

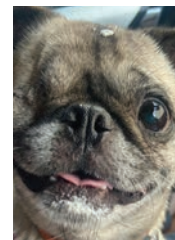
Champs!

Baseball team goes to All Stars; 6



CAVE CREEK/CAREFREE INDEPENDENT

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Adopt me

Sanctuary receives grant; 2

August 6, 2025

Volume 31 Issue 8

Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

Carefree art on display by Sonoran Arts League

By Brent Ruffner

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Art lovers, rejoice. Vibrant desert vistas and colorful portraits from local artists will be on display at a local hotel in Carefree.

The art — from the Sonoran Arts League — will feature works of art at the Hampton by Hilton Carefree at 2 Easy St., Carefree.

Displays are a part of the “Art in Public Places” initiative where works are featured at the hotel now through December.

Beth Zink — a Cave Creek resident — is an acrylic artist who uses water-based paint. She will have a cactus flower painting on

• See **Art** on page 9



Cave Creek resident Jules Gallatig shows off her photo of a barrel cactus that's expected to be on display at Hampton by Hilton Carefree. (Sonoran Arts League)



Scottsdale mayor's plan to put Salt River horses in the preserve draws critics

Others say the idea is worth further investigation

By J. Graber

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Scottsdale Mayor Lisa Borowsky's plan to possibly introduce up to 60 of the famous Salt River horses to 600 acres the McDowell Sonoran Preserve has been making headlines lately, but some local experts say it's a bad idea.

The Arizona Department of Agriculture's herd management plan calls for thinning the heard of approximate-

• See **Horses** on page 5

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Forever Loved Pet Sanctuary receives \$20,000 grant

Funds will be used to transfer at least 16 senior dogs from rural and county shelters across Arizona and provide them with the medical and dental care they deserve

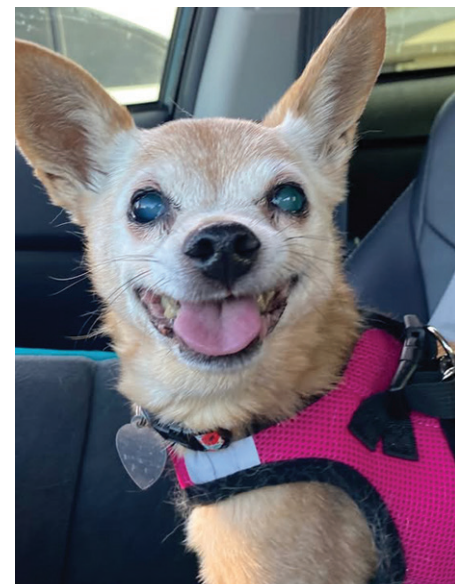
Forever Loved Pet Sanctuary, Scottsdale's only senior dog rescue group, was the recipient of a transformative \$20,000 grant from The Grey Muzzle Organization. Out of 440 applicants nationwide, FLPS was chosen to receive this grant to support at-risk older dogs in the area.

The grant will enable FLPS to take in at least 16 senior dogs, with each dog receiving \$1,250 to fund their basic medical and dental care.

These dogs will be transferred from shelters and rescues around Arizona, continuing Forever Loved's statewide initiative to provide rural and county



Spaghetti. (Forever Loved Pet Sanctuary)



Henrietta. (Forever Loved Pet Sanctuary)

shelters with access to a specialized senior dog rescue. After those 16 dogs have received care, any remaining funds will go toward the veterinary

and dental care of additional senior dogs that FLPS pulls from rural and municipal shelters.

"This grant will provide much-needed veterinary and dental care for the incoming seniors to our sanctuary and foster homes," said Luisa Chocron, FLPS founder and executive director. "As a small rescue, we rely heavily on grants to sustain our mission of finding homes for senior dogs in Arizona. No one appreciates a cozy bed and a loving heart more than this often-overlooked and underserved group."

A national nonprofit, The Grey Muzzle Organization has given more than \$7.2 million in grants over the past 17 years to improve the lives of at-risk senior dogs at animal shelters, rescue organizations, sanctuaries, and other nonprofit groups nationwide.

In addition, one of FLPS' rescues, Maya, is prominently featured on Grey Muzzle's website with volunteer Caroline and the rest of the pack. A 10-year-old Bernese Mountain Dog who was originally seized from a hoarding situation in Northern Arizona, Maya received veterinary care

at FLPS and was treated for anaplasmosis, a tick-borne illness that's curable if treated. A month of treatment later, Maya was adopted and is now living the wonderful life she always deserved to live.

"If 50 is the new 30 for humans, why not for our older best friends?" asked Denise Fleck, Executive Director of the Grey Muzzle Organization. "Senior dogs have so much love left to give, yet they're often the last to be adopted and the first at risk when shelters run out of space. Our grants help change that by funding medical and dental care, adoption and foster programs, hospice support, and services that help keep senior dogs in the homes they love. These resources give thousands of older dogs a second chance to shine."

In 2024 alone, FLPS rescued 109 senior dogs, placed 99 senior dogs in new homes, and helped 9 senior dogs receive in-home hospice care. In the first half of 2025, those numbers are 54, 41 and 8, respectively.

