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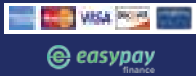
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ON THE COVER

Victor Moreno photographed graduating seniors this year at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center: from left, Heritage Academy's Caleb Weyrauch, Sequoia Pathway's Taylor Yon, A+ Charter's Lealani Escalade and Maricopa High's Kaden Rogers.

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Milestones all around

WITH EVERY ISSUE OF INMARICOPA, A theme seems to evolve.

This month, it's all about milestones. Jim and Alice Shoaf watched 20 years of hard work burn up when the Maricopa Pantry caught fire on March 28. The food bank was destroyed.

Less than three weeks later, on April 16, Maricopa Pantry was back in business, doing the work it does best to help local families. It's really a case study in resiliency.

What does it say about the dedication and determination of the Shoafs, and their volunteers, that after such a devastating event they are serving the public once again so quickly? It's clear their humanity and desire to serve burns brighter than any diesel-fueled blaze. Such a quick recovery from disaster certainly counts as a milestone in my book.

And speaking of serving, Mayor Christian Price, perhaps the City of Maricopa's biggest cheerleader, announced his resignation so he could serve the city in yet another way – leading the Maricopa Economic Development Alliance.

As mayor, one of Price's many goals was to attract good-paying jobs to the city. Now, he will get to focus on that duty full time.



Price moved to Maricopa in 2005 in the midst of an incredible boom. He bought a house for \$185,000 and as the Great Recession took hold in the following years, watched its value drop 80 percent in just two short years. Here through thick and thin, he chose not to cut and run. Instead, he ran for office and spent the next decade guiding the city's economic recovery.

And lastly, how do you reach a bigger milestone than graduating high school?

More than 700 high school students from five institutions will graduate this month in a rite of passage, signifying the beginning of adulthood.

Congratulations to all!

And thank you for reading our magazine.

JUSTIN GRIFFIN | EDITOR
Justin@InMaricopa.com

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CHRISTINA PROCTOR

Christine has a love for the plants she says have changed her life. She works with the UofA Master Gardener program.



BRIANNA REINHOLD

Brianna, the owner of Northern Lights Therapy, discusses the importance of taking care of one's mental and emotional health.



RON SMITH

Ron has some thoughts about volunteerism, the Maricopa Pantry and Universal Housing Design.



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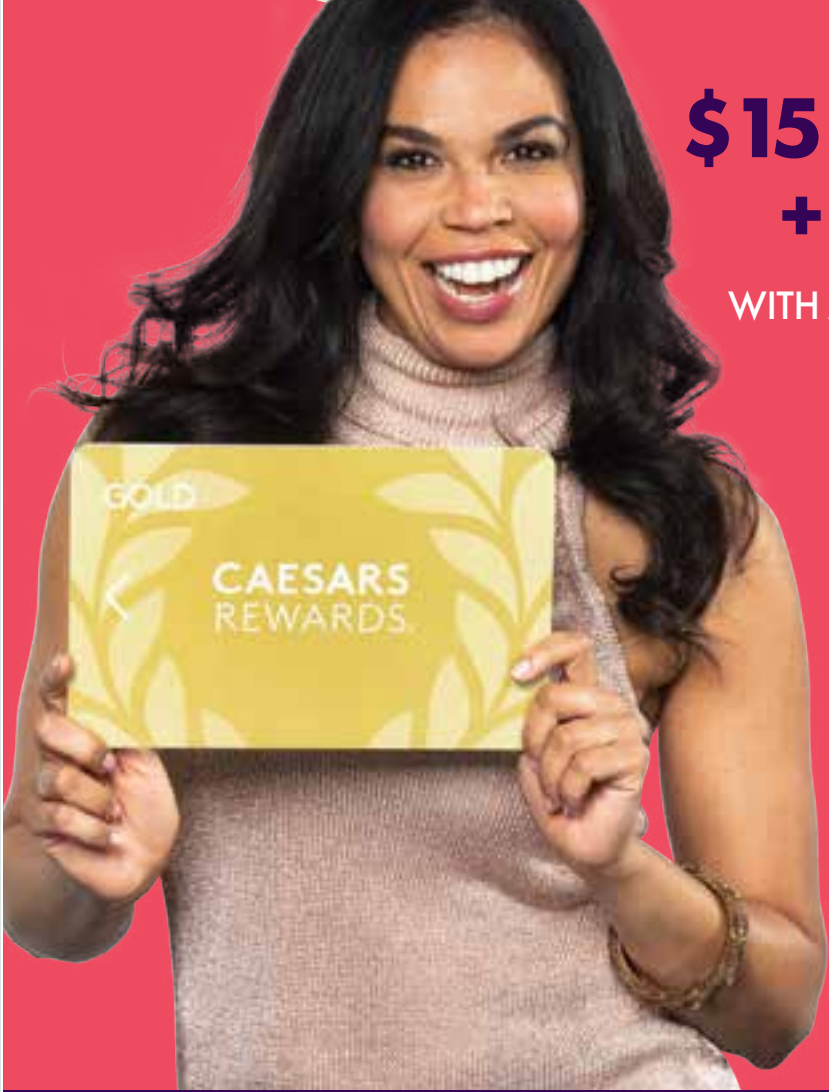
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Pool is gone, but history remains

A community pool once sat just north of where the Silver Horizon Zephyr railcar now sits. The Zephyr railcar came to Maricopa in 2000 and was utilized as the Amtrak ticket station for the community from 2001 to 2003 before a larger ticket station was built closer to the railroad tracks. Using massive cranes, the railcar was moved to its current location in January 2019.



THIS MONTH BACK IN...

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



2004

For the first time in its young history, the City of Maricopa elected a City Council. Voters installed Kelly Anderson, Stephen Baker, Will Dunn, Edward Farrell, Kelly Haddad, Brent Murphree and Phyllis Von Fleckinger to the inaugural council. Baker, the leading vote-getter, and Von Fleckinger were the only rookies joining the Council. The rest returned to their seats on the board, having served on the interim Council appointed upon the City's incorporation in October 2003. Voters also overwhelmingly approved a measure to directly elect the mayor in future elections instead of allowing the Council to select the mayor.



2007

A 23-year-old man shot in the head while driving down State Route 347 near Bowlin Road lost control of his vehicle and crashed. The incident occurred after an early morning altercation at Headquarters Lounge on John Wayne Parkway, according to police. Three others were injured in the crash and transported for medical treatment. Police said the victim was traveling southbound on SR 347 when another vehicle drove alongside, and several shots were fired at the man. He was transported by air ambulance to a Phoenix-area hospital.



2014

A man was arrested and charged with murder after officers found a 43-year-old woman dead in the backyard of her home in The Villages. At the scene, officers observed blood in the kitchen and a wet tile floor that appeared to have been recently washed. The victim appeared to have visible injuries to her face, abdomen and arms, police said. The defendant told police he and the woman had a disagreement and pushed each other until she fell and stopped talking. The victim and defendant were in a sexual relationship, police said. The man was convicted in the death and sentenced to 8.5 years in prison.

Maricopa Historical Society; Brian Petersheim Jr.

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CHANGING LANES

Price to resign as mayor, take economic development post

BY JUSTIN GRIFFIN

OUTGOING MARICOPA MAYOR
Christian Price will always work to advance the cause of the city he loves.

After serving as Maricopa's mayor for the last decade, Price will resign July 1 to take on the role of president and CEO of the Maricopa Economic Development Alliance, a private, nonprofit entity with a City contract to help attract industry and jobs.

With his new position, Price's job will, in many ways, mirror the job he currently holds: help bring new economic opportunities to Maricopa.

"I'm still here," Price said. "I'm taking the knowledge that I've garnered on the job for Maricopa and I want to take it to the next level. I think we have an amazing Council and there will be a great mayor, whoever that person ends up being. The future is bright and the sky's the limit."

A transition

There is still two years left on Price's four-year term as mayor. The timing of his resignation means there is no chance for potential candidates to garner the necessary signatures to get on the ballot for this year's election. As a result, Maricopa's next mayor will be chosen by the City Council.

As Price explained, the process isn't much different than what's employed by many other municipalities.

"We're an at-large city, meaning the public votes in the mayor," Price said. "But there are many cities and towns where the mayor is selected by the City Council."

Vice Mayor Vincent Manfredi will serve as interim mayor until a new mayor is selected.

As mayor, Price has one of seven votes on the City Council. The first order of business for the Council will be to select a seventh member to replace Price's vote. Soon after, the Council will select a mayor from the seven serving councilmembers, who will serve out the remaining two years of Price's term.



Manfredi said the process to select a new mayor will begin immediately.

"We will get legal advice and define the process prior to his departure," Manfredi said. "We will meet as a council and set a timeline, but I suspect by year-end, we will have a mayor in place who will serve until an election can be held in 2024."

With more than 10 years of service, Maricopa Mayor Christian Price has presided over the city's remarkable recovery from the devastation of the Great Recession, along with safety projects, like the addition of the John Wayne Parkway overpass, that greatly improved the ease of transportation throughout the city.



Above: On the night in June 2012 that Christian Price was sworn in for his first term as Maricopa mayor, outgoing Mayor Anthony Smith presented him with a new gavel.

Right: Christian Price and his wife, Cindy

Left: Christian Price delivers the state of Maricopa address last fall dressed as Willy Wonka, as part of a "Pure Imagination" theme for the event.



File



Q&A WITH VICE MAYOR VINCENT MANFREDI

What are your thoughts on serving with Price? I knew Christian before he was mayor and before I ran for council. I worked my tail off to get him elected in 2012 because I knew his passion for Maricopa and his work ethic would produce results. We have had a great eight years working together, but it's not over. We will continue

to collaborate daily to get more done and move the city forward. The next four years are going to be hectic with tons of growth, and who we pick to take the reins from Christian has some big shoes to fill.

Are you interested in serving as mayor longterm? No. I am happy as a council member and love doing that job. I run a small business and do not have the hours in the day to serve as mayor for a full term.

What are your goals as interim mayor? My goals are to remain a steady hand and work with our council to set the policy for our city manager and staff.

What are the biggest challenges facing the council? Arizona Legislature recently passed a bill (HB2749)

surrounding a real estate practice known as Prime Contracting. The new law changes the way tax revenue is collected when people make improvements to their homes. Instead of that money being reinvested in our community, it could be invested elsewhere. The ultimate impact to Maricopa may be upwards of \$1 million annually.

SB1116 is another bill that hurts Maricopa. It is aimed at residential rental taxes and will have the same negative impact on our city's overall tax revenue.

Knowing we face shortfalls in revenue because of legislative actions means we must continue to keep a laser focus on spending. We have cut property tax rates in Maricopa year after year, and since I joined council, we have not increased our primary property tax rates. This year, we spent less money

than we spent last year and cut rates again, but the Legislature and high inflation caused by irresponsible federal spending is having a huge impact on the city.

In the long term, transportation is the No. 1 priority. A close second is economic development. Utilizing MEDA to bring more jobs to Maricopa will help alleviate some of the traffic woes, but regardless of how many jobs we can create in Maricopa, the SR 347 must be fixed. My plan called M.O.V.E., which is an acronym for More lanes, Overpasses and interchanges, Violation enforcement and Education, can get that done. I will ensure we will always have a voice when it comes to transportation. Our goal is to be the "squeaky wheel" when it comes to transportation, and everything we see as a need for our constituents.

A tough decision

Price has spent the last 10 years as mayor. In many ways, he has become the job and it's become a part of his identity. A little over a month ago, MEDA approached Price. The answer wasn't immediate.

"I said, look, I need some time to think about it," Price said. "I need some time to work through this because, you know, there's a whole lot of emotions that run through your head when you've enjoyed something so much. And you know, the last thing I want to do is feel like I'm abandoning my post. I certainly don't want to do that."

But with time, Price started to come to the realization that the move was really the continuation of the job he's already doing.

"I have really looked at this deeply," Price said. "I'm helping even more because I get to hyperfocus on this job of bringing industry here, and that was very exciting to me."

Price will answer directly to MEDA's board of directors, composed of business leaders throughout Maricopa. He feels with the structural changes the board has made, it's

ready for success and he's excited to be at the helm. He'll have a staff of 3-5 people who will work to attract companies to partner with the city to bring jobs and economic prosperity.

"We are working in a formation," Price said. "It's like forming the tip of the spear that has never really been there before and that's exciting."

Looking back

For Price, there are a lot of stories to tell from his tenure as mayor and city denizen. He bought his home in Maricopa in 2005, and then watched it lose 80 percent of its value in just a few years as the city was devastated by the Great Recession, where a boom became a bust in a matter of a few years.

Nowadays, there's no doubt the city has fully recovered. But even as late as 2011, when Price was considering running for mayor, there were doubters.

"I remember when I was thinking about it, and I contacted a friend to run my campaign, she told me, 'The only reservation I have is that everyone is wanting to leave Maricopa,'" Price

recalled. "Everybody wanted to leave this city that I knew. Everybody. They wanted to get out. They thought it was the middle of the recession. They were angry. They had been promised something and I tried to come in with a little bit of optimism and a little bit of belief that, hey, it's going to be OK."

The struggle during those early years makes it even more special for Price.

"I knew we were going to grow through this and were going to find a way to make it happen," Price said.

When Price took the mayoral reins in 2012, Maricopa was a good deal smaller than it is now. But as he sees it, leading a city looking to grow is just as big a challenge as leading a city now nearly twice the size as when he took over.

