



Clubs

Sun City Ukulele Club strikes a chord; **4**



INDEPENDENT



Community

Firefighters to host charity car wash; **18**

August 12, 2026 Volume 66 Issue 32 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

County licensing program benefits Sun City seniors

By Zev Black and Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Identification for pets is key to reunification if that pet ever gets lost.

As part of this effort, Maricopa County Animal Care & Control partnered with DocuPet a year ago to help keep pets safe.

Residents can create an online profile and renew licenses, upload proof of rabies and update information online, without having to visit a physical location.

Maricopa County requires dogs three months and older to be licensed and renewal is required

• See **Pets** on page 5



Sun City Posse Cmdr. Arlene Kluzenaar speaks during the organization's Aug. 4 monthly meeting, where she urged residents to take precautions during Arizona's extreme summer temperatures. (Noah Flug/Independent Newsmedia)

Posse shares July activity, public safety updates

By Noah Flug
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Even as many volunteers head out of town for the summer, the Sun City Posse remains hard at work. At the organization's Aug. 4 monthly meeting, leaders reviewed July activity and shared public safety updates for residents.

The Posse logged more than 8,000 patrol calls, 1,139 incoming telephone calls and approximately 3,300 vacation watches during July, according to monthly statistics present-

ed by Lt. Fay Moore.

Moore said the organization had 128 active members at the end of the month, although many volunteers leave Sun City during the summer.

"We're really working at much less than that," Moore said.

She praised active members for their willingness to fill open shifts after two volunteers called out because of medical issues.

"Before the phone reached its cradle, two people jumped in and took those shifts," Moore said. "That's

what we're made of. We get the job done."

The Posse also assisted the Sun City Fire and Medical Department 293 times with asset protection and crowd control, completed nearly 3,800 neighborhood drive-bys and conducted 31 welfare checks in July.

Moore said the Posse has completed 166 welfare checks this year, resolving "more than 80%" of those calls without assistance from other agencies.

• See **Posse** on page 5

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MUSIC



Club president Trudy Bryson stands with members Jim Walker and Vicky Miller. (Independent News-media/Zev Black)

Sun City Ukulele Club strikes a chord

By Zev Black
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

In 2011, a guitarist couldn't believe the Sun City community didn't have a ukulele club. Now, the club not only exists but is thriving, growing to more than 150 people who love to jam and have fun.

The Sun City Ukulele Club meets 3-4:30 p.m. every Thursday at the Fairway Recreation Center, 10600 W. Peoria Ave., in the second floor music room.

Trudy Bryson, who was an original member and the current president, said those looking to join don't need to have any prior experience playing the instrument to be part of the jam sessions.

"We don't bite," she said. "We have big smiles on our faces. We wel-

come everyone. We don't care about how much music background you have or if you've ever played an instrument in your life. Just come and have fun with us because that's really our whole objective. To have fun."

Jim Walker, a former vice president of the club, said he started playing the ukulele five years ago when he joined the club. He added he learned how to play the guitar when he was 70 years old which he did view as a slight advantage.

When a new member joins the club, they go through five stations as they get acquainted with the instrument and club.

"You can stay in one station as long as you want, until you feel comfortable to go to the next one," Walker

• See **Ukulele** on page 9

INDEPENDENT

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Posse

• From page 1

Maricopa County Sheriff's Deputy Bill Cornwell told residents deputies are investigating multiple reports of criminal damage in the community.

"We've had a series of criminal damage going on. There's multiple victims of that," Cornwell said, urging residents to contact the Sheriff's Office if they witness anything.

The meeting also included a presen-

tation on heat safety from Posse Cmdr. Arlene Kluizenaar, who encouraged residents to take precautions during Arizona's hottest months.

Kluizenaar said Maricopa County recorded 645 heat-related deaths in 2023 and 608 in 2024.

While 2025 figures remain under review, she said the preliminary total has dropped to 430 deaths.

"We are surmising it is because of the increase in interest in getting water out there in the public and having cooling sta-

tions for people," Kluizenaar said, noting the Posse now serves as a mobile hydration station by carrying bottled water in patrol vehicles.

Kluizenaar urged residents and volunteers to stay hydrated, avoid alcohol and caffeine, wear lightweight clothing and seek shade or air conditioning whenever possible.

For anyone showing signs of heat stroke, she emphasized immediate action.

"You call 911 first thing," Kluizenaar said.

Pets

• From page 1

every year. According to the website, the cost starts at \$19.

Kim Powell, communications supervisor with Maricopa County Animal Care & Control, said many of the phone calls coming in are from residents in the Sun Cities who want to use the service and need assistance navigating the program through the website.

"A lot of individuals in Maricopa County do not realize it is the law to license their pet," said Powell.

She said pets that are licensed keep pets and people together, which is the goal.

DocuPet allows owners to indicate in the profile if the dog is missing.

If someone finds a dog with a tag, that can be inputted to indicate a dog was found. Powell said the information on the back of the tag can be typed into DocuPet and owner information can be found. If a Maricopa County field officer finds the dog, they can provide a free ride back home.

The first 24 hours is free for found dogs to stay in a Maricopa County shelter. If there is no microchip or identification for the dog, state law states they can be held for 72 hours before the dog can potentially be placed up for adoption. There is also a five-day minimum hold on stray dogs.

Powell said officials try to do everything possible to reunite the dog and owner.

"When you know your pet ran off,

owners can go into DocuPet and report it missing and that will integrate with other apps," said Powell.

The Sun City Posse also assists with lost dogs.

