



The Glendale Star

Vol. 79 No. 23

www.glendalestar.com

June 8, 2023

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PUSD makes changes to administrative staff

BY JORDAN ROGERS
Glendale Star Managing Editor

The Peoria Unified School District recently made some changes to its administrative staff for the 2023-24 school year.

Lori Garcia

Garcia will serve as the district's new executive director of exceptional student services. For the last two years, she has served as PUSD's director of special education.

Prior to this role, Garcia served PUSD as a special education coordinator and she previously held the role as interim director

of special education. She also previously served in the roles of director for exceptional student services, director of teaching and learning, special services program coordinator and assistant principal in the Alhambra Elementary School District and the Union Elementary School District.

Garcia has also served as an education program specialist for the Arizona Department of Education, district math coach, special education facilitator and interventionist and special education teacher across the state of Arizona.

This new role will oversee special education, English language learners, federal pro-

grams, preschool and gifted education.

Karie Burns

Burns will serve as the new director of federal programs and joins PUSD from the Dysart Unified School District where she was a principal.

She previously served as an assistant principal in Dysart Unified and was a turnaround coach at the Arizona Department of Education. Burns replaces Laurie Little who is retiring from PUSD after 22 years serving the district as a district-level administrator

SEE PUSD PAGE 5

Glendale police to get new software analytics program

BY JOE McHUGH
Glendale Star Staff Writer

The Glendale Police Department is renewing its full-service software analytics agreement with Nighthawk Cloud Inc. following the approval of City Council at its May 23 meeting.

The agreement — that was passed on a 6-1 vote — approves \$152,745.42 to be allocated to the renewal of service with the software company.

"We are so blessed here in the city of Glendale to have a command staff chief level that supports our efforts and that are willing to put in the investment it does," General Investigations Unit Lt. Scott Waite said.

"Then in turn, to have a city council — to have our elected officials and city managers — understand and have that trust with

our chiefs that when they go to them and say, 'Hey, these are the tools that we need. We know it's an investment. We know that it takes money.' For them to be like, 'We believe in you, and we believe in this department. We believe in this community that we're willing to invest back in.'"

Nighthawk.Cloud's services are used by the police department to evaluate data collected during police investigations. This includes avenues such as social media account downloads, cell phone extractions and call records.

The software is then able to take in the data and sources to condense it into a report that investigators and prosecutors can use efficiently.

"One of the ways I like to explain it to people is, we've all seen the crime dramas where

you go into the room, and there's a picture of somebody up on the wall and how there's strings attached to different pictures and people all over the place, and you're like, 'How does anybody comprehend this?'" Waite said. "What Nighthawk does is take that giant mess, and compile it in a simple, easy report so that now you can see that I am looking for subject A, and this is how they tie into this crime."

"Nighthawk really does for us what would take us days, weeks and it can do it in a relatively short amount of time."

The Glendale Police Department first entered into the agreement with Nighthawk Cloud last year by way of grant funds to purchase the license. The feedback has been

SEE ANALYTICS PAGE 7

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Cindy Segotta-Jones,
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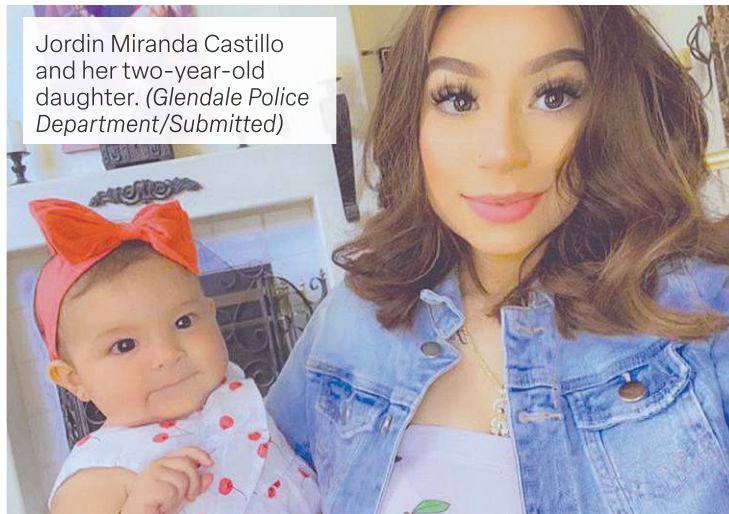
BY JAMES LOTTS
Glendale Star Staff Writer

Rueben Xavier Rocha, 22, is facing charges of murder, burglary and aggravated assault after turning himself in June 5, a day after killing his ex-girlfriend and injuring two others at a Glendale apartment complex.

The victim was identified as 20-year-old Jordin Miranda Castillo.

Glendale police found Castillo and the other two victims — 19- and 20-year-old-females — with gunshot wounds after arriving at an apartment complex near 51st and Northern avenues shortly after 2:30 p.m. on June 4. The three were taken to a nearby hospital with life-threatening injuries.

Castillo was pronounced dead at the hospital. The 19-year-old is in critical but stable condition, and the 20-year-old is



Jordin Miranda Castillo and her two-year-old daughter. (Glendale Police Department/Submitted)

in stable condition.

According to the Glendale Police Department, Rocha entered the apartment complex after a social media dispute dressed in all black, with a black face-mask and a black hoodie pulled over his head. He went up to Castillo's third-floor apartment and jumped onto a balcony.

Inside the apartment were the three female victims along with another fe-

male, a male and Castillo's 2-year-old daughter whom she had in common with Rocha.

Rocha then broke the glass on the balcony door and, after Castillo called the police, Rocha, with a handgun, fired multiple rounds into the living room. The fourth female took the 2-year-old into the bathroom, and the male went to the back of the apartment balcony.

None of the three were

injured.

According to the Glendale Police Department, Castillo had an order of protection granted in April against Rocha after the two split up. Glendale police also said they had no records of previous domestic violence incidents between the two, but detectives are still investigating.

One of the females in the living room had taken Castillo's 2-year-old daughter into the bathroom prior to the shooting. Rocha left the apartment before police arrived.

Sgt. Randy Stewart said the case was "heartbreaking" at a press conference on June 5.

"I've seen a lot of cases, but to have this type of violence, it's pretty rare and it's really unfortunate that it ended this way," Stewart added.

Castillo's family was in attendance to

SEE **HOMICIDE** PAGE 7



RUEBEN XAVIER ROCHA

The Glendale Star

Glendale's Community Weekly Since 1978

The Glendale Star is a weekly publication distributed every Thursday.

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The Glendale Star is distributed by AZ Integrated Media, a circulation company owned & operated by Times Media Group. The public is limited to one copy per reader. For circulation services, please contact Aaron Kolodny at aaron@timeslocalmedia.com.



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SHERRY PIAZZA

PUSD FROM PAGE 1
and site-level administrator.

Sherry Piazza

Piazza, who has been a part of PUSD since 2001, is shifting into the role of director of learning and teaching. She has held various roles including professional development coordinator, instructional coach, reading interventionist and teacher.

Her experience includes working with professional learning communities, collective commitments, textbook adop-

tion, comprehensive needs assessment, building goals for student achievement and technology integration.

Anita Gomez

Gomez will serve as the principal at Desert Palms Elementary School beginning the 2023-24 school year. She currently holds the position of assistant principal at Desert Valley Elementary School and has served in that capacity for the past four years.

Previously, Gomez was the director of federal programs and PUSD's test coor-

dinator from 2017 to 2019. Prior to that, she served as principal in the Fountain Hills Unified School District from 2004 to 2017.

She began her educational career in 1990 and held various roles as a math teacher and instructional coach before taking on leadership roles.

Jewelene Bachanos

Bachanos was named the new principal of Heritage Elementary School for the 2023-24 school year. She currently holds the role as assistant principal at Frontier

Elementary School and has been an assistant principal in PUSD since 2016.

Previously she held the role of instructional coach, and she served as a teacher at Country Meadows Elementary School from 2007 to 2015. She has also assisted with planning and presenting district professional development throughout her tenure. [GS](#)

See future editions for extended coverage of these changes in PUSD's leadership.

