



Business

Mega-firm brings on PV executive; **4**



CHANDLER
INDEPENDENT



Neighbors

MLB pitcher finishes 2nd career; **12**

June 2026 Volume 4 Issue 11

Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

Chandler school board OKs new behavioral health provider

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A somber August 2023 commemoration acknowledged the opening of a fairly unique facility: a clinic devoted to preventing suicide and resolving mental health crises, on the campus of a public high school.

That was the ribbon-cutting for the Hope Institute, set up in some spare house-like buildings on Chandler Unified District land adjacent to the Perry High School campus in Gilbert. While the institute and its staff, by all accounts, did well in their missions, seeing 500-plus students and probably saving lives over the past two and a half years, that came to an abrupt halt when it closed April 30.

The CUSD Governing Board unanimously approved a five-year lease for a new behavioral health services provider at its May 6 meeting. That lease is with the Cranes for Change Corp.

Kurt Rohrs and other CUSD

• See **Cranes For Change** on page 9



FLOCK OUT?

Council pushes decision on camera contract to July

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A contract extension and consolidation decision on Flock security cameras was pushed back to July 16 by the Chandler City Council during a recent meeting.

Council voted 5-1 to postpone the decision at the end of its 4-hour May 21 regular meeting.

Dozens of Valley residents, mostly from Chandler, spoke out against the Flock company and its program, which has 40 cameras positioned around the city.

Chandler Police want to consolidate a pair of existing contracts and extend them, with a price tag of \$153,000, though an exact time term of the extension wasn't mentioned.

• See **Flock** on page 6

Caden Carlson holds a sign above his head while helping a group chant "Get Flock out" at the end of Chandler City Council's May 21 meeting. He and dozens of others spoke against a \$153,000 extension of a Flock traffic camera system contract. Council decided to postpone its decision to July 16 to get more information. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

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AN UPDATE?**

LOCAL FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED

PAGE 7

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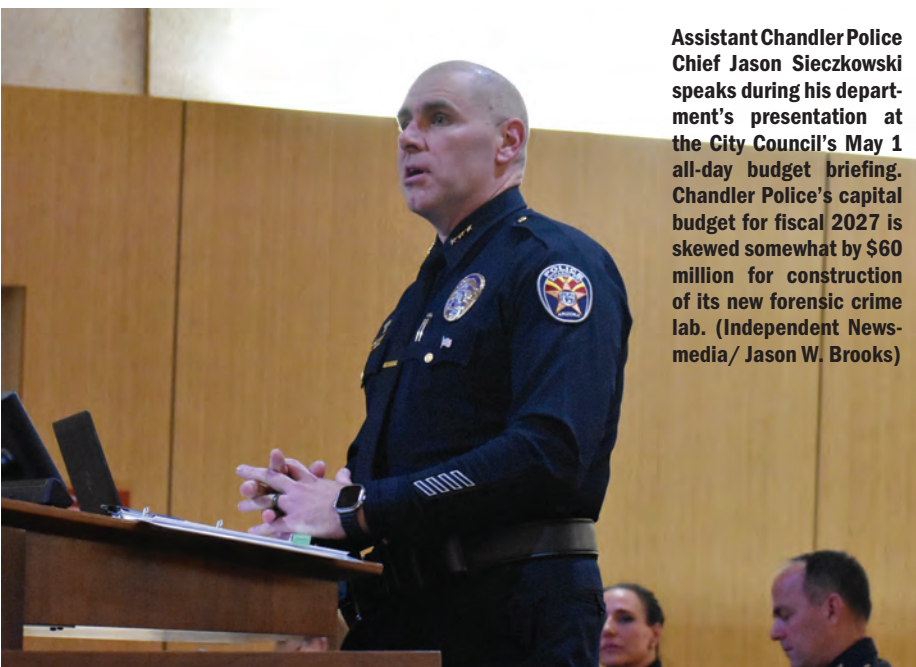


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**SCAN FOR
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Assistant Chandler Police Chief Jason Sieczkowski speaks during his department's presentation at the City Council's May 1 all-day budget briefing. Chandler Police's capital budget for fiscal 2027 is skewed somewhat by \$60 million for construction of its new forensic crime lab. (Independent News-media / Jason W. Brooks)

Chandler Police: \$60M budgeted for forensic lab

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Even without another signature capital project on the horizon, the Chandler Police Department is asking for more money in fiscal 2027, which starts in a few weeks.

The bulk of the construction cost of the city's all-new forensic crime lab hits in the fiscal year ahead, with \$60 million budgeted toward that project in fiscal 2027.

The budget year runs from July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

The department's main operating budget fell slightly last year but is set to rise from \$99 million to about \$103 million this year, reports state.

Department command staff and council announced and celebrated the full staffing of officers at CPD at a January Council meeting.

The department has about 540 total sworn officers and civilian staff combined, reports state.

Capital expenses next year also

Chandler Police Budget Changes POLICE OPERATING AND CAPITAL PROJECTS

Fiscal 2026 (began July 1, 2025):

- Operating budget: \$99 million
- Capital highlights: \$8.3 million toward forensic lab construction

Fiscal 2027 (begins July 1, 2026):

- Operating budget: \$103 million
- Capital highlights: \$60 million toward forensic lab construction; \$1.5 million in planning main station renovations; \$487K drone program

Source: City of Chandler

\$1.5 million in the budget to study renovations to the main downtown police station.

• See **Police** on page 11

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INDEPENDENT NEWS MEDIA

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Compass International Holdings Names Greg Hague Director of Home Sale Strategy

Founder of 72SOLD will provide voluntary, no-cost strategy training to more than 300,000 agents across the company's portfolio of brands

New York, NY – April 23, 2026 – Compass International Holdings, a global real estate services company, announced that Greg Hague, founder of 72SOLD and one of the most credentialed and experienced home sale strategists, has been appointed Director of Home Sale Strategy. Hague brings more than 50 years of experience to the role, with a career spanning brokerage, law, and real estate innovation. His work is grounded in the idea that the market is not a fixed constraint but a dynamic environment in which skilled real estate professionals can influence outcomes through strategy, positioning, and execution.

“My passion has always been helping real estate professionals unlock what’s possible for the clients they serve,” said Hague. “It’s about mastering how to position, market, show, and negotiate homes in ways that drive better results. When agents have access to the right strategies and the freedom to use them, the impact for sellers can be significant. I’m excited to share that with agents across this incredible network.”

Hague’s approach is designed to complement the company’s listing marketing strategies, giving agents additional tools around home positioning, buyer demand creation, showing strategy, and negotiation. Agents can adopt and adapt these strategies as they see fit, with the goal of delivering stronger outcomes for sellers.

“Greg and I share a belief that the future of this industry is one where agents are empowered to lead, and sellers have more choice in how their homes are marketed and sold,” said Robert Reffkin, Chairman and CEO of Compass International Holdings. “The best outcomes happen when the professional closest to the client has the flexibility and tools to act in their client’s best interest. Greg has spent his career building strategies that do exactly that, and we’re excited to make that expertise available to every agent across our network.”

Hague’s training will be available to all agents across Compass International Holdings’ brands at no cost, with participation entirely optional. Agents maintain full discretion over how and whether to incorporate these strategies into their business.

About 72SOLD

Founded in Scottsdale, Arizona, 72SOLD is a home-selling strategy consulting and training company operating across major U.S. markets. Inc. 5000 ranked it #211 among America’s top 250 fastest-growing private companies and the number one fastest-growing real estate company in the Southwest. The company has been recognized as one of the Most Admired Companies in Arizona. Seven independent studies over five years have documented higher seller net proceeds from agents trained on 72SOLD’s methods. Learn more at 72SOLD.com.

About Greg Hague

Greg Hague is one of the most credentialed and experienced home sale strategists in the country. A licensed real estate attorney who earned the top score on the Arizona bar exam,



Greg Hague

he is a 50-year real estate professional who made a deliberate choice early in his career: that the real estate business needed better thinking more than it needed another lawyer.

He began selling homes in the 1970s at his father’s Cincinnati real estate firm and never looked back. Over the decades that followed, he has personally listed and sold thousands of homes, and has trained agents across the country who have collectively effected the sale of tens of thousands more. Realtor Magazine ranked him among the Top 20 home-selling agents in the United States.

