



Neighbors
 Chef shares
 his journey; **4**



The arts
 Phoenix
 Theatre sets
 gala; **22**

August 12, 2026 Volume 43 Issue 32 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

COMMUNITY NEWS

Coffee with a Cop focuses on back-to-school safety

Residents join police for a discussion on school zones, traffic and protecting students

By Allison Kotzbauer
 INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Paradise Valley community members gathered in the Paradise Valley Police Department’s main auditorium Wednesday, Aug. 5, where hot coffee and fresh bagels welcomed them into the station.

Community members were then placed into small groups to play games about back-to-school safety. Each team received a whiteboard and marker to write their answers down.

“It really is back to school,” a Paradise Valley resident shouted out.

The event was part of the Coffee with a Cop event series the PVPD hosts the first Wednesday of each month to better inform the community on public safety topics and to give community members a chance to in-

• See **Discussion** on page 14



Nearly 60 years of art, community and discovery in Paradise Valley

Beth Ames Swartz reflects on a lifetime of creativity, connection and finding meaning through her work

By Allison Kotzbauer
 INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Paintings line the walls of Beth Ames Swartz’s Paradise Valley living room, illuminated by gallery-style track lighting.

Her home feels less like a curated space and more like a lifetime of memories and creativity accumulated over nearly 60 years; the kind of lived-in authenticity that cannot be engineered or replicated.

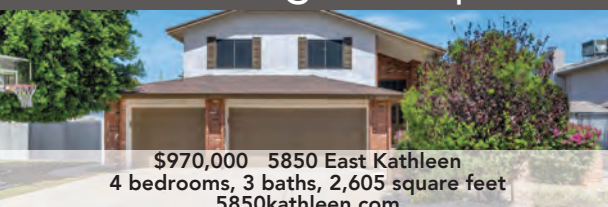
On a side table, a small mountain of CDs and art catalogs teeter beside one another, evidence of decades spent listening, studying and creating. Nearby, ceramic pots made by her grandson sit among the

• See **Art** on page 6

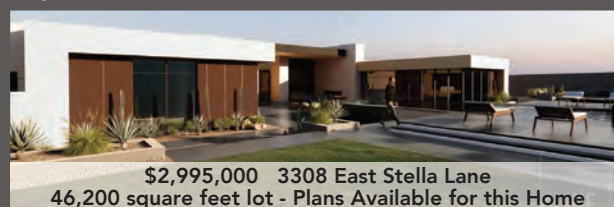
Beth Ames Swartz in her home studio working on a new piece in her series, “Quantum Light.” (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

THE CHOICE IS OBVIOUS

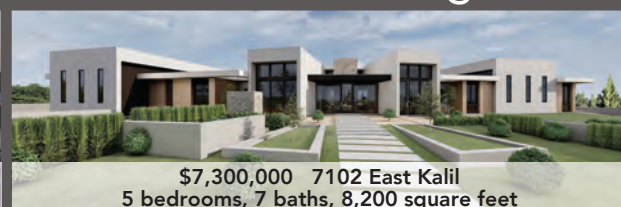
Our Knowledge is Unparalleled, Our Connections are Limitless and Our Marketing Works



\$970,000 5850 East Kathleen
4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2,605 square feet
5850kathleen.com



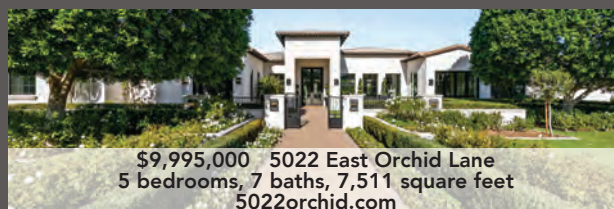
\$2,995,000 3308 East Stella Lane
46,200 square feet lot - Plans Available for this Home



