

Museum

New character joins Arizona Gold Mining Experience; **9**

CAVE CREEK/CAREFREE
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Award

Town finance director receives national honors; **23**



October 2026 Volume 32 Issue 10 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

Cave Creek navigates Colorado River cuts with proactive water management strategy



By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

For decades, the Town of Cave Creek operated under the quiet assumption that water would always flow.

But behind the scenes, a growing crisis has forced local leaders to reckon with harsh realities, fragile infrastructure, and a shrinking supply from the Colorado River.

Town officials trace the formal management efforts back nearly two decades.

"The town bought the water systems in 2007," said Cave Creek Utilities Director Shawn Kreuzwiesner. "I think, from that point on, they started looking at that and how to manage the water resources at the time."

However, as local development expanded, the urgency intensified. By 2022, the town updated its water shortage and drought management plan to prepare for upcoming reductions in supply.

The town's water delivery system relies heavily on a long-standing contractual arrangement with the Central Arizona Project. Cave

• See **Water** on page **20**

Above, intake pumps that draw water from the Central Arizona Project canal, which is then pumped 12.5 miles to Cave Creek. (Courtesy of the Town of Cave Creek)

Cave Creek seeks new town attorney

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Town of Cave Creek is in the process of hiring a new Town Attorney, as the timeline for the process was given to the Town Council during September.

Current Town Attorney Bill Sims is planning to retire at the end of the year, and according to the timeline presented by Procurement Administrator Monique Harris, the town hopes to have a new hire ready to be approved by the council at its Oct. 20 meeting.

"As we were putting together the scope, we were very mindful about identifying not a replacement for Mr. Sims, but really ensuring continuity of services and identifying someone that's going to be the right fit," Harris said.

Harris said they are looking for someone who has strong municipal experience, responsive, a great communicator, someone who establish-

• See **Attorney** on page **24**

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PLANNING

Carefree officials voice concerns over HB 2447

By Zev Black
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Earlier this year, on Jan. 1, House Bill 2447, or A.R.S. § 9-500.49, went into law, requiring municipalities like the Town of Carefree to designate an official to review and approve plans without public input.

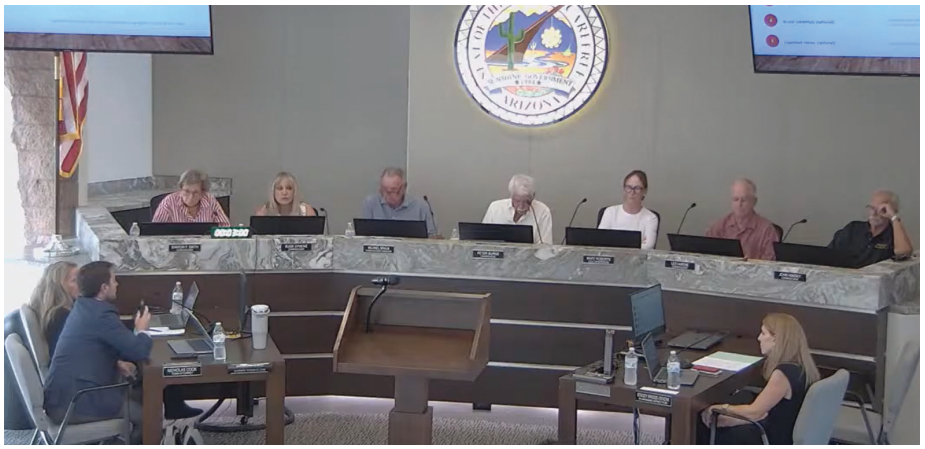
At a November 2025 town of Carefree Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, multiple officials, including Town council member Colleen Rose-Scurti, disapproved of the bill.

Recently, at the Sept. 14 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, Chairperson Peter Burns also spoke in disapproval.

"The legislator took away so many authorities of the elected, appointed bodies of this esteemed municipality," he said.

The bill was approved by Governor Katie Hobbs March 31, 2025 and officially went into effect Jan. 1.

With the bill in place, the Carefree Planning & Zoning Commission is working to fully understand the new law.



The town of Carefree Planning and Zoning Commission talks about HB 2447. (Submitted photo/Town of Carefree)

Town of Carefree staff will handle all site and development plans and objective design review. Self certification, at-risk submittals and expedited reviews are all optional for the town to take on by itself.

"I do firmly believe 9-500.49 will control staff needs to be approving or denying site plans, pre-plats, final plats," town attorney Nick Cook said. "There was portion of the code that said 'referred.' The staff could refer something to the planning and zoning commission if it's a referral relating to site plan, pre-plan, final plat."

All plat information will be submitted electronically to the staff.

"Now, it's all electronic until we're actually ready to approve a plat that actually requires any kind of signature," Stacey Bridge-Denzak, director of community development, said.

"I think at that point, then we would print things out."

The town will publicly publish when a plat is filed to keep residents updated on what is happening in the community.

"To go one step further, you could put into place a provision that says there's been an application, it's a complete application, that's now in staff's review here within 600 feet of the proposed development," Cook said.

This will allow the public to make comments to the town and the plat applicants with suggestions. Under the law, the staff is allowed to ask for it, but cannot require it.

To watch the full meeting at which HB 2447 was discussed, go to youtube.com/watch?v=tVDRxuJH-1FM&t=238s.

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

ART



People looking at art. (Submitted Photo/Town of Carefree)

Art Night comes to Carefree

The town of Carefree invites Valley residents to stroll through the heart of the Carefree Town Center 4–7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month, October through May. With more than a dozen galleries, artist-run shops and studios participating, guests can discover work by internationally recognized artists alongside pieces created by local Arizona artists.

Rather than simply walking from gallery to gallery, Carefree Art Night is about slowing down and becoming part of the experience. Meet artists and gallery owners, hear the stories behind the works you see, discover something unexpected and enjoy the personal conversations that can turn a casual evening out into a new monthly tradition.

Attendees can also enjoy wine, small bites and handheld treats, giving the opportunity to sip, shop and explore at your own pace.

Blending art, hospitality, dining and small-town charm, Carefree Art Night offers more than a traditional art walk. With over 12 galleries and shops participating, each event features new artists, exhibits and discoveries.

For additional information visit visitcarefree.com/artnight.

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CONSERVATION

Cave Creek approves grant application for land trust purchase

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Town Council on Sept. 15 approved a resolution authorizing a grant application submittal for a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant and directing staff to take any and all action as necessary to implement the grant, if awarded.

The grant, awarded in the amount of up to $2 million, would be used to purchase 4,005 acres of open space from the Arizona State Land Department.

"We fell like we have a strong application to get all the funding from the grant," Kautzman said. "However there are 17 groups that have applied for the grant and only $9 million to be awarded, so we think we will get funding, but the exact amount we don't know yet."

Cave Creek would have to match dollar-for-dollar the amount of the grant.

There are other funding mechanisms being put into place, including one the voters of Cave Creek will act on in the November election to add a 1/4 of one cent sales tax to help raise the necessary funds to complete the purchase.

At Tuesday's meeting, Development Services Director Luke Kautzman provided the council with an update on the land purchase.

Kautzman explained a lot of processes are in the beginning stages.

"We are in stage where a lot of studies are being done," Kautzman said. "Biological, cultural, geographical. We're engaged with a survey firm, and we hope to get some of those completed by December."



Cave Creek Development Services Director Luke Kautzman, left, and former Maricopa County Parks Director R.J. Cardin provide and update on the purchase of 4,005 acres of open space around Cave Creek at the Town Council meeting Sept. 15, 2026. (Independent Newsmedia/Jeff Wendt)

Kautzman also said they were working with Maricopa County to determine possible right-of-ways within the open space areas that could impact future development around the open space.

Kautzman said that all of that has to be uploaded to the current application, and then the Arizona State Land Department will do their due diligence and complete a final appraisal of the land.

R.J. Cardin, a former Maricopa County Parks Director and a consultant on the open space acquisition, said the town has had some preliminary talks with Maricopa County in being a partner in the purchase, maybe by purchasing a parcel or two of the land Cave Creek is looking to acquire.

"We are looking to meet with them (the county) next week and maybe begin the framework of a memorandum of understanding and a possible IGA (intergovernmental agreement) with them," Cardin said.

Kautzman reminded everyone there are a lot of factors in play before getting toward the finish line.

"There are a lot of variables due to deadlines," Kautzman said. "But by the end of the year, we should have some clarity."

Kautzman said the current timeline has them possibly heading to auction for the land in July or August 2027.

