NEWS BY YOU

Girl Scouts learn about pipe trades

Submitted by Brenda Yanez, a spokeswoman for Torres Consulting and Law Group in Tempe.

Nicole Castro takes her gloves off and walks quickly to catch the next pipe-fitting station. She already soldered with a blow torch, twisted a steel and bonded a pipe. Next up is undogging a bathroom sink.

Castro, a 13-year-old seventh-grade student, participated in a recent Girl Scout outing at the UA Local 469 Arizona Pipe Trades Apprenticeship Training Center.

"I would definitely do this again because it's fun and helps you learn everyday skills that you'll need when you grow up," said Castro, of Gilbert.


The program evolved from the Girl Scout council's effort to encourage girls to pursue science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) professions, said Crystal Kilkenny, a camp director who leads the Girl Scout council's STEM programs.

The event will be repeated Saturday and is open to Girl Scouts in Grades 4 to 12.

"We are excited to introduce girls to different trade fields, including the fields of pipe fitting, plumbing and material engineering," Kilkenny said.

The event starts with girls attending a safety presentation. Then, they move on to soldering copper tubing and fittings, cutting pipe threads, cementing plastic pipe and fittings, and taking apart and installing a sink p-trap.

Bill Brown, a volunteer with UA Local 469, said the program is already a success with the Boy Scouts. They've had more than 700 boys go through the pipefitter's program since it started in 2011.

Playing with Fire is from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday at the UA Local 469 Arizona Pipe Trades Apprenticeship Training Center, 2950 W. Thomas Road, Phoenix. Information: www.uaLocal469.org or www.girlscoutsaz.org.

NEWS BY YOU

Zombie Mud Run to scare up support

Submitted by event organizer Priscilla Barney.

Mud runs have evolved from a pure boot-camp experience into one of the hottest formats for charity fun runs.

The Escape the Chase 5K Zombie Mud Run — beginning at 9 a.m. at 3740 S. Signal Butte Road, Mesa — is the first event of its kind in the East Valley as nearly 2,000 runners plow through mud pits and tackle enormous obstacles with zombies in hot pursuit.

Escape the Chase combines fun, adventure and zombie pop culture and makes a big difference for Make-A-Wish Arizona, Feed My Starving Children and Scholarships for Students.

During the planning phase of Escape the Chase, my husband, Trace, and I knew we wanted our event to make a positive impact on local children in need. Kids are our world — we have eight children — so, we sought out charitable partners who help kids and families in real and meaningful ways.

Among the runners are Miss Classic American 2012 Tristan Toppes, of Chandler, who will trade in her gown and crown in favor of muck and mud, all part of her long-term commitment to fighting childhood hunger.

Gilbert resident Jolyn Andrews and her 4-year-old son, Joel, also will join in.

The Andrewses are competing in support of Make-A-Wish, as they know exactly what it's like for families battling life-threatening childhood disease. Joel was born with a serious genetic disorder that causes tumor growth, but that won't stop him Saturday. Decked out in his Power Rangers costume, he will cheer on his mom and the other racers.

Joel won't be the only one in costume Saturday. We're expecting our runners to compete in costumes of all varieties, as we're handing out medals for best costume as opposed to fastest finish time.

Race registration is $75 online or $85 on race day. Zombie registration, which includes makeup, is $20. Information: www.escapethechase.com.