



Election Guide

Glendale bond, DVUSD override on ballot; **8-9**



INDEPENDENT

Sports

Deer Valley football fights through injuries for big wins; **18**



October/November 2025 Volume 31 Issue 11

Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper - YourValley.net

GOVERNMENT

Council hires next city manager

Patrick Banger served in same role at Gilbert

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Glendale Mayor Jerry Weiers said the city council faced a difficult choice for the next city manager between Gilbert Town Manager Patrick Banger and Glendale Assistant City Manager Vicki Rios.



Patrick Banger

Council unanimously voted to appoint Banger as city manager during its Oct. 14 meeting. After the meeting ended, Weiers said the decision came down to one factor.

During direct interviews with the council Oct. 7, he said, both were asked how long they were comfortable serving as city manager before retiring. Banger's time line was longer.

"Patrick is a proven innovator,

• See **City Manager** on page 22

LICENSE PLATE READERS

HOAs approve Flock cameras

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Homeowners associations in northern Glendale are adding to the city's available license plate reader network, agreeing to install cameras that monitor cars driving through the subdivisions.

The Flock Safety cameras have been in use by the city of Glendale and other cities and police departments in the West Valley, but local homeowners association are joining that network as residents seek more safety in their neighborhoods.

The Arrowhead Lakes community first discussed the cameras three years ago, HOA board vice president Brian Kelley said.

These cameras became a more practical, less expensive solution to increasing crime and trespassing in the upscale community. Arrowhead Lakes' HOA approved and installed 16 cameras at community entrances a little more than two years ago.

"There was a lot of talk from some of the residents about want-

• See **Cameras** on page 14



Arrowhead Lakes HOA Vice President Brian Kelley stands by a Flock camera at the 59th Avenue and Melinda Lane entrance to the Glendale community. (Independent Newsmedia/Richard Smith)

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ON YOURVALLEY.NET**Calles announces City Council candidacy**

Michael Calles, a fourth-generation Arizonan, veteran of two branches of the armed forces, retired Phoenix Police officer, and longtime community leader, announced his candidacy for Glendale City Council in the Barrel District on Oct. 10.

Bart Turner is the incumbent council member in the Barrel District.

Read online: <https://tinyurl.com/yunmbr9t>

Government shutdown not affecting Glendale, GESD, yet

As of mid-October, none of the social services offered by the city or the Glendale Elementary School District at the GESD System of Care Center, 7677 W. Bethany Home Road.

“No program operations are affected by the shutdown right now or anticipated in the next two to three weeks. If the shutdown extends to December or later there would be challenges to some of our les[program] funding,” stated Glendale Community Services deputy director Matt Hess in an email.

Read online: <https://tinyurl.com/y525ae2y>

Shea Homes prepares final phase of Legacy Place

The Glendale Planning Commission unanimously approved a preliminary plat for Legacy Place Phase 2, at the southeast corner of 75th and Northern avenues during its Sept. 25 meeting.

Colliers is the applicant for the plat. Shea Homes will build the 151-lot, single-family subdivision on 35 acres.

Read more: <https://tinyurl.com/y6ksfsmu>

DOWNTOWN

A view from the edge of Murphy Park to the proposed gazebo in the downtown Glendale park. Renovations were scheduled to begin in October. (City of Glendale)

City fine tunes plans to revamp Murphy Park

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Glendale’s reimagination of its downtown is starting to focus on Murphy Park, just outside City Hall.

During the Sept. 23 City Council workshop, council members and city staff mostly discussed where a new gazebo would be placed in the park and how it would look.

The gazebo was originally located in the southeast corner of the park.

“There were comments that it might be too busy and too loud. It was moved to the northeast corner of the property. With that, we’re providing an accessible, sloped plain up to that elevated platform for those special events. Mainly, that northeast corner is a little quieter. It’s better for special events,” said Michael Jacobs, principal at Holly Street Studios, the

architects for the downtown project.

In the latest designs, the gazebo has a more modern, tent-like roof.

Mayor Jerry Weiers, Vice Mayor Lauren Tolmachoff and council member Ray Malnar all said they like idea of railing around the gazebo.

“To look like a gazebo, it needs to have some sort of railing going around it,” Weiers said. “The advantage of that would be to have it look like a more traditional gazebo. But also this would keep the skateboarders from jumping off the edge onto the sidewalk.”

Council member Lupe Conchas said he was concerned that a crowd of people around the gazebo could block people walking on the sidewalk.

Council member Bart Turner said perhaps the gazebo would work well

near Glendale Civic Center.

Conchas and Malnar said they like a bit more traditional looking gazebo.

“The more traditional it looks, I think the more citizens would want to utilize it. And that’s what I want,” Weiers said.

Malnar said he prefers a more traditional gazebo roof. Weiers asked to see two or three roof options.

City Architect Eddie Garcia pushed back on that idea, based on longterm plans.

“We like the idea that is not necessarily a completely covered roof system. It’s just light and shadow,” Garcia said. “We thought the roof was very elegant.”

Tolmachoff asked if the gazebo’s new location and park reconstruction will fit in with eventual plans for

• See **Murphy Park** on page 26



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BUSINESS

Glendale chamber hires new CEO from Tucson area

The Glendale Chamber of Commerce announced the appointment of Zach Yentzer as its next president and chief executive officer on Oct. 7.

Yentzer will start in the new role in November and joins the Glendale Chamber from The Chamber of Southern Arizona (formerly the Tucson Metro Chamber), where he served as vice president of business advocacy, representing more than 1,400 businesses employing more than 150,000 individuals across Tucson and Pima counties.

In this role, he led the chamber's public policy and government affairs, oversaw strategic communications, the military affairs committee, and workforce development initiatives.

During the merger of the Tucson Metro Chamber and Sun Corridor

Inc., he played a role in aligning policy priorities and integrating strategic initiatives in the newly formed Chamber of Southern Arizona that brought economic development and business advocacy together under one organization.

"This is an exciting and pivotal moment for Glendale — a rapidly growing leader in the Valley for sports and entertainment, technology and innovation, aerospace and defense, workforce development, and more," Yentzer stated in a press release. "What happens in the next two to five years will shape the next 25, and the Glendale Chamber of Commerce will play a vital role in creating that future. I'm grateful to build on the strong foundation laid by our outstanding board and staff, and my family and I are thrilled to

be part of Glendale's present and future story."

