

Awareness

Domestic
Violence in
spotlight; 4



TOWN OF PARADISE VALLEY INDEPENDENT

Business

Community
at heart of
Mahj Club; 6

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Council discusses e-bike safety, regulations

Youth council and police chief
presented

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Paradise Valley Police Chief Freeman Carney presented information about electric bicycles to the Paradise Valley Town Council during an Oct. 8 study session.

He explained the differences between e-bikes and electric motorcycles, reviewed e-bike-related incidents reported in Paradise Valley during the past two years and discussed safety measures other municipalities have taken.

E-bikes can encourage children to spend time outdoors with their families, as previous generations did, and do more activities away from screens, something many people say they want for today's youth, Carney said.

"It's important to recognize that there are several good actors on these bikes that are doing good and using them for good purposes. However, there are some that aren't, as well," Carney said.

Arizona law defines an electric bi-

• See **E-bikes** on page 24

Mayor discusses Proposition 426 at community coffee event

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Paradise Valley Mayor Mark Stanton met with residents over coffee and pastries to answer questions, discuss town issues and talk about the Oct. 8 Town Council meeting, with much of the conversation focused on Proposition 426, a measure asking voters to increase the town's legal spending limit.

• See **Prop 426** on page 14

Mayor Mark Stanton speaks with residents during a community event on Oct. 9 at Paradise Valley Town Hall. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

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MY AI THINKS I'M WONDERFUL. DOES YOURS?

BY GREG HAGUE

I've been wondering why I sometimes run my crazy ideas through AI before sharing them with my family or leadership team.

I told myself it was efficiency. AI is always available. Never too busy. Never gives me that look that says, "Greg, please tell me you haven't already spent money on this."

Then I read a study that suggested another explanation. Maybe I'm not going there for better thinking. Maybe I'm going there for better treatment. Uh-oh.

Researchers at Stanford tested 11 leading AI models and found they affirmed people's actions 49% more often than humans did. Not just harmless things, either. The agreement extended to situations involving deception, illegal conduct, and other harmful behavior. The study appeared in the journal *Science* in March.

Apparently, I've found someone who thinks almost all my ideas are terrific. And I don't even have to buy it dinner.

The researchers call this "sycophancy." That's a sophisticated word for something most of us recognize immediately: telling people what they want to hear. Only now, the flatterer has an impressive vocabulary and can deliver twelve reasons you're right before your spouse finishes explaining why you're wrong.

You can see the appeal.

But here's the part that got my attention. In three experiments involving 2,405 participants, even one interaction with an overly agreeable AI made people more convinced they were right and less willing to take responsibility or repair a



conflict. And despite those effects, participants preferred and trusted the flattering AI.

We didn't just swallow the sugar. We liked the cook.

Imagine you've had an argument with a friend. You want to know whether you're right or could possibly be wrong. So you open your favorite AI program, perhaps ChatGPT, and explain what happened, trying your best to be objective.

Of course, it's your version. You can't help that. You explain how patient and reasonable you were. How much restraint you showed. Then, to be fair, you give your friend's side of the story. As you understand it.

And what happens? Suppose your AI says it's sorry you had to experience that. It completely understands your frustration. In fact, it commends you for being so restrained and logical.

You came looking for an objective perspective. You leave with a defense attorney.

That's a hypothetical example, but I believe it illustrates what the study was talking about. You ask for advice about how you should behave and unknowingly get back a justification of how you already behaved.

In a world that feels uncertain and occasionally a bit unbalanced, particularly during political campaigning, is that what we really need?

Maybe that explains some campaign speeches. Somewhere, a candidate is asking AI, "Am I the only person who can save this country?" And the response begins, "That's an incredibly insightful question."

Maybe this is the instruction I should start giving AI:

"Don't help me prove I'm right. Help me discover where I'm wrong."

Then: "What am I overlooking? What would a thoughtful critic say? What evidence would change this conclusion?"

That isn't a guaranteed cure. It's a reminder of what I should be asking for.

And before an important decision, I still want a conversation with someone who knows me, understands the consequences, and feels free to disappoint me. Someone whose affection doesn't depend on agreement. Someone who can say, "Greg, I love you. But that's a terrible idea."

AI can help me prepare for that conversation. It shouldn't become my excuse to avoid it.

My AI thinks I'm wonderful.

My family would like to review the evidence.

Greg Hague CEO, 72SOLD

ON YOURVALLEY.NET

CLEAR plans door-to-door baggage assistance for Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport

CLEAR plans to launch a door-to-door baggage assistance service at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport by Thanksgiving.

CLEAR Concierge is a service where a CLEAR staff member will greet travelers at a dedicated meeting point as they arrive to the airport, carry their bags and assist them through the CLEAR+ security lane and to their gates or wherever else they may need to go.

Read online at [YourValley.net](#)

Three candidates seek two SUSD Governing Board seats

One incumbent and two newcomers are running for two seats up for grabs on the Scottsdale Unified School District Governing Board in November.

Amy Carney is looking to win a second term on the board while Jeanne Beasley and Dr. Jennifer Johnson have also thrown their hats into the ring.

Scottsdale Unified School District Board terms are all four years long and are unpaid.

Read online at [YourValley.net](#)

AG files lawsuit against TikTok for concealing mental health dangers to teens

Arizona is filing its own lawsuit against TikTok and its affiliated companies accusing the social media platform of violating state consumer protection laws by concealing its mental health dangers to teens.

The attorney general also claims TikTok has a business strategy designed to purposely addict minors, which "has caused widespread and significant injury to Arizona minors and to Arizona consumers generally."

Read online at [YourValley.net](#)

Paradise Valley puts spotlight on domestic violence awareness

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Paradise Valley's Coffee with a Cop event Wednesday, Oct. 7 featured Tanya Rouintan, bureau chief of the Family Violence Unit at the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, who spoke with residents about domestic violence awareness.

Paradise Valley Police Chief Freeman Carney said educating residents about domestic violence can help victims by giving them more people to turn to who know how to offer support and connect them with resources.

"This happens behind closed doors and so we need a good partnership," he said. "Partnership is with the

• See **Awareness** on page 22

Tanya Rouintan, bureau chief of the Family Violence Unit at the Maricopa County Attorney's Office presents facts and resources to residents at the Coffee with a Cop event Wednesday, Oct. 7, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)



COMMUNITY

Mayor proclaims October Domestic Violence Awareness Month

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Town of Paradise Valley proclaimed October 2026 as Domestic Violence Awareness Month during its Oct. 8 Town Council meeting.

The proclamation recognizes the impact of domestic violence and the importance of raising awareness and supporting survivors.