Posse Cmdr. Arlene Kluizenaar stated in a text message that the group has a lost and found book for missing dogs and other pets. She added one resident has a large tortoise that sometimes gets loose.

"Our lost and found book can help to reunite a lost animal with their family," she stated.

Residents who have lost their pet or found a missing pet can call the Posse with the type of animal, color, any special markings, size, name and any other important details.

NextDoor, Ring and Petco Love Lost are alerted through the DocuPet program, which provide pet searching options.

Powell said when an individual loses a dog, it is important to take all the steps online to report it missing, but also paying a visit to the shelter should also be on the list.

Kluizenaar stated the Posse gives out the phone numbers of local shelters and Maricopa County Animal Control, but does not take in any lost dogs.

"The Sun City Posse does not take lost animals but we can send a patrol car to the area to help look for a lost animal," she stated.

Not licensing a dog can result in fines and Maricopa County has ways to enforce. If an individual's dog bites someone and does not have the rabies vaccine, that

Nominations open for Sun City Favorites contest

Readers are invited to submit any missing Sun City businesses from our Favorites list now until Friday, Aug. 14, 2026. To make the list, the business must physically reside in the geographic boundaries of Sun City.



After Aug. 14, we will no longer accept submissions for our readers' choice awards contest, which goes live Sept. 1-30, 2026. Please let the newsroom know if your favorite Sun City-located business is not on the list by emailing aznews@iniusa.org.

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can add penalties.

Powell said making sure the pet has a microchip and is tagged helps pets and people together. The county offers \$25 microchip events throughout the year.

Visit maricopa.gov/226/Dog-License or call 602-5067-387.

DONATION

Senior Center receives donation from St. Mary's

Grants, donations make up 52% of total funding

By Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A recent donation to the Banner Olive Branch Senior Center will help to ensure food availability for those in need.

The senior center received a \$5,000 donation from St. Mary's to support pantry operations at the senior center. Banner Olive Branch Senior Center team members Heike

Newman, Angela Bertty, Jennifer Lawless and Sharon Christensen accepted the donation from St. Mary's Food Bank representative Yocelyn Ruiz.

Senior center director Lawless said officials are grateful to have the support of Banner Health, however, only 48% of funding comes from this organization.

The remainder is covered by grants and donations.

"We are so fortunate to have support from the Banner Health Foun-

dation, the philanthropic arm of Banner Health. Our largest grant comes from the Area Agency on Aging, and we have been funded by them--through the Older Americans Act--for a very long time," said Lawless.

Lawless also seeks grants and opportunities online, as well as through grant platforms.

The \$5,000 donation will be used to buy shelf stable food to supplement the pantry on days when inventory is low.

Grocery donations received and redistributed in 2025 included 1,123,152 pounds of food.

"That equates to 1,347,782

meals and based on a standard valuation of donated food (\$1.73 per pound) that equates to \$1,943,053 in donated food," Lawless explained.

Lawless said from 2024-2025, she started seeing about 13% less food through July and that went down from 2024-2026. The random day program helps to get through the 500 patrons each day.

In 2025, there were 86,207 people visited the pantry and currently through June, 62,000 people have come through

The Banner Olive Branch Food Pantry is open 7-11 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.



Banner Olive Branch Senior Center team members Heike Newman, Angela Bertty, Jennifer Lawless and Sharon Christensen accepted the donation from St. Mary's Food Bank representative Yocelyn Ruiz. (Submitted photo/Banner Olive Branch Senior Center)

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, Aug. 12 - Hot open face roast beef sandwich, mushrooms, peas, sweet potato tots, graham crackers, orange
- Thursday, Aug. 13 - Eggplant parmesan, pasta, lima beans, Caribbean mix vegetables, fruit jello
- Friday, Aug. 14 - Chicken salad sandwich, sliced tomato, coleslaw, whole grain sun chips, pears
- Monday, Aug. 17 - Beef lasagna, Normandy mix vegetables, bruscher sprouts, brownie, peaches
- Tuesday, Aug. 18 - Herb chicken breast, lemon couscous, asparagus, carrots, orange



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PERSONAL BACKGROUND HIGHLIGHTS: I was born just outside Ottawa, Canada; my husband Jerry was born in Cali, Colombia. My parents retired to Arizona from Indiana to be closer to family. Jerry and I are home base for our daughter and her three children, our grandchildren. We also have an Australian shepherd mix we brought home during the pandemic.

PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND HIGHLIGHTS: More than 13 years of leadership experience in enterprise technology and high-growth B2B

SaaS, leading product management and product marketing initiatives at Honeywell and multiple fast-scaling B2B SaaS companies. I hold a BA in Spanish from Rutgers University, an MBA from the Thunderbird School of Global Management (now part of ASU) and am Six Sigma Green Belt certified.

WHAT I DO: I'm the owner of Seniors Helping Seniors Sun City — the seventh Seniors Helping Seniors location in Arizona. My husband Jerry serves as vice president of operations. We provide non-medical in-home care built on a peer-caregiver model, matching active older adults with seniors who need support. Services include companionship, meal preparation and shopping, light housekeeping, errands, medication reminders, long-distance check-ins, safety and fall prevention, respite care, light handyman work, yard work, pet care, memory/dementia/Alzheimer's care and personal care. We're also completing the process to offer veteran services.

