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sign NLI, page 8

LEDGER

MARCH 2, 2016
Vol. 4, No. 26



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VALLEY
INCORPORATION?**

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games to be
broadcast
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Published the first and third Wednesday
 of the month by Copper Area News
 Publishers. Mailing address is Southeast
 Valley Ledger, c/o Copper Area News
 Publishers, PO Box 579, Kearny, AZ
 85137.

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 where the politicians have seized absolute
 power and muzzled the press. There is no
 country in the world where the press has
 seized absolute power and muzzled the
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David Brinkley

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 also request our newspaper through the mortuary or funeral home.

Obituary

Isabella Hope Roche

Isabella Hope Roche or "Izzy" went to be with
 the Lord Jesus on Feb. 19, 2016 after living a
 short but amazingly impactful life.

Izzy's life may seem too short to many, but those
 who were touched by her understood that the
 quality of existence far exceeds the quantity of
 time in which one lives. She had an amazing way
 of winning the hearts of everyone who met her
 including her parents, Chad and Jill Roche.

To the world, Izzy had Down Syndrome or
 "special needs" but in reality anyone who met
 her had their special needs met! She was all
 personality and her Daddy affectionately referred
 to her as his little monkey and she was the Queen
 of Dirty looks! She was full of energy and was a
 totally free spirit who wanted to do things her
 own way—and she had no problem telling you
 that!

Izzy spent time in the KidsLife program at
 LifePoint Church in San Tan Valley and even
 though she was only there for a few hours a week,
 she impacted the lives of those who watched
 over her. She had so many special friends and
 people in the community who adored her. One
 of her friends even liked to spend time with her
 and have "cuddle therapy" with Izzy because she
 absolutely loved to cuddle.

Izzy is survived by her loving parents, Chad and
 Jill Roche of San Tan Valley, Arizona; sisters,
 Abigail, Carmen and Ashley; brothers, Johnathan,
 Samuel, Joseph and Jeremiah; paternal
 grandparents, Robert and Catherine Roche of
 San Tan Valley, Arizona; maternal grandmother,
 Beverly Pahlas of Beloit, Wisconsin; Uncle
 Charles and Aunt Shauna of Mesa, Arizona;
 Uncle Luke and Aunt Baylee and cousins Cai and
 Ryott of San Tan Valley, Arizona; Aunt Joan and
 cousin CJ of Janesville, Wisconsin; Uncle Jim
 and Aunt Deena and cousin Hunter of Ramsey,
 Michigan; and MANY special friends and loved
 ones—too many to name!

Izzy is preceded in death by her maternal
 grandfather, John M. Pahlas of Beloit, Wisconsin.

Services to remember Izzy's life were held at
 LifePoint Christian Fellowship on Saturday, Feb.
 27, 2016.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to:
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Letter to the Editor

Sheriff discusses RICO fund use

To the residents and business community of Pinal County: Over the past few months, you may have seen news reports that the American Civil Liberties Union is suing the State of Arizona, including the Pinal County Sheriff's Office, regarding the use of criminal monies that have been legally seized under the "Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organizations" act of 1970. (RICO funds).

Now this week, the Goldwater Institute submitted a public records request to our office and sent out their written opinion to local news organizations asking for information explaining how the seized funds are used, the groups these funds are given to, and what the County receives in return for the funds.

Much of the criticism over our use of the RICO funds have been leveled at our donations to Pinal County youth programs, organizations that help disabled veterans, shelters that assist domestic violence victims and organizations that help prevent teen suicides. The Goldwater people said in their "news release", they want to know what we get back from these non-profit organizations.

To the people of Pinal County, the return is very clear. These programs make for healthier communities, yes, and safer communities for our residents to live and raise their families. Pinal County is rural and we don't have the same funding sources as many urban population centers in our state. These programs would not thrive and grow in our communities if they didn't receive financial assistance like that given by our office.

