



Election
Voting
centers
approved; **4**



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talks
continue; **18**

The teamwork behind town government

**For Paradise Valley staff, it all
starts at the table**

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Every Tuesday at 10 a.m., Paradise Valley town staff gather around a long conference table to go over the week ahead.

Employees from departments ranging from finance and public works to the police department come together for the weekly meeting, which Town Manager Andrew Ching said helps keep the small municipality coordinated.

The meeting begins with an exercise Ching calls “Did you know?”

The exercise gives staff an opportunity to share something about their work or personal lives that their colleagues might not know, helping build relationships among the employees responsible for running the town.

• See **Town Staff** on page 12



Youth Council to conduct sustainability audit

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Two Paradise Valley Mayor’s Advisory Youth Council members are gearing up to perform an audit of Town Hall’s sustainability this fall.

Paradise Valley residents and Xavier College Preparatory students Claire Young and Allison Weddell said at the youth council’s Wednesday, Sept. 9, meeting, they will first tour town hall to see what current sustainability initiatives are in place.

Then they will meet with department heads like the town manager, public works director and chief financial officer to understand who makes decisions about water, waste disposal, electric use and landscaping and how they are budgeted.

At one of the six town council meetings scheduled this fall the sustainability audit along with improvement plans will be presented.

Young said she is excited to get started because creating change within the government will encourage and show it is possible for residents.

• See **Youth Council** on page 24

Mia Steinmetz shares her thoughts during the Paradise Valley Mayor’s Advisory Youth Council’s meeting Wednesday, Sept. 9, meeting, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)



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THE CALM PERSON

BY GREG HAGUE

My friend Bruce once taught me how to land a Husky tail-dragger airplane in the wilderness.

That is the sort of lesson where you particularly appreciate an instructor who does not become emotionally adventurous.

Bruce and I have done business together, traveled together, and helped each other make important life decisions. I helped him sell a \$100 million Las Vegas casino. He helped me learn to put that little airplane safely on the ground.

Through all of it, I noticed something unusual about Bruce.

He listened far more than he talked. He never, and I mean never, became visibly upset. He would listen, consider the facts, and respond intelligently. He was brief and brilliant instead of big and bloated.

I never saw him freak out. Not once.

Bruce is also among the wealthiest people I know. Yet what impresses me most is not his wealth. It is the organized, purposeful, completely enjoyable life he leads on his terms, not somebody else's.

I do not think those things are unrelated.

Most people absorb the emotions around them. When everyone else panics, they panic. When stress enters the room, they give it a chair and offer it coffee. They are calm when life is calm, which is not much of an achievement.

The rare person stays calm when everyone else is unraveling.

Not because that person feels no pressure, but because he has trained himself to respond instead of react. His presence becomes an anchor. While everyone else is discussing how terrible, insulting, frightening, or unfair something is, he asks one simple question:

“What should we do next?”

Calm can look like doing nothing. That is why people underestimate it.



But calm is not passive. Calm is the pause between what happens and what you do about it. That pause is where intelligence enters the conversation.

Here is one of the best definitions of a problem I have ever heard:

A problem is simply a set of facts compounded by emotion.

Remove the emotion and something interesting happens. The “problem” disappears. What remains is simply a set of facts.

Something happened.

Someone said something.

A business deal changed.

A medical report arrived.

A plan failed.

Someone broke a promise.

Those facts may require serious thought and decisive action. But anger, fear, resentment, and panic rarely improve the quality of either.

Indignation can be wonderfully satisfying. It just has a terrible record as a strategic adviser.

I see people become consumed by what someone “should have” done, how unfairly they were treated, or why circumstances “should not” be this way. They spend enormous energy arguing with facts that have already occurred.

Facts are stubborn that way. They do not reverse themselves because we are offended.

This does not mean you should become cold or unemotional. Love your spouse deeply. Adore your children. Care for your parents and friends. Get excited about your dreams. Laugh loudly. Celebrate wildly.

I am talking about decisions involving your health, your wealth, your work, and the future you hope to create.