WHAT I LIKE MOST ABOUT DOING BUSINESS

HERE: Sun City and Peoria were built on a spirit of neighbors helping neighbors, and I see what we do as an extension of that same value. Most of the



Submitted photo/Julie Vasquez

time, a good neighbor is exactly what someone needs — but sometimes a family needs a level of support that goes beyond what a neighbor can reasonably provide. People here love their homes and their community, and we get to help them remain independent in both for longer. We also get to give relief to family members who want to stay close to a loved one but need support to make that possible.

PREVIOUS OCCUPATION AND WHY I LEFT: This feels like coming full circle. In college, I directed activities in nursing homes and before business school, I ran a community development corporation. Both were experiences rooted in understanding what people actually need and building some-

thing around it. At Honeywell, that same instinct took me around the world, working with people from dozens of countries and cultures. Across my years in product management and product marketing, I built a career on developing a deep understanding of people's needs and creating solutions for them. Now I get to do that same work at kitchen tables instead of conference tables.

WHAT I AM PROMOTING: Our peer-caregiver model of non-medical in-home care — companionship, meal prep, housekeeping, errands, medication reminders, fall prevention, memory/dementia/Alzheimer's care and personal care. Nationally, nearly 70% of retirees will need some form of long-term care, and Seniors Helping Seniors is one of the only home care brands built around hiring active seniors to care for their peers.

WHEN AND WHY I STARTED MY BUSINESS/EMPLOYMENT HERE: We recently launched Seniors Helping Seniors Sun City — the seventh Seniors Helping Seniors location in Arizona. After 13+ years building products and go-to-market strategy in the corporate world, I wanted to bring that same

• See **Seniors** on page 8



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SUN CITY PRIDES UPGRADE MEDIAN LANDSCAPE

The latest beautification project orchestrated by the Sun City PRIDES is the updated landscape of the median on 99th Avenue from Bell Road north to Del Webb Boulevard and Lindgreen Avenue. The refreshed median effort included the removal of the old gravel and the installation of more than 400 tons of saddle brown decorative rock. The project began June 20 and was completed July 31. The Sun City PRIDES is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that works all year to keep the over 200 miles of streets, parkways and medians in Sun City neat and clean. For more information about the PRIDES, including membership and donations to continue beautification projects in Sun City, visit www.suncityprides.org. (Submitted photo/Linda Benson)

Seniors

- From page 7

discipline to something built on relationships instead, and to run an organization with a direct, tangible impact on the community around me. It draws directly on a lifelong thread in my own life: directing activities in nursing homes in college, volunteering in hospitals, mentoring youth and working with community organizations.

WHERE I WAS BEFORE I LEFT AND WHY

I LEFT: I came from a 13-plus year career leading product management and marketing at Honeywell and in business-to-business software as a service (SaaS). I left to build something rooted in service and relationships — a return, in a way, to work I'd done informally since college.

MY FAMILY: We also have our daughter and her three children, our grandchildren. My parents retired to Arizona from Indiana to be closer to family. We also have an Australian shepherd mix who keeps us on our toes.

Ukulele

• From page 4

said. "Or, if you feel you can jump one, you can jump one. There's no pressure. You just come and have fun."

Having fun is clearly important to the club. The doors open well before 3 p.m. to allow for socializing amongst members.

According to Walker, that sense of camaraderie helps new members feel comfortable.

"We actually make a conscious effort, if we have a new member, to get a member who's been there for a while to make sure we sit next to them," he said. "Talk to them, make them feel welcome, let them know that we were all there and we know what they're going through... This isn't a professional organization. I usually tell them I don't hear well and I can't remember so don't worry. It's just a welcoming group."

In addition to the weekly jam sessions, the club also hosts performances throughout the year.

Club member Vicky Miller said there have been times where a new member participated

in the performance the same week they joined.

"I get goosebumps thinking about performing because it's such an electricity that goes out there," she said. "Trudy has a way of getting the audience involved and everybody has a smile on their face."

Those interested in joining do not need to have their own ukulele as the club provides instruments to jam with.

In addition, the club has donated 12 ukuleles to libraries in the area that residents can check out and practice with.

Bryson said this idea came from Heidi Swedberg, who played Susan Ross in "Seinfeld" and is a ukulele teacher.

According to Bryson, Swedberg and her husband Daniel Ward are coming to Sun City for a ukulele festival Feb. 11 and 12.

She has taught multiple workshops and done concerts with the club in the past.

To learn more about the Sun City Ukulele Club, go to suncityukuleleclub.com.

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.



PERFORMING ARTS WARDROBE SALE NEXT MONTH

A Stardust Theater wardrobe donation sale is Sept. 3-5 in the Back Forty Room, through the performers' entrance behind the Stardust Theatre corner of R.H. Johnson and Stardust boulevards, 14401 W. R.H. Johnson Blvd. The sale is by email invitation only for performing arts club members 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sept. 3 and opens to the public 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sept. 4 and 5. All items can be purchased by cash only. Browse items and an extensive costume collection used by performing arts clubs of Sun City West. The sale is for performers, collectors, crafters, Halloween planners and anyone who enjoys discovering a unique find. The Stardust Theater will host a large wardrobe, donation only, sale featuring decades of costumes, accessories, hats, vintage pieces, gowns, dance costumes and one-of-a-kind theater treasures and wigs. (Submitted photo/Marla Peters)

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OPINION

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under that category as its vote spread is quite high: Vote Spread: 15.26% Leaning: Republican Competitive-ness: Outside of Competitive Range

In Maricopa County we are currently focused on the swingable CD 01 (Shah) and two others statewide: CD 06 (Jo Mendoza) in Tucson and CD 02 in Flagstaff (Jonathan Nez)... Remember that LD 27 is half of CD 8 and it IS flippable with the AZ Legislative Senate candidate Kyle Clayton and House candidate Deborah Howard. So your effort can make an impact in not only the Legislative districts but in CD 8's results."

