TOWN OF PARADISE VALLEY
INDEPENDENT
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Volume 43 Issue 46

INSIDE

Caring for veterans
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NOVEMBER 18, 2026

Arizona's Nonpartisan Newspaper

'Financial flexibility' expected following election



Gretchen Wright and her daughter with her "I voted" sticker on Nov. 3, at town hall in Paradise Valley. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Paradise Valley voters appear to be supporting two propositions that would give the town greater flexibility in managing its spending limitations, although election results remain unofficial.

Proposition 426 asked voters to approve a permanent adjustment to the town's base expenditure limitation, increasing it by $3,940,190 in 1980 dollars, equivalent to approximately $20 million today.

If approved, the adjustment would give the town more flexibility to fund municipal services and respond to rising costs. Without approval, the existing base expenditure limit would remain unchanged.

Proposition 427 asked voters to approve a Capital Projects Accumulation Fund exemption, allowing the town to set aside future surplus revenues for capital improvement projects without those expenditures counting against its annual expenditure limitation.

Potential projects include sewer repairs, drainage improvements, street and intersection improvements, utility undergrounding and public safety facilities.

The measures are independent, meaning voters could approve both, reject both or approve only one.

Mayor Mark Stanton said he

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Council delays CASA solar project amid neighbor concerns

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

The Paradise Valley Town Council voted 6-1 to delay a proposed solar panel project at the Franciscan Renewal Center after residents raised concerns about the height of the structures and their potential impact on neighboring properties.

The project, which would add three solar panel shade structures to the center's parking lot, will return to the council Nov. 12 after the council disagreed over whether the church had done enough to accommodate nearby residents.

The Franciscan Renewal Center at 5802 E. Lincoln Drive is seeking approval to install the structures in the western and northwestern portions of its parking lot. The panels would provide shade for vehicles while generating electricity for the campus.

Brandon McMahon, a planner with the town's Community Development Department, presented revised plans showing a combined project area of 11,237 square feet, down from the original 12,281 square feet.

The center also offered to limit the structures to 14 feet in height, providing 11 feet of clearance underneath, following a meeting with a northern neighbor.

McMahon said the structures meet the town's setback requirements and are similar to solar shade structures previously approved at other properties in Paradise Valley.

However, several council mem-

• See **Solar** Page **18**

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A PAIN IN A VERY DELICATE PLACE

BY GREG HAGUE

At 78, I'd like to report that I injured myself lifting 200 pounds or driving a golf ball 250 yards. Either story would do wonders for my reputation.

Unfortunately, I was doing something else, trying entirely too hard. What, exactly, is between me and the Almighty. I felt a sharp pain in my left groin, but I was late for golf, so I did the sensible thing. I ignored it and played.

By the time I got home, the pain was worse. Then I undressed for a shower and spotted a bulge in a neighborhood where surprises are especially unwelcome. I sat down.

Naturally, I consulted artificial intelligence. The diagnosis was a hernia. I asked six different ways whether it might heal itself. AI was as sympathetic as a parking meter. No.

I studied the surgical options: open, laparoscopic, robotic. All involved strangers rearranging things in a place I prefer to manage personally. Then I read about anesthesia and memory problems in older people. As if I needed another reason to forget why I'd walked into a room.

Fortunately, I'm a Mayo Clinic patient and met with the woman who heads hernia surgery. She'd performed thousands of operations and teaches other surgeons. I didn't like the procedure, but I liked her résumé.

Surgery was scheduled for a Monday, weeks away. My strategy for worry is simple: postpone it. I scheduled my panic for the Saturday before surgery. When Saturday arrived, I rescheduled for Sunday. By Sunday afternoon, dread had ignored my calendar and moved in.



I arrived at Mayo at 6 a.m. Monday. The nurses were kind, reassuring, and suspiciously cheerful for people sending me into an operating room.

Everybody seemed confident. Everybody except the patient.

When they wheeled me in, the room was enormous. Bright lights, blinking monitors, machines everywhere, doctors and nurses moving with practiced confidence. On television, I watch these scenes from my recliner, usually with ice cream. This time I was the fellow on the table.

They'd padded my back and backside because the operating table was hard. I appreciated the courtesy, though I wondered what kind of table requires protective equipment just to lie on it.

A nurse said, "We're going to put you to sleep now." I stared at the ceiling. Still awake. Still awake. What if the anesthesia didn't work and they started without me?

Then I opened my eyes in recovery. My nephew Jason was standing in the doorway making ridiculous faces. My first sight after surgery was a grown man behaving like a six-year-old. Never have I been so happy to see an idiot.

My son Corey was there too, behaving considerably better. They stayed through the afternoon while I tried to get released. The surgery had finished before noon, but Mayo had one final requirement: I had to pee. Otherwise, they might need to insert a you-know-what where no you-know-what belongs.

I eventually passed the test. It felt like urinating fire, a sensation that continued for two days. My stomach, with three fresh surgical openings, felt like it had lost an argument with a lawn mower.

By 3 p.m., I wanted to go home. Everything was moving at the speed of a government permit. I asked a wonderful nurse named Marilyn if she could speed things along. Corey said there was no way I'd be out before 5. I bet him I'd be in a wheelchair by 4.

At 3:59, Marilyn rolled me toward the car, where Corey and Jason were waiting. After weeks of worry, I'd finally won something. Naturally, we hadn't bet money.

Three weeks later, I'm feeling good. My surgeon says no golf for another two weeks. As for the activity that started this whole business, I've learned not to be in such a hurry.

> ***They say haste makes waste. I learned that sometimes haste doesn't make waste.***

It makes a hernia.

Greg Hague CEO, 72SOLD

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NEWS IN BRIEF

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Public Works crews clear storm debris following heavy rainfall

Paradise Valley Public Works crews have removed more than 100 tons of debris from town streets each day following three days of heavy rain Oct. 30-Nov. 1, according to the town manager's Nov. 6 weekly update.

