



Community

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Conchas to
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INDEPENDENT

Business

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July 2026 Volume 32 Issue 7 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

INVESTIGATION

City has most of summer to respond to AG stipend probe

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Arizona Attorney General's Office notified the city of Glendale May 6 that it is investigating the city's \$900 monthly stipend and \$450 car allowance for council members, as well as the city's process enacting this stipend in 2022.



Mayes

Glendale will have most of the summer to decide on its legal response. Lesley Miller, the city's media relations and communications program manager, stated in an email that Glendale has until Aug. 20 to respond and will consider its reply this summer.

The letter from Attorney General's Office states officials received a complaint alleging a misuse of funds and a violation of Open Meeting Law by Glendale regarding City

• See **Probe** on page 17



BACK HOME FOR ITS BIRTHDAY

June 18 marked 116 years since the city of Glendale was founded. This year, the city celebrated with a special event unveiling its extensively renovated \$94 million City Hall. Mayor Jerry Weiers, center, cuts the ribbon outside the new city hall and amphitheater after a flyover by two F-35 jets from Luke Air Force Base. Weiers is flanked by current and former council members, Arizona Rattlers cheerleaders the Sidewinders and their mascot, Stryker. Glendale Director of Communications Sue Breeding, left of Weiers in front of the ribbon, led the ceremony. The City Hall complex includes a free parking garage adjacent to the building and another free garage on Palmaire Drive and 58th Avenue. (Independent Newsmedia/Richard Smith)

DROUGHT

City prepares for less CAP water

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Glendale did not need its water resources update during the June 9 City Council workshop to know cuts to its water supply are inevitable and the alternative supplies the city built up may come into play.

Of the two main reservoirs along the Colorado River, where the city gets a

good portion of its water, Lake Mead is at 30% capacity and Lake Powell is at 24% capacity, Water Resources Manager Zacary Richards said. The total Salt River Project reservoir system is at 54% capacity as of June 8. The system was at 67% a year ago.

"The Colorado River system is facing a historic hydrological dry period, with total system storage falling to 20

million acre-feet, a significant drop from the 23 million acre-feet recorded just one year ago." Richards said.

Current guidelines for the Colorado River basin expire at the end of the year and an agreement is not close, he said. The federal government favors a new 10-year operational framework with new guidelines every two years.

• See **Supply** on page 15

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GOVERNMENT

Judge's ruling returns Conchas to Glendale council

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Lupe Conchas was back in his council office Tuesday.

In a ruling released the afternoon of June 15, Maricopa Superior Court Judge Greg Como found the Glendale City Council's 4-3 vote to remove the Cactus District council member "illegal and void."

Como's ruling also permanently enjoins the city and council from preventing Conchas to serve on the council and the SRP agricultural improvement and power district board,

He also granted special action relief requiring the city to immediately reinstate Conchas to the council, and he is listed as the Cactus District council member once



Lupe Conchas

again on the city website as of June 16.

"The \$60 SRP pays its Direc-

tors is a per diem payment that reimburses Directors for an amount that reasonably approximates their actual expenses in attending board and committee meetings. Facts supporting this conclusion include the relatively small payment amount, and that payment is only for directors who only physically attend meetings," Como's conclusion reads in part.

Considering the presumption in favor of eligibility, Como ruled that the \$60 SRP payment does not constitute compensation under the Glendale City Charter,

Also, the conclusion finds neither the Arizona Constitution nor state law bar Conchas from seeking election to or serving on the SRP board, because it is not a "salaried"

office.

"The city of Glendale has reviewed the Superior Court's ruling and is taking the necessary steps to complete the reinstatement of Councilmember Lupe Conchas to his position representing the Cactus District," read a statement released by the city on June 16.

Mayor Jerry Weiers and Councilmembers Lauren Tolmachoff, Ray Malnar and Dianna Guzman voted for Conchas' removal based on their interpretation of the city charter's provision that the mayor and council "shall hold no other public office for which they receive compensation except that of a notary public or member of the National Guard or naval of military

• See **Conchas** on page 5

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Conchas

- From page 4

reserve.”

Conchas, Bart Turner and Leandro Baldenegro voted against Conchas' removal.

Conchas said he returns to office focused on issues facing his district, like getting the word out about the Bethany Home Road and 51st Avenue drainage project now underway and related road closures.

He said another priority is collaborating with Hope for Hunger Food Bank in the district, as several of his residents are struggling after cuts to SNAP and Medicaid benefits.

“I’m really ecstatic that the Cactus District residents have their duly-elected council member representing them again,” Conchas said June 16. “I’m grateful for the justice system taking the facts into consideration.”

The next council meeting is June 23.

Conchas, essentially, said the council can have differing opinions and still work together.

“At the end of the day, we all care about Glendale,” Conchas said.

Court arguments

The hearing for Conchas v City of

Glendale et al was June 11.

Attorney Austin Yost with Copper-Smith Brockleman PLC presented Conchas' case at the hearing. Mitchell Fleischmann, a partner at Phoenix-based Thorpe Shwer PC, represented the city and council members.

Yost said the phrase “receive compensation” in the city charter forms the crux of the dispute — and that Conchas holds no other public office for which he receives compensation.

“Our position is longstanding Arizona law does not treat expense reimbursement as compensation. We cited Earhart (v. Frohmiller) for this proposition, an Arizona Supreme Court case. It says, ‘When the state repays the legislators and their employees for their personal expenses, this does not constitute additional compensation, but is merely a reimbursement for actual cash outlays necessarily occurred for subsistence while away from home in the performance of duty,’” Yost said.

Conchas was elected to the SRP board April 7 and served on the Glendale council since December 2024.

Fleischmann called Glendale and the council's legal backing

a straightforward analysis of clear municipal charter law.

“When plaintiff accepted an elected position on the SRP board, which is indisputably a public office position, and that position receives mandatory compensation, he ceased to satisfy the qualification for city council service that the Glendale voters ratified through the city charter,” Fleischmann said.

