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Maricopa

December 2020

GOVERNMENT

Political
newcomer
elected to
council

ROUGH RETURN

Snowbirds are not
flocking back in the
midst of COVID

BUSINESS

Wildcat crazy
for boulders

PEOPLE

Catching up with
Laura Walsh



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The winds of change ...

This year has been bumpier and more unpredictable than any in recent memory. As the winds of change blow, they sweep a new political player into city office.

Amber Liermann, a longtime counselor with the Maricopa Unified School District, won her runoff for a city council seat in the November election. "I have a passion to help our most vulnerable citizens," she told us. "I believed if I could earn a position, I could make a greater impact."

The ongoing pandemic has meant change for all of us, including the snowbirds who flock to town for winter year after year. Whether from Canada or the Midwest, many made the difficult decision to forgo this year's season in the sun, some even selling their Maricopa homes. With their sizable contribution to the local economy, the good news is that not all of our winter visitors stayed home.

This month marks the departure of the editor who has shepherded this magazine with a steady hand for the last six years. Raquel Hendrickson is moving on after doing it all for this publication, including reporting, photography and the countless other tasks necessary to produce a lively read every month — and every day online. "In Maricopa, I've found more people with ideas for what their new hometown should be than I have encountered



anywhere," she writes in a farewell column. Fortunately, she is not moving on from the city. If you see her around town, thank her for helping chronicle life in Maricopa. She certainly has our gratitude.

At the same time — 2020 was like that after all — we are losing another featured player. Kyle Norby, our multimedia journalist, has taken his talents to the classroom as a photography teacher at Maricopa High School, where he joins his wife, Hannah, a culinary arts instructor. "The main goal," he says of his students, "is to give them confidence to explore and be creative." We wish him luck in his new endeavor.

Also in this issue, three generations of a family do the heavy lifting at one local business, and an update on current and future development in the city.

Happy holidays from all of us at InMaricopa. If you are among those who will be separated from family and friends at this special time of year, take solace in the words of an anonymous sage: "Together forever, never apart. Maybe in distance but never at heart."

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Contributors



DR. C. JON BEECROFT
Fluent in English and
Spanish, he is a doctor
of podiatric medicine.



BETH SULEK-LAHOUSSE
An accomplished pickleball
player, she delves into
mistletoe for the holidays.



VICTOR MORENO
A portrait specialist, the
photographer has been busy
shooting events in the city.

ON THE COVER: Jeff Zerr, a snowbird from Saskatchewan, decided to visit this year despite the pandemic. He and his wife play golf several times a week. Photo by Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios

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History

Ring the Bell

Used as both a school and a Catholic church, St. Francis of Assisi Mission was built in the Ak-Chin community in 1920-21. Despite changes over the years, it never had air conditioning. It also became too small for parish needs. A much larger St. Francis church was constructed on its east side in 2013, but the original, nearly century-old church remains a piece of history on Church Road.



1920s

Carmelita Stanley/Maricopa Historical Society

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Passionate go-getter elected to city council on first try

By Raquel Hendrickson



Victor Moreno

Amber Liermann remembers the exact moment she decided to run for Maricopa City Council.

“I was driving down Porter Road, driving past Pacana Park, and just thinking about it,” she said. “I turned my blinker left, and I drove down Bowlin and I walked into City Hall and I signed my name. I was ready. I was like, ‘I really want to do this.’”

That was Nov. 7, 2019. Though not part of her plans for the day, it did not come out of the blue.

“I was starting to pay attention to the decisions that were being made by council,” she said. “I began to value those decisions and the impact that they have on our community on a daily basis. With some of the volunteer work I’ve done, I see some of the needs, some of the real, raw, vulnerable needs of our community members.”

She is set to take the oath of office in December.

Liermann has worked in Maricopa 17 years and has lived in town 16 years. She has always been a highly active individual with a lot of irons in the fire and a passion to help that drives almost everything she does. That has placed her in the middle of many community and charity efforts.

As a result, she has become a familiar face to many beyond the confines of Maricopa High School, where she is Exceptional Student Services behavioral counselor. Her work with Copa Closet on campus, providing free clothes and supplies for students, brought her into contact with even more like-minded residents, who connected her with others.

“I have a passion to help our most vulnerable citizens. I believed if I could earn a position, I could make a greater impact,” Liermann said.

Before and during her campaign, she gained the support of many high-end leaders who saw how engrained she was in the community. For all that, she was a political newcomer among five other candidates vying for three seats.

So, she had her work cut out for her. She also had a lifetime of multitasking and being a go-getter to push her forward.

WHY AMBER IS AMBER

Liermann was born in Los Angeles. Her father was a military chaplain at the time. Her mother was a preschool teacher and music teacher.

Amber was a middle child amid five siblings — four brothers and a sister. Like their father, her brothers served in the military.

“I’m a middle child, so I think oftentimes I played that middle child role of peace-maker,

flexible, helpful,” Liermann said. “I was kind of your typical middle child.”

The family moved around a bit during her childhood, partially due to her father’s military service. He eventually retired as a lieutenant colonel.

Liermann went to elementary school in Redlands, California, and junior high in Chula Vista. She spent one year of high school in Raleigh, North Carolina, but graduated in Staples, Minnesota.

She was a three-sport athlete in high school. There also were extracurricular activities and clubs like Students Against Destructive Decisions and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

“When I was in high school, I went to school all day, and then I went to sports, or band, or choir or handbell choir,” she said. “I went to church, and I was very involved in my church. So, my schedule now is pretty much like my schedule in high school and college.”



Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios

Amber Liermann chats with a voter on Election Day at Maricopa Community Church. “I’m just so amazed and humbled by the support,” she said.

She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Crown College, a private Christian school in Minnesota, in 1995. That wasn't the direction she started out.

"I wanted to be a teacher my whole entire life. That's all I ever wanted to be," Liermann said. "My junior year of college I had a pre-teaching experience in the classroom, and I recognized right away that there were about four or five students in my class who were really struggling to learn. It really concerned me and bothered me. I became very passionate about identifying the barriers to their learning and finding solutions for those students. After that experience, I changed my major from elementary education to psychology."

She moved to Arizona and earned her master's degree in counseling from Ottawa University in 2001. Liermann was living in Chandler when hired as a counselor at Maricopa High School in 2003. The first person she met in Maricopa was Heidi Lee, who was the ESS director at the time and is now an assistant principal at MHS.

The ESS program ensures special-education students receive not only the proper education for their abilities but also the proper counseling. That is where Liermann thrives.

DISCOVERING MARICOPA

Liermann moved to Acacia Crossings in 2004 when her daughter was a toddler and her son was an infant.

"There was, I think, one streetlight," she said. "There was just that one grocery store. Bashas' had not opened yet, no Fry's, nothing like that. So, I drove to Chandler for my groceries. The Dairy Queen was here and Headquarters and La Roca. And that's about it."

The new city was gearing up for dramatic growth, but Liermann had already seen something unique in town. She took the job at MHS because of the diversity she witnessed on campus.

"Even back then the diversity drew me to this district," Liermann said. "There is a richness in that diversity. There is a depth in the diversity here. That is a depth we can draw a lot of strength from, not just individually but from each other."

She said that made her excited to raise her family in the community.

Liermann now has four children, and they are used to watching her involvement in the community on an almost nightly basis.

Her volunteer work has included Maricopa Police Department, Maricopa Veteran Care Center (she is on the board), Copa Closet,



Submitted



Submitted

Amber Liermann (left) training on suicide prevention and (right) receiving a CopaCloset donation of school supplies at Maricopa High School.

Family Advocacy Center, Women's Hope Center and her church, Church of Celebration. She has also been on the MHS Site Council.

Her oldest daughter is now 18 and attending Grand Canyon University, where she majors in worship arts. She also wants to minor in youth ministries.

“As her pastor, I have seen many examples of her leadership skills and talents and have long been impressed by her character, diligence, compassion and heart for bettering people around her.”

Rev. Joshua Barrett

Her 17-year-old son, a junior at MHS, hopes to attend the Air Force Academy. He is in the preapplication process, running cross country, carrying a 4.5 GPA, working a part-time job and volunteering.

Her youngest daughter, 15, is in ninth grade at MHS, where she takes art and dance with plans to study performing arts in the future.

Her youngest son, 13, attends Maricopa Wells Middle School. A three-sport athlete, he is also interested in joining the military.

THE CAMPAIGN

With 17 years of Maricopa contacts, Liermann found support that ranged from friends speaking up for her campaign to formal, investigated endorsements such as the City of Maricopa Police Association.

Liermann said the endorsements "gave dignity" to her rookie campaign. Support came from an 8-year-old girl and a state legislator. It came from years of growing her network of acquaintances. She both reached out for support and worked for it.

"I was given some very hard questions" from prospective supporters, she said. "I was just sweating."

The results were obvious.

Vice Mayor Nancy Smith backed Liermann, saying her "positive attitude, conservative fiscal mindset and ambitious work ethic will be welcomed to council."

State Rep. Bret Roberts said she has "pragmatic insight into our city's needs."

Former state legislator Steve Smith, whom Liermann said was hugely helpful with his advice, said she "has been a force in our community for years and her experience with economic issues as well as her history of support for our military will be a welcomed addition to the City Council."

Constable Glenn Morrison, another

MARICOPA

Breaks ground on Community Hospital



City of Maricopa

Economic Development

Exceptional Healthcare Breaks Ground on Community Hospital

Maricopa's first freestanding community hospital, consisting of ten inpatient beds and ten emergency beds, has broken ground. The single-story building will be located just south of the overpass on John Wayne Parkway. The state-of-the-art facility will include a specialty internal medicine hospital, a 24-hour emergency unit, an in-house laboratory, and a digital imaging suite – including CT Scan, X-Ray, mobile MRI and ultrasound. Exceptional Healthcare will also feature a helipad for rapid transfer of patients to larger hospitals in the Phoenix region.

"For over a decade now the City of Maricopa has been working diligently to assist healthcare options to locate here. We are extremely excited to see Exceptional Emergency Centers open the City of Maricopa's very first, 24/7 ER and Hospital. This new facility will provide desperately needed medical services to our ever-increasing population and we are so very appreciative for their large investment in our city."

– Christian Price, Mayor.



"The experience working with the City of Maricopa has been fantastic. City leadership has been extremely supportive of the Exceptional Healthcare project, and has been there to assist us every step of the way. We look forward to providing much-needed jobs and services to Maricopa residents in 2021."

– Saeed Mahboubi, Chief Financial Officer of Exceptional Healthcare.