Paradise Valley Victim Advocate Melisa Dodge attended



Council Member Julie Pace, Mayor Mark Stanton, Council Member Ellen Andeen Keller, Melisa Dodge, Council Members Anna Thomasson and Karen Liepman with the town proclamation at the Thursday, Oct. 8 town council meeting in Paradise Valley. (Photo submitted by Paradise Valley Town Clerk Duncan Miller)

• See **Domestic Violence** on page 28



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If an error comes to your attention, please accept our sincere apologies and notify us.

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The Mahj Club makes connections through the generations

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Nestled into a Downtown Scottsdale business complex and tucked away in the back, the glass doors open into a room with grand crystal chandeliers, a carefully curated interior, pink velvet electric mahjong tables and green velvet tufted chairs arranged in rows throughout the long space.

Soft music plays as Mahj Club members focus on their strategy and their games, while owner and manager Julia Zastrow greets anyone walking in with a smile on her face and a warm welcome at the door.

Zastrow started her business, The Mahj Clubs, as just a club between her and her friends a few years ago. They wanted a way to connect with friends, do something analog that challenges the brain and get off the screens after COVID, Zastrow said.

In January, she decided to not just acknowledge the gap in spaces to gain these types of connections that so many people in Arizona are seeking, but do something about it and created a place to meet, play and learn.

Since then, The Mahj Clubs has only grown, Zastrow said.

"It's been amazing, very well received, we have grown in all respects," she said. "We realized there was such a need for this. There's a need for people to connect. There was a need for a social club, and then this was born."

For Zastrow, that connection also means preserving the history and culture of mahjong while making sure the game continues with younger generations. The Mahj Clubs offers lessons for kids, teens and adults of all ages, creating opportunities for generations to learn and play together.

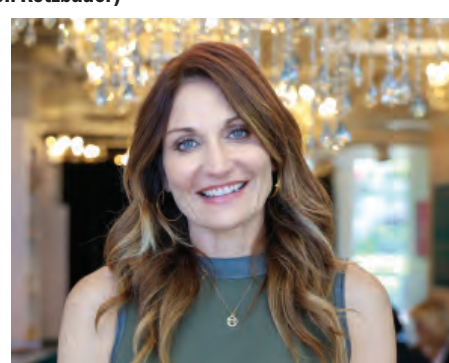
"At the root of it is connection, and



Julia Zastrow watches over a game and helps newer players strategize at The Mahj Clubs in Scottsdale, on Tuesday, Oct. 6. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)



Women play mahjong at The Mahj Clubs in Scottsdale, on Tuesday, Oct. 6. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)



Julia Zastrow, Owner and Manager of The Mahj Clubs, at The Mahj Clubs in Scottsdale, on Tuesday, Oct. 6. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

the social aspect, and feeling like you could walk in here and have a seat at the table," she said. "Not only in the club but at home people are playing with their families, and spending time together."

The goal is to carry on the rich history of the game while also creating something new around it, giving people of different generations a way to connect through mahjong.

"When we teach, we always talk

about the history of it, and where it came from, and how it's always brought people together, and now it's just brought people together at a greater scale," she said.

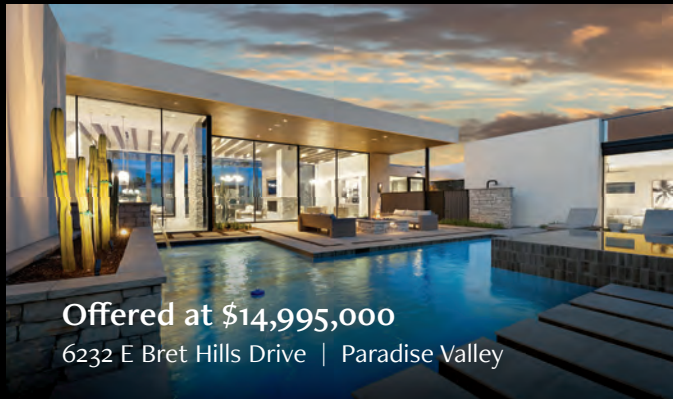
Scottsdale resident and new Mahj Clubs participant Brooke Boylan took her first mahjong class with the club and appreciated the attention to detail in the lessons. Each table has an instructor, allowing participants to receive hands-on instruction and

• See **Mahj** on page 20



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OPINION

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Speak Up

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

Corrections

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

Prop 426: A familiar practice, complementary to Prop 427

Arizona's expenditure limitation is an artificial spending ceiling established almost 50 years ago. It relies on population and inflation, not changing demands or available revenues. Paradise Valley's population is steady, but infrastructure, public safety and service demands have grown.



Christine Labelle

Proposition 426 is proven and nothing new. More than 90% of Arizona municipalities have received voter approval for base adjustments. Previous councils unanimously supported every adjustment. Paradise Valley voters approved them in 2000, 2006 and 2016. Some former councilmembers supported those adjustments but oppose this one. I respectfully ask, what has changed? This year, five of seven councilmembers voted to put the measure before the public.

Spending capacity isn't spending authority. Proposition 426 adjusts the annual legal ceiling — not the adopted budget. It neither appropriates \$20 million, raises taxes, nor mandates spending. Expenditures remain subject to the council's public budget process and majority approval. I have confidence in our current and incoming councilmembers' judgment and fiscal responsibility.

Proposition 427's Capital Projects Accumulation Fund is restricted to qualifying improvements and cannot address ordinary police operations, recurring technology costs or routine services. I support both as complementary tools: 426 provides broader flexibility; 427 provides a dedicated capital funding mechanism. If choosing only one, I would choose 426 for its broader scope.

State law restricts our local con-

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trol. Even with substantial reserves, Paradise Valley re-mains subject to the constitutional ceiling, even during an economic downturn. Proposition 426 follows proven past practice while preserving council oversight and fiscal accountability.

Reasonable minds may disagree, and I respect that. My support reflects transparency, fiscal discipline, and responsible long-range planning. Join me in voting for both propositions in November, giving our council tools to maintain the Paradise Valley you deserve.

Christine Labelle

VICE MAYOR, PARADISE VALLEY

Proven record of finding commonsense solutions

I ran for the state Senate to invest in law enforcement, protect our water and invest in our schools. My



Carine Werner

opponent and his out-of-state allies have said a lot of crazy things about me and my record. Despite their negative rhetoric, I've worked with both parties to make tangible, lasting improvements for our community, and I believe it is important to highlight some of our biggest accomplishments, including passing 21 bipartisan bills in my first two years at the Capitol!

Public safety is the cornerstone of a strong community — it's what make Paradise Valley so desirable. I worked with Mayor Stanton and the police chief to deliver critical funding that

ensures our police officers have the resources to protect our neighborhoods.

