



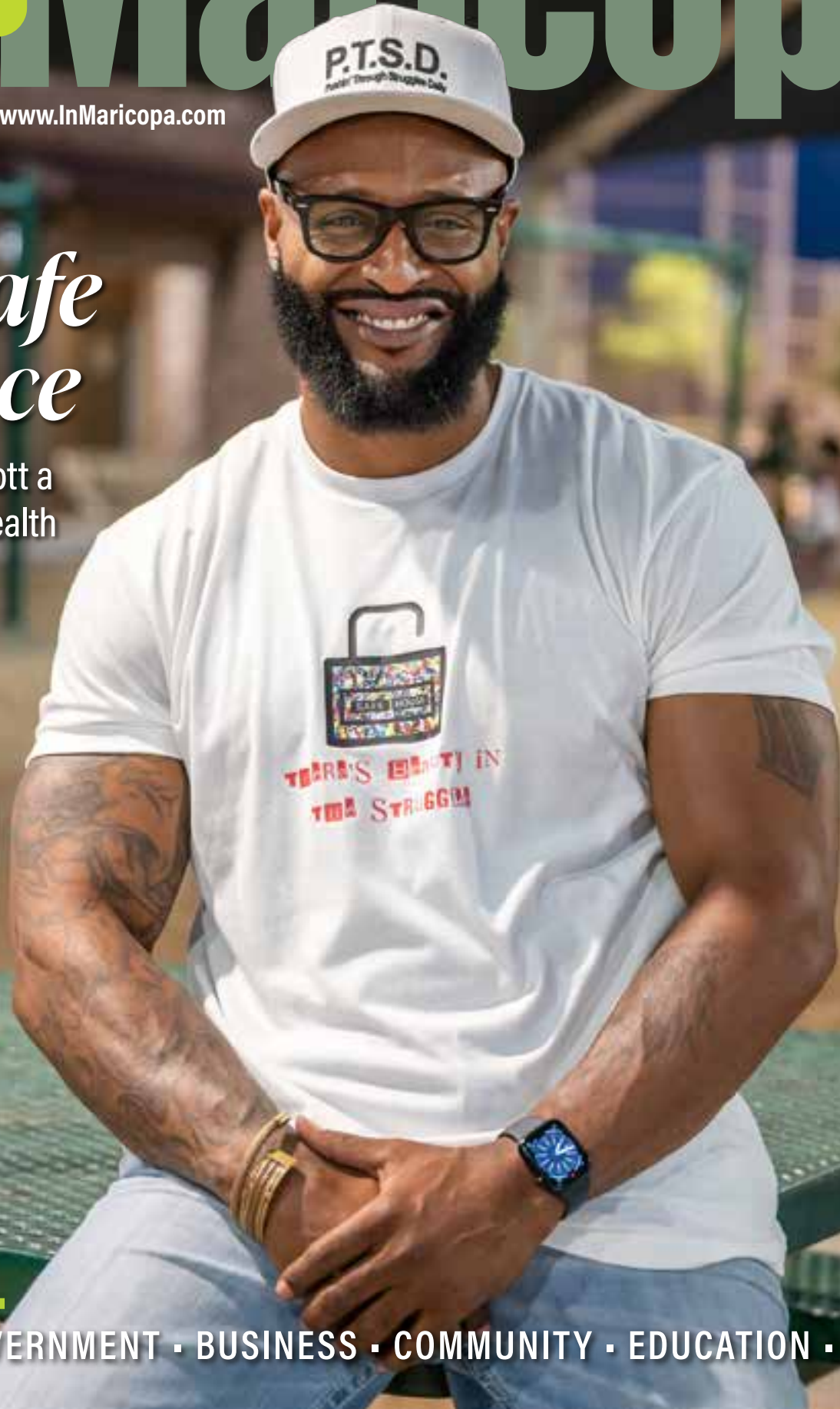
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June 2023

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Jelani Elliott a mental health advocate for teens



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21555R17 Assurance All-Season 94H BLK.....	\$180.99
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26570R16 Truck Radial 111T.....	\$136.99	LT26575R16 Truck Radial 10PLY.....	\$159.99
24565R17 Truck Radial 105T.....	\$143.99	LT24570R17 Truck Radial 1165.....	\$151.99
26570R17 Truck Radial 113T.....	\$152.99	LT24575R17 Truck Radial 10PLY.....	\$169.99
24560R18 Truck Radial 105H.....	\$152.99	LT27565R18 Truck Radial 120Q.....	\$198.99
27555R20 Truck Radial 117V.....	\$183.99	LT27570R18 Truck Radial 1225.....	\$193.99
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State or local taxes or surcharges for Environmental protection will be an extra charge.



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ON THE COVER

Bryan Mordt photographed Jelani Elliott at Express Fest in May. Elliott has started Safe House, a support group for youngsters ages 14-19.

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6/3/2023	9AM - 3PM	The Arizona Forum	2301 S Stearman Rd Chandler, AZ 85286
6/5/2023	12PM - 4PM	Arizona College Preparatory High School - Gilbert	4477 S Gilbert Rd Chandler, AZ 85249
6/6/2023	12PM - 4PM	Arizona College Preparatory High School - Gilbert	4477 S Gilbert Rd Chandler, AZ 85249
6/8/2023	12PM - 4PM	District 3, SACATON, Service Center	18 E Pima St Sacaton, AZ 85147
6/10/2023	12AM - 4PM	District 6, KOMATKE, Service Center	5230 St Johns Rd, Laveen Village, AZ 85339
6/13/2023	9AM - 3PM	Gila River Resorts & Casinos Wild Horse Pass Casino	Acacia Ballroom 5040 Wild Horse Pass Blvd Chandler, AZ 85226
6/15/2023	12PM - 4PM	District 4, SANTAN	1510 West Sesame Street Sacaton, AZ 85147
6/17/2023	12PM - 4PM	Casa Grande Community Rec. Center	1905 N Pearl Rd Casa Grande, AZ 85128
6/20/2023	12PM - 4PM	Central Arizona College Signal Peak Campus, Casa Grande	8470 N Overfield Rd Coolidge, AZ 85128
6/22/2023	12PM - 4PM	District 5, CASA BLANCA, District Center	Multipurpose Building, Gymnasium 3456 W Casa Blanca Rd Bapchule, AZ 85121
6/24/2023	12PM - 4PM	District 7, MARICOPA COLONY, Service Center	8035 S 83rd Ave Laveen Village, AZ 85339
6/27/2023	12PM - 4PM	Chandler - Gilbert Community College Pecos Campus	2626 E Pecos Rd Chandler, AZ 85225
6/29/2023	12PM - 4PM	District 4, SANTAN, Service Center	1510 West Sesame Street Sacaton, AZ 85147

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A sense of service

LIKE A CATERPILLAR ESCAPING THE COCOON for the last time as a butterfly, it's remarkable to see how each magazine develops here at InMaricopa each month.

More often than not, there's a theme to each issue. It's seldom planned, but it always seems to appear.

The underlying theme to this month's issue is service.

One local business, Crumbl Cookies, offers a service, sharing their leftover gourmet cookies at the end of each day with the police, fire department and medical workers. A cynic might argue the shop would have those leftovers regardless, but they're paying their employees at the end of the day to deliver these cookies and brighten the days of those who spend their lives serving us.

Our cover story is about Jelani Elliott and his efforts in creating Safe House to help youths looking for a place to fit in and who might be struggling to deal with the challenges of living in a chaotic society. Growing up can be tough, and knowing someone is willing to lend a hand has to be a relief to some kids. And such an endeavor on Elliott's part is a service to the community.



It goes further, look at Marla Baker and her business, We Care Maricopa, which was founded out of a need to provide care for seniors and the disabled. This should matter to all of us. We all have older relatives who, if they don't need help now, one day will. And, time waits for no one. We are all aging each day and we may find ourselves or our loved ones in such a situation. We're glad Marla cares.

Glassblower Mike Dearth, on the surface an artist simply working his craft, serves by teaching lessons across Maricopa and helping other artists get recognition.

InMaricopa is in the service business, too. To that end, we want to know how best to serve you. Please take a few minutes (by June 15) and give us your input via InMaricopa.com/Survey2023. Please let us know what we are doing well and, more importantly, how we can improve.

As always, thanks for reading our magazine.

SCOTT BARTLE
PUBLISHER
Scott@InMaricopa.com

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HARRIET PHELPS

In this issue, Harriet writes about the challenges of maintaining mental health and what it takes to care for tropical plants in a dry climate. Maybe gardening is a form of therapy in itself.



DAYV MORGAN

Dayv, the owner of HomeSmart Success, compares the costs of renting an apartment or a house against buying a house.



JAY TAYLOR

This month, Jay returned to write about a business owner's efforts to help the morale of first-line responders in the city with a thank-you — and some delicious cookies.



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Rancho El Dorado

Rancho El Dorado, as seen in a 2007 aerial photo courtesy of El Dorado Holdings, and as it sits 16 years later.

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THIS MONTH BACK IN...

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



2008

Anthony Smith was sworn in as mayor by Judge Scott Sulley after he was unopposed in the primary election. Marvin Brown, Carl Diedrich and Marquisha Griffin also took oaths after being elected to the city council, joining Joe Estes, Edward Farrell and Brent Murphree.



2013

The Copper Sky Lake was filled with 17.8 million gallons of water for the first time, making it the second city-owned lake after Pacana Park. The lake, Maricopa's first catch-and-keep fishing location, opened a year before Copper Sky Recreation Complex to irrigate the park's turf and landscaping.



2018

Maricopa firefighters doused three house fires in a span of a week. Homes in Senita, Desert Passage and Tortosa were damaged, prompting an "After the Fire" presentation by the fire department at the Senita home emphasizing fire prevention.

Brian Petersheim Jr. | El Dorado Holdings



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The Sonoran Desert Parkway will open later this summer as scheduled, according to the city, which is paying for its construction, despite the Ak-Chin Indian Community disputing a right-of-way easement granted to Pinal County in 1990.

Ak-Chin requests, city resists halt to road construction

BY MONICA D. SPENCER

THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS sent a cease-and-desist letter to the city of Maricopa in May to halt construction near the forthcoming Sonoran Desert Parkway.

In a news release, the Ak-Chin Indian Community stated the BIA got involved after Ak-Chin requested on multiple occasions the city stop construction on the \$30 million project to address right-of-way road assignments across tribal lands. Although the community said it supports the construction of the parkway, they claim the city “neglected to follow federal law to obtain proper right-of-way” along State Route 347.

“Like any landowner, the Ak-Chin Indian Community has the legal right and responsibility to protect its property from trespass,” said Ak-Chin Chairman Robert Miguel.

The announcement came just days after construction began for road improvements and traffic signals at the intersection of John Wayne and Ak-Chin parkways, which will join with Sonoran Desert Parkway by early fall.

The city, however, asserts the claims are incorrect.

“(Maricopa) affirms that the Sonoran Desert Parkway has been and will be done in full legal compliance, and in the best interests of public safety,” said city spokesman Quinn Konold.

The contested area exists in a 50-foot easement, a strip of land near the left-most southbound lanes that allows for construction. The area was previously under jurisdiction of Pinal County, but the Arizona Department of Transportation transferred maintenance of segments of SR347 to Maricopa in September 2022. The city took ownership of portions of the roadway Dec. 16.

However, on Sept. 29, Miguel sent a letter to ADOT and the city stating Ak-Chin did not consent to the transfer for roadway on tribal land between Juan Street and Steen Road.

They repeated this demand in three additional letters sent to the city in November and December. Two of these included cease-and-desist letters.

Deputy City Manager Benjamin Bitter explained the contested area is currently not part of the construction.

“(These are) two different projects, two different concepts that need to be separated but, for some reason, people keep wanting to bring them together and that isn’t appropriate,” said Bitter. “It doesn’t make a lot of sense.”

Miguel, in an earlier letter, argued the move encroaches on Ak-Chin land without permission.

Bryan Moridt

in Maricopa READER SURVEY



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“Federal law requires notice and approval of the Community and Bureau of Indian Affairs before any ROW assignment is valid,” wrote Miguel in a Nov. 7 letter. “The Community is the owner of such lands and has significant interests in rights-of-way across its land, entry and access onto its lands, and construction along and nearby its Reservation.

“Any roadway construction and improvements within the ROW and/or related to the Sonoran Desert Parkway Project must include input from the Community,” Miguel said.

