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# Yuma Sun

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## Standoff GOP, Dems trade blame for partial shutdown/A6



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Details on B8

\$1.00



### YEAR IN REVIEW

# Somerton: 'Best Little City in Arizona'

## Officials focus on quality-of-life projects

BY MARA KNAUB  
@YSMARAKNAUB

Somerton has been called the "Best Little City in Arizona," and local officials continued efforts to live up to the title in 2018 by focusing on projects that improve the quality of life for residents.

Newly elected Mayor Gerardo "Jerry" Anaya and City Manager Ian McGaughey recently shared the highlights and challenges the city faced this past year.

The city made some changes. Citizens elected a new mayor and the council hired a new city manager. Joseph Turitto, acting police chief since June, was named to the post permanently.

However, Anaya said, the council is "unified" and has the same goals. "That's big. We're excited about moving Somerton forward," he added.

The community marked the 100th anniversary of the city's incorporation with the June dedication of a new park at the base of Somerton's iconic water tower.

McGaughey noted that the park is designed as a place where residents can gather and "elders can sit while the kids play." It has a splash pad, which has already proved to be a hit with kids. Future plans for the site include a culture center and museum.

Somerton also opened a new "andador," or pathway for walkers, joggers and bicyclists, on Somerton's west side. The asphalt trail extends one mile alongside Cesar Chavez, from Main Street north to County 15th  
SEE SOMERTON/A5



ABOVE: THE NEW SOMERTON City Hall, 143 N. State Ave., received an award in late 2018 when the Arizona Masonry Guild honored it with its Excellence in Masonry Architectural Award. FAR LEFT: The Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 310 W. Spring St., makes for an interesting skyline in the south Yuma County city. LEFT: A small park sits at the base of the landmark Somerton water tower.

PHOTOS BY RANDY HOEFFT  
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## Youth group urges San Luis to recycle

BY CESAR NEYOY  
BAJO EL SOL

SAN LUIS, Ariz. — A new youth panel formed by City Hall to get young people involved in their community is tackling the environment as its first mission.

The San Luis Youth Council, made up of high school students, will launch a campaign urging residents to recycle household waste and cut down on their use of plastic bags, said Vanessa Aguilar, the council president.

"We wanted to begin with a campaign to avoid the use of plastic bags in businesses, but we found out that that can't be done, because there's no law that prohibits it," she said. "So we'll start a campaign in the community (encouraging residents) to limit their use."

The inaugural council,

appointed in September, consists of San Luis High School students who previously showed leadership abilities as members of the school's student council.

Aguilar said council members will advance their message about recycling through their participation in community events, and by lending a hand to City Hall in running its new recycling program.

In the pilot program launched in September, the city placed more than 700 recycling containers in neighborhoods on the northeast and southwest corners of San Luis, encouraging residents to deposit plastics, plastic bags, newspapers, other papers, cardboard, and aluminum and metal spray cans.

Besides Aguilar, members of the youth council are Anney Romo, the pan-



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PHOTO BY CESAR NEYOY/BAJO EL SOL

MEMBERS OF THE SAN LUIS Youth Council include (from left) Anney Romo, Gibran Murrieta, Vanessa Aguilar and Ileen Lopez. Members not pictured are Judith Anderson, Jackie Anderson and Emmanuel Hernandez.

el's vice president, and Gibran Murrieta, Ileen Lopez, Judith Anderson, Emmanuel Hernandez and Jackie Anderson.

Taking part in the coun-

cil "is an opportunity to participate in what is happening in the community," Romo said.

Romo said council members chose recycling as

their first initiative after taking part in a community cleanup campaign, during which they noticed heavy littering along Juan Sanchez Boulevard.

## 'Surprise' hospital bill law to take effect Tues.

BY HOWARD FISCHER  
CAPITOL MEDIA SERVICES


PHOENIX — Arizonans are finally going to get some protection from "surprise" hospital bills.

On Tuesday, a new state law takes effect designed to help people who think their hospital visit is covered but later find themselves facing a bill from some health care provider who says he or she doesn't accept their insurance.

The new law won't erase the bill entirely. And some kinds of health care bills remain outside the scope of the statute.

But Stephen Briggs, spokesman for the Arizona Department of Insurance said if patients are care-

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