For more information on Forever Loved Pet Sanctuary, visit www.foreverlovedpets.org.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Desert Hills Community School of Music welcomes new administrative director and 2 string instructors

Gregory Hamilton assumed the leadership role, while violinist/violist Brielle Beus and violist Kate Hamilton joined the faculty

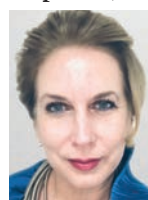
Desert Hills Community School of Music announce exciting changes to its team: cello instructor Gregory Hamilton has stepped into the role of Administrative Director, while accomplished violinist/violist Brielle Beus and internationally renowned violist Kate Hamilton have joined the faculty. All three musicians are eager to help expand the school's mission to provide world-class music instruction for children, teens and adults in the North Scottsdale, Carefree and Cave Creek communities.

Gregory brings a deep background in music education, performance and leadership to his new role, which he has assumed from longtime Administrative Director Heather Baldwin. For the past 15 years, Gregory served as Associate Professor of Cello and Bass at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. Prior to that, he was Executant Senior Lecturer of Cello at the University of Otago in New Zealand, where the Otago Daily Times described him as "a master of the instrument."

Gregory has also taught at Illinois State University and performed with the Houston and Columbus (Ohio) symphonies. His international experience includes appearances at conservatories in Milan, Seville and France, as well as teaching and performing with the Lugano String Orchestra, a

program supporting disadvantaged youth in Buenos Aires. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Kansas, and his solo CD, *The Hollywood Cello*, was released by Soundset Recordings in 2011. In addition to his leadership responsibilities, Gregory maintains a studio at DHCSM and teaches orchestra at Heritage Academy campuses in Mesa and Maricopa.

As Gregory begins his new leadership role, his wife – acclaimed violist,



Kate Hamilton

Kate Hamilton – has joined the school's faculty as an instructor. Kate brings international performance experience and a distinguished teaching career to DHCSM. She currently serves as Associate Professor of Viola at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is Co-Director of the International Chamber Music Festival in João Pessoa, Brazil. Since 2019, she has been performing in the viola section of the Berlin Philharmonic at the prestigious Berlin Philharmonie Concert Hall, under the batons of Sir Simon Rattle, Herbert Blomstedt, Paavo Järvi and the late Bernard Haitink.

As a soloist, Kate has appeared with the Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra (China), Kansas City Civic Orchestra, Central Oregon Symphony and the Chamber Orchestra of San José (Costa Rica). With her viola modeled after the baroque viola d'amore, crafted by luthier Hiroshi Iizuka of Philadelphia, she regularly performs in leading chamber ensembles around the world. Kate is delighted to work with local students at DHCSM, bringing a wealth of per-

formance knowledge and global perspective to her teaching.

Also joining the faculty is violinist and violist Brielle Beus, who began her musical journey in Wyoming, where she first studied piano before falling in love with the violin at age 10. As her passion for music grew, she performed at competitions and events, became the fiddler in a bluegrass band and joined her five younger siblings to perform as "The Von Trapp Family of the West."

Brielle majored in violin performance at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, where she played in



Brielle Beus

the BYU Philharmonic Orchestra and studied under Professor Monte Belnap. She went on to build a thriving private studio in Salt Lake City, teaching more than 40 students and performing for weddings and recording sessions. Brielle is Suzuki certified in Book 1 for both violin and viola and brings a passion for technique and a nurturing teaching style to her students.

With its ever-growing faculty of world-class musicians, DHCSM offers a variety of group classes and private lessons on the scenic campus of Desert Hills Presbyterian Church, 34605 N. Tom Darlington Road, Scottsdale. For more information or to schedule a free trial lesson, visit deserthillsmusic.org.



Gregory Hamilton



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REAL ESTATE

Summary for Sellers in Phoenix Metro (July 2025)

Sellers face typical challenges: 55% of June closings included median buyer closing cost contributions of \$10,000, with negotiations at 97.1% of list price on average. Sales volume matches last year.

Median days on market is 41 days

overall (59 for condos/townhomes). Negotiations vary by price and type—lower ranges focus on concessions like repairs rather than price cuts, while higher ends see deeper discounts. For instance, \$300K–\$400K single-family homes close at 99.1% of list, versus 97.7% for condos/townhomes in that range (a \$4K–\$6K difference due to fewer negotiable items). Over

\$1M single-family homes negotiate to 95%–96% of list.

Wider gaps reflect sellers' high expectations clashing with market realities in a buyer's environment, not direct price trends. June prices fell 4.5% YOY under \$400K and 2.4% in \$400K–\$600K; \$600K–\$1.5M stayed flat (0.1%–0.8% change); over \$1.5M rose 4.4% amid tougher bargaining.



Statistical Market Analysis

Status	# Listings	List Volume	Sold Volume		List Price	Sold Price	Sale/List Price	Approx SQFT	List Price Per Approx SQFT	Sold Price Per Approx SQFT	Agent Days on Market	Cumulative Days on Market
Closed	19	19,385,664	18,185,500	Low	340,000	338,000	0.84	1,056	251.09	240.17	5	5
				Avg	1,020,298	957,132	0.95	2,855	360.30	343.91	91	90
				High	2,449,999	2,065,000	1.01	7,605	575.94	536.97	250	246
Overall	19	19,385,664	18,185,500	Low	340,000	338,000	0.84	1,056	251.09	240.17	5	5
				Avg	1,020,298	957,132	0.95	2,855	360.30	343.91	91	90
				High	2,449,999	2,065,000	1.01	7,605	575.94	536.97	250	246

Selection Criteria for Comparable Properties

Specified listings from the following search: Property type Residential; Close of Escrow Date relative 7 days back; Status of 'Closed'; Zip Code of '85331', '85377'.

