

ARCADIA NEWS



VOL. 32 NO. 10

ARCADIA • BILTMORE • CAMELBACK CORRIDOR

JANUARY 2025



BE “HARDER TO KILL”

Argent Alpha is a workout group for men over 50 that aims to help them regain control of their health and fitness.

PAGE 12

EAT, SLEEP, DIVE

Chase Sorosky set an Arizona state diving record and was also recognized as one of the top NCAA recruits.

PAGE 34

GET DOWN TO BUSINESS

The ninth annual AZ Children’s Business Fair featured 140 unique, kid-created startups.

PAGE 22

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JANUARY

2025
Happy New Year

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Two Arcadia moms took charge to create earrings for sensitive ears after struggling to find cute, affordable pieces for their family members.
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Family-owned and operated Ersland Touch Landscape has grown from a one-man operation in Arcadia to serving multiple Valley neighborhoods.
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Phoenix Jose, an AHS student with cerebral palsy, earned a varsity letter in football this year, thanks to his statistician skills and unwavering support of the team.
- 32** **What's old is new again**
Chris Petroff restores and repairs baseball and softball gloves, and has even gained national attention from the major and minor leagues.



Phoenix's Alpha Live II attendees started the event off with a brisk hike up Piastewa Peak.
PHOTO COURTESY OF SCOTT JAGODZINSKI



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Somewhere out in the ether, a friend of mine has a 10-year-old video on her phone of me attempting to do a pull-up. I really gave it the ol' college try, but I couldn't even get my feet three inches off the ground. You can hear me in the video, defeated, saying "I just...can't!"

Now, if Scott Jagodzinski had been in that room, he probably would have given me some words of encouragement, or schooled me on my form, or perhaps given me a table to stand on. Scott is the founder of Argent Alpha, a workout group that is "Helping men over 50 become harder to kill."

In 2019, he developed a severe bone-on-bone issue that caused pain and limited mobility. Instead of taking the surgery route, Scott researched and experimented with different workouts to come up with his own. He decided to share those workouts with the world, and now Argent Alpha is gaining national attention. Also – if

you're curious – I still can't do a pull-up.

We have plenty of success stories in our January edition. Terri Sue Rossi won a Women Achievers of Arizona award, and AHS's Zoe McClure won Scottsdale Public Library's design-a-card contest. Our Arcadia neighbors are starting 2025 off on the right foot.

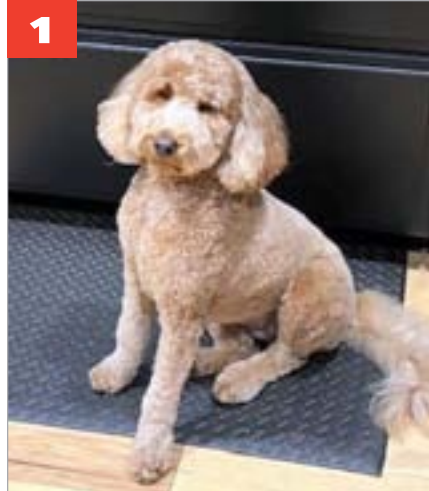
Keep an eye out for the *Home and Design* and *Camp Guide* editions coming your way in a few months.

Happy New Year to you, dear readers. We wish you all the best in 2025, and thank you for reading Arcadia News!

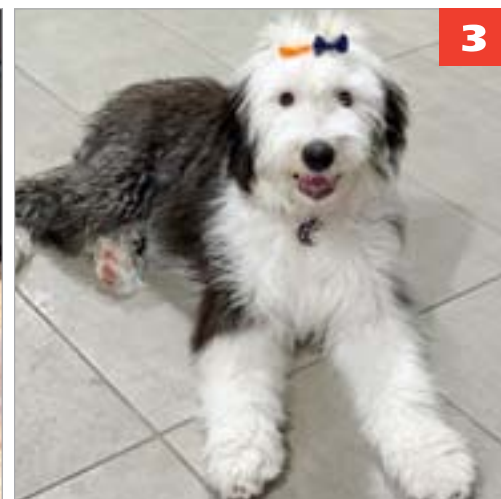
Mallory
– Mallory Gleich



ARCADIA'S PETS



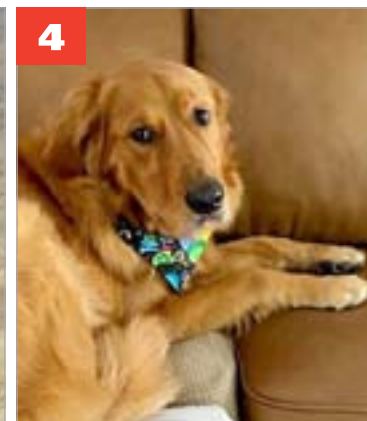
1



3



2



4

1. My name is **Lucy** and I'm a three-year-old golden doodle. I love taking walks around my neighborhood and running into my fellow dog friends, Henry and Lulu. Broccoli is my favorite vegetable and I do not like garbage trucks. I am spoiled most by my dad!

– Dorcas G.

2. This is **Shire and Butters**. She is named after *Lord of the Rings* and he is named after the cartoon *South Park*. They are both rescues from Houston. Shire was adopted from a shelter 10 years ago and Butters was found on the side of the road nine years ago. Both dogs are sweet, goofy, and naughty.

