

El Mirage News

www.cityofelmirage.org

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623-972-8116

El Mirage police officers win award

On March 25, three officers from the El Mirage Police Department's patrol division were informed that they were nominated for the Elks Club Enrique Camarena Award for the State of Arizona. Each year, the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks presents the Enrique S. Camarena Award to a member of law enforcement who best exemplifies the qualities and principles for which DEA Agent Camarena gave his life when about to expose a major drug trafficking operation.

Officer(s) Doug Jones, Karyn Mucci and Kim

Walden were all selected from among other Arizona agencies as first place award recipients, marking the first known instance in 25 years where multiple officers from one agency received the award for the same incident. These three officers will be honored by the Elks Club in May for their actions on March 20, 2010 during a traffic stop and barricade situation that resulted in the seizure of money, 44 lbs of bundled marijuana and 2 weapons.

At approximately 1:23 a.m. March 20, 2010,



Police Chief Steve Campbell, Officers Karyn Mucci, Kim Walden and Doug Jones; Acting Patrol Lieutenant John Heffelfinger.

Officer Doug Jones #3315 was driving north on El Mirage Road., near Peoria Avenue when he observed two speeding vehicles and subsequently performed a routine traffic stop on one of the vehicles, which had an inoperable license plate light. Due to the poor lighting, the

wrong license plate number was initially transmitted to dispatch. Upon noticing the discrepancy in the license plate description, Officer Jones submitted a corrected license plate entry but did not receive confirmation that the new information had been received.

While waiting near his patrol car for dispatch to read the vehicles' registration information, the driver of the stopped vehicle began calling out to Officer Jones, motioning for him to approach the car and becoming agitated. Sensing a dangerous situation, Officer Jones remained near his patrol car for safety. The driver of the vehicle suddenly accelerated his vehicle at a high rate of speed and ran a red stoplight.

Officer Jones attempted to follow the vehicle, but the vehicle drove erratically and turned into a residential area. Dispatch advised on the radio that the original license plate did not return as being registered to a vehicle. Sergeant John Heffelfinger, #3308, who had heard Officer Jones' revised license plate description, advised dispatch to re-enter the license plate using the correct information. Dispatch received the registration information for a vehicle that matched the suspect vehicle's description and was registered to a

residence in the immediate area.

Officer Karyn Mucci, #3302, and Officer Kim Walden, #3311, were in the immediate area and responded to the residence. Upon arrival at the residence, the vehicle in question was observed in the driveway, parked at an angle that suggested it was parked abruptly. While walking past it, money was seen lying in the vehicle and the strong odor of green marijuana was detected. Officer Mucci and Officer Walden observed the garage door as it was closing. However, the garage door was being blocked by a vehicle that was backed into the garage and was still partially over the threshold of the garage which caused the door to open again. The officers observed the blocking vehicle had its headlights on.

Fearing that a suspect was in the car, they approached the vehicle in the garage and found it was unoccupied. While peering into the

MORE AWARDS ON 9

El Mirage fire fighters give back

El Mirage Fire Fighters have found a new way to give back to the El Mirage community. On May 15, the El Mirage Firefighter Association Charity Kicks off its First Annual El Mirage Fire Department Kickball Tournament. This double-elimination tournament is open to anyone at least 18 years of age – the entry fee is \$200 for a team of 10 and includes team t-shirts. First Place winners receive a trophy and bragging rights as well as knowing they have contributed to a worthy cause. The games begin at 9 a.m. at Gateway Park and all proceeds will benefit the non-profit charity.

El Mirage Fire Fighter Steve Kruzel came up with the idea for a kickball tournament after having participated in charity sporting events in other cities. "I wanted to do something that would be a lot of fun for participants and spectators and a little different from the standard softball game. Kickball seemed like a perfect fit." Fellow El Mirage Fire Fighter Tom Jury agreed, stating "It's fun and it's unique. It won't be the same old same old. But best of all, all the money raised goes to a great cause. We're raising funds for



El Mirage students who might need a scholarship to help get them to college. We're trying to do something that will have a direct, meaningful impact on

our community."

For more information, contact Steve Kruzel at skruzel@cox.net, or 623-238-0300.

Recycle drop off bin relocation

Due to issues with the current locations of the recycling bins at Gateway Park, Gentry Park, and Surprise Elementary, the City of El Mirage will be relocating the bulk drop off bins to the Public Works Facility on June 1st. The Public Works Facility is at 12000 W. Peoria Ave., east of El Mirage Road. Beginning June 1st, residents will be able to drop off recyclable materials Monday thru Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. not including holidays.

Arts in El Mirage on Fourth Fridays

Join the City of El Mirage and El Mirage Arts Group (EMAG) in celebrating the arts within our community. This *free* monthly art event takes place on the Fourth Friday of each month from 5 to 9 p.m. Plan on our next Fourth Friday set for May 27th at the City Plaza located at 14010 N. El Mirage Rd. Bring the family and enjoy the arts, entertainment, food and fun.

Luke West Valley Expo April 30

Kids Zone with Bouncers, Petting Zoo, and Pony Rides? Best of the West Firehouse Chili Cookoff? Weiner & Chihuahua Races? Youth Art Contest? Skateboard Contests? Police K9 Demos?