Yentzer's experience in advocating for business, public policy, and workforce development, paired with a commitment to collaboration and results, will strengthen the chamber's role as a driving force for economic prosperity and regional leadership.

"Zach Yentzer's work ethic, experience, and passion for community-building are what we need to continue building our legacy and help Glendale continue to thrive. The board looks forward to supporting his leadership as we advance economic opportunity and innovation throughout Glendale and the entire West Valley," stated Dr. Jennifer Cruz, Glendale Chamber board chair.



On Oct. 7, the Glendale Chamber of Commerce hired Zach Yentzer as its new president and chief executive officer. He will begin in this role in November. (Glendale Chamber of Commerce)

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BUSINESS MOVES



at Westgate and celebrated its grand opening of its more than 100,000 square foot store in the Westgate area at 6385 N. 99th Ave., on Oct. 17.

4 Arizona Automotive Institute recently added a CDL rande at it Glendale location, 6829 N. 46th Ave.

PURCHASES

Photo courtesy Cushman-Wakefield Hospitality/Marketing

5 Chicago-based Cushman & Wakefield announced Sept. 22 that the firm has successfully arranged the sale of **Ascension at Manistee Ranch**, 71-unit build-to-rent townhome community located in the Manistee Ranch Master Plan at 7959 N. 53rd Ave., in Glendale. The property was sold by Kinella Capital and was acquired by NextWave Investors for \$23.45 million.

6 Commercial real estate firm Lincoln Property Co. announced on Oct. 1 the sale of a 1.25 million-square-foot, Class A industrial building in its Park303 logistics park in Glendale to **Dollar Tree, Inc.** Park303 totals 210 acres and 3.75 million square feet of industrial space along Loop 303 at Glendale Avenue.

NOW OPEN

1 MENSHO, a ramen destination from Tokyo, celebrated the grand opening of its newest location at Westgate Entertainment District Oct. 11. The store is at 9380 W Westgate Blvd D101. After its first month, the store will begin opening at noon. MENSHO is closed on Mondays.

2 Super Star Car Wash celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony led by The Glendale Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 3 at 5131 W. Olive Ave.

3 Dick's House of Sport, has arrived

GROUNDBREAKING

Photo courtesy Cushman-Wakefield Hospitality/Marketing

7 Creation, a Phoenix real estate developer with a nationwide footprint, in partnership with QuarterMoore, broke ground Oct. 7 on Harbor Park, a two-building industrial complex on 9.69 acres in Glendale. Harbor Park is already 67% preleased to PODS Phoenix, a local franchise division of PODS Moving & Storage.

CLOSED

8 Gravity Coffee recently closed its location at 5250 W. Bell Road.



CREATION



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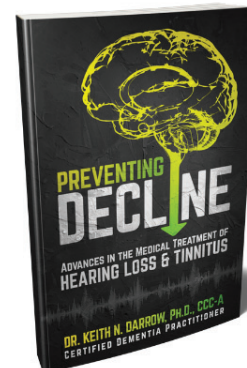
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ELECTION 2025

Arrowhead Ranch residents take part in bond meeting

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Glendale will offer five locations for ballot drop boxes and in-person voting for its Nov. 4 bond election. They are, along with the day they open:

- Foothills Recreation and Aquatic Center, 5600 W. Union Hills Drive. Opens Oct. 27.
- Peoria Unified School District Office, 6330 W. Thunderbird Road. Opens Oct. 27.
- Glendale Civic Center, 5752 W. Glenn Drive. Open since Oct. 14. Drop box only.
- Glendale Elementary School District System of Care Center, 7677 W. Bethany Home Road. Opens Nov. 4.
- West-MEC District Office, 5487 N. 99th Ave. Opens Oct. 31.

If Glendale's two-question, \$65 million bond proposal is approved by voters, the projects it covers will not directly effect the city's northern neighborhoods.

Still, several residents living north of Bell Road attended a Sept. 30 bond information meeting at the Foothills Recreation and Aquatic Center.

Bond question 1 deals with flood control and water retention and is for \$30 million. Bond question 2 focuses on upgrading operations facilities that support city infrastructure maintenance and would be for \$35 million.

Bond projects, if approved by voters, come with a strict time limit.

"All of the bonds must be spent within three years of when we issue them to avoid what we call arbitrage," said Assistant City Manager Vicki Rios. "Let's say we invested these bonds in the market and we earned 5% interest but we're only paying

3.5% interest on the bonds. Any of that difference is called arbitrage and we would have to pay it back because they're tax exempt bonds. We would have to pay that to the federal government as a tax on Glendale."



Vicki Rios

Glendale lowered its property tax rate for nearly 10 consecutive years, she said.

For the flood control projects, Glendale would receive matching funds from the Maricopa County Flood Control District.

The city listed five flood control projects, the largest planned on Bethany Home Road from 43rd to 51st avenue, estimated to cost \$13.6 million.

"If you think about it, geographically and the way the city is oriented, all of the water starts in the northern part of the city and it flows sort of downhill. That's because we're sloped and it's actually a downhill slope from the northern part of the city to the southern part. We have collectors along the way, but a lot of the water ends up at this intersection. When it gets there, it floods during heavy rain events and it is very difficult to drain," Rios said.

The operations bond question is about the city facilities near 62nd Avenue and Orangewood Drive, just south of Grand Avenue.

A new police evidence storage facility opened Sept. 24 at the site. Now most of the buildings at the site need to be revamped or demolished.

The city's fleet — police cars, fire vehicles, garbage trucks among others — is maintained here. The operations campus stores warehouse equipment.

• See **Bond Election** on page 15

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November Events

Nov. 1-2

Kierland Fine Art & Wine Festival

Kierland Commons, 15205 N. Kierland Blvd., Scottsdale

Nov. 8-9

WestWorld Art & Wine Experience

WestWorld, 16601 N. Pima Rd., Scottsdale

Nov. 21-23

Sonoran Fine Art & Wine Festival

Stagecoach Village, 7100 E. Cave Creek Rd., Cave Creek



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EDUCATION

Election Day could bring more Deer Valley Unified cuts

District hoping to reverse trend last 2 years, maintain original funding

By **Steve Stockmar**
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Deer Valley Unified District students and families will learn this month about their maintenance and operations budget – and possible cuts.

