). Mr. Verges also earned the American Public Power Manager designation from the American Public Power Association.

## How money is spent in Maricopa

Maricopa businesses paid \$1.7 million in transaction privilege taxes, also known as sales tax, in July. That total in July 2018 and July 2019 was \$1.3 million, according to the Arizona Department of Revenue. Here's where people were spending money in town based on the amount of sales tax collected:



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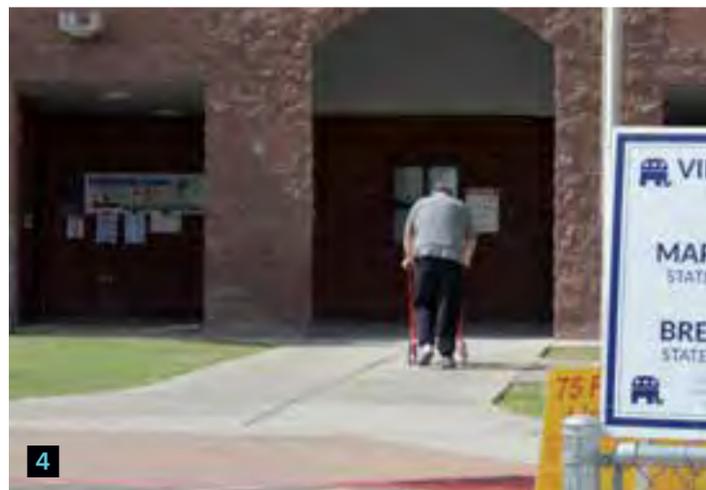
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- 1. A+ Charter Schools faculty prepares for the school year at the newly completed facility on Allen Stephens Parkway. *Kyle Norby*
- 2. The La Quinta construction crew dealt with record-high heat in August by working in the morning. *Raquel Hendrickson*
- 3. Sidewalks and curbs were poured along Main Street (previously Pershing) in the Heritage District's new Maricopa Station area. *Raquel Hendrickson*
- 4. Though at least 60% of Primary Election voters opted to vote by early ballot, voters still came to the poll locations like Pima Butte Elementary to have their say. *Raquel Hendrickson*

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**WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

# Former vice mayor reflects on growth in city, career

By Kyle Norby



Brent Murphree

Courtesy of Farm Press



Courtesy of Brent Murphree

**Brent Murphree is a 1977 graduate of Maricopa High School.**

It has been three years since Brent Murphree's career in the cotton industry took him away from his Rancho El Dorado home and local roots. The Maricopa native now lives in the Memphis, Tennessee area where he works for The Cotton Board, an oversight and administration arm of the Cotton Research & Promotion Program, representing U.S. Upland cotton.



Courtesy of Brent Murphree

**Murphree, left, and brother Patrick at Maricopa Elementary School in the early 1970s.**

**“The new library and City Hall are on my grandmother's old farm. Whether or not the name is on it or anything, I have a sense of pride in that fact.”**

A graduate of Maricopa High School class of 1977, Murphree was present for most of the city's milestones. He was on the committee that incorporated the city in 2003 and was appointed to Maricopa's first city council. He served on the Flood Control District Board, was president of the Maricopa Historical Society and was vice mayor for seven years.

Murphree is happy to see how far the town has come since his days working the

family business as a third-generation cotton farmer.

“The new library and City Hall are on my grandmother's old farm. Whether or not the name is on it or anything, I have a sense of pride in that fact,” he said. “I like watching those things and seeing how they develop.”

While Murphree's work for The Cotton Board has included field work — interviews, meetings and photos on location — COVID-19 now has him mostly working from home. As the content director for Farm Press magazine's Southwest/West region, Murphree provides readers in-depth news on farming and agribusiness. He is in the process of taking a new position as editor of the Mid-South region's Delta Farm Press.

**BRETT MURPHREE**

**Age:** 60  
**Occupation:** Editor for Delta Farm Press  
**Residence:** Mason, Tennessee  
**Education:** Journalism degree from Arizona State University  
**Family:** No children.  
**Favorite Maricopa memory:** “My greatest memories took place at the Maricopa Community Pool. We'd all accumulate at the pool over the long hot summer days and end up in swim practice at the end of the day. We had a pretty strong team and competed against towns that were slightly larger than us in the area — Casa Grande, Coolidge, Eloy and a few more further away.”

“In terms of my career, I've always written. I've always done something writing whether it's promotions or public relations,” Murphree said. “Now I'm just doing a lot of reporting on the general (agriculture) industry and really enjoying it.”

Murphree is enjoying his life in Tennessee, but said he misses the West and anticipates coming back one day.

“Maricopa's always going to be my home,” he said.

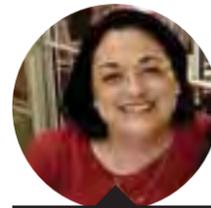
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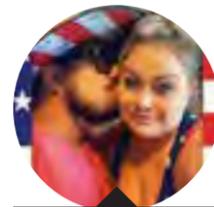
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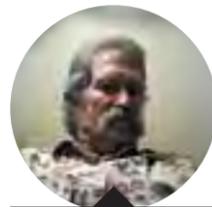
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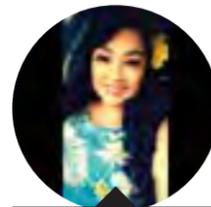
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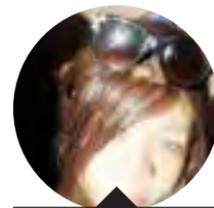
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Harry D. Carroll



Jazmin Gutierrez



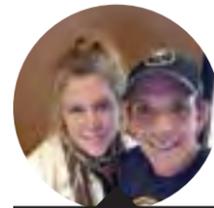
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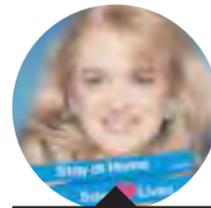
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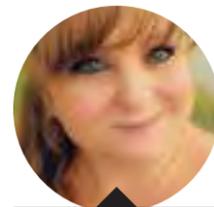
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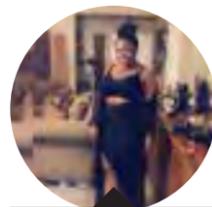
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# City Council rookie a techie with decades of know-how

By Raquel Hendrickson

It's been a long road for Bob Marsh.

A self-described dot-connector at age 76, he will be a fresh face on Maricopa City Council after he was elected outright in the August primary. It took him two tries to win a seat, and he says he intends to stay for only one term.

His election comes after serving on the city's Board of Adjustment, Planning & Zoning Commission, 2040 Vision Committee and Zoning Code rewrite task force, as well as Pinal County's Board of Adjustment.

"I think having somebody on council who understands the way the world works, the way the city works, the way a water purification plant works, the way electricity is generated, who understands infrastructure and how it gets done, and how capacity planning really works is useful," he said.

A long-time engineer, he wants to use his cumulative knowledge gathered from the four corners of the country in his decision-making on council.

"I have engineers in my family, and I have always admired their ability to ask the right questions," friend Ron Smith said.

"Asking the right questions makes Bob a great problem solver. Every good team needs this kind of insight to be productive and effective."

Cynthia Marsh, his wife of 14 years and the person he has called his inspiration, balances his cerebral analytics.

"We have complementary skills," he said. "When I get into situations like political campaigns, that requires people skills that I don't have. She's got 'em. So, she's my inspiration."

They first dated in 1981 and married in 2006. There is a lifetime in between, and it's a long story.

## WHERE THEY CAME FROM

Born in North Carolina, Marsh's father was a Marine in World War II at Camp LeJeune, on the coast. The family went to Pittsburgh for a couple of years and then on to Massachusetts for several years, where Marsh attended school through sixth grade. He attended junior high and high school in a little town named Poultney, Vermont, where both parents were professors at Green Mountain College.

"It was convenient for me going through high school in a small town with a girls college next door," he said.

Marsh's father, whom he calls a middle-of-the-road Eisenhower Republican, also taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Tufts University and Massachusetts College of Pharmacy. His mother was a librarian who taught library science.

Marsh said an uncle graduated from MIT in food technology and was the vice president of research and development for Gerber Foods his entire career. His mother's father had a

master's degree in chemical engineering at MIT and went on to lead the team that developed synthetic rubber after the Japanese destroyed U.S. rubber plantations in Malaysia. That rubber formula is still in use today.

"I'm the kid that took radios apart at age 12 and put them back together right," he said.

