



Surprise Expo

Connects seniors to services; 4



INDEPENDENT

Willow Canyon

Football preview; 16



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Fight for free speech not yet settled

Massie is still waiting for closure 2 years after arrest

By Jason Stone
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Rebekah Massie's body still shakes and shivers when she recalls the events of Aug. 20, 2024. The trauma is still so fresh and real, it may as well have been two days ago.

What do you think?

What is your position on this issue? Send comments to jstone@iniusa.org.

But last week marked two years since Massie was arrested at a Surprise City Council meeting for refusing to stop speaking during her allotted time during call to the public.

Her arrest made international news and she subsequently sued the city's former mayor Skip Hall, the man who arrested her, officer Steven Shernicoff, and the city of

• See **Massie** on page 18

Ex-NFL player adds to 'Rosy' outlook for OUAZ



Spirit hire former college star, Cardinals QB Rosenbach

By Jason Stone
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

OUAZ football coach Reilly Murphy was 1 year old when Timm Rosenbach first became an All-American quarterback at Washington State

in the 1980s.

But when the two first crossed paths as coaches of NCAA Division II football coaches 30 years later, Murphy knew about Rosenbach's exploits as a college All-American and starting quarterback for the then-Phoenix Cardinals.

• See **Rosenbach** on page 3

Former NFL quarterback Timm Rosenbach is now the offensive coordinator and wide receivers coach at OUAZ in Surprise. (Independent News-media/Jason Stone)

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FROM THE COVER

Rosenbach

• From page 1

“He’s somebody I really admired and looked up to,” Murphy recalled about his time coaching camps with “Coach Rosy.”

Now, the pair are coaching together for OUAZ. Murphy quietly hired the one-time Heisman Trophy candidate this spring as the team’s offensive coordinator and wide receivers coach.

Rosenbach gives the NAIA Spirit, which went 8-1 a year ago, NFL experience leadership heading into the 2026 season, which begins Thursday, Aug. 27 at Montana Tech.

Rosenbach recently served as offensive coordinator at Cal Poly, an NCAA team in the Football Championship Series division.

When his former teammate and center Paul Wulff was let go as head coach after the 2025 season, Rosenbach left as well, opening up an opportunity at OUAZ where he knew Murphy coached.

“I just thought, I’ll send a quick message and hit him up,” Rosenbach said when he heard a job was open in a state he knew well. “Then he called me right back, and we just started talking about it.”

Murphy said it did not take long to make the decision to hire him.

“He knew there was an opening, and we talked it through, and it was it was an absolute no-brainer,” Murphy said. “When there was an opportunity to bring him here and his ties to Arizona, and I told him what we were trying to achieve here, he was one of those men that I talked about from all over the country that decided to get behind that message.”

Rosenbach said he is picky where he takes coaching jobs and he was not going to just take any position after leaving Cal Poly.

“I’m not a big network guy. I’m not



OUAZ coach Timm Rosenbach talks to a player after a recent practice. He is starting his first year as the Spirit's offensive coordinator. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason Stone)

gonna go schmooze a bunch of people trying to get a job,” Rosenbach said. “It’s not my style, so I just kind of saw what was out there, and then this job came up.”

Murphy said the former Cardinals signal caller has helped elevate the professionalism for a program looking for its first playoff win in school history this year, one of the few goals the relatively new program has yet to achieve.

“He’s done a great job — the experience, the maturity, all those things that he brings, has been something that we can really hang our hat on,” Murphy said. “The thing that really has changed for us is just having a person that’s kind of lived it as a player. He’s coached at the highest level, as a head coach, position coach, offensive coordinator. It allows him to identify with many different players on our team. And that’s really been such a blessing.”

Offensive excellence

While most local football fans will remember Rosenbach for his stellar

• See **Rosenbach** on page 14

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Surprise Expo connects seniors to services

Dozens of vendors range from health care to entertainment

By Jason Stone
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Goodyear resident Lu Dube went to the Independent Newsmedia's Surprise Expo on Aug. 18 looking for assisted living facilities, but she left with a lunch instead.

Dube won a free meal at Vista Winds Independent Living in Peoria in one of its random giveaways at the expo.

Hunter Creek Kepler of Chaparral Winds and Vista Winds

"It's a great opportunity for us to be here," said Hunter Creek Kepler, of Vista Winds and its sister facility Chaparral Winds in Surprise. "And it's really one of our big things is that we get to represent our communities and bring people in for tours to show off how wonderful our staff and our communities really are."

Creek Kepler was among dozens of vendors — from insurance agents to window repair — who packed the convention room of The Colonnade, 19116 N. Colonnade Way, to show off their businesses to seniors.

Dube said she drawn to the event several miles from her home because of a mail advertisement, while others like Ted Grove and his wife simply traveled down the street from their home in The Grand.

It was the second time the Groves have been to the Independent's Surprise Expo, as they were shopping for a new primary care doctor. And, of course, pick up some of the free swag most tables put out to entice customers to come over to visit.

"I just got some chopstick, and I think a couple water bottles, that's all," Grove said.

Patrons to the expo could find plenty of deals and discounts across the tables.

Semper Fi Heating Cooling and Plumbing was giving away a raffle for a free home air conditioner and offered free air conditioning tuneups and home inspections for free.

Toni McElfresh, of Semper Fi, said she was pleased to see the big crowds at the expo as soon as the doors opened.



Toni McElfresh, of Semper Fi Heating Cooling and Plumbing, right, talks to attendees of the Surprise Expo on Aug. 18 at the Colonnade. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason Stone)



Sharon Williams, a licensed sales agent for United Healthcare, speaks to three seniors who attended Independent Newsmedia's Surprise Expo on Aug. 18 at the Colonnade. Williams was one of the vendors who showed off their businesses at the senior expo. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason Stone)

"This event here is great because we can meet people and their needs," McElfresh said.

Entertainment offerings in the West Valley were also represented at the expo.

Arizona Broadway Theater in Peoria was promoting its new season, which begins in October, and detailed its upcoming lineup.

"This is definitely a good hub for us because this age demographic is definitely where our bread and butter is for our client health," said Gracie Down, a box office patron associate representative for the theater. "And it also gives us a lot of promotion opportunity."

The theater was offering buy one, get



More than five dozen vendors took part in Independent Newsmedia's Surprise Expo at the Colonnade on Aug. 18. (Independent Newsmedia/Jason Stone)

"This event here is great because we can meet people and their needs."

Toni McElfresh
Semper Fi

one tickets for some shows.

"This just gets us the push to show everyone what shows are coming up and new pricing and all that kind of stuff," Down said.

Arizona Broadway Theatre, Cardiac Solutions, SCAN Health Plan, Sunland Plumbing & HVAC were premium sponsor of the event.

Jason Stone can be reached at jstone@iniusa.org. 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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Way, L-Black Gold Ln.

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14114 W. Whitwood Dr.,
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Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ,
R-Meeker, L-Echo Mesa, L-Whitewood Dr.

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Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ, R-151st., L-Deer Valley, R-Executive Way, L-Black Gold Ln.

Highly sought after Prescott model. Home has 1872 sq. ft., 2 bedroom, 2 bath, den & great room floor plan. Home is located just a block & half from SCW's Desert Trails GC pro shop. Don't Wait! Call Today to View!



