

Posse, MCSO aware of local vandalism; **6**

Hiker honors America, trail founder; **21**



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As need grows, food bank works to keep families fed

By Zev Black
and Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

According to Amy Tekulve, director of marketing at Valley View Community Food Bank, the organization served 900,000 people last year. This year, the group is on pace to serve even more.

Right now, an average of 2,000 individuals are coming through Valley View's doors every day.

"The need continues to grow," Tekulve stated in an email.

She added the group's biggest challenge continues to be trying to keep up with the growing demand while managing the rise of food costs.

"Many working families and seniors are finding it more difficult to make ends meet," Tekulve stated.

• See **Food** on page 5



Heike Newman, Banner Olive Branch Seniors Center community outreach representative. (Independent Newsmedia/Jennifer Jimenez)



New outreach rep making connections with seniors

Resources available for various services

By Jennifer Jimenez
and Zev Black
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Banner Olive Branch Senior Center has a new community outreach representative ready and eager to

help assist seniors in the Sun Cities.

Heike Newman will replace Julie Ash, who retired this summer and left her mark in the community.

According to Jennifer Lawless, director Banner Olive Branch Senior Center, Ash helped thousands of seniors save tens of thousands of dollars by helping members apply for

support services.

"Julie leaves behind a legacy of giving time and resources to our members to ensure all those we serve have all they need," Lawless stated in an email.

She added that this is an important service because "for some folks,

• See **Outreach** on page 5

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HISTORY

50-year-old time capsule to be cracked open

By Zev Black
and Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, in collaboration with the Recreation Centers of Sun City, will be opening a time capsule from 1976 in a celebration that run 1:30-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 15, at the Sundial Recreation Center, 14801 N. 103rd Ave.

While the capsule is concealed underneath the Liberty Bell at the Bell Recreation Center, it will be opened at Sundial because it has an overhead that will show those in attendance the contents of the capsule when it opens.

Andy Kindler, museum president, said he thinks 150 people or 1,500 people could be in attendance.

Not much is known about the contents of the capsule. One thing the museum does know is inside are letters from 1976 to residents of today.

"We don't know how many," Kindler said. "We don't know what else, if there's anything else. We don't even know how big the space is because it's under the Liberty Bell and that's heavy."

Bret McKeand, with the Del Webb Sun Cities Museum, said the

assumption is national newspapers and magazines may be inside and other items surrounding those moments in time.

Kindler added he doesn't even know if the contents are preserved.

"We're mentally being prepared if there's nothing," Kindler said. "I mean, it's there but if there's nothing ... We're also prepared that part of it did survive or all of it did survive."

McKeand wonders about the condition of the items placed inside 50 years ago.

"The biggest challenge is these types of capsules leak and water and humidity kills the things inside," he said. "But here in Arizona, you just never know and that is the biggest mystery."

The museum is hoping an archivist from one of the Arizona universities will assist with preserving the contents.

Whatever is in the capsule will go into a cabinet set up at the museum.

In addition to opening the capsule, festivities will include the "Pledge of Allegiance," the "Star Spangled Banner," various speakers, music from 1976 and food trucks.

"I want people to think of it as a fun day and go with whatever happens," Kindler said. "Hopefully, there's stuff



Sun City officials put the original time capsule underneath the Liberty Bell in 1976. (Submitted photo/Bret McKeand)

we can see. But if not, we'll still party but we'll talk about what's going in the next one."

A new time capsule to be opened in 2076 will also be going in the ground.

"What we want to do is make it all about Sun City," Kindler said. "What's going on in Sun City today that people can capture for the people in 2076."

Residents are encouraged to email timecapsule2076@gmail.com with ideas.

Instead of letters, the museum will put video messages from current residents into the capsule.

Reporter Zev Black can be reached at zblack@iniusa.org. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

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Food

• From page 1

ed. "We're seeing more first-time visitors seeking assistance than ever before."

Tekulve stated the food bank's goal is simple: "Ensure that no family has to choose between paying bills and putting food on the table."

That wouldn't be possible without volunteer support, which, according to Tekulve, has grown this year.

"We're fortunate to have an incredible volunteer base," she stated in the email. "In addition to our regular volunteers, we've welcomed many new corporate and community volunteer groups this year."

This past year, Valley View moved into a new Sun City space, 10733 W. Peoria Ave. Tekulve stated the new facility has improved the group's ability to receive, organize and distribute food.

Another highlight has been the steady growth of Valley View's partnerships across the community.

"We are incredibly grateful for the support of local schools, churches, businesses, civic organizations and service clubs that have come alongside us to help fight hunger," Tekulve stated. "These partnerships not only provide much-needed food and resources but also create opportunities for people of all ages to get involved and make a meaningful impact in our community."

Outreach

• From page 1

saving a little money on monthly bills and having a place to get a free meal is a lifesaver — literally."

Newman has been working with community members in this capacity since the start of July. However, she is no stranger to Banner Olive Branch. She spent time with Ash while training, according to Lawless.

Newman began volunteering as a chair yoga instructor twice a month for almost two years. When she heard Ash was retiring she went through the appropriate channels to apply and landed the job.



A Valley View Community Food Bank volunteer hands out food during Thanksgiving. (Submitted photo/Amy Tekulve)

That being said, the greatest need right now is financial support.

"Monetary donations allow us to purchase food at significantly reduced costs through our food bank partners, stretching every dollar much further than traditional retail purchases," Tekulve stated. "Volunteers are also always needed, and food donations of nonperishable items are greatly appreciated."

Valley View is just one of several resources in the area helping put food on the table.

Banner Olive Branch Senior Center Director Jennifer Lawless said the website vivory.org is a resource identifying food

pantries in a specific area.