Como closed by saying he was very impressed by the briefing and the arguments by both legal teams.

The original vote

The Glendale City Council held a special meeting for the vote on Conchas' eligibility to serve May 28, two days after it received legal advice about a conflict of interest.

This decision also came two days after a contentious council comment section May 26 about Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes' office in-

vestigating Glendale's council stipend and car allowance policy, where Conchas reiterated his opposition to the stipend.

Sixteen people spoke publicly against Conchas' removal while eight spoke in favor of it.

“I’ve been honored to know Lupe Conchas and knew his predecessor quite well. I have been involved in the system for quite some time, with previous mayors and whom ever. I’ve never seen anything quite this petty and retributive. It doesn’t serve you people well, It makes you look really bad,” Cactus District resident Mary Smith said. “He listens to whatever their issues are and whatever side they’re on. And then he acts on them. The stipend issue that is burning in everybody’s heads right now was brought to him by one of his constituents — not one of the same party — who he listened to and got educated on the

explanation of.”

Of the eight people to speak in favor of Conchas' removal from the council, one lives in the Cactus District.

Kris Tualla, a 51-year Glendale resident who lives in Malnar's district, said only Glendale voices should be considered.

“This issue is not about feelings. It’s above the law. No one is above the law, hard stop. If Councilman Conchas is of such high character — I’m sure you’re a wonderful person — why would you blatantly violate the charter. If he wants to remain a councilman, why did he not resign for the Salt River Project board, It’s clear you can’t get money from both,” Tualla said.

Conchas filed suit later that day.

“I did my due diligence. I reached out to officials to make sure it was allowed,” Conchas said May 29. “I made sure to ask the right questions to the right people.”

Deanna Elaine Jones

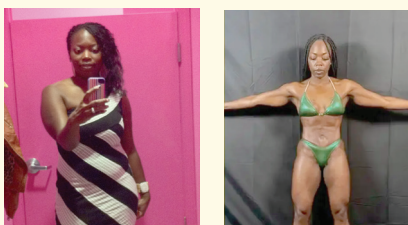


Deanna, 88, died April 21, 2026. Born in Pontiac, MI on April 6, 1938. Mother of two children. A Sun City resident for 29 years. A retired Michigan school teacher for 30 years. She was in Habitat for

Humanity several years. Work on electrical wiring of homes. In Sun City Handicapped group in exercise class, for years. Deanna was helpful to people who were handicapped. She would go out of her way to help people.

BUSINESS

AWARD



Before and after photos of Taneasha McNair of Glendale when she recently entered a bodybuilding competition. McNair earned one of three Submit Your Fit awards from EoS Fitness earlier this year. (Courtesy EoS Fitness)

Glendale personal trainer bounces back twice

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Twice, a debilitating medical condition knocked Glendale resident Taneasha McNair down. Both times, a commitment to fitness brought her back to her best.

For most of the past nine years, McNair worked as an independent personal trainer. Her own workouts are at the EoS Fitness gym is at 59th Avenue and Thunderbird Road in Glendale.

In April, EoS selected her as one of three winners for the company's nationwide Submit Your Fit competition, which garnered nearly 1,000 submissions.

"I had no anticipation of winning, I just thought I would share my story for someone else who needs to hear it," McNair said.

• See **McNair** on page 20

MEET YOUR BUSINESS

Meet Your Business: Big Air Glendale

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

By day, Kaleem Aslam, franchise owner of the upcoming Big Air Glendale location, works as a doctor.

But as a parent of young children, he was inspired to take on an entirely new venture by bringing Big Air, a 31,000-square-foot indoor adventure park, to the West Valley. What started as a personal interest in creating more family-friendly entertainment options for his own kids evolved into a business investment and entrepreneurial leap into the entertainment industry.

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

Name: Kaleem Aslam

Age: 44

Home City: Originally from Lahore, Pakistan, now lives in Scottsdale

Business: Big Air Trampoline Park-Glendale, soon to open at 5665 W Bell Road in the former site of Stratosphere.

What made you choose this line of work and why is it important or interesting to you? As a physician, I've always been passionate about helping people live healthier, happier lives. As a father of young children, I've also seen firsthand how much kids benefit from active play and quality family time. My children love visiting trampoline parks, and through those experiences I saw the value of having a place where families can have fun together while staying active. Investing in Big Air allowed me to combine my entrepreneurial interests with something that aligns with both my professional values and personal experiences as a parent.

What do you like most about



Kaleem Aslam is the franchise owner of Big Air, soon to open on Bell Road in Glendale. (Submitted)

what you do?: Whether I'm practicing medicine or preparing to open Big Air, what I enjoy most is the opportunity to make a positive difference in people's lives. In healthcare, that comes through helping patients. With Big Air, it's about creating a place where families can spend quality time together, kids can stay active and the community has a fun destination to enjoy.

What makes Big Air unique and separates you from your family-friendly entertainment competition?: Big Air offers something for everyone. Beyond trampolines, we feature a variety of attractions designed for different ages and interests, making it a destination where the entire family can participate together. We focus on providing a clean, safe and welcoming environment while encouraging active play and memorable experiences.

What is a challenging aspect of balancing these two very different

jobs?: Time management is definitely the biggest challenge. Healthcare and business ownership both require significant commitment and attention to detail. Fortunately, I have strong teams supporting me in both areas, and I've learned the importance of prioritization, delegation and staying focused on long-term goals.

What aspects of fatherhood inspired you to invest in a family entertainment business? As a father of young children, I've spent a lot of time taking my kids to trampoline parks and other family attractions. Seeing how excited they get, how much energy they burn, and how those outings create quality family time really opened my eyes to the value of these experiences. I was drawn to Big Air because it provides a place where kids can be active, parents can join in the fun, and families can make lasting memories together.

If you had picked a different occupation, it might have been? If I had chosen a different path within medicine, I likely would have become a pediatrician. I've always enjoyed working with children and families, and helping kids grow up healthy and happy would have been incredibly rewarding.