Closed Listings

MLS #	Address	FE	Bed	Bth	SqFt	YR	OLP	LP	SP	COE	LP/SP/\$/SF	ADOM	CDOM
6878010	4131 E CASCALOTE DR	32XPO2G	3	2	1,811	1989	575,000	585,000	585,000	07/14/2025	323.03 / 323.03	47	21
6870612	4554 E COYOTE WASH DR	43FDP2G3S	4	3	2,132	2001	670,000	649,950	620,000	07/14/2025	304.85 / 290.81	46	46
6848806	28802 N 45TH ST	42FDXPS2G2S	4	2	2,186	1996	825,000	800,000	790,000	07/11/2025	365.97 / 361.39	50	48
6880470	6251 E BRAMBLE BERRY LN	53XSQO3G	5	3	2,945	2015	1,100,000	1,100,000	1,063,000	07/11/2025	373.51 / 360.95	144	144
6876131	4208 E ASHLER HILLS DR	34DO3G3S	3	4	3,152	2020	1,350,000	1,350,000	1,279,000	07/11/2025	428.3 / 405.77	8	7
6864907	31517 N 41ST ST	43.5DPSO5G6S	4	3.5	3,273	2020	1,700,000	1,630,000	1,594,000	07/11/2025	488.01 / 487.01	56	56
6857051	30026 N 47TH ST	42FDXPSO3G3S	4	2	2,563	1992	1,095,000	1,025,000	995,000	07/10/2025	399.92 / 388.22	77	76
6835027	35411 N 50TH ST	54.5FXPSHO3G	5	4.5	5,006	2004	1,999,500	1,999,500	1,910,000	07/10/2025	399.42 / 381.54	49	282
6839141	36600 N CAVE CREEK RD 9B	32XO1G	3	2	1,558	2013	559,000	549,000	532,800	07/08/2025	352.37 / 341.85	109	109
6848563	3816 E EL SENDERO RD	43.5FDXPSO3G6S	4	3.5	3,894	2004	1,350,000	1,350,000	1,275,000	07/08/2025	346.69 / 327.43	72	72

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REALTY EXECUTIVES

Horses

• From page 1

ly 280 horses in the Tonto National Forest down to about 100, which begs the question of what happens to the other 180 horses?

Borowsky put out a written statement July 29 saying she is considering taking some of them.

“First and foremost, we can act with humanity and save these beautiful horses while helping meet government-mandated directives,” Borowsky said. “This aligns with Scottsdale’s identity as ‘The West’s Most Western Town’ and could also serve as a unique visual for promoting our city globally.”

The plan is not set in stone though.

It first has to be considered by the McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission, which will discuss it Sept. 4, and then the city council.

“The McDowell Sonoran Preserve spans more than twice the size of Manhattan and is lightly trafficked in many areas,” Mayor Borowsky points out. “The key question is whether adding wild horses will enhance or harm the land. That answer will guide our decision.”

Borowsky said she was first approached by concerned citizens with the idea before she became mayor so she formed an ad hoc committee that supports researching the idea further.

There are many benefits to bringing the horses to the preserve, like their grazing could help eliminate the danger of brush fires, she said..

Len Sherman, the chair of the ad hoc committee, said the committee’s report neither opposes or supports the idea.

He said it is feasible to bring in food and water (a well could be dug) in the far northeast portion of the preserve, shelters could be built and

a fence put up, but the committee’s report stops short of saying these things should be done.

“The preliminary report said this is worth investigating,” Sherman said.

He noted an online camera broadcasting live footage of the horses across the internet would be a large boost for Scottsdale’s reputation as would saving horses from auctions where they could end up in good homes or possibly slaughter houses.

He also noted that Arizona is a big place and other locations for these horses should also be considered.

But some not everyone shares Borowsky’s feelings on the subject.

“Some of us have been trying for months to inform those in power what a bad idea this is to no avail apparently,” said Carla, a preserve pioneer who played a key role in establishing the 30,500 acre preserve.

“It is antithetical to everything the preserve was created for,” she continued. “To bring large, non-native, grazing animals into the preserve will destroy our Sonoran desert ecosystem, harm the native wildlife, endanger preserve users and it violates the city code governing preserve management.

“Not to mention, if you put 60 horse in the preserve and God forbid a wildfire starts, how is the fire department going to be able to fight the fire and control the horses and the volunteers there to help the horses.”

McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission Chairman Steve Coluccio, speaking solely for himself, doesn’t like the idea either.

Areas of the preserve used in the past for cattle herding 70 years ago still hasn’t recovered, he said.

“Even today, that land is so compacted that nothing will grow on it,” Coluccio said.

That’s what will happen to more

land if you put horses on it, he said.

He’s also concerned the horses would over graze the land, starting with Red brome (an invasive species itself) - which has very little nutritional value for them so after eating that up, the horses will go after native plants, which, in turn, create an issue for native animals that rely on that vegetation.

