

Community
Council OKs several
police items; **4**

CHANDLER INDEPENDENT



Education
Cabinetry can be a
lifelong skill; **10**

April 2026 Volume 4 Issue 9 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

THE BIG EVENT

Does Chandler need
more large-event spaces?

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Chandler's mayor envisions the city having another large indoor event space for performances and presentations.

Looking at the recently completed 36th annual Chandler Chamber of Commerce Ostrich Festival, which outgrew its long-used park and had to be moved outside the city limits, it's tough to see where the city could add a large outdoor venue.

But with indoor events, Mayor Kevin Hartke said, the possibilities

are more varied.

"I think the big need we have now is for indoor venue space," Hartke said. "I think the largest space in town right now is the Marriott (on South Price Road) at about 10,000 square feet."

Hartke, who's term-limited at the end of this calendar year, said he'd like to see city staff or other entities pursue some type of event center that has a main space between 20,000 and 50,000 square feet that's geared toward performances and presentations.

"I would love to see something that's not really like a convention

• See **Event Spaces** on page 9



Alia Williams and her mother, Paola, ride a carousel in March at the 36th annual Chandler Chamber of Commerce Ostrich Festival. The festival was moved to Rawhide Western Town in the Gila River Indian Community this year, though Chandler's mayor says a large indoor event center is what the city can and should create or arrange in the near future. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

EDUCATION



The Chandler Unified Governing Board approved a three-year district contract with its newly hired superintendent, Dr. Anna Battle, at its March 25 meeting, to start officially July 1, as Superintendent Frank Narducci retires. Battle's base annual salary will be \$265,000, with a long list of stipends, allowances and incentives. (Jason W. Brooks/Independent Newsmedia)

CUSD board OKs \$265K superintendent contract

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Now that the Chandler Unified Governing Board has selected and contracted with a new superintendent, it can turn its attention to other things.

The board approved a three-year district contract with Dr. Anna Battle at its March 25 meeting. She'll start officially July 1, as five-

plus-year Superintendent Frank Narducci is retiring.

Battle's base annual salary will be \$265,000. There are provisions in the contract that are similar to what Narducci has in his contract, such as the district contributing a designated amount — in her case, \$16,500 annually —

• See **Superintendent** on page 11

RENOVATE
YOUR GATE

**YOUR GATE NEED
AN UPDATE?**

LOCAL FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED

PAGE 7

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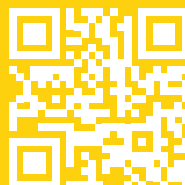
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Nonprofit donates 'StormSticks' to Chandler firefighters

The 100 Club of Arizona's firefighter cancer prevention campaign has led to eight "StormStick" being donated to the Chandler Fire Department. The spray systems attach directly to firetrucks and allow firefighters to quickly rinse off dangerous carcinogens immediately after a fire. Donations are needed for more systems. Find the link to donate and read more at tinyurl.com/2hhf2y6t

Thunderbirds 'Connecting Kids' grant covers \$5K in programs

The Chandler Center for the Arts has received a \$5,000 grant from Thunderbirds Charities to support its Connecting Kids program. The program is a comprehensive suite of youth engagement initiatives that provide access to the arts for children and teens in the Chandler area, which including theater camps, student matinee field trips, the Youth Advisory Council and creative expression in a professional arts environment. Read more at tinyurl.com/mdj6ybep

Center for the Arts closing for renovations

The Chandler Center for the Arts will undertake a major theater renovation from June 15 to Oct. 15. Planned updates include the replacement of theatrical seating, new carpet and epoxy flooring, enhanced floor and chair lighting, seat renumbering and fire sprinkler system, theatrical rigging and electrical infrastructure upgrades. Some programs will be relocated; a grand reopening gala will happen in October. Read more at tinyurl.com/44vn6yb9

Council OKs police grant, agreement, camera contract

By Jason W. Brooks

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Chandler's City Council approved three items for its police department March 26 after a lengthy discussion on each one.

Council member O.D. Harris and others asked questions of Chandler Police command staff who presented three items at a March 23 study session.

Those items were acceptance of a state grant for forensic lab equipment, an agreement with the Arizona Department of Public Safety to use surveillance in specific investigations and a \$1.5 million, three-year contract extension for traffic cameras.

Council ended up approving all three items March 26 as part of its regular meeting consent agenda. Council member O.D. Harris voted against the camera contract, so that was a 6-1 vote.

Harris had questions for Police Chief Bryan Chapman and two of his assistants during the study session.



Chandler Assistant Police Chief Jason Sieczkowski speaks to the City Council during its March 23 study session. Council approved three items for the Chandler Police Department that week, though they were also grilled by council beforehand. (Courtesy of city of Chandler)

In the discussion about the lab equipment, which is a non-matching \$303,000 grant to Chandler Police for narcotics analysis, Harris asked Chapman if Chandler — three hours drive time north of the Mexican border — is where many narcotics are trafficked.

Chapman said the amount is growing. He said 2.4 million Fentanyl pills were seized in the city of Chandler in 2024 alone — up from

1.8 million the year prior.

Large amounts of cocaine, methamphetamine and other narcotics and firearms are also seized regularly in Chandler law enforcement operations, the chief said.

The timing of the grant will help as Chandler constructs its own new forensic lab building, Chapman said.

Assistant Chief Melissa Dean-

• See **Cameras** on page 13

HOUSING

City's housing application deadline is April 17

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The city of Chandler's Housing and Redevelopment Division is opening its public housing waitlist for three-, four- and five-bedroom family sizes.

Pre-applications were ?????? will be accepted starting at noon Friday, April 3. All completed applications must be submitted by the noon, Friday, April 17, according to a news

release.

Interested applicants can pre-apply online at applychandlerhousing.com. Applicants must complete both steps of the process — creation of an online account and completion of a pre-application.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

From the pool of all-pre-applications submitted, 350 pre-applica-

tions will be placed on the waitlist by random selection, which the news release terms a "lottery."

Pre-applicants not selected will have to reapply for assistance when the waitlist is open again.

Paper pre-applications will also be available and may be requested by emailing staff at chandler.housing@

• See **Housing** on page 21

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TAXES

Study: City effective property tax among lowest in U.S.

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A newly released study shows Chandler has among the lowest effective property tax rates in the nation in a survey involving about 650 U.S. cities.

Chandler's effective property tax rate of 0.385% for owner-occupied homes ranks 640th among the 651 cities surveyed.

The data used in this analysis is from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2024 American Community Survey. To determine the locations with the highest property taxes, researchers at Construction Coverage calculated the effective property tax rate for owner-occupied homes by dividing the aggregate annual real estate taxes paid by the aggregate value of housing units.

In the event of a tie, the location with the greater median property taxes paid for owner-occupied homes was ranked higher.

Chandler ranked two spots ahead of Gilbert, which had an effective rate of 0.391%, in the study. Glendale was 10th-lowest, with Flagstaff at No. 5, Tempe at No. 4 and Scottsdale — at 0.296% — had the second-lowest among the 651 cities, with only Mt. Pleasant, S.C., being lower.

East Orange, N.J., came in as worst among the 651 cities with a 2.453% effective owner-occupied tax rate.

• See **Taxes** on page 26

New logistics, manufacturing being built near Chandler Airport

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Sun State Builders announced it broke ground March 6 on a new warehouse and office facility in the Chandler Airpark area.

Avion Square is a 39,620-square-foot, ground-up build designed for future tenants located at Germann and Cooper Roads, according to a news release.

The "spec" building adjacent to the airport will offer flex space available for one or multiple tenants, the release states.

The total square footage is divisible for up to four tenants at about 8,500 square feet apiece. The building design includes four industrial roll-up doors and reinforced slabs for private truck parking.

"The buildings' proximity to the Chandler airport offers an opportunity to companies seeking more



Avion Square is a 39,620-square-foot, ground-up build designed for future tenants located at Germann and Cooper Roads. The project's groundbreaking was in early March and it's expected to be ready for tenants in January 2027. (Courtesy of Sun State Builders)

space to expand and to new companies in need of a home to operate," Mike Forst, CEO of Sun State Builders, stated in the news release.

The project, now under construction, is projected to be complete and available to tenants by the end of 2026, it states.