In those moments, strip away the drama. Write down exactly what happened, without adjectives. Decide what outcome you want. Identify your options. Choose the most intelligent next step.

Then act.

When the upsetting email arrives, pause. When somebody tries to aggravate you, remember that accepting the invitation is optional.

Whenever something happens that might otherwise upset you, ask yourself three questions:

What happened?

How does it affect me?

What should I do next?

Focus on your objective, nothing else. Then act. Deliberately. Unemotionally.

Think of life as a series of chess moves.

Better moves, better life.

Bruce taught me how to land an airplane in the backcountry. Without intending to, he also taught me a better way to land almost everything else life throws at us.

The calm person may not control everything that happens.

But very often, the calm person controls what happens next.

Greg Hague CEO, 72SOLD

ON YOURVALLEY.NET

Youth survey shows declining substance use

Arizona youth are vaping and drinking less as well as having an increased awareness of fentanyl, according to a new annual report released by the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission.

The survey was taken by more than 41,000 students in eighth, 10th and 12th grades across 264 schools in all 15 Arizona counties.

Read online at [YourValley.net](#)

Audit shows Arizona Medical Board not timely in investigations

A new report says it's taking too long for the state board responsible for regulating doctors to deal with complaints.

The report found the board was out of compliance with that 180-day standard even in what it calls Priority 1 complaints. That includes sexual misconduct, a doctor's drug or alcohol abuse, and what auditors consider a "severe quality of care violation, such as inappropriate prescribing of medications resulting in death."

Read online at [YourValley.net](#)

Top US doctors offer updated flu and COVID vaccine recommendations

Leading U.S. medical groups are urging people to get updated flu and COVID-19 vaccinations this fall, banding together in early September to issue shot guidelines — and highlight the science behind them — saying they hope to ease confusion caused by the Trump administration's changing advice.

Read online at [YourValley.net](#)

Maricopa County supervisors approve voting centers, emergency locations for election

By Jeff Wendt

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors approved polling locations and emergency vote centers for the November general election during its regular meeting Tuesday.

The resolution approved 254 voting centers, 54 of which will be open on the Saturday prior to Election Day on Nov. 3, and another 151 open the day prior to the election.

"The vote centers are aligned with the plan that was

- See **Election** on page 20



Assistant Maricopa County Manager Zach Shira (left) and Maricopa County Director of Elections Scott Jarrett speak to members of the Board of Supervisors at its meeting On Sept. 2. (Screen capture from YouTube)

COMMUNITY

Lifeguard Training offered at Valley of the Sun J

The Valley of the Sun J community center, 12701 N. Scottsdale Road, Unit 201, will offer a two-day, American Red Cross Lifeguarding course Sept. 26-27 from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. This course is open to participants outside of Scottsdale, including those living in Paradise Valley.

This course equips participants with the skills and knowledge to prevent, recognize and respond to aquatic emergencies, as well as provide care until Emergency Medical Services arrive, according to a press release from the Valley of the Sun J.

Those who successfully complete the course will earn an American Red Cross certificate for Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED, which is valid for two years.

Participants must pass swimming



Lifeguard training will be available the Valley of the Sun J Sept. 26-27. (Courtesy Valley of the Sun J)

prerequisites. There is also an online component that must be completed before attending the in-person class. The online portion takes approxi-

mately six to eight hours. The minimum age is 15.

To register or for more information, visit [valleyofthesunj.com](#).

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The new Lakefront at Scottsdale mixed use development will feature La La Kind Cafe, V Modern Italian and SUSSHISAMBA as tenants. (Courtesy Diversified Partners)

Diversified Partners break ground on the Lakefront

Scottsdale-based real estate brokerage and development firm Diversified Partners broke ground on the Lakefront at Scottsdale Sept. 24, at 7501 E. McCormick Parkway.

An approximately 100,000-square-foot

mixed-use redevelopment, the Lakefront is designed to transform a Scottsdale waterfront property into a destination for dining, curated retail, office space and gathering areas, according to a press release.