As Maricopa continues to attract residents for affordable housing and a high quality of life, a full spectrum of medical and emergency care will shortly follow, as we see with the groundbreaking of Exceptional Healthcare. The City of Maricopa will continue to work closely with the developers to ensure a rapid completion of the Exceptional Healthcare facility, which is currently projecting a completion date in autumn 2021.



mentor, said, “Amber has gained my respect due to her years of volunteer work, community involvement and ability to build effective working relationships with people from all backgrounds.”

Her pastor at Church of Celebration, the Rev. Joshua Barrett, went public with his political support of Liermann: “As her pastor, I have seen many examples of her leadership skills and talents and have long been impressed by her character, diligence, compassion and heart for bettering people around her.”

And from elementary school student Brinleigh Thorp: “She is filled with passion!”

In a COVID-drenched campaign season that made meeting people difficult, that kind of backing was invaluable. Liermann survived the primary by placing third and qualifying for a runoff with Andre LaFond. She won the seat with more than 55% of the vote in the general election.

“I’m just so amazed and humbled by the support that I’ve been given,” she said. I was very encouraged by that. Good conversations, good interactions. A lot of it, too, is I have a lot of connections through the volunteer work that I’ve been doing in the community. I think those connections helped me build trust.”

She touted three main issues, saying she wanted to join council to make a difference. That it is a part-time job with pay and benefits went over her head until near the end of the campaign.

“I had no idea there was financial compensation,” she said. “I thought it was a volunteer position.”

THE ISSUES

Liermann always named as her first priority improving Maricopa’s health and mental health resources. That includes pushing efforts to bring a “full hospital” to town. And she sees strengthening mental health as a community effort.

“Our community is amazing. We have generous, kind, amazing people, but we’ve got to connect these people,” she said. “That’s part of my problem with our mental health services in Maricopa. I believe there’s some disconnect in those services.”

She is proud the board of Maricopa Veteran Care Center is starting mental



Submitted
Amber Liermann, back row left, and the Maricopa Veteran Counseling volunteers.

“The thing is we have people from all over the country. We may need to do some education about local laws and local expectations, because they aren’t aware of the history of 347.”

Amber Liermann

health counseling services in March. With volunteers in place, it is developing a referral process and needs assessment.

State Route 347 is top of mind for her and “a deep concern for residents.” While she sees the complexities involved in improving the roadway between Maricopa and Interstate 10, she wants to be part of the decision-making that creates change.

“The next step is that we need to complete the survey that the Maricopa Association of Governments has requested ... so we can position ourselves for the funds that we are

competing for with other cities and counties as well,” she said.

It has been and will be a very long process. What can be done right now to lower the dangers of driving SR 347?

“Educate people,” she said. “The thing is we have people from all over the country. We may need to do some education about local laws and local expectations, because they aren’t aware of the history of 347.”

The third issue of her campaign was economic development. She has seen the efforts to bring companies to town and had conversations with City Manager Rick Horst about the importance of shrinking the floodplain.

“I’m looking forward to learning more about that and making decisions that move in that direction,” Liermann said. “It’s kind of right in the center of Maricopa where we really want to do some major growth.”

PREPARATION

Liermann said with many of the endorsements came great advice and mentorship. She’s received tips on how to manage her full-time and part-time job with family life.

She said she will handle that balancing act just like other members of the council.

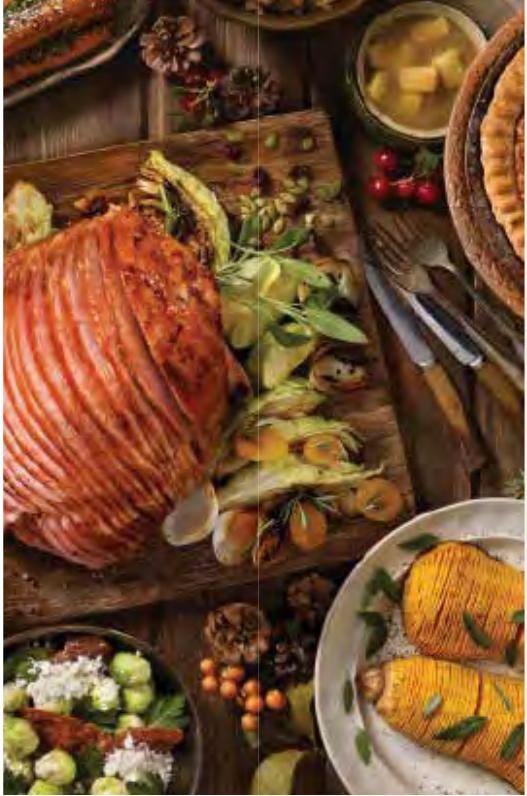
Her kids, she said, are curious about what her new job will entail. They are used to seeing her involved in community efforts almost every night of the week, and they are busy multitasking, too.

“That’s been my children’s whole life,” Liermann said. “We are used to a very active lifestyle.”

Liermann said she’s in it for the long haul, willing and wanting to serve as long as she’s needed. She is particularly happy to have been elected on her first try.

As a behavioral counselor, she said her mind is trained to identify problems and then find the solutions to remove obstacles. She is also trained not to get distracted and wants to put those skills to use for the community.

“I try to contribute to discussions and problem-solving, but I guess I was hoping for more opportunity to make a greater impact. I believe that serving on council will give me that opportunity.”



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Council, mayor vote to raise their salaries

By Raquel Hendrickson

Maricopa city councilmembers voted, 6-1, to give themselves a raise starting in January.

The salary increases amount to a 20% hike for the mayor and a 14% raise for councilmembers. The two councilmembers who will not benefit from the vote were divided on the issue at its Nov. 17 meeting.

Marvin Brown voted in favor of the increase while Julia Gusse was the lone vote against, saying she felt “uneasy” when the council gives itself a raise. Moreover, she said it wasn’t the proper time with the future uncertain due to COVID-19 and businesses failing. Both members are at the end of their terms.

City Manager Rick Horst had proposed a raise of 28% for council and 52% for mayor.

Resident Bryan Ott, a former councilmember in Milton, Washington, said during public comment he felt that was “a little excessive.”

“Even if you gave yourselves 15%, I think that would be agreeable to the public,” Ott said.

Councilmember Henry Wade said he, too, thought the proposed raises were a little high.

“I respect the hours and the time the mayor puts in,” Wade said. “I respect the amount of hours and the time my fellow councilmembers put in and the time they spend away from their families... I think that should be respected and taken into consideration.”

Vice Mayor Nancy Smith came to a compromise figure, making comparisons to other Arizona cities and adding in a “complexity factor” due to Maricopa’s growth and demand.

Her proposal, raising councilmembers’ salary to \$20,500 and the mayor to \$33,600, was ultimately approved. The salary for Mayor Christian Price was not as simple as a raise, however.

When he became mayor in 2012, Price received a \$200 monthly car allowance in lieu of mileage reimbursement, a policy made by the previous council. Councilmembers collected \$100 monthly for the same purpose.



Mayor Christian Price pauses during a discussion about raises for city councilmembers and himself at their Nov. 17 meeting.

That stipend wasn’t covering the cost of driving 4,000 miles a month in his own vehicle on city business, so in 2017 he went to council and said he had a problem. The council then increased the allowance to \$500 month. He was already using a city vehicle for longer trips for city business, to Page and Flagstaff and other parts of the state, he said.

Later in 2017, Price was a hit-and-run victim in his personal car while on city business in Phoenix and had to shoulder the financial burden. About the same time, the city was expanding its vehicle fleet for administrative usage, he said.

Subsequently, he started using a city vehicle to attend to city business in Phoenix, Florence and other nearby cities. Citing the time and mileage involved with picking up and returning the vehicle to City Hall on a regular basis, Horst granted full-time use of the vehicle to him about 18 months ago, Price said.

Price continued to collect his \$23,000 salary plus the \$6,000 annual car allowance, in addition to having personal use of the city vehicle, including gas and maintenance.

At the meeting, Councilmember Marvin


Brown said it did not make sense for Price to continue to accept the car allowance if he had full-time usage of a city vehicle.

Asked about the appearance of “double-dipping,” Price said he had considered it but thought the proper time to address it was during the reset before a new council takes office.

“You can give it back,” he said. “But it was understood that it was part of the compensation package.”

Ultimately, the council decided Tuesday to raise his salary 20% to \$27,600, remove the car allowance in name and add the \$6,000 to salary for a total of \$33,600. The council vote also codified the mayor’s official use of a city vehicle.

The council also tied future increases to city employee raises.

Councilmembers had earned an \$18,000 annual salary since 2017. They will continue to receive a benefits package that includes a \$1,200 annual auto allowance, \$900 annual cellphone allowance, health insurance and Copper Sky memberships. 

Bob McGovern contributed to this report



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Wildcat Landscape Supply Co. is a family affair: Owners Donnelle and Donny Schimpa, far right, work the business with the help of (from middle left) daughters Brooklynn and Bailee, Donny’s mother Carole Dismuke, daughter Rachel and Donnelle’s mother Lynn Lokey. Holding sign are Donnelle’s father Howard Lokey and Donny’s father Sonny Dismuke.

At this family business, everybody has a rockin’ role

Story and photos by Bob McGovern

Last year, Donnelle and Donny Schimpa left their regular jobs to secure their family’s future. Donnelle moved on from a Casa Grande HOA, where she worked in architectural compliance, to take a job at Wildcat Landscape Supply in June 2019. She joined as a trainee-of-sorts for four months to learn as much as she could about the business before taking the keys from retiring owner Terry Jackson, who had run the business for 15 years. Even before their Nov. 1, 2019, takeover date, Donny left his position with Oldcastle Infrastructure in Chandler after 30 years to jump in with Donnelle in preparation. Soon, three generations of the family were taking

on roles at the landscape materials business operating on North Maricopa Road in the shadow of the new State Route 347 overpass. “I never even knew this place existed,” Donnelle said. Next thing you know, she owns the place. Donnelle, a newly honed expert on decorative rock and pavers, handles customer service and works with residential and commercial clients to lend advice, make sales and fulfill orders. She also fills in where needed when others are off. Donny oversees the yard operation. The couple’s three children work for the business as well. Bailee, 31, works the front desk, while Brooklynn, 28, and Rachel, 24, work the yard and make deliveries in the

truck. Rachel, in fact, is quitting her job as a medical assistant to work fulltime at Wildcat. Donnelle’s parents and in-laws — all “retired” — play important roles, too. Lynn Lokey, her mother, and Carole Dismuke, her mother-in-law, handle the bookkeeping and human relations functions of the operation. Lokey retired from AT&T about 10 years ago. Donnelle’s father and father-in-law, Howard Lokey and Sonny Dismuke, respectively, perform maintenance. Howard Lokey retired from United Airlines three years ago. “My mom is meticulous with numbers,” Donnelle said, ticking off the qualities that makes each a good fit for their role. “My husband is a workhorse. I am a chatterbox. My



Brooklynn Schimpa uses a front-end loader to load landscape material into a customer’s truck at Wildcat Landscape on Maricopa Road.

daughters are a little bit of everybody. And my father is somebody who can fix anything.” It was a family affair from the beginning, and they are working together to take the enterprise to the next level. “Right now, we are building it up,” said Donnelle, noting Wildcat has always sold many varieties of Arizona-mined rock — Apache Pink, Jesse Red and Arizona Gold, for example — but has now added other landscape products, including Belgard pavers, building block and synthetic grass. More products are on the way as soon as a warehouse can be built. The business lost some of its property at the rear to the overpass project, Donnelle said. “We’re trying to become a one-stop shop,” she said. “We’re still sort of in the middle” of that transition.