What is your advice to today's youth? Don't be afraid to pursue multiple interests and explore different opportunities. My career path led me to medicine, but I also developed a passion for entrepreneurship. You don't have to limit yourself to just one dream. Work hard, stay curious, keep learning, and be willing to step outside your comfort zone. Most importantly, treat people with kindness and integrity as those qualities will take you far no matter what path you choose.

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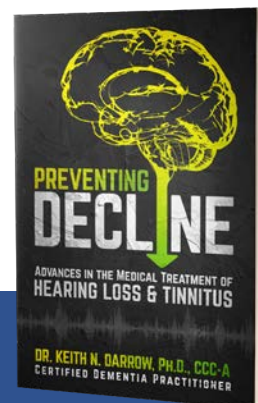
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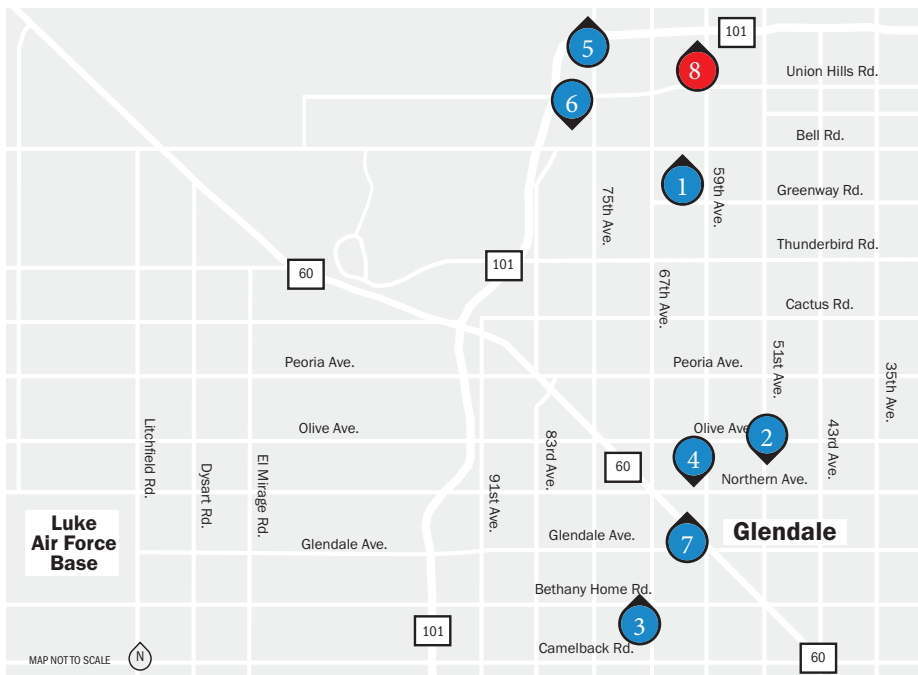


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BUSINESS MOVES



Compiled by Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

NOW OPEN

- 1 **Salon 312** recently opened at 6033 W. Bell Road, Suite C. The salon offers a range of services, including precision haircuts, dimensional color, extensions, highlights, and bridal styling, along with professional lash services and brow enhancements. Advanced skincare treatments, such as microdermabrasion, microneedling, and chemical peels, are designed to rejuvenate and restore skin.
- 2 Earlier this year, the Valley-wide **Accura Home Health Services LLC** opened a local office at 8751 N 51st Ave.
- 3 **Best of Bengal** opened earlier this year at 6002 N 67th Ave., serving Indian food. The restaurant features seafood, biryani, vegetable entrees,

chicken, soups and dishes from a tandoori clay oven.

- 4 Another **Dutch Bros. Coffee** has opened June 11 in Glendale, and this location is the closest to downtown. The drive through is at 5960 W. Northern Ave.

- 5 **KidsUnited** fitness center at 7507 W. Rose Garden Lane, Suite 103, had its ribbon cutting ceremony May 29. It is a youth soccer training center, that owner Sumit Arora said focuses more on early childhood development.

- 6 **Earthbound Trading Co.** opened June 4 in Arrowhead Towne Center, 7700 W. Arrowhead Towne Center Drive, Suite 1025. The store features curated collections, boho fashion, eclectic decor, gifts and more.



KIDS UNITED

- 7 **G57 Sports Grill & Venue** opened in May in the downtown area at 6729 N. 57th Drive. The grill also offers breakfast seven days a week and is open until midnight.

OPEN SOON

- 8 Later this summer, a Vietnamese cafe called **Phin Brew** is scheduled to open at 20020 N. 59th Ave., Suite 105. This is the former location of Papa Murphy's at the Arrowhead Promenade shopping center.



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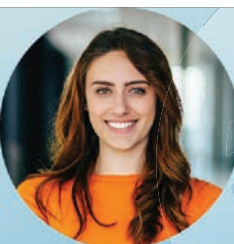
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Those that are judged as personal attacks or complaints about neighbors, businesses or other opinion writers will not be considered. No person may submit more than two opinions for publication during a calendar month.

Two submissions in the same issue will not be published. The content of a submission is the responsibility of the person who submitted it.

Speak Up

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

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.

Lifetime of service is why I support Goreé for council

After 33 years in law enforcement, I've learned what real public service looks like. It's not about titles or talking points, it's about showing up, listening and doing the work.

That's why I'm supporting Rory Goreé for Glendale City Council.

Throughout my career, I saw how important it is for leaders to stay connected to the people they serve. Unfortunately, there's a growing disconnect between our council and the community.



Willard Watts



Rory Goreé

Residents feel unheard, and decisions are made without input from community members. Take the data center approval, not a single resident spoke in favor, yet it passed. That needs to change.

Rory understands that. His service in the Navy speaks to a commitment bigger than himself, but what stands out even more to me is what he's done here at home. He's been out in the community, knocking on doors, meeting neighbors and listening because he genuinely cares.

