



Maricopa

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January 2022

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2021
Year in Review

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- 4 During winter, keep the draperies and shades on your south-facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

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SOURCE: www.energy.gov

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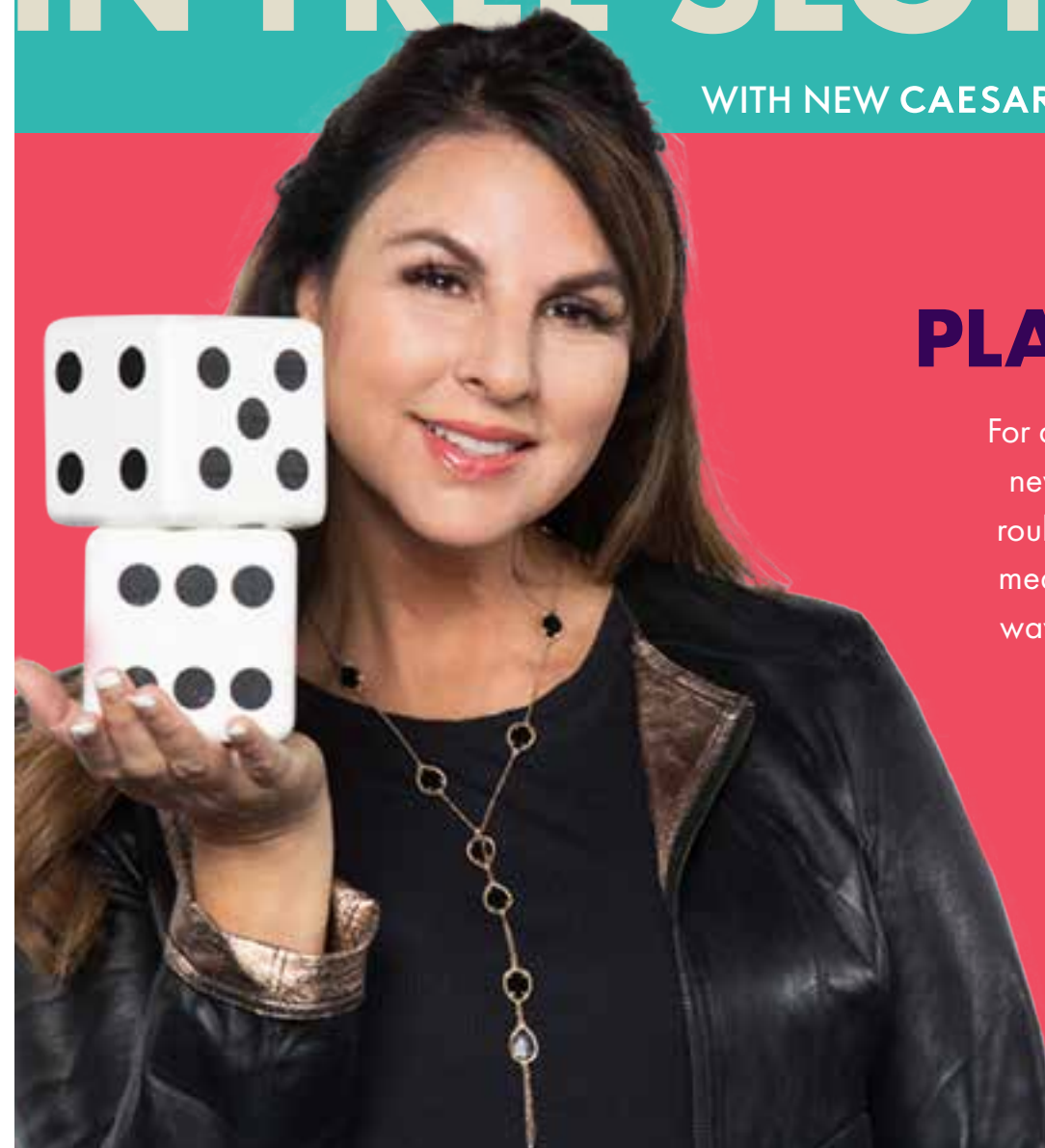
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Resolutions worth keeping

WITH IT BEING JANUARY, WE'VE ALL made our New Year's resolutions.

I'm sure many of the boilerplate items include losing weight, keeping a cleaner house and maybe answering more emails in a timely fashion.

But, instead of those resolutions that we all make and most of the time forget by February, why don't we set a goal for ourselves to take care of one another?

That's what happened over the Christmas holiday in the city of Maricopa.

An organization known as Best Christmas Ever, or BCE as I've heard it referred to in our office for the last two months, helps identify a family in a tough situation that was no fault of their own.

They certainly found one in the Powell family. Katrina Powell and her husband Mike Powell were thrown a curveball back in September when their 8-year-old son, Brayden, was diagnosed with Transverse Myelitis.

What started out as a persistent cold and a fever turned out to be an illness where Brayden lost the ability to walk and is now wheelchair-bound.

Transverse Myelitis is an extraordinarily rare neuroimmune disorder. According to NORD, the



National Organization for Rare Disorders, there are about 1,400 new cases diagnosed each year in the United States.

The treatment for the condition involves stem cell therapy, which is not included in the family's health insurance policy.

As a result, the Powell family will take Brayden to Costa Rica for a series of treatments, which have been estimated to cost \$100,000 for the full course.

It's been quite a sight to watch the community of Maricopa come together to help this family.

It's also encouraging. In a day and age where people are seemingly growing more and more disconnected from one another, it's good to see a community come together to help out a family in crisis.

Acts of good don't have to wait until next Christmas. Let's all try to find ways to pay it forward throughout the year. Practice random acts of kindness.

That's a resolution worth keeping.

JUSTIN GRIFFIN | EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Justin@InMaricopa.com

CONTRIBUTORS



HARRIET PHELPS

Harriet is a licensed psychologist and has written for InMaricopa in the past. We welcome her back.



JAY TAYLOR

Jay is all about business and growth in Maricopa, and he's a die-hard Sun Devils fan.



RONALD SMITH

An expert in universal design, Ron works to make homes more accessible and comfortable for those who are disabled.



Publisher
SCOTT BARTLE

Advertising Director
VINCENT MANFREDI

Editorial Director
JUSTIN GRIFFIN

Advertising
DEBORAH COATES
JAIME HARRISON
MICHELLE SORENSEN

Writers
AL BRANDENBURG
C.M. CURTIS
KRISTINA DONNAY
JOAN KOCZOR
BOB MCGOVERN
DAYV MORGAN
IAN ROBERDS
TOM SCHUMAN
MURRAY SIEGEL
RON SMITH
JAY TAYLOR

Photographers
VICTOR MORENO
KYLE NORBY
BRIAN PETERSHEIM JR.
IAN ROBERDS
JASON RZIHA
CARRIE SCHMIDT
MERENZI YOUNG

Designer
CARL BEZUIDENHOUT

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44400 W. Honeycutt Road, Suite 101
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520-568-0040 Tel 520-568-0050 Fax
News@InMaricopa.com
Advertising@InMaricopa.com



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ON THE COVER

City staffer and community volunteer Brenda Campbell was photographed by Victor Moreno at City Hall.



2021



1930s

A water tower and an overpass

In the 1930s, a couple of men came to Maricopa and set up a woodcutting business. They contacted the people on the reservation and arranged to haul mesquite trees and limbs into Maricopa for cutting. This wood was sawed into pieces about 18 inches long for easy handling.

In the photograph from the 1930s, Nina DeHart is seen with her mother and stacked wood.

While driving north on State Route 347 from Maricopa, one can see many of the stumps of the mesquite trees.

In today's Maricopa, the only portion of the photo from the 1930s still around is the historic water tower. The other houses and wood stacks are long gone and once sat where the John Wayne Parkway overpass is today. On the left side of the older photo, you can see the old Maricopa train station.

THIS MONTH BACK IN...

For these and other historical stories, visit InMaricopa.com.



2005

During a routine, New Year's Day traffic stop on State Route 347 in Maricopa, Pinal County Sheriff's Office deputies discovered about 600 pounds of marijuana concealed in the bed of a pickup truck. The driver, a Mexican national, was arrested and booked into jail on Possession of Marijuana for Sale and related charges. Information from the stop led to the recovery of an additional 1,500 pounds of pot in the Stanfield area.



2008

Hot Dog the Wienermobile was in town on to the delight of many customers who got a close-up look while parked near the entrance of Fry's Marketplace on North John Wayne Parkway. Jenna Barna, whose business card identified her as a hotdogger, offered visitors a tour of the motor vehicle inspired by the Kraft Foods' Oscar Mayer wiener.



2011

Bristol Palin, the daughter of Sarah Palin, told an Alaska radio station about her Maricopa home purchase and personal life. Palin said she wrote a check for her house in Cobblestone Farms with money she earned through her appearance on "Dancing with the Stars." "I'm thrilled," Palin said of her new life in Arizona. "I love the town I live in. I love my house. Tripp's happy. He's healthy. Everything's great." Palin sold her house about five months later.

Maricopa Historical Society, Brian Petersheim Jr.

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The last years of Lorenzo and Olive Oatman

BY C.M. CURTIS

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the last in a series of articles dealing with the Massacre of the Oatman family in 1851 and those who survived it. A few days after leaving Maricopa Wells, the Oatman family encountered a party of 19 native men. The natives bludgeoned and stabbed to death Royce and MaryAnn, the parents, and four of their seven children. Lorenzo, 15 was clubbed on the head, thrown off a 20-foot embankment and left for dead. Olive, 14 and 7-year-old Mary Ann were taken to the village of their captors and treated as slaves for a year, after which they were sold to the chief of the Mojave tribe and his wife.

Visit InMaricopa.com to read the full account on the Oatman family.

THE TWO GIRLS WERE TREATED very well by the Mojaves, but there came a season of famine and Mary Ann died of starvation. Olive was later returned to white society, where she learned her brother Lorenzo had survived the massacre and made his way back to civilization. The reunion between the two surviving Oatmans made headlines across the west.

With the permission of Olive and Lorenzo, a pastor named Royal B. Stratton wrote a book about the massacre and the events following it. The book is filled with distortions and sensationalism, and years later, when Olive married, her husband burned every copy he could get his hands on. However, the revenue from the book enabled the siblings to attend preparatory school.

Later, they did a lecture tour to promote book sales. After about two years, Lorenzo grew tired of retelling his traumatic story and moved on. He married and began a new life in Minnesota as a farmer. By all reports, Olive was a good public speaker, and she seemed to enjoy the lecture circuit. For nearly six years, she made a very good living traveling around the



Olive Oatman was a good public speaker, and she seemed to enjoy the lecture circuit. For nearly six years, she made a very good living, traveling around the country lecturing about her experiences.

country lecturing about her experiences.

Let us back up, now, and view Olive's story from her perspective:

After an arduous 10-day trek across the Arizona desert to Camp Yuma, where the camp commander told you your brother Lorenzo is alive, news that gave you such an emotional shock you fainted, you are finally, weeks later, reunited with your only living family member. The emotion you both feel is so strong neither of you can speak for nearly an hour.

But life goes on. After all the drastic changes you have been forced to endure, you are faced now with another you must adapt to living in the society of your own people. You have nearly

forgotten how to speak your native tongue; you can no longer read or write. People close to you observe how you seem to suffer, as though torn between two worlds: that of the Mojaves who treated you as one of their own, and this civilized world, which was yours before your family was slaughtered.

You wear a veil wherever you go to hide your chin tattoos, and when you speak face to face with someone, you have the habit of covering your lower face with your hand.

In 1864, eight years after your celebrated return, you meet and marry John Brant Fairchild, a wealthy rancher. You will never have to work again. You, who once were a slave

to a native tribe, now have servants who do all the work. You, who lived in a tiny hut and wore only the bark skirt of a Mojave woman, now have a fine, two-story Victorian home. You wear expensive clothes. You, who nearly died of hunger during the famine that took the lives of countless Mojaves, along with your beloved little sister, Mary Ann, have food and money in abundance.

Those closest to you report you do not sleep well. You walk around the spacious grounds of your home in the darkness, often weeping softly. It has been speculated you left a husband and at least one child among the Mojaves, but you have never spoken of them. On the other hand, you never bear children in your marriage to John Fairchild, a fact that may indicate you are unable to conceive. No one knows but you.

The diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder does not yet exist, but it would be unusual indeed if you did not suffer from it.

You speak of the Mojaves in the highest terms, especially the chief, his wife and their daughter, who adopted you into their family.

You help out at a local orphanage, no doubt remembering how you yourself were orphaned. You and your husband adopt and raise a 3-week-old girl. You begin suffering from severe



A memorial to the Oatman family members who were murdered by a party of 19 native men.

headaches, eye pain and deep depression, at times being bed-ridden for weeks at a time. These symptoms, which are likely related to your post-traumatic stress disorder, will plague you for the rest of your life. In 1903, at the age of 65, you die of a heart attack.

Your sorrows are over now, but the world will never forget the girl with the blue tattoos.

C.M. Curtis, American Western author and historian, is the best-selling author of 11 books, including eight westerns. His books can be found on Amazon or at CMCurtisAuthor.com.

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Year in Review

2021 has been quite a year in and around Maricopa. Despite the pandemic, many homes were built and sold. New businesses continued their trek into the city's limits. There was even news of a surf park coming to town, which will lead to many tourism dollars for the local economy. There were struggles, however: The monsoon season left parts of the area recovering. There were also shootings and a bank robbery during an intense week and half in August. In our year in review section, we wrap it all up for you.

DEVELOPMENT

SLOW, STEADY PROGRESS IN COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential development was clearly the major real estate story in town in 2021, but the city made steady progress in its efforts to expand commercial development as well. Projects approved or that began construction included:

APEX MOTOR CLUB

The private "country club racetrack" is developing a series of "garage condos" designed to be multi-configurable. Each 1,250-square-foot condo includes a 625-square-foot mezzanine. The facility completed its first race circuit, a car-storage building and a temporary sales center. The garage condos have sold out of the initial offering of 48 units and 14 people are on a wait list for the second offering. There will be 96 garage condos when APEX completes phases 1 and 2 of the project, and there will be space for almost 180 garages on full buildout.



OMNI SELF STORAGE

This full-service, climate-controlled storage facility at Alan Stephens Parkway and Stonegate Road opened in September, giving the city four storage facilities. Omni covers 95,496 square feet and has 660 storage units — 544 of which are climate-controlled. Units range in size from 5 feet by 5 feet and extend to 10 feet by 35 feet. The facility offers 12 covered RV stalls.

LA QUINTA INN & SUITES

The city's first hotel in 66 years opened in September after a series of delays. The 89-room property at Copper Sky opened with a VIP event and ribbon-cutting for city officials and dignitaries. The pet-friendly hotel features an indoor pool, jacuzzi, fitness room and meeting room. There is no restaurant on property, but a hot continental breakfast is served daily.



