



THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TIMES

Your Award-Winning Hometown Weekly Newspaper

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Hues of beauty



A bright moon, sunset-stricken clouds, palms swaying in the breeze, a world-famous Fountain – life just doesn't get much better than that. Isabelle Yono, age 11, thought the same thing and grabbed her camera to capture this beautiful scenic shot. Our town's special beauty can be appreciated at any age...

'Play Day' on Saturday

Town encouraging playful activities

In recognition of the town's designation as a "Playful Community" Mayor Jay Schlum has proclaimed Saturday, Sept. 18, as an official Play Day for Fountain Hills.

The town Community Services Department will be one of more than 1,000 communities across the country hosting a Ka-BOOM! Play Day!

KaBOOM! is the national non-profit organization making children healthier by creating great places to play and together with

Play Day sponsor Mott's, the Town of Fountain Hills Community Services will be hosting a fun field day for the whole community, with games and activities to get families healthy and active outside.

For the Fountain Hills Play Day, kids and adult activities will include:

Youth Soccer contests including throw-ins, penalty kicks, and accuracy competitions and tentative scrimmage from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Desert Vista Park. Awards will be given

out to a selection of winners.

A disc golf clinic hosted by pro Dan Ginnelly will take place from 10 a.m. to noon at Fountain Park's Golden Barrel Ramada.

Tentatively planned activities include youth flag football practices at Four Peaks Park North Field, and games and contests at Golden Eagle Park conducted by MCSO.

There are also tentative plans for an adult tennis clinic by Parks & Recreation instructor Ron Nielson at Golden Eagle Park Tennis Courts.

Pickleball games will be played from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Palisades West Courts.

There are also tentative plans for a walk by Fountain Hills Walking Club.

To help make the Town of Fountain Hills an even better place to play, adults will be invited to take part in an improvement project such as replacing any old soccer nets at Desert Vista Park.

Efforts are being made to have activities taking place at each of the town parks.

Children today spend less time playing outdoors than any previous generation and are spending an average of four hours a day viewing electronic media.

This lack of active play is directly linked to increased childhood obesity – one of the main issues facing children today.

Play enhances children's learning readiness, learning behaviors and problem-solving skills. They're also happier and better able to get along with others.

Johnny as Janitor?

Proposal would cut classroom cleaning to hire more teachers

By Ryan Winslett
Times Reporter

With federal assistance still uncertain, two items affecting educational funding on the November ballot and the most drastic state-wide budget cuts in recent memory, Arizona schools continue to struggle with providing a quality education despite slimmer wallets.

The Fountain Hills Unified School District governing board addressed these challenges at the Sept. 8 meeting, discussing the possibility of trimming janitorial services to bring in additional educators at the second and third grade level.

Class sizes have taken up much of the limelight recently as Arizona Districts try to balance maintaining teachers with a dwindling budget.

Locally, FHUSD recently hired a new kindergarten and first grade teacher, creating more ideal class-

room environments at those levels.

Second and third grade classes are still above the desired number of bodies in chairs and, according to board member Dana Saar, the district should be looking at more options to bring these class sizes down.

At the Sept. 8 meeting, Saar presented his argument for limiting janitorial services in order to free up some cash for additional teachers.

"Class size in these areas is something I've always felt very strongly about," Saar said.

"A major reason for asking for the K-3 overrides was to provide lower class sizes and we need to be sure we're doing everything we can to do that effectively."

Saar quickly identified the difference between janitorial and custodial, stating that it was primarily in-classroom maintenance that would be affected by his proposed changes.

According to Saar, a jani-

torial contract of about \$300,000 could provide several additional educators, who usually operate on about a \$45,000 annual salary.

"Of course, some duties would have to be delegated to the classrooms," Saar said. "This would require some personal commitments, especially on the

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School Board
candidates**

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part of students and staff."

Such activities as floor vacuuming, dry mopping, trash disposal and dusting, for instance, would become the responsibilities of the individual classrooms.

Saar stated that, given the choice between janitorial services and additional teachers for classrooms, he

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Long-time Town Prosecutor Mark Iacovino explained the legal consequences of getting caught for underage drinking during a Teen and Parent Symposium held last week by the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition.

The dangers of drinking

Teens, parents given big wake-up call

By Michael Scharnow
Times Editor

Officials last week spent more than an hour educating teens (and parents) about the severe consequences surrounding underage drinking.

Teenagers typically do not think too far ahead when it comes to potential long-term harmful impacts from drinking, experts said at the Underage Drinking Symposium.

"Decisions you make now will affect your future for years to come," said Michael Harmon, a counselor and social worker

who works with clients on substance abuse issues.

The symposium was organized by the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, and it was attended by more than 175 people.

Consequences were covered in such areas as legal issues, driving record, physical, social, emotional and academic.

