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Can Green Valley help  
save Arctic treasure? A7

# Green Valley News

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**Weather**  
Partly sunny  
& very warm,  
high 96. Clear,  
cooler night;  
low 61. **More  
weather, A4.**

Sunday, May 21, 2017 VOLUME 51, NUMBER 41

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**Bicyclists head down** Abrego Drive during Wednesday's 12th annual Ride of Silence, honoring those who lost their lives in bicycle accidents.

Christopher Boan Green Valley News



Kim Smith Green Valley News

**Sahuarita Police Officer** Wesley Genzer, center, speaks with Rancho Verde Care Communities owner Jerone Davis, left, after Arizona Adult Protective Services removed 13 residents from his assisted living homes. Seated in the kitchen of Rancho Verde Duval on South Placita Octubre are family and friends of the last person to be removed.

## 2 care homes abruptly close in Sahuarita; 13 displaced

By Kim Smith  
ksmith@gvnews.com

Thirteen residents of two Sahuarita assisted-living homes found themselves abruptly moved to new facilities Thursday and Friday, but exactly why remains unclear.

Several residents and their families said they were told they had to move because their caregivers had walked off the job after going unpaid for weeks.

Jerone Davis, owner of Rancho Verde Duval and Rancho Verde Canalito homes, denied that he was behind on paying employees, but said his seven homes between Sahuarita and Tucson had 17 visits from several agencies over the past two months after complaints were filed.

The scene at one of the homes in the Valle Verde del Norte neighborhood was near chaos Thursday as flustered relatives rushed to pack up belongings. Some were in tears as they wheeled their loved ones out of the home. A couple said they were angry and confused about the situation and too upset to speak with a reporter.

In an interview at Rancho Verde Duval on Friday, Davis said that for unknown reasons his operations manager called all of his certified caregivers Wednesday night and told them not to report to work.

The state Department of Health Services confirmed they were overseeing the moves but said they were

See **CARE HOME, A10**

## Jordan honored with bikeway

By Kitty Bottemiller  
kbottemiller@gvnews.com

Recreation united two Green Valley men whose friendship spans nearly 50 years — one recently recognized with a leadership award, and the other with a bike lane recently named for him.

Bill Adamson and Jim Jordan met while working as mechanical engineers at a Connecticut aerospace company around 1970. Adamson heard Jordan was into rock climbing so contacted him,

wanting to learn more.

Over the years, they have shared many adventures also including bicycling, hiking and mountaineering. Adamson and his wife settled in Green Valley in 1994, and after visiting here, Jordan and his wife followed in 1998.

"He saw what many of us see ... great year-round road and mountain bicycling and hiking," Adamson said.

By 2003, they realized the increasing population and traffic had made the roads "uncomfortably dangerous for bikes, golf

carts and walkers," he said.

They penciled out recommendations to close gaps in unfinished bike lanes, and with support from the Green Valley Council Traffic & Arroyos Committee and Pima County, with the approval. In 2004, the subcommittee formed the Santa Cruz Valley Bicycle Advocates subcommittee with the two onboard.

Over the years, they've worked with the county, state agencies and others, adding bike lanes

See **JORDAN, A10**

## County tax hike would go to roads

By David Rookhuyzen  
and Kitty Bottemiller  
Green Valley News

The Pima County Board of Supervisors will decide this week whether to approve a new plan that would increase property taxes to help fix roads.

County Administrator Chuck Huckelberry has proposed raising the primary property tax rate by 25 cents per \$100 of assessed value — or roughly \$20 on average per homeowner annually — with the extra money designated for pavement pres-

ervation. The increase would be partially offset next fiscal year by lowering other tax rates by a cumulative 11 cents. The full 25 cents could not be offset in this budget due to "unavoidable" costs in the Sheriff Department's budget, including mandatory payments to the public safety retirement pension fund, Huckelberry wrote in a memo to supervisors dated Wednesday.

