



Community

City Council suggests age limits for e-bikes, e-scooters; **2**



INDEPENDENT

Sports

Playoff snub fuels Skyhawks for much tougher schedule; **10**



September 2025

Volume 31 Issue 9

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Home prices impacting DVUSD enrollment decline

By Steve Stockmar
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Deer Valley Unified School District started classes July 31 and the 42-school district is sure of one thing: enrollment figures to be down.

District administrators are anticipating a decline of 900 students from one year ago.

A number of contributing factors are among those analyzed in a demographic and enrollment report from Phoenix consulting firm Applied Economics that issued its findings in October 2024. The lack of affordable housing for young families within the district's boundaries is one of the factors cited.

While the district population figures to get a major boost over the coming years with housing growth



Christy Walker

• See **Enrollment** on page 23



A rendering of the nation's first tech-integrated recovery hospital for survivors of child and young adult trafficking, to be built in Glendale. (Submitted)

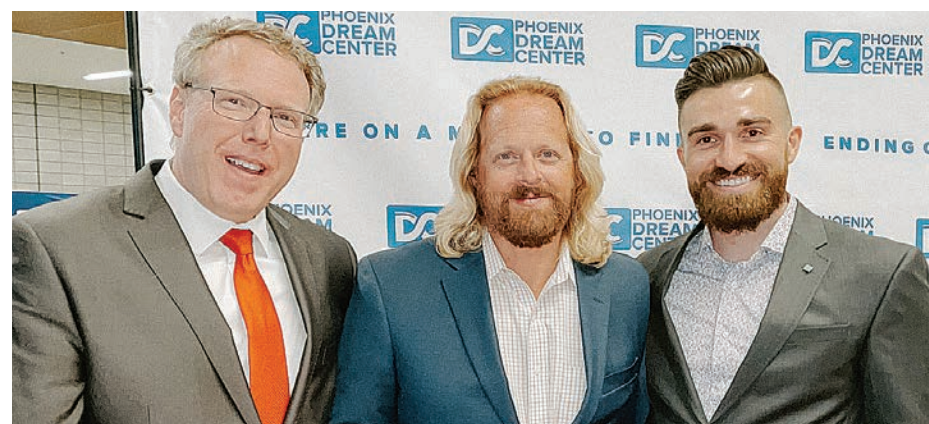
Future facility in city aims to help sex trafficking victims

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Brian and Skye Steele dreamed of a singularly dedicated medical and therapeutic campus for Where Hope Lives for many years.

They co-founded the nonprofit is part of City Help Inc. of Phoenix (Phoenix Dream Center). Where

• See **Campus** on page 14



From left, Brian D. Steele, CEO of Where Hope Lives, Jeff Gottfurcht, co-founder and CEO of Cyber Dive, and Derek Jackson, co-founder and COO of Cyber Dive, pose for a photograph. On July 31, Where Hope Lives and Cyber Dive announced a partnership to build the nation's first tech-integrated recovery hospital for survivors of child and young adult trafficking in Glendale. (Submitted)



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COMMUNITY NEWS

IN BRIEF

ELECTION

Goree announces 2026 council seat bid in Ocotillo District

Rory Goree announced his candidacy for the Glendale City Council seat in the Ocotillo District during a Aug. 14 event at Bitzee Mama's restaurant.

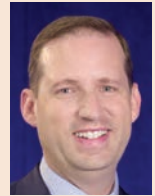
The Ocotillo District includes downtown Glendale and stretches west to 75th Avenue between Glendale Avenue and Bethany Home Road, and to 67th Avenue from Bethany Home south to Camelback Road.

Current council member Leandro Baldenegro has not announced his intentions for the 2026 election, which will be on Aug. 4.

PROMOTION

Glendale hires new deputy city manager Adkins

Glendale announced Thomas Adkins as the new deputy city manager on Aug. 11. His first day in the city was Aug. 25.



Thomas Adkins

He replaces Brent Stoddard, hired by Mesa as an assistant city manager in July.

Adkins has decades of experience working in public policy at the local, regional, state and federal level, as well as in crisis communications, community relations and legislative advocacy.

• See **Adkins** on page 12

ORDINANCE

City Council considers age limits for e-bikes, e-scooters

By Richard Smith

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Northern Glendale Councilmembers Ray Malnar and Lauren Tolmachoff see electric scooters and bikes zipping by their neighborhood and hear about their dangers from constituents.

In southern Glendale, Councilmember Leandro Baldenegro sees a large number of students ride their e-bikes to Glendale American School, where he works. And Councilmember Lupe Coachas had to brake when a kid on an e-bike cut in front of him on Maryland Avenue before they blew through the stop sign.

Glendale does not have an ordinance to deal specifically with e-bikes and e-scooters, other than a regulation already prohibiting the use of electric bicycles and scooters in parks.

Council and staff laid the groundwork for an ordinance during a workshop discussion Aug. 12.

"It's just a matter of time, in my mind, before tragedy strikes and somebody gets seriously hurt," said Deputy City Manager Rick St. John.

An Aug. 1 collision between a pickup and a 13-year old Mountain Ridge freshman riding an e-bike to school nearly turned tragic.

St. John said he was told the e-bike was not a contributing factor. In that wreck, it was just inattention from both parties.

"As I understand, he was going the same direction as traffic. Both had stopped for a red light. And when the light turned green for 67th Avenue, both vehicles went — the bike to cross



Multiple e-scooters block a sidewalk on the southeast corner of Second Street and McKinley Street on Oct. 30, 2023. (Cronkite News/Alyssa Bickle)

the street and the truck to turn right," St. John said.

Tolmachoff has heard from many constituents worried their child would be hurt riding a scooter — or that they would get hit darting around in traffic — and these calls came before the accident.

E-scooter and e-bike use escalated north of Loop 101, and just south of it, in the past year.

"It's a big problem in Arrowhead Ranch. I know it's a big problem in north Phoenix and north Peoria because I talk to Ann O'Brien, whose district is to the east, and Peoria leaders. We're dealing with the same thing," Tolmachoff said after Tuesday's council meeting. "Obviously, you can't just snap your fingers

and have an ordinance."

Phoenix recently adopted an electronic bike ordinance.

Electric bicycles are defined by state law as having fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts. The bikes are broken into three classes.

Electric scooters have two or three wheels, handlebars and a floorboard. They are powered by an electric motor with a maximum speed of 20 mph.

Meanwhile, motor driven cycles do not have pedals and are governed by the same laws as standard motorcycles.

The fastest electric bikes are limited to 28 mph.

"Basically, they are restricted to

• See **Scooters** on page 12

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IN BRIEF

MALL

Ricemill opens in Arrowhead, Pickleman's coming soon

Ricemill opened its second Arizona location at Arrowhead Towne Center in Glendale Aug. 23.

It is on the second floor food court.

The Arrowhead location will operate from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday.

Pickleman's will make its debut in Arizona later this fall in the mall.