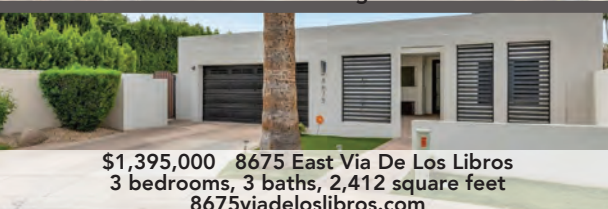
\$7,300,000 7102 East Kalil
5 bedrooms, 7 baths, 8,200 square feet



\$7,295,000 7347 North Red Ledge
5 bedrooms, 6 baths, 7,300 square feet
7347northredledge.com



\$9,995,000 5022 East Orchid Lane
5 bedrooms, 7 baths, 7,511 square feet
5022orchid.com



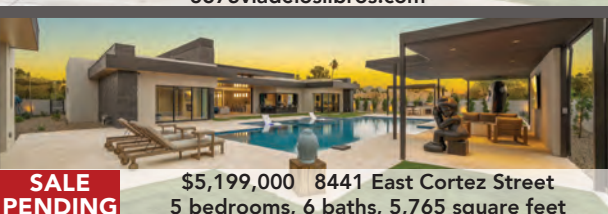
\$1,395,000 8675 East Via De Los Libros
3 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2,412 square feet
8675viadeloslibros.com



\$9,595,000 9790 North 56th Street
4 bedrooms, 5 baths, 8,144 square feet

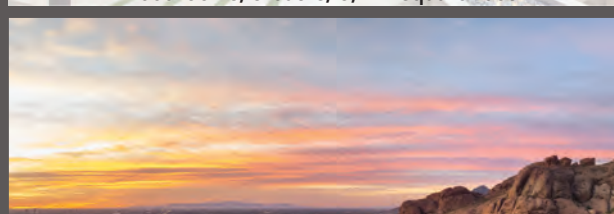


\$3,250,000 3965 East Sierra Vista
5 bedrooms, 5 baths, 4,487 square feet

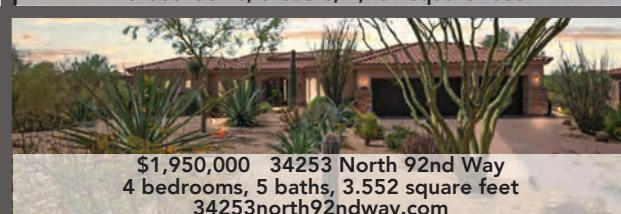


**SALE
PENDING**

\$5,199,000 8441 East Cortez Street
5 bedrooms, 6 baths, 5,765 square feet



\$24,000,000 5500 North Dromedary
The iconic MERRY CHRISTMAS House on top
of Camelback Mountain 23.66 acres



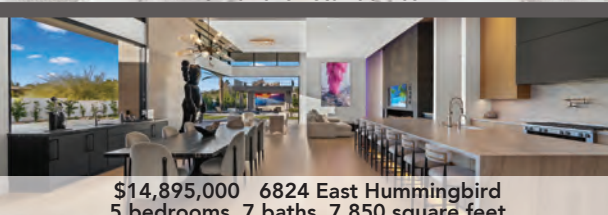
\$1,950,000 34253 North 92nd Way
4 bedrooms, 5 baths, 3,552 square feet
34253north92ndway.com



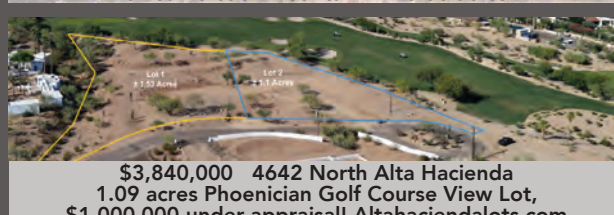
\$1,495,000 7157 East Rancho Vista #4001
3 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2,213 square feet
7157ranchovista4001.com



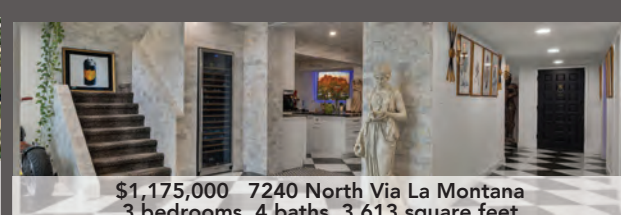
\$7,500,000 9735 East Kemper
5 bedrooms, 7 baths, 7,742 square feet