He discovered an interest in electricity and electronics during his sophomore year of high school. He walked the halls of MIT as a kid and showed up as a scholarship student in 1962.

When Marsh wrote letters home, his father would correct them with a red pencil and send them back.

To make ends meet, he became something of an entrepreneur, starting up three businesses during his years there before selling them to MIT as he graduated. He engineered the campus telephone system, ran the distribution of the New York Times on campus and, even while underage, had a contract with a wine seller in Brookline, Massachusetts, to supply big university events with champagne, glasses, buckets and ice.

Meanwhile, Cynthia, who is almost three years older, went to nursing school in Manhattan. After she married, she took hospital jobs near colleges where her husband worked, including Oberlin and Purdue.

"I had a baby in every hospital I worked in," she said.

That turned out to be three babies, starting when she was 20. But one day, a patient's death weighed heavily on her. She cried herself to sleep and then quit nursing altogether.

"I went back to upstate New York, where I brought up my kids until the marriage was over," she said. "And then I moved here to Arizona."

Her youngest child, who was 13 at the time, came with her. Her second son eventually moved in with her, too. Her oldest was attending Oberlin College.

A friend in Arizona said Cynthia could stay with him until she found a job and her own place. She worked for a psychiatric hospital before going into private practice as a psychotherapist and family counselor.

## THE MEET-CUTE

It was while living with her friend that she met Bob Marsh, the red-headed stranger next door.

"He was out digging a trench to do the gas lines in the back of his house," she said. "I made sure I told him I was not in a relationship. I put my contact information in his mailbox. So, he called."

That was 1981. Marsh, who had moved to Arizona in the 1970s and was working as a



Victor Moreno

Marsh calls himself a straight-A collaborator, welcoming new ideas to City Hall.



Victor Moreno

Marsh and others elected to council this year are scheduled to be sworn in at a December meeting.

technology engineer, took her out to Cowboys for the first date. They didn't ride the mechanical bull, but they hit it off. They dated for a year-and-a-half, and then broke up.

Bob went on to marry elsewhere and had two kids of his own. His first child was born when he was 40. His children and Cynthia's children are a generation apart.

"The company I was working for in Tempe was in the business of designing and building IBM terminals, pre-PC when all computing was done on mainframes," he said. "There was a company in Georgia doing that same thing for PCs. This was revolutionary and new and exciting. I wanted to get into the PC business. They had a contract with Microsoft, and I

wanted to be on that, too. That was my intro to Microsoft. I was a contractor to Microsoft starting in 1989."

After his marriage ended, Bob and Cynthia reconnected in 1997, this time for keeps. From Georgia, they moved on to Washington state, where they married in 2006.

Cynthia had also taken a job with Microsoft, working with a PC team on a predecessor to smartphones.

"I had all these other skills. I never even learned how to type," she said. "Bob says, 'Go to Microsoft and sign up to get a contract job.' I got hired as a temp contractor for them. (The hiring official) says, 'I interviewed somebody who had more skills than you, but you have enthusiasm.'"

**LEARNING MARICOPA**

They both missed Arizona, where they still had family and friends.

“My daughter the Realtor said, ‘Hey, this is a good place. The prices are low.’ So, we looked in ‘08, and then everything crashed,” Cynthia Marsh said.

When they seemed to have lost out on the model they thought was perfect in Glennwilde, they found the same model in Desert Cedars for five digits.

“No mortgage. Cashed in some Microsoft stock, and there you go,” Bob Marsh said.

They became involved in the homeowners association board, where Cynthia is still using those late-learned typing skills to create the monthly newsletter.

“HOA is the lowest form of government,” Marsh said. “We learned that full transparency defuses a lot of hassles, and having that newsletter make all the HOA activities and vendors fully transparent. When you explain it to people, they understand and can become part of it. We can do the same thing at the city level.”

Taking the City’s Maricopa 101 class, which introduced residents to the workings of City Hall, Bob Marsh combed through the zoning code and other government documents.

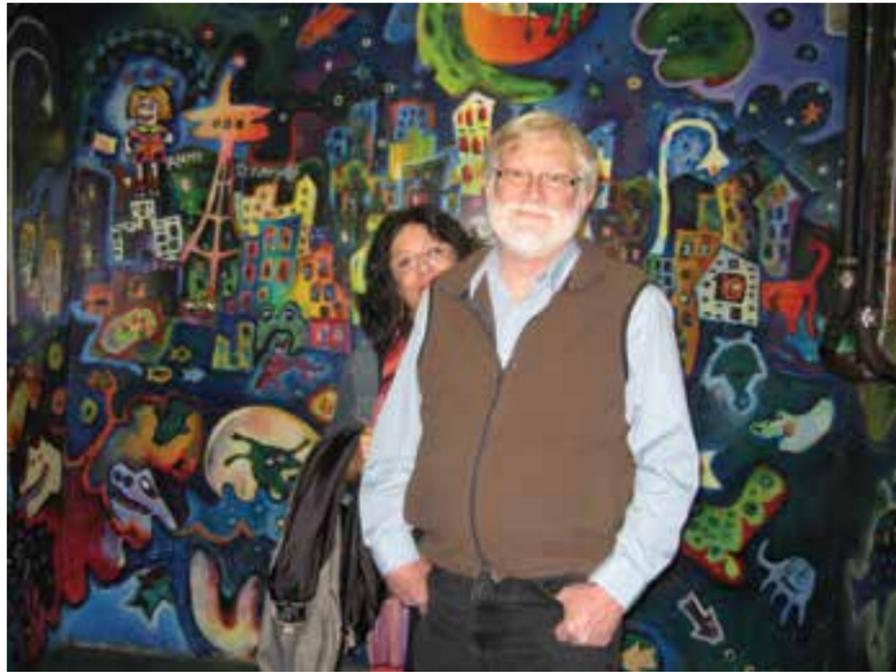
“I worked in Microsoft’s legal department for a little while, wrote some contracts and things like that. I understood the legal language and could plow through it fairly easily,” Marsh said. “But I also had ideas about how Maricopa could grow and not just become another piece of the board back on the grid like Chandler, Mesa, Gilbert, whatever.”

His friend Ted Yocum, who was on the Board of Adjustment at the time, pulled him into serving on public boards.

“We served together on Maricopa’s Planning and Zoning Commission for years,” Yocum said. “I can attest that he knows his stuff and that he has a track record of getting to the core of each issue, zeroing in on the right decision, even when most of the rest of the commission was going in other directions.”

That included the P&Z Commission’s discussion of the Anderson-Russell residential development.

“When the Anderson-Russell project was brought up through P&Z, the commission turned it down,” Marsh said. “I had a significant argument in favor of the project. Luckily, there was a councilperson in the meeting who heard my argument, and she relayed it on to council. And Anderson-Russell got approved by council.”



Submitted

**Lunar Landing**

In the 1960s, Bob Marsh designed, built and deployed eight computer drum memory systems for NASA’s Orbiting Astronomical Observatory II (OAO 2) program at Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. The systems were also used at eight tracking stations around the world as backups to the primary communications systems for comms between Earth and the moon on the Apollo Project. NASA told him the backups were actively used during the lunar landing of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. One of the NASA engineers was subsequently the best man at Marsh’s wedding.

He and a dozen others were named to the Zoning Code rewrite task force and went through 340 pages of legal language in more than a year’s time. On P&Z, he was part of the effort to rewrite the subdivision ordinance, worked on the 2040 Vision Committee and was part of the 2015 General Plan update.

Influenced by what he had seen in Verrado in Buckeye, he campaigned for a “village” concept in future growth plans. That became part of the General Plan because of a team effort in which he was well-versed.

“At Microsoft they realized that people who tried to be egotistical, arrogant superstars didn’t get much done,” Marsh said. “They found that the most successful people and projects were

**Bob Marsh first dated Cynthia in Tempe in 1981, and they married in 2006.**

ones that were team efforts. They graded you, even if you were a vice president up at the top, they graded you on your collaborative work. I always got straight A’s on collaboration.”

A bit gun-shy of joining any do-nothing committees, Cynthia Marsh said she was “coerced” into participating in the 2040 Vision, too. She soon found she would rather work in the background.

When Bob decided he wanted to run for council in 2018, she was on board.

“I was very proud of him,” she said. “He’s got a lot to offer. All those committees he’s been on have certainly given him the background. Bob comes in with the skills.”

**GOING FORWARD**

Bob Marsh’s next task is getting up to speed on council-specific issues. He is putting together a list of issues to ask about, including the annexation process. He will join council in December.