BIA controls ROW assignments on tribal lands to assist in managing and protecting tribal lands and resources, as well as promoting tribal self-determination and economic development. The approval process can take up to 60 days.

“This is truly an unfortunate situation, as our Community supports the Desert Sonoran Parkway (sic) project and would like to see this work completed as quickly as possible,” Miguel said. “If the City of Maricopa had sought right-of-way assignment last summer when we formally raised this issue, it is likely the transfer would have been completed and roadway work could be underway at this time.”



“We’ve told our citizens that we would have (the parkway) open this summer, and we remain committed to that.”

BENJAMIN BITTER
DEPUTY CITY MANAGER

Konold maintains the city attempted to address these issues in a timely manner.

“The assertion that the city has been slow or negligent in adhering to this process is incorrect,” Konold said. “Within 10 days of

this turnover (on Dec. 16), ADOT requested that the BIA assign the Easement to the City of Maricopa. BIA failed to act on this request, or provide any communication on the same, until May 4th.”

Slow or not, construction continues. The only obstacle Bitter saw impacting commuters involved a delay in traffic signals at the intersection. The signal box currently sits on the contested easement.

“We haven’t moved forward with the signalization of that intersection because we don’t want to create any conflict in that area,” Bitter said. “We’re also contemplating moving the signal box so that we can have it on our right-of-way.”

Bitter also explained even with this kerfuffle over right-of-way assignments and threats to halt progress, the city is still dedicated to its timeline.

“We’ve told our citizens that we would have (the parkway) open this summer, and we remain committed to that,” he said.

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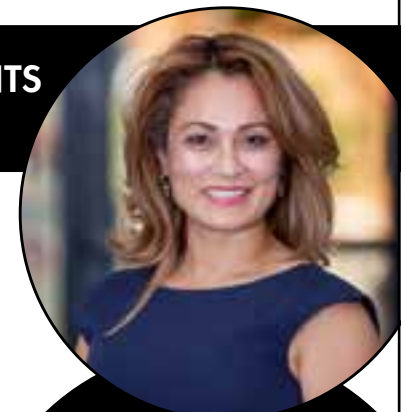
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New Resolutions & Ordinances

ORD 23-22: On April 4, zoning codes for cannabis facilities were adopted, updating the minimum distance from schools and definitions.

RES 23-23: On April 18, the city adopted a new policy on roadside memorials, restricting the size of memorials and how long they may stand in a location.

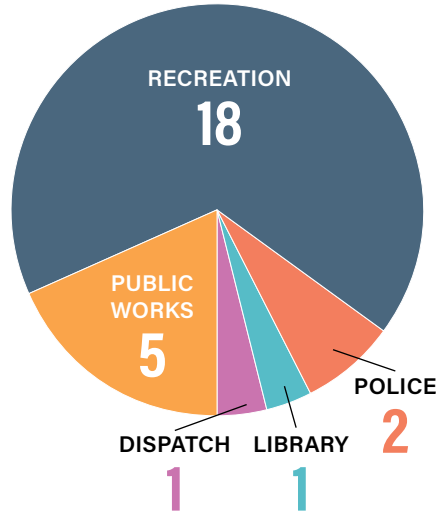
RES 23-20: On April 18, the city appointed all members of the Planning & Zoning Commission to serve as members of the Transit Advisory Committee.

ORD 23-24: On May 2, the city adopted a \$20 administrative fee collected from court fines to fund improvements to the court.

NEW CITY STAFF

APRIL 10-MAY 9

The city of Maricopa hired 27 new employees.



Recreation positions are part-time, and police includes one intern.

Permits Issued

April 12-May 12

COMMERCIAL

Maricopa 35 LLC for a leasing office, fitness studio and pool bathroom and storage at Innovation Villas at West Maricopa at a cost of \$424,000.

A commercial shade structure at **EVR @ Porter** at a cost of \$25,000. The contractor is Shade Industries, Inc.

Restaurant tenant improvements valued at \$927,000 for Edison Pointe. The owner is **Queen Creek Fiesta LLC** and the contractor is Laurshan Construction LLC.

Tenant improvements for **Art of Fades Barber Lounge** and **Nektar** at Edison Pointe each for \$100,000.

Iconic Tire will build a \$10,000 enclosure at Maricopa Town Plaza. The contractor is Maxbilt Inc.

Innovation Villas at West Maricopa will add three garages at a cost of \$57,000 each. The contractor is T & K Contracting LLC.

Lennar Arizona LLC will build a \$450,000 model home sales office at Anderson Farms.

RESIDENTIAL

Bungalows on Bowlin LLC for eight one-bedroom units, 12 two-bedroom units and eight three-bedroom dwellings at Bungalows on Bowlin.

Maricopa 365 LLC 18 permits for two-bedroom apartments at Innovation Villas at West Maricopa.

D.R. Horton to build 46 homes at Sorrento Phase II.

CW Tortosa LLC to build five homes at Tortosa South. The contractor is Ashton Woods.

Pulte Homes Company for two homes at Santa Rosa Crossing.

Lennar Arizona to build 25 homes at Anderson Farms.

D.R. Horton for nine homes at The Lakes at Rancho El Dorado.

Richmond American Homes of Arizona will build eight homes at The Lakes at Rancho El Dorado, Phase III.

Meritage Homes of Arizona for 15 homes at Province. They will also build 10 homes at the Trails at Tortosa.

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Gettin' the job done

Clockwise from top: Robert Silva oversees work on installing water lines at the site of the new Maricopa Police station. | Councilmember Eric Goettl discusses the new court enhancement fund, which will include a \$20 administrative fee collected from court fines. | Fifteen decorated horses dot the city part of a community arts initiative by City Manager Rick Horst. | Mayor Nancy Smith and Fire Chief Brad Pitassi announce a proclamation on water safety.



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Safety upgrades begin

The Maricopa Unified School District Governing Board approved renovation of the main entrances and offices of Maricopa Elementary School and Maricopa Wells Middle School. The district will add barriers and another set of doors this summer.



Robert Downey



Jacob Harmon

Downey, Harmon join Board of Trustees

During a regular meeting on May 10, the Maricopa Unified School District Governing Board appointed its president, Robert Downey, to the Board of Trustees and district Chief Financial Officer Jacob Harmon as the group's chairman. They join community members Megan Purvis, Ben Owens and Rick Abel on the 5-person board established in May to assist in decision-making based on the community's expectations and needs.

EdRising students head to nationals

EdRising students from Maricopa and Desert Sunrise high schools are heading to Orlando, Fla. for the Educators Rising National Conference. From June 29 to July 2, the future teachers will showcase their skills competing for national titles, network with other members and learn from influential keynote speakers.



More grades, fewer days

After facing the state board on May 8, A+ Charter Board received unanimous approval for many changes including expanding to 6th grade and implementing a four-day week. Interested families can begin enrolling in 6th grade for next school year. A+ faculty is eager to watch their student population and morale grow.



Free math bootcamps for high schoolers offered

Faculty from the Central Arizona College Math department are offering math bootcamps in-person and online to help high school students who have taken or will take dual enrollment courses. Live streaming camps will take place June 5-8, and in-person camps are June 12-15, June 26-29, July 17-20 and Aug. 7-10. Registration is free.

CAC receives \$3 million grant

Central Arizona College has been awarded a federal grant worth nearly \$3 million aimed at retaining Hispanic and other traditionally underrepresented students. The five-year grant will support various programs and initiatives, including revising education courses to address relevancy and coordinating curriculums to address students' basic needs.

Orientation set

Central Arizona College is offering New Student Orientation at its Maricopa Campus 4-6 p.m. on Aug. 14 to help students prepare for fall classes. Orientations are open to prospective students, current students, parents and guests.

CentralAZ.edu/orientation



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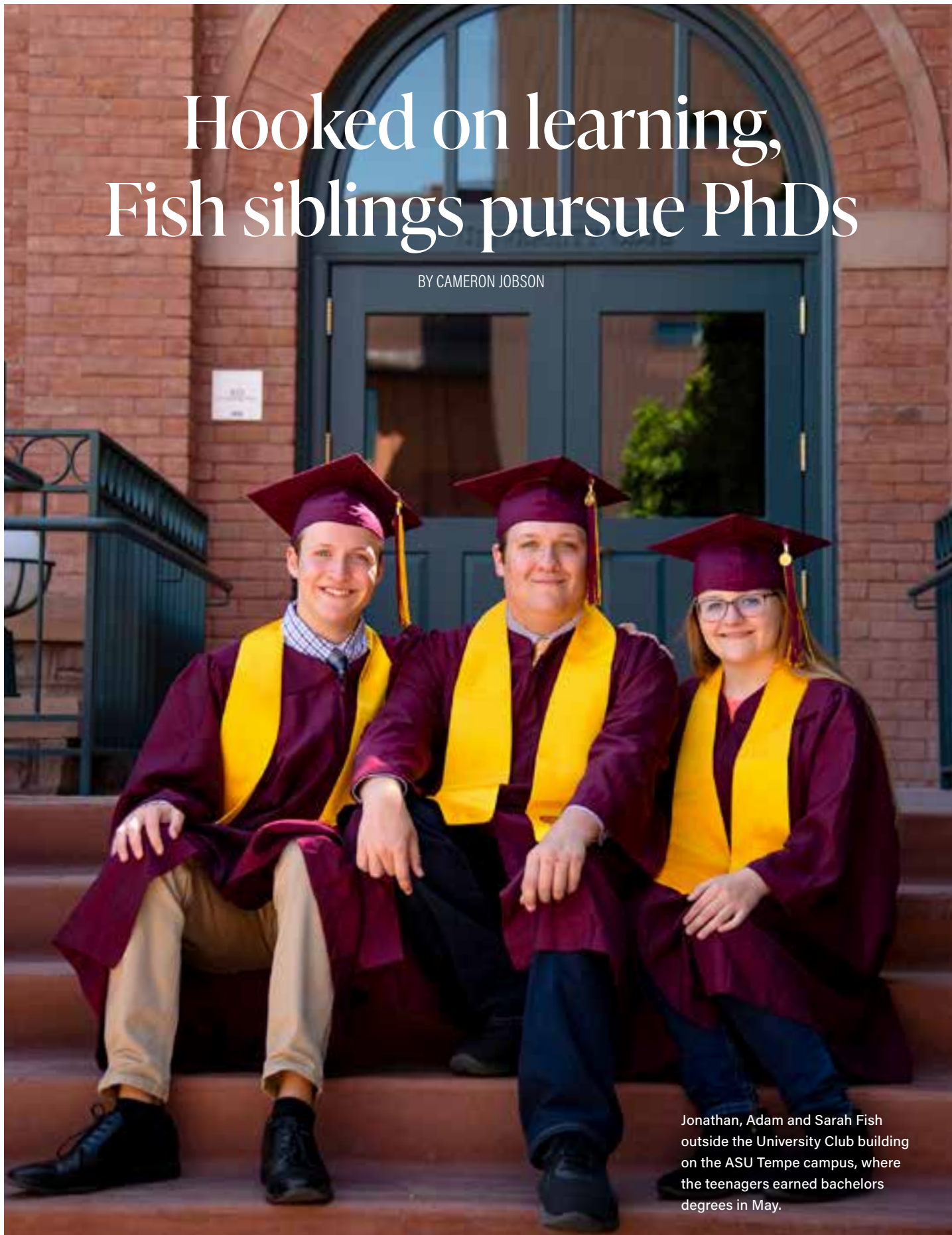


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Hooked on learning, Fish siblings pursue PhDs

BY CAMERON JOBSON



Jonathan, Adam and Sarah Fish outside the University Club building on the ASU Tempe campus, where the teenagers earned bachelors degrees in May.

Monica D. Spencer

ATRIO OF SIBLINGS FROM Maricopa are making waves in the world of science.

Sarah, Jonathan and Adam Fish are pursuing their PhDs in biological sciences after flying through their undergraduate studies at Arizona State University.

For the past four years, the siblings have been on the same trajectory — whether writing lab reports at home or walking across the graduation stage. However, it was 19-year-old Adam who paved the way for his younger siblings.

“I was, in some ways, the one who started this whole thing,” Adam said.

Adam’s academic journey began at Maricopa High School, where he found his passion for science in anatomy class.

“I just really grew to love the field,” Adam said. “Most of my motivation comes from how much I love learning.”

After his sophomore year, Adam took the Accuplacer, a placement test for community college, and received an irresistible offer from Sequoia Choice, which agreed to pay for his college classes if he attended through them.