In 2024, Schweikert won CD 1 by 16,572. A reasonable margin in a district that has been won by Democrats twice in the last three elections. CD 8 on the other hand has elected three Republicans in the last three cycles. In 2024, Hamadeh won by 47,925 votes.

Here's the thing. Bernadette Greene-Placentia presents a great story. Smart, well-informed and focused on all the right stuff. A knowledgeable and compelling candidate who deserves to be heard.

To my friends in the half of LD 27 that live in CD 8, you might want to let SLMC know you are not going to just lay down.

If voters in CD 8 believe their voices matter, they should remind organizations like Swing Left that competitive districts aren't created — they're built through organizing, candidate support and showing up.

Let's get some game, CD 8!

Epson Brewer
SUN CITY

*This writer is using a pen name.
Bernadette Greene-Placentia is seeking*

• See **Letters** on page 16

Solo owner agrees RCSC punch cards can be costly

I agree with Jennifer Anderson on RCSC giving us solo owners a guest pass.

The punch cards get lost, destroyed or used up, then we have to dish out another \$20 for a punch card.

Lynn Briese
SUN CITY

Bring empathy, kindness back to Sun City, reader says

How sad that in Sun City, "just turn in your neighbor" seems to have become the new mantra. It is heartbreaking to think that we have come to a place where reporting one another is often the first response instead of reaching out with kindness and understanding.

Whatever happened to empathy?

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. It means putting yourself in someone else's shoes and trying to understand what they may be experiencing before passing judgment. Empathy reminds us that every person has a story one we may know nothing about.

Before making a phone call or filing a complaint, why not knock on your neighbor's door? Ask if they are OK. Ask if there is something you can do to help. Sometimes, a simple conversation can reveal that someone is dealing with illness, financial hardship, the loss of a loved one or other challenges that are not immediately visible from the outside.

Sun City has always taken pride in being known as the City of Volunteers. That title means something. It represents a community built on

compassion, service, and neighbors helping neighbors. It should never become a place where we are quicker to report one another than to offer a helping hand.

We all have a choice in the kind of community we create. We can foster division and suspicion, or we can choose kindness, understanding and respect. The true strength of a community is not found in how many complaints are filed, but in how willing its residents are to care for one another.

Let's bring back empathy. Let's bring back kindness. Most importantly, let's bring back the spirit that made Sun City a place people were proud to call home.

Chevy Jordan
SUN CITY

This writer is using a pen name.

Disappointed that Dems are betting only on sure things

Recently, I reviewed Swing Left Maricopa County's schedule of online events. I emailed and asked why there was no event featuring Bernadette Greene-Placentia. The response was revealing:

"We appreciate your question. We would love to address every race, however it does not match our mission which is to flip red districts to blue in swingable Congressional Districts.

Currently AZ 08 does not fall

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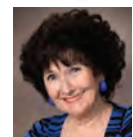


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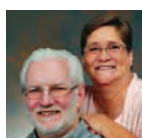
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NEIGHBOR

Meet Your Neighbor: Sun City Poms president Cindy Kress

How long have you lived in Sun City? We moved to Sun City nine years ago. However, we moved to the Valley from Wisconsin in 1978.

Why did you move out here? I have an uncle that lived in Sun City and as part of our honeymoon trip, we stopped in Sun City to visit him. My husband, Jerry, was working for the Post Office in Wisconsin, and on our last day here, he went to the Sun City Post Office to talk to the Postmaster to inquire about a transfer. We moved to the Valley a month later. I had moved here when I was 19 and lived with my uncle for about 10 months. During that time, I worked at Boswell Hospital. My husband and I were high school sweethearts, but had a major break up, which is when I moved here the first time. I decided to return to Wisconsin, and my husband and I got back together in my first week back, and have been together ever since. On a side note, my husband and I were delivered by the same doctor and baptized in the same church. We were meant to be!

Where did you grow up and what was it like? I grew up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin! Lots of memories! We walked or rode our bikes everywhere with friends, whether it was to downtown, school, ice skating or to friends' houses. Of course, we had to be home when the street lights came on. I went to Catholic grade school for eight years. I come back to Sheboygan every year for a visit (which is where I am now). I get together with friends that I met in kindergarten, grade school and high school. Sheboygan is a town of approximately 50,000 people. Beautiful city located along Lake Michigan, with a beautiful lake front and river walk. I have lots of family and friends here and cherish my time with them. I had lunch on Monday with 13 friends from high school and Friday, will be having lunch with seven friends from grade school/kindergarten.

What's a childhood memory that has stuck with you? My favorite childhood memory is a hard choice. Many come to mind, but this one I am still able to cherish. I think the one big memory is when my sister Felicia was born. I was 13 and my brother was 11 when she came along. She was quite a surprise! I loved taking care of her, taking her for walks and as she got a little older, I was able to take her places with me. She was very loved and very spoiled!

What's a favorite memory from adulthood? My favorite memory from adulthood was probably



Cindy Kress

becoming parents. My daughter, Kelly, was born in 1978, then our two sons followed in 1980 and 1983. Watching our kids grow up, attending their sporting events, see them branch out on their own, having two loving grandchildren, and a husband of 49 years is my favorite chapter of my life!