With views of the lake and Camelback Mountain, the project is designed around walkability, waterfront activation and an elevated visitor experience.

The site was originally developed in 1978.

Smiling Moose Sandwich Grill opens new location



Smiling Moose Sandwich Grill is known for its made-to-order sandwiches, wraps, soups, salads, burgers and freshly baked cookies. (Courtesy LevRose Commercial Real Estate)

The Colorado-based sandwich shop chain the Smiling Moose Sandwich Grill has opened its first Arizona location at the Scottsdale Crossing shopping center, 2865 N. Scottsdale Road.

Smiling Moose Sandwich Grill is known for its made-to-order sandwiches, wraps, soups, salads, burgers and freshly baked cookies, according to a press release.

Its signature sandwich, the Original Mo, features grilled meat, melted cheese, fresh vegetables and vinaigrette on a freshly baked baguette. The restaurant also offers dine-in service, online ordering,

delivery and catering.

Behind the Arizona expansion is a local ownership group that includes former Arizona State University basketball star James Harden, Troy Payne, Nico Fricchione, Patrick Fricchione, Brian Padilla, Carlos Munoz, and George Gundrey.

LevRose Commercial Real Estate represented both the landlord and Smiling Moose Sandwich Grill in creating the lease for the store.

For more information about Smiling Moose Sandwich Grill, call 602-844-9996.

YourValley.net

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OPINION

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Those that are judged as personal attacks or complaints about neighbors, businesses or other opinion writers will not be considered. No person may submit more than two opinions for publication during a calendar month. Two submissions in the same issue will not be published. The content of a submission is the responsibility of the person who submitted it.

Speak Up

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

Corrections

We will promptly correct all factual errors. We offer a "right of reply" to the people about whom we write. Readers who disagree with a news story are welcome to respond with a letter.

Electric leaf blowers are a huge improvement

The recent article on electric leaf blowers begins with the fact that gas-powered blowers have been a big quality of life question recently, and the next eight paragraphs, detail that person's opinions; no "facts" were checked.

Most of the backpack gas and electric blowers vary less than 10% by weight, but the gas models (when full) are slightly heavier; all are around 19-23 lbs.

The batteries, that cost cents to recharge, last 1-2 hours, so two batteries provide 2-4 hours of performance.

Changing a four-pound battery, in a mass produced, consumer device shouldn't injure professional maintenance personnel, and you can't spill a battery.

The CFM ratings of all models are published by the manufacturers and are facts. The correct machine will clear the street quickly, and unlike gas machines, are solid state, so they won't flood or stall and require almost no maintenance.

Backpack blowers, with several batteries and a charger, start around \$1,250 and the best Stihl models (made in Virginia, USA) are about \$2,300 (to any consumer). So, four machines would in fact cost \$5-9,000.

The difference in decibels, carefully tested in the factory, is 20-30% lower for electric, by all manufacturers. This isn't all the noise, but it's significant; think of a 25% improvement in anything.

What was strikingly missing in the article is that the gas machines will burn about 150 gallons of gas, mixed with 2-stroke oil (that blue smoke), every year. This will be over \$1,300 in annual operating costs, versus the electricity of around \$110.

On any given day in Paradise Valley, around 800 houses will be "main-

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tained" by several hundred workers, using these machines, putting themselves, and everyone around them, at risk. Until 25 years ago, brooms and rakes sufficed, but if we want blowers, the electric versions are a huge improvement.

Melodi Lamé
PARADISE VALLEY

Vote yes on Scottsdale Unified bond

As the mother and grandmother of twin boys who have attended Scottsdale Unified School District schools since first grade, we have seen the difference an SUSD education can make, and we encourage a "yes" vote on the SUSD bond.

Our boys excel in academics and sports thanks to dedicated teachers and strong leadership. Just as importantly, SUSD has created a close-knit support circle that helps them – and us – feel connected and ready to succeed.

Now it's time to invest in those who follow. This bond builds more than buildings; it builds an extended family for all those who walk their halls.