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I also care a lot about the condition of our parks and public spaces. These are the places where our neighbors come together, where kids play and where community is built. They deserve proper investment and upkeep,

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not the neglect they get now.

Rory has shown that he values transparency, takes community input seriously and is accessible to the people. Those qualities matter.

Public service is a calling, and it takes dedication. I've lived that life, and I recognize it in Rory.

That's why I'm asking you to vote for Rory Goreé for Glendale City Council.

Willard Watts
GLENDALE

Editor's note: The author is a retired police officer.

Police groups endorse Calles for city council

Upon recommendation by the Glendale Fraternal Order of Police, the Arizona FOP has endorsed Michael Calles for Barrel District councilmember. Michael, a fourth-generation Arizonan, is also a retired Phoenix police officer and a veteran of the U.S. Navy and Army.

Michael is keenly aware of the growing violence being directed at law enforcement across our country. In 2025, a police officer in the United States was shot in the line of duty about once every day. Since the start of 2021, over 2,000 police officers have been shot in the line of duty across our country. And assaults on American law enforcement are trending upward. Michael pledged he will do everything in his power to protect our Glendale

Speak Up

Read what local residents are saying about hot-button issues:

Below is a list of comments from people on social media, including the announcement of Lupe Conchas' 2028 mayoral bid, high gas prices and Peoria Unified School district governing board controversy.

Glendale has most of summer to respond to AG investigation of stipend

"They got busted! Why are our taxes going to pay for their personal cars and expenses?" — **Robert P.**

"They don't get paid to be on the council. This money covers some of their expenses and gas/wear and tear from traveling around their district on council business. Mayes is way the hell out of line!" — **Brian W.**

Conchas files suit against Glendale, council members

"Just wants more press. He was warned about the rules." — **Valerie K.**

"Kind of thinking good for him." — **Peggy M.**

Duplexes planned near stadium in Glendale

"I find it hard to imagine that during any event at the stadium, residents would be unable to enter or leave the area. It seems unlikely

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AMERICA@250

Glendale 5th-graders win America250 essay contest

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

In celebration of America's upcoming 250th birthday, the city of Glendale Office of Arts & Culture announced Monday the winners of the city district-wide America250 Essay Contest for local fifth-grade students.

The contest invited students from Glendale school districts to reflect on the nation's history, values, and future as the United States approaches its semiquincentennial anniversary.

"Reading these essays has been a wonderful reminder that one of America's greatest strengths is the freedom to share our stories, perspectives, and visions for the future. As we celebrate 250 years of our nation, we are proud to uplift the voices of Glendale's students, the next generation of thinkers, leaders, and community builders," Holly Garner, Glendale arts & culture coordinator stated in a press release.

More than 50 essays were submitted by fifth-grade students, showcasing creativity, civic pride and optimism for the future.

Glendale congratulates the following district winners:

- Cholla District Winner — Ava Donnelly, Dream City Christian School
- Barrel District Winner — Aliyana Johnson, Sahuaro Ranch Elementary
- Cactus District Winner — Atoosa Khairy, Horizon Elementary
- Ocotillo District Winner — Eli Lewis, William C. Jack Elementary
- Sahuaro District Winner — Shiloh Perrin, Marshall Ranch Elementary
- Yucca District Winner — Keziah Ateh, Desert Spirit School



Sahuaro Ranch Elementary School fifth grader Aliyana Johnson, third from right, accepts the Glendale America250 Essay Contest prize for her council district, along with family, teachers and Barrel District Council Member Bart Turner, second from right. She also won Glendale's overall competition. (City of Glendale)

Aliyana Johnson is the city-wide winner. She will receive a commemorative certificate signed by the mayor, a \$50 gift card, a family four-pack to Andretti Indoor Karting & Games, and the opportunity to read their essay during the Downtown Glendale

America250 Celebration.

District winners will receive a commemorative certificate signed by their respective district councilmembers and a \$25 gift card.

"After reading these essays, I can confidently say our country is in good

hands with this next generation," Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers stated in a press release. "It was inspiring to read what being an American means through the eyes of our young people."

Their patriotism, gratitude, and love for this country filled my heart with pride and hope for America's future. I was truly honored to read these remarkable essays and narrowing it down to just one winner was incredibly difficult, because every student should be proud of what they wrote," Weiers stated.

"The contest is part of Glendale's efforts to engage residents of all ages in commemorating the nation's 250th anniversary through arts, culture, education and community celebration."

For information about the contest or Glendale's America250 activities, contact the office of arts and culture at publicart@glendaleaz.com.



Dream City Christian School fifth grader Ava Donnelly, center, receives her America250 Essay Contest award from Glendale with her parents. She won for the Cholla District. (City of Glendale)

Music, art series highlights city's America250 celebration

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Glendale continues to celebrate the nation's milestone birthday with the America 250 Arts and Music Series.

Performances began May 16 and will continue after Independence Day on July 4. All of these America250 events are in the auditorium of the Glendale Main Library, 5959 W. Brown St.

And all events include free ice cream. The remaining schedule is:

- ♦ 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 25.

Sounds and Stories of the Jazz Age:
featuring class American jazz hits.

- ♦ 2 p.m. Saturday, June 27. Pick

• Holler Band plays early American Folk music.

- ♦ 2 p.m. Saturday, July 11. Secret

Harbor Music plays U.S. naval tribute songs.

- ♦ 6 p.m. Thursday, July 23. Sug-

ar Theives brings their blues roots
sound.

- ♦ 6 p.m. Thursday, July 30. Drift-

wood Quintet plays classical American songs.



Sounds and Stories of the Jazz Age is June 25 at Glendale Main Library, and is the next event in the city's America250 Art & Music Series. Hear unique versions of American jazz standards including such favorites from George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and more. (City of Glendale)

- ♦ 2 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 6. Citizen

Tom Paine will present a staged reading from a historical novel.

