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Phoenix library to celebrate 100 years

By TOM BAKER
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PHOENIX — The Phoenix Public Library is celebrating its centennial anniversary this weekend and library officials promise a fun-filled event for the entire family. Established in 1921, the library is steeped in detailed history and the staff of the literary archive has been working diligently to bring it to the public this Saturday, Sept. 25, along with the unveiling of a special surprise. The library will hold an open house from 9 a.m. until noon, with a special presentation slated for 11 a.m.

"At the ceremony we're going to unveil a logo, our first ever logo," said Natalie Curran, director of the Phoenix Public Library. "That's going to be a big part of the celebration."

Curran also said they are going to celebrate the entire year with a "Read 100 books in our 100th year challenge."

"The challenge is for both adults and children and the idea is to read 100 books over the next year," she said. "There will be a tracking system where the readers can turn in their books and be entered for prizes."

Curran said they tried to think of activities that wouldn't attract an overly large crowd, noting safety concerns amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

There will be several displays showing and describing the history of the library from its early conception to its present-day offerings.

Originally the library was established in a regular house on the corner of Main and Lock streets in Phoenix. However, approximately 30 years ago it was relocated to its current address of 34 Elm St., according to Curran.

"There's a lot about how we moved into our current location," Curran said. "We were in that house from the '20s to the 1990s. It appears they started looking for a new location in the '80s and finally broke ground on the building in the 1990s."

The event will also feature crafts, candy and cookies in the form of the new logo.

"We have been so excited to get to a logo," Curran said. "We're having shirts made for the staff, we're so excited. When I started here four years ago we didn't have a logo and we just used a picture of the building (to identify ourselves) so this was really important to me. There is a lot now about branding and how that's really a key to having your establishment recognized no matter what you do, whether you're a nonprofit or otherwise. So it was important to us to have a logo that both kids and adults will recognize as their public library."

The unveiling of the logo is at 11 a.m. Admission is free. For more information contact the library at phoenixpubliclibrary.org or call them at (315) 695-4355.

Oswego County COVID-19 death toll reaches 100

By MATTHEW REITZ
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OSWEGO — One hundred Oswego County residents have died due to COVID-19 complications as coronavirus infections continue to increase, according to county health department data.

More than 400 Oswego County residents tested positive for COVID-19 over the past week, continuing the now multi-month climb from single-digit, active cases in the county to hundreds of new cases each week. Since the start of August, more than 2,000 new cases have emerged in Oswego County, nearly one-fifth of the 10,195 total cases recorded in the county since March 2020.

The 412 new cases recorded over the past week mark the fourth consecutive week of 300 or more positive cases, according to the county Health Department. Health officials reported 482 active cases of COVID-19 in the county as of Monday, up from a low of just three in July, and hospitalizations increased three-fold over the

last week compared to the previous seven-day period.

The county's community transmission level remains high, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"With this latest surge, I urge residents to protect themselves in public spaces, regardless of whether they are vaccinated or not," said Oswego County Legislature Chairman James Weatherup, R-Central Square. "Now is not the time to abandon safety practices. If you have not been vaccinated yet, it is time to get your shot to protect yourself, your family and friends and your community."

Oswego County Public Health Director Jiancheng Huang expressed sorrow for the death of another resident and expressed condolences to the loved ones and family of the individual.

"While every death is a sad development in our efforts to fight this virus, this marks the 100th death of Oswego County," Huang said in a statement. "It is a stark reminder that the COVID-19 virus remains



Mike LeBoeuf photo

In this file photo, Oswego's Jessica Pingrin receives a COVID-19 vaccine administered by volunteer nurse Marygrace Fronk (right). Also pictured is volunteer nurse Ellen Holst.

rampant in our county, and we must all do what we can to protect ourselves, our loved ones and our community."

The 100th death recorded this

week marks the seventh death since the start of August, following a five-month period, from March to August,

See OSWEGO COUNTY COVID-19, Page 5

Summertime favorite Spencer's Ali changing hands

By GREG CASTER
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OSWEGO — One of the Port City's longtime popular watering holes is getting sold.

Robert McGrath, proprietor of the adjoining Clubhouse Tavern and Spencer's Ali on West Second Street, announced this month a sale of the popular summertime bar and music venue Spencer's Ali is in the works, and another local business owner is set to acquire the longtime open air venue. McGrath, who plans to continue overseeing Club House Tavern, said his plan is to shift focus to that business, which is expected to reopen in the near future.