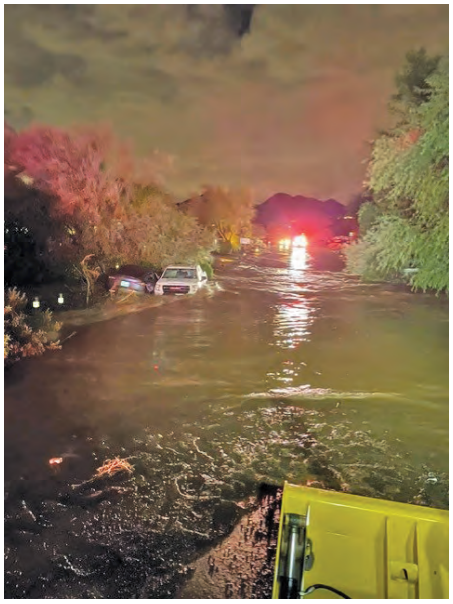
The storm brought between 2.44 and 4.72 inches of rain across town, according to the Maricopa County Flood Control District.

Crews have identified nearly 150 locations needing cleanup and are continuing to clear neighborhood streets, washes and major roadways. Additional work includes street sweeping, erosion repairs, sidewalk cleaning and vegetation removal.

Police participate in Trunk-or-Treat at Cherokee Elementary School

The Paradise Valley Police Department joined local families for Cherokee Elementary School's annual Trunk-or-Treat event on Friday, Oct. 30, celebrating Halloween with students, parents and community members, according to the town manager's Nov. 6 weekly update.

The event featured a specially decorated PVPD patrol vehicle, Halloween candy, toys, temporary tattoos, interactive games and photo opportunities with department personnel.



Paradise Valley Public Works crews have been hard at work clearing debris after storms hit throughout the Valley Oct. 30-Nov. 1. (Town of Paradise Valley)

Representing PVPD were Community Resource Officer Vasilije Sagovnovic and department volunteers, who were joined by Town of Paradise Valley Mayor Mark Stanton.

The annual event provided an opportunity for police officers to interact with children and families in a relaxed, family-friendly environment while strengthening relationships between law enforcement and the community, according to the town manager's update.

Police to host free document shredding event

Paradise Valley Police Department will host a Safely Shred event 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. Nov. 21 at the Paradise Valley Municipal Complex, 6401 E. Lincoln Drive, according to the Town Manager's Oct. 23 weekly update.

Residents can schedule an appointment to bring unwanted documents for safe disposal there. Appointments are preferred but not required.

Residents can bring up to five standard business shred boxes of unwanted documents for free disposal, according to PVPD's website.

The event will also collect unwanted electronics, excluding CRT monitors and televisions.

The event is funded by Paradise Valley resident Mike Cummiskey of Paradise Valley Wealth Management, with optional donations supporting Special Olympics and the Cops & Kids holiday program.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

On **November 18, 2010**, Paradise Valley banned the use of fireworks in the Town, except novelty items and supervised shows permitted by the Fire Marshal, banned sales to anyone under 16 and made violators liable for emergency response costs. Since then, the town has changed the restrictions to allow use during certain windows near New Year's Eve and Independence Day.







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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Caring for veterans after service

By Allison Kotzbauer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Jon Siegel is a Paradise Valley-area resident, former U.S. Air Force captain and biomedical science officer and founder and president of The Perfect Companion, a concierge in-home senior care company. His career has taken him from military service to helping seniors receive personalized care and support in their own homes.



Jon Siegel during his time in the U.S. Air Force. (Submitted photo/Jon Siegel)

How did your military service shape your approach to health care?

The military taught me what teamwork in health care should really look like. As a biomedical science officer and captain in the Air Force, I saw that there was always a full team behind the patient: a psychiatrist, a nurse, a social worker, a psychologist and a discharge planner, all working toward the same goal. Nobody operated alone.

What do you wish more people knew about veterans today?

I wish people understood that serving is a sacrifice, and veterans carry it long after they leave the military. When you serve, you give up control of your own life. You don't choose where you live or when you move. Starting a family is hard, and kids get pulled out of school. You're doing something selfless for a country you love, and your own interests come second.

What challenges do aging veterans face today?

The biggest challenge I see veterans facing today is the quality of care. They made the great sacrifice, and they deserve the highest quality of care.

Their needs change with time, and they need someone who knows them well and notices the small changes early. That's the kind of attention a busy system can't always provide, and families can't always provide on their own.

What can Paradise Valley do to better support veterans?

Start with one veteran. Each year, the town could pick someone from the community who served and honor them in front of their neighbors. Then I'd ask the bigger question. There are 365 days in a year, so why stop at one? Imagine a veteran from Paradise Valley honored every day, with their story told. It would remind people what service looks like and why it matters.

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.



Scottsdale businessman Dave Smoot has received funding for sustainable aviation fuel. (Submitted photo/Northwest Advanced Bio-Fuels)

MORE ONLINE
See more Business news at yourvalley.net.

Area businessman secures funding for aviation fuel plant

A new partnership will help finance the development of one of the nation's largest sustainable aviation fuel projects, a woody biomass-based biorefinery planned for Washington State. This week, Northwest Advanced Bio-Fuels announced a funding partnership with Black Gold Equity Partners, a private equity platform that finances and transforms innovative businesses into institutional-quality operating platforms.

