



Benbrook News

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From Fort Worth ISD

FWISD Students Can Receive Free Meals After School

Fort Worth ISD families, did you know your child can get free dinner by enrolling and participating in our [after school programs](#) at some campuses?

Dinner is served at varying times during after school programming, and menus can be found [here](#).

In addition to FWISD campuses, students can get free dinner from some nearby community centers. It is important to note that to get meals from a community center, you must call the center ahead to confirm their hours and let them know you're coming to

ensure you receive a meal.

Most centers serve dinner from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, but times may vary.

Benbrook Middle High School serves meals Monday through Thursday, Leonard Middle serves meals Monday through Friday, Luella Merrett Elementary serves meals Monday through Thursday, Western Hills Elementary serves meals Monday through Friday and Western Hills High School serves meals Monday through Friday. [Check here for the complete list.](#)

FREE DINNER FOR STUDENTS

Did you know you can get **FREE** dinner for your children through FWISD and our community partners?

From Suburban Newspapers Staff Writers

Benbrook City Council Meets Tonight

The Benbrook City Council meets the first and third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, located at 911 Winscott Road in Benbrook, 76126.

The Jan. 16 agenda is available to view [here](#).

From Fort Worth ISD

Schools Closed for Holiday Monday, Jan. 20

Fort Worth ISD schools will be closed Monday, Jan. 20 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Stay informed of closures and view the district calendar on the [Fort Worth ISD website](#).

From the Sports Desk with John English

Basketball: Lady Bobcats and Lady Cougars Claim Wins

The Benbrook girl's basketball team defeated Carter-Riverside by a score of 52-17 last week, and coach Leta Lofton said her team a great second quarter.

"It was a slow start for us as we used the second quarter to pull away from the Carter Riverside Eagles," Lofton said. "All hands had an instrumental part in the victory. All team members scored and played a part in the team effort victory."

Lofton said one player did have an especially memorable game, however.

"Freshmen Laila Hall, our back up point guard, scored two, 3-

point goals in her varsity debut versus Carter Riverside," Lofton said.

Over at Western Hills, the Lady Cougars defeated Southwest by a score of 34-31 last week to improve to 5-1 in district competition. The victory came on the heels of a 51-15 victory over Diamond Hill-Jarvis last Tuesday.

On the boy's side, Western Hills lost to Diamond Hill-Jarvis last Tuesday by a score of 56-38, and coach (continued on page 3)

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From 4PAWS & Benbrook Animal Shelter

Adopt a Friend! Come Meet Loretta!



Loretta is a four-month-old, 20-pound terrier mix. She is learning commands and walking on a leash. She would be a great family dog!

She is available for adoption at the Benbrook Animal Shelter, located at 469 Winscott Road.

Adoption hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday.

Visit www.4pawsinc.org or call 4 PAWS volunteer Lynda at 682-279-0760 to get more information about any of the dogs available.

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Sports Desk (continued from page 1)

Dustin Harrison said his team struggled early on.

“I thought we came out very sluggish against Diamond Hill,” Harrison said. “We did not move the ball as a team and it showed at the end of the game. We tried to play hero ball and that's not our identity. They came out with more intensity and togetherness and that was the deciding factor of the game.”

The Cougars then came up short against Southwest on Saturday by a score of 54-41, but Harrison said that his team showed signs of improvement.

“They are a very good team,” Harrison said. “They have good team size for our level and shared the ball. I felt we play a lot better as a team, but we could not pull it out in the end.”

Over at Benbrook, the Bobcats made it a clean sweep last week, defeating Carter-Riverside by a score of 78-25 on Tuesday and followed it up with a 62-48 victory over Dunbar on Saturday.



On the mat, the Benbrook wrestling team competed in a dual with Birdville last week, and coach Wade Cribbs said both of his teams availed themselves well at the competition.

“The Birdville dual was a challenge,” Cribbs said. “Birdville is the reigning district champion and returned most of their team. The girls came up a bit short losing 30-35, but the boys wrestled extremely well beating Birdville 41-39. Jayden Nunez won the final match to secure the victory.”

