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Class of 2015



The FHHS senior choir provided a musical break during the ceremony, singing "Break Away."

Breaking away from high school

By Ryan Winslett
Times Reporter

The Fountain Hills High School class of 2015 held its graduation commencement ceremony at Fountain Park on Friday, May 22, surrounded by family, friends and community members.

Along with some opening remarks from Principal Tom Brennan, music provided by the FHHS band, as well as fireworks to cap the whole thing off, graduates had the opportunity to hear some words of encouragement from teacher John Burnett, as well as

several of their class leaders.

First to take the podium was senior class president Emmie Lawrence, who said that the evening marked both an ending and a beginning for the class of 2015.

Lawrence highlighted many fond memories from over the years and reminded her classmates that they would carry those memories with them throughout the rest of their lives.

"Realize the gravity of what you have accomplished, and the potential of what you can accomplish," Lawrence added.

The high school senior choir followed, singing



Katie Petkus and her classmates celebrate graduation.

"Break Away," with student body president Kate Domin on stage next to offer the farewell address.

Domin opened by thanking "everyone who has had a hand in getting us to this point." She added that the sun is setting on the horizon for the class of 2015.

"Our sky wasn't cloudless, but we made it through," Domin continued.

"Sunset is bitter-sweet...It sets with the promise that it will rise again. There will be some cloudy days —

(cont. on page 10A)

Marijuana dispensary compromise

Operating hours expanded

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

After about 90 minutes of presentation and discussion the Town Council granted the local medical marijuana dispensary an additional eight hours of operation each week.

The council split its vote, 4-3, with Vice Mayor Dennis Brown, and Council Members Nick DePorter, Cassie Hansen and Alan Magazine supporting the change.

Mayor Linda Kavanagh and Council Members Henry Leger and Cecil Yates opposed.

It may have been a change of heart and a pro-

posed compromise on the part of Mark Steinmetz, owner and operator for Natures AZ Medicines, which prompted the needed four-vote support.

Steinmetz had originally asked for and presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission a request that allowed him to open the dispensary between 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week.

The commission had recommended the council deny that request. However, last week Steinmetz proposed a change to allow the store to be open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. seven days a week, which is some 28

(cont. on page 10A)

Hentz is Merit winner

By Ryan Winslett
Times Reporter

Fountain Hills High School student Roland Hentz has performed a rare feat, going on from being a National Merit semifinalist to earning a Merit scholarship from his school of choice, The University of New Mexico.

Fountain Hills High School is no stranger to producing National Merit semifinalists but, according to Principal Tom Brennan, having a local student earn one of the Merit scholar-



Fountain Hills High School senior Roland Hentz has received a National Merit Scholarship to attend the University of New Mexico.

Algae bloom grows early in lake

Town planning for better aeration

By Bob Burns
Times Reporter

Some residents have already noticed the deep green shade of the water in Fountain Lake, a sign that excessive algae has started growing.

The temperature in Fountain Hills has not even reached 100 degrees yet.

Normally the growth of algae is a hot weather phenomenon in mid to late summer when the humidity begins to rise. The seemingly early onset for algae may only mean the water near the surface is warmer than it usually is this time of year.

The town has for some time had on its agenda a program to improve the

quality of Fountain Lake.

The nitrate-rich treated effluent waste water is a prime growing condition for algae, and while the town had discussions with the Sanitary District about partnering on an inter-governmental agreement to improve the water quality, the Sanitary District backed out of any potential partnership more than a year ago.

Cost is a significant hurdle to improving the water quality, particularly in what is essentially a closed body of water with little circulation.

There are aerators in the lake and the Fountain itself has some impact on circulating the water — during summer months Fountain run times have

been expanded to include overnight hours.

The town has a plan to install new aerators in the lake to enhance the water circulation to help improve water quality.

Community Services Director Mark Mayer said final design for a new circulation system will be completed after the current construction work is completed in Fountain Park.

Mayer said the water quality consultant that works with the town has recommended aerators and horizontal water circulators to improve the water quality.

"We have finished the design work for the aerators as far as the specifications required," Mayer said. "There is still design work to be completed for the installation."

Once that design is finished the project can be offered to bid to contractors for installation.

The town has included \$200,000 in the budget for the 2015/16 fiscal year for the project. The money would come from the Capital Improvement Fund.

The project is part of a comprehensive water quality management program developed by the town. The budget details cite "episodes of low oxygen levels, occasional algae blooms, unpleasant odors and fish die off as justification for the effort."

"Fountain Lake serves as a centerpiece for town activities," the budget sheet states.

It is unclear how far the estimated \$200,000 project cost will go toward improving water quality.



Mike Isenberg of Fountain Hills submitted this photograph he took in late April on a 'flightseeing trip' over Fountain Hills and, of course, Fountain Park. It would appear when this shot was taken that the lake water appeared to be more green in color than the park grass (although in fairness the grass has been in transition from winter rye to summer Bermuda).



Fountain Hills Botanical Garden

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INSIDE THIS WEEK

News: FHHS seniors earn many college scholarships. See Page 2A

News: Debbie Fisher (pictured) played Taps as part of Memorial Day activities. See Page 10A

Schools: Charter School students celebrate the year. See Page 11A



WEATHER

	H	L	P
Tues., May 19	84	59	--
Wed., May 20	90	61	--
Thurs., May 21	87	65	--
Fri., May 22	81	60	--
Sat., May 23	80	56	--
Sun., May 24	82	58	--
Mon., May 25	87	59	--

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