\$444,875

15192 W. Las Brizas Ln., SUN CITY WEST
MLS# 7059982

Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ, R-151st, L-Corral Dr., R-Acapulco, L-Las Brizas Ln.

Highly desired Prescott model is located on the 7th fairway of Desert Trails GC. This 1856 sq. ft. home has 2 Bdrms (split), 2 baths plus a den. New roof underlayment 2022, HVAC in 2020 & kitchen appliances 2019. Quick close of escrow is possible. Home has been well maintained. This one is one you'll want to see! Call today to view!



\$244,875

12759 W. Ballad Dr., SUN CITY WEST
MLS# 7064685

Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ, R-128th, R-Aurora, R-Ballad Dr.

Nicely maintained Gemini/Twin home just a half a block from SCW's Stardust GC clubhouse. 1419 Sq. Ft., 2 Bdrms, 2 baths plus a large, screened patio. New HVAC 2023. Guest bath updated. Porcelain plank tile flooring. HOA allows pets (max 2) & rentals. Quick close of escrow possible. This one is one you'll want to see! Call today to view!



\$574,875

14114 W. Whitwood Dr., SUN CITY WEST
MLS# 7068961

Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ, R-Meeker, L-Echo Mesa, L-Whitewood Dr.

Expanded Montero model with panoramic views of SCW's Trail Ridge GC 3rd fairway/ green & lake with fountain. Approx. 3000 sq. ft., 2 Bdrm suites, 3 baths plus a den/office & golf cart garage. The large, covered patio, dining/family/living Rm combination is designed for formal/casual entertaining. Quick close of escrow is possible. Centrally located & in SCW's lower tax area this home is one you'll want to see. Don't hesitate! Call today to view!



\$359,875

23100 N. Drifter Way, SUN CITY WEST
MLS# 7062138

Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ, R-Meeker, L-135th, L-Deer Valley Rd., R-Dusty Trail Blvd., R-Drifter Way

Popular Rio Verde model (expended). This 1612sq. ft. home has 2 Bdrms (split), 2 baths plus an added den/office/craft studio. Both bathrooms updated including walk in/roll in showers (2023). Paid off solar lease. Quick close of escrow is possible. No neighborhood HOA fee. This one is one you'll want to see! Call today to view!



\$654,875

12635 W. Eveningside Dr, SUN CITY WEST
MLS# 7040339

Dir: Bell Rd./RH Johnson, Dr. N-RHJ, R-128th, R-Sunglow Dr. which becomes Eveningside Dr.

Fabulous panoramic view of Stardust GC's 4th & 5th fairways & greens. Home has 2599 sq. ft., 3 large bedrooms (split), 2 updated bathrooms, golf cart garage plus an added 175 Sq. ft. art/crafts studio or office. This home is truly special & an absolute must see! Call today to view!



OPINION

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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.

Thank Hamadeh for backing Stop Insider Trading Act

After years of hearing politicians pay lip service to fighting corruption only to sell out to the highest bidder the minute they reach Washington, I can't tell you what a breath of fresh air it is to see Congressman Abe Hamadeh of Arizona's 8th Congressional District deliver on that promise.

Instead of focusing on his own stock portfolio, he chose to invest in the people of his district. He stood up to colleagues more interested in personal gain and voted for H.R. 7008, the Stop Insider Trading Act.

The U.S. House passed the bill on July 22. It bans members of Congress, their spouses and their dependent

children from buying individual stocks while in office, requires advance public notice before any sales and imposes meaningful penalties for violations.

Congressman Hamadeh didn't just talk about cleaning up Washington; he actually took action to make it happen. In an institution too often driven by self-interest, he put principle first and voted to stop members of Congress from enriching themselves at the public's expense. That kind of integrity deserves recognition.

Thank you to Congressman Hamadeh for showing what real public service looks like.

Nikki Colletti
GLENDALE

Congressional District 8 includes parts of Surprise, Glendale, Peoria, north Phoenix, Sun City and Sun City West. 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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Reader unhappy with Hobbs' performance as governor

It's time for all Arizonans to get serious on how we want our state government managed. After four years of Katie Hobbs, we desperately need a change.

She has proven time and time again she is not competent for the position. She refuses to debate her challengers so the public can see what she actually brings to the table. She doesn't do press conferences that ask questions. Sounds a lot like how they shielded Biden from the public.

Among her first acts in office were to give LBGQ more protections, really?

In my opinion, she has put our state in danger of financial disaster; what was once a very large surplus is now down to nearly nothing. You can check online to see our state's financial status over the years.

She personally went to negotiate water rights with failed results, now we will be at the mercy of the federal government. She has shown she is not able to deliver. It's time for her to go.

Don Halter
SURPRISE

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.

Reader disagrees with ICE, Surprise facility opponents

I read the opinions of Dudley Gibson, Chris LaHaie and Lori Lux,

Speak Up

From Nextdoor & Facebook

Here are some comments about stories happening in Surprise:

City cancels Flock Camera system after possible misuse

"There goes our safety." — **Sherry Y.**

"Welcome back your privacy! They are violating and intrusive. Nobody needs to know my every move." — **Cina R.**

"By law, there is no 'expectation of privacy' when you're in a public place. Act appropriately and you have nothing to fear." — **Carrie H.**

"I don't give a damn either way. I'm doing nothing wrong, so I don't care who watches me or when." — **Brian W.**

"Keep up the fear porn. It has been proven that the flock cameras do not help police solve crimes." — **James D.**

"We know from previous experience that the government will do what it wants no matter what the law says." — **Keith K.**

"Cities are just installing different ones since Flock has a bad name." — **Jeff F.**

"What about the other cameras, the ones that Flock installed in shopping center parking lots and in HOA controlled subdivisions? They fall outside municipal contracts." — **Paul G.**

"That's too bad. Glad lots of vehicles out there have their own cameras watching everyone.

No cameras to deter crime equals more crime." — **Sandra K.**

and I disagree with their positions.