Hague founded 72SOLD, a home sale strategy consulting and training company that Inc. 5000 ranked #211 among America’s top 250 fastest-growing privately held firms and the number one fastest-growing real estate company in the Southwest. 72SOLD has been recognized as one of the Most Admired Companies in Arizona.

Seven independent studies over five years have documented higher net proceeds for sellers represented by agents trained on Hague’s methods. The most recent, a 2025 study of

11,618 Phoenix Metro MLS transactions, showed a 5.8% higher median sale price compared to other homes sold in the same market.

Hague has built a fully integrated infrastructure supporting agent training and seller results, including a proprietary CRM, an in-house advertising agency, a buyer lead generation platform, an appointment-setting center, and an AI partnership with PolyAI.

About Compass International Holdings

Compass, Inc. (“Compass International Holdings”, “CIH” or the “Company”) (NYSE: COMP) is a global real estate services company with a presence in every major U.S. city and approximately 120 countries and territories. Compass International Holdings serves millions of buyers and sellers through a portfolio of some of the most recognized and iconic brands: @properties, Better Homes and Gardens® Real Estate, CENTURY 21®, Christie’s International Real Estate, Coldwell Banker®, Compass, Corcoran®, ERA®, and Sotheby’s International Realty®. Every day, we empower a global network of 300,000 real estate professionals and affiliate broker-owners to grow their businesses and deliver exceptional service to consumers.

The Company empowers real estate professionals to streamline operations and seamlessly guide clients through every phase of residential and commercial transactions, leveraging powerful tools, including its modern technology platform. Compass International Holdings brings together integrated services, including brokerage, franchise, mortgage, title, insurance, escrow, and relocation.

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FROM THE COVER

Flock

• From page 1

Jason Bondelli of Chandler said he avoids certain parts of the city on purpose, such as near the Chandler Fashion Center, so as not to feed the cameras images of himself and his vehicle more than absolutely necessary.

"This system is one step removed from having a government-installed GPS tracker on your vehicle," Bondelli said. "No one is asking for this. This will only drive a wedge between the people in power and the rest of us."

One of the largest crowds at a council meeting was there partly because a citizens' rights group and others drew attention to it and also due to questions raised by Councilmember O.D. Harris during a May 18 study session. He was the lone "no" vote May 21 on postponing the vote on the extension, saying he was hoping to make a decision to at least suspend the program.

Audience members loudly applauded, interrupted council members and Chandler Police Chief Bryan Chapman, who took questions from council. He and Katie Dauphinais, Flock Safety's Arizona public affairs manager, and Michelle Denton, the Chandler Police Department's communications technology manager, also presented on concerns council voiced when all three had presented during the May 18 study session.

The city would use Flock's city of Tempe contract, which technically expires at the end of September 2027. Tempe officials have also moved to at least partially disengage with Flock.

Public safety agencies across the nation are increasingly turning to high-tech security solutions, particularly automated license plate reader technology, to help with solving and preventing crime, a staff report states.

Chapman sought to clarify several things, including the two detectives who are part of U.S. Marshals task force. He



Hamilton High School language arts teacher Michael Oei speaks at a Party for Socialism and Liberation-Arizona news conference just before a Chandler City Council study session in May. After a lengthy meeting, Council decided to wait and vote on a \$153,000 extension of a Flock traffic camera system contract at its July 16 regular meeting. (Independent Newsmedia file/Jason W. Brooks)

said if ICE or any federal agency wants data from Flock cameras — data that's owned by the city of Chandler — they need to have a warrant signed by a judge and have specific cases, vehicles or people they're investigating.

"We have an arrangement in which the marshals are looking for specific violent felons," Chapman said. "And anyone misusing our proprietary and confidential information will be terminated."

That wasn't reassurance enough for Harris or for Councilmember Matt Orlando, who was concerned about data sharing. Dauphinais acknowledged even though there's an automatic "hard delete" of data after 30 days, the fact it's stored on Amazon Web Services servers off-site drew skeptical jeers from the crowd.

"I trust our police officers and audit processes to do the right things," Orlando said, but also, looking at Dauphinais, said, "I don't know if you can really audit your own data, though."

Chandler City Manager John Pombier said the Tempe contract calls for quarterly reviews of camera data usage.

Before the May 18 study session, a group calling itself the Party for Socialism & Liberation held a news conference in the City Hall courtyard where group organizers blasted the reputation of Flock and its use of data. Members urged council to vote against the extension and some spoke at the May 21 meeting.

In March 2024, the Chandler Police Department installed 14 fixed-camera devices to pilot the technology. In May 2025, council approved the purchase of 26 additional devices and ongoing standard support for a total of 40 devices.

These cameras use advanced computer technology to capture and compare digital images of license plates, a staff report states.

Chapman and Denton each mentioned statistics about how the cameras have been used to directly enhance public safety.

Denton said the Flock system was chosen using an extensive, competitive bid system by Chandler Police.

At one point in the three-plus-hour discussion, Harris called for the immediate deactivation of all 40 Flock cameras "until some guardrails can be put in place."

Harris then moved to table the vote on the contract to hold an executive session with Chapman in the near future. Not only was his motion not seconded, it sparked a shouting match involving Harris and Councilmember Christine Ellis that was only resolved after Mayor Kevin Hartke called for what ended up being a 10-minute recess.

Hartke struggled the most with outbursts and profanity as much as probably any meeting in his nearly eight years as mayor.

Early in the presentation, he informed attendees with anti-Flock handheld signs they must lower them for the meeting to continue. That was met with obscene gestures, laughter and verbal objections, with Hartke eventually choosing to ignore the signs.

• See **Flock** on page 9

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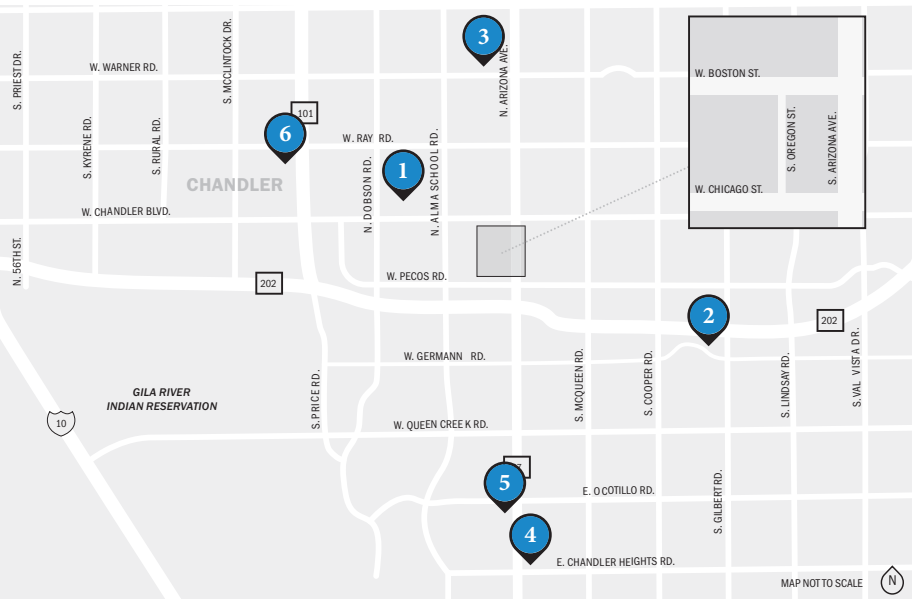


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BUSINESS MOVES



Compiled by Jason Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

NOW OPEN

1 Wok With Ming has relocated from Gilbert to the 99 Ranch shopping center at Chandler Boulevard Dobson road in west-central Chandler. The full-service hot Chinese eatery has 21 different chicken entrees alone, along with 15 shrimp dishes. These are part of a total of 33 lunch specials served from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. The eatery is on the west end of the 99 Ranch main building, on the Dobson side. The hours are Thursdays through Tuesdays, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., closed Wednesdays. Learn more at wokwithmingchandler.com.

2 Ted's Hot Dogs held a grand-opening weekend event in late May for its second Arizona location, in the Chandler Airport area, located at 2700 E. Germann Road. The New York-based chain serves hot dogs, burgers and sides and deserts. Even though the Tempe location is longstanding, the company has reportedly been trying to expand into Chandler for years. Learn more at tedshotdogs.com.