\$14,895,000 6824 East Hummingbird
5 bedrooms, 7 baths, 7,850 square feet



\$3,840,000 4642 North Alta Hacienda
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\$1,175,000 7240 North Via La Montana
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THE MOST VALUABLE THING I'VE *NEVER* USED

BY GREG HAGUE

Have you ever owned something valuable for years, something you genuinely loved, and never quite figured out what to do with it? A vintage guitar in the closet. Your grandfather's watch in a drawer. A lakefront lot you keep meaning to build on.

Mine doesn't sit in a drawer. It doesn't sit anywhere. You can't hold it or hang it on a wall, yet people keep trying to buy it from me.

More than fifteen years ago, I bought the website address ParadiseValley.com. The name itself. Our town's name, on the internet.

I always intended to do something wonderful with it. Then my real estate business grew, and grew some more, and the years slipped by the way they do. The most valuable thing I've never used just sat there, patiently waiting for me.

Others noticed. Every so often, someone tracks me down with an offer. You'd guess the biggest checks would come from real estate companies. They didn't. You'd guess next a major corporation wanting to put its luxury brand in front of a town like ours. Several tried. Good offers, too. But not the biggest.

The biggest offer, well over \$1 million, came from a company in an industry I won't name. It had nothing to do with real estate, luxury goods, or Arizona. I stared at that offer, genuinely puzzled. Why on earth would they want it? Then they explained, and I learned that "paradise" means one thing to our town council and something else entirely in certain



corners of the internet. I felt about a hundred years old. I'll leave it there, except to say that our town's good name can't be bought for a million dollars, and it's staying in local hands.

While I've turned down every offer, I'd partner with the right person tomorrow if they had a great idea and the time to execute it.

I don't want money for ParadiseValley.com. What I want is for it to do what it was born to do: sell this town to the nation the way no community website ever has.

Picture it. Someone in Chicago or Seattle searches for luxury homes in Arizona, and the first thing they find is ParadiseValley.com, showing them the most beautiful community in America and making the case, space to breathe, mountain view by mountain view, that there is simply no better place to live.

It could even feature Paradise Valley homes whose owners might consider selling, whether publicly listed or not, and listed with anyone at all. This isn't about my business. Not one dollar needs to flow my way. It's about doing something special for the town I love and intend to live in for the rest of my life, which I'm planning on being a long one.

What I lack is time. So I'm looking for an idea. Maybe a partner. Someone with a great idea and the ability to execute it. The only requirements: the site must make Paradise Valley shine nationwide, it must be genuinely engaging, and it must serve this community first.

Done right, it would lift the value of every home in town simply by telling the world what we already know.

So here is my invitation. If you have an idea for ParadiseValley.com, along with the time and skill to execute it, email me at greg@72sold.com. And since this column now travels well beyond our town limits, to about 100,000 readers across the country, let me be clear: you don't need a Paradise Valley address to raise your hand. Great ideas don't check zip codes.

Fair warning: I receive over 200 emails a day, so give me a few days. But I answer every email I get, and if you send me an idea, I guarantee you'll hear back from me.

Fifteen years is long enough for something valuable to sit in a drawer. With the right idea and somebody to help, it's time to lift it out.

Greg Hague CEO, 72SOLD

ON YOURVALLEY.NET

Collaborative surpasses 2,000 stories in first year of statewide reporting

Over 2,000 education stories have been published across Arizona in the first year of the Arizona Local News Foundation's Education Solutions Collaborative, a milestone organizers say reflects growing demand for local reporting focused on both education challenges and the programs working to address them.

Read online: <https://tinyurl.com/3b7jjaep>

Arizona water conservation efforts paying off

At first glance, Arizona's booming population and decades-long drought might seem like a recipe for soaring water demand. Instead, many cities across the state are telling a different story.