“And, by the way, there is no water source out there,” Coluccio said.

Digging a well would harm nearby homes that rely on well water by diminishing the water table.

“The only answer here as far as water is concerned, which is obviously the key component, is to haul water in,” he said. “That’s going to create damage to the environment just by having the trucks going in and out all the time. I understand that horses need at least 15 gallons of water each day - times 60 horses, that’s a lot of water that is going

to have be brought in on a pretty steady basis.”

City Councilwoman Solange Whitehead said she would like to see leadership across the Valley come up with a way to preserve the iconic horses but her vote would be an “absolute no” on the idea of putting them in the preserve, if it ever reaches the City Council.

“There’s no shade, no water, no barriers to protect horses and drivers and we have an ordinance that prohibits invasive species in the preserve,” she said. “It could be a death sentence for the preserve and the horses,” Whitehead said.

Please send your comments to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines. J. Graber can be reached at jgrab@iniusa.org.

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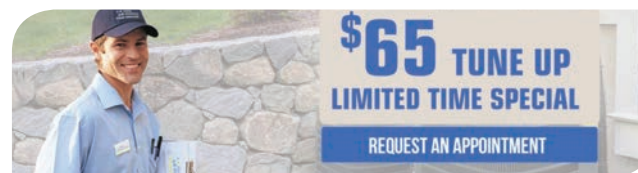
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Cactus Foothills 10U All-Stars with their families.

Cactus Foothills 10U All-Stars capture state title

By Cory Brunson

SPECIAL TO THE INDEPENDENT

The Cactus Foothills 10U All-Stars officially claimed the 2025 Arizona State Championship, finishing their tournament run with an undefeated 7-0 record. Over the course of the competition, these young athletes scored an impressive 56 runs and allowed just 19—an incredible showing of teamwork, determination, and skill.

Their All-Star journey began in June with district tournaments and wrapped up in mid-July in Sierra Vista. During that stretch, the team held 18 practices over 63 days and battled their way through the winner's bracket—all without suffering a single loss.

This kind of achievement doesn't happen by accident. It's the result

of dedicated players, supportive families, and a strong, connected community that rallies around its youth.

Being selected to an All-Star team is a true honor, and these players have represented Cave Creek with pride, sportsmanship, and heart.

As a league and as a town, we're proud of what these boys have accomplished—not just for the win, but for the way they've carried themselves every step of the way. Their success is a reflection of the values we hold dear in Cave Creek: commitment, teamwork, perseverance, and the belief in nurturing young talent.

Their story is one worth telling, and one that we believe will inspire others across the area.



Cactus Foothills 10U All-Stars.

THOUGHTS ON THE ARTS

Sheep is Life

We will be having some exciting guest writers from the Sonoran Arts League in this column in the coming months. We are happy to start with Roxanne!

"Have you ever wondered how an artist finds passion and meaning in their materials? I am an artist who uses fiber, mainly wool from sheep, to create large sculptural vessels. This process happens by adding water and lots of agitation to the wool fibers, which then combine to produce a solid material. Depending on the amount of fiber, the thickness varies from almost transparent to sturdy, thick forms that can be self-supportive.

Designing was my career, from the footwear and clothing industry to textiles. Living on the East Coast and in cold climates, I had experience and access to wool and its many uses. As I had more time to experiment with wool and its felting techniques, I transitioned from clothing to the possibilities of wool sculptures as a designer and artist. Living there also afforded me sources of wool, Shepherd friends, learning about the breeds of sheep (over 400), large fiber festivals, and endless resources. My typical shopping trip was to go to the farms, pick out the sheep/fleece, and either wait for shearing or help with it. I do all my own processing of the wool, which includes picking, washing, carding, sometimes dyeing, etc. It's very time-consuming, but a relaxing process where I really get to understand the characteristics of each breed.

Three years ago, my husband and I decided to retire, move to Cave Creek, and build a home with studios to enjoy our passions. I moved quite a supply of wool with us, but there would be plenty of resources here. My first trip was to Window Rock,



Fiber Artist Roxanne Eklund

AZ, for the celebration of "Sheep is Life." This was an annual event for Shepards of Navajo Churro sheep. I did meet many of the shepherds and bought a lot of fleeces.

Since this first trip, I have learned the unfortunate journey and history of this ancient and endangered breed and the slow progress of bringing these heritage sheep back to the present. Most of the Navajo weavings are of this breed, as the fleece is coarse but strong and very easy to spin.

These sheep came from Spain originally and found their way to the tribes in New Mexico and Arizona, becoming vital to their lives. Today, the Navajo/Dine elders continue with their flocks, but the wool market has diminished, mills in the US have closed, and the art and skills are disappearing.

My friend, Nikyle Begay, who is an expert shepherd, weaver, and helps register these heritage sheep, has provided me with some of the most beautiful fleeces from their flock

• See **Sheep** on page 11


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Arts & Entertainment

ARTS

Phoenix Art Museum to welcome rare exhibition of Italian works

Historically significant pieces from the largest collection of Florentine Baroque art will be first of its kind in Arizona

SPECIAL TO INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Phoenix Art Museum this summer presents the Southwest premiere of “Florentine Baroque: The Haukohl Collection,” which showcases a collection of historically significant works from 17th- and 18th-century Florence rarely seen outside of Italy.