"It's all relative," Price said. "Back then, I was working just as hard because I was learning on the job. I didn't know the right people. I was trying to get to know the Council at the time and how to work effectively with them. There were so many hurdles to overcome."

Vincent Manfredi is co-owner of InMaricopa.

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Community is valued partner on police beat

BY CHIEF JAMES HUGHES

IT HAS BEEN A FEW MONTHS SINCE MY LAST COLUMN on how the Maricopa Police Department is policing your community.

In that column, I discussed the community policing concepts implemented at MPD. I am thoroughly pleased with the progress we made in 2021. On behalf of the proud men and women of the Maricopa Police Department, I appreciate the tremendous support we receive from our community on a daily basis.

It is imperative we continue to develop strong relationships and partnerships within our community. Policing is about people and will always be about people. This is why these relationships are critical. We are in the business of public trust and trust is fostered through relationships, competence and professionalism.

As part of our community policing efforts, our city is divided into four geographical areas called beats. Patrol officers are usually assigned to

the same beat for a year. The purpose of this to create familiarity with that area of the city, provide an opportunity to get to know the problem areas of that beat, frequent location of calls for service and, most importantly, get to know the people within their beat.

Beat ownership occurs when the officers interact with the community to solve problems and prevent crime on a frequent basis. Officers getting out of their patrol units to interact with the community encourages positive interactions. These interactions lead to better-informed officers with a greater understanding of the problems within their respective beats. Community policing is not a “one size fits all” approach. We understand each community has unique challenges that need to be addressed.

Our supervisors now prioritize our officers’ commitment and involvement with the community as a critical component of their duties. In my opinion, there is a philosophical difference between answering calls, taking reports and solving problems when called by our residents. At its core, the goal of problem-solving is changing behavior or eliminating the concern. Our goal is to fix the problem if we can. This leads to a high level of satisfaction with both the community and MPD.

The majority of our residents embraces the standards of what make a city a community: getting to know their neighbors and building strong relationships to watch each other’s backs by reporting suspicious activity immediately when they see it.

I am very proud of the community policing most of our residents engage in daily. Our most frequent calls for service are consistently the call types that illustrate an engaged and concerned community. These calls include welfare checks of residents, suspicious activity and premise checks. These types of calls tell me two important bits of information: We have low crime, and our community cares about public safety and will do their part in keeping their community safe.


In my 35-plus years in this business, I have seen how a lack of caring by a community can invite crime and disorder. Criminologists have proven a correlation between public disorder and higher crime rates. Studies have shown when a community stops caring and withdraws from their community responsibility of reporting crime and assisting in criminal prosecution as witnesses, crime rates increase significantly.

It is my pleasure to work in such an engaged and caring community. The proud men and women of MPD are doing some great work. But a lion’s share of the credit goes to our residents for caring and taking a “not-in-my-city approach.”

MPD will continue to address quality of life issues and work with city code compliance to keep our city clean and safe. Our citizens work hard for the opportunity to live in a clean and safe city and that is what MPD is focused on; not just crime or the calls for service, but the finer details of what makes a good city great.

Sir Robert Peel, who is often referred to as the father of modern policing, stated in his seventh principle of policing:

“The police at all times should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police are the only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the intent of the community welfare.”

Peel raises a critical concept that safety and community welfare is the job of the entire community and not just the police. I applaud the great cooperation our department receives from the community. This cooperation, and the quality of our residents, is why Maricopa is one of the safest cities in the state. 

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The first phase of Palo Verde Regional Park will be comprised of 6,000 acres south of State Route 238. A non-motorized trail system will link three parcels totaling nearly 500 acres to be developed by Pinal County.

23,000-acre park to rise from mountains west of Maricopa

BY BOB MCGOVERN

THE LEGENDARY NATURALIST John Muir was an early advocate for preserving the wilderness of America.

Called the “Father of our National Parks,” he was passionate both about nature and inspiring people to get out into the wild.

“Everybody needs beauty ... places to play in and pray in where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to the body and soul alike,” said Muir, who lived in (and loved) the Arizona high desert for a short period of his life.

Parks and recreation provide three values that make them essential services to communities — economic value, health and environmental benefits, and social importance — according to the National Recreation and Park Association.

Maricopa’s government and community leaders understood these benefits well when the City Council greenlighted Copper Sky regional park and recreation center in 2008. Voters agreed, approving \$53 million in bonds to build the 93-acre park, which has been the jewel of city facilities since opening in 2014.

The Bureau of Land Management, whose mission is to “sustain the health, diversity and productivity of public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations,” seeks to fulfill that promise with the construction of the Box Canyon Shooting Range at the base of the Palo Verde Mountains, west of Maricopa. (See sidebar.)

Now, Pinal County, whose motto is “wide open opportunities,” is working to build its own recreational jewel in the desert in the same area.

The sprawling, nearly 23,000-acre Palo Verde Regional Park would stretch from State Route 238 in the north to Interstate 8 in the south. (By comparison, the city of Maricopa today numbers about 27,000 acres.)

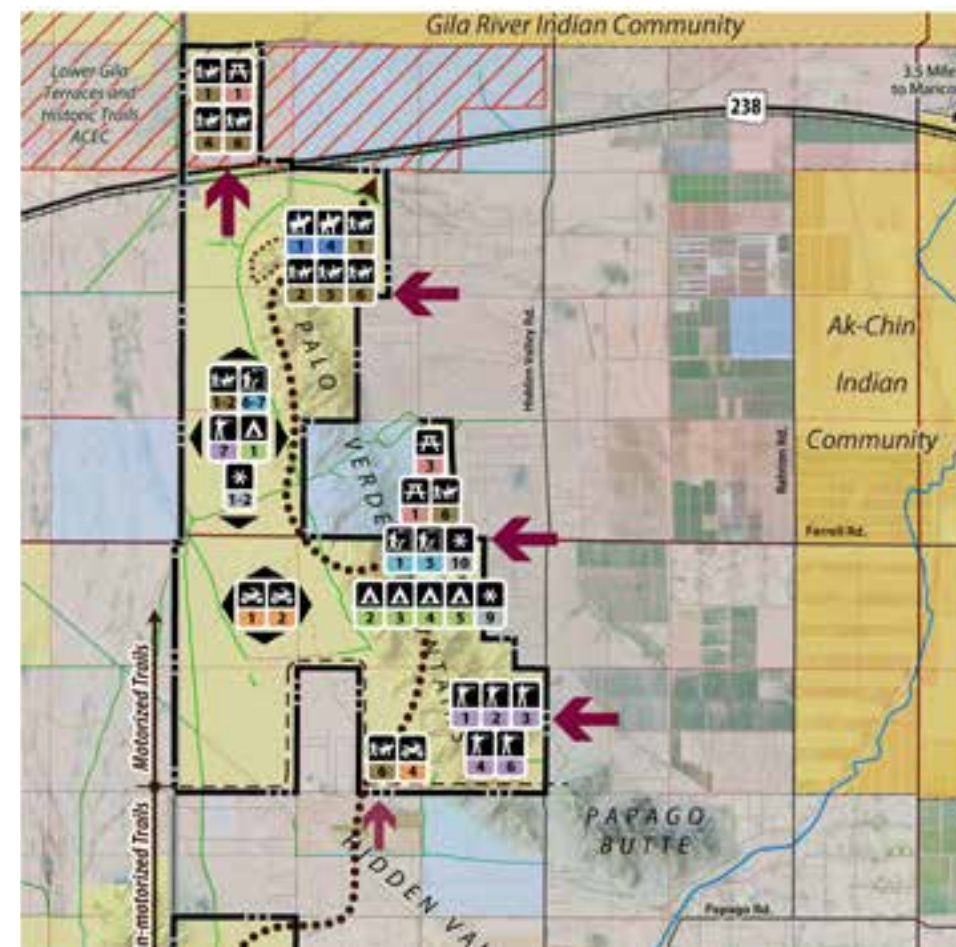
“The park was identified all the way back in 2007,” said Kent Taylor, who has been guiding the project since becoming county director of open space and trails in 2013. “The need has been there for some time.”

Once built, the park would offer miles of interconnected trails and places for camping and hiking, riding horses and off-highway vehicles, and, perhaps, disc golf, BMX biking and ziplining.

It will likely take decades to fully realize the county’s vision, Taylor said.

“A regional park such as the Palo Verde

Bryan Moritt



Palo Verde Regional Park

Preferred Alternative



Reference Features

- Proposed Park Boundary
- BLM Tertiary Unpaved Road (These are the only BLM-authorized two-track roads)
- National Monument Boundary
- Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)
- State Trust Land
- Bureau of Land Management
- Pinal County Conceptual Trail Alignment
- Existing Secondary Trail
- Proposed Competitive Track Area

A Pinal County map shows the location of Phase 1 of Palo Verde Regional Park.

Recreational opportunities could include hiking and horseback-riding trails, birdwatching areas, a nature center, picnic areas and playgrounds, and places for geocaching and rock climbing.

Regional Park is going to be a great resource for folks to use for their recreational needs,” said Jeffrey McClure, chairman of the Pinal County Supervisors, who represents District 4 (and Maricopa, till district realignment in June.) “As we continue to grow as a county, and as the city of Maricopa continues to grow, our wilderness areas will continue to shrink. We must continue to attempt to preserve as much of this type of land as possible for the present and future generations.”

A growing need

Pinal County and the city of Maricopa are growing rapidly.

The county’s population, about 380,000 in 2010, has grown to about 510,000, according to estimates, an increase of nearly 35%. Maricopa is the largest city in the county, with about 63,000 residents, up from about 43,500 in 2010. Pinal’s population will reach 732,000 by 2025 and 1.3 million by 2050, according to Arizona Department of Commerce estimates. Maricopa will boast 121,600 of those residents according to the City.

Population was already exploding in 2007, when Pinal County planned for the

“If you have a regional park that is similar to Phoenix’s South Mountain Regional Park, three times its size and nearly on your doorstep, it can be another advantage when businesses are considering relocating to your community.”

ANTHONY SMITH, FORMER
COUNTY SUPERVISOR

construction of seven regional parks. Working toward a goal of 7,236 park acres by 2025, the county hopes to open its first regional park, Peralta, east of Gold Canyon, in January 2023.

Rapidly growing communities bring increased demand for enhanced recreation opportunities by Pinal residents and visitors

traveling through the area, including from metro Phoenix, said Chris Wonderly, BLM public affairs specialist.

The first phase of Palo Verde Regional Park will comprise 6,000 acres south of SR 238. After completing an environmental assessment, Pinal County is seeking a 25-year, no-cost lease from BLM under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act for three parcels — nearly 500 of those acres — to develop amenities. The County also seeks a right of way for a non-motorized trail system to link the three parcels.

Calling himself a “big proponent” of the project, Maricopa Mayor Christian Price said the plan protects, preserves and improves the land.

“Having this land in contract with Pinal County is good for this area,” he said. “The reality is federal land can be shut down by the

BOX CANYON SHOOTING RANGE OPENING DELAYED

A March opening was planned for Box Canyon Shooting Range off Hidden Valley Road, but construction is ongoing on fences, berms, targets and signs, according to Chris Wonderly, public affairs specialist for the Bureau of Land Management, which is developing and managing the site.

In fact, construction delays and the arrival of Arizona's fire season means Box Canyon may not open for several months, he said. BLM often closes shooting facilities during fire season — May to late fall, typically — to prevent wildfires, after on-the-ground assessments of current danger levels.

"We understand people are eager" for the opening at Box Canyon, he said, adding "it could be after fire season that the facility opens."



Local residents have used the Palo Verde Mountains region for shooting and other recreation for decades. A park master plan notes a "growing number of shooting areas that are strewn with shell casings, shot-up saguaros and projectile pockmarked rock outcroppings..."

working on the final approvals with BLM to acquire the lease. Meanwhile, BLM is seeking public comment on the county's application through May 15. (See box.) If the lease is approved, the County will begin work on the final design and construction documents needed for park development. That process is expected to start 1-2 years after issuance of a lease and right-of-way grant.

A 'pretty outstanding' setting

Local residents already play in the distinctive Palo Verde Mountains, which rise 2,121 feet from the Sonoran Desert floor at its narrow peak and take their name from the plentiful Palo Verde trees in the region.

With its steep sides and mostly continuous crest, the small range is a centerpiece of more than 1.4 million acres of mountain ranges, alluvial plains and riparian areas managed by BLM in its Lower Sonoran Decision Area.

In a prime location, the park would connect the Table Top Wilderness area to the south and the Sonoran Desert National Monument to the southwest and several planned regional trails.

The area is already used for recreation by the public, despite a lack of BLM oversight or facilities. Popular activities include hiking, horseback riding, wildlife observation and off-highway vehicle use.

The park would be adjacent to the Box

Canyon Recreation Area, 1,100 acres just west of Hidden Valley Road that will include the shooting range. Shooters have frequented the area for years.

In fact, the County's Palo Verde Regional Park Cooperative Recreation Management Area Master Plan from 2016 noted "unregulated, unauthorized and illegal use is visible throughout the area, as evidenced by the enlargement of and growing number of shooting areas that are strewn with shell casings, shot-up saguaros and projectile pockmarked rock outcroppings, trash dumping, uncontrolled wild cat trails, sign vandalism, cut fences and more."

The shooting range in Box Canyon is being developed, at least in part, to discourage what BLM calls a "demonstrated misuse of public lands."