It's a surprising trend: Arizona has added hundreds of thousands of residents while many communities have reduced the amount of water each person uses every day.

Read online: <https://tinyurl.com/55j4u-w2b>

Arizona, California, Nevada would share cuts under proposal to manage Colorado River

Arizona, California and Nevada would take less water from the Colorado River under a proposal announced Friday by the federal government to stave off crisis in the beleaguered waterway.

The proposal from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation spares Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Wyoming from facing mandatory cuts for now. But it's a temporary fix as the states that rely on the river still fight over a long-term management plan for the dwindling resource that powers huge swaths of the Western U.S.

Read online: <https://tinyurl.com/597u-je9h>

Michelin star chef's journey takes influences from nomadic youth, Las Vegas tenure

By Gentry Roberts
CRONKITE NEWS

At Belmont Kitchen and Cocktails, executive chef Alex Stratta has put his Michelin-starred experience to work.

Stratta has adopted those standards to create what he calls "a really fancy, luxury neighborhood place." The result is a restaurant where diners can enjoy a Tuesday taco night or Friday caviar and champagne with equal ease.

Stratta's commitment is to the people he serves. "I just want to take care of people and make Belmont a place on all levels where you can have exquisite cuisine or just a burger," Stratta says. "This place is perfect for me to do that."

In 1998, at 30 years old, Stratta won the James Beard Award. Later, he connected with Steve Wynn and was offered the opportunity to open his own restaurant in Las Vegas; the partnership was sealed with a simple guarantee.

• See **Chef** on page 18



Executive chef Alex Stratta arrives early at his restaurant, Belmont Kitchen and Cocktails, for evening service on July 17, 2026, in Scottsdale. (Photo by Gentry Roberts/Cronkite News)

HEALTH

Doctor: routine check-ups key to men's health

By J. Graber

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA



Men utilize health care four times less than women, according to HonorHealth primary care physician Aaron Barrett. (Courtesy HonorHealth)

Men's health month may be winding down, but HonorHealth primary care physician Dr. Aaron Barrett offered some advice for men toward earning a clean bill of health year around.

The No. 1 thing men can do to improve their health?

"First, they need to go to the doctor," Barrett said. "Men under utilize health care. I think it's like four times less than women, something like that, so first, they just need to have a good primary doc that they're seeing every year."

About 55% of men admit to not getting regular health screenings, according to the Cleveland Clinic.

That discrepancy results in an average man's life span being 5.4 years less than women, according to the U.S. Cen-

ters for Disease Control. And it's a gap that's been growing

But going to the doctor doesn't just mean seeing a primary care physician, said Barrett, who has been practicing medicine in the Valley since 2018. It's also routinely doing things like going to the ophthalmologist to get your eyes check and the dentist for your teeth.

"Also in Arizona, annual skin cancer screenings with a dermatologist (are important)," Barrett said.

The reason men don't go to the doctor as much as women?

"Because we're men!" Barrett said. "We're stubborn. We're told and taught and raised to deal with it. It will go away."

That's a particularly bad plan when it comes to cancer screenings, Barrett said.

• See **Health** on page 20



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FROM THE COVER

Art

• From page 1

artwork. Her daughter and grandson are both creatives, continuing a legacy that spans generations.

One of her recently reacquired “Firework” pieces, from the defining series she created between 1977 and 1984, glimmers nearby as she reaches for a shoebox sitting on her coffee table.

Inside are dozens of handmade birthday cards from fellow artists and longtime friends, each one celebrating Swartz’s 90th birthday. She flips through them one by one, sharing stories about the people who made them and the decades of friendship behind each note.

The collection says as much about Swartz’s legacy as the artwork hanging around her.

For Swartz, art has always been about more than creating something to hang on a wall. Her life and work are guided by the teachings of Kabbalah, including the belief that giving to others and doing good deeds creates a greater sense of connection.

“If you give love you get it back,” she said.

That philosophy has shaped the way Swartz interacts with her community. For nearly 60 years, the nationally recognized artist has called Paradise Valley home, and beyond her exhibitions and accolades, she has quietly helped shape the Valley’s creative community.