“There’s a lot I don’t know about the City, and I have a lot of questions for the mayor and [City Manager] Rick [Horst],” he said. “I’m pretty much in alignment with what’s going on. I’d like to see us do a better job as far as advanced capacity planning.”

For him, that means studying the growth area and growth plans for the next 25 years and determining the necessary internet bandwidth, power lines, water supply, cell towers and other



**Cynthia and Bob Marsh at the Olympics Torch Run in 1996 in Georgia (left), and all dressed up in 1981 (right) during their first courtship in Arizona.**

Submitted



infrastructure. The Anderson-Russell project needs police and fire, water and sewer capacity.

“It would also give developers the opportunity to buy land for development where the capacities exist, where they don’t have to pay extra themselves to bring in that additional capacity,” he said.

The City’s planning area extends down State

Route 347 to south of Interstate 8. He sees a lot of potential in the unincorporated area south of Harrah’s Ak-Chin Casino.

“Infrastructure is key,” he said. “It’s the key to bringing new businesses to Maricopa. It’s the key to bringing more people to Maricopa. It’s the key to bringing a hospital here.”

Bob anticipates forging more relationships

within the Ak-Chin and Gila River communities.

“I’ve always felt that they’re part of Maricopa,” he said of Ak-Chin, “and there’s not an ‘us and them’ situation. The 27 subtribes that populate the Gila River land, that’s a complex situation. If they have to do a tribal council vote, they have to get all 27 to say something, and that could take a long time. I think Gila River has a bad rap. They’re not counter to all development; it just takes a long time to get a decision.”

Meanwhile, the Marshes are doing more community work. They joined an effort to get face masks to the people in the Navajo Nation. That stemmed from friendships formed there while exploring Arizona.

“Working for not-for-profit agencies gives you an opportunity to look and see what the needs really are,” Cynthia Marsh said.

They also have their combined five children in Pittsburgh, Texas, Washington and Arizona, several grandchildren (one of whom is a redhead) and great-grandchildren to fuss over, but Bob Marsh doesn’t think he can be too busy.

“I don’t want to be measured at the end by how much sleep I got or how much TV I watched or how many pizzas I ate,” he said. “I want to be judged by how much good I got done.”

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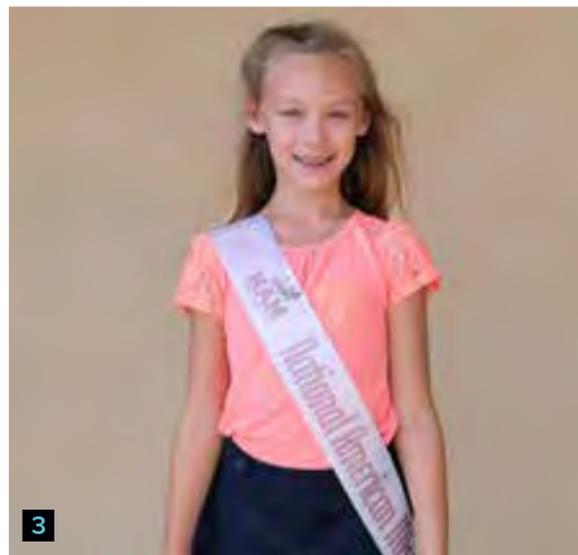
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3



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4

1. Brianna Reinhold, owner of Northern Lights Therapy, spearheaded an effort to fill MPD Hero Bags with goodies for every officer, including K-9s. Eighty bags were filled with Gatorade, snacks, hand sanitizer and other products to show the community's appreciation for their public service at this difficult time. Reinhold, right, and Davee Jacobs presented the bags at the police department. *Victor Moreno*

2. Coordinators of the effort pose with dozens of Hero Bags, from left: Savannah Reinhold, Brianna Reinhold, Katrina Powell and baby, Hillary Eckert and Davee Jacobs. *Victor Moreno*

3. Aurora Leigh Willoughby, 10, of Maricopa is a state finalist in the National American Miss Arizona pageant scheduled Sept. 5-6 in Scottsdale. *Kyle Norby*

4. Maricopa Unified School District staff distributes more materials to families during the early days of online school. *Raquel Hendrickson*



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- Playing games
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- Specialized instruction for students with special needs

### The Secondary Student Experience (Grades 6-12)

- Routine synchronous instruction
  - Attending virtual class time with MUSD teachers
  - Collaborating with classmates
- All courses offered at schools traditionally will be offered online
  - English Language Arts
  - Math
  - Science
  - Social Studies
  - Elective courses
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- Listening to audio clips
- Watching videos
- Specialized instruction for students with special needs

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Maricopa Elementary School • (520) 568-5160  
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# Q&A with Maricopa High School principal Deana McNamee

By Raquel Hendrickson



Victor Moreno

**B**orn and raised in Northern Arizona, Deana McNamee was an administrator at Winslow Unified School District when she was named this year as principal of Maricopa High School. A graduate of Winslow High School, she earned a degree in art education at Northern Arizona University and taught art at Holbrook High School eight years before joining the staff at Winslow High. She has been an athletic coach, adviser and administrator.

### **What do you find to be the biggest difference between Winslow and Maricopa High School?**

There really isn't any huge difference. The kids are great. The staff is dedicated and amazing. I would say the biggest difference is the size itself and just working with the number of staff we have on campus and the number of students we serve. But the diversity is very similar. That's what I enjoy, and that's why I'm here, because it's just a very diverse community. They're very dedicated to their students. It's very enjoyable in that regard.

### **What is MHS's estimated enrollment?**

We are increasing enrollment. We're a little up and down. I believe the last count was around 2,600. Those were kids showing up.

### **All schools have had issues with glitches in tech and logging in. Have those been solvable for Maricopa High School?**

We've been able to tackle it. I think our biggest challenge has been not knowing what struggles and frustrations the families are experiencing. So, we really encourage that line of communication and that partnership in trying to figure it out. When we're aware, we can either troubleshoot here if it's minor, which in most cases it is, or if it's on a bigger scale, we definitely partner with the district's technology team to resolve those issues.

### **One thing Distance Learning has relieved for MHS is the overcrowding. What do you think that will look like this year when students get back in class?**

I feel like we're still going to have a lot of bodies on campus. So, to prepare for that, it's really about, again working with families so that we can keep everyone safe, students and staff included, making sure we're communicating our safety protocols and procedures. It's going to be a lot of bodies, so ensuring that we are all doing our best to keep each other safe is

key, and just working together to ensure that happens. I think the district has been very proactive in their approach to a return to campus and what that looks like. It's really been a team effort across the district. The district website is a wealth of resources for that communication, so we're constantly directing families to the website because that's where that information is being disseminated.

### **Beyond learning during COVID, what is your goal for Maricopa High School?**

Having been here the short time I've been here, I'm still learning what it means to be a student or even an educator at Maricopa High School, but I see there's a lot of great things happening here. I think the goal is to share those great things with the rest of the educational community and the community of Maricopa. There's good things happening here. I just don't think we're collecting the data or providing the evidence to show the greatness that's occurring and the learning that's happening.

### **At your previous schools did you work with any internal schools like Ram Academy and the new Virtual Academy?**

Yes, we did use Edgenuity at my previous district, so I'm very well-versed in Edgenuity. We did have an alternative program similar to Ram Academy for students who just didn't find success in the regular school setting.

### **How would you describe what student success looks like?**

I think student success right now is a high school diploma and some kind of post-secondary plan, whatever that is for that kid. I think that is successful. That could be preparing them or helping them plan for a college or university. It could be trade school. It could be community college. It could be

**“It's going to be a lot of bodies, so ensuring that we are all doing our best to keep each other safe is key, and just working together to ensure that happens.”**

Deana McNamee

military, or it could be the workforce. We would define success as, yes, our kids are graduating with a plan. It's not just, 'Woo-hoo, I'm done. Now what?' Helping them find purpose once they're beyond our campus I think is a successful indicator.

### **What in your background is your greatest advantage as principal?**

I would say that being a minority myself [she is Navajo] and working with the diverse population here, I can definitely relate to the diversity here. I also feel a strength of mine is the ability to listen; I have a lot of experience. I worked in the alternative school. I have a variety of experiences. I think having that broad education and experience and bringing that to this school gives me the advantage of understanding the various mechanisms at work here. There's a lot of things happening at the same time and having an understanding of each of those moving parts to some degree does help, especially with a large campus such as this.