What's a time in your life when everything changed? A time in our life when everything changed was when we found out that our youngest son Kevin was special needs. He was delayed in his development, so it was a gradual thing. I had always questioned a few things, but it wasn't until he was 2-3 years old that we had an actual diagnosis. His school years were like his siblings, same district, except he went to the school that supported his needs. His first "home school" he attended was Mountain Ridge High School. What makes a difference when you have a special needs child, is that you are responsible for them forever. There are great times as well as challenging times. We don't have the freedom that many of our friends have. Our life revolves around Kevin. Kevin attends an adult day program called One Step Beyond, since he graduated from high school. Through this program, Kevin is able to live independently, with support from caregivers. This has given us more freedom than what we once thought we would have. When the day comes that we are no longer

• See **Neighbor** on page 19

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Surprise • January 19, 2027 • The Colonnade
Litchfield/Goodyear • February 17, 2027 • Tuscany Falls Clubhouse(Pebble Creek)
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EMERGENCY

Resident aims to educate on posting emergency information

Encourages residents to have contact, medication information easily accessible

By Jennifer Jimenez

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

In the normal evening hours a Sun City couple went from enjoying time with a friend to a medical emergency.

After dinner, John Zimmerman, his wife and friend were playing cards when they noticed the friend did not look right and was not responding. A call to emergency services was immediately placed, but the pair quickly realized they had several challenges ahead.

"We were trying to find the kids' names or phone numbers and that was a nightmare and the EMTs asked us what medications she was on before they began working on her," he said.

Zimmerman said medication lists and emergency contact information is not something he ever thought about, but this event has forced him and his wife to prioritize this information and want others in the community to do the same.

He said he never believed how fast a true medical emergency could happen.

One second the trio was enjoying a card game and the next, the friend was unable to function. The friend had suffered a stroke, according to Zimmerman.

"Had we not been there, she would have died. She lives alone and no one would have been able to help her," said Zimmerman.

Zimmerman suggests keeping emergency contact names and phone numbers in case of an emergency and a current list of medications inside a



Arizona Fire & Medical Authority Fire Corps Volunteer Nancy Jerosi educated residents on various resources, including emergency medication lists and contact information. (Independent Newsmedia/Jennifer Jimenez)

kitchen cabinet on the actual door. He said this can be easily accessed by emergency service personnel.

Zimmerman and his wife began rifling through mail to try to find something with an address, since they only had it in their GPS. They were unable to get into her phone due to the password. The pair located an old Rolodex and notified her daughters on where she was transported and reunited with her family.

Reporter Jennifer Jimenez can be reached at jjimenez@iniusa.org. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to Asoptions@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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PEO CHAPTER GATHERS FOR LUNCHEON, CELEBRATION

The Sun City PEO chapter CT recently gathered for a monthly summer luncheon. They also celebrated Ula Miller's 100 birthday. She is seated second from the right. The Philanthropic Education Organization and is a group that supports the education of women by raising money for scholarships and more. The organization is over 100 years old and was started by seven women in an Iowa college. (Submitted photo/Janice Wagner)

Letters

• From page 10

to unseat incumbent Abe Hamadeh in CD 8, which includes parts of Glendale, Peoria, north Phoenix, Sun City, Sun City West and Surprise.

Time for a change in CD 8 representation

I heartily concur with Anne Whitmore's Aug. 5 letter, "Why is Abe Hamadeh defending the Tate brothers?" concerning our representative's strange championing of Andrew and Tristan Tate, who face 59 criminal charges of sexual assault in the U.K.

I'm seriously confused because I thought his responsibility and actual job is to represent those of us in Congressional District 8, Arizona.

Instead of holding Town Hall meetings where he can hear from his constituents, he's busy fighting extradition for these two highly questionable men.

It's simply not in his purview and he needs to focus on his constituents and by that I mean all of us, not just the Republicans he picks and chooses

es to attend photo ops in his D.C. office glittering with golden gewgaws in emulation of the president.

I have not seen one single accomplishment for CD 8 since Abe has been in office. Much of CD 8 is on Social Security and Medicare since a portion of the district includes the Sun Cities.

Drastic cuts are coming and even Social Security is in danger yet not a word about these two vital social programs. I'm very tired of not having a chance to engage with my representative — he even turns off comments on social media which, by the way, is against the First Amendment.

It's time for a change in representation. Hamadeh won't engage with us and is busy chasing issues that have nothing to do with CD 8.

Let the Tate brothers take care of themselves and let us take care of Abe by removing him from office this fall.

Connie Morrison
SUN CITY WEST

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CHARITY

Firefighters to host third annual charity car wash

By Noah Flug
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Sun City firefighters will trade hoses for sponges later this month as they invite residents to support a cause that has grown from helping one of their own into an annual fundraiser benefiting firefighters and the community.

The Sun City Firefighters Charities organization will host its third annual charity car wash from 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, Aug. 15, at Fire Station 131, near Bell Road and 99th Avenue. Donations of any amount are welcome.

The fundraiser began after Capt. Matthew O'Reilly, a firefighter in Sun City, was diagnosed with cancer. According to Rudy Ramirez, president of the Sun City Firefighters Charities organization, the department wanted to find a way to support O'Reilly and his family during his treatment.

"We started that car wash, and we saw how successful it was for him," Ramirez said. "Thankfully, everything happened positively for him. He got surgery, he got it removed, he's now cancer free."

At O'Reilly's request, the annual fundraiser now benefits organizations dedicated to firefighter occupational cancer awareness and support. This year, proceeds from the car wash will help support the Firefighter 48 Foundation while also replenishing the charity's member services fund to assist firefighters facing unexpected hardships.