"Spencer's Ali was fun, there was live music and drinks others were not serving," McGrath told The Palladium-Times this week. "The atmosphere of this place was successful and it met all the aspirations of what I wanted to give here."

McGrath said one of the driving factors toward selling the venue was to free up more time to spend with his family and other activities, noting the "bar business takes a lot of your life." Though the sale of Spencer's Ali will free up some of his time, McGrath won't entirely eject himself from the bar business and plans to continue operating Club House Tavern, a business that predates Spencer's Ali.

Club House has been closed as of late to allow McGrath and staff to focus more time on Spencer's Ali, but McGrath said following the transfer in ownership his focus would shift back to the original business.

McGrath said his passion for working a bar started



Greg Caster photo

Longtime Port City business owner Robert McGrath, pictured above, is walking away from the popular, open air bar Spencer's Ali after more than two decades at the helm. McGrath plans to continue operating the adjacent Club House Tavern.

much earlier, however, when he served as a bartender in the 1970s while trying to "make some extra money" living in Colorado. The Club House Tavern opened in 1996 and has operated as a "small Irish pub," for more than two decades.

Following a few successful years, McGrath said his aspirations grew and he looked to expand and provide the community with a new, unique-for-the-area venue.

See SUMMERTIME FAVORITE, Page 5

Two-year-old hit by car, hospitalized in Mexico

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MEXICO — A two-year-old boy has been hospitalized after being hit by a car in the village of Mexico, according to state police.

State police said the two-year-old, from the town of Williamstown, was sent to the hospital Monday after getting hit by a car in a Laundromat parking lot.

Police said an investigation into the incident determined the young boy "ran between two parked cars and directly into the path of the vehicle" in the parking lot of the Maytag Coin Laundry Mat, which is located at 3364 Main Street in the village of Mexico.

Emergency personnel determined a woman driving a 2018 Chevrolet Equinox hit the boy, but was not at fault.

State police said no charges would be filed against the driver in relation to the investigation.

The two-year-old boy was transported by McFee Ambulance to SUNY Upstate Hospital with a fractured leg and contusions, police said.

Schumer pushes for funding amid rise in mosquitoes

Record mosquito populations, rise in West Nile and EEE could continue due to wet, warmer weather

STAFF REPORTS
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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Record numbers of mosquitoes and a rise in mosquito-borne illnesses across New York has Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer calling for increased funding to deal with the pests.

The Oswego County Health Department reported Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) and/or West Nile virus (WNV) in at least a half-dozen towns and villages in the county this summer. WNV is present from central New York to New York City, and Schumer on Tuesday started a push for increased funding to tackle the issue through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Vector-Borne Disease program and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Both WNV and EEE can be trans-

mitted to humans through the bite of a mosquito and cause serious illness, and county health officials warn residents to protect themselves against mosquito bites. Oswego County Public Health Director Jiancheng Huang recently noted mosquito populations would remain a threat "until the first heavy frost."

"It's very important for people to continue to follow their personal protection practices and reduce mosquito populations around their homes," Huang said. "Preventing mosquito bites remains the best protection against mosquito-borne diseases."

More than 1,000 mosquito pools across New York have tested positive for WNV, according to Schumer, who noted a changing climate could lead to an extended mosquito season. Several of those WNV pools have been collected in Oswego County, most recently in Central Square.

"Ask any outdoor diner about the mosquitoes this summer, and you'll feel a resounding itch," Schumer said in a Tuesday statement. "This is actually one of the worst mosquito seasons in recent memory with a record number of bugs plaguing communities across New York — from the city, to Buffalo and all throughout



CDC photo

Mosquito populations across New York are on the rise in 2021 and bringing with them mosquito-borne illnesses, such as West Nile virus and Eastern equine encephalitis.

New York."

More concerning than the number of mosquitoes is the potentially deadly WNV, Schumer said, adding data indicates 2021 has been one of the worst summers on record for the biting pests. The number of mosquito pools testing positive for the virus across the state continue to grow, and

a wet summer and warmer fall could extend the insect's season.

"We are pushing a two-pronged plan involving the EPA and the CDC so that our area has the dollars and the resources to beat back the mosquito and its diseases before they

See SCHUMER, Page 5

