

PHOENIX REPUBLIC

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A GANNETT COMPANY

Z3 SECTION PH

T-BIRD HIGH STANDOUT TOPS TEAM

Jessica DeLeon, a senior at Thunderbird, is *The Republic's* Metro Phoenix Player of the Year in girls soccer. She will compete next season for Arizona State.

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Boxer back in Phoenix for fight

Jesus Gonzales, a one-time Phoenix phenom, looks to resurrect his boxing career beginning with a bout tonight at Celebrity Theatre.

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LOOKING FOR A RALLY

Attendance is down at two Phoenix Cactus League ballparks, but more fans tend to show up near the end of spring training

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Oakland Athletics third baseman Kevin Kouzmanoff signs a jersey for Nicole Demetrak of Petaluma, Calif., before a Cactus League game against the San Diego Padres at Phoenix Municipal Stadium. DAVID WALLACE/ THE REPUBLIC

Cleanup set for nature center

Helpers sought for work at Rio Salado Audubon Center

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Arizona Spa Week makes a return

Prices for luxurious treatments will be slashed in April.

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CORRECTIONS POLICY

The *Phoenix Republic* corrects errors fully and promptly. To report an error in the news pages, phone the Republic at 602-444-NEWS (6397) or e-mail Assistant Editor Elvia Diaz.

Enjoy relatively cool days, help clean nature center

The weather may be getting warmer but summer is still weeks away, so there is still plenty of time to enjoy being outdoors without working up too much of a sweat. Here's a chance to enjoy the spring weather and help the environment, too:



What About Phoenix?

**CONNIE CONE
SEXTON**
The Arizona
Republic

From 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. March 26, volunteers will help clean up the area around the Nina Mason Pulliam Rio Salado Audubon Center, 3131 S. Central Ave.

The nature center is part of a 600-acre park within the historic Salt River corridor. It's also considered a gateway to the lush Sonoran riparian habitat that is used by more than 200 species of birds and other wildlife.

As part of the second annual "Green Up" event, participants will pick up trash and debris along the river. Water and light snacks will be provided by the Valley Forward Association, a group of area businesses, government agencies, municipalities, non-profits and individuals who work together on environmental initiatives.

But those planning on helping are encouraged to bring water. Other suggestions: Wear closed-toe shoes, hats and sunscreen. If you're planning to attend, you'll need to RSVP by Monday to jkrutz@valleyforward.org or by calling 602 240-2408.

Speaking of green, Phoenix officials were among Valley participants in the May 9 Regional Tree and Shade Summit held in downtown Phoenix.

The goal of the daylong program was to help Valley communities realize the need to expand their shade coverage, including planting more trees. The idea is to help the Valley return to more of an urban-forest environment, one that promotes healthier air and makes the region a more livable space.

During the next few years, Phoenix officials will work on more than doubling the amount of shade canopy. Right now, the urban tree canopy is 11



The Murphy Bridle Path along Central Avenue is a favorite of strollers, joggers and equestrians. MICHAEL SCHENNUM/THE REPUBLIC

percent, said Richard Adkins, a forestry supervisor for Phoenix. The goal is to expand that to 25 percent.

One of the areas of Phoenix that shows the value of lush tree canopies is the Murphy Bridle Path in central Phoenix.

The 2.5-mile-long path runs along Central Avenue from Bethany Home Road to the Arizona Canal, about a half mile north of Northern Avenue.

Trees on each side of the street are plentiful and not only shade those on the path but often Central Avenue, as well.

The path's soft surface of decomposed granite has made it a favorite for jogging, walking, strollers and equestrians.

Those who follow the 6-foot-wide crushed granite path will pass by mature ash and olive trees, some more than 100 years old, city officials said.

The trail was named for William Murphy, a land speculator, who was hired to build the Arizona Canal in 1883. Phoenix officials said Murphy founded the nearby area, dubbing it Orangewood. He dedicated a 100-foot right of way to the public to create North Central Avenue.

Reach the reporter at connie.sexton@arizonarepublic.com or 602-444-6843.



City of Phoenix

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