3 Tikka Drive opened in April in

a shopping center on the northwest corner of Arizona Avenue and Warner Road that it shares with ATL Wings and a smoke shop, in north Chandler, in a former Yoliberto's location. Billing itself as the first hot, handmade Indian food drive-thru in Arizona, Tikka Drive offers Punjabi recipes from five clay tandoor ovens and doesn't use freezers or microwave ovens. All its meat is certified halal, the restaurant states Tikka consists of boneless pieces of meat or vegetarian alternatives, such as paneer, that are marinated in spices and yogurt and then strung through a skewer to be cooked. The hours are seven days, 10:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Learn more at tikkadrive.com.

4 Tandoori Pizza, a California-based chain that specializes in Indian fusion pies, topped frequently with chicken or vegetables and often involving curries and paneer, opened a south Chandler location May 15. The marinades are made in-house and ingredients are billed as premium. A few American traditional specialties accompany the Desi-style pizza and sides for what is the chain's first Arizona location. It's in Chandler Crossings on the northeast corner of Arizona Avenue and Chandler Heights Road in south Chandler. It's open for lunch and dinner, seven days per week. Go to the

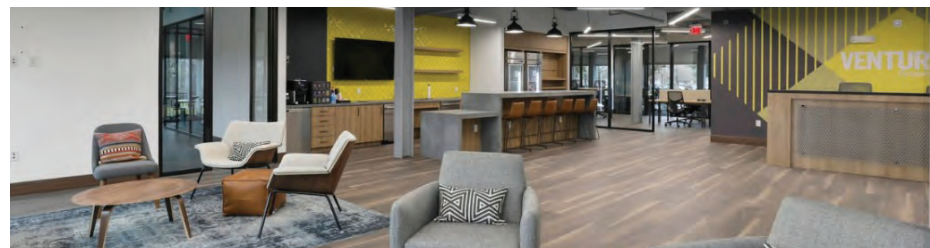


WOK WITH MING

Instagram page [@tandooripizzaca](https://www.instagram.com/tandooripizzaca) or tandooripizza.com to learn more.

5 Original Pancake House has opened in the former home of Egg N' Joe in Fulton Ranch Towne Center, on the southwest corner of Arizona Avenue and Ocotillo Road, next to CAVA Mediterranean. The second Valley location — the Scottsdale restaurant opened almost 40 years ago — for the Portland, Ore.-founded chain hangs its hat on fresh ingredients, like real butter, pure whipping cream and grade AA eggs. There are ethnic pancake recipes in addition to crepes, waffles, corned beef hash, eggs made many ways, bacon and sausage and sandwiches that combine these items. The Chandler location, found online at ophchandler.com, is open 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. most days, but is closed on Tuesdays this June.

6 Venture X held a May 14 ribbon-cutting event at its 3075 W. Ray Road, Suite 200 facility in west Chandler. The dedicated-space and co-working space includes flexible coworking and private offices, meeting rooms, furniture rentals and virtual office services, some that rent by the day. Learn more at venturex.com.



VENTURE X



TED'S HOT DOGS



TIKKA DRIVE



TANDOORI PIZZA



ORIGINAL PANCAKE HOUSE

FROM THE COVER

Cranes For Change

• From page 1

board members asked Natasha Davis, the district's counseling director, and Cranes for Change director Kelsey Phillips questions about how some 60 students will transition from Hope Institute services to the current provider.

"The Hope Institute did take in clients from all over the state, with full priority for CUSD students," Davis explained. "And that will be the same with Cranes for Change. We've done all we can to provide a very warm handoff to them and are confident that between Cranes and other services like Mind 24-7, we'll have crisis care in May, which is a very stressful time of year for many students."

Board Vice President Barb Mozden grilled Phillips on whether Cranes clinicians are trained not only to assess a student's risk for harm on-site, but also work with students who have been recently hospitalized as the result of a crisis.



Chandler Unified District Director of Counseling Natasha Davis speaks at a CUSD Governing Board meeting earlier this year. The board unanimously approved a lease May 6 with a new local agency that will take over both the facilities and the mental health crisis services provided by the recently closed Hope Institute. (Independent Newsmedia file/Jason W. Brooks)

"We've had students who were discharged from acute care and still went on to die by suicide," Mozden lamented.

Phillips explained all her clinicians are trained in assessing risk for harm to oneself or others in all interactions.

And when it comes to post-acute follow-up care, she said, Cranes has staff who specialize in therapy with a broad range of specialties.

"When a parent or someone tells us a young person is coming out of acute care to us, that gives us the chance to set them up with the best fit with, say, someone who specializes in obsessive compulsive disorder treatment," Phillips explained.

Cranes for Change states, on its website, cranesforchange.org, that the new site in the building at Perry High will be called The Next Steps Center.

Unlike the arrangement with The Hope Institute, in which no students were billed and the school district heavily subsidized the services, Cranes for Change is paying CUSD to lease space. It states on its site that it "accepts all major insurances including AHCCCS plans."

The building is isolated against Queen Creek Road, near Perry High School's swimming pool, away from most of the campus. It was remodeled in 2023 for The Hope Institute to use,

primarily for crisis mental health services.

In an April 29 letter posted to the CUSD's website, Derek Lee, founder and CEO of the Institute, announced The Hope Institute's CUSD clinic would be closing the following day, citing "a number of factors, primarily related to financial feasibility."

Cranes for Change states it's a non-profit organization that provides behavioral health services, including comprehensive clinical assessments, risk evaluations, as well as therapeutic individual and group counseling sessions.

The lease runs from May 7 of this year through June 30, 2031, for \$1,500 per month, with Cranes for Change having the option of a two-year extension.

Superintendent Frank Narducci pointed out Phillips is a Chandler High School alumna.

The board is set to meet on Wednesday, June 10.

Watch the discussion and vote on the lease by clicking here: youtu.be/ws4OIsmaSqQ?t=16406

Flock

• From page 6

The live and recorded feed of the meeting used far fewer shots of the speaker podium than usual, instead showing a wide angle that didn't give

signholders as much camera time.

Chapman, having heard several speakers accuse his department of aiming cameras at Hispanic neighborhoods and setting up a camera pointed directly onto the Galveston Elementary School campus, acknowledged that was a Flock camera

directed to be focused on the campus by now-former City Manager Josh Wright in 2023.

Chapman said that camera was being removed from the Galveston area as the meeting was occurring.

Council then calmly voted for the delay. It wasn't immediately clear if

any Flock cameras in the city will be removed or deactivated before the July 16 meeting.

Read this full story online at ti.nyurl.com/yfbs9her

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David McCasland
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OPINION

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Corrections

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.

Reining in Big Pharma is a winner for midterms

Affordability is on the ballot this year.

The cost of housing, gasoline and groceries is up, leaving Arizona families struggling to keep pace. Now, three out of four Americans also cite rising healthcare costs as one of the nation's biggest problems, one driven in large part by high prescription-drug prices.

Prescription drugs are already three times more expensive for Americans than the rest of the developed world, and up more than 40% over the past decade alone. Given this, is it any surprise that 94% of U.S. voters blame Big Pharma for these skyrocketing drug costs?

In fact, a new survey by the Pharmaceutical Reform Alliance found that voters support both policies and candidates that take on high drug prices.

Among Arizonans, the poll found nearly 9 in 10 voters support drug-pricing reform, and more than 75% believe President Trump's "Most Favored Nation" executive order should be codified into law. That policy would ensure that drugmakers bring U.S. prescription-drug prices in line with the lowest prices paid in comparable countries.

Of note for political candidates, 77% of voters said they would be more likely to support a candidate who fights drug manufacturers as a campaign issue. It's no wonder there's such striking voter consensus on this. During the first quarter of 2026 alone, a handful of drugmakers made tens of billions of dollars in revenue.

The bottom line: Big Pharma executives are getting rich and raising prices while Americans with serious health conditions struggle to afford

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life-saving medications. It's high time Congress took action.

Policymakers can deliver real, popular wins by providing real economic relief to the American people by writing the Trump administration's order into law.

Reining in Big Pharma is more than just good policy – it's good politics, too.

J.D. Hayworth
Scottsdale

J.D. Hayworth is a Republican, former six-term U.S. Congressman from Arizona, and spokesman for pharmaceutical reform.

Lamb would 'fit in' with worst of Congress

Mark Lamb is running for Congress. He's a true financial genius!