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Police investigating Westgate gunfire

GLENDALE STAR STAFF

Glendale Police are investigating an incident that involved gunfire between two separate parties at Westgate Entertainment District on June 4.

Around 6:30 p.m., officers respond-

ed to multiple calls of a shooting. When they arrived, the suspects had already fled the scene.

As of print time, no injuries have been reported and the suspects are still outstanding. ^{GS}

15 year old dead after crash in Glendale

BY JOE McHUGH
Glendale Star Staff Writer

A 15-year-old is dead following a single-vehicle collision in Glendale.

Four teenagers were injured after their vehicle lost control and rolled over near the 53-hundred block of northwest Grand Avenue. The driver of the vehicle, an unlicensed 17-year-old male, along with two 16-year-old female passengers, were transported to a local hospital with life-threatening injuries. The fourth occupant was the 15-year-old male, who was pronounced dead on scene.

The four individuals involved in the crash were traveling on Grand Avenue in a blue Infiniti G35, as another car made a turn onto 53rd Avenue. Detectives said the Infiniti attempted to avoid the turning vehicle, which caused the rolling of the car.

When the car rolled, three of the un-

restrained occupants were ejected from the car. According to detectives, none of the passengers were wearing seatbelts at the time of the crash.

The identities of the teenagers were not released, but each of the four have been determined to be Glendale residents.

Officers evaluated the driver for impairment and no signs or symptoms were found.

This crash caused the Glendale Police Department to reissue its message to the public of wearing seatbelts.

"To save more lives on Arizona's roadways, the Glendale Police Department, in partnership with the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety, is currently running a 'Click It or Ticket' campaign," Glendale police said in a press release. This campaign enforces a 'zero-tolerance' approach toward seat belt and child safety-seat usage. Law enforcement agencies across the state are stepping up traffic enforcement patrols and increasing other enforcement efforts to drive home the message: "Buckle Up, Arizona. It's the Law." ^{GS}

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speak at the press conference. Her brother, Elijah Castillo, her aunt, Mercedes Castillo, and her cousin, Brianna Soto, all spoke. Each of them highlighted how hard the loss has been for the family.

"Me and my family stand here before you guys to bring justice in regards of my poor baby sister, Jordin Miranda Castillo," Elijah Castillo said. "That is her name, Jordin Miranda Castillo. She was one of the strongest women I ever knew. Super independent; did everything for everyone without ever asking for anything in return."

Mercedes remembered her niece for how good of a mother and person she was.

"Jordin was an amazing young lady who had a whole life ahead of her," Mercedes said. "She was sweet. She was caring. She was friends with everyone."

Stewart said it could take a while for detectives to go through evidence in the case and that the investigation is ongoing.

The Glendale Police Department is asking anyone with any information regarding the incident to come forward and help. **GS**

ANALYTICS FROM PAGE 1

positive while using the product.

"Our detectives love it," Waite said. "It's something that we're embracing more and more each day because we're learning more about it."

"It's like anything else, because you get a brand new toy, so to speak, and you realize what its capabilities are and so it's really been a tool that each day, we use it more and more, and it's really helping us identify people that are involved in crimes. We're using it across many platforms, and we're seeing a lot of success with it."

Waite said the services from Nighthawk.Cloud is something the public deserves from its police department.

"They want a police department that is utilizing the latest technology and the latest tools out there to help solve crimes and bring them resolution when they've been victimized," he said. "So I think it's incumbent upon us as a police department to look at anything that we can do to make ourselves more efficient and allow us to catch criminals."

With the council's approval, the department will continue to use the ser-

vices Nighthawk.Cloud provides in a manner that will help effectively use the city's dollars.

"My units are homicide, violent crimes and gun crimes in forensics, so we have to talk families through the worst situations of their lives," Waite said. "To be able to look people in the eye and tell them we're doing everything we can to help bring you justice and for them to truly believe that, to know that we do have the tools and the capabilities, it brings us confidence, and it brings a peace of mind knowing that I can look our citizens in the face and say we're doing everything we can in our department which is giving us all the resources we need. It's a huge difference." **GS**

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Opinion

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Coyotes alike losing proposition in the Valley

BY DAVID LEIBOWITZ
Glendale Star Columnist

The Arizona Coyotes lost 40 hockey games last season and that's the good news about this franchise.

Then there's the bad news: The Coyotes took their worst loss of the season May 16 at the hands of Tempe voters. That's when 33,147 folks turned out to vote on three propositions that needed to pass for the Coyotes to build a new arena near Tempe Town Lake.

All three measures got steamrolled by double digits.

If I'm being honest, I wasn't entirely surprised by this result.

I spent years working with the team on the arena issue, first to keep the Yotes in Glendale and later to help negotiate a move pointing east. That relationship ended a few months after the latest owner, Alex Meruelo, bought the franchise.

It's bad business to discuss former clients, so I'll keep my opinion of Meruelo to myself. But the landslide in Tempe did



leave me feeling sympathy for two groups: Coyotes' employees and Coyotes' fans, both of whom remain in limbo as this soap opera continues to crawl along.

How does it end? There's what I think will happen and what I wish would happen.

Let's take them in order.

I suspect any minute now the team will announce that it has all sorts of new possibilities in the East Valley or perhaps on tribal land near the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

They'll claim cities and towns are dying to have the Coyotes move there and that a deal is imminent. Maybe they'll even announce "a letter of intent" or some other document that's relatively meaningless, but has a really impressive title.

An old PR adage applies here: If you shout something often enough, it might actually come true.

The reality is, after the Tempe shelving, I can't imagine that elected leaders anywhere are all that anxious to

stick out their necks for the team.

While the Coyotes have trumpeted what they call a "privately financed arena," the reality is, they want to recapture a few hundred million dollars of any tax revenue the \$2 billion project would create.

It's that gift I believe Tempe voters objected to at the ballot box — mostly because it's a sweetheart deal not available to regular folks who go into business.

Say you open a restaurant, for example. You lease a building, you hire managers and servers, cooks and hosts. You buy equipment, silverware, plates, tables, food. Then you open the doors and pray to the heavens that customers show up before you go bankrupt.

While you might qualify for a piddling tax credit here or there, what you won't get is a massive rebate from the government on the tax dollars you create.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman has long been committed to the Valley, which makes sense based on population size, corporate dollars and the number of transplanted hockey fans who live here.

I imagine the commish's patience is about to wear thin, however. That could create a scenario where the Coyotes threaten to move to somewhere like Salt Lake City or Houston.


Which brings us to what I hope happens: This team and its diehards finally land the deep-pocketed, visionary owner it so richly deserves.

Owners don't play the games, but they do set an organization's culture and provide resources.

Generally speaking, sports ownership can go one of two ways: The road to nowhere traveled by the Bidwill family and the Arizona Cardinals or the direction it appears new Suns owner Mat Ishbia is poised to take our NBA franchise.

Coyotes' fans deserve a happy ending. But there's only one thing this team has done consistently since relocating from Winnipeg in 1996.

Lose.

I wouldn't bet on that changing anytime soon, hockey fans. 

David Leibowitz has called the Valley home since 1995. Contact david@leibowitzsolo.com.

Border crisis continues to be ignored in Washington

BY J.D. HAYWORTH
Glendale Star Columnist

These words are being written as America observes Memorial Day 2023.

But don't expect another lecture in this space about how our leisure pursuits on Memorial Day obscure the sacrifices made for the freedoms we enjoy.

Actually, the enthusiastic embrace of those pursuits serves as the best testament to those hard-won freedoms — provided we don't forget about the significance of the day.

That's why "R&R" — rest and recreation — should always carry a "Memo-



rial Day addition" along with that acronym: reflection and remembrance.

No less a warrior than Rob O'Neill, the Navy SEAL veteran who dispatched Osama Bin Laden from this earthly existence,

reflected on comrades-in-arms who died in battle, and how to best observe Memorial Day during a recent episode of "The Operator" podcast.

"All my friends that were killed in combat, they would want you to have the day off. ... On Monday when you crack open that first cold one, raise it up to the sky,

give them a toast and they'll toast right back to you. They'd want you to have it."