“I tend to find a need in the community and fill it,” she said.

Swartz founded an artists breakfast club that has connected hundreds of artists, hosted neighborhood potlucks for 25 years and encouraged others to see art not simply as something to look at, but as a way to better understand one another.

Behind her home sits Swartz’s studio, a personal oasis filled with natural light, exposed wood beams and artwork spanning decades of her career. The space holds pieces from throughout her life, including



Beth Ames Swartz, Stars, I Have Seen Them Fall, from the Quantum Light series. The work is part of Swartz's latest collection, which explores themes of life, loss, mortality and the search for meaning. (Photo submitted by Beth Ames Swartz)

many works from her current “Quantum Light” series.

“I think being in Paradise Valley I’ve been very, very lucky to keep this house and have my studio here,” she said. “I think I would have developed very differently if I had lived somewhere else.”

For Swartz, that ability to stay rooted

Beth Ames Swartz creates Solomon’s Pillars #1 in 1980 at Solomon’s Pillars in Israel’s Timna Valley using her Firework process-ritual, a method that incorporated fire as part of the artistic process. (Photo submitted by Beth Ames Swartz)

in one place while continuing to create has been part of what has kept her energized throughout her life.

“I just was so busy making art, I didn’t even notice that I was old until I turned 90,” she said.

And Swartz has no plans to stop creating.

Art, she said, has given her a sense of purpose and kept her connected to curiosity and discovery.

“When you make art it’s like you’re traveling on the inner realm. You’re investigating, you’re reading, you’re discovering...it’s not about the outside really it’s about the inner and I feel like I’m still learning and investigating,” she said. “It keeps me alive.”

Her current collection, “Quantum Light,” reflects that same curiosity while exploring the later stages of life. As she

• See **Art** on page 16



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5275 N Camelhead Rd PHOENIX	\$2,550,000
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OPINION

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Our opinions page is to provide an open forum for our readers. We hope to stimulate debate, not to dominate or control it. We reserve the right to edit our opinions, and we insist on civility. Please include your name and phone number, so we can contact you for clarification or confirmation. We welcome your photo. All opinions must be no more than 300 words.

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.

With water, bring demand in line with supply

Arizona's response to the latest Colorado River plan has focused heavily on economic damage. Officials warn that deeper cuts could hurt agriculture, mining, semiconductor manufacturing, housing and future growth.

That concern is understandable, but it avoids the central issue. Arizona is still trying to protect every major demand on a river that no longer produces enough water to support them all.

The Colorado River is delivering less water than the system was built to use. Bureau of Reclamation data show that natural flow at Lees Ferry averaged about 14.6 million acre-feet annually from 1906 through 2024, but only about 12.4 million acre-feet during the 2000 through 2024 drought period.

That is not a negotiating problem. It is a supply problem.

Arizona should fight for a fair share of the river, but fairness will not refill Lake Mead or Lake Powell. Even if the state wins concessions from California or the Upper Basin, the larger imbalance remains.

The answer is to bring demand into line with supply.

That means protecting existing communities before approving more water-dependent growth. It means rejecting subdivisions that rely on uncertain future supplies, requiring new industry to provide renewable water, limiting groundwater pumping, expanding wastewater reuse and eliminating wasteful uses such as nonfunctional turf.

Agriculture will also have to become more efficient, and some acreage will have to come out of production. Those choices will be painful, but postponing them will only make the eventual cuts harsher.

**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.

Arizona has spent decades treating growth as the priority and water as a problem to solve later. Later has arrived.

An economy built on water that does not exist is not sustainable. Arizona can impose limits now, while it still has choices, or wait until falling reservoirs and dry wells impose them for us.

Rusty Childress
RIO VERDE

Will we learn from the last Scottsdale Unified election?

As a taxpayer in the Scottsdale Unified School District, I hope voters will remember the lessons of the last school board election before casting their ballots for the two open seats this November.