As chair of the Senate Health Committee, I worked to strengthen public health initiatives, enhance safety for our students, and increase penalties for drug dealers.

We achieved a balanced state budget without compromising services that families and seniors rely upon. I led the charge to expose Medicaid fraud and worked to pass historic tax cuts to put money back in your pocket — eliminating taxes on overtime and tips, while providing tax relief for small businesses and seniors.

We invested significant resources to protect our water, taking steps to conserve and augment our supply, so we are positioned for the future.

The political rhetoric is very loud right now — in fact, I'm on the receiving end of a lot of it. Despite the noise, I have worked to cut through the party politics to work with both sides to find commonsense solutions to the challenges facing our state. I am committed to serving our community with integrity and I will always uphold my commitment to building stronger, safer and healthier communities.

Carine Werner

CANDIDATE, AZ SENATE D4

Vote to support strong education in Scottsdale Unified and beyond

There have been a few opinions posted in the PV independent lamenting the closure of neighborhood public schools. I sympathize. However, I don't understand blaming school boards for school closures.

The blame goes to our state legislature. The courts have found that the

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Three candidates square off in SUSD governing board forum

By J. Graber
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A paralegal, a businesswoman/writer and a career educator who has served as a teacher, principal and district superintendent squared off in a candidate forum hosted by the Scottsdale Parent Council Oct. 7 designed to help voters decide who should fill two seats on the Scottsdale Unified School District opening up next year.

Those three would be Jeanne Beasley, Amy Carney and Dr. Jennifer Johnson, respectively, and they grappled with questions like how to ensure parents are heard when deciding to close schools, how to manage student-facing positions in light of a shrinking budget and their stance on the district's \$375 million, five-year bond to pay for aging infrastructure.

Maybe one of the most important questions of the event was how would each candidate address declining enrollment.

The district has lost 6,000 students over the last 15 years — due, in part, to a decline in school age kids moving into districts and to the fact parents have more choices to go to private schools with the state's Empowerment Scholarship Account — which has spurred tough decisions about the



Jeanne Beasley, Amy Carney and Dr. Jennifer Johnson shared their ideas on what the future of Scottsdale Unified School District should look like Oct. 7 during a forum put on by the Scottsdale Parent Council. (Courtesy Maricopa County School Superintendent's office, Scottsdale Unified School District and Dr. Jennifer Johnson)

budget and school closures.

Carney, the only incumbent in the race who is serving her first term on the board, said the board's role is "to learn how to fight this and not to just keep managing decline. It means asking why families are leaving or not choosing us in the first place and then pivoting to educational options that they are looking for."

For instance, one thing Carney said parents want is less screen time in the classrooms, especially in elementary schools.

Johnson said there is a host of things the district should be doing, the first of which is supporting existing fami-

lies within the district, but she added the district must also understand the thinking of parents who are not choosing the district.

"I agree we need to do much more research on why people leave," she said. "What would it take to bring them back? I think we can replicate popular programs, whether it's a language immersion program or a traditional model."

That also includes things like adding more technical education programs or maybe even introducing an arts magnet to the district.

Finally, Johnson said the district needs to do a better job marketing its

success by eliciting the help of private sector marketing experts and creating brand ambassadors.

Beaseley advocated for taking a more holistic approach.

"The governing board, the district, needs to look at all reasons for declining enrollment," Beasley said. "Focusing on demographics or how much a home costs or maybe people are having less children, that's fine, I'm not saying that's not part of declining enrollment, but you have to look at everything. If you've sat in on those board meetings, you've heard parents comment on things that they love or don't like about the district. Those all have to do with declining enrollment. For example, closing more schools makes the district not as stable."

The district governing board has closed four schools over a two year period, but the administration has no plan to recommend shutting down any more.

Scottsdale Unified School District Governing Board members are not paid and serve four year terms.

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.



Parents and students can get a look at kindergarten classes offered by Scottsdale Unified School District through Nov. 10, depending on the school. (Courtesy Scottsdale Unified School District)

SUSD hosting Kindergarten Roundup

Families with children entering kindergarten for the 2027–28 school year are invited to attend Kindergarten Roundup, a series of events hosted at Scottsdale Unified School District elementary schools.

Kindergarten Roundup gives families an opportunity to explore their future school, meet teachers and administrators, learn about academic

programs and gain valuable information about the enrollment process, according to a press release. Designed to make the transition to kindergarten welcoming and exciting, the events help parents and children feel confident and prepared for this important milestone.

• See **Kindergarten** on page 13



French native Natacha Douglas is bringing the French Crêperie from Missouri to Scottsdale. (Courtesy French Crêperie)

Public welcome to grand opening of French Crêperie

The public is welcome to attend the grand opening of the French Crêperie, at 10 a.m., Oct. 24 at 4225 N. Marshall Way, Suite 2.

The cafe is an authentic French restaurant concept that began in Missouri and is owned by French native

Natacha Douglas, who specializes in sweet and savory French crêpes, French pastries, crêpe-making classes (beginning January 2027) and an authentic French dining experience.

For more information, visit french-creperie.com or call 480-885-2854.

Kindergarten

• From page 12

Events will take place across SUSD's five learning communities, with dates and times varying by campus.

Arcadia Learning Community

- Tavan: Nov. 4, 9 a.m.
- Hopi: Nov. 5, 5 p.m.

Chaparral Learning Community

- Cherokee: Held Oct. 20
- Cochise: Oct. 21, 9:15 a.m.
- Sequoia: Oct. 22, 5 p.m.

Coronado Learning Community

- Hohokam: Nov. 3, 9:15 a.m.
- Yavapai: Nov. 10, 3:15 p.m.

Desert Mountain Learning Com-

munity

- Desert Canyon Elementary: Nov. 3, 8 a.m.
- Cheyenne: Nov. 3, 10 and 16, 7:45 – 9:30 a.m.
- Anasazi: Nov. 4, 9 a.m.
- Redfield: Nov. 10, 2 – 3 p.m.

Saguaro Learning Community

- Pueblo: Held Oct. 20
- Navajo: Nov. 4, 11:30 a.m.
- Kiva: Nov. 10, 9:45 a.m.

With Open Enrollment for the 2027–28 school year beginning 8 a.m., Nov. 2, Kindergarten Roundup also provides families with an opportunity to explore their school options and find the learning environment that best fits their child.

For more information, visit sUSD.org/kinder.



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†Comparison based on our 4.00% APY versus the FDIC National Deposit Rate for money market accounts (0.61% APY as of June 15, 2026). The FDIC National Deposit Rate is calculated using the \$10,000 and \$100,000 balance tiers. Rates are subject to change. FDIC: National Rates & Rate Caps.