The rest of the increase can be offset in future budgets, and an expected growth in assessment and the tax base in the future should make the proposal

tax neutral, the memo said.

The proposal was unveiled a day after Tucson voters OK'd a half-cent sales tax increase to raise \$250 million over five years for fire, police and street maintenance.

The increased county tax would bring in an estimated \$19.5 million in fiscal 2018. The owner of a median-priced home of about \$165,000 in Pima County would pay an extra \$18.47, according to Huckelberry's memo. The supervisors will consider whether to enact the proposal in the fiscal 2018

budget at its meeting Tuesday.

The proposal calls for the money generated to go to pavement preservation and not to overhead costs; all projects must be competitively bid to private contractors; and all projects will be ratified by the

See **ROADS, A9**

**This intersection at** La Cañada Drive and Paseo del Canto is among Green Valley's most-deteriorated roadways.

Kitty Bottemiller Green Valley News



## See more of today's classifieds C1-6

Classifieds on the Cover	Classifieds on the Cover	Classifieds on the Cover	Classifieds on the Cover	Classifieds on the Cover	Classifieds on the Cover
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**CARE HOME**

Continued from A1

not the result of “action taken by DHS,” said Holly Ward, communications director.

Connie Weber, deputy press secretary for the Arizona Department of Economic Security, said that “because of state statutes regarding client confidentiality, the DES Division of Aging and Adult Services Adult Protective Services program can neither confirm nor deny any involvement in any case.”

Sahuarita Police Lt. Matt McGlone said late Friday that they are investigating “a complaint of possible fraud against the owner and management of that care home and we are aware of a current investigation by the AG’s Office outside the Town of Sahuarita.”

While police were at Rancho Verde Duval on Friday to take a report, Davis arrived and spoke with the officers and an APS representative.

“I want to thank the families for letting me take care of their loved ones and to say I’m sorry this happened,” Davis, 53, told a reporter. “I hope they give me the opportunity to explain my side of what transpired.”

Over the past three years, Davis said he purchased seven assisted-living facilities in Tucson and Sahuarita under the umbrella of Rancho Verde Care Communities. Over the past two months, he said numerous complaints were made to the state Attorney General’s Office, APS and DHS resulting in 17 visits from those agencies.

“A lot of the families started to get concerned and they started to pull their families out,” Davis said, prompting the closure of three Tucson homes.

The complaints varied, but some pertained to a lack of food and employees not getting paid, Davis said. He suspects most of the complaints were filed by his operations manager, although he couldn’t explain why she would file complaints against him.

Davis said he first learned something was amiss when he received a call Thursday from APS. He was told his operations manager had moved four residents from Rancho Verde Canalito in Los Arroyos to Rancho Verde Duval, stating there were no caregivers to take care of them.

He also was told the operations manager reported that she had been on the job 30 hours, there was no one to replace her and she was leaving, Davis said. He was instructed to find a certified caregiver to take over.

Davis said by the time his employee arrived at 4 p.m., APS had already removed eight residents and had hired an outside agency to watch the patients as their loved ones packed their belongings.

**LAST MAN OUT**

On Friday morning, Joe Kovacs, 80, was the last resident at Rancho Verde Duval. His friends, Bobbie Fankhauser and Nathan Hedman, were trying to find a company capable of trans-

porting a wheelchair to take him to his new home on Tucson’s east side.

It was Kovacs’ third move in six weeks. He had just moved into Rancho Verde Los Reales when Davis shut it down and moved him to Rancho Verde Duval.

When Fankhauser was told Kovacs was being transferred to a sister facility in Green Valley three weeks ago, she wasn’t happy, but understood.

It was a new facility and Davis didn’t have enough residents to justify hiring staff for just Kovacs, she was told. She had a different reaction when she got the call Thursday telling her Kovacs’ new facility was being closed by Adult Protective Services and she had 24 hours to find him a new home.