“I placed into high enough classes,” Adam said. “So, I made the transition.”

Encouraged by Adam’s success, Jonathan, 17, and Sarah, 16, also took the Accuplacer and tested into the same classes.

All three siblings decided to start school at the same time and attended Sequoia Choice Arizona Distance Learning from 2019-2021, taking advantage of concurrent enrollment to get a jump start on their college curriculum.

They navigated online school and advanced courses, transferring to Arizona State in 2021 to finish their bachelor’s degrees.

Adam, Jonathan and Sarah found their footing at the four-year university.

“I kind of got thrown into this,” Sarah said. “But I got motivation as I was going along.”

“And over time, I became really interested in science and I’ve become really passionate about it over the few years,” Jonathan added. “So now I’m excited to progress in the field.”

The ‘science’ of success

On May 12, the Fish siblings reached a major milestone in their academic careers as they walked across the stage at ASU to receive their bachelor’s degrees in Biological Sciences.

While all three siblings shared an interest in biology, they each had a different area of focus: Adam specialized in genetics, Jonathan developmental biology and Sarah cell biology.

They each found different passions throughout their continuous 18-credit semesters and



Siblings Jonathan, Adam and Sarah Fish work on a biology experiment inside a classroom of the Life Sciences building at the ASU Tempe campus.

found their footing in their respective fields.

“In my genetics class, we actually made a plant glow,” Adam said. “We genetically engineered a plant and made it express a glowing protein.”

Sarah’s interest piqued in cell biology and physiology.

“At first, it doesn’t seem like there’s much to know about a cell,” she said. “But once you get into these classes, you realize they have all these signaling pathways and then all the other classes seem to build from there.”

For Jonathan, his developmental biology class was a turning point.

“That’s kind of when everything started to click,” he said. “Seeing the process of cells on a micro scale is just really cool too.”

All in a day’s work

The Fish siblings are no strangers to a busy schedule. Between lectures, lab reports, research, homework and exams, their daily routines are jam-packed.

But that is not all — they are also paying for most of their education out of their own pockets.

Outside Adam’s \$40,000 Presidential Scholarship from Sequoia Choice and a \$2,500 scholarship Sarah received, the teenagers are carrying the financial burdens of their educations.

To tackle student loans and tuition bills, Adam, Jonathan and Sarah work at Copper Sky Recreational Center.

Sarah started working as a lifeguard last year and is now becoming a swim instructor.

Jonathan has been a lifeguard and instructor for over a year and just got promoted to head guard, while Adam has been the head guard the last three years.

While they try to limit their working days to Saturday and Sunday, it is safe to say the Fish do not get much free time.

More times than not, their day starts before the sun comes up, traveling together to Tempe almost daily, preparing for hours of schoolwork on campus.

“Sometimes we have to head out to school at 5:30 in the morning,” Adam said. “Then we have our labs that we’ll do that are 3-4 hours, some lectures, then we can start to drive home.”

Accounting for rush-hour traffic, they don’t get home until 6 p.m., making 12-hour days the norm.

Luckily, each semester, the siblings try to take the same classes, which provide built-in study partners, carpooling and lab groups.

“It’s really useful actually,” Jonathan said. “Plus, we all live in the same house; we get to talk about science at the dinner table.”

“I think at this point, our parents have grown to accept the weirdness,” Adam added.

Planning for PhD, medical school

Following their recent graduation, the Fish siblings are already working toward their next goal.

While all three say medical school is their end goal, they are pursuing doctoral degrees as an ambitious “back-up plan.”

Adam and Sarah are jumping into graduate

school this August, hoping to secure their degrees within the next three years.

“I’ve become more and more interested in some of the biochemistry fields and research aspects,” Adam said. “So, I’m hoping to get my PhD in that field.”

Sarah hopes to get a doctorate in development, continuing her education from her undergraduate career.

In the meantime, Jonathan will be serving a two-year mission with his church, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and saving up some money.

Long-term, education remains a priority for Jonathan.

“Right now, I want to get a job, pay off my student loans,” he said. “And then following my mission, I want to get my PhD.”

Considering their fast-paced nature, the future of the Fish siblings is always evolving. But their unwavering determination is a testament to their potential to succeed in any pursuit.

Fish family

When it comes to the Fish family, Adam, Jonathan and Sarah are not the only ones who



The Fish siblings, who graduated in May, stand beside a sculpture celebrating the class of 2023 in front of Old Main on the Arizona State University campus.

fell into the sciences — it is an integral part of their family conversation.

Their two older sisters are nurses, and the oldest Fish brother works in biology and obtained his degree in Biological Sciences. Adam said he drew a lot of inspiration from his older brother, wanting to learn more about his studies and findings.

And as time went on, biological sciences were not only the study of life, but became the Fish’s way of life. Even in his limited free time,

Adam said he likes to apply his knowledge to his daily life, trialing old experiments and even producing his own.

From making the grass in his front yard glow, to turning latex gloves into hot sauce, he said he has endless ideas that are stirring in his mind.

“If I could do anything with more time,” he said, “I would just kind of mess around more with knowledge that’s I’ve learned at school.”

Monica D. Spencer



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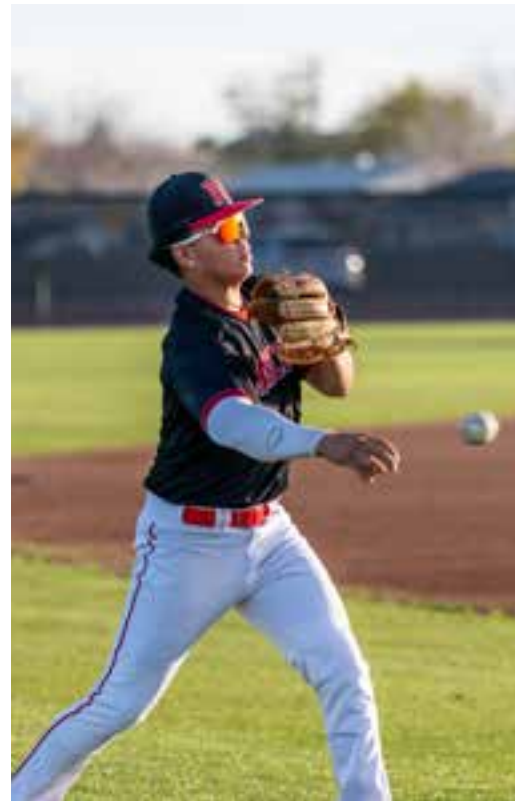
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Reaching new heights

Clockwise from top: The Maricopa Boys Volleyball team took on Shadow Ridge High School. | Team captain Cody Gallardo warms up before a Rams baseball game against Gila Ridge. | Maricopa basketball players Tristan Walters and Andrew Hoxie signed to play college basketball. Walters will play at Coe College in Iowa and Hoxie will play at Phoenix Prep. Pictured, from left are Pamela Hoxie, Thomas Hoxie, Andrew Hoxie, Tristan Walters Jr. and Tristan Walters Sr. | Lindsay Sulik teaches preschool at Maricopa Elementary School. | Maricopa Wells Middle School students Savannah Gores, Jennika Thomas, Asher Lanka and Hunter Benton work on their lines during a rehearsal for Variety Fairytale show.



Bryan Mordt

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Artist brings ideas to life – in glass

BY CAMERON JOBSON

IN A SMALL, MAKESHIFT STUDIO tucked away in a quiet corner of Maricopa, Mike Dearth stands hunched over a glowing torch, carefully shaping a small piece of molten glass into a delicate bead.

Dearth's studio is a dark, music-blaring room with ongoing projects, finished pieces, half-used glass and various tools lining the walls and countertops.

There is a torch on one side of the room, where Dearth stands for hours of his day.

The flame works off tanks of propane and oxygen, with safety measures in place to prevent fires.

Using his dominant right hand, Dearth guides a long, skinny, glass rod across the open flame and patiently watches through protective lenses as the glass changes form.

He is constantly twisting the rod in his fingers with a close eye on the spinning bead. The glass droops with the heat.

And depending on what he is creating, the piece can take anywhere from 15 minutes to three hours.

"I can't put a time on anything," Dearth said.

Dearth's favorite part of glassblowing is experimenting with new materials or patterns.

"There's so much that goes into the art," Dearth said. "But that's why I love working with glass. I'm always learning something new or a new technique."

His love for glassblowing started almost a decade ago, when his cousin showed him how to make a simple bead.

"He's the one that got me into it," Dearth explained. "And ever since then, I've just been growing piece by piece by piece."

Since his cousin passed away, Dearth has used glass art to keep his memory alive.



Mike Dearth twists a glass rod, forcing it to melt into the flame, which would later become the two pendants seen at left as part of a process called lampworking.

Bryan Moritt



In Maricopa reporter Cameron Jobson and Mike Dearth work to combine glass rods to create two pieces of jewelry, seen to the left. One of the creations shows intricate detail, including a flower with a glass stem and a glass bee with two glass ladybugs.

LAMPWORKING VS. GLASSBLOWING

What is lampworking?

Lampworking is known as flame working, a technique of shaping glass using a small torch.

The art of lampworking, a centuries-old craft, is still practiced today by a few artists dedicated to preserving the unique artform.

The process begins with a thin rod of glass, which is heated until it becomes soft and pliable. Then, using a variety of specialized tools and techniques, Dearth shapes the glass into intricate designs and patterns – anything from necklace pendants to flowers and animal figurines.

"The main difference with lampworking is that you use a solid," Dearth said. "So, you can make hearts, animals and critters."

He also added that one of the most challenging aspects of lampworking is achieving the right balance of heat and pressure, as even the slightest disruption can cause the glass to crack or shatter.

"You just always have to keep an eye on it," Dearth said. "And be able to adapt with the glass."

As the piece takes shape, it must be reheated in a special furnace, which reaches temperatures of over 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

This allows Dearth to add layers of color, texture and design, while requiring a great deal of skill, patience and a deep understanding of the glass properties.

For those who appreciate the craftsmanship of handmade objects, lampworking creates one-of-a-kind pieces that showcase the artist's creativity.

How is glassblowing different?

In the world of glass art, two techniques stand out: glassblowing and lampworking.

While both involve shaping molten glass into beautiful and intricate objects, the two methods differ in their approach, tools and results.

Glassblowing is a technique that uses a blowpipe to shape larger pieces of molten glass.

When demonstrating the

difference, Dearth gathers a glob of molten glass at the end of a blowpipe, which is then shaped by blowing into the blowpipe. Dearth constantly rotates the glass; he must carefully control the amount of pressure applied to the glass while using tools like tweezers, shears and paddles to shape and refine the piece.

One of the main differences between glassblowing and lampworking is the size and scale of the pieces that can be created. Glassblowers can work with larger pieces of molten glass, creating large vases, bowls and sculptures. Lampworking is a more delicate and precise technique that involves shaping smaller pieces of glass using a hand-held torch. This is often the preferred method for artists who specialize in smaller, more intricate pieces such as beads, pendants, and figurines.

Whether you prefer the larger, more dramatic pieces of glassblowing or the delicate, intricate designs of lampworking, there is no denying the complexity of these two techniques.

520-450-5139
PapaDearthx4@gmail.com

Crumbl Cookie spreading sweetness throughout community

BY JAY TAYLOR

MARICOPA'S FIRST RESPONDERS — fire, police, hospital and emergency workers — have a tough job. They provide protection to all residents, and don't always receive the thanks they deserve.

Crumbl Cookie, known for providing delicious, sweet desserts to its customers across Arizona and the U.S., was determined to change that.

When Jason Armstrong decided to open his eighth Valley Crumbl location in Maricopa last year, his plan to deliver the store's leftover cookies to first responders at the end of each day was a match made in heaven.

Since Crumbl's opening in late July of last year, Armstrong has directed his employees to take each day's unsold cookies to the Police Department, fire stations or Exceptional Community Hospital as a thank you for the work they do.

"These folks are the ones protecting our community," Armstrong said. "We do this at all our stores around the Valley because we want to show these people how much we appreciate what they do for our communities."

Armstrong said the program seemed like a natural service to provide to those who give so much to the community.

"Hospitals can have some low morale sometimes, and we know police and fire are on duty 24/7," he said. "Sometimes getting a delivery of Crumbl Cookies puts a smile on their faces and that makes us feel good, as well."

Kathy Alvarez, manager of the Maricopa Crumbl in Sonoran Creek between MOD Pizza and Jimmy John's, said the store staff had to adjust initially to meet demands of the recipients.