Price also cited Box Canyon as an example where current recreation at the mountain range is a bit of a "free-for-all" and a "safety issue." The range will offer more shooting opportunities in a safer atmosphere, he said.

With spectacular scenery, easy accessibility and proximity to other geographical features, the area is a great setting for a public park, Taylor said.

"In the park world, we talk about quality of life and adding to that quality of life," he said. "The Sonoran Desert environment that this facility will reside in is pretty outstanding."

Bryan Mordt

Building Blocks for the Future

When it comes to innovation, Maricopa leads the way in discovering new strategies to set us apart as a premier city in Arizona.

The FLATZ 520 project is another example of how Maricopa is rising to the challenge of meeting the demand for high-quality housing.

The design and construction are truly unique. The homes are built off-site and then trucked into Maricopa for assembly. Snapping the ready-made units together like Lego, crews can install nine units a day, three stories high! That significantly cuts down on the construction process here in Maricopa.

FLATZ 520 will bring 348 multi-family units to the northwest corner of the city at Loma Rd and SR-238.

"We are thankful to collaborate with supportive City staff at every level who are just as eager to get this project opened for the public as we are!".
Elainna Wright, Project Manager with Z Modular

As Maricopa continues to expand, projects like these will help the city meets the needs of the growing community. It also keeps us competitive in attracting new businesses and the jobs that will allow more residents to cut the commute by working where they live.

Stay connected with all the development happening around you by subscribing to the City's newsletter at www.Maricopa-az.gov

For those who seek to break the mold and invent the future, you're invited to come build a city with us!



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Phase 1 plan

With full buildout likely decades away, the development of the northern portion of Palo Verde Regional Park would happen much sooner, perhaps within 3-4 years, Taylor said.

Phase 1 would include some 6,000 acres of land bordered by SR 238 to the north, West Fulcar Road to the south, Hidden Valley Road to the east and the Maricopa County line to the west. That section and a much larger one to the south will one day be bisected by Interstate 11, the proposed route of which runs across Hidden Valley to the west side of the mountains.

Roughly in the shape of a small “h,” Phase 1 would include three main recreation areas at McDavid, Farrell and Table Top roads. Most recreational users would enter the park at those three points.

The master plan calls for a loop driveway, parking and trailhead facility that accesses non-motorized trails at the end of West McDavid Road. The main entrance, at the end of West Farrell Road, would feature another trailhead, a developed campground, a sunken archery range, group camping area and administrative facilities. Another trailhead access point for off-highway vehicles would be located on the west side of the parcel at the end of Table Top Road (a little further west than it shows in the original master plan).

Recreational opportunities could include hiking and horseback riding trails, bird-watching areas, a nature center, picnic areas and playgrounds, and places for shooting sports, geocaching, rock climbing and an off-leash dog enclosure.

More than 26 miles of trails are planned in this first phase, with about 3.7 miles within the county-developed sites.

“The trails are planned and designed in a sustainable way to blend in with the environment,” Taylor said. “They don’t disturb cultural or biological resources. The camping is in a developed site where there’s restrooms and water and electricity, so we don’t have folks just driving unobstructed through virgin desert. When we go in and develop the trailhead, we’re not developing virgin desert. We’re developing places that are already physically disturbed.”

Not all amenities would necessarily be available from the start; some would likely be developed over time.

New infrastructure would include restrooms, water stations, trailheads, entry stations, host sites, internal park roadways,

“***There is absolutely no reason they need to charge us for land use that we have access to and used for many, many years. The area is NOT blight, it is NOT destroyed; the areas where trash are dumped are easily accessed areas and most are private property ... It really is a ridiculous thing to do.***”

CITIZENS AGAINST PALO VERDE
REGIONAL PARK

equestrian staging, off-highway vehicle staging and a maintenance yard.

At the McDavid and Farrell facilities, potable water and electric service would be available either with initial construction or future site improvements for use at restrooms and campsites. Restrooms and host sites would be designed with septic systems and leach fields, though sewer lines may be extended to

HOW TO COMMENT ON THE PARK PLAN

The Bureau of Land Management is seeking public comment on a proposed, 25-year no-cost lease of 497 acres of public land to Pinal County for creation of the Palo Verde Regional Park. The agency is seeking comments on a Recreation and Public Purposes Act application submitted by Pinal County. The public-comment period ends May 14.

Written comments must be mailed to the Lower Sonoran Field Office, Attn: Ryan Randell, Realty Specialist, 21605 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85027, or faxed to 623-580-5580. Please note any personal identifying information included in a comment may be made available to the public at any time.

this site in the future. At the Table Top Road area, restrooms would feature waterless vault toilets and host sites would have electricity powered by solar shade canopies.

Taylor said staff will likely be on site 365 days a year.

“We’re just trying to develop the northern portion,” Taylor said. “I would think the southern part would develop separately and there might be trail connection that provides connectivity between the north and the south.”

That link could be a grade-separated crossing or a trail network that’s worked into the existing road network.

The plan has garnered much support from residents and government leaders — but not everyone thinks it’s a good idea.

Supporters and detractors

Three county-led public meetings/open houses and two web-based surveys since December 2015 have sought public review and comment on the project. Those meetings, including one at Copper Sky, drew a total of 273 residents.

For the most part, public comments were minimal and generally supportive of the project, according to Taylor, who acknowledges that as early as 2016, there were detractors, too.

Members of a private Facebook group, Citizens Against Palo Verde Regional Park, say they already use the mountains and surrounding area for recreation — and have for many years.

In a statement to InMaricopa, the group said:

“Our stance remains the same. This area is already public lands, federal lands and many utilize it for numerous outdoor activities. This proposed action is adding further restrictions on the users and additional costs to use.

“There is absolutely no reason they need to charge us for land use that we have access to and used for many, many years. The area is NOT blight, it is NOT destroyed; the areas where trash are dumped are easily accessed areas and most are private property ... It really is a ridiculous thing to do.”

The group also contends county parks inevitably lead to tax hikes.

“Taxes must increase as user fees across the board at county parks do NOT sustain the parks. They are ALL supplemented by taxation ... To us, this makes no sense. None of it.”

Taylor said user fees are likely for some amenities and activities, and that county supervisors will determine fees once specific

amenities are set. He also acknowledged that user fees typically do not cover full operational costs, noting supervisors would decide how to make up the shortfall.

June Staruch, a Hidden Valley resident who moved to the area 22 years ago, said she has issues — many of them, in fact — with the park.

“I am not happy at all,” she said, ticking off her concerns.

A stargazer, she said her heavenly view is already compromised by light from Maricopa and Copper Sky.

“And now we are going to have a park with lights?” she said. “No! I don’t care if it is two miles away, six miles away, 10 miles away, it destroys the night sky that we love.”

She added the park will bring more noise and dust from off-road vehicles and she fears wildfires starting in the campgrounds.

“Thunderbird Fire Department has their hands full as it is,” Staruch said. “In two months, we have had three really bad fires. Two houses within two miles of me burned to the ground and the (Maricopa Pantry) food bank was destroyed by fire. We do not have the resources to fight fires, and if we have campgrounds, we are going to have fires. That puts everyone in Hidden Valley at risk. This is a nightmare waiting to happen.”

For his part, Taylor said he is “always willing to talk to folks” who want to share their opinions about the park plan in a professional and productive manner.

Price said he understands the city, and perhaps its outlying rural areas even more so, are changing. Some people will resist that change, he said.

Taylor thanked Maricopa government leaders for their support.

“I’d be remiss to leave out the City of Maricopa, which has been a staunch supporter of this project since Day One and continues to be,” he said. “They realize this is going to be a tremendous amenity (that) will help them in their efforts to build their community.”

Price agreed, saying opening the land for enhanced recreational opportunities is good for his city.

“Pinal County can spend tax dollars there to improve the area and that benefits Maricopa,” said Price, noting the park would sit within the city’s tourism-focused adventure corridor along SR 238.

“Isn’t that the purpose of public lands? For people to enjoy them.”

Business, development around town

T-Mobile will spend \$50,000 to add a standby generator, automatic transfer switch, generator auxiliary power distribution and remote monitoring communications circuitry to its existing cell tower at 45330 W. McDavid Road. The work will be done by Motive Energy Telecommunications Group for Diamond Communications LLC.

AT&T will add a 30-kilowatt emergency diesel generator and 190-gallon fuel tank to its facility at 20386 N. Murphy Road at a cost of \$96,000. The work will be done for Crown Atlantic Company, LLC by General Dynamics Information Technology Inc.

Volkswagen of America will refurbish 2,827 square feet of office space at its facility at 17169 N. Murphy Road at a cost of \$150,000. Work will be done by Willmeng Construction Inc.

Walmart will replace roof-mounted cooling towers in its store at 41650 W. Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway in the Wells shopping center. Climate Pros Mechanical will do the work.

A prefabricated, 544-square-foot commercial shade sail structure will be built on Parcel 9 in Province at a cost of \$39,000 for **Meritage Homes of Arizona** by Hessor Inc.

A 480-square-foot shade ramada will be built over an existing barbecue picnic area for **Bungalows on Bowlin** at 44900 W. Bowlin Road at a cost of \$8,000 by Hessor Inc.

The **Maricopa Grand Professional Village** office condominiums at 41600 W. Smith-Enke Road will build a new commercial shell at a cost of \$809,370. Owner Danielle Collazo will have the work done by Kroll Contractors Inc.

Crumbl Cookies is undertaking \$45,000 in tenant improvements to Suite 105 in Sonoran Creek Marketplace, 20320 N. John Wayne Pkwy. The work is being done for owner John Wayne Parkway AZ LLC by KTM Construction Inc.

Carniceria Sonora will remodel the interior of an existing facility at 19568 N. Maricopa Road at a cost of \$175,000 in preparation for opening a meat shop and small take-out restaurant. Negev Design Build LLC will do the work for owner D & N Financial LLC.

Marshalls will spend \$300,000 for tenant improvements at its Sonoran Creek store, 20250 N. John Wayne Pkwy. Owner John Wayne Parkway Maricopa LLC has selected American Retail Contractors LLC for the project.

Exceptional Healthcare Maricopa will undertake interior tenant improvements on its 6-patient, fast-track clinic at 19060 N. John Wayne Pkwy. at a cost of \$125,000. EHC Maricopa LP has chosen BMH As Built of Texas Inc. for the work.

REV@Porter has begun construction on 10 duplexes for rent at 17085 N. Porter Road. Five are 782-square-foot, 1-bedroom units and five are 1,093-square-foot, 2-bedroom units. The total cost is \$1.1 million. Construction for EVR Porter LLC is by Sodella Construction Inc.

K Hovnanian Homes will build a model home office at 42420 W. Peters and Nall Road for sales in **Santa Rosa Springs** Parcel 4 at a cost of \$50,000.

Maricopa 35 LLC has begun work on **Fuze 520** modular apartments at 45760 W. Village Pkwy. in the West Maricopa Village development off North Loma Road. A total of seven three-story buildings with 1-3 bedroom apartments will be built. Buildings will range from 32-48 units. Copper Nail Construction LLC will build.

Copa Flats Apartments have begun construction on 72 units in three buildings at 17485 N. Porter Road. There will be 36 3-bedroom units, 30 2-bedrooms and six 1-bedroom apartments. The \$9.8 million project is being done by Johnson Carlier LLC for El Dorado Porter 27 LLC.

REV@Porter is beginning work on three single-family homes for rent at 17805 N. Porter Road at a total cost of \$404,895. The 2-bedroom, 1,106-square-foot units are being built by Sodella Construction Inc. for EVR Porter LLC.

Electrical District No. 3 will place equipment in the roadway at 18411 N. Smith Farms Circle in Desert Passage for a new power pedestal. The work is being done for the Desert Passage Community Association by Fishel Construction Co.

Southwest Gas will extend a gas main at Estrella Parkway and Edison Road, with work done by Fishel Construction Co.

Medians on **Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway** between Porter and Stonegate roads will be landscaped by Haydon Building Corp.



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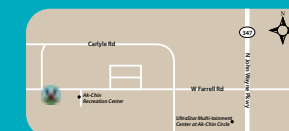
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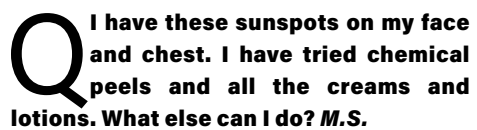


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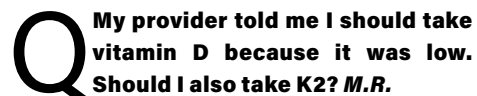
Maricopa Wellness Center's Medical Director, Kristina Donnay FNP-C, gets many emails asking aesthetic and wellness questions. We have decided to answer some of the most common questions in this article.



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A: Recent studies clearly demonstrate that vitamin D and vitamin K2 are essential to good health. Deficiencies in both these vitamins are extremely common, which is why more and more people are taking vitamins D and K2 as a daily dietary supplement. It's very important to know that if you take vitamin D regularly over a long period, you should take vitamin K2 as well. K2 is responsible for depositing calcium at the right places in the body including bones and teeth. Taking vitamin D stimulates the body to produce more of the vitamin K2-dependent proteins that transport calcium. These proteins have many health benefits but cannot be activated if insufficient vitamin K2 is available, so anyone who is taking vitamin D needs more vitamin K2.




Vitamin D and K2 work together to

strengthen bones and promote the health of the heart and arteries. As always, check with your provider before you start any new supplements.