For example, Wildcat sells cinder block, but not rebar, she said. The business sells landscape materials to contractors and homeowners, the bins in the yard filled with different colors and sizes of stone to keep the city’s myriad HOA boards and compliant residents happy. “Nothing is dormant in this yard,” Lynn Lokey said. “They just go crazy for the boulders,” Donnelle added. Before entering the business, Donnelle laughed that she would go online to look at shoes and handbags. Now it’s landscape and hardscape materials. The goal is to work for several years and retire, handing off the business to the three

“My husband is a workhorse. I am a chatterbox. My daughters are a little bit of everybody. And my father is somebody who can fix anything.”

Donnelle Schimpa

daughters and their families. Plenty of help is on the way — eventually. Donnelle and Donny have eight grandchildren; the oldest is 12. She feels good about the future of the company in a growing city like Maricopa and its emphasis on “shop local,” buying supplies at Ace Hardware and tires from the shop next door. “When you are supporting your town, your local businesses,” she said, “it’s what makes the city grow.” “We believe in giving back to the community,” Lynn Lokey added. This month, they will begin a customer appreciation program to award a prize to a randomly selected client. The one-year anniversary of ownership came quickly. “This first year went by in a blink of an eye,” said Donnelle. That happens when you are learning a new business, making improvements and preparing for the future. Prior to taking ownership, Donnelle thought taking the reins of the business would be no great shakes. Acknowledging the challenge of the past 13 months, she recalls something she would tell Jackson, the former owner, as she was preparing to take over. “It’s rock and sand, how hard can it be?” she said, pausing for second. “I’ve eaten those words many times.” Wildcat Landscape Supply will hold an open house on Jan. 23 from noon to 3 p.m. with free food and drink, and prizes.

POP ROCKS

Rock is an integral component of the desert landscape, with the power to completely alter the look of a home. “Rock totally changes your entire landscape,” said Lynn Lokey of Wildcat Landscape Supply. “It changes the whole perspective of your yard.” It comes in a range of colors and sizes — from pink to red to brown — each with its own unique characteristics. Apache Brown, for example, has a purple glint when viewed from a certain angle. Here are the three most popular styles at the landscape supply business:

APACHE BROWN



ARIZONA GOLD



SADDLEBACK BROWN



Boost your immunity during cold and flu season

By Kristina Donnay, FNP-C

Proper immune function is important all year round but becomes even more important in flu and cold season.

We are exposed to organisms that are inhaled, swallowed or inhabit our skin and mucous membranes. Whether or not these organisms lead to disease is decided by the integrity of our body's defense mechanisms, or immune system. When we have an ineffective immune system, we are at a greater risk of getting sick.

How can we improve our immune system? There are many options each improving the immune system in different ways. A Lipotropic MIC-B12 injection full of vitamins, minerals, and amino acids help the body's immune system, liver detoxification and metabolizing of fat and may improve mood and sleep and increase energy and weight loss.



Medical Director
Kristina Donnay

Another option is vitamin D3 with K2. Deficiency of vitamin D3 is associated with increased susceptibility to infections and autoimmunity. It plays an important part in

innate antimicrobial response and helps protect against bacterial and respiratory infections. High dose vitamin D3 should always be paired with K2. Vitamin D3 causes the body to absorb calcium. Mineral K2 assists in shuttling calcium to just bone and teeth. The two vitamins should always be taken together.

The Myers cocktail, along with IV fluids, is a very fast way to get critical vitamins, minerals, and hydration into your body. Containing magnesium, B12, B6, B5, B complex and vitamin C, the IV is intended to decrease the symptoms of a cold or flu, strengthen the immune system, decrease the

effects of a hangover and improve hay fever symptoms.

Zinc is an important function of the immune system and wound healing. Anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties of zinc have long been documented. Nearly 30% of the elderly population is considered to be zinc deficient. Zinc homeostasis is essential for multiple aspects of the immune system including hematopoiesis, cell maturation, differentiation and cycle progression. Zinc lozenges are one of the most effective ways to absorb zinc in supplement form and may reduce the duration of a cold and the number of upper respiratory infections in children.

We recommend talking to your doctor about what option is best for you.

At Maricopa Wellness Center we offer many of the above options to increase your immune system. Please call for a free consultation. LIVE WELL BE WELL

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Holiday entertaining in your backyard oasis

By Lerrin Smith, BBQ fan

While other parts of the country are often under snow, gray skies and cold, here in Maricopa we are just getting into enjoying the beautiful weather once again after the long, hot summer. Now more than ever we are escaping the kitchen and hitting the patio. It's here in our own little oasis where we enjoy grilling, chilling and entertaining for the holidays.

Whether you're just beginning to learn the fine art of outdoor cooking or you are a seasoned veteran, there are many choices today in how and what to BBQ on.

Welcome to the newest BBQ and backyards destination in Maricopa! Karsten's Maricopa Ace Hardware has recently undergone a major remodel and we have dedicated a great deal of space in the store to showcase the best BBQ brands like Big Green Egg for kamado-style grilling, Traeger for wood-pellet fired grills and Weber, the best in gas and charcoal grills.

When you are ready to learn about the different options in grilling, our experts at Ace are here to help. The team is passionate about grilling, baking, smoking and everything BBQ. They are here to share recipes, make suggestions and ensure you have all you need to complete that holiday meal.

Remember that you will need a few extra items besides the grill! You'll need wood pellets for the Traeger, including an Ace-exclusive Reserve Blend that works for all meats, veggies and even pies. For you Egg Heads out there, we have all of the quality Big Green Egg accessories, lump charcoal and Eggsperter advice to help you get the most out of your Egg.

Sauces, rubs and seasonings? Everyone has their favorites and you will find that it is quite fun to experiment with all of the different choices out there. Do you like a little heat in your meal? Check out the line of unique Tabasco sauces and seasonings.

Another thing to consider is the amount of convenience your new grill brings with it.

If you want the authentic BBQ taste without having to work too hard, there are Wi-Fi-enabled, smart phone-controlled grills available across all of the Best Brand grills. If you are old-school, there are plenty of options there as well offering FULL manual control of your grilling experience.

To complete your backyard experience don't forget about lighting, heaters and firepits. We may not have snow on the ground, but it's chilly enough to enjoy the warmth and ambience of an open flame.



Matt Austin

Happy holidays and we look forward to serving you in the future with all of your backyard oasis needs. The most important thing we have to do today, is to help you!

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Business, economic development news

This month’s update on economic activity in Maricopa:

Sonoran Creek Marketplace picked up several permits and adjusted a lot line on a portion of the property at 20300 N. John Wayne Parkway. Developers plan one commercial shell for the main retail building, valued at \$1.3 million and referred to as the north shops, and another commercial shell for a multi-tenant building at 20320 N. John Wayne Parkway, valued at \$914,000. Owners also received a commercial tenant improvement permit for a new Sprouts grocery store in the main building.

Bahama Buck’s opened Nov. 3 at 17470 N. Porter Road but not before an electric meter base was moved more than a foot north to clear the way for the drive-thru. The base was not on the original drawings for the store site and is serving off-site improvements.

The reviving **Santa Rosa Crossing** subdivision is putting in a 300-square-foot shade structure at 18265 N. Karsten Drive as part of its ongoing construction.

La Quinta, 44575 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., was approved for a commercial swimming pool, designed as 435 square feet and valued at \$72,727. (See story on page 22.)

Properties in Alterra South and Tortosa were zoned for **group homes** with capacity up to 10 residents.

Gehan Homes in The Lakes at Rancho El Dorado received a temporary use permit for a model home complex at 41085 W. Agave Road. Gehan is building homes in Homestead South at the northwest corner of Honeycutt Road at White and Parker Road.

The **Maricopa Station** portion of the Heritage District was zoned for an overlay that allows the City of Maricopa to develop the property into mixed use area of residential, commercial and civic applications.

Tax tips for business owners

CPAs Jim Chaston and Chris Scoggin of CS CPA Group, formerly Chaston Taxes & Accounting, are leading a virtual presentation to help business owners increase their knowledge and decrease their taxes in 2020 and 2021 at 10 a.m. Dec. 10. They will present year-end tax strategies for 2020 and anticipated changes to the tax code in 2021. The event is open to InMaricopa Business Partners and CS CPA Group clients. To participate, contact Jaime at 520-568-0040 or Jaime@InMaricopa.com.

Restaurant gets deep-clean after positive COVID test

A popular Maricopa restaurant closed for a day Nov. 6 after learning an employee tested positive for coronavirus. The staffer at Native Grill & Wings was quarantined, according to a company statement.

“The health and safety of our guests and employees is always our number one priority,” the statement said.

From the beginning of the pandemic, Native noted, it has taken additional



precautions to “ensure our employees and guests feel comfortable dining with us,” including operating at 50% capacity, enforcing 6 feet of social distancing, requiring temperature checks for employees prior to their shifts and face coverings for employees and guests (until they are seated and safely distanced from other patrons).

2 eateries tagged by inspectors

Two restaurants were marked down during Pinal County health inspectors’ examination of Maricopa eateries Oct. 16-Nov. 13. Barro’s Pizza and Native Grill & Wings received “satisfactory” grades rather than “excellent.”

Barro’s Pizza was noted three times for debris build-up. The inspector found an excess of grease and debris on the fryer line hood filters, with the wall next to the hood heavily soiled. There was reported build-up on nonfood surfaces, floors and walls throughout the kitchen. Pasta in a walk-in cooler should have been no more than 41 degrees but was 70 degrees. Meatballs in a steam well that should have been at least 135 degrees were measured between 121 and 129 degrees. The food was discarded and rules were reviewed with staff.

Native Grill was tagged for a hot-holding infraction. The inspector found a cheese sauce on the stove that had been sitting at 105-117 degrees for more than an hour instead of 135 degrees. It was only closed one day.

