

Schools

Fountain Hills' EVIT district on November ballot

The East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) school board has five of its nine seats on the ballot in the Nov. 6 General Election.

Different to how the Fountain Hills Unified School District and other public schools elect governing board members, EVIT has one board member for each of its nine districts.

Fountain Hills is a part of District 5, which also includes North Mesa and East Scottsdale. Two candidates are running for the District 5 seat, incumbent

Erwin C. Heimbeck and challenger Ronda Shumway Doolen.

Erwin C. Heimbeck

Heimbeck has been on the EVIT Governing Board since 2006 and has served twice as the board's president.

A graduate from South Dakota State University where he obtained a degree in chemistry with minors in math and physics, Heimbeck became interested in CTE fields after the launching of the Soviet

satellite, Sputnik.

Heimbeck, who went on to get a degree in computer science, believes just as the launching of Sputnik changed the world, the advancement of technology is changing the world today.

"The world has changed tremendously," Heimbeck said. "There is a crying need to training people in these new fields."

Heimbeck is proud that



Erwin C. Heimbeck

during his time on the board, EVIT has involved industry leaders to help develop their programs

"One thing that I think we (EVIT) do really well is involve industry," Heimbeck said. "We talk with our industry partners to help us figure out what their needs are for their workers. It helps us make our programs better for students."

If re-elected, Heimbeck looks forward to continuing to expand EVIT's partnerships with industry in order to create more opportunities for the students.

Ronda Shumway Doolen

Doolen has 23 years of experience working as a nurse and currently works with the Arizona Board of

Nursing.

Doolen attended college in Colorado and spent a year there in the nursing workforce before returning to Arizona.

Here, Doolen worked at Mesa Lutheran and Mesa Public Schools before she got the chance to work as the Health Director at EVIT.

"It gave me the opportunity to use what I knew about nursing, and what I had experienced and learned about education as a school nurse, and combine them," Doolen said. "It was hard moving on from EVIT."

There are three issues

that made Doolen interested in running for the governing board, the first being transparency.

"Neither the board agenda nor the board minutes are easily available to the public," Doolen said. "I feel like we need to hear from and invite the public in, and not having those easily accessible make it difficult."

Doolen said the second is the action by the board to not fund new programs on high school campuses and the third is that many current board members have been unopposed for many years.

"The gentlemen that I am running against, Mr. Heimbeck, has run unopposed for the last eight years," Doolen said. "I just feel like people need a choice."



Ronda Shumway Doolen

Walk to School Day



McDowell Mountain Elementary School P.E teacher, Rich Olson, leads the way for Liberty Bay and her fellow students as they walk to school from Golden Eagle Park on Oct. 3, National Walk to School Day.



Mckenna Feller walks ahead of brothers Elijah and Ezekiel Norris and their mother as McDowell Mountain Elementary School students walk to school on National Walk to School Day.



A good book

Fountain Hills High School security guard Jeff Bonner and football player Albert Alatorre joined fellow students and staff on Oct. 3, visiting McDowell Mountain Elementary School to read books from the book fair to students.

Open talk offered concerning teens and social media

On Thursday, Oct. 25, Katey McPherson, the executive director of The Gurian Institute, will offer two one-hour keynotes on the effects of social media on tweens and teens.

McPherson, who has spent 23 years at K-12 schools as a teacher, counselor and administrator, will give the keynotes in the District Learning Center. The first one starts at 7:45 a.m. and is for high school parents.

The second keynote is for elementary and middle school parents and begins at 8:45 a.m.

In her presentation, McPherson will cover both the positive and negative effects that social media


has on a child.

"I will be covering the hidden impact on kids' brains of social media and screen time use," McPherson said. "Some of it, for academics, can be a great tool. But extended use and lack of sleep continues to be a concern for our tweens and teens, specifically. I will also speak on the flip side of that by showcasing what geniuses kids are at using social media and technology for good to brand, market and promote themselves."

The keynote is being presented by the Fountain Hills Unified School District, the FHUSD PTO and the Fountain Hills Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition,



Katey McPherson, executive director of The Gurian Institute.



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