– Caroline C.

3. This is **Lucy Lou**. She is a five-month-old Old English Sheepdog. Lucy is a goofy, playful, sweet puppy adopted from a rescue in Wisconsin in July 2024. She has made a great (and entertaining) addition to the pack after my beloved pit bull, Penny, passed away. She keeps me on my toes and laughing and I look forward to watching her grow.

– Erica N.

4. **Oliver** is a golden retriever and is three years old. Recently he has been learning how to be a therapy dog and is excellent at his job!

– Debbie D.

UPCOMING THEMES:

FEBRUARY

History

MARCH

Arcadia Home & Design

APRIL

Camp Guide

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– David Bowie

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VOTED BEST SEAFOOD IN THE WEST VALLEY VIEW 2021
VOTED BEST TAKEOUT IN THE WEST VALLEY VIEW 2023
VOTED BEST SEAFOOD IN THE GLENDALE STAR 2020, 2023
VOTED BEST SEAFOOD IN LOVING LIFE AFTER 50 2023

Would you like to share your pet? Send a photo and a description (50 words max) of your pet to editor@arcadianews.com. Include your pet's name and age, along with any fun facts about them you'd like to share. All animals are welcome!

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New library card design competition won by AHS student

By Lauren Geiser

Books are portals to endless worlds, each page offering a new adventure, perspective, or idea. They have the power to transport readers across time, space, and imagination, sparking curiosity and enriching the minds of all who turn their pages.

Arcadia High sophomore Zoe McClure recently captured that magic in her award-winning design for Scottsdale Public Library's design-a-card competition. Her artwork, which features an Arizona sunset, saguaros, and majestic mountains emerging from the pages of an open book, will soon appear on thousands of library cards throughout Scottsdale.

Zoe was selected from 52 entries, including finalists from Desert Mountain and Chaparral High Schools, by over 3,000 community votes. Her design celebrates Arizona's desert landscape while illustrating the boundless adventures readers can embark on through books.

"When you read a book, you're transported to different worlds," Zoe said. "I wanted to capture that feeling on the card."

By blending a love of reading with her passion for art, Zoe's design captures the excitement of turning every page. She learned about the competition from art teacher Cira Riccio, who posted about it in their Google Classroom. Inspired by the

challenge, Zoe dedicated her fall break to working on the design.

She started the process by creating different thumbnails until she found one that met her vision. Using her favorite medium – colored pencils – she blended and shaded rich colors, adding fine detail and textures to create the sunset on the card.

Zoe's artistic journey began as a child, but she credits her middle school art teacher with helping her discover her full potential.

"I've been drawing my entire life, but I really flourished in Art 1 last year," she said. "I love the projects we do, and I plan on continuing to take art classes until graduation to meet the Art Seals requirement."

Zoe said she didn't expect to become a finalist, so she was overjoyed when she heard the news. Winning this competition is a significant milestone – in addition to the excitement of seeing her design on library cards, she received special recognition from the Scottsdale Public Library in December when she attended a celebratory event to announce her win.

"I can't go a few days without drawing," Zoe said. "I'm always working on art projects during every break from school."

She enjoys participating in art class assignments and competitions, using her free time to create pieces that brings her joy.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSD

Zoe McClure's winning design was selected out of 52 entries.



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 Echo Canyon, Hopi, Ingleside, Phoenix Country Day, Tavan

Placement evaluations are mandatory for the upper Baseball and Softball divisions.
 Practice will begin in February. Season runs from early March until May.

WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

BRIEFS

Mark your calendars: The ninth annual **Arcadia Cares: Food for Kidz Packathon** is back and scheduled for February 28 and March 1 from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (3641 N. 56th St., Phoenix). The community is welcome to volunteer to help pack meals for underprivileged families. Sign-up will open in mid January.

popphoenix.org

Devonshire Senior Center (2802 E. Devonshire Ave.) and **Longview Recreation Center** (4040 N. 14th St.) will offer free yoga classes for all levels starting Tuesday, January 7 and Thursday, January 9. Men and women aged 15+ are welcome to participate in Hatha Yoga, which will include stretches, breathing exercises and various poses. Longview also offers an advanced class for a small fee on Wednesdays. Learn more at the Phx Plays tab on the website.

phoenix.gov

Arcadian Wally Collins published his first novel, **Where's My Phone, My Glasses, My Keys, My Remote? The Subtle Joys of Aging**. Collins' debut work delves into his journey through the 60s and 70s and shares the challenges, joys and surprises that come with growing older. Throughout the book – currently available on Amazon and at Wally's Gastropub locations – readers will find “wit, wisdom and a dash of humor to help navigate the experience of aging gracefully.”