There is an option to select a radius and individuals can learn more about each specific location, such as hours and requirements.

According to the website, there are 16 food distribution sites within a five-mile radius and 20 within a 10-mile radius of Sun City.

Lawless added there are a lot of churches in the area that also offer food pantries once a week, which most people do not know about.

For more information about Valley View Community Food Bank, go to feed-ingaz.org.

"Now I am connecting the community with the resources that are available to them or finding resources that we might not even know about yet," she said.

Newman has been scheduling appointments with individuals and also accepts walk-ins.

She can help with benefit reviews and provide resources if seniors have financial restraints or emergencies. She can connect individuals to utility reduction programs and food security resources. She can also help people apply for AHCCS.

Various types of scenarios with clients come across Newman's desk. Some have a lot of concerns and do not know where

to turn for help and others do not use a computer, but they are so worried about not being able to pay their bills or not having enough food, according to Newman.

As she begins her new journey, Newman said she is looking forward to leading with love and compassion, regardless of if she can help or not and hopes when people leave they feel cared for after working alongside her.

"If I can help one person a day, big or small, I feel like I accomplished something today and that is a good day," said Newman.

Seniors 60 and older can receive this assistance and resource from the senior center. Call 623-465-6000.

CRIME

Posse, MCSO aware of vandalism in the Sun Cities

By Zev Black
and Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Residents in the Sun Cities have grown concerned about vandalism in the community. And according to calls taken by the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, this includes homes and cars that have been vandalized by someone throwing eggs.

Sun City Posse Cmdr. Arlene Kluizenaar said through the years Sun City has had areas with sudden strings of vandalism, such as stealing or breaking potted plants and lawn ornaments or damaging vehicles. These incidents would last a few days to weeks and would stop as suddenly as they started.

"We are getting calls this week, starting with messages that were left

on our answering machine over the weekend regarding the current string of vandalism including egging of houses and vehicles. We are increasing patrols in those areas," she said.

Kluizenaar said those impacted should call MCSO's non-emergency number, 602-876-1011, to report these incidents and any other suspicious activity.

In addition, she said they are asking Sun City residents who have security cameras to check their cameras and see if they have a record of these vandals.

Sun City West Posse volunteer Roger Quan said July 20 the Posse received eight calls from residents reportedly getting egged. Volunteers at the posse have been instructed to document everything and provide as

much detailed information as possible, as this is happening all over Sun City West. Cmdr. Carolyn Patterson is keeping a list, according to Quan, to report to MCSO.

"We have been getting a lot of these calls on the weekends and anyone who has cameras on the property and have captured anything, they should share it," he said.

They have been unsuccessful in identifying a license plate, but recently in the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center parking lot, near the Automotive and Restoration Club, Posse volunteer Rob Barron was on patrol and came in contact with a blue SUV filled with younger girls, which fit the description and the windows were down as the posse patrol car cameras caught video of the individuals in the

car.

MCSO Lt. Scott Keller said they do know vandalism is going on, and it is not just happening in Sun City West. It is also happening in Peoria, Surprise, Glendale and Sun City.

Keller said this happened to his home in Glendale, and while it is ideal to catch a license plate number, facial recognition can be used alongside a driver's license to help MCSO.

Quan said a recent "little library" built by a resident's husband, who has since passed, was recently destroyed, so the vandalism is going beyond egging.

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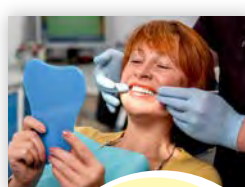
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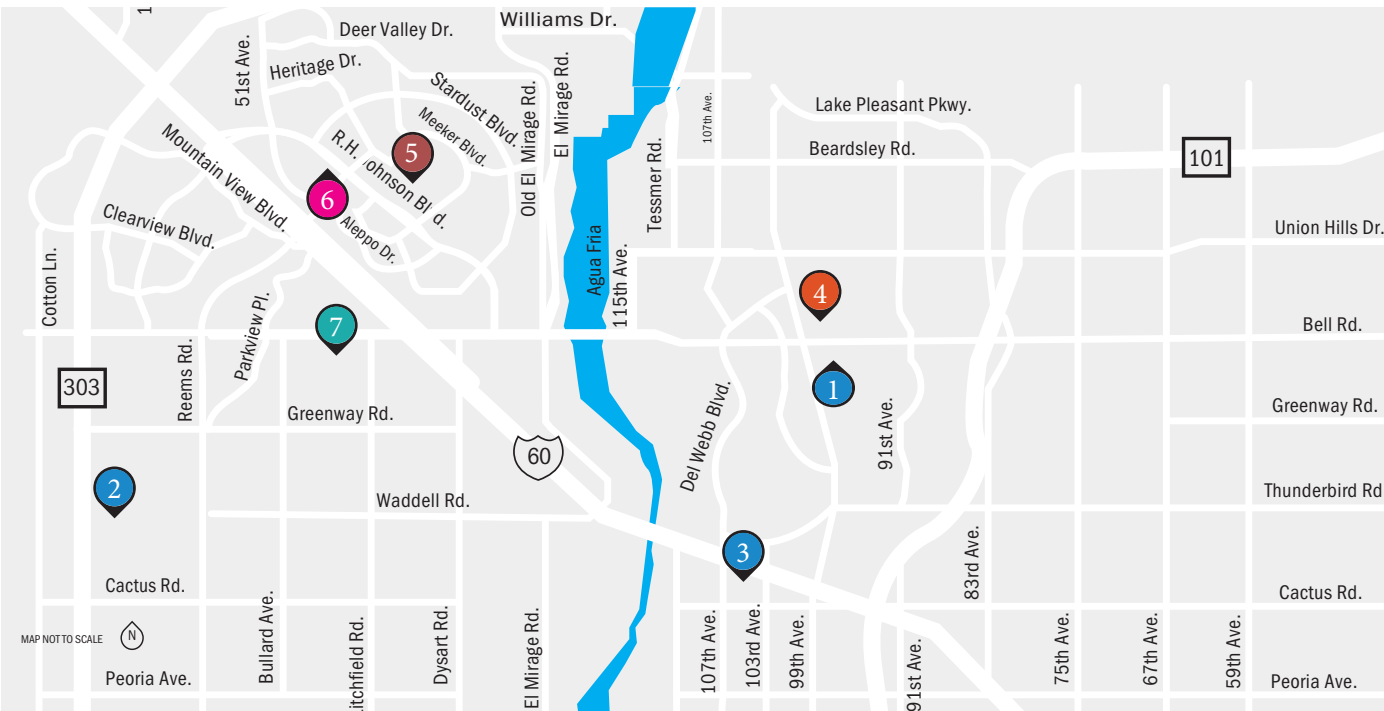
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BUSINESS MOVES



