

Opinion

Mourning Morningstar

A letter from:
Lisa A. Wagner

We've heard a great sales pitch to approve and build an assisted living facility. It will surely profit, but how will it spark future growth? Building a nursing home on prime real estate compromises our goals and misrepresents our assets. Rather than encourage vitality, Morningstar will define us as a dying community. Who visits a town that features the world's greatest fountain and a nicely appointed nursing home?

Residents are bound to the nursing facility itself, not its location. As we all know, Fountain Hills has an abundance of vacant properties, many better suited for this endeavor.

We've rezoned the space, but what if they proposed a prison or cemetery? Would we be so grateful then? None are the best "permitted use." And what about local revenue? Morningstar boasts a 24-hour bistro, salon, theater and spa.

By design, it's all-inclusive for residents and employees, no need to shop or dine out. Twice a year however, artists travel from around the country and park on the property. THEY patronize locally and encourage visitors. Without that available space, artist participation and local revenue will decline.

Access to the property is remote with no easy entry for emergency vehicles, proximity to a highway or emergency room. No one's care should be compromised by a hindered traffic flow or by distance.

Transition is sub optimal. One side offers much sought after condos, the other offers a hotel where guests vacation. The transition is one of vibrancy and liveliness to neither of those.

Finally, the project was approved without input from 20,000 residents. They'll return to building in their back yards that occurred without their representation.

Clearly the only interests being served are those of the developers. We've acted in haste to approve a bad idea rather than plan an optimal and progressive course.

Fountain of youth

A letter from:
James Villers

The elusive fountain sought by us humans since the beginning of our existence has always been around, but no one bothered to look in the right places.

The noted explorer Ponce De Leon searched the newly discovered Americas for this mystical fountain. The only fountain he found was the blood spouting from a shoulder wound caused by an arrow fired from one of the locals.

As for myself, I am nearing 93 years old but I feel I have found this fountain in my local community. During the hot weather I will go down to Fountain Park and sit near the sprinklers and watch the young children cavorting in an out of the sprinklers and enjoying youth as only the young know how. I will close my eyes and reminisce back to the 1920s in Brooklyn, N.Y., where the Department of Sanitation would set sprinklers for us children to enjoy. For those brief few moments I am again a child, I have found the elusive fountain.

When I arrive back at my condo and look in the mirror I am in for a rude awakening, I find an old man looking back at me.

This fountain is available to everyone, all one has to do is look to the children enjoying themselves as only children know how. An old adage which might apply to the above for people still searching

for the fountain (Some do not see the forest for the trees, and most do not even see the trees).

New heights

A letter from:
Howard Iskyan

Those persons who are interested in the Fountain Hills Fountain should visit the website of *The Canberra Times* <http://www.canberra-times.com.au/act-news/ganggang-captain-cook-memorial-fountain-back-in-action-20150526-gh9ogk.html> <<http://www.canberra-times.com.au/act-news/ganggang-captain-cook-memorial-fountain-back-in-action-20150526-gh9ogk.html>>.

The letter is based on that Australian article. Both the Fountain Hills Fountain and the Captain Cook Memorial Fountain were put into operation at about the same time, i.e. 1970. Based on differing definitions each can claim to be the highest at that time. However, now "Neither of the two comes within a bull's roar of the world's highest water jets". The undisputed king, which is appropriate given its name after Saudi Arabia's King Fahd, located in the Red Sea off Jeddah, i.e. 260 meters versus Fountain Hills' 91 meters. The King's Fountain is followed by the South Korea Fountain 202 meters, the St. Louis Gateway Gateway, the Pakistan Port Fountain, and the

Dubai Fountain.

Like Fountain Hills, the Captain Cook Fountain is due for refurbishment. *The Canberra Times* article concludes "Surely, one would think, this represents an excellent opportunity to do more than just recapture the original capacity of what is arguably our best known watermark... A world-beating water jet would prove that when it comes to international competitions... this country has still got what it takes."

This question is applicable to both our country and our fountain. We are no longer number one. Should we just stay out of the competition, or capitalize on our strengths? Currently, the Congress is debating Fast Track Trade Authority. We have the choice of staying out of competition in world trade, or putting ourselves in the best possible position.

Fountain Hills cannot have the highest fountain, but does that mean that it should stop improving. The question for world trade, our fundamental attitude about ourselves, and our fountain is the same, should we try to improve, or do nothing?

Unraveling

A letter from:
Kimberly Miller

As a result of our complacency, our country is unraveling. We show little concern for our children's education at all levels; a lack of protection and care

for the mentally ill and homeless; and a lack of compassion for our children returning home from war, wounded mentally and physically. Our entire infrastructure is heading into an abyss.

Our churches are falling apart. Our role models "haven't been." All of God's creation, we are annihilating. What happened to our values and morals? Where is our compassion and decency? We have so misconstrued the Bible by the defiling of "dominion" since the dawn of man, and churches remain in utter ignorance as we treat billions of animals less than their own excrement, never promoting the Bible's healthy diet of nuts, fruit, and vegetables. We have been acting in a shameful and irresponsible manner.

Huge and laden corporations backed by big money have caused the grandest holocaust man has ever known, killing two billion innocent, defenseless animals every week just for our gluttonous appetites. By our complacency, we now are allowing millions of animals to be shipped thousands of miles to other countries to be slaughtered.

The younger generation is now questioning atrocities such as our abuse of animals for food, in the same manner that we questioned the slaughter of Native Americans, slavery, women's rights, Japanese slave camps, etc.