ESTRELLA GIN

The initial 45,000-square-foot building in the commercial/warehouse/retail project at 45654 W. Edison Road began construction in October. The City of Maricopa committed to lease 5,826 square feet of space. A portion of that space will then be leased, free of charge, to the Maricopa Economic Development Association and the Maricopa Chamber of Commerce, which will share a conference room and restrooms. The city will retain about 2,000 square feet as a business incubator space.



MARICOPA STATION

The city acquired 15 acres of land mostly along the Union Pacific railroad tracks for \$5.9 million to enhance this project. The city intends to use the acreage to develop a public market and infrastructure, including streets, utilities and green space. The project, just south of the railroad tracks and east of John Wayne Parkway, is envisioned by the city as a vehicle to spur economic, residential and retail development in the area south of the overpass where the east side of Honeycutt Avenue currently dead ends as well as the Heritage District area.

Bengt Nyman / Flickr

PHX SURF PARK

A world-class surf park would be Maricopa's first true destination attraction and tourism driver.



Surf park to draw plenty of tourism dollars to Maricopa

BY JAY TAYLOR

Maricopans are used to hearing about new housing developments. They get excited about new sit-down restaurants. They clamor for more retail opportunities. But no one predicted the May announcement of a major surfing attraction coming to the city.

The city got potentially the biggest addition to its entertainment lineup in history and a huge economic driver with the unveiling of an early site plan for the PHX Surf Park at Loma Road and State Route 238 in May. Construction has yet to begin.

The 70-acre park will offer state-of-the-art wave technology and a variety of other attractions to make it more of a family entertainment center than just a water park.

Water-related attractions include two wave/surf pools that could be as large as 3½ acres each, multiple water slides, a lazy river, swimming pools and a splash pad. A rendering shows a series of shade trellises equipped with misting systems meandering through the park to help keep guests cool during the summer heat.

Other potential amenities shown in preliminary site plans include a hotel, retail spaces, restaurants, a swim-up bar, a concert area with shaded stage and lawn seating, spa, RV park, tiny home village with its own clubhouse, bike pump track, and sand volleyball courts. PHX Surf said the project will be developed in phases, but there is no indication at this point which amenities will be included in each phase.

In the application narrative, the developer says "the PHX Surf Park will be a premier destination not only in Pinal County, but across the state of Arizona and beyond. The park will create a unique attraction that offers advanced active entertainment, progressive surfing experiences, water play, related retail and dining, concert and open space, and hospitality — all immersed with 'ocean views,' and the sound of crashing waves breaking in the desert sun."

The preliminary documents indicate that the fun won't stop when the sun goes down as PHX Surf calls for night surfing under the lights as well as the presence of restaurants, bars, live music and entertainment.

With the hotel, RV park and tiny home village, the park will offer out-of-town visitors a variety of choices regarding price and amenity level for staying on site.



RETAIL

RETAIL ROUNDUP

As Maricopa’s population rises, it becomes attractive to a greater number of retail businesses. Here’s a look at the key retail/service developments in progress in the city, with many expected to come online in 2022.



SONORAN CREEK MARKETPLACE

The major retail development in 2021, Sonoran Creek, on the southwest corner of John Wayne Parkway and Edison Road, will host eight retail and professional storefronts, in addition to five restaurants. Sprouts Farmers Market, the anchor of the shopping center, opened in August. Two automotive businesses, Brake Masters and Discount Tire, and The Joint Chiropractic are also open. They will be joined by four professional offices all in some phase of construction — ATI Physical Therapy, Neon Barre fitness studio, Vanessa McDill State Farm and Wynn Nails and Hair Salon, the last two moving from other shopping centers in town. A Super Cuts salon is going in as well.



THE WELLS

Another hot site is The Wells, the retail district anchored by Walmart, where a number of businesses have plans in various stages. Two of them — Fast & Friendly Car Wash (anticipated mid-to-late January opening) and a second AutoZone store — already have a presence off John Wayne Parkway and are expanding southeastward. Pacific Dental Services is also looking there.

EDISON POINTE

Edison Pointe, just north of Edison Road and east of John Wayne Parkway, will get active in 2022, too. In addition to a Nando’s restaurant, Petco has begun the development approval process for a 12,500-square-foot pet supermarket at the site. Five additional retail/service pads of more than 2,000 square feet each will house commercial, retail or service-related tenants permitted in the CB-2, or general business, zoning.

EDISON PLACE

A tenant was found for the Edison Place storefront vacated by Aaron’s in July 2020. Sherwin-Williams, an international paint and coatings retailer, is proceeding on plans to open a 7,000-square-foot store in the spring. The Maricopa store will be much larger than the company’s typical 4,500-square-foot retail operation.

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HOSPITALS

1 DOWN, 1 TO GO

After years of anticipation and many runs to medical facilities in Casa Grande and Chandler, residents now have a hospital of their own – with another on the way.



EXCEPTIONAL COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Exceptional Community Hospital-Maricopa, with a 24-hour emergency room and specialty internal medicine department and digital imaging suite, opened to patients in December off John Wayne Parkway, just south of the overpass. The \$18 million, 20,000-square-foot facility will have outpatient and inpatient hospital beds for acute admissions and overnight observation of patients as well as a landing area for medical helicopters to transport serious cases to other regional medical facilities. It will employ 60-100 staffers. Subsequent phases of construction at the site are planned by Exceptional Healthcare of Texas.



NUTEX HEALTH HOSPITAL

A second hospital is already planned in the city that waited 18 years for its first. A specialty ER facility would be operated by Texas-based Nutex Health, on the southeast corner of West Bowlin Road and John Wayne Parkway, near Copper Sky. It would have about 125 beds. As originally conceived, the hospital would be joined by a seven-floor luxury condominium building and parking garage on adjoining acreage with most of its 70 units sold to the public. Some units could be made available to hospital visitors and doctors visiting overnight to perform surgery.



Huge strides in education

BY JAY TAYLOR

Coming off the chaos of 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools to in-person learning, forced students and staff to wear masks and observe a range of safety protocols, and limited attendance at the city's nine public schools, 2021 stood out as a landmark year for students and educators in the city.

In January 2021, the Maricopa Unified School District Governing Board voted to extend its distance learning policy through Jan. 29 to allow the spate of cases that arose following the holiday season to subside. Students and teachers returned to the classroom

Feb. 1 and the district has remained open since.

May saw the district break ground on the city's second high school at Murphy and Farrell roads, on the 80-acre site of a former pecan grove. July brought further good news for the district as, thanks in large part to the efforts of former state Rep. Bret Roberts, the high school was allocated an additional \$18.8 million toward construction on top of the initial \$22.5 million.

The additional funding will allow the district to build a more complete facility rather than the "bare bones" school initially planned. Additional facilities include a



student services building and field house for athletics.

In November voters passed a continuation of the district's 10% budget override which secured about \$5 million per year in funding for teacher and staff salaries, technology and the RAM Academy.

The year was capped with the governing board choosing the name Desert Sunrise for the new high school.

Top: Construction continues on Desert Sunrise High School which is slated to open for the 2022-23 school year.

Above: Maricopa Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Tracy Lopeman addresses a crowd in 2021 about the progress on the new high school and the importance of passing the school system override, which was accomplished.



Former Arizona State Rep. Bret Roberts stands at the intersection of State Road 347 and Riggs Road. He was instrumental in securing funding for a bypass that will ease traffic problems along the troubled highway that links Maricopa to the Valley.

TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS ACCELERATE IN '21

Transportation issues are a constant topic of conversation. In 2021, the city made big strides toward long-term solutions for some of those issues. And while those solutions may be years away, they provide hope for managing traffic in town and better connecting the city to the Valley.

RING ROAD

Both the Sonoran Desert Parkway, formerly know as the East-West Corridor, and Green Road overpass are part of a larger project initially introduced by city manager Rick Horst at the city's 2020 planning meeting — a "Ring Road" around the city. The proposed loop would allow residents of outer-lying communities to get to and from their homes — and the Valley — without having to drive through the middle of Maricopa. Horst said the ring road will provide easier access to businesses that will begin to migrate away from the John Wayne Parkway corridor as the city grows and more homes are built farther from the city center. He said the road, which is slated to follow the Green Road alignment on the west side of town, will tie into McDavid Road.

"Right now, traffic is only going north and south because that's the way the town goes," Horst said. "But, eventually, there are going to be commercial hubs everywhere, and traffic will redirect to bring people to those hubs and away from John Wayne Parkway." Preliminary routing has the road spurring off State Route 347 and moving west through the Gila River Indian Community north of Cobblestone Farms and then south to the Green Road alignment and the new overpass. Then it could connect with the Sonoran Desert Parkway running along the Farrell Road alignment, initially to Porter Road and eventually out to its eastern leg, which would run north-south along an alignment in the area of Hartman, Murphy or Anderson roads, then swinging back west to SR 347.

JOHN WAYNE PARKWAY MEDIAN PROJECT

The city's landscape and median improvement project on SR 347 from Honeycutt Road to the northern city limit began in August and will continue through mid-January. The 2.15-mile beautification project includes plants, shrubs, decomposed granite, landscape irrigation, concrete, boulders, gabion baskets, steel light columns and artistic elements. There also will be a monument sign at the northern entrance to the city that, in preliminary renderings, shows the city's stylized "M."

RIGGS ROAD OVERPASS

The Riggs Road overpass across State Route 347 took a huge step toward becoming reality in 2021 when the Arizona Legislature committed \$35 million toward

the project. Former state Sen. Bret Roberts of Maricopa was instrumental in pushing through the funding package. The project will improve safety at the congested and dangerous intersection by building a bridge over 347 at Riggs Road and removing the traffic signal to dramatically improve traffic flow. The project would be a major step toward smoothing traffic congestion on SR347 and enhancing safety on the heavily trafficked route between Maricopa and the Valley.

GREEN ROAD OVERPASS

To accommodate growth in southwest Maricopa, the city will build a second overpass crossing the Union Pacific railroad tracks at Green Road. It will provide access to planned housing developments on the city's west side and aid in the development of a John Wayne Parkway bypass route. The overpass and other improvements to Green Road will be paid through developer impact fees. The project came about as the city studied traffic patterns that would be created with the coming development of Hogenes Farms, which spans 773 acres and could be home to more than 7,000 people. Rodolfo Lopez, the city's acting director of development services, said improvements on Green Road should begin within two years and take 12 to 24 months.

EAST/WEST CORRIDOR

The city took the final steps in preparation for the construction of the initial 1.6-mile portion of the East-West Corridor, now known as Sonoran Desert Parkway, between John Wayne Parkway and Porter Road along the Farrell Road alignment. The parkway eventually will run from SR 347 to Interstate 10 incorporating stretches of the Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway, giving residents on the south side of the city a more efficient route to connect with I-10. Construction is scheduled to begin Jan. 10 and finish in March 2023. The project includes building a bridge across the Santa Cruz Wash as part of flood control measures in that area.



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RESTAURANTS

ON THE MENU FOR 2022: LOTS OF NEW RESTAURANTS (AND PLACES TO SIT DOWN)

Champing at the bit for more places in town to sit down and have a bite to eat? Your patience will be rewarded this year. Here's a look at the fast-food chains and sit-down restaurants coming to Maricopa in 2022 and beyond, including a fine dining establishment ranked 5th on Yelp's list of the Top 100 Places to Eat in the United States.



CHILI'S GRILL & BAR

Location: The Wells, tentatively
Anticipated opening: November

What to expect: A real estate broker for the fast-casual chain restaurant says Chili's has committed to building a restaurant in Maricopa. The tentative location is at Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway and Stonegate Road at The Wells, next to Jiffy Lube. A favorite in local Facebook discussions about the most-desired restaurants in the city, Chili's offers American food, Tex-Mex cuisine and dishes influenced by Mexican cuisine. The 5,700-square-foot restaurant constructed here might be a new prototype design that features more exterior glass.

Coming
Soon

BURGER KING

Location: The Wells
Anticipated opening: TBA
What to know: This Burger King, the city's second, would be owned and operated by the same company, Barnett Management of Avondale. With 3,200 square feet and a dual drive-in on 1.2 acres, it would be one of Burger King's new-design restaurants.



CARL'S JR.

Location: Maricopa Towne Plaza
Anticipated opening: TBA
What to know: A Scottsdale firm has submitted plans that would bring back the fast-food burger and chicken outlet. A 2,666-square-foot restaurant and drive-thru is proposed for three-quarters of an acre just south of the new Maricopa Animal Hospital. A Carl's Jr. operated in town until December 2018 at the site of the current Wendy's on John Wayne Parkway.

COCINA MADRIGAL

Location: Bowlin Road (near the new Maricopa Library)
Anticipated opening: 2023
What to expect: This will be the second location for the upscale, sit-down Mexican restaurant. It ranked fifth on Yelp's list of the Top 100 Places to Eat in the United States. Madrigal specializes in handcrafted tacos, homemade enchiladas (\$14.95), fresh salads (\$5.95-\$13.95), and made-from-scratch specialties. Margaritas go for \$8.95.

COLD BEERS AND CHEESEBURGERS

Location: Sonoran Creek Marketplace
Anticipated opening: Spring 2022
What to expect: Construction has begun at the casual, sit-down burger joint. The sports bar offers half-pound burgers that run from \$14-\$16 each. The 5,000-square-foot restaurant is going up at the end of a strip of smaller storefronts attached to Sprouts. A patio will feature an additional 2,000 square feet for outdoor dining.

CRAVE HOT DOGS & BBQ

Location: TBA
Anticipated opening: TBA
What to know: In March 2021, an item on RestaurantNews.com reported that Crave Hot Dogs & BBQ, a quick-growing franchise started in 2018, would build a restaurant here, but the report did not offer a location or timeline. The report jived with an announcement (still) on Crave's website that it had signed a local franchisee. The company did not return requests for comment from InMaricopa.

FILIBERTO'S MEXICAN FOOD

Location: Sonoran Creek Marketplace
Anticipated opening: TBA
What to know: Founded in Mesa in 1993, this chain of 24-hour carryout and delivery eateries has more than a dozen outlets in the Valley. It features tacos, burritos and carne asada fries made with fresh meat and ingredients.

JIMMY JOHN'S

Location: Sonoran Creek Marketplace
Anticipated opening: Soon
What to expect: The national fast casual sandwich shop offers takeout and delivery.



MOD PIZZA

Location: Sonoran Creek Marketplace
Opened in December
What to expect: Founded in the Seattle area in 2008, MOD Pizza is the pioneer of the fast-casual pizza sector. It features individual artisan-style pizzas and salads made on-demand with any combination of toppings for one flat price. The 2,600-square-foot pizzeria received city approval for a Series 12 restaurant liquor license that would allow sales of beer, wine and spirits. A patio offers outdoor dining.