Nexus Youth Soccer League is a non-coed, competitive recreational soccer league serving boys and girls in third-eighth grade. The upcoming spring season runs from

February through May. Weekly practices take place on Mondays; games are on Saturdays at Eldorado Soccer Field. The \$275 registration fee includes a MLS GO jersey kit, practice shirt, weekly practices, one pre-season scrimmage game, eight regular season games, a single-elimination tournament, medal, and US Grassroots Certified coach.

nexusysl.com

Studio B Smiles is moving its downtown Phoenix office into a new state-of-the-art facility at the Camelback Arboleda (1661 E. Camelback Road). The offices will feature 6 Month Smile makeovers, cosmetic crowns, lip repositioning, no prep veneers and more. Led by Dr. John Badolato, Studio B's new facility is slated to open on January 7.

studiobsmiles.com

A new clothing store has opened near 38th St. and Indian School Road. Located between Essence Bakery and Arcadia Improvement Club, **The Lomas Brand** offers shirts, pants, jackets, hats and accessories for men, women and kids. Based in San Diego, this is the first Arizona location for the brand's owners, Sean and Fati Feeney.

thelomasbrand.com

The Arcadian (4220 N. 32nd St., Phoenix) is a new townhome community located near 32nd Street and Indian School – and units are now up for sale. The community features 40 townhomes ranging in square footage from 1,400 to 1,900 and an array of amenities including Juliet balconies, two-car garages and views of Camelback Mountain.

arcadianphx.com

Maricopa County Community College district students with an active student ID can now enjoy free admission to the **Phoenix Art Museum** through June 2025 as part of a \$1 million grant from Men's Arts Council, a nonprofit dedicated to supporting the museum's community outreach programs. This includes admission into special engagement exhibitions.

mensartscouncil.com

ARIZONA AUTO WEEK



BARRETT-JACKSON Westworld of Scottsdale 16601 N. Pima Road

Headquartered in Scottsdale, Barrett-Jackson is the granddaddy of collector car auctions. The event draws visitors from all over the world. In 2024, the auction sold over \$200.9 million – including the sale of Sammy Hagar's 2015 Ferrari LaFerrari, sold for a record-breaking \$4.675 million. To date, Barrett-Jackson has helped raise more than \$152 million for charity.

When: January 18-26, 2025
barrett-jackson.com

ARIZONA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

**Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts
7380 E. Second St.**

The Arizona Concours at Scottsdale Civic Center is a professionally judged and curated assembly of collector vehicles. An array of 100 rare and historic automobiles will be displayed, ranging from antiques at the dawn of motoring through pre-war classics, sports and competition cars, and modern-day exotics.

When: January 19, 2025
scottsdaleperformingarts.org

BONHAMS

**The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa
6902 E. Greenway Pkwy., Phoenix**

Historic British auction house Bonhams offers a more intimate auction environment with unique autos like a 1967 Mercedes-Benz 250SL, a 1934 Packard Twelve 1107 Coupe or a 1970 Oldsmobile 442 W-30 Hardtop Coupe.

When: January 25, 2025
bonhams.com

MOTORSPORT AUCTION GROUP

**Cubs Stadium at Sloan Park
2330 W. Rio Salado Pkwy., Mesa**

The MAG will feature more than 500 collector cars, including a 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle Coupe, a 1974 Ford Bronco Ranger and the 1973 Corvette Stingray Roadster. The auction will focus on classics, muscle cars and hot rods.

When: January 24-26, 2025
motorsportauctiongroup.com

RM SOTHEBY'S

**The Arizona Biltmore
2400 E. Missouri Ave., Phoenix**

RM Sotheby's will return for the 27th annual Arizona sale, kicking off its 2025 auction calendar. RM Sotheby's is set to present a wide variety of makes and eras (like a 1917 Detroit Electric Model 68 Brougham) across different price points. The preview on January 24 (9-11 a.m.) is open to the public, but tickets are required for the auction.

When: January 24, 2025
rmsothebys.com

EVENTS

SATURDAY 1/4

Dog Days at the Garden

8-11 a.m. at Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy., Phoenix. Start your day on the right paw at the Desert Botanical Garden. Bring the whole family (dogs included) for a walk on the trails. Meet new friends, pose for photos, learn about pet nonprofits, shop and enjoy samples for you and your pups. Tickets are \$33 for humans, four-legs in free.

dbg.org

MONDAY 1/6

Beginning & Intermediate Pottery

9:30 a.m. at Shemer Art Center, 5005 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. The foundation of any successful pottery thrower is mastering the basics – and Shemer's Alan Jones can help. This introduction class will cover centering, bowls, plates, and cylinders. Students will work in a hands-on environment learning about these methods as well as basic history and scientific principles of clay and the wheel. This class is covered over seven sessions; registration is \$281.

shemerartcenter.org

WEDNESDAY 1/8

AZ Speaks

6:30 p.m. at Heritage Square, 113 N. Sixth St., Phoenix. Using storytelling, activities and songs, Dr. Tamika Sanders – an educator with a Community Luminary Award and Humanities Rising Star nomination on her resume – will depict the ingenuity and resiliency of those who used the Underground Railroad to help over 100,000 slaves escape to freedom between 1810 and 1850. This lecture is free.

localfirstaz.com

THURSDAY 1/9

Coffee, Conversation & Classics

2 p.m. at Symphony Hall, 75 N. 2nd St., Phoenix. Join Associate Conductor Alex Amsel while he hosts and moderates an open rehearsal as the Phoenix Symphony prepares for its upcoming concert. Hear pieces like Brahms' Symphony No. 1 and participate in a Q&A including the guest conductor and musicians. Admission starts at \$35.

phoenixsymphony.org

FRIDAY 1/10 – SUNDAY 1/12

Home and Garden Show

10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the State Fairgrounds, 1826 W. McDowell Road, Phoenix. Looking to give your home a makeover but not sure where to start? Look no further than the Maricopa County Home and Garden Show. Over 1,000 exhibits showcasing home improvement, interior design, ask-the-expert seminars, hands-on gardening, backyard glow-scapes, make-and-take crafts and more

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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?