The Goldwater attorneys say they want to ensure "taxpayer money isn't being misused for personal gain or in violation of the Arizona constitution." The RICO funding is not taxpayer money, but it is public money that we have legally seized from organized crime syndicates like

the Mexican Drug Cartels. Our choice to spend this public money to support our communities' youth, is well within the rules of the Department of Justice and the state laws governing the use of RICO funds. Our use of RICO funds is not in any way supplanting funds for normal government expenses, as has been alleged by the Goldwater attorneys. It is a legal and recognized proper use of these funds.

The Department of Justice has stated that up to \$25,000 of Federal RICO funds can be used to "support of community based programs". The State RICO statutes say that "at least ten percent of the monies in the fund shall be provided to private, non-profit community based organizations and gang prevention and intervention programs." We are clearly following the directives of these regulatory agencies.

Over the past seven years, the Pinal County Sheriff's Office has donated approximately \$1.5 million of seized criminal money to support youth programs like the Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, High School Graduation Night Lock-in events, youth sports programs, victim assistance programs and drug rehabilitation programs such as the "Home of Hope."

The primary job of law enforcement is to protect our citizens. We are doing just that by using money we have seized from drug dealers and other criminals and reinvesting the money into programs to improve the quality of life in Pinal County. As long as the bad guys keep trying to make a living through committing crimes, we will continue to fight them by seizing their illegal gains and use the money to support organizations that help victims and help keep our youth free from drugs, criminal activity and gangs.

Respectfully,
**/s/ Paul Babeu, Sheriff
Pinal County, Arizona**

calendar

MARCH 2016

FLORENCE COPPER COFFEE

03

Join Florence Copper on Thursdays at 10 a.m. for the weekly Coffee Club. Enjoy a hot beverage and pastry with other residents of the community as you chat about the Florence Copper Project, the future of Florence, or anything else. Coffee Club meets at the Florence Copper Community Center, located at 130 N. Main St. in Florence. Event repeats March 17.



BTA PLANT SALE, LIVE MUSIC

05

Last year the Abbey Garden in California closed its doors after decades of raising and selling unusual and exotic succulents; Boyce Thompson Arboretum purchased a large portion of the inventory for internal collections -- plus duplicates for collectors of rare plants to buy. Join the Abbey Garden rescue effort by owning a plant from this unique collection March 5 during a special Saturday sale from 8am-5pm, one week before the annual Spring Plant Sale fundraiser at BTA. Join the Arboretum as an annual member (\$50/year) and get 10% off plants purchased -- members' discount doubles to 20% off during the annual plant sale March 11-27. Next weekend also brings a late lunch concert of live music Sunday, March 6, from 1 - 2:30 p.m., with Steve Holmquist. Music is included with daily admission of \$10; confirm times for guided tours and other events at cals.arizona.edu/bta



POWWOW FARMERS MKT.

12

On Saturday, March 12, Produce on Wheels Without Waste will return to the San Tan Valley Farmers Market. Buy 60 pounds of produce for just \$10. And you get to pick it out! Artisan breads will also be available for purchase. The Farmers Market is located at Combs High School, 2505 E. Germann Rd., San Tan Valley. For more information please call 602-684-5489.



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House bill that could enable San Tan Valley to become Arizona's 11th largest city advances

By James J. Hodl
Southeast Valley Ledger

Now that legislation that would ease the way for residents of San Tan Valley to hold a vote on incorporating as a city has begun advancing through the Arizona House of Representatives, opponents are asking that the issue regress back to the discussion stage.

A meeting needs to take place so we can sit down and identify some middle ground on San Tan Valley incorporation.

A bill (HB 2385) was approved on Feb. 24 by the House Judiciary Committee on a unanimous 6-0 vote and now awaits hearings in the House Rules Committee before being sent for a vote by the full House. The measure would eliminate the "six-mile rule" in Pinal County that allows an incorporated city or town within six miles of a community seeking to incorporate to block a vote in that community if it feels the newly incorporated town would have a detrimental impact on the existing city. Since 2011 Pinal has been the only county in Arizona where the "six-mile rule" is still in effect.

The "six-mile rule" was used by the Florence Town Council in 2010 to block a vote on San Tan Valley incorporation. The following year, the Arizona state legislature enacted a measure that would have originally eliminated the rule for all counties, but that Pinal County was removed from coverage in a deal to get the measure passed for the benefit of the other counties.