A yes vote helps keep schools safe, modernize classrooms and address aging facilities before small problems become costly emergencies. These are essential, not extravagant, projects. Many buildings and systems are decades old, including Saguaro High School, where the boys are freshmen. Go Sabercats!

This investment benefits every Scottsdale resident. Strong neighbor-

hood schools help protect property values and keep Scottsdale an attractive place to live — all for about \$3 per week for the average homeowner. We know what Scottsdale schools can accomplish when students have the resources they deserve. Join us in voting yes on the SUSD bond.

Sam and Katie Campana
SCOTTSDALE

Supporting Dr. Jennifer Johnson for Scottsdale Unified board

I'd like to encourage you to support and vote for Dr. Jennifer Johnson for the Scottsdale Unified School District Governing Board.

My support and advocacy for our public schools have been a high priority in my life. It's critical to have dynamic leadership at the board level to accomplish our community's goals and aspirations. That's why I've met with Dr. Johnson on multiple occasions to determine her level of expertise and her dedication to public schools.

I'm happy to report she passes my tests with flying colors.

First, she is a former superintendent. She understands education as a Ph.D. and as a seasoned practitioner.

Second, she's genuine and cares for students. She could easily rest on her laurels and not seek public office. That's not in her DNA. She continues to want to make a difference in the lives of students.

Third, she understands the role of the board. She's not a micromanager. She doesn't have a hidden agenda. She believes in public schools. When she's elected, she'll tackle the job description with the same energy that has defined her professionally for a lifetime.

♦ See **Opinion** on page 22

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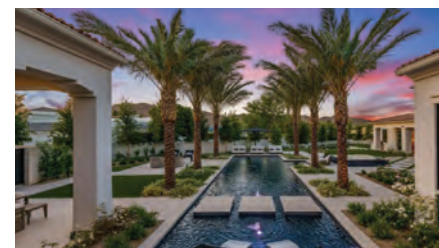
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FROM THE COVER

Town Staff

• From page 1

“We go around the table and people share a little something, a nugget of information, if you will, that we might not otherwise know,” Ching said.

Running a town with a small-town, rural feel in the middle of the Valley requires coordination among a relatively small staff, Ching wrote in an email. Ching said in the 2027 fiscal year, the town has the manpower equivalent of roughly 115 full time employees.

“Unless a resident is seeking a building permit or some other type of permission to do something on their property, they probably don’t think much about other town functions and services, such as street sweeping, street repairs and managing a full municipal court docket,” Ching wrote. “We are fortunate to have skilled, professional staff in each of our departments who work together to set priorities.”

Chief Financial Officer Leslie DeReche wrote in an email effective communication between departments is key to keeping the town operating smoothly.

“Strong communication and close working relationships between departments help ensure everyone stays informed, coordinates effectively and works together to keep the town running smoothly day to day,” she wrote.

DeReche has worked for Paradise Valley for two and a half years and has found working for a small municipality has given her a stronger connection to her colleagues and a sense of pride in her work, she wrote.

“One of the things I value most about working for a smaller municipality is the opportunity to know the people I work with and to feel a strong sense of community,” she



Paradise Valley town staff members gather for their weekly meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 25, at Town Hall in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

wrote. “That personal connection is one of the things that makes the work especially rewarding and keeps me here.”

Erin Sweeney, a part-time Town Hall staff member, was initially introduced to the town through the Arizona State University Marvin Andrews and Jane Morris Local Government Fellowship. The program places graduate students pursuing public administration or public policy degrees with local governments for hands-on experience.

Sweeney said the collaboration between departments has allowed her to gain experience across several areas of local government.

“I really got to kind of wade into a bunch of different areas of local government,” she said. “I have budget experience now, I have grant writing experience, I worked with HR and with the police department and with legal. I feel very much like I developed a really wide skill set rather than

specializing in one area.”

Ching, who has been with the town for three years, said he has found support from town staff, the Town Council and residents throughout his time in Paradise Valley.

“The organization is small in numbers but talented and does great work every day, and the community cares deeply about the town, and has been incredibly kind and welcoming from my first day to today,” he wrote. “I feel very fortunate to be a part of the town.”