The exhibition features gilded paintings and sculptures that demonstrate the distinctive Florentine Baroque style, known for its poetic and colorful symbolism, a Museum press release explains. Drawn from The Haukohl Collection, works feature dramatic and vibrant depictions of religious, classical, mythological, and allegorical narratives.

The first exhibition of its kind in Arizona, Florentine Baroque is an opportunity for local audiences to experience the legacy of important Florentine artists of the period who contributed to the Tuscan city’s cultural legacy, most notably supported by the Medici Grand Dukes.

“Florentine Baroque: The Haukohl Collection” will be on view at



Alessandro Gherardini (1655-1726), “The Annunciation to the Immaculate Virgin.” Oil on canvas. Haukohl Collection. (Photo Credit: MNAHA, Tom Lucas)

IF YOU GO

What: “Florentine Baroque: The Haukohl Collection” exhibit

When: On display Aug. 28-July 26, 2026

Where: Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 N. Central Ave.

More Information: phxart.org

the Phoenix Art Museum from Aug. 28 through July 26, 2026.

“This exhibition offers a unique opportunity for our audiences to explore works from a specific place and

art historical period that are not prominently represented in the Phoenix Art Museum Collection,” Jeremy Mikolajczak, the Museum’s Sybil Harrington Director and CEO, stated. “Additionally, it is the only chance to view these stunning sculptures, paintings, and more in the Southwest.”

The collection showcases more than 30 examples of large- and small-scale works from some of the most prominent artist families in Italy. Featuring work by Florentine artists who lived and produced across Europe, the collection was assembled over more than 40 years by Sir Mark Fehrs Haukohl, a Houston-based art col-



Giovanni Domenico Ferretti (1692-1768), “God Reproving Cain for the Murder of Abel.” Oil on canvas. Haukohl Collection. (Photo Credit: MNAHA, Tom Lucas)

lector and co-founder of the Medici Archive Project.

Visitors to the exhibition will discover how Florentine Baroque works unite influences of Florentine tradition with Renaissance sensibilities.

The rare display of works also provides the opportunity to examine the legacy of the House of Medici. The Medici Bank was founded in 1397 and for hundreds of years was the largest bank in Europe.

Visit phxart.org.

Art

• From page 1

display. She paints landscape paintings and sunsets, she said.

"I paint a lot of everything," Zink said. "But I paint it with a lot of color."

The Sonoran Arts League is a nonprofit best known for its "Hidden in the Hills Artist Studio Tour" that features artists in "various studio locations throughout the scenic" Desert Foothills communities of Cave Creek, Carefree and north Scottsdale, according to its website.

At the Hampton Inn, the hotel management decided to include some original pieces from local artists, Zink said.

The additions to the hotel are popular.

"(Customers) take selfies in front of the art," Zink said.

Cave Creek resident Jules Gallatig is expected to have her photo of a barrel cactus in the show. The

picture — a close-up features yellow and red flowers on the cactus with pointy thorns covering the cactus.

The photo is a 16-inch by 24-inch canvas print on sale for \$465.

"There's no reflection," Gallatig said. "But (the pearl canvas) gives a shimmer to it."

Taking photos of stationary objects in the desert isn't as easy as it seems, the photographer said.

Lighting and wind are elements that constantly change — which could change the photo, she said.

"The wind is my enemy," Gallatig said.

Zink's work isn't featured exclusively at the August show.

Instead, she has an art studio where she teaches in-person classes at her Cave Creek space, she said.

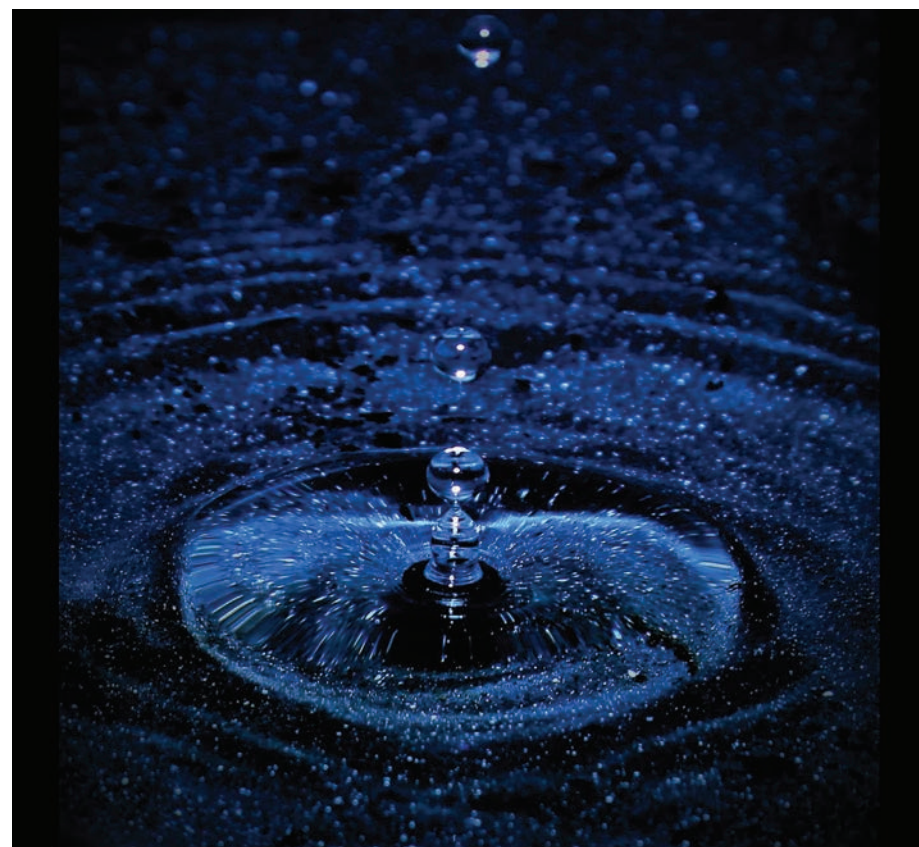
She hopes her love of painting translates to others, she said.