All performances are free and the audience will receive commemorative

flags.

For information, contact Chris Taylor, arts and culture administrator at 623-930-3557 or ctaylor1@glendaleaz.com.

Take in the celebration at Lake Pleasant on third of July

Pleasant Harbor at Lake Pleasant will host its annual Celebrate America fireworks show on Friday, July 3. This event is home to the annual firework show, as well as food trucks, free kids' activities and live music.

Gates open at 5 p.m. with fireworks at 9 p.m. and activities running through 10:30 p.m. Presale parking admission is \$30 per vehicle and \$35 for vehicles with watercraft. The day of the event, admission for vehicles is \$35 and \$40 for vehicles with watercraft. Coolers and lawn chairs are welcome. Canopies are allowed until sunset, then must be taken down. Tickets can be purchased online at pleasantharbor.com or at the lake on the day of the event.

For more information about the Lake Pleasant fireworks show or Pleasant Harbor, visit pleasantharbor.com or call Pleasant Harbor events at 623-203-5173.

Did You KNOW?

56 men signed the Declaration of Independence



Names like John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and, of course, John Hancock might instantly come to mind when pondering the men who signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. But what about the remaining signatories to the founding document of the United States? According to the National Archives, 56 men signed the Declaration of Independence, and even historians and armchair history buffs might be hard pressed to name all 56 signers of the pivotal document. Some might even be surprised to learn that various notable figures from the era were not among the 56 signers on the Declaration of Independence, a list that includes Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and George Washington.

The logo for Albrecht and Son LLC features a cartoon painter in a red cap and white uniform, holding a paintbrush and a bucket of red paint, standing next to a simple black silhouette of a house. To the right is a circular seal with '250' in large blue numbers, 'YEARS' in small text above, and 'ANNIVERSARY' in small text below. The background is a stylized American flag with stars and stripes.



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Letters

• From page 10

Police Officers from it.

Michael is equally protective of our brother and sister firefighters. Studies from the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety tell us that firefighters' cancer risks are significantly higher than the general population. Alarming, cancer is currently the most dangerous threat to the health and safety of those who run toward burning fire.



Dave Goitia

Michael took the time to discuss with law enforcement these issues impacting our brothers and sisters with fire. Why? This is where his two-decades plus of service as a first responder were obvious. Michael understands first responder culture. And he made it clear to us that he will prioritize the safety and well-being of those in Glendale who so quickly become the physical, life-preserving manifestation of emergency calls for help.

Dave Goitia
GLENDALE

Editor's note: The author is president of the Glendale Fraternal Order of Police and second vice president of the Arizona Fraternal Order of Police. A 25-year police veteran, he received President George W. Bush's 2008 Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor. Glendale FOP represents 380 active/sworn police officers and 155 retired Glendale police officers.

Child care programs strengthen Arizona families

The federal child care program known as the Child Care and Development Block Grant helps working parents in Arizona afford child care while ensuring young children have safe, supportive places to learn and grow.

Backed by a long history of bipartisan support, the program strengthens

working families, fosters child development and fuels our economy.

New data from First Five Years Fund shows how CCDBG makes child care more manageable for families. In Arizona, the average cost of center-based infant care is \$1,330 per month, or nearly \$16,000 per year.

With a CCDBG subsidy, the maximum amount a family of three pays for care is just \$35 per month. That translates to savings of approximately \$1,295 each month, or more than \$15,500 a year that families can put toward housing, groceries, transportation and other essentials.

Parents can also choose the type of care that works best for their family, whether that's a child care center, a home-based provider or a faith-based program.

Affordable child care is pro-family and pro-work. When parents can afford quality care, they have peace of mind and can stay in the workforce.

Children have opportunities to learn and grow, and employers benefit from a stable, reliable workforce.

There is also bipartisan interest in strengthening the program even further. The Child Care Modernization Act would build on the program's decades-long success by helping states better meet the growing child care needs of working families, providers and employers. That's good for children, families, businesses and Arizona's economy.

We urge our policymakers to support this legislation. Arizona families are counting on it.

Tonya Mitchell
GLENDALE

Speak

• From page 10

that people would choose to live there permanently, or that the area would mainly consist of short-term rentals, which could lead to some challenges."

— **Tracy Maruska**

Supply

• From page 1

A final federal decision is likely in July, with terms available by August.

The Salt and Verde rivers, which are controlled by SRP, account for 55% of the city's drinking water supply, while the Colorado River handles 41% and groundwater chips in 4%. That is good news.

Councilmember Bart Turner said the area of Glendale north of Arizona Canal primarily receives Central Arizona Project-delivered drinking water from the Colorado River, while south of the canal is mostly SRP.

"Other cities in the metro area, many of them are heavily reliant on CAP water and they're not in nearly as fortunate of a situation as the city of Glendale," said Turner, a member of the Arizona Municipal Water Users Association board.

Sarah Porter, director of the Kyl Center for Water Policy at Arizona

State University, said she does not like to compare cities as more or less fortunate. There are many variables in a city's ability to manage very deep cuts to water.

But cities that use CAP water to meet demand for tap water and watering turf facilities will experience the most immediate impacts if there are deep cuts. And some cities are set up better than others.



Porter

"Yes, cities that rely entirely on groundwater and Tempe, which relies on SRP and groundwater, won't be impacted by cuts to the same extent as cities that rely on CAP supplies. In contrast, Scottsdale arguably relies more heavily on CAP supplies than Glendale and some other cities," Porter stated in an email.

Valley water resources by the numbers

Porter breaks down the water re-

source position several Valley cities are in this summer:

• About half of the approximately 42,000 acre-feet of water Glendale sends to surface water treatment plants is from CAP and slightly less than half is from SRP. None of the water Glendale delivers to turf facilities — golf courses, cemeteries and parks — is CAP water. Also, Glendale's main source of supply for aquifer recharge is effluent. But Glendale uses only about 14% as much water to recharge aquifers as it delivers to taps. Glendale has about 188,000 acre-feet of long-term storage credits.