OPENINGS



Taco Boy's has opened its doors at 9801 W. Bell Road (Independent Newsmedia/Zev Black)

1 Taco Boy's has officially opened its doors at 9801 W. Bell Road, moving into the space formerly occupied by Coco's. The restaurant is open 11 a.m.–10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 11 a.m.–midnight Friday and Saturday.

2 Men's Wearhouse held a soft opening June 4 and officially celebrated the opening of its location at 16340 W. Waddell Road, Suite 104, June 12 with community partners, supporters, elected officials and customers. Visit menswearhouse.com/store-locator/2518.

3 KFC is expanding with the opening of its newest restaurant in Sun City, at 10801 W. Grand Ave., near Plaza de Grande. The restaurant is owned and operated by Pak Foods, LLC, a multi-unit, multi-brand operating group with locations across the southwest. Leadership team members Tanweer and Rehman Ahmed are spearheading operations in Sun City. Visit kfc.com.

LICENSE

4 The Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association filed a Class B Bingo License to be used at 19801 N. R.H. Johnson Blvd. The Board of Supervisors will recommend approval or disapproval of the application and forward the original application endorsed with its approval or disapproval to the Arizona Department of Revenue.

CLOSINGS

5 The Pizza Hut at 10050 W. Bell Road, has permanently closed. The closest Pizza Hut to Sun City and Sun City West is now at 13706 W. Bell Road, in the Surprise Towne Center and Marketplace.

RELOCATIONS

6 Alliance Dermatology, 13847 W. Meeker Blvd., has moved to a new location in Sun City West as of July. The hours are 8 a.m.–4 p.m. Monday-Friday and the office is closed for lunch noon–1 p.m. Availability to schedule appointments online is available at alliancedermatology.com or call 602-971-0268.

MEDICAL

7 Magnolia Sage Psychiatry, 14239 W. Bell Road, Suite 203, a new psychiatric and mental health clinic, is now taking patients. The office specializes in providing psychiatric care and medication management services for adults and older adults. Call 623-356-1560.



KFC is opening its newest restaurant in Sun City, at 10801 W. Grand Ave., near Plaza de Grande. (Metro Creative Graphics)



Men's Wearhouse celebrated the opening of its location at 16340 W. Waddell Road, Suite 104, June 12. (Submitted photo)



The Sun City West Property Owners and Residents Association filed a Class B Bingo License. (Independent Newsmedia/Jennifer Jimenez)



Alliance Dermatology, 13847 W. Meeker Blvd., has moved to a new location in Sun City West. (Independent Newsmedia/Jennifer Jimenez)

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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.

RCSC guest pass preferable to punch card, solo owner says

Regarding Patrice Massey's letter, Single homeowner understands why RCSC charges per household: I completely agree with the per household fees.

As a solo homeowner, I do wish I could get a guest pass for when my friends visit rather than purchasing a punch card. We discussed this topic at length during the bylaws ad hoc meetings, and have the feeling that we could gain traction on this topic if people would come up with a proposal that does not involve "doubling" the fees for others.

My thought is: for each solo owner, provide a guest pass so I can bring someone with me. Not on their own — because then I'm still responsible for their actions and could find myself banned if my guest broke the rules.

It would be a small cost to RCSC by losing the revenue of a punch card, but it would also help those of us who are solo to feel like we are getting "something." Anyone else with me?

Jennifer Anderson
SUN CITY

Three's a charm for Sun City voters

Hooray! Three Sun City Maricopa County election locations were available for 2026 Primary voting, after several years with none!

Thank you to Faith Presbyterian Church, Banner Health Warren D. Ruff Building and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for providing convenient voting options in Sun City for eligible county residents to exercise the fundamental right and responsibility to vote as

LETTERS

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.

engaged citizens.

Interestingly, the Recreation Centers of Sun City, due to liability concerns, declined providing a voting location at any one of their eight centers. Sun City West voters cast their ballots at a single location: the R.H. Johnson Recreation Center.

Much appreciation to the three Sun City voting location hosts that stepped up! See you in November!

Chris Tracy
SUN CITY

Retired power plant operator OK with APS rate hike

I've lived in the Valley since 1970 and retired from the power company. I have been reading the concerns from folks about the potential APS rate increase.

I'm a former power plant operator with many years of hands-on operating experience here in Arizona and I'd like to provide some feedback. Power plant generating equipment, the support system equipment and the downstream electrical distribution equipment all run nonstop 24/7.