The restaurant will offer pickles, naturally, and is also known for its sandwiches, tavern-style pizzas, salads, macaroni bowls, soups and made-from-scratch cookies.

"Their high-quality ingredients, modern vibe, and commitment to community align perfectly with our vision for offering unique and delicious dining experiences to our shoppers," stated Gabrielle Ochoa, general manager at Arrowhead Towne Center, in a press release.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

County indicts Glendale iSold it on eBay operators for multiple

Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes announced Aug. 20 that a Maricopa County Grand Jury has indicted the entity 'iSold It on eBay' in Glendale.

Charles Hudson Jr., Charles

• See **Indicts** on page 5

Q & A

Meet Your Businesswoman: Glendale chamber interim CEO Lisa Baker

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

In a coordinated leadership transition plan, the Glendale Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors announced July 31 that Lisa Baker of Russ Lyon Sotheby's International Realty will step away from board duties and serve as interim president and CEO of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce.

This interim appointment ensures organizational stability and continued forward momentum while Waverly Partners, a national executive search firm, actively recruits for the chamber's next full time president and CEO.

"I am honored to serve the Glendale Chamber in this transitional role," Baker stated in the press release. "I'm committed to working alongside our talented team and devoted board to ensure a seamless transition and continued excellence in service to our members."

The Glendale Independent caught up with Baker for a question and answer session:

Name: Lisa Baker

Occupation: Global Real Estate Advisor with Russ Lyon Sotheby's International Realty and Interim President & CEO of the Glendale Chamber of Commerce

What made you choose this line of work and why is it important or interesting to you?: Real estate transactions typically occur as a result of a life change. It could be a change in employment, like a new job or re-



Lisa Baker (Glendale Chamber of Commerce)

irement, or a change in household size needs, like upsizing or downsizing. I love helping people navigate through those changes and the challenges from a housing perspective. It is very rewarding to assist someone with a milestone in their life or guide them through a stressful transition or change, so they can move on to whatever is next for them. There is an absolute joy in working through that process with someone and being able to bring a successful conclusion.

What do you like most about what you do, both working as a Realtor and promoting the Glendale Chamber of Commerce? I love finding solutions and making connections, and those are both key aspects of my work in real estate and with the chamber.

When did your job bring you in contact with the chamber, and how did your work benefit from chamber membership? It was June of 2017, and it actually wasn't through

my job. I had just been appointed to serve on a committee for the city of Glendale and was waiting for the first meeting to start. I was talking to the person sitting next to me, and she suggested I look into joining the Glendale Chamber of Commerce. She offered to make an introduction and asked me for a card. I met with the chamber staff and joined immediately. I've been involved in the chamber ever since, and that person has also become one of my dearest friends.

Why did you decide to be a candidate for the interim CEO role at this point? As a member of the board of directors, I understood firsthand the challenges we faced in identifying a suitable interim CEO. It is a temporary position, and candidates typically seek permanent employment. Consultants we explored were often already deeply engaged in their own businesses and unable to commit the time required for an interim role. We also hoped to find someone with knowledge of the chamber, or chambers in general, to ensure continuity during this important transition. Recognizing these obstacles, I began considering an alternative approach. We have fantastic agents and support staff at our brokerage, and I explored ways to leverage those assets so I could provide the chamber with the support it needs at this critical time. This organization means a great deal to me, and I felt a strong responsibility to step forward and do whatever I

• See **Baker** on page 5

BUSINESS NEWS

Baker

• From page 4

could to support both the staff and our members.

What do you think will be the most challenging aspect of your job, particularly with the turnover at the Glendale Chamber's CEO role in the past two years? The recent turnover in the CEO role has naturally raised questions about stability, and I see that as both the challenge and the opportunity of this position. The most recent CEO served for only a year, which is not long enough to create a lasting impact. Before that, our previous CEO led for more than a decade, and the stability he provided became the foundation on which the chamber still operates today. As interim CEO, the most significant challenge will be ensuring that our members, partners, and the broader community remain confident in the chamber's direction during this transition. My focus will be on strengthening engagement, communicating transparently, and reinforcing that the chamber is not defined by one individual but by the collective strength of our team, our members, and our mission. If we can sustain that confidence and demonstrate momentum, I believe we won't just weather this change; we'll

emerge stronger, better aligned, and ready to grow.

People who inspired me (and how)? My parents. They instilled in me a sense of responsibility to step up and be part of the solution whenever possible, and to not back away from a challenging situation. My husband inspires me every day with his enthusiasm, boundless support, and encouragement. The chamber board members who have put their trust in me and the chamber members who love the chamber and can't wait to see what's next for the organization and be a part of it are also an incredible source of inspiration.

What is one thing you want prospective members and new businesses in Glendale to know about the chamber? I want prospective members and new businesses to know that the Glendale Chamber of Commerce is the largest business organization in the West Valley, driven by our core principles of business connection, community impact and economic prosperity. We're here to help you grow and to strengthen our entire community.

What is your advice to today's youth?: There are countless ways to contribute through organizations, clubs, or your local municipality. Find your passion, get involved, and show up. You never know where an opportunity will take you!

Indicts

• From page 4

Hudson Sr., Sherry Hudson, and Carlos Flores, as well as 24 known alleged "boosters," were indicted after a multi-year investigation conducted by the United States Department of Homeland Security.

The alleged iSold It ring members were indicted for organized re-

tail theft, trafficking stolen property, fraudulent schemes and artifices of \$10,000 or more, illegally conducting an enterprise, and conspiracy.

From 2018 to 2024, iSold It is alleged to have made more than \$2 million from the sale of previously stolen property.

During a search of the business and property associated to iSold It, investigators recovered more than \$200,000 in Blu-Ray and DVDs.



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BUSINESS MOVES



ESCAPOLOGY

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Courtesy Escapology

1 Escapology, a national escape room venue, opened its 100th location Aug. 11 at 9950 W. Glendale Ave. The 2,900-square-foot space features seven live interactive experiences played in private groups of up to eight people. Participants in the 60-minute adventures will solve puzzles, open locks and discover secret rooms while trying to escape.

2 The B. W. Bakery, better known as Baker Wee in Phoenix, featuring its custom cakes and neighborhood roots, is celebrating 30 years of serving the Valley with the opening of its second

location at Arrowhead Towne Center. The new storefront quietly opened in June on the ground floor of the mall's center court near the Apple Store and Victoria's Secret. It features a curated menu.

3 This summer **Revitalize Your Glow Medspa** opened at 6630 W. Cactus Road, Suite B-107. The store offers non-surgical body contouring treatments, Radio Frequency skin tightening, CoolSculpting and HydraFacials.

4 This spring, **Bunzee Burgers & Wings** opened at 8024 N. 51st Ave. The restaurant offers burgers, wings, wraps and Halal food.

OPENING SOON

5 The Sandwich Shop is coming to Glendale. From 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 13 the shop will celebrate its grand opening at 17045 N. 59th Ave., Suite 106. Enjoy Hawaiian malasadas and cheesecake samples, pin and cup giveaways and a raffle.

