



THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TIMES

Your Award-Winning Hometown Weekly Newspaper

ATTENTION
All Homeowners, Realtors & Brokers
WE SPECIALIZE IN BUYING SHORT SALES,
WITH MULTIPLE MORTGAGES AND LIENS

Selling your home, Call us...We are cash buyers
 We don't charge any fees. Period!
 Realtors receive a guaranteed commission at closing
 Professional mitigation team on staff
 Entire process is handled by an attorney
 If you want to sell your home now, call us today!

Heritage Property Solutions **602-725-4852**

Wednesday, June 2, 2010

\$1.00

Volume 37, No. 22 • 32 pages • 3 sections

Budget breaks Fountain time won't be cut

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

It appears the town will not cut the Fountain's running time in an effort to save money and help balance the budget for next year.

Accounting staff indicated to the Town Council during a recent budget presentation that the 15-minute per hour run time for the Fountain would not be cut, and Community Services Director Mark Mayer has confirmed that for The Times.

"The Fountain run times will remain at 15 minutes

and this is now included in the budget," Mayer said.

In earlier discussions Mayer had proposed that the run time for the Fountain be reduced to five minutes per hour in an effort to save up to \$60,000 over the next year.

That idea, however, met with resistance from residents, particularly from Realtors and those business owners in Plaza Fountain-side and on the Avenue of the Fountains.

The discussion also made its way into Valley media outlets.

There were TV news features stating the town

was definitely cutting back the Fountain's operation schedule, and one radio station announcer even stated the town had already shut the Fountain off.

There was also news brief about the Fountain being cut back to five minutes in the nationally-distributed *USA Today*.

However, Parks and Recreation will be feeling the budget pinch in other areas this coming fiscal year such as routine park maintenance.

"We have cut back on the frequency of mowing in the cooler months when
(cont. on Page 8A)

Compromises for seniors, contracts

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Town Council has been able to tentatively resolve some budget issues but may still be involved in lengthy discussions as members move to adopt a preliminary budget plan Thursday.

The council has come to some consensus on maintaining the operation of the Fountain (see separate story), funding community service agreements and addressing Senior Services revenue.

The town's contribution to the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Bureau and the Extended Hands Food Bank will be cut by 14 percent. The amount in the budget for tourism is \$129,000, and the Food Bank amount is \$37,840.

The Fountain Hills Community Theater will be cut based on self-imposed

budget reductions and will receive \$90,300 from the town.

The Boys and Girls Club will receive \$100,000, the same contribution it received last fiscal year.

Vice Mayor Cassie Hansen said it would not be equitable to cut all of the services the same amount. She noted that the Boys and Girls Club had not received increases over the three-year term of the contracts as the other agencies had.

Hansen also noted that the Community Theater, for instance, operated out of a town-owned building at a nominal lease fee.

Mayor Jay Schlum said he was not willing to discuss the agreements at that level of detail.

"I don't think it is practical for us to drill down in that detail," Schlum said. "We are getting good value from all of our partners."

"The real issue is not

having the money to put into it."

However, Schlum moved an amendment to support the Boys and Girls Club with no cuts to the town contribution.

That motion carried with a 4-3 vote.

The town had earlier budgeted increases to Senior Services membership and the cost for Home Delivered Meals, but were admonished by seniors that this was not acceptable.

It had been proposed that the cost of membership be raised from \$12 to \$25 and Home Delivered Meals be increased from \$6.50 to \$8.50.

Senior Services Advisory Commission Chairman Jim Judge challenged the town's cost calculations for Home Delivered Meals, saying they did not consider revenue from clients who pay for their meals and contri-
(cont. on Page 8A)



Times photo by Ryan Winslett

Wet 'n wild hug

Mary Doka decides to give Amy Wojtysiak a hug just in time to keep her from running away before the cold water hits during Fountain Hills Charter School's end-of-year field day event, culminating with a traditional dousing provided by local fire fighters. For additional photos, see page 11A.

*Summer: Teen parties heat up Drug coalition told zero tolerance by MCSO

By Michael Scharnow
Times Editor

With high school graduation now complete, and the heat upon us, authorities warn about the increased chance for underage drinking parties this summer.