The existing 15% M&O override was first approved by voters in 1991 and provides for the district's operating resources, including staff salaries and student extracurricular activities.

Voters the past two years voted against continuing the override. As a result, the district cut \$11 million from this year's budget, which amounted to cutting almost 50 staff positions, and also raised fees for extracurricular activities.

The district put the override on the November General Election ballot to prevent having to cut another \$11 million from next year's budget and to maintain previous funding levels.

IF YOU GO

What: DVUSD Governing Board November Meeting

When: 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 18

Where: DVUSD Governing Board Room, 20402 N. 15th Ave., Phoenix or live streamed at youtube.com/@dvusdboard/streams

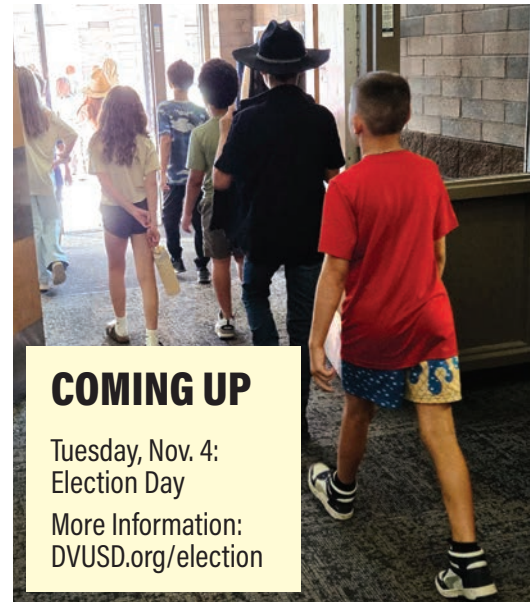
"Until that personally hits you and you don't see that, you're not affected by it and you don't really do anything about it," governing board member Stepanie Simacek said from the dais in an Oct. 14 public meeting. "But for all of those families who have a future kindergartener, we will not have full-day kindergarten if we do not pass this override."

The General Election is Tuesday, Nov. 4.

The current override was authorized in 2019, but FY2025 was the last year of its full funding.

This year the district used cash accounts to offset

- See **Override** on page 15



COMING UP

Tuesday, Nov. 4:
Election Day

More Information:
DVUSD.org/election

Students make their way through campus at Copper Creek Elementary School in Glendale on Sept. 8, 2025. (Independent Newsmedia/Steve Stockmar)



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Christine Twidwell has run the Flagstaff Marathon. (Submitted photo)

Principal of Glendale-based virtual school opens up

Q&A with leader of Insight Academy of Arizona

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Glendale Independent caught up with Christine Twidwell, principal at virtual learning school Insight Academy of Arizona, which is based at 5323 N. 99th Ave., Suite 210, Glendale, for a question and answer session:

Name: Christine Twidwell

Where I live and work: Glendale

Why do you live in Arizona? I was born in Arizona and was fortunate to grow up here. I attended Northern Arizona University and have worked all over the state. Working in virtual education through In-

sight Academy of Arizona provides me with the opportunity to explore our great state while helping students from all over Arizona. I can't imagine living anywhere else.

What do you like most about living in Arizona? There is no other state like Arizona! You can visit beautiful mountain towns to experience the fall colors and snow, explore the desert in the winter, spend time on the water at Lake Powell or on the rivers and of course there is the Grand Canyon.

What activities do you enjoy? Spending time with my family, trail running, camping, back country hik-

Principal

• From page 10

ing, baking, reading and traveling.

What clubs/organizations are you involved in? I am on the children's ministry team for my church and have the opportunity to lead our 5-8-year-old kids each month.

What is your favorite charity or volunteer activity and why does it deserves support from others?

I volunteer each month at a local shelter that supports women and children experiencing homelessness. Together with a small group, we prepare and serve themed meals to the residents. The shelter offers a safe and nurturing environment where women receive essential physical and mental health care. It also provides job training and placement services, empowering them to build independent, sustainable lives for themselves and their families. Al-

though space and resources are limited, the shelter and its volunteers play a vital role in offering hope and connection to the women and children as they work toward a brighter future.

What is your No. 1 suggestion to new residents looking for ways to get involved in their community?



Christine Tidwell

One of the best ways to feel at home is to get involved. Explore local events, community centers and activities. Whether you're into fitness, art, volunteering or just meeting new people, finding your

niche helps you build connections and discover groups that matter to you.

What one thing would you like to see changed in your community? I would like to see more opportunities for kids to connect in the community while engaging in ac-

tivities that align to their interests. As a principal of an online school, Insight Academy of Arizona, I see first-hand how important it is that students of all ages find connections with their peers, pursue interests and get involved in their community.

Describe your family I have been happily married for 23 years to my husband, Marc. We have a son who will graduate from Arizona State University this year and a daughter who just started her freshman year of college at West Texas A&M University. We have a large extended family that is spread throughout Arizona and we always look forward to spending time together.

What do you do?: I am the principal at Insight Academy of Arizona. After nearly a decade with Insight Academy of Arizona, it has been such a blessing to help students access a meaningful, personalized and flexible learning experience. Whether a student is working to-

ward credit recovery, traveling for sports, managing family commitments or simply looking for a quieter learning path, online education is a great option for those looking for individualized support.

What people are an inspiration to you? I am fortunate to be surrounded by people who are always looking for ways to improve the world around them. I am inspired by those who look for the best in a person or situation because it always leads to something good and brings hope for a positive outcome no matter what the challenge.

What is your advice to today's youth? Try doing one thing each day that helps you grow. Read something interesting, volunteer your time, watch a movie that motivates you, or try something totally new. Join a club, play a sport, or hang out with people who share your interests, connecting with others makes the journey way more fun.