Examples of the coordination that can happen behind the scenes include the drainage and streetscape project along Mockingbird Lane and Invergordon Road, the town’s response to residents’ concerns about speeding in their neighborhoods, and the finance team’s work to ensure newly introduced projects are financially feasible.

The Mockingbird Lane project has required extensive coordination

with surrounding neighborhoods, utility providers and the Maricopa County Flood Control District to improve drainage while making the streets safer and more visually appealing, Ching wrote.

If a resident raises a concern about speeding, the Police Department will take an active role in responding, which is what residents might expect. But addressing the issue may also require coordination with other departments. The Engineering Division of the Community Development Department may get involved by analyzing data from speed studies, reviewing the posted speed limit and signage in the area and evaluating the roadway design, Ching wrote.

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

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Boardwalk Big Wheel now spinning at Arizona Boardwalk

Arizona Boardwalk has marked its 10th anniversary with the opening of the The Boardwalk Big Wheel.

Standing 80-feet-tall, this climate-controlled, giant Ferris wheel will offer 360-degree views of the Valley and beyond, combining cool comfort with elevated moments at every turn, according to a press release.

Boardwalk Big Wheel is the first permanently fixed outdoor Ferris wheel in metro Phoenix and the newest signature attraction at Arizona Boardwalk.

Featuring 18 fully-enclosed, climate-controlled gondolas that comfortably seat up to six guests each, the ride offers 360-degree views of the McDowell, Black, Mummy, Four Peaks and Camelback mountains — providing a perspective of the Valley unlike any other. Onboard music and dazzling LED lighting complete the experience, transforming the Big Wheel into a glowing landmark after sunset.

“The Boardwalk Big Wheel was designed to bring families and friends together, creating unforgettable moments while adding an exciting new element to every Arizona Boardwalk visit,” Arizona Boardwalk managing partner Ran Knishinsky said in the release. “Whether you’re celebrating a special occasion, enjoying a family outing or simply taking in the incredible Arizona scenery, this attraction offers a one-of-a-kind experience unlike anything else in the Valley.”

Visible from Loop 101, the Boardwalk Big Wheel is the 10th attraction at the Arizona Boardwalk. Rising above the Behind Butterfly Wonderland’s glass conservatory, it joins attractions like OdySea Aquarium, Butterfly Wonderland, Museum of Illusions, Cluville, Pangaea: Land of the Dinosaurs, Cyber Quest Family Arcade, UFO Experience, Laser+Mirror Maze and the Boardwalk Carousel — making it easy for families to spend an entire day exploring and playing.



Featuring 18 fully enclosed, climate-controlled gondolas that comfortably seat up to six guests each, the 80-foot Boardwalk Big Wheel at Arizona Boardwalk offers views of the Valley. (Courtesy Arizona Boardwalk)



Emma Ruth heads to Phoenix in November. (Photo By Mason Rose, provided by Another Side)

Emma Ruth Rundle planning Valley tour stop at Crescent Ballroom

With a new album due out in September, Emma Ruth Rundle will bring her fall tour to downtown Phoenix.

The multi-instrumentalist, songwriter, poet and multi-disciplinary artist in July released her new single, “Enough,” from her forthcoming studio album “These Killing Times,” which is due out Sept. 18. She and her full band will perform Nov. 29 at Crescent Ballroom. Cinder Well will

be the opening act.

“These Killing Times” returns to a full-band set up for a fuller sound, and features drummer Jess Gowrie (Chelsea Wolfe, Mrs. Piss), longtime friend and collaborator Troy Zeigler, Patrick Shiroishi, Nick Reinhart (Tera Melos), Gina Gleason (Baroness), Marissa Nadler, Lukas Frank (Storefront Church) and Amelia Baker (Cinder Well).