In the previous election, three Democratic candidates campaigned on protecting our neighborhood schools. Yet after taking office, they became the driving force behind voting to close schools that our families and taxpayers have supported for decades. Many residents were left wondering how campaign promises could differ so dramatically from the decisions that followed.

Now, as this election begins, we're seeing another troubling example. One school board candidate placed campaign signs in the public right-of-way before the date permitted under Arizona law. Thankfully, communi-

ty members reported the issues and the Cities of Scottsdale and Phoenix promptly removed the signs. This is not about campaign signs, this is about character.

Campaigns are often our first glimpse into how a candidate approaches public responsibility. Respecting the law, following the rules and competing fairly are not small matters. They reflect the judgment and integrity voters should expect from those seeking public office.

Scottsdale cannot afford another election where campaign messaging says one thing while actions tell a different story. Before entrusting candidates with decisions that affect our children, teachers, neighborhood schools and millions of taxpayer dollars, we should ask whether they have demonstrated the character and accountability those responsibilities require.

Fortunately, voters have another choice. Incumbent Amy Carney and candidate Jeanne Beasley have shown that integrity is not just something to talk about. It is something to practice throughout the campaign.

This election is about more than promises. It is about character. Scottsdale deserves school board leaders who respect the law, honor their commitments and earn the public's trust through their words and their actions.

Deb Oberhamer
Scottsdale

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5 BEDS | 7 BATHS | 6,021 SQ FT ON NEARLY 1 ACRE



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5901 E EDWARD LANE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
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SOLD: \$19,250,000
6025 E CHOLLA LANE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BUYER & SELLER



SOLD: \$16,000,000
6724 N 62ND STREET | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BUYER & SELLER



SOLD: \$18,750,000
6447 E MCDONALD DRIVE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



SOLD: \$17,000,000
6203 E JOSHUA TREE LANE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BOTH BUYER AND SELLER



SOLD: \$16,250,000
5001 N WILKINSON ROAD | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



SOLD: \$14,275,000
6515 E MEADOWLARK LN | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



SOLD: \$13,000,000
6101 N YUCCA ROAD | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BUYER



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OFF MARKET SALE IN FINISTERRE
REPRESENTED BUYER



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FROM THE COVER

Discussion

• From page 1

interact with officers in an informal setting.

Law for Kids, a non-profit part of the Arizona Bar Foundation aimed at educating children in Arizona about the law, their rights and their civic responsibilities partnered with the PVPD for August's event to focus on how to keep the community safe as children return to the classroom.

Education Program Manager at the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education Andrea Viel led the presentation with games and time for discussion about Arizona traffic laws related to schools and safety.

Members of the public played a crosswalk escape room game from the Law for Kids website as well as a matching game. Viel said the games



Education Program Manager at the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services and Education Andrea Viel starts her back-to-school safety presentation at Coffee with a Cop on Wednesday, Aug. 5, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/AllisonKotzbauer)

are meant for children but are a great way for anyone to refresh on Arizona laws as children head back to school.

"They are intended for youth, of course, but I think it's a great tool for anyone in the community," she said. "It's just a fun way to dive deeper."

The games covered when and

where to cross the street, what to do if there is no sidewalk, who has the right of way, laws for bikes on the road, school zone laws and fines and stopping for a school bus.

"Living in a community, it is a share of responsibility to keep each other safe," Viel said.

Paradise Valley Police Chief Freeman Carney thanked the community after Viel's presentation and attributed Paradise Valley's safe streets to the department's officers but also to everyone who participated in the event.

"I think this is the safest place in the state because of them (PVPD officers), which it is," he said. "But as you can see, you guys are really good on your answers, so you guys are making it safe, too."

Council Member Karen Liepmann who attended the event said everyone should join the PVPD for a Coffee with a Cop event, and she learned something about pedestrian laws she didn't know before.

"Coffee with a Cop is one of the most community building, positive reinforcing, events in Paradise Valley," she said. "It's a lot of fun, and we learn really interesting things, to-

• See **Discussion** on page 16



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FROM THE COVER



Beth Ames Swartz creating with fire, controlled by water bottle spray, in Arizona in 1977. (Photo submitted by Beth Ames Swartz)

Art

• From page 6

has lost friends and grown older, the work has become a way to process mortality and find meaning in what comes next.