REMODELING

6 The newly renovated and expanded flagship location of **Hot Topic** in Arrowhead Towne Center doubles the footprint of its previous location and stand as their largest store in Arizona. Hot Topic is located on the upper level near the food court. The store celebrated its reopening Aug. 2-3.

CLOSED

7 Due to ongoing gaps in reimbursement from Arizona's Medicaid program, AHCCCS, **Jewish Family & Children's Service** had to make difficult decisions. To continue to offer services, JFCS had to close its Glendale health center, at 5701 W. Talavi Blvd., Suite 180, and cut several behavioral health and administrative positions.



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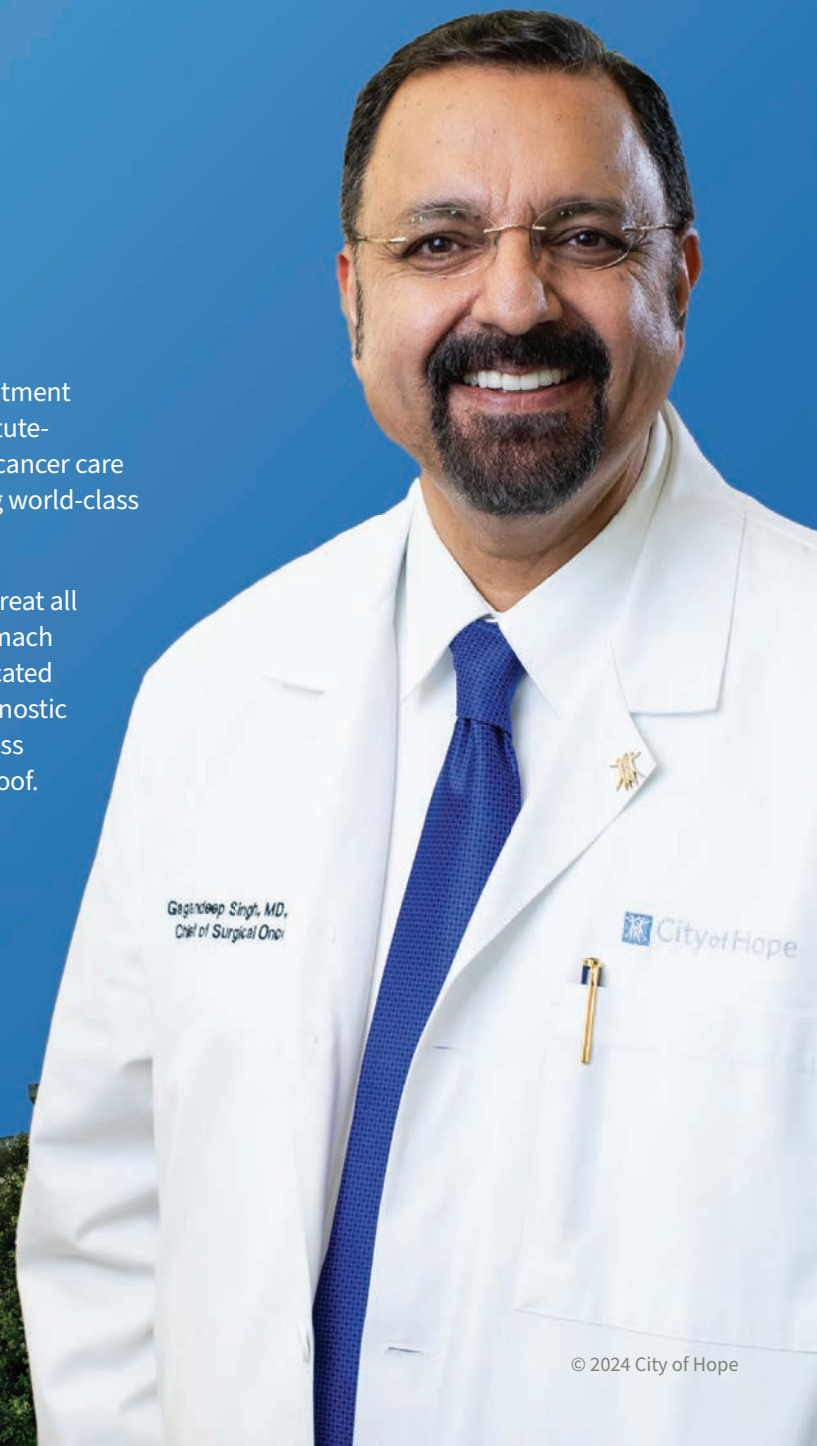
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EDUCATION

DEER VALLEY

DVUSD board frequently meets in executive session

By Steve Stockmar

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Deer Valley Unified School District and its governing board is a month into the 2025-26 academic year.

Two board meetings are already down this school year. The next meeting starts at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 9. Meetings take place in person in the DVUSD Governing Board Room, 20402 N. 15th Ave., Phoenix, and are also streamed live on the district's YouTube channel.

In addition to open meetings,



• See **Board** on page 9 This image from the district's YouTube channel shows most of the Deer Valley Unified School District governing board meeting on May 13, 2025. (Via YouTube)



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5750 W. Glenn Dr, Glendale, AZ 85301

TUESDAY / SEPTEMBER 30 / 6:30-7:30pm

Foothills Recreation & Aquatics Center - Coyote Room

5600 W. Union Hills Dr, Glendale, AZ 85308

THURSDAY / OCTOBER 2 / 6:30-7:30pm

Glendale Main Library - Auditorium

5959 W. Brown St, Glendale, AZ 85302

*Meetings Streaming Live
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SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



SCHOOL NOTES

SCHOLARS

Glendale residents earn degrees, president's list recognition

The following college students from Glendale recently earned academic honors:

- ♦ Jonathon Barron was named to the spring 2025 President's List at Muskingum University in New Concord, Ohio. Students must earn a term GPA of 3.90 or above on a minimum of 12 completed semester hours.

- ♦ Sofia LaBrozzi graduated from the University of Jamestown at the end of the spring 2025 semester. LaBrozzi earned a bachelor of arts in psychology.

- ♦ Randall Lester earned a spot on the spring 2025 president's list

at Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont, after achieving a semester grade point average of 4.0.

- ♦ David Bird and Nathan Barron were named to the dean's list from spring semester 2025 at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.

- ♦ Krisil Hightower, studying for her agricultural business certificate, earned a spot on the spring 2025 dean's list at the University of Minnesota-Crookston.

- ♦ Abby C. Wilkes earned a degree from Clark University in Worcester, Mass. Wilkes graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor of arts degree, and with high honors in sociology and was a member of the Phi Beta Kappa honor society.

Board

• From page 8

which generally take place every two weeks from August through July (with exceptions) and are mandated by the state's Open Meetings Law, throughout the academic year the governing board will periodically also meet in executive sessions.

The Arizona Legislature allows for executive sessions in numerous situations as outlined here.

The closed-door meetings are private to everyone except the public body hosting the meeting, legal officials, and any invited individuals.