"We ran into a situation early on when we were delivering to a fire station late night on a weekend, when we are open until midnight," Alvarez said "We got there to make the delivery and the firefighters were all asleep. So now when we're open late we make the deliveries to fire stations the next morning."

She said sometimes if the employee is heading to the police station and passes a patrol car, they will simply hand them off to the officer to deliver to the station. She also does a little something else for the police officers and firefighters.



Cassandra Soliz bakes fresh sheets of delicious treats at Maricopa's Crumbl Cookie.



"I try to give them a discount if they come in while on duty and they are in area for an incident," Alvarez said. "Unfortunately, in today's world, our first responders are not always the most loved people as they should be. They don't always get the gratitude they should get. I didn't grow up in that kind of world. They put their lives in danger to help us."

"The nurses and the people at the hospital really seem to love it," Alvarez continued. "We get these beaming smiles because a lot of time these nurses are not appreciated — or if they are it's not always shown. They work long days, and do things most of us can't imagine, so if we can brighten their day even a little, it's worth it."

Armstrong said the store typically has 50 to 70 cookies left over at the end of a day. While

that may seem like a lot, it's because he wants to make sure that whenever a customer comes into the store, the cookie they want will be available.

Crumbl offers six flavors each week, chosen from its 164 available options (their classic chocolate chip is always on the menu). Armstrong said they try to keep a tray of 12 of each flavor in the case all the time.

"So, If we have a tray of 12 of each at end of night, we end up with 50-70 cookies left over," he said. "If we had a perfect night, we'd sell every single cookie with the last one going out the door right as we close, but that happens maybe once a year. We make our cookies fresh every day, we crack the eggs, we mix the ingredients right here in the store, we don't use any preservatives, so the cookies can only stay in the warmer for two hours if they are not sold. Those that do not get sold, we set aside and donate those at end of day."

"Instead of tossing the cookies, we pay our kids a little extra to take them by the police or fire station or the hospital. Our policy is we're in the community, so let's be part of the community." 📍

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911 Air Repair owner Ray Nieves (center) and his wife McKenzie are presented the Business of the Year award from Exceptional Healthcare CEO Saeed Mahboubi.

911 Air Repair, Maricopa Wellness named businesses of the year

The Maricopa Chamber of Commerce hosted its annual Awards Gala at Global Water Resources April 29. Award winners were:

- 911 Air Repair – Pillar of the Business Community (Large Business of the Year) award, presented by Exceptional Community Hospital.
- Maricopa Wellness Center – Small Business of the Year, presented by Felix Appliance Heating and Air.
- Angel Raymond – Sonny Dunn Citizen of the Year award, presented by A+ Charter School.
- Tim Bennett – Renate Chamberlin Volunteer of the Year award, presented by 911 Air Repair.
- Boys and Girls Club of the Sun Corridor – Non-Profit of the Year, presented by AA Raymond Law.
- Silvia Marquez – Chairman’s Award, presented by Orbitel Communications.

Kooline finds new home

Kooline Plumbing Heating & Air hosted a grand opening party in May to celebrate its new office. Owner and president Mohammed Nazeem (below) shared his vision for the future and gratitude to attendees for their support.

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 🌐 KoolinePlumbing.com



New pizza spot opens

Well-known Casa Grande pizzeria Dell's Pizza & Wings opened a Maricopa location on May 8. The family-owned restaurant specializes in old Chicago tavern-style pizza, which features a wafer-thin, crispy crust cut into squares. The Maricopa Special is topped with homemade sausage, pepperoni, mushrooms and extra cheese.

📍 19975 N. John Wayne Pkwy., Suite 110
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Bryan Moridt | Submitted



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Restaurant inspections



A summary of the April 13-May 13 food inspections by Pinal County Environmental Health Services

SATISFACTORY



Food separation
Open container of cut lemons held on rim of wait station hand sink.

Sanitizing
Sanitizer in kitchen and bar dish machines tested to be 0.0 ppm (50-100 ppm required).

Cooling
Temperature of cooked mushrooms and marinara sauce in cooler 50-53° (< 41°F required).

Controlling pests
Excessive flies in kitchen area. Door was ajar.

Wiping cloths
Salad prep cook removed wiping cloth from sanitizer bucket and used to clean knife.
Sanitizer tested at 0.0 ppm (50-100 ppm required).



Wingstop and Cold Beers & Cheeseburgers (above) were dinged by health inspectors.



Cooling
Temperatures of blanched french fries were 51-54° (< 41°F required).

EXCELLENT

- A+ Charter Schools
- Bashas' - Deli
- Bashas' - Sushi
- Crumbl Cookies
- Exceptional Community Hospital
- KFC/Long John Silvers
- Maricopa High School

- Maricopa High School - Concession Stand
- Maricopa High School - Culinary Arts
- Maricopa Wells Middle School
- Neaux Coffee
- QuikTrip
- QuikTrip - Kitchen
- Raceway Bar & Grill
- Walmart
- Walmart - Bakery

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.

Monica D. Spencer

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OWNER
Neaux Coffee



Chris Spear
CHEF/OWNER | ROOTs Eatery,
Culinary Mafia Pop Up Kitchen,
COOKINGFROMROOTS Catering



Keri Berardinelli
FOUNDER
Lotus Evolutions Holistic Spa



Kristina Donnay, DNP, FNP-C
MEDICAL DIRECTOR/OWNER
Maricopa Wellness Center



Kristina Donnay

Which came first – your move to Maricopa or your business opening in Maricopa?

Brooklynne: My move to Maricopa came first; I lived here for 10 years before opening my business.

Chris: The move to Maricopa came first, and within two years I had my catering company fully launched.

Keri: It was definitely a move to Maricopa initially, but I began planning the business as soon as I moved here.

Kristina: We lived in Maricopa for over 3 years before we opened Maricopa Wellness Center.

Where do you live?

Brooklynne: Heritage District

Chris: Cobblestone

Keri: Rancho El Dorado

Kristina: The Meadows

How many years have you lived in Maricopa?

Brooklynne: 13

Chris: 8

Keri: 4

Kristina: 7

Why did you move to Maricopa?

Brooklynne: We loved the family-friendly, community-centric values Maricopa offers.

Chris: I choose Maricopa based on the growth of the city, cost of homes and a great place to start introducing real food other than fast food.

Keri: I moved to Maricopa to be with my son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter. My son was to be deployed and it was perfect timing to make the move to help family.

Kristina: Both my family and my husband's family live in Maricopa. Once we had children, we wanted to be closer to them.

What do you enjoy most about living and working in Maricopa?

Brooklynne: I enjoy the local community, interacting with them and hearing about the best parts of their day/lives. It's such an honor!

Chris: I enjoy the small-town feel, going places and getting to know everyone and building those relationships. It is also great watching the city grow and being part of the growth.



Keri Berardinelli



Brooklynne Molyneaux

Keri: I enjoy growing a business in the town I lives in. It truly feels like home and provides a sense of belonging and purpose for community contribution.

Kristina: I love knowing our clients, seeing them at my children's school or out in the community. I love the short commute. I love staying on our "island" and rarely having to leave.

How long is your commute?

Brooklynne: My commute is shorter than the amount of time it takes to make a cup of coffee!

Chris: 2 miles

Keri: 7 minutes

Kristina: 7 to 10 minutes depending on traffic

Wellness warrior

Mental health advocate Jelani Elliott talks his passion for addressing mental health in youth

BY MONICA D. SPENCER

A HELLO, A HANDSHAKE AND A flash of his infectious smile are all it takes to get a sense of Jelani Elliott's energy and passion.

Attend one of his mental health programs and you'll experience his charisma in full swing.

At Express Fest, a mental health event held at Pacana Park, Elliott facilitated a fishbowl discussion with teens on topics including bullying, self-esteem and making tough choices. In doing so, he spoke with an empathy stemming from the knowledge of how it feels to stifle those thoughts and emotions.

That's what truly drives Elliott in his mental health advocacy — he's been there. He knows how it feels to struggle with acknowledging and healing from trauma.

"Where I grew up in society, with the gang banging and the violence, to show vulnerability will get you preyed upon," Elliott said. "You can't show that, so you learn how to mask that. Then you're walking around with no feeling, no emotion."

Brianna Reinhold, a counselor with Northern Lights Therapy, said when she first connected with Elliott at an event in October 2022, and his enthusiasm was evident.

"He has a passion just to help youth," Reinhold said. "His mission is to give teens a place to be themselves without worrying about their family or school or what's going on in the world. It's very cool to see."

Finding serenity in a world of chaos

For Elliott, it's been a decades-long effort of healing and helping others in their own journey of self-exploration and recovery.

Elliott grew up poor in Sacramento with a mostly-absent father.

"(Football) was my therapy, it was a good way to get out aggression," Elliott said. "I was praised for that aggression ... I was able to get out all the tears because while I was sweating, I was crying."

That hurt, aggression and sadness followed him for years — until he was injured during a professional arena football game for the Corpus Christi Fury in Texas.

"I got blindsided," he said. "Normally, I



Jelani Elliott, founder of Safe House, operates the turntables at Express Fest in May.

would have seen that, but I didn't. After that happened and I got hurt, I was sitting and healing and I was just done. The drive just wasn't there."

Elliott said the injury forced him to focus inward and led him to begin working on his mental health and address some unhealthy

habits society often associates with masculinity he fell victim to in his younger years.

"As a man, to say you have something going on with you, (you're told that) is not what men do," Elliott said. "We take it on the chin. We put our head up, shoulders back, don't drop a tear. Don't cry because men don't cry."

Bryan Morct



He wanted to change that for himself, especially as a father.

"The only way change has ever come ... is because someone had to go against the grain of what everyone else says, and that's hard," Elliott

said. "I had to do it in my life because I didn't want my children or my family to repeat things (from my childhood). I needed to show my children that it's okay to not be okay. It's okay to cry, it's okay to have emotion."

REFRAMING PTSD

Chances are you'll find Jelani Elliott sporting a T-shirt emblazoned with the acronym PTSD. While it describes a condition that stems from traumatic experiences, Elliott wanted to reframe the abbreviation into something more hopeful.

"Post-traumatic stress disorder (can be) negative. Talking about it is already hard, especially coming from my background and neighborhood. You couldn't talk about mental health; it was taboo. I was looking for a meaning that was more positive and would help people be more open to talk about it.

"Pushin' Through Struggles Daily' is what I chose, and it was a way for everyone to relate to it. It's not just about mental health; you can apply it to football, work or any ambition.

"Some days are a struggle, and you've got to push through them."

 PushinThroughStrugglesDaily.com



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Addressing suicide and mental health in youth

As Elliott worked on himself, he also saw a growing need to also help youth in the community. This led him to create Safe House.

"It's a safe place, a safe space for kids to come and be themselves, whoever that is," he said.

Safe House began in October as a small gathering and grows each month. The monthly meet-up fosters a positive environment for 14- to 19-year-olds to participate in healthy activities and discussions about the troubles teens face these days. Elliott's chief concern is to address mental health and suicide awareness in teens. He cited six known suicide deaths among Maricopa teens since 2022.

"While the adults are (busy), what are the kids up to?" he said. "What are they watching? What are we teaching them? Safe House came about because of teen suicides in our city."

Earlier this year, those problems hit home for Elliott, whose son, Ajani, 20, took his own life in January.

Elliott remains significantly impacted by the memory of Ajani's struggles.

As Elliott explained, in the wake of such a tragedy, there are so many questions left unanswered and it's easy to heap the blame on himself, regardless of whether it's warranted.

"It's so difficult to not feel like you've failed," Elliott said. "As a parent, I feel I failed as a father because I failed to recognize my own son's screams. That is my reality, I go back and forth every day."

No parent should ever have to bury their child and living with the pain of losing Ajani was something Elliott didn't want other parents to experience.

"Safe House is completely different now because I see how these kids need some help," he said.

Helping youngsters find their way

Mental health is a difficult topic to broach because of the stigma from society. It seems perfectly fine to get help for a physical ailment, but people, especially younger folks, might feel too intimidated to seek out mental help.

Elliott wants to give teens the space they need to explore these issues and get help.

BY THE NUMBERS

Arizona Mental Health in 2021

42%
of high school students felt persistently sad or hopeless, an indicator of depression

22%
of teens seriously considered suicide

10%
of teens attempted suicide

10th
leading cause of death in Arizona: suicide

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

"They have emotion, but they often don't know what they're feeling and can't interpret it," Elliott said.