HB 2385 still contains some limitations on communities seeking to incorporate.

Existing incorporated towns can still block a neighboring communities' incorporation vote if the population of the community is less than 65% of the existing town. Thus, Eloy could still block an incorporation vote in Arizona City. However, no neighboring town could block its incorporation vote in San Tan Valley as its population is currently larger than any other town in Pinal County.

While prior to 2001 San Tan Valley was entirely farm land, development of subdivisions was so rapid that the community was large enough to select its own name by 2008, and be listed in the 2010 U.S. Census as having 81,000 residents. San Tan Valley is currently estimated to have between 88,000 and 100,000 residents, and is large enough to have been issued three ZIP Codes by the U.S. Postal Service.

If incorporated, San Tan Valley would immediately become the 11th largest city in Arizona, according to Tom Belshie, an administrator with the League of Arizona Cities and Towns (LACT).

Rather than see the Arizona House vote on HB 2385, officials in Florence have asked chief sponsor State Rep. Eddie Farnsworth (R-Gilbert) to put the measure on the back burner and enter a discussion that would lead to a fair solution. Farnsworth has not responded to this request.

"Florence would prefer a meeting of stakeholders that would include the county, as well as the cities and towns in Pinal County, as well as members of the San Tan Valley incorporation steering committee, and others that might be deemed stakeholders," Jess Knudson, Florence assistant town manager, told the *Southeast Valley Ledger*. "A meeting needs to take place so we can sit down and

identify some middle ground on San Tan Valley incorporation."

According to Knudson, Florence has asked State Rep. Doug Coleman (R-Apache Junction) to help organize a stakeholders meeting.

Florence opposed a San Tan Valley incorporation vote in 2010 it was at the height of the Great Recession and would have lost \$900,000 annually in state shared revenues had a new city of 80,000 claimed a share of these revenues, Knudson said. However, Knudson added that Florence is not currently opposed to efforts to incorporate San Tan Valley.

This differed from Florence's position in 2014 when the town objected to the boundaries of the proposed San Tan Valley Fire and Medical District as it claimed as a municipal planning area San Tan Valley south of Combs Road and east of Gary Road.

What scares nearby towns in Pinal County is the sheer size of San Tan Valley, said LACT's Belshie. The community stands to become the largest population ever to seek incorporation, and if it becomes a city it will cause a huge shift in how state revenue is shared in Pinal County. Residents of San Tan Valley will benefit from a larger sum of revenues while other towns would get less.

LACT thus opposed HB 2385 as it believes a slower, more thoughtful path to incorporation is required to make things less financially painful for other Pinal towns, he said.

In addition to Florence, Apache Junction and Maricopa are reportedly opposed to HB 2385. Maricopa is the most recent Pinal County town to incorporate back in 2003.

LACT believes that a too soon incorporation of San Tan Valley could have disastrous

Continued on page 9

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Mobile technology permits Poston Butte softball broadcasts

By Andrew Luberd
Southeast Valley Ledger

Are you a Poston Butte softball fan who is at work, at school or simply can't make it to a game?

If you are, don't fret.

Through the use of mobile technology, Broncos' fans can now listen to streaming audio of the game at www.postonbuttesoftball.com.

"With technology the way that it is, it's given us an opportunity to easily stream a game live on-the-air with literally an iPhone, a splitter and a pair of earphones," said Adam Strupp, who calls the play-by-play of every game.

The idea of streaming a live audio broadcast was considered after the Broncos boys' basketball team recently had to travel four hours away to Holbrook for a state playoff

game. Many parents and fans could not attend to game and were forced to follow Twitter and group texts for game updates.

"There's no reason for that with today's technology," said Strupp, who studied broadcasting in college. "In a perfect world, my long-term goal is to introduce this idea to schools that have media students who can broadcast games at an economically-friendly price."

Strupp, whose daughter Taylor is on the team, designed the website, where there is a link to live game broadcasts that will start 10 minutes prior to first pitch. Additionally, the site contains archived broadcasts of previous games.

"It's super easy to use," he said. "Once we go live on-the-air – technology permitting – the site will indicate that. There is a 'play' button;

press it and hear the girls' games."