Mark owns a house in Queen Creek and just bought a 140-acre ranch in Tennessee; never mind all of the sexual harassment/assault complaints against him, he's a good Mormon and tithes 10% to the church.

All of those expenses are a pretty heavy lift on a retired sheriff's income.

Ya, he's gonna fit in just fine in the cesspool of Congress.

Larry Reister
Chandler

No transparency, coordination on Bologna Elementary traffic plan

Your May 21 story (Chandler

• See **Opinion** on page 11

Here are some recent online comments about Chandler Independent items:

"See where the lowest gas prices are in Chandler this week":

"I think my tank must've grown, my car now holds \$100 worth of gas."

— **Bruno C.**

"Yours (and everyone's) biweekly reminder that elections have consequences. If you don't like how everything is more expensive now, make sure to voice that with your vote."

— **Andrew M.**

"New Chandler eatery's claim: First Indian drive-thru in state":

"Looking forward to it"

— **Rosie P.**

"Ted's Hot Dogs plans Chandler grand opening":

"Excited for the opening."

— **Karen S.**

"Kyrene approves 4% raise for teachers, lower hike for other staff":

"Mo money...Mo money...."

— **Kurb S.**

"Four Junior Achievement state winners from Chandler":

"Love the spirit of young entrepreneurs changing how we live here in Chandler. Congratulations to all Junior Achievers out there!"

— **Troy C.**

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.

Police

• From page 3

“We don’t want to come back and tell you things are at capacity,” City Manager John Pombier said during the May 1 budget briefing about the expensive study. “We want a station that’s going to work for this chief and the chief after him and maybe the chief after that.”

Chief Bryan Chapman said he and Pombier are having “robust conversations” about what the renovation will entail.

Chapman also spoke about nearly \$500,000 he wants in order to expand the department’s drone program.

He said while there are no plans to do much with drones south of Loop 202, where Chandler Municipal Airport is a proximity concern, drones will be more widely used in the downtown and Desert Breeze western areas of the city.

Inflation affects every Chandler department, with CPD trying to mitigate some of that by ordering needed equipment and supplies early and locking in prices, along with asking Council for the money to account for increases.

One example of this is a \$150,000 one-time authorization only for increases in ammunition costs.

There are also needs to spend almost \$500,000 on new CPD radio communication equipment and another \$335,000 on the third phase of building out the Real-Time Operations Center, according to staff reports.

Not mentioned in the May 1 budget briefing was the proposed \$153,000 extension to the department’s license plate reader camera contract with Flock Safety. The small-budget item was moved to a July meeting for action after dozens of Valley residents protested the city’s partnering with Flock at the May 21 Council meeting.

of Chandler and the public.

This news story exemplifies the issue. Traffic backup onto Val Vista Drive due to Weinberg Gifted Academy has been a problem for quite some time. Forward planning doesn’t happen, only a reaction to a predictable issue.

The Rudy Bologna traffic issue is another prime example. The traffic change occurred with no transparency. Elgin Street residents were not made aware of the change.

I have requested public records and documents from both the city and CUSD for school traffic change at Rudy Bologna, and, to date, have received pushback on the information request.

Patrick Tully
Chandler

OPINION

Opinion

• From page 10

board OKs school traffic-flow work for nearly \$2M) was an interesting article and of particular interest to me due to ongoing school traffic-safety concerns in my residential area.

If you drill deeper on the subject, there are several school traffic concerns across Chandler Unified School District and/or private schools.

For example, Rudy Bologna Elementary School has revised a parent drop-off/pick-up traffic plan to now direct traffic — 40,000 cars per year — onto a residential street, East Elgin Street.

I have researched the CUSD traffic plan-approval process and learned that there is very little coordination or transparency among CUSD and city

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.



Now that you’ve read the checklist, take the Civility Pledge at yourvalley.net/civility-pledge.

Chandler firefighter, former MLB player, retires — again

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The metaphors of baseball relief pitchers putting out fires will only be memories now.

Blas Minor, the Major League relief pitcher turned firefighter, retired this spring after 25 years of protecting life and property with the Chandler Fire Department.

When Mayor Kevin Hartke, Council member Jane Poston and the rest of the City Council acknowledged his retirement in late April, Minor said he became a firefighter because he lived in the city and wanted to stay.

“We feel like we can save everyone,” Minor said of being a first responder. “We always want to help, any way we can.”

After deciding to complete firefighter training, Minor’s career involved many roles with Chandler Fire, including some that involved community outreach. One of his more recent roles was as CFD’s main public information officer.

Photos and videos of Minor on social media show him doing everything from fire drills at senior facilities to documenting toy or supply drives to recognizing volunteers.

- See **Retired** on page 14



Blas Minor speaks at a Chandler City Council study session in April as his retirement from the Chandler Fire Department was acknowledged. Minor’s Major League Baseball career was followed by 25 years as a Chandler firefighter. On the left is Council member Jane Poston. On the right is Mayor Kevin Hartke. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

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July 10 – Deadline to request a mailed ballot
June 24 – Early voting begins July 21 – Election Day

Electrical firm takes over vacant Price-corridor building

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Rosendin, a national employee-owned electrical contractor, has announced the purchase of Allred Park Place Building 4 in Chandler, in a business park near Spectrum Boulevard and Willis Road, in the Price technology corridor.

The building will serve as the company's new Mountain West regional headquarters, a release states.

The new campus will unite Rosendin's regional operations teams with its growing workforce and corporate teams, including Engineering, Technology, Analytics, BIM, and Innovation.

The 100,622-square-foot, two-story building will support long-term opportunities for Phoenix metro employees in one of the nation's fastest-growing construction markets.

The remodeled facility will house



Rosendin, a national employee-owned electrical contractor, has announced the purchase of Allred Park Place Building 4 in Chandler, in a business park near Spectrum Boulevard and Willis Road, in the Price technology corridor. (Courtesy of Rosendin Electric, Inc.)

regional leadership, operations staff, engineering teams, corporate support functions, and technology teams under one roof.

Plans for the new campus also include a training center and dedicated collaboration space for innovation teams focused on developing emerg-

ing solutions to construction challenges.

Rosendin has partnered with Arc Tec to lead both the Chandler remodel and the company's corporate headquarters renovation in San Jose, Calif., creating a consistent approach to design and execution across both investments.

Rosendin has been a part of Arizona's construction industry for more than 25 years, delivering electrical infrastructure for some of the region's most complex projects, including large-scale semiconductor manufacturing facilities and hyperscale data center campuses for global tech giants.

The company has expanded rapidly in recent years through its continued investment in technology, workforce development, and advanced project delivery capabilities.



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INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

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Mesa • November 13, 2026 • Mesa Marketplace Swap Meet

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Retired

• From page 12

He offered to take a pie in the face for the Chandler Care Center during COVID-19 fundraising. On the more serious side, water safety is a huge part of Chandler Fire's outreach, with Minor often part of campaigns.

Minor said he plans to take the next 12 months off and volunteer with the Hamilton High School baseball program. He has volunteered with HHS, off and on, for the past 14 years.

He said all three of his children have plans to get married within the next 11 months, so that will keep him busy, too.

The native of Merced, Calif., first came to the area to attend Arizona State University on a baseball scholarship. A lanky standout pitcher, he made it to the Major Leagues, coming up with the Pittsburgh Pirates and playing part or all of six seasons in the 1990s with the Pirates, the New

York Mets, Milwaukee Brewers and the Houston Astros.

But the relief he was able to provide as a first responder seemed to be even more fulfilling than striking out some of the National League's toughest hitters.

"Serving my community, helping people during their most difficult times of their lives, and building relationships within the department and around the city have been the most rewarding aspects," he said.

In 157 Major League appearances as a pitcher, all in relief, he averaged 7.36 strikeouts per 9 innings of the 225 total innings he pitched, according to fangraphs.com.

"Playing baseball, I bounced from team to team," Minor said. "Friendships were formed but hard to maintain. Working for Chandler Fire, I have been able to build and maintain friendships for the past 25 years."

Family ties meant once professional baseball was over for Minor, Chan-

dlar would be his destination.

"Chandler has always been our home base," Minor said of his family. "I didn't start coaching at Hamilton until 2009 when my son decided baseball wasn't for him."

Minor said the mental and physical conditioning and in-game focus needed to get batters out is largely different from the dangerous, arduous situations faced by a firefighter.