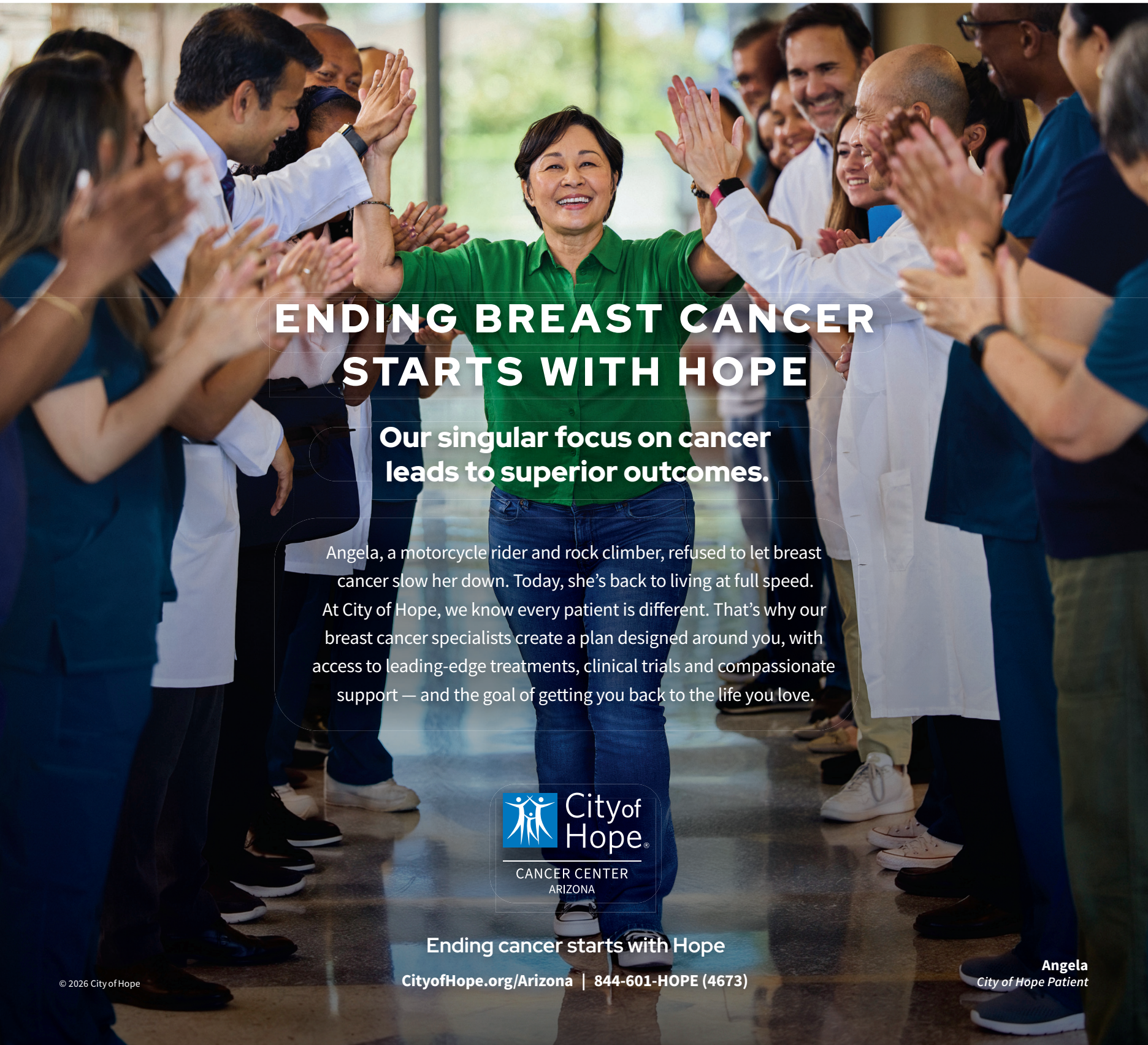
Whether that is all 12 parcels or some part of the 12 parcels could depend on funding.

"The current contract is for all 12 parcels," Kautzman said. "But the auctions could be parceled out due to the funding we have available."

"We are looking at many creative ways to making the purchase happen," Town Manager Grady Miller added.

One of those creative ways is having a website up and running this month to keep town residents up-to date on donations and fundraising efforts.

Members of the previous Ad Hoc Committee as well as Kautzman and communications director Bo Larsen will be keeping residents updated on those efforts.


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THINGS TO DO

Passport program gives tour of local landmarks

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Museum, in conjunction with the Cave Creek Visitors Center, invites residents and visitors to take part in the Local Landmarks Passport Program.

Passport users begin their adventure by picking up a Local Landmarks Passport at the Cave Creek Visitor Center or Cave Creek Museum.

Passport users then explore the town to discover 10 of the Local Landmarks, search for answers to trivia questions, and learn some Cave Creek history to explore the places, stories and people that helped shape the character of Cave Creek.

Upon completion of the answers they find, thrill seekers can bring the passport back to the museum or visitors center for some fun Cave Creek swag. The Cave Creek Visitors Center is at 6528 E. Cave Creek Road, and the museum can be found at 6140 E. Skyline Drive.

The Visitors Center and the Cave Creek Museum reopened to the public on Oct. 1.

The Local Landmarks program participants are recognized with a bronze plaque that connects the celebrated locations with a storytelling map. This map allows residents and visitors to explore virtually, physically and through the storytelling of Cave Creek's pioneers, descendants and residents.

For information about the Local Landmarks program, visit cavecreekmuseum.org/local-landmarks. Local Landmarks is managed by Cave Creek Museum for the Town of Cave Creek.



The Local Landmarks Passport Program helps uncover the places, stories and people that helped shape the character of Cave Creek. (Courtesy of Fran Booth)

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SCAN TO LEARN MORE



Local miner El Monty Jackson is being introduced to the Arizona Gold Mining Experience at the Cave Creek Museum, and will make his debut on Oct. 24. (Courtesy of Fran Booth)

Cave Creek Museum to introduce new character to Arizona Gold Mining Experience

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Museum, which opened the Arizona Gold Mining Experience five years ago, will be adding a new character to its program when the season opens on Oct. 1.

Local miner El Monty Jackson will be making his debut during the museum's first Arizona Gold Mining Experience Oct. 24.

Jackson, a crusty old miner, previously was a well-to-do-gambler from back East, decided to leave the life and venture to Cave Creek to try his luck at searching for gold in the renowned mining district. Jackson is quite a character, and visitors of all ages are going to love his wild and quirky style. He will make you laugh and experience a day filled with memories and knowledge.

Tickets for the Arizona Gold Mining Experience are available online at cavecreekmuseum.org. Tickets are $20 for adults and children under 12 are free, and Culture Passes are not accepted for this event. Reservations are required for the experience, which begins with check-in at 9 a.m.

The 56-year-old 501(c)(3) museum's mission is to preserve the artifacts of the prehistory, history, culture and legacy of the Cave Creek Mining District and the Cave Creek/Carefree foothills area through education, research, and interpretive exhibits. The Cave Creek Museum is located at 6140 E. Skyline Dr. Open from October through May. For more information call 480-488-2764.





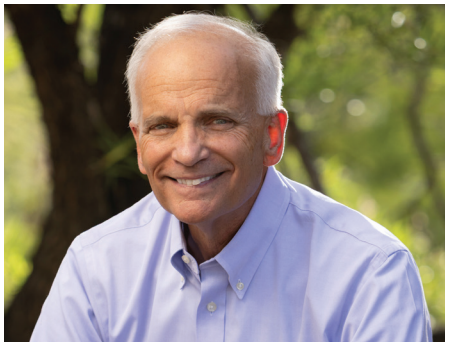
OP-ED

It Rained! Is the Drought Over?

By John Crane
CAREFREE MAYOR

On a recent mid-September afternoon, a wonderful thunderstorm, the kind of storm monsoon-lovers dream of, dumped about 3" of much needed rain in Carefree. Leaves glistened, the aroma of wet creosote bushes permeated the air, washes flowed, temperatures dropped, albeit temporarily, and, after months of dormancy, windshield wipers came to life. It was a very special day!

For communities in the grips of a 25+ year drought and facing significant Colorado River water delivery cuts, the storm felt like a much needed, overdue reprieve. Unfortunately, one major storm is not a drought breaker. The reason why lies in the complexity of our water supply.



Carefree Mayor John Crane (Submitted Photo/ John Crane)

While the water portfolio for every municipality or water company varies, many, like Carefree, derive their water from the Colorado River through the Central Arizona Project and groundwater delivered via wells drawing from aquifers. In Carefree, about 70% of our delivered water originates from the Colorado River and about 30% of our water comes from wells pulling water from an aquifer under our town.