EXCELLENT [No violations found]

- Brooklyn Boys Italian Restaurant
- The Duke at Rancho El Dorado
- Gyro Grill
- Li’s Garden
- Plaza Bonita
- Tacos ‘N’ More

SATISFACTORY [Violations corrected during inspection]

- Barro’s Pizza
- Native Grill & Wings

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



Brake Masters gets P&Z approval

Brake Masters received approval for a development review permit from Maricopa Planning & Zoning Commission Nov. 9. The company plans to open a 5,400-square-foot shop west of Culver’s off Edison Road.

The building is planned on the first pad to be developed in the future Sonoran Creek Marketplace anchored by Sprouts. The pad is about 0.68 acres.

Jim Egan, a representative of Heights Properties, a sister company to Brake Masters, said they held out until they could get the right location in Maricopa.



Stonegate development gets another look

A development that could mix houses, shops and possibly apartments moved another step forward in November.

Owners of Maricopa Stonegate received approval for proposed modifications to their land-use plan, amending the planned area development (PAD) during a public hearing before the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Maricopa Stonegate is on the northwest corner of Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway and Stonegate Road. It is southeast of the Senita subdivision and south of Glennwilde. Sketch Architecture Company has been representing the owners.

Randy Carter, a Sketch principal, said the plans are currently in four “theoretical phases.”

“It is conceivable that in a great market they sell all the pieces off and it gets built at one time,” Carter said. “But as we’ve seen in the past, it’s kind of cyclical. Phase 4 may go first in the end.”

“Most of our customers are women,” Egan said. “That’s why we’ve waited. We’ve been looking at this property for five years, but when Sprouts announced, we decided we had to be here.”

With the construction of the building comes the closing of the current access from Edison Road frequently used by Culver’s customers. Instead, that north access will move to the west side of Brake Masters. Culver’s customers exiting the restaurant’s drive-thru lane will have to turn left and drive around the automotive repair shop to access Edison.

Harrah’s Ak-Chin honors employees

Harrah’s Ak-Chin Casino announced its 2020 Caesars Award of Excellence recipients, who were honored at the casino Oct. 20.

“The Caesars Award of Excellence is one of the highest honors our employees can achieve,” said Michael Kintner, Harrah’s Ak-Chin Casino senior vice president and general manager. “This year has been particularly trying for our entire team, and I want to thank each of these employees for clearly demonstrating Caesars’ commitment to customer service, internal service, innovation, community volunteerism and leadership.”

Each of the six recipients was presented with 40,000 Total Reward Credits and the overall property winner won 100,000 Total Return Credits and \$2,500. In lieu of a large banquet, the recipients will enjoy a dinner for two at Chop, Block & Brew.



Jessica Mavis

- The awards went to:
- SUPERIOR INTERNAL SERVICE**
Brenda McCullough, Maricopa, seamstress in wardrobe
 - LEADERSHIP**
Amanda Groeneveld, Ahwatukee, assistant casino marketing manager
 - INNOVATION**
Alex Lorenzana, Maricopa, Promotions & Events associate
 - SUPERIOR GUEST SERVICE**
Jessica Mavis, Maricopa, server at Agave’s
 - COMMUNITY SERVICE**
Kirk Lane, Maricopa, IT manager
 - OVERALL PROPERTY WINNER**
Jessica Mavis



Two large roll-up doors will lead from the pool onto a patio at La Quinta.

La Quinta on the horizon for city visitors

It's been 66 years since Maricopa had a hotel to call its own. But that will change sometime in early 2021.

Construction continues on the La Quinta Inn, a four-story, 89-room hotel on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard adjacent to Copper Sky.

On a mid-November tour, as workers

buzzed about the site, owner Andy Bhakta gave an update on construction, pointing out areas of the hotel that will be transformed into a lobby, meeting space and an exercise room. The hotel will have two elevators.

Bhakta also showed an indoor pool taking shape in a space that

will feature huge, roll-up doors that open onto a patio with a fire pit.

The hotel, which represents a \$10 million capital investment, is expected to employ at least 20 workers, Bhakta said.

Bhakta owns La Quinta franchises in the Northern Arizona towns of Holbrook and Williams.

Submitted

ED3 closes city office, looks ahead to new space

By Bob McGovern

Electrical District No. 3 has vacated its customer service office at the Maricopa Manor Business Center as it looks ahead to opening new quarters toward the end of 2021, according to general manager Brian Yerges.

The location at 19756 N. Maricopa Road has been closed for months due to the pandemic, but that closure became permanent on Dec. 1. The company's lease on that office was ending and it was decided that owning space would be more affordable, Yerges said.

"Buying, instead of renting, was best from a cost perspective," he said. "With COVID closing the office anyway, it was a good time to make this move."

The utility is planning purchase of a 2,871-square-foot space in an office building under construction next to the current city library on Smith-Enke Road, with closing tentatively scheduled for late first quarter or early second quarter in 2021, Yerges said. The company will make improvements to the space before opening to customers.

The new office will be a bit larger than the Maricopa Road location. "It's very important for ED3 to have a city office," he added. "We liked the location, the amount of space, and thought it was the way to go. This space really meets our needs."

The utility had purchased 10 acres at the Estrella Gin complex, but




Bob McGovern

Electrical District No. 3 plans to open a new customer service office in this office building under construction on Smith-Enke Road next to the current city library.

Yerges said it selected the Smith-Enke location instead because it didn't need all of that space and determined the new office will be more cost-effective in the long run.

As part of the closing, the drop box can no longer be used at the Maricopa Road location, according to the utility.

But there are several alternatives to pay the electric bill:

- Online at www.ed3online.org
- Via the ED3 mobile app
- At Fry's Marketplace and Walmart
- Via the mail
- Payment by phone (520-424-9021)
- And the drop box at ED3's administration office, 41630 W. Louis Johnson Drive 

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Maricopan since: All my life
Family: Wife McKenzie, our sons Remy, Rayden and our new baby girl coming Valentine's Day 2021!
Pet peeve: Seeing people bite their nails!
Dream vacation: Spain
Like most about Maricopa: The people and the small-town feeling

FAVORITE ...
Charity: Maricopa Pantry, Maricopa Police Foundation, Against Abuse Inc.
Actor: Denzel Washington
Team: Los Angeles Dodgers
Meal: Mexico City green chile burger with fries
Getaways: San Diego, Pinetop
Quote: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." – Maya Angelou

 Learn more about the Nieveses at InMaricopa.com/Community/Getting-to-know

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2020 Veterans Day Parade



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

1. Maricopa Veterans Day Parade drew a strong red, white and blue turnout despite the uncertainties caused by COVID, with an equestrian group showing off the 4H Club. *Victor Moreno*
2. Maricopa VFW Chaplain Bryan Ott was among veterans walking the route. *Raquel Hendrickson*
3. Parade-goers lined the route with American flags to greet the veterans. *Raquel Hendrickson*
4. Retired Col. Chuck Millar showed up in his vintage military vehicle. *Raquel Hendrickson*

5. Blue Star Mothers of Maricopa honored their children currently serving in the military. *Victor Moreno*
6. A central part of the parade was a Blue Star tribute to the late Tracy Davis, who passed away just days before the parade and founded the local group. *Raquel Hendrickson*
7. A patriotic group stood for the passing U.S. flag during the parade. *Victor Moreno*



1



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1. Colorful luminarias line a driveway at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center where volunteers with Relay for Life distributed meals to cancer survivors and their families. Harrah's provided the meals for the Nov. 7 event. *Bob McGovern*
2. Tomas Teruel, a cook at Rili-B's Taco Shop, prepares food during an official grand opening on Nov. 14. The 24-hour Mexican restaurant opened in September. *Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios*
3. Bahama Buck's opened in early November at Oasis at the Wells with VIP grand opening festivities. Mayor Christian Price and other attendees enjoyed free treats. *Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios*
4. Exceptional Healthcare broke ground on Nov. 12 on a hospital facility at the northwest corner of John Wayne Parkway and Honeycutt Avenue. *Raquel Hendrickson*



Councilman Vincent Manfredi and Matthew Sabetta attended the groundbreaking for Exceptional Healthcare's new health care facility. Matthew, a champion of economic development in Maricopa, attends many groundbreakings. *Submitted*

WHERE
ARE THEY
NOW?

Laura Walsh

Maricopa's own finds success, community in Nashville

By Kyle Norby

When her musical career took her on a journey to Nashville, Tennessee, country singer/songwriter Laura Walsh said goodbye to her home and fans in Maricopa.

Walsh made the move to Music City, U.S.A in 2018 after a debut album in 2015 and multiple national tours. Her life in Tennessee has been better than she could have ever imagined, she said.

"The first two months I took off just to enjoy moving my whole life across the country and get familiarized with the area and soak in the whole experience," she said. "It's such an incredible community. There are so many people that support each other. I've been able to make some friends with people that I get to play with on a regular basis."

From performing at the Country Music Hall of Fame, releasing a new single, "Tease," in March and playing regularly at the Tin Roof Bar downtown, Walsh finds Nashville a safe space for all artists and musicians, no matter their genre or skill level. Continuing to grow as an artist, she believes the best way to build a reputation and a name is to create a sense of camaraderie with peers in the industry.

"I've latched on to a lot of community-driven people who just want to see one another succeed," Walsh said. "Being by myself out here and leaving what's comfortable has helped me, as an artist, identify who I am. I think when you're around what's familiar and what feels like a safety net, it's hard to grow. Leaving that, really pushes you to be your most honest and authentic self."

While COVID-19 hit the live music scene in Nashville hard and fast, things are slowly opening back up. She remembers when the industry thought things would get back to normal in June, only to remain locked down.

"I don't really know how to feel. Especially with the election, it has been a tough year for

unity," Walsh said. "The cool thing is seeing how people have responded wanting to help. Those coming out to visit have been so generous with tipping and supporting live music and those who are hurting."

When asked if she plans to play in Maricopa again one day, she was open to the idea when things settle down and the country recovers from the pandemic.

"I feel like Arizona was a great stomping grounds, especially Maricopa. Whenever I can, however I can, I would love to do it."



Walsh appeared on the cover of InMaricopa in 2014. The following year she launched her debut album, "Take Your Time."



Country artist Laura Walsh, who left Maricopa in 2018 for Nashville, says her life in Music City, USA has been better than she ever imagined.

Perry Joseph Photography

Laura Walsh

Age: 29

Occupation: Make music with my voice, and write songs from my heart

Residence: East Nasty (East Nashville)

Education: A student of life! Also, a bachelor's in communication from ASU

Family: Two sisters, two parents and many friends I consider family

Favorite Maricopa memory: "I was supposed to open up for the band Lifehouse when Maricopa won the radio contest to get a concert by them [in 2015]. The whole town promoted me as the opener but then right before the concert, someone from their team said they didn't want an opening act, so I was naturally devastated to have promoted this and then have to retract. But Copper Sky staff, the angels that they are, said I could do an "after party" and built me my own stage and decorated it so beautifully. When the Lifehouse show was over, the whole crowd rushed my little stage and stayed for my whole set and made me cry tears of joy on stage — tearing up thinking about it now — and there was this ginormous line of people wanting to meet me."