"Both were challenging, mentally and physically," Minor said. "Of course, the difference was firefighting could be deadly. The approach to both professions is similar, you train and get quality reps over and over."

Minor said he embraces the saying "amateurs practice until they get it right, but professionals practice until they can't get it wrong."

Minor said one aspect pitching and firefighting have in common is preparedness and the value of lots of experience.

"Bottom of the ninth, bases loaded,

3-2 count on Barry Larkin. No problem, I have prepared myself for this situation," Minor said. "2:30 a.m., alarm sounds for a reported working house fire. No problem, I have trained to risk a lot, within a structured plan, to save savable lives."

Minor said one element first responders learn to look at is risk based on what or whom can be saved.

"I will risk a little, within a structured plan, to save savable property," Minor said. "I will not risk anything, for that which is already lost."

Minor responded lightheartedly when asked if any of the rap tracks he recorded are still available to be heard by the public.

"I have no musical talent, but one of our battalion chiefs has put out some stuff," he said.

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

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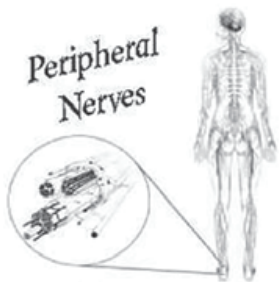
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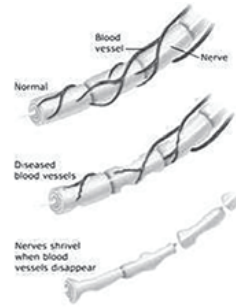
PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AND CHRONIC PAIN WARNING!

Mesa, AZ — The most common method your doctor will recommend to treat your chronic pain and/or neuropathy is with prescription drugs that may temporarily reduce your symptoms. These drugs have names such as Gabapentin, Lyrica, Cymbalta, and Neurontin, and are primarily antidepressant or anti-seizure drugs. These drugs may cause you to feel uncomfortable and have a variety of harmful side effects.

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) In order to effectively treat your neuropathy three factors must be determined.

- 1) What is the underlying cause?
- 2) How much nerve damage has been sustained?

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

- 3) How much treatment will your condition require?

The treatment that is provided at Aspen Medical has three main goals.

- 1) Increase blood flow

- 2) Stimulate and increase small fiber nerves

- 3) Decrease brain-based pain

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THE GREAT NEWS IS THAT NEUROMODULATION IS COVERED BY MOST INSURANCE! (Medicare restrictions apply) Depending on your coverage, your treatment could be little to no cost to you!

The amount of treatment needed to allow the nerves to fully recover varies from person to person and can only be determined after a detailed neurological and vascular evaluation. As long as you have not sustained at least 95% nerve damage there is hope!

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 July 31, 2026. Call 480-796-1136 to make an appointment to determine if your chronic pain and peripheral neuropathy can be successfully treated.

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Candidate Q&A: Chandler City Council hopefuls

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

All six candidates on the ballot for the July 21 Chandler City Council replied to five questions from Independent Newsmedia.

Incumbents Angel Encinas and Jane Poston are running for what would be second and final consecutive terms on Council, having both been elected for the first time in 2022.

Challengers Lisa Askey, Joe Granado Jr., Ron Hardin and Cicely Rocha-Miller are competing alongside Encinas and Poston for three positions on the all-at-large Council this year. Here are the questions and responses. The responses are listed in alphabetical order by last name of each candidate.

1) Which aspect of your record or experience is the best example

of why voters should choose you as a candidate?

2) Heading into 2027, is there an example of a new initiative or tactic the city could still employ to get more people housed?

3)) What's an element of spending where the city could cut back in order to free up more general funds for these projects?

4) What do you think about a more regular analysis that could lead to smaller increases on both of these fronts more often?

5) Which types of Council subcommittees or state- or national-level committees would you most want to serve on in 2027 and going forward?

Lisa Askey:

1) I've spent my career working with businesses and organizations

to solve problems and make things actually work, not just look good on paper. That means balancing priorities, managing budgets, and making decisions that hold up in the real world.



Lisa Askey

2) We need to focus on attainable housing that fits Chandler. We've never been a one-size-fits-all city, so no reason to start now. I would encourage smart redevelopment and mixed-use in the right areas, and remove unnecessary delays when projects meet our standards.

3) Before we ask residents to pay more, we should take a hard look at non-essential spending. The priority should always be public safety, in-

frastructure, and water. Everything else needs to be evaluated with the same level of discipline families use at home.

4) No one likes big, sudden increases and predictability matters. A more consistent review process can help with that, but the focus should also be on growing revenue through strong business development so we're not relying on residents to make up the difference. Any increases should be minimal, justified, and clearly explained.

5) I'd like to focus on economic development, as well as general administration, human resources, and elections. I also think that the infrastructure and public works committees would be very beneficial for me as a council member as well.

• See **Council Q&A** on page 20

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HERO AT THE HELM

Local industry leader explains how hormones hold the key to vitality



Aging doesn't have to mean slowing down, and CarolAnn Tuter is proof that hormonal balance is the ultimate comeback strategy.

CarolAnn is the first female medical entrepreneur to bring bioidentical hormone pellet therapy to the forefront. As the CEO and co-founder of Tuter Medical® and SottoPelle® with her late husband Dr. Gino Tuter, MD, FACOG, she has dedicated over 30 years to positioning the company as the industry leader.

Using a multi-patented, individualized dosing method developed by Dr. Tuter, they helped thousands of patients regain their health and vitality. As tireless advocates for wellness and longevity, they set the gold standard for bioidentical hormone therapy (BHRT) pellet practices across America.

Now, menopause is finally having its moment

after decades of misconception, while testosterone replacement therapy (TRT) continues gaining traction in men's health.

"We are the industry pioneer in BHRT pellet therapy and the reason it is practiced today," she says. "Our mission is to support people's physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being."

Armed with an unwavering vision and a relentless commitment to their patients, CarolAnn has helped to shape the hormone industry and change lives.

PATIENT-CENTERED CARE

With offices in Scottsdale and several Arizona locations, Tuter Medical® provides personalized hormone replacement therapy (HRT) to help men and women manage their hormonal imbalances. SottoPelle® is an international training

and education company that teaches medical providers how to use BHRT.

"Our providers undergo rigorous training to create a custom-tailored approach for each individual," CarolAnn says. "We always put our patients first."

That explains why Tuter Medical® has been named the "Number One Hormone Therapy Practice in Arizona" for 11 consecutive years by Ranking Arizona.

CarolAnn has been a core entrepreneurial force who redefined the rules of aging by bringing bioidentical hormone therapy into the mainstream spotlight.

"Our goal is to prevent serious illnesses and help people age gracefully, in addition to treating menopause and andropause."

BALANCING ACT

Feeling frazzled, forgetful, fuzzy and fatigued? Constantly grumpy or down in the dumps? It could be due to sex hormone imbalances. But what do sex hormones have to do with health?

"Everything," CarolAnn declares, explaining that the sex hormones aren't just for reproduction. "They regulate every function of the body and brain and determine the health of the entire body."

Dr. Tuter discovered that by age 45, most men have lost over half of their testosterone while women have lost most of their estrogen, testosterone and nearly all their progesterone.

A 2023 study found that as hormone levels decline, people face a higher risk of heart disease — the leading cause of death for both women and men in the U.S. — along with increased rates of autoimmune and cognitive disorders.

CarolAnn explains that HRT offers protective benefits to help insulate the body against cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer's and neurodegenerative conditions, with a notable slowdown in biological aging markers. Started within a decade of perimenopause, HRT is linked to a 25% to 50% reduction in fatal cardiovascular events and cognitive decline.

PELLET THERAPY

The SottoPelle Method® uses plant-based bioidentical hormone pellets that match the molecular structure of human hormones. Gently slipped under the skin, pellets provide 24/7 delivery for optimal effectiveness and typically last four to six months.

"We have always emphasized a custom-tailored approach based on a patient's individual needs, instead of a one-size-fits-all method," CarolAnn says. "We treat the whole person, not just the ailment. Patients feel that the moment they walk in the door."

HELPING MEN GET THEIR MOJO BACK

Testosterone is central to a man's well-being, but levels drop quickly over age 45. HRT can help offset the fatigue, low energy, malaise, and loss of muscle mass.

