



ARIZONA'S HOME PAGE

SUBSCRIBE NOW and get 3 months for the price of 1 SUBSCRIBE



search: All azcentral.com



Log in My account Register e-Newspaper Help

News Sports Money Things to do Politics Opinion Watchdog Travel Food & Home Health Traffic Weather

Ahwatukee | Chandler | Gilbert | Glendale | Mesa | Peoria | Phoenix | Pinal | Queen Creek | Scottsdale | Southwest Valley | Surprise | Tempe

Healthy Living » Article

Comments

Metro Phoenix works to climb national fitness ranks

After falling 7 spots in a year, metro Phoenix has much to do to reach top-10 goal



Carrie McNeish, 46, leads her Muscle Mania fitness class at the Pecos Community Center.

Julien Savaroz/Foto: Arizona Republic

SHARE URL EMAIL FONT: A A A

Tweet

For Full Access: LOG IN or Subscribe now: 3 months for the price of 1

RELATED INFO

Interact with the index Download an interactive version of the fitness index in AZ, our tablet magazine, at az.azcentral.com.

The fitness quotient

The rankings for metro areas (Phoenix is No. 33) reflect a composite of a community's

preventive health behaviors, its chronic-disease conditions, health-care access, resources and policies that support physical activity. The metro Phoenix population increased by almost 111,000 since 2012, though the breakdown among age groups remains nearly identical.

The 2013 ranking shows metro Phoenix residents weren't as active as the year before.

By Connie Cone Sexton

The Republic | azcentral.com

Wed Jul 10, 2013 4:56 PM

In 2012, the American College of Sports Medicine awarded Phoenix the dubious ranking of 26th fittest city among the 50 most-populated communities in the country. Motivated to boost Phoenix out of the bottom half into the top 10, city officials launched FitPHX, a health initiative promoting sports, exercise programs and fitness events, targeting youth groups to help prevent obesity. The effort came a little too late for the most recent rankings: For 2013, the Phoenix metro area dropped to No. 33.

Officials, such as Phoenix City Councilman Daniel Valenzuela, vow to help the city rebound.

"With our mountain preserves and parks and climate that we have, why aren't we the healthiest city in the country?" Valenzuela asked. "But when you travel around different cities, you see a different attitude about health and fitness."

The ACSM launched the annual fitness index in 2008. Using data from various governmental entities, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Census Bureau and the Department of Agriculture, a panel of health and physical-activity experts ranks the areas.

3 MONTHS FOR THE PRICE OF 1 SIGN UP TODAY AND SAVE!

Most Popular Top Videos

- Mud run: Week 1 workout
Kubler-Ross' five stages of dying
A magical plant
Many factors can cause daily weight swings - no matter what you eat
Making sense of over-the-counter teeth whiteners

GET AZCENTRAL ANYWHERE

azcentral.com mobile editions

Get azcentral.com on your phones and tablets for the latest news, sports, video, photos and much more from azcentral, The Arizona Republic and 12 News.

- Get azcentral.com mobile!
Android | iPad | iPhone
iPhone Sports | AZ

From our sponsor

Banner Children's Total Kid for iPad



Download your free copy of Total Kid, an interactive digital parenting magazine filled with trending health topics, videos, tips and activities. Sponsored by Banner Health.

The obesity rate in metro Phoenix grew by 2 percentage points year over year.

For metro Phoenix, the No. 33 ranking carried both bad news and good.

First, the bad news. In terms of personal health behaviors and problems, categories that examine such things as diet and the incidence of chronic disease, residents have a long way to go. In fact, the metro area lost

ground over the previous year: Residents got less exercise, smoked more and felt worse more often, mentally.

About 7 percent fewer people had health insurance, which, perhaps, was a measure of the economy.

Now, the good news: Fewer people suffered from asthma or had bouts of angina or coronary disease. There is more parkland in the metro area than the year before and more people are biking to work or using public transportation.

The ACSM's recent fitness index advises metro Phoenix to increase the number of recreational facilities, including baseball diamonds, playgrounds and even and golf courses.

Valenzuela says Phoenix offers more than 350 fitness and sporting programs and needs to promote them better. "They don't know about them all," he said.