NANDO'S MEXICAN CAFÉ

Location: Edison Pointe
Anticipated opening: TBA
What to know: This southeast Valley chain selected Maricopa for its fifth restaurant. A pre-application on file with the city calls for a restaurant of 5,125 square feet, plus 700-plus square feet of patio area, at the vacant site. A family restaurant, it features traditional recipes.



SLIM CHICKENS

Location: Currently scouting sites
Anticipated opening: TBA
What to expect: Tom Barnett, owner of the company that operates the Burger King in town (and soon two), has been hot to hatch a Slim Chickens franchise in Maricopa since signing an agreement to bring up to 32 of the restaurants to Arizona. "Of all the places I'm looking at, Maricopa is going to be the

best market by far," he told InMaricopa in October. The company is looking at a location on Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway in The Wells but has not yet signed a letter of intent. It is exploring other sites as well, the company said. The chicken chain, which operates in 22 states, United Kingdom and Kuwait, features wings, tenders and sandwiches, with a list of southern sides and 17 house sauces. It also offers catering.

LOCATIONS **The Wells:** southwest of Porter Road and Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway (Walmart, etc.)
Maricopa Towne Plaza: southeast of John Wayne Parkway and Hathaway Avenue (Maricopa Animal Hospital, etc.)
Edison Pointe: northeast of John Wayne Parkway and Edison Road (Planet Fitness, etc.)
Sonoran Creek Marketplace: southwest of John Wayne Parkway and Edison Road (Sprouts, etc.)

ONE HECK OF A WEEK (AND A HALF)

A stretch of 11 days in August gave Maricopa a glimpse of big city crime, violence and mayhem. It's a week most residents would prefer to forget. By the end, three people were dead, but it could have been much worse.



DOUBLE MURDER IN RANCHO MIRAGE

The violence ramped up on Aug. 18 with a double-murder in Rancho Mirage. MPD responded to a reported shooting at a home in the 37000 block of West Prado Street, where they found two deceased adults. According to police, witnesses identified Juan Jose Cazares Jr., 38, who apparently lived at the home, as the primary suspect. He allegedly fled in a gray 2003 Dodge Ram 1500 pickup truck before being arrested without incident by Tucson police later that day.

SHOTS FIRED AT NEW APARTMENT COMPLEX

It all started with someone firing at least 16 rounds into the C Building at the new Oasis at The Wells apartments on West Shea Way in the early morning hours of Aug. 9. Police said no injuries were reported and described the incident as "isolated but not random." There have been no arrests in the case.



CREDIT UNION INSIDE FRY'S ROBBED

What had already been quite a week got even crazier the next day, when the Desert Financial Credit Union branch inside Fry's Marketplace was robbed. The alleged thief in the Aug. 14 incident, who was dubbed the "Back Again Bandit" by the FBI, was arrested without incident Oct. 25 in Phoenix. The FBI Violent Crime Task Force said Richard Zumbro was a suspect in 23 bank robberies.

According to authorities, Zumbro allegedly walked away from the Desert Financial robbery with \$5,000 in cash after handing the teller a note reading: "THIS IS A ROBBERY! PLEASE DON'T MAKE IT A MURDER! QUICKLY AND QUIETLY GIVE ME ALL THE MONEY. HURRY!!"

FATAL PEDESTRIAN ACCIDENT

Just two days later, a man was struck by a vehicle and killed as he walked along Smith-Enke Road, just east of Province Parkway.

Maricopa police were dispatched around 4 a.m. on Aug. 20 to the scene, where officers attempted lifesaving efforts on the victim, who was identified as Jordan Guardo-Mickell, 23, of Maricopa. He died at the scene. MPD said Guardo-Mickell was walking in the roadway on Smith-Enke Road between Province Parkway and Desert Garden Drive when he was hit by a vehicle traveling east on Smith-Enke. "The (driver) was coming home from work this morning," a police spokesman said. "The subject was walking in the roadway, wearing dark clothing. There was no sign of impairment on the part of the driver."

STANDOFF IN RANCHO EL DORADO ENDS PEACEFULLY

Four days later, a report of an active shooter in Rancho El Dorado forced the lockdown of Pima Butte Elementary School. Police arrested James Brent Gallup, 59, who was found on the roof of a home in the 41000 block of Sunland Drive, about a quarter-mile east of the school. The Aug. 13 standoff began about 7:20 a.m. led Maricopa police to evacuate the neighborhood. The standoff lasted until about 3 p.m. when the Pinal County Sheriff's Office Regional SWAT team entered the home and found Gallup on the roof. They brought him down and he complied with officers, who arrested him. Gallup was charged with multiple offenses and booked at the Pinal County Sheriff's Office.

Gallup, was held on \$65,000 cash bond, and faced charges of disorderly conduct with a weapon, threats, criminal trespassing, disorderly conduct/fighting, criminal damage, discharging a firearm within the city limits, and being in prohibited possession of weapons.



Monsoon returns

The difference a year makes. In 2020, the monsoon was a no-show, leading to the driest monsoon season on record and worsening a historic drought in the Southwest, according to the National Weather Service in Phoenix. Luckily, the monsoon returned in 2021. In fact, it was one of the wetter seasons on record across the Southwest, according to the weather service. Average rainfall during the monsoon months of June through September across the region was 7.93 inches (good for the 20th wettest on record — since 1895), the wettest since 2014, and well above the 1991-2020 average of 6.39 inches, forecasters said.

Maricopa recorded six to eight inches of rain. NWS states that 30 to 60 percent of annual rainfall comes during the monsoon.

Several storms led to flooding and extensive wind damage in the region.

On June 22, a fleeting storm with strong, damaging winds hit some areas of Maricopa. The storm's heavy winds displaced a mobile home in Hidden Valley, damaged the east façade of the Maricopa Library and Cultural Center and blew away at least one residential backyard shed.

On the night of July 9, strong thunderstorms rolled through Maricopa, knocking out power to homes in several neighborhoods, including Glennwilde and Homestead. A lightning strike zapped transformers at a

substation at the northwest corner of Honeycutt and Porter roads, Electrical District No. 3 officials said.

A night later, more thunderstorms — with more heavy rain, strong winds, and thunder and lightning — rumbled through the city. It was preceded by a dust storm.

One prolonged rainstorm on Aug. 13 took the lives of two people and necessitated the rescue of dozens more — many from their rooftops — in Gila Bend, a town of about 2,000 people about 40 miles west of Maricopa. Storm cleanup efforts drew more than 100 volunteers from across the region, including many from Maricopa, including Mayor Christian Price and Realtor Dayv Morgan.

The most damaging storm of the season in Maricopa may have been the microburst that ripped through on Sept. 18. In addition to a deluge of rain, intense winds knocked down 34 electrical poles — all fairly-new and in a single line in the western part of the city — snapping many in half 2-10 feet off the ground, an ED3 spokesperson said. Nearly 800 customers near Ralston Road and State Route 238 lost power.

The active Monsoon wasn't all bad.

As of June 15, about two-thirds of Pinal County (central and eastern) was in "exceptional drought," according to data from the U.S. Drought Monitor. Maricopa and roughly the western third of the county was considered in "extreme" drought.

By Nov. 30, the entire county had improved to "moderate" drought status.




BY KRISTINA DONNAY, FNP-C

Having a treatment with the tone applicator is equivalent to doing 1,000 sit-ups or squats in a 30-minute period. Tone targets specific muscle group to increase muscle strength and refine the look of your muscles. The EMS optimizes cellular metabolism and regeneration of muscle fibers resulting in a more toned appearance.

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A side-by-side comparison of a woman's midsection. The left side, labeled 'Before', shows a belly with significant skin laxity and stretch marks. The right side, labeled 'After', shows a flatter, more toned abdomen with a visible waistline. The woman is wearing a red bikini bottom on the 'Before' side and a purple one on the 'After' side.



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 **41600 W. Smith-Enke Road**
Building 14, Suite 3

SPONSORED CONTENT


Business, development around town

Maricopa Fiesta, at 20800 N. John Wayne Pkwy., is doing \$20,000 in tenant improvement work to Suite 111 in part 2 of the Shops at Maricopa Fiesta. The property is owned by Aztec Ventures and the work is being done by Johansen Interiors LLC.



Desert Cedars Equities East LLC is doing \$1,987,648 in on- and off-site improvements to 192 units at the **Bungalows On Bowlin** at 44900 W. Bowlin Road, with Alexander Building Company Inc. doing the work.

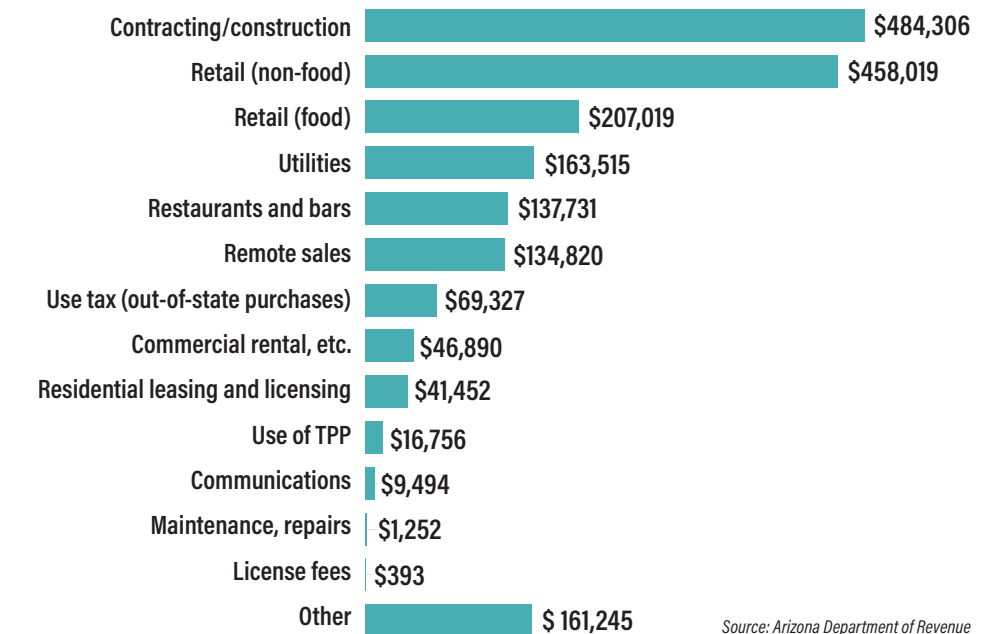


Two new mounted signs will be installed at the **Maricopa Library & Cultural Center** at 18160 N. Maya Angelou Dr. in the city complex. Airpark Signs & Graphics Inc. will do the work. 

[illegible]

Maricopa Sales Tax Collections

In December, businesses paid more than \$1,932,219 in transaction privilege taxes. Here's where people spent money based on the amount of sales tax collected:



Source: Arizona Department of Revenue



**A summary of the Nov. 10 to Dec. 14
food inspections by Pinal County
Environmental Health Services**



Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Hot and Cold Holding
Internal temperatures of the following items being held in the make line prep cooler were being held at 58-63° F when a temperature at or below 41° is required: Cut lettuce, cut tomato, roast beef, corn beef, cheese, turkey and lamb.

Cooling, Heating, and Holding Capacities-Equipment
Air temperature of the make line prep cooler was 65°. A temperature of less than 41 degrees is required.



Cooling
Internal temperatures of cooked pork, cooked beans and rice being held in plastic, 5-gallon buckets in the walk-in cooler were 48-51°.

Cooling Methods
Internal temperatures of cut tomatoes and cut lettuce held in closed 5-gallon buckets in the walk-in cooler were 60-65°.



Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Hot and Cold Holding
Internal temperatures of cooked brisket held in warmer were 114-115° (≥ 135°+ required).

Cooling, Heating and Holding Capacities-Equipment
Temperature of back warmer was recorded and verified by person in charge to be 102°. Staff was instructed to remove the warmer from service until it can be repaired to maintain internal food temperatures of at least 135°.



Gloves, Use Limitation
Observed employees use their gloved hands to handle ready-to-eat foods/donuts immediately after handling money and touching register.



Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Hot and Cold Holding
Internal temperatures of creamers held in reach-in cooler were 54-55° (≤ 41° required).

Cooling, Heating, and Holding Capacities-Equipment
Ambient air temperature of cooler was recorded at 55° (≤ 41° required).

EXCELLENT

- Chipotle Mexican Grill
- Culver's
- Firehouse Subs
- Maricopa High School

- Maricopa High School - Culinary Arts
- The New HQ
- Papa John's Pizza
- Shamrock Farms
- Wingstop

SATISFACTORY

- Arby's
- Cilantro's Mexican Cocina
- Dickey's Barbecue Pit
- Dunkin'
- Wendy's

Source: Pinal County

EXCELLENT No violations found.

SATISFACTORY Violations corrected during inspection.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT Critical items noted during inspection cannot be corrected immediately requiring follow-up inspection. **UNACCEPTABLE** Gross, unsanitary conditions necessitating the discontinuation of service.

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**Tuesday, February 15, 2022
5:30-6:30 PM**

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www.MUSD20.org/kindergarten

For more information, contact your school site:

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Butterfield Elementary School
43800 W. Honeycutt Rd
520-568-6100

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18150 N. Alterra Pkwy
520-568-5160

Pima Butte Elementary School
42202 W. Rancho El Dorado Pkwy
520-568-7155

Saddleback Elementary School
18600 N. Porter Rd
520-568-6110

Santa Cruz Elementary School
19845 N. Costa Del Sol Blvd
520-568-5170

Santa Rosa Elementary School
Spanish Dual Language Immersion Available
21400 N. Santa Rosa Dr
520-568-6150

K-12 Online Education
Maricopa Virtual Academy
44150 W. Maricopa-Casa Grande Hwy
520-568-5194



Support Structure: Community makes statement with generous gifts for family in crisis

BY JUSTIN GRIFFIN



Santa Claus arrives at the Powell residence as Maricopa Police Chief James Hughes looks on. The family was presented with a Best Christmas Ever package worth about \$70,000.

A FEW YEARS AGO WHEN KATRINA and Michael Powell decided to move from Tucson to Maricopa, they had no idea what a close-knit community they were joining.

"I had a childhood friend, Angela Lloyd, who lived here," Katrina said. "That was about all we knew about the community. But it's been one of the best decisions we've made. We've gotten so much support."

The support has been much needed.

Katrina and Michael Powell are facing a good deal of adversity after their 9-year-old son Brayden checked into Phoenix Children's Hospital in September with a fever and a few days later was paralyzed from the waist down.

More than 100 Maricopans gathered in a local neighborhood at Christmas to lend the Powell family a hand and to give them their "Best Christmas Ever."