Strupp will team with Mike Clark, who will provide color analysis during the broadcasts. Clark's daughter Megan is a junior and a third-year varsity player. His daughter Taylor is a Poston Butte graduate who now plays at the University of Richmond in Virginia.

"Mike has kept stats since the beginning of Poston Butte's softball history," Strupp said. "So he has knowledge of all the school and season records, which is pretty cool because it adds a lot to our broadcast."

Strupp admits the broadcasts will be a work-

in-progress to start and hopes to include a pregame and postgame segments, which will include starting lineups and possibly interviews with Poston Butte players.

The Lady Broncos' players are excited to have their games heard by fans even though there may be some added pressure to perform well.

"All-in-all we think they're excited about it," Strupp said. "It's sort of created a buzz around school."

So turn off the internet radio when you're at work and tune into the Lady Broncos' softball broadcast.

Young and talented Lady Broncos have high expectations

By Andrew Luberd
Southeast Valley Ledger

The Poston Butte softball team enters the 2016 season with the majority of its roster made up of underclassmen, including 10 freshmen or sophomores. Only five upperclassmen are on this year's team.

Many of the sophomores are second-year varsity players who earned valuable playing time

as freshmen a year ago, when the Broncos won nine more games than the season before. The talented group of underclassmen is a big reason why there is plenty of optimism surrounding the team despite the graduation of five seniors from last season.

"We have three freshmen who fill that gap right away," said Poston Butte head coach Don Baker, referring to the departed seniors' starting

Continued on page 9



READY TO PLAY

Members of the Poston Butte softball team (young as they are) stand ready to play some competitive ball this year.
Kelli Luberd | Ledger

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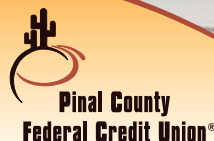
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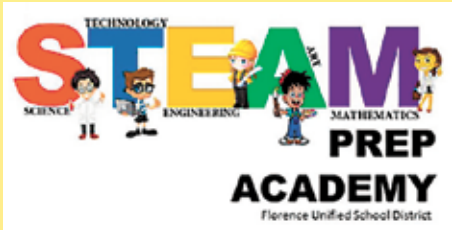
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Outdoor play area where children can learn engineering by building things out of these foam pieces.



Each room is designed with shelving units like this. Each child is assigned their own cubby.



Six Queen Creek football players sign NLI

By Andrew Luberd
Southeast Valley Ledger

Six Bulldogs' football teammates signed National Letters of Intent last month, committing to colleges or universities around the country to continue their education and playing careers at the next level.

"The great thing is they are kids that embody the Queen Creek spirit – they work hard, they do the things we ask, and they're great leaders," Queen Creek football head coach Travis Schureman told the *Ledger*. "They've set the bar high, which is great for our brand at Queen Creek. They've raised the standard here of what it's going to take for our program to continue the success we've had."

For senior defensive linemen Cody Davis, who will study chemical engineering at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, it also means

pursuing a dream.

"I think it's a very big opportunity to redshirt the first year," Davis said. "I'll be able to go up there and have about four-and-a-half years of playing football, learning, and continuing that on to the NFL."

Senior All-State kicker Zach Glaess signed with Missouri University of Science and Technology, located in Rolla, Missouri and one of the premiere engineering schools in the country.

Glaess, who is also a standout catcher on the Bulldogs' baseball team and one of the state's top collegiate baseball prospects, chose a school that provides an education that will help him land the best job possible when his athletic career finally ends.

"It is a top-10 engineering school and I was focused on attending a very good engineering school," said Glaess, who acknowledged he may play both sports for the Miners. "If I don't play

sports past college I want to get a good degree and Missouri S&T offers that."

Nico Martin, a two-way starter and an All-

Continued on page 9



COLLEGES CHOSEN

Jordan Ackert, Codie Davis, Zane Whiting,
Nico Martin, and Zach Glaess.

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QCHS NLI

Continued from page 8

Section offensive and defensive lineman, signed with Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where Cobber coaches intend to use the Bulldogs’ multi-sport athlete as a running back and/or linebacker.