As part of his effort, Elliott has formed a partnership with therapists from Northern Lights Therapy to assist in discussions and provide counseling for youth who require additional services.

"I was invited to his first Safe House event, which was cool to see," Reinhold said. "He wants to help youth feel safe, to feel heard and to feel like they matter. That's the same thing therapists do but our role is limited. Kids still need a place where they can go and feel like they belong. And that's important because there's not a lot of resources for all kids to do that. Home or school aren't always the most supportive environments for all teens. This gives them an option."

Reinhold spoke of one shy 15-year-old dropped off by his mother.

"She said he had some delays and had trouble making friends at school," Reinhold said. "She told me that she just wanted him to have fun and just hoped that he could build some kind of connection with someone. And he did. He befriended another boy over a game of Uno. To watch him walk out smiling and feeling accepted for himself, that was a cool thing to see."

Safe House continues to grow with more events and Elliott revels in the reciprocal healing experienced during the monthly events.

"These kids, I think they're just as much help for me as (Safe House) is for them," he said. 📌

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Celebrating freedom, resilience

Maricopa community members reflect on the lasting influence of Juneteenth

BY MONICA D. SPENCER

JUNETEENTH. IT'S AN AMALGAMATION of the words "June" and "nineteenth." It's a celebration of freedom, culture and resilience for many in the African American community. It's a period of education and reflection of the country's complicated history for Americans at large.

Juneteenth is a day that commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the U.S. on June 19, 1865. On that day, Maj.

Gen. Gordon Granger issued a legal decree that enforced the Emancipation Proclamation upon his arrival in Galveston, Texas. There, roughly 250,000 people were still living under slavery in the formerly confederate state.

Although the Emancipation Proclamation declared the freeing of enslaved people on Jan. 1, 1863, not every state and territory implemented the executive order from President Abraham Lincoln. This held true for states like Texas, an isolated part of the Confederacy.

"Juneteenth is significant because we were waiting for that massive allowance of people to be freed from slavery," said Joanna Vanderpool, an educator and member of the Maricopa Historical Society.

For the holiday's 158th anniversary, InMaricopa asked community members to reflect on why Juneteenth continues to stand as a notable holiday in Maricopa.



“Juneteenth is significant because we were waiting for that massive allowance of people to be freed from slavery.”

JOANNA VANDERPOOL, EDUCATOR AND MARICOPA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBER



Jelani Elliott
Founder | Safe House

When I see the celebration of the freedom and what happened after that, it stuck to me because it gave me a sense of myself, it gave me a sense of worth. Maricopa is a melting pot, so I feel celebrating Juneteenth is very important. We have a large African American population and I think it should be celebrated, along with Hispanic holidays, LGBTQ holidays. The city of Maricopa should reflect everyone in the city.



Jim Irving
Commissioner | Planning & Zoning

I remember being real thrilled when I found out about the day. It was just really nice to see there was a recognition of a day that was important to African Americans, especially one that tied into history.

Moving out here, I've really gotten to appreciate cultures. Any time there's a chance to explore and explain things like Juneteenth, it just benefits everybody.



Arnita Green
Owner | Greentree Financial Solutions

It gave me an opportunity to reflect on how far as a people we have come. It allowed me to have more cultural appreciation and just look at how much further we need to go. We as a people have overcome slavery but we still have a ways to go. Maricopa has a large African American population, so it's important that we are part of our history here and that we acknowledge and recognize Juneteenth as well.

Bryan Morde



Rachel Leffall
Commissioner | Planning & Zoning

I think it's important to recognize Juneteenth in Maricopa because a lot of people still don't know about the holiday and its significance. It is one thing we need to know and acknowledge historically, while seeing how that plays into where we are now. If you forget the past, you're doomed to repeat it.



Joanna Vanderpool
Educator

In Maricopa, we have children who are thirsty to understand different cultures. Children want to learn, they want to know different cultures. It is important for them to understand that right here at home, they can get involved. They can engage in a holiday.



Henry Wade
Councilmember

It's a part of me and who I am in terms of my understanding of my origins. If you can appreciate and respect yourself and what your origin is, then you're going to be more likely to be appreciative and respectful of other cultures.

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'Best moms' InMaricopa recognized, showered with gifts

BY BRIAN PETERSHEIM JR.



The three winners of InMaricopa's Best Mom award were (from left) Marlene Marshall, Christine Olivares and Meghan Bremer. Each was awarded a gift package the day before Mother's Day.

"Look at the three amazing children we have here," he said. "Eighteen years of our marriage now, and she's always been that lady that supports me and guides me."

In second place was Christina Olivares, also a mother of three.

"My mom is the person that you can go to for anything, and she will always be there for you no matter what," said Nevaeh Medina, who nominated her mom. "She's my best friend."

"She does everything for her family," added David Olivares, Olivares's husband.

Meghan Bremer received the third-most votes.

“My mom is the person that you can go to for anything, and she will always be there for you no matter what.”

NEVAEH MEDINA, DAUGHTER OF CHRISTINA MEDINA

The mother of two was nominated by her best friend, Mary Collazo, who said Bremer is always there when someone she loves needs help.

"Meghan Bremer literally does it all and I don't know how ... I'm a single mom of 2 youngest is 5 months, anytime I need help Meghan is there," Collazo wrote in her nomination. "Meghan does all her and her husband's mechanic work, handyman work, and yard work. She does all this while being the best mom to her boys, getting them to church, being another mother for my kids."

Ron Bremer said his wife has overcome some large obstacles but remains the best mom for their boys.

"She does everything for these boys," he said. "We have had a lot of trials for our family, but she has overcome them, and come out stronger than ever."

Bryan Moridt

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- Craftsman Combo Drill & Impact Kit



PACKAGE B

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- Gozney Rocbox Black Grill Cover

PACKAGE C

- Egg Chair Montreal Wicker Taupe

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- Rosati's Pizza of Maricopa
- Wildcat Landscape Supply
- Zuwa Family Care



It was all smiles the day before Mothers Day as the three winners of InMaricopa's Best Mom award are seen with their families at Karsten's Maricopa Ace Hardware, along with sponsor David Karsten and InMaricopa's Ashley Wallace.

Who is the best dad in Maricopa?

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B **BEING A MOM IS TOUGH.** Juggling many responsibilities? Yep. Lacking personal time? Probably. Trying to raise your kids to be the best version of themselves? Most definitely.

Moms are important and deserve to be recognized, hence, the annual tradition of InMaricopa's Best Mom contest sponsored by Karsten's Maricopa ACE Hardware. Maricopa moms were nominated and voted on by InMaricopa.com readers, and three of many

deserving mothers were recognized as the "best" this Mother's Day.

Coming in first place was a mother of three, Marlene Marshall.

Marshall was nominated by her daughter, Aleyhia Marshall. "She's very loving, and I can't think about one thing I don't like about her," Aleyhia said of her mom. "Obviously she makes mistakes, but there isn't a quality or characteristic about her that isn't perfect."

Chris Marshall said his wife not only supports the kids, but him too.



Mental health a key part of well-being

BY HARRIET PHELPS, PSYD. RETIRED



MAY WAS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH. Did you notice and pay attention to what that means?

As a professional, I am especially gratified our society has started to include mental health as a viable component of our well-being.

Historically, our physical health has been the emphasis of wellness. The medical community has always asked, “Where does it hurt? Describe the area of the body where you notice the pain. What are the symptoms you are having? Describe those.”

Rarely, have I been asked, “How are you FEELING?”

Answer the Four Measures of Well-being questions in the sidebar for insight into how you are feeling.

We all have stress from life circumstances. No one is exempt. Stress is normal in everyday life. Like a rubber band, tension is required for it to work effectively.

If there is too much stress from too many sources, the body will demonstrate physical symptoms such as eating, sleeping and energy in general. When experiencing stress, the body begins to release defense hormones from the hypothalamus gland located in the brain. These hormones activate the autonomic defenses of fight, flight or freeze, all responses from the primitive part of the brain.

Too much happiness can also be stressful and is called eustress, causing a similar response. Think about the happy anxiety of planning a wedding.

To reduce the effects of stress, be aware and identify the problem.

If any of the numbers from the measure above are high, ask why. What can be done?

Some things cannot be remedied easily or quickly. Focus on what you can change. It may be small or practical, and that’s okay.

FOUR MEASURES OF PERSONAL WELL-BEING

Answer on a scale of 0-10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely.”

Life Satisfaction	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?
Worthwhile (Purpose)	Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?
Happiness	Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?
Anxiety	Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday? [0 is “not at all anxious” and 10 is “completely anxious”]

Source: UK’s Office for National Statistics

There are many ways to reduce life stress. Begin with changes to eating, sleeping and exercising. Making one small change could make a huge difference.

We need to pause and ask, is this about me? Do I need to change something? Is there a solution or action I can take to make the situation better?

If any stress, anxiety or depressed feelings are unmanageable or overwhelming, it is time to seek help. There are many mental-health professionals in our community, regardless of whether it is for individual help or family therapy, to regain the balance necessary for your best mental health.

You are worth it! 🗨️

Harriet Phelps is a retired psychologist and a volunteer at Be Awesome Youth Coalition and Maricopa Senior Center.

RESOURCES

Emergency	911
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	988
American Medical Associates	480-306-5151
LaFrontera-Empact	520-316-6068
Northern Lights Therapy	623-243-2774
Wells Counseling Services	520-709-6476



Observe your face in a new light

BY DR. KRISTINA DONNAY DNP, FNP-C

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- 360 Light** illustrates areas of volume on the face, showcasing results for age-management treatments and dermal fillers.
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Water safety tips

DROWNING IS THE LEADING cause of death for children ages 1-4. Maricopa has experienced 16 drownings since 2018. Thirteen were children.

With summer in full swing, Maricopa Fire/Medical Department encourages adults to utilize the National Drowning Prevention Alliance's 5 Layers of Protection to keep kids safe around water.



1 BARRIERS & ALARMS
Use four-sided fencing with self-closing, self-latching gates. Pool safety covers and alarm systems can also prevent children from getting into the water unsupervised.

2 SUPERVISION
Always be aware of your surroundings by keeping close, constant and capable adult supervision when children are in or around water.

3 WATER COMPETENCY
Learning water-safety skills and taking swimming lessons are critical to helping children protect themselves in water. Knowing how to swim reduces the risk of drowning and water-related injuries.

4 LIFE JACKETS
When used appropriately, life jackets protect you when you are not expecting to be in water. Make sure life jackets fit properly and are tested and approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

5 EMERGENCY PREPARATION
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What is a podiatrist?

BY DR. C. JON BEECROFT, DPM

WHAT EXACTLY IS A PODIATRIST?
The short answer is a foot and ankle specialist.

A podiatrist is a physician who has an undergraduate degree, a medical degree in podiatry and residency training. On average it takes about 11 years to become a podiatrist.

A podiatrist covers all aspects of the foot and ankle. The following breaks down generally what we do.

Orthopedics: As a podiatrist, we are trained surgeons and work on bones and tendons and ligaments below the knee. Often, we see fractures and injuries, and these sometimes need surgery to be corrected. At Maricopa Foot and Ankle, we are Board Certified surgeons.

Dermatology: The foot and ankle have many skin problems a podiatrist can correct, including skin cancer, warts, fungus, lacerations, wounds and swelling. Diabetics often have skin problems that can turn to amputations.

Radiology: We have several modalities, such as X-rays and ultrasound visualization,



to diagnose pathology at Maricopa Foot and Ankle. We also order CT scans, MRIs and Nuclear Medicine to help assess problems on the foot and ankle. We have an X-ray and ultrasound unit in the office. As podiatrists, we are skilled in reading these the day you are treated, resulting in faster diagnosis and treatment.

Oncology: Cancer in the foot and ankle occurs as well. We can biopsy, diagnose and treat cancer. We work with oncologists to further treat any cancer ailments that appear on the foot and ankle.

Sports medicine: Injuries occur to the foot and ankle with any sport. We have the tools in our office to diagnose and treat sports injuries, from soccer to football, baseball to dance.

Wound care: People often get wounds on their legs and feet, especially diabetics. This is a very serious problem and needs to be treated by someone with lots of experience. At Maricopa Foot and Ankle, we have been treating wounds for over 20 years. This is often a multidisciplinary approach where we work as a team to treat life-threatening infections. Primary-care physicians, endocrinologists, vascular surgeons and cardiologists are all part of a team to help the patient.