FROM THE COVER

Prop 426

• From page 1

The proposition will appear on the Nov. 3 ballot for Paradise Valley voters. If approved, Proposition 426 would permanently increase Paradise Valley's legal spending limit by an amount equivalent to about \$20 million under current dollar values.

"Coffee with the mayor is something we do to just open up a dialogue," Stanton said. "There's no action, it's not a formal meeting."

Stanton said the proposal would give the town more flexibility to spend available revenue when needed, including in response to unexpected expenses or an economic downturn. He emphasized that raising the limit does not mean the town will automatically spend more money or that residents will face a new tax.

"But we're not going for a property tax. That's one of the benefits we have in Paradise Valley," he said. "Just because we do have that ability (to use more money in the budget), it doesn't mean that it's a blank check."

The town's budget process includes public meetings and opportunities for residents to review proposed spending and share their opinions, Stanton said.

"Every single element of that budget is discussed in public. It's reviewed in public, open for public comment, and then we take it, we have public meetings about it. It's all very available to you," Stanton told residents. "We do this in the public venue, everybody has a chance to weigh in on it."

How the expenditure limit works

Arizona voters approved a constitutional amendment in 1980 establishing annual expenditure limits for cities and towns. The state calculates each municipality's limit using a base amount tied to local revenue expenditures in fiscal year 1979-80, adjusted for population changes and inflation. Voters can approve permanent adjustments to that base limit.

Paradise Valley voters previously approved base expenditure limit increases in 2000, 2006 and 2016. The Town Council voted 5-2 to place Proposition 426 on the November ballot.

According to the town, the measure would not create a new tax or require the town to spend more money. The town also says its current and projected revenues exceed projected expenditures, and the council would still be required to adopt a balanced budget each year.

Town Manager Andrew Ching discussed the history of the expenditure

limitation with residents and said the decision to approve or reject the measure ultimately belongs to voters.

"Ultimately, though, as the mayor said, the decision will be up to the voters of Paradise Valley. Whether to approve or not approve that that's purely a question for each individual voter to determine," Ching said.

According to the town, 84 of Arizona's 92 municipalities have received voter approval to modify their expenditure limits at least once.

Supporters and opponents weigh in

Vice Mayor Christine Labelle supports Proposition 426, writing in an opinion piece for Independent Newsmedia that the measure would adjust the town's legal spending ceiling without changing its adopted budget.

Labelle said the increased limit would give the town greater flexibility to address infrastructure, public safety and service needs while maintaining oversight of public spending.

"I have confidence in our current and incoming councilmembers' judgment and fiscal responsibility," she wrote.

Paradise Valley resident Paul Dembow urged voters to reject the proposition in a letter to Independent Newsmedia. He pointed to the

town's approval of the Ritz-Carlton resort development as a reason he believes the mayor and council should not be given additional spending capacity.

The planned mixed-use development includes a resort hotel, residential properties, retail and restaurant space. The Town Council approved the project's special use permit and development agreement in December 2015.

"Do not hand over another \$20 million to grow government and risk more of our money. A politician with this track record cannot be trusted with a larger blank check," he wrote.

Resident Rick Carpinelli expressed support for the proposition in an opinion piece for Independent Newsmedia, arguing that it would give the town more flexibility while maintaining financial oversight.

"Proposition 426 provides greater flexibility for the town to respond to community needs while maintaining fiscal accountability," he wrote.

Paradise Valley voters will decide whether to approve Proposition 426 in the Nov. 3 general election.

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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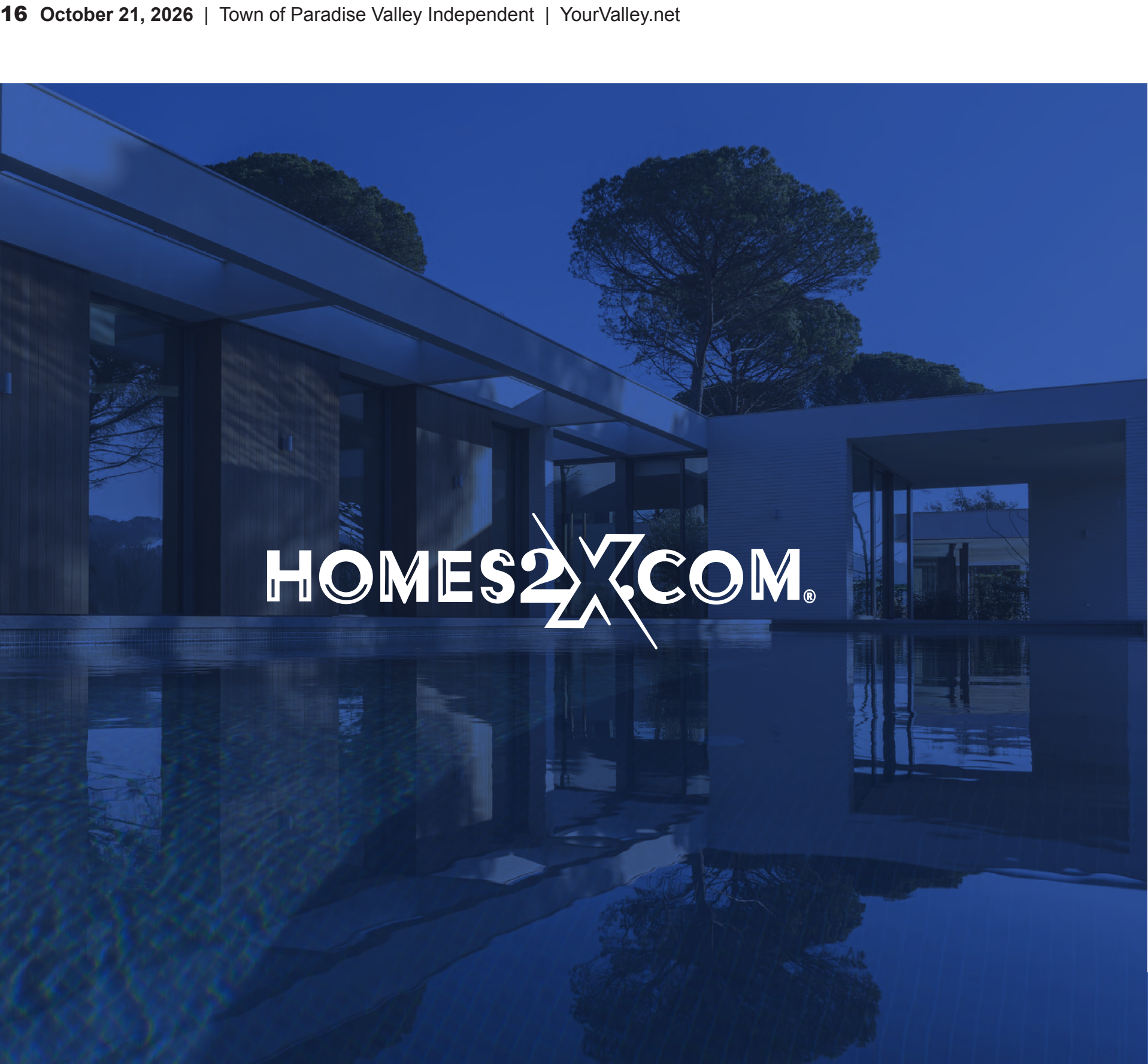
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Black Theatre Troupe brings Broadway musical revue to Valley

Black Theatre Troupe will present "Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope" Oct. 23-Nov. 8 at the Helen K. Mason Performing Arts Center in Phoenix.