Holidaze Craft Faire

Friday, October 31st • 9:00-2:00pm
Saturday, November 1st • 9:00-2:00pm

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Litchfield Park FESTIVAL OF ARTS

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DAILY

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Kristin Ryan, Pastel Paintings
Pictured: Pastel on LaCarte
Color My Mountain



James Sandoval
Custom Jewelry
Pictured: 9mm x 6mm
x 2mm ring



Eric Tippit
Unique Functional Pottery
Pictured: One-of-a-Kind Flower Vase

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- Notes from Neptune
- R & B Tastings
- The Jam Barn Band



Dave Hatton Photography
Southwest Landscapes and Nature
Pictured: Black Rock Oak Creek



Michelle and Todd Haden
Hand cut Berkshire Bags
Pictured: Alisha Carryall

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OPINION

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

Resident explains support of bond

Glendale voters will see two General Obligation (GO) bond measures on the ballot this November. I had the privilege of serving on the Glendale Bond Committee and wanted to share what I learned from our meetings:

- In March 2025, the city conducted a survey of 400 residents (0.15% of the city's population) to gauge public interest in four possible GO bond categories: Operations facilities, flood control, parks, and libraries.

- In May 2025, before the first meeting of the bond committee was held, the city council decided that only operations facilities and flood control would be considered for the November election.

- Question 1 is for \$30 million of flood control bonds that will address recurring stormwater flood control issues throughout the city, with a significant focus on the area around Bethany Home Road, 43rd Avenue, and Grand Avenue.

- Question 2 is for \$35 million of operations facilities bonds that will address unacceptable working conditions for city staff at the Glendale operations campus. This 30-acre campus was first constructed in 1976 and inadequate investment in maintenance has led to significant issues including lack of central air conditioning, unnecessary exposure

LETTERS TO THE NEWSROOM

to hazardous materials, obsolete and deteriorating structures, etc.

I was shocked to learn that city staff are working in 100-plus degree heat to maintain the police and fire vehicles that we all depend on for emergency services. I don't think anyone in our community would find this to be acceptable. How can we be confident in the city's ability to ensure public safety for 260,000 residents when it is clearly struggling to provide a safe working environment for 2,000 employees?

This election will provide voters with an opportunity to resolve both of these longstanding issues. I hope you will join me in supporting both GO bond measures in November.

James Ngyuen
GLENDALE

LD26's Crews: Prop 409 an investment in people

In Legislative District 26 in Maricopa County, we look out for each other. We check in on our elders, we show up for our kids and we believe that no one should be turned away when they need help.

That's why it's important to know about a bond election happening this November, Proposition 409. Prop 409 will expand Valleywise Health, our county hospital, and its services.

Valleywise is where people go when life takes an unexpected turn, insured or not. I know that struggle personally. As a working mom who's juggled multiple jobs just to keep the lights on and food on the table, access to quality, affordable health care has been essential for my family's survival.

Let's be honest: the Valley is growing fast, and our health care system must grow with it. That's why I'm voting yes on Prop 409.

Prop. 409 will help expand primary and pediatric care, build a new behavioral health facility and train the next generation of nurses and doctors. Many of these health professionals will directly from the very neighborhoods they'll serve. Can you imagine receiving care from a



Quantá Crews

health professional who understands the local environmental and societal pressures that impact your health?

This bond is more than dollars and cents. It's a moral investment in our people.

Voting yes means keeping the doors open for the next family in crisis. It means building the kind of Arizona we all deserve: one where dignity, healing and hope are available to everyone.

Join me this November in voting yes on Pro. 409. Let's choose care. Let's choose community. Let's choose each other. We're all we've got!

Rep. Quantá Crews
LD 26

Editor's note: Rep. Quantá Crews represents Phoenix and Glendale the Arizona Legislature.

Chamber interim CEO: Vote yes to invest in Glendale

On Nov. 4, the city of Glendale will ask voters to invest in their

♦ See **Letters** on page 13

OPINION

Letters

• From page 12

community in the form of an all-mail election with two ballot questions.

Question 1 asks voters to support an investment in flood control and water retention projects. If you've ever driven through flooded streets or seen storm drains overflow during monsoon rains, you know how unsafe and costly poor drainage can be.

Question 2 asks voters to support an investment in city facilities that help support critical operations, like maintaining public safety vehicles, repairing roads and keeping neighborhoods clean and safe.

City operations facilities are outdated and aging, and some have been repurposed over the years from their original use. Improvements for safety, water conservation and energy efficiency are greatly needed, as is the replacement of swamp coolers with modern HVAC systems.

These questions share the same goal: improving safety, efficiency and quality of life in Glendale. You can find audio recordings and presentation documents detailing the needs and proposed projects on the city Boards and Commissions website page under Citizen Bond Election Committee Agendas and Minutes.

I urge residents to vote yes on

questions 1 and 2. Voting to pass the bonds is voting to invest in your community. It is voting to increase road safety and the efficiency of



Lisa Baker

services you receive. It is voting to direct how you want your property taxes spent by your municipal government.

A yes vote is not a tax increase. It's a re-investment of existing property tax dollars, guided by a city policy that prevents new bonds from raising property taxes.

As a Glendale resident and a member of the last three Citizen Bond Election Committees, I believe these investments are vital. I will be voting yes because Glendale and its people are worth it. I hope you will join me.

Lisa Baker

GLENDALE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

From gap to growth: How West-MEC is powering Arizona's workforce

A skilled and capable workforce is essential to keeping any economy thriving, especially in fast-growing regions like Arizona's West Valley. With major employers such as Amkor, Nestlé, Amazon and others expanding operations in metro Phoenix, and with population growth

soaring, the demand for skilled careers is only expected to rise, particularly in the semiconductor and advanced manufacturing industries.

The region faces several challenges in building the talent pipeline needed to meet this demand. The high number of entry-level openings, coupled with an aging workforce approaching retirement, has created a widening skills gap. Compounding the issue is a general lack of awareness about careers in advanced manufacturing, specifically what these jobs entail, the benefits they offer and the paths to enter them.

Arizona must act now to meet the growing demand for skilled workers. One organization helping to address this challenge is Western Maricopa Education Center, or West-MEC.

West-MEC is a public career and technical education district serving more than 45,000 students from 49 high schools across 3,800 square miles in the northern and western Phoenix metro area. Each year, more than 3,000 students receive hands-on, industry-aligned training at West-MEC's four central campuses.

CTE programs are developed in close collaboration with local employers and advisory councils made up of industry profession-

als. This ongoing feedback loop ensures West-MEC's offerings are responsive to workforce needs, whether by updating curriculum or launching new programs like the Advanced Manufacturing program.