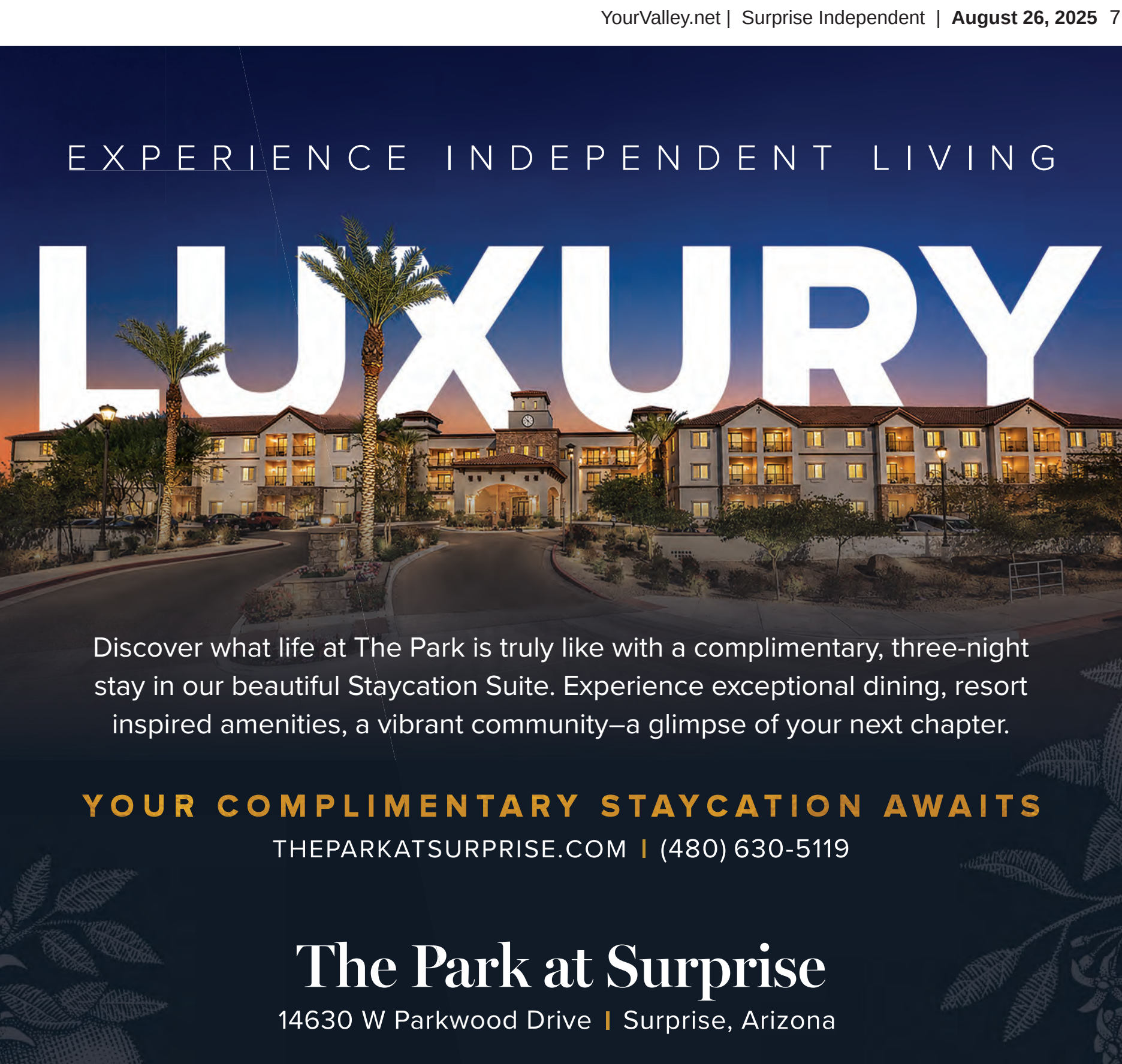
First of all, ICE would not even be necessary if the previous administrations, both Democrats and Republicans, had secured the borders as the law is written. But because the past administrations failed, and especially the Biden administration, we have a major illegal immigration issue.

I lock my doors. Not to keep me

♦ See **Opinions** on page 10

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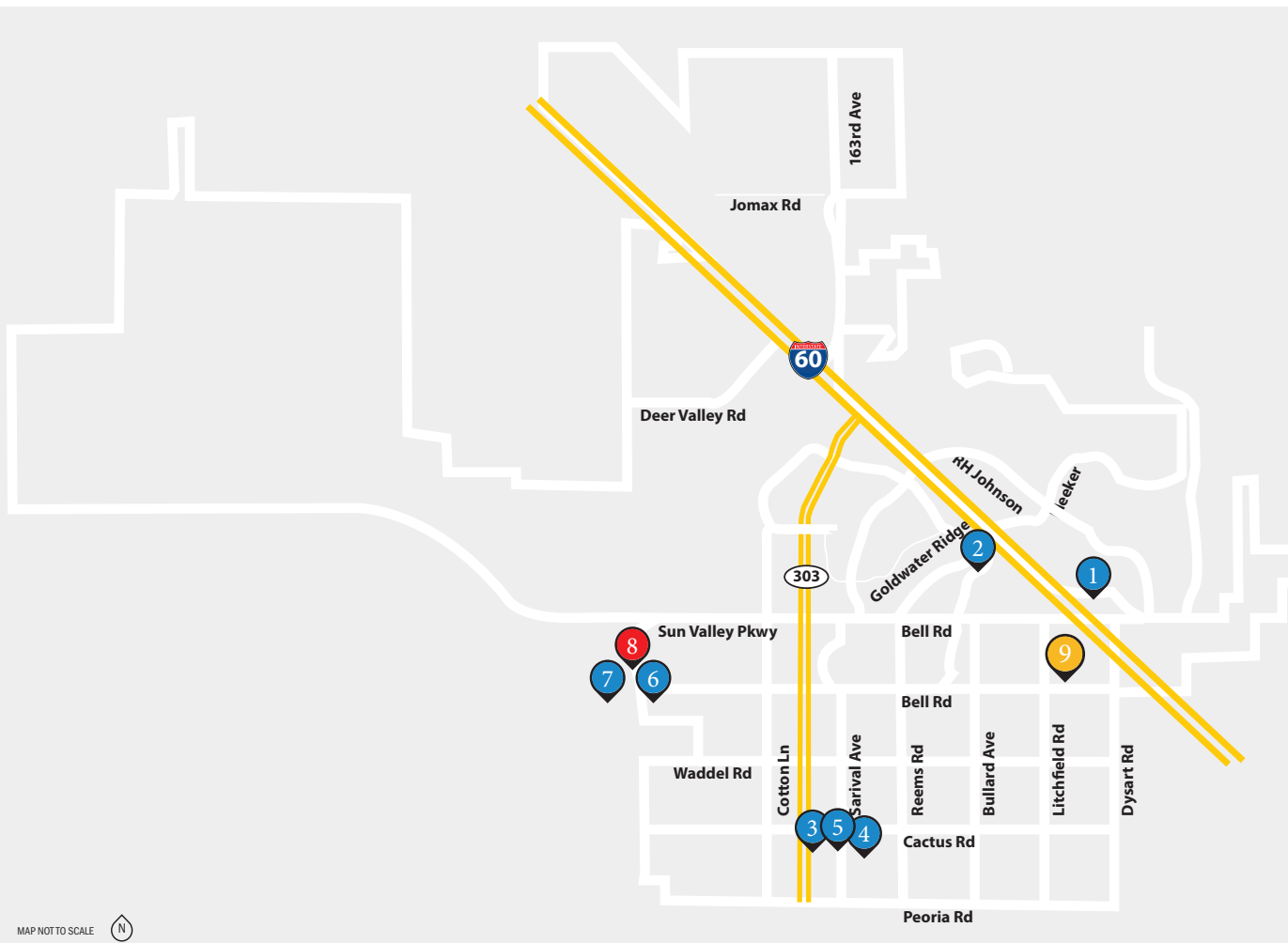
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BUSINESS MOVES



Compiled by Jason Stone
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

NOW OPEN

1 Window Depot opened up its first Surprise location at 13270 W. Bell Road, Suite 100. The business is open weekdays at 7 a.m., Saturdays at 8 a.m. and closed on Sundays. thewindowdepot.com.