The Colorado River relies on Rocky Mountain snowpack for its health and to fill Lake Powell and Lake Mead reservoirs. Local rain does not impact snowpack in the headwaters of the Colorado River drainage system.

But certainly, significant rainfall must replenish our aquifers! If it was only that simple. Most Sonoran Desert rain never reaches an aquifer. Only about 2 to 3% of desert precipitation becomes groundwater. Most desert rain is lost to evaporation, flows away as runoff, or is used by plants. The time needed for rain to find its way to an aquifer can be measured in decades, not days or weeks. Water must percolate slowly through dry, often fine grained sediments. The time it takes for rainwater to travel from the surface to an aquifer depends on the local geology and the depth of the aquifer. Desert aquifers are typically hundreds of feet below ground.

While local rainstorms, no matter how big, do not make a significant impact on our water supply, those storms decrease wildfire risk, bring the desert to life, reduce dust, and recharge soil moisture. Plus, they set the stage for water conservation. Outdoor water use – irrigation, swimming pools, fountains – account for about 70% of residential water use. For a few days after a heavy rain, irrigation systems can be suspended and pools can coast on additional inches of rainwater.

While a good thunderstorm is always welcome, it does not change the reality of a decades long drought. Our responsibility to manage scarce water resources remains and will continue for years to come.

OP-ED

Tell your friends Event Season is here

By Robert Morris
CAVE CREEK MAYOR

Cave Creek is often defined by its seasons: winter is when we see many of our out-of-town visitors who come to shop, dine, and explore. In spring, we prepare for wildfire season, though it's now a year-round issue. Then summer comes, and visitors and shops slow down a bit, and many Creekers head for cooler climates for a few weeks. Then fall season comes around, and we gear up for the visitors from around the state and the start of event season, especially Taste of Cave Creek.



Cave Creek Mayor Robert Morris (Submitted Photo)

The Taste of Cave Creek continues to grow in popularity with locals, and especially with visitors from the valley who want to come to our town for great food, shopping, and fun. This year will be the second annual Mayor's Cup friendly competition between participating restaurants. Last year, Harold's Cave Creek Corral won for best overall presentation and food.

We've expanded the categories to include best food, best booth presentation, and best dessert. Winners in these categories will receive 13-inch silver cup trophies. Each category also has second- and third-place ribbons. Town Council members do the judging.

The Town and many of our restaurants, shops, and bars work hard to attract people to Cave Creek through their social media. Just by the interest shown in the Visit Cave Creek social media, since August 2025, the Facebook page alone has grown by 10,316 followers, which is 710% more interest in Cave Creek!

Even though tourism is down across Arizona for a variety of reasons, Cave Creek has seen a slight uptick in our sales tax revenues. I am proud to say we don't have a property tax, so the sales tax helps us pay for our two fire stations, our relationship with Daisy Mountain Fire District, and other infrastructure services.

Thank you for supporting our local businesses. And keep telling your friends to meet you in Cave Creek because our event season is just starting.

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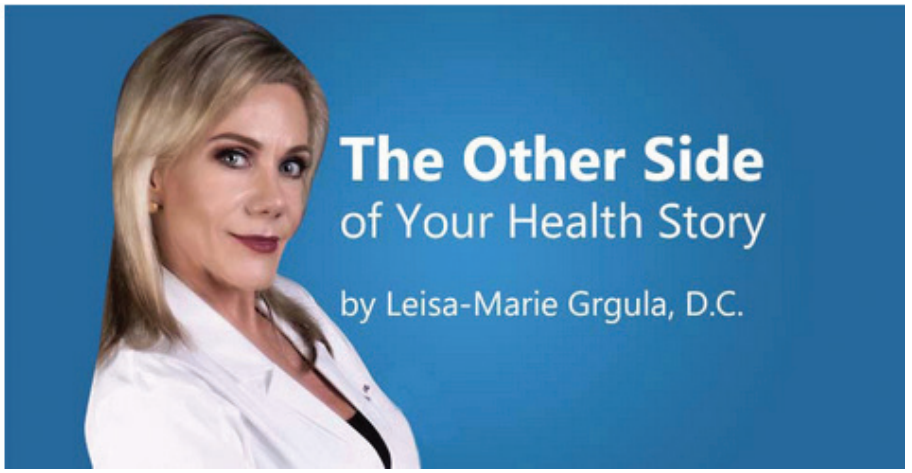
A special evening to ask me anything about stem cells: Exploring the future of Regenerative Medicine and what it can do for you!

By Dr. Leisa-Marie Grgula

Every day, I'm asked many questions about Regenerative Medicine, including stem cells, exosomes, PRP, and ozone. These are the most popular questions I'm asked by readers via email as well. Many of them relate to my purpose, which is to help my patients live long, healthy happy lives without drugs or surgery. My patients enjoy their retirement by spending more quality time with grandkids, hiking, playing golf, and more activities here in beautiful Arizona. As the owner and primary provider in my clinic, I've attended stem cell conferences around the country, and researched the highest quality products, therapies, and protocols available. Visit my website to see my guest appearances on national podcasts that feature providers like myself who render unique and specific regenerative therapies that work for difficult cases when others do not.

What will be discussed at the event? Pain relief without drugs or surgery.

We've set some dates in October to invite my readers to come to my office for a special event to speak to me personally while I present the truths and myths about Regenerative Medicine. Actual patients will be present to share their success stories and answer your questions as well. This is above and beyond a simple presentation, as my Medical Professional who renders the treatments will be there also. A tour of our medical area with our equipment where our regenerative medicine therapies are rendered will be included. I will also answer questions as to how my passion grew for this area of medicine and share my own personal success of preventing a full shoulder replacement with stem cells after a major accident that fully tore my rotator cuff muscles and fractured 3 bones in my face. The article, and MRI reports before and after are linked on the homepage of my website below. I'll discuss my passions in life, and what motivates me to help patients every day.



What conditions will be discussed for stem cell therapy?

We will discuss conditions we have had success with, including:

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- Neuropathy
- Trigeminal Neuralgia
- Autoimmune Disorders
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- Low Back Pain & Sciatica
- Herniated Disc
- Hand & Finger Pain
- Hip Pain
- Neck and Shoulder Pain
- Hand, Wrist, & Elbow Pain
- Sexual Rejuvenation

What will be offered at the event?

We'll be offering champagne and charcuterie, along with other light food and non-alcoholic drinks to enjoy as we answer all of your questions and concerns about these cutting-edge therapies, and how to save you from medications and surgery. Special discounts will be offered to all who attend.

What topics will be covered?

Some topics covered will include many questions that come from emails from my readers. Where do stem cells come from, what they are and what they are not, and where do we source them from? Does the mother of the baby get paid to donate the umbilical cord? Why do I work with stem cells as a Chiropractic Physician? Is it like an organ transplant, do you need to be a match? Who does not qualify to get stem cells? Does the FDA approve stem cells? Are stem cells legal in the US? Why are stem cells from a newborn more effective than our own cells? What is the difference between regenerative medicine products from the US and those from other countries? Why are some counties able to have trillions of cells in a product when in the US it is only billions of cells? How do they work for conditions other than joint pain?

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Here are the dates for you to choose for our special evening.

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- **Thursday, October 15 6:30 PM**
- **Tuesday, October 20 4:00 PM**
- **Wednesday, October 21 6:30 PM**
- **Tuesday, October 27 4:00 PM**
- **Wednesday, October 28 6:30 PM**

For any questions regarding my articles, please email me at DrLeisa@CaringPainRelief.com

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Cave Creek Museum to open season with family-friendly event

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Museum will be hosting a family-friendly event from 1-4 p.m. on Oct. 17.

The event is free thanks to sponsorship by the Kiwanis Club of Carefree.

The special three-hour event, themed "Where Melodies Spark Memories and Objects Tell Stories," will feature live musical performances, interactive storytelling and hands-on activities.

Visitors can meet curators, board members and community memory keepers, to uncover behind-the-scenes insights into the region's heritage. Ten other local non-profits will join the museum for this special afternoon.