The No. 1 ranked metro area — Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., and Bloomington, Wis. — was found to have a low death rate for cardiovascular disease (118.8 per 100,000 people vs. 156.9 in metro Phoenix), a high percentage of people being at least moderately active (54.5 percent vs. 50.2 percent), a low death rate for diabetes (14.5 per 100,000 people vs. 19.2 percent) and a high number of farmers markets (29.2 vs. 8).

But the Twin Cities region didn't escape with a clean bill of health. The index recommended its residents need to smoke less and eat more fruits and vegetables.

For details about the Phoenix programs, visit phoenix.gov/fitphx.

YOU MAY LIKE

by Taboola

MORE FROM AZCENTRAL



Restaurant Gem_Nobuo



The physical impact of ejecting from an F16

[Cooks recount horror of Indian school-lunch deaths](#)

[Woman's missing husband found buried in yard](#)

[Johnny Depp on hard times as 'Lone Ranger' bombs](#)

[TV actors who died while their shows aired](#)

[Coroner: Cory Monteith overdosed on heroin, alcohol](#)



Serial shooter Dale Hausner dies in prison



Restaurant Gems: Pepe's Taco Villa

▶ JOIN THE DISCUSSION

Join the conversation! To comment on [azcentral.com](#), you must be logged into an active personal account on Facebook. You are responsible for your comments and abuse of this privilege will not be tolerated. We reserve the right, without warning or notification, to remove comments and block users judged to violate our [Terms of Service](#) and [Rules of Engagement](#).

FROM AROUND THE WEB

by Taboola

Comments posted via facebook:



Billionaires Dump Stocks, Prepare for Collapse (Shocking) Newsmax



Billionaire Tells Americans to Prepare For "Financial Ruin" Moneynews

[Michael Phelps with Mystery Blonde Date at the Esia Awards \(PICS\) \(Zimbio\)](#)

[Easy Slow Cooker Peach Cobbler \(Betty Crocker\)](#)

[Aerial Footage: Boeing 777 Crashes in San Francisco \(Bloomberg\)](#)

[Kate Middleton's Ring - Close Up Photos \(StyleBistro\)](#)

[25 Ways to Lose Fat Faster \(Men's Fitness\)](#)



Biggest Photoshop sters ty Riot



Top 10 Athletes Turned Actors of All Time Rant Sports

Remaining Views

POPULAR TOPICS

- [Arizona Lottery Results](#)
- [Saving Arizona's Children](#)
- [Immigration](#)
- [Boomer101](#)
- [Western Jobs](#)
- [My Town](#)
- [Fiesta Bowl Investigation](#)
- [Ask & Answered](#)
- [My Neighborhood](#)
- [Who's Who In Business](#)
- [Investigations](#)
- [AZ Fact Check](#)
- [Arizona's American Indians](#)
- [Economic Snapshot](#)
- [City Comparison Guide](#)
- [Air We Breathe](#)
- [Republic 100](#)
- [AZ Storytellers](#)
- [Sheriff Joe Arpaio](#)
- [Valley Home Values](#)

SITEMAP

- [Homepage](#)
- [Arizona Lottery](#)
- [Healthy Living](#)
- [Business & Entrepreneurship](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Food & Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Things To Do](#)
- [Travel](#)
- [Getaway Tips](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Weather](#)

[More of azcentral.com](#)

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- [Mobile Apps](#)
- [RSS feeds](#)
- [Advertise with Republic Media](#)
- [Careers at The Republic](#)
- [FCC Online Public Inspection File](#)
- [EEO Public File Report](#)
- [Careers at 12 News](#)
- [Contact The Republic](#)
- [Media In Education](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Manage My Account](#)
- [Subscribe to The Republic](#)
- [Terms of Service](#)

PARTNERS

- [USA Today](#)
- [Gannett Co. Inc.](#)
- [Apartments: apartments.com](#)
- [Cars: cars.com](#)
- [Dating: eHarmony.com](#)
- [Homes: Homefinder.com](#)
- [HomeGain](#)
- [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#)
- [Local Businesses](#)
- [Shopping: findsave.azcentral.com](#)

© 2013 azcentral.com. All rights reserved. | Users of this site agree to the [Terms of Service](#), [Privacy Policy/Your California Privacy Rights](#) and [Ad Choices](#)

GANNETT

Remaining Views