2 Elevate Trampoline Park and activity center recently opened its seventh location in Arizona. It is open at noon weekdays, 9 a.m. on Saturdays and 10 a.m. on Sundays. 14537 W. Grand Ave., Suite 200.

3 Degree Wellness is offering red light therapy, cold plunge and wellness services, starting at 6 a.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. on weekends at 16427 W. Cactus Road, Suite 117. 602-837-0647. degreewellness.com.

4 Reformed Pilates is now open 5 a.m. weekdays and later on weekends at 16427 W. Cactus Road, Suite 129. 602-466-2819. reformed-pilates.com.

elevatetrampolinepark.com/surprise.

5 Port of Subs, a popular sub chain, made its way to the Surprise market at Prasada at 16640 W. Cactus Road, Suite 112. portofsubs.com.

6 Angie's Prime Grill recently took over the former Kneaders Bakery & Cafe building at 14183 W. Bell Road. It is from the same owners of Angie's Lobster and the former Salad and Go (see below). angies.com.

7 Marco's Pizza is giving the far northwest part of Surprise another pizza option. The pizza restaurant is moving from its previous location on Waddell Road. 480-744-3330. marcos.com.



ELEVATE TRAMPOLINE PARK

COMING SOON

8 Nite Creamery. The made-to-order liquid nitrogen ice cream shop is opening five stores in Arizona, including Surprise. 17829 W. Bell Road. wimschool.com/surprise.

CLOSINGS

9 Salad and Go shut down its four Surprise locations, including the one at 17137 N. Litchfield Road as part of its sudden closures all over the country. The owners opened Angie's Prime Grill around the same time (see above).

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Opinions

• From page 6

in, but to keep undesirables out.

There are a lot of Americans available to take jobs that some of these people come to America to take because the Americans that don't want to do those jobs are sitting at home taking taxpayers' money.

If I were in charge of ICE, I would call Sheriff Joe Arpaio to build tent cities as temporary detention centers. Day-old bread with peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

Legal immigration is good. Illegal immigration is wrong and against our laws, and lawbreakers need to be punished, not rewarded.

I pray that all illegal immigrants are deported today! I believe that would also change election fraud. I am angry, not at the current administration for doing the right

things and doing things right.

Ron Moe
SURPRISE

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Go, Bernadette — 'Make the House Great Again'

In response to Epson Brewer's letter about Congressional District 8 as seen in the Independent, I say, "game on!"

I am a military veteran and a former snowbird who is itching to get out on the hustings and canvass for Bernadette Greene-Placentia.

Bernadette will help "Make the House Great Again." She will ensure the House of Representatives acts as a co-equal branch of government. She will end Abe Hamadeh's rubber stamping operation and tackle this economic crisis which grows by the

day.

Abe claims the Democratic Party is going communist. Sounds like McCarthyism to me. I got news for Abe — if it was not for Democrats there would be no Social Security, no Medicare and no voting rights. All were passed by a Democratic Congress.

Incidentally, what is communist about calling for a ban on the sale of assault weapons?

Finally, next time you see an Abe poster, ask yourself if he believes the 2020 presidential election was stolen. If you think he would say, "yes," then go ask him: "How did you get elected in 2024?"

Go, Bernadette: Make the House Great Again!

Steve Grogan
SUN CITY

Bernadette Greene-Placentia is seeking to unseat incumbent Abe Hamadeh in CD 8, which includes parts of Surprise, Glendale, Peoria, north Phoenix, Sun City and Sun City West. 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.

Surprise leaders should plan for BESS, not fear it

The city of Surprise is developing an ordinance to regulate Battery Energy Storage Systems, commonly known as BESS. This is an important decision because energy storage will become an increasingly important part of the infrastructure needed to support Arizona's continued growth.

Surprise's Planning and Zoning Commission has voted twice to recommend a 100-foot setback for BESS facilities. In June, the City Council also heard from numerous experts who discussed the technology, safety standards and appropriate setbacks. The council should listen to those recommendations and ap-

♦ See **Opinions** on page 15

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Medicare And You™

Medicare's New GLP-1 Bridge: Weight-Loss Help for \$50 a Month



Jim Schmidt, Medicare And You™

By Jim Schmidt
MEDICARE AUTHORITY,
ADVOCATE & ADVISOR

For most of Medicare's sixty-year history, one thing stayed firmly off the table: coverage for weight-loss medication. By law, those drugs simply weren't part of the deal. This Summer, that changed. On July 1, 2026, Medicare launched a first-of-its-kind program called the Medicare GLP-1 Bridge, and for the right person, it can be a real game-changer. For anyone who has watched these medications from the sidelines, wishing they were within reach, this is welcome news indeed.

Here is how it came about. The GLP-1 medications you have seen in the headlines, the pens, pills, and injections that help people lose weight, have been costly and largely out of reach for

older Americans. After years of debate, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services created the Bridge as a temporary program to open that door. It runs nationwide, in every state and territory, from July 1, 2026 through December 31, 2027, offering these medications for a flat \$50 a month vs. prior costs of \$250 to \$300 and higher monthly costs.

That \$50 stays the same every month, even as your dose goes up, which is a rare bit of predictability in the world of prescriptions. One honest note: this \$50 does not count toward your Part D deductible or your yearly out-of-pocket limit, and the Extra Help program cannot lower it. This program is unilateral to your Medicare Part D plan either as a stand-alone PDP or incorporated within your MAPD plan. Insurance guidelines and benefits are absent here.

Who does it benefit? To qualify, you first need Medicare drug coverage, meaning Part D, either on its own or built into a Medicare Advantage plan. From there, you must be 18 or older and meet one of these health guidelines: a body mass index, or BMI, of 35 or higher; a BMI of 30 to 34.9 along with a condition such as heart failure, high blood pressure, chronic kidney disease, prediabetes, or a past heart attack or stroke; or a BMI of 27 to 29.9 with prediabetes, a past heart attack or stroke, or peripheral artery disease. In plain terms, it is aimed at folks whose weight is affecting, or threatening, their health.

Just as important is who is not eligible. You cannot use the Bridge if you already receive a GLP-1 drug through your Part D plan. And if you have type 2 diabetes, moderate-to-severe sleep apnea, or fatty liver disease, you are

steered elsewhere, though the good news is your regular Part D plan may already cover a GLP-1 for those conditions. When in doubt, it is worth a conversation to sort out which path is yours.

If you think you qualify, here are the steps to get started.

First, talk with your doctor. If a covered medication is right for you, your doctor sends the prescription to your pharmacy and, when asked, completes a short approval form called a prior authorization. Your doctor also confirms that you are pairing the medication with healthy eating and exercise.

Second, pick it up. Your pharmacy may ask for your Medicare number or the last four digits of your Social Security number. You will pay your \$50 and receive your medication.

Third, watch your mailbox. Medicare will send a letter confirming your coverage under the Bridge, and your approval lasts through December 31, 2027. Questions along the way? You can call me, 480-296-3900, or 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) any time, day or night.

The three specific medications covered under the program are **Foundayo**, a tablet you take by mouth; **Wegovy**, available as an injection or a tablet; and **Zepbound**, the KwikPen version only, as the single-dose vials and pens are not covered.