The Powells were the recipients of a generous community effort that totaled more than \$70,000 in gifts.

Brayden was diagnosed with Transverse Myelitis, a rare condition with only 1,400 new cases a year.

The only treatment available for Brayden is stem-cell therapy, and the family must travel to Costa Rica for it. Estimates for the therapy are close to \$100,000.

They also have three other kids: Brenden, Bentley and Bella.

Michael Powell, Brayden's father, was overwhelmed with emotion at the outpouring of support from the community.

"We continue the course that we're going on and we keep having these hurdles," Powell said. "We have these hurdles that we keep on having to jump through and get over, and the community and everyone around us keeps surprising us and just giving us a little boost."

Brayden had to go back to the hospital and had just been released earlier in the day.

Victor Moreno



YouTube

Check out video
of the surprise
unveiling at
[YouTube.com/
InMaricopa](https://www.youtube.com/InMaricopa).

As Powell explained, it was just another tough day in a string of many.

"When it's just getting rough and rougher, like today, we just got back from the hospital today and again, it's just amazing to come and see this."

Best Christmas Ever is a group that seeks to help families in need at Christmas time. The national organization started 10 years ago and is headquartered in Minnesota.

There are three rules to be nominated: First, the family cannot nominate itself; the family must have fallen on hard times due to no fault of their own; and there must be minor children in the home.

BJ Lingren, a native of Minnesota, is a board member of Best Christmas Ever. She splits time between Minnesota and Maricopa.

BJ and her husband, Scott, spend their winters in Maricopa and wanted to bring along a tradition with them.

"I just couldn't imagine a Christmas without Best Christmas Ever, Lingren said.

Continued on page 32



Top: Community members spent the afternoon wrapping presents for the Powell family, recipients of the Best Christmas Ever award.

Above: Santa and Mrs. Claus watch the kids open a few of their presents, many of which were electronics.

Left: Brayden seated in front of (from left) BCE board member BJ Lindgren, his mother, Katrina Powell and nominators Brianna Reinhold and Brenda Campbell.



What do you want to accomplish while you're finishing this term? I want to do something about the I-10! We need to continue pushing for the I-10 to be completed and I would also like to widen the 347. I also want to make sure we have some really good water policy in place.

Do you plan to run in 2022? Yes. In fact, people can go on the Arizona Secretary of State website and sign my petition.

What issues are most important to you personally? It's not about me and my issues or what I want. It's about what Pinal County wants. I don't ever want to lose focus that I am there on the people's behalf, not for my personal agenda or gain.

What issues are the most pressing for the city of Maricopa and Pinal County? Water, transportation and economic development — we need more and better of all three.

What have you been working on between your appointment and the opening of the legislative session? I have been meeting with city and county elected officials to get their priorities — communication is key! I have also been working with policy advisers to work on some bills that I would like to introduce in the upcoming session.

What have you learned in your brief time in office? Although I already knew that working as a team is important, this short time in office has really driven that point home. Working as a team with different people is the most essential thing that can really mean the difference between a getting things done or being unsuccessful.

Anything else you'd like to say to the residents of Maricopa? I am so humbled to be selected and I want to thank everyone who supported me. I look forward to working with the city of Maricopa and all of the citizens in my district! 🗨

Rep. Teresa Martinez
1700 W. Washington St., Room 344, Phoenix
602-926-3158
TMartinez@AZLeg.gov
AZLeg.gov

Q&A Rep. Teresa Martinez District 11

TERESA MARTINEZ WAS recently selected by the Pinal County Board of Supervisors to replace Rep. Bret Roberts in Legislative District 11, which includes the city of Maricopa. Roberts resigned at the end of the 2021 legislative session to pursue family interests in South Carolina.

Have you held office in Pinal County before? No. Never public office.

What is your political background? I am a Republican and I have worked for two U.S. congressmen, the Arizona Republican Party and then almost four years for Arizona Secretary of State Michele Reagan.

What do you do for a living? I work part time for U.S. Congressman Paul Gosar. I handle constituent case work. For example, if you did not get your IRS stimulus check, you could call our office and I would help you get it. I handle immigration cases, postal issues, passport, IRS and labor issues.

Has being selected sunk in yet? It really hit me when I was being sworn in! That was really a special moment.



Normally, as BJ Lindgren explained, a BCE presentation takes around 30 minutes. And the award amount is \$15,000 to \$20,000. This one took nearly an hour. There were Christmas carolers and a parade that went nearly 40 cars long, including fire trucks and police cruisers.

Aside from a scrapbook filled with gift cards from merchants around Maricopa and beyond, there were gifts galore for the family.

There were so many that volunteers had to form a bucket brigade of sorts, where nearly 20 visitors passed gifts from the two stuffed vans through the front door of the Powell's house. The Christmas tree was a full-sized tree no doubt, but it was dwarfed by the number of presents sitting under the tree. 🗨

Generosity on display

Hundreds of people donated time, money and services to the Powell family through Best Christmas Ever. Those who contributed \$500 or more include:

- Adobe Blinds
- APEX Motor Club
- Tom & Julie Asbach
- AZ-RY's Landscaping
- Greg & Brenda Campbell
- Church of Celebration
- Michael & Jennifer Connelly
- Electrical District No. 3
- eLogger
- Robert Felix
- Giovanni's Custom Flooring
- Global Gives
- Global Water
- Dave & June Guckenberg
- Iconic Tire & Service Centers
- Janine Haag
- Junction Bike
- Karsten's Maricopa Ace Hardware
- Maricopa Auto Glass
- My Maricopa Plumber
- Orbitel Communications
- Royalty Tires
- Ron Smith
- Victor Moreno Photography

A CITY COMING INTO FOCUS

Maricopa is quickly becoming one of the most attractive spots for families and businesses in Arizona! The National Council for Home Safety and Security just ranked Maricopa the 4th safest city in the state, and people around the country are taking notice.

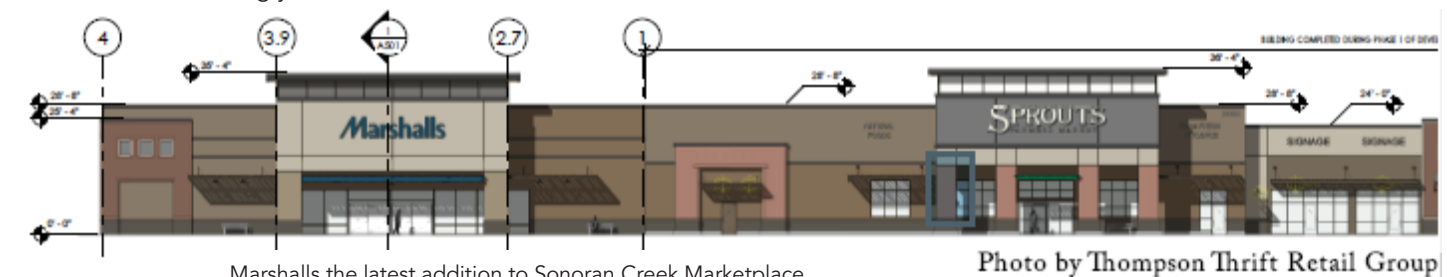
Twenty years ago, Maricopa's population hovered just above 1,000 people. Today, nearly 70-thousand people call Maricopa home! More than 3,200 new housing permits were issued since 2020 and dozens of new businesses have opened their doors.

"The city is also growing at a fast rate, which in return calls for more businesses to come to Maricopa. I feel like we brought something new to the city at just the right time. We can't wait to see the growth of Maricopa, and look forward to continuing to serve our community." - Karla Wear, Owner of Sweet Cravings

The City is making new investments to keep the momentum going. Maricopa's beautification project along John Wayne Parkway is a prime example. Once completed, residents and visitors will be greeted by a series of themed upgrades that include metal sculptures, boulders, trees and shrubs, and a crowning centerpiece monument at the city limit entry point.

This month, Exceptional Healthcare will become Maricopa's first high capability hospital. To meet the needs of the community, plans are already in the works for more future hospitals.

Commercial and retail businesses along JWP are falling into place. Mod Pizza and Discount Tires are the latest to join Sprouts in filling out the Sonoran Creek Marketplace. The City is excited to welcome Jimmy Johns, Cold Beers and Cheeseburgers and Marshalls in the coming year.



Marshalls the latest addition to Sonoran Creek Marketplace

Photo by Thompson Thrift Retail Group



Cocina Madrigal bringing critically acclaimed menu to Maricopa

Maricopa has also caught the eye of a critically acclaimed restaurant. Included in its many accolades, Phoenix-based Cocina Madrigal ranks among the top 10% of restaurants in the world. Now its owner, Chef Leo Madrigal, has his sights set on Maricopa!

"The Cocina Madrigal family and I are excited to join this wonderful community and we look forward to doing our part in helping it continue to grow and prosper. We greatly appreciate everyone's support in making this possible." - Leo Madrigal, Chef/Owner of Cocina Madrigal

Maricopa is just scratching the surface of a bright future, and you're invited to come build a city with us!

CITY OF
MARICOPA
PROUD HISTORY • PROSPEROUS FUTURE



Welcoming monument to cap Maricopa beautification project along John Wayne Parkway



Photo credit: Exceptional Healthcare



Brenda Campbell rings the bell at a Relay for Life fundraiser.

Longtime resident silent force for city – and community

BY BOB MCGOVERN

IN OCTOBER, THE STATE OF THE City address — a prime event on the city’s annual social calendar — was on the theme of “Pure Imagination,” from the song in the movie “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.”

Mayor Christian Price, fittingly costumed in the chocolatier’s purple velvet jacket, yellow bow tie and brown top hat, highlighted the city’s economic accomplishments in 2021 and presented a vision of the future.

But it was up to Brenda Campbell to transform Copper Sky into a Candyland to help put residents into a festive mood and help

the mayor convey his message of prosperity and optimism. Price spoke from a candy-festooned lectern and a stage decorated with faux sacks of sugar.

Campbell works in event planning for the Community Services Department for the City of Maricopa. She is one of those people who works behind the scenes to get things done. A humble servant ready to serve. And she prefers it like that.

She quietly puts her creative imprint on city events all year long.

She worked on last month’s Merry Copa, which drew its biggest crowd ever, and has been

working with other city staff in recent weeks on an interactive map of the annual Holiday Homes & Businesses on Parade, as well as the Copa Glow Night Market, scheduled for Jan. 14 at Copper Sky. She also helps plan the popular Salsa Fest, Great American 4th celebration and Mysterious Mansion Mayhem, the Halloween haunted house tour.

She also served on the planning committee for November’s Veterans Day Parade. On the day of the march, she was given a very important task: get Price and Ak-Chin Chairman Robert Miguel into the parade line *on time*.

Victor Moreno

“Brenda is a relentlessly selfless and thoughtful person,” said her boss, Community Services Director Nathan Ullyot. “She is one of those people who always seems to have more time than the rest of us.

“She is never too busy for a worthy cause, and I admire her for that.”

“I was raised to serve others,” Campbell said, simply.

‘Events are really my passion’

Campbell, a Las Vegas native, and her husband, Greg, came to Maricopa from Champaign, Illinois, after he was transferred to Arizona by his employer, Dollar Tree. A market manager for the chain, he is now retired. They live in Rancho El Dorado and have two grown daughters and six grandchildren.

“We were attracted to Maricopa by its newness and its cleanliness, even though it has that rich history,” she said.

In Champaign, Campbell was director of operations for Wolfram Research Inc., a software company. When the couple moved to Maricopa, she telecommuted for two-and-a-half years, eventually deciding that to do the job effectively, she had to be in Illinois. It was 2008 and she decided to resign and take a year off.

During her break, she went through the Citizens Leadership Academy, a biannual program that teaches Maricopa residents the inner workings of municipal government and prepares them to become actively engaged citizens. About the same time, she interviewed for an open position with the city that had event planning responsibilities.

She was offered the job and started in 2009 running events for the Parks, Recreation and Library Department, the predecessor to the current Community Services Department. When she started, there were five employees in the department.

“I didn’t want to be in charge anymore,” she recalled. “I just wanted something to keep me busy. ... The city took a chance on me, this person who just wanted to work and not manage, serving in a government capacity. I had never done that before.”

A year later, she took a quasigovernmental role as the chair of the 2010 Maricopa Complete Count Census Committee, working to ensure every resident was counted. She held community meetings and met with representatives from the Maricopa Unified School District and other stakeholders.

Later, when Copper Sky opened, she transferred to the administrative side, where

she worked until she returned last year to the Events group. The department, which now has more than 200 full- and part-time employees, also runs the library and cultural center and the new community center shared by veterans and seniors.

“That’s what I chose to do,” she said. “I was working all the events anyway, so why not have more say. Events are really my passion.”

In July 2019, the Arizona Department of Transportation gave the city a strict four-hour window for the community to celebrate the opening of the long-awaited State Route 347 overpass at the Union Pacific tracks. Campbell planned the ribbon-cutting and party on the bridge.

“I had to get people on and off the bridge,” she recalled. “I think we were five minutes over. The trucks were there to lay more asphalt as we were pulling off the trailers and leaving with all of our stuff.”

“She is a go-getter,” Price said. “She just doesn’t stop. We couldn’t do it without her. We love her.”

“She is a volunteer force. She is one of those people who is first to say, I can get this done. She is such a creative person.”

MAYOR CHRISTIAN PRICE

Friend of the community

It didn’t take long after her arrival to the city for Campbell to stretch her service to the community — as a volunteer. Today she spends as many as 12 hours a week of her personal time working on behalf of a half-dozen or so organizations.

Her volunteer work was sparked by the “little red-shirt ladies” — she uses the term with affection and respect — who greeted her on the porch of the original library near the MUSD administration building. (The building then became the veterans center and soon will house a city museum.) She quickly became a Friend of the Library.

Soon after, a group of historians in the Friends group decided the historical society needed to branch off and become its own entity, and Campbell joined that organization’s board. She helped get the Maricopa Historical Society

set up as a nonprofit, and served the first year as secretary, and then as treasurer, a role she still performs today. In early December she was nominated for another three-year term.

“I’m like, let’s get some new blood in here, but no,” she laughed.

Next, she became involved when Relay For Life, the world’s largest fundraising event to fight cancer, was started up in the city. She became a team captain and a member of the “Grand Club,” raising \$1,000 every year, and sat on the planning committee for many years. She had been involved with the fundraising effort in Illinois.

“She has always been willing to help us, to get whatever we need done,” said Joy Holsinger, the last of the original committee members from when Relay For Life started in 2010. “She is just amazing.”

“She’s just got a really big heart. She’s really helped a lot.”

A few years ago, Campbell helped form the Maricopa Community Foundation, and she serves as its liaison to the city. Ullyot is the foundation’s secretary.

