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TODAY'S

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GOOD MORNING!

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TODAY'S FORECAST:

52

Mostly cloudy with showers

SEE PAGE 12

INSIDE

NATION:

Congress seems headed towards another showdown as President Trump asks for \$8.6B for border wall in new budget.

SEE PAGE 12

HAVASU:

Thunderbolt Middle School students honored their bus drivers at a ceremony this week with signs and an assembly.

SEE PAGE 3

THE WEST:

California's first-in-the-nation attempt to track racial profiling complaints against police produced numbers so unrealistically small that the board overseeing the tally wants departments to make changes to encourage more people to come forward.

SEE PAGE 11

OBITUARIES

There are no listings in today's edition.

See recent listings at HavasuNews.com/obituaries

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View slideshows from this weekend's events around Havasu at havasunews.com

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INDEX

Marketplace: 14
Classifieds: 12-14
Comics: 15
Obituaries: 6
Opinion: 4
Orchids & Onions: 15

Volume 54, No. 70

50100

7 48828 15001 8

WEEKDAY

DNA database bill would cost state, cities millions

By JEROD MACDONALD-EVOY
AZ MIRROR

Proposed legislation that would create a state database from DNA from sexual assault kits using a new form of DNA testing would cost the Arizona Department of Public Safety up to \$2.3 million annually and would cost cities an unknown amount of money, legislative budget analysts say.

The bill, sponsored by Sen.

David Livingston, R-Peoria, faced initial controversy due to its wide scope, which would have had any person who applied for fingerprint clearance submit their DNA into the database. That would have included any person in Arizona who works with children, among others.

Livingston has since narrowed its scope to focus only on sexual assault kits.

An analysis by the Joint

Legislative Budget Committee released Thursday concluded that the costs for creating the mandated database and the additional staff required for DPS to collect the DNA data would cost the agency \$1.5 million annually.

In a separate report, DPS estimated the cost at \$2.3 million.

See DATABASE, Page 5

Legislature still has no code of conduct

LAWMAKERS PLEDGED LAST YEAR TO ESTABLISH NEW ETHICS RULES

By AUSTEN BUNDY
CRONKITE NEWS

PHOENIX — In the wake of several behavior scandals, the Arizona Legislature pledged last session to adopt a code of conduct in order to hold members more accountable for their actions in office.

Nearly a year later, that code doesn't exist. Republican leaders say it's still in the works, but is it?

"The House Ethics Committee will be drafting recommendations on the House member code of conduct and presenting those recommendations to the full House for approval," Matthew Spect, director of communications for the House Republican Caucus, said in an email Feb. 11. "The member code of conduct will be adopted as a House rule change."

The committee's purpose statement says the members are tasked to "propose and adopt during the first regular legislative session a code of ethics ... as part of rules and to issue advisory opinions interpreting the code of ethics."

However, the House Ethics Committee has only met twice, according to its website, since then-House Speaker J.D. Mesnard and former Senate President Steve Yarbrough, both R-Chandler, promised last winter to appoint bipartisan committees to write new rules. Neither agenda from those meetings mentions such new rules.

In response, Spect said in an email that "the House Ethics Committee hasn't yet indicated when they expect to finish drafting those recommendations."

House Minority Leader David Bradley believes this issue shouldn't be hard to solve.

See CONDUCT, Page 5



Buck Dopp/Special to Today's News-Herald

Dan Donaldson bought back his family's gym, Titan Gym and Fitness Center, after his mother sold it in 1994.

Triumphing over tragedy

HOW A HAVASU GYM OWNER OVERCAME A HORRIFIC MURDER IN HIS FAMILY AND LEARNED TO PUT HIS TRUST IN GOD

By BUCK DOPP
SPECIAL TO TODAY'S NEWS-HERALD

Dan Donaldson's sister stabbed their mother to death and his brother, Kenny, took his own life with a .44 magnum handgun. Despite these horrific events, Donaldson has found a way to triumph over tragedy.

Dan and wife Christi are the owners of the Titan Gym and Fitness Center, now in its 28th year. In an industry where revenues can fluctuate like tall grass in a high wind, Titan has flourished through good and bad economic times.

"We feel honored that God would trust us with a business we can use as a ministry," Christi said. "Dan is a strong man of God, which is what I admire the most about him."

Dan Donaldson's journey has not been an easy one, yet he has always felt the tug of God. His journey has not been an easy one, yet he has always felt the tug of God. His mother named him after Daniel in the Bible who survived a night in the lion's den meant as an execution because he prayed to God instead of King Darius.

From 1973-1977, Donaldson served as a weatherman in the Marines at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, an assignment he called, "the best job in the Marine Corps." After an honorable discharge, he went into banking for seven years, starting as a teller at Valley National Bank and finishing as one of the city's first personal bankers. The 63-year old remembers

when the bank got the first ATM ever installed in Havasu. The tellers were told to teach customers how to use it. He told the other tellers, "We're working ourselves out of a job!"