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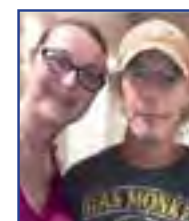
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Molly Colgan
Counselor

Desert Wind Middle School



Aundre Bell
ESS Teacher

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Tyler Miller
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Roving Custodian
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Evelin Ramirez
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8th Grade

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Brady McMullen
8th Grade

Maricopa Wells Middle School



Jerilyn Lee
9th Grade
Maricopa High School



Submitted

Thank you, Maricopa, for a great finale to a 30-year career

By Raquel Hendrickson

It's been 30 years since I first walked into a newspaper office as a paid journalist. The last six years have been in the cozy confines of InMaricopa. This media company has been an illustration of how news delivery has changed, how American readers have changed and how local journalism can still thrive. It is a satisfying way for me to now leave what has been a very satisfying career for other opportunities in this changing world. I look forward to watching the growth and transitions at InMaricopa and in Maricopa itself. It has been exciting to see the changes in the community in the short time I have been

here, and meet the interesting people who have been here for decades and those just now calling it home. I appreciate all who have helped me learn about Maricopa's past and those who have shared their vision of its future. So many have been so clear about what they expect of their media — what they want to see and shouldn't have to see — it's been enlightening. In my three decades in the business, no matter what technology, software or hardware we used to spread the word, our most important resource never changed. People never fail to amaze with their endurance, generosity, stubbornness, outrageousness, patience,

greed, talent, suspicion, accomplishment, indifference, brilliance, wickedness, courage, faith and love. All of those play a part in the best stories we tell. When I got my start, it was literally old-school journalism at a small newspaper in a small town in the Missouri Ozarks. I was ostensibly the sportswriter/editor, but also covered town council meetings, the local court and freeway accidents when necessary. While we were not exactly setting Linotype back in the day, we were rolling wax to apply computer-generated, printed copy to layout sheets for the darkroom. It was a tiny staff, and the two people in the editorial "department" were expected to report, write, photograph, develop film, design layout and take ads while the advertising "department" was on a smoke break. For all the state championships, small-town politicking and "big news" incidents I covered, it was personal stories that have stuck with me. Most memorable was the World War II veteran who walked into the office to tell us his name was on the memorial on the town square, but he wanted everyone to know he

was still alive. His family had moved away when he was in the Navy, and he hadn't returned to Missouri after being liberated from a prisoner-of-war camp in Japan. He had an excruciating story marked primarily by his ability to forgive. I returned to Arizona to work in a much bigger but still small town in Yavapai County. In an area that is a beautiful mix of outdoors and the arts, totally in my wheelhouse, I had to dive into hydrological issues of water supply. I had to learn geological and geographical history. Anyone who tells you to go into journalism because you won't need math and science is a big, fat liar. And for all the great characters who were reliable sources for news, one I recall with greatest respect was the quietly dignified president of a local garden club.

For all the state championships, small-town politicking and 'big news' incidents I covered, it was personal stories that have stuck with me."

In Maricopa, I've found more people with ideas for what their new hometown should be than I have encountered anywhere. That makes for lots of news stories but also explains how so many backgrounds from so many states are creating modern Maricopa. I've learned the truth of Roger Miller's words: *Some people bad, some people good, Too bad the bad can't be like the good, But everything changes a little and it should, Good ain't forever and bad ain't for good.* My time at InMaricopa has been a different adventure than journalism afforded me previously. I would like to thank Scott Bartle for the opportunity to be part of the company during such interesting and challenging times and Vincent Manfredi for his support and encouragement. InMaricopa is in great hands with Bob McGovern as it continues to evolve to meet the needs of you, the readers, and all the supporting clients. While the journalism world has changed irrevocably since 1990, it's been a heckuva ride. I've been so glad to be a part of it. I wish all the friends I've gained in the course of my work all the very best. I'll still be around, and I'll be seeing you.

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MHS graduates return as CTE teachers

By Raquel Hendrickson



Maricopa High School has two Norbys on staff. Kyle teaches photography while his wife instructs students in culinary arts. This photo was taken by one of Kyle's students, Brian Petersheim Jr.

Once a self-described slacker, Kyle Norby is the latest Maricopa High School graduate to come back and teach at the school. He was hired as the photography instructor in the Career & Technical Education Department, which finds its teachers in the trades. Norby picked up his work experience at InMaricopa, where he was the multimedia journalist for two years. Coming back to MHS as a staff member has offered new perspective — especially for the students.

“They think I’m more relatable. Some of them have siblings who were in my graduating class,” Norby said. “They tell me, ‘You’re young. You’re so old, but you’re young.’” They have found common ground in more than video games and music. Some of the teenagers feel comfortable talking to him about personal issues and not just class assignments. Norby graduated from MHS in 2014. His wife Hannah (Herrera) is a 2016 graduate. She studied culinary in the CTE department, winning a national gold medal and a

scholarship to culinary school in Las Vegas. She started teaching at MHS in 2018. “I think it helps my teaching, knowing I’ve gone through the program,” Hannah Norby said. “I know what these kids are going to do, especially when I talk to them about opportunities that they have. They can look at me and say, ‘Oh, wow. She got a scholarship in these competitions. I can do that.’ I think it’s inspirational to the kids.”

OFF TO VEGAS

The Norbys are engrained in Maricopa. Kyle arrived from New Mexico in 2006. He met Hannah in geometry class at MHS six years later. “I was a junior in geometry because I wasn’t too great at math, and she was a freshman in geometry because she was smart and ahead,” he said. They both were lifeguards at Copper Sky Aquatic Center. Kyle said he was a bit aimless in school until late in his junior year. He realized he needed to find direction. He liked graphic design and he was a member of the film club. He joined theater tech and discovered an affinity for sound editing. After graduating, he started work on an associate degree in graphic design at Central Arizona College while waiting for Hannah to graduate in 2016. They married and followed her scholarship to Las Vegas. His career decisions are directly tied to hers. While studying at the culinary institute, she landed a job as lifeguard at Wyndham Grand Desert Resort and eventually moved to the kitchen. Meanwhile, Kyle worked in the activities center while taking classes at the College of Southern Nevada, “a class or two at a time because it was a little expensive.”

As much as they liked Vegas, they were homesick for friends and family. MHS culinary teacher Greg Mahon kept tabs on them and looked for opportunities for Hannah once she completed her coursework at the institute. When the job in the CTE culinary department opened, Mahon reached out. “I applied. I was kind of winging it, and then I got an interview,” she said. “Then I got the job and had to move back home within 11 days.”

A MARICOPA RETURN

Kyle stayed in Las Vegas a few more months to tie up loose ends and pack up the apartment through the end of the lease. While she worked at MHS, he landed the job at InMaricopa,

The James Sanson Team

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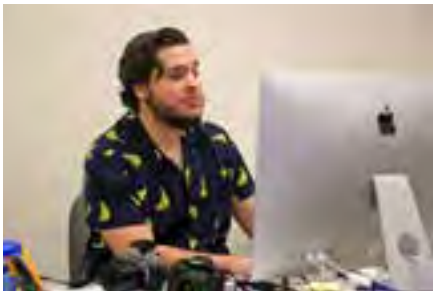
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Right: Chef Hannah Norby chops an apple in the high school kitchen. She is a 2016 MHS graduate.

Below: Kyle Norby, a 2014 graduate, returned to his alma mater in October to teach photography. He has students in class and at home.



Brian Petersheim Jr.



Kyle Norby

putting to use his skills in videography, sound editing, graphic design and photography.

Hannah encouraged him to go back to CAC and finish his degree, which he did in July. To be a CTE instructor he needed at least an associate degree and real-world experience. That lined up just in time for veteran photography teacher Chuck King to retire in September this year.

Though he has not been gone long from MHS, Kyle still sees the differences from his time as a student. He sees a much more positive place.

He said the students are much more into “the whole high school experience” and there are many more clubs, including an LGBTQ club, with bigger memberships.

“I think they’re just pouring a lot more heart into it,” he said. “It’s nice to see the inclusivity with everybody.”

Hannah has also noticed much more school pride apparent on campus. She noted the dramatic increase in the number of students, resulting in packed hallways. The current senior class is double the 300 in her graduating class.

When she was a student, the class had a goal of creating a garden of herbs and vegetables. That did not happen. By the time she had returned as teacher, the garden boxes were completed but not planted. She quickly put them to use. They both get a kick out working with staff members who taught them, including those who proved most impactful. Mahon is still Hannah’s mentor as he was for her sister Bri, but now he is a colleague.

Kyle said the MHS teacher who had the biggest influence on him, especially now as an

“It’s just giving kids a way to express themselves that they might not have thought about and just having that creative freedom to just have fun with it and make up assignments, find out stuff that’s fun as well as educational.”

Kyle Norby

instructor, was Kevin Piquette in theater tech.

“He trusted us with a lot of different things,” he said. “He gave you responsibilities, and you wanted to make him proud. I love theater tech and working with the drama kids.”

‘I SEE MYSELF IN A LOT OF MY KIDS’

Now, he enjoys giving his students opportunities to discover their talents because he recalls not quite knowing what he wanted to do for a career.

“it’s nice seeing the kids finding themselves,” he said. “I know at that age, I was kind of a slacker and I didn’t know what I was about. I see myself in a lot of my kids. I didn’t know I’d like graphic design or theater tech. I didn’t know I cared about sound design. It’s just giving kids a way to express themselves that they might not have thought about and

just having that creative freedom to just have fun with it and make up assignments, find out stuff that’s fun as well as educational.”

Hannah is a hands-on learner and a hands-on teacher. That helps connect with teens.


“They’re funny. They’re learning. They’re just at a weird time in life, but I think it’s an interesting time in life to be teaching them,” she said. “I really couldn’t teach little kids, but I love the teenagers. I just love the hands-on teaching. The kids take away so much more. They’re more engaged. They love it.”

For CTE classes, instructors teach the state standards and incorporate professional skills development, with required math and science thrown in. Though their classes are in very different areas, the Norbys want to set up their students to shine outside the classroom.

That means helping the culinary students to prepare meals for community members during special events. It means helping photography students have their work seen in the community, taking staff and senior photos and getting published.

“The main goal is to give them confidence to explore and be creative,” Kyle said. “A lot of that goes down to having people being able to see their name. That’s a big thing, especially for the first-year kids.”