A word of encouragement to close. Medicare can feel like a maze, and a brand-new program like this only adds to the questions. Please do not let that stop you from finding out whether it could help you or someone you love. If you are unsure about your eligibility, your coverage, or your next step, reach

out to someone you trust to walk you through it. You do not have to figure it out alone. After a lifetime of hard work, you deserve clear answers, honest guidance, and the genuine peace of mind that comes with knowing someone has your back.

Next Month's Article:

Come September, we will cover the 2027 Annual Enrollment Period, (AEP) which starts October 1st for reviews & discussion of your current coverage and what the Market Offerings are for 2027, and October 15th thru December 7th for plan change applications if appealing. A gentle tap on your shoulder; there most definitely will be considerable movement come the new year. That is not to say that you would need to change or experience any unwarranted stress! A trusted professional should be on your side with honest evaluation predicated on your review and current wants and needs conversations. Don't let anyone ever talk to you just about those "shiny add-ons". A health plan should stand on its own as a health plan and perform as expected when called upon. Extra's are nice, however what is nicer are no surprises, disruptions, peace of mind, and of course an Advocate on your side and always available throughout the year and the years to come. A longer paragraph than I set out to inform. Thrust- take it from this seasoned professional, that is how important this period is.

About the Author:

Jim Schmidt has been a trusted Medicare Authority, Advisor, and Advocate in Arizona since 2006. Jim never charges a fee to those who reach out. Contact him any time at 480-296-3900 or JimSchmidt@MedicareAndYou.Reviews.

Coronado Park is closed for routine maintenance

Mark Coronado Park is closed for routine maintenance through Thursday, Sept. 3.

The park will reopen on Friday, Sept. 4, and will resume normal operating hours, daily from 6 a.m. until dusk.

Visit surpriseaz.gov/Parks for a list of additional Surprise Park locations.

Call the Sports, Entertainment and Culture Office at 623-222-2222.

City's deadline upcoming for chalk art muralists

Chalk art muralists in the West Valley who want to be featured in a Surprise arts festival in January have until Sunday, Aug. 30 to

apply.

Surprise is looking for artists with qualifications to produce a unique, nature-focused sidewalk chalk art mural that will be a feature of the second annual Roots of Creation: Art and Nature Festival on Jan. 30, 2027.

Selected artists will be awarded a stipend, supplies and materials.

Apply at surprisearts.com/opportunities/artist-calls.

Vitalant teaming up with city for 9/11 blood drive

The city of Surprise is partnering with Vitalant Blood Donation to host a blood drive from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 11, inside the Community Room in Surprise City Hall, 16000 N. Civic Center Plaza.

An average of 5,500 blood

BRIEFS

donations are needed to meet patient needs every day. Donations through the local nonprofit Vitalant stay in the community.

Vitalant is providing special gifts through its Donor Rewards program.

Through Sept. 11, donors can enter for a chance to win a 2026 Volkswagen Taos S. Between Sept. 11-30, donors will be entered to win one of two \$10,000 gift cards, plus Donor Rewards members can get a free Halloween T-shirt.

Visit vitalant.org/FallGiveaway.

Community members who want to participate are encouraged to schedule an appointment through the Vitalant website using the blood drive code p1T62. Although walk-ins are welcome, those with an appointment will be given priority.

For questions or information on the blood drive, contact Daisy Vargas at 623-222-1612.

Early-bird tickets on sale for Desert Fall Festival

Early-bird tickets are available for the second annual Desert Fall Festival in Surprise City Center.

General admission tickets are \$14.95 through Sunday, Aug. 30 for the festival at 14470 W Tierra Buena Lane.

This year's event runs from Friday, Sept. 25 through Sunday, Nov. 1.

Organizers are also selling "credits" for high-demand attractions, such as operating a real excavator, shooting apples from a real cannon, roller skating and ax throwing.

Tickets are available at thedesertfallfestival.com.

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FROM THE COVER

Rosenbach

• From page 3

college play and year as a Cardinals starter, most of his football career has been coaching the next wave of stars at smaller colleges, mostly on the West Coast.

Rosenbach has proven credentials for coaching high-powered offenses.

Under Wulff at Eastern Washington in 2001 and 2002, he directed the top total offense team in the nation (514.5 yards per game). As head coach at Adams State in the mid-2010s, he led his team from a 42-6 deficit in the first half to a 52-51 win in double overtime. It happened to be Rosenbach's first game as a head coach.

Like Murphy and Wulff, he has coached for or with people he knew from his playing days or through his other coaching stops.

"It does help me because it helps for me for people to know my personality," said Rosenbach, who admits he is not the easiest person to deal with. "I'm a competitor, and I'm passionate about football. And so I will overreact at times, and I need people to either laugh it off or tell me to get my act together or just know what's coming.

"That's been impressive about Reilly. We don't always see eye to eye, but he does a good job of handling it. And that's professional."

Rosenbach said he is still getting used to the drop down to the NAIA level, where there are no team managers to haul practice gear like for many NCAA colleges and pro teams.

"It's a hard transition, but you figure out what you've got to have," Rosenbach said. "One thing about lower division football is I always felt the kids have got to love to play. You have to love football because most of football is just practice."

Big man on campus

Rosenbach certainly showed a love

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Sept. 5: at Wayland Baptist*

Sept. 12: NELSON (TEXAS)*

Sept. 19: OKLAHOMA PANHANDLE STATE*

Oct. 3: LANGSTON*

Oct. 10: TEXAS COLLEGE*

Oct. 17: at Arizona Christian

Oct. 31: at Arkansas Baptist*

Nov. 7: TEXAS WESLEYAN*

Nov. 14: at Louisiana Christian*

Home games in all caps

*Conference game

for the game as a player.

While a junior at Washington State in 1988, he set several single-season school records — total offense (3,422 yards), passing yards (3,097) and touchdown passes (24), among them. He earned All-America honorable mention honors and finished seventh in the Heisman Trophy voting.

Rosenbach said the highlight of his pro or college playing career came when 4-3 Washington State went to No. 1-ranked UCLA and upset the Bruins 34-30.

"That's probably the biggest one I've ever been involved in," Rosenbach said about the head-to-head matchup he had with eventual No. 1 draft pick and Pro Football Hall of Famer Troy Aikman.

The Cougars ultimately beat Houston and future Heisman winner Andre Ware, 24-22, in the Aloha Bowl in Hawaii on Christmas Day for the school's first bowl win since the 1916 Rose Bowl.

But instead of trying to claim the

• See **Rosenbach** on page 19

Opinions

• From page 10

prove the 100-foot setback.

There is understandable concern whenever new technology comes into our communities, particularly when people hear about lithium-ion battery fires. But we should put those risks into perspective.

Most of us already live around potentially hazardous materials every day. We have propane tanks attached to backyard grills, gasoline in garages and natural gas running into homes. Lithium-ion batteries are everywhere — in cell phones, tablets, laptops, power tools, e-bikes and countless rechargeable devices.

We don't eliminate these products because they carry some risk. We manage that risk through appropriate safety standards, proper installation, fire codes and responsible oversight. BESS should be approached the same way.