Come to Gateway Park on Saturday, April 30 between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. and enjoy the many free and fun festivities. Visit www.westvalleyrecreation.com for more information.

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Message from the Mayor

Building a sense of community is vital to the future success of the City of El Mirage. We need a strong, vibrant community in which neighbors know and help one another and the Mayor and City Council Members are active partners with our residents. It is not enough to work just on promoting economic development and balancing budgets, although that is most certainly a major part of serving as your Mayor. I also want to work on building our community so each resident can feel a real connection to El Mirage. Ultimately, El Mirage should be a place where all of us can live, work and play.

For this reason, I have been actively working with our Council and City Manager to bring back a wide array of community events and activities. A few weeks ago, city staff joined hands with community leaders in the downtown area to prepare for the Spring Celebration held at Gentry Park on Sunday, April 17th. It was truly a wonderful local event. Hundreds of children turned out to enjoy the free face painting, balloon animals, bounce houses, hot dogs, Easter Egg Hunt, and of course, the Easter Bunny himself! Residents got to know each other better, children played and made friends, and Council officials



Mayor Lana Mook

and City staff members mingled with the crowd, volunteering and assisting where needed.

In a city as small as ours, it is not unreasonable to expect we should have opportunities to come together, get to know our neighbors and gain a sense of belonging to our community. I look forward to joining you at more free community events, including our monthly Fourth Fridays at the city plaza adjacent to Gentry Park, where we can listen to music and enjoy the arts. Later this year, the City of El Mirage will have an Annual City-wide Celebration and we'll bring 2011 to a close with the return of the Christmas Tree Lighting and Parade. Let's all continue to come together and build El Mirage into the community we want it to be.

Council Corner: Volunteers make El Mirage great

In any great community, you will find great volunteers who work quietly behind the scenes to fill in the gaps and get things done. In a time of limited resources, these great volunteers have become even more critical to the success of a community. The City of El Mirage is no exception – as we work to move the City forward, we need and depend upon the many volunteers who freely give of their time and resources to make El Mirage a better place.

On Friday, April 29, community volunteer and El Mirage resident Bob Jones was officially named El Mirage Citizen of the Year at the 2011 "The Spirit of Community Awards Banquet," hosted by the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce. "Bob Jones is a great example of the type of community volunteer El Mirage needs," stated Council Member Jim McPhetres. "He has a sincere dedication to giving back to our community, whether it is by volunteering through the Cub Scouts or his HOA, or other organizations."

"This is a great award," said Vice Mayor David Shapera. "We need to recognize and appreciate the wonderful volunteers who are doing everything they can to give back to El Mirage. Hopefully, Mr. Jones will inspire other El Mirage residents to become more involved in our community because we



Bob Jones

definitely need more people like him." Council Member Jack Palladino agreed the City needs more volunteers. "In recent months, the City Council has been working to create Citizen Advisory Committees so community leaders and volunteers can partner with the City on meaningful projects and issues to make a real difference," he stated. "I invite all El Mirage residents to learn more about volunteering for a Citizen Advisory Committee. We need more Bob Jones in our City." For more information on the Citizen Advisory Committees please contact the City Clerk's office at 623-876-2925 or rsaathoff@cityofelmirage.org.

Another outstanding volunteer-driven organization in El Mirage is the Dysart Community Center, a non-profit organization that has

been serving low-income families in the West Valley since 1962. The Center provides English language instruction, GED instruction, computer literacy training, numerous after-school activities and a summer camp program – all supported by local volunteers, individual donors and community partners such as the City of El Mirage. "It is such an important organization to El Mirage," said lifelong El Mirage resident and Council Member Joe Ramirez. "And I can tell you, the Center would not exist without all of the volunteers who give their time, talents and money to keep it going."

On Saturday, April 9th the Dysart Community Center held a Volunteer Appreciation Event to recognize the 85+ volunteers who donate at least two hours of their time each week to assist the learners of the Center. These tutors teach English, GED, and/or citizenship preparation classes, or work with youth to assist them with reading or writing. El Mirage Mayor Lana Mook and Council Members Roy Delgado, Lynn Selby and Joe Ramirez were able to attend. Council Member Roy Delgado stated "This was a great opportunity to thank the people who make the Dysart Community

MORE VOLUNTEERS ON 3

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Public Works: Curbside recycling in El Mirage

The El Mirage City Council is considering a curbside recycling program as requested by residents. The recycling program would further the sustainability efforts identified in the voter-approved El Mirage General Plan. Currently, El Mirage is the only Phoenix Valley city without a curbside recycling program. Upon approval by Council, each homeowner will receive a blue 96-gallon roll-out container for recyclables before service begins.

“Curbside single stream recycling makes it convenient and easy for El Mirage residents to put

less waste into our landfills and help recover and re-use valuable materials,” said Public Works Director Lance Calvert. The plan is for the City’s waste hauler, Parks & Sons, to collect recyclables every Thursday. Trash will be picked up once per week on Monday while accounting for holiday schedules. Collection of recyclables will be “single stream,” meaning paper, cans, boxes, numbered plastics, and glass can be placed in the same container (co-mingled) for recycling.