"I enjoy sharing my love of painting," Zink said.

For information, visit sonoranart-sleague.org.

THROUGH THE LENS

Chloe Roskowinski



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I am so excited to share that my photographic artwork, titled Drip Drop, was selected by the Arizona Art Alliance for inclusion in the Heat is On Virtual Exhibition, which will take place through Aug. 31. Winners will be announced at noon during the Virtual Reception & Awards Ceremony on August 10.

CAVE CREEK VIEWS

The CUP: Where did everyone go?

By Don Senneville and Jim White

Cruising the Coffee Row this week has been lonely. Okay, we get why a steaming cup of Joe may not fit 115 degrees on the patio, but even the 75 degree interiors of our local stops are thin, like Don's coffee. Has everyone gone to Flagstaff-Pinetop-Turkey-Africa-Europe? We feel deserted. Please get out there and support our special towns' coffee culture. We are sitting in an air conditioned truck with excellent 'to-go' dark roast drip coffees from Local Jonny's listening to NPR (or was it FoxNewsRadio?) wondering where everyone is. The breakfast burrito was excellent. We will keep looking and researching further. Maybe they are at the lake.

We do know where some people went: They went as far away as Paris, Istanbul, and Pinetop. Not to mention Africa. For some reason, Don and family decided to go to Kenya. To see the Big Five. Apparently, that's what people go to Kenya to see — lions, leopards, rhinoceros-es, elephants, and African buffalos. In actuality, they saw a lot more than that. There were Big Five smaller animals (hyenas, warthogs, baboons, etc.). There were Big Five Bovidae animals

— impalas, gazelles, antelope. Big Five Birds, Big Five trees, Big Five restaurants, Big Five sunsets.... 10 year-old granddaughter Sedona saw it all. It was difficult to get Don to shut up about it. However, it's worth noting that a lot of good work is being done down there to save all the animals and their habitats, efforts funded by people from all over the world. Don says he petted a rhino and an ostrich. So much for common sense.

Okay, low lakes, fires, bad air, coffee bean issues, 115 degrees — 150 in cars — politics, gnats, road closures, and car sunshades are just a few of the factors that contribute to the summer irritations. Even a good macchiato doesn't do it. So to escape reality, we head to the Seed Cafe at Cirvana looking for divine guidance, AC and a date ball. Here there are humans with no tans and no problems, even with the scorched earth. Curious as we are, we engaged in conversations with a few of the paler quests. Most appear to live above the 40th parallel and work in "IT." We immediately questioned them about IT and AI. After determining that they were indeed not artificially intelligent, we listened intently. Our experience was extremely informative and fascinating. However, a day later, we have no

idea what they said. This may require another date ball and more oat milk. All in all, it was good to have human contact again after the deserted coffee shops of Coffee Row. Empty patios and parking spaces dot our towns. But the 4-Way Stop is a piece of cake these days. No line at the Grotto. One checker at Bashas.

Meanwhile, in case you're not back here yet, but tuned in, Divine Bakery moved over next to Fantastico's, across from Kiwanis' Market-place. Twice as much space, more good stuff. There's a new coffee place open, too, over sort of by Kaolin's Flat Tire bike shop. It's in the next center to the east, at the western edge. Bull & Brew it's called. They say they have great cinnamon rolls And finally, the Sonoran News has become a new paper, The Independent, with new ownership. Whether we get a refill at The CUP is up to our readers. Anyway, we have had several inquiries as to the status of the 1st Annual Sundial Dog Show, sponsored by The CUP. The Kid Judges are waiting to meet with the Mayor to set a date and get permission. The morning dog walkers have also dwindled in numbers. More details to follow. Nicolette, our French Connection, will be reporting on coffee from Paris, Sedona, age 9,



reports from Africa, and Jordan, 11, from Mexico. Don reports from Istanbul and Jim from Pinetop. Also, our favorite Barista from the Village Creperie is on assignment to Italy. She will report her coffee experience if she returns. We hope she does not become a tea drinker. We need some summertime humor. Please share, if you are still here or tell us where you went. One last thought, If snowbirds are defined as humans flying here in winter, what are we who leave here in the summer? "Desert ers"... ideas? Please write us at The CUP, to towns@iniusa.org, Independent Newsmedia (formally Sonoran News)

*** "Where Have All The Average People Gone?" (Roger Miller, 1969)*


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Community makes big impact

The Desert Foothills community showed up in full force on July 22 for the GIG (Get Involved Gathering)—an inspiring event that brought together local residents, nonprofit organizations, and civic leaders to strengthen the bonds of community service and volunteerism.