Key activities include:

- **Nanny Nikki's Imagination Station:** Located in the history wing, local Montessori teacher and podcast creator Nikki Wasilishin will introduce young explorers to the stories of Cave Creek's miners, ranchers and early families.
- **Live blacksmith demonstrations:** Desert Rat Forge and in-house artisan Paul will host ongoing "branding" activities at the outdoor blacksmith shed. Attendees can take home a custom, hand-forged Spur Cross-branded wood block keepsake.
- **Cowboy Chaz the Runaway Outlaw:** A resident wardrobed interpreter will roam the grounds, spinning rowdy yarns about the mining campus and posing for "selfies" with guests.
- **"A Kiss from France.":** Inside the historic Cave Creek Church, textile collector Sue Palmer will showcase her personal collection of rare WWI silks and share how Belgian artisans helped wartime soldiers stay connected with family.
- **Share music and memories at the gazebo:** Local musician Darrell Doepke, joined by friends, will honor 1970s era small-time traditions. Fill our "memory jar" with what you remember about the museum's gazebo, which originally stood at Neary's Village Square at Cave Creek Road and Hidden Valley Drive before being relocated to the museum property in 1991.
- **Behind-the-scenes and preservation:** Volunteer Kitty Sue Schlink will share insights into what it takes to maintain and operate the museum's historic ten-stamp ore crushing mill, while Kathy Tuley and Gwen Harwood will teach guests how to preserve their own family heirlooms.
- **Community partners:** Representatives from the Girl Scouts Arizona Cactus Pine Council, local business Desert Mermaid and others, will answer questions, talk about upcoming events and offer make-and-take activities for the kids.

The 56-year-old museum's mission is to preserve the artifacts of the prehistory, history, culture and legacy of the Cave Creek Mining District and the Cave Creek/Carefree foothills area through education, research, and interpretive exhibits. The Cave Creek Museum is located at 6140 E. Skyline Dr. The museum is open from October through May.

For more information call the museum at 480-488-2764 or visit cavecreekmuseum.org.



Cave Creek Museum in-house artisan Paul Diefenderder will host a branding activity during a family-friendly event on Oct. 17 at the museum. (Courtesy of Fran Booth)

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THINGS TO DO



There are several Halloween-themed events around town this month, including the Halloween Spooktacular Hot Air Balloon Festival, BOO! Arizona, the Scottsdale Zombie Crawl, Casino Arizona's Halloween Bash, the Pho-kin' Halloween Bash, and the Family Fun AZ Halloween Bash. (Metro Creative Connection)



The Scottsdale Symphonic Orchestra kicks off its season with "Roots and Rhythm" on Oct. 11 at the Virginia G. Piper Theater. (Courtesy Wikimedia Commons)

Blessing of the Animals

About: 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 3 at Black Mountain United Church of Christ, 30600 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale
Info: Celebrate the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, with the church's Blessing of the Animals service. All residents are welcome, as are their leashed pets. Every animal will receive a personal blessing and treat. Cider, donuts, and water will be made available.
Web: bmucc.org

Fall League Baseball Exhibit

About: Oct. 3-Nov. 15 at Scottsdale Stadium, 7408 E. Osborn Road, Scottsdale,
Info: An exhibit that celebrates baseball moments in history opens in October at Scottsdale Stadium. The exhibit will be accessible during Fall League games and other selected dates.
Web: experiencescottsdale.com

Farmers Market North Scottsdale

About: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday at 10428 E. Jomax Road, Scottsdale
Info: Every week find farmers, bakers, makers, and creative folks of all kinds sharing what they love to do.
Web: farmersmarket-northscottsdale.com

ariZoni Theatre Arts Awards of Excellence Annual Ceremony

About: 5:30 & 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6 at Virginia G. Piper Theater, Center For The Performing Arts, 7380 E. 2nd St., Scottsdale
Info: The ariZoni Theatre Association's annual awards ceremony celebrates excellence in Arizona theater. The youth ceremony will begin at 5:30 p.m., followed by the adult ceremony at 8 p.m.
Web: arizoniawards.net

Scottsdale Symphonic Orchestra

About: 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 11 at Virginia G. Piper Theater, Center For The Performing Arts, 7380 E. 2nd St., Scottsdale
Info: Scottsdale Symphonic Orchestra kicks off its season with "Roots and Rhythm." Internationally acclaimed violinist Sicong Chen takes center stage in Edgar Meyer's Violin Concerto.
Web: scottsdalesymphonicorchestra.org

Halloween Spooktacular Hot Air Balloon Festival

About: 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday, Oct. 23-25 at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, 7555 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale
Info: This family-friendly Halloween festival features illuminated hot air balloons, trick-or-treating, costume contests and seasonal entertainment. Guests can enjoy a children's activity area, inflatable attractions and tethered balloon rides, weather permitting. Tickets are required
Web: azspooktacular.com

EEK! At the Peak

About: 9 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 25 at Pinnacle Peak Park, 26802 N. 102nd Way, Scottsdale
Info: A free family event featuring

• See **Things To Do** on page **16**

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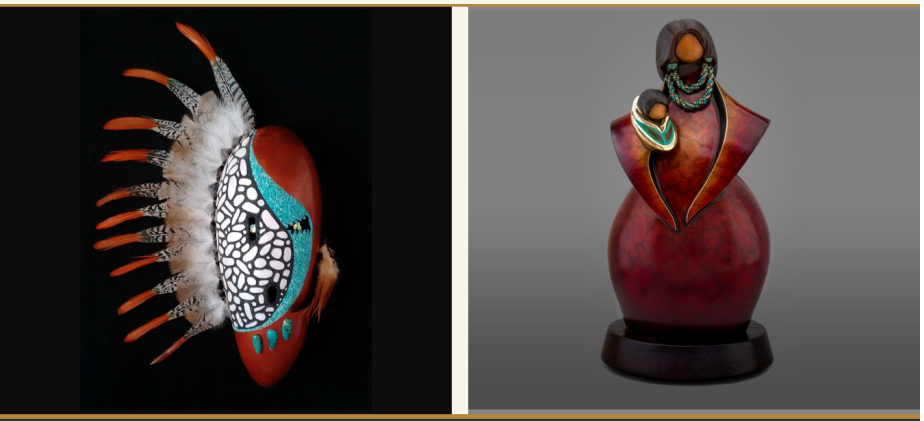


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Things To Do

• From page 14

costume contests, nature craft stations, and more. Registration required.
Web: community.scottsdaleaz.gov/scaz

BOO! Arizona

About: 6 p.m.-2 a.m. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 30-31 at WestWorld of Scottsdale, 16601 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale
Info: This two-night Halloween electronic dance music festival features DJs, multiple stages, roaming performers and large-scale art installations. The event is open to ages 18 and older, with VIP areas and alcohol service restricted to guests 21 and older. Single-day and two-day tickets are available.
Web: arizona.boo-halloween.com

Scottsdale Zombie Crawl

About: 7 p.m.-2 a.m. Friday and Saturday, Oct. 30-31, participating bars and nightclubs in Old Town Scottsdale
Info: Halloween revelers can dress in costume and visit participating Old Town bars and nightclubs during this two-night bar crawl. The event advertises drink specials, entertainment and access to participating venues for wristband holders. Tickets are listed at $20.
Web: scottsdalezombiecrawl.com

Casino Arizona Halloween Bash

About: 8 p.m.-midnight, Saturday, Oct. 31 at Casino Arizona, 524 N. 92nd St., Scottsdale
Info: Casino Arizona hosts a Halloween celebration featuring live entertainment by Superhero Band, a DJ and drink specials. Guests can participate in a costume contest advertising $5,000 in prizes. Admission is free, and attendees must be 21 or older.
Web: hunthalloween.com

Pho-kin' Halloween Bash

About: 7:20 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31 at Pho Cao, 7436 E. McDowell Road, Scottsdale
Info: Pho Cao hosts a Halloween rock and metal concert featuring St. Madness, Torso, Lost Dutchman, Blood Feud Family Singers and Simply Chaotic. Costumes are encouraged, with admission priced at $5 for guests in costume and $10 without. The event is open to all ages.
Web: hunthalloween.com

Family Fun AZ Halloween Bash

About: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31 at Arizona Boardwalk, 9500 E. Via de Ventura, Scottsdale
Info: Arizona Boardwalk hosts a free family Halloween celebration featuring trick-or-treating, carnival games, face painting, live entertainment and shopping. Children 18 and younger can participate in a costume contest offering $1,000 in total cash prizes. Admission and event activities are free.
Web: azboardwalk.com/events/free-halloween-bash



Look for a Fall League Baseball Exhibit Oct. 3-Nov. 15 at Scottsdale Stadium. (Photo provided by Major League Baseball-Arizona Fall League)

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AGREEMENT



The Cave Creek Town Council on Sept, 15 approved a resolution to amend its current agreement with Maricopa County and the management of the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. Spur Cross is 2,154 acres of preserved land that was dedicated on Jan. 9, 2001 and celebrated its 25th anniversary on Jan. 9, 2026. (Independent Newsmedia/Jeff Wendt)

Cave Creek renews agreement with Maricopa County to manage Spur Cross

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Town Council on Sept, 15 approved a resolution to amend its current agreement with Maricopa County and the management of the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

The agreement extends the county's management of Spur Cross to 2061.