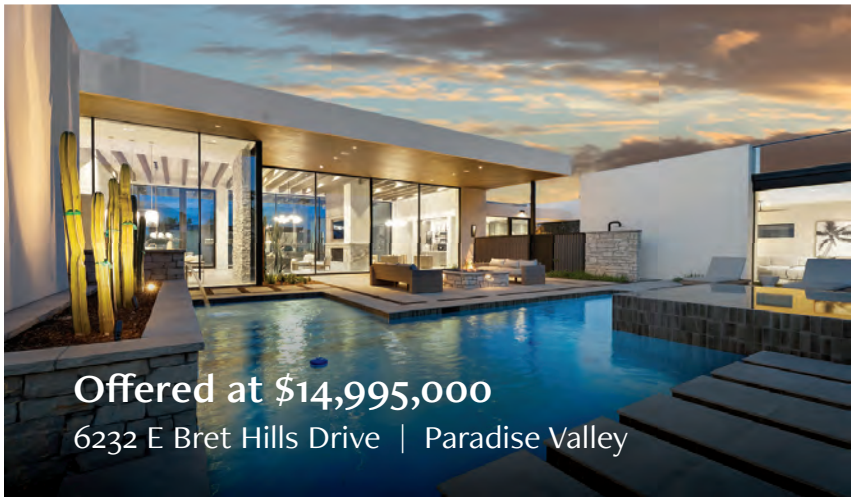
"One of the greatest challenges facing the sustainable fuels industry isn't technology - it's access to capital," said Dave Smoot, a Scottsdale Business Owner and Founder of Northwest Advanced Bio-Fuels. "Black Gold Equity Partners understands what it takes to build a project like this one. Their backing helps us move from concept to construction, and we believe it shows what's possible for sustainable fuel infrastructure across the country."

The partnership comes as industry-wide mandates and standards for lower-carbon transportation fuels take effect across global markets beginning in 2030.

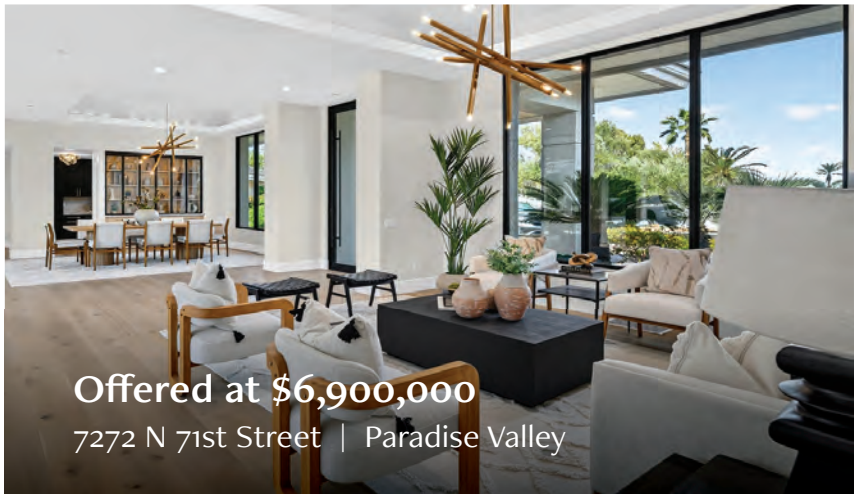
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YOUR OPINION

We hope to stimulate debate, not control it on our opinions pages. We reserve the right to edit submitted opinions. We insist on civility. Please include your name, physical address and phone number, so we can contact you for clarification or confirmation. We welcome your photo. All opinions must be no more than 300 words.

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

SPEAK UP

We support the use of pen names. Too many people do not 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 promptly correct factual errors. We offer a "right of reply" to the people we cover. Readers who disagree with a news story may respond with a letter.

Signs, signs everywhere in Paradise Valley

As many of you have pointed out to me, and certainly a growing problem, our Town is being taken over by large, potentially illegal construction/builder/contractor advertising signs everywhere.

Although their work and continued developments are welcome, after months of political signs the fatigue over signs everywhere is not only unsightly, but it's taking away from our most unique features – our open space and beautiful residential neighborhoods.

I brought this up recently at a previous council meeting and my colleagues unanimously supported enforcing our current sign ordinance. Obviously, those who continue to violate that ordinance even after our staff's direction to enforce the ordinance is purely disrespectful. Not only are they too large and tall, but they also block our line of sight with oncoming traffic on corners, making driving unsafe, and they're constantly placed in our town ROW, which is potentially illegal.

Violators need to understand the nuisance from our perspective. We as residents will always have construction to deal with. Whether it's remodeling or full teardowns, our town is always under reconstruction. Looking at signs as large as 4ft x 8ft everywhere is not only potentially illegal, but also unsightly. Per our town code, a residential sign can be no larger than three square and no taller than three feet. And that includes any sign placed on temporary construction fencing.

ATTENTION PLEASE!

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Please send comments to azopinions@iniusa.org. More letters are on **yourvalley.net**.

This is the typical size of a realtor sign before the large wood post is added, lifting it over three feet in height and making it another potentially illegal violation.

With 25 mph speeds almost everywhere, don't worry, your sign placed legally can still be read by a passerby at those speeds.

If you are tired of signs, signs, everywhere a sign, call our code enforcement department and report it. The number is 480-348-3523. Enough is enough!

Scott Moore
COUNCIL MEMBER, TOWN OF PARADISE VALLEY

Small businesses need protection from scammers, not new burdens

I run my own photography studio. Most customers pay through peer-to-peer apps. Money lands in seconds, and on Zelle, nobody pays fees, so I keep more in my pocket. My business isn't unique. Arizona has more than 700,000 small businesses, many running on payment apps, the new cash.

So, when Washington, D.C., talks about regulating payment apps, we pay attention. Bad rules hit businesses like ours.

No one knows scams better than small businesses facing fake invoices, phony vendor emails and bogus utility calls. I want criminals stopped without losing the tools my business runs on.

In D.C. and some states, lawmakers and attorneys general want banks or platforms to repay tricked users. That doesn't stop scams, it just shifts the criminal burden.

Platforms forced to cover every loss will treat every payment as risky. They'll hold funds longer, add fees to free services and impose hoops on buyers and sellers. Some businesses may drop the apps, burdening consumers.

A broad refund rule also invites claw backs unrelated to scams. A customer unhappy with their photos could skip me and report fraud for an automatic refund. I'd eat that loss.