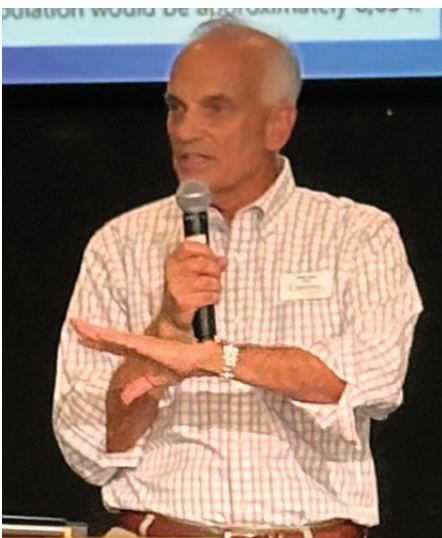
With more than 120 people in attendance, the energy in the room was undeniable. Both Mayor Bob Morris of Cave Creek and Mayor John Crane of Carefree delivered heartfelt remarks emphasizing the urgent need to support local nonprofits that pro-

vide critical services to the area's seniors, families, and those in crisis.

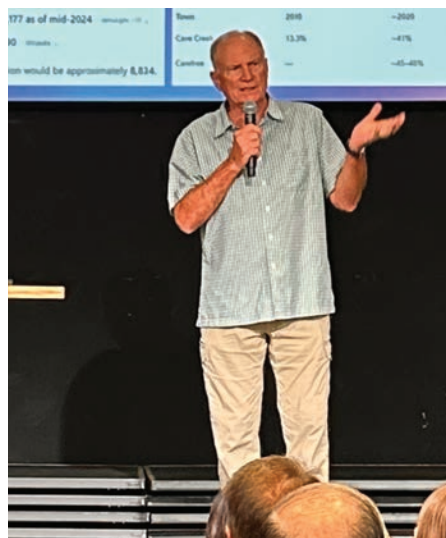
"We can't do this without our volunteers," said Mayor Morris. "The organizations here today are the safety net for our community."

Attendees connected face-to-face with nonprofit representatives from:

- Foothills Caring Corps
- Foothills Food Bank
- Desert Foothills Library
- The Holland Center
- Kiwanis Marketplace
- Scully Learning Center Foundation
- Cave Creek Museum



Carefree Mayor John Crane.



Cave Creek Mayor Bob Morris.

The response was overwhelming—Foothills Caring Corps alone had over 40 new volunteers step forward, with every nonprofit walking away with new contacts, sign-ups, and renewed momentum.

The event also featured a hands-on CPR demonstration by Daisy Mountain Fire Department, and an eye-opening presentation on identifying senior challenges, equipping attendees to compassionately respond to older adults facing mental health, substance abuse, or isolation issues.

This powerful afternoon was made possible through a meaningful partnership between Steve Woods of Tech 4 Life, Jim Ford from the Town of Cave Creek, and Brent Downs of Foothills Caring Corps, whose collaborative vision created a space for connection, education, and action.



GIG attendees.

"This was more than a gathering—it was a movement," said Steve Woods. "People didn't just show up, they got involved."

As the Desert Foothills region continues to grow, events like the GIG prove one thing loud and clear: This is a community that cares.

To find out more opportunities or the next "GIG," visit desertfoothillsvolunteers.com.

Sheep

• From page 7

and others. Today, I use almost exclusively the churro wool for my sculptures. I give presentations to advocate and promote this endangered breed, as well as inform about fair pricing. I have discovered that I could not create such large sculptures without using Navajo churro fleece. My current work is themed "Women of Wool" and is a collection of 11 large vessels with connections to Mother Earth

and the importance of protecting our environment and heritage."

You will see Roxanne and many more Sonoran Arts League artists at the Studio Tour on November 21—22 and 28—30!

There are always interesting shows at the Gallery in Carefree and exciting classes at the League Studio in Stagecoach Village! Please join us and remember "You Gotta Have Art!"

Roxanne Eklund
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Cave Creek teachers get surprise gift

By Maya McFall

This year's annual gathering of teachers and staff for the Cave Creek Unified School District to kick off the new year came with a surprise for the district's educators: a \$200 gift card.

"It's well documented that teachers will spend literally hundreds of dollars of their own money to set up their classrooms and provide a great learning experience, and they shouldn't have to do that," said Kiwanis Club Director Darrel Doepeke. "If we can help every teacher in the school district, they in turn will impact the lives of every student."

CCUSD partnered with the Kiwanis Club of Carefree to host a 2025-26 school year kickoff event July 28 for every teacher in the district. The event took place in Cactus Shadow High School's Fine Arts Center, 33606 N 60th St. More than 200 teachers attended.

The Kiwanis Club funds come from the Kiwanis Marketplace, 6535 E. Cave



Kiwanis Club of Carefree members were on hand to help distribute gift cards to Cave Creek teachers at the district's annual kickoff event. From left, Kiwanis member Kathy Haugner, Kiwanis Director Paula Scully, Kiwanis member Debra Lay, Kiwanis Executive Director Sandra Carrier. Kiwanis Treasurer Larry Key; Kiwanis President Cam Kuniej, Club Director Darrell Doepeke and Cave Creek Unified Superintendent Bill Dolezal. (Independent Newsmedia/Maya McFall)

Creek Road.