Jordan Ackert, the Bulldogs’ tight end last season, battled through a preseason knee injury that required him to wear a brace that was at least an annoyance for him. Still he was still

PBHS Softball

Continued from page 6

positions. “They have the potential to have even better seasons than those seniors did last year.” “That already indicates team improvement,” he continued. “Plus with the growth of last year’s freshmen, who are now sophomores and last year’s sophomores are now juniors make the team better in its self.”

Baker believes Poston Butte’s move down to Division III has created some additional excitement given it’s where he feels is team is more competitively balanced against other opponents. “This team competed very well in Division

STV Incorporation

Continued from page 4

consequences, Belshie said. Besides state revenue sharing, Arizona towns get much of their revenue from a local addition to the state Transaction Privilege Tax (known elsewhere as a sales tax). But San Tan Valley grew faster than its retail community. Much of the current retail community is located along Hunt Highway, especially at the intersections with Gary Road and Belle Vista Road. Retail also is sprouting along Ironwood/Gantzel Roads from just north of Ocotillo Road to south of Combs Road. But the number and variety of stores is still small with most San Tan Valley residents still driving into Queen Creek in Maricopa County to shop at the myriad stores in its two shopping centers. Thus the sales tax might not contribute the volume of revenues needed to support a city as

dynamic in two varsity seasons, attracting attention from schools before ultimately signing with Benedictine College with teammate Davis. Teryn Dudley signed with Concordia University in Seward, Nebraska. The senior defensive end is grateful to have been a part of the Bulldogs’ program, which he believes prepared him for the next level. “Everybody looks out for each other (at Queen

II,” Baker told the Ledger. “Now that we’re in D-three we should really excite some people and do some great things.” The roster in each of the last two seasons has featured only a few club players, which many of the best teams seem to have an abundance of. The Lady Broncos have more this year compared to at least the previous two seasons. “We went from having four or five club players on the team last season to having 10 club players this season,” said Adam Strupp, the Lady Broncos’ play-by-play broadcaster. “They are still a young team, but at the same time we

populous as San Tan Valley. The current sales tax in San Tan Valley is 6.7% while most incorporated towns in Pinal County add 2% on top of the state and county portion (total 8.7%). A few cash-strapped towns like Mammoth and Superior have 10.7% sales tax rates. LACT offers to help San Tan Valley prepare for an incorporation. This includes drafting an ordinance creating the town government, complete with the size and composition of an elected town council, and creation of town departments headed by a town manager, town clerk, financial director and a director of parks and recreation. Initially the town could contract out for police, fire and road repair, but could eventually create their own in-house

Creek),” Dudley said. “We play as a team, we talk as a team, and everything about us is a family and it’s just been such a great time to be here.” Zane Whiting, an All-Division and All-Section player at two different positions, signed with Adams State University in Alamosa, Colorado. Another Bulldogs’ multi-sport athlete, Whiting chose the Grizzlies over more than a few other schools, preferring to remain loyal to the school

think they’re going to be very, very good this year.” “I’m very optimistic that we should do very well in the section,” Baker added. “Our goal is to come back with a section championship, make it into the state playoffs, and make a deep run at state.” The remaining veteran players who have experienced a couple of lean seasons in their careers are looking forward to having the success that’s eluded them so far. “We have a lot of young talent and most of us play club (softball) and we’ve played

departments, Belshie said. Overall taxes would likely be raised to pay town officer salaries and things like liability insurance, he added. “It take a lot of planning to create a city,” Belshie explained. Worries that San Tan Valley might move for incorporation as soon as HB2385 is enacted may be premature. San Tan Valley Chamber of Commerce Chairman Wayne Bachmann said chamber members have not discussed incorporation much, and he knows of no other local group pushing for it at present. And any resident who receives water and/or sewer service from Johnson Utilities has received many warnings about incorporation bringing higher taxes in the firm’s newsletter

that was the first to offer. “When I went up on my visit I had a good feeling about the coaches, that they really cared about me and wanted me to be there,” said Whiting, who will study Sports Science and Sports Management. “It was also the first school that offered me and that definitely played into my decision. The coaches there were the first show any interest.”