Q I've tried everything to lose weight. Nothing seems to work or work for long. Is there a magic pill for weight loss?! *D.B.*

A: Unfortunately, there is no magic pill for weight loss. Weight loss takes effort and consistency. We always recommend following up with your primary care provider to make sure there are no underlining issues causing weight gain like low acting thyroid or hormonal imbalances. But, even if you do have underlining issues making your success more difficult, weight loss takes effort. We can provide you with great tools to help you on your weight loss journey. But they are just tools, and you still must do all the hard work. But, if we do ever find that magic pill, we will let you know!

If you have a question, you want answered in the next edition of “Ask Kristina” email them to maricopawellnesscenter@gmail.com 

 **520-464-6193**
 **MaricopaWellnessCenter.com**
 **41600 W. Smith-Enke Road**
Building 14, Suite 3

You should always speak with your provider before you start, stop, or change any part of your care plan or treatment. This article is not considered medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. If you think you may have a medical emergency, call your provider or dial 911 immediately.

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You matter: Mental health in our society

BY BRIANNA REINHOLD, LPC
OWNER / CLINICAL DIRECTOR / THERAPIST

"SUCK IT UP." "IT'S NOT THAT bad." "Get over it." "Stop being emotional." These are phrases constantly thrown about in society in regards to anyone who mentions that they are dealing with a mental health issue.

Mental health has continued to have a negative stigma associated with it because it's unseen and for some reason, still viewed as a weakness, yet it is oftentimes unavoidable.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 2021, one in five U.S. adults live with a mental illness (52.9 million). Of those adults, only about half are receiving any sort of treatment. This is largely due to the negative stigma associated with seeking help, lack of resources due to a shortage of providers, and financial inability, due to rising healthcare costs.

Mental health services can be a variety of things for different people. What matters is finding the services that work best for you and your life. Often, mental health services are recommended when someone has experienced a "significant trauma" in their life. This is viewed as being in war, a shooting, victim of a serious crime, etc. While these situations should include healing by attending therapy, they are not the only reasons a person could benefit from seeing a counselor. Daily life stressors, including home and work, financial stress, parenting, relationships, self-esteem, etc. are all topics that can be discussed and


addressed in sessions. Most therapy focuses on day-to-day situations versus major life events and can have a profound impact on the person receiving the care.

Have you ever considered seeking therapy of any kind? If you answered yes and haven't followed through, ask yourself, what is really stopping you? Do you feel as though you should be able to "just move on" or that others will judge you? It can be overwhelming and sometimes even scary to take that first step in finding a counselor, but the benefits that can come from participating can be wonderful. A counselor can help you find your path to healing, help you weigh all options when making decisions, and help you see alternative viewpoints that were always there, but were being blocked for some reason. Everyone deserves a place where they can speak freely and without fear of judgment as they continue the journey of life.

I chose to go into private practice to help however needed. We all can benefit from having an unbiased person to sort out our thoughts and feelings. So many of us have unresolved

issues from childhood, unhealthy relationships, or workplace stress, and now, COVID stress. It's easy to see how anyone could feel like they are hitting a breaking point.

Please know there are people who truly care and want to help you address it all and are working to change the way mental health services are perceived by the general public.

May is Mental Health Awareness month and I challenge each and every one of you to work towards ending the negative stigma associated with mental health. We owe it to ourselves and our future generations to say it's okay to not be okay, and to help them be strong in finding healthy ways to work past their symptoms. You each matter and deserve an opportunity to succeed. 

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BUSINESS

 Deli	<p>Equipment, Food-Contact Surfaces, Nonfood-Contact Surfaces and Utensils Observed a buildup of food debris on no-food contact surfaces of small reach-in warmer, oven shelves, and pizza prep and sandwich coolers.</p> <p>Ready-To-Eat Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Date Marking Observed small, open packages of meat. Operator using 8-day date marking system. Food required to be held under a date marking system cannot be held more than seven days.</p> <p>Ready-To-Eat Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Disposition Observed open packages of deli meat with expired dates.</p>	
	<p>Cooking and Baking Equipment Heavy buildup of food debris on fryer baskets and pizza oven conveyor.</p> <p>Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Hot and Cold Holding Internal temperatures of cooked meatballs held in the steam well 95-115°F. Hot foods to be kept at ≥135°F.</p> <p>Cooling Methods Internal temperatures of portioned pasta held in individual, sealed, plastic baggies stored stacked in deep plastic container in upright reach-in cooler 56-57°F. Chilled foods to be kept at ≤41°F.</p> <p>Good Repair and Proper Adjustment-Equipment Walk-in cooler door not closing properly. Hinge and gaskets damaged.</p>	<p>Equipment, Food-Contact Surfaces, Nonfood-Contact Surfaces and Utensils Observed buildup of grease and food debris on sides of pizza oven, handles and interior of prep coolers, oil hose and connectors located in kitchen. Cleaning recommended at frequency that negates buildup.</p> <p>Floors, Walls and Ceilings-Cleanability Observed missing/damaged floor tiles at wait station.</p> <p>Cleaning, Frequency and Restrictions Buildup of food debris on floors, walls and floor drains throughout facility.</p> <p>Ventilation Hood Systems, Filters Buildup of grease on fry station hood filters.</p>
	<p>Food Temperature Measuring Devices Food probe thermometer not present.</p> <p>Cooking and Baking Equipment Interior fan cover is broken.</p>	<p>Maintaining Refuse Areas and Enclosures Buildup of debris on and around the dumpster and grease receptacles. Dumpster door removed.</p>
	<p>When to Wash Employee entered kitchen through back door and used pot to scoop ice from the ice machine. A proper utensil must be used.</p> <p>Cleaning Procedure Employee washed hands for about five seconds prior to food prep. Proper handwashing procedure includes wet hands, vigorously scrub hands (20 seconds) with soap, rinse and dry with paper towel.</p> <p>Packaged and Unpackaged Food-Separation, Packaging and Segregation Observed loosely covered raw fish stored above open pan of cooked bratwurst on speed rack in walk-in cooler.</p>	<p>Ready-To-Eat Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Disposition Open containers held in walk-in cooler and small prep cooler with expired date or no date marks (no date marks on salsa, bratwurst and baked beans.)</p> <p>Good Repair and Calibration Food probe thermometer found to be off by 10°.</p> <p>Temperature Measuring Devices, Manual and Mechanical Ware Washing Operator using high temperature dish machine without use of irreversible temperature device to monitor temperatures at dish surface.</p>
	<p>Cooling Methods Internal temperatures of cooked potatoes and cooked vegetable soup held in deep, closed plastic containers in reach-in coolers were 60-63°F. Chilled foods to be maintained ≤41°F.</p>	<p>Cooling Internal temperatures of cooked chilies held in closed, 5-gallon bucket were 50-55°F. Chilled foods are to be maintained at ≤41°F.</p>
	<p>Fry's Marketplace Deli Ready-To-Eat Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Date Marking Operator using 8-day expiration date process. Date marks are not to exceed 7 days including the day the item was prepped/opened.</p>	<p>Fry's Marketplace Murray Cheese Sanitizers, Criteria-Chemicals In-use sanitizer from automatic dispenser tested to be above 400 parts per million (ppm). Should be 200-400 ppm.</p>
	<p>Time/Temperature Control for Safety Food, Hot and Cold Holding Internal temperatures of precooked eggs held in sealed plastic bag in prep-cooler were 61-63°F. Chilled foods are to be maintained at ≤41°F.</p> <p>Prohibiting Animals Customer entered establishment from back door with two leashed dogs. Manager stated customers are permitted to have dogs on the patio and enter patio through the back gate. Observed the back gate to be padlocked at the time of the inspection. Pet animals are prohibited in food establishments.</p>	<p>Floors, Walls and Ceilings-Cleanability Observed wall behind coffee rinse sink damaged.</p> <p>Cleaning, Frequency and Restrictions Observed buildup of debris on floor under soda lines and drain pipes.</p>

BUSINESS

	<p>Preventing Contamination from Hands Staff used bare hands in direct contact with ready-to-eat pancakes at expo window.</p>	<p>Equipment, Food-Contact Surfaces, Nonfood-Contact Surfaces and Utensils Buildup of food debris/grease on non-food contact surfaces of fry station, egg station and egg station order monitor.</p>				
	<p>Preventing Contamination from Hands Employee's bare hands in direct contact with ice cream cone.</p>	<p>Controlling Pests Live cockroaches at drink station.</p>				
	<p>Preventing Contamination from Hands Observed cook use bare hands to handle ready-to-eat oregano leaves.</p> <p>Sanitizing Solutions, Testing Devices Operator used sanitizer without testing strips.</p>	<p>Floors, Walls and Ceilings-Cleanability Wall under three-compartment sink and tiled baseboard throughout kitchen damaged.</p>				
	<p>Manual and Mechanical Warewashing Equipment, Chemical Sanitization-Temperature, pH, Concentration and Hardness Employee dropped knife on floor, then after washing and rinsing knife, dipped knife in sanitizer for about five seconds and then dry it with a paper towel. Food contact surfaces must be in contact with sanitizer at least one minute.</p>					
	<p>Cooling Internal temperatures of cooked beans held in plastic container in walk-in cooler were 64-67°F. Food should be covered in containers only after foods have reached 41°F. Chilled foods are to be maintained ≤41°F.</p>					
	<p>When to Wash Employee removed hose from mop sink hose bib then immediately donned gloves and begin to peel ready-to-eat carrots without washing hands.</p> <p>Manual and Mechanical Warewashing Equipment, Chemical Sanitization-Temperature, pH, Concentration and Hardness In-use quat-based sanitizer in three-compartment sink was tested to be 0 ppm. Proper level of sanitizer is 200-400 ppm.</p>	<p>Sanitizing Solutions, Testing Devices Operator uses a "quat"-based sanitizer. Testing strips provided by manager not viable because they had gotten wet. Proper strips were in manager's office.</p>				
<table><tr><td><p>EXCELLENT</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bashas'• Bashas' AFC Sushi• Bashas' Bakery• Bashas' Retail• Bashas' Sushi• Children's Learning Adventure Childcare Centers• Circle K, 18141 N. John Wayne Pkwy• Culver's• Desert Wind Middle School</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steakburgers• Fry's Marketplace• Fry's Marketplace Bakery• Fry's Marketplace Starbucks• Gyro Grill• Headquarters• LaQuinta Inn eating area• MOD Pizza• Panda Express• QuikTrip</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• QuikTrip Kitchen• Santa Cruz Elementary School• Sprouts<p>SATISFACTORY</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barro's Pizza• Bashas' Deli• Denny's• The Duke at Rancho El Dorado• Francisco's Mexican Food• Fry's Marketplace Deli</td><td><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fry's Marketplace Murray Cheese• Honeycutt Coffee• IHOP• McDonald's (Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway)• Native Grill & Wings• Omni Sushi (Sprouts)• Rili B's Taco Shop• Wingstop</td></tr></table>			<p>EXCELLENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bashas'• Bashas' AFC Sushi• Bashas' Bakery• Bashas' Retail• Bashas' Sushi• Children's Learning Adventure Childcare Centers• Circle K, 18141 N. John Wayne Pkwy• Culver's• Desert Wind Middle School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freddy's Frozen Custard and Steakburgers• Fry's Marketplace• Fry's Marketplace Bakery• Fry's Marketplace Starbucks• Gyro Grill• Headquarters• LaQuinta Inn eating area• MOD Pizza• Panda Express• QuikTrip	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• QuikTrip Kitchen• Santa Cruz Elementary School• Sprouts <p>SATISFACTORY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barro's Pizza• Bashas' Deli• Denny's• The Duke at Rancho El Dorado• Francisco's Mexican Food• Fry's Marketplace Deli	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fry's Marketplace Murray Cheese• Honeycutt Coffee• IHOP• McDonald's (Maricopa-Casa Grande Highway)• Native Grill & Wings• Omni Sushi (Sprouts)• Rili B's Taco Shop• Wingstop
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Source: Pinal County

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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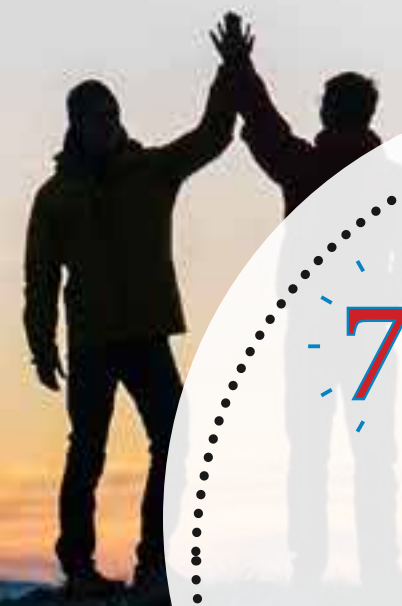
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in Focus Maricopa Pantry leader looks to rebuild after fire

BY JUSTIN GRIFFIN

WHEN MARICOPA PANTRY BURNED to the ground March 28, Jim Shoaf and his wife, Alice, saw two decades of hard work go up in smoke.

Jim, the president and founder of the food bank, didn't take any time to lick his wounds.

"It was terrible watching it burn, it really was, because that's 20 years of our life," Shoaf said. "But what was devastating was that we weren't going to be able to feed the people these next couple of weeks 'til we got this fixed."

For Shoaf and the 35-40 volunteers at the Pantry, the sole mission is service.