What we have to confront in this temporal realm are the curious times in which we live, tenuous times which demand yet a third usage for "R & R" — recognition and reaction.

Recent news stories clearly indicate that the way of life we have long enjoyed is under withering attack.

But for whatever reason, it would appear that most of us either ignore or readily dismiss the seriousness of the situation — sadly and most especially, those in elected positions — apparently unwilling to help stop the madness.

Consider the long-term effects of a

government policy that clearly borders on insanity.

Geopolitical jeopardy presents itself undisguised along our southern border, where an alien invasion continues, aided and abetted by the current crowd in charge.

The Biden bunch isn't just biding its time — it has taken technological and administrative steps to erase the international boundary between the United States and Mexico.

The latest outrage? Use of a cell phone app, "CBP One," available to foreign aliens in Northern Mexico, so that the

SEE HAYWORTH PAGE 10

Breaking barriers and celebrating abilities in hockey

BY JENNIFER SCHWEGMAN
HMA Public Relations

I moved to the Valley from Saint Paul, Minnesota, six years ago. While living there, I was fortunate to experience some of the state's 11,842 lakes and vibrant sports culture. There are a lot of Minnesota sports teams to choose from — my husband is a devout Vikings fan — but I developed a deep love for hockey, and no team captured my heart quite like the Minnesota Wild. But then I moved to Phoenix and fell in love all over again.

When first introduced to the Arizona team, I watched the players skate across the ice and was blown away by their physicality and sportsmanship. They were fierce competitors and determined athletes who encouraged teammates to bring their best. This team had something special, and they were about to teach me a valuable lesson about inclusivity in sports.

The One Step Coyotes, an Arizona-based adaptive hockey team, comprises 34 players with varying degrees of disability and abilities. The athletes show up at AZ Ice Peoria every Tuesday and Thursday during the four-month season and skate their hearts out. They are a force, and the people behind the program are part of a powerful movement promoting inclusivity that is reshaping the landscape of hockey.

Like any other sport, hockey poses unique challenges for individuals with disabilities. However, adaptive equipment has made it possible for people with diverse abilities to participate actively. Adaptive equipment, including sleds and wheelchairs designed for the ice, skate walkers and specialized hock-



ey sticks, have opened doors for participation and showcased the remarkable resilience and determination of individuals with disabilities.

I witnessed joy when a player with limited physical ability in a wheelchair scored a goal for their team. I observed true sportsmanship when a player skated off the ice after defeat and shared her happiness for the winning team, but ambition when I heard her strategize how she would put a player from the other team in the penalty box during the next match. Don't let the smiles fool you. These athletes want to win but recognize that winning isn't everything. Showing up and doing your best is what counts.

I'm happy that hockey organizations and leagues have recognized the importance of inclusive programs catering to individuals with disabilities. These initiatives break down barriers and create a safe and supportive environment for everyone. Special hockey organizations, such as the American Special Hockey Association (ASHA), provide program opportunities for individuals with cognitive and developmental disabilities to engage in hockey at their own pace.

Programs like this help players develop skills, an appreciation for teamwork and, most importantly, the joy of playing the game. By focusing on individual abilities rather than disabilities, these inclusive programs have been instrumental in fostering a sense of belonging and boosting self-confidence among

SEE HOCKEY PAGE 11



The One Step Coyotes are an Arizona-based adaptive hockey team that plays at AZ Ice Peoria. (Jennifer Schwegman/Submitted)

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AROUND THE BLUHMIN' TOWN

The Great Grasshopper Invasion of 2023

BY JUDY BLUHM
Glendale Star Columnist



Yikes! Millions of grasshoppers have been invading Arizona. I didn't really believe it until I saw it for myself. Jiminy Cricket! Dear readers, what I observed was so strange, so frightening, that it could be out of an Alfred Hitchcock movie!

I don't want to alarm anyone, but something weird is happening when you drive into a gas station and see a carpet of grasshoppers on the ground and they form a black cloud around the lights.

I witnessed a poor woman pumping gas while literally flicking them out of her hair. She had to run for shelter into her vehicle, which soon became covered with the little beasts. I saw people scrambling out of the convenience store swatting the creepy insects. You could hear crunching sounds as people stepped on them. What is going on?

I contacted some "grasshopper experts" who assured me that there is no chance that our state will experience anything like a devastating locust infestation. With our wetter than usual winter, the grasshoppers are having a field day (no pun intended). They are generally harmless to humans, although they can be annoying.

Who wants to go walking while these critters jump all around you and land in your hair?

As a woman jogger said, she spun around in circles trying to "untangle" crickets from her ponytail and almost ran like a wild woman out into traffic. Yep, insects can do that to people.



Do not go to Las Vegas! The Strip is so completely inundated with massive swarms of grasshoppers forming a dark haze around casino lights, that it is grossing everyone out and making terrified folks run for cover. The cloud of grasshoppers shows up on the weather radar.

Grasshoppers use celestial navigation, so the bright lights of Las Vegas are totally confusing them. Experts say the insects will not be able to break the trap of these lights and will end up in a mass graveyard, leaving gooey messes on sidewalks and streets.

"Otherworldly" is one weatherman's assessment, which describes Las Vegas every single day.

Sleep well. No locust infestation is predicted in Arizona, unlike in 1980, when a million acres were destroyed and there were 25 grasshoppers per square yard. Grasshoppers and crickets are cousins and can be pleasant and benign. Locust invasions are grasshoppers who have joined a ruthless gang and eat everything in their path.

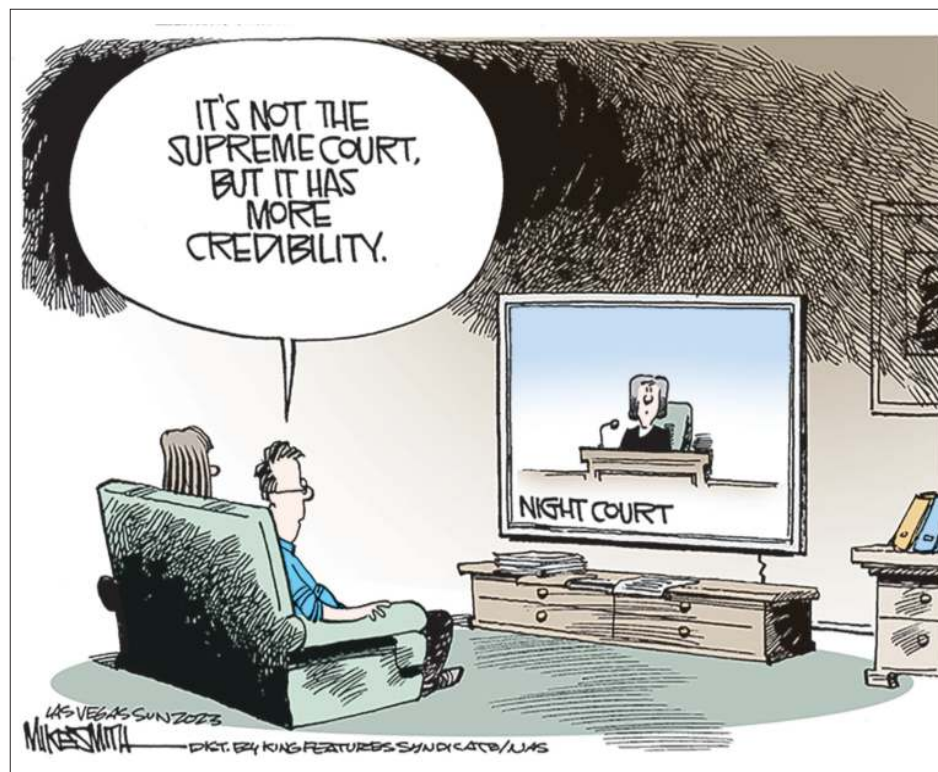
The particular gas station that had the onslaught of grasshoppers is adjacent to an area under construction. The grasshoppers congregated while they made their way to another location and a more "normal" behavior pattern.