The oldest of the three children, Dan shared a close relationship with his mother. However, things were different with his father, who seemed jealous of their bond and instigated conflicts between them and other family members, Donaldson says.

Forced to become the family breadwinner at 41 when her husband's arm was amputated with cancer, Donaldson's mom supported the family with several waitress gigs, and eventually started Titan in 1991.

TRAGEDY HITS HOME

In 1994, Donaldson says his father told his sister, DeNay Reylea, that her mom had sold Titan and "the boys are going to divide up the money between them. You'll get nothing." DeNay lured her mother to her home where she stabbed her dozens of times with a large folding knife and slit her throat. A few days later, Kenny Donaldson went to DeNay's house looking for their mother



The front page of the Lake Havasu City Herald carried news about the death of Doreen Donaldson, though few details were immediately available in the days after the grisly murder.

and discovered her body rolled up in a blanket in the garage.

That bloody murder in May 1994, sent shock waves of disbelief throughout Havasu. Neighbors couldn't wrap their minds around the fact that "a real sweet person" and mother of three could commit such a gruesome homicide against her own mother. Indicted on a single count of first-degree murder, DeNay served 16 years in a mental health facility and is now out. She called Donaldson after her release and asked, "Do you hate me?" He replied, "I forgave you that day." He says he continues to pray for her.

Kenny took his own life about 18 years later. Dan said his brother's funeral was one of the largest ever held at Calvary Baptist Church, and estimated that over 500 people came to pay their respects to a man who "made friends easily and could party with anyone."

At the wake, Donaldson spoke of his brother's suicide. "The hardest thing for people to do is to bend the knee and submit to God. If Kenny's actions help bring one guy to Christ, his sacrifice was worth it."

See TRIUMPHING, Page 5

SPRING BREAK



News-Herald archives

Concerts are always popular during spring break, but this year, local DJs are also holding free daytime beach parties at the London Bridge Resort.

Resort announces plans for spring break entertainment

By SCOTT SHINDLEDECKER
SSHINDLEDECKER@HAVASUNEWS.COM

There is no shortage of things to do in Lake Havasu City for spring break and London Bridge Resort is hosting live entertainment beginning next week.

Arizona Spring Break and The Zoo Boom Bandits Entertainment are hosting free daytime beach parties at Kokomo Beach beginning Tuesday. Events are scheduled for 2-6 p.m. each Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday through March 30. The daytime parties at Kokomo will feature a live disc jockey, a foam party, games and giveaways. There will also be live remotes with KDMM every Wednesday.

In addition, there will also be 18-and-older parties in the tennis court at London Bridge Resort. Zoo Boom Bandits will convert the tennis courts into the ZOO, a dance club for parties each Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday night from 10 p.m.-1 a.m. The admission is \$20 per person.

The Rave Rover will also feature more than 18 DJs throughout the last three weeks of March.

See RESORT, Page 5

TRIUMPHING: SERIES OF 'GOD STORIES' HAVE HELPED SAVE GYM

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Later, a man approached Dan and said, "I'm that guy. I'm calling my wife. I want to start going to church."

A CROSS TO BEAR

Although his mother sold Titan before her death, Donaldson continued to run the fitness center for two years without pay, while Christi supported them with her job. They were able to use those two years of back pay for the down payment to buy back the gym.

One day, he noticed there were only two people working out. He prayed for guidance. If business didn't pick up, he'd have to close the gym. He got the idea to put a cross on the wall. When he went to the Christian bookstore to buy the cross, the owner said he had been praying for Titan. He mounted the cross near the front door where it hangs to this day. People came out of nowhere, membership increased, and the gym took off. Donaldson calls this a "God story."

Another God story happened the month before the Great Recession. An excessive amount of payments flowed into the business that didn't match the attendance of members or visitors. That unexpected, unexplained revenue carried the company through the next few months when the recession hit the hardest.

A significant turning point for Dan and Christi occurred while they were members of Saint Michael's United Methodist Church. When attending an Alpha course for the first time in



Buck Dopp/Special to Today's News-Herald

Patrons use the cardio equipment at Titan Gym. Owner Dan Donaldson credits his faith for helping him through the toughest times in his life and business.

the Hualapai Mountains, they were jolted by a spiritual mountain top experience that exceeded being on the top of a mountain. It changed their lives.

Donaldson called the Alpha course "Christianity 101." The class introduces the basics of the Christian faith through a series of talks and discussions that answer questions about the meaning of life. Alpha is a course about relationships, and it taught them how to have a relationship with Jesus. Alpha is open to all, meets weekly for nine weeks, and is free.

Dan and Christi Donaldson are now the facilitators of the Alpha course at Calvary Baptist Church.

According to Calvary's Lead Pastor Chad Garrison, Dan is a volunteer pas-

tor who loves God, loves people and loves to help them get healed. "He's an encourager and a great picture of how much God can redeem anyone's life who has gone through as much pain as he has."

Jodie Mitchell, who started Celebrate Recovery at Saint Michael's said, "Dan has an amazing passion for Christ that has brought him through. He has a heart for helping people to keep their bodies healthy and strong."