Ramirez said the event is also more than just a fundraiser.

"It's pretty fun," he said. "We have our families here, so our kids are in-



Sun City firefighters Trevor Berl (standing) and Boston McGuire (on shoulders) at last year's car wash. Donations will benefit the Firefighter 48 Foundation and help provide assistance to firefighters facing unexpected hardships. (Submitted photo/Rudy Ramirez)

involved. We're playing music and we just try to have a good time."

Beyond washing cars, Ramirez hopes the event strengthens the department's connection with residents.

"We want to show the community that we're not just here to run calls and meet people when an emergency happens," he said. "Our charities team is here to go beyond that and support our community any way we can."

MUSIC

Church hosts free organ concert

Desert Garden United Church of Christ, 18818 N. 128th Ave., will host a free afternoon of organ music and inspiration, featuring Eric Marsollier, 3 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 16.

Marsollier comes from a family of musicians, according to a media release, which added he is studying organ musicology. Dennis and Claudia Marsollier serve as the church's music directors; Dennis Marsollier since 2016, and Claudia Marsollier, the organist/handbell director, since 2009.

"An organ performance major, Eric brings his artistry and passion for the instrument to a program showcasing the beauty, power and versatility of the organ through classical masterpieces, beloved hymns, and inspired improvisations on familiar melodies," the release noted.

Regular in-person and online ser-



Organist Eric Marsollier will perform 3 p.m. at Desert Garden United Church of Christ, 18818 N 128th Ave. in Sun City West. (Courtesy of Desert Garden United Church of Christ)

vice times are 9:30 a.m. Sundays for worship and 11 a.m. coffee hour for fellowship. Chair pilates is offered 11 a.m. on Wednesdays, according to the website.

Visit desertgardenucc.org.

Neighbor

• From page 12

here, Kevin's life won't be so drastically changed. My husband and I cover Kevin on weekends and 2-3 nights a week. Our daughter is with him one night a week, and my sister covers him two nights a week. We have a wonderful friend that is with him in the early mornings until he is picked up for his program. We are extremely fortunate that Kevin has been successful with this living arrangement and that we have such wonderful people supporting him. While most people our age, especially living in a place like Sun City, you really see the freedom retirees have to do what they want, when they want, we do not have that choice. Kevin is our first responsibility. We are also responsible for his living costs and expenses. Kevin is a very kind, caring, respectful, appreciative and loving young man. This could be a story in itself!

What brings you joy today? Joy to me is being with family and friends. I am blessed to have a large extended family and various circles of friends. I have realized that since I have lived in Arizona for 49 years, it gives me a large circle of from different experiences in my life. If you retiree to Sun City, your friends tend to be right here! Being a Sun City

Pom has brought much joy to my life. The ladies are so inspirational, caring and supportive! I think finding such wonderful people to share your life with at this age, is pretty amazing! Now that I am the president of the Sun City Poms, I want to make the next couple of years as special for our Poms as they have made it for me. I love being around people, trying new things and experiences. Love to travel and wish I could do more. Luckily, I have a wonderful husband, who supports me when opportunities come up to go places!

Who do you turn to when you need strength? I rely on my husband, my faith and often friends when I need support. I am also very strong and try to handle many things on my own. I am the oldest in my family, and have always taken it upon myself to do what I can to make things work. I tend to want to be there for others!

What are you most excited about in the future? Looking to the future, I hope to make the most out of each day. I hope to remain healthy and active for many more years. I worked in both education and the medical field, so this is why it is easy for me to have compassion for others and want to be there for them. I usually put others ahead of myself, but that makes my heart happy.

What are you still dreaming about today? I am still dreaming of more travels in my future. Fun times ahead!

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RAZZLE DAZZLE DANCERS SLATE 50/50 RAFFLE, LIVE MUSIC EVENT

The Razzle Dazzle Dancers will perform and dance with attendees at a music event Thursday, Aug. 13, at I&J Fountain Restaurant, 12221 W. Bell Road. Music starts at 5:30 p.m. with the first performance at 6:30 p.m. Residents will have a chance to take home cash while supporting local talent at the 50/50 raffle to benefit the dancers. Sponsored by local musical duo Thorn & the Rose, the fundraiser offers participants a shot at winning half the total proceeds, with the remaining proceeds directly benefiting the performance group. Tickets are \$1 each or six for \$5. Ticket holders do not need to be present at the drawing to win. For ticket purchases, event inquiries or more information, email razzledazzledancersAZ@gmail.com or follow the Razzle Dazzle Dancers on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Pictured is Becky Johnston, one of the Razzle Dazzle Dancers. (Submitted photo/Deb Wheeler)

DAUGHTERS ATTEND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS EVENT

The 135th National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Continental Congress was held in June at NSDAR Headquarters in Washington DC. During the conference an installation ceremony was held for all incoming new NSDAR chapter officers who were attending from the different state chapters. NSDAR Arizona Society Regent Katie Paulsen and Vice-Regent Twila Lobitz were among those taking their oath for their new officer positions for 2026-28. NSDAR President General Ginnie Sebastian Storage and Arizona Society Regent Sarah Ziker 2024-26 were in attendance. Lobitz is a member of the Sun City Agua Fria Chapter, Paulsen is a member of the Arizona Grand Canyon Chapter and Ziker is a member of the Arizona Black Mountain Foothills Chapter. Visit aguaafia.arizonadar.org for more information. Pictured are Lobitz, Paulsen, Storage and Ziker. (Submitted photo/Shirley Staggs)



FAITH

Temple offers series on contemporary American Judaism

How has American Judaism changed over the past half-century, and where is it headed next?