Carole Groux, coalition director, said a survey of participants showed that 99.5 percent had a positive response to the information.

"Written in evaluation comment reflected many

participants learned multiple facts they didn't know about the law, legalities and long-term consequences of underage drinking," Groux said.

"And students reported learning what to do if they get caught in a bad situation."

Both FHUSD School Superintendent Dr. Bill Myhr and Sheriff's Dep. John McAtee, the school resource officer, reiterated the policy of zero tolerance regarding drugs and alcohol on campus.

For the first offense, Myhr said law enforcement

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Promoting tourism

Gov. Jan Brewer and Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation President Dr. Clinton Pattea plugged the features of Fort McDowell and Fountain Hills during the taping of a message for later this month at the annual conference of the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) at Tulalip, Wash., near Seattle. Radisson Fort McDowell Resort will be the location for the September 2011 gathering hosted by Fort McDowell, Fountain Hills and the state. The national parley focuses on topics related to tourism and Native American lands. The Fountain Hills/Fort McDowell Visitors Bureau, a division of the Chamber of Commerce, collaborated with the Radisson in submitting the successful bid for booking the national conference.

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Candidates fill H.S. gym
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Love of theater:

Hard-working staff, volunteers make FHCT endearing.
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Falcons tough:

Carter Capirchio (pictured) runs five yards for a score in Falcon win.
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WEATHER

	H	L	P
Tues., Sept. 7	100	80	--
Wed., Sept. 8	98	78	--
Thurs., Sept. 9	93	61	--
Fri., Sept. 10	93	65	--
Sat., Sept. 11	97	68	--
Sun., Sept. 12	99	70	--
Mon., Sept. 13	104	70	--

For weather updates and forecasts go to www.fhtimes.com



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* DRINKING: Symposium eye-opening to many

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will be called in, a suspension is possible, and by the third offense expulsion will occur.

"And, unlike law enforcement, we only need reasonable cause to search lockers, backpacks or cars on campus," Myhr said.

He briefly reviewed the new district athletic code, which now allows athletes to "self report" a substance abuse issue (before school or police officials are involved) and not lose playing time in a sport.

"We've already had one case of self-reporting under the new code," Myhr said.

"We are in a help mode, not a punish mode."

McAtee, a drug recognition expert and trainer, made it clear, however, that he will aggressively pursue incidents of drug and alcohol abuse.

"I will not accept kids drinking or taking drugs," he said. "There is zero tolerance. I will arrest you."

Those found in possession of drugs will be booked into the Mesa Juvenile Correctional Facility.

As for house parties, McAtee said the only way this problem will decrease is by parents talking to other parents and parents talking to their teens.

The deputy also urged parents to be more proactive when it comes to room searches within their own homes.

To the teens he said, "All the rules your parents come up with are designed to protect you and keep you safe. Your friends like you, but they won't get hung for you."

Binge drinking

Jessica Smith, state-wide director for Students Against Destructive Decisions, said that alcohol poisoning is a bigger issue among teens than most people realize.

Binge drinking usually leads to young adults passing out and potentially aspirating on their own vomit and other deadly consequences.

"When you're puking, your system is saying, 'Enough, I'm toxic, I can't hold anymore.' It's already in your blood stream," she said.

Smith said alcohol users who start drinking under the age of 14 are 40 percent more likely to become alcohol dependent when they

are adults.

Town Prosecutor Mark Iacovino said, next to tobacco, alcohol is the most dangerous drug known to mankind because people's ability to exercise responsible judgment quickly goes out the window when they start drinking.

He believes a minimum of 85 percent of all crimes are in some fashion related to alcohol.

"That's why it is illegal for kids to drink," he said. "They just don't have the life experiences."

Iacovino reviewed state laws concerning consumption and possession along

with the potential fines, jail sentences, probation, etc. Simply hopping as a passenger into a car where alcohol is located could bring a possession charge, the long-time prosecutor said.

"These things can follow you for years," Iacovino said of consumption convictions. "They can impact you so far down the road in ways you've never even thought of."

Harmon, the substance abuse counselor, said teens drink because they want to fit into their particular group or culture.

"If you hang around with kids who drink, and

if you don't make certain changes, you will drink," he told teens in attendance.

As "good times" are had with the group, that only reinforces the desire to drink and associate it with having a good time.

"How do you not drink? You just get out of that culture or that particular group," Harmon said.

Smith of SADD wrapped up the symposium by reviewing some practical tips for parents and teens on dealing with consequences and social situations involving alcohol.

"Alcohol kills more kids than all other drugs com-

bined," she added. "Be involved in your child's life. Plan things out. Role play. Follow through is key.

"If drinking is condoned in your home, that's blanket permission for your teens to drink."

Mayor Jay Schlum opened the symposium and thanked the coalition for organizing such an effort.

"We as a community are a form of family," he said. "Like families, alcohol and drugs can ruin communities..."

