

How some bars in the Valley are reopening in COVID-19 pandemic

Priscilla Totiyapungprasert and Tirion Morris
Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

On Thursday night, Thunderbird Lounge owner Jeremiah Gratza welcomed patrons back to his Phoenix bar’s patio for the first time in nearly two months.

That morning, Maricopa County reached the “moderate” spread category of COVID-19, allowing gyms, bars and other businesses to reopen for the first time since Gov. Doug Ducey ordered them to close in June.

In the evening, strings of lights twinkled once more above the patio, where tables and bottles of hand sanitizer were spread out across the 4,000-square-foot outdoor space. There was no corn-hole or giant Jenga set up.

The bar’s interior, a ’70s-themed lounge, was closed to guests, and the arcade games inside were turned off.

But Gratza feels relieved he gets the chance to bring his furloughed employees back and reopen the way restaurants were allowed to reopen in May.

Elsewhere around the Valley, other bars also reopened, such as Bottled Blonde in Old Town Scottsdale and Har-

old’s Cave Creek Corral.

“It feels great to be given the opportunity to show that we can open safely just like any other business,” Gratza said. “That’s all we’ve asked the entire time — to be treated fairly and to be treated equally.”

‘Be fair across the board’

On Thursday, Gratza and his staff could be seen wearing face masks, escorting people to tables and bringing out drinks. To prevent people from congregating outside the bar’s service window, Thunderbird Lounge is asking people to stay seated while a server takes their orders. Drinks will also be served in plastic cups that guests can toss out on their own, an attempt to reduce contact spread of COVID-19.

Antoine Bush, the doorman for Thunderbird Lounge, said it felt good to see the friendly faces of his regulars again, albeit behind a mask. Bush was laid off from his second job during the pandemic. During the two months he was furloughed from Thunderbird Lounge, he was unable to get his unemployment processed, he said.

Meanwhile, his boss Gratza was a vocal critic about the way Arizona has

managed bar reopenings.

Gratza, who opened his retro-style bar in April 2019, turned Thunderbird Lounge into a delivery and walk-up convenience shop during the early months of the pandemic, when bars and restaurants were first ordered to shut down. The bar sold beer, packaged snacks, cigarettes and cocktail ingredients, with a free roll of toilet paper with every purchase.

When restaurants and bars offering food were allowed to reopen, Thunderbird Lounge reopened its patio seating, serving meals from Restaurant Progress and Dino’s Napoletana next door.

But Ducey’s June 29 executive order forced bars to shut down again — specifically ones that hold a Series 6 or 7 liquor license. The order came after COVID-19 spiked over Memorial Day weekend and videos of crowded Scottsdale bars went viral.

In August, Gratza was one of more than 100 bar owners who signed onto a lawsuit against the closure. Gratza felt that a distinction should have been made between indoor and outdoor dine-in. Scientists generally agree that the risk of coronavirus transmission is greater indoors than outdoors.

“While we were forced to close, you

could still go to a casino, you could still go to a hotel, you could still go to a restaurant, walk right up to their bar and have a drink,” Gratza said. “We were forced to close even though we have a 4,000 square foot patio.”

How other bars in metro Phoenix are reopening

Jolie Grant, owner of Jolie’s Place bar and restaurant in Chandler, said it’s going to take some time before she’s ready to reopen.

Grant joined protesters in August against the bar closures.

Now that they can open, with caveats, she wants clear guidance from the state.

“We are kind of torn, I am glad he is taking the steps to reopen businesses but I am also worried that there’s still no clarity and the guidelines are confusing,” Grant told The Arizona Republic on Wednesday.

In the meantime, there’s clearing out to do, food to order and prepare, Plexiglas to secure in place and staff to train on state health guidelines.

“We are trying to avoid the rush,” Grant said. “We kind of have to tip-toe through this reopening.”

‘Black Panther’ star Boseman dies of cancer

Ryan Pearson
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES – Actor Chadwick Boseman, who played Black icons Jackie Robinson and James Brown before finding fame as the regal Black Panther in the Marvel cinematic universe, died Friday of cancer, his representative said. He was 43.

Boseman died at his home in the Los Angeles area with his wife and family by his side, his publicist Nikki Fioravante told The Associated Press.

Boseman was diagnosed with colon cancer four years ago, his family said in a statement.

“A true fighter, Chadwick persevered through it all, and brought you many of the films you have come to love so much,” his family said. “From Marshall to Da 5 Bloods, August Wilson’s Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom and several more – all were filmed during and between countless surgeries and chemotherapy. It was the honor of his career to bring King T’Challa to life in Black Panther.”

Boseman had not spoken publicly about his diagnosis.

Born in South Carolina, Boseman graduated from Howard University and had small roles in television before his first star turn in 2013. His striking portrayal of the stoic baseball star Robin-

son opposite Harrison Ford in 2013’s “42” drew attention in Hollywood and made him a star.

Boseman died on a day that Major League Baseball was celebrating Jackie Robinson day.

“This is a crushing blow” actor and director Jordan Peele said on Twitter, one of many expressing shock as the news spread across social media.