West-MEC equips high school students with a powerful jump-start toward in-demand careers, yet misconceptions persist. A common myth is that CTE students forgo college or are not suited for higher education. In reality, about 70% of West-MEC graduates go on to further their education, while 28% enter the workforce directly out of high school.

For example, students who complete relevant programs at West-MEC could pursue careers with companies like Amkor Technology Arizona in roles such as:

- Manufacturing operations
- Facility technicians (HVAC, electrical, mechanical, water, controls)
- Logistics and warehouse technicians

Every student's path is different; some go to college, others enter the workforce. Many do both. CTE does not limit a student's future; it expands it.

West-MEC has over 30 career training programs in areas including auto tech, coding, welding and

♦ See **Opinion** on page 22



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FROM THE COVER

Cameras

- From page 1

ing to gate the community. There was a feeling that we were seeing people in the community that didn't necessarily belong. We had some incidents — some burglaries, where they broke into cars in the neighborhood and mailboxes were being burglarized," Kelley said. "We have eight entrances and exits. To gate that was really not feasible. You have to own the property where the gates would be."

Flock cameras can scan plates and run information through state police watch lists and the FBI's primary criminal database. It also allows users to create "hot lists" to generate an alarm if a listed plate is identified.

Kelley, a retired law enforcement officer, moved into the Arrowhead Ranch community six years ago. He brought the idea for the cameras to the community.

Some residents voiced concerns with who would have access to the license plate data. Kelley said after the vote and installation of the cameras all Arrowhead Lakes residents, including he and the board, were kept out of the loop in their day-to-day operation and data collected.

Cameras are tied into the real time crime center for Glendale Police Department, and now linked with the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Kelley said.

"The opposing side was that there were people feeling like it was an invasion of our privacy. Or they were afraid the information would be used for something it shouldn't be used for. Which is really not possible," Kelley said. "We made sure no one at Arrowhead Lakes, including myself, has access to that system. I gave the Glendale PD the password, which I don't even remember and didn't write down. They may have since changed it. I don't know. I was the only

one that had it to begin with."

West Valley residents, particularly in Surprise and Goodyear, voiced concerns about privacy violations and how data is shared, could be hacked and retained in the system, then misused.

There is some legal precedent backing up claims about Flock cameras and misuse of similar methods of data collection using emergent technology. In 2022, a car set off an automated license plate reader system alarm in Litchfield Park. The camera system told police the vehicle was stolen. An officer pulled over the driver for a stolen vehicle alert, but the Flock AI made a mistake.

In 2021, the Fourth Circuit Court found in *Leaders of a Beautiful Struggle v. Baltimore Police Department* that extended drone surveillance constituted a Fourth Amendment search because it created an intimate mosaic of private tendencies.

In 2021, a Kansas police officer allegedly used the Flock system to snoop on his estranged wife. He was later fired and arrested.

Representatives of Flock did not return calls prior to publication.

Kelley helped neighboring Mohawk at Arrowhead Ranch get their Flock cameras in place. Arrowhead Ranch Phase I is installing them.

Arrowhead Ranch Phase II HOA board president Helena Johnson said the HOA board is voting on Flock cameras at its Oct. 21 meeting. Results were not available at press time.

Glendale Police had six Flock cameras in place by 2023. That August, the camera system helped police arrest two suspected car thieves.

On Feb. 13, 2024, the Glendale City Council voted to approve a linking agreement with Flock and the purchase of 12 additional cameras for the police department to deploy. The contract is valid through Sept. 30, 2027, and cannot exceed \$400,000.

"This is a very inexpensive way

• See **Flock** on page 22

Override

• From page 9

the loss and minimize the impact to students and staff. If next month's measure fails at the ballot box, the override will reduce to 5%, from the original 15%, in FY27 and be eliminated in FY28.

"We actually didn't cut any of the (FY2026) services that we are providing through the override funding and so we had to find alternative methods to continue to provide those services," Deer Valley Unified School District Deputy Superintendent Heather Mock told the governing board at the meeting.

Some of those alternative methods included instituting a furlough day, which is coming on Jan. 5, for staff members; a one-time option to use cash reserves, which in this case amounted to just over \$1 million; elimination of some summer programs; and hikes in sports and arts participation fees for students and families.

As for the 2019 bond (the bond measure is not on next month's ballot, only the override is) the district has about \$45 million, or 26%, left of that original bond to spend over the next four years, Mock said.

The bond money in 2025-26 has gone toward music instruments in 21 district schools, uniforms and athletic equipment at 17 district schools, fire alarm projects at 29 schools, and roofing and flooring needs at various district schools, among other needs.

Bond Election

• From page 8

Glendale has ran out of space on the campus.

"There is no space for them to have safety meetings, so they did it outside, used a projector and projected it onto one of the trucks," Rios said.

The former home of Spring City on this campus was converted into a storage facility, but it leaks and needs to be demolished. Some buildings at the operations campus still have swamp coolers instead of air conditioning.

The total project costs \$39.6 million. Some of that cost will not be funded by bonds or it will be paid back by the city's enterprise funds.

"I was telling them that there's no air circulation in there at all. It's very dry," Arrowhead Ranch resident Helena Johnson said.

Newer buildings will save water and electricity use.

Operations campus bond funds include language stating they can only be used for

things related to the campus.

Vice Mayor Lauren Tolmachoff said the city has been fiscally conservative for at least a decade. The city restricted itself from raising its secondary property tax rate.

"We have a fiscally conservative community and we don't want to go out for a bond and start paying interest before we need the money," Tolmachoff said. "Vicki and her staff do a great job on managing that process."

Arrowhead Ranch resident Tommy Cramer asked if the improvements around 59th Avenue and Thunderbird Road will tie into the canal for drainage or will it be all underground.

Glendale plans a \$2.8 million flood control project at the intersection.

"The canal is right there but as it developed, we couldn't get the water out of the intersection," City Engineer David Beard said.

"Over the years we've been able to do some different things to fix that. There's still a little bit left underground to get it from that intersection to the canal."

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NONPROFIT

Knuckleheads help Glendale High students stay in game

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A bunch of knuckleheads decided to put their heads and hearts together for old Glendale High School.

This group of friends, most of whom graduated from GHS in 1977 and played baseball, started to meet in a local garage. Over time gatherings grew to more than 20 people, with some coaches of these former athletes joining in.