### **What is your advice to parents to relieve the stress of the way the school year has started?**

Let's communicate. Every year a strong partnership between the district and families is essential to student success. This crazy year is no different. It may be even more important that we continue to partner together to ensure our students find success with managing technology, with ensuring that their assignments are turned in, with connecting to teachers, to asking questions. To providing that social emotional support. Our students, our adults are struggling at this time, and we have those resources here.

### **What do you see as MHS's greatest challenge to get to be the B school – and even A school – they want to be?**

I don't know if it's a challenge but it's a great area of focus to identify the big-picture goal and get us all moving in the same direction.

### **What is the greatest thing you've learned from your students in the course of your career?**

That our students value to be understood, to be heard. So, I reference not only partnering with families to ensure student success, but it is important to partner with students to ensure their own success. They're in it. They have a voice. So, to listen and honor their journey and support them through it and with them is what I've learned the most about kids. 

# Principals on MUSD campuses adjust to virtual job demands

By Raquel Hendrickson

It's been an unprecedented start to the school year for Maricopa Unified School District's nine principals, including three new to the job.

In a great sense, all were newbies to the world of virtually supporting students and teachers, controlling online education processes and, as Santa Rosa Principal Eva Safranek called it, "netiquette." The launch of the new year was not perfect, with technical glitches, parents complaining about log-in issues and students late to pick up devices, but MUSD principals painted an overall positive picture.

At every campus, teachers had to work up a new process to prepare for the COVID-19 world, and principals worked all channels of communication. Ahead of the district's transition to in-person instruction, families were asked to choose between online or brick-and-mortar classrooms for their children to continue the year.

"This is a new experience for all of us, and especially for the students and their families," said Pima Butte Elementary's new principal, Elizabeth Allison.



## Desert Wind Middle School

"It's comical how much it's changed every single day," Principal Carlos Alvarado said of enrollment a week into the start of online instruction, a rollercoaster for most schools navigating a return to instruction.

Some of that is typical of any start of school, but families were looking for the academic programming that best fit their needs during COVID-19.

The distribution of laptops went "extremely smoothly," according to the principal, though it took a lot of effort for staff to locate some

families that had not picked up devices well after instruction had begun.

In the fluid enrollment situation, DWMS has had about 800 students. Keeping them healthy has been worked into this year's campus theme: "Tigers are respectful. Tigers are responsible. Tigers are safe."

Teachers had options to teach their remote classes from home or from their classroom. All staff meetings were conducted through Google Hangouts. Alvarado said everyone had to be "really on point" in reading their emails for communication to be effective.

"As with any administrator, you can't lead from your office. You have to be in among the people," said Alvarado, who is in his second year as principal.

DWMS has seven new teachers, and Aidan Balt is the new assistant principal, coming over from Maricopa High School. It is running on a block schedule, which will continue when children return to the building.

Alvarado said teacher evaluation will continue as scheduled but on a virtual basis.

## Maricopa Wells Middle School

"It is certainly different without students on campus. I do miss that!" said Maricopa Wells Middle School Principal Thad Miller. "I love being here every day and serving all of our students. However, I have been able to attend many of the Google Classrooms and have observed students collaborating with each other and their teacher."

Again, there are more than 900 Panther students at MWMS and more than 45 teachers. As at DWMS, the regular morning intercom announcements were replaced with other communications between administration and staff and students.

"I create video morning announcements that the teachers show in our homeroom class period every morning, and we consistently review expectations and share important events that students need to be aware of," said Miller, who has been principal since 2017. "We also utilize our parent-notification system, ConnectEd, to share weekly messages with parents and various stakeholders in a timely manner."



He gave a virtual tour of the campus on YouTube for all newcomers at the middle school. He also reminded parents that students needed to "dress appropriately" for class during distance learning.

"It is very rewarding to see all kids participating and eager to learn, regardless of the method of instructional delivery," said Miller, a Maricopan since 1973.

A former coach, he noted the long wait for high school and middle school athletic programs as Arizona Interscholastic Association worked through a staggered approach to getting kids back into competition. He said he's a supporter of athletics, and other clubs, as long as it's safe.

The school's mission statement is to "Prepare our students for success at the high school level ... and beyond." Miller said students had been consistent in their online attendance to start the year.



## Saddleback Elementary School

Marchelle Hasan, Ed.D., is in her second year as principal of Saddleback, with June Shull as teacher on special assignment. She said the teaching staff has "embraced this new way of learning" to start the year.

Saddleback was a comeback kid last year, rising to a solid B rating from a C. Academic growth remains an expectation, it was conveyed to families during a virtual Meet the Teacher Night.

This year's "3 B's" motto was created by teachers to that end. Similar to Desert Wind, it stands for "Be respectful. Be responsible. Be safe" and is part of the PBIS.

"These rules outline appropriate behaviors for students to be mindful of," Hasan said. "Expectations are also reviewed daily."

The principal's daily duties have necessarily changed until instruction can transition back to the classroom. She said while she can't visit classrooms in person, she has live sessions to talk with teachers and students.

"It's important to keep routines for staff and students," she said. "Although we are not in a brick-and-mortar setting, teachers have a consistent daily schedule for students and families to follow."



## Maricopa Elementary School

Jennifer Robinson, Ed.D., has been principal at MES since 2012. She led the campus to Lighthouse status, part of the "Leader in Me" program. For the new school year, flexibility is the name of the game while maintaining the school's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework.

"Our teachers spent the first few days establishing high expectations for online learning and communicating them regularly with scholars and families," Robinson said. "We are keeping routines and expectations as normal as possible using our PBIS

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expectations: Be respectful, be responsible, be safe and be aware.”

The beginning of the school year, with teachers and children at last connecting and children able to see their friends, was “exciting,” she said.

As part of “Leader in Me,” the staff introduced its “8 Habits of Leaders” program for the year and focused on a habit a week. Those habits include imperatives like “Be proactive,” “Think win-win,” “Synergize” and “Find your voice and inspire others to find theirs.”

### Pima Butte Elementary School

Elizabeth Allison was the teacher on special assignment for Pima Butte before being named the principal this year after the departure of Randy Lazar. She has taken over what is currently the only A-rated school in the city.



**Elizabeth Allison**

She said the launch of distance learning seemed to go well overall.

“As with anything new, we have experienced hiccups along the way,” Allison said. “However, with the support of technology and a community dedicated to supporting our students’ success, we have continued to persevere and work through the challenges as they present themselves.”

With Allison moving up, Earshline Young is now the teacher on special assignment for both Pima Butte and Santa Rosa elementary schools.

Also new to the campus is the City of Maricopa’s Afterschool Connect, a free program sponsored by Global Water Resources. It offers resources and internet access for students and their parents (who must attend with their child) to help navigate their online learning programs.

With all the vagaries that could result from remote learning, Allison said it was important to convey expectations early.

“We know that instruction is best taught when the environmental expectations are clear,” she said. “It’s for this reason that our teachers spent the first few days establishing these expectations for online learning and communicating them regularly with students and families.”

### Butterfield Elementary School

Principal Janel Hildick said her school was off to a good start.

“Our teachers are so creative, and they are committed to ensuring students have the best experience possible,” she said.

When issues arise in the learning platform or attendance log-in, she said staff is trying to provide the necessary support.

“Teachers are delivering dynamic, grade-level content and differentiated instruction, and students are doing well navigating the new online/distance platform,” said Hildick, principal at Butterfield since 2011.

The school has achieved A status from the state and currently has a high B. Hildick is working with 38 teachers trying to keep families and staff on the same page as the school navigates a difficult time. An important part of that was setting expectations.

“Teachers shared our expectations with the students and parents during parent-teacher conferences, and communication was sent home each week to families from myself and from the teachers,” Hildick said. “Students are learning new online etiquette, and teachers are continuing to reinforce procedures and routines just as they would in a typical classroom environment.”

### Santa Cruz Elementary

The SCES campus in Tortosa has a new principal after Loraine Conley was moved to the district office as the director of assessment and data. Stephanie Rhinehart took over after serving as the Saddleback and Santa Rosa teacher on special assignment and the district’s professional development coach.

Saddleback’s TOSA is Marcus Mitchell.

To prepare for the year, Rhinehart said she shared a student-friendly Google Meets Expectation Matrix with teachers to review with their students to outline expectations for online etiquette.

“In addition to reviewing these common expectations, teachers are practicing the tools such as when to use the ‘chat’ feature or the



**Janel Hildick**

‘raise your hand’ tools,” she said. “They are also communicating our online practices with parents as well so they can help guide at home.”