together for a long time so there is a lot of team cohesiveness,” said junior Megan Clark, a three-year varsity player and the Lady Broncos’ most experienced player. The Lady Broncos went 2 – 3 – 1 in last week’s preseason tournament at Dobson and Westwood high schools. Their schedule moves forward this week with a game at Douglas on Mar. 2 before the home opener on Tuesday, Mar. 8 versus Safford at 6 p.m. Streaming audio of all Lady Broncos’ games this season is available at www.postonbuttesoftball.com.

tucked in with the monthly bill. Still others seem to want San Tan Valley to become its own entity. “It would be nice for San Tan Valley to become a city and offer the same services as other towns,” said B.J. Young, a resident of the Wayne Ranch subdivision. “We should be able to chart our own future as our own city. That is why I favor incorporation. We can figure out where the downtown is to eventually locate the town hall later,” said Vic Jansen, a resident of the Pecan Creek subdivision. A Facebook page called San Tan Valley’s Right to Vote has been created to promote passage of HB 2385 and offers daily reasons why passage would benefit residents.

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The Bubbly Hostess

hosts a murder mystery party

By Heather Sneed
The Bubbly Hostess

A couple of weeks ago, we hosted our 2nd Murder Mystery Party - our guests, once again, did not disappoint! Arriving in full character and amazing costumes, it was another successful event! In 2015, our theme was set in the Roaring 20s and this year it was set in the Old West at the Deadwood Saloon.....

I followed the same process I did for the last one, sending out an email to a large group of our friends to gauge interest. Once I knew who was ready to play, I started working on the character assignments. Once again, I purchased the party through Night of Mystery which gave me a large PDF file that had everything I needed.

Upon arrival, the guests entered our courtyard to find a hitchin' post, a campfire, a saddle, bales of hay, and a jail. The Hubby did an AMAZING job decorating this area - my favorite part was the jail he constructed! We also purchased a Saloon

Door Cover for the front door and rented whiskey barrels, wagon wheels, and lanterns from Lasting Impressions Party Planning that you'll see throughout the décor.

Once inside, the guests could grab their "Envelope A" which included their 1st set of objectives, \$500 in "funny money", and their name tag. All of our guests were kind enough to bring an appetizer to share at the party - as usual, everyone delivered!

As everyone entered the family room, they walked into what we tried our best to make look like The Deadwood Saloon. We removed all of the furniture from our family room to help make this happen. We once again rented cocktail tables and linens from Y-Knot Party Rentals. We also used a barn siding backdrop to line the lower half of the main wall in the room and a red plastic table cover roll on the upper half.

To decorate the walls, we used the signs included in the kit from Night of Mystery and for the posters with characters; I Photoshopped my friends' images over the

page in the PDF file. On a few of them, I tried to make them a little more authentic by burning the edges a little - and sometimes a lot! My 9 year old son suggested burning more than the edges of the paper - great idea!

Once I knew we were ready for "the murder", The Hubby arranged for the lights to go off and I had set up an app on my phone (along with a Bluetooth speaker) to make the gun sound. Our victim fell to the floor and phase 2 of the party began.

Each guest was handed "Envelope B" with information about what they knew, objectives they had to complete, and some were given evidence. Once the evidence was presented, everyone was given the opportunity to vote and then I tallied up the results. I then presented the award certificates to the various winners.

We also staged a "photo booth" area for our guests using the same barn siding backdrop that was in the main room. But

this time, we doubled it up to be on the top and bottom of the wall. With some additional props, either borrowed from friends or rented from Lasting Impressions Party Planning this was the perfect space to capture images of everyone during the evening.

All of the characters took lots of great pictures - many of them getting a kick out of being behind bars for some of the photos! I hope you will visit my site at www.bubblyhostess.com to see all of the photos especially the images of the cast of characters (a.k.a. our amazing friends) in their fabulous costumes!

Please visit my site at www.bubblyhostess.com. You can also find The Bubbly Hostess on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter - I always love new followers!



DEADWOOD SALOON

The Bubbly Hostess, Heather Sneed, and her husband hosted a mystery party with an Old West theme.

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