"About 20 of have been meeting twice a year in a garage and we called ourselves the 'knuckleheads.' We all graduated in '77, except for a couple '76ers," Mike Biciolis said, "Our hearts have always been for Glendale High School, even though we've

moved away."

Their talks started to turn from old times in old town to the needs of athletes and students now at Glendale High.

Ed Russell, who runs a photography studio in north Glendale, followed friend Carla Bajek, an assistant softball coach for Bart Underwood — also a knucklehead — at Cactus High School, when Bajek took over the Glendale High softball program for the 2022 season. She asked Russell to take some game photos of the Cardinals.

"When I went over to do photos, I started to get to know the kids and find out their back stories and how tough these kids re-

• See **Knuckleheads** on page 17



Founding members of the Knucklehead Foundation Ed Russell, left, Randy Shanahan, center and Mike Biciolis, right, get together for lunch Oct. 10 at The Spot in north Glendale. (Independent Newsmedia/Richard Smith)

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Knuckleheads

• From page 16

ally have it tough. Although they're great kids, they and their families financially struggle," Russell said. "We started with four guys in Benny's garage. Now there's about 25. Somebody started calling us the knuckleheads. When I saw what was going on at Glendale I thought, 'let's do something.'"

The Knucklehead Foundation earned its 501(c)3 status in April. Now, the nonprofit is preparing for its second fundraiser at the spot where it all started.

Originally planned to raise donations for Glendale Cardinals sports teams, The Knuckleheads expanded their focus to include fundraising for cheerleaders, glee club and art programs.

The Knucklehead Foundation will present a car show from 9 a.m.

to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 15 in Glendale High School parking lot, 6216 W. Glendale Ave. Some athletes will be there.

All vehicles and guests are welcome and the car show will include raffles, music and food. Vehicle entry is \$25, vendor spaces are \$35.

"We wanted to focus on the high school because it's our first attempt at doing anything like this," Randy Shanahan said. "We have hopes that someday, the kids can replace us on the board."

Shanahan worked as an accountant and handles the charity's financials.

The first fundraiser in April was an unqualified success, raising \$5,340 for Glendale athletics. Russell said a lot of small donations helped.

This event at Bullshooters at 3337 W. Peoria Ave., Phoenix, offered dart, cornhole and pool tournaments. Knuckleheads sold baseball tickets, a boom box and other

raffle items.

Bullshooters owner Michael Bates used to torment the Knuckleheads, leading rival Apollo High to a number of close baseball wins against Glendale in the '70s. Now he had the Cardinals' backs.

"Mike Bates was phenomenal. He opened his place up to us. He didn't charge us for cornhole or pool. We had to pay a little bit for darts because of the vendor," Russell said. "It was pretty cool. We played against him and he was very good. It was kind of cool having the old Apollo-Glendale rivalry come together to help Glendale High kids."

Biciolis said parents and coaches taught them to give back.

His wife makes custom cakes and baked four of them for the Bullshooters fundraiser.

"That's the cool part of our group. Mike's a knucklehead and his wife just jumps in and makes a cake," Russell said. "Randy's our money

guy and he spent hours helping on the fundraiser."

Biciolis said the newer the high school, the better the neighborhoods, the more money for the sports programs and activities. The group's mission is to put money in place to allow school programs and students a chance to continue in difficult conditions.

"Some of the things I've seen are coaches pulling out of their pockets to buy shoes for athletes," Russell said.

Shanahan said the next Knuckleheads fundraiser will be a golf tournament in April.

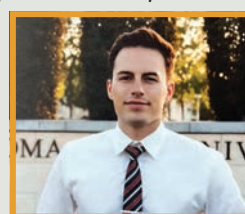
Russell has taken photos of sports and activities at Cactus High School for more than a decade. He said it's cool if the Knuckleheads concept catches on at other high schools in Glendale and the West Valley.

"We're all in our mid-60s so it would be nice if we left that legacy," Russell said.



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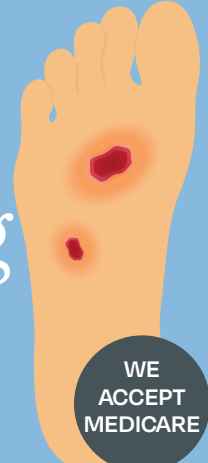
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PREP FOOTBALL

Skyhawks keep pushing past injuries to wins

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

At this point, Deer Valley football expects more and tougher obstacles, and the Skyhawks believe they will overcome them.

Take the Oct. 10 home game against Lake Havasu. After three straight road losses, Deer Valley's gauntlet continued against a 5-1 team on a four-game winning streak.

By the second offensive drive, the Skyhawks were without star wide receiver Coleston Paxton due to a knee injury and by the second quarter senior safety Simon Gonzales was out with an dislocated elbow. Yet, this determined team built a 17-7 halftime lead and held on for a 24-23 victory.

"I think my staff and I have gotten really good at playing Tetris since we've been at Deer Valley. We come in on the weekends and we've got to put different people at different positions and scheme it up," Skyhawks Head Coach Dan Friedman said. "My defensive coaches do a really good job of that.

Our d-line is different every week, it seems like. We have four linebacker positions and it seems like one is getting hurt every game. So our kids have to know every position. Coach C is doing a great job. The same with Bubba (Clement) with the corners."

Paxton took a hit to the knee during a punt return Oct. 3 at Scottsdale Chaparral. He hobbled off and was checked out by trainers. That night, the injury appeared to be a contusion.

An MRI Oct. 14 revealed Paxton had torn his ACL and MCL and has a small fracture in his knee. He learned the diagnosis Oct. 15. The next night, the Skyhawks made the trip to Estrella Foothills to face the team the kept it from the playoffs a year ago.

At 5-9, 160 pounds, Paxton developed into a great high school football player, Friedman said.

"He's one of my favorite kids that I've had in a long, long time. He's such a hard worker and so competitive," Friedman said. "This senior group, all of 13 them played for us as freshmen, which is cool.

• See DV on page 19



Deer Valley senior linebacker/safety/quarterback Rylan Barnes does a rep on the bench press at the Glendale school Oct. 15. (Independent Newsmedia/Richard Smith)

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DV

• From page 18

Coleston was one of the leaders of that group. As sophomores after the season we were 0-10, they were frustrated they wanted to work. They loved football and wanted to work at that.”