RESOURCES

South Chandler well gets federal help



U.S. Rep. Greg Stanton (D-Phoenix) and Chandler officials met at the site of a planned water well March 10 for which Stanton helped secure federal funding. From the left are Chandler City Council member Matt Orlando, Mayor Kevin Hartke, Stanton, Council members O.D. Harris and Jennifer Hawkins and Vice Mayor Angel Encinas. (Independent Newsmedia/ Jason W. Brooks)

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

While there are many battles still to be fought over water resources in the months and years ahead, at the Congressional level alone, Greg Stanton says, it's nice to be able to celebrate small victories.

That's what Stanton wanted to talk about March 10 when the Congressman showed up for the presentation of a symbolic \$1 million check. That's the approximate amount of a federal appropriation Stanton (D-Phoenix) says he helped secure to help fund Chandler digging a water

• See **Federal Help** on page 23

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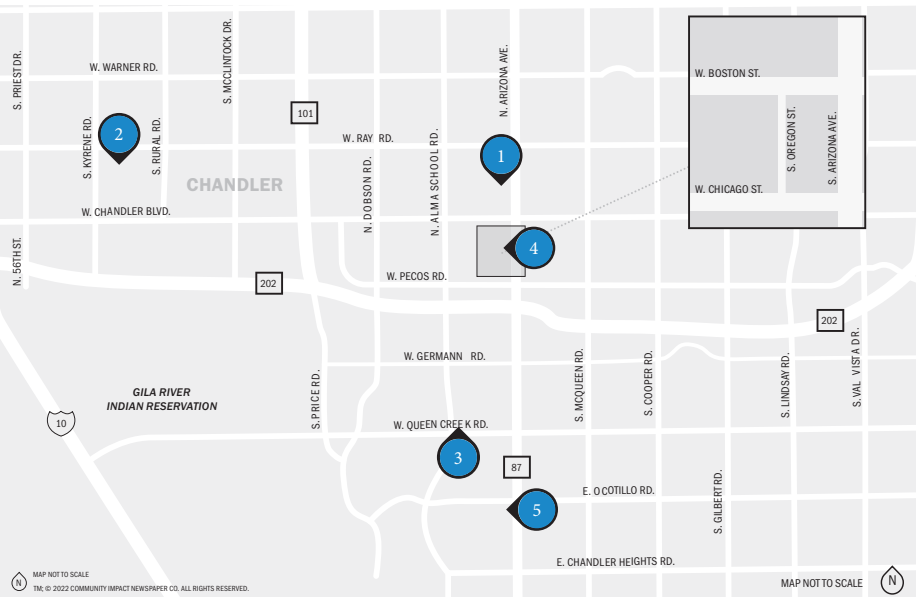


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BUSINESS MOVES



Compiled by Jason Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

NOW OPEN

1 PIP Coffee + Clay, a combination ceramics/pottery studio and coffee shop, has officially opened its new location at 44 W. Erie Street. It also includes The Pearl: a small resale boutique featuring designer, vintage and up-cycled clothing. Owners Mara Friedman and KC Bonnem opened this business in the mid-century house on a mixed-use property and attached retail component. They kept as much of the original, historic character as possible while modernizing and beautifying it, thought there was an extensive list of upgrades needed, including a new parking lot. Visit pipcoffeeclay.com for more information on workshops, classes and store hours.

2 Hashtag 48 Modern Kitchen has opened in Laguna Village, on the southeast corner of Ray and Kyrene in west Chandler, in the storefront space that had been home to Lebanese Palace before it closed late last year. The

Mediterranean restaurant and hookah lounge has a somewhat diverse menu, with hummus and other Mediterranean appetizers. Their sandwiches include shwarma, kefta, falafel and chicken tikka. Main entrees focus on lamb shank, musakhan, baked eggplant and chicken. Kebabs, lobster tail and salmon, lamb chops and steaks are all grilled. Desserts include cannoli and Layali Baghdad. The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner seven days per week. The address is 5965 W. Ray Road, Suite 20. Find Hashtag 48 on Facebook or Instagram.

3 The Great Greek is a national chain of counter-service Mediterranean restaurants that now has three Arizona locations, having recently opened one on the northeast corner of Alma School and Queen Creek in south Chandler, next to Barro's Pizza. The menu for the Florida-initiated chain includes wraps, pita sandwiches, gyros, humus, salads, souvlaki and falafel. The first Giant Greek in

Arizona opened in Scottsdale in 2023, followed by a Gilbert location in 2024. The Chandler location is open for lunch and dinner seven days per week. Visit thegreatgreekgrill.com or call 480-378-6130 to learn more.

4 Best Pizza & Brew is a San Diego-based chain whose ownership has decided to open its first Arizona location, taking over the former Gadzooks Enchiladas & Soup location, next to The Sleepy Whale, on the northwest corner of Arizona Avenue and Frye Road in downtown Chandler. The chain's first location outside the San Diego area offers both thicker Detroit-style squares and the traditional New York-style thin crusts. Chicken fajita and pesto chicken burrata are among the more unique pies. There are also the typical pizza joint items, like boneless wings, salads, and sandwiches, desserts and a full list of beers and IPAs. There's also a wagyu beef burger. The location is open for lunch and dinner seven days per week. Learn more at bestpizzaandbrew.com or by calling 480-680-4264.

5 16 Handles is open in Fulton Ranch Towne Center in Ocotillo, on the southwest corner of Ocotillo Road and Arizona Avenue, near CAVA Mediterranean, across from Hamilton High School. It's the first Arizona store for the frozen yogurt chain, which has locations in New Jersey, Massachusetts, Texas, South Carolina and Florida. Their rotating 16 flavors included, as of April 6, Arriba coffee, birthday cake and black matcha. No-sugar-added options include "cake batter" flavor. There are dozens of gluten-free, fat-free, reduced-fat, vegan and artisan options. Party packages and catering are available. Learn more at 16handles.com.



PIP COFFEE + CLAY



HASHTAG 48



THE GREAT GREEK



BEST PIZZA & BREW



16 HANDLES

FROM THE COVER

Event Spaces

• From page 1

center, but more like what we have at the Center for the Arts, but larger,” Hartke said.

The Chandler Center for the Arts’ largest theater, the Steena Murray Mainstage, has a seating capacity of 1,500, with 800 seats on the lower level.

Hartke said with most large acreages in the city limits already purposed, finding a location for a smaller indoor venue is probably more of a financing challenge than it is a space or location issue.

“We’ve got a couple of (undeveloped street) corners left that things could develop on,” Hartke said. “We’ll see if we can get something a little bit larger so that those types of indoor events can continue to stay in town.”

Terri Kimble, director of the Chandler Chamber of Commerce, said she and her team have worked with city staff who handle economic development with such a build somewhere in distant plans.

In the meantime, she said, working with local businesses that have hangars or large indoor workspaces, as well as Chandler-Gilbert Community College and local K-12 schools, is how the Chamber currently tries to find sites for large indoor events.



Kansas lead singer and keyboardist Ronnie Platt, top, encourages crowd response as violinist Joe Deninson plays during the 36th annual Chandler Chamber of Commerce Ostrich Festival in March. The festival was moved to Rawhide Western Town in the Gila River Indian Community this year, though Chandler’s mayor says a large indoor event center is what the city can and should create or arrange in the near future. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

Hartke pointed out that Tumbleweed Park actually has more space — especially grass — than the Rawhide Western Town, where the Ostrich Festival was held this year. It’s the parking that the park is losing that forced the move of the Ostrich Festival.

“We’ve had as many as 50,000 or

60,000 for some Tumbleweed events, but it’s getting smaller, not larger,” Hartke said. “And even with redoing A.J. Chandler Park, no place downtown is going to hold much more than about 8,000 in one place, safely.”

While Rawhide, which is part of the Gila River Indian Community, doesn’t have paved permanent park-

ing everywhere, it has made several major recent upgrades and is set up to host some large events with freeway and highway improvements and expansions planned in the vicinity.

Tumbleweed, on the other hand, despite being Chandler’s largest all-purpose city and regional park, has had some of its temporary parking vanish as expansion occurred.

Spaces sometimes used for parking at large public events now are home to recent additions like the outdoor pickleball court complex, opened in September 2025, or the new softball fields on the southwest end.