Those questions will be at the heart of Temple Beth Shalom of the West Valley's three-session course, "Contemporary American Judaism," led by Rabbi Dana Evan Kaplan, author of "Contemporary American Judaism: Transformation and Renewal."

The sessions will be 10–11:30 a.m. Sept. 17 and 24, and Oct. 1, at Temple Beth Shalom, 12202 N. 101st Ave.

The course will explore the sweeping changes that have reshaped Jewish life in America — from the rise of suburban synagogues and changing religious movements to debates over feminism, Israel, LGBTQ+ equality, and the growing emphasis on personal choice and Jewish identity. Participants will also examine innovative spiritual practices and new forms of Jewish community that continue to redefine what it means to be Jewish in America today.



Rabbi Dana Evan Kaplan (Submitted photo/Lori Baker)

"The American Jewish community has changed more in the past few decades than at any other time in its history," Kaplan said. "Together, we'll explore not only what has changed, but why — and what those changes may mean for the future."

Cost is \$20 for members and \$35 for non-members. Discounted coupon books for four courses are available. The deadline for pre-payment and registration is noon Sept. 1 by calling the Temple office at 623-977-3240.

MIDWEEK BELL LIONS DONATE TO FOOD BANK

The Sun City Midweek Bell Lions club recently donated \$1,000 to the Valley View Food Bank. Pictured are Lion Kristine Scoville, Valley View director Jesse Ramirez and Lion Becky White. The Midweek Bell Lions club is 54 years old and is part the Lions Club International, which was formed in 1918, in Chicago. All can be members of the Lions, which has the motto: "We Serve." (Submitted photo/Janice Wagner)





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FOOD

Decreases in food as patron numbers increase pose a challenge

Banner Olive Branch Senior Center reverts to serving those in the immediate area

By Jennifer Jimenez
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A recent change to the Banner Olive Branch Senior Center food pantry is now in place, limiting accessibility for people outside the nearby area.

Now only Sun City West, Sun City, Youngtown, El Mirage and Surprise residents 18 and older are eligible to receive food from the pantry.

Director Jennifer Lawless said she is glad the food pantry has been able to help so many people who come through, but she has been tracking the pounds of food and number of people every month and operationally something needed to change.

“We have had a 15% decrease in food over the last two years and about a 10% increase in people and those numbers are causing us to run out of products more quickly,” she said.

Ensuring there is enough food for everyone has been a struggle for Lawless and after speaking to her team, the decision was made to look at the original mission and service area, as well as food pantry options in the area.

Approximately one-third of the people coming through were from Glendale and Peoria. Other areas represent-

ed include Wittmann, Litchfield Park and Tucson.

Everyone who previously visited the pantry from outside of the area were mailed a letter with at least 20 food pantries nearby. Lawless wanted to make sure these personal letters provided a resource and outreach for those who were truly concerned with where their next meal would come from.

“We are working with those people who reached out through October to find pantries and get them what they need,” she said.

Despite the pantry having limited access, there is a free lunch available to anyone over 60, no matter where the individual lives.

Lawless said limited access is a common practice among food pantries.

She said from 2024-2025, she started seeing about 13% less food through July and that went down from 2024-2026.

The Banner Olive Branch Food Pantry is open 7-11 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Lawless said there are 500 patrons each day and there is a random draw program in place with colors and numbers.

“In 2025 we had 86,207 people come through and currently through June, 62,000 people have come through



Fay Jones visits the Banner Olive Branch Senior Center Pantry, but due to the recent change in access, July 30 was her last day. (Independent Newsmedia/Jennifer Jimenez)

and we are almost to the number of all of last year,” she said.

Currently there are 75 volunteers who are at Banner Olive Branch Senior Center, with the majority in the pantry or on the truck picking up food, but Lawless said they can always use more volunteers.

Volunteer Gloria Humble has been with the senior center for one year after recently moving to the area. She began by coming in for lunch and activities and after watching the volunteers, she wanted to join them.

Primarily she is focused on breakfast sign in and pantry check-in. Humble said she enjoys talking to

people and loves the public volunteering.

“I see the same people and I can tell when they are having a good day or not and I know just smiling and letting them know I care really helps,” she said.

Humble said she found a home at the senior center connecting with new friends and spending time in a place she loves.

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.



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POSSE

Posse honors volunteers, welcomes new members

By Noah Flug
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

There was no shortage of ceremony at the Aug. 4 Sun City Posse monthly meeting, where new volunteers were welcomed and active members were honored before leaders unveiled plans for a permanent tribute to the organization's military veterans.

One of the evening's highlights came when three new Posse members — Mary Back, Edward Reiss and Debra Leef — were sworn in by two former commanders in a first for the organization.

Former Posse commanders Marge Paulding, who served in 2010, and Art Jenkins, commander in 2013, administered the oath after being introduced by Posse Cmdr. Arlene Kluizenaar.

"This is the first time that we're doing this, and we are very honored," Kluizenaar said. She noted that Paulding and Jenkins, who joined the Posse together as recruits, are "two of our most experienced former commanders."

After swearing in the new members, Paulding reflected on the moment.

"It's wonderful having you all in the Posse, and we are honored, Art and I are very honored, to be the first to get to do this," she said.

The Posse also presented five Make a Difference Awards recognizing members whose volunteer efforts had an exceptional impact.