Just like things at home, equipment reaches end of life due to constant use, wears out or breaks due to the loads placed on them. Some equipment needs to be replaced regularly to prevent power outages from happening at the worst times, especially noteworthy during the peak season when we all need ac to live here in the Valley.

It's true that it's not going to be

easy on the wallet at times, but we all chose to live here and we are all are using the local electrical system unless you are off the grid.

The system needs to be maintained so we can count on it when we need it the most. I worked hard for many years to maintain our system and now I can enjoy having a reliable electrical system.

I understand what I'm paying for and am willing to pay the increased operating and maintenance cost. You get what you pay for.

Mel Meter
SUN CITY

Hamadeh protesters not crazy, nor communist

Re: your article, Hamadeh labels protesters 'communists' at Sun City West GOP meeting. First, there were well over 50 protesters there, not sure why your count was so wrong. Second, why did Hamadeh feel the need to label the protesters as crazy and communist?

He's not spoken to us, he doesn't know us, he has no idea why we protest, except that he does know we do not support his views. He has had plenty of opportunities to meet with us, through town halls that have been requested, or by just coming out to see what a good number of people think about his policies. If he truly was our representative, he should talk to all of the people in his district, not just his supporters. Let's have less name calling and more direct communication.

As for the communist label, it appears he only started using that after his leader started calling his opposition that. It would be appreciated if our representative was able to think for himself, and not just reiterate the

ART

West Valley exhibition showcases the art and process of printmaking

The West Valley Arts Council is presenting “Lasting Impressions,” a unique exhibition celebrating the craftsmanship and creativity of printmaking. Open to the public with free admission, the exhibit invites visitors to discover the many techniques artists use to create original prints while exploring the beauty and versatility of this timeless art form.

Located at the WVAC Arts HQ Gallery, 16126 N. Civic Center Plaza, “Lasting Impressions” features 80 original works by Arizona artists, offering an educational and visually engaging look at the diverse world of printmaking.

Visitors will experience everything



Daniel R Combs, West Valley Arts Council artist member and featured artist (Submitted photo/WVAC)

from traditional linocuts and woodcuts to gel printing, silkscreening and other innovative printmaking techniques.

Printmaking is a centuries-old artistic process that combines creativity with technical precision, allowing artists to produce original works through

carefully crafted printing methods. Lasting Impressions offers a rare opportunity to see the wide range of techniques used by contemporary local artists while gaining insight into the meticulous processes behind each piece.

“The gallery did a phenomenal job hanging my work,” said Daniel R Combs, WVAC artist member and featured artist. “I love how they displayed the original carved plates alongside the final prints—it really pulls back the curtain on the physical process behind the imagery.”

Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday–Saturday.

Visit westvalleyarts.org.

Letters

• From page 10

words of another.

I, and I’m sure I speak for many of the protesters, are very much in favor of democracy. We just don’t want autocracy, with one person acting as a dictator, ruling by executive order. We appreciate the three branches of government, acting to keep each other in line. Right now, we have a uniform party who supports one man, one idea, with no regard for our Constitution, our laws and the will of the people.

This must change. Vote for sanity in November.

Jan Stittleburg
SUN CITY WEST

Abe Hamadeh represents Congressional District 8, which includes parts of Glendale, Peoria, north Phoenix, Sun City, Sun City West and Surprise.



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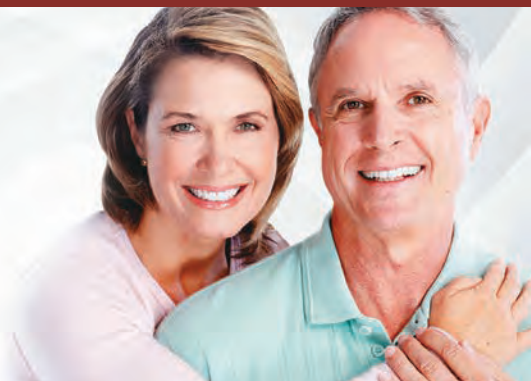
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DOGS

Arizona Golden Rescue to host fall fundraisers for dogs in need

By Zev Black
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Valley residents have two chances to support dogs in need this fall when Arizona Golden Rescue hosts its Chicken N Pickle and Dine Out With the Dogs fundraisers.

Arizona Golden Rescue is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization working to find homes for golden retrievers and golden mixes. The group's president, Deb Orwig, stated in an email that she started the Golden Rescue because she felt there was a need for it in the Valley.

Since its inception in 2009, it has rescued 1,532 dogs. Of those, 48 have come in 2026.

While goldens are a top five most popular breed in the United States, they are not meant for everyone.

"Unless they are old, they are usually high energy, need training and need companionship," she stated. "We take great care in finding out as much as we can about the dog and about the families that apply to adopt from us, then we match the family to the dog based on the dog's needs."

She added the rescue does a lot of education so the family looking to adopt knows exactly what to expect with the dog.

That commitment isn't cheap. These fundraisers help give the group a chance to raise money needed to improve these dogs' lives.

The first event runs 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 2, at Chicken N Pickle, 9330 W. Hanna Lane. Attendees can join a professionally run indoor pickleball

tournament, with round-robin play followed by a single-elimination bracket. Every team is guaranteed at least three games.

Registration is \$50 per person, \$100 per team, or \$25 for children 10 and under. Sign up at tinyurl.com/672ycnr8.

The second event is noon-7 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 25, at Paulie's Little Bite of Italy, 15456 N. 99th Ave. Attendees can bring their dogs dressed up in Halloween costumes and mention Arizona Golden Rescue when ordering.

A portion of food and beverage sales goes to the rescue.