Coleen Collins joined the gym in 1991, the first year it opened, and continues to be a member. "I've stayed because it's like home to me. Staff and members are like family," she explained. "I will always remember Dan's incredible faith and strength when his family went through things

no family should have to endure." She noted that Donaldson is a compassionate leader with a great sense of humor who quotes lines from movies and imitates characters, making her laugh every time she's around him.

Donaldson is explicit about the reason for the success of Titan and how he's been able to cope with his family's tragedies. "It's not about me. It's about God. He loves his people. It's amazing what God has done. I've seen 'dead' people receive life, the blind see, the dumb speak and the deaf hear. God is real, and he has a plan for all of us. He's here for you."

Looking back on the afflictions he has faced, he observed, "What the devil meant for bad, God has used for his glory."

DATABASE: MONEY WOULD LIKELY COME FROM GENERAL FUND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Part of the cost comes from hiring seven new employees who would have to create and maintain the new database, as well as providing the rapid DNA testing that the bill specifically mandates.

The money would likely have to come from the state's general fund or DPS's forensic fund. DPS has already requested around \$22 million for its forensic fund in fiscal year

2020.

The discrepancy between DPS's and JLBC's analyses comes from DPS assuming it would be testing a backlog of sexual assault kits. The agency also adds in assumptions about the number of kits it will analyze in the future.

Cities that have their own crime labs could also need to provide additional funding if the bill is passed.

The City of Phoenix estimates an additional \$1.4 million in costs annually, based on an estimate of 912

sexual assault kits per year using the rapid DNA test at a cost of \$1,523 per kit, plus the cost of the equipment.

Mesa also estimated additional costs at \$230,000 annually for the 155 sexual assault kits it assumed it will test.

However, both Phoenix and Mesa had different estimates of the per-kit costs of testing, and both were higher than what DPS estimated.

Phoenix and Mesa both only estimated these costs if local governments were

made to implement the rapid DNA testing as well, but JLBC and DPS both assume that DPS would become the central repository for doing the new testing.

Livingston's bill originated with a Colorado-based genetics company. The company, ANDE, does rapid genetic testing, something that the bill emphasizes would be used. Currently, ANDE is the only company accredited by the FBI to do this type of testing.

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RESORT: NEW ADDITIONS INCLUDE 30-FT 'RAVE ROCKET'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Boom Bandits is also unveiling the Rave Rocket, a 30-foot tall mobile entertainment stage that will sit inside a boat where DJs will play music and spring breakers can dance.

"We're excited to have the Rave Rocket at Spring Break 2019," Boom Bandits' Amy Kleefisch said. "It's a part of Havasu history and it's great to bring it back."

The Rave Runner DJ boat will be in the channel. This week, the following colleges are on spring break according to GoLakeHavasu.com: University of Arizona, San Francisco State University, University of Southern California, Colorado State University, University of Denver, University of Northern Colorado, University of Idaho, University of Minnesota - Crookston, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities, Missouri University, Truman State University, North Dakota State University, University of New Mexico, Ohio State University, Texas A & M, University of Texas-Austin, Southern Utah University, Washington State University, University of Wyoming, University of Utah, Loyola Marymount University, Gonzaga University, Whitman College.

CONDUCT: NO MENTION OF RULES BY ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"I don't think it's all that complicated, I don't think we have to reinvent the wheel," Bradley said. "I think there are standards out there that we can apply and we can adapt to ... we just need the energies to do it."

The Senate Ethics Committee lists only a Feb. 11 meeting on its website, but there's no mention of new conduct rules on the agenda.

The committee's chairwoman, Sen. Sine Kerr, R-Buckeye, did not respond to questions from Cronkite News.

"It's really important that our state leaders are making sure that there (are) clear guidelines for behavior for elected officials and that those are being enforced in an equitable manner," said Diane Brown, executive director of Arizona Public Interest Research Group. Arizona PIRG calls itself "an independent, non-partisan group that works for consumers and the public interest" and fights for government transparency and accountability.

"It's important that those rules are enforced and that also there are nonpartisan or bipartisan efforts to really investigate ... and that the individual who is being accused

has the right to be seen as innocent until proven guilty," Brown said.

Rep. Reginald Bolding, D-Laveen, the House minority whip, called for the expulsion of fellow Rep. David Stringer, R-Prescott, on Jan. 28 after new documents revealed accusations of sex crimes against Stringer from the 1980s. The House recessed before an expulsion vote could be held.

"What we do know is that it's important to make sure people are held accountable and the people who elected us know that they have people fighting for them," Bolding said.

Stringer has not stepped down despite calls from fellow Republicans, including Gov. Doug Ducey, who said Stringer had "basically disqualified himself from leading at the state level" after Stringer made racially charged comments about immigrants last summer.

"By ensuring there is an independent body ... that can review allegations ... that would really be most helpful in getting some of the politics out of each potential allegation and to better get to the truth of the matter," Brown said.

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