Testosterone acts like a "first responder" and Navy SEAL for men's health. Tuter Medical® offers a special program to help men boost their vitality with optional testosterone injections formulated by a compounding pharmacy, in addition to BHRT pellets.

CarolAnn notes that the company began using TRT successfully over 12 years ago to treat NFL football players with concussions and military veterans with PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Tuter Medical® now accepts insurance from select plans for pellet therapy and TRT injections. A simple blood test and consultation with a certified trained provider can put a man on the road to recovery.

BREAKTHROUGHS

Some patients hesitate to consider HRT, often due to misconceptions over cardiovascular risks.

A 2024 study linked low testosterone to increased rates of stroke and a 60% higher risk of cardiovascular mortality. Another recent study suggested that "250,000 women's lives could have been saved" with greater access to estrogen and progesterone therapy.

"It is my hope that the medical profession will recognize the importance of hormones in overall health and mental function as well as disease prevention and support their patients who choose HRT as part of their wellness regimen," CarolAnn says.

The Tuter Medical® legacy reflects CarolAnn's passionate commitment to advancing more effective methods of hormonal health, helping men and women across the globe age gracefully.

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Fluctuating levels of estrogen and testosterone decrease bone strength and increase the chance of fractures. Women who undergo premature surgical menopause also remain at greater risk of developing osteoporosis, making it critical to check their hormone levels. Pellet therapy has a 4x greater increase in bone density than oral estrogen and 2.5x greater increase than patch delivery methods.

Improves sexual function

Estrogen deficiency can result in vaginal pain and dryness, uncomfortable sex, and even urinary incontinence in women. Low testosterone in men can lead to sexual performance problems including erectile dysfunction or "ED". BHRT pellets help to restore youthful hormone levels to alleviate these problems and improve sexual function and enjoyment in both women and men.

Protects against disease

Hormone decline is associated with many life-threatening illnesses including heart disease, diabetes, and more. Maintaining proper hormone levels with BHRT Pellets can help prevent disease and maintain youthful vitality, health and energy.

Wondering if you may have a hormonal imbalance?

Visit our website or scan the QR code to take the free self-evaluation quiz.

www.tuteramedical.com



Council Q&A

• From page 16

Angel Encinas:



Angel Encinas

decisions and deliver results that reflect what Chandler communities want and need.

2) In 2027, I'd like to focus on expanding our missing middle housing and streamlining infill and redevelopment to increase supply. These steps will add attainable options, use land efficiently, and ensure Chandler residents have options.

3) As we plan for significant public works investments, we can focus on securing the most competitive bids and ensuring strong project management. By prioritizing the highest-need/critical projects and core services, we can direct resources where they matter most without reducing services residents depend on.

4) Reviewing the factors annually or bi-annually. Having a consistent transparent analysis helps us plan ahead and avoid sudden spikes, allowing predictable adjustments that protect residents while maintaining reliable and strong services.

5) I value my current committee service on Community Safety, Connectivity, and Economic Vitality because they're directly connected to Chandler moving forward. Looking ahead to 2027, I would like the opportunity to serve on a national neighborhood or sustainability committee to share best practices and

help strengthen livable

Joe Granado Jr.

1) Built and sold a \$20M mechanical company that I started in 1996 with no financial backing and now teach construction at Arizona State. I understand budgets, contracts, and workforce development and how to deliver major projects efficiently while protecting taxpayers.

2) Prioritize faster approvals, incentivize redevelopment, and expand public private partnerships. We should focus on attainable workforce housing tied to local jobs while ensuring infrastructure especially water and power, keeps pace with growth.

3) Improve project delivery efficiency. Standardize designs, reduce change orders, and prioritize local



Joe Granado Jr.

contractors. Better upfront planning and accountability can cut waste without sacrificing quality or delaying critical infrastructure projects. This is where I can excel. I built a business with no resources. I can be very efficient with nothing.

4) I do not want to raise taxes so we need to prioritize our spending to support our aging infrastructure. The capital improvement funds will not cover all issues of this problem. We need real leadership that will tell you the truth (about costs) — not what you want to hear.

5) I'd focus on economic development, infrastructure, and workforce committees. My background in construction and business allows me to contribute immediately to smart growth, job creation, and responsible capital planning.

Ron Hardin:

1) My 12-plus years as a Chandler

• See **Council Q&A** on page 26



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AMERICA@250

Chandler celebrates 250th with history, fun for kids

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

When Jody Crago spoke about Betsy Ross becoming a widow in her mid-20s during a June 2 presentation, he added as much historical context to the death of John Ross as he could think of.

That's how Crago, the director of the Chandler Museum, tries to deliver all his historical presentations. And with America's 250th birthday in full swing, history and presentations are at the forefront of how Chandler's acknowledging the occasion.

With June and July being too

warm to plan many outdoor daytime events and with Chandler typically merging into the July 4 celebrations in neighboring East Valley communities, there are still a handful of special events planned in the city this year before July 4.

Some, like the Swim250 event, will take place again later in 2026, as the city has made it clear the birthday is a yearlong celebration.

The city is also celebrating by encouraging youth to sign up for the "Red, White & Blue Pass." The free digital pass features activities, programs, exhibits, and events for the community to participate in,

throughout the year, accumulating points and redeeming them for prizes.

One can check in or sign up by scanning the available QR codes at each point of interest to get points for participating or online at tinyurl.com/mryyjtxb

The "27 Flags" exhibit has been at a few city special events this year. It's a trip through time, showing the 27 different U.S. flags that have existed as more states joined the original 13 colonies in the union.

The flags have been split up at locations across the city since Feb. 13, with one or two at various city facilities. Flag No. 1 was posted at Chandler City Hall.

Here are some of the upcoming "250" city-sponsored or promoted events happening through July 7:

American flag painting

5 p.m. to 7 p.m., Tuesday, June 9, Hamilton Library, 3700 S. Arizona Ave.

Celebrate summer reading and America's 250th birthday by joining at Hamilton Library to paint a patriotic painting of the American Flag. Adults only. Registration is required.

Mystery Round Table: The Girl from Greenwich Street

6:45 p.m. to 7:45 p.m., Monday, June 15

Sunset Library, 4930 W. Ray Road.

Drop in to the June meeting of the Mystery Round Table book group for an American-history themed read.

"The Girl from Greenwich Street" by Lauren Willig is based on the story of America's first murder trial, which forced bitter rivals Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr to work together to save a man from the gallows. No registration required.

Celebrate and create 250 years together

11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday, June 29

Basha Library, 5990 S. Val Vista Drive

This event is especially for families and for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers. Create, celebrate and march together in a patriot parade. In honor of America's 250th birthday, enjoy red, white and blue crafts and a fun parade through the library.

• See 250th Things To Do on page 23



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250th Things To Do

• From page 22

Swim 250 - Desert Oasis Aquatic Center

Regular business hours of four city pools, Wednesday, July 1 through Wednesday, Sept. 30

Desert Oasis Aquatic Center, 1400 W. Summit Place

Nozomi Aquatic Center, 250 S. Kyrene Road

Mesquite Groves Aquatic Center, 5901 S. Hillcrest Drive

Hamilton Aquatic Center, 3838 S. Arizona Ave.

Chandler Aquatics invites swimmers, especially young ones, to swim, splash, and move their way through a year of themed challenges — all built around the number 250. Track progress, earn rewards and try something

new each quarter. A similar event will be held at the same pools Oct. 1-Dec. 19.

Chandler's All-American Bash

7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m., Saturday, July 4, Dr. A.J. Chandler Park Stage Plaza, 178 E. Commonwealth Avenue

Enjoy live music, yard games, food vendors and more. This year, there will be a 15-minute pyrotechnic show as part of the concert. The show will begin at 8:15 p.m. at the Dr. A.J. Chandler Park Stage Plaza.

Popsicles for America

11 a.m. until supplies run out, Tuesday, July 7, Chandler Community Center, 125 E. Commonwealth Ave.

Swing by the Community Center and grab a patriotic popsicle to cel-



Jody Cargo, the Chandler Museum's manager, points as he talks about Betsy Ross and the first American flag June 2. There are more historical and other events planned around the city in the month ahead to help celebrate the nation's 250th birthday. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason W. Brooks)

brate 250 years of America with a sweat treat. Popsicles will be handed out, starting at 11 a.m. until supplies run out.