Surprise is growing rapidly, and with that growth comes increased demand for reliable electricity. Battery storage allows electricity to be stored when it is available and used when it is needed, making it an important component of our future energy infrastructure.

The city should absolutely establish strong safety requirements for these facilities. But regulations should be based on facts, established safety standards and expert recommendations — not fear.

Planning and Zoning has studied this issue and twice reached the same conclusion.

Let's plan responsibly for Surprise's future. I ask the City Council to approve the 100-foot setback.

Bob Doyle
SURPRISE

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WC Willow Canyon Wildcats

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2025 record: 3-7
Playoffs: Did not qualify
Division: 5A Northwest
Coach: Jeff Bowen (First year)

SEASON PREVIEW

New-look Wildcats eager to win this fall

By Richard Smith
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Whenever a new coach takes over a high school football program and brings a largely new staff in, players about to go into their senior year have a natural tendency to wonder where they will fit in.

Seniors want to know if they will be pushed aside to develop players for the future. New Willow Canyon Coach Jeff Bowen said he is worried about this season only.

“We let them know that they were

going to get a fresh start,” Bowen said. “We want to be competitive with each other. And one of the things we talk about all the time is having a ‘no soft’ mentality.”

The 20 seniors on the roster have repaid this opportunity by buying in to a new philosophy from a staff that played or coached at Arizona Christian University for the past decade.

Bowen was the Firestorm coach for 10 seasons, and defensive coordinator Keith Sewell has been his right

• See **Wildcats** on page 17



Junior receiver Tobi Alade looks in a touchdown pass for Willow Canyon during a Sept. 26, 2025 home game against Tolleson. Alade is back this season. (Courtesy Ryan McGinley/Dysart Schools)

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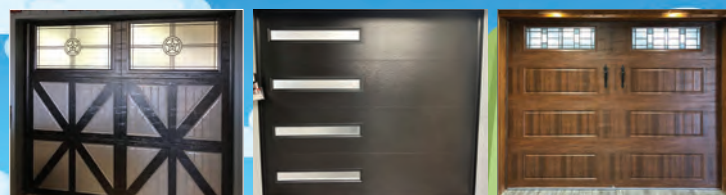
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Wildcats

• From page 16

hand man. Offensive coordinator and former Peoria coach Will Babb and receivers coach and former West Point coach Jerry Ball were on Bowen's ACU staff.

Position coaches Xavier Watkins, Riley Tucker and Travis Combs played for Bowen at the university.

"Our senior class has been phenomenal. They've done everything I've asked them to do. They're working hard. They've tried to change habits that they've had in the past. There's 1,001 ways to do this game. I just have a belief in what works in my system," Bowen said.

Senior defensive end Devar Allen said players are working harder across the board this offseason, notably unior defensive end and offensive guard William Ford.

"I think everybody is starting to understand football more," Allen said. "Everybody comes to practice with them mindset to compete."

Senior offensive tackle Caden Kilpatrick and Allen go head to head in almost every practice, and the competition is improving both players.

"Something that Coach Bowen brought to us is not being a check mark. We're not going to practice and just getting what we have to do done. We're going the extra mile," Kilpatrick said.

Much of the responsibility for keeping the tempo up falls on senior quarterback Tate Callan's shoulders and he's seen a difference in August.

He has veteran receivers to target.

Seniors Tobi Alade (24 catches for 319 yards) and Aiden Fuerstenberg (22 catches for 346 yards) are back after leading the 2025 Wildcats in different receiving categories. Callan also gets a big target back.

"Our receivers Cam and Tobi have really improved a lot, especially Cam who had a torn ACL last year and didn't get a chance to play. He's really bounced back from that and he's go-

WILLOW CANYON WILDCATS

KEY RETURNEES: Tate Callan, Sr., QB; Tobi Alade, Sr., WR; Aiden Fuerstenberg, Sr., WR; Caden Kilpatrick, Sr., OT/DT; Devar Allen, Sr., DE; William Ford, Jr., DE/OG; Jadin Ferrer, Sr., S.

NEWCOMER TO WATCH: Cameron Caldwell, Sr., TE/FS.

ing to be a big part of our team on both sides of the ball," Callan said. "Tobi is really taking it seriously, making sure he's eating right and working out with us. He's always asking to throw on the side."

Senior Channce Jones returns after leading the Wildcats in rushing.

Players are adjusting to a different thought process.

"There's a level of expectations that myself and my coaching staff has put on them. They needed to adjust and learn and get to the point where they feel actually comfortable with that. For me it's about developing habits. Habits determine success, not talking about winning or what's on the scoreboard," Bowen said.

Callan said his goal is to play in a way that leads to winning, whether that's 30 passes a game or 40 handoffs.

The intensity helped the quarterback, who started three games in 2025.

"They're coaching me hard and it's making me better," Callan said. "We really take every rep serious, whether it's 7-on-7, team or going against air or going over footwork."

Wildcats players are now used to pushing each other to improve.

"Our offense and defense, we kind of go to war in that practice, but it's cool because after we're all best friends. I think that's another thing. This team has grown really, really close to each other. I think we all love each other as brothers and that's something that has been really beneficial for us."

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FROM THE COVER

Massie

• From page 1

Surprise as a whole. That case is still in litigation, and the two sides are nowhere near a settlement.

While she waits for closure, Massie said she has been battling depression, worried about physical threats, moved her family out of Surprise and has suffered possible work repercussions.

Massie entered the public eye in the summer of 2024 when she videoed then-mayor candidate and city councilmember Aly Cline ripping down signs Massie had put up trying to get Kevin Sartor on the ballot.

Massie wanted voters to have at least two choices for mayor and not just a rubber stamp for Cline.

Sartor got on the ballot just in time, and after a council censure of

Cline, the controversy undoubtedly helped him get elected by a wide margin.

These days, Massie has buyer's remorse, but she has not been around City Hall lately to tell anybody about it.

But she did sit down with the Surprise Independent on the second-year mark of her arrest to talk about the impact it has had on her life and where is going moving forward.

Today marks two years. How long does it seem to you?

The easiest way to explain, kind of, how I've sat with it for the last two years is, I hate to use pop culture or media references, but I feel like it's fairly relevant. If you've seen the Apple TV show "Severance," where they have that chip in their head, basically, that severs their personality and their one person outside of work, and one person inside of work. It's kind of like that because I think

that's probably my body's way of dissociating and dealing with it. Because there's no way that on any planet, this should have been something that happened — and certainly not in America.

When you see that date, what does it do to you?

I've been on high alert probably for the last week and a half to two weeks of knowing that it's coming.

Today, I've been trying to get work done, and I haven't been very productive at doing anything that I need to do. I'm sitting here still kind of like shivering, shaking, whatever.

Anytime there's any sort of update or information that's passed along from either my attorneys or opposing counsel through my attorneys ... it still brings a lot of those emotions up to the surface.

In what ways has this affected your life most?

I've been shaking all morning, and I can't control it. It has definitely impacted my mental health. And what a lot of

• See **Massie** on page 22



Former Surprise resident Rebekah Massie wants closure two years after her arrest when speaking at a city council meeting. (Courtesy FIRE)



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FROM THE COVER

Rosenbach

• From page 14

school's first Heisman his senior year, Rosenbach decided to leave college early and enter the 1989 supplemental draft, where the Cardinals picked him second overall.