To accommodate the manufacture and delivery of the blue containers, the anticipated schedule

is for recycling to begin on Thursday, September 1st with the blue barrel delivered to individual homes in August. Additional information about the new program will be provided by both the City of El Mirage and Parks & Sons.

Quick recycling facts:

- Five plastic PET bottles (e.g. beverage bottles) yield enough fiber for one extra large t-shirt, one square foot of carpet, or enough fiber to fill one ski jacket.
- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to keep a light bulb lit for 12 hours or one television for 3 hours.

- Recycling one 3 foot stack of newspaper saves one tree.

- Every three months Americans landfill enough aluminum to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet.

- One glass jar that is recycled saves enough electricity to light a conventional 60-watt bulb for 4 hours and an 11-watt CFL bulb for 20 hours.

El Mirage Road and Santa Fe Lane intersection improvements

The El Mirage Road and Santa Fe Lane Intersection project is completed. Construction began in mid-January 2011 and was completed on schedule. The City of El Mirage awarded the project to Visus Engineering Construction, Inc. The City Public Works Department engineering staff designed the project and supervised construction.

The project improved intersection safety for local pedestrians as the existing El Mirage Road alignment has been revised to be perpendicular to Santa Fe Lane with a three way stop installed. The project also provides PM-10 dust reduction at the intersection due to the extension of curb and gutter reducing the amount of unpaved shoulder.

Construction included roadway re-surfacing and reconstruction, concrete vertical curb, concrete sidewalk, ADA compliant sidewalk ramps and pedestrian crosswalks.

“As a handicapped military veteran, I thank the City from the bottom of my heart for making the street accessible for people like me”, wrote Mr. Jose A. Vasquez, a resident of the area, “This tells me that the city cares about its residents by making important improvements such as this one.”

This project was funded by a Small Cities Transportation Assistance Program (SCTAP) grant through the Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and local Highway User Funds (HURF).

Oni Boston - El Mirage Employee of the Quarter

The City of El Mirage has a lot of dedicated employees and recently, the City of El Mirage started its Employee of the Quarter Recognition program to recognize employees for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to going the extra mile. Each quarter, employees nominate their colleagues for this award and a recipient is chosen by a volunteer panel.

For the first quarter of 2011, the very first recipient

of Employee of the Quarter was chosen by City Manager Dr. Spencer Isom. He selected Customer Service Manager, Ms. Oni Boston. “Oni is very conscientious in her work, and she is a team leader and team player when working with other departments,” praised Dr. Spencer Isom. “She is focused on improving the level of customer service to our Citizens and she is always ready with a smile and kind word.”

Oni was hired in 2009, bringing to the City 20 years of experience as a company trainer and project manager with AT&T. Currently, she supervises a staff of five who provide customer service for utility billing to over 10,000 commercial and residential accounts. When hired, she faced the challenge of how to correct a loss in revenues due to what are called “zero reads” on meters throughout

MORE ONI BOSTON ON 7



Dysart Community Center Volunteers Joan Ponseigo, Patricia Berglund, Roberta Knapp, Phyllis Tuchscher, May Thomas and Harry Chorpennig.

VOLUNTEERS: Council corner, From 2

Center possible. These folks truly make a difference in the lives of so many El Mirage residents.” Fellow Council Member Lynn Selby agreed and praised the Executive Director of the Center. “Jessie Singer is doing a great job as Executive Director. She is always looking for residents to volunteer

their time or help out and she also works hard to make sure the volunteers know they are appreciated.”

As we work to build the City of El Mirage into a better, stronger community, we invite you to help us make a difference. Please volunteer today!



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News from the El Mirage Fire Department

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Fire safety inspections underway – protect your business

The El Mirage Fire Department is conducting annual fire safety inspections of commercial businesses throughout the City of El Mirage. “Every single business is an important part of the City’s economy,” stated Chief Munding. “We

want to make sure that our businesses are safe for customers, employees, and business owners.”

The Chief conducts fire safety inspections and pre-fire planning surveys throughout the year to improve community safety and the safety of firefighters should a fire occur. Chief Munding said business owners need to ask themselves the following questions:

- How much property and assets are you willing to write off?
- How many injuries or deaths are acceptable?
- How long can you afford to be closed while repairs are being made?



What NOT to do to your exit.

- Where will my customers go to make their purchase while I am closed?
- Will my customers return once I reopen?

The El Mirage Fire Department has a

comprehensive checklist of the most common hazards found in local businesses. To obtain a copy or if you have questions or need assistance call the Fire Department at 623-583-7968.

Is your smoke alarm a false alarm?

They have been in every new home built since the late 1970’s. Most people don’t notice or even think about them until late in the night when you hear a “chirp”. It isn’t a continuous sound, but every couple minutes you hear it again. That “chirp” is a warning from your smoke alarm that the battery needs replacing. The smoke alarm will continue to “chirp” until the batteries are replaced. Many individuals interpret that “chirping” as an actual alarm sounding and will call 911 to report it and

request assistance, creating a false alarm.