Dog Days in the Garden at DBG.



Rock 'N' Roll Arizona Marathon in Tempe.

will be on-site. Plus, January birthdays get a present if they attend. Tickets are \$5.
maricopacountyhomeshows.com

FRIDAY 1/10

Arizona Unzipped

8 p.m. at Orpheum Theatre, 203 W. Adams St., Phoenix. Orpheum is celebrating 96 years by showcasing a “history lesson told through burlesque.” There will be live jazz music, follies dancers, variety acts and more. This event is sponsored by Friends of the Orpheum Theater, Marshall Shore and Pyrrha Sutra Entertainment. Proceeds will go toward providing historic and educational support for the Orpheum Theatre. Ages 18+ only. Admission starts at \$60.
orpheumphx.com

SATURDAY 1/11

Arizona Wedding Show

8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Phoenix Convention Center, 33 S. 3rd St. This event features more than 200 of the Valley’s top wedding experts. Find resources for venues, photographers, honeymoons, dresses, flowers, and music – all the things a couple needs to make their wedding memorable. There will also be bridal gown fashion shows, giveaways and workshops. Tickets are \$12 per person.
arizonaweddingshowjanuary.com

SUNDAY 1/12

PAW Patrol Live

2 p.m. at Arizona Financial Theatre, 400 W. Washington St., Phoenix. Fans of Chase, Liberty and Everest won’t want to miss this show. The PAW Patrol is facing their greatest challenge yet. Mayor Humdinger has dognapped Robo Dog and cloned him, causing chaos all over the world. See if you can help the pups solve the case at this all-ages show. Tickets start at \$47.
pawpatrollive.com

THURSDAY 1/16

MLK Celebration Dinner

5:30 p.m. at The Fieldhouse at Scottsdale Stadium, 7408 E. Osborn Road. Celebrate

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with the 31st annual MLK Celebration, hosted by the Community Celebrating Diversity organization. Guests can enjoy dinner and a featured presenter; this year, best-selling author and former politician Bakari Sellers will take the stage. Individual tickets are \$250 per person.
ccdarizona.org/mlk-events

FRIDAY 1/17

Candlelight: The Best of The Beatles

9 p.m. at Warehouse215, 215 E. Grant St., Phoenix. Candlelight concerts, presented by Fever, are bringing the magic of a live musical experience to Phoenix. This evening’s show will highlight the music of The Beatles. Guests will hear songs performed by the Listeso String Quartet, such as Here Comes the Sun, Penny Lane, Blackbird, Yesterday, Hey Jude and more. Tickets start at \$30.
feverup.com

8123 Fest After Party

10 p.m. at the Marquee Theater, 730 N. Mill Ave., Tempe. Although The Maine’s 8123 Fest takes place in Mesa, there’s still opportunities to jam out closer to home. Hosted by the Arizona-based band themselves, guests will hear plenty of emo and pop songs from years past. Day two of the festival, plus another dance party and other pop-ups happen throughout the weekend. Tickets start at \$28.
8123fest.com

SATURDAY 1/18

Zoo Move and Groove

5:30 p.m. at the Phoenix Zoo, 455 N. Galvin Pkwy. This year’s theme is “Pounce to Victory.” Guests can participate in the one-mile fun run or the 5K, which comes with a commemorative t-shirt (medals are also available, purchased separately), and afterward enjoy kettle corn, cocoa, a raffle ticket, glow necklace/bracelet and free entrance to Zoolights. Registration is \$50 per person.
phoenixzoo.org

SATURDAY 1/18-SUNDAY 1/19

Rock ‘n’ Roll Arizona Marathon

7 a.m. starting at S. Mill Ave. and 3rd St., Tempe. Start the new year with a flat and fast race that takes runners through Arcadia, Scottsdale and Tempe at the 21st annual Rock ‘n’ Roll Arizona Marathon. Saturday is the 5K, and Sunday will have the marathon, half marathon, 10K, and kids’ run. There will be live music (including a Taylor Swift tribute concert) and an awards ceremony after the race. Registration is \$69-\$125.
runrocknroll.com

TUESDAY 1/21

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

6 p.m. at the Scottsdale Public Library, 3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd. This month’s Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable will host Dr. Gary Gallagher with a presentation given in honor of the “Ed Bearss Memorial Lecture”. Dr. Gallagher’s oration will focus on his publication, “Celebrating Union Victory: The Grand Review in History and Memory.” Doors open at 5 p.m. for meeting the speaker, book sale, and viewing Civil War videos. This event is free.
scottsdalecwr.org

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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

TUESDAY 1/21

DancIn'spiration Benefit
6 p.m. at the Madison Center for the Performing Arts, 5601 N. 16th St., Phoenix. DancIn'spiration is a collaborative effort of six Arizona dance studios demonstrating performances that include ballet, jazz, tap, musical theater, lyrical, contemporary and hip-hop. More than 250 students, ages 8 to 18, are set to participate in this annual event that highlights their talent and raises funds for charities across the Valley. Tickets are \$20.
themadison.org