Development Services Director Luke Kautzman said the two entities have been working on a handshake agreement since 2021 to get the agreement hammered out.

"While we've been working on the necessary paperwork to extend this, this is something that we've been working a long time to get done," Kautzman said.

In exchange for managing the conservation area, the Town would annually pay Maricopa County to cover costs relating to maintenance and staffing, which is currently $216,000 annually.

One of the parts of the agreement is that Cave Creek residents can continue to access Spur Cross at no cost to them.

"You said free? I thought it was a dollar a year," asked council member Joe Freedman.

"Well we have an administrative cost I guess of a dollar a year at town hall," Kautzman said, which was built in the original agreement.

Council member Cynthia Driskell asked if there were any significant changes to the amended agreement.

"No, we went back and forth on a couple of different drafts and ended up with the keep it simple stupid method and just extended it out 2061," Kautzman said.

Driskell in making the motion to approve was glad to see the agreement extended.

"We were fortunate to be able to celebrate the Spur Cross anniversary just earlier in the season," Driskell said. "So this is a timely follow up to continue that relationship and keep a close relationship between the residents of Cave Creek and share that responsibility with the county."

"We're grateful to the county for their cooperation all these years," Vice Mayor Kathryn Royer added.

AMENDMENT

Cave Creek approves pair of amended agreements for water services

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Town Council approved a pair of amended agreements with GHD Inc. on Sept. 15 for repairs with the water system in Cave Creek.

The first agreement, for an amount not to exceed $69,361, allows the Pall membrane filters, which were installed from 2019 through 2024, to become a permanent part of the treatment process.

The permits for the Pall membranes expired in 2024, according to Utilities Director Shawn Kreuzwiesner.

"So what we have in front of you right now is a scope of work where there's been a lot of work done already," Kreuzwiesner said. "So, what actually in the second phase of the work, they actually had to go through alternatives. That was part of the evaluation to prove that the Pall membrane units in their current configuration in the trailers at the back side of the site was the best."

The town staff and GHD have held several meetings, and now have received clear direction from Maricopa County Environmental Services Department as to what improvements will be required at the Water Treatment Plant.

The contract amendment will provide the funding to allow GHD to prepare the final design for submittal to MCESD.

The second agreement with GHD, for an amount not to exceed $40,939, is in reference to services associated with the repair of a 10-inch sewer line crossing Andorra Hills Wash.

During the design phase of the project, Maricopa County Flood Control requested that a scour analysis be completed prior to a permit being issued for the work, which was not included in the original scope of work for the project.



Cave Creek Town Utilities Director Shawn Kreuzwiesner, left, speaks at a town hall to discuss Cave Creek's water issues Jan. 6, 2026. (Independent Newsmedia/Jeff Wendt)

"Why is it taking so long? Partly because of some of the other issues we've had to deal with, including the failure of the Rancho Manana force main a few years ago," Kreuzwiesner said. "The funding that was actually put in the CIP two years ago for this project got consumed by that project. So we were paused by that in order to get those emergency repairs done.

"I'd like to complete this project with GHD," Kreuzwiesner added. "We've reached out to the county to re-engage them. They would like us to do what a scour analysis. We want to prove that what we're doing is not going to impact and cause more scour damaging uh to this wash."

Council member Tom McGuire asked if there would be any interruption in service with the scour analysis.

"No," Kreuzwiesner said. "Our thought would be because it's not just like a sewer lining project which we can do with back trucks for the day, this will probably require a bypass pump. So we'll have to set up a pump, and pump around the operation."

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FROM THE COVER

Water

• From page 1

Creek holds both a Municipal and Industrial subcontract and a Non-Indian Agricultural subcontract.

Beginning in 2027, Cave Creek will no longer have access to the Non-Indian Agricultural water.

The central challenge facing Cave Creek is its heavy reliance on outside sources. Nearly 95% of the town's water supply comes directly from the Colorado River.

When mandatory cuts to the Central Arizona Project allocation became imminent, officials braced for impact.

"We've been anticipating a 20% cut, balancing everything around a 20% cut," Kreuzwiesner said. " CAP has told us for next year through their manipulation of the system they're actually going to be able to reach that down to 14% for next year."

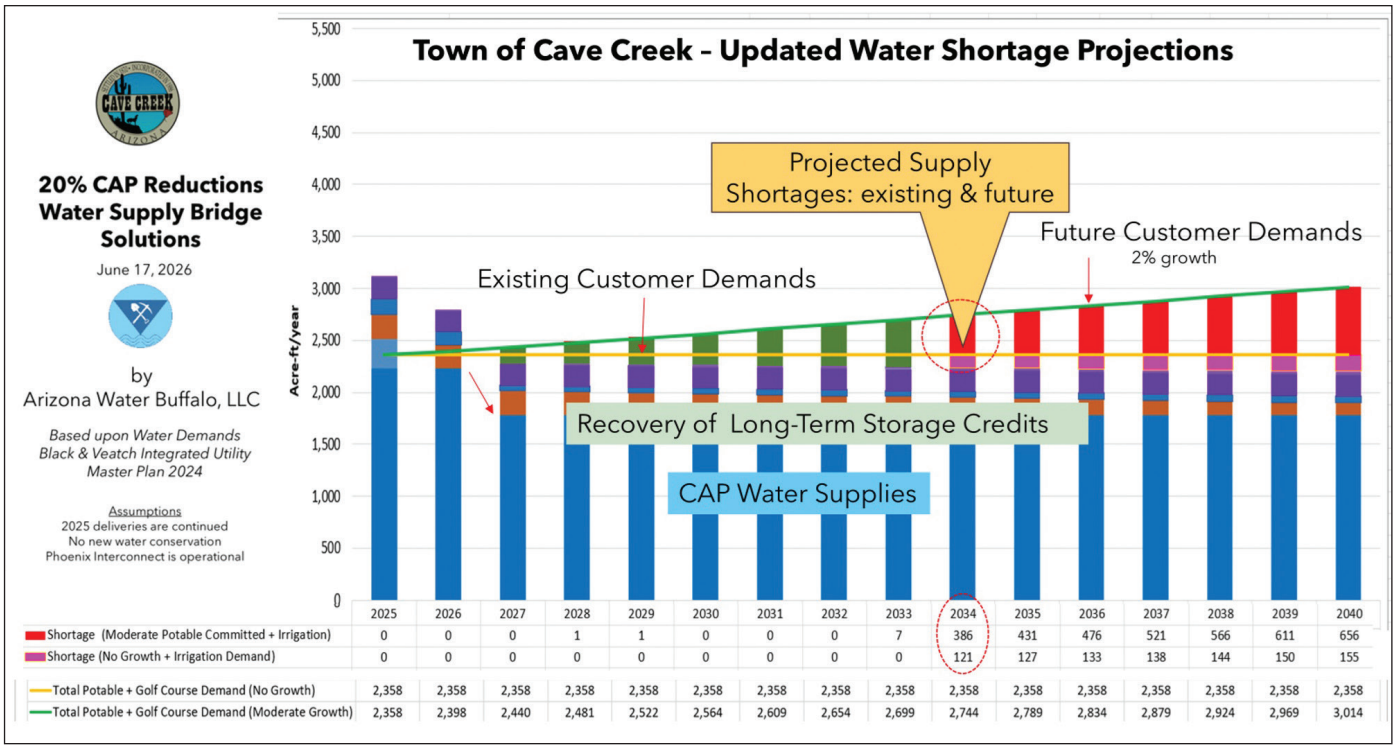
Natalie Mast, Water Resources and Planning Manager with Central Arizona Project talked about the struggles to get down to a number that was manageable for everyone who takes water from CAP.

"We were expecting about a 10 percent reduction to the tribal pool ... and about a 14 percent reduction to the M&I priority CAP water," Mast said. "When we calculate reductions to M&I, for example, we look at it at the pool level. We get everyone's water order in on October 1st, and that tells us how much total water everyone's trying to get in that M&I pool."

Compounding the supply issue is the vulnerability of the town's delivery infrastructure.

Cave Creek depends on a single 12.5-mile pipeline running along Cave Creek Road with four inline booster stations to feed its treatment plant.