In addition, both events will have raffles and a silent auction.

According to Orwig, attendees can expect a "fun time, good food, and the warm-and-fuzzy feeling of helping an organization help a lot of dogs find new homes."

She added that its fundraising goal is around \$6,000 for each event.

"Over 90% of our income goes towards paying vet bills for incoming dogs," she stated. "Whatever the dog needs health-wise is what we provide. That could be just an exam with standard vaccinations and tests for valley fever and heartworm."

However, many of the dogs the group rescues need far more extensive care, including dermatology treatment, surgery, oncology and neurological care. In 2025, the rescue's average veterinary cost was more than \$3,375 per dog.

For more information about Arizona Golden Rescue, go to arizonagoldenrescue.org.

NONPROFIT

Local nonprofit supports foster children

Partners with other organization to reach more individuals

By Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA



Foster Hearts nonprofit hosts a golf tournament yearly as a fundraiser to support the organization. (Submitted photo/Fostering Hearts)

The organization is growing and looking for new board members, volunteers and sponsors.

Currently, Bayard takes 20 starter kits to two churches in Sun City West and returns two months later to pick up the filled started kits. She said 90% of the money raised goes to foster youth and the organization is run solely by volunteers. Distribution of the bags happens once a year and the organization continues to make more.

Last year, 478 kits were given out to partner organizations, with 248 delivered in 2024.

“The people here want to give and are very generous with strong values, (but) when they see organizations with the administration of 45% they are adverse to that,” said Bayard.

She said when residents hear about Fostering Hearts and how much money goes directly to youth, they are eager to fill a bag and head out shopping.

Email fosteringhearts.info@gmail.com or call 623-252-5523.

Reporter Jennifer Jimenez can be reached at jjimenez@iniusa.org. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

A Sun City West resident assisting another nonprofit made the decision to come alongside and serve.

Vonnie Bayard formed Fostering Hearts In Our Community as a way to continue to ease the difficult transition Arizona’s foster youth face as they age out of foster care.

“I started making these duffel bags in attempt to help OCJ Kids. This need already existed and we are helping take it to another level to get more bags down,” she said.

Bayard said as Fostering Hearts has grown, they have reached more organizations and partners and continue to give to OCJ Kids. She said 360 bags are going to the Department of Child Safety.

Northern Arizona University and Grand Canyon University also have programs. At GCU, those in the Fostering Futures program, students who came out of the foster system can get meals, housing and education.

Fostering Hearts provides essential care kits, which come in various sizes and include items in the categories of bed linens, bath essentials, hygiene and kitchen items.

“We need more people involved and unless someone has come out of the system here in Sun City West we are in a bubble, and the rest of the West Valley is facing these circumstances,” said Bayard.

She said working alongside these other organizations allows them to focus on other needs foster youth has.

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HEALTH



(Metro Creative Graphics)

Church slates hospice care presentation

The community is invited to join Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church, 13658 W. Meeker Blvd., for a presentation 1 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 5, in the Fellowship Hall Meeting Room.

This free educational program, presented by Hospice of the West, will explore the many myths and misconceptions surrounding hospice care while offering clear, compassionate information about the support hospice can provide for patients and their families.

Many people mistakenly believe that choosing hospice means giving up hope, that it is only available for cancer patients or that hospice is a place someone must go. In reality, hospice is specialized care focused on comfort, dignity, and improving quality of life for individuals facing serious illness, while also providing emotional and practical support for

loved ones.

During this presentation, attendees can gain a better understanding of what hospice truly is, who can benefit from its services and how early access to hospice care can make a meaningful difference for both patients and families. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and receive reliable information from experienced professionals.

Hospice of the West is committed to educating the community through programs that address topics such as healthy eating, palliative care, end-of-life planning, and caregiver support. This presentation offers a welcoming environment to learn, ask questions, and replace common misconceptions with facts that can help families make informed decisions.

This free event is open to the public.

Sign up at shepherdumc.org.

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DISCUSSION

Readers club gathers for latest book discussion

SPECIAL TO INDEPENDENT
NEWSMEDIA

By Tom Haugsby

RCSC's Fairway Readers recently discussed Gerri Willis's book "Lincoln's Lady Spymaster," featuring Elizabeth Van Lew, a rich, beautiful and captivating figure in Richmond, Virginia's elite society. She was born and educated in Philadelphia, abhorred slavery and opposed the dissolution of the Union. Her social position enabled her to invest her sentiments in spycraft on behalf of the Union and to end the enslavement system.

Deb Quinn and Sue Blechl asked the Readers, "Was your perspective on the Civil War changed?"

Logan Greene said she "did not know about Canadian involvement in the War." Geri Thacker said, "Lincoln was disguised on his way to the inauguration to avoid assassination." Natalie Hlavna added, "Learning more about John Wilkes Booth." Dennis Crooks, who taught American history, added context, enriching the discussion.

Van Lew had a gift for organization. As a genteel lady, she used prevailing diminished expectations of women to slyly gain access to detailed war plans from Confederate generals eager to impress her. Women like her, she wrote, had to be "wise as serpents — and harmless as doves."

Maya Knowles thought women could "pretend to be dumb."

One can almost imagine fluttering eyelashes and a coy smile while learning about troop movements and war plans.

The Readers marveled at Eliz-

abeth's spycraft, which included sending and receiving messages in books loaned to prisoners, disguising herself as a washerwoman and tucking incriminating documents around her home. Unionists were sequestered into a room inches away from Confederate investigators because neighbors and others reported Van Lew as a suspected traitor. She used invisible ink and developed systems to encode and decode messages. Messages were sent in hollowed-out baskets and in the heels of servants' shoes. Her collaborators performed daring nighttime grave-robbing to repatriate Union soldiers with their families.