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Out and about

Clockwise from top: Rio Rapids Soccer Club (Albuquerque, N.M.) and FC Arizona recently played a match at the Copper Sky fields. | Arthur Salas' second catch of the day was a catfish. He's been fishing Pacana Park since he moved to Maricopa three years ago. | Emily eyes a pitch during a Maricopa Little League softball game at Copper Sky Park.



Bryan Moret

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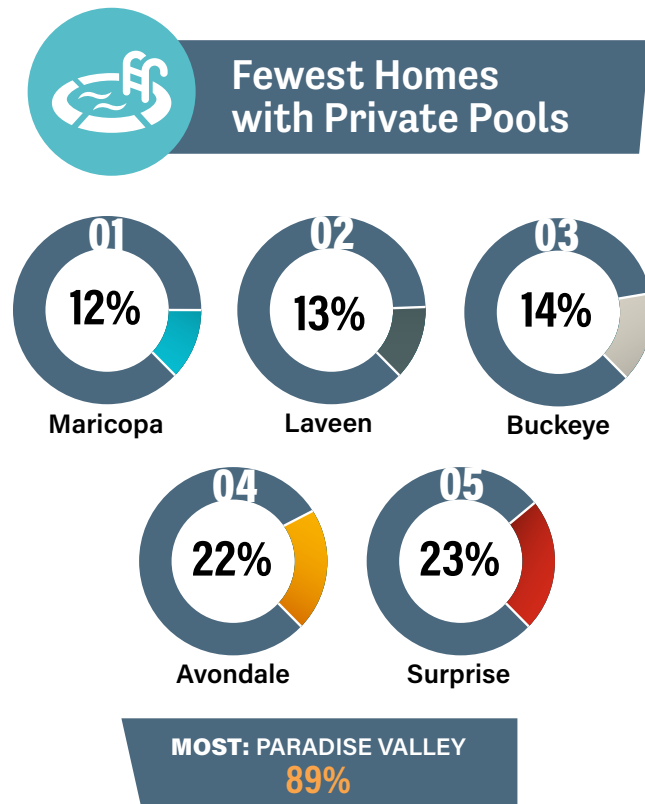
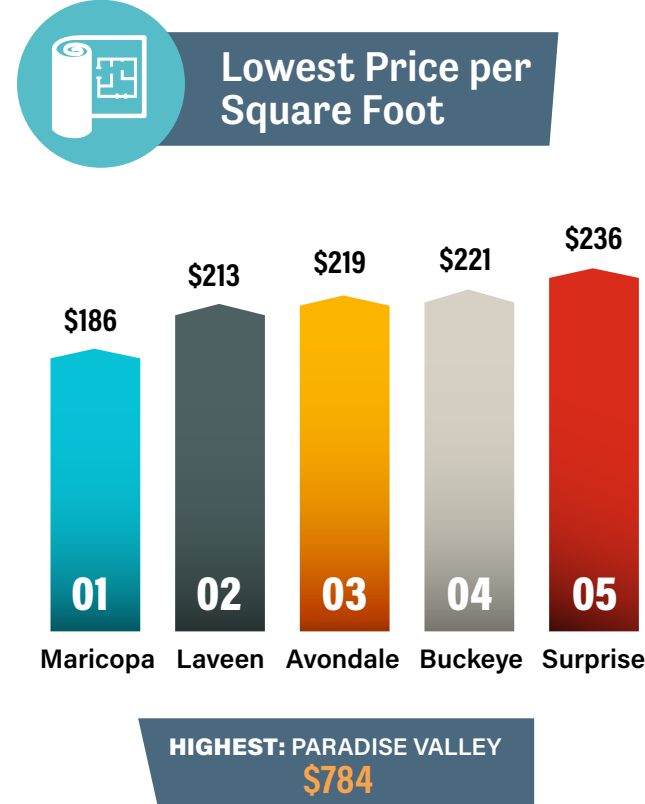
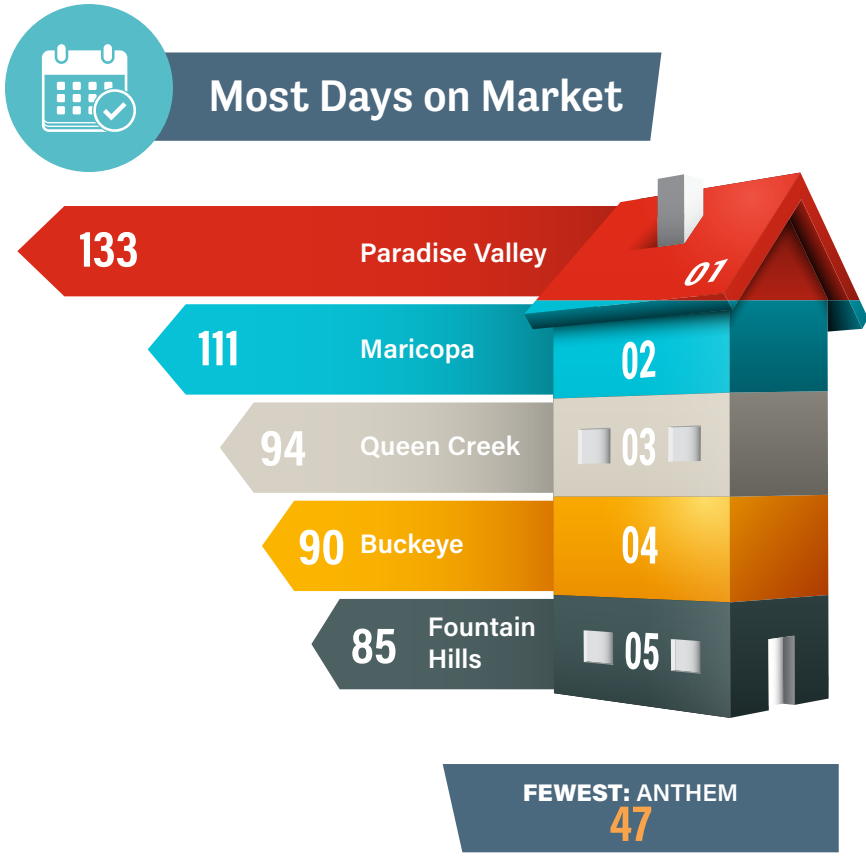


Top 5

Maricopa vs. Maricopa (County, that is)

April 2023 Home Sales

Maricopa was the median of 20 Maricopa County communities analyzed with 191 home sales. Anthem had the fewest with 33 sales and Phoenix the most with 1,061, more than double Mesa, which was next with 504.



Source: Arizona Regional Multiple Listing Service, Brian Petersheim
Note: Queen Creek includes parts of Maricopa and Pinal counties. The data used is specific to Maricopa County.



Realtor Analysis

Maricopa continued its reign of having the most affordably priced homes in the Valley with an average sales price of \$358,130 in the month of April. This lower selling price carries over to the lowest price per-square-foot in the Valley. On the other end of the spectrum, Maricopa had the highest number of "days on market," or DOM, meaning homes sat for sale longer than the rest of the Valley. That high number is a

result of inventory of homes for sale in Maricopa increasing disproportionately higher than the other cities. While many of the other cities have around 60 days of inventory for sale, the city of Maricopa is at nearly 3.5 months' supply. This stockpile of homes gives homebuyers more options, leaving the rest of the homes waiting for new owners. For those who just need to go swimming in the summer to beat the heat in a private pool, it looks like the average person in Maricopa will

need to make friends with eight more neighbors to have a great chance of cooling off in someone's backyard. That is one great reason to meet your neighbor, but there are so many other reasons to get out there and introduce yourself. We are, after all, living in Arizona's friendliest city. Brian Petersheim Sr. is a Maricopa local Realtor with Homesmart Success. 602-206-9644



Home construction timelines a revolving door

BY TOM SCHUMAN

IT SEEMS LIKE A RATHER innocuous question: How long does it take to build a new home?

The inquiry is certainly relevant with Maricopa remaining a hotbed for new residential construction.

Many national economic issues are a factor, including a lack of skilled workers and supply-chain delays.

The answer, however, is far from simple. In fact, it needs to be broken down into two categories — historical, which includes concrete numbers captured in government statistics, and current, which is murkier with various delaying factors and many in the business of constructing and selling such homes opting not to weigh in.

A look back

The U.S. Census Bureau's most recent data (2021) from the Survey of Construction finds the average time from start to completion of private, residential homes to be 7.6 months. For comparison, that time nearly doubles to 14.3 months for owner-built homes and falls to 6.7 months for build-for-sale (spec) homes.

Sticking with single-family homes, geography plays a major factor. Average build times in 2020 based on region were:

- Northeast: 10.7 months
- Midwest: 7.4 months
- South: 5.9 months
- West: 7.5 months

Locally, in wrapping up the 2021 real estate market for *InMaricopa*, Realtor Brian Petersheim Sr. wrote the year saw “some of the longest construction times quoted by builders due to some supply issues.

“In the past, builders were quoting 6-8 months from contract to move-in for a new home. Currently, the builders are quoting



Above: Construction crews raise a wall at The Trails development in Tortosa.

Left: A construction worker applies stucco to the exterior of a model home being built at Anderson Farms.



10 months to a year. Recently, some of those buyers coming up to the year mark are being notified that it will be several more months until completion.”

Current climate

The real estate market changes frequently, but that's not to say that some of the same problems facing the industry 18 months ago, don't still exist to some degree. Some challenges have existed for years and include:

- Skilled worker shortage: There were 7.7 million construction workers in 2007

(before the Great Recession), but only 7.5 million 14 years later when demand was much higher.

- Shortage/high costs of supplies: The list of items here includes, but is certainly not limited to, lumber, concrete, paint, furniture, appliances and even shipping containers to move the products.
- Weather: Extreme temperature shifts and/or too much precipitation impact home construction. This, of course, is less of an issue in Maricopa and the West than in other parts of the country.

Add those factors together, along with the economy in general, and those promised construction times were closer to 18 months in 2022, says Alec Wible, a sales associate for Richmond American Homes at Seasons at the Lakes at Rancho El Dorado III.

“But we started getting more trade workers back and the supplies became more available, so now we're looking at 10 months to a year — from dirt to completion,” Wible adds. “It's something that changes about every two months though.”

Stay tuned. The home-building timeframes will undoubtedly continue to evolve.

Jenece Morat | Bryan Morat

Summertime irrigation – doing it right

BY SHAINA SHAY



SUMMERTIME MEANS MORE WATER will be used outdoors. The good news is you can provide plants with water they need and still use water wisely in your landscape.

Here are some best practices for summer landscape irrigation:

1 Water at night or early in the morning.

Water evaporates quickly under the hot desert sun. Irrigate when the sun is not out to maximize the amount of water your plants receive.

2 Test your irrigation system.

If you are watering at the right time of day, then you may not notice a leak. Make it a habit to test your system at least once a month. It only takes a couple of minutes and can save huge amounts of water. Turn on the irrigation system while you are home during the day and check for signs of leaks, overwatering and broken or missing irrigation heads. Just make sure to change your schedule back to early mornings or nights after this test.

3 Follow a schedule.

Use the Water Use Wisely watering guideline to make sure you are watering for the right season. You should change your irrigation schedule about four times a year.

4 Embrace rainy days. Irrigation water should supplement rainwater received by your landscape. Although it may not happen often, turn off your irrigation system when it rains.

5 Consider rainwater harvesting.

There are many ways to integrate rainwater harvesting practices into your landscape. Consider making berms and basins to better capture rainwater and allow it to sink into the ground near plants. You can learn more about active and passive rainwater harvesting techniques on our conservation website.

6 Wait to install new plants. The harsh summer climate is not a good time to transplant or install new landscape plants. Wait until fall when plants can better adapt and don't require so much water to survive.

Shaina Shay is water resources and conservation specialist at Global Water Resources.