As online instruction got underway, teachers helped students get more and more comfortable with the platform.

“Teachers have done an amazing job learning the new technology, helping troubleshoot difficulties logging in, and creating a positive experience for our families,” Rhinehart said.

The Coyotes have adopted a HOWL theme — Honesty, Optimism, Wisdom and Leadership. The campus is the host site for the new Boys & Girls Club.

### Santa Rosa Elementary School

Eva Safranek is MUSD’s longest-serving principal, becoming the Scorpions’ campus administrator in 2010. But the start of the new school year was novel for her.



**Eva Safranek**

She said that during a typical brick-and-mortar opening of school, teachers would start out teaching classroom expectations and etiquette. This year, they did the same, with a difference. They used the first few days of instruction teaching netiquette and distance-learning expectations in an effort to limit inevitable confusion.

“Expectations and procedures are taught and practiced, and then practiced some more to ensure a smooth class routine,” Safranek said.

The district plans for those smoothly operating virtual classes to be able to transition to a smoothly operating physical classroom once the time comes. The process encourages students, at least in upper grades, to learn time management, which may positively impact that transition.

SRES staff worked to get the students comfortable with the Florida Virtual platform before “gradually releasing responsibility to the older students to work independently on assignment,” she said.

“We appreciate the support from our families in helping students at home with navigating platforms and monitoring schoolwork,” Safranek said. “This is definitely a team effort, and everyone deserves to be complimented.”

# The 3-Sport Student-Athlete

High school athletes have been on pins and needles in preparation for what they hope is a fall season of competition. Because of the Arizona Interscholastic Association’s intent to stagger the opening of athletic play, seasons could back into each other, giving another challenge to three-sport athletes like Maricopa High School senior Mister Chavis.

## Mister C. Chavis Jr.

**Age:** 17  
**Parents:** Sherry & Te-Airre Dunn  
**Originally from:** St. Louis, Missouri  
**Sports:** Football, basketball and track & field  
**Favorite sport:** Football. I know that my opponents know that I am going to get the ball. The thing is... “Now you have to catch me!” It’s a physical and mental sport, and I have accepted both.  
**Classroom study strength:** English  
**Greatest achievement so far:** When I was a sophomore, I was named 5A San Tan Region Second Team as a running back.  
**Virtual classtime:** I have enjoyed my experience with Distance Learning. I feel that it is helping me to prepare for college.

**Are you concerned about the impact COVID-19 will have on the sports year?**  
 Yes. I am concerned about the safety of my teammates and myself while playing. The number of games that we are going to be able to play will impact the amount of film I will be able to produce while on the field in action.

**How have you coped with the COVID-19 protocols while still staying in shape?**  
 Trying to remain motivated by running drills in my backyard and in parks. Having my family members record me so that I can see the progress that I have continued to make. My family has continued to cheer for me! That’s what helps me to keep pushing during these times.

**What are your plans after high school?**  
 Attending college to obtain a degree in sports medicine. Continuing my football career at the college level and of course making my mother even prouder of me!

Victor Moreno



“I am concerned about the safety of my teammates and myself while playing,” said Mister Chavis, a senior running back for the Maricopa High Rams, of the COVID-19 pandemic.



**New MHS Athletic Director Evelyn Wynn: some overlap of sports seasons likely.**

Victor Moreno

## New AD working to ensure safe fall season amid COVID

By Raquel Hendrickson

**E**velyn Wynn had a wild introduction to Maricopa High School sports.

The new athletic director arrived as COVID-19 was changing sports schedules into question marks and casting a shadow across the fall season.

Arizona Interscholastic Association had to revise its expectations weekly and sometimes more often. Tentative schedules were created and then thrown out the window. Coaches started and stopped camps and practice.

In August, AIA announced it would try a “staggered” start to the fall season. Conference committees hustled to create new schedules.

While awaiting new schedules, Wynn was organizing practice schedules.

“In the meantime, we have been implementing a phased return-to-play schedule during the off-season in preparation for competition,” she said.

Wynn has been an athletic director 10 years, from Montourville Area School District in Pennsylvania to Globe High School last year.

“While scheduling is a huge part of this career path, we are having to navigate it much differently during this time,” she said. “It has been helpful to use my network in the athletic

community to stay connected as we all move toward the common goal of providing athletic competition for our student-athletes.”

### MHS Fall Sports

- Boys’ golf** – Coach Donald Gordon
- Girls’ golf** – Coach Brad Chamberlain
- Cross country** – Coach Corey Nelson
- Swimming** – Coach Laura Logan
- Volleyball** – Coach Theresa Abernathy
- Football** – Coach Brandon Harris
- Cheer** – Coach Kaitlyn Hendricks

Golf starts first with competition on Aug. 25, with championships in late October. Cross country starts Sept. 9, with championships in mid-November. The swim team’s first competition is mid-September. Volleyball will be allowed to start competing Sept. 21. Football is last out of the chute, with first games allowed Sept. 30 heading to championships in mid-December.

“We really looked at a phased approach based on whether they were a high-risk type sport or a medium-risk sport or low risk,” said AIA Executive Director David Hines. “Mainly that came around with contact.”

MHS has been preparing athletic facilities as advised by AIA. Athletes and coaches were pre-screened for the virus before workouts started.

“All student-athletes are required to complete a short self-reporting survey and have a temperature check as well,” Wynn said. “Facilities are disinfected by our custodial staff before and after each workout in order to maintain a safe practice space for our athletes.”

She said there will be some overlap of the seasons. AIA is looking at possible delays of the winter and then spring seasons to have lesser impact on multi-sport athletes.

Despite coronavirus and its restrictions, Wynn said student interest in sports remains consistent.

“Our students are still passionate about competing in athletics, spending time with friends, discovering their talents, and everything that encompasses a typical high school experience,” she said. “We are glad that with safety modifications, we are still able to offer athletics to our students. Doing so provides a familiar outlet and helps to create a sense of stability in our current environment.”

For MHS this fall, sports are scattered across divisions and conferences. Football remains in 5A, but in the East region. Volleyball is in the 6A Desert Southwest. Swimming is in Division I. Cross country is DI Southeast. Golf is DI Yuma.

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**Wearing headphones so he doesn't distract his older brother, William tunes into a videoconference class with his teacher and classmates.**

Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios

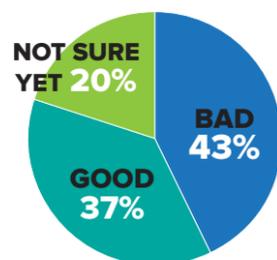
## Students, schools push through early days of virtual education

**M**aricopa families knew how school was going to start this year, but that did not make it any easier to cope with unprecedented challenges.

The state's response to COVID-19 pandemic delayed opening day. For most, the first weeks of school were online distance learning. Parents remained divided between keeping students and staff safely out of the classroom and sending all students back to campus.

The opening days were rough for most students. The district schools and charter schools tried to help parents through log-in issues. Some devices did not work properly. Some were damaged. At Maricopa Unified School District, parents rebelled loudly against one of the layers of attendance mandates, and the district removed that requirement.

### How have your child's first few weeks of online school been?



Source: InMaricopa.com poll; 111 responses

Desert Wind Middle School seventh grader Chloe Armstrong shared her experience with Maricopa Unified School District administration: "Something a little challenging during distance learning is not being able to see my friends and my teachers because they always make me so happy, and seeing them in



**Mom Alicia assists her boys, William, left, and Devin as they attend virtual classes on their laptops at the family dining room table. The children are attending a virtual academy this year.**

Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios

person would just make my day. Also, my real brothers can be real noisy sometimes, but most of the time they're good. Some things are really good. I get my emails back super quickly and I have no malfunction with my computer."

Leading Edge Academy opened later than all other schools but had students both in class and online for Day 1 on Aug. 17. Principal Mat Reese said, "A lot of parents had difficulties logging in. We just need to take care of some issues, and that's what we're looking at, trying to get things squared away. It's a challenge."

Legacy Traditional Academy started online but brought kids back to the classroom in August. MUSD, Heritage Academy and others decided to wait until at least Sept. 9 to start in-person education while parents continued to debate.

Jessica Cerkoney shared her opinion with InMaricopa: "I don't understand the push to force stay-at-home education on others who cannot do this option. I'm sure there are enough teachers who would be willing to teach in-person for those kids who need it. How would families who want their kids to stay home feel if they were forced to put their kids in school for classroom education? Some people can and some people cannot."