From August 2024 through June 2025, the Deer Valley Unified governing board met in executive session 19 times, according to the district's public record of meetings.

Stated reasons for the executive sessions ranged from the board's discussion or consultation for legal

advice with attorneys regarding the superintendent contract to discussion or consultation for legal advice regarding complaints against district personnel to a review of a teacher's decision to promote a pupil to a grade or retain a pupil in a grade, for instance.

Promotion, demotion, dismissal, salaries, or disciplining or resignation of a public officer, appointee or employee of any public body are also protected under executive sessions.

The Deer Valley Unified governing board met in executive session 11 times during the 2023-24 school year; 14 times during the 2022-23 school year; and 26 times during the 2021-22 school year.

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Deer Valley Skyhawks

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2024 record: 9-1
Playoffs: Did not qualify
Region: 4A West Valley
Coach: Dan Friedman (8th year)

SEASON PREVIEW

Playoff snub fuels Skyhawks for very different 2025 season

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

It is such an anomaly — a 9-1 team missing a 16-team playoff bracket — that Deer Valley Coach Dan Friedman still hears from coaching peers about it more than nine months later.

Around the time the calendar flipped to 2025, it no longer mattered. Not quite half of the 2024 team was returning, determined to find a way to game 11.

Deer Valley was held up as the case study for a 24-team bracket in the 58-team 4A Conference. The irony is, the Skyhawks will have to make the expanded playoffs with a much less experienced team playing a far tougher schedule.

“The returning kids took it really hard and worked their tails off,” Friedman said. “My message to the kids was to focus on the now.”

Suffice to say, this small senior class of 13 players did not lack motivation.

In case the returning players needed something else to point to, there's the



Deer Valley junior receiver Coleston Paxton turns and faces the defense after securing a catch Oct. 11, 2024 against Washington. The Skyhawks' leading receiver returns for the 2025 season. (Independent Newsmedia/Courtesy Ed Russell)

mid-summer transfer of senior defensive end/tight end Carter Guggenberg-

DEER VALLEY SKYHAWKS

OFFENSE: Spread

DEFENSE: 3-3-5

KEY RETURNEES: Coleston Paxton, Sr., WR/DB; Brody Keith, Sr., WR/DB; Alex Jimenez, Sr., OL/DL; William Simpson, Sr., DE; Rylan Barnes, Sr., LB; Bryson Keith, Jr., LB/RB; Nathaniel Cervantes, Sr., CB/WR.

TOP NEWCOMERS: Simon Gonzales, Sr., S; Cash Smith, Jr., LB, (transfer-Liberty).

er to week one opponent Peoria. The 6-3, 245-pound end had 3.5 sacks and three fumble recoveries last year.

“We have this fire in us right now. We just want to get back to it and, honestly, punish every team that's against us,” senior defensive end Will Simpson said.

Deer Valley benefited from the high school transfer game, too.

Junior linebackers Reven Simmons (Betty Fairfax) and Cash Smith (Liberty) come from programs on the opposite sides of the success spectrum. But both are having an impact at a spot where the Skyhawks have some experience, but could use some more size.

“Everyone is raising their level because of what they bring to the mix,” Friedman said.

When they are eligible, it will bolster a unit led by senior Rylan Barnes and junior Bryson Keith.

Keith also will pick up carries as a backup running back.

Senior running back Adan Sanchez bided his time, gaining 390 yards on just 54 carries backing up Marcus Johnson last year.

“We saw a lot of good things from him as a sophomore. He played really well last year. He's got great vision,” Friedman said.

• See DV on page 11

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INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

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SPORTS

DV

• From page 10

Sanchez joins third-year starting receivers Coleston Paxton and Brody Keith in a productive trio of weapons. Paxton finished 2024 with 38 catches for 542 yards.

Sophomore receiver/defensive back Baxter Floyd impressed Simpson, as did sophomore center Kolton Brenden.

“Those two have really made a big impact on our scout team and are trying to get a starting spot,” Simpson said.

New quarterback Gavin Youngker got into four games last year as Tyler LeBaron’s backup.

At 5-8, 135 pounds, Youngker will need a bit more protection than the average junior quarterback. But he has learned through this program since before he started class at Deer Valley.

“Since we came in our freshman year, Gavin’s always been around. He was coming to the high school and practicing with us. We’ve always had that connection with Gavin. We can trust him and he can trust us,” Paxton said.

Though the starting offensive line is all new other than Alex Jimenez and smaller with Peyton Clemens and Dillon Buss graduated, Friedman said he has faith in this group and assistant Seth Olsen’s ability to mold a line. Junior guard Hudson Yakesh started a couple games in 2024 as an injury replacement.

Senior twin brothers Anthony and Julius Wald worked out all summer and improved their skills — they’re the biggest offensive linemen on the team.

Simpson and senior defensive lineman Brian Story are two team leaders in the front wall.

Senior cornerback Nate Cervantes got better as last season went on and is the centerpiece of the secondary.

“Brody Keith has a big role on this team,” Paxton said. “Nate Cervant-

2025 SCHEDULE

Home games in caps

Aug. 29 PEORIA

Sept. 5 GOLDWATER

Sept. 12 GREENWAY

Sept. 18 at Arcadia

Sept. 26 at Thunderbird

Oct. 3 at Chaparral

Oct. 10 LAKE HAVASU

Oct. 16 at Estrella Foothills

Oct. 24 at Buckeye

Oct. 30 YOUNGKER

es is always on us about giving effort. He’s always wanting to work.”

Three years after older brother Rudy transferred to Cactus and started for the Cobras in the 2022 5A title game, Sergio and Simon Gonzales are putting on the pads for the first time in high school. As the season nears, Sergio is playing cornerback and Simon is playing safety.

“They add to the athleticism and competition level,” Friedman said.

Schedule strength will not keep the Skyhawks out of the playoffs in 2025. Deer Valley picked up 4A title contender Peoria, 5A district rival and 2024 playoff team Goldwater and 4A playoff teams Arcadia and Thunderbird.

Then the Skyhawks added a road game at Scottsdale Chaparral, a 5A team that just dropped down from 6A. Moving to the West Valley Region means Buckeye and Youngker replace Alhambra and Maryvale.

One region rival remains. On Oct. 16 Deer Valley travels to the southern tip of Goodyear to face a program that beat it for the last two region titles and that 4A playoff berth last year.

“One game that stands out to all of us is Estrella Foothills. That’s become our biggest rivalry,” Story said.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Scooters

• From page 2

roadways and designated bike lanes on roadways,” St. John said.

Bikes that go above 28 mph and have pedals are illegal. Malnar said he has witnessed some going 40 mph. St. John said in most cases families are removing a governor that limits the bike's speed.

There is not one area of Malnar's district between, roughly, Peoria Avenue and Bell Road, that has more issues with e-bikes than another.

“I think it's pretty pervasive,” Malnar said.

The main discussion topic was whether to build age limits into the ordinance. Conchas said he has heard a lot from Cactus District residents, about the speed and sound of the bikes.