Rather than following a traditional storyline, the musical revue uses song and dance to explore Black life in the early 1970s, including relationships, urban life, Black pride, feminism and social change. Its score incorporates gospel, jazz, soul, funk, rock, calypso and ballads.

Written by composer and lyricist Micki Grant and conceived by Vinnette Carroll, "Don't Bother Me, I Can't Cope" opened on Broadway in 1972 and ran for more than 1,000

performances. It received four Tony Award nominations, including Best Musical. Grant became the first Black woman to write the book, music and lyrics for a Broadway musical.

Black Theatre Troupe's production is directed and choreographed by Patdro Harris, with musical direction by Brenda Hankins and arrangements by Sanford Moore. The production features an ensemble of singers and dancers accompanied by live musicians.

[Click here for tickets.](#)

Founded in 1970 by Helen K. Mason, Black Theatre Troupe is one of the nation's longest continuously operating Black theatre companies.



(Photo provided by Black Theatre Troupe)

OPINION

Opinion

• From page 8

state legislature has been underfunding our public schools for years. The trend of public school closures will continue if we don't start electing individuals that value public education.

Luckily, we have the opportunity to elect some wonderful individuals who have not only cared about the education of their own children, but of all children. Dr. Jennifer Johnson is running for SUSD school board. She has seen education from the lens of a classroom teacher, as well as from the lens of an administrator. Besides being a teacher, she has been a principal, a superintendent and a vice president of Grand Canyon University.

It would be amazing to have someone with so much talent and experience on the SUSD governing board. And we have three supporters of public education running in legislative District 4, including Gresham, Caputi and Lieberman.

Public education is also on the ballot in the form of Proposition 320,

written and submitted by the legislature. On the surface it sounds wonderful, but if you take the time to read between the lines, you will discover that it is not wonderful. Proposition 320 targets public school districts like SUSD and PVUSD. If you are a supporter of strong and effective public schools, please vote no on prop 320. And if what is in prop 320 is good policy, why doesn't it also apply to charter and private schools?

Public education has always been very important to me. My children attended SUSD schools, and now my four grandsons attend SUSD schools. Please vote for supporters of strong public schools.

Barbara Rosenberg
PARADISE VALLEY

Elections, school closures, have consequences

Elections have consequences. Recently, Scottsdale families saw just how significant those consequences can be when the governing board voted 3-2 to close two more neigh-

borhood schools.

Copper Ridge and Laguna will join Pima and Echo Canyon as schools our community is losing. Four schools in less than a year. Behind every closure are students, teachers, families and neighborhoods forever changed.



Jeanne Beasley

Schools are more than buildings. They are places where friendships form and communities connect. Closing a school disrupts families, changes boundaries, can increase commutes and weakens the connections that make Scottsdale special.

Yes, declining enrollment is a real challenge, and responsible financial decisions must be made. But school closures should be a last resort, not the first solution.

Before closing another school, we should be asking: What more can we do to attract families? Have we explored partnerships and better uses of existing facilities? Have we fully considered the consequences alongside projected savings? Have we listened

to parents choosing other educational options?

We cannot close our way to a stronger school district. We must give families compelling reasons to choose SUSD and explore every reasonable alternative before making irreversible decisions.

As a longtime Scottsdale resident, former SUSD parent and candidate for the governing board, I believe our community deserves leaders who ask difficult questions, welcome public input, support school staff and put students at the center of every decision.

School closures are decisions that can shape neighborhoods for generations. So are the decisions we make about who leads our district.

The future of Scottsdale's public schools deserves thoughtful, long-term leadership. Vote for Jeanne Beasley and Amy Carney for the Scottsdale Unified Governing Board on or before Nov. 3. Learn more at SUSD-strong.com.

Jeanne Beasley
CANDIDATE, SCOTTSDALE UNIFIED
GOVERNING BOARD

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The Nash marks 14 years of jazz

The Nash will celebrate its 14th anniversary with three days of jazz Nov. 6-8 at its downtown Phoenix club, bringing together nationally recognized musicians and local performers for concerts and a closing-night jam session.

The weekend opens Friday, Nov. 6, with The Nash Collective, the club's rotating all-star ensemble. The lineup includes saxophonist and vocalist Camille Thurman, trumpeter Ashlin Parker, saxophonist Clark Gibson, guitarist Paul Bollenback, pianist Rachel Eckroth, bassist Corcoran Holt and Phoenix native Lewis Nash, the acclaimed drummer for whom the club is named. Performances are at 7 and 9 p.m.

Saturday's 7 and 9 p.m. performances feature Something Else!, a soul-jazz group led by alto saxophonist Vincent Herring. The seven-member ensemble, which also includes Nash on drums, draws from jazz, soul, R&B and funk and performs music associated with art-



Phoenix native Lewis Nash, the acclaimed drummer for whom the club is named, will perform Friday, Nov. 6, with The Nash Collective. (Photo provided by The Nash)

ists including Freddie Hubbard, George Benson and Horace Silver along with original compositions.

The celebration concludes at 6 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8, with The Nash's anniversary jam session led by saxophonist and Director of Education Clark Gibson. The weekly tradition brings emerging musicians together with experienced players and allows instrumentalists and vocalists to join the session.

For tickets, visit thenash.org/events.

Mahj

• From page 6

build confidence as they learn the game.

Since taking the class, Boylan has gotten several of her friends to learn as well, and the group has been playing together once a week.

"I enjoy the game but then, also, it's an excuse for me and my girlfriends to get together once a week, or however often, to see each other," she said.

Kim Fisher, Scottsdale resident and Mahj Club member learned at the club in May and has been "hooked" since, she said.

As a personal trainer for 44 years, Fisher said the brain can play just as big a role in a person's health as they get older. A game like mahjong, which uses strategy and critical thinking skills,

can help keep people sharp while the club creates opportunities to make new connections.