"I have a good crew," Shoaf said. "They think about the people. And that's what makes this work."

Shoaf isn't a man encumbered by obstacles. He seems to find a way. Immediately after the fire, he and his crew took care of the 20 families who most needed the food bank's services, mostly people confined to their homes.

So, without a place to call home, volunteers delivered food to those homes while retooling for the future.

"Flies everywhere"

In the aftermath of the fire that destroyed trailers and equipment, at least 40,000 pounds of rotting food covered the grounds, which attracted a swarm of flies.

"You know the flies are incredible right now," Shoaf said a few weeks ago on the day they sprayed. "It's insane. If you sit on the porch of the church, you're going to see little baby flies everywhere."

Exterminating the flies was only the start of the efforts to rebuild. The cleanup was well underway at that point, and a few weeks after the fire, Maricopa Pantry was again holding food bank events.

Soon, there was a different kind of swarm at the site, one of trucks removing debris from the fire and trailers taking steel to be recycled, preparing the site for something bigger.

"We've been hauling out steel," Shoaf said. "We've been hauling out all the trash and it's going to be a couple of days before we have that emptied. Then, we're going to treat the ground because of what was spilled."

Bryan Mordt

Patience is needed — all around

Shoaf is a practitioner in the fine art of impatience.

"I don't like to take time doing things," he said. "I'm a firm believer that if you're going to do it, do it."

Shoaf was ready to start rebuilding the Maricopa Pantry the day after the fire. But as he pointed out, it's going to be a step-by-step process. The fire occurred on March 28. Shoaf said he received approval to clean up the site on April 7.

After the cleanup, the planning process begins to build a new structure.

"We're going to start looking at what we need to put the building up. And then we're going to start construction on the building."

Shoaf hopes for an October start on construction and to have the building complete by the end of winter.

"But, you know, we have to get designs," Shoaf said. "We have to figure out what we want. We've got to get everything OK'd by the county. We must get permits and I want everything in place, so that once we decide to actually start construction, everything's in place."

For Shoaf, being patient with the process is as difficult as having patience with himself. The community's response has been overwhelming.

"I feel bad, but I can't answer everybody's phone calls and everybody's texts and there's a lot of people I couldn't get back to, but there's no way. I mean, my phone's been ringing off the hook. I don't know how many emails I've gotten how many messages I've gotten, and I just can't get to them."

For Shoaf, when a door closes, a window opens. People from Maricopa and the county are ready to lend a hand.

"There's tons of momentum coming from the community," Shoaf said. "We've had so many people step forward monetarily, offering their time, their muscle, and their equipment. You know, this city has reached out in more ways than I could think of reaching out. I mean every one of our needs are being met. You know, if I need help down at the church, I've got more than I need."

Shoaf is confident that energy will lead to a bigger and better Maricopa Pantry.

"This time, we're going to rebuild differently," Shoaf said. "We're looking at a warehouse because that was always one of my dreams. I always wanted to put up a warehouse, a food bank, a clothes bank, a soup kitchen that's open every day of the week so people can come in and get breakfast."



Maricopa Pantry co-founder Jim Shoaf speaks about the organization's efforts to rebound from a destructive fire on March 28. Below, a firefighter works at the scene of the blaze in Hidden Valley. The fire reportedly originated with a malfunctioning pallet jack.



Shoaf said he'd considered moving the food bank to another site, but the costs were too high and five or six years down the road a renovation would be necessary.

"Since this happened, we decided that now the doors are open," Shoaf said. "Let's just build what we want, rather than buy all those trailers again. Let's just build what we want, and it'll be more cost-effective. It'll be easier on the food. You know, it'll be easier to build the boxes."

A blessing during a disaster

The Maricopa Pantry sits next to Mountain View Community Church. The two structures are close enough to one another to have caused concern during the fire.

"You know, it's funny because we sat there and watched the fire go up," Shoaf said. "And there was just no stopping that. We had so much stuff burning, plus, all my units were diesel units. So, every one of them had a full tank of diesel. So once the diesel caught fire, there was just no stopping it."

"But to watch the fire, I mean, the winds were coming from the south and the fire was really up over top of the church. We were afraid the church was going to catch on fire. Some of the bushes in the back did and we got that put out and then, it was like the wind totally shifted."

"It came from the north and pushed to the south and the flames went the other direction and church was saved."

Keeping in touch

For the past few weeks, the site of Maricopa Pantry has been a beehive of activity, with cleanup of the fire damage and the ongoing work of continuing to provide for the nearly 1,200 families the organization feeds each week.

Shoaf may not be able to answer each call he receives but urges the public to check out the group's website and Facebook page for announcements about upcoming events and for updates about what the project needs to move forward.

"Some people may want to hold a food drive for us," Shoaf said. "Before they do that, I need to make sure that we have a way to store that food. We have always taken great pride in not wasting anything. We make sure that every donation goes to someone in need."



Barely three weeks after a fire devastated the Maricopa Pantry, the organization was at Maricopa High School on a Saturday morning helping to feed more than 1,000 families. Volunteers en masse were on hand to keep a steady line of cars moving through its drive-thru.



Bryan Moritt

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- **3rd Place** is a gift basket filled with items along with a bouquet of flowers. Additional prizes will be donated to the winners by local businesses. People had the opportunity to nominate their favorite mothers in April with a written and photo nomination. 📷

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Central Arizona College earns 2022-2023 Military Friendly® School Designation

BY ANGELA ASKEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE HAS earned the 2022-2023 Bronze Military Friendly® School designation. Institutions earning the Military Friendly® School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. More than 1,800 schools participated in the 2022-2023 survey with 665 earning special awards for going above the standard.

The 2022-2023 Military Friendly® Schools list will be published in the May and October issue of G.I. Jobs magazine and can be found at militaryfriendly.com.

Methodology, criteria, and weightings were determined by Viqtory with input from the Military Friendly® Advisory Council of independent leaders in the higher education and military recruitment community. Final ratings were determined by combining the institution's survey scores with the assessment of the institution's ability to meet thresholds for Student Retention, Graduation, Job Placement, Loan Repayment, Persistence (Degree Advancement or Transfer) and Loan Default rates for all students and, specifically, for student veterans.

Elizabeth Barrett, CAC Military & Veteran's Services School Certifying Official stated, "We are honored to once again receive this designation. Central Arizona College remains dedicated to our Veteran students and their families."

"Military Friendly® is committed to transparency and providing consistent data-driven standards in our designation process. Our standards provide a benchmark that promotes positive outcomes and support services that better the educational landscape and provide opportunity for the Military Community. This creates a competitive atmosphere that encourages colleges to evolve and invest in their programs consistently. Schools who achieve awards designation show true commitment in their efforts, going over and above that standard," said Kayla Lopez, National Director of Military Partnerships, Military Friendly®.

For more information about Central Arizona College's student veteran programs visit centralaz.edu/va or contact: Elizabeth.Barrett@centralaz.edu



were developed with the assistance of an independent research firm and an advisory council of educators and employers. The survey is administered for free and is open to all postsecondary schools that wish to participate. Criteria for consideration can be found at militaryfriendly.com.

About Viqtory

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What does an academic coach do?

BY MURRAY SIEGEL

MOST EVERYONE KNOWS WHAT an athletic coach does, yet many are ignorant about the duties of an academic coach.

By next school year, all Maricopa Unified School District schools will have an academic coach on staff. To learn more about the role, I talked with Christine Skubisz, the academic coach at Butterfield Elementary School.

Skubisz, a Philadelphia native, is a graduate of Old Dominion University and has a master's

degree from Northern Arizona University. She has 22 years of classroom teaching experience. In her first year at Butterfield, she has become a valued asset in the school.

Skubisz sees her primary objective as increasing student academic growth by offering support to both teachers and students.


She observes teachers to offer feedback on improving instruction. She is not an administrator, so teachers see her as a peer rather than an evaluator, which allows her to work closely with faculty members. Based on classroom observations, she makes recommendations about planning instruction as well as curriculum development.

Skubisz has access to student data, which provides insight to be utilized as she helps in working with small groups of students. She analyzes test questions to better prepare students for mandated testing and to train teachers how best to provide their students with the tools needed for testing success. This training allows teachers to use testing data to determine areas students need assistance and how to provide that support. Academic

coaches can even lead English-language learner (ELL) instruction.

During this school year, Skubisz worked with new teachers at Butterfield, aiding them as they adjusted to classroom dynamics. Significant improvement has been observed in the performance of these new faculty.

Skubisz believes it is vital to her success students and teachers trust her and feel free speaking with her in confidence. She feels truly fulfilled in her role as academic coach, and if all MUSD academic coaches have her energy and focus, we should see meaningful increases in student learning.

The district's efforts to hire qualified academic coaches is another bit of evidence demonstrating MUSD's commitment to enhancing student growth and development. 

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

 InMaricopa.com/Columnists



Seniors prepare for rest of their lives

BY JUSTIN GRIFFIN

FOR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL seniors, graduation represents a key turning point in their lives.

While it will signify the end of their high school careers, it is also the beginning of the rest of their lives.

Some students have higher education in mind, and others have goals to reconnect with family and take time to figure out where to go next.

In mid-April, a baker's dozen of Maricopa's graduating seniors gathered with photographer Victor Moreno at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center for an InMaricopa photoshoot.

There were a couple of entertaining moments during the shoot.

The first came when Moreno requested all the graduates jump at the same time for a photo.

To get everybody in the frame, he had to back up a good distance. But that distance created an echo on his count of three to signal everyone to jump, so the timing was off.

Moreno subsequently had one of the students count to three, and everything synced up rather nicely.

Another entertaining moment came with discussion of the graduates tossing their caps in

the air for a photo.

Moreno knew exactly what he was looking for and had exact instructions for the students on how — and where — to toss their caps.

It only took a few misfires before Moreno had the effect he wanted.

With 13 students at one shoot, it would be easy for anyone to mix up names, but not Moreno. His command of their names was impressive.

The graduates representing four high schools — Maricopa High School, Sequoia Pathway Academy, Heritage Academy and A+ Charter School — were in high spirits and looking forward to what life holds in store for them.

Caleb Weyrauch, a graduating senior at Heritage Academy, has international plans. He will spend the next two years in Africa — Benin to be exact, which sits to the west of Nigeria — as part of a two-year mission with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"I'm looking forward to moving out and being on my own," Weyrauch said. "It's exciting to be headed for a different part of the world and to have the opportunity to learn about different cultures."


Joseph Russoniello and Haley Raffaele, coincidentally, will both work summer internships at Grand Lakes Lodge, near Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, prior to heading to Massachusetts to start their college careers.

Raffaele's internship will focus on fashion marketing and Russoniello's will be centered on hospitality management, which will be his major at Kilachand Honors College at Boston University. Raffaele will study theater at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Zoie Koons, of Heritage Academy, will move to Tulsa, Oklahoma to be closer to family.

"A lot of people don't know much about Tulsa," Koons said. "It's a unique place. It's a pretty decent-sized city but it has a small-town feel to it."

Closer to home, Maricopa High School's Matthew David looks forward to starting at Arizona State University, but first enjoying the upcoming summer.

"I'm looking forward to having three months off to spend with friends and family," David said. "I can't remember ever having that much time away from school." 



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Senior Spotlight

Following the challenges brought on by the pandemic, the 2021-22 school year saw a return to normalcy. The Class of 2022 has faced many challenges on the way to earning a diploma. These outstanding seniors have overcome the obstacles and are looking ahead confidently to college life and achieving their career goals.



CATELYN CHANG
Maricopa High School

Catelyn plans to attend Arizona State University and major in Conservation Biology and Ecology. Eventually, she wants to become a marine biologist. She feels her time at Maricopa High has prepared her through AP courses and dual enrollment opportunities.

“I also encountered many different teachers who had various teaching styles,

which I will soon face in college,” Catelyn said.

Catelyn feels her greatest achievement was making the MHS Dance Company, “because I have such an amazing team who I can call my dance family as well as my hardworking teacher.”

Catelyn’s favorite high school memory was probably the “Wish Upon a Dream” dance recital in December 2021, “because it was such a fun and thrilling experience, especially since it was in-person and not a virtual recital.”



GRACEE CLARK
Maricopa High School

Gracee, a lifelong Maricopan, is vice president of Maricopa High School Theatre Company. She wants to become a lawyer specializing in business law. She feels her studies of sociopolitical issues at MHS have prepared her for higher education and made her passionate about justice.

“My greatest achievement was managing to keep up with school during quarantine,” Gracee said. “My favorite high school memory was stage-managing ‘Bright Star’ and connecting with my Southern culture.”



MATTHEW DAVID
Maricopa High School

Throughout high school, Matthew has been active in several clubs, including National Honors Society, Link Crew and EdRising. The Maricopa native is vice chairman of the Maricopa Youth City Council, where he volunteers his time to serve and unite youth in the community. He plans to attend ASU and major in nursing.

“I have always had a passion for serving children in our community and providing medical care for those who are in need,” he said.

Matthew pointed out participating in clubs and organizations throughout high school has “given me the opportunity to volunteer and serve, whether that would be within my school, the city or in the church.”

He also wishes to thank Mrs. Krigbaum and Education Professions for teaching him about the importance of health in a child’s growth and development, which has influenced his decision to become a pediatric nurse.

Matthew’s greatest achievement is maintaining a 4.0 grade point average and participating in several extracurricular activities while balancing school, work and life.