“We’ve got 13 high-profile executives on this board and I’m the go-to, you know, because they’re out running their businesses,” she said. “I’m the one that kind of just helps them in an administrative capacity as much as I can.”

Like her city work, she prefers to do her volunteer service quietly, though she has been honored several times in recent years by members of the Maricopa Chamber of Commerce, including awards as the Civil Servant of the Year and the Sonny Dunn Citizen of the Year.

“I really don’t want to be in the limelight,” she said, when asked about it. “I don’t want to be in charge, but it just seems that when there is a need, I offer assistance. I never want to be the chair of the committee but sometimes I end up that way just because of, I guess, my leadership skills or time management skills or organizational skills.”

But don’t confuse quiet with a lack of energy.

“She is a volunteer force,” Price said. “She is one of those people who is first to say, I can get this done. She is such a creative person.”

Helping others

That philosophy marks the couple’s philanthropy, too, even when Brenda doesn’t officially volunteer for the beneficiary.

Upon their move to Arizona, they continued to lend financial support to organizations in Illinois. In time, they have been faithful

donors to F.O.R. Maricopa, a local food bank, and Against Abuse, which operates a domestic violence shelter in the city.

“My husband, well, he’s got a different budget now that he is retired,” Brenda said. “We don’t have the same disposable income as we had before, but he still finds a way to give. He’s always been a very giving person.”

“My husband writes checks,” she added. “I write checks, too, but I donate my time and he allows me to do that. I’m very lucky. Last week, I probably had dinner with him one night, though I did take one afternoon to have lunch with him. He’s been very, very good to me.”

She acknowledged that some medical issues a couple of years ago have slowed her a bit.

“His only concern is that I stay healthy, and he sees me exhausted and he doesn’t like that,” she said. “But he is a huge supporter and gives me the freedom to do what I can.”

Their generosity is guided by one desire — to help others.

“We don’t need to be in the limelight,” she said. “We just do what we can when we can, and we get that self-gratification personally.”

Most recently, Campbell jumped at the

chance to support Best Christmas Ever, a charitable organization founded in 2010 that made its way to Maricopa in 2021. It assists families who have fallen on tough times through no fault of their own. The charity partners with local leaders and businesses to bless families with a hugely generous gift package tailored to their unique situations and meant to be life-altering.

She met with BJ Lingren, a recent snowbird who brought the program from her home state of Minnesota, became a volunteer and nominated a local family who needed a helping hand.

You’d think Campbell was a beneficiary rather than a benefactor, the enthusiasm rising in her voice as she talked about the Christmastime campaign.

“We are so fortunate that BJ and her husband found Maricopa,” she said. “It’s going to be huge. When we write checks, we don’t necessarily know where that money is going. We donated \$1,000 (to BCE) and we’re seeing where it’s going, it’s visible.”

“I just wanted to be a part of it. It’s such a great thing.”

‘Seeing the smiles’

With her front seat on the city’s growth, Campbell said being involved and seeing things happen is exciting. She pointed to the December opening of the new hospital.

“I think we’re seeing the growth and opportunity in the foresight of the early city leaders, the fast-moving pace of our current city manager.”

“We stay very busy here,” she continued. “Seeing the smiles on people’s faces serving our community in that way, it just makes everything worth the long hours that you put in to make things good.”

Everyone can play a part in making the community better for all.

“There’s plenty of opportunities to volunteer,” she said, mentioning the library, the food bank and MUSD. “Maricopa is a community of transplants; we all come from different walks of life, and we have so much varied experience and knowledge. Sharing that knowledge — working as a tutor with a student, for example — there are a lot of opportunities.

“I was lucky, the little (red-shirt) ladies inviting me to coffee, finding out about their

organization and getting involved. It can be the Lions Club or the Rotary Club or just being a member of something. Everyone can spare an hour a week, I think.”

BRENDA CAMPBELL

Age: 59

Maricopan since: 2006

Neighborhood: Rancho El Dorado

Family: Husband Greg; two daughters

— Meagan, 38, of Las Vegas has

four children and Alissa, 36, of Long

Beach, California, has two children

Position: Recreation Coordinator, City of Maricopa

Favorite event: The city’s marquee event, Salsa Fest. “I enjoy them all, but my favorite is the salsa festival, simply because it is just such a festive affair. It’s so focused on the salsa and the Hispanic community. It’s colorful. It’s bold. It’s the



Jacquelyn Hermosillo, left, and Brenda Campbell make their rounds during the Dec. 3 Merry Copa.

music. It just gives you good vibes.”

Mantra: “I’m a true believer in buying local because we are a tight-knit community, and we need to help each other.”

Special talent: Gift basket design.

She puts together more than 50 a year, turning a single item — a toaster or a Papa John’s gift card, for example — into a themed presentation.

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Passion rekindled for local dollmaker's Indigenous-inspired creations

BY IAN ROBERTS

ROBIN HOLLAND HAS AN unorthodox family.

One child wears an outfit consisting of fringed, cream leather, accented with real rabbit fur. There are also handloomed ties that ornament her long black pigtails, which peek out from beneath a beautifully colored, beaded headband.

She goes by “Dances with the Wind.”

Another child, known as “Turtle Song,” dons a brilliant scarlet blouse trimmed with ribbon and decorated with silver filigree. Her dark hair is braided and trails behind her, attached to a matching traditional hair piece that evokes fire.

For all their individuality, these “children” share one thing in common: they’re not human.

Holland, 69, a Maricopa resident since 2009, was once among the world’s most well-known dollmakers. Her company introduced an innovative line of articulated self-standing dolls called “Starshine Dolls,” which depicted various American Indian tribes in their cultural appearance.

When she wasn’t busy being a mother to five human children, she was busy becoming a mother to children made of vinyl and cloth. About 33 unique Starshine Doll designs were handcrafted by her company in the early 1990s.

But that was then. All things come to an end. And for nearly 30 years, the artist believed her beloved works had been left to gather dust as forgotten playthings of a past filled with success and a good deal of pain.

Little did she know that on the internet, interest was brewing for her Starshine Dolls.

Finding a niche

Holland’s business began by identifying a need.

It was 1989 and she had been working for three years at the Colorado Doll Faire in Fort Collins, Colorado. Her lifelong love of dolls had prepared her for the part-time environment of crafting, sewing and selling. What she wasn’t prepared for, however, was



Above: Robin Holland sits with one of her dolls remembering the past.

Below: You can find Holland’s signature on nearly every Starshine Doll; this original Morningstar, dubbed “Alpha,” was produced in 1989 at the inception of the business.



the number of people who came into the store asking for Native American dolls. “Everything they had at the time were either very expensive porcelains or cheap little curio shop things,” Holland observed.

Seeing the need for a reasonably-priced, yet appropriately-detailed Native American doll, she decided to take matters into her own hands. She took a doll, removed its hair, and put in its place a long-haired modacrylic wig with straight bangs, which she then adorned with Navajo-inspired braids, ties, and a white feather. Later, she designed a dress and some jewelry to complete the doll’s transformation. Her new name became “Morningstar.”

“I took her on a trip down through New Mexico and I stopped at different doll shops along the way to talk to people and see if they’d be interested,” Holland explained. “And they were all interested.”

When she returned home, she took \$2,000 out of the bank and used it to place an advertisement in the November 1989 edition of Doll Reader, a leading magazine for collectors. By the end of the year, she had received over 200 orders.

American Heritage

Holland, an Ohio native raised in New Mexico, has long had strong feelings about Indigenous culture.

“I love the Native American people,” she said. “I think they’re beautiful, and they have been mistreated forever. That’s why I decided to do these dolls.”

In true cottage industry fashion, she converted the loft of her Fort Collins home into a doll studio and immediately began work on the growing list of orders. A special agreement

with Götz Puppenmanufaktur allowed her to purchase excess supplies of the German company’s dolls, which arrived at her doorstep bald and undressed. These “naked” dolls were the perfect palette for her creativity.

Morningstar was followed by “Prairie Flower,” a doll representing the Cherokee Tribe. The demand soon required more hands and at its peak, Starshine Dolls employed 15 artisans who helped in all aspects of production. A Navajo couple from Tuba City, Arizona, handcrafted authentic jewelry for every doll, while an expert leatherworker from Lee Leather produced the genuine hide for their costumes and moccasins.

Holland had to quit both her jobs — at the doll store and as a seminary teacher — just to keep up. “I used to sit and sew from eight in the morning to 10 at night,” she recounted. “I worked around the clock to get them out there.”

Her mission became the company’s tagline: “Preserving an American Heritage.” She poured hours of research into each design by reading countless books and working with real Native Americans as much as possible. Only the finest quality material was used for the Starshine line — no corners cut, the pamphlets proudly proclaimed. For the beadwork, glass beads were specially imported from Czechoslovakia and worked by hand. Some dolls even have actual moose hair and parakeet feathers.

All the hard work did not go unnoticed. In 1991, her Cheyenne-inspired “Singing Dove” received the prestigious international DOTY (Doll of the Year) award. Starshine Dolls could

be found in shops throughout the country, including popular destinations like Busch Gardens and Nashville’s now-defunct Opryland USA. The Denver Post hailed her as “one of the most successful doll makers in the world.”

That all ended in 1993.

Holland had never set out to make money; she simply wanted to help preserve Native American culture in the way she knew best. Unfortunately, her unwavering commitment to the dolls’ detail and accuracy meant she certainly wasn’t making any money, and in fact, was quickly losing it. A tanking market, as well as the pricey theft of about \$6,000 worth of dolls, left her sinking in debt and unable to continue turning her dream into reality.

“I felt like a total failure,” she admitted. “I worked myself to death and then all of a sudden — bam! — nothing. I was so disappointed.”

Just over three years and hundreds of dolls later, the Starshine Doll company closed shop. Holland was forced to take a second mortgage out on her house to work on paying off the bills. The remaining stock of unfinished dolls was given away through programs like Toys for Tots. Slowly, she began to erase the painful dollmaking endeavor from her memory.

In 2009, with her children grown and away from home, she and her husband, Dan, left the Centennial State and settled in Maricopa, putting nearly 1,000 miles between her and the home where her Starshines were born and died.



A mixed collection of Robin Holland’s original and ‘Next Generation’ Starshine Dolls on display in her Tortosa home.

DOLL DEVOTEES

Denise Orsino of Hammondsport, New York, considers herself the world’s biggest Starshine fan.

“Most dolls that come to me, I clean up, restore in some way, and re-home or sell,” she said. “But not my Starshine Dolls. They stay with me forever.”

Orsino has collected one of every doll Holland has created and appreciates that they allow a glimpse into a world unseen by many.

“I think they are exquisitely detailed in every way,” she explained. “[Holland] has worked so hard, for so many years, to educate through her dolls on the lives of the Indigenous people they represent.”

Sonia Leach of Denver, Colorado, another leading Starshine authority who owns nearly all of Robin’s dolls, agrees they filled a much-needed gap in the community.

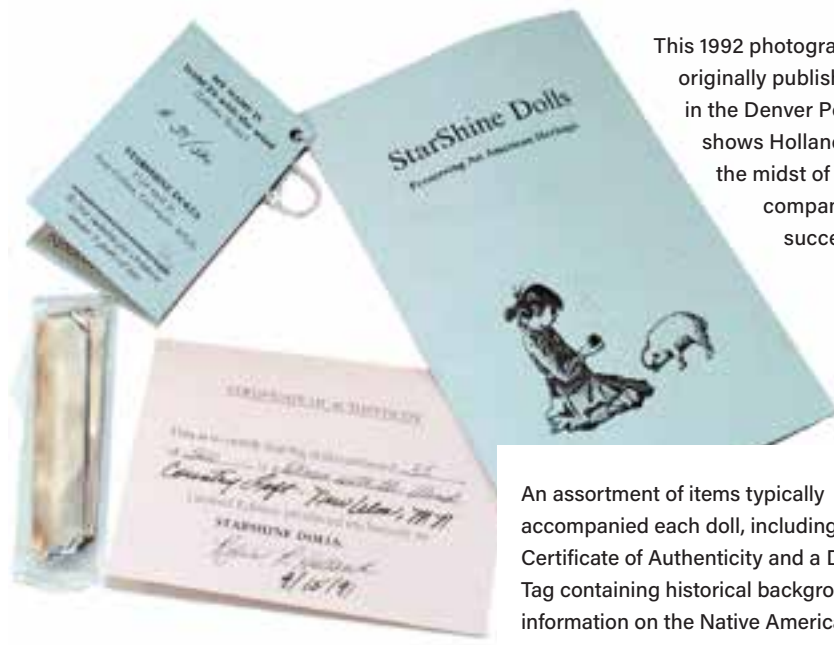
“Aside from an occasional plastic souvenir doll in Native American costume or mass-produced porcelain versions, there are virtually no dolls that depict Native American culture,” she said. “Each of Robin’s dolls serves as a mini tribute to a rich and important piece of America.”

After getting the chance to interview the Starshine maker herself, Arms connected her with Orsino and Leach, who were starstruck. The two, unaware of the reason Starshine Dolls had suddenly ceased production, weren’t sure if she was even still alive.

“A truly beautiful thing happened,” recounted Leach. “I think our rabid enthusiasm allowed Robin to look back at her earlier experiences with a new appreciation. To know that nearly 30 years later her creations are fought over by a whole new wave of collectors I think provided a joyful validation that all her effort was worth it.”

It’s true that their value continues to grow, but that isn’t what makes Starshines shine so brightly in the eyes of their collectors.

“When you open your boxed doll, it is like opening a story treasure,” Orsino said. “I am hard pressed to put a price to that. To me, they are priceless.”



This 1992 photograph, originally published in the Denver Post, shows Holland in the midst of her company's success.



An assortment of items typically accompanied each doll, including a Certificate of Authenticity and a Doll ID Tag containing historical background information on the Native American tribe it represents.

Rediscovery

Try as she might to forget the dolls, others did not.

In December 2020, she received a call from her son, Adam. “He says, ‘Mom, you’re famous and you’re in Wikipedia and you have a fan club,’” Holland recalled.

Through her son, she learned that her dolls were now some of the most collectible and highest-priced of their kind on the market. One of her original Morningstar dolls, once priced at \$249.95, was recently listed on eBay for \$999.99, plus shipping. Some Starshines have sold for over \$3,000.

“I was just blown away. I thought they went into the black hole of the universe,” she said with a laugh.

Heather Arms attributes this to their painstaking artistry and design.

“Their quality is incredible and evident the moment you see [a] doll in person,” she wrote. “I personally hope one day that Robin [will] know how much Gotz Doll Collectors have come to admire, cherish, appreciate and love the exceptional beauty, design and craftsmanship of her dolls.”

Arms, a doll aficionado known online by her moniker “GotzDollJunkie,” is the creator of the Götzt Doll Wiki, a community website dedicated to researching and indexing dolls created by the Götzt company. An entire section of the site is solely devoted to preserving Robin’s Starshine Dolls, which have become valued favorites among collectors.

