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Publisher

# THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TIMES Inside

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THE FOUNTAIN HILLS  
**TIMES**

## A little of this and a little of that

It sounds like the flu season has hit Arizona hard.

In fact, I heard we have the most cases of anywhere in the nation. Reporter Bob Burns was out most of last week with some kind of a bronchial problem.

That doesn't happen very often.

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Former Tribal Chairman Robert Doka is this year's selection for induction into the Lower Verde Valley Hall of Fame to Fort McDowell.

He led the tribe in the fight against Orme Dam when it was first learned the reservoir would flood nearly two-thirds of their land, east of Fountain Hills.

Doka called a community meeting for tribal members to express their views about the dam and reservoir.

After hearing from the members, he called a press conference. Doka sent a telegram to then-Secretary of the Interior, Rogers Morton. This is to notify you that the Indians of Fort McDowell are not willing to give up their land for the Central Arizona Project." Doka said, "We are not saying 'Don't bring in the CAP. We are saying, 'Don't bring it through our land.'"

The ex-marine served in the Korean War. He passed away in 1977.

He was nominated by Carolina Butler, an outspoken activist against Orme Dam.

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Well, one of the biggest jobs of the year for our staff is behind us for another year. The Fountain Hills & Verde Communities Telephone Directory was delivered by the printer to our warehouse last week and delivery to homes and businesses is under way.

It is 176 pages and features a colorful cover with the fountain and the painted wall concealing the pump house. In the foreground is the cactus garden featuring a colorful plant in bloom.

Delivery of the books will continue throughout the month of March.

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The publication that the staff and nationally recognized baseball writer Charlie Vascellaro produced, was distributed last week and has had a good reception from the public and our readers.

One reader was looking at the schedule of Spring Training games and he was overheard saying in Denny's, "This is what I've been looking for." We plan to continue producing the "Play Ball" edition every year.

We have some other ideas about additional publications we can do.

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It's going to be a busy night on Sunday, March 6. The Fountain Hills Theater has its annual fund-raiser "Broadway in the Hills" starting at 5:30 p.m. with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and the . Dinner, dancing and entertainment start at 7 p.m. at the Community Center. This year's event features a beach theme complete with a band called The Southwest Surfers. There should be plenty of "Good Vibrations."

A couple of blocks away at the Fountain Hills Presbyterian Church, at 7 p.m., the Jeff Dayton tribute to Glen Campbell concert gets under way. Dayton who lived in Fountain Hills for many years, was the band leader for Campbell for 15 years. He has reassembled the band that toured with Campbell for the Sunday concert. Call 837-1763 for information about tickets.



Posing for a group shot were the top three essay contest winners (seated) and the honorable mention winners. A supportive crowd was on hand at the FHUSD Learning Center to cheer on the teens at the awards ceremony.

## Speaking Volumes

Students share powerful messages through Coalition essay contest

By Mike Scharnow  
Special to The Times

Cheers were shared – and a few tears were shed – as the Fountain Hills Coalition recently hosted an awards ceremony for its annual high school essay contest.

The School District's Learning Center was abuzz with activity as students, parents, teachers, administrators and coalition members gathered to await results.

This year's contest attracted 171 essay entrants, and Nataly Gruender walked away with the grand prize of \$1,000 for her winning essay entitled "A Letter under the Door." Taking second place with a \$200 prize was McKenna McCue, while Noah Ohnsorg's essay took the third spot, earning him a \$100 check.

"We are extremely pleased to have received 171 essays for this year's contest," said Shelly Mowry, executive director of the coalition, which fights drug abuse and underage drinking among youths.

"The teens really poured out their hearts and souls in these. They are well beyond their years..."

"And it's only appropriate we hold this ceremony around Valentine's Day, because this will touch your heart."

Students could choose from among the following

three questions to write an essay:

1. The parent-teen relationship is not always easy. Share any thoughts on how you feel either you or your parent(s) could improve this relationship.

2. Many families face addiction struggles. Share an experience where addiction has impacted you, your family or a friend. What do you feel can be done to help?