Save your health, the environment, and the animals. Consider Meatless Mondays!

Tough choice

A letter from:
Paula Hatch

There are many reasons we are fortunate to live in Fountain Hills, not the least of which is to have the support of Republic Services Community Grant Program. There are only two cities in which Republic Services provides the grant: Fountain Hills and Readington, N.J. In each, Republic Services provides a \$10,000 grant to the community group receiving the most votes from recycling customers. There are five local organizations/projects asking for your votes, more information is available at publicgivesback.com.

So, given that each of these organizations is in need of the funds and each does "good work" for the community, why am I writ-

Our viewpoint

Fireworks and more...

As we inch closer to Independence Day, many will be tempted to blow off some fireworks in celebration of this holiday or simply because today is the first "legal" day personal fireworks can be used until July 6.

But we're urging everyone to leave these things in the hands of professionals.

Arizona state law allows for the sale of the fireworks items between May 20 and July 6, for the celebration of the Fourth of July, and again between Dec. 10 and Jan. 3, for celebration of the New Year.

The sale and use of "novelty" items known as snappers (pop-its), party poppers, glow works, snakes, toy smoke devices and sparklers are permitted at all times.

Also, individuals may be cited by law enforcement for using fireworks anywhere but private property with the owner's permission.

Fireworks on the store shelves at this time are the items that are legal to use during the holiday. All other fireworks are prohibited, except as authorized by permit from the local fire department.

It's a common sight to see illegal fireworks being used here at this time of year -- fireworks that were perhaps purchased elsewhere and brought here.

This is not a good idea. With our desert community, sweeping washes and surrounding wildland areas, the fire danger is extreme at this time of year. A simple spark can ignite a tremendous wildland blaze. Let's wait until Fourth at the Fountain and then we can all "ooh" and "aah" at the big fireworks at that time.

Garden gem

A letter from:
Peg Lewis

The Fountain Hills Botanical Garden is located on Fountain Hills Blvd. for all citizens and visitors to enjoy. I first discovered this treasure when here as a snow bird and now I enjoy it as a resident.

Are you interested in hiking, bird watching or learning about the native plants or colorful rocks? You will find it all HERE.

The hiking paths are well maintained and many of the native trees and plants are labeled. There are even benches for resting.

This hidden treasure deserves your vote for the Republic Services grant to update and make the entrance area more attractive. Take pride in this GEM.

Superior service

A letter from:
John Riley

Customer service is alive and well in FH. My wife, Connie and I wanted to visit Alaska.

We had never been there so we decided to use a travel agent to help us plan the

(cont. on page 7A)

Health Talk

By: **Maria Perreault**
Program Manager
Fountain Hills Coalition and
Health Council member



Keeping teens safe over summer

Summertime is peak time for teens to try drugs or drink alcohol. More teenagers start drinking and smoking cigarettes and marijuana in June and July than in any other months. According to a report by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, during each of those summer days, more than:

- 11,000 teens on average use alcohol for the first time
- 5,000 start smoking cigarettes
- 4,500 try marijuana

These months include periods when adolescents are on a break from school and have more idle time, have fewer structured responsibilities and less adult supervision. Even though summer months are about free time, it is also about greater risk, and the Fountain Hills Coalition suggests parents:

1. Have structured daily activities for your child. There are many programs in town for kids of all ages including the FHUSD summer school program, vacation Bible schools and summer camp through our local Boys and Girls Club-McKee Branch.
2. Have your child enjoy supervised time with friends through the town's many activities and Party in the Park Series (www.fh.az.gov/recreation).
3. Develop a list of activities they can do without your permission and activities they need to ask your permission before doing.
4. Establish a regular daily check-in call time with your child so they know they will have at least that time to communicate with you directly each day.
5. At night, take a moment to review the day's activities and discuss any situations that may need clarification for the following day.

It is important for children and teens to be able to decompress, enjoy the summer months and the relaxation that comes along with them. As tempting as it may be for parents to let their guard down during this casual time, continued supervision and communication is just as important in helping to keep your teen safe and healthy as it is throughout the school year.

If you suspect your child is using drugs, Early Action Kits are available at Fire Station No. 1 (Palisades Blvd.), through Dr. Matthew Hummel's office (16838 E. Palisades Ct#153) and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office reception (located on the first floor at Town Hall). They are free of charge and no information is needed when picking it up. For more information, please go to www.fhcoalition.org.

Online Poll

www.fhtimes.com

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION

Do you think the temps will reach 125 degrees this summer?

Yes No

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Do you like the Park Place plan for the Avenue?

45% Yes 55% No

Take our weekly online poll on the home page of our website, www.fhtimes.com

This is not a scientific public opinion poll. Polls expire Monday, 5 pm.

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The Times wants to hear from its readers and encourages letters to the editor. All letters must be under 300 words. It is preferred that they be typewritten and must include a name, address and telephone number for verification. All letters are subject to editing, and all letters that are judged as personal complaints about neighbors or businesses will not be considered. No person may submit more than two letters or cartoons for publication during a calendar month. Two submissions will not be published in the same issue.

Letters deadline noon Monday

All letters must be submitted by noon on Monday to be considered for publication in that week's edition. They are to be dropped off at The Times office at 16508 E. Palisades Blvd., P.O. Box 17869, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269-7869 or faxed to 837-1951. Letters also may be e-mailed to mike@fhtimes.com.

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