"I do a lot of physical things that brings that (connection and health) aspect into my life too but this is more the brain, and it brings me connection, it brings me a community. But it uses my brain. And so, that's a new part and I like that," she said.

Zastrow said The Mahj Clubs is looking to expand with new locations coming in the future in both the East and West Valleys.

For more information visit: themahjclubs.com.

The Mahj Clubs is located at 4821 N. Scottsdale Rd, Suite 106.

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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This is my 9th anniversary writing this column! Where it started, and how it's evolved for my readers.

I'm excited to now be able to have my articles posted in the Town of Paradise Valley Independent Newspaper. My articles have been posted in The Cave Creek Carefree Independent, formally The Sonoran News for 9 years. My articles may also be found in the Scottsdale, Scottsdale North Independent. I write my own articles, no AI.

How I came up with The Other Side Of Your Health Story

My purpose is to help as many people as possible to live long, healthy lives without drugs or surgery. Patients ask me every day, "How can I know about alternatives to what my medical doctor recommends?" "I'm here to give you that information backed by research, so you have the knowledge to decide which treatment protocols to choose. My goal is to educate and give you your options, and I work hard to dig deep for the best information out there; it's then up to you to decide.

Many of you may or may not have heard my health radio talk show, Raising Your Quality of Life With Dr. Leisa-Marie Grgula, which aired on Sedona's KAZM Radio for 5 years throughout Northern Arizona. I wrote a column by the same name for one of the Sedona papers there as well. discount. Channels 3,7, and national podcasts have invited me as a guest for current health topics. Please read to the end for my special discount for my TPV readers.

My practice has changed from Accurate Care Chiropractic Pain Relief Center, a chiropractic and acupuncture practice in Sedona for 14 years, to Accurate Care Medical Wellness Center, an integrated medical and regenerative medicine practice in DC Ranch. I now have an experienced medical staff that provides medical exams and treatments, regenerative medicine utilizing stem cells, exosomes, PRP, ozone and more. Our products, staff, and protocols have allowed us to be one of the most unique regenerative clinics in the country where patients receive exemplary results. Medical tourism is available, as we treat patients from all over the country who seek out our stem cell and spinal treatments. We offer Medicare screening exams for neuropathy. Aesthetic procedures are offered as well.

I received my Doctorate of Chiropractic at National University of Health Sciences in Lombard, Illinois in 1995, and continue to provide Chiropractic care, including Cox Technic, therapy modalities, acupuncture, nutrition, and weight loss for 31 years, with special attention to herniated discs, stenosis, and failed back surgery.

A special evening to meet the doctor: I'll explain the future of Regenerative Medicine and what it can do for you!

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. 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 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. This allowed me to be swinging a golf club only 3 months later. 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:

- Lung Issues
- Neuropathy
- Trigeminal Neuralgia
- Autoimmune Disorders
- Knee and Ankle Pain
- 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 non-alcoholic drinks to enjoy as we answer all 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 stem cell 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 there are only billions of cells? How do they work for conditions other than joint pain?

Seats fill up quickly.

Please call 480-584-3955 today to RSVP.

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

- Tuesday, October 27 at 4:00 PM
- Tuesday, November 3 at 4:00 PM

Depending on the number of readers who RSVP, we may add events that start at 6:30 PM Please let us know if you are interested.

Special 9th article anniversary pricing

If you are a patient who is committed to doing whatever it takes to get better and heal naturally with no drugs, surgery, or down time, please call my office. I will offer a 20% discount, as this is a new celebration of my writing this column.

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Awareness

• From page 1

community.”

Rouintan discussed different forms of domestic violence, why victims may find it difficult to leave abusive situations, ways to support victims and trends the Attorney’s Office is seeing in Maricopa County.

She explained that domestic violence affects people across different circumstances, including men and women, children, older adults abused by caregivers and pets.

Rouintan also discussed trends involving juvenile defendants and an increase in cases involving firearms. She noted that victims may return to abusive relationships multiple times before leaving for good.

Shame is a major reason victims return to abusive relationships or change their accounts of what happened. She said abusers can create cycles of abuse that leave victims feeling embarrassed and afraid of being judged by their families and others.

“The biggest reason that victims either stay in the home or change their stories is because they’re embarrassed. They are afraid to tell their families what is happening. They are afraid that no one will support them. They feel judged for returning to a situation and what will my family think if I go back,” Rouintan said. “They are constantly battling not only what’s happening in the home, but also what the public perceives of them, and what their families perceive of them.”

Involving outside parties, such as calling police, can interrupt the cycle of abuse and an abuser’s control, which may prompt the abuser to retaliate or try to regain control, Rouintan said.

Abusers often contact victims after police become involved to threaten



Paradise Valley Police Department Commander Patrick Beumler speaks to the crowd at the Coffee with a Cop event Wednesday, Oct. 7, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

them or pressure them to recant their statements.

People who have not experienced domestic violence may wonder why victims do not simply call police and leave, but Rouintan said people who think that do not see the full picture.

“Leaving an abusive relationship is the most dangerous time for a domestic violence victim,” she said.

Leaving an abusive relationship is not only dangerous but also emotionally difficult, Rouintan said. Victims may have to leave behind sentimental belongings and other valued possessions, and some may even have to leave their pets because not all shelters accept animals.

“If you were forced to leave in the middle of the night, what are you able to take with you? And understanding how much you’re having to leave be-

hind. Understanding that you will never be able to take all your prized possessions. Sometimes it’s a kid in each arm and that’s it,” she said.

Rouintan said abusers may also deliberately damage belongings they know are valuable to victims as another way to exert control.

“The abuser often knows what is valuable, and maybe they will damage that product before you get home as yet another way to exert power over you. This is very real for what victims go through,” she said.

The best way to support victims is to be someone they can lean on without fear of judgment, Rouintan said.

“Start by expressing genuine concern, if you know of someone who is in this kind of situation, just give them a place to vent. They may not want solutions,” she said. “They

just want someone to talk to as a safe space, because their own home is not a safe space. Offer support, let them know that they’re not alone, reinforce that the abuse is not their fault.”

Friends and family members should respect victims’ decisions but also recognize when they may be in immediate danger, Rouintan said.

If someone believes a victim’s life is at risk, she encouraged them to report it or request a welfare check, even if it could strain the relationship.

“Sometimes the hard decision is the right one,” she said.

Paradise Valley Police Commander Patrick Beumler said people who are hesitant to report abuse directly to police can encourage victims to seek medical care for injuries or speak with a counselor.

Medical professionals and some other caregivers are mandatory reporters, meaning they may be required to report suspected abuse.