"To be honest with you, I wasn't doing anything in school," Rosenbach said. "I was playing ball. And I never had even thought about the Heisman. I just didn't feel like that was that important to me at that time." But Rosenbach said if he could have done it over again, he would have stayed his senior year at Washington State.

"Believe me, I wasn't ready," Rosenbach said about the NFL.

Pro stories

After sitting out most of his rookie season in '89, Rosenbach was one of two quarterbacks (Dave Kreig the other) to take every offensive snap in 1990 — 1,001 in all.

With weapons around him such as wide receiver Ricky Proehl, running back Johnny Johnson and offensive tackle Luis Sharpe, Rosenbach threw for more than 3,000 yards and rushed for 473 yards, the second highest among quarterbacks behind the Philadelphia Eagles' duo threat Randall Cunningham.

"I was blessed to have a lot of those guys around me and try to get me on

the right path," Rosenbach said.

After a 2-8 start, Rosenbach directed the Cardinals to three straight wins to turn the season around.

But a one-point loss on the final play to the ultimate Super Bowl champion New York Giants in Game 15 ruined the team's shot at a strong finish. Instead, the team ended up 5-11.

Still, Rosenbach had reasons to be optimistic going into the 1991 season. He was effective in two preseason games as the Cardinals were on their way to a 4-0 preseason.

His career completely changed, however, when the team was participating in a game walk-through in Tempe one night.

On a goal-line bootleg play, Rosenbach planted his leg when he saw menacing Dexter Manley running at him and he heard a distressing noise.

"Oh my God, something is wrong," Rosenbach said he thought to himself.

"It just popped. It didn't hurt, but I was like, 'Oh, crap. I just blew my knee,'" Rosenbach said. "At that point, it was ready to go."

Just like that, his football playing days were effectively over.

Rosenbach attributed the tear of an ACL to years of abuse on the knee.

"I wasn't a slide guy," he said, referring to today's quarterbacks who intentionally go down in order to legally avoid hits. "After that, for a number of

• See **Rosenbach** on page 21



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EPIC networking meetup rolling to Uptown Alley

EPIC networking is headed to Surprise's Uptown Alley for its next monthly mixer.

The West Valley Regional Chamber is co-sponsoring the event from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 27 at 13525 N. Litchfield Road.

Business leaders can check out the entertainment center's \$2 million renovation.

Uptown Alley includes Lucky Putt, sports simulators, Crazy Darts, a VR arcade, the Sports Theatre, a full-service bar and state-of-the-art bowling lanes.

Cassandra Salamone, of Cassandra Sold It; Greg Garcia, of Independent Newsmedia, who is also a commercial real estate agent with West USA Realty; and Raymond

E. Grim, of American Family Insurance, sponsor the EPIC networking mixers each month.

City wants VITA volunteers for upcoming tax season

Volunteers are needed to help low to moderate-income families and individuals prepare their taxes.

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program is sponsored by the IRS and provides free tax return preparation services through a large network of short-term volunteers.

Volunteers are not required to have prior tax preparation experience; training will be provided.

There is a large variety of volunteer opportunities within the VITA program, including the following:

- ♦ Tax Preparer – Prepares basic or advanced 1040 tax returns and related schedules for eligible taxpayers. Interviews taxpayers to determine if all income, deductions, and allowable credits are claimed.

- ♦ Greeter/Screeners – Greets taxpayers to create a welcoming atmosphere and performs the screening process of all taxpayers prior to moving them to the tax preparer.

- ♦ Interpreter – Provides bilingual assistance for Spanish-speaking and ASL clients seeking tax preparation services.

VITA information sessions are available at Surprise Resource Center, Riverboat Bingo and online.

Sessions go through Nov. 5. Visit TurnaNewLeaf.org/VITA or email WestValleyVITA@TurnaNewLeaf.org.

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Police substation needs artists for public display

The city of Surprise needs artists to help design permanent public art at the new police substation, which is opening at the end of 2027.

The city invited professional artists and artist teams to apply for a permanent public art opportunity at the new substation near 163rd Avenue and San Ysidro Road.

The selected artist will receive a contract of approximately \$165,000 to design, fabricate and install the artwork.

Apply at surprisearts.com/opportunities/artist-calls by Monday, Aug. 31.



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FROM THE COVER

Rosenbach

• From page 19

reasons, I couldn't stay healthy. That's a tough league, man."

Coaching carousel

After attempts to play with the New Orleans Saints and in the CFL in the mid-1990s, Rosenbach gave up football all together.

In a total different direction, he operated a charter boat service in Cabo San Lucas called "Go Deep." But after three years of that, he was itching to be around football again.

In 1999, he called an old school friend who was head coach at St. Ambrose University, an NAIA school like OUAZ in Davenport, Iowa.

He began volunteering to coach the offense but he was not able to get a full coaching job since he never earned his degree before leaving Washington State early.

Wulff brought Rosenbach over to Eastern Washington the next three years, first as a restricted-earnings coach because of his lack of a degree.

A senior administrator at Washington State, however, found that Rosenbach already had enough credits for a degree from all the classes he had taken at various colleges throughout the years. He officially earned a general studies bachelor and could now qualify for any college coaching job.

Among his many stops, Rosenbach has coached at UNLV and two stints at the University of Montana, which plays in a state where he grew up during part of his childhood. Rosenbach also spent three years as a head coach at NCAA Division II Adams State in the mid-2010s.

Feeling great

"Coach Rosy" will turn 60 midway through the season, but he said does not feel it.

"I feel way better than I did when I was 40," he said. "I feel better than when I was 29 to be honest with you."

Part of his good health stems from his three decades of years of sobriety from alcohol, which he was able to achieve when he was 30 after receiving treatment at The Meadows in Wickensburg.

His family life is in a good spot. He has a daughter attending dental hygiene school and another who is a volleyball middle blocker garnering NCAA Division I interest. The girls' mother, who lives in Montana, was a former volleyball player on the Canadian national team.

Rosenbach, himself, was inducted in the Montana Pro Football Hall of Fame over the summer.

"I coach because I'm an old player, and I can't play anymore," Rosenbach said. "I wish some of my players had the passion that I had. But times are different now."

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FROM THE COVER

Massie

• From page 18

people don't know is that after my arrest I was on a medical leave, basically a psychiatric medical leave from work, all the way up until the Monday before Halloween (of 2024).

You've been the center of a First Amendment debate from both sides. Some say you're a free speech champion, while others said you deserved arrest for being disruptive. How do you feel about the public debate about your actions?

Case law is exceptionally clear if you look at any SCOTUS cases is that my comments fall directly under the First Amendment, and technically, not that this has any legal bindings, but if you want to talk about the city's meeting rules or meeting policies or Robert's rules, which is the parliamentary procedure that the city uses, I wasn't even in violation of that. Skip was, not me.

There's still no resolution in your lawsuit against the city, the police officer and the ex-mayor. Where does it stand today?

We're in the process of going through the discovery phase. The city's been kind of dragging that out a bit and been difficult about getting some things that my attorneys want. It's disheartening to see that.