In 2010, the El Mirage Fire Department responded to 81 false alarms. If a fire crew is responding to a false alarm in one part of the City, it could potentially delay their response to a legitimate alarm in another part of the community.

The El Mirage Fire Department wants you to know that, just like any other appliance,

MORE ALARM ON 8

Analysis of Incidents for March, 2011:

Structure fires - 5
 Other fires - 11
 EMS calls - 203
 False Alarms - 11
 Other service calls - 64
 TOTAL - 94
 Total Fire Loss = \$33,000

Training Hours = 796 hours
 • Live Fire training with Goodyear Fire Department

Fire Prevention
 • Conducted 13 annual fire inspections

Public Education/Community Activities
 • Taught 2 CPR classes

• Read water safety book to classes at Riverview Elementary
 • Total Public Attendance: 11 - Adults, 330- Children.

Significant Incidents/Activities
 • 3/12/11 - Garage fire at 12622 W Corrine – Cause of fire was overloaded electrical extension cords. Estimate damage \$13,000

• 3/26/11 – Vehicle fire in the alley at 11718 W. Soledad – Vehicle was stolen and had been stripped and then burned. Chief Munding worked with EMPD and

Glendale Fire Investigator on scene to investigate the fire. The case has been turned over to El Mirage Police and is still under investigation. Estimated damage \$20,000

• 3/30/11 - Hazardous Material spill at 12136 W Rosewood – Mercury spill was discovered by a realtor showing a vacant bank owned home that was for sale. No injuries were reported. The incident is being cleaned up by a hazardous waste disposal company. – Estimated cost for clean up \$50,000.

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News from the El Mirage Police Department

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EMPD participates in special olympics fundraisers

On Saturday, March 26, 2011, the El Mirage Police Department participated in "Tip-A-Cop" in support of the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. El Mirage and Surprise Police worked alongside staff at the Surprise Red Robin restaurant. Patrons were able to learn about Special Olympics and were able to "tip" their police waiters with the proceeds going to Special Olympics. The Red Robin and McGruff also made special appearances.



The Red Robin with El Mirage Community Action Officer Monica Rios and McGruff the Crime Dog

Almost \$5000 was raised during the day-long event, with all funds being used to support Special Olympics. A big THANK

YOU to everyone who participated - you helped make the Surprise location the biggest single fundraiser in the state!

On Saturday April 2nd, officers from Sgt Witte's night squad participated in an annual bowling fundraiser in support of

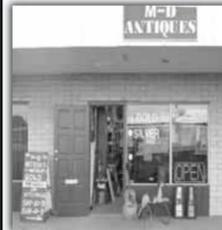
Special Olympics.

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Three officers win Elks Club award

The El Mirage Police Department has been on a mission to "Provide Extraordinary Police Service and a Safe, Secure Community for the Citizens of El Mirage." Recently, three of its officers were recognized statewide for their police work, with all three receiving the

Elks Club Enrique Camarena Award for the State of Arizona.

Award Recipient Officer Doug Jones has been a sworn peace officer in AZ since 1998.

MORE AWARD ON 9

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<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">25% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 1.5em; font-weight: bold;">Fuel Saver</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Includes oxygen sensors, fuel injection service, fuel filter & air filter</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$39⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Spring Special!</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Regular price \$59.95. Lube, oil & filter, brake inspection. Complete vehicle inspection.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Disposal fee extra. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$50⁰⁰ OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Per Axle Brake Service</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">For sure stops, we install brake pads or shoes, resurface drums or rotors & adjust drum brakes on serviced axle.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$54⁹⁵</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Power Steering Flush</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Regular price \$89.99</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Special GM, Ford, Chrysler & Dex coolant extra. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$59⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">All Wheel Alignment</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Helps prevent early tire wear with computerized accuracy, plus we inspect steering & suspension. Regular price \$79.99</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Parts & shims extra if needed. Most cars & light trucks. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">25% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">30 • 60 • 90,000 Mile Scheduled Maintenance</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$74⁹⁵</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Engine Scoping & Diagnosis</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">VEHICLE HAVING PROBLEMS? CHECK ENGINE LIGHT ON? Surging • Hesitation • Lack of power</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Regular price \$100⁰⁰</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$74⁹⁵</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Cooling System Flush</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Regular price \$109.95</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Special GM, Ford, Chrysler & Dex coolant extra. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">\$99⁹⁵</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Transmission Flush</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Regular price \$109.95</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Special GM, Ford, Chrysler & Dex coolant extra. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #0070C0;">25% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold;">Parts & Labor</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">For non-scheduled maintenance service. Maximum Discount \$50</p> <p style="font-weight: bold;">Coyote Tire & Auto</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">With this coupon. Most cars & light trucks. Not valid with other offers or prior services. Exp. 6-11-11.</p>

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Easter Bunny visits El Mirage

The City of El Mirage hosted its first Easter Egg Hunt event on Sunday, April 17th at Gentry Park. In partnership with Senda de Esperanza, a grassroots volunteer group made up of El Mirage residents, the city was very successful in organizing a wonderful family and community event. Over the course of the afternoon families enjoyed the numerous festivities, including interactive

games such as the popular inflatable obstacle course, live entertainment and music, and of course the main event—the great egg hunt. The hunt included four different egg hunts offered every half hour for children of all ages.