And Alice Latham Pulliam weighed in: "I just hope and pray by sending the children back to school [it] will not cause a spike in COVID. We all share this City."

Said Keauna Olugu: "If I was unable to assist MY children with their studies, due to me not knowing how to, I too would want to push my children back to campus! As for my home, my educational background won't allow me to act carelessly when it comes to my children! I have seen COVID up close and personal, and I know this is a different beast from the flu!"

Jet Hoiet opined: "It's too soon. Things are not going to change enough for a safe in-person start date by Sept. 8. They should have aimed for after fall break, at least. Governor is probably going to push it back anyway. Maybe not tomorrow but he'll probably have to push it back."

Shannon M. Villanova posted: "I actually asked my 11yr old daughter what she thought and her biggest concern was that they have to have mandatory masks and social distancing. I'm not really okay with her going back but I truly understand why."

And Tiffany Johnson said: "I wonder the quality of education if they have to shut down and quarantine every time they are exposed. With as complacent as some parents are about sending their children to school sick. This could cause a lot of shutdowns again."

## Skyrocketing tuition spurs free-college promises

By Murray Siegel

**I**t is an election year and several politicians have included a program of free college in their platforms.

There is no question the cost of attending college has experienced a drastic increase. In 1980, the yearly cost for tuition, room and board at Arizona State University was \$3,101 (\$9,702 in 2020 dollars) while today that cost is \$22,752. That is a 135% increase above inflation.



Murray Siegel

What are the causes of the explosive rise in the cost of attending college? One understandable cause is the inflated level of salaries for faculty. At the large four-year universities, research is prized since it brings credit to the school and, since much research is funded by grants, institutions can charge administrative costs to the grants. To attract top researchers to the faculty, salaries have increased well beyond inflation.

Another factor causing salary expenses to rise is that professors who conduct research teach fewer classes, which means money must be spent to hire instructors to cover the classes not taught by the researchers.

Salaries are not the only cause of rising costs. Universities must have the latest technology for researchers, for computerization of records and for coursework in majors such as engineering, nursing and computer graphics. This technology is expensive and this expense is reflected in higher tuition.

A third cause is maintaining competitive teams in football and men's basketball, which provide revenue to cover the other varsity sports. At many schools, the head coaches of these two sports are among the highest-paid employees. Without some change, we appear to be stuck with an ever-increasing cost of attending college.

There already exists tuition-free college programs, so what can we learn from them? The City University of New York (CUNY) offered free tuition at all its campuses until 1976. Today, a New York City resident whose annual family income does not exceed \$125,000, and who meets the entrance requirements, can attend a CUNY school tuition-free. Not everyone can meet the entrance requirements, since only 46% of applicants are accepted.

Georgia has the HOPE scholarship, which guarantees free tuition at any state campus for a student with a high school grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 (a B student) for four years. Right here in Pinal County, Central Arizona College has the Promise for the Future program, which provides free tuition for any county resident who graduates high school with at least a 2.75 GPA and who has performed a minimum of 20 hours of community service.

Parents and students need to forget about promises from politicians and focus on getting good grades. A future column will offer an answer to reducing the cost of a college education without sacrificing the opportunity to gain real knowledge.

Murray Siegel, Ph.D., has 44 years of experience teaching mathematics. He is a volunteer at Butterfield Elementary School.

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Kyle Norby

**MOST EXPENSIVE HOME SOLD**

**1. 42533 W. Sandpiper Drive, Province**

The most expensive home sold in Maricopa July 16-August 15 was a waterfront home with expansive views and a resort-style backyard featuring a custom water feature highlighted in Phoenix Home and Garden magazine. Built by Engle Homes, the backyard features a built-in gas BBQ and gas fire pit. Kitchen has granite countertops and huge walk-in pantry. It last sold in 2007 for \$439,485.

- Sold:** July 21
- Purchase Price:** \$444,000
- Square footage:** 2,296
- Price per square foot:** \$193.37
- Days on market:** 76
- Builder:** Engle Homes
- Year built:** 2007
- Bedrooms:** 2
- Bathrooms:** 2.5
- Community:** Province
- Features:** 10-foot ceilings, wood laminate and tile floors, wall oven, custom-built Stone Creek media center, master bedroom with door to the Saltillo-tiled patio.



Kyle Norby

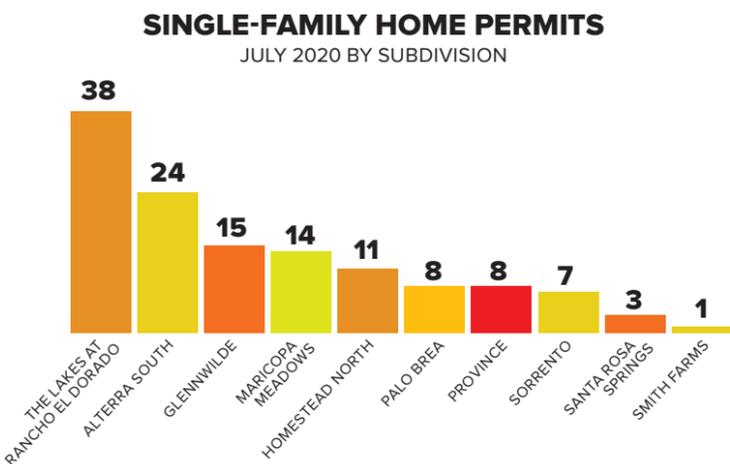
**LEAST EXPENSIVE HOME SOLD**

**1. 19392 N. Taft Ave., Heritage District**

The least expensive home sold in Maricopa June 16-July 15 was a 65-year-old house with four bedrooms and two baths on an acre lot. On the market just five days, it last sold in 2016 for \$40,000.

- Sold:** July 23
- Purchase Price:** \$152,000
- Square footage:** 1,285
- Price per square foot:** \$118.29
- Days on market:** 5
- Builder:** Unknown
- Year built:** 1955
- Bedrooms:** 4
- Bathrooms:** 2
- Community:** Heritage District
- Features:** All new tile, painting and fixtures. The home needs a new bathtub, kitchen countertops and cabinet doors.

- 2. 40165 W. Hayden Drive, Homestead North** ..... \$180,000
- 3. 20767 N. Carmen Ave., Acacia Crossings** ..... \$186,000
- 4. 19722 N. Locke Court, The Villages** ..... \$193,000
- 5. 42300 W. Colby Drive, Rancho El Dorado** ..... \$200,100



For a full list of last month's Maricopa home sales, visit [InMaricopa.com/Real-Estate](http://InMaricopa.com/Real-Estate).

**Low mortgage rates make it a great time to refinance**

By Dayv Morgan

With interest rates as low as they have been this year, homeowners are facing a dilemma. Should they purchase a home or just refinance the one they already own?

Since December, rates have been on a steady decline. In August, they were as low as 2.5% and are expected to be around 3% into September. Homeowners are taking advantage of the opportunity.

According to local lender Kristy Furman of Sunstreet Mortgage, last year at this time refinances were about 20% of their volume. Now they make up 60% because interest rates are so low. Homeowners can save an extraordinary amount of money on their current mortgage.

When I moved to Maricopa in 2006, interest rates were 7%. They were still near 5% in 2018. If you still have a mortgage at these rates and have not refinanced then you are just throwing money away.

Let's look at a breakdown of how much a

lower interest rate can save you over time. The average sale price of a home in Maricopa is \$257,000. Here is what you would actually pay in principal and interest for a 30-year loan of \$250,000 at the various rates:



Dayv Morgan

- 3% = \$1,054/month, \$379,440 total
- 4% = \$1,193/month, \$429,480 total
- 5% = \$1,342/month, \$483,120 total

At the 2006 rate of 7% interest, the monthly payment would jump to \$1,663/month, for a total cost of \$598,680. So a home owner with a \$250,000 loan at today's rates will save almost \$220,000 in payments over the life of the loan.

It makes sense to refinance if you can lower your rate by at least 1%. If streamlining, the cost of refinancing ranges between \$3,000 and \$5,000, depending on your lender and your loan type. That cost can be rolled into the loan for no out-of-pocket cost. It's a fairly simple process. You usually need a minimum credit score of 620, with no appraisal or

income verification required.

However, refinancing is not the answer for everyone. If you can't get an interest rate at least 1% lower than your current mortgage, it takes over a decade to recoup the cost of refinancing. And if you decide to sell your home within a couple of years of refinancing, any savings you intended could be wiped out.