His favorite memory? “Seeing the smiles on kids’ faces during my Edrising internship hours.”



LEALANI ESCALADE
A+ Charter Academy

Lealani is a member of the National Honor Society and president of the student council. Away from school, Lealani is a member of a dance group specializing in Folklorico, Mexican folk dancing. Lealani, who will graduate as a junior and will attend Grand Canyon University in the fall, also helped plan her school’s prom.

Lealani’s biggest achievement was to graduate early and gain acceptance into Grand Canyon University. “If I went to another high school, I’m not sure I would have had the opportunity. Not all high schools do the

Victor Moreno

EDUCATION

early college program.” Lealani said that once the faculty knew that she understood what advanced classes would mean, “They all rallied with me,” Lealani said.

Lealani’s fondest memory was her college tour at Grand Canyon University back in November. “It was a fun day,” she said. “My friends went with me and I really felt that’s where I should be. In Nov. 21. I was still considering other options, but it became clear that day that’s where I wanted to be.”



NATALIE HANANIA
Maricopa High School

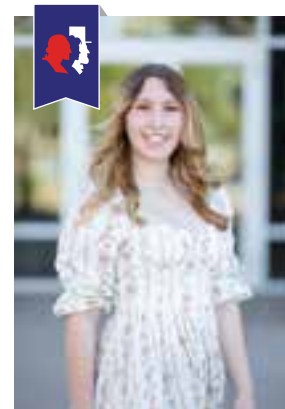
Natalie is active in DECA, Yearbook, Theatre, Link Crew, Asian American Association and Class of 2022. A native of Folsom, California, Natalie has spent most of her life in Maricopa. She is a fan of the television show “The Office” but has no aspirations to be a regional manager of a paper company. Instead, she’s going to work toward a degree in business communications, specializing

in human resources.

“MHS has given me many opportunities to prepare for my career, from giving us a marketing class, DECA and DECA competition, Link Crew, an AP Econ class, a Digital Communications class and many others,” she said.

Natalie was voted Homecoming Queen, “Best Social Media Feed” for senior superlatives and is known as the “announcement girl” at school.

Her greatest achievements include becoming DECA president and going to DECA competition, getting the part of Lucy in the musical “Bright Star” this year and becoming MHSTV news producer.



ZOIE KOONS
Heritage Academy

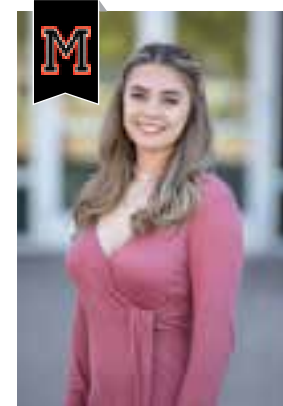
Zoie moved to Maricopa from Oklahoma at the beginning of her freshman year. Her hobbies include reading, “any type of art I can get my hands on, yoga/ meditation, and spending time with friends and family.”

“I have many wonderful siblings who fuel my energy, and a wonderful, supportive family that I am grateful for,” Zoie said. “I am ready to end this year

strong and head on my way to finding and experiencing my best future!”

Although high school has had its ups and downs, Zoie appreciates her teachers and their support. “Therefore, I’ve thought about pursuing a career in teaching. I’ve also considered somewhere in the business category as well. Although I may not continue with this plan, I do believe I will find my purpose.”

As for a favorite memory, Zoie said: “Honestly, I don’t have a favorite high school memory. The days tend to just merge together. I can say that I have loved all the fun and laughs that I’ve spent with friends, especially friends I’ve made outside of school, and I wouldn’t have asked to experience high school in any other way.”



HALEY RAFFAELE
Maricopa High School

Haley has a passion for the performing arts. Through all four years of high school, she has dedicated herself to theatrical performance — and has a desire to learn more. Haley wishes to explore every component of theater. With this career path, she is confident she will find fulfillment.

“Whether I help others enter the world of theater or attempt to pursue professional performance, I am doing what I love, and high school has taught me that this pursuit is the most imperative to my happiness and success,” she said.

Haley feels her time at Maricopa High has taught her how to “deeply analyze a character on a vulnerable, yet profound level” and that it has taught her “how integral a role theater plays in philosophy, literature, history, anthropology.”

She pointed out those lessons have prepared her for the challenge presented by the interdisciplinary teachings of a theater degree.

Haley’s top achievement was her musical theater performance awards and scholarships earned at the annual International Thespian Festival.

That was also the site of one of her favorite high school memories.

“At my first festival, I got to perform in front of one of my Broadway idols for adjudication with my group, and we moved him to tears! It was the most exhilarating moment of my life, and afterwards we celebrated, went to workshops and had the opportunity to meet him as well. I’ll never forget that moment.”



KADEN ROGERS
Maricopa High School

Kaden is hopeful for a career in film and television and aspires to work behind the camera.

“My goal, and dream, is to direct and produce films and television, as well as own and operate a production company,” Kaden said. “At Maricopa High School, I have started preparing for these aspirations through starting the MHS Film Club, taking the Technical

Theater/Stagecraft class and internship, as well as being involved with the Technical Theatre Club.”

Kaden’s greatest achievement in high school was premiering a short film, “Little Tavern in the Woods,” that he created with Film Club during his sophomore and junior years. “The experience with my fellow Film Club members was extremely gratifying and exciting, and I am very proud of the project that we were able to create.”

Kaden’s favorite experience was participating in Mr. Maricopa High School.

“I had a great time with the other Mr. MHS contestants at our practices — even if we never really ‘practiced’ — and participating in the actual event.”



JONATHAN ROMERO DOMINGUEZ
Sequoia Pathway Academy

Jonathan has four siblings and enjoys playing sports as well as activities with his family. Jonathan played varsity football all four years of high school.

He plans to go to university and pursue a career in business administration, with hopes of one day starting his own business.

“High school has taught me to be patient and understanding with those I disagree with,” he said.

Jonathan’s biggest achievement was earning scholarships to multiple colleges that will help him pursue his career.

Looking back on his high school career, Jonathan’s fondest memory will be “winning football games with my boys with those Friday night lights on.”



JOSEPH RUSSONIELLO
Maricopa High School

Joseph intends to study hospitality management and economics in college and hopes to one day be a financial operative for a nationwide hotel chain.

“My high school experience has really helped me to prepare for this future. My high school mathematics really pushed and encouraged me to use math in creative and inventive ways,” he said.

Joseph also took job opportunities throughout high school and worked summer internships for Highway West Vacations to prepare himself for the real world of hospitality operations.

Joseph’s greatest achievement in high school was getting accepted into the Kilachand Honors College at Boston University.

“Years of hard work inside and outside of my classes finally led to an acceptance to a prestigious school that I would love to attend,” he said.

Joseph counts among his fondest school memories his work with the Maricopa High School Theatre Company.

“My freshman year, we traveled to the International Thespian Festival, and I was able to spend an entire week performing with best friends in front of an audience of thousands of fellow Thespians and Broadway icons,” he said. “It was unbelievable.”



CALEB WEYRAUCH
Heritage Academy

Caleb has attended Heritage Academy since the school started in 2019 at the former UltraStar. Caleb has wrestled, played basketball, volleyball, and participated in dance and drama. He enjoys sports the most and is a highly competitive athlete. He loves spending time with friends inside and outside of school.

After high school, Caleb plans to go to Africa to serve a two-year mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

“When I come back, I plan on majoring in either engineering or finance,” he said. “I was originally interested in pursuing engineering since I had a strong academic performance in science and math but have recently taken economics and financial applications and those classes have piqued my interest.”

Caleb’s greatest achievement is keeping a perfect academic record. “At times it’s been hard, but I’ve always managed to pull an A in every class. If you want it bad enough, you set goals, and you work toward them. You’ll eventually reach them.”

His favorite high school memory is going to the state tournament with his volleyball team junior year.

“Although we lost the game, we played really well, and I already miss those who left since last season. After the game, some of my friends and family expressed that they were surprised at how passionate I was on the court. I don’t think I’ll forget how it felt to play that day.”



TAYLOR YON
Sequoia Pathway Academy

Taylor has attended Sequoia Pathway for 13 years. Her favorite activities include volleyball, hiking, crafts and hanging out with friends and family. She has two older brothers and a younger sister.

“I wouldn’t be who I am today without my great loving parents supporting me along the way,” she said. “I couldn’t have done anything without them.”

Taylor aspires to finish Central Arizona Valley Institute of Technology (CAVIT) to become a registered medical assistant and then attend Central Arizona College to obtain a degree in recreation and tourism management.

Her top achievements include balancing a 4.1 GPA, getting All-Region 2nd Team volleyball, and balancing high school, CAVIT and a part-time job. Her favorite memory is participating in Senior Night for the volleyball team.



CHLOE ZIMMERMAN
Maricopa High School

Chloe has many career goals. She plans to attend university in the Midwest to study elementary education. Chloe has plans to earn a master’s degree in the field and a Department of Defense Education Activity license.

“After this, I will teach on the Spangdahlem Air Base in Germany,” she said. “High school has helped me realize

my dreams and how I can achieve them, along with teaching me very valuable social skills to better myself.”

Chloe says her greatest MHS achievement is becoming head drum major of the marching band.

“My favorite high school memories are fishing at Copper Sky with the Fishing Club, a club I started, and bringing my cat, Nala, to meet everyone at marching band practice,” she said.

Victor Moreno

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Ernesto Elizade-Lopez



Natalia Espinoza-Vergara



Adarely Esquivel



Ruben Esteban



Charley Evans



Alfred Everett



Marionana Everistic



Emily Fauth



Maria Fernanda-Perez



Jose Fierro



Evan Figueroa



Jessilyn Figueroa



Joseph Figueroa



Robert Figueroa



Kellen Fitzgerald



Brenna Fitzpatrick



Itzia Mariana Flores



Jenae Ford



Justice Ford



Kylee Foster



Brent Fournier



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Patrick Frost



Veronica Fucito



Brenna Fulton



Claudia Garcia



Dalia Garcia



Denise Garcia



Cassidy Garner



Christopher Garner



Malina Garza



Caleb Gillies



Benaiah Gindiri



Roanne Gloria



Lesly Gonzalez



Chloe Gordon-Myers



Rori Gosiak



Ivan Guerrero



Lizbeth Guillen Corchado



McKinley Hacker



Jayden Hawkins



Tamura Hayes



Alexandria Haywood



Deja Hester



Joshua Paul Hodina



Destiny Hoehler



Noah Hoellwarth



Madison Hoffman



Emily Hollingsworth



Kaydaly Hunley



Mallorie Hunt



Arianna Garcia



Nicola Furbee



Haylie Galineau



Arianna Garcia



Gabriel Garcia



Ivon Garcia



Danny Garcia-Urquidez



Kylee Gifford



Isaiah Gil



Miguel Giles-Gomez



Jazmine Gomez-Castillo



Catherine Gonzalez



Diego Gonzalez



Lauren Grist



Amelia Gross



Si Liyah Guerir



Natalie Hanania



Tyler Hanks



Tanjim Hasan



Kate Herbig



Aleksio Hernandez



Melissa Hernandez



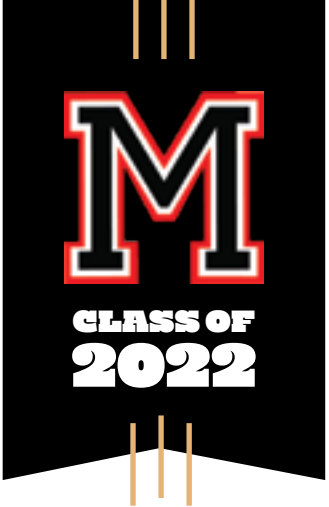
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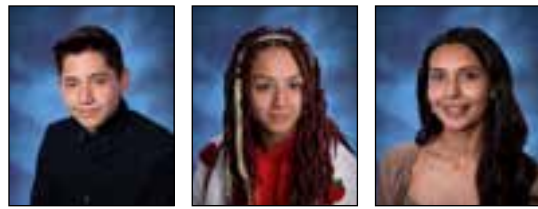


Arianna Garcia





Tanis Palmer David Parks Jonathan Parks



Jesus Pastrana Makena Patterson Danielle Pedro



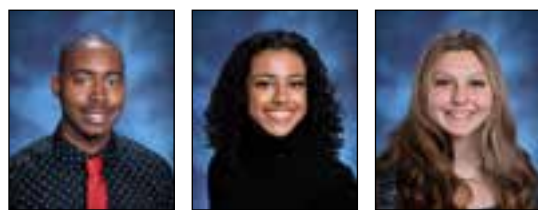
Genevieve Pierce Jordan Pierce Tage Pinkerton



Anel Porras Christopher Poteet Rheagan Potter



Stephanie Ramirez Khayree Rashed Mercedes Rayos



Julius Rhoden Amaya Richardson Victoria Richardson



Mariana Robles Joseangel Rocha Brianna Rodriguez



Pollett Rodriguez-Robles Kaden Rogers Raven Rogers



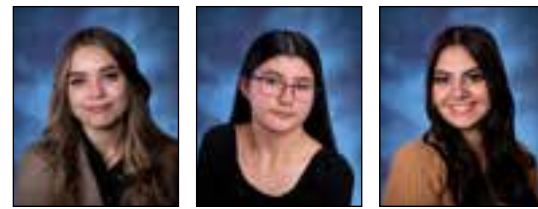
Maria Parra Roman Parra Ethan Pasten-Rosales