The midway, booths and concert setup dominated the Tumbleweed property for the better part of two weeks in years when the Ostrich Festival was spread over two weekends. Other food- or music-themed festivals tied up park fields on other weekends each spring.

LeVine Entertainment received the Best Multiple-Day Event Program for a Corporation or Association award at the Informa Connect’s Special Event Gala Awards, held in early 2023 in Orlando, for producing the 2022 Ostrich Festival.

That was especially rewarding for Levine Entertainment, agency staff said at the time of the award, because restarting the 30-year-plus event after a two-year hiatus for the COVID-19 pandemic wasn’t easy.



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REAL ESTATE



Chandler Unified Chief Financial Officer Lana Berry explains March 25 how the district can earn an administrative fee from being the lead agency in some newly negotiated vendor contracts. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

District flexes negotiating leverage

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Nearly anyone who follows Arizona school boards has seen contracts up for approval with another district's name attached to them.

Many Arizona districts are members of the 1Governmental Procurement Alliance — a nonprofit national government purchasing cooperative that helps public agencies take advantage of existing contracts in purchasing everything from construction services to vehicles, from local and national vendors.

Chandler Unified has been using 1GPA for years, and district staff even had some 1GPA contracts up for approval at the CUSD Governing Board's March 25 meeting. But the district is taking the lead in some cases as well.

The board unanimously approved a district agreement with 1GPA itself in February 2025 that permits CUSD to become one of the lead agencies that establishes public contracts through 1GPA in order to gain national purchasing power.

In exchange, 1GPA will offer the district revenue sharing on usage of 1GPA contracts issued through CUSD.

One such contract that Chandler staff are the leads on was for real estate consulting and brokerage services. The CUSD board unanimously approved

• See **Real Estate** on page 12

Chandler High cabinetry students learning lifelong skills

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

When Chris Todd was looking into career and technical education teaching positions in Arizona, he made a discovery.

The northwestern Iowa native knew the factory, industrial and agricultural infrastructure and history of the Upper Midwest meant career, technical and former "industrial arts" classes and facilities were common there. But his search for teaching positions — which landed him in Chandler High School's cabinetry program — showed him Arizona still has collective work to do.

"Anything Arizona has going on as far as career and technical ed is way behind what, say, Nebraska has had for years, in every single high school," Todd said. "So coming down here (when his wife found an Arizona job) was a big shock. I asked, 'Do these places not have shop classes?' Fortunately, I found out Chandler High had an opening."

Todd reached nationals in SkillsUSA cabinetry competition while in college in

• See **Cabinetry** on page 12



Chandler High School junior Emily Hernandez works on clipboards for her family during a recent cabinetry class. Students can take beyond the two-year standard CHS program for credit. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

CONSERVATION

Chandler school district buys turf, HVAC services

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The era of Chandler Unified varsity football home games being played on natural grass is officially over.

The CUSD Governing Board approved a purchase of a new artificial turf field for Arizona College Prep High School's Fred DePrez Stadium at its Feb. 25 meeting. ACP will be the last of the six CUSD high schools to have its stadium converted from grass to turf.

• See **Turf** on page 20



Arizona College Prep High School Knights football senior Max Sasso carries the ball behind blockers at Fred DePrez Stadium in a September 2025 game. The stadium will be the last of the six Chandler Unified such facilities to switch from grass to artificial turf, cutting back on water use by an estimated 2 million gallons per year. (Independent Newsmedia file/Jason W. Brooks)

FROM THE COVER

Superintendent

• From page 1

to a 403(b) tax-deferred annuity account.

Board Vice President Barb Mozden was the only one to vote against it. She said, during the meeting, she was “unhappy with the contract,” but didn’t elaborate.

Asked later for more details on how she arrived at a “no” vote, Mozden said she couldn’t comment, due to confidentiality law. The board met in executive session prior to March 25 to discuss Battle’s contract.

Battle will receive a percentage pay increase each year commensurate with whatever rate the board increases other CUSD administrators’ pay.

The superintendent will earn a minimum \$15,000 in performance pay each year, subject to board assertion that she met all pre-established performance benchmarks.

There is a \$500,000 life insurance policy mentioned, as well as a \$12,000 annual stipend for items like health insurance savings, supplemental disability insurance and business-related books and journals.

There is also a long list of termination provisions, including a minimum of 15 day notice from the board and either 18 months’ pay as severance or monthly pay for the remaining months on the contract, whichever

is less. Battle must give 90 days notice if she resigns and must inform the board before taking a job outside the district.

The contract includes a \$5,000 annual allowance for professional organization dues and related expenses and another \$5,000 for “civic organizations and community liaison endeavors.”

Finally, there is a \$1,000-per-month vehicle allowance.

Battle was chosen in late January by the board after an exhaustive national search. She is a longtime Arizonan and administrator; she was chosen over Chandler Unified Chief Financial Officer Lana Berry and one other finalist after a full day of interviews and interactions.

Narducci was chosen as interim superintendent by the board in late 2020 without that same type of outside search process. He succeeded the retiring Camille Casteel when she ended her 25-year run heading the district.

Narducci’s interim tag was removed from his title in early 2022.

Battle spoke briefly at the March 25 meeting, thanking the board for its trust and promising collaborative efforts and to help ensure students and staff feel supported.

The board is set to meet on two Wednesdays next month, April 8 and 22.

Be a Civility Advocate!



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 & 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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Cabinetry

• From page 10

Nebraska. He said cabinetry is a sort of “AI-proof” field for the foreseeable future, as robotics have not shown the ability to take all aspects of designing, creating, finishing and especially installing it.

“It’s going to be something humans will continue to do,” he said.

Todd explained that the Chandler High cabinetry program is technically only two years long, though he has some students who take it a third or fourth year for elective credit — especially if they see themselves entering a career involving cabinetry skills.

Todd said historically, students have primarily made gifts or “knick knacks,” though he wants to raise that to have students making professional-grade products using plywood. Examples of products would be dining room tables or other practical, load-supporting items.



Chandler High School students Anson Call, left, and Drake Farrow work on a nightstand during a recent cabinetry class. Students can take beyond the two-year standard CHS program for credit. (Independent News-media/Jason W. Brooks)

Todd extolled the contributions of Mark Roberts. He’s a former Chandler High teacher and a national award winner as a Mesa Community College instructor who still spends time in the CHS shop, advising students and teachers alike.

Roberts pointed out a wall-length set of cabinets being made for cabin in the Flagstaff area. Todd said he’d like to get more one-time jobs like that for students and to partner with Chan-

dler-area contractors and other businesses.

Junior Emily Hernandez has been working on clipboards for her family. She’s also worked on step stools, nightstands, small jewelry boxes and cutting boards, following in the footsteps of an older brother who was in the program.

Cabinetry allows for repurposing, she said, as the cutting boards were made using old gymnasium flooring.

Hernandez, a second-year student in the program, said she might take it again as a senior to keep working on projects. She aims to take her skills with her into one of the branches of the U.S. military.

“Teachers are really good about keeping an open mind to different trades or skills cabinetry can lead into, and encourage us to think the same,” Fernandez said.

Todd said his laser engraving is another skill he hopes students can develop and work into their industrial resumes. He wants them to start by making gifts for teachers or family members, but also to start thinking about what professional-looking and functioning items they can create.

“That’s the goal — to get the kids real-world experience, making professional stuff,” Todd said.

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Real Estate

• From page 10

such a contract at the March 25 meeting.

In addition to CUSD now having access to the four awarded firms’ services, should it require them, if other Arizona districts want a slight discount on those services, their local boards can approve the same 1GPA

contract, and Chandler will receive a fee from 1GPA, explained CUSD Chief Financial Officer Lana Berry.

“So it’s not just for us, but we can collect an administrative fee on these new contracts — if there is one,” Berry said.

Berry went through the dates and details of the request-for-proposal and review process of the initial seven proposals for the real estate consulting contract, as received by an evalu-

ation committee. The awarded firms are Bang Realty Inc.; Land Advisors Organization, Nathan & Associates Inc. and R.O.I. Properties.

The multi-term, one-year contract begins March 25 of this year and has the CUSD board option of a maximum of four additional years on a year-to-year basis.

There are no dollar amounts mentioned in the contract, as it’s unknown how often each contracted district

would call upon the consultants.