3. We live in an often stressful world, both globally and personally. What activities and actions do you engage in that bring you personal peace? In what way does this help?

In addition to the top three winners, another 14 high schoolers were recognized as honorable mention winners and awarded \$50 each.

Those teens included Gabriel Anderson, Ashley Beck, Amara Feyrer-Melk, Maddy Key, Ashley Knox, Katelyn McErlan, Brynn Oberhellman, Emily Pall, Dominique Pettiti, Brittny Quintana, Darien Redendo, Mitchell Schurz, Davis Smith and Bobby Tegland.

Excerpts were read from many of the honorable mention essays, and the top three winners were invited to read their essays aloud to the supportive crowd.

Not all chose to publicly read their essays, however, due to the per-



Coalition board member Dwight Johnson, left, listens as Amara Feyrer-Melk reads an excerpt from her honorable mention essay.

### A letter under the door

By Nataly Gruender

There is no Twelve Step program to becoming a functional teenager. There is also no all-encompassing strategy to being a "cool" parent. When beloved children enter the weird experience that is being a teenager, many parents believe that their baby will become someone they don't know. Worse than that is the possibility that the child that once saw their parents as heroes will begin to push them away.

This, I suppose, is a common nightmare of most parents. In the teenager's view these new experiences seem terrifying. And sometimes it seems that parents are either getting in the way or causing the trouble.

When the comfortable child-parent relationship comes to an end and a teenager-parent relationship is introduced, the hardest thing about this time is keeping that relationship strong. But if there is in fact no system to being a teenager or a parent, how can either one keep this relationship alive?

Like how there's no single path to being a teenager or a parent, there's no clearly labeled solution to taming a troubled teen, no cheat codes to making your parents less strict, and not all of us can have Dr. Phil solve our problems. But something that I believe everyone needs to remember is that no one is identical, therefore no two relationships are identical.

I'm not good at vocalizing my problems. But give me a pen and paper and I could convey my struggles through words in a way that would make by AP English teacher proud. My father, however, prefers to talk everything out and only picks up a pen for boring things like taxes.

Like most dads, my father likes to know what's going on in my life, and when he notices something is upsetting me he will question it. One time when he asked what was wrong, all thoughts of work, school and the imminent future scrambled up in my head and all I could manage was a faint, "I don't know."

I could tell that my demeanor was troubling him, but I just couldn't make my mouth say what my brain was thinking. Instead I went to my room and wrote a full page about what was worrying me and how I didn't know how to fix any of my problems on my own. I silently handed him this paper and was back in my room before he had even read the first word.

An hour later, I saw not one, but three sheets of paper slide under my door. My father had written me a letter in return to my exasperated essay, telling me that he loved me and then addressing each fear that I had named in turn. He gave advice to the best of his ability and told me that no matter what, he would always be on my side.

After seeing who I was as a person, someone who did better with printed words than spoken ones, my father adapted to my unique needs and said what he wanted to say in a way that made me feel comfortable. I still have that letter.

Even though teenagers might change and grow away from their parents as they age, the best thing a parent can do is adapt to this new person their child is transforming into. Just like how my dad wrote out his parental advice instead of forcing me to talk about it, noticing what your teenager's needs are and adjusting your strategy could mean the whole world to them.

As for my fellow teenagers, we don't like to admit it, but sometimes we have no idea what we're doing. I used to think I was the only one who could fix my problems. But something teenagers need to remember is that your parents were teenagers once, too. They've made mistakes and done stupid things, just like you have done or will probably do.

My mother and father tell me that they are my free source of life advice, and they are.

So parents, allow your child to change, learn to adapt, and let your teenager know that they are loved. And teenagers, let your parents know they are loved. And learn to accept the help. That letter showed me that parents will do anything for their children, and proved to me that I am not alone on my journey. The relationship between parent and teenager could be one of the most important relationships you make in your entire lifetime, so make it a good one.



Top three finishers in the annual Fountain Hills Coalition essay contest were, from left, McKenna McCue, second place; Nataly Gruender, first place; and Noah Ohnsorg, third.

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