[GWRResources.com/conservation-education](https://www.gwrresources.com/conservation-education)



SPONSORED CONTENT

How Much & How Often <small>Water to the water edge of the plant's canopy and to the depth indicated. Watering frequency will vary depending on season, plant type, weather and soil.</small>		Seasonal Frequency — Days Between Waterings				Water This Deeply <small>(Typical Root Depth)</small>
		Spring Mar - May	Summer May - Oct	Fall Oct - Dec	Winter Dec - Mar	
Trees	Desert adapted	14-30 days	7-21 days	14-30 days	30-60 days	24-36 inches
	High water use	7-12 days	7-10 days	7-12 days	14-30 days	24-36 inches
Shrubs	Desert adapted	14-30 days	7-21 days	14-30 days	30-45 days	18-24 inches
	High water use	7-10 days	5-7 days	7-10 days	10-14 days	18-24 inches
Groundcovers & Vines	Desert adapted	14-30 days	7-21 days	14-30 days	21-45 days	8-12 inches
	High water use	7-10 days	2-5 days	7-10 days	10-14 days	8-12 inches
Cacti and Succulents		21-45 days	14-30 days	21-45 days	if needed	8-12 inches
Annuals		3-7 days	2-5 days	3-7 days	5-10 days	8-12 inches
Warm Season Grass		4-14 days	3-6 days	6-21 days	15-30 days	6-10 inches
Cool Season Grass		3-7 days	none	3-10 days	7-14 days	6-10 inches

These guidelines are for established plants (1 year for shrubs, 3 years for trees). Additional water is needed for new plantings or unusually hot or dry weather. Less water is needed during cool or rainy weather. Drip run times are typically 2 hours or more for each watering.



You can bring the tropics home

BY HARRIET PHELPS

RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU HAVE attempted to grow tropical plants. My hand is up.

While living in Kansas, my stepfather said he was going to call the noxious weed department and turn me in for harboring them. Our youngest son, then 4, told me the Elephant Food plant needed a haircut while holding the scissors. It took forever to regrow the long reed-like leaves he had shortened.

Tropicals are beautiful coming out of the nursery. Sitting there in all their glory on those pallets, they scream, "Take me home!" However, when they start to dry up and dry out, not so much.

So, how do you avoid a dead tropical plant? To start, think like a tropical. Read the nursery label telling how to keep the plant alive.

We are in an area that is dry with full sun for at least six hours a day and limited moisture. Tropicals typically grow in areas that requires heat, moisture and, generally, a forest floor with high humidity and indirect sunlight. Replicate that environment.



As transplanted Kansans, we grew up with beef and wheat. While living in Iowa for 25 years, we adapted to pork and corn. Environment has a lot to do with how we grow.

Tropicals generally are houseplants, but some will survive outside in the dirt. We currently have a **Bird of Paradise** tree (*Strelitzia reginae*), which produces large, green, waxy leaves and a bloom flower that has color from orange to purple and blue accents. It is beautiful in our patio shade and welcomes moisture. We also have the White Bird of Paradise that is similar.

Areca Palm or Golden Cane Palm are nice to grow. However, if exposed to extreme full sun in hot climates like ours, the root will go brown. Planting them in a moist environment in a well-drained pot, using an evaporation tray underneath, will help them survive inside.

Harriet Phelps' garden includes a fig plant (left), which thrives in areas with long and hot summers and an elephant food plant (right, center), sitting with more of Phelps' favorites.



Other tropical plants available include:

ZZ Plant (*Zamioculcas zamiifolia*) is native to Eastern Africa, low maintenance and easy to grow. It has bulb-like roots that hold water. It can go months without water. It grows best when soil is slightly moist to the touch.

Bromeliad (*Aechmea spp*) is a relative to the pineapple. It is a hardy, exotic, flowering plant native to Brazil.

Orchid (*Orchidaceae spp*) is a common flowering plant with over 28,000 species. It is very hardy and blooms year-round. It replaces an old stem with a new flower and stem over time.

Kentia Palm is native to the Australia coast in the South Pacific. Slow-growing, it can reach 32 feet high and 20 feet wide. It is easy to grow and drought-resistant.

Painters Palette or **Flamingo Flower** (*Anthurium andraeanum*) is known for its pinkish red waxy leaf. It can grow a brilliant, white flower from its center resembling a flamingo.

Schefflera or **Umbrella Plant** has long, shiny leaves from a central stalk.

So, think like a tropical plant. Understand its natural environment, and it will thrive!

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Harriet Phelps is a Maricopa master gardener for Pinal County.



All hibiscus are thirsty plants that need to be kept moist. Indoor tropical hibiscus benefit from regular watering.

most expensive HOME SOLD



21859 N. Ingram Court April 20 \$ 664,000

This two-story, golf course home is in a cul-de-sac. The first story is tiled, and the second has new carpet. The kitchen has quartz countertops and double ovens. There are two game rooms, loft, indoor theater, billiards and ping-pong tables. The backyard has a heated, saltwater pool and separate hot tub. The home has a three-car garage and sold for its original list price.

Community: Rancho El Dorado **Builder:** Hacienda
Square feet: 4,318 **Year built:** 2005
Price per square foot: \$153.77 **Bedrooms:** 4
Days on market: 10 **Bathrooms:** 2.5

- 43304 W. Little Drive, Rancho El Dorado..... \$630,000
- 43989 W. Palo Abeto Drive, Palo Brea..... \$575,000
- 22489 N. Celtic Ave., Cobblestone Farms..... \$560,000
- 19315 N. Toya St., Senita..... \$550,000

least expensive HOME SOLD

42505 W. Jawbreaker Drive May 5 \$ 240,000



This single-story duplex home in Province has two a two-car garage, den with a double-sliding door and covered patio in the backyard. It sold for \$109,900 below original list price.

Community: Province **Builder:** Engle
Square feet: 1,593 **Year built:** 2004
Price per square foot: \$150.66 **Bedrooms:** 2
Days on market: 134 **Bathrooms:** 2

- 45528 W. Amsterdam Road, Maricopa Meadows..... \$270,000
- 37088 W. Amalfi Ave., Sorrento \$270,701
- 44899 W. Portabello Road, Acacia Crossings..... \$275,000
- 35635 W. Velazquez Drive, Tortosa \$280,000

Brian Petersheim Jr.

Source: MLS, April 10-May 9



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How to secure the right tenants

BY SHERMAN AND EUPHEMIA WEEKES

Not all tenants are created equal, and finding quality tenants is essential to the success of a real estate investment. It is important to screen potential tenants to ensure they are reliable and responsible.

Here are five tips to attract quality, long-term tenants.



1 Prepare the property

The property must be ready for the tenant to move before you begin marketing. That means the property is clean, all repairs completed in a skillful manner and the curb-appeal is great. Prospects should not have any objections related to the appearance of the home.



2 Market the property

Market your property to as many potential renters as possible. The internet is a reliable resource to do so. Choose as many website options as are available as the more exposure the property gets, the bigger the pool of tenants and the more likely to select a quality tenant.



3 Check credit, background

Running credit and background checks are absolutely necessary. The results tell you a lot about the applicant, how responsible they are with paying their bills and an overall indication of their fiscal responsibility. You may see judgments for nonpayment of rent from previous rentals or qualities you as a landlord may not be able to tolerate.



4 Check income, employment

Tenants with stable jobs are less likely to have issues paying their rent. This is a very important factor when looking for a long-term tenant. Tenants should demonstrate stability and household income of at least three times the monthly rent. Tenants must be able to pay rent, utilities, other living expenses and have a cushion for emergencies. Always get prospective tenants' most recent pay stubs and contact information for employers to verify employment status and duration.



5 Check rental history

It is also a clever idea to have rental applicants provide contact information for their current and previous landlords. By verifying their rental history, you will have a better understanding of how reliable and responsible the tenant is, not only in paying rent but also how they cared for their previous rentals.

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To rent or own: Are apartments the answer?

BY DAYV MORGAN

MORE APARTMENTS WILL BE available in Maricopa this year. Oasis at the Wells started the ball rolling when it opened in 2021, offering 120 units.

This year, that number has increased six-fold with Copa Flats adding 312 new units and Flatz 520 adding another 342 apartments.

Soon, Home@Maricopa's opening will add another 536 units, bringing Maricopa's apartment total to 1,310.

The prices for these units vary. Oasis at the Wells and Copa Flats are both income-restricted, meaning a married couple would have to make less than \$42,420 to qualify. The rates top out at \$61,500 for a 6-person household.

Flatz 520 may give the most accurate picture of what apartment rates are going to be in Maricopa without income restrictions. A 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom unit with 1,102 square feet will run \$1,999 per month, with each pet requiring an additional \$40 per month.

There are better rental deals out there to be had, however. As of mid-May, there were 36 single-family houses for rent in Maricopa for \$2,000 or less, all with more square feet than the largest apartment being built.

Keep in mind the houses are mostly prior rentals with some wear-and-tear, compared to an apartment just built with everything brand new. Yet over time the supply of apartments will increase and the newness will wear off, and I expect the rental prices will come down, too.

So, rent or buy?

There are still a few homes available to buy under \$300,000 in Maricopa that you can own for almost the same amount of money as renting.

A \$300,000 house with 5% down and an interest rate of 6.5% would have a monthly payment of \$1,801 for principal and interest. HOA, taxes, and insurance would also be due on top of that, and most likely mortgage insurance as well.

Although your monthly costs will be similar to renting, after a few years of making payments, and with some appreciation you'll start to generate equity.

It comes down to your personal situation. If you know your time in Maricopa is going to be limited, maybe renting is the smarter choice. Even if you are ready to buy, a rental might still be a good option while you learn more about the area, neighborhoods and schools.

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

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Challenging ageism in the workplace

AARP Survey: 78% of workers age 40-65 have seen or experienced age discrimination

BY MONICA D. SPENCER

AT 52, APRIL MUNK RECALLED her first real brush with ageism. “There was one group of people I worked with for one school year that definitely would leave me out of things,” Munk wrote in a social media post. “I can’t say for sure, but I felt it was because of my age. I was 49 that school year.”

Ageism, as the name suggests, is a form of discrimination based on age and one that has become more prevalent as Baby Boomers and late Gen Xers stay in the workforce. In fact, a 2021 survey by AARP reported 78% of workers age 40-65 had seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace.

Older employees often report facing age-related biases, such as negative stereotypes and misconceptions about their productivity and ability to keep up with technological advances or new skills. Unfortunately, ageism often manifests subtly through coded language or exclusion.

This was the case for Munk. At the time, she was one of the few older adults working in an East Valley preschool program where most other teachers there were in their early- to mid-20s. This left a generational gap she believed negatively impacted comradery among staff.

“They just kind of formed this clique where they excluded me,” she said. “They never once included me in their stuff outside of work ... (and) they kind of didn’t want me in the classroom.”

Aside from feeling socially isolated from colleagues, Munk also felt dismissed in the classroom for using older teaching techniques or being singled out by the program director for trivial things.

“I have a tendency to get to work early in the morning, so I waited in the classroom before clocking in,” she said. “I was told by the program director that I couldn’t be in the classroom when I’m not on the clock. But the (younger teachers) were in there all the time.”



Karen Adams is a career coach based out of Hidden Valley.

Munk eventually learned she wasn’t alone in feeling excluded. Several teachers her age confessed to feeling the same exclusion from younger teachers in their grade levels.

“I can’t prove it was ageism, but it felt like it was,” she said. “I think a lot of older folks are feeling that.”

The ‘affordability’ excuse

In other instances, the job interview is where discrimination can manifest. Mayor Nancy Smith shared an experience of job hunting after Motorola closed operations in Arizona.

“I decided I was at a point where I didn’t need a high-paying job, I could do something I really had a passion for,” she said. “I applied for several nonprofits ... but their upper-level management used the explanation that I wouldn’t stay in the job long because I was so used to high salaries.”

Smith and the people who suggested she apply for the position believed her age played a role in the decision.

“I think it was age discrimination, but it wasn’t something I was going to force because I had no evidence of it,” she said.

It’s an excuse many older adults hear after an interview. They are used to high salaries, they are over-educated or they are told the work environment is fast-paced.

Hidden Valley resident Karen Adams is a career coach for Job Hunt Like a Pro. She said older adults often face the difficulty of appearing old-fashioned.

“When job hunting, older adults can come off as not with the times, not technically savvy or things like that,” she said. “Those are some of the things that we really want to target on a resume to showcase they can learn new technologies and skills.”

This includes utilizing modern resume formats, highlighting technological skills and updating LinkedIn profiles. These can help get resumes noticed by recruiters and management, but the interview is a different beast, according to Adams.

“There’s no hiding your age like you can with a resume when you go for an actual in-person interview,” Adams said. “You really want to show how you can be a benefit to their company and what your experience can do to help their bottom line.”

‘I’m more than able to keep the pace.’

Ron Angerame’s passion for combating ageism first took hold when interviewing a candidate for a telecommunications company nearly a decade ago.

“He was probably in his early 60s and wore a blue, pinstripe suit and wingtip shoes from 30 years ago,” he said. “I walked him past all the cubicles full of Millennials and Gen Xers. As the guy walked by, all my team were snickering and making faces, like, ‘You’re not really going to hire an old guy, are you?’”