"In Fountain Hills, we do not put our heads in the sand. We shine the light on and step up to face chal-

lenges together. We care, we take action."

Schlum said that, according to the Teenage Research Unlimited, 51 percent of 13- to 15-year-olds say they will be faced with making a decision regarding alcohol in the next three months.

"Groups such as this coalition send out a strong statement that underage drinking and alcohol-fueled misbehavior will not be tolerated," the mayor added.

"I challenge you to share what you learn and hear tonight with other parents and encourage them to step up and do the same."

* Parents say much was learned at meet

Based on the feedback she received last week, Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition Director Carole Groux said the group will continue its education efforts here.

The coalition organized a Parent and Teen Symposium on Underage Drinking.

"Teens who know these facts are much less likely to drink underage," Groux said.

"And parents who know these facts are less likely to condone this behavior and more likely to design rules and consequences about underage drinking."

Groux said it is well known that parental attitudes have an enormous influence on adolescents' probability of underage drinking.

"We will continue educating more parents and students on the informa-

tion presented by this well-rounded panel of experts."

Parent Mari DeGroot said about the symposium:

"I am so thankful for the coalition for providing parents and teens with information to end underage drinking in our schools and community.

"The symposium was well organized and provided some 'eye-opening' information, especially from the town prosecutor

and Sheriff's Deputy John McAtee regarding legal consequences for our students on campus and in the community.

"It was really emphasized that the choices students make now affect the rest of their lives.

"The 'Parent Toolkit' was a nice touch, which included a BreathScan alcohol detector."

Mary Ann and John DeCicco were at the sym-

posium as well.

"It offered informative and interesting information for both the kids and adults," he said.

"The panel of speakers was diverse and offered different perspectives regarding physiological effects and legal implications of underage alcohol use.

"This was a very good program and great job was done by all involved."

* Coalition offers 'stay connected' parenting classes

To help battle local substance abuse and underage drinking, the Fountain Hills Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

organized two programs geared toward parents.

The first is "Safe Homes Network" of Fountain Hills, a loose alliance of

parents who pledge to keep their homes free of underage drinking and parties.

The second is "Staying Connected with Your Teen," a series of classes for parents of teens.

With the Safe Homes 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 not 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.

Stay Connected

Parents who sign up for a session of "Staying Connected with Your Teen" will receive \$100.

There is a total of 10 hours in the workshops.

The program is being funded through a grant

awarded the coalition by the Governor's Office for Children, Youth & Families - Division for Substance Abuse Policy.

Karen Whalen-Bayne of the coalition said the "Staying Connected with Your Teen" program teaches parents and teens skills to improve communication.

She added that the coalition selected this program because it is a science-based prevention program that is grounded in rigorous research from a variety of disciplines.

Families who participated in the program showed improvement in five critical areas -- prevention of substance abuse, improved family discipline practices, improved family supervision skills, improved family bonding and reduced family attitudes favorable to anti-social behavior.

The program consists of:

- * Real life strategies to increase bonding, reduce risk factors and increase protective factors resulting in a more effective relationship with your teen.

- * Ideas for parents to

supervise their teen while reducing arguments and accusations about invading your teen's privacy.

- * Techniques to assist parents with setting family policies on health and safety issues.

- * Tools and methods for effective family problem solving.

"Things start to change with kids once they enter their middle school years," said Whalen-Bayne, a retired educator.

"This is a very proactive, practical program. It's not just about alcohol. A major emphasis is keeping alive those relationships with your children."

The first round of classes has already been held. Sign-ups are currently being taken for sessions in September, October, January, February and March.

All sessions are conducted in the Fountain Hills Unified School District Learning Center.

To sign up or for more information, contact Whalen-Bayne at (480) 639-0519 or e-mail her at karob@cox.net.

Drop off prescription pills anonymously

Prescription drug abuse in this country is an epidemic and now law enforcement is giving citizens an opportunity to dispose of unused pills in the medicine cabinet.

With pill abuse at record levels, addicts are looking in as many medicine cabinets as possible - in many cases without the knowledge of the person to whom the drugs are prescribed.

On Saturday, Sept. 25, DEA in conjunction with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office is operating a collection site in Fountain Hills where residents can turn in their unused, unneeded and expired prescription drug medications - no questions asked.

This is a free, anonymous service that will help keep homes safe and could

save lives.

Prescription drugs treat illness and alleviate pain, but they should only be used when prescribed by a doctor.

Unfortunately, these medications often end up in the wrong hands. More than 70 percent of people who abuse these medications say they get them from family or friends.

Many users of street drugs like heroin start with abusing painkillers. Don't be an unknowing source. Help make the community and homes safer by participating in this program.

The Fountain Hills collection site will be at Town Hall located at 16705 E. Avenue of the Fountains, at La Montana Drive. Hours of operation will be 1 to 4 p.m.