

AROUND MESA

Lifelong Learning is ramping up at Mesa Community College

The New Frontiers Lifelong Learning program is ramping up at Mesa Community College with classes going online because of the pandemic.

There are other social opportunities, such as outdoor hiking and discussion groups. An MCC student ID card gives New Frontier Lifelong Learning members discounts on MCC campuses and in the community.

The program is a peer-led, self-directed organization of over 400 members operating under MCC's sponsorship.

Classes are usually held one time or two times for one to two hours and in some cases over a period of a few weeks. There are no tests, grades or credits to worry about.

Fees this year are \$60.

For more information: 480-461-7497 or newfrontiers.mesacc.edu

Mesa Hydration Donation Campaign needs water

The Mesa Hydration Donation Campaign has collected thousands of bottles of water to help people in need, including the homeless and unsheltered, but with less than seven weeks remaining in the campaign and temperatures exceeding triple digits daily, the need for donations is still critical.

More than 134,000 bottles have been collected but the campaign's goal is 400,000 bottles by Sept. 25.

You can donate water at various drop-off locations throughout the City. A complete list is at mesaaz.gov/

H2Omesa.

Businesses, residents and organizations are being challenged to buy a pallet of water, which weighs more than one ton, for under \$150. A donated pallet of water would contribute approximately 2,016 bottles to the campaign.

"If our Chamber members all stepped up to the challenge or partnered with others to take the challenge it would be a huge success and we would reach our goal of collecting 400,000 bottles of water," Mesa Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Sally Harrison said.

Businesses or residents donating pallets of water can contact Melissa Forrester with United Food Bank at mforrester@unitedfoodbank.org.

The water is distributed through United Food Bank to numerous nonprofit organizations in Mesa and throughout the valley including Paz de Cristo, Mesa United Way and A New Leaf-East Valley Men's Center.

Mesa parks win 3 national awards

Mesa Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Department has received three Best of the Best Awards from the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association.

The three awards are: Outstanding Adaptive Program for its Certified Autism Center; the Partnership Award for its work with Dave Bang Associates in upgrading Jefferson Park at 306 S. Jefferson Ave.; and the Young Professional Award that went to Oscar Venegas, who has participated as a teen, mentor and

worker in city recreation centers for the past 22 years.

"The APRA Best of the Best Awards are a statewide recognition of our dedicated staff who work hard to provide innovative programs and tremendous facilities for our residents," Mesa Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities Director Marc Heinstberg said.

MCC succeeding with some fishy business in East Mesa

Endangered, native Gila Topminnows at the Mesa Community College Red Mountain Campus support the recovery of the fish's species.

The Red Mountain Campus now raises enough that they are being used to stock other bodies of water throughout the state.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department last week relocated 100 topminnows to Pima County's Roger Road Nodal Park ponds to help replenish the species in the wild.

The endangered fish were originally introduced to the MCC Cienega in 2016 through a collaboration with the Phoenix Zoo, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the state.

MCC Life Science Professor Andrew Holycross and Life Sciences Exhibits Coordinator Paula Swanson have worked extensively on the cienega project, caring for the endangered topminnows.

"This is the first time our population has been used as a source of fish for new populations, which means we've arrived," Holycross said.

A cienega is usually a wet, marshy area at the foot of a mountain, in a canyon or on the edge of a grassland

where groundwater bubbles to the surface.

The cienega at MCC Red Mountain provides students with an on-site exhibit and reserve. With native plants and animals, the cienega incorporates educational signage for faculty, staff and the general public.

The MCC Life Science Department also has played a significant role in the conservation and regrowth of other species such as Desert Pupfish and Lowland Leopard Frogs.

The endangered species in the cienega provide faculty and students with the opportunity to offer research experiences, the ability to collect data on rare habitats, and to observe endangered plants and animals.

Cadence homes selling quickly in The Strand in East Mesa

Harvard Investments says sales have exceeded expectations in Newport Homes' The Strand at Cadence. Newport Homes has sold 71 of the 82 available homes since sales began in April in the master-planned community at Ellsworth and Ray roads in Mesa.

The neighborhood has two-story homes in groupings of six, which the builder said "appeals to smaller families, individuals and empty nesters. It has its own park connected to the trail system at Cadence.

The Strand has three different floor plans ranging from 1,710 to 2,493 square feet, individual yards and access to Cadence's community center, pools, fitness center and ball courts. Pricing starts around \$300,000.

Information: cadenceaz.com. ■