Berry explained such consulting firms are not only useful for land sales, as CUSD currently owns only one significant vacant lot of land, and school district sale of real estate requires voter approval first. She said leasing agreements and other property-related decisions all could be run past attorneys at such contracted consulting firms.



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Cameras

• From page 4

da said the agreement between the city and the Arizona Department of Public Safety permits teams of law enforcement investigators to use electronic surveillance equipment as part of task-force operations.

Council member Christine Ellis asked Deanda if information gathered by such task forces is shared with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency. Deanda said no.

"This equipment just for special operations and/or special events, such as some in downtown Chandler," Deanda said. "And we don't partner with any federal agencies on those — including ICE."

Harris said he had concerns about whether the technology can be used as "spyware." Deanda explained some equipment is used to capture interactions undercover officers have with suspects, while some cameras

are for "event safety" and aren't the type of cameras used for automated facial recognition.

Deanda said officers aren't permitted to use the equipment to simply fish for conduct that might be illegal and evidence isn't shared with federal agencies, including ICE.

Assistant Chief Jason Sieczkowski presented on the camera contract extension. Like many Arizona cities, Chandler has 17 red-light and "green speed" detection cameras at 12 intersections. The three-year extension with Verra Mobility — which runs through March 31, 2029 — is on the backs of two five-year deals the city had with that company.

The reduction of the extension to a three-year term is to avoid a new price and contract negotiation process while legal disputes over the use of such technology are resolved, Sieczkowski said.

"Every citation is human-issued and human-reviewed," Sieczkowski said, adding Chandler's been using

photo enforcement, in some form, since 2006.

Harris' concerns with Verra Mobility were about data breaches and how likely it would be that the company would share data with other agencies.

City Attorney Kelly Schwab said there are provisions in the contract requiring Verra Mobility to notify clients immediately upon discovering any data breach.

Sieczkowski said the program isn't quota-based. He presented a string of statistics that show how the program has had a positive impact on traffic collisions, injuries and death at intersections with cameras.

Harris said he has concerns with Verra Mobility and wanted to learn more about that company, other companies in the industry and protecting resident privacy.

Mayor Kevin Hartke pointed out that Harris likely didn't vote against Verra Mobility's most recent five-year contract extension when it was

approved by council.

"I think we're in a pretty interesting time," Harris said. "Council has not revisited the terms, the privacy mechanisms; the protections we have."

The 12 intersections in Chandler equipped with red-light / speed photo enforcement cameras are:

- Alma School and Queen Creek roads
- Alma School and Ray roads
- Alma School and Warner roads
- Arizona Avenue and Ray Road
- Arizona Avenue and Warner Road
- Arizona Avenue and Ocotillo Road
- Chandler Boulevard and Dobson Road
- Chandler Boulevard and Kyrene Road
- McQueen and Queen Creek roads
- Ray and Dobson roads
- Ray and McClintock roads
- Ray and Rural roads

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We will promptly correct all factual errors. We offer a "right of reply" to the people about whom we write. Readers who disagree with a news story are welcome to respond with a letter.

Cesar Chavez: Balancing legacy against priorities

I've been reflecting on the allegations surrounding Cesar Chavez and the legacy of the farmworker movement.

For me, this is not just history. It is deeply personal.

I come from a family of farmworkers and my family's commitment to service and activism was shaped in part by this movement. Their sacrifices and belief in civil rights and justice helped lay the foundation for the community we stand in today.

With that history comes both pride and responsibility.

I honor the generations of farmworkers, families, and leaders who organized and fought for fair wages, safe working conditions, and respect—while also recognizing the importance of facing the realities of these allegations.

I want to acknowledge the courage of those who have come forward. You are heard, seen and your truth matters. It's never too late for a voice to be recognized.

We seek accountability, healing, and growth as we move forward together.

Many in our community are holding complex emotions. It is possible to carry pride in a movement that has meant so much, while also confronting painful and troubling allegations.

I uplift the legacy of the farmworker movement built by countless workers, families, and organizers who came together in pursuit of dignity, fairness, and justice.

Their collective efforts created lasting change for the voiceless, rooted in unity and resilience, and that impact continues through new generations.

I remain committed to carrying

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that work forward with honesty, compassion, and a renewed dedication to justice for all people.

We must continue, as a community, to fight for the voiceless.

Angel Encinas

Vice mayor of Chandler

Mesnard off-base with Proposition 123 replacement

I had intended this to be a typical notebook piece, shorter observations about disparate topics.

However, after identifying ideas banging around the Arizona Legislature that I found interesting, I noted a common element: They were all the handiwork of state Sen. J.D. Mesnard.

Mesnard has been among the most serious and productive legislators over the last decade and a half. He was a chief architect of the flat tax and universal voucher program that are the GOP's signature accomplishments.

There is much to laud regarding Mesnard's legislative activity, and I will do some lauding as we move along. However, I think his political assessment of a Proposition 123 renewal is seriously flawed.

Proposition 123 was passed by Arizona voters in 2016. It increased the distribution from the state land trust for K-12 schools from 2.5% to 6.9%, producing, roughly, an additional \$300 million a year.

The higher distribution expired last June. The Legislature

• See **Opinions** on page 15

SPEAK UP

Here are some recent online comments about Chandler Independent items:

"CHANDLER SCHOOL BOARD OKS \$265K SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACT":

"With all the shortages the kids need these days in their schools, the amount that school districts pay to the superintendents is ridiculous."

— **Joseph Zack** via story comment

"Dr. Battle is a fully qualified educational professional. As a woman, you should know that you would not have gotten any place without DEI in any workplace. She is very highly respected in her field."

— **Jadine Bowens** via story comment

"NEW 'PIZZA & BREWS' LOCATION IN DOWNTOWN CHANDLER":

"Excited to order several different pizzas with friends to taste-test."

— **Robert Broch** via story comment

"DISTRICT BUYS TURF (FOR ACP HIGH SCHOOL)":

"Yep, plenty of studies showing how dangerous turf can be. As always, money wins."

— **Jana McKay** via story comment

Got a comment on a story you've recently seen? Email us at azopinions@iniusa.org with the name of the story and a one- or two-line comment.

OPINION

Opinions

• From page 14

has been unproductively churning over a replacement since. The land trust distribution is set in the state constitution, so renewing a higher distribution must go back to voters.

Mesnard has been a leader in a GOP faction that wants all of an increased distribution to go to teacher salaries. In the original iteration, the additional money went to public schools generally on a per-pupil basis, to be used as they thought best.

Gov. Katie Hobbs has proposed that a slice of the higher distribution go to support bonds for capital repairs to district schools. If that would settle a new lawsuit over such funding, it would be something GOP legislators should seriously consider.

Other than that, a per-pupil distribution is more in keeping with the school-choice model Republicans profess to support, leaving schools to compete for students based upon how they use the money, rather than dictating a particular use of it. It is probably the surest route to a bipartisan referral and bipartisan support in the election. And the pitch to voters would be straightforward: We've had this, it worked well, so let's continue it.

Robert Robb

Retired Arizona journalist Robert Robb opines about politics and public policy. Reach him at robtrobb@gmail.com.

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One of actors' final works shown at Chandler festival

'Mr. Wonderful' now available for online viewing

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

When Dan Smith came to Chandler earlier this year to help promote the film "Mr. Wonderful," he said he hoped it would be viewed by many partly because it's one of the final films starring longtime actor Michael Madsen.

He also hopes audiences will view it because it's a quality independent film with a compelling story.

The coming-of-age drama recently became available on Amazon Video. Non-Prime customers can rent it for 30 days for \$2.

"In the indie film world, story is king — not how many stars are in it," Smith, who lives in the greater St. Louis area, said during his visit to Chandler. "We don't have big budgets — but we have big stories to tell."

Smith said he and director Mark David said like many of his scripts, Mr. Wonderful is a story about real humans — with real everyday human problems.

Smith's brother, Stuart, was with Dan the weekend they were in the Chandler area for the showing of Mr. Wonderful at the Chandler International Film Festival. The film ended up winning CIFF's Best U.S. Narrative Feature Film award for 2026.

Smith said he traveled to Los Angeles, Austin, Delaware, his hometown St. Louis area and had plans to go to Iowa to promote the 1-hour, 47 minute film at festivals, in addition to Chandler.