"Anything goes wrong with any



This chart, shown to resident at a June 17 Town Hall meeting, shows where Cave Creek could have shortage of water to its customers by 2034. (Courtesy of the Town of Cave Creek)

of those components means we can't produce water for the system," Kreuzwiesner said. "The system has so many single points of failure. That's critical."

To build resiliency, the town is pursuing key interconnections, such as a major distribution link with the City of Phoenix, as well as short-term water exchange agreements with neighboring municipalities like Peoria and Surprise.

"I want to make sure everybody's aware of it's not adding to our water resources, but it gives us a connection to a distribution system that we currently don't have," Kreuzwiesner said of the Phoenix Interconnect. "Once the City of Phoenix Interconnect is up, that gives us another way of getting water into the system.

"It doesn't fully replace our need for the treatment plant, but having some water come in through Phoenix, then filling their reservoir and distributing a system is huge, which I don't have right now," Kreuzwiesner added.

Cave Creek has also taken the step of working on water exchange credit agreements with other municipalities to ensure they have an adequate water supply going forward.

Recently, the town completed an agreement with Peoria to exchange water credits for wet water, and an agreement is in the works with Surprise for a similar agreement.

"This question started a couple years ago through some regional agency cooperation, where all three agencies were all part of the Bartlett Dam project, and we actually started talking at the staff level," Kreuzwiesner said. "There was a discussion about how do we get access to our stored CAP supplies.

"Most of it was going into originally into the Hieroglyphics facility, which is in north Surprise," Kreuzwiesner added. "It was through the organization that Peoria reached out to and said 'You want to put some water here, and then maybe we can change agreements.'"

Cave Creek shifted its credits around through multiple permits with multiple agencies to get it done.

"I'll give credit to the state agencies," Kreuzwiesner said. "They came up with some unique solutions for us to help us bridge this gap."

To ensure continuity of supply, Cave Creek has taken lead steps in coordinating with CAP and the Arizona Water Banking Authority to recover stored water credits and implement water exchange agreements.

"Cave Creek was the very first entity that came to us for one of those agreements," Mast said. "They have been extremely proactive about making sure that they would have the types of agreements in place in or-

• See **Shortage** on page 25

Sponsored Content

In 30 Minutes I Had a Plan for My Shoulder Pain that Didn't Require Surgery or Pills

By Shoulder Pain Expert, Dr. Matthew Hernandez, Ethos Integrative Medicine

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TRAFFIC

Cave Creek Council approves hybrid traffic measure

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Cave Creek Town Council approved a hybrid traffic measure for Cave Creek Road at the intersections of Rancho Mañana Road and Spur Cross Road on Sept. 1.

The measure, approved on a 4-3 roll call vote, will have a traffic calming lane on Cave Creek at Rancho Mañana, and a full four-way stop at Cave Creek and Spur Cross Road.

The 4-3 vote came after a proposal by Y2K Engineering to suggest using traffic calming lanes at both Rancho Mañana and Spur Cross fell in a 5-2 vote.

The proposal now goes from the concept phase to the design phase, where staff will come back with a recommendation and costs for the hybrid option before installation.

The hybrid proposal, which came from council member Joe Freedman and amended by council member Dusty Rhoades, was geared at slowing traffic going westbound on Cave Creek headed towards Rancho Mañana to give those at Rancho Mañana time to turn and properly merge with eastbound Cave Creek traffic.

Freedman wanted to have just a four-way stop sign at Spur Cross, but agreed to Rhoades' amendment to add the calming lane at Rancho Mañana.

"A four-way stop sign gives people a better chance at getting out at Rancho Mañana and Spur Cross in my opinion," Freedman said.

"My concern with the stop signs at Spur Cross is we're not considering all the businesses there," council member Cynthia Driskell said. "We not only have to worry about people crossing the street there, but we have to worry about the ingress and egress from the businesses there."

"Stop signs are the most beneficial," Rhoades said.

"People are speeding through the town and they are almost doing 60 on westbound Cave Creek. We need to find a way to slow them down, and I think stop signs are the way to go."

Melissa Gende from Y2K Engineering presented her findings from a study conducted, with five suggestions from do nothing, to stop signs, to traffic calming lanes, to roundabouts to access control/median reconfiguration.

While Mayor Robert Morris was against the hybrid proposal and for the Y2K recommendations, he was quickly chastised by Cave Creek resident Joe Toomis when Morris said that Rancho Mañana was not a safety hazard.

"You're study doesn't take into account the near-misses that have happened in that road," Toomis said. "I've had at least four that I can count of. Not a safety hazard? You're completely wrong there."

Council member Tom Augherton talked about how much Cave Creek Road throughout the town has changed over the years.

"We went from a two-lane to four lanes and then five after the removal of some of the medians in town," Augherton said. "I beg to the staff to figure out how Cave Creek Road should function."

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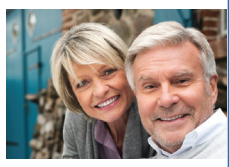


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Chandler • February 23, 2027 • Sun Lakes Country Club
Peoria • March 25, 2027 • Westbrook Village
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Sun City • May 3, 2027 • Sundial Recreation Center

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AWARDS

Cave Creek receives national budget and financial reporting awards

By Jeff Wendt
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Town of Cave Creek received two national awards from the Government Finance Officers Association, a government finance professional organization that represents more than 25,000 members across North America.

Cave Creek was presented with the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the highest forms of recognition in governmental budgeting and accounting.

"Receiving these two nationally recognized awards speaks to Cherie White's leadership as the director of the Finance Department," said Town Manager Grady Miller in a release. "Cherie and her staff work diligently to maintain the highest standards of fiscal responsibility for the Town."

White thanked her whole department for the job they have done.

"I am grateful for the recognition, but these awards truly reflect the work of our entire Finance Department team," White said. "Our staff is dedicated, detail-oriented, and committed to excellence every day. Every team member contributes to the accuracy, clarity, and professionalism of our financial documents. These honors are a testament to their hard work and the pride they take in serving the community."

The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting was awarded for the Town's annual comprehensive financial report for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. The report was reviewed by an impartial panel and judged to meet the program's strict criteria, including a commitment to full disclosure and clear communication of the Town's financial story.



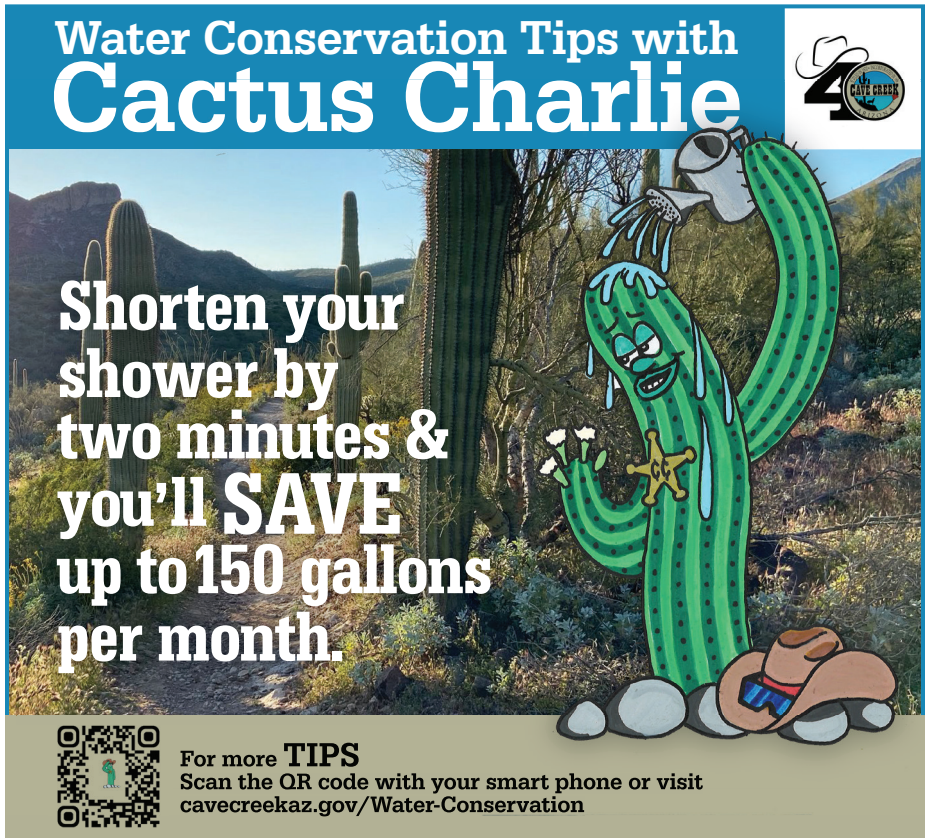
Town of Cave Creek Finance Director Cherie White presents the tentative fiscal year 2027 budget to the Town Council May 19, 2026. Cave Creek was presented with the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award and the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the highest forms of recognition in governmental budgeting and accounting. (Independent Newsmedia/Jeff Wendt)

The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award recognizes the Town's commitment to the highest principles of governmental budgeting. To earn this honor, Cave Creek's fiscal year 2026 budget was evaluated against nationally recognized guidelines for serving as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide and communications device.