Apart from their intricate detailing and very limited quantities, another factor that has made her dolls so valuable is that their

original facial mold is no longer made and thus highly sought after. Though it was used on other dolls before, its association with her work has led to it being affectionately referred to as the “Starshine mold.”

But when Adam Holland first stumbled across the website, his mother knew nothing of this nor had any idea her dolls were still remembered by anyone. He left an appreciative comment thanking Arms for her effort, and when she replied asking if she might have the opportunity to talk to Robin herself, his response was, “I hope you have a lot of time, because my mom loves to talk about dolls!”

The next generation

“I never thought my house would be full of dolls again.”

Today, a dresser in Holland’s small cyan sewing room is filled with an assortment of

THE UNCANNY VALLEY

A hypothesized phenomenon known as the “uncanny valley,” which theorizes that objects bearing a close but imperfect resemblance to human beings can provoke feelings of eeriness and discomfort, may explain why some people find dolls unsettling. And yet, according to the United Federation of Doll Clubs, collecting them is among the largest hobby groups in the world.

unclothed dolls in various conditions. Some she has purchased herself, while others have been sent to her by those eager to receive the Robin Holland treatment.

She and Arms are now friends, and their connection has allowed the former doll artisan to connect with some of her most ardent supporters. United across states and time zones, their passion is very much alive and greatly exceeds their size.

In January 2021, at the insistence and inspiration from these new friends, Holland started a revived line of Starshine Dolls dubbed “The Next Generation” — or as she nicknamed it, the “Phoenix” line. Like the phoenix, she explains, her company and passion for creating Indigenous dolls has risen from the ashes.

She does things a little differently this time. The love is still there, but now she creates at her own pace, no longer burdened by piling orders or the threat of accumulating debt. She enjoys traveling to various thrift and antique stores across the West for unique materials and items to dress her dolls, making only as many as she can or simply feels like.

All the same, her fans are just thrilled the master is back.

“I’ve met new people and friends through these dolls that I said goodbye to 30 years ago,” Holland said. “And suddenly, they’re coming back to visit me. You would never expect that because they’re inanimate objects.”

She doesn’t let it consume her life as it once did. When she’s not constructing a new Starshine she spends much of her time painting, which is a pastime that has proven useful in filling the walls of her colorful Tortosa home. Still, as she’s recently learned, there’s apparently something quite special that happens when she channels her creativity toward crafting miniature representations of America.

“Maybe there’s something more to it than I thought.”

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Take it easy in the new year

DR. HARRIET PHELPS, PSYD

ONE YEAR AGO, WE THOUGHT 2021 would pass quickly. The effects from the COVID Virus have held steady with many consequences. Those realities have ricocheted like a pebble skipping on a lake. This year's theme is "Easy Does It" with a hefty dose of focus on your mental health. Entering a New Year, we make resolutions to take better care of health, weight, finances, and family time. My personal method is taking inventory and letting go of the behavior that no longer brings positive results. My resolutions usually weaken by the second week and my good intentions have crashed and burned. Letting go takes about 2 minutes with a commitment to change something. A definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting different results.

Our brain is an awesome organ that governs everything we do and think. It is the brain that processes and ignites the body to action. For example, we go to a movie and the brain does not discern whether the action is actually taking place or only being captured by our eyes. The brain has a hormonal chemical reaction to the thought and the body releases those hormones into the blood system. Some hormones are good such as the adrenals that urge primitive responses to fight, flight, or freeze. We do not have to think about these responses they are automatic. We have a natural alarm system in which the body produces cortisol when our stress levels are high. Cortisol is the body's main stress hormone and works with the brain to control mood, motivation, and fear. When stress hormones get too high it affects inflammation, blood pressure, blood sugar, sleep cycles, eating and how the body metabolizes nutrients. Exercise is the best antidote and helps reduce cortisol to more normal levels.

Here are tips to help minimize the stress and prevent anxiety or depression:



1. **Acknowledge your feelings** and understand it is normal to feel sad and grief from losses. That could be the death of someone close, or challenges related to jobs, finances or health.
2. **Reach out to others.** Seek out others in family, community, church, or social groups.
3. **Be realistic about daily tasks.** Nothing has to be done perfectly. Manage your time according to your mood or energy. Do not overwhelm yourself. Easy does it.
4. **Choose the right time to discuss differences or important topics.** There is good timing or bad timing according to urgency. If you do not have the energy then that is the answer. Table the topic and set a date to revisit the discussion.
5. **Stick to a budget.** Gifting does not buy happiness and if you have over spent on gifts limit activities until you are caught up.
6. **What's your plan?** On the days that you have higher energy and are focused

to manage a task consider what is needed and plan the steps. Combine like tasks together in the same day and create less distraction.

7. **Time out.** We truly need to take time to rest. Turn off social media, TV, or anything else that has been stressing you. Establish a set time and limit to rest. Listen to meditation, pick a program that teaches breath and slowing breathing. It can be 10, 30, or 60 minutes in a quiet space without distraction. If you have small children to watch, ask a family member or friend to exchange time so they can unwind too.
8. **Seek professional help if you need it.** If you feel your moods are not lifting or your energy is not recovering seek medical or professional help to regain your health.
9. **Learn to say no.** Yes, I would like to do that with you but not at this time. Let's plan another time together. Yes, but no. 🗣️

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1



2



3

Maricopa boys start basketball season strong

MHS basketball finished 2021 with 13-3 record, including a 77-61 victory over Dobson High Dec. 14.

1. Nigel Abel (22) grabs one of his 13 rebounds. Kallai Patton (11) had 18 points for the Rams.

2. Dennis Sims (5) shoots a free throw.

3. Isaac Warren (3) led the Rams with 21 points.

Victor Moreno



4



5



6



7

Maricopa soccer teams split with Dobson

4. The Maricopa High School girls soccer team.

5. Maricopa's Dylan Hahn defends against two Dobson players during the Dobson's 8-0 win over the Rams.

6. Maricopa's McKinley Hacker fires a shot against Dobson during the Rams' 5-0 victory.

7. Tim Crabajales works to gain control of the ball against Dobson.

Victor Moreno

InDiscussion:

Dr. Tracey Lopeman, Maricopa Unified School District Superintendent

BY JUSTIN GRIFFIN



Dr. Tracey Lopeman, the superintendent of Maricopa Unified School District, has shepherded the school system through the construction of a new school and the passage of an override, along with challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Another challenge has been the worker shortage, which extends beyond the educational field, Lopeman explained.

"It isn't just affecting our industry," Lopeman said. "It's everywhere."

"We're still searching for and adding strategies for our workforce. We just don't have very many applicants for the vacancies that we have in our schools. We have to respond to the fact that we don't have guest teachers to the same degree that we had before the pandemic, and that's a drain on our staff. We've come up with more strategies, and more options, so that we can educate kids and still be a good quality place of work."

One of those strategies has been to start a new initiative, the "Grow Your Own Teacher Program," where MUSD is developing its own teachers by, for example, helping instructional assistants get the education they need to become fully certified teachers.

"We've successfully moved nine classified staff members, instructional assistants and paraprofessionals into the certified ranks. These are people who love Maricopa," Lopeman said.

Passage of the override looked to be in question on election night in early November. The early tabulations had the measure failing, but there were a lot of ballots turned in the days before Election Day, a total of more than 1,700, where the difference was made up and surpassed.

"I think what pushed us over the finish line was great work by our volunteers over the last week prior to Election Day," Lopeman said. "There were a lot of public and private conversations that people had about what a

vibrant education system means for the city of Maricopa, and how important MUSD is in our city.

"I think a point about the override was that it was promises made and promises kept," Lopeman said. "And those promises were around class size, technology and the RAM Academy. We did those things. That's documentable."

The override originally passed in 2016, so voters also had statistics to consider — with the chief number being graduation rates. In 2016, the MUSD graduation rate was 69%. Now it's 80%.

"The override also helps our teachers with small class sizes, and that helps teacher retention as well," Lopeman said. "That's one of the benefits of passing the override and maintaining low class sizes, we have more teachers who choose to continue their careers with us."

In 2017, 82% of MUSD teachers had at least four years of experience. In 2020, that number improved to 91%.

The district celebrated a big victory in July when the Arizona State Legislature approved a second allocation, a grant of \$18 million, for the construction of Desert Sunrise High School.

"I think a point about the override was that it was promises made and promises kept. And those promises were around class size, technology and the RAM Academy. We did those things. That's documentable."

DR. TRACEY LOPEMAN

"Well, I think we had some legislators, like Bret Roberts, who understood the reality of the funding formula for new construction, and truly how limiting it was," Lopeman said. "Construction costs were just escalating overnight, and the second allocation almost doubled our funding for the high school. It was people going to bat for the city of Maricopa and the kids of MUSD. That did not happen by chance. We had some people looking out for us."

The second burst of funding brought the state's commitment for the school to \$41 million.

"That allows us to move into phase two of the high school," Lopeman said. "Not only building more but outfitting that original classroom building. It's about 52 classrooms in our classroom building. That was going to be a shell. But with this second allocation, we were able to completely outfit it, the teaching stations, the technology, the furniture. And then we added a Student Services Building and a Student Commons Building — that has the media center and a lecture hall and some other gathering spaces."

The past year was a busy one, but, as Lopeman explained, many people helped.

"All that happened during the pandemic," Lopeman said. "It's not like we could stop visualizing and working toward something that our kids really deserve. Our board is not the board that kind of kicks the dirt and says, 'Aw, shucks, I guess it didn't work out this time.' They work to figure out plan B and keep moving forward, keep striving for that vision, keep striving for what the kids of this city deserve."

"And so that's what we did. Those are the kinds of outcomes that occurred amidst some pretty significant challenges."

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Learning to read in Maricopa schools

BY MURRAY SIEGEL

FOR SEVERAL YEARS, EMPHASIS has been placed on the learning of mathematics and science in the elementary grades, yet nobody disputes that the most vital subject taught in the lower grades is reading.

Kristin McMullen, the reading interventionist at Butterfield Elementary School, has a good idea as to what's going on in literacy education in Maricopa schools.

McMullen has been at Butterfield since it opened 13 years ago, as a classroom

teacher. This is her first year with primary responsibility being reading.

She feels that Butterfield, as a representative of the Maricopa Unified School District, has done an excellent job at providing a strong foundation in reading skills. She is proud of her school and notes the top three graduates in the Maricopa High School Class of 2021 began their schooling at Butterfield Elementary.

McMullen credits the quality of the primary grade teachers at Butterfield Elementary for student accomplishment in reading. Given the divergent needs of elementary students in reading, she lauds the efforts of the administration to have small groups composed of students with a similar reading level for the success that has been realized.


The "Walk to Read" program is an example of the small, homogeneous grouping which has been utilized to develop reading skills in young students.

Children would move to the classroom specified for their reading needs, allowing all students to experience success.

Current limitations due to COVID have caused this program to be canceled until those restrictions are lifted, yet other efforts are in

place to enable reading progress.

McMullen's position allows her to work with small groups of students in need of extra help to become successful readers. She sees real excitement as her students find accomplishment in her class. The gains in her classes have been seen when her students return to their regular classroom. She also is a resource for all the classroom teachers who teach reading at Butterfield Elementary School.

Another positive step taken by the school administration that is enhancing the learning of reading, is the hiring of Leah Poland as the school library aide, who has made the school library a fun place where students find interesting books available. They are eager to go to the library and generally leave with a new book to read. Residents of Maricopa should be delighted to know that a subject as important as reading is being taught successfully in our elementary schools. 

Murray Siegel, Ph.D., has more than 44 years of teaching experience and volunteers at Butterfield Elementary School.

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



5 reasons to become a substitute teacher in Maricopa Unified School District

1 Set Your Own Schedule

Flexible schedules have become a top-priority in today's job market. MUSD substitute teachers have the ability to decide exactly when and how often they would like to work. This is perfect for the person who is interested in maintaining a flexible lifestyle.

2 Supplement Your Income

Substitute teaching is a great way to supplement your income. MUSD offers competitive pay for long and short-term assignments:

- Day-to-Day-Substitutes earn \$175 per day
- Long-Term Substitute (Assignments over 20 days) \$200 per day
- Retired MUSD Teachers \$210 per day

3 Become an Instant Celebrity


There is a HIGH demand for great subs. Once principals and teachers know they can count on you to deliver quality instruction, your popularity will SKYROCKET. And, your students will most certainly adore you. When was the last time you received a construction paper heart listing all of your best qualities?

4 Find Your Niche

Every school, every classroom, and every grade-level is different! You may think elementary or middle school is your favorite age group, but have you ever walked into Maricopa High School's AFJROTC classroom to see every cadet immediately stand at attention? Instant

goosebumps. And the sophistication and poise of AP Capstone students, talk about elevated conversations!

5 Make a Difference in the Lives of Kids

You don't need to teach full-time to make a lasting impression. Kind, caring, adults are the foundation of positive role models. You never know what tidbit of wisdom that you share will live in the hearts of your students forever. 

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Smart homes can be the key to easy living

BY DAYV MORGAN

THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE WILL soon be automated smart homes.

I'm not talking about a home that can solve a math problem. Instead, how about a home where you can adjust the thermostat from your smartphone?

Smart home technology describes basic home amenities that have been fitted with communication technology, enabling some degree of either automation or remote control. It includes things like:

- Appliances — washing machines, fridges, and garage door openers
- Environmental controls, like air conditioning, heating, and lighting
- Home security systems

If you are in the market for a new property and are looking for these features, there are builders in Maricopa that offer some of these features as add-ons when you are planning and designing your home.

For example, KB Homes, which is currently building homes in Tortosa, has options to add some of these upgrades, including security systems, smart speakers, smart lights, and smart garage doors.

Security systems include the ability to lock or unlock your front door from virtually anywhere in the world. Through an app on your phone, you could allow someone into your home for cleaning services or to walk your dog.


Centex, a firm with offerings in Santa Rosa Crossing, has an upgrade package for people who would like to automate the home, including a wireless access point, remote garage door, voice control, climate control, and remote door locks.

Several builders also include a video doorbell on every home, regardless of the upgrade package selected.

If you're not in the market for a brand new home, many of these items can still be added to your current home and are relatively inexpensive to install. Additionally, they will likely work with the Alexa or Google Assistant products you are already using.

For the typical buyer, smart home devices are currently not at the top of "must-haves" in a house. Cosmetic features such as flooring, cabinets, counters, and backyard amenities are usually given priority. But as people experience automated conveniences more often and the list of available devices expands, these features will come to be the standard in homes, instead of just "options."

The world is changing and technology is leading the way.

And believe it or not, your home is the next frontier. 