While there, city staff encourage everyone to check out what programs are available at the Community Center.

Jane POSTON

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School board OKs school traffic-flow work for nearly \$2M

By Jason W. Brooks
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A contract approved by the Chandler Unified Governing board for traffic flow improvements at a school will be paid for from two different pools of property tax money totaling nearly \$2 million.

The board unanimously approved a contract with Chasse Building Co. on May 6 to create some parking, parent drop-off and bus traffic flow solutions at Weinberg Gifted Academy in Gilbert.

The school and neighborhood have undergone changes since it was designed and built and its traffic flow areas are now obsolete.

Weinberg was opened as a neighborhood elementary school in 1986 but has since been converted into one of a handful of CUSD's gifted academies, which changed how students get to the school each day.

Open enrollment and Weinberg's teachers and programs, according to CUSD Superintendent Frank Narducci, has made the school one of the most popular K-6 options for district parents. A staff report states 80% of students are transported to and from school by their families by vehicle rather than living within walking distance or busing.

Between Val Vista Drive having become a major north-south artery for southeast Chandler and west Gilbert, along with Appleby Road being a narrow collector road, traffic backs up regularly on Val Vista, especially in the mornings — sometimes for a full mile to the south.

Traffic is such a problem, the district devoted a page and aerial photos to showing parents where certain grades have drop-off/pickup areas, to

• See **School** on page 27



Chandler Unified Superintendent Frank Narducci engages in "paper, rock, scissors" on the first day of school with students in July 2025 at Weinberg Gifted Academy. The Chandler Unified governing board approved a contract May 6 to start work on traffic flow improvements on the Weinberg campus. (Courtesy of Chandler USD)

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CicelyforChandler.com

Cicely Rocha-Miller is running for City Council to bring a practical, community-focused approach to leadership and ensure residents feel heard, informed, and connected.

AngelforChandler.com

Angel Encinas was raised in Chandler, and is a reflection of our city's collective values and traditions. He will ensure these values and quality of life are passed on to the next generation.

JanePoston.com

Jane Poston is a small business owner and a former city employee, possessing a strong understanding of the workings of municipal government from the inside out.

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Council Q&A

• From page 20

Chamber member, combined with experience in both corporate leadership and small business ownership, give me a practical understanding of what drives economic success. I've built relationships across the community and understand how to balance growth, fiscal responsibility, and quality of life for Chandler residents.



Ron Hardin

2) We can expand adaptive reuse and missing middle housing by streamlining approvals and updating zoning, if necessary, in targeted areas. Chandler can leverage proven models from cities that have done this successfully (e.g. Tempe), converting underused commercial space into housing while increasing supply and supporting walkable, economically vibrant areas.

3) We should prioritize core services and critical infrastructure by reviewing non-essential spending, delaying lower-priority projects, and improving operational efficiencies. Regular performance audits (data-driven) and zero-based budgeting can help ensure our spend is justified, freeing up resources for

essential public works without compromising service quality.

4) I believe we should exhaust every opportunity for efficiency and reducing non-essential spending before considering any tax or rate increases. Chandler has been well managed, and residents expect that discipline to continue. Any future adjustments should be a last resort, not a routine practice.

5) I would prioritize committees focused on infrastructure planning, economic development and water policy, as those will shape Chandler's long-term future. I'm also interested in supporting the arts, recognizing their role in quality of life and economic vitality

Jane Poston:

1) As a City Council member, I have delivered on my commitments to increase police staffing, improve government transparency, and build strong relationships with businesses, nonprofits, residents and education partners. I am accessible and make decisions through community input and research.

2) Place city-owned land in a trust with a nonprofit partner so private builders can deliver homes without



Jane Poston

land costs, lowering purchase prices while allowing buyers to keep earned equity and enabling the process to repeat in perpetuity.

3) Council reduced CIP funding for the downtown (A.J.) Chandler Park by \$10 million and asked city staff to come back with a plan that produced the most benefit and impact to Chandler residents. All projects should get this review.

4) No one wants to increase rates, but leadership includes making difficult decisions. Small, incremental increases will ensure that current users are paying for the services they receive, and prevent future residents from experiencing large, unfair rate hikes.

5) I want to continue with the NLC Public Safety & Crime Prevention Committee, MAG Transportation and my three Council subcommittees: Economic Vitality, Neighborhoods and Connectivity. I would like to add the Arizona League of Cities and NLC Women in Government.

Cicely Rocha-Miller:

1) I've built my career and life on showing up, bringing people together, and getting things done. I'm an optimistic problem solver with an attitude of gratitude. My job has always been turning ideas into reality, on budget, thoughtful, and aligned with my clients' goals.



Cicely Rocha-Miller

being thoughtful with every dollar so we can take care of the basics first.

3) We can lean into our General Plan by focusing on smart infill and adaptive reuse, turning underused spaces into attainable housing. By simplifying approvals and encouraging mixed-income projects, we can create options that fit our community while protecting what makes Chandler feel like home.

4) I think smaller, predictable adjustments are better than sudden spikes, but my goal is to avoid increases whenever we can. I would only support them if truly necessary, after tightening our spending and planning ahead so we're not putting extra pressure on families.

5) I'd focus on committees where I can make a real impact, like the Arizona League of Cities and Towns and Maricopa Association of Governments, with an emphasis on economic development, arts, public safety, and infrastructure, bringing ideas back to strengthen Chandler.

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School

• From page 24

keep them separate from the buses.

Assistant Superintendent Tom Dunn told the board the plan is to start work immediately that involves swapping the current bus and drop-off areas and creating more off-street lanes to do so.

“The bus lane along Val Vista will be utilized as the beginning of a queuing lane for drop-offs,” Dunn explained. “And we’re moving buses to the Appleby side where there will be a sort of cutout, similar to what’s at Knox or Frye (schools).”

He said there will be other adjustments made for exiting and parking. An abandoned water tank on the Appleby side will be removed.

Dunn said the timeline for the improvements, if work is started this month, should be done sometime “after the end of the first quarter” of

the upcoming school year, or after Sept. 18.

A staff report states district and school administration have had several meetings with the town of Gilbert and the Gilbert Police Department to discuss ways to improve traffic flow and maximize safety as a more permanent solution was developed and constructed.

The contract with Chasse includes about \$291,000 from adjacent ways funding and about \$1.896 million from 2025 bond funds.

According to the Arizona School Facilities Board, adjacent ways funding is “a specialized property tax levy that school districts use to pay for infrastructure improvements adjacent to school properties. It is primarily designed to ensure safe vehicle access and provide utilities to the property line without having to pull money from general classroom budgets.”

ON YOURVALLEY.NET

Chandler economic development staff manager receives award

The Arizona Association for Economic Development has honored City of Chandler employee, Chandler Escalante, with an annual Workforce Practitioner of the Year award. That’s an award that recognizes an individual’s overall impact on the community workforce, the development of strong relationships and community support, innovation and creativity, and contributions to the workforce development profession. Read more at tinyurl.com/mpcb5zyf



The Arizona Association for Economic Development has honored City of Chandler employee, Chandler Escalante, with an annual Workforce Practitioner of the Year award. (Courtesy of city of Chandler)

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The city is providing night respite services for those needing a safe, cool place to sleep.

Learn more: chandleraz.gov/HeatRelief



Candidate Q&A: Chandler mayoral hopefuls

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Both candidates on the ballot for the July 21 Chandler mayoral election — Council member Matt Orlando and former council member and current state Rep. Jeff Weninger — replied to Independent Newsmedia's questions.

The two longtime city residents are vying to replace term-limited Mayor Kevin Hartke next January.

Here are their responses.

Why do you feel you're the best choice for mayor?

Orlando: Over my time on the council, I've focused on smart growth, strong public services, fiscal responsibility, increasing quality of life, and community-centered decision-making. Chandler deserves steady, experienced leadership that understands where we've been and knows how to



The only two candidates who will be on the July 21 ballot for Chandler mayor, Jeff Weninger, left, and Matt Orlando took debate questions April 28. Independent Newsmedia also sent each candidate five questions. (Independent Newsmedia file/Jason W. Brooks)

move us forward.

Weninger: I've spent 30 years running Floridino's in Chandler, served

on council, and in the legislature getting real results. I understand growth and budgets, and I'm a proven col-

laborator who brings people together. Chandler needs experienced, common-sense leadership.