"Kiwanis has done another amazing thing in gifting our teachers gift cards to set up their classrooms this year," said board member Dan Moore. "In a time where we can't properly fund our teachers given the constraints of the state and the federal, it's nice to see an organization like Kiwanis come in and show some sup-

port for our teachers, so we greatly appreciate that."

Teachers appreciated the gifts.

"I teach language arts, so probably what I will do is purchase novels for my students to read with. You know, really pushing, student selected reading," said Shelley Kniffen, an English teacher at Sonoran Trails Middle School, 5555 E.

Pinnacle Vista, Phoenix. "This is a nice surprise — a treat."

CCUSD boasts 4,000 students.

"Our theme this year is moving forward together," Superintendent Bill Dolezal said, describing the significant role educators play in the lives of their students. "They are the future we are shaping, they are the inspiration behind every lesson, every late night, every moment of dedication we pour into our profession."

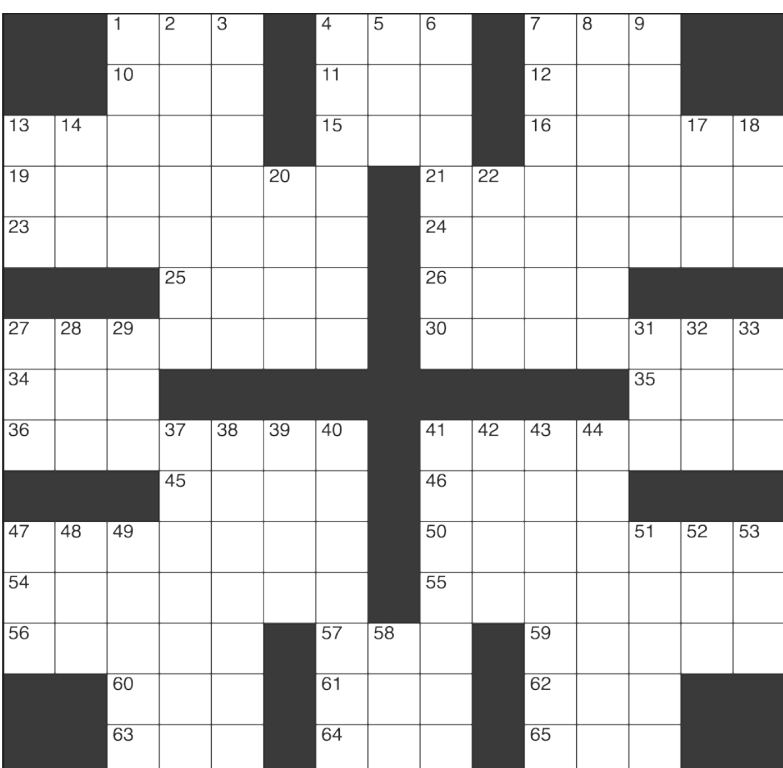
Dolezal continued to lay out the goals of each educator, and how they should aim to prepare each student for their "E": Employment, Enlistment or Enrollment.

Board member Brianna Walker retold a story from a family photo collage from volleyball to choir to talent shows -- all her children were positively impacted by an educator to pursue their passions.

Moore said he appreciates the close-knit community Cave Creek.

"We truly have something special, and at the core of that is all of you," he added.

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1. Auto manufacturer
4. The 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet
7. Two-year-old sheep
10. Member of indigenous people in Asia
11. Airborne (abbr.)
12. Actress de Armas
13. Not moving
15. Cool!
16. Plants of the arum family
19. Perceptible by touch
21. Rorschach test
23. Monetary units
24. Art
25. Cardinal number
26. Dueling sword
27. Hates
30. Fixed in one place
34. Pie __ mode
35. Moved on foot
36. Passenger's spot on a motorcycle
41. A way through
45. "Rule, Britannia" composer
46. Leader
47. Flowing

50. Common greetings in Arabic countries

54. Solution for all difficulties
55. Soft clothing fabric
56. Building material
57. Sea bream
59. A way to cause to be swollen
60. One and only
61. Skin color
62. Wreath
63. Nevertheless
64. They __
65. Sea eagle

CLUES DOWN

1. Policemen (French)
2. Toy dog
3. Inflamed colon disease
4. Muscular weaknesses
5. Helps little firms
6. References
7. Takes down
8. Facilitates
9. One-time empress of the Roman Empire
13. Engine additive
14. Chemistry solution
17. Written account

18. Consumed

20. Coming after all others
22. No (slang)
27. Government lawyers
28. Super Bowl winner Manning
29. Small amount
31. A way to save for your future
32. A way to travel behind
33. Midway between northeast and east
37. Head pain
38. Loud lawn insect
39. Actress Hathaway
40. Boat race
41. About fish
42. Nursemaid in India
43. Marketable
44. Tinier
47. Parts per billion (abbr.)
48. Paddle
49. Oneness
51. Bitter compound
52. Not around
53. Very fast airplane
58. Swiss river

ANSWER ON PAGE 15.

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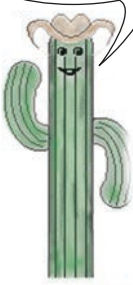
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