It’s a matter of showing students the avenues available. The Norbys came back to Maricopa because they love Maricopa, not because they couldn’t make it out in the world. They want their students to understand their choices don’t have to be limited, either.

“It’s their responsibility to take these opportunities and go as far as they want with them,” Hannah Norby said. 



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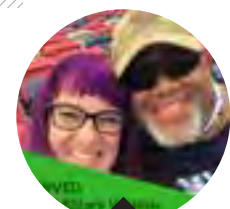
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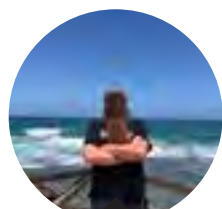
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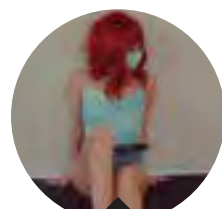
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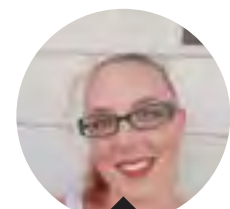
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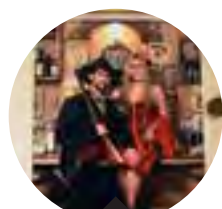
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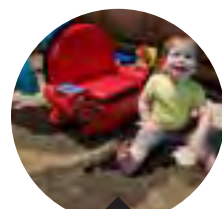
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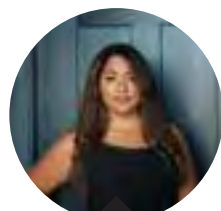
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1. Maricopa High School varsity football team charged the field ahead of an October football game. *Victor Moreno*
2. MHS cheerleaders were all masked up for safety but still entertained the crowd. *Victor Moreno*
3. Sequoia Pathway senior Izaiah Stewart was a top-3 offensive player in the 2A Gila region. He plays wide receiver, running back and cornerback. *Raquel Hendrickson*

4. The 804 Film Company debuted their first film "The Little Tavern in the Woods." *Raquel Hendrickson*
5. Hundreds of families visited the Pacana Park Walk N' Treat to collect candy and other sweets from more than 60 local vendors at the Halloween event. *Brian Petersheim Jr.*
6. MHS junior Nolan Ford was a silver medalist in the 50-yard freestyle at the Arizona Swimming & Diving Championships. *Victor Moreno*



Bob McGovern

Dave DeVos of Minnesota visits his home in Province, where he is vice president of the snowbird club. He wasn't going to let the pandemic change his plans, but he knows of others, especially from Canada, who are not coming this year.

For snowbirds, pandemic wreaks havoc with tradition

By Bob McGovern

Jeff Zerr and Dave DeVos are back. Fellow snowbird Tony Zarrillo is not. “The risk is too great,” he said. The pandemic’s impact on Maricopa’s winter visitors is still playing out, but some fallout is already evident.

The U.S.-Canadian border, closed to non-essential travel in mid-March, will remain sealed until at least Dec. 21, with recent waves of coronavirus cases hitting both countries, according to reports. Airlines are flying, however.

“I know there’s a lot of people worried about what’s happening south of the border in Florida, Arizona, California and other places where the virus is not under control or less under control than we are here,” Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told USA Today in mid-October. Since then, the number of

positive cases has climbed dramatically in the United States and Canada.

Maricopa snowbirds are conducting their own assessments of the health risk posed here by COVID-19.

Some are making the trip — Zerr and his wife arrived in early November, a couple weeks earlier than usual — while others are staying put in cities and towns around the United States and Canada.

Others, like Zarrillo, have surrendered the snowbird lifestyle they enjoyed so much here.

Amid all the uncertainty, one thing is for sure: the public health crisis will mean fewer snowbirds in Maricopa this winter. Some will come anyway, but others are unable to make the trip or choosing to stay away. Some are selling their homes or have already sold.

‘THIS YEAR WILL BE DIFFERENT’

Jeff Zerr, 62, lives in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, a town of 10,000 in the southeast part of the province, about 46 miles north of the North Dakota border and about 1,220 miles away from Maricopa.

He and his wife, Judy, bought a house in Maricopa Meadows in 2011 and their annual winter treks have gone like clockwork — until the pandemic. They have two grown sons and two granddaughters.

“It’s been a very good experience,” he said. “We do love coming down to Maricopa.”

Jeff Zerr said he and his wife carefully evaluated the state of coronavirus here before deciding to make the trip. But the virus, he was quick to add, is most definitely altering the plans of some of his fellow Canadian snowbirds.

“Some are coming down later,” he said. “Some are not coming down at all.”

Dave DeVos, a Minnesota resident who retired from a career in agricultural finance, said he has heard the same thing from fellow members of the snowbird club at Province. Some, especially Canadians who are dealing

with the border closure and health insurance concerns, have told DeVos they are even thinking of selling.

“As far as the Lower 48, I haven’t talked to any who are not planning to come down,” he said, noting the virus is changing traditional plans for some.

DeVos, 67, who got to know Maricopa through his work with local dairies, had a home built in Province in 2011. He is past president and current vice president of the social organization at the 55+ community, which numbers as high as 500 members.

The pandemic is not changing his plan, however. He made it to Maricopa in early November. He will head back to Minnesota for the holidays and return for the rest of the winter.

Zerr said an Alberta snowbird who lives across from him in the Meadows is putting off his southern trip until after Christmas.

“I figure this year will be different,” Zerr said. “It’s a different world.”

The Zerrs are already playing golf at The Duke at Rancho El Dorado, one of their favorite social activities. But they expect health concerns will alter some of their usual activities. They will likely forgo trips to the casino for a show to avoid big crowds. Another favorite activity, the movies at Ak-Chin, is already closed for the foreseeable future.

The retired telecommunications technician said protecting oneself is all about common sense. He and his wife have no qualms about wearing face masks, physically distancing and steering clear of large gatherings.

Maricopa, indeed much of America, is different from his neck of the woods in Canada, he said.

“It’s more densely populated in the States,” he said. “But our (social) bubble is pretty small. It’s something that will have to run its course.”

DeVos, who doesn’t see any additional health risk in Arizona compared to Minnesota, where a face mask mandate remains in place, agreed snowbirds who make the annual migration will likely alter their traditional social lives to stay a bit closer to home in Maricopa. Because of the uncertainty, the Province club has yet to plan activities, including a casino night.

‘WE MISS OUT ON SOMETHING WHEN SNOWBIRDS DON’T COME’

The term “snowbird” was first used in the 1920s to describe seasonal workers who headed south for the winter months. By the late 1970s it was being used to describe the many retirees flocking to sunny and warm locations for the winter. A negative connotation — slow drivers,

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Fallout from COVID

We asked several businesses in town if they are seeing fewer snowbirds this year due to the pandemic. Here is what their representatives told us:

“I am seeing fallout, unfortunately. None of our Canadian visitors are back. That’s a huge chunk of our clientele. A few of our winter visitors have come back, but less than half.”



Kristina Donnay
Maricopa
Wellness Center

“We have patients who usually come back in October, but we haven’t heard from them. We haven’t had a lot of them come back this year.”



Sandy Creamer
Maricopa Foot
& Ankle Center

“We’re getting a lot of North and South Dakotans back, and Wisconsin. But fewer Canadians. I’ve only seen 4-5 Canadians come back (instead of the 100 or so in a typical year.) The Canadians aren’t here with their horses.”



Connie Majors
Ace Hardware



Merenzi Young / Eye of Odin Studios

Jeff and Judy Zerr bought a home in Maricopa in 2011 and have visited during the winter ever since. “It’s been a very good experience,” he said. “We do love coming down to Maricopa.”

early-bird diners — persists for some more youthful people.

“I’ve been in Arizona almost my entire life,” said Mayor Christian Price, harkening back to his younger days. “We would make fun of snowbirds in a locals versus winter visitors type of thing.”

Now, as the top elected official in Maricopa responsible to a large degree for the city’s fiscal health, Price learned long ago not to take the retirees for granted.

“Our economy completely depends on them,” he said. “A lot of homes here are owned

by folks who live in Canada and elsewhere. They spend (money) here.”

Their economic contributions to Arizona municipalities and businesses are staggering. Canadian snowbirds alone contribute \$1.5 billion annually to the state economy in the four to six months they are here, according to Glenn Williamson, founder and CEO of the Canada Arizona Business Council, which works to promote and increase foreign direct investment, trade and tourism between state and country.

They pay real estate taxes and sales taxes. They buy groceries and gas. They pay green fees

at golf courses. They dine in local restaurants, order takeout pizza and have their nails done. Some have seasonal jobs.

Pat Kieny, owner of Native Grill and Wings, said sales at his restaurant typically grow 10%-20% during snowbird season.

About 100,000 homes in Arizona are owned or rented by Canadians, who spend \$13 billion on real estate annually.

They own thousands of local homes, according to Williamson. “In a town like Maricopa,” he said in September, “the Canadians and Americans who live there as neighbors co-exist as one. It’s like family.”

“Snowbirds have been taken for granted for decades,” he added. “And then COVID-19 comes along ... we are going to start noticing.”

For months, Williamson has been trying to figure out how to enable Canadian snowbirds to drive down to their second homes in Arizona.

Part of the heightened concern results from an assumption by Williamson there will be “no completely open border until we get a vaccine. The money that is lost every day in tourism is mind-numbing.”

Long-term, the winter visitors look to enrich state and local economies for years to come.

“Today’s snowbirds aren’t your retired grandparents’ snowbirds,” Williamson said.

The demographic profile is changing, he explained, with more snowbirds who are younger business executives who first experienced Arizona as a tourist and now spend winters here. They take full advantage of technology to run their Canadian companies from the greater Phoenix region, which averages 300 days of warm sunshine a year.

“They can work wherever they want,” he said. “Maricopa is very much part of that.”

Williamson had high praise for Price, calling him a leader who pays attention to snowbirds and their impact on the bottom line.

But Price was quick to add snowbirds’ contributions to the community go beyond their wallets.

“They bring knowledge, they volunteer at our schools, they bring diversity,” he said. “We miss out on something when snowbirds don’t come.”

‘IT WAS A GOOD TIME TO SELL’

In mid-March, many snowbirds went home early from their winter homes as the first wave of the virus spread around the world. Some had to do it in a rush.

Zarrillo, 63, a Winnipeg resident, was a Maricopa snowbird until this year.

In 2009, after the real estate market crashed, he and his brother-in-law came down to the

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city and liked what they saw. The trip, the men had agreed with their wives, was a fact-finding mission only. By the time they left, however, they had co-signed on the purchase of a cul-de-sac home in Glennwilde.

“We were really impressed with the growth and layout,” said Zarrillo of the development. “It was very safe, quiet.”

Until 2016, the four friends and owners worked full-time. The Zarrillos would visit the home on West Lucera Court for two weeks in November and then again in February or March.