What do you see as one of the biggest issues facing the city heading into 2027?

Orlando: Maintaining our excellent quality of life. I supported and led numerous activities that benefited and "laid the foundation" for our community that we enjoy today - Police; Fire; Parks and Recreation programs; neighborhood enhancement programs; and economic development opportunities.

Weninger: Managing our final phase of growth is critical. We don't have much land left, so every decision on housing, jobs, and infrastructure carries more weight. Getting that

• See **Mayoral Q&A** on page 33

A colorful poster for Yamaha Music School's 40th anniversary. It features a large red heart with a musical note inside, surrounded by confetti. Text includes "EV / ND YAMAHA MUSIC SCHOOL", "Celebrating 40 years!", "MAKING MUSICIANS", "SATURDAYS IN AUGUST", "Join us for Open House and bring a friend! AGES 2.5-9", "East Valley", "NEW CLASSES START SEPT 8TH", and "5:15pm". There are three polaroid-style photos of children playing instruments and a QR code at the bottom left.

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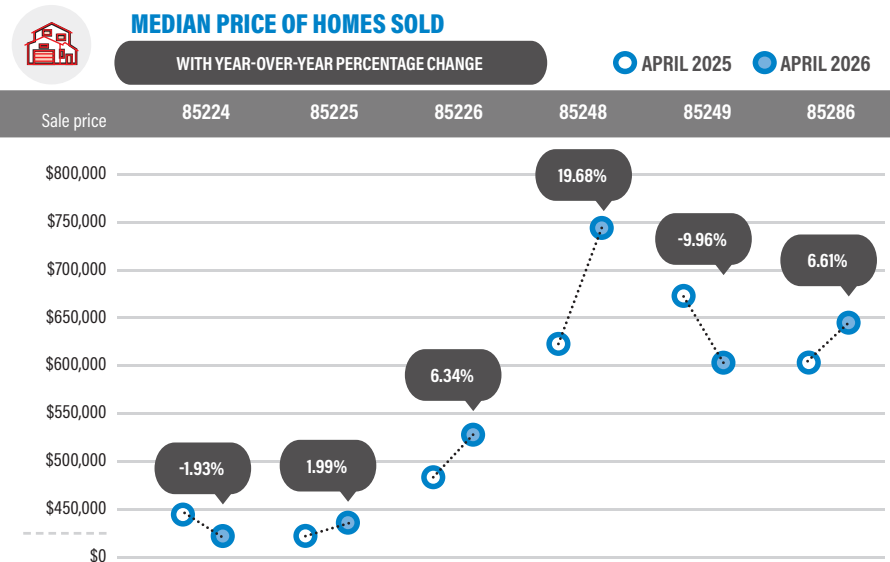
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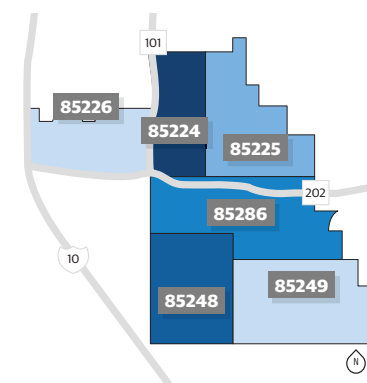
	APRIL 2025	APRIL 2026
85224	86	73
85225	150	113
85226	69	61
85248	107	101
85249	206	198
85286	123	104

AVERAGE DAYS ON THE MARKET

	APRIL 2025	APRIL 2026
85224	36	61
85225	59	61
85226	46	66
85248	56	53
85249	73	77
85286	68	61

NUMBER OF HOMES UNDER CONTRACT

	APRIL 2025	APRIL 2026
85224	45	60
85225	67	63
85226	39	30
85248	22	37
85249	83	82
85286	52	54



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Four Junior Achievement state winners from Chandler

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Junior Achievement of Arizona has announced this year's 18 Under 18 winners — with four of the 18 winners having ties to Chandler.

The awards program aims to recognize outstanding students who exemplify the best of Arizona youth. They were honored at an event on April 16 at Junior Achievement's office in Tempe.

Junior Achievement of Arizona is a nonprofit organization that prepares Arizona students to succeed in work and life by teaching them financial literacy, career readiness and entrepreneurship skills, according to a news release.

The winners include Iraj Shroff. The BASIS Chandler 11th-grader is tackling global challenges through STEM, the release states.

Shroff developed a low-cost water



Junior Achievement of Arizona has announced this year's 18 Under 18 winners — with four of the 18 winners having ties to Chandler. Iraj Shroff, a BASIS Chandler 11th-grader, is tackling global challenges through STEM, the release states. Shroff, 16, developed a low-cost water purification system and a smart medication device. (Courtesy of LDH Consulting)

purification system and a smart medication device.

In another role as a leader, he mentors students and promotes STEM education and service.

Motivated by his family's personal experiences with contaminated water in India, the 16-year-old developed the Natural Aqua Purifier — a low-

cost water treatment system that uses natural coagulants.

Shroff spent more than a year refining the system at a local water treatment plant, and has trained more than 450 students and community members in India and Kenya to ensure the successful long-term production and implementation of the puri-

fier.

The project has earned international recognition. In addition to Junior Achievement honors, the project was selected as honorable mention for the Governor's Celebration of Innovation Future Innovators of the Year Award.

Ira Bagga is an Arizona College Prep High School junior. She blends research and advocacy to make science accessible, the release states.

Bagga, 17, has conducted neurological research and founded BreakingTheCycle, reaching 120,000 readers online and raising funds for "PCOS awareness," it states.

As a STEAM Society and Athena Project leader, she builds programs that connect science, art and community impact, the release states.

• See **Achievement** on page 33

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Mayoral Q&A

• From page 28

balance right will shape Chandler indefinitely.

What else could the city be doing to house the homeless people on Chandler's streets today?

Orlando: By combining our federal, city, and non-profits fundings, we have developed a robust program to address and reduce our homeless population. We need to do more. As mayor, I will implement my "Housing for All" initiative to address the overall housing shortage.

Weninger: We need to stay focused on practical solutions. That means working with nonprofits and regional partners to expand shelter space and connect people to services like mental health and addiction treatment.

At the same time, we need to enforce our laws and keep public spaces safe, while helping people get back on their feet.

Regarding data centers and other development projects, what's one tool Council and staff don't currently have, to deal with newer, more-complex proposals?

Orlando: Continue to streamline our internal processes to ensure

quicker responses to our business community and residents without jeopardizing quality and safety. I would centralize our economic development processes and create an ombudsman office to help small businesses and residents.

Weninger: Chandler needs clear, upfront standards for development projects. The city is too reactionary, so we must establish defined criteria for infrastructure impact, land use fit, and long-term home values to enable us make consistent decisions that protect our neighborhoods.

Tax and other cost burdens affect all residents. What's one thing a mayor can push or encourage as a way to mitigate either the cost of living or of select products and services?

Orlando: Continue to be a fiscally efficient city – deliver quality services at a fraction of the cost. Chandler has the lowest overall tax burden on our residents in the valley. My "Chandler Delivers" — on my website — platform outlines other initiatives.

Weninger: It starts with a careful watch of taxpayer dollars. When the city is disciplined and avoids unnecessary spending, it helps keep taxes and fees from increasing. Investing in preventative maintenance for infrastructure also avoids more expensive repair long-term.

lic advocacy.

Srinidhi Pallerla, 16, is an Arizona College Prep junior and the founder of Steps to Impact, supporting neonatal intensive care unit babies and their families and communities through medical outreach initiatives.

Pallerla also conducts research and founded MedConnect. A TEDx speaker, she plans to pursue medicine with a focus on patient-centered care.

Follow @JAArizona on social media or visit jaaz.org/resources for some free online educational tools.

Achievement

• From page 32

Ikeoluwa Esan, 17, is a Hamilton High School senior who is a civic leader focused on justice and education. She rebuilt her school's mock trial program and co-leads a national legal education nonprofit.

As the HHS student government vice president, she raised more than \$10,000 for Make-A-Wish and serves on the Governor's Youth Commission.

Esan plans to pursue law and pub-

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- Kitchens & Baths

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YORK
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WEEKLY SPECIALS

AVAILABLE FOR ALL ITEMS
ASADA + \$0.50 | SURF AND TURF +\$1.00

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)