The Easter Egg Hunt brought with it a visit from Mr. Cottontail, also known as our very own Council Member Roy Delgado. Mr. Cottontail arrived in style, courtesy of the El Mirage Fire Engine, making his grand entrance with the sirens on. Children and parents immediately flocked to his side and the friendly Easter Bunny posed for hundreds of photos. The crowd truly appreciated Council Member Roy Delgado volunteering for the role Mr. Cottontail.

Along with city staff, both



El Mirage children line up for the Easter Egg Hunt.

the El Mirage Fire and Police departments were on hand for the event. Each time the sirens of the fire engine went off, the children ran excitedly to collect Easter eggs and candy. By the end of the day, over 3,000 eggs and 8,000 pieces of candy were gathered by the 1,200+

children who participated.

In addition to the egg hunt, face painters and balloon artists were on hand to put smiles and paintings on the faces of many children. Officials and residents of the Town of Guadalupe donated many beautiful Easter baskets that were raffled off to children

throughout the day. Former San Diego Padres pitcher and friend of El Mirage, Mr. Victor Malone, donated over 300 hotdogs, chips and beverages for all those who came to participate.

Overall the free community event was a huge hit and many residents left asking

when the next community event was to take place. This wonderful Easter event is just one of many to come, it's with gratitude we thank Mayor Mook, City Council and staff for their service, leadership, foresight and vision in making our community a better place to live and enjoy.



Mayor Lana Mook and young girl.



Balloon artist creates balloon animals for children.



Mr. Cottontail Visits El Mirage.

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What can the arts do for your community?

The wonderful thing about art is there are many mediums an individual can use to express a certain perspective or point of view. An artist can grab their audience through a photograph, a painting, a song, a sculpture, or a piece of spoken word. Art has the power to inspire the minds of youth, celebrate the culture of community, and enrich the development of creative expression. Over the course of two years, the City of El Mirage has committed itself to support the arts and the citizens of El Mirage have voiced their appreciation for a community which embraces what the arts can offer. Art can enliven a community the same way it can move an individual to create, connect and develop.

Current research literature has shown that art has the ability to encourage social interaction and community development through successfully implemented programs.

In embracing the connection between art and the community, a new art organization called the El Mirage Arts Group, or EMAG, has come to the forefront of the arts movement here in El Mirage. This organization is committed to promoting arts within the city while providing community service to El Mirage citizens through artistic programs. EMAG hopes to explore the connection between urban agriculture and public art within our great city by way of murals, community gardens, and farmer's markets. These

projects will engage artists, volunteers, and residents, in a collaborative effort to support art, beautify our city, and attract public interest. In building a relationship with city residents, EMAG intends to provide community art workshops in the form of art classes for youth and seniors, special community activities, and monthly art workshops. Currently, EMAG has joined efforts with the City of El Mirage to continue the promotion of the arts and to support the community Fourth Friday Art Event.

Through the evolution of the art community, artists and community members have come together to develop a neighborhood event which occurs on the Fourth Friday

of every month at 14010 N El Mirage Road. This event was developed in collaboration with the city of El Mirage, by the former Artist in Residence, Thomas Schultz and community members like Anthony Galto, owner of Galto Design, and Kristi Vater, owner of Divine Art Connections. Fourth Friday in El Mirage has created free opportunities for community members to become involved in art through entertainment, exhibitions, demonstration artists, and music. El Mirage Arts Group continues to work with the City of El Mirage in order to ensure that the hard work of these dedicated members of our arts community moves forward to develop into a recognized "Valley of the Sun" art event.

This organization is open to anyone who would like to explore their own artistic talents or who would like to volunteer to help others in the area. We are always seeking artists in El Mirage and surrounding cities to become involved in the community through their own passion for art. Visit, www.emag-az.org, or e-mail emag@emag-az.org. We look forward to hearing from you. Let's get to work.



El Mirage Arts Group Educating Residents.

ONI BOSTON, From A3

our city. She has also corrected delays in service requests and resolved billing and payment issues within her division. Customer Service is a division of Public Works and, under Oni's direction, every meter in the city has been identified



Oni Boston

and is read every month, service orders handled promptly, utility account payments are up and accounts turned over to collections are down.

"During my years of work in the private sector, I quickly learned that an organization is only as good as its people," stated Mayor Lana Mook. "Ms. Boston is a great asset to the City of El Mirage and the perfect recipient of Employee of the Quarter."

Oni completed her MBA with the University of Phoenix and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Management in Organizational Leadership. She also works as a teacher/facilitator with the University of Phoenix, teaching Critical Thinking and Strategic Decision-Making for Business, and Management Consulting. Oni loves spending time with her family and is an avid reader. When asked for the secret to her positive attitude, Oni replied "I love my family, my job, my co-workers. To put it simply, I love life! That makes it easy to get up every day and give my best." Congratulations to Ms. Nancy "Oni" Boston for being distinguished as El Mirage Employee of the Quarter, 2011.