Paxton led the team with 44 catches for 518 yards, exactly double that of fellow senior Brody Keith (22 catches for 259 yards).

He shined in the second half comeback against Goldwater Sept. 5, when the Skyhawks erased a 34-14 halftime deficit to beat their rival 38-34. Paxton made 10 catches for 179 yards and three touchdowns.

“Everything I wanted to do was to come here and make Deer Valley a success,” Paxton said. “I still feel like we haven’t played to the best of our potential yet.”

In the game where Paxton was injured at Chaparral, he caught eight passes for 115 yards and a score.

He practiced a bit the week of the Lake Havasu game.

“He played against Havasu for a series or two and caught a couple of balls. He went out on a post pattern that was kind of under thrown, he went up for it and came down. He landed on his left foot and said, ‘My knee’s killing me.’ So we took the pads off and he was done,” Friedman said.

Senior interior lineman Alex Jimenez, who starts on both sides of the ball, has not been back since the Goldwater. It is the third straight season he has missed a couple of games. He may be able to return Oct. 24 at Buckeye, Friedman said.

Deer Valley was originally given a game against 6A Mesa Desert Ridge by the AIA schedule makers.

Not having the option to play a 4A team, that game was switched to 5A Chaparral.

Junior defensive end Marcus Williams went off in an ambulance that night. Fortunately testing that night

revealed no fractures to his back, just deep bruising.

“We just have a team full of athletes,” senior linebacker/quarterback Rylan Barnes said. “I think what this team has that a lot of previous Deer Valley teams didn’t is the chemistry and how tight we are. We don’t give up on each other.”

Barnes knows that firsthand, having played snaps at linebacker and safety, and coming in as a backup quarterback Sept. 27 at Thunderbird when junior starter Gavin Youngker was checked for a possible concussion.

The defense had to improvise again after Gonzales went out against Lake Havasu.

“I play linebacker, but I know all the linebacker positions,” Barnes said. “I play what we call the ‘dawg’ safety position and can move to the WILL linebacker or SAM linebacker. Bryson Keith ended up taking Simon’s safety position when he went down. That’s where he played last year.”

Most of the Skyhawks’ 13 seniors have played together since their freshman year and really play for each other, Paxton said.

To him, the Goldwater comeback was the epitome of this group.

“Going down to a team that just runs the ball and chews clock, that’s hard to stop,” Paxton said.

All year, Deer Valley has been driven by its playoff snub as a 9-1 team in 2024. At 4-3 despite a much tougher schedule, the Skyhawks are also playing for Paxton now.

“He’s been one of our No. 1 guys. Coleston is a huge leader. I don’t know anybody who loves football more than him. For him to go down like that is really sad,” Barnes said. “I also know that he wants us to succeed. As far as how close our relationships on this team are, I spend a lot more time with my football teammates than I do at home. I didn’t grow up with them but lot of our senior group has known each other since they were little.”



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CAR SHOW

Free Dino's Git-Down returns to stadium parking lot

SPECIAL TO INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Dino's Git-Down, the largest GM only truck and car show in the country, returns to State Farm Stadium in Glendale Nov. 14-15.

More than 8,000 custom and restored Chevy trucks will be on display from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 14.

The event opens up to anything GM — custom hot rods, cars and trucks — from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 15.

Dino's Git-Down features custom and vintage Chevy and GM trucks from across North America. Admission and truck participation is free.

There is no charge for parking. Friday is dedicated to Chevrolet/GMC trucks only, while Saturday is open to all GM vehicles.

The event, organized by Dino Battilana and presented by Classic Performance Products, attracts thousands of vehicles and spectators each year.

This is the event's 15th year, beginning in Battilana's backyard and evolving into a major event in the national car show scene.

In addition to the thousands of vehicles on display, the event will feature an auto-themed expo with 250 local and national vendors specializing in Chevrolet/GM products offering engines, transmissions, suspension parts, audio systems, wheels, paint, mufflers, lifts, upholstery, metal fabricators and more. Everything needed to build a custom project will be there.

• See **Car Show** on page 21



Car and truck enthusiasts packed State Farm Stadium in the 2023 Dino's Git-Down event in Glendale. The 2025 version will be Nov. 14-15. (Photo by Kendra Aceto Photography/ Courtesy Dino's Git-Down)

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Car Show

• From page 20

Included again this year are a cruising lane and top 100 trucks, some of which will be in the Barrett-Jackson and Mecum auctions. Attendees can enjoy food, live music and dancing in the tailgate grass area. Food Truck Alley will have specialty offerings.

There will be a free raffle of vendor products Nov. 15, including three engines from Courtesy Chevrolet, Blueprint Engine/Summit Racing and Auto Nation Parts/Performance Chevrolet.

"It's all free and there is something for everyone. You will never see this many trucks in one place in Arizona. We've got great food and the kids can play in the grass and just have fun." Battilana stated in a press release.

Battilana greets every truck owner as they come in the gate, that

way he gets to see every participating truck, meet every owner and hear their vehicle run.

Battilana stated there is a wave of enthusiasm across the country for custom and restored GM trucks and it's only getting more popular every year.

In addition, Cure Realty will sell T-shirts with all proceeds donated to children's cancer network; C10 Club. Arizona T-shirt sales will benefit The Foster Alliance; the Glendale Community College automotive department will have a booth to recruit students; Salt River Police Department will be on hand recruiting; and She's All Cat will have a cat adoption booth.

Dino's Git-Down is presented by Classic Performance Products and sponsored by Courtesy Chevrolet, Speedway Motors, Switch Suspension, UP Car Parts, Auto Nation Parts, O'Reilly Auto Parts and Chevy On.

OCT. 24-JAN. 4

Tianyu Lights Festival

The Tianyu Lights Festival returns to the West Valley this fall with more than 60 groups of handcrafted lantern displays featuring more than 1,000 illuminated pieces. This exhibit opens Oct. 24 and is on display through Jan. 4, 2026 at Camelback Ranch. Tickets are available for purchase. Ticket prices start at \$25 for children and adults ages 12 and up and \$18 for children ages 3-11. Entrance is free for ages 2 and under. The entrance to the parking lot is on Camelback Road. Parking is \$10 per car when purchased online in advance and \$15 per car when purchased on site with a credit or debit card. Cash is not accepted. Created with a centuries-old lantern-making technique reimagined with steel, fabric and LED lights, the installations will transform Camelback Ranch-Glendale into a glowing spectacle stretching more than one mile.

