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The Daily Courier

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Prescott adopts new Wildland-Urban Interface Code, discusses sewer exemption for certain homes

Anthony Valdez, Prescott Fire Marshal and Division Chief of community risk management, speaks to council about the adoption of the 2024 International Wildland-Urban Interface Code on Tuesday, May 12, 2026. (Brodie Greene/Courier)



By **BRODIE GREENE**
 The Daily Courier

The Prescott City Council unanimously voted to adopt the 2024 International Wildland-Urban Interface Code, along with amendments created by the Prescott Fire Department, establishing standards applicable to buildings and structures within the wildland-urban interface.

At the Tuesday, May 12 voting meeting, the council also provided direction to city staff on a proposed exemption that would remove sewer connection requirements for parcels that meet certain requirements.

ADOPTION OF INTERNATIONAL WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE CODE

Anthony Valdez, who serves as the Fire Marshal and Division Chief of community risk management, said that the International Wildland Urban Interface Code is a supplemental code to the rest of codes adopted by the city, such as the International Building Code, and is specifically applicable to mitigating wildfire risk.

"Wildfire is our No.1 risk within the city of Prescott, and so we are making very intentional efforts to ensure that we are reducing that risk to the best of our ability through a whole plethora of services

that we provide. The enforcement of the international wildlife interface code is just one of those elements that helps create that resilient community against wildfire," Valdez said.

Prior to the adoption of the updated codes, the city was using the 2012 edition of the IWUIC.

The newly adopted codes include amendments that redesignate the wildland-urban interface to include the entire city limits, update vegetation management requirements, use data to determine ignition-resistant construction materials, and

See **PRESCOTT**, page 5

FIXTURE FEATURE

Scott O'Neal's blues legacy earns Arizona Hall of Fame induction after decades shaping Prescott scene

By **JESSE BERTEL**
 The Daily Courier

Scott O'Neal has spent nearly three decades building Prescott's blues foundation — one Sunday jam session, one original song, one mentored musician at a time. That dedication earns formal recognition when he's inducted into the Arizona Blues Hall of Fame on Sunday, June 21 at the Windsock Lounge, 1365 Iron Springs Road. The induction ceremony runs from 2 to 6 p.m. during O'Neal's weekly Sunday blues jam, which marks its eighth year as of March 2026.

The honor caps years of nominations for the musician who's served as a Hall of Fame board member since 2017 and president for over a year.

"We have over 160 inductees in the Hall of Fame now," O'Neal said. "Pretty much the cream of the crop as far as blues players in Arizona are the ones who nominate you and induct you, so it's a big deal."

Inductees are nominated and elected by other inductees and board members, giving O'Neal just one vote despite his leadership position.

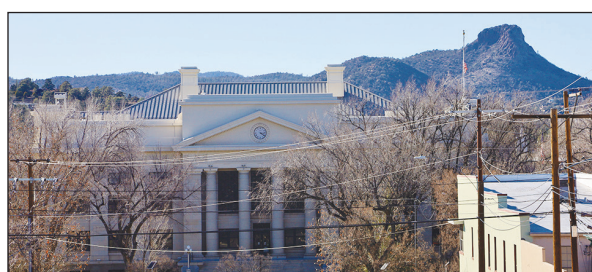
O'Neal moved to Prescott in 1998 with a specific mission of bringing blues to town. The scene was sparse when he arrived. Since then, Prescott

See **O'NEAL**, page 5



Scott O'Neal will be inducted into the Arizona Blues Hall of Fame on Sunday, June 21, 2026, at the Windsock Lounge. (Courtesy)

NORTHCUTT TRIAL



Yavapai County Courthouse at 120 South Cortez Street in Prescott, February 4, 2026. (Hava Herzog/Courier)

Northcutt's trial begins for alleged crimes against Habitat for Humanity

By **HAVA HERZOG**
 The Daily Courier

Karen Marie Northcutt, 62, is charged with multiple charges of theft, money laundering, trafficking stolen property, and tampering with physical evidence against Prescott Area Habitat for Humanity (PAHH).