There's a whole lot of knee knocking, leg clanging, and body slamming going on when you get a few thousand grasshoppers together. They make quite a racket. The situation seems to be settling down. They only live for a brief time. It appears that these pests are leaving Arizona for greener pastures.

Isn't there an alcoholic drink called the "Grasshopper?" Might be fitting to try it. If it's any good (with no real bugs involved) and you have the recipe, drop me a line. **GS**

Judy Bluhm is a writer and a local Realtor. Have a comment or a story? Email her at judy@judybluhm.com.

SMITH'S OPINION – King Features



HAYWORTH FROM PAGE 8

process of admitting illegals into the United States is "streamlined."

Never mind that our tax dollars are being used to subsidize an unlawful act against the United States — Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas dodges the outrageous illegality by faulting Congress for "not fixing a broken immigration system."

Absurd and untrue? Absolutely.

Impossible to stop? Not with a proper display of political courage.

On Capitol Hill, Republicans huffed and puffed about impeaching the DHS Secretary, but the Speaker of the House failed to give voice to a stark-yet-simple strategy.

Kevin McCarthy could have made it clear to the Biden White House during negotiations over the debt ceiling — either cease and desist in aiding this alien invasion, and instead join with Congress to reallocate funds to actually enforce the border and deport illegals — or prepare to default.

Instead, the Speaker offered poll-test-

ed comments about renewing work requirements for welfare, saying, "I don't think it's right that we borrow money from China to pay somebody with no dependents and who is able-bodied to sit on a couch."

True enough, but in reality, it's just ear candy that satisfies the political sweet tooth, and avoids a sour label for the Speaker — another e-word — extreme.

What this all demonstrates is that even now, at the last nanosecond of the 11th hour, the Washington "smart set" still views the border as a political problem to be managed instead of seeing it for what it really is: A national security threat that must be stopped.

A day of reckoning will come, but that sobering thought prompts a question.

Want to crack open a cold one?

The elbow is bent in this instance, not to remember and honor bravery, but to try and forget cowardice. **GS**

J.D. Hayworth worked as a sportscaster at Channel 10, Phoenix, from 1987 until 1994 and represented Arizona in Congress from 1995-2007.

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HOCKEY FROM PAGE 9

participants.

But I'm most excited about the fact that the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in hockey is not only reshaping the sport but also challenging societal perceptions. Athletes with disabilities have become powerful advocates, showcasing their talents and inspiring others to overcome barriers. Promoting inclusion in hockey goes hand in hand with educating the broader community about disabilities and breaking down stereotypes. And not only is it true on the ice, but off the ice as well. These individuals are being recognized and celebrated in sports, the workplace, on stage, in art galleries and as philanthropic members of their communities.

Organizations that pro-



vide comprehensive programs that empower individuals who have intellectual disabilities to be independent, effectively seek and maintain employment and achieve greater social participation in their communities are essential for the Valley community. The athletes on the One Step Coyotes are a testament to what these individuals can do. They show up. They work hard. And they have joy in their heart when others see what they are capable of. They want to be active members of the community, but they need our attention, support and commitment. They need us to be inclusive and break down barriers. By doing so, we not only enrich the lives of those with disabilities but also nurture a more diverse and vibrant community for all.

Together, let us embrace the power of inclusion and celebrate the remarkable achievements of my favorite hockey team and individuals of every ability.

For more information about adaptive hockey, joining the team or how to support the One Step Coyotes, visit osbi.org.

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Family-owned Ideal Insurance Agency lives up to its name

BY ALISON STANTON
Glendale Star Contributing Writer

In 1982, David Mitchell and his father Jack founded Ideal Insurance Agency from a spare bedroom in the Mitchell family home.

Mitchell's brother Dan joined the company in 1983, the same year it was incorporated.

Over the last four decades, Ideal Insurance Agency has grown significantly. No longer located in a bedroom, it has offices in Glendale and Surprise, and a third location will open soon in Colorado.

Although Mitchell's brother sold his shares to him in October 2022, Ideal Insurance Agency is still very much a family-owned and operated business.

"My daughter Sarah manages our

Glendale office, and my daughter Catherine will be managing our new office in Colorado," said Mitchell, who added that Ideal Insurance Agency provides a wide range of insurance options.

"We offer all lines of personal insurance including auto, home, recreation vehicles and personal umbrellas. For business insurance, we offer property and casualty, including workers' compensation. In addition, we offer life, disability and long term care products."

What helps Ideal Insurance Agency stand apart from other agencies, and ultimately live up to its name as an outstanding insurance firm, is the level of knowledge and experience that Mitchell and his team bring to the industry.

"We have a very competent staff who

have longevity with our company, and they love to help people," he said. "Also, at Ideal Insurance Agency we are contracted with several insurance companies, so we shop prices for our customers through many insurance companies.

"We do insurance the old fashioned way by understanding the clients' needs. Part of our mission statement at Ideal is the Golden Rule to, 'Do unto others as you would want them to do to you.'"

Mitchell said he and his team never want any of their clients to be on the short end at the time of a claim because they were not made aware of their individual insurance exposures.

"We try to be as competitive as possible as we meet these needs," he said. "You will never hear the staff or me say we can get you a quote in 15 minutes or less because with that approach a client has a lot to lose at the time of a claim."

For Mitchell, this commitment to customer service is definitely noticed and appreciated by their clients.

"We have been an award-winning agency several times in both the community and insurance industry, and we have a 99% satisfaction rating for customer satisfaction with Google," he said.

Mitchell has earned a number of designations during his career in insurance.

For example, in the Property Casualty Insurance Industry category, Mitchell earned the Chartered Property Casualty Underwriters designation, and he is also a Certified Insurance Counselor.

Mitchell has also taught continuing education courses to insurance professionals and college courses as an adjunct professor since 2002, and he has consulted on over 55 insurance court cases in Arizona, including being hired as an




DAVID MITCHELL

expert witness.

"My father often told me, 'School is never out for the pro.' I continue to learn daily," Mitchell said.

Whether he is working with a new client or helping an existing client with a claim, Mitchell said he truly enjoys using his knowledge and experience to educate and help people.

"I have been richly blessed to be a part of this industry for over 40 years," he said. "To me insurance has been much more than a job, it has been a career."

For more information about Ideal Insurance Agency, contact the Glendale office at 602-938-7579, the Surprise office at 623-933-8263, or visit [idealins.com](https://www.idealins.com). 

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Can Clean Pros blossoms across the WV

BY JOE McHUGH
Glendale Star Staff Writer

Jordan Kunz was enjoying chicken for dinner one night, seven years ago. Once finished, he did what everyone else does: He threw it in his trash can, which was to be cleared the next day by the city trash truck.

The truck came, took the trash and left, but the smell of “rancid” chicken was left behind. He washed it out by hand.

After taking it to the local hand car wash station, the can was clean of dirt and grime, but that smell was still present — and transferred to him. To make things easier, he searched online for businesses that clean trash cans but couldn't find anything.

An idea he calls “brilliant,” Kunz created his now-flourishing business — Can Clean Pros.

“I did what most people do, I went to Google just saying, ‘There’s got to be a better way,’” Kunz said. “We ended up seeing these cleaning trucks that you can



buy. ... There's nothing like it. Other people are having a lot of success in those cities. Why don't we do it, too? So, we got the truck, started going and now we have two trucks running”

Kunz's trucks lift the trash cans onto a high-pressured hot water head that spins 360 degrees. The water, shooting out at 3,000 PSI, removes anything that is “caked” on.

Once the inside of the can is clean, the truck operator will then spray the lid and outside of the can with a pressure washer, ensuring the whole can is cleaned. Afterward, the can is sprayed with a specialized enzyme disinfectant that helps kill leftover bacteria.

This process leaves the owner with a fresh smelling trash can.

“At the end of the day, having clean bins is something I take for granted now,” Kunz said. “But I think one of the most common phrases that we get is that it is a service that customers never knew existed but can never live without afterward.

“It's a unique service; most people don't even notice it.”