THURSDAY 1/23

Cooking Class
6-8 p.m. with Arcadia's own YouCare-SelfCare guru – also known as Miriam Hahn. This month's cooking class theme is easy weeknight dinners, with guests creating appetizers and an entrée – and then enjoying it together on the patio. All meals will be plant-based, and guests can bring a beverage of choice. Classes are \$100 per person.
youcare-selfcare.com

FRIDAY 1/24

Les Miserables
7 p.m. at Veritas Prep, 3102 N. 56th St., Phoenix. The fine arts students of Veritas Prep Academy present "Les Miserables," a



YouCare-SelfCare cooking class.

musical adaptation of Victor Hugo's novel chronicling the struggles of ex-convict Jean Valjean as he seeks redemption while being pursued by Inspector Javert. Set against the backdrop of post-revolutionary France, the story explores themes of love, sacrifice, and justice. Performances take place on January 25 at 2 and 7 p.m., January 30 and 31 at 7 p.m. and February 1 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$20.
veritasprep.greatheartsamerica.org

Sazerac Whiskey Dinner
6 p.m. at Phoenix City Grille, 5816 N. 16th St. This evening's pairing dinner features Sazerac Whiskey and is hosted by Master Blender Drew Mayville, who will discuss five bourbons and whiskeys

while guests partake in a multi-course meal. Drinks include PCG's Private Barrel Select Stag and Blanton's Straight from the Barrel, paired with dishes like smoked bourbon clam chowder and wagyu strip loin. Cost is \$600 per person.
phoenixcitygrille.com

SATURDAY 1/25

Doggie Street Festival
10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. The seventh annual Doggie Street Festival is a "dog, cat and small pet adopt-a-thon" where folks can bring the family pup and enjoy live music, treats for humans and pets, guest speakers, contests, an

auction, prizes, a VIP area, demos and kid's activities. This event is free.
doggiestreetfestival.org

Time Travelers Vintage Expo
10 a.m. at the Phoenix Convention Center, 151 N. 3rd St. The largest traveling vintage market in the United States is making its way to AZ. Attendees can find a "retro wonderland" that boasts vintage clothing, home goods, retro-inspired handmade items and more. Up to 120 small businesses, curators, and artists will be on-site. This is an all-ages event; tickets start at \$10.
timetravelersexpo.com

SUNDAY 1/26

Seussical the Musical
1:30 p.m. at the Hormel Theatre, 1825 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. Enter the whimsical world of Dr. Seuss, where guests will embark on a musical adventure with Horton the Elephant and other familiar characters. Narrated by Cat in the Hat, this celebration hopes to teach kids young and old to believe in themselves, allow their imagination to run wild and celebrate the special qualities that make you, you. Tickets start at \$59.
phoenixtheatre.com

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Here are some of our 2024 highlights:

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- Arizona Broadway Theatre
- Fresh Start Women's Organization
 - Canine Companions
 - Good Soles

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Every relationship, every partnership, and every connection we make is an opportunity to make a positive impact right here at home. Thank you for being a part of our journey in 2024. Together, we will continue to build a stronger, more connected community for years to come.

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SATURDAY 1/4

Tribute to ABBA
4 p.m. at Hale Theatre, 50 W. Page Ave., Gilbert. This concert will transport guests straight to the 1970s, capturing the energy that made ABBA one of the best-selling music acts in history. Sing along to hits like Mamma Mia, Dancing Queen, and Waterloo as talented performers bring the band's iconic songs to life – complete with dazzling costumes. Tickets start at \$45.
haletheatrearizona.com

THURSDAY 1/16

MIM Curator Tour
2 p.m. at the Musical Instrument Museum, 4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix. Curator Matthew Zeller is here to expand on the MIM's special exhibition, Stradivarius and the Golden Age of Violins and Guitars. Guests will get a curated insight into this once-in-a-lifetime collection of string instruments made by Antonio Stradivari and other preeminent European makers of the 16th to the 19th century. Admission is \$20 per person.
mim.org

Sunsets and Sips
5-7 p.m. at Taliesin West, 12621 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd., Scottsdale. Enjoy the beauty of the Arizona sunset within the beauty of Taliesin West at Sunsets and Sips. Guests can grab a cocktail, tour the campus and discover the history behind one of Wright's most renowned architectures while also listening to live music from guitarist John Calvert. Tickets are \$42 for adults, \$37 for kids.
franklloydwright.org

FRIDAY 1/17 – SUNDAY 1/19

Carefree Winter Fine Art Festival
10 a.m.-5 p.m., at 101 Easy St., Carefree. Take the weekend off to relax and stroll through more than 120 juried fine arts displays in downtown Carefree. Artists from the U.S. and abroad will be on-site showcasing their paintings, sculptures and



Sunsets and Sips at Taliesin West in Scottsdale.

photography while guests sip domestic and imported wines and grab a bite from various food trucks. For \$15 patrons will receive a commemorative wine glass and tastings and hear live musical entertainment. Tickets are \$5.
thunderbirdartists.com

SATURDAY 1/18

Copper State Beer Festival
1-5 p.m. at Riverview Park, 2100 W. Rio Salado Pkwy., Mesa. Let the beer bellies have their moment at the sixth annual Copper State Beer Festival, a celebration of local brews, wines, ciders and seltzers. Guests can enjoy drinks, food trucks, live music, a vendor village and games like axe throwing, corn hole and giant Jenga. Tickets start at \$60 for general admission and \$80 for VIP.
copperstatebeerfest.com