Criminals use crypto, gift cards, wire transfers and fake checks. Targeting apps ignores those and steers crooks to apps, where others pay for their crimes.

Real solutions target criminals, which Arizona cannot do alone since most scams originate overseas. The next Congress should make fighting scams a real priority: fund law enforcement to catch scammers, pressure foreign governments to shut down scam operations and revive the bipartisan TRAPS Act to coordinate federal agencies and industry.

Arizona's small businesses want scams stopped as much as anyone, but we need solutions targeting crooks, not the tools we count on to get paid.

Lorena Figueroa
AVONDALE

• See **Opinions** Page **18**

REAL ESTATE PERSPECTIVE FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

THE MARKET EDIT

PEOPLE PLACES PROPERTIES A MORE MEANINGFUL WAY

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PARADISE VALLEY, 85253 | $13,488,888
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6323 E SAGE DRIVE
PARADISE VALLEY, 85253 | $12,999,888
5 BEDS | 8 BATHS | 7,928 SQ FT ON 1.2 ACRES



8020 N 64TH PLACE
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5 BEDS | 8 BATHS | 8,363 SQ FT ON 1 ACRE



4715 N LAUNFAL AVE
PHOENIX, 85018 | $8,495,000
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7525 N CLEARWATER PARKWAY
PARADISE VALLEY, 85253 | $5,488,888
6 BEDS | 7 BATHS | 8,290 SQ FT ON 1.3 ACRES



5209 N 63RD PLACE
PARADISE VALLEY, 85253 | $3,999,888
5 BEDS | 6 BATHS | 5,102 SQ FT ON NEARLY A 0.50 ACRE LOT



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SOLD: $19,250,000
6025 E CHOLLA LANE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BUYER & SELLER



SOLD: $18,750,000
6447 E MCDONALD DRIVE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



SOLD: $17,000,000
6203 E JOSHUA TREE LANE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BOTH BUYER AND SELLER



SOLD: $16,250,000
5001 N WILKINSON ROAD | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



SOLD: $16,000,000
6724 N 62ND STREET | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BUYER & SELLER



SOLD: $14,275,000
6515 E MEADOWLARK LN | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



SOLD: $13,000,000
6101 N YUCCA ROAD | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED BUYER



SOLD: $12,300,000
OFF MARKET SALE IN FINISTERRE
REPRESENTED BUYER



SOLD: $12,000,000
6101 E CABALLO LANE | PARADISE VALLEY, AZ
REPRESENTED SELLER



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4534 E PEBBLE RIDGE RD | PARADISE VALLEY, 85253
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EDUCATION NEWS

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SUSD schools earn high marks

By J. Graber
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Scottsdale Unified School District schools are excelling and getting better, according to the annual report cards of the state's schools and districts handed out by the Arizona Department of Education.

Twenty-four schools in the district earned an "A," which is two more than last year. Four schools got a "B" and two school got a "C." No school earned a "D" or an "F."

Last year the district had 22 "A's," six "B's" and two "C's." No school earned a "D" or an "F" last year either.

Perhaps the most notable improvement this year was from Mohave Middle School, which received an "A" ranking this year for the first time in over a decade.

"This accomplishment is a testament to the tremendous hard work, dedication and commitment of our students, teachers and staff, as well as the unwavering support of our PTO and community," Mohave Principal Paul Ferrero said in a written statement to the Daily Independent. "It truly takes all of us working together to make a difference, and we are incredibly proud of what our Mohave family has accomplished. This is something worth celebrating!"

Also, Redfield Elementary School earned more points — 99.59 points —than any other K-8 school in the district.

Other notable scores include Kiva Elementary School, with 98.35 points; Cheyenne Traditional School, with 97.87 points and Chaparral High School, with 97.46 points.



Hohokam Elementary School was one of four Scottsdale Unified School District schools to earn a "B" from the Arizona Department of Education this year (Independent Newsmedia/J. Graber)

Overall, 14 district schools had scores in the 90s.

"Our 130-year legacy is built on generations of students, educators, families and community members who believe in the power of education," Superintendent Dr. Scott Menzel said in a press release. "These results reflect the incredible work happening across our schools every day and our continued commitment to providing students with the opportunities and support they need to succeed."

District schools earning "A's" this year were Anasazi, Cherokee, Cochise, Desert Canyon, Hopi, Kiva, Laguna, Navajo, Pima, Pueblo, Redfield, Sequoya and Tavan elementary schools; Cocopah, Desert Canyon, Ingleside, Mohave and Mountainside Middle Schools; Cheyenne Traditional and Echo Canyon K-8s; and Arcadia, Chaparral, Desert Mountain and Saguaro High Schools.

District Schools earning "B's" this year were Hohokam and Yavapai elementary schools; Copper Ridge K-8 and Coronado High School.

District Schools earning "C's" this year were Tonalea Middle School and Scottsdale Online Learning.

State and federal law require the grades be assessed every year.

According to the board of education, the grades mean:

• A (excellent): A combination of distinguished performance on the statewide assessments for math, English language arts, and science; significant student growth; high four-year graduation rates; high and/or improved test scores for students identified as English language learners; and/or high student participation in honors, dual enrollment, or career and technical education courses.

• B (highly performing): A combination of above average performance on statewide assessments for math, English language arts, and science; high and/or improved student growth; above average four-year graduation rates; and/or above average student participation in honors, dual enrollment, or career and technical education courses.

• C (performing): Adequate performance in multiple measures, but with needs for improvement on key indicators, such as proficiency, student growth, and/or graduation rate.

• D (minimally performing): Inadequate performance in proficiency, growth and/or four-year graduation rate relative to the state average.

• F (failing): Systematic failures across all or the majority of measures, with a performance in the bottom 5% of the state.

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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To My Paradise Valley Neighbors,

Arizona has given so much to me, my family, and our business over the years.