She appeared in Superior Court, Division Four, Tuesday, May 12 at the Yavapai County Courthouse for the first day of her seven-day jury trial. Fourteen jurors were selected — seven men and seven women, two of whom are alternates.

County Attorney George Rodriguez presented

See **TRIAL**, page 8

FIREWISE PART 1

Wildfire threat heating up

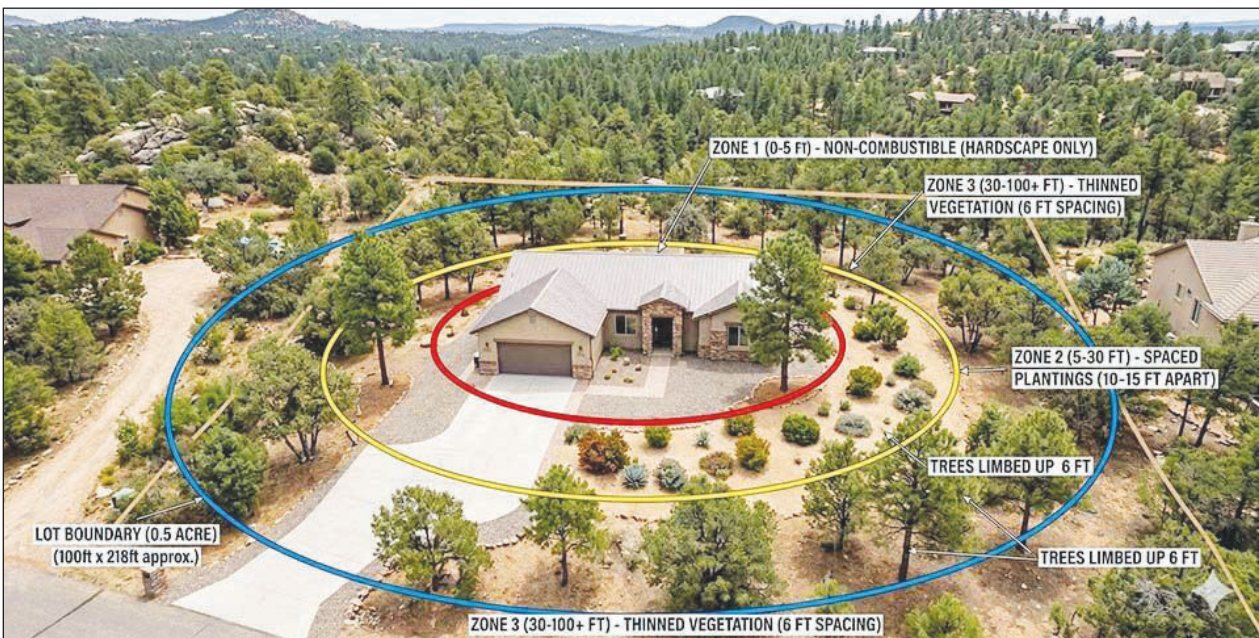
By **CONRAD JACKSON**
 Special to the Courier

You may have noticed that this winter was drier and warmer than normal. This winter set a new record for the warmest since we started measuring such things here in Prescott. It is the same story for the state, with record or near-record average temperatures everywhere. Firefighters are already starting to think about the upcoming peak wildfire season, which may get off to an early start if things keep going the way they have been. If you reside in Yavapai County, you should be thinking about the threat too. It is your

home and community at risk. If you are the Wildfire Risk Manager for the City of Prescott (that's me), you are thinking about ways to illustrate the threat and give folks ways to improve their safety in the event of a wildfire.

I want to paint a clear picture of the wildfire threat around here and clear up a few misconceptions. For starters, we live in a fire-adapted ecosystem. It always burns here. With annual monsoons and the accompanying lightning, the plants around here are adapted to a life with fire. We should be doing the same. Mature

See **FIREWISE**, page 7



(Prescott Fire Department/Courtesy)

Today's Weather

High 84° | Low 49°
 Weather, Page 2

Inside Today's Courier

Local	3	Comics	10
Opinions	4	Features	11
Obituaries	8	Sports	12
Your Health	9	Classifieds	13

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