Can Clean Pros was started in 2016 but picked up steam in 2020. Subscription based, customers can choose from

Jordan Kunz channeled his frustration from his smelly, dirty trash can into his business, Can Clean Pros. (Can Clean Pros/Submitted)

three main price points, and getting trash can cleanings monthly, bi-monthly or every three months.

Kunz's trucks come by the day after the trash gets picked up.

Through this business model, Kunz admits he “loses money sometimes,” but added it is worth the investment to help people get their cans cleaned by his company.

“We only have five-star reviews on Google,” he said. “So, we've just tried really hard to take care of the customer and put the customer first and to get out to the home as quickly as possible. When somebody signs up, they want to get it done as quickly as possible. And it is our intention is to try to make it to that home.”

Can Clean Pros, Kunz said, is meeting his expectations.

“We've seen a lot of our growth over the last couple of years; it's kind of a snowball effect,” Kunz said. “It took a lot of work to get the ball rolling, but now it's rolling fast. It's a lot easier to get excited with fast growth than with slow growth.

“We're very excited to see what the next two, three or four years hold for us and just see what we can do if we can get to the point where we cover the whole Valley.” GS



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Josh Rojas wants to make his hometown proud

BY JAMES LOTTS
Glendale Star Staff Writer

When Josh Rojas headed to the University of Hawaii to play baseball, he had never been away from his home state of Arizona to play the sport he loved.

He admitted he struggled at first, but he eventually settled in and became comfortable with life on the road. However, the business of baseball brought him back home, and with that, the pressure of representing his hometown in front of friends and family.

Raised in Litchfield Park as a D-backs fan, Rojas was traded from the Houston Astros to the Arizona Diamondbacks. The return home tempered the blow of leaving the people with whom he started his professional baseball career.

"It was bittersweet for sure," Rojas said. "It was sad to get traded away from everybody I came up with, all my friends, all the coaches I had created a bond with. It was so sad to be leaving but the fact that it was Arizona was pretty cool."

Rojas not only wanted to make his hometown proud on the baseball field, but off it as well. Rojas has made a point to do work around the community, whether that is in the form of camps or donating gear. He was last year's D-backs nominee for the Roberto Clem-



Raised in Litchfield Park, Josh Rojas was traded to the Diamondbacks in 2019 after being drafted by the Houston Astros in 2017. (Arizona Diamondbacks/Submitted)

ente Award, a prize given "to the player who best represents the game of baseball through extraordinary character, community involvement, philanthropy and positive contributions, on and off the field."

"The award was cool. It was icing on the cake," Rojas said. "But it wasn't my intention going into it. I was just trying to help out."

Rojas said he wants to host more camps and stay involved with his alma

mater, Millennium High School in Goodyear.

A large portion of the expectations Rojas faces are on the field. He said he is proud to have been a part of the D-backs' journey of improvement since he was traded to the team in 2019. Even though he is a veteran on this young D-backs team, he is still learning from everybody on the team, including his younger teammates.

"For the most part, we're bouncing ideas off each other," Rojas said. "I'm taking just as much from (Dominic Fletcher) Fletch and Corbin (Carroll) and Alek (Thomas) as they are from me. I really haven't taken much of a leadership role in that sense and giving advice. I'm learning just like they are. I consider myself new to this game. And you know, their success has come at a much earlier age than me. So, they obviously got some things figured out before I did."

Rojas' journey to the MLB was not as simple and smooth as it would be for a top prospect. Rojas said he struggled at times during college.

"I'd say my most discouraging year was my junior year at Hawaii, my first year of Hawaii, it was my first time away playing baseball on the road and not

SEE **ROJAS** PAGE 18



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ROJAS FROM PAGE 16

being home," Rojas said. "It was a really tough year."

After high school, Rojas played at Paradise Valley Community College before he transferred to University of Hawaii. After college, Rojas was drafted by the Astros in the 26th round. Rojas said he started to get more comfortable when he started playing in the minor leagues.

Rojas is happy to see the D-backs starting to find success after some years of turbulence. He hopes the other Valley teams follow suit.

"When it comes to the Arizona Diamondbacks, we had a few tough years, a few of which I was here for," Rojas said. "I really wanted us to turn it around. With all my friends and family and people I went to high school with being Arizona sports fans, it's always embarrassing to look them in the eye and know that I'm helping us lose. I take pride in us having better years."

Rojas said he's inspired by Marquis Flowers, a former football standout at Millennium High School who made it to the NFL. He and Flowers try to motivate

kids in the community to make it to the highest levels of sport.

"I think it's always cool to see somebody from your hometown make it, and for me coming up, I remember that Marquis Flowers went to Millennium High School and then went to the NFL," Rojas said.

"But it was cool to see somebody from your area make it big and kind of feel like, 'Oh, you had a part in that, even though I had zero part in that, but it kind of feels like there is a connection there.' I feel like I carry that now with baseball." **GS**

Arizona Diamondbacks
dbacks.com




Josh Rojas is a graduate of Millennium High School and attended Paradise Valley Community College before transferring to the University of Hawaii. (Arizona Diamondbacks/Submitted)

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The Glendale Star Calendar



Shrinky Dink Take and Bake Keychains ALL JUNE

Teens between the ages of 12 and 18 can drop by the Velma Teague Library Teen Zone throughout the month of June to make a Shrinky Dink Keychain. Create a design of your own using colored pencils and Shrinky Dink transparent sheets, or select from a variety of design templates. Visit the public service desk to pick up a keychain, then take your masterpiece home, pop it in the oven, and watch it shrink and harden. **Velma Teague Library, 7010 N. 58th Avenue, Glendale, free, glendaleazlibrary.com**



The Open Mic WEDNESDAYS

Stir Crazy Comedy Club hosts its weekly open mic night. Those interested are likely to see new talent as well as seasoned comedians just looking to work on new material. Think you have what it takes to take the stage and make the audience laugh? Now is your chance. There are 10 sign-up spots that will become available online at noon on Monday.

Stir Crazy Comedy Club, Westgate Entertainment District, 6751 N. Sunset Boulevard, Suite E206, Glendale, visit website for ticket prices and times, stircrazycomedyclub.com



Momma's Organic Market SATURDAYS

Featuring food trucks, local artisans and fresh produce, this weekly farmers market gives locals the chance to shop local and shop fresh. Taking place near Dillard's, new vendors grace this event weekly. Admission is free, and furry friends are allowed if they're on a leash. Cash and cards are accepted as methods of payment, and the market runs from 8 to 11 a.m.

Arrowhead Towne Center, 7780 W. Arrowhead Towne Center, Glendale, 8 a.m., free, arrowheadtownecenter.com



The Str8 Up Band JUNE 8

For those looking for an upbeat act to see, the Str8 Up Band is one to check out. They play a variety of music from genres like hip-hop, disco and jazz in English to salsa, cumbias and Tejano in Spanish. They deliver across these genres thanks to their five singers. Audience participation will not only be welcome but encouraged.

Westside Blues and Jazz Club, 17045 N. 59th Avenue, Suite 104, Glendale, visit website for ticket prices and times, westsideblues.com



Big Band Grandstand JUNE 12

Become part of a big band and practice your musical skills along with a large collection of other like-minded musicians. Any musician that can sight-read charts is encouraged to show up with their own music stand and instrument to play, getting an experience they could not get simply practicing alone at home.

Foothills Library, 19055 N. 57th Avenue, Glendale, 1 to 3 p.m., free, glendaleazlibrary.com

other teen rogues, fighters, and druids. This program is put on for teens, 12-18, only.

Glendale Main Library, 5959 W. Brown Street, Glendale, 6 to 7 p.m., free, glendaleazlibrary.com



Wildlife World Zoo Animal Presentation JUNE 14

Kids and their families are invited to come face to face with animals from around the world during this exciting and educational presentation by the Wildlife World Zoo & Aquarium. At the end of the show, after each animal is discussed, you will have the opportunity to ask the presenter any questions you may have about the animals you saw and what it is like working at the zoo. This is a ticketed event and space is limited, so tickets will be given out one hour prior to the event on a first come, first served basis at the Public Service Desk.

