



THE FOUNTAIN HILLS TIMES

Your Award-Winning Hometown Weekly Newspaper

Vote

Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 3.
Ballots hit the mail next Wednesday, Oct. 7, and should be sent back no later than Oct. 27.
Vote centers will open beginning next Wednesday, Oct. 7, with a center in Plaza Fountainside opening for in-person voting on Thursday, Oct. 22.
For additional details, see story on page 2A.

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

\$1.00

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Face to face with nature

Larry Arbanas was driving home from the Needle Rock area in Rio Verde one evening when he saw this approximately three-foot-long Mohave Rattlesnake basking on the warm asphalt. He said he wanted a unique angle for his photo, which he certainly achieved.

Town bids farewell to former councilmembers

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Town of Fountain Hills is paying tribute to two long-time residents who were civic leaders, with both having served on the Town Council. Mike Archambault and Edwin Kehe both passed away on Wednesday, Sept. 23.

Archambault served on the Town Council from 2002-2010. Kehe was a council member from 2004-2008. Archambault (2018) and Kehe (2014) were both inducted into the Lower Verde Valley Hall of Fame.

Mayor Ginny Dickey, who served with both as a council member, issued the following statement:

"Mike Archambault and Ed Kehe personified community service. From committee and organizational work, to volunteering tirelessly, to thoughtful policy-making, they contributed



Mike Archambault



Edwin Kehe

(cont. on page 9A)

General Election:

Meet the LD23 candidates

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The Times is running a series offering a look at key election races that impact Fountain Hills voters and residents. We are starting with the Arizona Legislature for District 23.

Incumbent State Senator Michelle Ugenti-Rita handily won over her primary challenger, Scottsdale attorney Alexander Kolodin, and will now face Democrat Seth Blattman in the General Election.

For the Arizona House of Representatives, voters



Michelle Ugenti-Rita

will choose two of three candidates on the ballot, incumbent Republican John Kavanagh, Republican Joseph Chaplik – who narrowly defeated Jay Lawrence in the primary – and the third candidate is Democrat Eric Kurland.

Senate

Michelle Ugenti-Rita has served in the legislature for 10 years, including the House of Representatives before being elected to the Senate. She has a degree in Business Administration from Arizona State University and her career is in real estate.

Ugenti-Rita is asking voters to consider her extensive experience in the legislature when they cast a ballot. She has served on the Appropriations Committee providing hands-on experience with budgets. She has worked with the Governor's Office against cronyism and working to eliminate unnecessary regulation.

Ugenti-Rita has the support of Congressman David Schweikert (AZ-6), the National Federation of



Seth Blattman

Independent Business the NRA and Americans for Prosperity.

"With your support I will continue to be a strong voice at the legislature to fight against out of control spending and burdensome regulations, to jump start our economy and to defend the integrity and security of our elections," Ugenti-Rita said in her Clean Elections statement.

Seth Blattman was 10 years old when he moved to Scottsdale with his family.

(cont. on page 8A)

Sears Fire is burning 20 miles north of town

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

The shroud of smoke enveloping the Lower Verde Valley on Saturday morning was the result of the Sears Fire in Tonto National Forest near Cave Creek.

The fire was first discovered around mid-day on Friday, Sept. 25. It had grown to 14,241 acres by late Tuesday.

On Sunday, suppression operations focused on the northeast perimeter of the fire area, south of Hum-

boldt Mountain where the fire is most active.

The Sears Fire is located near Forest Service Road 24 and the Sears Kay Ranch. The fire is burning in grass and brush. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Over the weekend there were 12 engines, four hand crews, one air attack plane, one very large air tanker, two large air tankers, two single engine air tankers and four helicopters assigned to the incident. Additional resources have

been ordered and are responding.

An area closure order was implemented Saturday to include Bartlett Dam Road, Seven Springs Road (NFSR 24), Horseshoe Lake, Bartlett Lake and Seven Springs recreation sites. The closure order shall remain in effect until further notice.

The fire is approximately 20 miles north of Fountain Hills with the eastern boundary of the blaze along the Verde River between Bartlett and Horseshoe lakes.



This photo taken by resident John Hepburn about 7:45 a.m. on Saturday shows the smoky shroud from the Sears Fire covering the Lower Verde Valley and Four Peaks foothills. The fire had burned more than 9,000 acres by late Sunday between Bartlett and Horseshoe lakes along the Verde River north of Fountain Hills. The photo was taken from Cerro Alto Drive.

Arts fair gets permit approval

The Town Council has given its approval for the Fall Festival of Fine Arts & Crafts in Fountain Hills to go ahead as scheduled Nov. 13 -15.

The council voted 5-2 to issue a special event permit for the fair at a special session on Monday, Sept. 28. Mayor Ginny Dickey and Councilman Alan Magazine were the "no" votes.

The Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce has hosted the annual arts fairs for nearly 50 years, this is the first time it has had to consider cancellation.

A staff report to the council states that Governor Doug Ducey's executive orders related to the COVID-19 pandemic have prohibited any events or gatherings that would attract more than 50 people, however, the governor has recently changed his posi-

tion to allow such events if permitted by the municipality.

Chamber CEO Betsy Lavoie made her case for going ahead to the council by noting that several similar events are scheduled around the Valley including Cave Creek, Tempe and West Valley locations.

LaVoie also presented the Chamber's comprehensive safety plan to the council.

"The (festival) understands the impact and importance that our fairs have on local businesses, the economy and our community," the plan states. "We are prepared to implement strict physical distancing procedures as well as (a) detailed and thorough public health and safety plan."

LaVoie said the plan has been prepared conforming to the guidelines of CDC and current state and local

regulations.

"Changes will be made upon recommendations and updates by governmental bodies as well as the CDC, WHO or Arizona Department of Health Services," the plan states.

The plan calls for a doubling of security to monitor the measures being put in place.

Dr. Michael Eisenberg, a local resident, spoke saying conditions are not as rosy as they are being made out to be by government and some health officials and urged a no vote.

Chamber of Commerce Board President Bill Hinz stated Chamber staff had spent a lot of time taking a hard look at the situation and finding ways to make it safe.

The Times will have a more detailed report on this decision, including the safety procedures, in its Oct. 7 print edition.

INSIDE

Overseeding:
Town preparing parks for winter.
See Page 13A

Sister Cities:
Series begins exploring local group.
See Page 3A

Roundabout:
Downtown project delayed.
See Page 2A

COVID-19 update

Reported Cases*
As of Tuesday, Sept. 29

Maricopa County Totals: 141,738

Fountain Hills Totals: 266

*Source: Arizona Department of Health Services

WEATHER

	H	L	P
Tues., Sept. 22	98	73	--
Wed., Sept. 23	100	71	--
Thurs., Sept. 24	102	71	--
Fri., Sept. 25	102	71	--
Sat., Sept. 26	100	70	--
Sun., Sept. 27	98	69	--
Mon., Sept. 28	101	75	--

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