• Peoria delivers about 32,500 acre-feet of tap water, 33% CAP water, 29% SRP and 39% groundwater. About half the water Peoria delivers to turf facilities is SRP water, 23% is groundwater, 15% is effluent and 13% is CAP water. In some years, Peoria uses almost as much water to recharge aquifers as it delivers to taps but two-thirds of the water it uses for

recharge is CAP water. Peoria has 196,000 acre-feet of long-term storage credits.

• Scottsdale relies on CAP water for 71% of the approximately 82,000 acre-feet it uses to meet tap water demand with the rest divided almost equally between groundwater and SRP supplies. Approximately 33% of the water Scottsdale delivers to its turf facilities is CAP water. And about 70% of the water Scottsdale uses for aquifer recharge is Colorado River water. Scottsdale delivers about 20% as much water for aquifer recharge as it does to taps. Scottsdale has 247,000 acre-feet of long-term storage credits.

• Tempe, which uses close to the same amount of water as Glendale, doesn't use any CAP water for tap water or for turf facilities. It has a modest CAP allocation that it historically has used for accruing groundwater credits (aquifer recharge) through an exchange. Historically, Tempe recharges

• See **Water** on page 16



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Water

• From page 15

about 10% as much water as it delivers to taps. Tempe has 78,000 acre-feet of long-term storage credits.

City prepares options to counteract cutbacks

This year's March heat wave caused the snow pack to melt prematurely, wiping out most of the source of spring runoff.

The Bureau of Reclamation is reducing releases from Lake Powell to Lake Mead, which should translate to a 20% reduction in Glendale's CAP water delivery in 2027. This will also reduce the Hoover Dam's hydroelectric generating capacity by as much as 40%.

"The Bureau of Reclamation recently released a draft environmental impact statement outlining five federal strategies for managing Lake Powell and Lake Mead after 2026. These

proposals have exposed a significant divide between the upper and lower basins with serious implications for the Central Arizona Project," Richards said.

Instead of the current federal options, the city is pushing for a management framework based on actual river hydrology and river storage.

Glendale will update its drought management plan this year.

Likely reductions on the delivery of Colorado River water will take effect in October.

"Should Glendale's allocation be reduced by 25% in any given year, we would still be able to meet all project demands with our CAP supply. However, if a 50% reduction should occur, we would need to begin pulling from our alternative supplies such as new conservation space, long-term storage credits that can feasibly be recovered and pumped groundwater," Richards said.

He said 35% of the city's recharged

water is used to recharge Glendale's aquifer. Annual water demand remains well below Glendale's supply.

Five strategic well projects are designed to provide a backup for residents in higher elevation areas. One well near Abrazo Arrowhead will finish in September and another at Sierra Verde Park will be done in January.

"The city recently secured a significant win for long-term storage capacity within the Bartlett Dam expansion project following a successful steering committee vote in February," Richards said.

Construction costs for this expansion will be released later this year.

Digging in deeper to the water portfolio comes with a cost.

Once the city begins pumping from long-term storage credits and groundwater, it is drawing from non-renewable water savings accounts — which will only last a limited number of years.

Glendale has been in stage one of its

drought management plan since June 2022. The city's 5% reduction in use means saving about \$30 million a year.

"The drought management plan was designed in steps, so you really want to go through all of the steps. You wouldn't want to go from stage one, which is voluntary for residents, right to stage three, which is mandatory for residents," Environmental Programs Administrator Joanne Toms said.

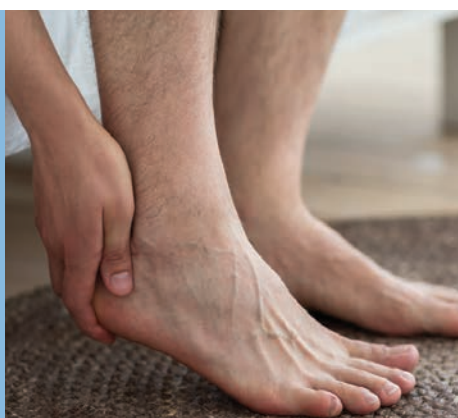
Logan said not all cities are equally prepared for deep cuts in CAP supplies, even if they have enough groundwater to last them a few years.

This is largely an infrastructure issue. Some cities have the wells, pipes and pumps needed to move groundwater to a treatment plant and deliver it to the parts of town that currently rely on CAP supplies treated at a surface water treatment plant and one or two just don't have that infrastructure in place.

"Our assessment is that Glendale is in pretty good shape," Logan said.

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Probe

• From page 1

Administrative Policy 11, which allowed for the stipend and car allowance.

The complaint alleges the monthly stipend goes against Glendale City Code as an impermissible benefit, and that the city charter limits the pay received by those on council. Any pay raise, according to the charter, must be recommended by a council-appointed commission and approved by voters.

The complaint alleges voters rejected a proposed \$18,685 increase to council member salaries in November 2019. Payments under council-passed stipend are alleged to circumvent the results of that vote.

Allegations of improper benefits came up May 28 when the council voted 4-3 to oust Councilmember Lupe Conchas according to its interpretation of the city charter language on receiving compensation from another elected role, in this case an Salt River Project utility board. He is suing the city and won, returning to his Cactus District council seat.

He and several of his supporters indicated during the May 28 meeting that his outspoken opposition of the stipend was a catalyst of his removal from the council. Mayor Jerry Weiers and Councilmembers Lauren Tolmachoff, Dianna Guzman and Ray Malnar denied that during their votes, stating Conchas SRP board position is compensated, which triggered their votes.

Conchas raised the issue of the stipend as a council item of special interest Aug. 26, 2025.

Gary Hirsch is a 47-year Glendale resident and lives in the Cactus District. He ran for its council seat in 2004, 2008 and 2012.