About 40 people attending a recent meeting of the Fountain Hills Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition were told to be on the lookout.

"If you know of a party scheduled, we can be proactive," said Lt. Brian Jakowicz of the Sheriff's Office.

"We have a zero tolerance for underage drinking."

The coalition has waged a campaign this spring to deter underage drinking and warning parents about the dangers and illegalities of hosting teen get-togethers where alcohol is involved.

Survey numbers show that the majority of teens who drink obtain their alcohol at parties.

An Arizona Youth Survey filled out by Fountain Hills High School seniors in February revealed that 46 percent of them had drunk alcohol during the past 30

days.

"Substance abuse among adolescents is everywhere, not just Fountain Hills," said Carole Groux, coalition director.

"We just have to plant ourselves, dig in and attack the problem..."

"We can't address all the problems at once. We're starting slowly and hopefully gaining momentum."

Groux said it is a "community problem" and the coalition seeks to change the social norms so that underage drinking and other illegal usage of drugs don't remain a "rite of passage."

Jakowicz said the MCSO is aware that several things will be happening this summer - teen drinking increases, vandalism incidents rise and the number of fights go up as well.

"We'll be heading off a lot of crimes if we can get proactive on the drinking," he added.

Residents are urged to call MCSO dispatch at (602) 876-1011 if they know of a teen drinking party.

If there is a fight occurring, other emergency or even "suspicious circumstances," residents should dial 9-1-1.

The coalition announced the establishment of the "Safe Homes Network" of Fountain Hills, a loose alliance of parents who pledge to keep their homes free of underage drinking.

The coalition and Fountain Hills Times will periodically publish the names of those individuals who are part of the network.

Participants pledge:

* To not knowingly allow youths under 21 to consume or use alcohol or illegal drugs at their home, property or gatherings at other locations.

* To provide reasonable adult supervision for parties of underage youths at their home.

* When out of town, to now knowingly allow children to host parties at the house involving underage youths.

* To welcome and encourage contact from other parents whose children are gathering at their home.

"We have to raise our standards," Groux said about the community and its attitude toward underage drinking and other issues.

"The younger you start
(cont. on Page 2A)

Elkie ready for challenges

Swearing-in Thursday

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

Tait Elkie will be sworn in as the newest member of the Fountain Hills Town Council Thursday evening, taking the oath alongside incumbents returning to their seats, Ginny Dickey and Henry Leger and Mayor Jay Schlum.

In many ways Elkie is a prototypical Fountain Hills resident.

He lived in the Valley a number of years with only a vague notion of Fountain Hills and its location until being introduced to the community by a friend, family, or in his case, a co-worker.

The attraction was immediate, and Elkie was living in the community within six months.

That was four years



Tait Elkie will take his seat for a four-year term on the Town Council at the June 3 regular meeting.

ago, and two years ago Elkie opened his own law office in the community and has been busy getting involved with the VFW and Sunset Kiwanis.

He is also part of the Fountain Hills Republican Club, for which he is treasurer.

Getting involved in politics has been on his "to do" list, and when Councilman Keith McMahan passed

away in March 2009, Elkie applied for the seat, which went to Councilman Dennis Brown by appointment.

However, Elkie said he was urged by others to keep his name out there and run for a seat in the next election. He said there was a feeling it was time for "new blood" on the council.
(cont. on Page 2A)

*SUMMER: Parents need to be vigilant

(cont. from page 1A)

drinking, the higher the risk of alcohol disorders later in life. If onset is at age 13, there is a 40 percent chance of having alcohol disorders later.

“Why, as a parent, would

you want this for your child?”

“Our community has to address this problem, not just the parents. One way to attack the problem is to reduce access to alcohol.

“Parties are a very big problem in Fountain Hills.”

Groux said the Safe Homes Network will help increase awareness.

“When your kid screws up, you tend to go underground,” she said. “Especially in a small town like this.

“But you shouldn’t go si-

lent. It’s a phenomenon I’d like to break. I don’t think it’s helpful. It’s important to share information as parents with one another.

“We need to change the social norm, to say that (underage drinking) is not OK, it’s illegal.”