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Chapter 2 from Karina Bland today | ARIZONA LIVING SUNDAY, E1

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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2010

Investors propping up home sales

Valley landlords buying some houses; hedge funds and equity firms want to buy more

By Catherine Reagor
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Investors are dominating metropolitan Phoenix's home-buying market again.

The region's growing supply of inexpensive foreclosure homes is draw-

ing thousands of investors, who can pay cash and close deals fast. The growing supply of renters means those investors can make money off the homes they have scooped up.

The market has drawn a diverse crowd of investors, spurring small-scale landlords to add more homes to

their holdings and attracting buyers from around the world looking to get in on a down market.

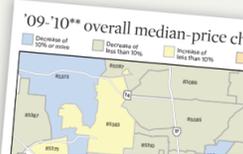
It also has quietly attracted investment firms that are buying huge quantities of houses in a strategy aimed at

See FORECLOSURES Page A16

VALLEY HOME VALUES 2010

In Business

See a map of how home values have changed in the Phoenix metro area. **D4-5**



MIKE O'CALLAGHAN-PAT TILLMAN MEMORIAL BRIDGE

A stunning bridge,

AN AMERICAN TRIUMPH



PHOTOS BY DAVID WALLACE/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

Challenged by geography and the elements, builders persevered

By Sean Holstege
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

It stands like a sentinel, watching in the wind over one of America's most treasured landmarks, the Hoover Dam.

When the Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge opens to traffic later this week, it will become an instant tourist attraction and provide a quicker, safer way to drive from Phoenix to Las Vegas.

The Hoover Dam bypass bridge is a study in superlatives. The highest and longest arched concrete bridge in the Western

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The new bridge, the highest and longest concrete arch span in the Western Hemisphere, opens to traffic later this week. At left, Brad Appleby takes a photo from the plaque that honors its namesakes: Pat Tillman and former Nevada Gov. Mike O'Callaghan.

Immigrant reform is caught in a quagmire

By Dan Nowicki
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

There has been no shortage of talk about comprehensive immigration reform on Capitol Hill. But years of promises, good intentions and even all-out efforts to pass legislation so far have led nowhere. And with Congress in recess, time has run out — again — to tackle reform before the midterm elections, which could change the balance of power in Washington.

It's enough for frustrated advocates to wonder if Congress' continued lack of action is deliberate.

So far it hasn't mattered whether a Democrat or a Republican is in the White House or which party is controlling Congress. President George W.

See REFORM Page A14

Reform: Some Democrats have hope for lame-duck session. **A15**

Dems fear for House prospects

By Dan Balz
WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — Two weeks out from Election Day, Campaign 2010 has come down to this: Democrats are increasingly pessimistic about holding the House but cautiously optimistic that they can keep their majority in the Senate, though with little room to spare.

That view is shared by many Republicans. They are bullish, some extraordinarily so, about the House. However, many now worry that the Sen-

See ELECTIONS Page A22

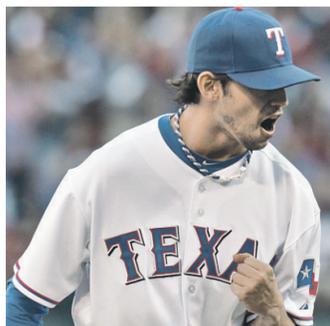
NATION & WORLD

PROGRESS NOTED IN AFGHAN WAR

Citing an improved Afghan army and an aggressive campaign in which hundreds of Taliban leaders and thousands of fighters have been recently killed or captured, U.S. officials say the momentum is shifting and notable progress is being made in the Afghan war. **A5**



'Mrs. Cleaver' dies: Barbara Billingsley, who portrayed a perfect stay-at-home mom as June Cleaver on TV's "Leave it to Beaver," was 94. **B7**



TONY GUTIERREZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPORTS

RANGERS CONQUER PLAYOFF DEMONS

Clay Rapada celebrates an out as the Texas Rangers win a home playoff game for the first time ever and snap a 10-game postseason losing streak against the New York Yankees. The 7-2 win ties the AL Championship Series 1-1. **C4**

VIEWPOINTS

Tough issues in Arizona: This year's ballot propositions may seem controversial, but the state's voters have dealt with much thornier subjects. **B11**

TRAVEL

A national treasure: Yellowstone National Park is more popular than ever, attracting visitors in record numbers. Why you may want to join the crowd next summer. **T1**

WEATHER High 90. Low 71. Partly cloudy, lower temperatures. » Complete forecast on B14