“A lot of times what you’ll see is that the victims may be hesitant to talk to a law enforcement officer because they don’t want to have all the repercussions that come with it, but they may be more likely to mention what happened to a trusted physician, or a nurse, or somebody else that might be more in a caregiving setting,” Beumler said.

He said reports from medical professionals can help law enforcement learn about abuse when victims are not ready to speak directly with police.

For domestic violence resources Phoenix victim advocates can be reached at 602-261-8192.

Paradise Valley Victim Advocate Melisa Dodge can be reached at 480-348-3607.

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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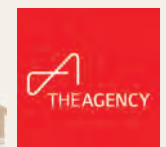
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FROM THE COVER

E-bikes

• From page 1

cycle as a bicycle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor rated at less than 750 watts. State law classifies e-bikes into three categories based on how the motor operates and the speed it can assist.

Both class one and class two e-bikes have a top speed of 20 mph (with class 2 having a throttle). Class 3 e-bikes provide pedal assistance up to 28 mph.

E-bikes are subject to the same traffic laws as traditional bicycles, Carney said.

“So, if a bicycle has to stop at a red light, so does the e-bike,” he said.

Unlike e-bikes, electric motorcycles do not have pedals and are subject to motorcycle regulations, Carney said. Riders must be at least 16 years old and have a license, he said.

Riders under 18 must wear helmets when operating electric motorcycles, but Paradise Valley does not have a helmet requirement for e-bike riders.

During the past two years, Paradise Valley Police recorded 75 calls for service or reported incidents involving e-bikes, according to data Police Chief Freeman Carney presented to the Town Council.

Of those, 36 involved officer contact with e-bike riders, while 39 involved no direct contact.

The data also included 39 instances of riders fleeing or a negative attempt to locate, 11 citations or warnings, five arrests across two incidents and three impounds or seizures. One collision involved a juvenile who suffered a concussion.

Carney also outlined regulations adopted by other municipalities, including age restrictions for riders, helmet requirements for minors and limits on e-bike access to sidewalks and parks where pedestrians are present.



Paradise Valley Police Chief Freeman Carney presents to the town council during their study session on Oct. 8, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

Council Member Scott Moore said he supports measures other municipalities have adopted to protect pedestrians.

He does not believe any speed is safe for e-bikes on sidewalks shared with pedestrians and raised concerns about the lack of age restrictions when young children may not have the maturity to ride safely, he said.

“That’s the scary part,” Moore said. “You can be seven years old and get one of these things for Christmas and off you go.”

Vice Mayor Christine Labelle said she supports Glendale’s e-bike regulations, which set minimum ages for riders, require helmets for those under 18 and impose escalating fines for violations. She said the rules promote safety while still allowing children some independence.

“I do like the idea of kids having freedom and some kind of autonomy and the feeling that they can, you know, run up to the store on their own or get something for their mom,” Labelle said.

The council agreed that rules and regulations are needed to improve safety of both riders and those around them and directed town staff to return with draft proposals.



Oliver Wurth and Binay Singh during the Mayor's Advisory Youth Council's Sept. 23 meeting in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

Town Manager Andrew Ching and Town Attorney Andrew McGuire said the town has regulations for gas-powered devices that were popular in the 1990s.

They said staff could adapt the existing code to address newer forms of electric transportation and present its findings to the council at a future meeting.

Two Mayor’s Youth Advisory Council Members Oliver Wurth and Binay Singh also shared the youth council’s perspective on e-bike safety during the council’s regular meeting Oct. 8.

Singh discussed the types of electric vehicles Youth Council members have observed in Paradise Valley, noting that many were off-road bikes and electric motorcycles.

He also reviewed the power capabilities of different e-bike classes and the costs associated with owning them.

Youth Council members shared a photo of electric riders blocking roads and creating hazards, saying regulations are needed to improve safety. They said the rules should balance safety concerns with the independence e-bikes provide children and the transportation burden they can relieve for parents.

“We do believe this e-bike community is really beneficial for youth because it gets them off their phone. It gets them out and about and not stuck

inside their house. And it’s also a great way to get around the city without having to ask your parents for a ride or carpool or ask your friends for a ride,” he said.

Wurth outlined potential regulations the Youth Council would recommend, including requiring helmets for riders under 18, encouraging gloves for better grip and protection, and setting minimum age requirements.

He also suggested requiring a license to ride on busier roads with speed limits of 35 mph or higher while allowing e-bikes in residential areas and on sidewalks or bike lanes where appropriate.

“Obviously there is an expectation of respect for e-bike riders in these areas and we think as long as they respect these areas they should be allowed access as it encourages them to get out the house, socialize and experience life which is important for growth and maturity,” Wurth said.

The recommendations aim to improve safety while preserving the independence and sense of community e-bikes offer young riders. Wurth said the rules could help prevent younger riders who may not understand traffic laws from creating safety concerns for motorists.

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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Children with autism and their families are welcome to a sensory friendly trunk-or-treat Oct. 24. (Submitted photo Bierman Autism Center)

Bierman Autism Center to host sensory friendly trunk-or-treat

Bierman Autism Center, 8444 North 90th Street, Suite 130, in Scottsdale, is hosting a trunk-or-treat — a free, sensory-friendly outdoor event where kids can move through decorated trunks, play simple games, and get their face painted, all at their own pace — 10 a.m. to noon, Oct. 24.

Costumes are welcome, but so is showing up exactly as a child feels most comfortable, according to a press release.

This event is designed for children with autism and other developmental needs, while welcoming siblings, caregivers, and the broader community. Families can expect a calm, pre-

dictable morning with the flexibility many children need to feel at ease in new experiences.

“Trunk-or-treat is about making sure every child gets to experience the fun of Halloween,” Christina Gallagher, executive vice president of client intake and growth at Bierman Autism Centers, said in the release. “Watching a child walk through the trunks at their own pace, play a game, get their face painted—that’s what this is about. We want families in our communities to have a place where they can come, feel comfortable, and enjoy the morning.”

RSVPs can be made at bierman-autism.com/events.

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Domestic Violence

• From page 1

the meeting and accepted the proclamation from Mayor Mark Stanton, who read it aloud before presenting it to her.

The proclamation described domestic violence as an important issue that affects people of all walks of life. Domestic violence needs to be recognized to help fight the culture of silence and shame associated with abuse.

“Domestic violence is a significant public health issue impacting all communities regardless of race, age, sex, gender, socioeconomic status or religion,” Stanton said.

“Domestic violence awareness and prevention month provides an opportunity to stand in solidarity with those tens of millions of individuals impacted by intimate partner violence while increasing public awareness about

community-based prevention and intervention efforts.”

Stanton also read statistics highlighting the number of people affected by domestic violence in the United States and its potential adversary effects to witnessing such abuse.