If you are looking to move out of your current home, it's a great time to sell and buy at these historically low interest rates. You can likely buy something newer and bigger with little or no increase in your monthly payment. And rates below 3% won't stay around forever. 📱

Dayv Morgan is a Maricopa Realtor and owner of HomeSmart Success.

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## A love-hate relationship with oleanders

By Rita Bricker

If oleanders are toxic, why do we have so many of them growing in Maricopa? Here's the scoop on the good, the bad and the ugly aspects of oleanders.

Nerium oleander, often romantically called rose laurel, and its relatives like the desert rose (Adenium) and yellow oleander (Thevetia peruviana) are prized as ornamental and landscape plants. They are fast-growing, drought-tolerant and easy to maintain. They are sun-loving, evergreen, not picky about soil quality and impervious to air pollutants and dry wind.

Their blossoms are beautiful and often very fragrant in colors of pink, white, red, salmon, apricot, yellow and even purple. Oleander can be planted singly as a specimen plant or in groups for a privacy hedge or windbreak. The taller varieties can be trained into lovely, long-blooming trees.

At last count, there are about 500 varieties of oleanders.

Oleanders have a few problems. They can attract aphids, which are easily dispersed with a strong stream of water. Sticky "honeydew" on the leaves or the presence of ants in the plant may indicate aphids. Leaf drop may be the

result of either under- or over-watering. Best practice at this time of year is deep watering one or two times weekly, but oleanders do not like soggy roots.

A fairly recent development with oleanders is leaf scorch. This is an infection caused by the Xylella fastidiosa bacterium spread by the glassy winged sharpshooter; it is injected when the sharpshooter feeds on oleander tissues. The uptake of water and nutrients through the roots is interrupted, causing the leaves to yellow and drop. The life of the plant may be prolonged by pruning and destroying (not composting) the affected areas, but there is no cure.

But the beautiful oleander is also treacherous. All parts of the plant: flowers, leaves, stems, trunks, and roots — both dried and green — contain powerful compounds that can cause severe gastric and cardiac distress when ingested. The sap from the plant can cause skin irritation. Even smoke from burning oleander leaves can be irritating.

Humans, cattle, horses, sheep, goats and llamas can all be affected by oleander poisoning. But, luckily, the bitter taste

and sharp-pointed leaves make the plant unpalatable, so ingestion by humans is rare.

Symptoms of blurred vision, difficulty breathing, stomach pain and diarrhea, vomiting, low blood pressure, irregular heart-beat, dizziness or drowsiness, disorientation, depression, tremors or severe headache can present about four hours after ingestion. If oleander ingestion is suspected, contact our local emergency services or the National Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222.

[InMaricopa.com/Columnists](https://www.inmaricopa.com/columnists)



Rita Bricker

## Time to get ready for fall planting season

By Leslie Maldonado  
Certified Master Gardener  
Karsten's Maricopa Ace Hardware

September means a few things for the avid gardener like new pots, plants, seeds, soil and new gardening supplies such as gloves and pruners. With those on the list it usually includes a trip to your local Karsten's Maricopa Ace Hardware store for supplies and advice.

It's that time of year to fertilize all your ornamental trees and shrubs or replace any that you may have lost over the long hot summer, prepare those backyard gardens and raised beds for fall planting and, of course, for preparing to over-seed with winter rye grass.

Depending on what you have growing in your yard, there's probably a fertilizer for it. Different plants have specific food needs. So, knowing what you have helps to feed them properly. There are general "All Purpose" fertilizers if you have a variety of plants. As always, if you need guidance picking out the proper product to make your plants grow greener, taller or bloom more profusely we are here to answer those questions. If any pesky weeds sprout along the way or bugs happen to appear, we have the solutions for that as well.

Now that temperatures will start decreasing, those raised beds and gardens can begin to be used to their potential again. Now is the time to till up that soil and add more nutrients. Whether you're adding bagged fertilizer throughout and mixing it in or adding fresh organic soil to fluff up the garden bed, your plants will appreciate the aeration once they are in and thriving. We also do weekly orders of vegetables and herbs to get a jump start on the growing season.

Growing a beautiful lawn is easy with some preparation, which is key, to keep it growing healthy and green. You can have the greener grass with hard work in the beginning that will save time and frustration in the long scheme of things. Existing lawns will need aerating, a good mowing on lowest setting and raked up thatch to give new winter rye seed a good start. Gypsum (#7191042) may be raked in to help condition the soil. If starting a brand new

lawn, till the soil working in gypsum to give a nice airy base for seeds to take root.

To get started planting, make sure to measure your planting area so you know how much seed you'll need (about 1.5 pounds per 100 feet) and don't forget the starter fertilizer (#7475320). You'll need a spreader, push (#7697733) or hand held (#7167406), depending on how big of an area. We recommend using a seed cover, such as Omni Compost and Seed Cover (#7196710), to help keep seed moist until germination (5-10 days typically), it also helps keeps the birds from eating your seed. Remember two important



Leslie Maldonado



factors, temperature 70-65 degrees at night and water enough to moisten seed but not too much to puddle. Puddles can leave you with bare spots, as seeds pool together.

Helpful hints when spreading your winter rye grass:

1. Divide your seed in half, spreading first half in one direction and second half perpendicular to ensure even spread.
2. Buy a little extra seed, for any spots that doesn't come up as thick as you expected.

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# September is World Alzheimer's Month

By Joan Koczor

World Alzheimer's Month, an international campaign by Alzheimer's Disease International, is observed every year on Sept. 21 to raise awareness of dementia.

Alzheimer's disease is named after the late Dr. Alois Alzheimer, a German neuropathologist who first described the disease of the brain in a patient in 1906.

In 2010 the "Silver Tsunami" arrived as more than 40 million American baby boomers turned 65.

As more of them approach retirement, the number of people suffering with the neurodegenerative condition that causes dementia increases. According to the Alzheimer's Association, more than 5 million Americans live with the progressive disease, with more than 16 million adults spending about 18.6 billion hours providing them with unpaid care.

A few noticeable differences between normal aging and signs of early dementia:

**Daily life activities like driving, using the telephone and shopping.** No problems getting these tasks done as before. With early dementia the person may experience confusion or inability to complete a task without reminders or help.



Joan Koczor

**Changes in behavior and personality.** A change in temperament. Communication issues. Loss of existing vocabulary. Difficulty making decisions.

**Stowing away items they think are valuable.** Gives the person a sense of control. Enables them to feel like they're doing something to manage their situation.

**Vision.** Since Alzheimer's patients are usually elderly, their sight might be going naturally in any case. But a non-Alzheimer's patient should still be able to judge the distance of certain things or the passage of time. When Alzheimer's strikes, however, this cognitive function is among the first to go.

Other unfortunate symptoms of this visual-spatial weakness include a loss of focus in reading and not being able to work out words. They may not be able to discern one color from the other, which can lead to more risks.

While Alzheimer's and other kinds of dementia are responsible for many cases of memory loss, the good news is there are other non-permanent factors.

If you or a loved one are experiencing any changes in mood or behavior check with your doctor. Early detection is key for any illness. Additional information can be found at MayoClinic.org/diseases-conditions/alzheimers-disease/symptoms or VeryWellMind.com/what-causes-memory-loss-4123636.

Joan Koczor is a senior advocate and a member of the Age-Friendly Maricopa Advisory Committee.

[InMaricopa.com/Columnists](http://InMaricopa.com/Columnists)

# Senior designs for safely entering, exiting your house

By Ron Smith

When considering safety factors to adapt your home as you grow older, look for good visibility, excellent lighting, accessibility and no trip hazards. Be sure that your address numbers are clearly visible from the street to aid guests and first responders.



Ron Smith

**Walkways** to doors should avoid trip hazards, such as uneven stones or raised concrete joints. Shrubbery should not interfere with walkways. Outdoor lighting should have sensors that can either detect motion or turn themselves on at dusk and off at daylight. Lighting fixtures should point downward to avoid shadows and should be frosted to help reduce glare.

**Stairs** should have step risers of equal height with each being about 8 inches high. Sturdy handrails should be 1.5 inches thick on both sides of the stairs and extend beyond

the top and bottom steps to provide proper support for approaching or exiting. **Steps** should be deep enough and wide enough to accommodate the person and a mobility aid. Visual clues provided by proper lighting or color changes help to define each step.