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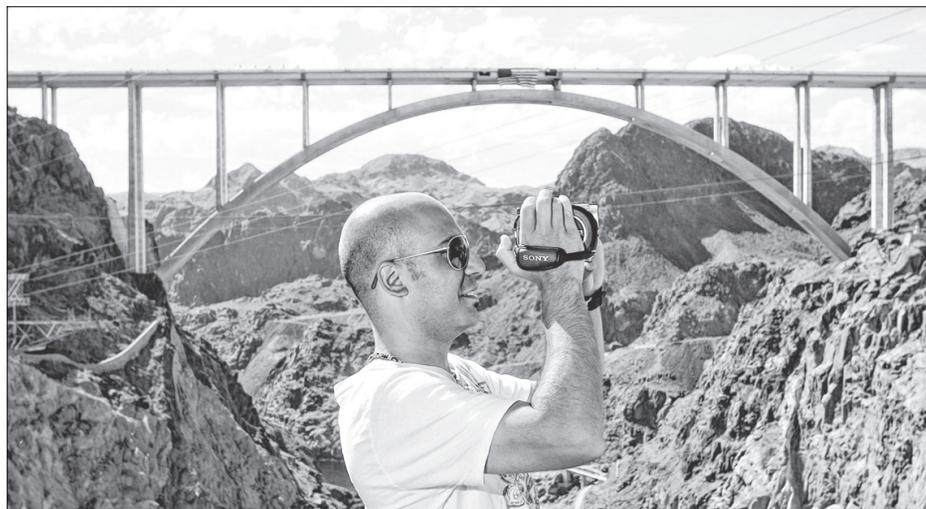
Pedestrians will be allowed to cross the bridge on the upstream side. From there, they can look down to the river 890 feet below and out to a new perspective on the imposing Hoover Dam. Work on the \$114 million bridge started on Valentine's Day 2005.

DAVID WALLACE/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC



On Thursday, workers, their families and other observers gathered on the bridge for dedication ceremonies including a Native American dance. About 1,200 workers and 300 engineers worked on the project.

DAVID WALLACE/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC



Rami Ellaz of Colorado Springs, Colo., shoots video from the Hoover Dam with the new Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge in the background. The dam will now be open to visitors only from the Nevada side.

MICHAEL SCHENNUM/THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC

BRIDGE

Continued from A6

charges. Even that work was surgical. Rock couldn't be allowed to fall because buildings housing overflow pipes for the dam were below. Instead, all of the rock was carried out by clamshell buckets.

The first concrete of Hoover Dam was poured on June 6, 1933. If the dam had been poured all at once, it would have taken 125 years to cool and cure, and the concrete would have cracked. Workers built the dam as a series of concrete boxes, dumping the mix from huge buckets. To keep the mix cool, workers ran 582 miles of cooling pipes through the forms. At first they carried river water and later ice water from a nearby plant. Sixteen people at the site died of heat exposure in just one month that summer of 1931, in which the average high was 120 degrees. The last concrete in the dam was poured on May 29, 1935.

As cliff preparations were being finished, crews near Las Vegas were casting the first of 440 concrete blocks that would form the columns that hold up the roadway. The first columns allowed crews to build short stretches of roadway jutting partly into the canyon.

Those columns brought the roads at each side of the river

nearly 900 feet closer. Then work on the 1,060-foot arch could begin.

To build the arch foundations, concrete was pumped through hoses from above. Work took place at night because of triple-digit heat, made worse as it radiated off the rust-colored rock. Even at night, high temperatures threatened to dry out concrete too fast, which can cause fatal cracks. Workers pumped liquid nitrogen through tubes to cool the slurry.

The arch could rise from the rock.

A cable was strung from one side of the canyon to the other. It carried workers and equipment out one-quarter mile above the river, then lowered them to the emerging arch.

To support the arch temporarily, workers erected a huge steel tower on each side of the canyon. They anchored thick steel cables in the ground and looped them over the towers. These cables held up the partially constructed arch for almost three years.

As the arch's first segments formed, catastrophe struck.

In September 2006, wind gusts topping 60 mph roared through the canyon. The towers and rigging crashed to the ground.

Zanetell, the project manager, had just returned to his Colorado home when he heard the news. He returned immediately to Boulder City, Nev., just west of

the bridge.

"That was a tough day," he said. "Often when something unforeseen of that magnitude happens, you immediately get finger-pointing, and your team fractures."

Within hours he had created three teams: one to clean up the mess and assure safety, another to assess damage, and a third to create a plan to keep the project moving.

Miraculously, nobody was hurt, and none of the arch work was damaged.

New rigging equipment was brought in from Scotland. Zanetell used the time to finish other parts of the job.

"I had to create an atmosphere that we're not giving up," he said.

The accident set work back two years.

The windstorm wasn't the only accident on the arch work.

In November 2008, a worker named Sherman Jones was loosening the cables using a hydraulic jack when something slipped. Part of the jack punctured his chest, killing him. He would be the project's only fatality.

Throughout construction of Hoover Dam, the remote site drew tourists from far and wide. Visitors came to be fixated by the daredevil work of the high-scalers, like a real-life circus act without the tent. One worker was dubbed "The Human Pendulum" be-

cause he swung co-workers and cases of dynamite along the cliff faces.

Over the months, the two fingers of the arch grew steadily together.

Carpenters built a wooden form in the shape of an arch segment. Supported by suspension cables, the form slowly traveled the distance of the arch. For each segment, concrete was poured into the form, then allowed to harden in place.

From turnouts on U.S. 93, Hoover Dam tourists stopped and gaped at the work high overhead. People worldwide flocked to a federal website to marvel at the construction photos and live webcam.