For the last four years or so, Zarrillo and his wife would spend winters in the warmth and hosting their children and grandchildren. A retired manager of an automotive testing equipment company, he played lots of golf. He socialized with the other residents on the cul-de-sac, many of them from different parts of the Great White North.

“It was a nice little clique going on there,” he said.

In February, coronavirus changed everything. In mid-March, the Zarrillos received a bulletin from their health care provider telling them their coverage would be canceled at the end of March if they didn’t return to their home country.



Tony Zarrillo and his brother-in-law bought this home on West Lucera Court in Glennwilde in 2009. But after 11 years, with COVID-19 restrictions in Canada keeping them away, they decided to sell. In mid-October, Zarrillo sent this photo of snow on the ground at his home in Winnipeg.



Submitted

Within the week, they were packed and on the road for the 37.5-hour drive to Manitoba.

They have not been back.

Health insurance is a particular obstacle for Canadian snowbirds right now, according to Williamson. Universal health coverage only covers citizens traveling abroad for three days. As a result, the retirees’ provincial or territorial health plan may cover none, or only a small portion, of costs for medical care in the United States. Typically, travel health insurance is purchased to ensure adequate coverage.

But with the current public health crisis deemed a Level 3 pandemic, travel health insurers are not covering COVID-19-related medical expenses, including quarantine costs.

With the reopening of the U.S.-Canadian border delayed month-after-month and the virus persisting, Zarrillo said the two couples sat down to mull the future of their home. Overhead was the same whether it was used or not, and the Canadian dollar was weaker, they reasoned.

But the uncertainty of COVID-19 — “we don’t know when it is going away,” Zarrillo lamented — tilted the argument.

“The U.S. is the epicenter of the epidemic,” he noted. “More cases than anywhere in the world.”

They decided to sell, taking some solace in buying near the bottom of the market 11 years ago and taking advantage of today’s sizzling sellers’ market. They sold in August. They weren’t alone.

“There’s just two (remaining members of their Canadian clique) on the cul-de-sac now,” he said in mid-October from Winnipeg, where a dusting of snow had fallen the night before.

“It was a good time to sell,” he added. “We were very fortunate.”

Brian Petersheim, a Realtor in Maricopa, said he has seen evidence of many snowbirds selling homes in recent months, with many properties selling furnished, or with furnishings being sold under a separate bill of sale.

The Zarrillos were in the same situation. Unable to return to collect their belongings, they threw open the doors of their home and invited neighbors to take what they wanted. They also gave away a vehicle.

Sadly, Zarrillo said he’ll probably never enjoy the snowbird lifestyle again.

“I don’t think we’ll ever see the opportunity again,” he said. “It was enjoyable. We love the state. Great people. And the community was very good. We’re going to miss it.”

But that doesn’t mean he won’t be back.

“Once this pandemic is over, we’ll definitely be returning for a visit.”

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Presence versus presents

By Dr. Harriet Phelps

The Be Awesome Youth Coalition wishes you and your families joy and blessings this holiday season. The Be Awesome team continues to boldly believe that we can impact our world by supporting, developing, confident and connected youth in our community. The Coalition continues to offer community-focused programs and services to our youth to redirect them from the potential use of drugs and alcohol.



Harriet Phelps

Our holiday celebrations may cause a great deal of stress for families normally, without the impact from this year's events. When we add in family conflicts, time constraints, budget concerns and the spread of the virus, this year will be different. Stress is showing up by increases of domestic violence, substance abuse, impacts from financial losses, shifting schedules, and social interactions. Doing things differently

does not mean the holidays are canceled. Now is the time to have that family meeting and discuss with your children what you can or cannot do this year. Process the emotions along with the planning.

Discuss the expectations around travel, meal planning and on gift giving. Gifts are meant as symbols of love. In our consumer-oriented society we are stimulated to buy a lot of gifts, which are usually forgotten in a few months. We do not have to create a fanciful situation that dooms us to feelings of disappointment or depression after. I do not remember the gifts given so much as the time spent together around the dinner table and the opening of the gifts.

Determine what is important for your family. When our family moved away from the extended family and could not be present for celebrations, we determined what traditions were important for all of us.

Plan creative ways to communicate. Parents who discuss with their children the ideals of healthy decisions and the perils of drug abuse will succeed in deflecting unhealthy choices."

We realized the importance of the meal we shared and traditions of that holiday.

Plan creative ways to communicate; parents who discuss with their children the ideals of healthy decisions and the perils of drug abuse will succeed in deflecting unhealthy choices. Engagement tells the other that they are important, and they matter. Talking establishes expectations and ways to handle a difficult situation.



Staying connected means inclusion; you belong and I love you. Focus on what you can do, not on what you cannot. Ask for understanding about what you can do and not on higher expectations. Share the load for the success of the holiday, ask for help. Holiday shopping can be challenged with a \$5 bill at the dollar store. It is as simple as buying a premixed bag of cookies and cookie cutters. Drawing coupons good for one hug, taking out the trash or doing the week's laundry are always welcome. Enjoy holiday goodies and telling each person a compliment about them that is important to you. Walk the neighborhood looking at the lights and singing Christmas carols brings enjoyment to others. Connection with your child truly is the greatest gift of all.

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Rewarding responsible behaviors

By Murray Siegel

This is the second of a two-part report on the lack of responsibility displayed by elementary school students. Input was obtained by querying educators with years of experience in the elementary grades.



Murray Siegel

What is the reason for the lack of personal responsibility among elementary students? Every educator indicated the source can be assigned to parents who prevent their children from accepting responsibility. The fact is that parents work and may not make the time to obtain information sent home from school with the child.

Some parents compensate for the lack of time spent with their children by focusing on good grades and demanding the student be given every break to receive an outstanding grade, even when it is definitely not deserved. It is important to note that this is not true of all parents, as many children come to school with a sense of responsible behavior that has been developed at home.

A standard example cited is the child who fails to bring the signed permission slip for a field trip that was due on Thursday. This child is informed that no signed slip means not going on the trip. The next day, the parent is in school demanding the child be allowed to go, first to the teacher, then the principal, and if that fails, a parent may approach a board member, demanding fairness.

When the parent is successful, what message is sent to the child? Bills, rent and taxes must be paid on time, yet a child who has learned to avoid responsibility will grow up continuing to avoid accountability until harsh consequences finally teach a needed lesson.


One teacher reported bullying by parents, especially when they wanted a child's grade upgraded. One contributor stated, "We don't push them to succeed anymore except for the end of the year test. I hear more about testing them to take a test than teaching them to succeed at life. It makes me sad."

What can be done in these early grades to foster responsibility? One teacher suggests allowing students to create class rules to provide a connection and build accountability. All respondents agreed teachers can motivate responsible behavior by creating a reward system to positively reinforce desired actions. One contemporary approach involves rewards such as being first on line for lunch or being a teacher's aide.

One educator provided a list of means to teach responsibility:

- Teacher praise for specific actions
- Discussion of responsible behavior in class
- Providing students with opportunities to demonstrate responsibility
- Recognizing and rewarding proper behavior
- Giving students a choice of rewards to maximize individual motivation




Murray Siegel, Ph.D., has more than 44 years of teaching experience and volunteers at Butterfield Elementary School. To learn more about Murray, visit InMaricopa.com/Columnists.



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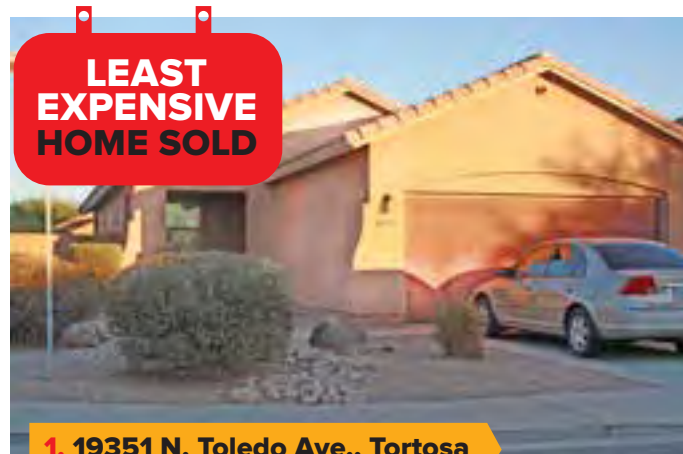
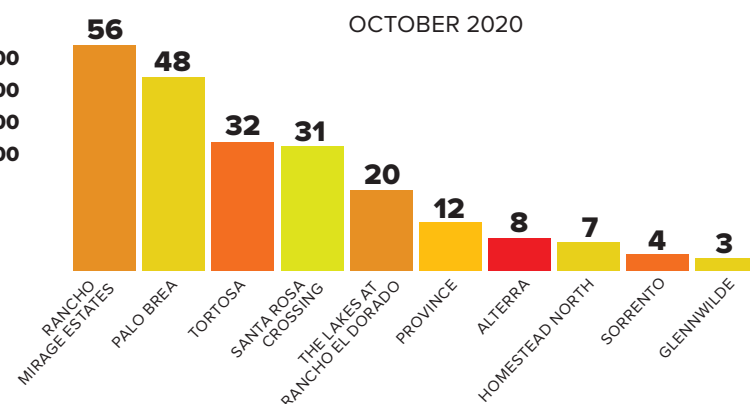
The most expensive home sold in Maricopa Oct. 16 — Nov. 15 was a two-story home in Rancho El Dorado. The grand front entrance leads into the formal living/dining featuring a fireplace and soaring ceilings. The home features tigerwood floors, tile with accents and new carpet. The kitchen has been remodeled with custom cabinets and granite countertops. The first-floor master overlooks the oversized backyard with a large covered patio. A beautiful pebbled pool has attached hot tub and water features. Upstairs has a large loft with sliding door to the second-floor balcony. This upgraded home sold in just over 30 days by the original homeowner.

Sold: Oct. 30
Purchase price: \$470,000
Square footage: 4,067
Price per square foot: \$115.56
Days on market: 32
Builder: Hacienda
Year built: 2004
Bedrooms: 5
Bathrooms: 3.5

Community: Rancho El Dorado
Features: Wood flooring, tile accents, updated kitchen, granite counters, stainless steel appliances, breakfast bar, built-in desk and drink refrigerator, solar hot water, solar power, covered patio, pool, hot tub, fruit trees, oversized back yard

2. 18339 N. Stonegate Road, Glennville	\$450,000
3. 41022 W. Hopper Drive, Homestead North	\$450,000
4. 18459 N. Stonegate Road, Glennville	\$437,500
5. 20101 N. Peppermint Drive, Province	\$425,000

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Bob McGovern

1. 19351 N. Toledo Ave., Tortosa

The least expensive home sold in Maricopa Oct. 16 — Nov. 15 was a one-story, three-bedroom house in Tortosa. The home is on a corner lot, with oversized backyard and desert landscaping. The split floorplan offers privacy in the master suite. It sold quickly at asking price.