Stuart Smith, who helped his brother obtain financing for, and is one of the co-producers of, Mr. Wonderful, said viewing a film with an audience is so much different than viewing it alone or with any cast or producers or directors.

"You get to see and hear so much



Screenwriter Dan Smith, center, poses with Chandler International Film Festival Director Mitesh Patel, left, and Smith's brother, Stuart during the festival in January. Smith wrote the novel and the screenplay for "Mr. Wonderful," which stars the late Michael Madsen and which recently became available on Amazon Video. (Jason W. Brooks/Independent Newsmedia)

more about how certain moments land, how it plays in a larger group in a theater," he said.

Dan Smith has written a few other dramatic films that have been completed, such as "Wake" and "Texas Heart." His "Impact: After The Crash" is a narrative-style documentary that looks at the wide-ranging consequences of a particularly catastrophic drunk-driving crash.

As a novelist, Smith's credits include the 2018 Mr. Wonderful book that he says he added some dramatic elements to, that would translate well to film scenes. He's written several historical books and scripts as well, including "Black Indians: An American Story," which won awards and was aired by ABC.

Smith, known as "Daniel Blake Smith" on imdb.com, said working with seasoned professionals like Madsen and Priscilla Barnes was rewarding; veteran actors not only know a

great deal about how movie sets and filmmaking work, but also appreciate independent productions in ways less-experienced actors might not, he said.

Barnes, probably best known for taking over Suzanne Somers' role in Three's Company and for her role in the Jane the Virgin series, has stayed plenty busy in TV and film through the years, with acting ranging from NCIS one-time roles to the feature film The Devil's Rejects.

Madsen appeared in more than 300 films, TV shows and even lent his voice to a video game associated with one of his best-known roles — Mr. Blonde in Quentin Tarantino's 1992 film Reservoir Dogs.

Smith said unfortunately, Madsen, who went on to appear in other Tarantino films, such as all three "Kill Bill" movies and "The Hateful Eight," and Barnes might have become typecast for playing the same type of charac-

ter more than once, preventing them from being cast in the most prominent studio films.

Madsen passed away in July 2025 at age 67 from a heart attack, about a year after shooting his scenes in Mr. Wonderful.

Madsen plays the middle generation in Mr. Wonderful. It's a story of how his character, his father and his son all have a sort of life or identity crisis at the same time.

Smith acknowledged that the passing away of an actor does bring attention to their work — especially the final recorded work before their deaths.

"One of the last things Michael said to me was 'You need a publicist,'" Smith said. "Truth is, it sounds horrible to say, but his passing was sad but also a blessing in terms of shining a light on his work."



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Perry boys hoops' four-peat attempt falls short vs. Liberty

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

PHOENIX — Not only did the Liberty Lions and Perry Pumas make a great case March 7 for how non-top-4 seeds can play a compelling, entertaining boys basketball championship game, the winner ended up looking like it belonged there all along.

The Lions held off the Pumas, 69-65, in overtime at Veterans Coliseum to win their second 6A title in three seasons.

The No. 5-seed Lions, with seven seniors but some new faces among the starters, completed their winding road to the 6A title by knocking off a four-time defending champion, Perry.

And a member of the Class of 2029 helped them do it.

Freshman Trevin Davis was named the championship game's most valuable player. Most of his game-high 23 points and four 3-pointers came in the first 3 quarters, but the 6-foot-5 Davis said confidence in each other is how the Lions (22-9) got it done this year.

L.J. Diamond and Vik Babic each

had 22 points for Perry (13-17), which had won the 6A crown in 2022 and then won the first three Open Division titles.

Perry's first-year coach, Justin Collard, took over for longtime and title-winning Sam Duane Jr. last spring after the Pumas' fourth consecutive crown.

Davis was among four Lions in double figures against Perry, a team that has knocked Liberty out of the playoffs a few times. Topolessek and Harris each had 15 points, with the former hitting four 3-pointers — all at key moments — and the latter notching five assists.

The Lions won the 2023-24 title, though getting back to the title game was done the long way. A Feb. 20 home loss to Basha bumped the Lions from the Open bracket into 6A, but then the road-tested Liberty lineup was unbeatable.

The Lions' March 2 semifinal win at 6A's No. 1 seed, Mesa High, was a 57-40 textbook team win. Davis' 19 points led five Lions in double figures as Liberty started slow, but then probably played its best three quarters of the season to get the final.



Perry's J.J. Howard leaps and passes around Liberty players in the 6A boys championship game March 7 at Veterans Coliseum. Liberty outlasted Perry in overtime, 69-65, to win its second 6A title in three seasons and to end the Pumas' run of three consecutive state championships. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

The championship game went the opposite way, as the well-disciplined Lions surged to a huge early lead, only to have Perry sneak back into the game.

The first-half nerves led to sped-up play with mistakes on offense by both teams. The Lions' first 2-point make from the field was by Harris, five minutes into the game.

Liberty's defense was solid, especially in stopping Perry from shooting from the perimeter, and contesting dribble-drives. The Lions made eight of its first 13 shots from the field.

Liberty led 23-8 on Davis' crowd-pleasing 3-pointer at the first-quarter buzzer.

• See **Basketball** on page 27

FOOTBALL



BEARS BOOSTED

The Basha High School Bears football team went 12-1 and won the 2025 Open Division championship. It was the school's second state title in the sport, the first one coming when the Bears won the Open crown in 2022. Council recognized the Bears at a Feb. 26 meeting. In front, toward the right, wearing blue jeans, is Basha coach Chris McDonald. (Jason W. Brooks/Independent Newsmedia)

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 **KyreneSchoolDistrict**



Turf

• From page 10

Initially, in 2023, district staff announced that only the five older high school stadiums would all be converted to turf as part of a \$14 million plan using 2019 bond funds, with ACP's grass to remain in place for the foreseeable future. That grass had just been installed prior to the 2021-22 school year.

But after seeing how much the district was saving in water and money, along with community goodwill from allowing various teams to use turf fields that needed to be preserved for football and a handful of other activities before, staff urged the board to reconsider turf at ACP.

CORE Construction was awarded a nearly \$3.4 million contract for the purchase and installation of the turf,

cooling infill material, a shock pad and a storm drain system.

CUSD Assistant Superintendent Tom Dunn said use at the five older stadiums has increased dramatically since turf was installed.

"Almost every weekend, we have community teams and programs using our stadium fields now, year-round," Dunn said. "Before, we had to deny them, in order to preserve the fields for the high school programs."

Dunn said he didn't have hard numbers on the cost savings per gallon, but he does know that turf fields use about 2 million fewer gallons per year than grass fields.

He added that maintenance time and equipment needed for each field is much less, going from about \$6000,000 to about \$120,000 per field per year.

Some water is used to help cool the new turf before practices and games,

he said.

Dunn said 10 years is the anticipated life of an artificial turf field. But the base layer and drainage system, once installed, should last far longer, so the first 10-year replacements of all six CUSD turf fields should all be one-third the costs of initial installations.

Dunn said while the ACP conversion uses 2019 bond funds, those are dwindling. He pointed out there were a few items on the Feb. 25 agenda that are already pulling from the \$271.5 million in 2025 bond funds.

Dunn said no ACP programs will be able to use the stadium from the start of this month's spring break onward, with plans to have the turf ready for the varsity home football opener, usually played in late August. That means the track and field athletes must practice elsewhere and graduation will be held at Hamilton

High School this year.

Another item approved Feb. 25 was a \$591,000 contract modification with a company named Emcor for HVAC replacements, repairs and preventative maintenance district-wide.

Dunn explained that staff typically have to go to the board at least twice each year with HVAC contract totals for CUSD's 4.5 million square feet of indoor space. The first contract request is a year-ahead estimated total — \$700,000, in the case of 2025-26, approved for Emcor last summer — along with an extension with the same company in late winter or early spring.

That's \$591,000 this year, with \$391,000 for five specific projects, along with \$200,000 built in for unexpected HVAC maintenance or repairs for the rest of the school year.

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Housing

• From page 4

chandleraz.gov, by calling 480-782-3200 (*711 via Arizona Relay Service, TTY English 800-367-8939 or Español 800-842-2088) or by downloading a printing out a paper application from the “Apply Chandler” website.