SATURDAY 1/18 – SUNDAY 1/19

Native American Arts Festival
9 a.m. at the Superstition Mountain Museum, 4087 E. Apache Trail, Apache Junction. This two-day festival features



BrewHaHa at the Orpheum Theater in Flagstaff.

dance, storytellers, artisans and their unique creations and musicians playing native flute and acoustic guitar. Traditional and contemporary tribal-registered artisans will be showcasing their work in a master craftsman space and special guests from the 22 Tribes of Arizona will also be on-site. Admission is \$10 per person.
superstitionmountainlostdutchmanmuseum.org

SUNDAY 1/19

Tucson Coin Club Coin Show
9 a.m. at the Tucson Women's Club, 6245 E. Bellvue St. Coin collectors, this one is for you. There will be 35 tables of dealers with U.S. and world coins, paper money, tokens, medals, gold and silver and numismatic supplies and stamps. Several dealers will be available to buy precious metals and appraisals will also be available. This event is free.
tucsoncoinclub.com

WEDNESDAY 1/22

National Geographic Live
7:30 p.m. at the Mesa Arts Center, One E. Main St. Photographer Babak Tafreshi has spent his career documenting the beauty of the night sky and working to connect people through the shared experience of simply looking up. Guests will experience a visual story that spans from the Milky Way to the animals that come out after dark here on Earth. Tickets start at \$32.
mesaartscenter.com

FRIDAY 1/24

Norterra Art Festival
10 a.m. at the Shops at Norterra, 2460 W. Happy Valley Road. North Phoenix will host a local version of Sedona's popular Oak Creek Arts & Crafts Shows, featuring demonstrations, an interactive art installation and live entertainment. Paintings, photography, pottery, jewelry, and Native American pieces will be available for purchase. This event is free.
theshopsatnorterra.com

SATURDAY 1/25

BrewHaHa
1:30 p.m. at the Orpheum Theater, 15 W. Aspen Ave., Flagstaff. This one is a bit of a trek, but it will be worth it for all the brews. Guests can enjoy over 50 local, regional and western breweries with more than 100 beers to try. There will also be live entertainment, food tents and vendors, plus a ceremony for the Snowman's Choice Award. Better make this an overnight trip! Tickets are \$50 for general admission.
flagstaffbrewhaha.com

SATURDAY 1/25 – SUNDAY 1/26

Arizona Bao and Dumpling Festival
11 a.m. at Centennial Plaza Park, 8401 W. Monroe St., Peoria. The Arizona Bao and Dumpling Festival is returning for its seventh year with the Fried Chicken and Wings Festival in tow. There will be various bao, dumpling and fried chicken and wings vendors on-site, along with boba tea and desserts available for purchase. There will also be a curated marketplace featuring local artists. General admission starts at \$8.
phoenixfoodfestivals.com

SUNDAY 1/26

An Intimate Evening
3 or 7:30 p.m. at Mesa Arts Center, One E. Main St., Mesa. Sixteen-time Grammy award-winning musician, songwriter, and producer David Foster and acclaimed singer, television and Broadway star Katharine McPhee are bringing their show on the road. This performance will include David's hits from Chicago, Whitney Houston, Celine Dion, Josh Groban and Michael Buble and Katharine's biggest songs from *American Idol*, *Smash* and *Waitress*. Tickets start at \$40.
mesaartscenter.com





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Empowering men over 50 to help them ‘become harder to kill’

By Rachael Bouley

An Arcadia resident is joining forces with those who want to live longer, healthier lives and not let their age slow them down. Scott Jagodzinski is the man behind Argent Alpha, a workout group for men over 50 that combines mindset, health, training, and personal development into one cohesive approach.

So far, men across 10 states have signed up to “stop acting their age” and hold each other accountable in a like-minded community where they see physical and mental results. For Jagodzinski, a fitness enthusiast and entrepreneur, the inspiration for Argent Alpha came during a personal wake-up call.

In 2019, he developed a severe bone-on-bone knee issue that caused constant pain and limited his mobility.

“My knee couldn’t bend enough to ride a bike. Three orthopedic surgeons recommended knee replacement surgery, but at 55, I refused to accept that as my only option,” Jagodzinski said. “Over the next year, I researched, tested, and experimented. The result? I regained about 90 percent of my knee’s range of motion and eliminated the chronic pain – without surgery. This taught me the power of persistence, experimentation, and addressing root causes.”

Reflecting on his experience helped him apply the same principles to broader health challenges. He developed the Alpha 5 framework: Mindset, Sleep, Nutrition, Fitness,



The Argent Alpha Live III event included an intensive four hour “Crucible” workout.

and Hydration, using body composition as the primary metric to measure progress.

“The goal was to burn fat, maintain or add muscle, and avoid the weaknesses that come with aging,” he explained.

After seeing the results, Jagodzinski was curious to find out if these protocols would work for others and invited a small group of friends (all men over 50) to test the framework.

“The outcomes were remarkable. They all burned fat, gained muscle, and transformed their health. It changed their lives for the better,” Jagodzinski said. “These men became

the foundation of Argent Alpha and are still active members today.”