Van Lew's most audacious action was in 1864 by engineering the large and storied Libby Prison break.

Club members learned of the Dahlgren Affair, a bungled attempt to capture Richmond by Union forces. Elizabeth and others, however, critically aided Ulysses S. Grant when the Union captured Richmond, thus signaling the end of the War.

Van Lew made intelligence in warfare more sophisticated. In 1864 President Lincoln drew attention to the roles women performed in support of the Union — Elizabeth Van Lew surely central in that praise. After the war, she gave lectures and Grant made her a postmaster, an unusual post for a woman.

Fairway Readers is open to RCSC cardholders. They will meet again 1 p.m. Aug. 14, at the Fairway Recreation Center, to discuss "The Light Between Oceans," by M. K. Stedman.



SUN CITY CLUB SETS RECEPTION, NEW GALLERY

The Artists by the Lake Club announces the opening of a new exhibition in the gallery of the club's Lakeview Center room, on the second floor at 10626 W. Thunderbird Blvd. The exhibition includes more than 60 new pieces of art by club members. There is a variety of mediums including oil, acrylic, colored pencil, pastel and more, as well as different sizes of art. Styles and subject are as varied as the artists who created them. There are cards and small art gifts for purchase. To celebrate this opening there will be an artist's reception with light refreshments noon-2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 1. The Artists by the Lake Club is open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday. To join the club bring a check for \$10 and a valid RCSC card. Classes are offered in watercolor, oil, acrylics, pastel, alcohol ink and mixed media. All skill levels are welcome. Call or text Deb Dahlin at 315-491-9650 for more information. (Submitted photos/Deb Dahlin)

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ELK RIDERS RAISE FUNDS FOR CHILDREN

Fourteen Elk Riders from Sun City Elks Lodge #2559 recently participated in the Christmas in July toy run alongside the Elk Riders from the Show Low Elks Lodge. Despite the inclement weather, the ride raised \$2,000 to support Santa in providing gifts for children in the local community. (Submitted photo)

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SPORTS

Athlete perseveres through wildfire delays at USATF National Championships

What began as a routine trip to the 2026 USATF Masters Outdoor Track & Field Championships in Geneva, Ohio, quickly became one of the most unusual national championships in Dr. Lydia A. Woods' 22 years of Masters competition.

More than 1,700 athletes from across the United States gathered to compete in one of the nation's premier Masters track and field events. After the opening day, smoke from the massive Canadian wildfires drifted into northeastern Ohio, creating hazardous air quality that forced officials to cancel competition for two consecutive days.

Woods completed only one event before the shutdown, earning a seventh-place ribbon in the hammer throw. Athletes then waited through two days of uncertainty, hoping the smoke would clear and the championships could continue.

Fortunately, conditions improved. After a two-hour delay on Saturday morning, officials resumed competition with a revised schedule that compressed two days of events into the remaining weekend. The women's pentathlon and the weight throw were canceled, and sprint preliminaries were eliminated so the championships could be completed safely.

Saturday became one of the busiest days of her Masters career as Woods competed in seven events.

At age 73, Woods competed in 12 events over the four-day national championship and returned to Arizona with 10 national awards, including three bronze medals and seven ribbons.

Her bronze medals came in the long

jump, triple jump and the 4×100-meter relay. Woods earned fourth-place ribbons in the steeplechase and 200-meter hurdles, fifth place in the 80-meter hurdles, sixth place in the discus, seventh-place ribbons in the high jump and hammer throw and an eighth-place ribbon in the javelin.

One of the most dramatic moments came in the 200-meter hurdles. Battling for third place, Woods glanced at a longtime competitor approaching the final hurdle, clipped the hurdle and fell. Hearing spectators encourage her to "Get up, Lydia!" Woods got to her feet, finished the race and earned a fourth-place ribbon.

The final event presented another challenge when the shot put and pole vault were scheduled almost simultaneously. Woods chose the pole vault, one of her favorite events. For the first time in 20 years, Woods failed to clear the opening height and recorded a "no height."

"Despite the interruptions, the championships will be remembered for the resilience of athletes, officials and volunteers who adapted to unprecedented circumstances created by the wildfire smoke," Woods said.

As she reflected on the weekend, Woods was reminded that success is measured by more than medals: "Sometimes the greatest victories are perseverance, adaptability and simply being grateful for the opportunity to compete."

"After 22 years in Masters track and field," Woods adds, "this championship proved once again that you never know what any given meet will bring."

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INDEPENDENT NEWS MEDIA

LEARNING



Members of the Lifelong Learning Club of Sun City touring the Banner Sun Health Research Institute. (Submitted photo/Pat Tonnema)

Learning club tours Banner Sun Health Research Institute

By Pat Tonnema
SPECIAL TO INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Twenty members of the Lifelong Learning Club of Sun City recently toured the Banner Sun Health Research Institute. These free tours are offered each month to all interested residents.

A history slide presentation was followed by a visit to the morgue/surgical room. Physicians and volunteer delivery teams are on call 24/7 in rotating shifts, as speed is vital to best freeze and preserve tissue for use in research. Actual specimens were displayed to show the visible difference between a healthy brain and an Alzheimer's brain. More than 30 storage freezers holding samples at -80 degrees Celsius line both sides of hallways. The science labs display huge colored photos taken of dyed brain specimens to diagnose the diverse tangles, abnormal cell formations, and chemical markers that differentiate various forms of age-related disorders.