I don't know (if the city is) just not taking it seriously, or if they just don't care, or they're trying to sweep it under the rug, and we think that this is gonna go away, but this is a real issue. It's a literal federal case filed in the Ninth Circuit.

Were you expecting to have a resolution by this time?

I was hoping that maybe we'd be at least further along in the process. That's probably a little naive on my part. I know that federal court systems don't run super quick.

You used to go to a lot of council meetings. Now you're almost never there. How has this incident changed your activism?

It's had a huge impact in the sense that I'm not doing as much in-person stuff as I had sort of planned. I am a precinct committeeman with the Maricopa County Libertarian Party. Time will tell as far as what our goals are there. I know our chairman has a few things that he'd like for us to work on.

But I've mostly been relegated to arm-chair activism, if you can call it that, where a lot of what I'm doing is in the online sphere — if for no other reason that I don't think my body's going to be able to go through something like what I went through again.

Before your arrest, you were not afraid to speak your mind in front of people, and it seems to be different now.

I'm terrified. I'm terrified that if I say the wrong thing to somebody — and because I'm the voice of dissent — that I get in a situation where I get arrested again.

Or maybe worse, maybe I don't come home to my kids, and I leave them motherless. Because that's, unfortunately, a real possibility whenever you have an interaction with law enforce-

• See **Massie** on page 23



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FROM THE COVER

Massie

• From page 22

ment. They lack the skills to de-escalate.

How do you think the city council has handled the city's role in the ICE detention center?

It does kind of bother me when people reach out to me and send me city council footage of recent things where somebody like Kevin is squashing descent.

To me, it's extremely chilling to hear somebody interrupt somebody in their three minutes once again, and tell them that they're going to stop or they're going to be removed.

When I worked with Kevin to get on the ballot and ultimately work with him to win the election, the thing that he and I aligned with, even though he's registered Republican, and I'm registered Libertarian, was government transparency and government accountability. And I'll be damned if he's not turning the other way at this point.

Looking back now, do you regret your role in getting him on the ballot?

I do. I don't think Cline would have been any better.

How has the attention your case has brought affected your family?

My daughter was there (the night of

the arrest). My eldest child was there. She was 10 at the time. She'll be 13 in December. And still to this day. I can't bring up the city of Surprise in passing or if she eavesdrops on a conversation between my husband and I, and hears me talking about Surprise, Kevin, Skip and any of that. She has a meltdown about it because it still is very triggering for her.

How do you respond to people who said you were asking to be arrested for attention?

If you think that I'm a monster who would go and do something for internet clout points or whatever you want to talk about it, or call it, at the expense of my child's well-being, absolutely not. That's not who I am.

As far as somebody trying to say that I was asking for it, I wasn't. It's no secret, people who know me well, that I've struggled with mental health since I was a teenager. I had done a lot of work from 2018 to 2024. Six years, working with a psychiatrist, working with various therapists, things of that nature, and got to a point where my PTSD was almost like I was not getting triggered at any point in time.

And that roughly 90-minute interaction undid six years of work. It brought me back to where I was probably worse

off than when I started on my mental health journey in 2018. I hadn't had any thoughts or attempts on my own life, and I didn't attempt anything, but the thought was definitely there, because I was in so much emotional pain and turmoil that I just wanted it to stop, and the only escape seemed like death.

And that's really hard. I know anybody who's wrestled with those thoughts and has overcome them knows how bad it feels to feel like you're back at square one again.

I don't make a habit of making this super public, but when I was a teenager, there were a couple of things that happened to me that would fall into the vein of sexual assault. And wrestling with not only that happening to your body,

and happening to your person and losing your autonomy, is something that I don't wish on even my worst enemy. I wouldn't wish it on a single soul.

But unfortunately, with what happened to me that night on Aug. 20, it feels very reminiscent of losing my autonomy and feeling like I was violated in that way.

Would you consider running for political office yourself?

I have zero desire to run for political office or anything like that. My children need me. I'm right where I need

to be.

But there are definitely people that have approached me to try to run for Congress, approach me to try to run for other things or try to get me involved in a bigger aspect to more formal political processes.

I've been approached to run for Libertarian national committee positions or at-large reps, different things of that nature, which is wild to me that I'd even be in that position.

What's next for you?

Right now, I'm just kind of taking it one day at a time. That's really all that I can do, as far as a lot of this is very uncharted territory, especially since the city has not approached us in over a year with an attempt to settle.

But I'm also terrified. We're taking it one day as a time as a family. There are still definitely questions where even my youngest, who was 3 almost 4 at the time, asks what happened.

At almost 4, he would ask questions, "Mom, how come the police were mean to you?" How do you explain that to a 3-year-old?

Jason Stone can be reached at jstone@iniusa.org. 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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Public Notice

Public Notice:

Dr. Sanjay Bommanati is no longer with CenterWell Surprise as of July 31, 2026. Current patients will automatically be transferred to another provider at the center. If you are a patient and you choose not to continue care at CenterWell Surprise, you can obtain your medical records by calling 623-428-8189.

Publish: Surprise Independent, August 26, September 2, 9, 16, 2026/47410_1

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Public Notice

DEVELOPMENT PROJECT NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

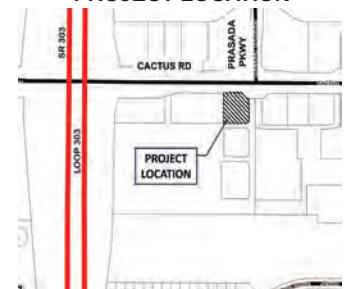
Please be advised, Ms. Trina Borja with Service First Permits, will host a Neighborhood Meeting to discuss the project referenced below. Any member of the public may participate in this conversation as it pertains to this project by utilizing the information provided under Neighborhood Meeting Details below. According to Surprise Municipal Code, the applicant is required to host a Neighborhood Meeting to present their project to the public while soliciting feedback and providing answers to questions. Please note, the City of Surprise Community Development is not the host of this meeting; however, the assigned City Planner will be available to provide information as needed in response to inquiries received from residents.

Applicant: Trina Borja, 510-504-0568, comments@s1permits.com
City of Surprise Planner: Aslesha Basnet, 623-222-3152, aslesha.basnet@surpriseaz.gov

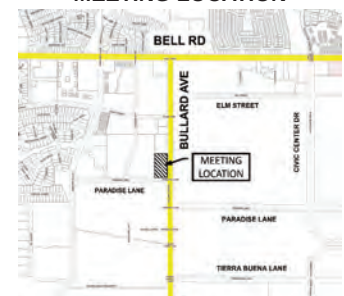
NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING DETAILS

DATE: Wednesday, September 16, 2026
TIME: 6:00PM
LOCATION: Residence Inn by Marriott
16418 N Bullard Avenue
Surprise, AZ, 85374

PROJECT LOCATION



MEETING LOCATION



PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

A request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) with Site Plan for a Bank/Financial Institution with drive-through to allow for the development of PNC Bank. The site is generally located on the South-west corner of Paradise Parkway and Cactus Road, Surprise Planning Case #FS26-0245.

Publish: Surprise Independent, August 26, Phoenix Independent, August 28, 2026/47726_1

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