Since then, the workouts have become much more than a fitness plan. It’s a movement, not for quick fixes but for permanent identity shifts and lifelong learning. Every month, guest speakers and subject matter experts including authors, physicians, professional athletes and former military leaders visit to educate and inspire members.

Jagodzinski partnered with Director of Training Brock Harling to create a system. It’s rooted in Dr. Peter Attia’s 4 Pillars of Fitness for Longevity – stability, strength,

Zone 2 cardio, and Zone 5 cardio – with an important addition: mobility.

With a tagline of “Helping Men Over 50 Become Harder to Kill”, Argent Alpha uses intentional and measurable workouts to improve range of motion, prevent injuries, and unlock strength gains.

The A³ system, Argent Alpha Athlete, relies on recurring accountability drivers to measure progress and make course corrections.

“We face unique challenges. Career and family responsibilities often come at the expense of men’s health. Many have spent decades focused on external success, unintentionally neglecting their well-being,” Jagodzinski explained. “The shared commitment and accountability within the community makes this work. Members see what’s possible through others’ successes, inspiring them to stay on the path.”

Members are encouraged to think of the habits of the healthiest men and athletes as motivation to make fitness, diet, and lifestyle choices to fuel their bodies and minds.

Jagodzinski and the Argent Alpha community are eager to expand their membership and help more men across the Valley.

“We’re primarily a virtual community but believe in the power of real-life connections: meeting, moving, and learning together. We host live events in Phoenix and Scottsdale and plan to expand to four events yearly,” Jagodzinski said.

Arcadia is close to his heart, and he wants to welcome more locals as Argent Alpha guides men on the journey to reclaim their health and vitality.

“My mission is to help 100,000 men over 50 become harder to kill. In 2025, we’re launching additional products and services to expand our reach and impact,” Jagodzinski said. “We hold immense influence as fathers, grandfathers, business leaders, and role models. When men lead from the front and prioritize health, their families, friends, employees, and communities notice.”

argentalpha.com

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Takael and Alexis Clement.

Sisters turn sensitive ears into a successful business

By Lauren Geiser

Six years ago, Takael Clement faced a challenge many moms may relate to: finding stylish earrings that didn't create discomfort for her six-year-old daughter. Takael was determined to find a solution, but options were limited. Rather than give up, she turned her frustrations into a creative opportunity.

The idea for Oh Clementine (also known as Oh Clem) was formed when Takael teamed up with her sister-in-law, Alexis. Together, they set out to create hypoallergenic, stylish jewelry that started with earrings designed for children. Their goal was simple: making safe, comfortable, fashionable jewelry for youngsters. They quickly realized they were tapping into a much larger market than anticipated.

Oh Clem soon made its way into the adult market, with many mothers reaching out to request the same colorful designs as their kids.

"For the past four years, we were primarily selling earrings for young ears, but then we started noticing that moms with sensitive ears were reaching out to ask for the same designs," Alexis said. "Over the past year and a half, we shifted to selling to everyone."

Today, Oh Clem creates a wide range of earrings – from oversized hoops to delicate floral pieces. One of the top-selling designs, the Chunky Checkered Huggies, is bold and eye-catching. Another popular design is the 3D Huggy Hoops, which feature small fruit shapes along the earring. These designs showcase

the brand's ability to merge modern trends with thoughtful craftsmanship.

One of the most unique features is their flat-back screw-backs to secure the jewelry. This design ensures wearers can swim, sleep, and play without discomfort – and comfort is a key selling point for the brand, since it allows customers to

enjoy stylish jewelry without worrying about irritation or sensitivity. For children, Oh Clem offers earrings that are both safe and fashionable, with miniature hoops and studs designed to be gentle on delicate ears while still making a statement.

Two years ago, Alexis and Takael relocated their warehouse from St. George, Utah, to the Arcadia neighborhood. This transition has significantly supported the brand's growth, offering a new creative hub in the Valley.

"The support here and how the community has embraced us has been unreal," Alexis said.

While Oh Clem continues to operate primarily online, their unique pieces are also featured in select boutiques across the country. This expansion has helped the brand gain national recognition, and they are constantly exploring new ways to reach a broader audience.

Alexis and Takael plan to expand the collection and collaborate with local businesses in the new year. Oh Clem continues to innovate, offering new designs that combine style and comfort for everyone.

ohclem.com



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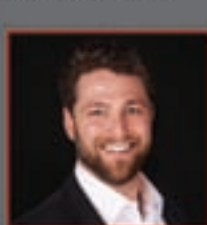


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In the Kitchen

with **Chef Stephen Jones,**
owner of the larder + the delta

2320 E. Osborn Road • thelarderthedelta.com

For over two decades, Chef Stephen Jones has put his heart and soul into the dishes he's created. A Chicago transplant, Jones worked fast food, fine dining and almost everything in between before opening the larder + the delta, a restaurant that encourages diners not only to relax and unwind, but also learn a thing or two behind the dishes they're enjoying.

Where are you originally from?

I was born and raised in Rialto, California but I lived in Chicago before moving to Arizona in 2008. The only other time I'd been to Arizona was for a football game, so when we came down to visit we went to all the cool spots and I thought 'oh, there's something going on here, this is kind of cool.' We moved down in June. Right in the middle of summer. It was terrible. I feel like these last three summers have me rethinking my life choices [laughs].