"These awards are incredibly meaningful for the Town of Cave Creek," White said. "They validate our commitment to strong financial management, transparency, and responsible stewardship of public funds. Being recognized at a national level reinforces that we are meeting the highest standards in both budgeting and financial reporting, which ultimately builds trust with our residents, businesses, and partners."







Attorney

• From page 1

es integrity, and someone who can build trust.

"It's very important, even in a small town, but larger towns as well, you want someone that you can communicate with effectively and who can provide solutions," Harris added. "We want someone who can review the council agenda, materials, legal documents, attend the council meetings, come to management meetings and be very active in our process."

The request for proposals went out on Aug. 13. Questions from those submitting proposals were due by Aug. 24, and the final proposals were due on Sept. 17.

From there, a committee, headed by Town Manager Grady Miller, and including Deputy Town Manager Teresa Riza and Finance Director Cherie White, were to go through the applications and select a group of semifinalists from that pool of applications.



Cave Creek Procurement Administrator Monique Harris talks to the Cave Creek Town Council Sept. 2 about the process to hire a new town attorney for the retiring Bill Sims. (Bo Larsen/Town of Cave Creek)

From there, Town Council members were part of the group that conducted interviews on Oct. 1 to determine who will be the choice for the new town attorney.

A list of finalists was not available by press time.

The council will vote on Oct. 20 to accept the choice for the new attorney.

Mayor Robert Morris asked Harris what she was expecting for the number of applications she is expecting for the position.

"Six is what I'm estimating," Harris said.

Morris followed up by asking how many are expected to get through to the semifinalist level.

"I would say it could be up to four, but I would expect what we're trying to do is give you three at a minimum," Miller said. "So, we're not going to give you one or two."

Sims offered his thoughts for the next Town Attorney.

"The best way to do it is you're not hiring a firm, you're hiring a person," Sims said. "That person is your counselor, and you need to hire a person who has a wide variety of expertise and can counsel you and not lecture you. I've recommended three different firms and people to Grady (Miller). I'm hoping they respond."

Foothills Food Bank to host annual Empty Bowls event

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center will host its 27th annual Empty Bowls Marketplace, a North Valley tradition that focuses on handcrafted bowls to raise awareness of hunger in the community.

The event takes place 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Nov. 14 at The Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center, located at 4250 E. Carefree Hwy. in Cave Creek.

Guests can shop hundreds of bowls donated by local artists and community members while enjoying live music, food and raffles.

General admission and parking are free. VIP Tickets are available for $75 and allows entrants into the event 90 minutes prior to the general public opening.

VIP entrance begins at 10:30 a.m., with general public entrance beginning at noon.

VIP tickets give early entry to get first pick of the best bowls and artwork. VIP ticket holders will also enjoy complimentary refreshments and a more relaxed shopping experience.

For information on the event, go to FoothillsFoodBank.com/Empty-Bowls.



A couple shows off one of the bowls at last year's Empty Bowls Marketplace. (Courtesy of the Foothills Food Bank & Resource Center)

FROM THE COVER



Cave Creek Town Utilities Director Shawn Kreuzwiesner, left, and consultant Bradley Hill talk during a town forum Jan. 6, 2026 on the upcoming strategies to combat a possible water shortage in the town in 2027. (Independent Newsmedia/Jeff Wendt)

Shortage

• From page **20**

der to meet their wet water needs for next year."

Mayor Robert Morris and Mayor-elect Kathryn Royer, the current Vice Mayor, have worked together for the past eight years in getting to the table to discuss the agreements.

"I'm so glad that Kathryn got elected to succeed me," Morris said. "Kathryn has the contacts within the Arizona Department of Water Resources and CAP and her background in water helps.

"It's almost become a relationship business," Morris added. "To call and be able to get meeting in order to get it pushed to the forefront is big in our industry."

Cave Creek also changed to an automated metering infrastructure water meter for its customers.

"I didn't realize how significant the advanced metering infrastructure would be for us, but I've realized that that's probably one of the best things that we could do," Kreuzwiesner said.

"As we move forward, water is going to be more important for a small community like us, and we want everybody who is using the water, you know, to be watchful of it," Kreuzwiesner added.

Morris praised Kreuzwiesner for the job he has done working on the water situation.

"Shawn has done a wonderful job," Morris said. "Trying to run a department and managing a capital budget, I couldn't be more happier of the job he has done."

The next thing on Cave Creek's agenda is to update it drought management plan.

"Conservation, specifically outdoor use of water has to be at the front and center," Morris said. "People are learning to conserve on the inside use, We just have to have a stronger conservation program."

"The drought is not overnight," Kreuzwiesner said. "Over 27 years into the drought, Overall, I think I'm hearing it more than the news media, but I think I'm more alert to that.

"But yeah, how do we get the average citizen to understand that?" Kreuzwiesner added. "You know, you just can't turn on your faucet when you want to. This is a resource that we have to manage for everybody."



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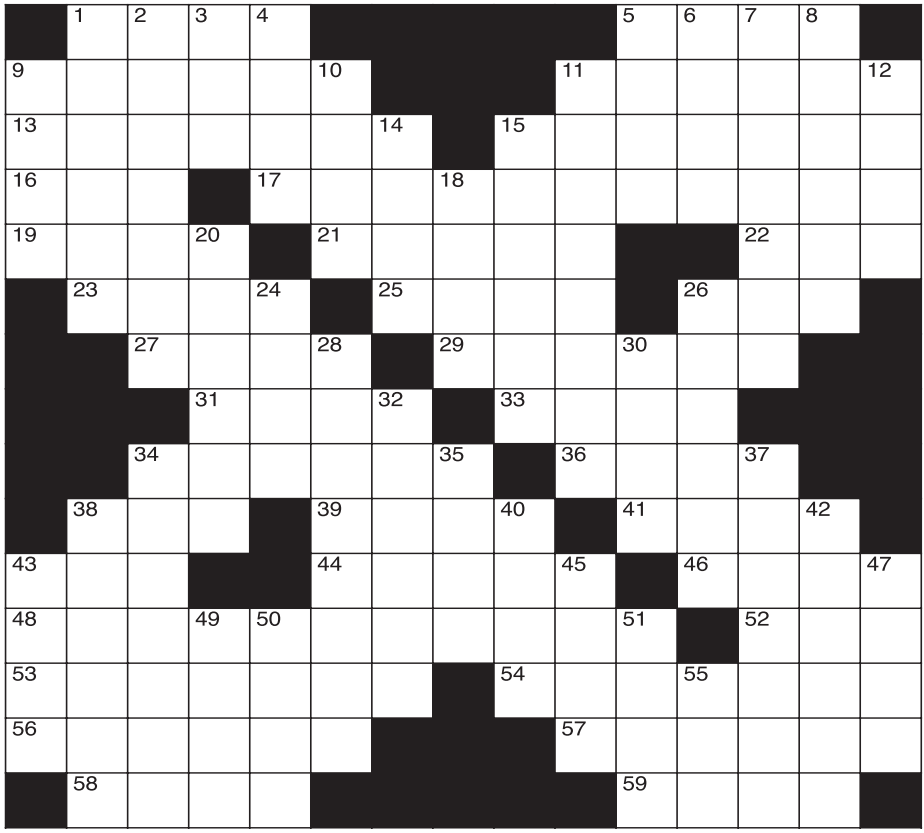
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Difficult
5. Coarsely ground corn
9. A group of similar things ordered one after another
11. Loved Romeo
13. Something to solve
15. Pelvic areas
16. Informal debt instrument
17. Ineffective
19. A device attached to a workbench
21. Related on the mother's side
22. "Fresh Prince of ___ Air"
23. Astronomer Sagan
25. C. Utah city
26. Turkey
27. Informal terms for money
29. Awakens
31. Those who favored Prohibition
33. Blabbed
34. Looked through
36. Rhode Island rebellion
38. A type of "cast"
39. One's duty
41. Where golfers begin
43. Make a mistake
44. Semitic Sun god
46. Ancient Greek City
48. Removed someone's head
52. A place to stay
53. Unwise
54. Most unnatural
56. "Dennis" is a notable one
57. Ointments
58. Examination
59. Leaked fluid