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National Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS) Awareness Day

On May 14 thousands of people around the country will observe National Cornelia de Lange Syndrome (CdLS) Awareness Day. Since 1989, the second Saturday in May has been designated as CdLS Awareness Day in order to focus national attention on this little-known genetic condition. CdLS is a genetic disorder present from birth but not always diagnosed at birth. The occurrence of CdLS is estimated to be 1 in 10,000 live births and it causes a range

of physical, cognitive and medical challenges, affecting all races, ethnic backgrounds and both genders.

CdLS Awareness Day has special meaning to the Green family in El Mirage, as their daughter Sophia was diagnosed with CdLS. Sophia just turned 3 in April. With the exception of some development delays, she is perfectly healthy. She attends physical and speech therapy weekly. Meeting her, you would not be aware of her special condition except for the fact she is not able to talk yet. She is a happy and active



El Mirage Resident Sophia, who was diagnosed with CdLS.

little girl and can put a smile on anyone's face.

Until she was diagnosed,

the Green family had never heard of the condition. In fact, most people - even those in the health professions - have never heard about CdLS, but it's important for them to learn. That's because CdLS goes undiagnosed in thousands of men, women and children, leaving them without medical monitoring for complications unique to the syndrome, like seizures and silent reflux. Please visit the CdLS Foundation web site, www.CdLSusa.org, to read Sophia's as well as other children's stories on the story bank section of the website.

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ALARM: Smoke alarm safety From 4

smoke alarms need maintenance. The NFPA recommends that you test your smoke alarms once a month and replace the batteries at least once a year. This will help you to avoid false alarms and stay alert to real alarms emanating from your smoke alarm. Maintaining your smoke alarm properly is critical to your safety. The Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) conducted a survey and found that smoke alarms were not working in one out of every five homes equipped with the alarms. According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), 65% of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms at all or just as bad, with smoke alarms that aren't working. When there is a fire, smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out.

Most smoke alarms are powered by your ordinary home electrical supply and also have a 9 volt battery back-up in the event of a power failure. To test your smoke alarm, simply push in the button on the face of the alarm and hold it until the smoke alarms sound continuously. That tells you that the alarms are functioning. Once a year you need to physically remove the 9 volt batteries and replace them with new ones. While you are there, it is a good idea to vacuum the dust off the smoke alarm or use the canned air, commonly used to blow out computers, to blow the dust out of the smoke alarm. Many times false alarms are caused by dust in the smoke alarm.

To learn more tips on how to keep your smoke alarm working, visit www.nfpa.org and select "Safety Information" followed by "For Consumers," then "Fire & Safety Equipment - Smoke Alarms."

Most smoke alarms are powered by your

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AWARDS: Police, From 1

car through the window, a pistol was seen on the seat. In addition, a revolver was found on the garage floor near the entry door into the residence. Officers established a tactical position in the garage and maintained cover. The revolver's serial number was found to have been reported stolen from a neighboring city.

One occupant was called out of the residence and taken

into custody by an arrest team consisting of Officer Doug Jones, Officer Chris Culp, Officer Steve Hastings, and Sergeant John Heffelfinger. The pungent odor of green marijuana emanated from the interior of the residence. The Surprise Police Department's Tactical Team responded and served a search warrant with the El Mirage Police Department's criminal investigation division.

Forty-four pounds of bundled marijuana was located on the floor of the residence. Two handguns were recovered, to include a stolen revolver. A suspect was identified and criminal analysis involving DNA on the weapon and drugs are pending. The experience of Officer Doug Jones undoubtedly preserved his life by not approaching the suspect when the situation did not feel right. Officer Karyn Mucci and Officer Walden's quick thinking and experience

allowed access into the garage and the recovery of two weapons. The outstanding teamwork exercised by all involved, including relief officers and supervisors, resulted in the removal of a stolen revolver, hundreds of dollars and 44 pounds of green marijuana, with a street value of approximately \$23,000. The El Mirage officers will be presented with the award honoring their quick thinking, tactical experience, judgement and teamwork on May 14.

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AWARDS: About officers From 5

He was a reserve officer for the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) from 1998 until he was hired by EMPD in 2009. During his time with MCSO, Doug served in patrol for 7 years and was on a special assignment warrant team for 3 years. During his tenure, Doug was nominated four times for Reserve Officer of the Year, and won the award in 2007. In addition, he received 3 unit citations for his duties.

Doug is an experienced Field Training Officer, General Instructor and recently became a Firearm's Instructor for the El Mirage Police Department. Doug is seen as a leader among his peers, and was recently elected to the position of President for the El Mirage Police Employee's Association.

Award Recipient Officer Karyn Mucci has been with the El Mirage Police Department for over 3 years. Prior to working for El Mirage, she had over 14 years of experience with the Phoenix Police Department. During her tenure with the Phoenix Police Department she worked various assignments including Patrol, Community Action Officer, and as a detective in both the Drug Enforcement Bureau and the Legal Unit. She currently is a Field Training Officer assigned to the Patrol Division.