Velma Teague Library, 7010 N. 58th Avenue, Glendale, 1 to 2 p.m., free, glendaleazlibrary.com



Jam-Boree Acoustic Jam JUNE 10

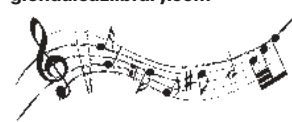
Bring your acoustic instrument to play along or join the audience at this round-robin all-acoustic jam session. All skill levels are welcome! This jam session takes place every second and fourth Saturday of each month.

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Level Up! Dungeons & Dragons JUNE 12

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The Glendale Star

PUZZLE PAGE

ANSWERS ON PAGE 27

ACROSS

- 1 Cave flier
- 4 Beans
- 8 Experts
- 12 Punk rock offshoot
- 13 Classic theaters
- 14 Global septet
- 15 Ages and ages
- 16 When bar drinks are discounted
- 18 First-rate, in slang
- 20 Perched
- 21 Apothecary measure
- 24 Of the Arctic
- 28 Annual celebration for a saint
- 32 Forbidden act
- 33 Freedom, for short
- 34 First half of an LP
- 36 Pol. party org.
- 37 Raw materials
- 39 Magazine founded in 1933
- 41 Costume
- 43 Admin. aide
- 44 Composer Rorem
- 46 Grammarian's concern
- 50 Freshman
- 55 Pen name
- 56 Garfield's pal
- 57 North Sea feeder
- 58 "This tastes awful!"
- 59 Engrossed
- 60 Conked out
- 61 Uncle (Sp.)

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
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59					60					61		

- 2 Latin love
- 3 Singer Braxton
- 4 Companions
- 5 Oklahoma city
- 6 Zing
- 7 Easy targets
- 8 Actor Kutcher
- 9 Corp. boss
- 10 Vichy water
- 11 Old map letters
- 17 Chatter
- 19 Rx writers
- 22 Tennis score
- 23 Tyler Perry persona
- 25 Mine find
- 26 Diarist Frank
- 27 Boulder
- 28 Promote aggressively
- 29 Hibernia
- 30 Help a hood
- 31 Evergreen trees
- 35 Promised
- 38 Twilight time
- 40 Scale amts.
- 42 Favorite
- 45 Turned blue?
- 47 Border on
- 48 Leslie Caron role
- 49 Repeat
- 50 Supporting
- 51 Lupino of film
- 52 Wardrobe malfunction
- 53 Peyton's brother
- 54 Actor Vigoda

DOWN

- 1 Gridlock sound

EVEN EXCHANGE

by Donna Pettman

- | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1. Toast topping | ___ T ___ | Crabbe or Keaton | ___ S ___ |
| 2. Envy's color | ___ N | Athens' language | ___ K |
| 3. Movement | M ___ | Salve | L ___ |
| 4. Household task | ___ R | Decided upon | ___ S |
| 5. Sylvester's prey | ___ E | One score | ___ N |
| 6. Saunter | ___ B | Plenty | ___ P |
| 7. Confess | ___ P | Of late | ___ C |
| 8. Musician Manilow | ___ A | Small fruit | ___ E |
| 9. Outspoken | V ___ | Indigenous | L ___ |
| 10. Pig's protest | ___ L | Sound of a noisy door | ___ K |

Each numbered row contains two clues and two answers. The two answers differ from each other by only one letter, which has already been inserted. For example, if you exchange the A from MASTER for an I, you get MISTER. Do not change the order of the letters.

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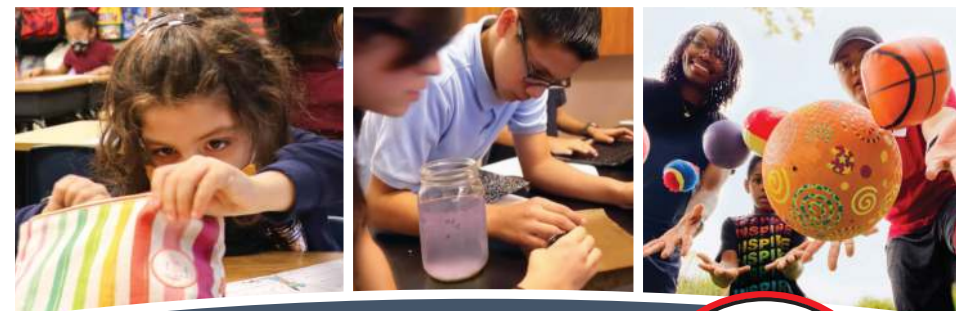
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For King & Country finds success in collaborations

BY CHRISTINA
FUOCO-KARASINSKI
Glendale Star Executive Editor

For King & Country's Luke Smallbone is passionate about Arizona. He's even named his son Phoenix.

"I love coming back to Arizona," Smallbone said enthusiastically. "Naming my son Phoenix attests to that."

He and his brother, Joel — the frontmen of For King & Country — are bringing their bombastic show to Desert Diamond Arena on Sunday, June 11, for FamilyLife Radio Fest. Also on the bill are Cece Winans, Pat Barrett, Andrew Ripp and Jonathan Traylor.

"We love to bring a high-energy show," Smallbone said.

"We have elevators and we're flying

around through the air. We have streamers — all the fun little things. Our hope is to share the stories with people. During the pandemic, our live show was taken from us. We appreciate the gift of music and the gift of performances more than ever."

For King & Country recently released "What Are We Waiting For?" the follow up to their double Grammy-winning album, "Burn the Ships." Smallbone is pleased with the results.

"We're proud of it if it connects with people," he adds. "You work hard at these things, to make music and it's up to other people to decide if it's good or not. There are two genres — good music and bad music. Hopefully it ends on the side of 'good.' We pour our heart and soul into

music and hopefully it does connect with people."

"What Are We Waiting For?" is the Australian Christian pop duo's fifth studio album and it features appearances by Dante Bowe, Sleeping at Last, Tori Kelly and Kirk Franklin. The duo collaborated with Tedd T., Josh Kerr, Jeff Sojka, Federico Vindver, Benjamin Backus and Seth Mosley in the production.

"We've always tried to collaborate, in some cases, it's with as many different artists as possible," Smallbone said. "It's through collaboration that you discover new sounds, new ideas and new ways of writing songs. Working with different artists is fun because you discover who they are and what makes them tick."

So far, the collection has spawned the singles "Relate" and "For God is With Us," both of which peaked at No. 1 on the U.S. Hot Christian Songs chart. As a whole, the record is the act's first No. 1 entry on the Billboard Christian Albums chart, and it received a GMA Dove Award nomination for pop/contemporary album of the year.

For King & Country is touring throughout the year and then launching a Christmas jaunt in the winter. They're also finishing a movie about their parents called "Unsung Hero." For more information about the film, visit unsungheromovie.com.

"Our family moved from Australia to the United States with nothing," he said. "It's our parents' story and our family's story of moving to a new continent with six kids. My mother had a seventh when we just arrived.

"There are a lot of highs and lows. This movie is about our parents' journey and that should be coming out the top of next



For King & Country is performing at Desert Diamond Arena. (For King & Country/Submitted)

year. We're spending this year getting the movie right."

Smallbone said the timing of "Unsung Hero" is important.

"A lot of times, people make these movies about people who aren't here anymore," he explains. "We wanted to tell the story while they're here. I think there is something honorable about it: People who believe in family and people who stick together and pour into each other."

GS

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INFO: desertdiamondarena.com,
forkingandcountry.com

Glendale auction to feature rare bikes

BY JOE McHUGH
Glendale Star Staff Writer

EJ's Auction and Appraisal in Glendale is slated to host its quarterly auction which typically features fine art, antiques and other collectibles, but this auction will feature nine motorcycles from former motorcycle champion Charles Roller.

The bikes were kept as art after Roller collected them, and the "rare mint condition" bikes will now be bid on at the Saturday, June 10 auction. For EJ's Appraiser and Acquisition Specialist Brad Halverson, this is something that is getting bidders and appraisers excited at just the sight of the historic bikes.