Pre-applications are available in English and Spanish. For additional languages or reasonable accommodations, contact the Housing and Redevelopment Division at 480-782-3200 (*711 via Arizona Relay Service, TTY English 800-367-8939 or Español 800-842-2088).

Completed paper pre-applications must be submitted no later than noon Friday, April 17 via email, by “snail mail” or in person.

Applications can be mailed to City of Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division, Mail Stop 101, P.O. Box 4008, Chandler, AZ 85244-



The city of Chandler's Housing and Redevelopment Division is opening its public housing waitlist for three-, four- and five-bedroom family sizes. All completed applications must be submitted by the noon, Friday, April 17. (Courtesy of city of Chandler)

4008. Mail must be postmarked on or before Friday, April 17.

Check with the U.S. Postal Service to ensure your mail is properly postmarked.

In-person applications can be completed at the city's Chandler Housing and Redevelopment Division office at 235 S. Arizona Avenue, downtown Chandler. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

There 's also an after-hours drop-box located near the office entrance in the City Hall parking garage located at 226 S. Washington Street.

This waitlist is only for existing public housing sites and not the Villas on McQueen property. The waitlist for Villas on McQueen will open in late April.

To qualify for the Public Housing program, the total gross household

income must not exceed \$62,850 for one person, \$71,800 for two people, \$80,800 for three people, \$89,750 for four people, \$96,950 for five people, \$104,150 for six people, \$111,300 for seven people, \$118,500 for eight people, \$125,650 for nine people and \$132,850 for 10 people.

The Housing and Redevelopment Division staff are committed to fully complying with all state, federal, and local laws involving non-discrimination and equal opportunity, the release states.

The Public Housing Program is a project-based housing program funded by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to for low-income individuals and families.

For more information or assistance with the pre-application process, call 480-782-3200 (*711 via Arizona Relay Service, TTY English 800-367-8939 or Español 800-842-2088); or email chandler.housing@chandleraz.gov.

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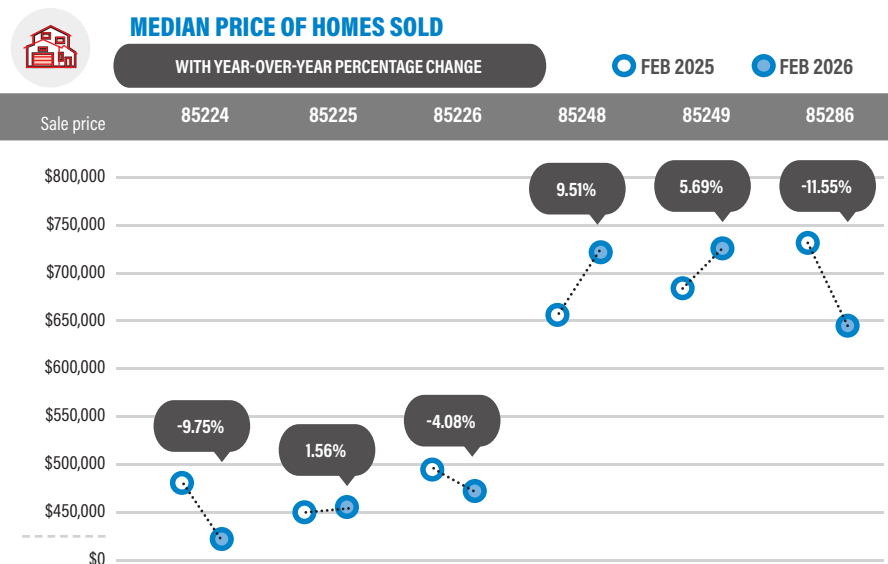
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NUMBER OF HOMES ON THE MARKET

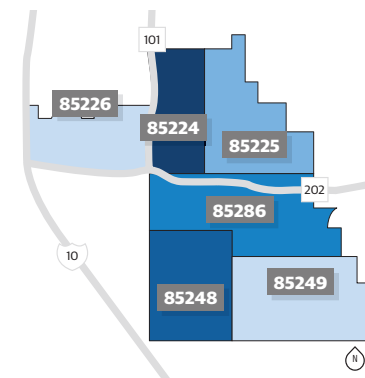
	FEB 2025	FEB 2026
85224	65	81
85225	140	143
85226	57	52
85248	82	100
85249	183	173
85286	93	108

AVERAGE DAYS ON THE MARKET

	FEB 2025	FEB 2026
85224	55	82
85225	57	52
85226	50	65
85248	62	67
85249	70	80
85286	53	58

NUMBER OF HOMES UNDER CONTRACT

	FEB 2025	FEB 2026
85224	29	35
85225	83	65
85226	50	44
85248	31	25
85249	71	94
85286	43	62



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Federal Help

• From page 6

well along McQueen Road in south Chandler.

"Thanks, in part, to Chandler's leadership, the city has a diverse water portfolio that's not as heavily dependent on Colorado River water as some cities," Stanton said. "Chandler's been instrumental in conservation and other water fronts. For years, I've worked closely with them to secure federal investments to meet these kinds of moments."

The well site is next door to Chandler's No. 10 fire station on McQueen Road, just south of Chandler Heights Road.

Stanton, whose District 4 includes parts of Chandler, Phoenix, Mesa and most of Tempe, was accompanied by staff. Chandler was represented at the gathering by Mayor Kevin Hartke, Vice Mayor Angel Encinas City Council members Matt Orlando, O.D. Harris and Jennifer Hawkins and Public Works Director Jeremy Abbott.

Hartke spoke, pointing out that adding to the city's 32 wells was just one decision that's part of staff and council's regular scrutiny of ways to

improve the city's overall water resources and system.

He pointed out that every Valley city has a different division of its water sources. Chandler gets 57% of its water from the Salt River, 37% from the Colorado River and only 6% from groundwater.

Abbott said the water for the well will come from the East Valley Aquifer.

Stanton praised Chandler leadership's focus on a variety of water priorities, including xeriscaping incentives, reclaimed water development and other conservation efforts.

Stanton said the event was a reminder that Arizona water solutions will always be complex. He said examples are pipeline infrastructure to divert Salt and Verde excess into the Colorado basin, more use of reclaimed water at facilities like golf courses, desalination and more conservation methods.

Stanton said the cuts the seven states in the Colorado River basin must be divided evenly between the upper and lower basins.

"It's a matter of national security," Stanton said. "Adequate water supply for critical chip-making, like what Intel does here in Chandler, is what's right for the whole U.S."

GUEST SPEAKER



HOUSING SPEAKER

Rachel Masch-Perez will be the Jewish War Vets Post 619 guest speaker at the post's 10 a.m. April 19 meeting in the Oakwood Country Club ballroom in Sun Lakes. Masch-Perez is the community engagement coordinator for MANA House, which houses 78 homeless veterans along the northern edge of downtown Phoenix. (Courtesy of Jewish War Vets Post 619)



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Chandler 'No Kings' brought thousands to park

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The teen organizer of one of the March 28 Valley "No Kings" events states the most recent protest was, by far, the best-attended of the three Chandler events held within the past year.

Nathan Taylortaft, who states he's a high school junior and the co-director of East Valley Unite, said March 28 protests had a clear focus and had much youth involvement.

"Our generation is fed up with the lies, violence and lack of accountability with this (Trump) Administration," Taylortaft stated in an email to media outlets. "ICE has kidnapped our friends, but we're not scared. Schools have retaliated against our walkouts, but we're not afraid."

After participating in highly visible downtown, Arizona Avenue-centered protests in June and October of last year, East Valley Unite headed to Chandler's Thudde Park and surrounding streets this time, near Loop 101.

Taylortaft says he believes there were as many as 5,000 protestors at the event. He said thousands formed a "moving human banner" in Chandler in the morning, marching and joining up with thousands of others.

One highlight was protestors be-



This drone screenshot shows one of the messages East Valley Unite protestors formed March 28 as part of the nationwide "No Kings" rallies. (Courtesy of East Valley Unite)

ing assembled to spell out "No kings in the USA," as seen from a drone overhead.

Taylortaft stated that even in a republic, people still must show they have the power to block things like ICE acting in ways courts have already redressed.

"The administration is trying to take away our future, but we're not intimidated," Taylortaft stated. "We, the people, have the power. That's why we are fighting for a democracy that works for us — by mobilizing in unprecedented numbers for 'No Kings.'"