Award Recipient Officer Walden has been with the El Mirage Police Department for 3 years but has 12 years experience as a law enforcement officer. She came to the El Mirage Police department with 4 years experience as a Sex Crimes Detective and 5 years experience as a K-9 Handler. Officer Walden is the recipient of the 2010 El Mirage Police Department's Officer of the Year Award and is currently working the streets as a patrol officer on the midnight shift.

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National Take Back Initiative

The El Mirage Police Department will be participating in a one day nationwide event on April 30, 2011 to collect unwanted and or expired medications from our residents. The collection site will be at the El Mirage Police Department, 14405 N Palm St, from 10 am to 2 p.m. The Police Department will collect all over the counter and prescription medications. However, glass containers, intravenous containers, injectable medications, syringes and needles will not be accepted.

Removing unwanted and/or expired medications helps make our community safer, healthier and drug free. For further information, contact El Mirage Police Department's Community Action Officer Monica Rios at 623-433-9536.

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COMMUNITY WIDE SPECIAL EVENTS
El Mirage Fire Fighters 1st Annual Kickball Tournament – Sunday, May 15 at 9:00 a.m.
This community and charity event will be at Gateway Park (10100 N. El Mirage Rd.). It is a double elimination tournament; the entry fee is \$200 for a team of 10 and includes team t-shirts. All proceeds benefit the El Mirage Firefighter Association Charity.
For more information, contact Steve (Bear) by May 2 at skruzel@cox.net, or 623-238-0300.

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Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30 a.m. – Senior Strides walking club
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. – BINGO!
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You Are Here
CHILDREN
SKIP ALONG STORY TIME - May 3, 10 a.m.: Ages 1-5 and their caregivers. Join us for fun books and silly songs.
ALL AGES
FAMILY MOVIE - May 26 3:30 p.m. - Register for Summer Reading today, then relax and take a break from the heat with a movie in the library.
GREAT LITTLE BALLOON COMPANY - May 31 10 a.m. - By popular demand! Enjoy classic stories retold while kids help make balloon creations of the story characters! Seating is limited; first come, first seated. Register for Summer Reading while you're here.
JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE ELMIRAGE BRANCH LIBRARY! - The Friends of the Library are people like you who are interested in supporting their local library and community through fund raising, service, and are committed to the success of the El Mirage Library.
Everyone is welcome to attend monthly meetings on the 4th Tuesday of the month (May 24th) at 1:30 p.m. at the Library, 14011 N 1st Ave.
Topics of discussion include ways to support more programs, performers, summer reading programs, and any other items that help promote reading, literacy, and lifelong learning.

The first initiative is to start selling donated books at the Fourth Friday Art celebrations at the El Mirage Civic and Cultural Center, 14010 N El Mirage Rd.
Suggested donations for Membership are \$5 for Individuals or \$10 for a Family. To volunteer your time or to join the Friends of the Library, please come by the library or call (602) 652-3000.

EL MIRAGE HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
May 10 - Need help purchasing a home? This federally funded program provides down payment and/or closing costs assistance to purchase a house in El Mirage.
Applications are available at El Mirage City Hall, 12145 NW Grand Ave. Currently, there is NOT a waiting list. It is on a first come, first serve basis. Therefore, don't delay.
Homebuyer assistance informational seminars are held the second Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in the El Mirage Senior Center, 14010 N El Mirage Rd. The next seminar is May 10. Seating is limited, call 623-876-2959 to reserve a seat.

DYSART COMMUNITY CENTER - 14414 N. El Mirage Road
623-974-4156
GED classes - Monday-Tuesday 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Tuesday 6-8 p.m.
Wednesday 5-9 p.m.
Contact Susie Ratley at

EL MIRAGE BRANCH LIBRARY
14011 N. 1st Ave.
602-652-3000
All Maricopa County Library District libraries are closed May 30 for Memorial Day
SUMMER READING PROGRAM - SIGN UP BEGINS MAY 26 - May 26: ALL DAY - Join this year's Summer Reading program and earn prizes for reading! There's a Summer Reading Program for everyone!

Cactus Wren Training Program
Approved by the Department of Health, Arizona State Board of Nursing and Licensed by the Arizona State Board for Private Post Secondary Education

Course Offering:

- Nursing Assistant Classes
- Pharmacy Technician
- Phlebotomy Technician
- Caregiver training
- CPR and First Aid
- IV certification for LPN'S
- Assisted Living Facility Manager
- Caregiver CEU's and Manager CEU's
- Assistant Statement of Deficiencies
- Group home Start-up consultation

OPEN HOUSE
May 19, 2011
1:30 pm - 4:30 pm
FREE CPR & First Aid Classes for First 20 people

FINANCIAL AID AVAILABLE FOR QUALIFIED STUDENTS

Next Classes
Phlebotomy
May 2 & June 1, 2011
8:30 am-12:30pm
Pharmacy Tech
May 3 & June 6, 2011
2:30 am-6:30pm