• See **Rundle** on page 20



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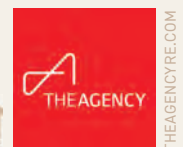
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How to engage in respectful, honest & civil dialogue about public issues

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- ❑ **Be respectful.** Bullying, public humiliation, insults, name-calling, harassment, and threats directed at another person — or that person's race, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. — have no place in civil discussions. Find ways to respectfully disagree without questioning someone's character or motives.
- ❑ **Be truthful.** Base your opinions/arguments on facts. Value honesty. Make only accurate statements when making your point and avoid exaggeration and stereotypes. When appropriate, cite your sources of information that others may question.
- ❑ **Don't misrepresent.** Always identify your opinions as opinions (not stating opinions as facts). Never misrepresent the views of others or falsely claim your opinions represent someone else. If quoting the words of others, identify and credit the source.
- ❑ **Listen & learn.** It's both polite and respectful to listen to those we disagree with (as well as those we support) and be genuine in our attempts to understand their point of view. Expand your mind by thoughtfully seeking out views that don't agree with your own.
- ❑ **Look for common ground.** When disagreeing with others, look for even small areas of agreement — which can be the gateway to working together for the greater good.
- ❑ **Respect privacy.** Keep private things private — whether it involves your own information or those with whom you disagree. Revealing private information about someone else is rude, unethical, potentially harmful and, in many cases, illegal.
- ❑ **Set a good example.** Practice civil behavior online as well as in public and in your interaction with others. Encourage others to practice these civil behaviors. And it's OK to challenge disrespectful behavior — but be courteous, respectful and helpful in your approach.



Now that you've read the checklist, take the Civility Pledge at yourvalley.net/civility-pledge.



The Scottsdale Unified School District staff presented three options for more possible school closures for next year during the governing board's Sept. 8 meeting. (J. Graber/Independent Newsmedia)

SUSD Governing Board gets look at next round of school closures options

By J. Graber

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Scottsdale Unified School District School Governing Board got its first official look at what the district's next round of school closures might look like during its Sept. 8 meeting.

District staff presented the board with three options for what Phase II of the district's school closure program could look like.

Phase II includes the closure of two or possibly three schools from a list of Copper Ridge, Cheyenne Traditional, Laguna Prep, Redfield Elementary School, Desert Canyon Elementary schools and Desert Canyon Middle School.

The three options presented to the board were created by two committees made up of parents, district staff and community partners that worked from March through August. The plan is to put one the options in place for the 2027-28 school year.

The choices are:

- ♦ Option A — Move Cheyenne Traditional K-8 to Copper Ridge; move Laguna Prep and Redfield to Cheyenne campus and a potential Desert Canyon K-8 merger. This option would impact between 2,126 and 2,232 students but would save the district around \$2.59 million annually.

nually.

- ♦ Option B — Merge Desert Canyon schools into K-8 at Copper Ridge; close Laguna Prep and repurpose Desert Canyon campuses and Laguna. This option would impact between 2,132 and 2,153 students but would save about \$2.68 million annually.

- ♦ Option C — Close Copper Ridge K-8 and Laguna Prep; redistribute boundaries and possible and a potential Desert Canyon K-8 merger. This option would impact between 773 and 872 students but would save the district \$2.72 million.

The idea is to impact the fewest number of students while maximizing savings and ensuring as many students as possible will still have access to the same programs they had at their previous schools.

The district already closed Pima Elementary and Echo Canyon K-8 schools this year as Phase I of the program.

Phase III of the plan does not include closing any more schools. Instead, it's about developing a plan to grow attendance in each of the district learning communities.

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Election

• From page 4

approved in April prior to the primary election,” Scott Jarrett, Maricopa County Director of Elections, told the board.

“We tried to use voting locations that have been used in the past,” Jarrett added. “The highest response is going to previous locations where they voted.”

New locations in Tolleson, Avondale, Goodyear, Mesa, the Peoria/Sun City border and south Phoenix were needed due to growth in those areas since the 2024 presidential election.

“We try to identify the gaps by using heat maps where voters live and where they tend to go to vote, and then we looked at the last three elections, and where new voters live,” Jarrett said.

Jarrett did say this year’s gener-

al election ballot will be a one-page front-and-back ballot, which should cut down on the time it takes to count ballots.