“I would also support that it be limited to people over the age of 16, or those with a valid permit or valid drivers license,” Conchas said. “I read recently about a tragic accident that happened in Pennsylvania where she lost control and ended up in the street and getting hit by a car. Their family is looking for legislation in their community to prevent that happening to anybody else.”

Malnar and Guzman said limiting the use of e-bikes and scooters to age 16 and up was a bit aggressive. Mayor Jerry Weiers was along the same lines.

When prompted to come to a consensus, Tolmachoff favored limiting electric scooters to age 12 and up and e-bikes to age 16 and, as does Conchas. Turner, and Guzman.

“If we set the minimum age to ride an electric scooter at 12 and electric bicycles at 16, I think we wouldn't have an enforcement issue,” St. John said.

Weiers said he wanted to make sure all kids using these electric scooters and bikes are wearing helmets first and foremost, as did Turner and Tolmachoff. A robust education program through schools and for adults in Glendale will be a key. Council came to consensus on a warning for a first offense before going to a civil citation, as well as 90-day window before the final ordinance is enforced.

“I think if a person is 16 years old, they should be held accountable, the same as an adult driving the car or a 16-year-old with a license driving the car,” Weiers said.

He believes most current laws should cover this. St. John described most current laws on e-bikes as “minimalist.”

Another debate sprung up on whether scooters and e-bikes can be ridden on sidewalks or only in designated bike lanes and neighborhood streets.

“Riding some of these small scooters on roadways that are very bumpy is more dangerous than a sidewalk,

and that causes me some concern,” Malnar said.

He said standard bicycles are allowed on sidewalks, which is much safer than streets.

Turner and Tolmachoff disagreed because of the speed and size of e-bikes. Sidewalks in the Cactus District can be narrow and some of them end abruptly, Conchas said.

“We heard the word sidewalk as if they're all the same, and I guarantee you they're not,” Baldenegro said.

Allowing e-bikes on sidewalks along arterial roads might be feasible from an enforcement perspective, St. John said. Weiers suggested allowing scooters on sidewalks where the speed limit on the attached street is 25 mph or less. For streets with a higher speed limit they could only be on the roadway in a bike lane. St. John suggested the restrictions would work better if it was sidewalks on roads with higher speeds and streets of slower neighborhood roads.

Staff will now work with the city attorney's office to draft a proposal for the ordinance. The main goal is safety for kids and safety for drivers watching for these kids on scooters, Malnar said. He also wants Glendale to allow room for agency and the need for an ability for parents to be to choose for their child.

“The ultimate goal is to have a little bit more mature riders on the e-bikes that have a better understanding of consequences,” Tolmachoff said.

Adkins

• From page 2

He will oversee the Intergovernmental Programs and Communications departments, which include internal and external communications, media relations, video production, website management, graphic design and special projects.

He will provide direction to ensure programs meet the needs of the community and City Council's goals.

Adkins most recently worked for the Arizona Board of Regents, where he managed crisis communications and community relations through high-profile challenges including the University of Arizona's financial recovery.

PROMOTION

Longtime city employee earns engineering services director

Glendale announced Djordje Pavlovic as the city's new Engineering Services Director Aug. 13.

Pavlovic has been with the city for more than 10 years, serving in two instrumental roles – structural engineer and building official. His first day in the new role was Aug. 25.



Djordje Pavlovic


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COURT

Current, former Glendale residents sue city for panhandling ordinance

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

One current and two former Glendale residents filed a lawsuit alleging the city's panhandling bans violate their First Amendment rights to engage in constitutionally protected speech.

In this suit, announced July 30, these residents are seeking a preliminary injunction to stop Glendale from enforcing the unconstitutional ordinances. They are represented by Public Justice, the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona, and the First Amendment Clinic at Arizona State University Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law.

Glendale passed the two ordinances in October 2022, just months before it played host to Super Bowl LVII. The panhandling ordinance forbids people from asking for money, donations, or other items of value in public — including on public transit, at a bus stop, from someone in a car and several other places.

The street and median ordinance bans pedestrians on medians or in streets for any reason, including for the purpose of free speech and expression.

"The First Amendment protects speech from government regulation even, and especially, when that speech is disfavored or unpleasant," stated Aaron Baumann, assistant teaching professor with the First Amendment Clinic at ASU's Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, in a press release. "Glendale cannot prohibit certain messages — like a request for money — without a compelling reason, and its desire to eliminate the perceived 'blight' of visible homelessness is far from sufficient."

Glendale City Attorney Michael Bailey stated in an email that the city does not comment on pending litigation.

Plaintiffs in this suit are resident Amy Hughes, and former residents Denise Carr and Gabriel Gilbert.

IN BRIEF

SEPT. 6 & 13

Homecoming Closet

The Peoria North Rotary Club will open its Prom Closet doors on two Saturdays in September to assist young women looking for homecoming dresses in the coming months. Only dresses — and primarily short dresses — will be available. There is no charge and reservations are not required.

Members of The Rotary Club of Peoria North and other Rotary volunteers will be on hand to assist shoppers. The event is open only to high school students. The club will lead its traditional Prom Closet March 14-15 and March 21-22, 2026.

Glendale System of Care Campus
7677 W. Bethany Home Road
9 a.m.-noon both days

SEPT. 19

Sister City Funding

The Glendale Sister City program is leading a fundraising event to build a strong youth program and make it possible to send high school students to youth diplomatic leadership conferences starting in 2026. The event is a "Kick Off" to Oktoberfest to get the Oktoberfest season started featuring a 22-piece Bavarian Brass Band from our Sister City in Memmingen, Germany. Ticket price includes a German dinner buffet, a cash bar featuring German beer and wine, music and dancing. The evening will also include a 50/50 raffle and door prizes.

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FROM THE COVER

Campus

• From page 1

Hope Lives provides trauma-informed residential care and comprehensive therapeutic services to survivors of sex trafficking.

When the Steeles found a technology partner that could handle the operation's scale and could assess and address the healing needs of trafficking victims in real time, the dream was real enough to announce the nation's first hospital dedicated solely to trafficking victims.

And the planned \$60 million facility will be in Glendale.

"The decision to build in Glendale is both intentional and practical. First, this is property that we already own, which gives us the ability to move forward without the delays or costs of acquiring new land. It's located in a safe community and neighborhood where

we've had a long-term presence, and we've built very strong relationships with both city officials and the Glendale Police Department — both have been long-standing supporters of our work with trafficking survivors," Skye Steele stated via email.

Where Hope Lives announced the first tech-integrated recovery hospital for trafficking survivors, and partnership with Mesa-based technology company Cyber Dive on July 31. It is planned on 9 acres in Glendale. The nonprofit declined to identify anything else about the location because of the nature of their patients' trauma.

The unnamed \$60 million recovery campus will provide 170 beds — 120 for youth in intensive behavioral health recovery and 50 for survivors with serious physical injuries or chronic conditions.