Executive Officer Don Erlitz praised Butch Kurth for his work maintaining Posse vehicles and facilities, calling him "an invaluable asset to the Posse." Erlitz highlighted Kurth's behind-the-scenes efforts, from restoring a janitorial storage room to responding quickly to vehicle and building maintenance issues.

Roberta Lambin received an award after noticing an electric patrol vehicle appeared to be idling while plugged in for charging. Her attention to detail led

to the discovery that the vehicle had not actually begun charging, potentially preventing "a dead car battery, a possible overheated situation, or worst-case scenario, electric car fire," according to Erlitz.

Don Double was recognized for several acts of community service, including helping an injured pedestrian home, relocating a turtle away from traffic and replacing a smoke detector battery for a resident who lived alone after discovering she did not have a replacement. Erlitz said Double's actions exemplified "what the Posse is all about, caring for community, even our resident turtles."

Danny Moore and Fay Moore were honored for helping lead the implementation of the Posse's new phone system. Erlitz said Danny Moore led the effort to evaluate vendors and oversee the transition, while Fay Moore helped test the system and train members to ensure a smooth rollout. He said their efforts demonstrated "their passion for the Posse."

Perry and Linda Johansen also were recognized during the meeting, each receiving a certificate marking five years of volunteer service with the Posse.

Looking ahead, Kluizenaar announced plans to dedicate a veterans honor wall during the November general membership meeting. The display will recognize 65 current and former Posse members who served in the military by listing their names, rank and branch of service.

She encouraged members to submit the names of any veterans who may have been missed, adding that the display is designed so additional names can easily be added in the future.

Kluizenaar said she hopes the tribute will become "the lasting tribute to our veterans that we never did before, and should have."

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Sun City Sings! recently entertained residents of El Dorado Condominiums with patriotic and early American songs, celebrating America's 250th anniversary. Learn more about Sun City Sings! at suncitysings.org. This spirited, fun-loving group welcomes new members when they kick off their new season next month. Contact director Shelley Logan or accompanist Linda Shirck through the website. (Submitted photo/ Linda Shirck)

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Chuck and Marilyn, Ronny and Janice and Robert, his seven grandchildren, twelve great grandchildren and four great-great grandchildren, a prodigious family of which he was immensely proud.

Ron was born in Calgary, Alberta, Canada and moved to Arizona in 1962, followed by the rest of his family shortly after that. Ron originally took a job at Phoenix Encanto Golf Course as a pro shop manager, further igniting his passion for the game of golf which would follow him the rest of his life. Earning a Master's degree in his mid-thirties he began his teaching career in

Page, Arizona where he became a legend at the local links and where he developed the Page High School golf program. Quick to lend a hand to anyone in need, he developed a wide circle of friends. After retiring to Sun City, Arizona he quickly became known as a "force on the course" and developed many close friendships there. He was well known for his integrity and willingness to stand for what he knew was right. He was equally known for his generosity and as a consummate gentleman which earned him the respect of all who came to know him. He will be greatly missed.

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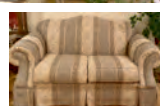
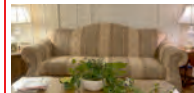
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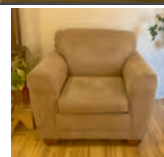
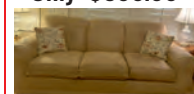


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DONATION

Drum Arizona donates
handmade drums to Choice
Day Treatment Center

Drum Arizona, Inc., a Sun City-based nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting healing and wellness through rhythm, recently brought the gift of music, culture and joy to 60 participants at Choice Day Treatment Center in Glendale.

Choice Day Treatment Center is a nonprofit organization that provides daytime programs and compassionate care for individuals with developmental disabilities and special needs. The center serves adults with a wide range of disabilities, including autism, Down syndrome, intellectual and developmental disabilities and physical disabilities requiring wheelchairs or walkers. Trained caregivers provide a safe, supportive environment where participants enjoy meaningful activities and social interaction.

The Drum Arizona team was welcomed by staff and participants who were excited to experience a Native American drum circle. During the interactive session, participants learned simple rhythms, shared laughter and experienced the healing power of making music together.

At the conclusion of the drum circle, each of the 60 participants received a gift of their own 10-inch handmade Native American-style deerskin drum, complete with a handcrafted drumstick and carrying bag. The drums were theirs to keep and take home as a lasting reminder of the experience.

Every drum is handcrafted by Drum Arizona volunteers using genuine deerskin. Volunteers from Sun City, Peoria, Phoenix, Glendale, Surprise and El Mirage donate countless

hours making drumsticks, assembling drums, painting each drum with a Native American-inspired animal and preparing every gift for its recipient.

Inside each carrying bag is a drum birth certificate, care instructions and information explaining the Native American symbolic meaning of the animal painted on that particular drum. Every drum is unique, making each gift personal and meaningful.

The 60 drums presented at Choice Day Treatment Center were donated free of charge through the generosity of Drum Arizona's volunteers and supporters.

"This is about much more than giving away drums," said Dr. Lydia A. Woods, founder of Drum Arizona. "We are giving individuals an opportunity to experience the joy of rhythm, to express themselves through music, and to take home something that reminds them they are valued and celebrated."

This event also marked another milestone for Drum Arizona. During its nearly 11 years of service, the organization has now donated more than 1,100 handmade drums to children, veterans, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and others facing life's challenges throughout Arizona.

For Drum Arizona, every donated drum represents far more than a musical instrument. It is a symbol of hope, healing, inclusion, and the power of community volunteers working together to make a lasting difference—one drum, one person, and one heartbeat at a time.

Volunteers can call 404-217-2459 for more information.

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