Taylortaft stated the human banner was more than four times as large as a similar one in October, which he feels shows significant growth of the movement.

Chandler Gilbert Indivisible, which has been involved in No Kings



Linda Spar of Chandler shows off the sign and shirt she had with her at a March 28 No Kings rally. A large event at Thudde Park in Chandler was part of a nationwide effort. (Courtesy of Linda Spar)

rallies in Chandler in 2025, participated March 28 in the large rally at the Gilbert Civic Center.



U.S. Rep. Greg Stanton (D-Phoenix) smiles next to a protestor March 28 at a No Kings rally in Chandler. The congressman later pledged to continue to derail attempts by President Trump to deploy ICE agents as "his own personal army." (Courtesy of U.S. Rep. Greg Stanton)

U.S. Rep. Greg Stanton (D-Phoenix), whose District 4 includes a sizable part of Chandler, attended the Thudde Park-area East Valley Unite event. He took photos with protestors holding up signs — though not the relatively profane or most colorfully worded signs — and echoed the larger sentiment on his social media.

"The power in this country still belongs to the people, and we're not going to let this wannabe king turn ICE into his own private army," Stanton wrote on his social media.

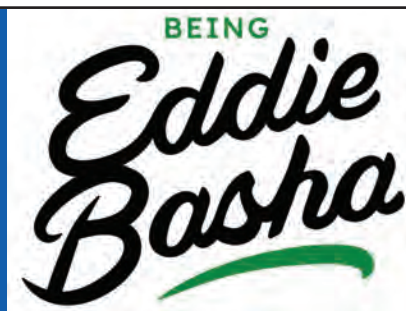


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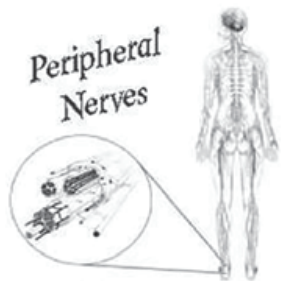
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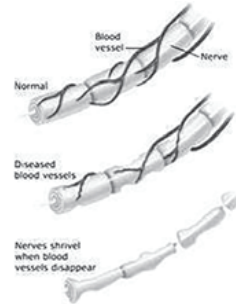
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Chronic pain and/or peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves often causing weakness, pain, numbness, tingling, and the most debilitating balance problems. This damage is commonly caused by a hands and feet which causes the nerves to begin to degenerate due to lack of nutrient flow.



As you can see in Figure 2, as the blood vessels that surround the nerves become diseased they shrivel up which causes the nerves to not get the nutrients to continue to survive. When these nerves begin to "die" they cause you to have balance problems, pain, numbness, tingling, burning, and many additional symptoms. The main problem is that your doctor has told you



to just live with the problem or try the drugs which you don't like taking because they make you feel uncomfortable. There is now a facility right here in Mesa that offers you hope without taking those endless drugs with serious side effects.

(See the special neuropathy severity examination at the end of this article) neuropathy three factors must be determined.

- 1) What is the underlying cause?
- 2) How much nerve damage has been sustained.
- 3) How much treatment will your condition require?

NOTE: Once you have sustained 95% nerve loss, there is likely nothing that we can do for you.

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Aspen Medical will do a chronic pain and neuropathy severity examination to determine the extent of the nerve damage as a public service to you and/or your family and friends. This neuropathy/pain severity examination will consist of a detailed sensory evaluation, extensive peripheral vascular testing, and a detailed analysis of the findings of your neuropathy.



Aspen Medical will be offering this chronic pain and neuropathy severity examination from now until June 30, 2026. Call 480-796-1136 to make an appointment to determine if your chronic pain and peripheral neuropathy can be successfully treated.

Due to our busy office schedule, we are limiting this FREE consultation to the first 15 callers. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SUFFER ANOTHER MINUTE, CALL. Call 480-796-1136 ... NOW!

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INDEPENDENT NEWS MEDIA

Bottom Cities	Tax Rate*
1. Mount Pleasant, SC	0.248%
2. Scottsdale, AZ	0.296%
3. San Tan Valley, AZ	0.337%
4. Tempe, AZ	0.341%
5. Flagstaff, AZ	0.347%
6. Dothan, AL	0.349%
7. Urban Honolulu, HI	0.367%
8. Orem, UT	0.376%
9. Franklin, TN	0.379%
10. Glendale, AZ	0.380%
11. Meridian, ID	0.383%
12. Chandler, AZ	0.385%
13. Lehi, UT	0.389%
14. Gilbert, AZ	0.391%
15. Salt Lake City, UT	0.395%

A newly released study shows Chandler has among the lowest effective property tax rates in the nation in a survey involving about 650 U.S. cities. (Courtesy of Construction Coverage)

Taxes

- From page 6

Chandler officials, both verbally in meetings and in staff reports, have bragged on reducing a property tax rate for 10 consecutive tax years.

An Arizona county, Apache, was ranked lowest in the nation among American counties in the study, at 0.156%.

From 2022 to 2024, property

taxes saw the largest total increase in revenue among major tax categories, rising by more than \$96 billion (13.7%) from \$703 billion to \$800 billion, the study states.

This outpaced the growth in sales tax revenue, which increased by just over \$21 billion, and corporate income tax revenue, which grew by \$5.3 billion.

Read more about the study online at tinyurl.com/3rubrvv6

West Chandler AI firm expands

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Prama AI, an enterprise AI, data engineering and cloud solutions technology company, has announced the expansion of its office at Chandler Gateway Office Park, 80 N. McClintock Drive in west Chandler.

The move represents a significant investment in the city's growing technology ecosystem and is expected to create new jobs while deepening Prama AI's presence in the region, according to a news release from the city of Chandler.

Prama AI helps businesses solve complex problems using intelligence and machine learning, partnering with major cloud providers and finding solutions, the release states.

The expanded west Chandler office will serve as a hub for innovation, supporting the company's growing customer base and accelerating its development of AI-driven products and services.

Ronak Bhavsar, CEO of Prama, stated in the release that the company is committed "to building an exceptional local team of talent who will continue to drive next-generation technologies."

"Forward-thinking enterprises can grow, thrive and contribute to the region's evolving tech economy," Chandler Mayor Kevin Hartke stated.

The expanded facility in west Chandler will serve as Prama AI's primary base for engineering, product development, customer engagement and regional operations. The company plans to increase its workforce in the coming year with a focus on AI and data engineering roles to support client projects across industries.

Prama AI's services span AI/ML integration, cloud strategy, data engineering and full-stack platform development.

For more information about the company, visit prama.ai.

Basketball

• From page 18

The Pumas finally started forcing the Lions into some tough shots and spread the floor on offense to get some looks of their own, using an 8-0 run to make the first half closer.

Liberty went slightly cold in the second quarter, but led 36-28 at the half, due partly to six offensive rebounds.

The Pumas got some stops and some fast-break points in the third quarter and cut the Liberty lead to 42-39.

The Lions surged to a 59-46 early in the fourth quarter, forcing the pace and some traveling violations.

The Pumas, with a much better perimeter defense and quick-play offense, surged in the fourth quarter and tied the game, 63-63, with 1:28 left on J.J. Howard's layup off

of a steal.

The Lions ran the clock down, but couldn't get great looks. Perry ended up with the last shot in regulation, but Diamond's shot was off the mark.

Liberty finally got the Pumas into serious foul trouble in overtime, with Montague fouling out.

Up 68-65, Liberty's Jacob Hunter missed a 3-pointer that went out of bounds, and out of a timeout, Perry looked to set up a potential game-tying 3-pointer in the final minute.

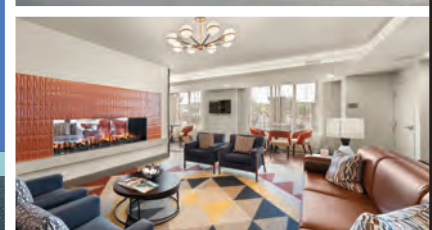
Babic stepped on the sideline after receiving a pass. Harris was then fouled with only 8.7 seconds left, making one of two free throws for the 4-point lead that sealed the loss for the Pumas.

Independent Newsmedia Sports Editor Richard Smith contributed to this story.