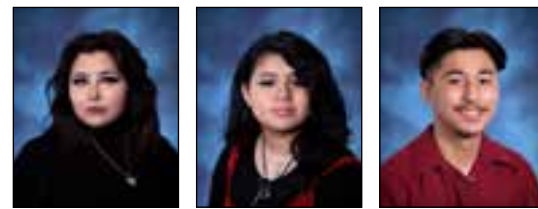
Alexia Perez Kaylan Peters Nicholas Phillips



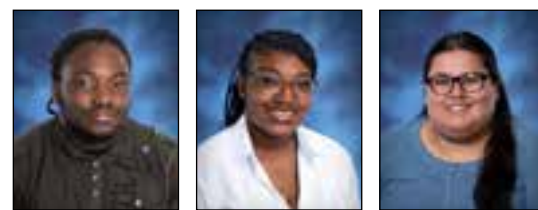
Marcellus Piwowar Aaron Platt Monique Ponce



Katelyn Quigg Haley Raffaele Arianah Ramirez



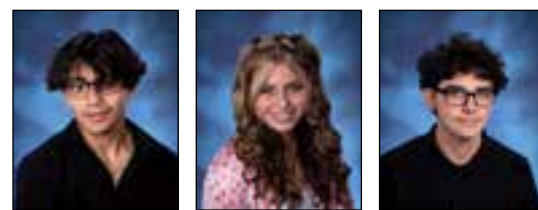
Korina Ramirez Bianca Rendon Jekav Reyes Baker



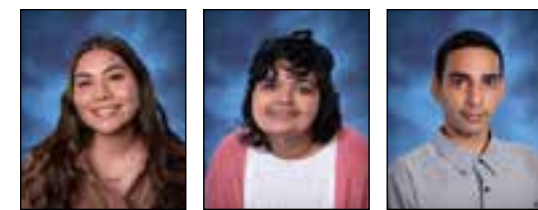
Bernadette Robles Jontae Robinson Temitra Robinson



Alexander Rodriguez-Ramirez Taylor Rodriguez Jocelyn Rodriguez



Daniel Rosales Xavier Rose Lexy Rowe



Aaliyah Rubalcaba Alexis Ruiz Isaiah Ruiz



Joseph Russoniello Victoria Salazar-Moreno Arlette Salazar-Atondo



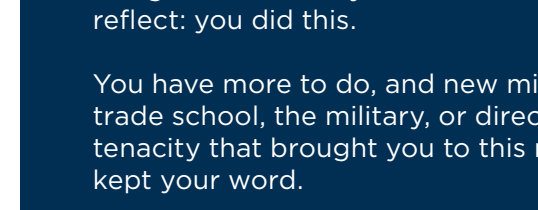
Yasmine Saldana Benicio Sanchez Kayden Sanchez Justine Sanchez Mora Sierra Sanhadja



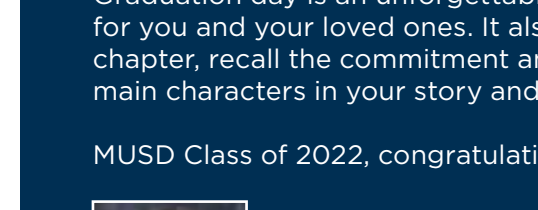
Eliza Santiago Leslye Santos-Contreras Sarina Saspe Mohammad Satti Aideal Sawyers



Chloe Saysana Jaydn Schlegel Janie Schlueter Connor Schrader Rafe Scoresby



Karla Segura-Rodriguez Destiny Shane Nathan Shearer Keegan Short Sheyla Sias Shawn Siebert



Sarmolue Siefa Cameron Simmons Kyra Simon Austin Skrnich Shelby Smith

2022 Message to Graduates

Dear Maricopa High School and Maricopa Virtual Academy Graduating Class of 2022,

Congratulations to you on this outstanding achievement! Before you move forward, pause and reflect: you did this.

You have more to do, and new milestones to reach. Whether your path takes you to college, trade school, the military, or directly into the workforce, remember it was your commitment and tenacity that brought you to this moment. You made a plan, and even when it was difficult, you kept your word.

Graduation day is an unforgettable celebration to commemorate a monumental accomplishment for you and your loved ones. It also signifies the end of a chapter. As you contemplate the next chapter, recall the commitment and tenacity that brought you here today. Make those qualities main characters in your story and you'll move mountains.

MUSD Class of 2022, congratulations on your graduation.



Sincerely,

Dr. Tracey Lopeman, Superintendent
MARICOPA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT





**Maricopa High School
Graduating Seniors
Not Pictured**

Veira M. Aguilera
Jaden R. Allen
Jacob D. Alvarado
Kamdikachukwu Anyigbo
Cristian Arguelles Maldonado
Emily Barba Mendoza
Dalton E. Basset
Jade I. Bencomo
Jaharri Boling-White

Tinson D. Brown
Kameryon W. Bryant
Frankie H. Carlyle
Sharon N. Carlyle
Genaro J. Carrillo Ruiz
Trent L. Ceal
Paul Chavis
Kamari A. Clinkscale
Jayden H. Cooke
Justin Cordova
Jesus H. Corella
Gage Cottrell
Joseph I. Cruz
Ethan J. Davis
Ralph K. Dejesus
Ernesto E. Espinoza
Jonathan Estrada Reyes
Jonathan D. Farinas
Jose A. Fierro
Dillon C. Flores
Mya O. Francisco
Andy Garcia
Knia N. Garcia
Valerie L. Garcia
Marcos F. Garcia
Roberto Garcia Flores
Eli R. Garrido
Zelda V. Gonzales
Destiny I. Gonzalez

Kaylyn Andrea Gosiaco
Aldan D. Hendershot
Nadia A. Hendershot
Chloe M. Hernandez
Ashley Herrera
Austin K. Hoffman
Sarah C. Hymer
Kyle E. Jones
Ralston A. Justin
Mary K. Le
Kendall N. Leonard
Jason Madrid Orduno
Maximilian Maldono
Mark A. Martinez
Gabrielle E. Mattox
Hilda Mendez Dominguez
Jose A. Miranda Arzola
Adam J. Molina
Julie Molina Rodriguez
Aydan S. Montoya
Ahmari R. Moody
Tyshaun L. Mooney
Kraset M. Moshi
Jessica Murrieta
Isaiah L. Olivares
Daniel J. Olivarez
Laura B. Ostler
Sione F. Otutoa
Randy J. Paniagua Tow

Tatyana M. Parmer
Dominic M. Perez
Jennifer G. Perez
Bryan J. Poirier
Amari D. Porter
Daniel Ramirez
David J. Ramos
Kieleigh L. Reddick
Mirella Retana Escoto
Albert M. Ruiz
Alexander M. Schriver
Keliyah A. Silva
Derin M. Silva-Rivera
Alexander A. Solarez
Brandon L. Sorenson
Elias R. Soto
Demani L. Spivey
Owen B. Svoboda
Emilee M. Thompson
Maurique D. Tuggle
Jonathan F. Turner
Pedro Varga Zavala
Yamileth A. Vazquez
Saul Valezquez Gutierrez
Prince Amari Victum
Joseph F. II Villa
Brian K. Visitor
Anthony L. Jr. Yarbrough

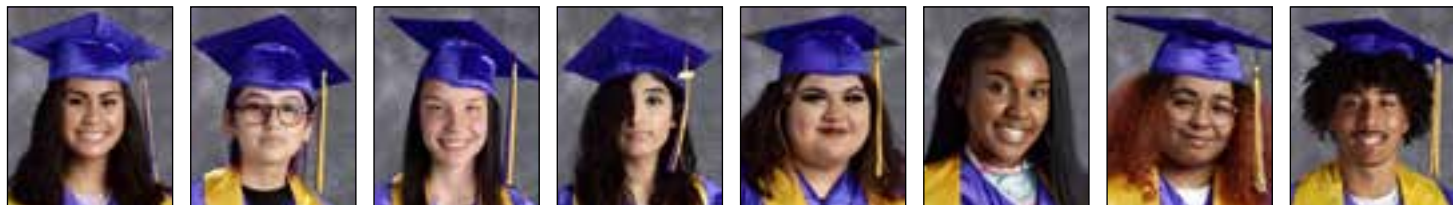


May your graduation
be the beginning of
many more wonderful
achievements in your
life. Wishing you much
success on your journey.





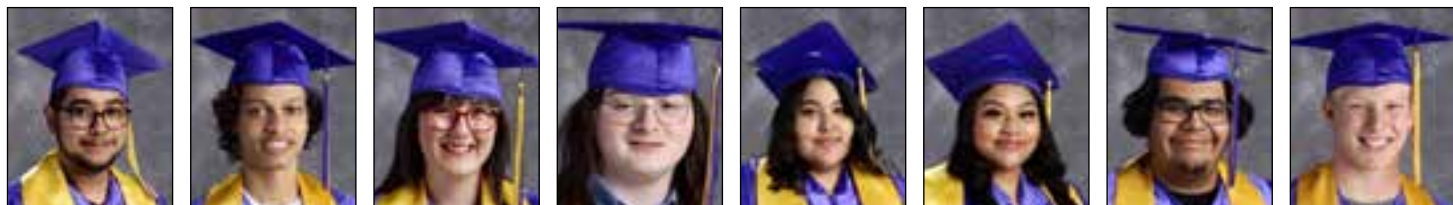
Sequoia Pathway Academy



Ayliah Anderson Sabrina Avielez Raven Bell Lillyana Blauvelt Sara Boggs Renea Cain Mireya Carral Curtis David



Ebba Debelo Micheal Easley Lizbeth Felix Yoselin Flores Jyrei Gamble Jeremiah Garcia John Garcia Mia Garcia



Victor Garcia Lorenz Glenn Emily Granus Jacob Greifer Alyssa Gutierrez Angel Gutierrez Favier Gutierrez Wyatt Hall



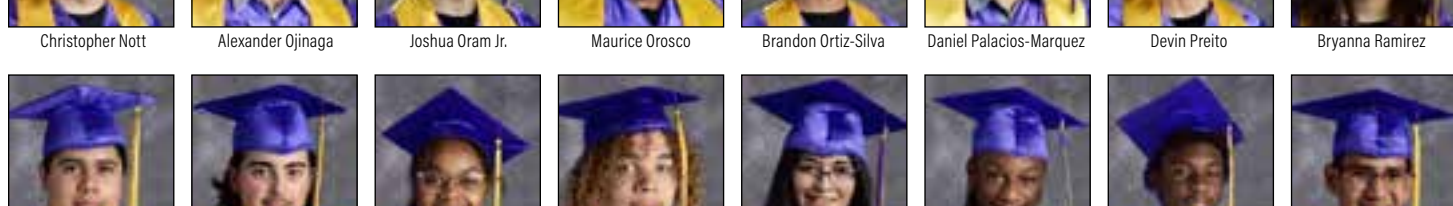
Brittany Hamwright Isabella Hopkins JaZayla James Zayne Janssen Esequiel Jaramillo Skylar King Weston Klee Tre-Matthew Lacey



Kelsea Laffin Brenden Lerch Zander Lloyd Daimon Lyons Bior Malual Arondai Miller Doronta Monterro William Morris



Christopher Nott Alexander Ojinaga Joshua Oram Jr. Maurice Orosco Brandon Ortiz-Silva Daniel Palacios-Marquez Devin Preito Bryanna Ramirez



Freddy Rivera Jonathan Romero-Dominguez Tyniya Scott Arick Sheppard-Stine Sabrina Stone Dalon Summons V'shon Summons Mario Torres



Amari Turner



Xavier Wade



Watson Kayla



David Williamham



Albert Wolford



Taylor Yon

Graduating Seniors Not Pictured

Ethen Axelsen
Jameshia Hughes
Kayla Lott
Raymond Sampaga



Heritage Academy



Kenzie Abercrombie



Xavier Aguilar



Brecken Bogle



Ana Carlson-Munoz



Mandy Carrol



Aidann Champley



Maxwell Cottam



Vincente Delgado

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CLASS OF 2022



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HOME

most expensive HOME SOLD



42119 W. Almira Court

SOLD

April 1

\$ 659,900

This two-story, seven-bedroom home on a cul-de-sac in Glennwilde has artificial grass, beautiful landscaping, a front porch and an RV gate. The kitchen is equipped with staggered cabinets, stone counters and a large island with breakfast bar. There is a den/office and bonus/game room. Upstairs features a loft and the master bedroom with an en suite bathroom and walk-in closet. The backyard has a covered patio with extended paver patio and ramada. The home was on the market for 78 days and sold for \$20,000 under the original list price.

Previously sold: No history

Community: Glennwilde

Square feet: 4,003

Price per square foot: \$164.85

Days on market: 78

Builder: Fulton Homes

Year built: 2019

Bedrooms: 7

Bathrooms: 4.5

2. 42061 W. Rummy Road, Province\$670,000

3. 22122 N. Reinbold Drive, Rancho El Dorado\$625,000

4. 21807 N. Greenway Drive, Rancho El Dorado.....\$616,500

5. 21947 N. Desert Park Court, Rancho El Dorado.....\$615,000

least expensive HOME SOLD

19939 N. Justin Drive

SOLD

March 21

\$ 265,000



This single-story manufactured home is in Maricopa Manor. With no HOA, this home has plenty of outdoor space, including an above-ground pool, two decks and three sheds. Inside, there is a large great room, dining area and a kitchen with plenty of counter space and a breakfast nook. Each of the three bedrooms has a walk-in closet. The home was on the market for three days and sold for \$30,000 over list price.