In August 2009, the gap in the arch was closed. The two segments that began 1,060 feet apart met just three-eighths of an inch off perfect. The most treacherous part of the job was done. The bridge could stand on its own weight for the first time.

"The bringing of the arch together was an incredible sense of accomplishment for the team and an incredible source of pride for the trade workers," Zanetell said.

While construction crews celebrated, Zanetell forced himself to stay away. It was the construction crews' night, and his mind was already on making sure nobody let down his or her guard for the final phases of work, he said.

It was a typical reaction from the man they called David Z, who held status meetings every Monday for six years. Goodyear, the designer, said it was the "most intensely managed project" he could remember.

Keeping everybody focused became one of Zanetell's biggest challenges.

On many big projects, work crews often compete for bragging rights and sometimes bonuses over which team can perform a task fastest. On the bridge, plaudits were earned by doing the job to perfection.

It mattered. Workers were erecting concrete columns atop the arch. A millimeter mistake at the bottom could result in an irreconcilable flaw at the top of a football-field-length column. Months could be lost.

With every new block they stacked, the entire structure settled a little. After each, engineers took precise measurements. Slowly, methodically, the bridge was finished.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt commemorated Boulder Dam on Sept. 30, 1935, with 10,000 people in attendance. The work was finished 18 months early. The dam had once borne the name of Herbert Hoover, who had been instrumental as U.S. Commerce secretary in getting the river-states agreement. But Hoover, no longer in office in 1935, was not invited, and his name was dropped. Congress restored his name to the dam in 1947.

The bridge and the new stretches of U.S. 93 leading to it will open to traffic this week. Combined, the projects came in under the \$240 million budget.

Thursday commemorated the opening. Victor Mendez and his boss, U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, were there, along with members of the Tillman and O'Callaghan families. Congress had designated the

name of the bridge in a 2004 transportation bill. It honors people from both of the states that the bridge connects.

Pat Tillman is the Arizona Cardinals linebacker who joined the U.S. Army after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and was killed by friendly fire during combat in Afghanistan. Mike O'Callaghan was a two-term Nevada governor and newspaper editor.

A public celebration was held Saturday, allowing visitors — some who came from as far away as Boston — the chance to walk on the monumental span for the first time. Police estimated a crowd in excess of the 20,000 predicted, as a steady stream of 60 double-decker buses continuously ferried visitors, who lingered to take photos and admire the view.

"The view is spectacular," said Mike Hoover, a 62-year-old from Phoenix whose father's name is Herbert Hoover. "The view is spectacular. People are really going to enjoy this."

Denver resident Mike Capps, 64, has relatives in nearby Kingman and visits them often.

"We've been watching this bridge being built for the last eight years," he said. "We made the trip just for this. Just to be a part of it."

Views from cars crossing the dam will be partly obscured by a barrier. But pedestrians are allowed to cross on the upstream side.

From there, they can look straight down through the railing at the rocks and river far below. They also get a new perspective on the dam. From the bridge, Hoover Dam seems more imposing, more impressive than from any other vantage point.

ADOT will finish widening the last 15-mile stretch of U.S. 93 before the bypass by year's end.

Studies from 2001 showed an average traveler will save 17 minutes when crossing from one side of the canyon to the other. On busy holiday weekends, the time savings could be more because the bridge eliminates tourist travel congestion and security checkpoints that have caused two-hour delays.

It remains unclear how significant the time savings will be on the entire Phoenix-to-Las Vegas route.

With the bridge opening, trucks will no longer be detoured to cross the river downstream at Bullhead City, as they have been since 9/11. About 2,000 trucks are expected to return to the more direct route on U.S. 93.

That is expected to add to the congestion through Boulder City, Nev., already a bottleneck 11 miles north of the new bridge. Nevada transportation officials still don't have the money or full political support for a bypass around Boulder City.

When work on Hoover Dam began, it was the depths of the Depression. About 20,000 desperate job seekers swarmed Las Vegas, then a town of 5,000 people. By the end of 1937, workers would finish the Golden Gate Bridge, the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and the first bore of New York's Lincoln Tunnel.

As the bridge was being built, Arizona and Nevada construction workers were hit harder than in any other state during the recession, the worst since the Depression. Since the boom-time peak in mid-2006, about 131,000 Arizona construction jobs, more than half, have evaporated. Nevada shed 86,000 jobs, or almost 60 percent.

So while the Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge is an engineering feat, it symbolizes much more to its builders in these troubled economic times.

For Mendez, the project is a model and an advertisement to lawmakers reluctant to spend more money on public works.

"This bridge is a unique accomplishment for the nation," Mendez said. "This is the kind of smarts and attitude we need to bring more of these projects in and put more people back to work."

As the bridge rose, the 1,200 skilled workers and 300 engineers on the project found inspiration a quarter-mile upstream.

"If any one of us had a day when we felt tired or run-down or in doubt, working in the shadow of that dam really helped," Zanetell said. "Hoover Dam was the greatest engineering accomplishment in our nation's history. We had an opportunity to be as great for our generation."

Said Joseph Maietta, a carpenter who finished the arch: "We're building a national monument."