Over the weekend, the girls wrestled at the Frisco Duals and placed fourth, beating 6A Lewisville Marcus and Frisco Lebanon Trail.

“The girls also placed higher than powerhouses Melissa and Frisco Lone Star,” Cribbs said. “The girls losses came to number one state-ranked 5A Frisco High and 6A juggernaut Princeton.”

The boys went to The Colony tournament this past weekend and dominated, taking first place as a team.

“This is a very difficult tournament and the Bobcats wrestled lights out,” Cribbs said.

Mac Shafer, Landry Wilkinson and Dominic Nunez were all tournament champions, while Gabe helm, Desmond Chambers and Jacob Carpenter took second place at the tournament.

Gavin Henderson and Erik Morrison finished third at the meet.

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From StatePoint

Top Scams to Watch Out for During Tax Season

The days of filing paper tax returns are gone, and criminals are taking advantage. With taxpayers managing their sensitive information online, thieves are finding new ways to scam victims. In 2023 alone, the IRS reported \$5.5 billion lost to tax fraud schemes. And the increased prevalence of artificial intelligence means tax scams this year will likely be more sophisticated than ever.

Scammers have an arsenal of weapons, but no matter their tactics, the goal is the same – to have you give them money or access to it. Here are scams to look out for this tax season:

Tax avoidance scams. These scams often promise rewards too good to be true. Scammers claim to have specialized knowledge on exploiting loopholes to avoid taxes or maximize returns. High-income filers are heavily targeted through offers of seemingly legitimate annuities or tax shelters.

Refund scams. In this scam, a criminal will claim to be someone official notifying of an unclaimed or incorrectly calculated refund, prompting the victim to share information – and possibly bank account numbers – to claim it.

Violation scams. This is a fear-based scam, where the criminal poses as an IRS official threatening some punitive action, claiming the victim committed a violation and needs to contact them to resolve the situation.

Filing support scams. Similar to tech support scams, criminals offer to help create IRS accounts to assist with the online filing process. Frequently posing as tax preparers, scammers will go through the motions of gathering the victim's personal information for tax forms they never intend to file.

Social media scams. Social media serves as a great place for criminals to find potential victims and carry out tax scams, fraudulently claiming to offer different types of services or possessing unique knowledge or access.

Recovery scams. Once a victim is scammed, criminals will try to strike again – believing the victim is gullible. Exploiting a time of vulnerability, they'll contact the victim with promises of helping them recover their losses and will leverage this as an opening to commit additional crimes.

While it is not always easy to pick out a scam, here are indicators to watch for:

- Promise of a big pay-out. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Request for your account information. The IRS will never ask for your credit or debit account information over the phone.
- Random contact. The IRS contacts taxpayers by mail first and will never contact via random phone calls or digital means. The IRS will not leave prerecorded, urgent, or threatening voicemails.
- Demands or threats. The IRS can't revoke your driver's license, business licenses or immigration status and cannot threaten to immediately bring in local law enforcement. Taxpayers are allowed an appeals process, so any message of "now or else" won't come from an official channel.

- Request for you to click a weblink. Odd or misspelled web links can take you to harmful sites instead of IRS.gov.

The IRS recommends these best practices to protect against tax fraud:

- Get an early start. File early so criminals have less time to impersonate you.
- Set up a verified account. Set up your own IRS account before someone else can and use an Identity Protection PIN – a six-digit number known only to you and the IRS.
- Wait for written notice. Do not respond to any supposed communications from the IRS if you haven't first received official notification through U.S. mail. If you get a call from someone claiming to be the IRS, hang up and call the official number on the website before engaging. Further, never click a link sent digitally as initial contact.

Apply good cyber hygiene. Do not use public Wi-Fi when filing your tax returns. Do use strong passwords, secured network connections and multi-factor authentication. Run all software updates and keep systems current.

If you fall victim to a tax scam, report it to the IRS. For more scam protection tips, visit PNC's Security & Privacy Center at pnc.com.

One wrong click can cause tremendous damage that ends up earning bad guys a wind-fall. However, a little caution can go a long way in helping you avoid a costly tax scam.