Previously sold for \$50,000 on Oct. 26, 2013

Community: Maricopa Manor

Square feet: 1,569

Price per square foot: \$168.90

Days on market: 3

Builder: Palm Harbor

Year built: 1997

Bedrooms: 3

Bathrooms: 2

2. 42469 W. Jawbreaker Drive, Province.....\$270,000

3. 42526 W. Candyland Place, Province\$279,900

4. 42791 W. Sunland Court, Rancho El Dorado.....\$299,995

5. 19270 N. Costa Verdez Ave., Tortosa\$305,000

Source: MLS, March 10 — April 9

Brian Petersheim Jr.

HOME



While helpful, a home warranty only goes so far

BY DAYV MORGAN

O

F THE ROUGHLY 21,000 EXISTING houses in the city limits of Maricopa, nearly 8,000 of them are at least 15 years old.

At that age, a home's systems begin to wear down. Some sellers, even in this market, may offer home warranties to put a buyer's mind at ease and offset some of these future costs. But there are coverage limits.

Take for example, a home's heating and air conditioning system. After 15 years, an HVAC

system is nearing the end of its life. While almost all warranties include HVAC repairs or replacement, they usually don't cover everything.

This is especially noticeable with older units using R-22 refrigerant, which can no longer be produced. If the compressor for the condenser unit needs to be replaced, the new system will come with R-410A refrigerant. This requires the other half of the system in the attic to also be replaced so that it is compatible. Since the portion in the attic was working properly, the warranty company may call it an "upgrade," and the \$3,000-\$4,000 needed to replace the other half may have to come out of your pocket.

Consider your roof. While it's unlikely you will have to replace all the concrete tiles on your roof, the felt paper underneath degrades over time. After 15 or 20 years of sitting in the hot Arizona sun, your roof may leak during Monsoon storms. Most warranty contracts have little or no coverage for roof leaks, and the cost to remove all your tiles, replace the felt, and re-install the same tiles could cost between \$8000 and \$12,000, depending on the size of the house.

It's also helpful to remember that most warranties don't cover repairs to the physical

structure of your home, such as interior or exterior walls, extensive plumbing and electrical repairs. And along those same lines, deck or pool repairs. New plaster for a pool averages \$7,000-8,000, with a higher cost for a pebble-tec interior.

New homes come with a builder's warranty, so you won't need to worry about most large-ticket items for a while. But if you have a home that's 15 years or older, it might be a good idea to keep an emergency fund on hand so you can make repairs as needed. A home warranty plan could come in handy to help close the sale of your home, or if you've just bought the home and some items got past the home inspection. Every company has different coverage options and limits, so be sure to read the fine print carefully.

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

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Purslane packs a nutritious punch

BY CRISTINA PROCTOR

I LOVE PLANTS; THEY HELPED save my life in their own special and unique way. They have also introduced me to some of the best friends I have ever had.

Throughout that process I learned tons of information about plants that both amazed me and set me free. Then the world went a bit crazy, and now, while everyone is discussing food scarcity, I find myself even more drawn to learning about what plants can do to provide everyone with food security.

Here we get to purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), one of many wild plants commonly known here as


“weeds.” Less commonly known is its standing as a food source in many places throughout the world. Purslane is packed with nutrition and is one of the few vegetables super-rich in omega-3 fatty acids. In fact, it has the highest recorded levels of omega-3s found in any land-based plant.

A 3.5-oz portion contains the following recommended daily requirements: Vitamin A, from beta-carotene, 26%; Vitamin C, 35%; magnesium, 17%; manganese, 15%; potassium, 14%; iron, 11%; and calcium, 7%. It also contains small amounts of vitamins B1, B2 and B3, folate, copper and phosphorus. The best part is you get all of this for the low, low cost of only 16 calories, making purslane one of the most nutrient-dense foods on the planet if calculating calorie-for-calorie.

Now, it's not all butterflies and rainbows, though butterflies love purslane. It should be known if you are prone to kidney stones you should use purslane with moderation and leave the seeds out of your culinary exploration. It contains oxalates and the seeds tend to have higher levels of them. It also tends to be saltier than other vegetables due to its succulent nature.



There are different varieties of purslane locally, including horse purslane (*Trianthema portulacastrum*), which is also edible but may irritate the throat. Some confuse purslane with spurge visually; this is important to mention because spurge is toxic. Be sure to properly identify any plant you are looking to munch on as most plants have look-alikes which should typically be avoided.

Purslane has a tart flavor with citrus undertones. Some say it tastes similar to spinach and watercress. It can be eaten raw, cooked like spinach, steamed, sautéed, juiced, boiled, pickled, drenched in butter, or added into a salad with some oil and vinegar. There's even a recipe for chimichurri online. 

References: ncbi.nlm.nih.gov, healthline.com, webmd.com

Cristina Proctor is a Master Gardener Volunteer with the University of Arizona.

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Aging — it happens

BY JOAN KOCZOR

NOT MANY LIKE IT, BUT, eventually, it happens to all of us, whether we like it or not.

We get older.

The aging process is long. Over time, we will experience several age-related changes. Some of us older adults may need long-term care, or assistance with physical activity. Others may have difficulty with everyday activities, such as laundry, preparing a meal or maintaining their home.

But physical changes are not the only problem as we age. We may experience emotional changes, such as feeling alone or estranged from family. Others may experience

cognitive decline, becoming forgetful or being unable to cope with minor issues that may affect their behavior.

Experts generally break down the aging process into five stages:

Stage 1: Independence. For most senior citizens, this stage lasts through their 50s and 60s. Many handle the basic everyday care and needs on their own without much help from others or family members.

Stage 2: Interdependence. Most seniors enter this stage in their 70s or 80s. It can be a time when seniors tend to become stubborn and want to do everything on their own, although they know, deep down, they really can't or would have a tough time doing so. They may be resistant to the idea of needing help. Many can do some things on their own, just a little slower.

Stage 3: Dependency. At this stage, age-related changes become more noticeable. Seniors may find it difficult to do everyday chores. Mental and physical activities become more challenging. Many will need to depend on others for driving or traveling to places they would normally take themselves. Adult children may need to step in to help their

aging parents, and to assist in every aspect of their parents' lives. A caregiver or a live-in family member may be needed to help monitor physical activity, prepare meals and manage medication.

Stages 4 and 5: In many cases, the Crisis Management and End-of-Life stages may intertwine. Many seniors need around-the-clock care, and assisted living facilities or hospice may be necessary. Often, it may seem like everything is OK until changes — which you have no control over — happen.

Each of us will go through these age-related changes in our own way. Situations vary from person to person. You need to learn to adapt to these changes with careful planning and adaptation to new situations as they occur. Certain stages come quicker and last longer for some. The idea is to be ready for whatever aging may bring.

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

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Watch out, I have things on my mind!

BY RON SMITH

I'VE HAD A BUNCH OF INTERESTING tidbits running through my mind the last few weeks.

InMaricopa magazine's focus last month on volunteerism struck a nerve with me. I want to thank Justin Griffin and InMaricopa for highlighting National Volunteer Month in the April edition. It is very important to recognize the contributions volunteers of all ages make to this community. There are a lot of very giving people who periodically deserve to be acknowledged for all the work they do to help others.

The Maricopa Pantry suffered a devastating fire. It lost over 40,000 pounds of food and several storage trailers. The food bank has been serving the community for 20 years and helps nearly 1,200 families a week. Last year, it distributed over 3 million pounds of food. They plan on rebuilding and, with help from organizations such as St. Mary's Food Bank, should be operational in some form by the time you read this. You can check their status at [Facebook.com/MaricopaPantry](https://www.facebook.com/MaricopaPantry) to see if there is something you can do to help them come back bigger and stronger.

I recently saw a reminder about our state's Homeowner Assistance Fund (HAF). About \$197 million came to Arizona from the U.S. Treasury as part of the American Rescue Plan Act. The program assists low-income homeowners who have experienced financial hardship related to COVID-19 (after Jan. 21, 2020). The assistance is intended to prevent foreclosure but can help with more than just mortgage payments. HAF can help with past-due utilities and internet service, insurance, property taxes and HOA fees. To check your eligibility and to apply visit haf.azhousing.gov.

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is designed to help low-income

households pay for broadband service and internet-connected devices. If your household is eligible, you can receive:

- Up to a \$30 per month discount on your internet service.
- Up to a \$75 per month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands.
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet or desktop computer (with a co-payment of between \$10 and \$50).

Go to acpbenefit.org/do-i-qualify to see if you qualify.

Finally, a couple of shout-outs to Arizona homebuilders. As you may know, I've been advocating for a better home product for retirees. I want to see new homes that provide a better level of safety and comfort utilizing Universal Design features. Universal Design offers improved safety and comfort, and greater adaptability to future lifestyle changes, which greatly enhances the ability to age-in-place in your forever home.

I recently visited Del Webb's Sun City Anthem at Merrill Ranch. I found that Del Webb has included several very important features as part of their standard design: a zero-step entrance from the garage, wider doorways and wider hallways. By altering the footprint

of their designs, these changes make the home safer and more comfortable and eliminate most of the expensive renovations required when trying to accommodate a wheelchair or a walker following a fall. In fact, these features help prevent falls — the No. 1 source of injury to seniors.

By incorporating Universal Design principles into their standard features, Del Webb recognized the value to their target buyers and did the responsible thing for all homes targeted to retirees. There is nothing that shouts "handicapped living" in these houses, but when the time comes, they are ready.

My other shout-out goes to Shea Homes. Not because they have incorporated Universal Design as of yet, but because of their retirement planning tools. Their Resource Guide is a very nice planning tool if you are starting to plan for your retirement home.

Ron Smith is a living-in-place advocate, a member of the Age-Friendly Maricopa Advisory Committee, a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist and a Certified Living in Place Professional.

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THINGS TO DO

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

3

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

5

Teen Support Group
6:30 p.m., Northern Lights Therapy
21300 N. John Wayne Pkwy., Suite 103

6

MOPS — A Group for Moms
9 a.m., Copper Sky
44345 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

9

Friends of the Library meeting
5:30 p.m., Maricopa Library & Cultural Center
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

Planning & Zoning Commission meeting

6 p.m., City Hall
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza

11

Dementia Support Group
10 a.m., Maricopa Senior Center
41614 W. Smith-Enke Road, Suite 100

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

14

2nd Annual Golf Tournament to benefit American Diabetes Association
6:30 a.m., Southern Dunes Golf Club
48456 W. State Route 238

17

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

19

Teen Support Group
6:30 p.m., Northern Lights Therapy
21300 N. John Wayne Pkwy., Suite 10

20

MOPS — A Group for Moms
9 a.m., Copper Sky
44345 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Sundays

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

Mondays

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

Alcoholics Anonymous

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

Tuesdays

Maricopa Cruise-in
5 p.m., Parking lot behind Burger King
20699 N. John Wayne Pkwy.

Alcoholics Anonymous

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

Celebrate Recovery Small Group Meeting

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

Wednesdays

Alcoholics Anonymous
7 p.m., Mountain 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.

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., Mountain View Community Church
50881 W. Papago Road

ALL EVENTS ARE TENTATIVE



For details on these and other local events — and to list your own — visit InMaricopa.com/Calendar.

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Splash pad at Copper Sky opens

Police release video of vandals at The Duke

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\$4M project to help alleviate traffic jams

TRENDING



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Special needs school continues to grow



Multi-family units planned adjacent to Estrella Gin



City fogs at Copper Sky to address mosquitoes



O'Halleran joins bipartisan bill on border immigration



City council changes meeting time



Orbital set to dramatically increase internet speeds



Primary brings big change for campaign sign placement



Candidates set for city council primary race

POLL



The Maricopa City Council voted to approve a project that would add lanes to John Wayne Parkway between Smith-Enke Road and the northern city limits. What do you think?

Yes! It is needed.

It is needed but not worth a year of construction traffic.

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Taking notice of a furry neighbor

Chrystenn Kammerer captured this round-tailed ground squirrel just west of Rancho Mirage in May 2021. She used a Canon SX60HS.

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consideration as next month's "parting shot!"

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★★★ MEMORIAL DAY ★★★

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EARN
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ACTIVATE
Activate your free & earned entries Monday, May 30, 2022 from 11AM – 7:45PM at a designated Promotional Kiosk.

WIN
Drawings will take place on Monday, May 30, 2022 for cash prizes every 15 minutes starting at Noon.

Finale Drawing for \$10,000 IN CASH and all unclaimed prizes will take place on Monday, May 30, 2022 at 8PM

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TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER: Must earn 200 Tier Credits on your first trip to qualify for progression. If not earned, guests will receive a 2X multiplier each day. Must swipe and activate at a Promotional Kiosk between 8AM and 11:59PM each Promotional Day to participate and opt-in. Missed swipes and/or activations will not be awarded retroactively. Earning begins at 7AM on Promotional Day and ends at 5:30AM the following day. For example, for a 5X multiplier, a participant earning 100 Tier Credits on a slot machine will have 400 Tier Credits added into their account for a total of 500 Tier Credits. Only Tier Credits earned on Promotional Day applies. Tier Credits may take up to 5 business days following the end of the promotional period to be posted into your account.

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