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TRANSPORTATION

Compiled by
Jason W. Brooks

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

1 Alma School and Chandler Heights roads, extending east to Sunland Drive and south to Oakwood Hills Drive, will be the site of nighttime closures through Friday, May 1. The estimated 102-day project is for both fiber work and “push / pull” work.

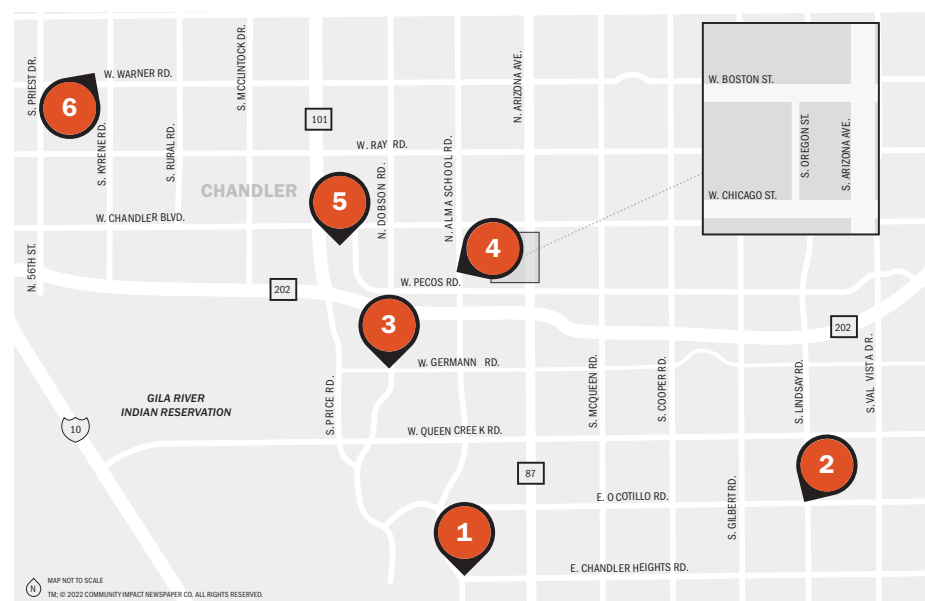
2 Lindsay Road, from Ocotillo to Chandler Heights roads, will be site of major southbound restrictions through Friday, April 17. The estimated 11-day project is for a variety of roadway improvements. Glacier Place, from Old Stone Circle to Lindsay Road, will also be impacted.

3 Germann Road, from Dobson

to Alma School roads, will be the site of minor eastbound and westbound restrictions through Monday, April 29. The estimated 14-day project is for boring and pothole work.

4 Alma School, Frye and Pecos roads is an area near San Marcos Park where weekend restrictions in several directions will be in place through Saturday, April 25. The estimated 33-day operation is for microtrenching, coring, potholing, cutting, conduit, flowfill, fiber-jetting, splicing and restoration. Affected streets will include Fairview and Hartford.

5 Frye Road, from Fairview to Nebraska streets, will be the site of major eastbound restrictions through Friday, May 1. The estimated 39-



day project is for concrete work.

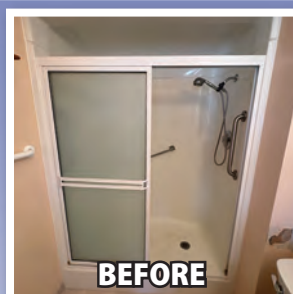
6 Kyrene Road, from Del Rio to Oakland streets, will be the site of

weekend restrictions in both directions through Saturday, April 25. The estimated 33-day project is for boring.

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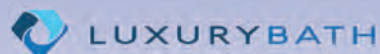


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AFTER

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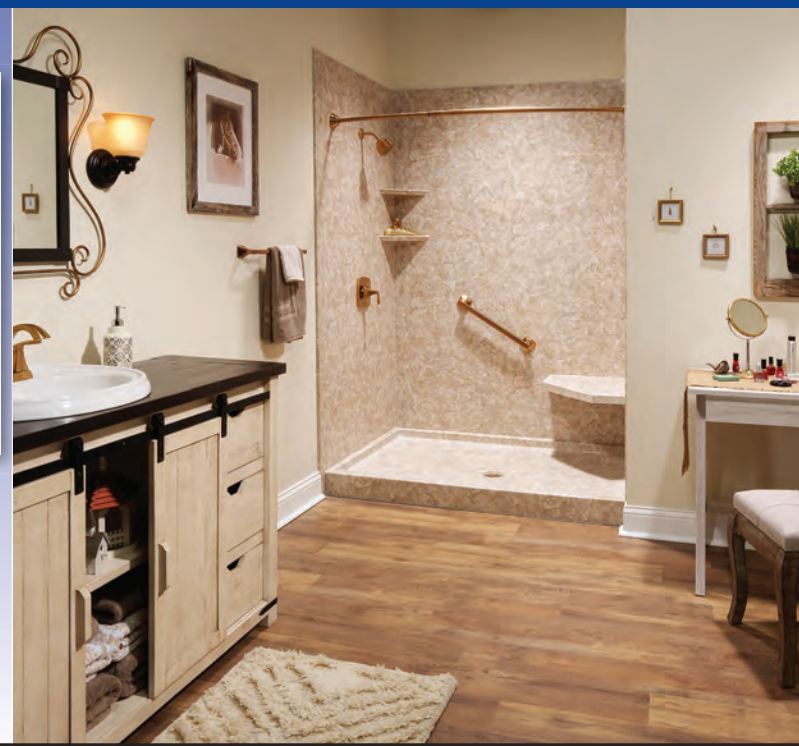
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THINGS TO DO

May 8 charity golf tourney at San Marcos

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Bogeys & Stogies Charity Golf Tournament returns to a downtown Chandler course.

The tourney is set to have a 7:30 a.m. shotgun start when it takes place Friday, May 8, at San Marcos Golf Course, 100 N. Dakota Street in Chandler.

The fundraiser tourney is meant to bring together golfers, local businesses, and community supporters for a day of golf, premium cigars, food and fundraising.

Hosted by Hospitality First Concepts, and sponsored in part by Sysco, the event will benefit Chandler Law Enforcement Charities, supporting programs that assist Chandler police officers and their families.

Check-in starts at 7 a.m. The tournament will feature 18 holes of golf, breakfast, on-course contests, raffle prizes, silent auction experiences, and an awards luncheon. Participants will also enjoy cigar tastings and specialty contest holes throughout the course.

The cost to enter is \$175 for a solo player or \$700 for a four-person scramble team. Solo players, four-somes and sponsorships are available at this link: tinyurl.com/4j2npzn

Registration includes an awards luncheon and cart fees. On-course competition includes a \$10,000 hole-in-one challenge and premium cigar and spirit activations.

Sponsorships are available by contacting Missi at withatwistmh@gmail.com.

Bogeys & Stogies is a community-driven charity golf tournament designed to bring together local businesses, hospitality leaders, and community supporters for a memorable day of golf while raising funds for meaningful causes in the Chandler community.

The Chandler Law Enforcement Association is an officers' union whose stated mission is to promote the positive role of the police profession through education, communication, support and diligent representation.

EDUCATION



MARVELOUS MARGIE

Margie Chamalbide starts to tell a story as Chandler Unified Superintendent Frank Narducci encourages her to hold the microphone still. Chamalbide was recognized during the March 25 CUSD Governing Board meeting for 45 years of service to the district. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

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Monday

BIRRIA COMBO DAY

BIRRIA COMBO #1 (3 BIRRIA
TACOS + CONSOME + DRINK)

\$14
(REG. \$17)

Tuesday

STREET TACO TUESDAY

STREET TACOS
(ANY MEAT. ALL DAY.
EXCLUDES SURF & TURF)

\$2
(EACH)

Wednesday

BURRITO MADNESS

ANY BURRITO
(CHOICE OF MEAT, INCLUDES BIRRIA
OR REGULAR BURRITO. NO DRINK.)

\$10
(EACH)

Thursday

THIRSTY THURSDAY

FOUNTAIN DRINK OR AGUA FRESCA
WITH PURCHASE OF ANY ENTRÉE.

\$1

Friday

FIESTA FRIES

LOADED FRIES
(BIRRIA OR REGULAR MEATS.)

\$10
(REG. \$13)