With housing affordability becoming a challenge for so many families, I believe it's time for us to do our part.

We can't control home prices or interest rates, but we can control what we charge.

So, for a limited time, we will reduce our list-side commission to less than $1,000, to cover costs, for home sellers who need it. We'll even waive that, if needed.

Our goal is simple: Help sellers keep more of their equity, give buyers more opportunity, and give back to the state that has given us so much.

If you know someone who could benefit from this, I hope you'll share this opportunity with them.

With gratitude,

Greg Hague

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FOODIE PROFILE

MORE ONLINE
Find your next favorite spot online at yourvalley.net.

Cielito serving Mexican cuisine in Old Town

Restaurant name: Cielito
Owner/chef: In partnership with The Wayfaring Group, Shon Foster developed the menu.
Address: 7117 E. 3rd Ave, Scottsdale, AZ 85251
Phone number: 480-422-5601
Website and social media: cielitoscottsdale.com / IG @cielito_scottsdale
Type of cuisine: Northwest Mexican
Days and hours of operation: M-Th 4-10 p.m., F-Su 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Year established: 2026
Dine-in, takeout, delivery or catering options: Dine-in
What's the story behind your restaurant?
Cielito opened in February 2026 on the rooftop of AC Hotel Scottsdale Old Town. The name was inspired by the phrase "a beautiful little sky," and the restaurant was imagined as a rooftop gathering place that works just as well for a quick sunset drink as for a long night out with friends.
What are your most popular or signature menu items? What would you recommend a first-time customer try?
Agua Chile, Sinaloa Wings, Rabbit + Rattlesnake, Arrachera, Pan Elote
What makes your restaurant unique?
Cielito is a small rooftop restaurant with about 50 seats and west-facing views toward Camelback Mountain, so the sunset is part of the experience. The menu leans on ingredients tied to Northwest Mexico and the Sonoran Desert, including chiltepin, nopales, huitlacoche, and prickly pear, and the bar pours regional spirits like sotol and bacanora alongside Arizona beers from Huss Brewing, Four Peaks and State 48.



Cielito has a variety of Northwest Mexican inspired bites and drinks to be enjoyed with a rooftop view in Old Town Scottsdale. (Submitted photo/Cielito)

Lufthansa to start nonstop flights between Phoenix and Munich

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport announced the start of a new international route.

German airline Lufthansa will start nonstop service between Sky Harbor and Franz Josef Strauss International Airport in Munich beginning Aug. 3, 2027. This will be the first ever nonstop service between Phoenix and Munich.

"The addition of this new nonstop service from Phoenix to Munich is a win for our residents, our businesses and the community as a whole," stated Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego in a news release. "Phoenix Sky Harbor is one of the best airports in the country, and Phoenix is a destination of choice for international tourism and investment."



Munich is the third-most populated city in Germany. (Submitted by Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport)

Flights will operate three times a week year-round on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday. Flights will leave Munich at 1:20 p.m., arriving in Phoenix at 4 p.m. and then depart Phoenix at 5:50 p.m., arriving the next day in Munich at 1:25 p.m.

"The U.S. is the most important market for Lufthansa, outside of our home markets, and the addition of Phoenix to our route network certainly displays our strong commitment to the region," stated Dirk Janzen, Lufthansa Group Vice President of Passenger Sales in the Americas, in the news release.

The flight not only provides nonstop service between Phoenix and Germany, but also feeds into Lufthansa's significant hub in Munich meaning that travelers will have the opportunity to connect across cities in Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia as well as travel with Star Alliance codeshare partners.

Lufthansa is the latest addition to Phoenix Sky Harbor's international flight options which also include international destinations across Canada, Mexico as well as London, Paris and Taipei.

For more information on all the destinations available to travel to from Phoenix, visit skyharbor.com and selects "Where We Fly" under the "Flights" tab.

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Solar

• From page 1

bers questioned whether the proposed height was appropriate given concerns from neighboring residents.

Mike Slivers, director of operations for the Franciscan Renewal Center, said the church had spent nearly $20,000 and 10 months preparing the project and had already made efforts to address residents' concerns.

The center wants to begin construction to meet donor expectations, qualify for a government tax benefit this year and reduce electricity costs so more money can go toward its community outreach efforts, he said.

"We have land rights. We have the right to do this. We've compromised as far as we can. We can't compromise anymore," Slivers told the council.

Councilmember Julie Pace asked whether the center would consider lowering the structures to nine feet. Both Slivers and the center's attorney, Francis Slavin, said they were not willing to make that additional reduction.



The Franciscan Renewal Center's solar panel project faced more delays amid resident concerns at the Paradise Valley Town Council's Oct. 22 meeting. (Independent Newsmedia/Allison Kotzbauer)

During the public hearing, five residents spoke against the project, while three spoke in support.

Opponents raised concerns about the structures' potential impact on neighboring views, communication with the church and whether approving the project could set a precedent for future development.

Some also questioned whether the center's long-term goal of becoming net-zero in energy use could lead to additional solar installations and view obstructions.

Supporters argued the center had followed the town's notification requirements and made efforts to work with neighbors. They also said the project would allow the center to use renewable energy without compromising Paradise Valley's character.

The council was divided on whether to approve the project as proposed.

Pace said residents' concerns deserved consideration and argued the proposed 14-foot height did not align with the values of Paradise Valley.

She initially proposed lowering the structures to nine feet, saying the change could still accommodate large vehicles while reducing potential view obstructions.

Councilmember Ellen Andeen-Keller also opposed the proposal with the 14-foot height.

"I haven't seen the coordination with the Franciscan renewal to be accommodating, and I do think that the arrogance has been disheartening," she said.

Councilmember Scott Moore questioned why the structures needed additional clearance for large vehicles, including semi-trucks and construction vehicles like Slivers argued.

He said those vehicles could use other areas of the property and indicated he would vote against the project if the center was unwilling to consider revised plans.