Their laboratories share information internationally with scientists doing similar research seeking the causes, future cures and prevention of these afflictions. Early detection using pet scans allows the study of brain synapses, since brain tissue cannot be safely removed from a living patient. The most recent advances involve non-invasive fluid biomarker samples from

skin-punches, blood and spinal-cerebral fluid.

The Brain and Body Donation Program collects and sends sample tissues all over the world. During its 40 years, 2400 volunteers have donated their brains to further exploration of cognitive decline. Currently, 700 members of the local community are enrolled in the program.

The program offers volunteers a chance to participate in important long-term scientific research with a minimal annual time commitment for cognitive and neurological testing. Tissue slices from just one brain can potentially supply 1,000s of studies.

The Institute community outreach services offer free educational classes, memory-screening tests, seminars and lectures to the community and various care-giver support groups and counseling for families facing disease-caused difficulties.

Registration is required for the 90-minute walking tour of the Brain and Body Donation Program, located behind Banner Boswell Hospital. There is also a 10-minute YouTube video.

The tour was followed by a Mediterranean lunch at Hanging Gardens. Many people had experienced the toll that cognitive decline can take on elderly family members and shared emotional stories.



SUN CITY HIKER HONORS AMERICA, TRAIL FOUNDER

Sun City resident Art "Karts" Huseonica honored the America250 Arizona celebration with a final stop at the Sun City Liberty Bell. This spring he carried the official flag from Mexico to Utah. He had 13 guest hikers helping him honor the trail's founder, Dale Shewalter, and honor America250. They included a first responder, a United States Navy commander, a forest ranger, five friends, a Hollywood producer, a visual artist and two television celebrities. Arizona PBS will air a special documentary, hosted by Kristen Keogh, this winter about the hike. (Submitted photo/Art Huseonica)

New kayak dock opens in Sun City



A new kayak and canoe dock has opened from dawn to dusk at Viewpoint Lake, 10626 W. Thunderbird Blvd.

Residents should park in the east lot near the tennis courts. Enter through the south or west gates before checking in at the mini golf facility attendant station.

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SUN CITY POMS SUPPORT FOOD BANK

The Sun City Poms supported St. Mary's Food Bank by participating in a food distribution event July 9. Twelve members sorted food, verified expiration dates and prepared carts for distribution. Pictured, in back, are Diana Lamb, Jeanene Willson, Cath Reel, Anita Doll, Debbie Kruep, Sharon Word, Kathleen Emerson and Sharen Valentine. In front are Julie Yake, Cindy Kress, Chrys Main and Deborahanne Wicher. (Submitted photo/Jan Desmond)

Sun City crossing gets safety upgrade

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation is installing an enhanced pedestrian crossing and making other improvements at the intersection of 111th and Connecticut avenues in Sun City, near the border with the town of Youngtown.

Work started July 15 and is expected to continue through late August. It will be done 5 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. No weekend or holiday work is anticipated.

The new crossing will feature a warning device that uses high-intensity, rapidly flashing yellow LED lights to alert drivers that a pedestrian is crossing or is about to cross the

roadway. At the same time workers will upgrade existing Americans with Disabilities ramps to current federal standards, and remove and replace sidewalks, curbs and gutters where necessary.

Access to residences will be maintained at all times, but drivers can anticipate lane restrictions for the length of the project. Workers will be on hand to assist pedestrians and others wishing to cross. This work is expected to take approximately five weeks.

Schedule is subject to change for reasons beyond MCDOT's control, including weather, equipment failure, illness or other circumstances.



SENIOR SOFTBALL CELEBRATES DERBY WIN

Christie Nunes, a member of the Angels of Liberty 75 and older senior women's softball team, returned from a national tournament earning second place. She is pictured here with her mother Doris Waldron, who receives care from Encore Hospice, who sponsors the team's tournament fees of \$2,500 and her nurse Christina Samad. Manager Bev Burger said this team would not be able to travel and participate without the community support. Nunes came home crowned a home run derby champion with seven total. (Submitted photo/Vinnie Taibbi)



BETH EMETH HOSTS OPEN HOUSE

Beth Emeth Congregation of the West Valley, 13702 W. Meeker Blvd., hosted a successful open house in Sun City West. The event was held for three hours July 12. Rabbi Lev Ettelsen spoke to members and potential members interested in more information about the synagogue. Beth Emeth congregation member Gary Cohen said it was a nice gathering, which ended with several new people joining as members. This community event included an ice cream social, 2026 High Holiday ticket sales, a sing-along with Judy Hamer and the chance to tour the synagogue. (Submitted photo/Beth Emeth Congregation of the West Valley)



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Surprise • January 19, 2027 • The Colonnade
Litchfield/Goodyear • February 17, 2027 • Tuscany Falls Clubhouse(Pebble Creek)
Chandler • February 23, 2027 • Sun Lakes Country Club
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Senior center offers upcoming tech talks

Banner Olive Branch Senior Center offers free tech talks for seniors. The first event Tech Talk with Steve runs 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 4, at 13049 N. 103rd Ave. Tech Talk AI Intro part one is 10-11 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 11. Tech Talk with Steve will follow 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Week three features the second part of AI Application 10-11 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 18, with one-on-one Tech Talk with Steve 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Week four offers Tech Talk with Steve availability 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 25.