The three current Where Hope Lives facilities in the Valley are part of larger campuses. Right now, the

nonprofit provides 148 total beds for children and young adults from ages 4 to 26. Where Hope Lives serves between 250 and 300 victims each year.

"Each year the desire and the vision grows stronger in response to our ever-growing waiting lists as awareness around the issue of human trafficking has grown nationally. Unfortunately specialized therapeutic services have not grown at the same pace leaving, thousands of children and young adults each year without adequate resources to meet their healing needs," Steele stated.

Cyber Dive launched in 2019 with the debut of its Aqua One smart phone. It was not long before co-founder and CEO Jeff Gottfurcht met the Steeles.

The new company with a smartphone that allows parents to see and rewind everything that has been on their kid's screen had a greater sense of purpose.

"It was so moving and so needed," Gottfurcht said.

Most importantly, the phone gives victims — who in many cases are underage and dealing with the trauma of sex trafficking — a way to connect with the world that is monitored, regulated to filter out adult content, and does not carry reminders of trauma on their old smartphone.

"Where Hope Lives started to buy our phones as part of their mission," Gottfurcht said. "A lot of kids would turn away from treatment rather than give up their phones."

In 20 years, Where Hope Lives has served more than 7,000 children and young adults recovering from trafficking, the Steeles said. That experience shaped trauma-informed models like family systems healing and sensory modulation therapies to address the deep neurological and emotional wounds survivors carry.

• See **Hope** on page 24

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NEIGHBORS

BENEFIT



Dancers take part in a Mixed Fit class at EoS Fitness in North Glendale on Aug. 15. The fundraiser will provide \$1,400 for One Step Beyond Inc. programs. (Independent Newsmedia/Richard Smith)

Fundraiser for One Step Beyond nearly triples goal

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Clearly, One Step Beyond Inc. and EoS Fitness will have to bump up projections for its fourth annual dance group fitness fundraiser in 2026.

The original goal was to raise \$500 Aug. 15 in the gym at 20255 N. 59th Ave., Glendale, based on last year's number.

Fitness instructor Jeff Lim led the fundraiser for the third straight year and said donors had doubled the goal before the class began.

The final tally is nearly \$1,400 to be given to One Step Beyond, a non-profit organization that provides educational, vocational, recreation and performing arts programs for adults who have intellectual disabilities.

"Every year they get bigger and

bigger, I think, because they realize how important One Step Beyond's focus is. It allows people with disabilities to be part of the community," said Tamara Silva, One Step Beyond director of donor relations.

Other Valley Mixxed Fit instructors helped Lim run the class. Heather Vazquez, EoS district group fitness manager, said Lim's contacts with One Step Beyond got this fundraiser off the ground in 2023.

Mixxed Fit is a people-inspired dance movement that blurs the lines between fitness and dance, Vazquez said, and very big community based organization.

"I believe fitness is for everybody. They're aligned with our goals and they're aligned with my life mission,"

• See OSB on page 17



Dancers take part in a Mixxed Fit class at EoS Fitness in North Glendale on Aug. 15. (Independent Newsmedia/Richard Smith)

OSB

• From page 16

Lim said.

Lim typically teaches this class Tuesday nights at EoS Fitness' gym at 5860 W. Thunderbird Road in Glendale. The gym further north in Glendale has a bigger room, making it ideal for the fundraiser.

A donation of \$20 was required to gain a spot in the glow-themed dance workout.

"I love a good theme and also making it really fun and unique for our members is a way to give back to them for giving back to the community," Vazquez said.

The first two years were more standard.

Last year donations totaled a bit more than \$500. Neon-adorned volunteers kept the dark room alight while they volunteered.

"We've taken it to the next level tonight, making it glow and having flair. It's grown to where people are looking forward to it every year," Lim said.

Silva said it is one of the five to 10 community fundraising events for One Step beyond in a typical year.

Silva said saw at least 10 OSBI members she knows taking part in the Aug. 15 fitness class.

"It's super fun. The best thing about Jeff is he puts his own personal style on it and makes it super fun. It's

not going to the gym and getting on the elliptical. It's fun, healthy and still a workout," Silva said.

All money raised goes to One Step Beyond's programs, and is distributed based on need in each program.

Employees and members enjoy giving back to the community, Vazquez said.

"The services they provide that really speak to us are their fitness and their dance programs," she said. "They have those classes at their facilities and a lot of the beneficiaries of their programs are members with EoS too. So the ties were already there."

One Step Beyond has four locations in the Phoenix Metro area, including Glendale, Peoria, Scottsdale and Surprise, as well as a location in San Carlos, California.

Programs include culinary training, performance and fine arts, recreation health and fitness program, life skills, employment training, socialization and respite activities and family support.

"I think we've made our presence felt," Silva said.

"It's really showing the partnerships we have with different businesses. It shows they really support the community and individuals with intellectual disabilities. They're giving a voice for them and they're making these companies role models for other companies to step up," Silva said.

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THINGS TO DO

WEST VALLEY

Luke Days announces 2026 air show dates

Popular event draws tens of thousands every other year

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The largest fighter wing in the U.S. Air Force will put on a show in 2026.

One of the Valley's most popular events, Luke Days, has announced the days for the next air show, which will take place Saturday and Sunday, March 21-22. Luke is located seven miles west of the central business district of Glendale, and also borders Litchfield Park and Waddell.

Luke, which opened in 1941, is home to more than 120 F-35A Lightning IIs and 20 F-16 Fighting Falcons.

Luke Days draws tens of thousands of enthusiasts every other March to the two-day open house air show on the base.



IF YOU GO

What: Luke Days 2026

When: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Saturday-Sunday, March 21-22

Where: Luke Air Force Base, 14185 W. Falcon St., Luke Air Force Base

A U.S. Air Force F-35A Lightning II assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, performs a strafing run during Haboob Havoc on March 29, 2025, over Barry M. Goldwater Range. Haboob Havoc is a total force competition that provides a way for pilots to demonstrate their skills across a diverse range of aircraft while also testing their abilities in different mission sets such as dogfighting and gun runs. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Katelynn Jackson, courtesy Luke Air Force Base)



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SPORTS

Tickets available for 2025 Ridge Rider Days in Glendale

Homestand will close regular season before championship in Vegas

SPECIAL TO INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Tickets are available now for when Arizona's professional bull riding team, the Teton Ridge-owned Arizona Ridge Riders, host their Glendale homestand in 2025.

The annual PBR Camping World Team Series transforms bull riding from an individual to team-formatted competition, Ridge Rider Days, at Desert Diamond Arena in Westgate Oct. 10-12.

Ridge Rider Days will mark the final event of the PBR regular season before all 10 pro teams from around the country make their way to the championship in Las Vegas for the PBR Teams Championship Oct. 24-26.

In 2024 the Ridge Riders closed out the regular season dominating their homestand event, riding four of their five bulls on the final day to down the Missouri Thunder and finish 3-0 in Desert Diamond Arena.