“How did we get to this point, where we are going through this process today? When I was on the planning commission, on occasion I would call the city attorney’s office and get

advice about potential conflicts of interest. I didn’t take notes or ask for it in writing, I took that office’s word as it was,” Hirsch said. “I think he did his due diligence. Now the stipend is like a poison. It’s like sepsis. It’s infecting everything that’s happening in this city government, and it needs to end. In my humble opinion, this is nothing more than an effort to penalize my council member, who has been doing what we asked him to do — to bring it to light and bring it to an end.”

Public discussion of the issue dissipated after December.

The yearly stipend is \$10,800. To date, Mayor Weiers and every council member other than Conchas and Bart Turner have received \$7,892 in fiscal year 2026 thus far. Conchas and Turner have not accepted any money this fiscal year.

Spending of this stipend is not tracked by the city.

In fiscal year 2025, Turner declined to use any of his stipend, while Conchas spent a bit under the full amount. The car allowance expenditures follow a similar pattern with Turner declining both years, Conchas receiving near the full amount in fiscal year 2025, and Conchas receiving only \$185 this fiscal year.

The other five council members each received \$3,946 this fiscal year.

The summary of allegations from Mayes’ office includes an allegation that the stipend policy violates the Arizona Constitution prohibiting increasing the compensation of any public officer during their term of office and that the stipend functions as compensation because it is paid taxable income.

Finally, the complaint alleges the decision to enact the stipend policy was conducted in violation of Arizona Open Meeting Laws during a council executive session in “April or May of 2022.” The complaint is that this is not an approved topic for an executive session and there is not a record of any public agenda item, meeting or vote prior to the implementation of the policy.

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EDUCATION



Community members stand outside the district office prior to the June 9 governing board meeting in Phoenix calling on Kim Fisher to resign. (Independent Newsmedia/Steve Stockmar)

Deer Valley board member sidesteps calls to resign amid community anger

Residents considering action that would require 23,000+ signatures

By Steve Stockmar
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Residents — and at least one fellow sitting governing board member — are considering initiating a recall effort to unseat Kim Fisher of the Deer Valley Unified School District.

Fisher in late May sparked local and national outrage when, during a contentious conversation in an open meeting, she did a Nazi salute and said “heil heil.” In the governing board’s first meeting after the outburst, Fisher offered a five-minute explanation that did little to quell the public’s outcry.

Residents picketed outside the June 9 governing board meeting demanding Fisher resign as did a group of nearly 20 public speakers during the meeting, including members of the local Jewish community.

“Not only did you offend and hurt the Jewish community with your actions, you violated the rights and protections of all our minority populations based on race, religion on several occasions,” Aaron Arnold, a teacher at Barry Goldwater High School, within the district, said from the governing board meeting podium. “Do the right thing and resign.”



Fisher

Fisher initially was elected to the board in 2014 and most recently in 2024. Her current term ends in January 2029.

Fisher posted a note to her Facebook page which read in part, “As for your request to resign, NO!! You did not elect me so no you will not get to bully me to eliminate the voice of those who did ... Feel free to do a recall.”

Fisher walked out of the June 9 meeting, but as remarks continued among board members on the dais, board

• See **Fisher** on page 19



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Local students graduate, make dean's list in May

The following students from Glendale recently earned these honors in college:

- ♦ Karis Joe earned a spot on the spring 2026 dean's list at Belmont University in Nashville.
- ♦ Daniel Chavez received a bachelor of arts degree cum laude from College of the Holy Cross at commencement

May 22 in Worcester, Mass.

- ♦ Camille Secatero was recently elected to membership into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest all-discipline collegiate honor society, at Northern Arizona University.
- ♦ Lena LaVeyw earned a bachelor's of science degree from the the University of Central Missouri in May.
- ♦ Stephan Wandel of Glendale earned a master of science degree in

global security studies from Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas on May 15.

- ♦ Luna Diaz Lara was named to Rhodes College's Spring 2026 honor roll. The university is in Memphis, Tenn.
- ♦ Juliana Bustraan was named to Alvernia University's Dean's List for the spring 2026 semester while studying athletic training. The university is in Reading, Pa.

Midwestern University honors Glendale graduates

At commencement ceremonies June 1-3 at its Glendale Campus Auditorium, Midwestern University celebrated the graduation of 1,004 master's and doctoral degree recipients during nine commencement ceremonies.

It is the beginning of professional healthcare careers for graduates across a wide range of disciplines.

Fisher

- From page 18

member Stephanie Simacek pointed out the board itself cannot remove Fisher from her seat but she encouraged the community to initiate a recall effort.

"Let's do it. I'm happy to help guide," Simacek said. "I ask you to do that. Let's do this together."

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The 2026-27 academic year starts Monday, Aug. 3.

The Office of the Maricopa County School Superintendent, which serves as the filing officer for the recall of school district governing board members in Maricopa County, reports that 23,004

valid signatures gathered within 120 days of a submitted application are required to trigger a recall election in Deer Valley Unified School District.

Per state law, the office calculates the number of signatures required based on most recent general election data.

In the past 10 years, there has been no successful school district recall through the Office of the Maricopa County School Superintendent, officials said.

The most recent attempt was when 21,750 signatures were required in an effort to recall Janelle Bowles from Peoria Unified School District. With a signature filing deadline of March 17 of this year, the effort failed to qualify.

In 2014, two Sunnyside Unified School District governing board members in Tucson were removed from office after a successful recall petition drive.



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McNair

• From page 6

"And I got the email that I won. I was blown away."

Her journey to this point began when she gave birth to the youngest of her three daughters 12 years ago.

At first it was a battle for survival. "Fitness found me. It did not start that way," McNair said. "My journey didn't start in a gym. It started in a hospital bed. Twelve years ago when I had my youngest, I developed what is called HELLP syndrome during my pregnancy. It's a life-threatening pregnancy complication where your liver is failing."