DAR CHAPTER HONORS VETERANS AT 250 CELEBRATION

The Sun City Bell Recreation Center held its annual July 4 ceremony, which this year coincided with the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The event also recognized United States military veterans. Nine members of the Sun City National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Agua Fria Chapter — descendants of Revolutionary War patriots — were stationed at both entrances to the Bell Center Social Hall. They distributed U.S. flags, U.S. flag lapel pins and chapter brochures to attendees. Vietnam War-era veterans received Vietnam War 50th commemorative anniversary lapel pin packets. Surviving spouses of veterans received surviving spouse pin packets. Some DAR members rang the Liberty Bell during the ceremony. For more information about the Agua Fria Chapter go to aguafria.arizonadar.org. Pictured are chapter vice regent and newsletter editor Mary Hart, Linda Lundberg, Tish Allicki, Daneen Gibson, chapter treasurer Jane Woehle, Linda Korhonen, Deena Gibson and chapter chaplain and veteran Debbie Schneider. (Submitted photo/Mary Hart)

Banner Olive Branch Senior Center offers meals, pantry service

Banner Olive Branch Senior Center, 13049 N. 103rd Ave., offers in dining, to-go meals and food pantry services. The food pantry available at no cost 7-11 a.m. Tuesday-Thursday. The center staff recommends a suggested donation of \$5 (\$5 fee for under 60). Lunch is served at 11 a.m. at no cost for anyone over 60. Breakfast is served 6:30-8:30 a.m. Monday-Friday. Cost is \$5 for breakfast and is open to all. To-go meals are now available daily for \$5/meal and are open to all. To-go meal distribution is 11 a.m.-noon Monday-Friday. The center also offers benefits reviews and information and referral services as well as many activities. Call 623-465-6000.

Menu

- Wednesday, July 29 – Sloppy Joe, wedged potatoes, five-way blend vegetables, berries
- Thursday, July 30 – Shrimp salad (romaine lettuce, cabbage, artichoke, red bell pepper, carrots, asparagus), thousand island dressing, fig bar, roll, orange
- Friday, July 31 – Chicken tenders, tater tots, peas and carrots, roll, graham crackers, peaches
- Monday, Aug. 3 – Country fried steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, roll, fig bar, apricots
- Tuesday, Aug. 4 – Chicken ala king made with peas, carrots, and mushrooms, broccoli, cauliflower, pear, cookie

POLICE REPORTS

Editor's Note: The following information is obtained from Maricopa County Sheriff's Office District 3. This column lists arrests, not convictions, unless otherwise stated. Arrested persons listed here who are later found not guilty are welcome to inform the Independent by calling 623-972-6101.

JULY 4

- A fire was reported 11:12 p.m. in the 10700 block of West Peoria Avenue.
- An assault was reported 7:53 p.m. in the 18300 block of west Caminito Drive.
- Criminal damage was reported 10:14 a.m. in the 13100 block of West Spanish Garden Drive.
- A theft was reported 9:47 a.m. in the 10000 block of West Peoria Avenue.
- A burglary was reported 7:09 a.m. in the 10800 block of West Coggins Drive.

JULY 5

- A vehicle crash with no injuries was reported

7:49 p.m. at the intersection of North Del Webb Boulevard and West Bell Road.

- A fraud or con game was reported 7:30 a.m. in the 14200 block of North 71st Avenue.

JULY 6

- A fraud or con game was reported 12:54 p.m. in the 10600 block of West Manzanita Drive.
- An assault was reported 5: 29 p.m. in the 11000 block of West Timberline Drive.
- An assault was reported 4:27 p.m. in the 14500 block of west Granite Valley Drive.
- Trespassing was reported 3:52 p.m. in the 11300 block of West Duluth Avenue.
- An assault was reported 2:17 p.m. in the 13300 block of West Copperstone Drive.
- A burglary was reported 12:19 p.m. in the 14500 block of west Granite Valley Drive.
- Identity theft was reported 10:43 a.m. in the 16000 block of West Huron Drive.
- Illegal dumping was reported 10:21 a.m. in

the 11400 block of North 114th Avenue.

- A traffic violation was reported 9:26 a.m. at th intersection of 111th Avenue and Mountain View.
- A abandoned vehicle was reported 8:19 a.m. in the 15300 block of West White Horse Drive.
- A burglary was reported 5:17 a.m. in the 14400 block of West R.H. Johnson Boulevard.

JULY 7

- A theft was reported 8:01 p.m. in the 10800 block of West Cameo Drive.
- A theft was reported 3:58 p.m. in the 13600 block of North Del Webb Boulevard.
- Trespassing was reported 4:42 p.m. in the 10500 block of West Thunderbird Boulevard.
- Suspicious activity was reported 12:51 p.m. in the 11022 West Bluefield Court.
- A fraud or con game was reported 9:43 a.m. in the 11100 block of West Emerald Drive.

- A vehicle crash with no injury was reported 9:49 a.m. at the intersection of North 99th Avenue and North Cameo Drive.

JULY 8

- Neighborhood trouble was reported 7:09 p.m. in the 18100 block of West Mission Lane.
- A vehicle crash with no injury was reported 8:32 a.m. in the 10600 block of Northwest US60 Grand Avenue.
- Threats to commit an offense was reported 5:39 p.m. in the 11200 block of West Duluth Avenue.
- A fraud or con game was reported 1:30 p.m. in the 14500 block of West Granite Valley Drive.
- Found property was reported 6:40 p.m. in the 13000 block of West Bell Road.
- A fraud or con game was reported 5:25 p.m. in the 11700 block of West Foothill Court.
- A burglary was reported 3:27 p.m. in the 14500 block of West Horizon Drive.



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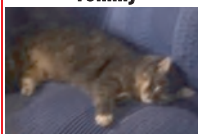
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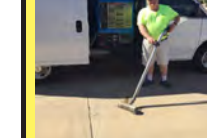
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☐ **Be respectful.** Bullying, public humiliation, insults, name-calling, harassment, and threats directed at another person — or that person's race, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. — have no place in civil discussions. Find ways to respectfully 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
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