"It's pretty frequent that we have motorcycles, but it is not very common at all that somebody has bikes that are displayed as art," Halverson said. "Most of the time, we can find some pretty cool bikes in garages and random places, but they're

typically not serviced and prepped to be displayed in such a way."

Roller's motorcycle career went just as he drew it up when he was a child, claiming that he would one day be a champion in motorcycle racing. He went on to win the Nevada State Off-Road Championship, to which he used the prize money to collect rare bikes from across the country.

Through his connections in the motorcycle world, he was able to get access to a number of rare bikes that he displayed in the living room of his Paradise Valley home.

Halverson said EJ's bidders will be eager to try their hand at getting one of Roller's bikes.

"Because we're international and definitely throughout the states really heavy, our reach is strong," Halverson said. "So, you're going to get it exposed to so many eyes. And that's the power of an organic auction. It's only worth what you can get for it in the next auction, so we're incentivized to try to call it what it is, take some

pictures of it, stage it in a nice way so that it looks appealing and something that attracts attention. And we partner up with the people to get the best result we can form."

The auction is online, and Roller's bikes such as the 1966 Honda CB77 305 Super Hawk, 1991 Honda CT 70 Mini Trail Bike, 1968 Honda CA77 Dream, 1968 Honda CB 450 K1 Twin and Honda CL 72 250 Scrambler, among others, will be auctioned.

"We really care about the consigner's items, and we do what we can to make sure that the right people see them," Halverson said. "So, we're definitely a conduit to getting your most prized possessions into somebody else's hands to become their next brides. So, whenever we have collections, no matter what they are, when there's unique and find items that come through, it always brings more of those items in that's definitely what we love to see

and always excited to see what's coming around the corner.

"We're proud to represent all sorts of different collections in town and out of the state," Halverson said. "So sometimes we will acquire different collections coming from everywhere, but we definitely take pride in trying to represent and present the items. And for the people, to try to get them the best results on their items once they finally decide to let them go." **GS**

EJ's Auction & Appraisal

5880 W. Bell Road, Suite B,
Glendale
ejsauction.com

Former motorcycle champion and Paradise Valley resident, Charles Roller, has decided to part ways with nine of his "rare mint condition" bikes, which have already hit the auction block hot. (EJ's Auction and Appraisal/Submitted)



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Babbo aims to hit a home run with day of giving

BY ALEX GALLAGHER
Glendale Star Staff Writer

Babbo Italian Eatery is swinging for the fences June 15 with its second annual Baseball for Babbo Day of Giving event where it will donate 100% of the proceeds to the Seena Magowitz Foundation — a national nonprofit organization dedicated to “harnessing a collective synergy to defeat pancreatic cancer.”

Last year Babbo Italian Eatery was able to raise just over \$100,000 for the charity but this year, the restaurant is looking to raise more funds.

“It’s a cause that is very near and dear to our hearts,” said Babbo Italian Eatery marketing director Taylor Schultz. “Since we are a family-run restaurant that has been around for over 20 years, it felt like it was the right time to do it around Father’s Day especially since Babbo means ‘daddy’ in Italian.”

This year also has a personal tie for



A variety of Italian foods and the Baseball for Babbo t-shirts at Babbo Italian Eatery. (David Minton/Staff Photographer)

Schultz, the daughter of Babbo Italian Eatery Founder Ken Pollack.

When Pollack was given the devastating diagnosis of stage four pancreatic cancer in February 2021, things didn’t look good. He was given a prognosis of three to six months to live.

He defied the odds and fought vigi-

lantly until he died in Dec. 2022.

During his fight, Ken made strong connections with his care team at HonorHealth Research Institute and Mayo Hospital and the Seena Magowitz Foundation.

“He connected with the (Seena Magowitz Foundation) through the care he was receiving at HonorHealth,” Schultz recalled. “He learned that it donates a lot of funds to pancreatic cancer research, which is very important because it’s a very underdiagnosed disease and it is oftentimes diagnosed very late.

“The more research we have, the better it is for anybody going through that sort of treatment process.”

Because of this, June 15 marks a big day for Babbo Italian Eatery’s eight valley locations — Glendale, Queen Creek, Cave Creek, Scottsdale, Mesa, Surprise, Phoenix and Goodyear — as the restaurants will donate 100% of its earnings from dine-in, take out, gift card and merchandise sales to the Seena Magowitz foundation.

Since Pollack was also a lifelong baseball fan, each location will also feature raffles that give customers the chance to score baseball memorabilia like signed jerseys, baseball cards and baseballs donated as a courtesy of Memory Lane Inc., Milwaukee Brewers merchandise and Arizona Diamondbacks season tickets. Raffle tickets and individual donations can be made on Babbo Italian Eatery’s website, babboitalian.com.

Additionally, the Ken Pollack family and Roger Magowitz will each match

funds raised during the Baseball for Babbo Day of Giving event up to \$50,000.

However, most of the revenue is expected to come from dine-in, take out and gift card sales.

“We’re very known for our spaghetti and meatballs, we have amazing salads, pizzas, huge calzones and then we have some summer cocktails as part of our summer menu right now,” Schultz said.

Schultz admits she has a favorite item on the menu.

“We have a zucca pizza which is a light pizza that is topped with fresh zucchini, squash, mozzarella, scallions and goat cheese. It’s delicious,” Schultz said.

Food aside, June 15 is a day dedicated to giving back.

As a philanthropic man who had held charitable events benefiting Phoenix nonprofit Young Life and the Arizona Humane Society, Schultz says this event perfectly represents who her father was.

“He was really excited about it and was really happy to be able to do this. My dad is definitely a philanthropist at heart,” Schultz said. “One of his sayings was ‘if you give, you will get and if you get, you should give. This is something that just totally embodied him and everything he did.’

Because of this, she is looking forward to seeing her staff and customers rally behind a cause.

“It’s just a way to bring everybody together for a unified cause and really honor somebody that we care about,” Schultz said. “I feel like our staff is really excited and just we want to get the word out there for the state of giving.” **GS**

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Dance with God and you will succeed

I thought it might be inspiring and informative for me to share my life in my early 20s. This article concerns my first ownership experience and hearing God for direction and guidance. Remember guidance? God ... you and I ... dance.

Like God led Joseph and Mary out of Nazareth to Bethlehem, God started repositioning me into my purpose and destiny in 1974. Twenty-four years old and equipped with a bachelor's degree in personnel management, I worked as an office manager for Grimshaw Mortuaries in Phoenix. The company then had nearly 80 employees, four mortuaries and one cemetery. I started as an office manager trainee.

In March of 1974, during the Jesus Revolution, I received Christ as my Lord and savior. Right away, I could sense something was different. Immediately I knew on the inside that I was supposed to leave Grimshaw Mortuaries and start a new business. I had \$3,000 at that time. A print-shop owner from my church mentioned a small book bindery he knew was for sale. The owners were quite elderly, ready to retire, and the business had dwindled to just a few accounts.

I knew nothing about bookbinding or printing. My vast experience (just kidding) in the industry was printing funeral folders at the mortuary. I looked at another business, but there was something about the bindery. I was a new Christian, but I knew this was the business for me. It wasn't a presumption or a wish dream. Rather, it was a faith-infused utterance from God providing wisdom, guidance and direction.

From that point on, it was done in heaven. It just needed to be done on earth. We entered negotiations. And with

CHURCH COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Pastor Ed Delph

Glendale Star
Columnist



the helpful eye of my father's wisdom, business sense and God's direction, I stepped into the unknown and bought the business.

That was the start of what was Central Bindery in Phoenix. I was 24 years old and had never been a business owner. I had little to no knowledge of the book-binding industry. The one employee I hired as the supervisor was a printing machine operator. But I had one thing that trumped them all: I had God on my side (more accurately, I was on God's side). I didn't deserve it. I didn't earn it. Nevertheless, God allowed me to be part of what He was doing in my life and many other people's lives. For the next six years, I watched God be God.