Sold: Oct. 29
Purchase price: \$185,000
Square footage: 1,041
Price per square foot: \$177.71
Days on market: 22
Builder: Unknown
Year built: 2006
Bedrooms: 3
Bathrooms: 2
Community: Tortosa
Features: Corner lot, large backyard, breakfast bar, split floorplan

2. 44836 W. Gavilan Drive, Acacia Crossings	\$185,000
3. 37095 W. Amalfi Avenue, Sorrento	\$194,000
4. 43874 W. Carey Drive, Rancho El Dorado	\$200,000
5. 35829 W. Costa Blanca Drive, Tortosa	\$210,000



For a full list of last month's Maricopa home sales, visit InMaricopa.com/Real-Estate.

4 tips for selling your home in December

By Dayv Morgan

It's no secret 2020 has been a seller's market for most of the year, with low supply and multiple offers. As we head toward the holidays there is a good chance we may see a slowdown, as we have in previous years.

In December 2019, only 112 homes went under contract, the lowest of any month in the last year, and about half the 219 homes that went under contract two months later in February.

If you do plan to list this month here are some things to keep in mind:

1 Have your house photos taken before you do any decorating for the holidays so the Christmas decorations are not in the pictures. If your house doesn't sell in December, then buyers will still be viewing pictures of your Christmas tree in January and February, reminding them that it's been on the market a long time.



Dayv Morgan

3 If someone is coming to see your home, light is especially important in wintertime. If you have sunscreens on your windows, they should be removed. It gets dark early, so remember to keep your exterior lights on and make sure the bulbs inside are working when late-afternoon or early-evening visitors come to look over your house.

4 Spruce up your landscaping and outdoor elements. If weather permits you should overseed your lawn. They also sell a special grass paint to make dormant Bermuda grass look lush and green. Use a portable fire pit to create a picture of warmth. If you have a pool, take off the cover.

Even if they are buying in winter, potential buyers want a good idea of what the year-round experience in your house will be.

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

2 If you are "decking the halls" for your last Christmas in the home, keep it very minimal. You want potential buyers to see the floor plan when they visit, but holiday décor can hide that. It can also take up space and make the house look small and cluttered. Scents of Christmas, however, like cinnamon can be a good addition.

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Mistletoe: 1,300 species and a holiday tradition

By Beth Sulek-LaHousse



Everyone has heard that if you stand with a loved one under mistletoe you are supposed to kiss that person but where did the Christmas connection come from? Historians aren't sure but the tradition has been around for centuries.

Mistletoe's evergreen foliage and white berries make a pretty Christmas decoration and the tradition of kissing under it just makes for a romantic encounter!

But did you know that mistletoe's Anglo-Saxon name means dung-on-a-twig?

If you squeeze open one of the berries, you'll find a very sticky seed. The seeds are

covered with a glue-like substance called viscin, so they stick to whatever they fall on. When birds eat the berries then excrete the seeds, the seeds don't fall to the ground, they stick on the branches of trees, hence the dung-on-a-twig reference. Once the seeds sprout, the tiny roots are sent into the tree bark's cambium layer, where it siphons off water and nutrients, which slowly weakens the tree and can eventually kill it. This is why mistletoe is considered a parasitic shrub that can be seen on mesquite



Beth Sulek-LaHousse

and ironwood trees in Maricopa. In Arizona, we have desert mistletoe, or mesquite mistletoe, which differs from the decorative type used at Christmastime. In fact, there are more than 1,300 species of mistletoe, some very useful in nature. Three types of butterflies depend on mistletoe to survive. The great purple hairstreak caterpillars feed on American mistletoe and the Johnson's hairstreak and thicket hairstreak caterpillars feed on dwarf mistletoe.

Native bees pollinate mistletoe and feed on its nectar. Other insects that feed on and



Mistletoe-tapping music


Nearly 60 years ago, mistletoe sprouted in Christmas music.

The 1952 hit "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus," originally sung by a 13-year-old boy named Jimmy Boyd, is the one of the earliest references to mistletoe in popular music. The holiday staple, of course, has been covered by many popular artists over the years including Andy Williams, The Jackson 5, Reba McEntire and John Mellencamp.

Frank Sinatra wrote and sung about "Mistletoe and Holly" in 1957 and, a year later, the U.S. hit "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" told of couples wishing to stop beneath the white berries.

More recent songs include "All I Want for Christmas Is You" (Mariah Carey, 1994), "Mistletoe" (Justin Bieber, 2011) and "Under the Mistletoe" (Kelly Clarkson, 2020).

help pollinate mistletoe include flies, ants, beetles, thrips and mites. Many birds eat the mistletoe berries. The Phainopeplas, a silky flycatcher that lives in Arizona, relies almost exclusively on mistletoe for food in the winter.

As a parasitic shrub, mistletoe should be removed from trees. The dense growth of mistletoe can become quite heavy on branches and a large infestation can damage and destroy your beautiful tree. It's important to remove clusters before they bloom and produce more seeds. Once removed, mistletoe can grow back because its roots grow deep into a tree. The best way to remove it is to hire an experienced tree care professional. 



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 - Additional coursework available through Maricopa Virtual Academy for students who want to get ahead!
- Listening to audio clips
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- Specialized instruction for students with special needs

Foot pain: what is normal?

By C. Jon Beecroft DPM, FACFAS

Here are a few things NOT TO DO during a viral pandemic:

- 1. Have a coughing competition. (Unfortunately, there are no winners in this one.)
- 2. Shaking hands with all hospital staff after 12-hour shift. (A kind letter written to the hospital thanking staff will suffice)
- 3. Inviting 100 strangers to your house for a wrestling match. (Might not be the best thing to do, even in a non-viral pandemic.)

Hopefully, no one is entertaining any of these ideas right now. But there are plenty of things we should be doing.

The number-one thing we should do, is take care of ourselves.

One will not be able to help others if we cannot help ourselves.

As foot and ankle physicians, we can help with physical problems. Often, when

physical pain is gone, that can help mentally or emotionally.

So, what is normal pain and what is not normal? These scenarios cover some common pains. None are normal.

1. I get out of bed and first step is painful. Usually on the heel.

- a. Most people try to just “walk this off.” But it continues and does not go away. Many will just deal with it and finally come see us at Maricopa Foot and Ankle for some relief. I recommend coming in early to start the healing process faster.

2. My feet are numb.

- a. This is not normal, even as we age.
- b. There are several causes. Simple tests may be able to determine that cause.

3. My feet itch and I get little blisters that come and go.

- a. This could be as simple as athletes’ foot, eczema, or infection. One should not just deal with this.





Dr. Jon Beecroft

- b. Come into Maricopa Foot and Ankle and get a thorough exam.

4. Pain that does not go away after an injury.

- a. It depends on the extent of the injury.
- b. At Maricopa Foot and Ankle, x-rays, ultrasound visualization and the expertise of our board-certified physicians can help and make sure it does not get worse.

In conclusion, forgetting to take care of ourselves, can often lead to greater problems. We are taught to help each other. This is a great philosophy. By helping others, we will elevate ourselves. Yet, by forgetting to take care of ourselves, we often will not be able to help those we love the most. Life is a balance, and it is difficult to keep that balance, especially during a pandemic. My hope is that we each remember how important we are as individuals. As everyone improves themselves, it makes our community stronger. I hope Maricopa Foot and Ankle can be part of making your life better. 

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A second COVID-19 wave? Seniors should prepare now

By Al Brandenburg

With the holidays upon us, the biggest threat to our health is another wave of COVID-19 cases. We already know our generation is the most vulnerable. Surging coronavirus figures across the world are providing what one senior health official has called “a wake-up call,” with the impact of an imminent second wave beginning to be felt. Health experts warn seniors and their caregivers should prepare to face the threat of two viruses at once this winter.



Al Brandenburg



Schedule routine appointments now. For dental visits, auto maintenance, tech repairs and the like, get essential ones done ASAP or put them off until spring.



Decide on a contingency plan. You're taking every precaution, but unexpected things can crop up. It's important to have a backup plan because it's always harder to make sound and reasonable decisions in a panic state. Understanding what a trip to the ER might entail, for example, is essential.



Get a flu shot. Anyone who will be around a senior this winter — caregivers, grandchildren, houseguests et al — should make it a priority to get their flu shot and other recommended vaccines.



Gather important information. Keep important information close at hand, such as medication

names, doses and instructions, pharmacy or prescription mail delivery service phone numbers, and utility providers and accounts.



Make plans to stay connected. In the era of COVID-19, technology is crucial. If digital literacy is a challenge, seniors should get help now setting up devices and learning how to do remote tech support.



Practice self-care. Given the challenges this winter might pose, experts agree protecting mental health will be crucial for both seniors and caregivers. Self-care might look different from one person to the next, but experts say it generally includes getting enough rest, exercising and eating healthy foods to boost your mental and physical outlook.

Sources: The Huffington Post, Univision.com, ctinsider.com, care.com, AARP

Al Brandenburg is director of the Maricopa Senior Coalition. To learn more about Al, visit InMaricopa.com/Columnists.



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Calendar

DECEMBER

1

Maricopa City Council Meeting
 6:30 p.m., City Hall
 39700 W. Civic Center Plaza

2

BabyTalk at Pacana Park
 10 a.m., Pacana Park
 19000 N. Porter Road

4

Merry Copa
 6-9 p.m., Copper Sky Regional
 Park
 44345 W. Martin Luther
 King Jr. Blvd.

4-5

Maricopa Santa
 6-8 p.m., Desert Cedars
 44267 W. Cypress Lane

7

Storytime at Pacana Park
 10 a.m., Pacana Park
 19000 N. Porter Road

9

MUSD Governing Board Meeting
 6:30 p.m., Maricopa Unified
 School District Office
 44150 W. Maricopa-
 Casa Grande Hwy.

11-20

Holiday Homes & Businesses on Parade
 6-9 p.m., various locations

12-13

Maricopa Santa
 6-8 p.m., Desert Cedars
 44267 W. Cypress Lane

14

Storytime at Pacana Park
 10 a.m., Pacana Park
 19000 N. Porter Road

15

Maricopa City Council Meeting
 7 p.m., City Hall
 39700 W. Civic Center Plaza

19-20

Maricopa Santa
 6-8 p.m., Desert Cedars
 44267 W. Cypress Lane

CONTINUING

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

Maricopa Cruise-in
 5-9 p.m., behind Burger King
 20699 N. John Wayne Parkway

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.

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