Not only was she panicked about finding Kovacs a new place to live, she was also angry. She paid Davis six months in advance and she had to come up with \$2,700 for the new facility.

“I feel ripped off, obviously, and like a sucker,” Fankhauser said Friday.

She said it wasn’t Davis or any of his caregivers who called her. The owner of another facility who was taking in patients left a voicemail for her in the morning that she didn’t receive until after 5 p.m.

Jeanie Anstey, 91, lived at Rancho Verde Duval for a year.

“It was very good at first and then it went downhill,” she said.

Lately, the caregivers were constantly being moved around so no one knew who would be taking care of them from day to day, staffing levels dropped, summoning bells would go ignored and meal quality diminished, she said.

“They used to have freezers full of food and the girls never had to worry about what they were going to fix for us,” Anstey said. “The meals kept getting skimpier and skimpier and a lot of the times we left the table hungry.”

Anstey said lately she heard several caregivers complain about not getting paid and she knew something was wrong when the residents from the other home showed up Wednesday night. Three of them slept on recliners because there were no beds, she said.

When they were told they were going to have to move, Anstey said everyone was upset because they’d become like family.

“It was terrible,” she said. “It made me sick to my stomach. I can’t believe the person who owns these homes let this happen.”

Anstey found a comfortable place nearby and considers herself lucky. She’s also fortunate that she paid Davis on a month-to-month basis, she said.

“Some people had paid a year in advance,” Anstey said.

Davis said he always pushed for quality care at his homes and will work to straighten out the situation.

“My objective is to meet with all of the family members in the next week to discuss meeting my financial obligations,” Davis said.

**Kim Smith** 547-9740



**Green Valley Ride of Silence organizer** Chuck Hill, right, chats with Sergio Arellano, Supervisor Steve Christy’s Green Valley assistant, at the event Wednesday.



**Jim and Lilliana Jordan** show the new bike lane sign dedicated to Jim at Wednesday’s event.

**JORDAN**

Continued from A1

along Esperanza Boulevard, Whitehouse Canyon and Continental roads, and expanding recreational trails and open space in the area. Largely through their efforts, the number of bike lanes in Green Valley and Sahuarita has quadrupled.

Jordan took the lead on helping secure funding and tech review for several projects, and served as an adviser on getting safety upgrades of the rail crossing on Whitehouse Canyon Road. He’s also coordinated area bike rides and events for mostly local bicyclists since moving here.

For his contributions, the two-mile expanse of Continental Road bike lanes between Camino del Sol and Whitehouse Canyon

Road, has been named the “Jim Jordan Bikeway.”

Jordan, 79, was surprised with the announcement just preceding the 12th annual, seven-mile Ride of Silence on Wednesday around Green Valley.

Jordan’s younger brother, Bill, was 15 when Jordan went off to college, and recalled a few highlights via email. Jordan grew up in Lebanon, Indiana, an “A” student, Cleveland Indians fan, and played baseball and football. As a carrier for the hometown newspaper at about 15, Jim was profiled in a news column, saying he aspired to play baseball professionally.

One summer, Jim invited brother Bill to spend the summer in Springfield, Massachusetts, where he was racing his Triumph TR3 in Sports Car Club of America races “when we really bonded,” Bill said. “We fi-

nally had something in common — cars and girls. Life didn’t get much better than that.”

Jim got hooked on bicycling and bike racing after relocating to Vermont in the mid-1970s, cycling even through the harsh New England winters. Although the key bike lanes are now connected, the two still serve on the Traffic and Arroyos Committee.

“Jim has been instrumental in all this success. Even through a few recent years of personal tragedy, he always worked as our bike advocate,” Adamson said.

Adamson was recognized earlier this year with the 2017 Chuck Catino Community Leadership Award for ongoing efforts to improve cycling safety and recreational opportunities in the area.

**Kitty Bottemiller** 547-9732

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