CLUES DOWN

1. Brave
2. A state of excitement
3. Jest at
4. Sandwich store
5. Chapter of the Koran
6. Dismounted from a horse
7. Small vehicle
8. Irked
9. A disreputable man
10. Monetary unit of Samoa
11. A list of woes
12. Weight unit
14. Alone, single
15. Broadway legend Bernadette
18. Monetary unit of Serbia
20. Worn by exposure to the weather
24. A body of traditions
26. Students seek one
28. Hydrophilic amino acid
30. Nasal mucus
32. Branch of U.S. Congress
34. Swinish
35. Russian assembly
37. Grant an exemption to
38. Set up in advance
40. Satisfy
42. Felt
43. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls
45. Witnesses
47. Strong insects
49. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
50. One of an ancient people inhabiting Scotland
51. Cheerless
55. Unhealthy

SOLUTION ON PAGE 30

SUDOKU BY METRO CREATIVE SERVICES

8		9	3					
	1				9	2		
								4
9			5		4		7	
2								
	6			8			1	3
3			2			7		
6		8		7	5			
	5							

Level: Intermediate

FUN BY THE NUMBERS

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Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

SOLUTION ON PAGE 30

GUESS WHO ?

I am a singer born in Connecticut on October 16, 1977. I worked for more than a year as a gas station attendant to afford a guitar from a famous player. My debut album reached multi-platinum status. Though I'm an accomplished singer, I may be better known for my guitar skills.

Answer: John Mayer

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to small business.

V N I E T S

Answer: Invest





Nancy Hoard Glenn

Nancy Hoard Glenn was born on April 14, 1938, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Hal and Betty Hoard. Nancy was the great granddaughter of William Dempster Hoard, who was the governor of Wisconsin. Starting at age 6, she began riding English at Joy Farm. Every Saturday she rode in an indoor arena, sunshine, rain or snow. She developed very fine riding habits which remained throughout her life. At 13 years old Nancy's family moved to a dryer climate. Arizona!!

They ended up between Camelback and Mummy Mountain in a home with a barn and corral. Nancy had her own horse and was happy. After her sophomore year at Scottsdale High School, she joined the first class of girls to attend Judson School for boys. She was an accomplished tennis player and played on the boy's tennis team.That must have been interesting when the Judson's tennis team played against another boys' team from Tucson and showed up with a girl on their team and she usually won her match.

Nancy loved to dance and when she was on the dance floor all eyes were on her.

She was the boss's secretary at Coldwell Banker where she met her husband to be-Bob Glenn. They were married for 54 years spending a wonderful life together. They had a ranch with horses and Rhodesian Ridge Back dogs. Nancy would show both horses and dogs. She was at Westminster dog show at Madison Square Garden when her dog Dagga won best of breed.

Nancy also had a beautiful soprano voice and enjoyed singing in many choirs in the valley over the years. She was a beloved member of the Desert Foothills Lutheran Church Sanctuary Choir for more than fifteen years.

Nancy was special. If you met her, you felt like you had known her for a long time. She was beautiful inside and out. She was confidant, full of wisdom and support, always thinking of others before herself.

Nancy wrote a note recently:

When you think of me, think of the laughter and glorious fun we all had together! Remember how much I treasured knowing you and how much I loved life. Try to capture the present moment and make every second count. Spread God's love every hour of every day-it will come back to you 100-fold. He is the answer to everything. May God Bless You Forever. Nancy.

Nancy's service will be held at Desert Foothills Lutheran Church, 29305 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85266, on October 7th at 1:00pm.

Rather than flowers, please make a donation in Nancy's name to Hospice of the Valley or Foothills Caring Corps.



In loving memory of

Jacqueline Mae Davis,

October 10, 1937 – August 10, 2026

Jacky Davis, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, and dear friend to many, passed away in her home in Cave Creek on August 10, 2026. Born to John and Mildred Kennedy in Des Moines, Iowa, the middle daughter of three, she moved with her family to Sunnyslope, Arizona during elementary school. She met Gary Davis, her future husband, at Sunnyslope High School where they became sweethearts. She was a high school English teacher when she married Gary in 1962. They had three children and made Cave Creek their home.

Jacky was passionate about the community and conserving the desert. She was on the 1986 Cave Creek Incorporation Committee, and then served as the first elected Mayor from 1987-1991, dedicating her time, vision, and heart to Cave Creek. She then became active in the Desert Foothills Land Trust paving the way for the conservation of Spur Cross and the Jewel of the Creek. Jacky was a 20-year volunteer at the Desert Botanical Garden.

Jacky's legacy is one of service, perseverance, and love for the desert. She loved being outdoors, reading, hiking, gardening, and walking her dog. Her warmth, generosity, and steadfast presence will be remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her. She is lovingly survived by her husband, Gary, her three children (Jeremy, Anna and husband Vince, and Megan) and three granddaughters (Allison, Olivia, and Annika).

To honor Jacky, memorials may be made to the Desert Foothills Land Trust at dflt.org.



Sharon "Sherrie" Wilson Walton

May 22, 1942 – August 15, 2026

On August 15, 2026, I said goodbye to the love of my life. Sherrie passed away peacefully and without pain in Scottsdale, Arizona, after a brief but heroic battle with bone cancer. For 58 wonderful years, she was my co-pilot, my strength, and my best friend.

Born in Des Moines, Iowa, Sherrie attended Drake University before following her adventurous spirit into aviation at age 20. She began as a stewardess for Braniff Airways in Dallas and later moved to Seattle to fly the Lockheed Constellation for Pacific Northern Airlines to Alaska, a land and people she grew to love deeply. That was where our story truly began—on my very first flight with PNA to Kodiak, Alaska. I fell in love with her grace and love for life. We were married in Hawaii in July 1968, embarking on a life rich in family, service, and extraordinary adventure. Sherrie remained in the airline industry until retiring from Western Airlines in 1975.

Sherrie's heart belonged entirely to her family. Together, we adopted our two beautiful daughters from Thailand and a son from Iowa. She immersed herself in every moment of their lives — cheering at soccer games, sitting through cheerleading practices, helping with homework, and walking the fairways during Jr. PGA tournaments. When our family grew, she poured that same fierce, tender love into being a grandmother to Victoria, John, Peyton, Cameron, Karson, Paris, and Blake.

In 1975, we moved to Scottsdale, living along a green golf course before settling in Cave Creek in 1987 so Sherrie could have her horses. She had a wonderful gift for thoughtful gestures. For our second wedding anniversary, she bought me a Stearman aircraft project — a labor of love we worked on and flew together for 44 years, later a gold placer claim in Arizona.

Sherrie had a deep, protective love for animals and children. She spent 17 years with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office Mounted Search and Rescue, frequently riding her Mustang, Cheyenne, through the trails of the National Forest north of Phoenix. Her courage saved lives: she provided emergency medical aid to a woman crushed under a horse and heroically located a young boy lost in northern Arizona during the dead of winter.

Even with a full heart at home, she never stopped learning or giving back. Sherrie earned a degree in Archaeology, volunteered with the Phoenix Art Museum, Kiwanis of Carefree, and the BLM Mustang program, and shared the world with us on family journeys across America, Thailand, Korea, Europe, Russia, and England.

Sherrie had an extraordinary knack for making lifelong friends wherever she stepped. She is survived by her husband, Michael; daughters Kimberly Emminger and Tanya (Jack) Maixner; and her seven grandchildren. She lived fully, loved deeply, and left a legacy of courage, warmth, and joy that will stay with us forever.

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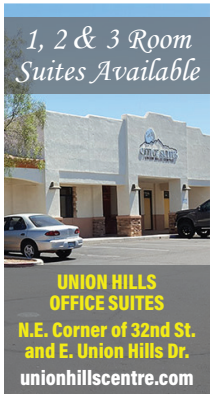
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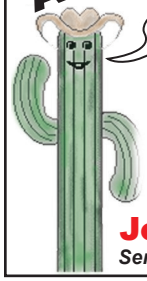
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PUZZLE ANSWERS

from page 26 & 27

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3	9	4	2	1	8	7	5	6
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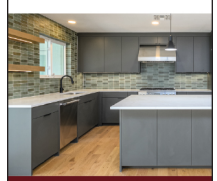
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