From Fort Worth ISD

Fort Worth ISD Gold Seal Programs of Choice

Gold Seal Programs of Choice are specialized programs that are located in a traditional elementary, middle, or high school campus. All programs are described in the [catalog](#), along with the college and career opportunities they provide after completion of the four-year high school programs. The students in these programs applied and were assigned to each campus through the Gold Seal application process.

The Lottery Priority Window ends Friday, Jan. 31 at 11:59 p.m. and the application window closes Sunday, Aug. 31 at 11:59 p.m.

Students who apply after Jan. 31 will not be included in the Lottery and will be added to the bottom of the Waiting List. The final cutoff to apply for the 2025-2026 school year is Aug. 31.

ATTENTION, 8TH GRADERS: Unlock your future!



Read the Gold Seal Catalog to learn more about your choices in Fort Worth ISD!

Want to gain a competitive edge to launch your future career? Our P-TECH and ECHS programs offer the opportunity to earn an associate degree or two years of college credit, as well as industry certifications, all for free while attending high school!

WHO NEEDS TO APPLY? Whether you want to attend the high school in your neighborhood or across the city, P-TECH and ECHS programs require an application for admission.

HOW TO APPLY: A parent or guardian must complete the Fort Worth ISD Gold Seal application online at www.fwisd.org/choices.

ADMISSION LOTTERY DEADLINE: Friday, January 31, 2025. Applications received later will be placed on a waiting list.

NEED HELP? Email us at choices@fwisd.org



ECHS (Early College High School) programs are offered through Tarrant County College (TCC) at four neighborhood high schools and three TCC campuses.

P-TECH (Pathways in Technology Early College High School) programs focus on a specific pathway and provide real-world industry partnerships and certifications to prepare students for their careers.



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NEIGHBORHOOD HIGH SCHOOLS	<p>Middle School: Riverside</p> <p>P-TECH Pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cloud Convergence <p>Industry Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Jean Networks • Fort Worth ISD • iTrust IT <p>Degree Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Applied Science 	<p>Middle School: W.A. Meacham</p> <p>P-TECH Pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Management Technology • Logistics and Supply Chain Management <p>Industry Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magna Mechanical • Habitat for Humanity <p>Degree Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Applied Science 	<p>Middle School: J. Martin Jacquet</p> <p>ECHS Higher Ed Partner: Tarrant County College</p> <p>P-TECH Pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aviation Manufacturing <p>Industry Partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell Textron <p>Degree Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Applied Science • Associate of Arts 	<p>Middle Schools: Jean McClung, Meadowbrook</p> <p>P-TECH Pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity <p>Industry Partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iTrust IT <p>Degree Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Applied Science 	<p>Middle Schools: J.P. Elder, Kirkpatrick</p> <p>P-TECH Pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical <p>Industry Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walgreens Pharmacy, CVS Pharmacy, Marine Creek Nursing and Rehabilitation, JPS Health Network, MedStar <p>Degree Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Arts
	Polytechnic	South Hills	Southwest	Western Hills	O.D. Wyatt
	Polytechnic	South Hills	Southwest	Western Hills	O.D. Wyatt
	Polytechnic	South Hills	Southwest	Western Hills	O.D. Wyatt
SCHOOLS OF CHOICE	Marine Creek Collegiate High School	TCC South/FWISD Collegiate High School	I.M. Terrell Academy for STEM & VPA	Texas Academy of Biomedical Sciences	Young Men's Leadership Academy
	<p>Location: TCC Northwest Campus near Lake Worth</p> <p>Closest neighborhood HS: Diamond Hill-Jarvis</p> <p>ECHS Higher Ed Partner: Tarrant County College</p> <p>Degree Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Arts • Associate of Science 	<p>Location: TCC South Campus</p> <p>Closest neighborhood HS: O.D. Wyatt</p> <p>ECHS Higher Ed Partner: Tarrant County College</p> <p>P-TECH Pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy <p>Industry Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Fort Worth Water • ONCOR <p>Degree Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Applied Science • Associate of Arts 	<p>Location: East of downtown Fort Worth</p> <p>Closest neighborhood HS: Polytechnic</p> <p>P-TECH Pathway:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robotics and Automation <p>Industry Partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Instruments <p>Degree Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Arts 	<p>Location: TCC Trinity River Campus in downtown Fort Worth</p> <p>Closest neighborhood HS: North Side, Carter-Riverside</p> <p>ECHS Higher Ed Partner: Tarrant County College</p> <p>Degree Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Arts • Associate of Science 	<p>Location: East Fort Worth</p> <p>Closest neighborhood HS: Dunbar</p> <p>P-TECH Pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Robotics and Automation <p>Industry Partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Instruments <p>Degree Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate of Arts
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First Woman on the Supreme Court - Sandra Day O'Connor