Camelback Ranch-Glendale
10710 W. Camelback Road
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OCT. 27

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FROM THE COVER

City Manager

• From page 1

and his experience aligns with Glendale regarding economic development and diversification of industries. His forward-thinking leadership and results-driven approach make him the perfect fit for Glendale as we continue to grow, innovate, and lead across the Valley,” Weiers stated in a press release.

Then Weiers had the unenviable task of letting Rios know the decision, he said. She started working for the city in 2013 following a long career in the private sector.

Rios attended the Oct. 14 meeting and gave a brief report for another agenda item. Weiers said after the meeting he hoped both Banger and Rios will both be part of the city manager’s office going forward.

Banger was at the Gilbert Town Council meeting at the same time Oct. 14.

His last day as Gilbert town manager will be Jan. 2 Banger will start as Glendale city manager Jan. 12.

“I’m honored to take on the role of Glendale city manager, but I leave Gilbert with deep gratitude and pride. Over the past 14 years, I’ve had the privilege of working alongside exceptional staff, visionary elected leaders, and engaged residents and community partners who have made Gilbert the remarkable town it is today,” Banger stated Oct. 14.

Glendale City Manager Kevin Phelps announced his intent to step down in February, kicking off the nationwide search for his replacement. He left the date of his departure open ended. Phelps will remain with Glendale until the end of January to complete the transition, according to the press release.

“I am deeply honored to have been selected as Glendale’s next city manager and grateful to the mayor and council for placing their trust in me,” Banger stated. “I look forward to work-

ing alongside them and with Glendale’s exceptional employees as we serve this vibrant community and keep building on the city’s momentum for continued success.”

Under his leadership, the Gilbert Heritage District attracted \$387 million in private investment and 748,000 square feet of new development. Banger’s career includes private-sector work, though he spent 24 years in government positions.

“I want to begin by expressing my deep gratitude to Mr. Phelps, who has led Glendale with distinction for nearly a decade, and to every applicant who stepped forward for this role,” Councilmember Lupe Conchas said before casting his vote. “This vote isn’t just about selecting a new city manager. It’s about the future of Glendale for the decades to come. For the Cactus District, it’s an important opportunity to grow and serve our residents. I’m confident Mr. Banger’s leadership will help us continue the path forward.”

Flock

• From page 14

to address crime,” Council Member Lauren Tolmachoff said in 2024.

From his law enforcement career, Kelley said he knew these cameras were vital in investigations. More than 85% of crime investigation will involve the use of license plate readers, he said.

Arrowhead Lakes’ Flock camera cost about \$100 per house per year — or \$45,000 total each year.

This summer, Arrowhead Lakes also decided to hire off-duty police officers to patrol the neighborhood at random times. Use of the lakes by nonresidents was mostly a liability concerns.

Flock captures a license plate and a photo of the car. A private individual would have to have access to the

system to learn information from the license plate. Residents also cannot influence police to look up others’ personal information.

“I think people feel a little bit more secure,” Kelley said. “According to Glendale Police our crime rate — although it was ever really high — is down 23% to 25%. We’ve had some successes with recovering stolen property.”

OPINIONS

Opinion

• From page 13

nursing. Each program is aligned with local industries to ensure students are learning what an entry-level employee would need to know to excel in their role. Not only are students taught the technical skills required to obtain these roles, but just as importantly, they are learning the professional skills required to keep and progress their careers.

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Scott Holman

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Editor’s note: Scott Holman is vice president of human resources at Amkor Technology Arizona.



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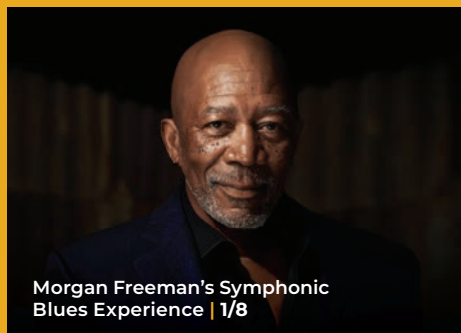




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Murphy Park

- From page 2

Velma Teague Library, particularly if the council eventually decides to build a new library building in the park.

“If the decision is to proceed with this proposed idea of a gazebo being in the northeast corner, we can definitely look at some opportunities along that edge of Glenn Drive. I think we’re only talking about 11,000 square feet of area that we’re considering to program,” Garcia said.

Time is running out to begin work at Murphy Park in order to finish it at the same time as City Hall and the amphitheater.

The goal was to begin construction in October with Murphy Park renovations substantially complete in April 2026.

Following discussions with the council in June, city staff came up

with a compromise for the look of the park’s light poles.

Lights along the park’s perimeter — Glenn Drive, 58th Avenue, Glendale Drive and 59th Avenue — will retain their old time look. The poles will be rewired with new LED lights.

New ornate poles with a more contemporary look will ring the interior loop.

“I know there was discussion of these kind of shower-head looking lights that were being proposed,” Tolmachoff said.

These multi-light poles will have colored lights that are programmable and can shine onto existing mature trees, Jacobs said. Operators can also program a pattern within the lights.

The interior area lighting, park benches and trash cans will all match the renovated City Hall.

Donor plaques relocated to similar locations in four different areas of the park. Tests showed these plaques can be moved without being damaged.

Murphy Park’s redesign allows flexible spaces for community events and pop up retail.

More desert adaptive plants along with trees and shrubs will be added. The perimeter of the park will have a green edge.

The majority of park would still be turf. Evergreen elm, Chinese Pistache and oak trees will be planted to provide larger specimens.

Shrubs will provide color, same palate as around the new city hall, just not as many.

Turner suggested planting a good amount of Arizona ash trees. Their leaves turn gold in the fall and would complement the red leaves on the pistache.

“Mr. Turner was talking about ash trees and I agree with him. I actually planted 10 of those at my property 25 years ago and I get the most beautiful red and gold colors,” Weiers said. “The great news is you get shade when you need it in the summertime.”

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