Vice Mayor Christine Labelle supported delaying the decision to give the church more time to

• See Solar Page 20

OPINIONS WITH CIVILITY

• From page 6

Helping veterans live their healthiest lives

Each year, approximately 200,000 service members leave active duty. After leaving the service, many veterans face a myriad of health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder, other mental health challenges, the effects of traumatic brain injury, musculoskeletal injuries and illnesses due to the physical and mental demands of the career.

Veteran health issues can be complex and are driven by many factors including age, race, gender, if the veteran saw combat or not, the geographic location where the veteran served and the conflict itself.

Veteran statistics on PTSD vary based on the era in which the veteran may have served. At some point throughout their life, 7% of veterans will have PTSD, affecting female veterans slightly more than male veterans.

A veteran's health profile is unique. Working as a team with the individual, a health care provider can devise a strategy to meet their patient's health needs. To help veterans live their best lives and improve their health in addition to needed medical and psychological care, it is important to take an approach of healthy living practices and prevention.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs offers the following evidence-based recommendations:

•Getting high-quality sleep each night and seek help for sleep difficulties

•Keeping your recommended screenings and immunizations up to date

•Being active in your health care and working with your healthcare team to meet your specific needs

•Managing stress

•Cutting out tobacco use

•Limiting alcohol use

•Taking measures to protect yourself and family from harm and injury, including self-harm or domestic abuse

•Maintaining a healthy weight and eating right

•Staying physically active

As we honor Americans who answered the call to serve, let's remind them that help is out there whether their wounds are physical, in the form of mental health challenges or both. If you are a veteran or take care of someone who served, it's important to take an active role in your health with your health care provider.

Dr. Michael Kleven
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Propositions

• From page 1

was pleased with the voter response.

"I support and trust our residents to vote on important matters regarding our town," Stanton wrote in an email.

Vice Mayor Christine Labelle wrote she was grateful residents considered the propositions and reached their own conclusions.

"I have confidence in our current and incoming Councilmembers to exercise sound judgment through the public budget process, ensuring that the trust placed in them by our voters is well served," she wrote.

Councilmember Julie Pace pointed to potential savings for residents and additional funding flexibility as benefits of the measures.

She wrote that the town could eliminate its fire service fund fee for residents in the next budget cycle because existing revenue would be enough to cover fire services with the passing of the propositions.

Pace also cited stormwater improvements and police department needs, including a proposed physical combat training and multipurpose facility with an underground shooting range that she said has been planned since 2016 but has faced funding restrictions.

"We do not need to keep collecting and putting excess revenue into a bloated reserve fund that the town cannot use," Pace wrote in an email.

Council Member Anna Thomasson wrote in an email that the measures would allow the town to plan and fund future capital projects, including road improvements and stormwater management.

She added that she would continue scrutinizing the town's budget to ensure public money is spent on residents' priorities.

Council Member Ellen Andeen Keller also welcomed the results, saying the measures could help move capital improvement projects forward more quickly, eliminate the fire fund fee for residents and maintain a focus on public safety.

Council Member Scott Moore said he supported Proposition 427 but opposed Proposition 426.

"In my conservative approach to government this creates too much opportunity for unnecessary government growth," Moore wrote in an emailed statement regarding Proposition 426.

Council Member Karen Liepmann wrote that the town should be able to make its own decisions based on residents' needs and not outdated formulas imposed by the state.

"These measures are fundamentally about fiscal flexibility, long-term financial stability, and local control," she wrote.

According to Maricopa County's unofficial results as of Nov. 13, Proposition 426 received 4,184 yes votes and 2,881 no votes, with 59.22% of ballots counted supporting the measure.

Proposition 427 received 4,454 yes votes and 2,569 no votes, with 63.42% of counted ballots in favor.

Both propositions address the town's state-imposed expenditure limitation but offer different approaches to providing additional flexibility for municipal spending.

Final election results will determine the official outcome of both propositions.

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.

HAVE AN OPINION ON THIS ISSUE?

Want to contribute to the conversation? Email us at **azopinions@iniusa.org**

Solar

• From page 18

find a compromise.

Other council members favored moving forward. Councilmember Anna Thomasson pointed to the Planning Commission's unanimous 7-0 recommendation for approval and the amount of time the center had already spent working on the project. Councilmember Karen Liepmann also supported moving forward.

Pace ultimately moved to continue consideration of the project until the council's Nov. 12 meeting. The motion passed 6-1, with Liepmann voting against the delay.

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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LIVE JAZZ

ABOUT: January through June, Ravenscroft, 8445 E. Hartford Drive, Scottsdale.

INFO: Live performances by various artists.

WEB: theravenscroft.com

ART GALLERY

ABOUT: Through Nov. 29 at Royse Contemporary, 7077 E. Main St., Suite 6, Scottsdale.

INFO: "Paintings in Perspective," a solo exhibition by Casey Wakefield. This new collection explores the intricate relationship between perception and experience, inviting viewers to consider how the act of seeing shapes—and is shaped by—our understanding of the world around us.

WEB: roysecontemporary.com

ART EXHIBIT

ABOUT: 11 a.m. 5 p.m. Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and 11 a.m. 7 p.m. Thursdays , Scottsdale Museum of Modern Art, 7374 E. Second Street, Scottsdale

INFO: "Chicomoztoc: The Cosmic Throne," the first museum exhibit of Estephania González , explores concepts of spacetime and cosmologies from both physics and Indigenous narratives and how they intersect with personal identity.

WEB: scottsdalearts.org



Concert goers can hear multiple genres of music — such as traditional and contemporary jazz, swing and R&B — During Ravenscroft's spring 2027 concert season. (Submitted Photo/Ravenscroft)

LIVE THEATER

ABOUT: Shows Tuesday-Sunday, Rose Theatre, 455 N. 3rd Street, Phoenix.