The Supreme Court of the United States is the highest court in the land and the last word on the authority and meaning of the Constitution short of an amendment. The court has handed down many decisions affecting American life and law. The justices who preside over the court sometimes become household names. Texas has produced a number of noted legal minds to serve on the court, including the nation's first woman justice, Sandra Day O'Connor.

Sandra Day was born in March 1930 in El Paso, the oldest of three children to ranchers Harry and Ada Day. The family also acquired a huge ranch in Arizona, so the future justice spent a lot of her childhood going back and forth between Arizona and Texas. Years later, she and her brother would compile some of their memorable childhood exploits in the book *"Lazy B: Growing Up on a Cattle Ranch in the American Southwest."*

At school, she excelled. Fellow students remembered her as extremely intelligent and very kind. She graduated from El Paso's Austin High School in 1946 at the age of 16. She quickly enrolled at Stanford University in California. She graduated with high honors in 1950, earning a degree in economics. Wanting to go further, she applied for and was accepted into Stanford Law School.

The law would change her life. At Stanford, she met and briefly dated future Chief Justice William Rehnquist. Rehnquist even went so far as to propose to her in 1951, but she declined. She soon began dating fellow student John Jay O'Connor of California while the two worked on the school's law journal. After she graduated in 1952, the two married.

In spite of graduating from one of the nation's most prestigious law schools, she found it difficult to find a job as an attorney because she was a woman. No private firm would hire her, and even state and local prosecutors were reluctant to hire her. Eventually, she talked her way into a position with the San Mateo County prosecuting attorney's office as a deputy county attorney. She would receive no salary and would not even have her own office. Nevertheless, she worked hard to show her skill. Eventually, she was given a modest salary and given more responsibilities.

Her husband was drafted into the army in 1954. O'Connor went to Germany with him and worked as a civilian attorney with the army's Quartermaster Corps until her husband's honorable discharge in 1956. The two then moved to the Phoenix area where her husband had received a position with a noted local law firm. They would soon have the first of their three sons. For the time being, she stayed home with their growing family.

While she was raising her young sons, she began getting active in Arizona politics. Arizona's Sen. Barry Goldwater was the Republican nominee for president in 1964, and O'Connor volunteered for his campaign. Though Goldwater lost, in 1965, Democratic Gov. Samuel Pearson Goddard appointed her as Arizona's assistant attorney general. In 1969, Gov. Jack Williams, a Republican, appointed her to an opening in the state senate. She worked well with the senators of both parties, gaining a reputation as a moderate and an able negotiator and legislator. In 1973, she was named Senate Majority Leader, becoming the first woman in the country to head any state legislative chamber.

In 1974, she returned to the law and was appointed as judge for the Maricopa County Superior Court, a prestigious position on the highest court in the state's largest county. In 1978, she was elected to the Arizona Court of Appeals.

In July 1981, Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart announced his retirement. President Ronald Reagan narrowed down a list of choices and decided to nominate O'Connor to fill the vacancy. She later reported she was surprised by the nomination and did not know she was a finalist for the position. By September, she was confirmed by the U. S. Senate to become the nation's first woman justice on the Supreme Court where she would serve for the next 24 years.

Part II

Sandra Day O'Connor had already made a mark on history by the time she was in her forties. In 1973, the Texas native became the first woman to head a state legislative chamber when she became Senate Majority Leader in the Arizona state senate. On August 19, 1981, the announcement of a woman nominee to the U. S. Supreme Court made headlines around the world in a time when rights for women were advancing across the globe.