“It’s the age and stage of life. You begin losing your friends and you begin seeing that you have to prepare for the inevitable,” she said. “It’s very comforting for me to do this work.”

Throughout her career, Swartz’s work has reflected not only her own experiences, but the world around her. She said her art encourages people not to dwell on individual strug-

gles, but to look at life from a wider perspective.

“Life is a school,” she said. “We have to be willing to learn the lessons that were taught or we keep repeating the lesson again and again.”

Currently, Swartz’s work is on display alongside that of her daughter, Julianna Swartz’s “Tender Alchemy,” at the Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art. The exhibition runs through Aug. 23.

Allison Kotzbauer can be reached at akotzbauer@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

Discussion

• From page 14

day I learned something interesting.”

Kyle Stewart, a Scottsdale resident and financial advisor, attended Coffee with a Cop for the first time Wednesday.

“I learned more about school safety and proper actions to take when driv-

ing and being around a school zone,” he said. “I wish they would do this in Scottsdale. I think it was extremely beneficial and just a great way for the community to come together.”

Allison Kotzbauer can be reached at akotzbauer@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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Chef

• From page 4

He said, "I've got to guarantee that you're here. I'll call it Alex." And that's how he guaranteed I was there all the time."

A decade and a half later, at the triple-A, five-time diamond restaurant Alex at the Wynn, he achieved what many chefs only dream of: two Michelin stars.

The ranking and publicity that followed brought surreal moments, including one when Michael Jackson sat in Stratta's private dining room with his feet on the table, a hole visible in his sock.

"He introduced himself to me saying, 'Hi, I'm Michael.' I'm like, no kidding," Stratta said while laughing.

For Stratta, the awards were never the destination; they were simply validation of doing things the right way and doing right by the people he worked with, he explained. The

accolades were never about personal fame.

"I never sought out to have any kind of fame out of it," he says. "For me, it's a craft. It's not an entertainment thing."

The real reward came from watching his team in his restaurant rise, he says.

"The joy really was to see some of my staff guys take pride," he says. "Some of these guys came from North Las Vegas, next thing you know, they're working in a two-star Michelin restaurant with a tuxedo on."

Mentorship is everything, he explains.

"My former sous chefs have gone on to win James Beard Awards themselves. My former sommelier became vice president of food and beverage at MGM Grand. My former line cook and sous chef now hold similar positions at the Cosmopolitan and Venetian."

"I didn't have any magic dust," Stratta insists. "I just passed on what

was passed on to me. And that is incredible joy. Bigger than any other rewards."

Even after overcoming colon cancer in 2009, Stratta's philosophy remains unchanged: "It's about taking care of people and committing to something personally. Stay humble, take chances, and be ready to fail."

Born in Wisconsin, he moved to Pakistan at 4 months old when his father, a hotelier, secured a job there. The family's nomadic life continued through Indonesia, Singapore, Monaco and Mexico.

Both his father and mother shaped his discipline as a chef.

"I had a lot of discipline from living in hotels, having to be quiet, having to eat at a certain time," he recalls.

He wanted to pursue his dream of becoming a chef when he became older.

"My apprenticeship started in France at a three-star Michelin restaurant when I was 19. That was the fundamental real start for me,"

Stratta explains. "I was exposed to fine dining and cooking, and it grew on me. I didn't know any other way. It's like, this is the way it's done. I knew no shortcuts."

While traveling across different parts of Europe to gain experience, he trained to perfect the small things.

"A lot of that fundamental stuff is still very much part of whether it's something in the service or something in the food," Stratta says of his approach. "They always had the common theme of ... trying to be genuinely hospitable and trying to exceed everything."

Stay tuned for our second story about a chef just as dedicated as executive chef Alex Stratta from cooking in Michelin-star restaurants to owning one of the best restaurants in Phoenix, Arizona, all in his name.