HELLP Syndrome is described by the Cleveland Clinic as a rare pregnancy complication that mainly affects the mother's blood and liver. It usually occurs during the third trimester of pregnancy (between 28 to 40 weeks) and causes the breakdown of red blood cells, elevated liver enzymes

and a low platelet count.

So her daughter was born prematurely. In late April, McNair traveled with that daughter to Florida for a national cheer competition.

Three years later, McNair started to work as a personal trainer. She dropped from a size 20 to a size 6 and said she got her energy back and felt like herself again.

"That's how I found personal training, because I wanted to give that back to other women," McNair said. "It's not over. You can redirect and continue this journey of health."

When COVID-19 hit, McNair said she spiraled. The isolation, uncertainty, and loss of routine took a toll on her mental health.

Depression crept in. Add perimenopause to the mix, and the workout and life routines did not "work" any more.

It took time and she had a busy calendar as a mom of three active daughters. But she learned to save some time

for herself and shares that advice to moms everywhere.

"Choosing yourself is not selfish. Women and moms, we live in our heads thinking about everyone but us," McNair said. "Writing letters and notes to yourself lets you know that you are worth this journey."

She recommends developing patterns and taking 20 minutes a day for your workout and treating it like an appointment.

Shilpi Sullivan, chief marketing officer of EoS Fitness stated in a press release the company is inspired by the passion and will power our members have shown throughout their journeys.

"Our EoS team members are deeply committed to walking alongside our members, supporting them every step of the way. This year's winners are a testament to the power of persistence and community. They remind us that every effort matters and that progress, big or small, is always worth celebrating," Sullivan stated.

McNair is still a busy cheer mom, as her youngest is a student at Inspiration Mountain School in north Phoenix. Her daughter practices almost daily at cheer or tumbling.

"When I'm raising my kids, I'm raising them with certain expectations. So I have to show them that these are my expectations and I'm living up to them," McNair said. "That weighed on my shoulders, to know that I'm being watched and I'm trying to achieve my own personal goal."

But an emptier nest made her think. One daughter just finished her freshman year at Prairie View University near Houston and her oldest daughter also lives in that metropolis.

So McNair recently entered a bodybuilding competition. She gets a workout in where she can while chaperoning cheer trips.

"I needed a pop up everywhere. I needed a gym that, 'Oh I'm right here in this area? I'll go to EoS,'" McNair said.



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 4-weeks minimum

EMPLOYMENT ADS

Starting at **\$45**

for one column by three-inch advertisement
 \$15⁰⁰ per inch after (maximum size 8.55 inches)
 Logo and photos included
 No minimum commitment requirement

CLASSIFIED ADS ONLINE

Create Your Own Ads Online, It's Easy!
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 then select "Place an ad"

Announcement

NOTICE
 Independent
 Newspapers
 will not knowingly
 accept any
 advertisement that is
 illegal or considered
 fraudulent. In all cases
 of questionable value,
 such as promises of
 guaranteed income from
 work-at-home programs -
 if it sounds too good to
 be true, chances are
 that it is.

If you have questions or
 doubts about any ad on
 these pages, we advise
 that before responding
 or sending money ahead
 of time, you check with
 the Better Business
 Bureau at 877-291-6222
 for previous complaints.

Miscellaneous

Glendale resident.
 Disabled senior citizen
 looking for someone
 to take out my trash
 three times a month
 (once every 10 days).
 Pay \$30 - \$45 a month.
 623-242-9358.

CLASSIFIEDS
 call
623-972-6101

Miscellaneous

Glendale resident.
 Disabled senior citizen
 in need of reasonably
 priced, non-emergency
 medical transport for
 doctor appointments,
 imaging, blood draws,
 pharmacies. Most are
 within a 10 mile radius.
 623-242-9358.

Full Time

**Valley
 Newspapers is
 Hiring!**
 Full-time delivery
 driver for busy
 print shop.
 26-foot box truck
 with lift gate.
 Must have clean
 driving record and
 pass physical.
 Competitive wages
 with benefits
 Contact Mike
 Jacobs at
mjacobs@iniusa.org

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 Find the Right Person

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FOR RENT
Remodeled
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 With Two Car Garage
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WARM TEMPS ARE HERE!
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\$8500 Installation Special
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 Mention this ad for a
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LevelUpHVAC.com
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**Superior
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 Our Specialty:
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 *Garage Floor Epoxies
 &
 *Fixing Old Coatings
 Serving the Valley Since 1987
 With No Complaints!
 Senior Discounts
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 ROC#354469 Lic/Bond

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Senior & Vet
 Discounts ROC336078
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**LAKE
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 COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL
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 MENTION THIS AD FOR **FREE**
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Garage Doors

**\$200 Off
 A NEW
 DOOR**

**Apex
 Garage Door & Repair**
 Garage Doors & Openers
 SALES • SERVICE • INSTALLATION
 Family Owned & Operated
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 Licensed • Bonded • Insured • License #300097
 View Valleywide Classified ads at iniusa.org/classifieds

Garage Doors

LICENSED CONTRACTOR

DYNAMIC
DOOR SERVICE

Sales - Service - Installation

GARAGE DOOR REPAIR

24 Hour Service

Cave Creek Chamber Member

Residential Repair Specialist
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Panels & Rollers Replaced
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New Construction
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Locally Owned & Operated



SAVE 5% WITH THIS AD

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Quality Products & Service

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- Custom Fabrication
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 - ✓ Full Service Moving
 - ✓ Serving the Valley for Over 30 Years
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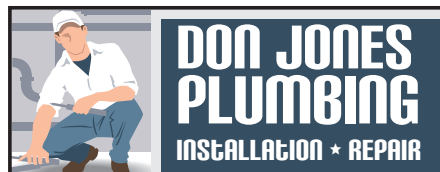
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WATER, SEWER, GAS

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- Since 1989 -

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CUSTOM INTERIOR & EXTERIOR PAINTING & FULL HOME REMODELING

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REMODEL**



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\$20⁰⁰
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Please include **\$4** for shipping and handling



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