INFO: "A Drunk Christmas Carol" is a boozy modern take on the classic play by Charles Dickens for a 21+ audience. The roughly 100-seat venue places audience members around and on the floor near the stage, creating an intimate setting where the line between performer and spectator often blurs.

WEB: drunkchristmas.com

CRAFT SHOW

ABOUT: Saturday Nov. 14, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Paradise Valley United Methodist Church, 4455 E. Lincoln Dr, Paradise Valley.

INFO: The 2026 Christmas Bazaar and Craft Fair will feature 25-35 local vendors offering handmade goods, christmas gifts, and food while live entertainment plays as well as the chance to win prizes at the door and bid in an a silent auction.

WEB: pvumc.org/events

YOUR EVENTS, PLEASE

We welcome your events for our neighborhood To-Do List page.

Please send the following for publication in our calendar: name of the event, time, date and location with address and if there is a cost to attend.

Email us: **aznews@iniusa.org**

IN EVENTS

The Apache Junction Independent will host a senior expo Jan. 6 at Central Arizona College.

Those wishing to participate may reach out.

Email us: **azad@iniusa.org**



Learn about Arabian horses

The public is invited to the free Mane Street Mornings event 8 - 9 a.m. Dec. 12 at Los Cedros USA, 8700 E. Black Mountain Road, in Scottsdale.

Attendees will enjoy complimentary coffee and donuts, as well as meet an Arabian, watch live riding demonstrations and chat with expert trainers about what makes Arabians such a revered breed.

For more information, visit loscedros.com.

The public is invited to learn about Arabian horses at Los Cedros USA Dec. 12. (Independent Newsmedia/Arianna Grainey)

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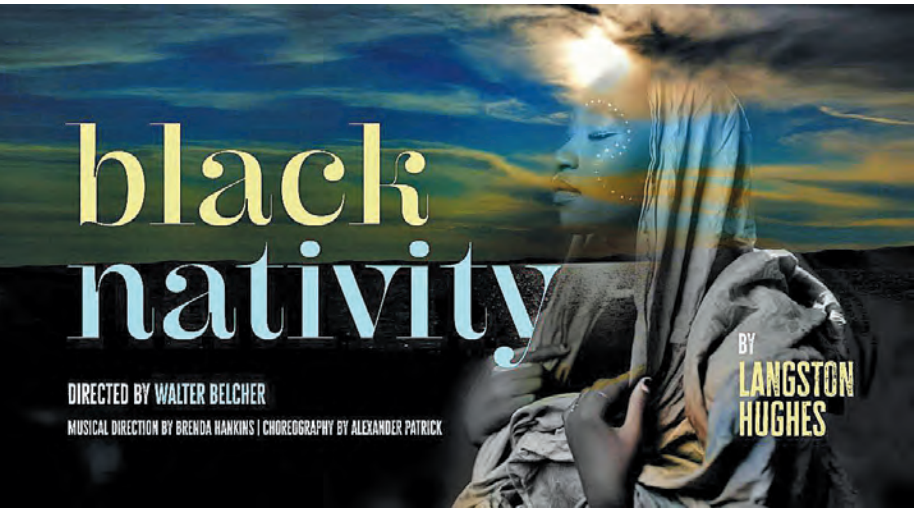
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(Show poster submitted by Black Theatre Troupe)

Black Theatre Troupe brings 'Black Nativity' to Phoenix stage

Holiday production features gospel music, dance

Black Theatre Troupe will celebrate the holiday season with Langston Hughes' "Black Nativity," running Nov. 27-Dec. 6 at the Helen K. Mason Performing Arts Center in downtown Phoenix. The musical retells the birth of Jesus through Hughes' poetry, gospel music and dance, drawing on the traditions of the Black church.

Directed by Walter Belcher, the production features four-time Emmy Award winner and former 12News anchor Kim Covington as one of two alternating narrators. She shares the role with Charity Evans, an elder at Greater Hope Christian Church. Cast members include Aria Robinson as the Angel, Cherish Hayes as Mary, and Alexander Patrick-Rolando as Joseph.

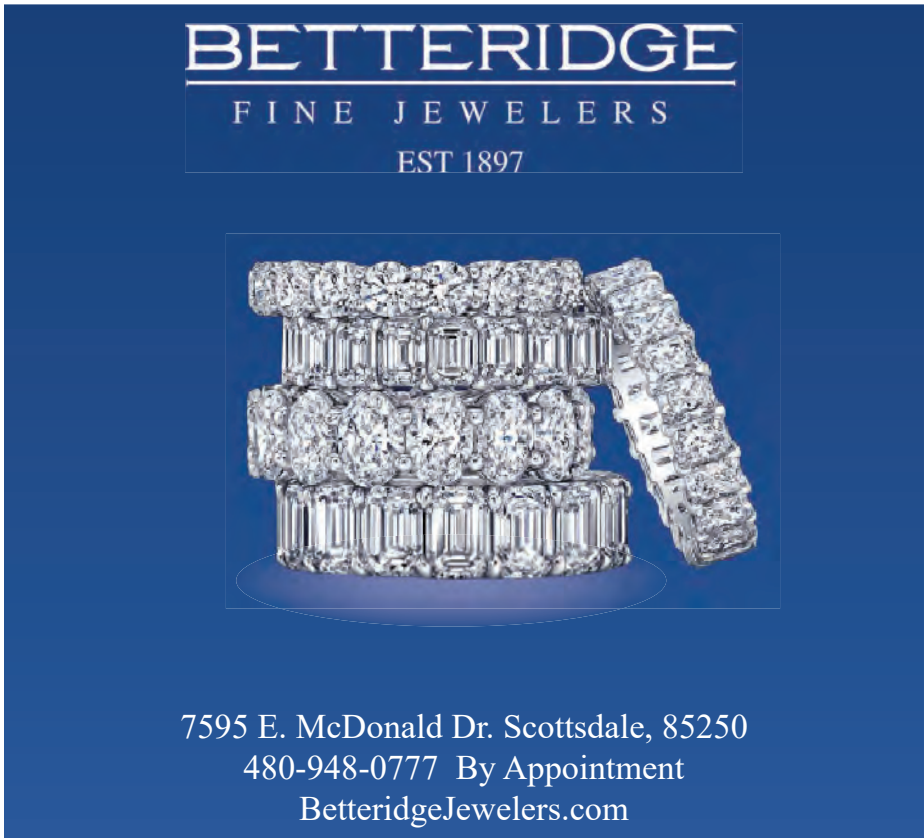
This year's production also features a new partnership with Phoenix-area chapters of Jack and Jill of America, a national organization focused on leadership development, community service and cultural enrichment. Young participants will take part in the Bethlehem village scenes and assist with audience services, gaining experience both onstage and behind the scenes.