“Based on his experience, he wasn’t a strong enough candidate,” Angerame said. “But I was surprised and really disappointed (in my team).”

Experiences like this prompted Angerame to show in the workforce, age is just a number.

“There’s this perception that Boomers just can’t keep up the pace in the workforce,” Angerame said. “I thought, what can I do to help convince people I’m more than able to keep the pace?”

In 2021, he decided to complete the Marine Corps’ physical fitness test, which he passed in the 21-25 age range. This year, at 69, Angerame upped the stakes by completing the shorter but more intense Combat Fitness Training.

CFT is composed of three components that evaluate strength, stamina and agility of potential and current Marines. To successfully pass, Marines have to complete an 800-yard run in uniform, repeatedly lift ammo cans overhead for two minutes, then maneuver a drawn-out obstacle course, all within a matter of minutes.

In March, Angerame completed and passed the CFT at Copper Sky Regional Park in four minutes, 20 seconds as several Marines verified the course and his timing.

RESUME TIPS FOR 50+ WORKERS

Karen Adams, founder of Job Hunt Like a Pro, shares resume tips for older adults.

- **Nix that Hotmail address.** It’s time to move on from your Hotmail, Yahoo, MSN or AOL email addresses. These, unfortunately, can age a job candidate. Instead, move toward Gmail or a personal domain name you own.

- **Use a modern resume template.** A standard objective or directive at the top of the resume is outdated. I recommend a summary of qualifications instead.
- **Remove dates older than 10 years.** You never want to lie on a resume because that will always find a way to come back to you. Instead, remove any dates for jobs and graduations older than a decade.

- **Showcase learning abilities.** Older adults have the misfortune of seeming not technically savvy. Highlight new technologies and skills you’ve learned for your career.
- **Use LinkedIn.** All recruiters are looking for their candidates on LinkedIn. Be sure you have a complete LinkedIn profile and include a link to your profile on your resume.

For Angerame, all of this was a chance to prove age should not be a factor for companies considering new hires or retaining employees. Instead, he believes employees should be evaluated on their performance and ability to contribute to the company’s success.

“My thing is, if hiring managers Gen X or younger are concerned about me keeping the pace or being fit and agile, then meet me out on the athletic field,” he said. “We’ll see who’s fit and agile.”



Ron Angerame passed the Marine Corp Combat Fitness Training test at age 69.

Monica D. Spencer | Submitted

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Local business owner retires the idea of retirement homes

BY BRIAN PETERSHEIM JR.



MARLA BAKER OWNS MARICOPA We Care, a nonmedical homecare agency that sends caregivers to patients' homes to take care of their daily needs.



Allowing patients, who are usually elderly, or disabled to get help with cooking, cleaning and hygiene from the comfort of their own home was the plan from the start for Baker.

The idea was hatched in Wisconsin, Baker's home before moving to Maricopa around 12 years ago. Baker's great aunt, who had no children, went into a nursing home just down the street from Baker's house.

"I kept telling myself, you've got to go visit her. And when I did, it broke my heart," Baker said. "I instantly became attached to my great aunt and wanted to take her out of there."

Baker received guardianship of her great aunt but did not get the chance to remove her from the home before she suffered a fall and later died.

After seeing the unsafe conditions in some nursing homes and the thought that there are elderly people without loved ones, Baker decided to make a change and leave her mark in the homecare industry.

"We are trying to reach as many [people] as we can to have someone there for them," Baker said.

Baker currently operates out of her home, and Maricopa We Care has already expanded into Glendale and Mesa.

Maricopa We Care is also expanding its offering of services.

Baker pointed out that her staff recently earned a home healthcare license from Arizona.

"We will be sending in CNAs, nurse practitioners, physical therapists and speech therapists," she said. "We are moving forward and trying to get contracted with Medicaid and Medicare right now."

"I like older people. I like to get into their head and get some of their knowledge and wisdom."

MaricopaWeCare.info

THE FLAIR FOR HAIR

In Baker's youth, she dreamed of becoming a hairstylist and to open her own salon.

At age 17, Baker began styling hair and opened Before and After Salon 10 years later.

What started as a small salon in Milwaukee grew. The three chairs in the salon turned into 10, and a beauty supply store, barber shop and nail salon were added over time.

Throughout the 16 years Baker owned the salon, she employed — and mentored — over 80 people. A dozen of them would later create their own businesses.

After moving to Maricopa, Baker continued to style hair for 10 years. She worked at local salons Hair Focus and House of Gentry until her retirement from hairstyling in 2021.

Brian Petersheim Jr.



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Prepare for summer heat

BY RON SMITH

OUR FIRST 100-PLUS DEGREE DAY arrived in late April.


This event was a reminder we trade eight months of generally beautiful weather for four months of very hot weather.

Arizona is one of the hottest places on earth during the summer months. Arizona summers mean extreme heat, dehydration, crazy thunderstorms and lightning, drownings, possible power outages, haboobs (apparently something we share with Mars!) and violations of the Stupid Motorist Law (ARS 28-910).

Surviving Arizona summers requires some preparation, planning and understanding situations can turn dangerous very quickly. Did you know extreme heat is responsible for the most deaths among all weather-related hazards?








Extreme heat is a period of high heat and humidity with temperatures above 90 degrees for at least two days. Older adults, children, sick and overweight individuals are at the greatest risk from extreme heat.

In 2022, there was a record 671 heat-related deaths in Arizona. In addition around 3,000 people visit hospital emergency departments every summer due to the heat.

Prepare for extreme heat. It could be a lifesaver. 

Ron Smith is a senior advocate, a member of the Age-Friendly Maricopa Advisory Committee and a member of the Maricopa Community Advocates. He is a CAPS and CLIPP™ certified planner.

MORE RESOURCES

-  [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)
-  [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
-  [211Arizona.org](https://www.211arizona.org)
-  **2-1-1**
-  **520-316-6800 ext. 1234**
-  **520-568-9098**
-  [InMaricopa.com/Columnists](https://www.inmaricopa.com/columnists)

PREPARE YOUR HOME



- 1. Get your A/C serviced** in the spring to be sure it is ready. If nothing else, make sure you have the telephone number of a reliable air conditioning service company before you are in a crisis situation. If you have vulnerable family members, consider an A/C service contract. The contract assures you will have had your unit serviced. And if an emergency occurs, the contract generally makes you a priority for service.
- 2. Make an emergency plan** that includes a friend or family member who might be able to provide a place to cool off during the hottest part of the day. If you're reluctant to impose on someone else, identify a location you could drive to, such as the Maricopa Library and Cultural Center or the Copper Sky Multigenerational Center.

PREPARE YOURSELF

- 1. Never leave people or pets in a car** on a warm day – not even for a few minutes. Temperatures can build up very rapidly to deadly conditions. Always check your back seat when leaving the car.
- 2. Take cool shower** or bath.
- 3. Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.**
- 4. Find shade and wear a hat** that will protect your face when you are outside.
- 5. Drink lots of fluids** to stay hydrated.
- 6. Have bottled water in your car** should you have a breakdown or get caught in a road closure.
- 7. Register with You Are Not Alone** if you are living alone and have no one to check in on you. They will contact you on a regular basis to check on your welfare.

- 3. Do not count on a fan** to cool yourself or your pet. Fans create air flow and a false sense of comfort, but do not reduce body temperature or prevent heat-related illnesses. This is particularly true for your dog.
- 4. Shade your windows** with sheets, towels or blankets if you do not have window coverings.
- 5. Add attic insulation and weather-stripping** to your doors and windows to help keep the heat out. Window reflectors or reflecting window film can also assist in reducing heat gain through your windows. Adding attic exhaust fans can help reduce the heat buildup in your attic space.
- 6. Install a window air conditioner** to create a cool zone somewhere in your house if you have no central air.
- 7. Don't use your oven.**
- 8. Keep your refrigerator closed** as much as possible.
- 9. Keep extra ice** in your freezer.
- 10. Acquire a modern cooler.** Some of the newer designs can maintain ice for days.
- 11. Store bottled water** in your home for emergencies. The shelf life of bottled water is about two years, so you should periodically rotate your supply.



- 8. Know the signs of heat-related illnesses** and proper responses.
- 9. Seek medical attention** quickly if you are experiencing symptoms of heat-related illnesses.



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Golden experience

Clockwise from top: Brandelyn Hughes, community program director at Maricopa Community Center, assists seniors. | Larry Jurgen, a Maricopa fisherman of 11 years caught a catfish at Pacana Park. | Ron Smith, Joan Koczor and Elizabeth Howell were on hand as Mayor Nancy Smith issued a proclamation in recognition of Older Americans Month.



Bryan Mordt | Monica D. Spencer

Senior center's Hughes moves on

Brandelyn Hughes is one smiling face missing from Maricopa Senior Center. The recreation coordinator relocated to Colorado for a career move, with her husband, former Maricopa Police Chief James Hughes, and two of their children in tow.

Hughes' new position is events coordinator for the town of Estes Park.

On her last day in the community center, Hughes reflected on what she loved most about working and living in Maricopa.

"I moved to Maricopa in 2006, and I watched the city grow so much. What I'm going to miss the most is the senior center and my team. My supervisor and my coworkers, we've worked together for years. We're like family. Not having them by my side or seeing my seniors is going to be hard.

"I'm going to miss the community. Everyone comes together when someone needs help. Maricopa really is a great little, yet big community."



Brandelyn Hughes says goodbye to "her seniors" as she leaves her post at Maricopa Community Center for a job in Colorado.

Bryan Mordt

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THINGS TO DO



JULY 2

Indoor Block Party

Get ready for an indoor block party like no other. Maricopa AZ Events presents an unforgettable evening of fun and music July 2 at Luxe Lounge in Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center.

Join us for an electrifying concert at 5 p.m. featuring Chico Debarge, Eaine Stepter and Raydio, followed by an epic after-party at 8 p.m. featuring Legendary DJ Manic Hispanic of radio station MEGA 104.3 to keep you dancing all night.

RSVP required for this free event. Text 312-539-0592 with your full name, email and size of your party. The dress code of no sneakers, tennis shoes, gym shoes, shorts or flip flops will be enforced to ensure a memorable and classy experience for all.

 MaricopaAZEvents.com

THINGS TO DO

June

- 1**
Maricopa City Council
6 p.m., City Hall
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza
- 3**
Maricopa Amateur Radio Assoc.
9 a.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive
- 4**
American Diabetes Association Charity Golf Tournament
6:30 a.m., Southern Dunes Golf Club
48456 W. Highway 238
- 5**
Maricopa Historical Society
5 p.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive
- Friends of the Library**
5:15 p.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive
- 10**
Jesse Colt Concert
8 p.m., Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment
16000 Maricopa Road

Teen Hall
10 a.m.-2 p.m., Copper Sky
44345 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Free conference/expo (and lunch!) focused on issues relevant to teens and their parents.

- 15**
Maricopa City Council
6 p.m., City Hall
39700 W. Civic Center Plaza
- 17**
Juneteenth Celebration
10 a.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive
- 21**
Be Awesome 3-on-3 Basketball
2-6 p.m., Copper Sky
44345 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Free for local high schoolers. Cash prizes. Info/Register: 520-428.2277, Awesome@BeAwesomeYouth.life
- 24**
DT Comedy Show & After Party
6 p.m., Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment
16000 Maricopa Road

Sundays
Narcotics Anonymous
7 p.m., Maricopa Meadows Community Park
45511 W. Honeycutt Ave.

- Mondays**
Narcotics Anonymous
5:30 p.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive
- Alcoholics Anonymous**
6 p.m., Community of Hope Church
45295 W. Honeycutt Ave.

- Tuesdays**
Maricopa Cruise-in
5-9 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 Large and Small Group
7 p.m., Maricopa Community Church
44977 W. Hathaway Ave.

- Wednesdays**
Al-Anon - New Beginnings
10 a.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

Alcoholics Anonymous
12 p.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

Narcotics Anonymous
5:30 p.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

- Thursdays**
Maricopa Police Cadets
6 p.m., Maricopa High School
45012 W. Honeycutt Ave.

Alcoholics Anonymous
7 p.m., Community of Hope Church
45295 W. Honeycutt Ave.


- Fridays**
Narcotics Anonymous
4:30 p.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

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

- Saturdays**
Alcoholics Anonymous
10 a.m., Maricopa Library
18160 N. Maya Angelou Drive

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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