Tickets for the 2025 three-day event are on sale now and range in price from \$35 to \$130. They are available at Ticketmaster.com and PBR.com, at the Desert Diamond Arena box office, or by calling 1-800-732-1727.

PBR's return to Glendale comes on the heels of a triumphant 2024



Jess Lockwood rides SweetPro's Long John during a past Professional Bull Riders series stop in Kansas City, Missouri. (AP Photo/Colin E. Braley)

IF YOU GO

What: Ridge Rider Days

When: Oct. 10-12, 2025

Where: Desert Diamond Arena, 9400 W. Maryland Ave., Glendale

Tickets: \$35-\$130, at Ticketmaster.com, PBR.com, the Arena box office, or 1-800-732-1727

for the Teams league.

Event attendance for the PBR Teams season increased 15% compared to 2023, and several CBS Game of the Week broadcasts drew more than 2 million average viewers.

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We support the use of pen names. Too many people don't speak up because they fear intimidation or even danger to their families and/or careers. Pen names are an important part of our nation's history.

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We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

Glendale councilman's newsletter gives trove of information

I'm a longtime resident of Glendale, and I want to share a great way to stay connected with our city. I live in the Cactus District and my Glendale City Council member Lupe Conchas puts out a free weekly newsletter packed with useful information for the community.

Every week, Lupe highlights the work of Glendale Police and Glendale Fire departments, shares updates from all city departments, and includes news from our local school districts. He also spotlights small businesses, home repair resources, and other programs available to residents. Plus, you'll find clear updates on city council meetings so you always know what's happening at City Hall.

It's an easy, reliable way to keep up with all the good things going on in Glendale. Go to GlendaleAZ.com/ Cactus and sign up, you won't want to miss it.

Willard Watts
GLENDALE

Political opponents join to keep Peoria's woman with her family

We don't agree on much. In fact, we've often found ourselves on opposite sides of the street — literally — at rallies and protests. But today, we

LETTERS TO THE NEWSROOM



Lisa Everett and Brent Peak

stand together for one reason: to keep Kelly Yu in the United States with her family.

As GOP chair for LD29 and co-chair of Northwest Valley Indivisible, we've faced each other in the Arizona heat, holding opposing signs at political events. We've debated fiercely on policy, values and the future of our country. Yet, when it comes to basic human decency, we find common ground.

Kelly Yu is a Peoria business owner, a mother and a valued member of our community. She fled China's "one-child policy" more than 20 years ago while pregnant with her daughter. Since then, she has built a life here in Arizona — raising her U.S. citizen daughter, contributing to our economy

and living without a criminal record.

Recently, Kelly was detained during a routine check-in with Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Now she faces deportation. Her husband and daughter are devastated. They are running out of time.

This is not about politics. It's about humanity, family and the values we share as Arizonans. Kelly has built a business, contributed to our community, and harmed no one. Deporting her now serves no public good and inflicts lasting harm on her family.

We urge our elected officials — at every level and from both parties — to do everything in their power to prevent

OPINION

Letters

• From page 20

Kelly's deportation.

We also ask you, the people of Arizona, to make your voice heard. Contact your U.S. senators, representatives and even the White House. Tell them Kelly Yu deserves to stay here, where she belongs.

When people who disagree as strongly as we do stand side by side for justice, it should send a message. Kelly Yu's case is not partisan. It is personal. It is urgent. And it is the right thing to do.

**Lisa Everett
Brent Peak**

Editor's note: Lisa Everett is chair of the Arizona LD29 Republicans and Brent Peak is co-chair of Northwest Valley Indivisible.

When success hurts: How Arizonans can help teens avoid burnout

Today's teens are striving for excellence in a world that equates success with self-worth. And because of social media likes, college prep courses and packed resumes, many are silently suffering.

We're seeing an alarming rise in burnout among high-achieving

adolescents. Teens who have straight A's and full schedules, who always push to do more, may "look fine" on the outside, but are actually likely



Buehl

battling exhaustion, anxiety and emotional shutdown. The pressure to be perfect is leaving many teens quietly unraveling.

Burnout isn't just feeling tired after a long day; it's a chronic condition marked by emotional, physical and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress.

Burnout is hitting teens younger and harder than ever before.

Why teens burn out, especially in summer

Summer was once a time for teens to recharge. Today, it often brings:

- ♦ Loss of routine creates instability for teens who thrive on structure.
- ♦ Increased screen time heightens exposure to cultural comparison and FOMO.
- ♦ Social shifts, like isolation from friends or changes in support systems.
- ♦ Excessive heat (especially here in Arizona) keeps teens indoors, limiting movement and compounding mood issues.

It might look like your teen is simply sleeping in or just on the phone, but these behaviors may actually be signs of something deeper.

7 signs your teen may be experiencing burnout

Here are early indicators of burnout parents and caregivers can watch for:

- ♦ Chronic exhaustion, even with plenty of sleep
- ♦ Lack of motivation toward school, goals, or hobbies
- ♦ Withdrawal from friends, family or previously enjoyed activities
- ♦ Increased anxiety, perfectionism or emotional numbness
- ♦ Physical symptoms like frequent headaches or stomachaches
- ♦ Irritability or mood swings that feel out of character
- ♦ Difficulty concentrating or remembering things

How to respond if you're concerned

If you suspect your teen is burning out, start by listening without judgment. Many teens won't speak up out of fear of letting someone they love down. Here's how you can help your teen:

- ♦ Validate their experience. Let them know it's OK to feel overwhelmed.
- ♦ Encourage balance. Help them build a summer routine that includes rest, movement, creativity and connection.
- ♦ Limit screen time and encourage offline activities, even if it's just a walk or making a meal together.
- ♦ Watch your language. Avoid praising productivity over well-being.

**Please send your comments to
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We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

Instead of using phrases like, "You're so busy!" try, "You seem really thoughtful about how you spend your time."

♦ Seek professional support. If burnout signs persist or worsen, don't wait to reach out. Early intervention is key.

Nearly 75% of high school students say they're often or always stressed by schoolwork. And 1 in 3 adolescents now meets the criteria for an anxiety disorder. These numbers are likely underreported, especially among high-functioning teens who are less likely to ask for help, but it's clear many teens are in the midst of a crisis.

If you're concerned about your child, you're not alone. There is hope. I recommend reaching out to an organization that provides a safe, supportive environment where teens can reconnect with themselves and rebuild healthy relationships with success, self-worth and stress.

Patrick Buehl
HORIZON RECOVERY

Editor's note: Patrick Buehl is executive director at Horizon Recovery.

Civility Checklist

How to engage in respectful, honest & civil dialogue about public issues.



❑ **Take the high road.** Respond to the topic — not the person. Refrain from demonizing others for their opinions. Assume those you disagree with are, like you, genuinely interested in improving the community.

❑ **Be respectful.** Bullying, public humiliation, insults, name-calling, harassment and threats directed at another person — or that person's race, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. — have no place in civil discussions. Find ways to respectfully disagree without questioning someone's character or motives.