The **entrance door** should be at least 36 inches wide or able to be that wide with the use of special offset swing clear hinges. The door should swing inward to avoid having to step backward. The entrance door threshold should be flat (zero-step) or no more than a half-inch high. Zero-step thresholds are important to avoid tripping and permit easier access for wheelchairs and walkers.

Note that if you are able to achieve a zero-step threshold, you need to be sure the porch/landing/pathway leading to the door slopes away from the door sufficiently for carry

water away from the door to avoid flooding. The door should have a lever-style handle for ease of use. On the inside, the door should have a security slide chain and a peephole viewing port or a porch/doorbell camera for observing who is outside. Make sure flooring inside and outside the door is slip-resistant. A key lockbox for first responders is a great idea.

A shelf or a chair near the front door can provide a place for a person to rest or put down packages while looking for keys to unlock the door. For some residents, an electronic lock may ease the entry process or provide a backup when a key is lost or forgotten.

Keep in mind that some entrances may eventually require modifications, such as the ramp or a lift when a person's mobility becomes more limited, necessitating a safer approach to the entrance. Also, keep in mind that an alternate entrance may be more feasible.

(Source: AARP HomeFit Guide at aarp.org/homefit.)

Ron Smith is a Maricopa resident and an aging-in-place advocate.

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# New health technology a boon to seniors

By Al Brandenburg

The healthcare industry is evolving, thanks to policy changes, societal shifts and technological advances.

New technologies like telemedicine have grown to a staggering degree during the COVID-19 pandemic and are here to stay. Experts say we can't go back. Old-fashioned medical visits will never be replaced, but going forward, many more doctor visits will be of the remote variety. That means it's important to keep improving the quality of those interactions.



Al Brandenburg

More and more seniors have computers and smart phones with the capability of communicating visually with their doctors. Along with using headsets whenever possible, doctors should make sure they are in a well-lit area for video visits and use captioning options for all patients by default.

It can be expensive to provide virtual visits via computer capability in an office infrastructure, but it's not to put it in a

phone app for virtual care. For details, go to [AgingInPlace.org/telehealth-and-seniors](http://AgingInPlace.org/telehealth-and-seniors).

Another growing area of health technology is artificial intelligence or AI. Today, despite expansion in health insurance coverage, ERs are seeing a larger and aging population, sicker patients who arrive in immediate danger with more chronic conditions. Other challenges are physician shortages as we expand care, a need for more expensive technical tools and an unsustainable trend in costs and expenditures.

The arrival of AI is poised to have a transformative impact on emergency department teams and the broader world of medical diagnostics.

(Sources: AgingInPlace.com, HealthDay, US News and Health Report, AARP)

Al Brandenburg is director of Maricopa Senior Coalition.

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGY

Here are some telemedicine and self-monitoring products now and soon to be available:

- **CallOnDoc.** Patients can get answers from health providers, as well as prescriptions for medications for anything from relatively minor issues to chronic conditions.
- **MedWand.** The device, which will be available later this year, combines several diagnostic tools, including an ECG and a pulse oximeter. Patient data can then be shared with a doctor.
- **Complete.** Made by Omron Healthcare, this is a novel Food and Drug Administration-cleared technology that provides blood pressure and EKG monitoring with one device and can share the data with your physician using an app.
- **Zibrio SmartScale.** This tool helps assess an individual's risk of falling by measuring and tracking physical balance. Falls are the leading cause of injury-related death among people age 65 and older, according to the CDC.

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-Chris Scoggin

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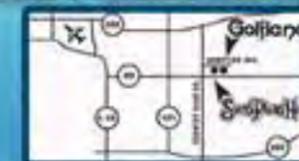
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# Calendar

## SEPTEMBER

- 8 Aspirational Return to Campus**  
Maricopa Unified School District
- 9 Aspirational Return to Campus**  
Heritage Academy
- MUSD Governing Board Meeting**  
6:30 p.m., Maricopa Unified School District  
44150 W. Maricopa Casa Grande Hwy.
- 10 Heritage District Advisory Board Meeting**  
5:30 p.m., City Hall  
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza
- 12 MHS Rams Football Booster Golf Tournament**  
8 a.m., Ak-Chin Southern Dunes  
48456 W. Hwy. 238
- 14 Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting**  
6 p.m., City Hall  
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza
- 15 Maricopa City Council Meeting**  
7 p.m., City Hall  
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza
- 23 Parks, Recreation & Libraries Committee Meeting**  
6 p.m., City Hall  
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza
- MUSD Governing Board Meeting**  
6:30 p.m., Maricopa Unified School District  
44150 W. Maricopa Casa Grande Hwy.
- Sundays**
- Narcotics Anonymous**  
7 p.m., 45295 W. Honeycutt Ave.
- Mondays**
- Virtual Storytime**  
9 a.m., Maricopa Public Library  
facebook.com/MaricopaLibrary
- Narcotics Anonymous**  
7 p.m., 16540 N. Porter Road
- Tuesdays**
- Celebrate Recovery Small Group Meeting**  
7 p.m., Maricopa Community Church  
44977 W. Hathaway Ave.
- Thursdays**
- Narcotics Anonymous**  
7 p.m., Ak-Chin Social Services  
48227 W. Farrell Road
- Fridays**
- Al-Anon**  
7 p.m., Community of Hope  
45295 W. Honeycutt Ave.
- ALL EVENTS ARE TENTATIVE

For details on these and other local events — and to list your own — visit [InMaricopa.com/Calendar](http://InMaricopa.com/Calendar).

**Nov 7-8**

## Copa Shorts Film Fest goes virtual

The fourth annual Copa Shorts Film Fest will take place online Nov. 7-8. With health guidelines discouraging gatherings during the coronavirus pandemic, the directors of Copa Shorts Film Fest decided to make it a virtual event.

Film and screenplay submissions, which began in August 2019, closed July 31. All submissions will be reviewed by CSFF reviewers. The filmmakers whose films are selected to be presented will be notified Sept. 18. Tickets for the festival will go on sale in October.

“Although it was a challenge for filmmakers who wished to complete their projects because of stay-in-place rules since March, some films that were completed prior to the rules and during the past five months have been quite inventive,” said Shelley Gillespie, executive director of not-



for-profit CSFF. “We have some especially compelling and entertaining films to show, including animation projects and documentaries.”

The decision to go virtual was made after discussion with the festival’s board and community members. The online festival will allow participants to benefit from workshops, vote for the festival’s “Best of the Fest” category, and engage in Q&As with filmmakers, in addition to watching the films.

CSFF will have a dedicated “channel” on xerbtv. Some of the previous year’s films can be viewed in weeks prior to the Nov. 7-8 showings. An advantage for “attendees” is they can view films from the comfort of home with a wider time span to see the films. There will be a small fee to view film blocks. All films are 20 minutes or shorter.

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**Sep 25** **Free abstract art contest to debut**

A new contest is open to all Maricopa visual artists.

Titled "Go with the Flow," the abstract art contest is sponsored by Maricopa Arts Council and VWM Art. Deadline is Sept. 25. The contest is completely online and is free to enter.

"Maricopa family, let's create some art that goes beyond what words can express and end this year with some creative fun," said Veronica W. Moses, a recent transplant, painter and creator of VWM art. She said she designed the contest to tap into the deep well of creativity in Maricopa.

This is a juried contest with money prizes to be awarded to the top three works. There is also the potential for the prize-winning works to be displayed in the opening VWM Art Gallery, planned to open late this year.

The contest will also be administered by Kristal Hoeh, a co-director of Maricopa Arts Council and well-known locally as a distinguished artist and art educator. The abstract art contest is centered on the colors blue, yellow and red.

Artists may submit one painting per e-mail address as a JPG or PNG. (Canvas/wood size: 24-by-36 inches up to 4-by-6 feet. Emphasis is on acrylics, but all media are accepted.) Artists should provide first



and last name, email and phone. They must also certify they are a City of Maricopa resident by naming their subdivision of residence.

Five finalists will be chosen by the public via online voting on Facebook. The final three winners will be chosen by co-directors of Maricopa Arts Council. First prize is \$100. Second prize is \$75. Third prize is \$50.

Submit entries to [MuseumMaricopa@gmail.com](mailto:MuseumMaricopa@gmail.com).

Winners will be announced Oct. 1.

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**Pet peeve:** Any day over 110 degrees  
**Like most about Maricopa:** Small-town feel, good people

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**Quote:** "If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door." – Milton Berle

Learn more about Keenan at [InMaricopa.com/Community/Getting-To-Know](http://InMaricopa.com/Community/Getting-To-Know)

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