The first few years of building the business were interesting. We 'built the airplane' while it was flying. There were some spins and stalls. God carried me at times. I was under construction, as was Central Bindery. But after three years, all the aspects of the business started coming together. Central Bindery became

efficient and proficient. We expanded and bought new quality equipment the Phoenix printing industry had never seen. We formed the most outstanding team of people I have ever known in the business world.

By the time I was 29 years old, Central Bindery was the largest book bindery in Arizona with 43 employees. The business was running as smoothly as any service business does. I should have been happy, right? I'd arrived — or so I thought. But something was stirring inside me. The season was changing. We don't change seasons, we adjust to them. My adjustment was to sell the bindery and go into church ministry. Central Bindery went on to stay in business for 47 years in Phoenix.

What was the key to this? God spoke, and I listened. It was the same principle as in the creation of the earth. "Let there be light," and there was light. God was gently leading, still proceeding, guiding me to His dream for me and others.


Do you know what I learned in my 20s? God speaks today, not just in the Bible. God gives direction now, just like God did in the Bible then. I learned that divine wisdom was mine if I just shut my mouth and listened. I realized God whispers because God's close. Now when I say, "God spoke to me," you might think, "That's weird and spooky." Don't go there. Let

me explain.

There are several main ways God speaks to people today. First, God speaks through the Bible — God's word. Secondly, God can speak through the wisdom of others seasoned in their Christianity. Thirdly, God can speak through circumstances. When one door opens, and another closes, it could be God leading. Finally, God speaks through impressions on the inside of us. Do I have peace about the decision? Do I have a sense that God is leading? Do I have the confidence to go forward with this decision?

I'm pretty good at hearing the biblically correct — spiritual word of God. How did this occur? Through the many toils, trials and snares of life. You can listen to God, too, especially in your 20s like I was. God can help you discover your "I was born for this." But, conversely, God can help you to find your "I wasn't born for this."

I realize not every story will end like mine, but with God, you have a more excellent resource than you could ever have by yourself. The real question is, "Whose voice will you listen to?" Why? Because not every voice out there in culture is on your side and your inside. I've learned the best sight is insight from the God of light.

Your takeaway: When opportunity wants to dance with you, you better be on the dance floor. 

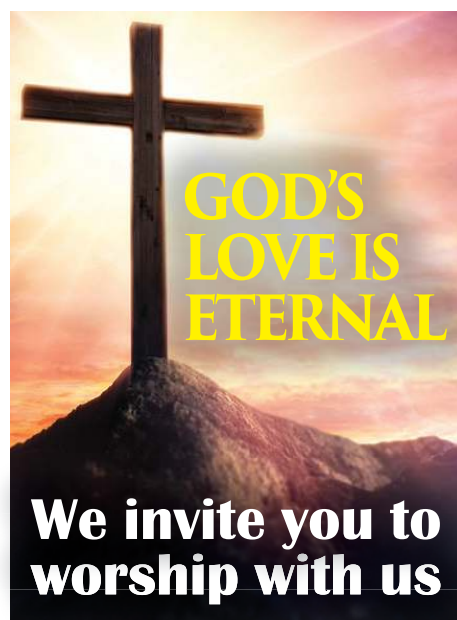
Ed Delph is a noted author of 10 books, as well as a pastor, teacher, former business owner and speaker. He has traveled extensively, having been to more than 100 countries. He is president of NationStrategy, a nonprofit organization involved in uplifting and transforming communities worldwide. For more information, see nationstrategy.com. He may be contacted at nationstrategy@cs.com.



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King Crossword

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E	M	O	O	D	E	A	S	E	A	S										
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P	R	I	M	O	S	A	T													
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F	E	A	S	T	D	A	Y	N	O	N	O									
L	I	B	S	I	D	E	A	D	N	C										
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Even Exchange answers

- Butter, Buster
- Green, Greek
- Motion, Lotion
- Chore, Chose
- Tweety, Twenty
- Ambie, Ample
- Repent, Recent
- Barry, Berry
- Vocal, Local
- Squeal, Squeak

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PUSD bus drivers receive district-wide wage raise

BY JOE McHUGH
Glendale Star Staff Writer

In an effort to attract and retain high-quality employees to transport students safely and efficiently to and from school, the Peoria Unified School District Governing Board recently increased the wage of bus drivers from \$17 to \$19 per hour.

This wage increase will make the district's current drivers better compensated in a competitive market, as well as attract new drivers to a vital organ of the district. This past school year, the Peoria Unified transportation team transported students more than 1.9 million collective miles.

"I think it's vital because it not only is more of a fair wage, but it's also considered a lifeline for some of our employees that are in this particular role," said Pedro Price-Dimond, transportation training coordinator for PUSD. "They not only appreciate it, but they also think it was something that was more long overdue. We are definitely not just a bus driver; we are someone that has a mobile classroom."

The \$2 increase will go into effect on Saturday, July 1 and is something that will produce "equivalent pay" for current employees.

"I think that it is so great for (the district) to consider that it's not just about specific individuals, it's more of a body



The Peoria Unified School District Governing Board recently approved a \$2 raise for its bus drivers. (Peoria Unified School District/Submitted)

of work," Price-Dimond said. "We really bring a lot to what's termed as support services."

The raise, the district hopes, will bring new drivers to the area. Along with the love for the job, its drivers' compensation seems to appease that passion in a manner that Price-Dimond says that new bus driver interviewees light up at.

"It's so exciting because when I speak to individuals, and I go over that portion of the salary per hour, they say, 'Oh, wow, I didn't realize it started out at that

there," he said. "It's nice to be able to say, 'Hey, this is what was recently approved by our district board. And this is where we're starting.' However, there's still more to come, meaning we're still in conversations to be able to hopefully accelerate this at some point."


The new wage will not conflict with the district's overtime rules, as drivers are able to work past their allotted 40 hours per week, and can work up to 60 hours per week. This, Price-Dimond said, is "encouraged" by the district, and is something that is sure to draw in even more eyes to drivers across the valley to join the PUSD team.

"I think it's exciting because it will identify how we as a district are able to personalize growth for what's to come," Price-Dimond said. "We have X amount of student population at the moment, we have Y amount of elementary and high schools, but there's that much more to come."

"Meaning, who's to say that we're not going to receive more funding to be able to open up more elementary schools or high schools, which would lead to more routes, which would lead to more expansion, whether they mean, in this particular site, which is amazing."

The district's ongoing search for more student enrollments creates a scenario where more drivers could be needed. With a staff of nearly 95 drivers, Price-Dimond said the district needs 10 to 15 more.

With that many hands coming on deck, the wage increase provides "competitive" compensation to their existing drivers and makes the new drivers they need more enticed to join PUSD, something that has Price-Dimond excited for what's to come.

"As the drivers, it's more about how are we being successful for our students?" he said. "How are we being successful for our community? And the only way that we can do that is bridging that communication from operations over to the necessary individuals that lead up to that board, so that they can continuously have that open ear to listening." 

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The Arizona Board of Regents, for and on behalf of Northern Arizona University, is soliciting sealed Proposals from qualified firms or individuals for the purpose of selecting a firm or individual interested in providing a Mobile Mental Health Van Reference P23JN002 for Northern Arizona University.

Proposals shall be delivered no later than 3:00 P.M., Arizona Time, Monday June 26, 2023 to the office of the Associate Vice President of Procurement on the campus of Northern Arizona University, 545 E. Pine Knoll Drive, Building 98B, PO Box 4124, Flagstaff, Arizona, 86011, (928) 523-4557.

To request a Proposal by E-mail contact Northern Arizona University Purchasing Services at the above phone number or by emailing NAU-Purchasing@nau.edu. To download a copy from the Internet access <https://in.nau.edu/contracting-purchasing-services/nau-bid-board/>

The Arizona Board of Regents reserves the right to reject any or all Proposals, to waive or declare to waive irregularities in any Proposal, or to withhold the award for any reason it shall determine and also reserves the right to hold any or all Proposals for a period of ninety (90) days after the date of the opening thereof. No Proposer shall withdraw their Proposal during this ninety (90) day period.

Published in the Glendale Star, Jun 8, 2023

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