❑ **Be truthful.** Base your opinions/arguments on facts. Value honesty. Make only accurate statements when making your point and avoid exaggeration and stereotypes.

When appropriate, cite your sources of information that others may question.

❑ **Don't misrepresent.** Always identify your opinions as opinions (not stating opinions as facts). Never misrepresent the views of others or falsely claim your opinions represent someone else. If quoting the words of others, identify and credit the source.

❑ **Listen and learn.** It's both polite and respectful to listen to those we disagree with (as well as those we support) and be genuine in our attempts to understand their point of view. Expand your mind by thoughtfully seeking out views that don't agree with your own.

❑ **Look for common ground.** When disagreeing with others, look for even small areas of agreement — which can be the gateway to working together for the greater good.

❑ **Respect privacy.** Keep private things private — whether it involves your own information or those with whom you disagree. Revealing private information about someone else is rude, unethical, potentially harmful and, in many cases, illegal.

❑ **Set a good example.** Practice civil behavior online as well as in public and in your interaction with others. Encourage others to practice these civil behaviors. And it's OK to challenge disrespectful behavior — but be courteous, respectful and helpful in your approach.



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FROM THE COVER

Enrollment

• From page 1

on the northern end of the its footprint in Phoenix, Peoria and Glendale where some estimates project an Anthem-sized population in the future, all those new homes and subdivisions may or may not solve the district enrollment downward trends.

If, that is, all that new housing is filled with owners who don't have school-age children.

"Between 2000-01 and 2007-08, every grade experienced a high level of growth," the report's findings noted. "However, faster growth in 9-12 and slower growth in Kindergarten to second grade (K-2) cohort reflects a shift in the housing market as rising values limited the supply of entry-level options for younger families."

Christy Walker, board president of Phoenix Realtors, sees it regularly.

"Affordability is definitely impacting younger buyers," she said.

Walker said first-time buyers are struggling to get into the market without the assistance of their parents helping with the first down payment. She further cites the latest Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers that shows first-time buyers decreased to 24% of the market share, down from 32% last year.

This year marks the lowest share of first-time buyers since the National Association of Realtors began collecting the data in 1981.

Walker sees a connection between enrollment decline in the Deer Valley Unified School District boundary and young buyers with school-aged kids being priced out of the market.

"With the median age of first-time buyers spiking to 38, it means fewer people are moving into homeownership with elementary kids," she said. "Additionally, 73% of recent home buyers did not have a child under the age of 18 in their home, which is the highest percentage ever. We are watching statis-

tics closely on this because it drives the types of homes that will be in demand. If more people are choosing not to have children or waiting later in life to have children, then they are likely in a move-up phase rather than a first-time buyer phase when they have kids in school."

The majority of the in-district students reside in the southwestern portion of the district (Arrowhead area), which is a well-established, primarily residential area. Large student concentrations also exist in new subdivisions east of Interstate 17 and north of Jomax Road, the Applied Economics report found.

"From the assessment I did recently, it appears that the majority of the ZIP codes within the Deer Valley district have between 25-30% of households with children," Walker said. "In looking at the age spread for the area, I typically see the highest population between 45-54 and 55-59 years of age. That leads me to believe most are likely to have high school-aged kids or empty nesters rather than families with younger children."

Infrastructure on the Biscuit Flats/North Park community — the largest area of the expected growth areas due to the \$40 billion Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. fabrication campus in north Phoenix — is expected to get under way later this year.

While estimates say this area could bring upwards of 20,000 potential new units to the parcels south of Carefree Highway, west of Interstate 17, and north of State Route 303 — all served by Deer Valley Unified School District — it could be longer until residences start appearing. Walker notes that development of the nearby technology park and surrounding sites zoned for office, retail and industrial are up first.

"There are a couple of subdivisions currently being developed in the area, but that's because they were purchased years ago and the plans for the development are finally coming to fruition at the right time," she said.

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INDEPENDENT

FROM THE COVER

Hope

• From page 14

The Glendale campus can be designed around victims' unique needs.

"It's important to honor that hospitals play a vital role — and always will — in treating the immediate physical injuries that trafficking survivors often face. But what's missing in a traditional hospital setting is the long-term, behavioral health environment where survivors can stabilize emotionally, retrain their nervous systems, and begin to process trauma in a safe and consistent way," Skye Steele stated.

Where Hope Lives combines a specialized approach with education, vocational training, and digital safety skills to create an environment that improves patient care and prepares survivors for a healthy transition into society.

This project has the potential to double the nonprofit's occupancy and

number of young people and children served each year.

"Right now, our services are spread across multiple sites, which can mean disruptions as young people move between campuses. By consolidating everything onto one campus, we create a seamless experience where medical care, trauma therapy, education, and residential support all happen in one safe and consistent environment," Skye Steele stated.

Cyber Dive's Aqua X, a technology system that gives clinical teams real-time visibility into residents' digital activity, will be the recovery campus' dashboard. It can help to address online risk before it becomes a crisis.

Trafficking victims in recovery also will have access to tablets and TVs from Cyber Dive under the same dashboard.

"As the resident goes through each state of recovery the phone opens up to them," Gottfurcht said.

Where Hope Lives is working with

architects, engineers and its planning committee to determine the most responsible way to launch this project.

Steeles said choosing Glendale made sense because the area provides nearby amenities, such as grocery stores, parks and employment.

"At the same time, it's one of the safer areas in the Valley to host a behavioral health operation of this scale, which is essential when you're caring for children and young adults who've endured significant trauma. So while trafficking is unfortunately an issue that touches every community, Glendale offers us the right combination of safety, community support and practicality to make this facility both secure and sustainable," Skye Steele stated.

The Steeles said Cyber Dive also advanced the platform on which Where Hope Lives engages the for-profit and corporate community seeking funding. Based on current projections, once the nonprofit raises

about 10% of the total \$60 million cost, it will have the sufficient resources to begin groundbreaking.

"There are other factors we're watching closely — things like the economy, the cost of building materials, and permitting with various licensing entities. One way we're being strategic is by looking at opportunities to save money through bulk purchasing of materials, which helps us steward every donor dollar wisely," Skye Steele stated. "So the milestone that allows us to officially break ground is in the range of about \$6 million."

Once ground breaks, Where Hope Lives expects the initial construction phase to run 24-30 months including commissioning and state licensing. The full campus buildout will be phased and aligns with the fundraising cadence — roughly 5-7 years end-to-end.

Projections are to have the first beds online in about two years; with the full build in multiple phases.

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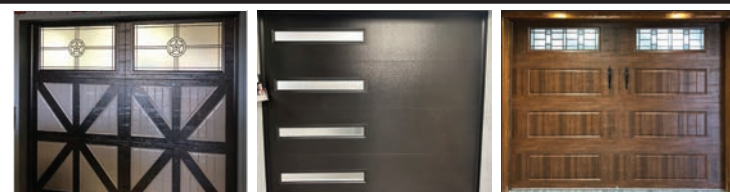
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