Supervisor Mark Stewart asked Jarrett if there were any concerns about long lines during this election, and Jarrett tried to calm Stewart of those concerns.

“There are always going to be lines,” Jarrett said, “our goal is to keep them under 30 minutes.

“In 2024, the average wait time was just a few minutes, so we are confident with the turnout models, that our lines will be under 30 minutes,” Jarrett added.

Jarrett also said they will be proactive on social media to get the word out about alternative locations near polling sites that have long lines, pushing voters to go to a location that may only be a mile or two away from their current location.

“I didn’t realize how complex elections were until I got this job,”

said Vice Chair Debbie Lesko. “And I didn’t know how complex it was to get voting centers. You have to work months in advance to sign contracts with these places.

“It used to be that schools were voting centers, now, they don’t,” Lesko said. “I don’t know why, maybe it’s because of controversy. It used to be more churches did it. Now they don’t. These places don’t want to do it anymore, so to get more voting centers than we did in 2024 is a great accomplishment.”

What wasn’t announced was drop box locations, how many drop boxes will be available and early voting sites that the county Recorder’s Office is responsible for. Those locations should be announced by Sept. 18, Jarrett said.

All those locations will be published online at locations.maricopa.vote.

Rundle

• From page 16

“I wanted to feel fortified by friendships and to be in community with other musicians — to make something that pushed back against the isolation,” Rundle shared in a press release.

The album was recorded by Sonny Diperrì (My Bloody Valentine, Trent Reznor, These New Puritans), who she has worked with on multiple releases over the last decade.

In 2025 her first book of poetry, “The Bella Vista,” was released via Unnamed Press.

The new tour kicks off in November, following her solo support tour with All Them Witches in October.

For tickets, visit <https://tinyurl.com/4kvakejk>.



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OPINION

Opinion

• From page 8

Fourth, our Scottsdale public school system is the envy of communities across America. It's not broken. It doesn't need fixing. It needs nurturing and support from competent leaders. Jennifer knows that celebrating our wins and sharing the positives about our district — of which there are many — is essential to keeping it healthy and growing. Think about how much more we can accomplish together when we stay focused on that.

Thank you for considering Dr. Jennifer Johnson. I hope you'll join me in supporting her campaign and voting for her.

Gary Shapiro
SCOTTSDALE

Arizona should learn from Vegas on water planning

Arizona officials love reminding us we prepared for the Colorado River crisis — banking water underground, building conservation programs, negotiating shortage agreements. Every round of cuts brings the same reassurance: Arizona planned for this.

Then look at Las Vegas.

Southern Nevada spent nearly \$2 billion building an intake and pumping system that can pull water from Lake Mead even below the elevation where Hoover Dam can no longer release it downstream — dead pool. Officials didn't dismiss that scenario as too frightening to plan for. They built for it.

The bigger story might be consumption. Las Vegas paid residents to rip out grass, is eliminating decorative lawns and imposed real limits: landscaping rules for new developments,

golf course caps, restricted outdoor watering, pool size limits, bans on wasteful water features. The logic is simple: indoor water can be treated and returned to Lake Mead; water sprayed on decorative grass is lost forever. So, Las Vegas targeted the water actually disappearing.

The results are striking. Between 2002 and 2025, Southern Nevada added nearly 900,000 residents while cutting Colorado River consumption by roughly 40 percent — proof that growth doesn't have to mean rising water use.

Las Vegas treated scarcity as a physical limit, not a PR problem. Arizona keeps celebrating conservation while approving massive new developments, locking in demand for generations even as the river shrinks.

If Southern Nevada can add 900,000 people while cutting river use 40 percent, why does Arizo-

na keep approving growth that adds long-term demand in the middle of a shrinking-river emergency?

Arizona should borrow Las Vegas' mindset — stop prioritizing decorative grass, force developments to live within tightening water budgets, mandate reuse and outdoor conservation and stop assuming new demand can be sorted out later.

Las Vegas prepared for dead pool. Arizona is still preparing for more growth.