El Paso native Sandra Day O'Connor would make history again.

Conservatives who had supported Ronald Reagan's election as president were initially concerned about (continued on page 7)

Sandra Day O'Connor (continued from page 6)

her record as a moderate in the Arizona legislature. O'Connor, however, calmly won over her critics. In spite of their initial misgivings, her nomination was nevertheless approved by the Senate unanimously on Sept. 21. She was sworn in four days later.

Judicial independence was a recurring theme in her career on the bench. O'Connor did not take an ideological approach. Instead, she looked at each case individually, which often made it difficult to predict how she would decide a question before the court. Throughout her long career, her decisions both thrilled and frustrated both liberals and conservatives. In the end, she earned the respect of Americans across the political spectrum.

She tended to side with conservatives on the bench, including her old friend from Stanford Law School, William Rehnquist, who himself would become chief justice by 1986. O'Connor remarked that she felt a great deal of pressure being the first woman on the court. In the early 1980s, there were still very few women serving as judges, and she knew it would be difficult to name another woman to the court if she faltered and recognized her position as a role model for women looking to careers in the law. She often said, "It's wonderful to be the first at something, but I don't want to be the last."

Though she was still the newest member of the court, she quickly took a leadership role in deciding the culture of the court. Getting people to work together was a skill she brought to the Arizona legislature, and she began a Supreme Court tradition of the justices having lunch together to promote a sense of teamwork.

Questions surrounding religion, firearms, civil rights, and abortion routinely came before the court. In 1983, she ruled with the majority in *United States v. Place*, declaring that it was not unconstitutional for drug-sniffing dogs to sniff luggage and property in a public place, but it was unconstitutional to hold such luggage until a police dog arrived.

In 1986, in *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*, four of the conservative justices were ready to overrule the controversial *Roe v. Wade* decision of 1973 that legalized abortion. O'Connor's vote in the Pennsylvania case was decisive in which she upheld the *Roe* decision but allowed limitations to be enacted. She was a skeptic in affirmative action cases before the court, but she often discussed the need for racial equality in education.

As her time on the court continued, she began becoming more of a swing vote on close decisions that divided the court. In 1993, she warmly welcomed Ruth Bader Ginsburg as the second woman on the Supreme Court, and the two developed a respected working relationship though they disagreed on many decisions. As early as 2000, O'Connor began expressing a desire to retire from the court. Her husband's health was uppermost in her mind as he slowly succumbed to Alzheimer's Disease.