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Health

• From page 4

“You know, by the time you recognize something, it’s often too late,” he said.

Nearly 300,000 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2024 and over 35,000 died from it, according to the American Cancer Society.

The reason is easy to pinpoint why men don’t like screening for prostate and rectal cancer, but there are ways around that.

Blood and stool tests, while not the gold standard, can take the place of more invasive procedures.

One of the top killers of men is cardiovascular disease.

One in four male deaths were caused by cardiovascular disease, according to a 2022 report from Emory Healthcare.

And men typically develop heart disease seven to 10 years earlier than

women with risk factors being things like high blood pressure and bad cholesterol, the report said.

Statin medication can go a long way there, but fear of statins causing Alzheimers is keeping people away, even though there is no documented evidence of that in research, Barrett said.

“Statins have been out for decades and if that were true, you know, the majority of the population would be demented ... but what they do, what we know they do, is save lives,” he said. “That’s one of the biggest thing I get, ‘Hey, I don’t want to take a statin because it might cause Alzheimer’s or something like that. When in fact, it would likely help prevent a heart attack or some other cardiovascular event. I have that discussion quite a bit.”

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.

Scottsdale Quarter signs lease agreements with two fashion brands

Scottsdale Quarter has signed lease agreements with two fashion brands, bringing their stores to Arizona for the first time.

The mall on 15279 N. Scottsdale Road signed agreements with Hill House Home and L’AGENCE, according to a press release. Hill House Home will open late summer to early fall in 2026, while L’AGENCE is set to open in 2027.

L’AGENCE is a Los Angeles-based brand that blends Southern California ease with Parisian sensibility. Hill House Home, formally a digitally native brand, has since grown into a retail operation with nine loca-



Scottsdale Quarter has signed lease agreements with Hill House Home and L’AGENCE. (Photo courtesy Evolve PR and Marketing)

tions across the United States.

For more information on Scottsdale Quarter, visit <https://scottsdale-quarter.com/>.

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The Dr. Stacie J. and Richard J Stephenson Theatre and Courtyard is located at 1825 N. Central Ave. (Independent News-media/Steve Stockmar)



Phoenix Theatre Company gala will celebrate institution's history, future

Phoenix Theatre Company will host "Applause! Gala 2026: Where Dreams Begin" to celebrate individuals and organizations whose commitment to the arts, humanitarian causes, and community has helped shape the Valley for generations.

The gala starts at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 6, at the Dr. Stacie J. and Richard J Stephenson Theatre and Courtyard, 1825 N. Central Ave.

Honorary Chairs DeeDee Vecchione and Robert Meza will lead the evening which features a live musical production written and directed by Producing Artistic Director Michael Barnard. Guests will enjoy preshow a cocktail hour and a post-performance New York City-themed meal with dancing in the open-air courtyard underscored by Justin & the Swing-Beats.

The 2026 honorees are Lauren Bailey (Humanitarian Award), Sally Pope (Woman Who Cares), John Graham (Man of Character), Stevie Eller (Lifetime Achievement), The David E. Reese Family Foundation (Angels of Our Art), and Rose Law Group (Company Who Cares).

"What the Applause! Gala makes possible reaches every corner of this

company," Phoenix Theatre Company Executive Director Vincent VanVleet shared in a press release. "It supports the productions audiences experience on our stages, but it also sustains the work that happens far beyond them, from our Partners That Heal to Summer Theatre Camp programs."

Partners That Heal brings live performance to patients and families in hospitals across Arizona, and the inclusive Summer Theatre Camp serves children of all abilities through a partnership with the Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center.

As The Phoenix Theatre Company opens its 107th season, the Applause! Gala offers an opportunity to reflect on more than a century of storytelling.

"This evening gives us the ability to dream bigger, serve more deeply, and continue building a theatre that belongs to this community," VanVleet said.

Gala tickets and sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Marisa Butler, director of development, at m.butler@phoenixtheatre.com.

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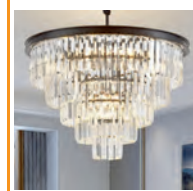
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