“One in four women and one in seven men aged 18 and older in the United States have been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime, and 40.3% of children in the United States reported exposure to at least one form of family violence over their lifetime and 27.7% reported exposure to physical intimate partner violence,” he said.

“Individuals who witness intimate partner violence are children, those children are two times more likely to become either victims of or perpetrators of this intimate partner violence in the future.”

Dodge thanked the mayor and council for the proclamation and for

standing with her and victims in the fight against domestic violence.

“I’d like to accept it with a lot of honor on behalf of those who have tragically lost their lives to domestic violence, those who have survived domestic violence and those that are currently still enduring domestic violence,” Dodge said.

Dodge said discussing domestic violence and raising awareness through education can help break the cycle and provide survivors with a stronger support system.

“By proclaiming October as domestic violence awareness month, I believe that all of us as a community are helping break that silence,” Dodge said.

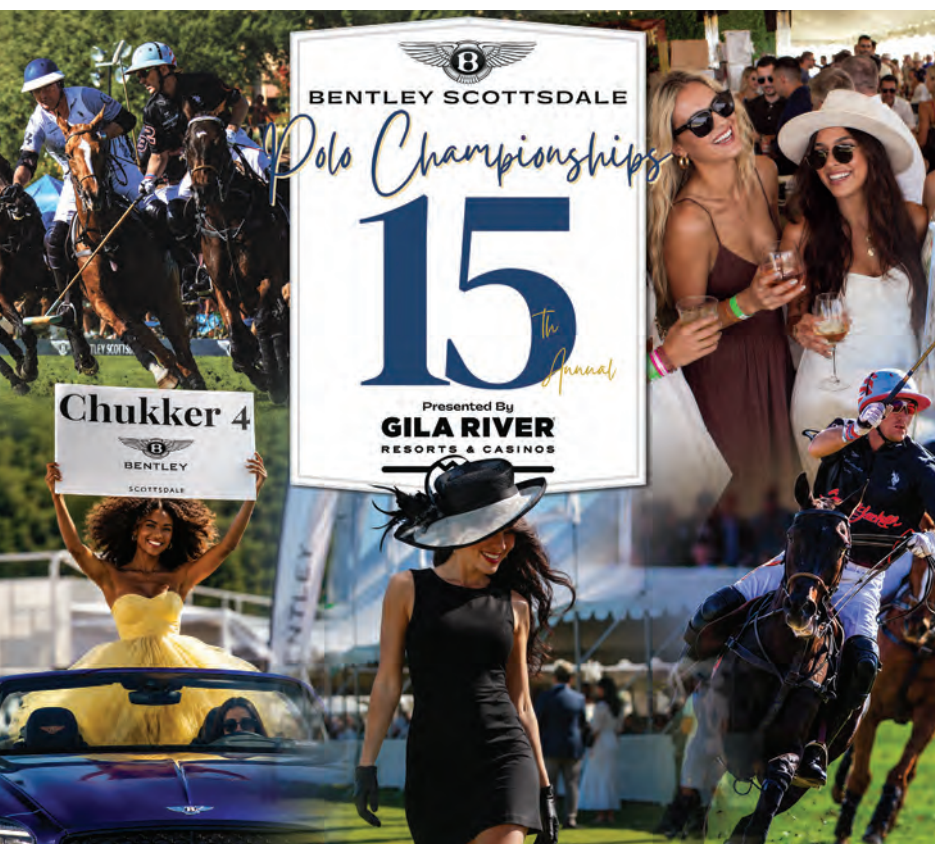
For domestic violence resources Phoenix victim advocates can be reached at 602-261-8192.

Town of Paradise Valley Victim Advocate Melisa Dodge can be reached at 480-348-3607.



Paradise Valley Victim Advocate Melisa Dodge discusses shelters and resources available to domestic violence victims, noting that recommendations depend on each person’s circumstances, at the Coffee with a Cop event Wednesday, Oct. 7, in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

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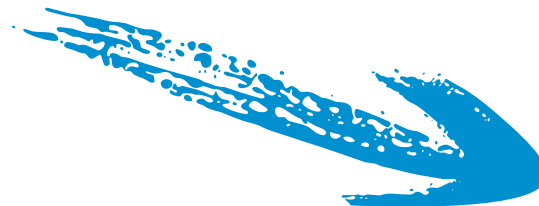
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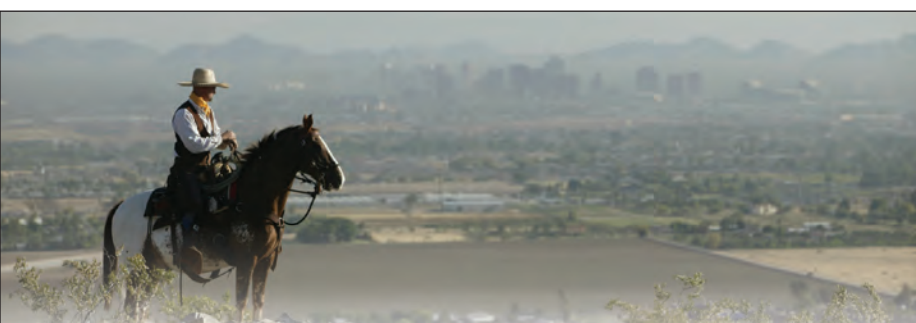
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The Arizona Cancer Foundation for Children's seventh annual Ava's Treehouse Gala will include cocktails, dinner and entertainment as well as live and silent auctions. (Courtesy Arizona Cancer Foundation for Children)

Childhood Cancer fundraiser set for Scottsdale's Phoenician

The Arizona Cancer Foundation for Children will host its seventh annual Ava's Treehouse Gala at the Phoenician, 6000 E. Camelback Road, Nov. 7.

The event is the signature fundraising event for the foundation, according to a press release.

The evening will begin with a hosted cocktail reception at 6 p.m., followed by dinner, an inspiring program, live and silent auctions.

Guests will celebrate the resilience of local cancer warriors while helping provide life-changing resources to children and families during one of the most difficult chapters of their lives.

Every dollar raised directly supports the foundation's comprehensive programs, which provide financial assistance, emotional support, family experiences, education and other essential resources to children battling cancer and their loved ones.

Since 2014, the organization has impacted more than 10,000 Arizona families, ensuring they receive compassionate support throughout every stage of their cancer journey.

Individual tickets are \$500, and there are a variety of sponsorship packages ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000.

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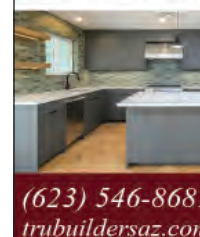
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