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

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Real estate recap

BY DAYV MORGAN

2021 BECAME A YEAR THAT LEFT buyers frustrated and sellers celebrating all the way to the bank, as the average sales price increased over \$100,000 in just 12 months.

Coming out of 2020, the real estate market was surprisingly advantageous to sellers. The assumption by many that the emerging coronavirus would slow down home sales proved to be completely false. Most home builders had initially put the brakes on starting new homes and now struggled to keep up with the surging demand. A shortage of building materials further compounded the issue, leading to some homes taking 12 months or more to complete.

With many buyers not willing to wait a year for a new home, resale homes became the preferred alternative. This caused the supply of homes, measured by active listings on the

home inspection and guaranteeing to pay the difference if the appraisal came in low.

And many still got beat out by cash. Not a low-ball cash offer from an investor fishing for a good deal, but a strong cash offer that was higher than the asking price. Other Realtors with an FHA or VA buyer would send me emails begging for a chance to have their offer accepted, stating that they had already been outbid on 10, 15, sometimes 20 offers. In the end, buyers felt exhausted and disappointed with the offer process and wondering if they overpaid for the home. Or they just gave up and decided to rent, with the hope that a year later the prices and interest rates would still be affordable.

For sellers, however, the market was anything but disappointing. The formula to getting a house sold was simple: 1. Put home on the market on Friday, 2. Stay away all weekend while a constant stream of buyers come tour the home, 3. Review all your offers on Monday, 4. Pinch yourself to see if it was just a dream.

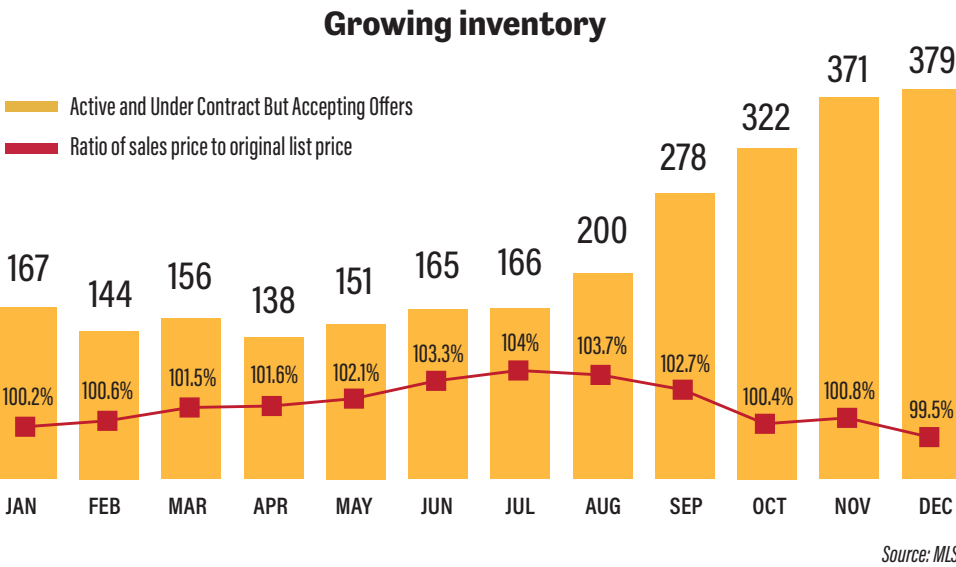
Toward the end of 2021, the strong seller's market started to normalize. The number of active listings tripled, prices flattened, and the average home started selling for just below the asking price. Home builders began to have spec homes available to purchase. And buyers are now regaining hope they can find their dream home and make an offer without giving up their right to negotiate.

As we head into 2022, don't expect the pendulum to keep swinging all the way to a buyer's market. Maricopa typically sees a higher demand for home sales in spring and early summer, so prices will likely continue to rise — gradually. Just don't bet on your home's equity going up \$100,000 again in 2022. 🗨

MLS, to drop to the lowest number in years and further plunged us into a seller's market.

The new normal became a bidding war on every house, pushing prices higher and higher. In June, the average home sold for 4% more than the asking price. Additionally, buyers had to give up normal contingencies and concessions to even have a chance at their offer being selected. And the thought of asking the seller to pay for a home warranty plan or to pay your closing costs was insulting.

I had several of my own listings get over 20 offers the first weekend. Personally, I would never buy a home without having it professionally inspected, yet many contracts I received had buyers waving the right to a



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Priced from the upper \$300s, homebuyers can choose from a collection of homes to accommodate all stages of life. Convenient single-story homes offer bright spacious floorplans and ample storage, while 2-story homes feature versatile loft space and a laundry room on the second floor. Design selections include elegant kitchens with sleek granite countertops, spacious islands and stainless steel appliances. Luxurious baths feature executive height vanities and Moen® chrome bath fixtures. Each home has 9' ceilings on the first floor, 8' ceilings on the second and ceramic flooring throughout, except at bedrooms. Homeowners can enjoy the outdoors with a covered patio and

fully-fenced backyard. The Extra Suite featured in our Vision home design is ideal for guests or multi-generational living.

In addition to spacious and elegant homes, The Lakes at Rancho El Dorado includes amazing amenities where families can thrive. Just steps from your door is a tranquil green space for you to roam and relax. Take in the pristine scenery of the community lake on one of the many walking trails. Play a round at The Duke Golf Course or a pick-up game at the community basketball court. Gather with family and meet up with new friends at the barbecue area and playground for good outdoor fun. Live your best life and build lasting memories with new friendships.

Located just 35 miles south of Phoenix, traveling is a breeze with easy access to I-10 and I-8. Enjoy a picturesque location with local conveniences nearby and elevate your living with a new home at The Lakes at Rancho El Dorado.

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Growing onions in the desert? No need to cry

BY REBA COOK

PERHAPS YOU'VE HAD THE same experience: onion bulbs from the big box stores that never develop into the big, dry ones like you buy in the grocery store. Here's how to grow your own.

Choose carefully

Onions can be started from seeds or purchased as starter plants. Whether seed or plant, the proper choice of onion is important. Why? There are short-day onions, medium-day onions, and long-day onions. So, gardeners must consider where they live. The short-day onion grows best in the Arizona central desert because they grow here during the winter when days are shorter. Bulbs or plants purchased from big box stores are usually not short-day growers, so ordering online is best. One reliable source I use for plants is Dixondale Farms. Growing seeds are more challenging and must be started indoors six to eight weeks before planting outdoors, but they are much cheaper. For seeds, I have ordered from True Leaf Market and Baker Creek Heirloom Seed.

Planting and watering

For the Maricopa area, the recommended planting time for onions is around Jan. 1. I grow onions in kids' swimming pools with small holes drilled in the bottoms. Fill the pool with a rich, loose compost soil. For growth nutrition, I put a little bone meal in each hole before I plant. Plant onions 1 inch deep but no deeper, and at least 4 inches apart. Onions like a lot of water so get them thoroughly wet after planting. Onions roots also aren't deep, so keep the soil at the base slightly damp. Mulching to retain water will help keep onions



from drying out. I usually water every other day and recommend a drip system rather than overhead watering, which can cause disease. Water more as you get closer to harvest. When the onions start falling over, stop watering. Let the soil dry out before harvesting.

Fertilize?

Some sources say to fertilize with ammonium sulfate every 3-4 weeks, but I use bone meal



and a good compost soil and that works well for me. But if you choose to fertilize, stop when the ground starts to crack and the onions begin to push the soil away so you can see the bulb starting.

Harvest

When the onions turn brown and yellow and fall over, it's time to harvest. To prevent rot, onions typically would be dried, or cured, in a field but it's too hot in Arizona. I put them on bread racks and dry them maybe 2-3 weeks indoors until the tops are dry. Then I put them in a cool, dark place to store.

Even in the Arizona desert, onions are easy to grow and tasty to eat, so give them a try.

Reba Cook is a Master Gardener.

 InMaricopa.com/Columnists

Left Submitted



Local Realtor pays for homeowner upgrades

Dayv Morgan takes risk to ensure clients sell homes quickly, for maximum value

WHEN IT'S TIME TO SELL OR invest in a home, Maricopans have a unique opportunity to benefit from using a local agent who is so committed to selling a home that he's willing to pay out of his own pocket for improvements. Dayv Morgan of HomeSmart Success offers to cover the costs of renovating and updating a home before putting it on the market, in order to increase its value and marketability.

All homes experience wear-and-tear over the years, and Dayv counters that by installing new carpet, fresh paint and even full kitchen remodels when necessary. The selling price can then be increased to cover, and usually exceed, the cost of the improvements. "Move-in ready homes sell much faster and for a significantly higher amount," he commented. "When a buyer walks into a home that looks and feels like it was just built, because it has new paint, flooring, and appliances, they will pay a premium."

Dayv, who sells over 100 homes annually, advised that such improvements not only help the seller make more money but also benefit the buyer as well. "Most buyers in Maricopa don't have the money, after they buy a house, to fix it up. They would much rather pay a slightly higher price and finance the upgrades through the mortgage. If they paid \$10,000 for



BEFORE



AFTER

improvements and put it on a credit card they would end up paying 14 to 18 percent interest. If that \$10,000 is instead done by the seller and included in the price of mortgage, now they're only paying 4 or 5 percent."

The program Dayv developed allows a seller to access his pool of preferred contractors, with whom he has negotiated reduced fees, or sellers can use their own referrals to make the repairs. Regardless of who completes the work, he pays up front for the improvements and is reimbursed from the proceeds of the sale, without charging any interest to the seller.

The idea came to him after seeing companies like Open Door and HomeVestors "low-ball" sellers to buy their home as-is, and then after making a few cosmetic improvements they would list the home on the MLS and resell it for a profit. He was surprised to see how much equity owners were giving away by selling their home direct to an investor. As a listing agent he created a process that allows sellers to "flip their own house" and keep the profit themselves. "It



BEFORE

doesn't cost the owners anything out of pocket, and it increases their return," Dayv noted. "It's a win-win for everyone involved — the buyer, the seller, myself as the Realtor, and even the city of Maricopa as it helps the neighborhood values to increase."

Dayv Morgan is a Maricopa Realtor and owner of HomeSmart Premier. He is a 15-year resident of the city.

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HOME

most expensive HOME SOLD



19795 N. Puffin Drive

SOLD Nov. 24


\$ \$660,000

This single-story home in Province features an attached casita with private entrance and lake views. Formal living and dining rooms are open to family room featuring a fireplace. The kitchen offers plenty of staggered cabinets, center island, gas cooktop, wall ovens, wine rack, granite counters and a huge walk-in pantry. The guest room with private bath offers lake views as well as the Master. The backyard has an extended covered patio, fire pit, built in BBQ, pool and second firepit near the lake shore. The home sold for \$9,000 under asking price.

Community: Province	Builder: Engle
Square feet: 3,142	Year built: 2006
Price per square foot: \$210.06	Bedrooms: 3
Days on market: 73	Bathrooms: 3.5

- 21294 N. Sunset Drive, Cobblestone Farms.....\$600,000
- 43273 W. Knauss Drive, The Villages.....\$560,000
- 20161 N. Valencia Drive, Tortosa.....\$560,000
- 41993 W. Sequoia Lane, Province.....\$522,115

least expensive HOME SOLD



43945 W. Cowpath Road

SOLD Dec. 6

\$ \$285,000

The least expensive home sold is a single-story in Senita. The home features solar, split AC system, and on-demand hot water heater. The backyard has a full covered patio along the back of the house, built-in raised planters with greenhouse and filtered watering system and no rear neighbors. The house sold for \$10,000 under asking price.

Community: Senita	Builder: Pulte
Square feet: 1,277	Year built: 2005
Price per square foot: \$223.18	Bedrooms: 3
Days on market: 36	Bathrooms: 2

- 41615 W. Caliente Drive, Province.....\$294,500
- 20571 N. Lemon Drop Drive, Province.....\$295,000
- 38134 W. San Alvarez Ave., Rancho Mirage.....\$296,585
- 43923 W. Wild Horse Trail, Senita.....\$300,000

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Teri Romero-Dominguez M.Ed.
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A Journey: Man remembers his climb through the ranks of the Coast Guard

BY TOM SCHUMAN

WHEN MARICOPA RESIDENT and retired Coast Guard Rear Admiral Steven E. Day discusses his lengthy list of military achievements, it is with equal parts humility and respect for the successes and contributions of family members and mentors. “You understand how people helped you,” Day exclaimed. “One of the biggest things I ever learned is that humility is the cornerstone of leadership.”

The Day family’s giving back begins with Steven’s father. Colonel Charles Day entered the Army in April 1941 and, five years later, became a “bird colonel,” slang for a member of the U.S. armed forces with the rank of full colonel, as distinct from a lieutenant colonel. (The name is taken from the insignia of rank, a depiction

of an eagle.) A military policeman, he served 32 years, while also working in the Veterans Administration while with the Reserves. “We’d always address him as Colonel,” Day shared. “It was out of respect and a term of endearment. Dad always felt everyone who lived in this country owed two years of service in some form.”

As a high school junior, Day saw his brother, Mike, join the Coast Guard in 1966. It was the beginning of a career that would last 42 years. One year later — on July 17, 1967 — a 17-year-old Steven followed his older brother, enlisting in the sometimes-overlooked branch of the military.

“My father was at D-Day (in World War II). He went in on day two or three. He always had the greatest respect for anyone who went in on

day one,” Day recalled. “He talked about the Rangers taking the point, was impressed with their service and said they do their job every day. He was the impetus (for my enlistment).”

Despite joining a unit with primarily older men who had some college experience, it didn’t take long for Day to take an important step in his development. Heeding brother Mike’s advice to keep ears open and mouth shut during boot camp, he was nevertheless selected by the chief quartermaster as master of arms. This was after three others had been dismissed from the role in the first few weeks of training.

“The thing he (Harry K. Schneider) did was instill confidence in me,” Day affirmed. “He gave me that first leadership and learning opportunity. He pushed me out of my comfort zone, and that’s what I needed. I never forgot that.”

Ian Roberts



Steven Day served in Mauritania, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa. He served in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm and was deployed to South Korea, Egypt and Bahrain, while commanding a port security unit.

His own distinguished career, as well as his family’s extraordinary service to the country, are captured on a Challenge Coin that he designed and proudly shares (see sidebar).

Traveling the world

Steven Day went on to serve as a damage controlman (maintenance and emergency repair specialist). His training and experience in the areas of welding, pipefitting, carpentry and firefighting led to teaching industrial arts on his exit from enlisted service. It was a career he enjoyed at the high school level from 1975 to 1987; he also was an adjunct college professor for 25 years.

Married in 1975 and being in the Reserves at the time, wife Shari asked how much longer he was going to serve. Day’s goal was to go 20 years and make chief.

When Shari pondered, “What if you ever get recalled?” Day responded, “That’s not likely to happen.”