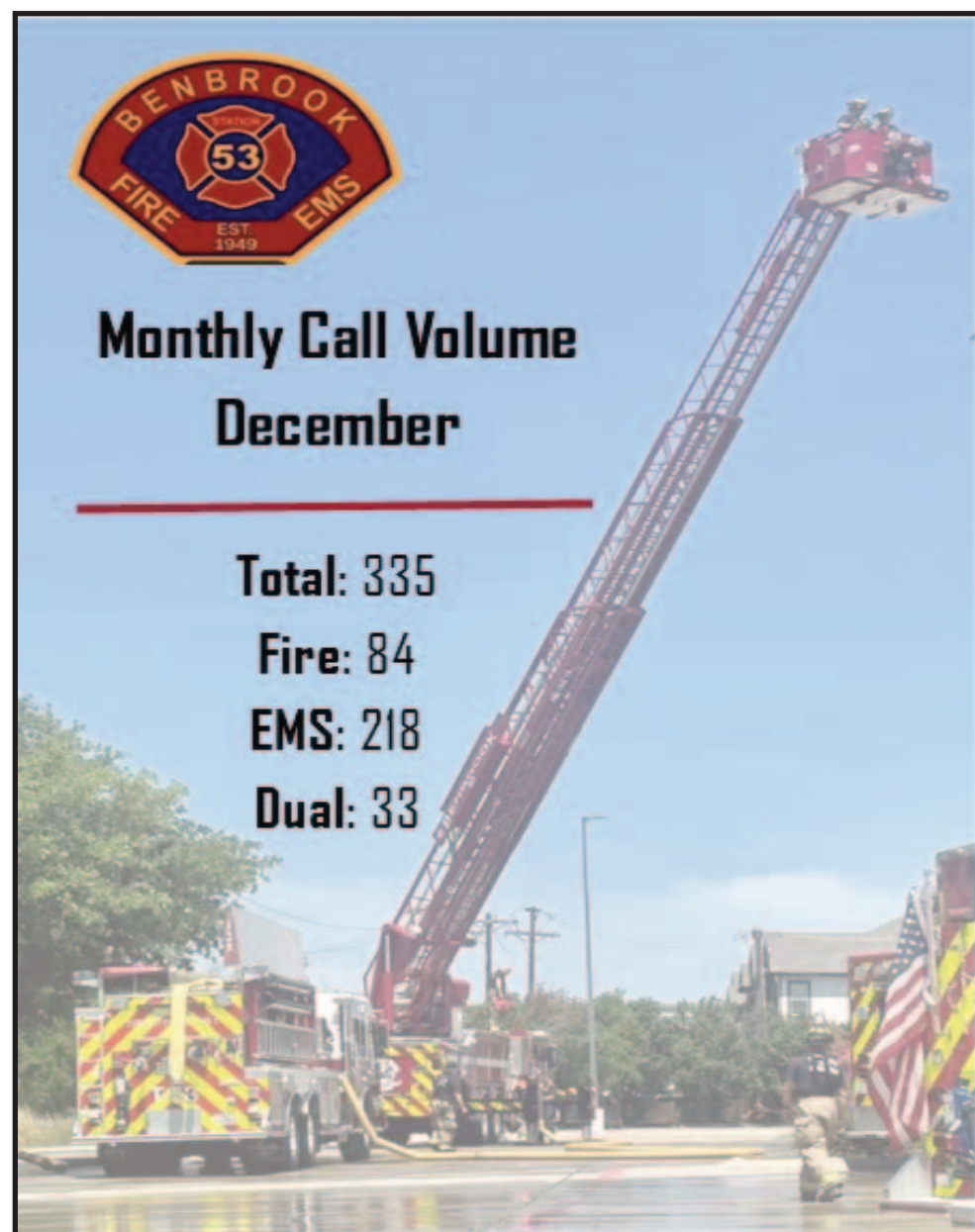
In *Bush v. Gore*, she was part of the majority in the controversial decision that ordered the State of Florida to end recounts in the 2000 presidential election, a contest that came down to the results

in that state. In the years afterward, she often wondered whether the court should have intervened at all. In 2003, she wrote the decision in *Lockyer v. Andrade* that upheld California's "three strikes law" mandating life sentences for individuals convicted of their third felony.

In 2005, she announced her retirement from the court and was succeeded by Justice Samuel Alito. She soon became the chancellor at the College of William and Mary in Virginia. She would still sit in on cases as a visiting judge on occasion. In 2009, President Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom in honor of her work on the Supreme Court. In 2009, John O'Connor, her husband of 57 years, died. In 2013, she wrote a book on some of the interesting episodes in the history of the Supreme Court called "*Out of Order*."

In her later years, her brilliant mind began to fade. Alzheimer's Disease struck and began to take its toll. She began to get more forgetful, and her physical health was declining. In 2018, she announced her retirement from public life, discussing her health issues. She spent her last few years in a nursing home in Phoenix, with her family and friends protecting her privacy and dignity.

The nation's 91st Supreme Court justice died quietly in December 2023 at age 93.



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Weekend Forecast



Friday, Jan. 17:

AM - Partly sunny, with a high near 66. S/SW wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.
PM - Partly cloudy, with a low around 38. S/SW wind 10 to 15 mph becoming N/NW after midnight.
Winds could gust as high as 20 mph.



Saturday, Jan. 18:

AM - Sunny, with a high near 52. North wind 10 to 15 mph, with gusts as high as 20 mph.
PM - Mostly clear, with a low around 27.



Sunday, Jan. 19:

AM - Mostly sunny, with a high near 38.
PM - Partly cloudy, with a low around 18.

Extended Forecast Click Here