Rusty Childress
RIO VERDE

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FROM THE COVER

Youth Council

• From page 1

“For now, we were thinking town hall, because it (sustainability) starts with the government,” she said

Weddell agreed with Young that figuring out which ideas are feasible for town hall first will help them understand where to go next.

“Just starting off small, and then maybe if we get more brain flow, brainstorming ideas, we can bring that in through the community,” she said.

The two youth council members said once they understand what it costs to make sustainable changes at a large scale and what that will cost, they would like to present ideas to the golf courses in town, neighborhoods and resorts.

Finding and implementing more ways to be sustainable are important to the youth council because Paradise Valley is their home and they want it to be a safe, clean place to live for as long as possible, Weddell said.

“We live in Paradise Valley, so I think it’s very important, as we’re living here. We also have a clean space for everybody to thrive in,” she said. “Making it more widespread would help the town as a whole.”

The youth council members are hopeful that creating sustainable initiatives that work for their small com-

munity will show the path for other municipalities to become more sustainable as well, Weddell said.

“If we focus on the small community, maybe we can branch it out to other communities as well, not just Paradise Valley, but other places,” she said.

Young said she sees accessibility and expense as two of their biggest challenges when examining what can be done to become more sustainable as a town.

“The hardest part about it is the accessibility and the expenses of it because a lot of times it’s more expensive to try and be more sustainable,” she said.

So far, the town staff and town council have been receptive to their efforts to be involved in the town’s sustainability audit, Young said. As young residents of the town, decisions made now will impact their futures most, Young said.

“We do have to have more input on what we do here, because we’re the ones affected by it in the future,” Young said. “Our town manager (and staff) are very supportive.”

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



The Paradise Valley Mayor's Advisory Youth Council and their advisors Vice Mayor Christine Labelle and Mayor Mark Stanton at the youth council's Wednesday, Sept. 9 meeting, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)



Paradise Valley Mayor's Advisory Youth Council member Umeed Singh speaks during the council's Wednesday, Sept. 9, meeting, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

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New pickleball and tennis courts debut at Phoenix's Pierce Park

By Mark Carlisle
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Phoenix's Pierce Park premiered some new sports courts in late August, and they're just a short drive away for Town of Paradise Valley residents looking to get out and get active.

The city held a ribbon-cutting event for the six new pickleball courts and two new tennis courts, along with LED lighting, Aug. 22 at Pierce Park at the southwest corner of 46th and Oak streets.

"Across the country, there's a real debate, but we are investing in both pickleball and tennis here because we just want people outside," Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego said at the event.

The new sport courts came along with other improvements to the park, including resurfaced basketball and volleyball courts, new drinking fountains, new benches and picnic tables,



Residents play tennis on the new courts at Phoenix's Pierce Park. (Courtesy city of Phoenix)

new sidewalks connecting to the new sport courts and a repaved parking lot.

Parks and Recreation Deputy Director Danielle Poveromo said the parking lot was a big priority they heard from the community.

"The big ruts are gone," Poveromo

said.

"The refreshed amenities you will see today build on the legacy of this park as a welcoming destination where families can relax, connect and enjoy time," Whitfield said.

Gallego noted that Phoenix has one of the biggest parks systems in

the country, and "one of the most successful."

"I've often said that parks are one of the clearest reflections of a city's values. When we invest in parks, we invest in people. And we in the city of Phoenix have made parks a priority," Gallego said.



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Sun City - September 23, 2026 - Sundial Recreation Center
Sun City West - October 28, 2026 - SCW Foundation Center
Mesa - November 13, 2026 - Mesa Marketplace Swap Meet
Apache Junction - January 6, 2027 - Central Arizona College
Surprise - January 19, 2027 - The Colonnade
Litchfield/Goodyear - February 17, 2027 - Tuscany Falls Clubhouse (Pebble Creek)
Chandler - February 23, 2027 - Sun Lakes Country Club
Peoria - March 25, 2027 - Westbrook Village
Sun City West - April 13, 2027 - SCW Foundation Center
Sun City - May 3, 2027 - Sundial Recreation Center

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