“But sure enough, I got recalled an awful lot,” Day said.

He deployed with the Reserves to several destinations:



- Jordan in 1985 and 1987
 - Port of Dammam, Saudi Arabia, in support of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm.
 - Mauritania, Nigeria, Uganda and South Africa, where a museum in Soweto (home of Nelson Mandela) reminded Day of the racial divide in the southern United States.
 - South Korea, Egypt and Bahrain, while in command of a port security unit
- “I was fascinated by the different cultures and respected all of them,” Day said. “Bahrain was a very interesting country. They enjoyed life. I called it the Las Vegas of the Middle East. Korea was a lot like Wisconsin in the geography and there was the tenacity and pride of the ROK (Republic of Korea) soldiers.”



EXCEEDING THE CHALLENGE

Steven Day’s self-designed Challenge Coin features his quote: “No problems in life, just numerous leadership and learning opportunities.”

The front of the coin includes:

- Coast Guard core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty
- Port Security Unit and Boat Forces pins. Day was commanding officer of various units for both.
- Day’s E-6 first class rank – to remind him where he came from

Family is the focus on the back of the coin with these elements:

- Coast Guard Reserve core values of preparedness, professionalism and patriotism circling the Reserve shield
- Yeoman, Storekeeper and Damage Controlman rates represent the 118 years of Coast Guard service of Day and his two brothers
- Crossed pistols honor the Army career of his father, who was also Chief of Traffic Control during the Normandy invasion
- An Air Force symbol is for Day’s sister and her service both in that branch and the Michigan National Guard
- An eagle, globe and anchor represent Major Sean Leahy, Day’s son-in-law. He has completed tours in Iraq and Afghanistan during a distinguished career.



As a high school junior, Steven Day saw his brother, Mike, join the Coast Guard in 1966. It was the beginning of a career that would last 42 years. One year later — on July 17, 1967 — a 17-year-old Steven followed his older brother, enlisting in the sometimes-overlooked branch of the military.

Day was involved when port security units were formed in 1984 in Key West, Florida.

“Now permanent, port security units are 97% manned by reservists. It was the best job in the world,” he proclaimed. “I was fortunate enough to serve on three and command two.”

Typical training exercises and deployments might last 20 days with about 120 members in a unit. Operation Desert Storm was another story, marking the first time since World War II that the Coast Guard Reserve had been called up to active duty. That call came in August 1990, the day after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

Day’s unit was in the Middle East a month later. “The big thing was the uncertainty,” he recalled. “We weren’t sure when we were going to go home.”

It turned out to be a nine-month tour.

Reaching the pinnacle

The intriguing assignments continued. In 2003, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Day was deployed to the National Military Command Center in the Pentagon, where “you can walk every floor and learn something historic.”

In 2007, 40 years to the day after he enlisted, Day received a phone call informing him he had been selected to the Flag Corps (officers authorized to fly their flags under appropriate conditions). The word came from Admiral Thad Allen — he had served with Mike Day — who was commandant of the Coast Guard.

“I’m not an Academy grad and had come up through the ranks,” Steven Day noted. “I’m proud of my 12 years as enlisted and the Good Conduct Medal that came out of that. It’s important to not forget where you came from.”

Day’s additional decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of

“I’m proud of my 12 years as enlisted and the Good Conduct Medal that came out of that. It’s important to not forget where you came from.”

STEVEN DAY



Merit, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, three Meritorious Service Medals, three Joint Defense Commendation Medals, two Coast Guard Commendation Medals, Navy Commendation Medal, Coast Guard Achievement Medal and a Joint Defense Achievement Medal.

He particularly enjoyed the service with other branches of the military. In addition, for someone who says he never dreamed of going to college, he earned associate, bachelor’s and master’s degrees in addition to taking part in courses at the Naval War College, Army War College, Harvard and MIT.

“We have the most educated military in the world,” Day said. He appreciates the strong support he received from his various private sector employers and advocates for the important work of ESGR (Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve).

“We (in the Guard and Reserves) choose to have two careers. (In those cases) employers get a heck of a great employee.”

Coming to Maricopa

Day’s service was not yet complete. In 2010, he was recalled as part of disaster response to both the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the

Gulf of Mexico and the Haitian earthquake. In 2012, he was preparing to retire before being assigned to Coast Guard Headquarters as director of Reserve and Military Personnel Policy — the first reserve flag officer to permanently serve in that role.

On a trip to Los Angeles and Hawaii to visit units, he and Shari stopped in Maricopa to see Day’s sister and brother-in-law. They bought a home in Province in August 2012. A few months later, Day was asked to remain in the post another year. The couple eventually came to Maricopa together in 2014 and have wintered here since.

“We’re in Wisconsin in the summertime. Our three granddaughters are a mile away,” Day shared. Two grandsons are in Pennsylvania, where his son-in-law works and is now a major in the Marine Corps Reserve as part of an ongoing 30-year career.

“I love being in Province. People who know me will find me on the tennis court in the morning and there are socialization opportunities if you want to take advantage of them,” he said. “The city of Maricopa is unbelievable. There appears to be a great understanding, respect and appreciation for the city and what it is trying to do.”

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Senior dental health and why it's important


BY AL BRANDENBURG



THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER AND we all probably put on a few pounds as well as made New Years resolutions that most of us won't keep. But in the new year we should reassess what we do to keep up our health. Taking care of your teeth and gums is important throughout your life but advancing age can put seniors more at risk for a variety of dental issues. Conditions like arthritis

might make it difficult to practice good dental hygiene daily, or memory loss may cause some seniors to forget to brush and floss. Changes in the mouth can lead to other health problems for some of the elderly population. However, with the proper care and regular visits to the dentist, it's possible for your teeth and gums to stay in great condition as you age. Some of the common issues seniors face when it comes to oral hygiene include:

- **Cavities and root decay.** Older adults often face more cavities and decay on the root surfaces of the teeth. Root decay is common as the roots become exposed when the gum tissue recedes from the tooth.
- **Darkened teeth.** Usually caused by changes in dentin, the bone-like tissues under the tooth enamel, as well as years of consuming foods and drinks that can stain the teeth. Also, sometimes the enamel can thin, causing the darker yellow dentin to be revealed.
- **Increased sensitivity.** As your gums recede over time, areas of the teeth not protected by enamel become exposed and can be sensitive to hot, cold sweet or sour foods. Sometimes, sensitivity is a sign of a cracked tooth or a cavity.
- **Dry mouth.** One of the most common oral health issues in seniors is dry mouth, and it usually occurs due to medication side effects that reduce saliva flow.
- **Decreased sense of taste.** Another common medication side effect that seniors face is a diminished sense of taste. Certain oral diseases or dentures can also affect our sense of taste.

First of all, the most important senior dental care tip to maintain good oral health is to visit your dentist twice every year. At your exam, discuss any issues you may be experiencing; if you've noticed any changes in your teeth or gums, any increased sensitivity or loose teeth, pain, discomfort, bleeding or sores. Secondly, brush your teeth twice each day, especially after meals and before bedtime. Use a toothpaste with fluoride, as it provides extra protection against dental decay. Also at bedtime, make sure to floss your teeth and rinse with an antiseptic mouthwash to help reduce bacteria that cause plaque and gum disease. Quit tobacco use and limit alcohol, as these substances increase the risk for periodontal disease and throat or oral cancers. For those of you who remember the TV commercial, Bucky Beaver says Brusha, Brusha, Brusha with your favorite toothpaste (OK it's Ipana)...Keep smiling and stay healthy. 

Al Brandenburg is a member of the Maricopa Senior Coalition.

Sources: mouthhealthy.org, asccare.com,
AARP, cdc.gov/oralhealth

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Seniors should enjoy the fruits of their life's labor

BY JOAN KOCZOR

A WE BEGIN THE NEW YEAR IT might be a good time to re-think our priorities.

Several articles focusing on ... between age 65 and death give axioms of how we should re-think our "Golden Years". Some of the suggestions you may find thought provoking. Others you may not agree with.

Use the money you've saved up. Use it and enjoy it. Stop worrying about the financial

situation of your children and grandchildren. Don't feel bad spending your money on yourself. You've taken care of them for many years, and you've taught them what you could. You gave them an education, food, shelter and support. The responsibility is now theirs to earn their own money.

Adapt a healthy lifestyle. Do moderate exercise like walking every day. More ambitious join a health club. Eat well and get sufficient rest. Stay in good shape and be aware of your medical and physical needs. As we age it seems easier to become sick, and more difficult to remain healthy. Keep in touch with your doctor, do tests even when you're feeling well. Stay informed.


We experience pain and discomfort more as we get older. Try not to dwell on them but accept them as a part of the cycle of life we're all going through. Minimize them in your mind. They are not who you are, they are something that life added to you. If they become your entire focus, you lose sight of the person you used to be.

Don't stress over the little things. You've already overcome so much in your life. You

have good memories and bad ones, but the important thing is the present. Don't let the past drag you down and don't let the future frighten you. Feel good in the now. Small issues will soon be forgotten.

Laugh a lot. Remember, you are one of the lucky ones. You managed to have a life, a long one. Many never get to this age, never get to experience a full life. But you did. So, what's not to laugh about? Find the humor in your situation.

Have pride in yourself and what you've achieved. Your history, your memories and the life you've lived so far. There's still much to be written. Don't waste time thinking about what others might think. Now is the time to sit back and enjoy. Be at peace and as happy as you can be!

Mark Twain may have said it best; "Life would be infinitely happier if we could only be born at the age of eighty and gradually approach eighteen." 

 Chattanooga.com

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Is there really no need?

BY RON SMITH

H APPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE! I'm hoping that many of you spent some quality time with family and friends.

There are many components to aging well. The final third of our life can be a very rewarding opportunity to focus on our interests/hobbies or even explore different directions.

Surveys have repeatedly identified a strong desire by the majority of people to live in their current homes as long as possible as they age. This choice is becoming more possible with the growth of the home care industry that can provide a wide range of services.

Although increased support services help to age in place, the housing industry continues to build houses that are not readily adaptable to changing needs. Even 55+ communities tend not to include the features that make a house adaptable. They promote the lifestyle amenities, such as, pickle ball courts, tennis courts, spas, pools, workout rooms, etc. that are desired by home buyers, but they do not provide the value-added adaptability features needed in the physical structure of the home.

Retirement starts out well, but the creaking joints, knee replacements, trips and falls, walkers, knee scooters and wheelchairs come along faster than we think. Vision starts to change. Visiting friends who may be experiencing the effects of aging can't easily get through our front door or down our halls. Initially these are infrequent inconveniences, but eventually the "crisis" comes. The crisis was likely generated by a fall, since falls are the leading source of injury or death to seniors.

Now, simple mobility around your home is a big problem. Your physical therapist recommends a walker or a wheel chair. Hopefully, you have a zero-step threshold at your front entrance and your wheel chair can pass through all of your doorways.


Chances are good that you don't have these accessibility features and will have to consider modifications to your home. Features that could have been built into your house at the time of construction at a small cost will now cost big dollars. In 55+ communities, this failure to anticipate future needs is almost criminal because we know that the need for such accommodations is inevitable.

A design concept called Universal Design was introduced nearly 30 years ago. Universal Design creates promotes accessibility and usability, allowing people with all levels of ability to live independently to the greatest extent possible. Using these concepts, some builders started designing homes that could easily address changing needs when they occurred.


If designed properly, all doorways and hallways can be comfortably navigated. Bathrooms will be slightly more spacious and make wheelchair access a breeze. Flat thresholds can be easily incorporated into the initial design. Changes made to framing are much more difficult in a retrofit and are a major expense that could have been avoided. Many other small changes, such as



the placement of light switches and outlets or improved lighting are also easily done at the time of construction.

Interestingly, home builders in Arizona say there is no need to incorporate these features because there is no demand from their home buyers. Why might this be true? First, planning for the future is not a natural activity for many people. Second, at the time of retirement, our focus is generally on all the exciting plans that we have made. Unless you have had a prior experience with a family member who has had to live with accessibility and mobility issues, you are unlikely to consider such potential issues when buying your own retirement home.


Hopefully, our understanding of the benefits of living in a more adaptable home will encourage home builders in the future to offer a better designed product for our community. Remember, 10,000 people turn 65 every day! 

Ron Smith is an aging-in-place advocate, a Certified Aging in Place Specialist (CAPS) and a Certified Living in Place Professional (CLIPP).





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Maricopa Historical Society meeting
5 p.m., Redwood Room
Maricopa Library & Cultural Center
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

7

MOPS - A Group for Moms
9 a.m., Copper Sky
44345 W. MLK Jr. Blvd.

8

The Maricopa Market Craft & Vendor Fair
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
17760 N. Regent Drive

10

Maricopa Planning & Zoning Commission meeting
6 p.m., City Hall
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza

Friends of the Library meeting

5:30 p.m., Maricopa Library and Cultural Center
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

12

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

14

Copa Glow Night Market
6-10 p.m., Copper Sky Regional Park
45345 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

18

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

Stephen Forester in Concert

7 p.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Road

22

The Maricopa Market Craft Fair
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
17760 N. Regent Drive

28

MOPS - A Group for Moms
9 a.m., Copper Sky
44345 W. MLK Jr. Blvd.

30

Craguns in Concert
8 a.m. & 10:30 a.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Road

Sundays

Narcotics Anonymous
7-9 p.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Road

Mondays

Narcotics Anonymous
7-9 p.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Road

Alcoholics Anonymous

6-7 p.m., Community of Hope Church
45295 W. Honeycutt Ave.

Tuesdays

Maricopa Cruise-in
5-9 p.m., Walmart parking lot, near McDonald's
41650 W. Maricopa-Casa Grande Hwy.

Alcoholics Anonymous

6:30 p.m., Mt. View Community Church
50881 W. Papago Road

Celebrate Recovery Small Group Meeting

5-9 p.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Ave.

Wednesdays

Alcoholics Anonymous
7 p.m., Mt. View Community Church
50881 W. Papago Road

Al-Anon - New Beginnings

10 a.m., Maricopa Library & Cultural Center
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

Thursdays

Maricopa Police Cadets meeting
6 p.m., Maricopa High School
45012 W. Honeycutt Ave.

Teen Support Group

6:30 p.m., Northern Lights Therapy, PLLC
21300 N. John Wayne Parkway, Ste. 103

Narcotics Anonymous

7 p.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Road

Fridays

Al-Anon - Strength & Home AFG
7 p.m., Community of Hope
45295 W. Honeycutt Ave.

Alcoholics Anonymous

7 p.m., Mt. View Community Church
50881 W. Papago Road

ALL EVENTS ARE TENTATIVE



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parting shot



Shay Adjei

Took this photo on the morning of Nov. 24 on the edge of the Palo Brea neighborhood.

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