Locations 10640 N 28th Dr. Bldg C-107 and A-103 Phoenix, AZ 85029 Tel: 602-741-5526 602-633-2730	NEW 1833 W Main St. #138 Mesa, AZ 85201	Nursing Assistants Class Schedule								
		<table border="1"> <tr> <th>Morning Class</th> <th>Evening Class</th> </tr> <tr> <td>(9:00 am to 1:15pm)</td> <td>(4 pm to 8:15 pm)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 9, 2011</td> <td>May 2, 2011</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 13, 2011</td> <td>June 6, 2011</td> </tr> </table>	Morning Class	Evening Class	(9:00 am to 1:15pm)	(4 pm to 8:15 pm)	May 9, 2011	May 2, 2011	June 13, 2011	June 6, 2011
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(9:00 am to 1:15pm)	(4 pm to 8:15 pm)									
May 9, 2011	May 2, 2011									
June 13, 2011	June 6, 2011									

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(Just east of CVS)

Goodyear/Litchfield
Northwest corner of Litchfield and Indian School Roads
(Just west of Walmart)

Give blood 3 times a year!
1-877-UBS-HERO (827-4376)
www.UnitedBloodServicesAZ.org

United Blood Services
Find the hero in you.

CALENDAR: May 2011 events, From 10

susier@dysartcommunitycenter.org or 623-974-4156 to register.

Citizenship Preparation Classes - Mondays, 7-9 p.m. contact Susie Ratley at 623-974-4156 to register.

After School Program - Enrollment offered on Mondays, 2-7 p.m.

Tuesday - Fridays, 3-7 p.m. \$5/month per child
Contact Priscilla Pena at priscillap@dysartcommunitycenter.org or 623-583-2137.

Summer Program - Enrollment begins May 2. First come, first serve. Open to 100 youth and \$10 per week for El Mirage Residents, \$20 per week for non-El Mirage residents 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Monday through Thursdays
June 6- July 14th contact Priscilla Pena at 623-583-2137.

Community Garden in Action - In partnership with the volunteers from Christian Liberty Center, Dysart Community Center has cleaned the land to begin a community garden. We are currently recruiting volunteers to help us design the garden and maintain it so we can start providing vegetables to local residents. For more pictures and videos, visit the "Dysart Community Center" on Facebook.

EL MIRAGE SPORTS ACTIVITIES
Youth & Adult Sports
Coed, Men & Women Slow-Pitch Softball League - The

City of El Mirage and NSA is always seeking Coed teams for play during the Spring, Summer and Fall Seasons for Friday and/or Sunday nights at El Mirage Gateway Park. Each team will be guaranteed 8 regular season games with a single elimination tournament at the end of each season. NSA rules apply for all leagues. Entry fee is \$350 plus \$25 registration fee (does not include umpire fees). 10 team Maximum for Friday Night only. Contact Chris Franciscus at 412-874-4074.

Over 30-Coed Adult Soccer League - West Valley's premier Adult Coed Soccer League. Play soccer in a friendly atmosphere at Gateway Park and do the work your body needs, while keeping your stress level down. For league information go to www.azcoedsoccer.com or call 1-800-BSA-0886.

White Tanks Little League - The City is continuing to work with the newly established White Tanks Little League. Although White Tanks Little League is currently in season you can get more information regarding fall baseball and the league by visiting www.eteamz.com/whitetanksl.

Volunteer Board Members are needed each season. If you are interested and able to be part of the established White Tanks Little League Board, contact WTLI directly at 623-241-4602 or whitetanksl@msn.com

Benfica Youth Soccer League and Benfica Youth Soccer Academy - This ongoing academy. Beginning in

March of 2009, the academy provides the highest success rate of youth soccer players in order to further their personal goals.

Registered participants in the Monday - Thursday (6-8:30 p.m.) academy will be taught the sport of soccer by professional trainers and coaches. Youth will develop discipline while learning soccer skills to improve precision and technique. For more information regarding upcoming soccer programs, call 1-800-BSA-0886 or go to www.azbenfica.org

El Mirage Martial Arts Academy - The City of El Mirage Martial Arts Academy is enrolling for Okinawa Karate classes to all ages at the El Mirage Senior Center - 14010 N. El Mirage Rd.

Kids ages 6 to 12 are taught in a traditional, structured setting, without forgetting that Karate can be fun. Each class is available for a \$45 monthly fee.

Adults age 13 and up train at their own speed. Students work to develop into healthy, well conditioned individuals, both physically and mentally. They train so that they may master the art of weapon-less defense. Students challenge themselves rather than compete with other students.

Monday & Wednesday Evenings - 6-7 p.m. - Ages 6-12: 7-8:30 p.m. - Ages 13 - Up
For more information, call Martial Arts Instructor Richard Gutkosay at 623-628-6725 or 602-721-4587.

Ladies Fitness Boot Camp

- Ladies Fitness Boot Camp has landed in the El Mirage. Participants can join classes on any Monday. The classes run three days a week for four weeks from 1 to 1.5 hours. Monday, Wednesday and Friday classes take place from 5 - 6:10 a.m.

All El Mirage Residents get a 50% off for their first month. This is a \$100 value. To get started go to www.ladiesfitnessbootcamp.com to fill out a registration form.

Find more about the camp at www.ladiesfitnessbootcamp.com or contact Tracey at 623-252-1FIT (1348).

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Hours:

Monday – Friday 8AM - 7PM

Saturday 9AM - 5PM

Sunday 10AM - 4PM

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