“This broke me,” said actor and writer Issa Rae.

His T’Challa character was first introduced to the blockbuster Marvel movies in 2016’s “Captain America: Civil War,” and his “Wakanda Forever” salute reverberated around the world after the re-

lease of “Black Panther” two years ago.

The character was last seen standing silently dressed in a black suit at Tony Stark’s funeral in last year’s “Avengers: Endgame.”

In addition to Robinson and Brown, Boseman portrayed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall in 2017’s “Marshall.”

He took on his first producing job in last year’s action thriller “21 Bridges,” in which he also starred, and was last seen on-screen in Spike Lee’s film “Da 5 Bloods” as the leader of a group of Black soldiers in the Vietnam War.

COVID-19: Arizona has 519 new cases, 49 more deaths

Alison Steinbach Arizona Republic
USA TODAY NETWORK

Arizona reported more than 500 new COVID-19 cases and 49 new known deaths on Friday as most metrics like hospital data and the percent of tests that are coming back positive continue to improve.

Hospitalization metrics like patient counts, ventilators in use and ER visits for COVID-19 have been on general downward trends over the past six weeks, with several metrics back down to levels from April and May, according to hospital data reported to the state.

Identified cases rose to 200,658 and known deaths totaled 4,978, according to the daily report by the Arizona Department of Health Services. The 49 new known deaths reported on Friday represent the new deaths identified by the Arizona Department of Health Services that day, but many occurred days and weeks prior.

Friday’s dashboard shows 84% of inpatient beds and 79% of ICU beds in

use, which includes people being treated for COVID-19 and other patients. COVID-19 patients are using 10% of all inpatient beds and 16% of ICU beds. Overall, 30% of ventilators were in use.

Here’s what you need to know about Friday’s new numbers:

Reported cases

- Cases increased by 519, or 0.26%, from Thursday’s 200,139 identified cases since the outbreak began.

Reported deaths

- On Friday, 49 new deaths were reported, although many occurred days and weeks prior.
- County deaths: 2,924 in Maricopa, 574 in Pima, 319 in Yuma, 219 in Navajo, 202 in Mohave, 183 in Pinal, 153 in Apache, 124 in Coconino, 78 in Yavapai, 59 in Cochise, 57 in Santa Cruz, 47 in Gila, 22 in Graham, 15 in La Paz and fewer than three in Greenlee.

ALMANAC

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1862:** The Bureau of Engraving and Printing began operations at the United States Treasury.
- 1944:** 15,000 American troops of the 28th Infantry Division marched down the Champs Elysees in Paris as the French capital continued to celebrate its liberation from the Nazis.
- 1957:** The Senate gave final congressional approval to a Civil Rights Act after South Carolina Sen. Strom Thurmond (then a Democrat) ended a filibuster that had lasted 24 hours.
- 2005:** Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast near Buras, Louisiana, bringing floods that devastated New Orleans. More than 1,800 people in the region died.
- 2008:** Republican presidential nominee John McCain picked Sarah Palin, a who had been governor of Alaska for less than two years, to be his running mate.
- 2012:** The NFL announced it would open the regular season with replacement officials.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

“Allegiant to add California flight from Mesa Gateway,” Aug. 28, Business, 13A:

The article used an incorrect pronoun to refer to Gail Barney. He is the mayor of Queen Creek.

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PRAYER

Lord, please help me to always remember that there is nothing in this day that you and I can’t handle together. Amen.

LOTTERY

- These Arizona lotteries were drawn Thursday:
- Pick 3**
- 5-1-0
- Fantasy 5**
- 02-04-07-23-34
- Estimated jackpot: \$55,000
- Triple Twist**
- 06-12-19-20-22-31
- Estimated jackpot: \$377,000
- Mega Millions**
- Estimated jackpot: \$68 million
- Powerball**
- Estimated jackpot: \$47 million

Please be advised that there will be two (2) virtual open house meetings to discuss a request for a citywide Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment to the Scottsdale Revised Code to amend the allowed uses in the Special Campus district.

The specific request proposes a Text Amendment to the Use Regulations (Sec. 6.803) to add COMMUNITY BUILDINGS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES NOT PUBLICLY OWNED, EDUCATIONAL SERVICE, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL, and RESIDENTIAL HEALTH CARE FACILITY to the Special Campus district.

This modification will allow the current uses and proposed uses in connection with a Zoning District Map Amendment request by the Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus which will also be discussed at the two virtual open house meetings.

Virtual Open Houses:

The web link www.technicalsolutionsaz.com/open-house.html will be accessible on Tuesday, September 8, 2020. The project team will be available on September 8, 2020 from 10:30 AM to 12 PM and 4:30 PM to 6 PM to respond to questions or comments. During this time, please feel free to call (602) 957-3434 or email info@technicalsolutionsaz.com during that time to communicate with a member of the project team.

Applicant Contact:

Michele Hammond (480) 385-2727 mh@berryriddell.com

City of Scottsdale Contact:

Meredith Tessier (480) 312-4211 MTessier@ScottsdaleAZ.gov

City of Scottsdale case # 11-ZN-2020 & 3-TA-2020

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