Patrick-Rolando provides choreography, while Brenda Hankins serves as musical director. The second act features a celebration of gospel music, with vocal performances and dance.

First performed Off-Broadway in 1961, "Black Nativity" has become a holiday tradition combining Hughes' poetry with African American musical and cultural expression.

For tickets, visit blacktheatretroupe.org/nativity.





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Phoenix Children's

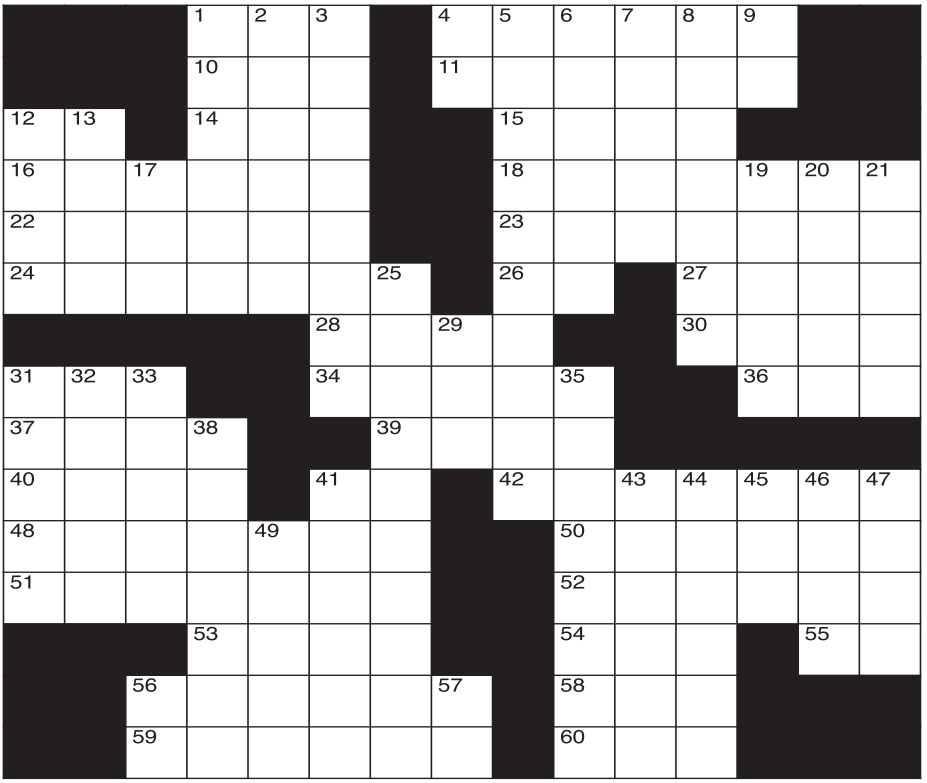
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1. Popular broadcast network
4. Train line
10. Go quickly
11. Straightforward
12. Canadian province
14. Swiss river
15. It can be straight or curved
16. Edit
18. Utter repeatedly
22. Gotten up
23. Sea vessel
24. Agents of one's demise
26. Not out
27. Something to scratch
28. A round water pot
30. Slang for cylindrical green fruit
31. Promotions
34. Masses of matter
36. Soviet Socialist Republic
37. Nightstand item
39. The content of cognition
40. Arab ruler
41. Northern U.S. state
42. Chewed in small bites
48. Hawaiian island
50. More thin
51. Of one
52. Rigid bracelet or anklet
53. Barbary sheep
54. Not even
55. Atomic #106
56. Haggle
58. Boxing's GOAT
59. Division of a group into opposing factions
60. Vietnamese offensive

CLUES DOWN

1. Horse-drawn carriage
2. Prejudices
3. Peacefully
4. University athletic official
5. Soldiers
6. Large mollusk
7. Take out again
8. Sour or bitter in taste
9. Songwriter Tunstall
12. Husk of wheat
13. Flexible covering in some birds
17. Energy
19. Night monkey genus
20. Small nails
21. Colorless volatile liquid
25. In a way, changes integrity
29. Mark Wahlberg's stuffed animal
31. Remember it
32. "Good Will Hunting" lead man
33. Pleasant facial expression
35. Sea vessel
38. Lacking poetic beauty
41. Tall, swift and slender dog
43. Sports personality Michelle
44. Robber
45. Liquefied natural gas
46. Snakelike fish
47. Sediment at bottom of a liquid
49. Crimean seaport
56. Bad grades
57. Popular S. Korean rapper

SOLUTION ON PAGE 27

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- Investment Records
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The Paradise Valley Police Department at (480) 348-3567.
Mike Cummiskey of Paradise Valley Wealth Management at (480) 483-3156
AZ Students Recycling Used Electronics at (480) 222-4066
*AZStRUT will be collecting unwated electronics. PLEASE NOTE:We cannot accept CRT monitors and televisions, only flat panels.

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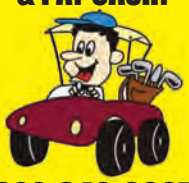
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LOCAL NEWS MATTERS.

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

PUZZLE ON PAGE 26

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