What was your first foray into cooking?

My grandmother, aunts, uncles, my dad and mom – they were all really good cooks. When we got together for birthdays or holidays or whatever, there was always a competition with dishes of 'who's doing what, who's going to outdo who'? My great uncle is a certified master chef. He works on the east coast in Virginia. I've been around it my entire life, but it wasn't until my first job at Taco Bell when I went all in.

Did you attend culinary school?

I went to Cordon Bleu in Pasadena. While I was doing that, I was also working, and I had a legendary conversation with one of my professors. She asked me why I wasn't turning in my assignments and I told her, 'Here's the thing, I'm never going to do any homework.' She was taken aback, so I explained to her that we start class at 6 a.m. and get done at two. I have an hour to eat and then get to downtown LA and I work until midnight. The instructor teaching me? I work next to him at my other job, so no, I was not doing any homework.

What kind of homework was it?

One thing people may not understand about culinary school is there are two parts: the practical and the academic. The academic part is writing papers and book reports. There's all kinds of topics and I kind of dug the food history aspect. Learning about the past is really cool. I tell people that's

the difference between a cook who goes to culinary school and one who doesn't – they can learn by doing the work, but they don't learn the 'why' behind the dish.

Give us a look into your culinary journey.

I worked in downtown LA for Chef Michael Cimarusti who now owns Providence, which is a three Michelin Star restaurant. I worked at Spago under Wolfgang Puck and did some stages at Table 8. I worked at Nobu in Vegas and ended up becoming the sous chef there. After that I was the sous chef at Restaurant Bradley Ogden. Then, I traveled to Japan and hung out there for a bit. When I got back to the States I ended up in Chicago, working as a sous chef at a restaurant called mk. That was a great time to be in Chicago because the food scene was jumping off. I did stages at Charlie Trotter's and Alinea and then came to the Valley.

I helped open BLT Steak at the Camelback Inn. I knew the GM and he mentioned that they had new concepts opening – BLT and Rita's Kitchen – so I helped with those while still looking for a permanent job. Through some mutual friends I found out that Tarbell's was hiring so I reached out to them and did a stage... and it was one of the worst stages of all time.

What happened?

It was right after Mark had won on *Top Chef*. They were crazy busy and decided to do the stage on a Saturday night. I agreed to it and I don't know what I was thinking [laughs]. They had everything set up for me, but what happens in Arizona at 7 o'clock? Everyone wants to eat dinner. I walk in and its chaos. There's one oven, breads coming out of that oven, prep cooks are running around, the walk-in is the size of a small closet, I can't find my stuff.

Mark and Jim Gallen, who was the GM at the time, still talk and laugh about this. I get my first two courses out fine and it goes downhill from there. I put my salmon in the oven and unbeknownst to me, it was turned up to fire some bread, so there goes the salmon and there's no more because they need it on the line.

I change the course to make some ravioli and that gets messed up because the cook pulled the boiling water off because he needed the burner. I finally get done and walk out back like 'what just happened,' and Jim explained the process. I left and was halfway up the road when he called



and offered me the gig. I was there for two years and had a great time.

And after that?

I left to go be the executive chef at The Boulders because I wanted to get back to fine dining, as that was my background. They did a lot of wonderful things up there. The team at Kimpton came and dined one night and I got a call from the restaurant director who asked if I'd be interested in coming to work for them. So I got the job at Palomar Kimpton and Blue Hound Kitchen and Cocktails.

At Boulders, I was still in my French and Japanese phase, so the food mimicked that a little bit. Once I got to Blue Hound, they basically said 'this is your restaurant, do what you want.' I made it mine and created dishes based off what I remember eating growing up, my travels, visiting my grandparents and things I hadn't seen anyone else doing. When we first opened, we were crazy busy, and that's when the 'bug bit me.'

A new prospect?

There was an opportunity for me to do my own thing. That ended up being DeSoto Central Market. We opened up four different concepts and it was something ahead of its time. People walked in and didn't know what to do, where to order, what to eat. We opened up the larder + the delta in there, but first it was called Yardbird. Everything was going great until I got a cease and desist from this company in Miami.

They had a Yardbird Southern Kitchen opening a location in Vegas so it was too close in proximity. Lawyers told me I could change the name and move on, so that's what I did. We started counter sessions with tasting menus and pop-ups and they really took off.

We were doing the Seven Chefs Dinners and had been invited to the James Beard

House... we had a lot going on. I got nominated twice for a James Beard award and then the pandemic happened, so we closed DeSoto. Then, Kevin Binkley called me and told me his situation – and here we are.

Tell us about the new spot.

I've known Kevin and Amy for a long time. They were thinking about change; they'd been running the restaurant for 30 years. Thirty years in the industry is like dog years. It's a long time. We're able to make this location work and kept all the staff from the previous location and stay in the fine dining realm. We have family meals on Wednesday, hot chicken on Thursday, tasting menus on Friday and Saturday and brunch twice a month. I want to make sure I preserve the space as it's really important to me.

What's the story behind the name?

We do a lot of fermentation, pickling and curing in all its shapes and forms – we would cure and pickle rocks if we could [laughs]. Prior to refrigeration, people would pay a nickel to store their goods in retrofitted churches and barns. These were called larders. The delta represents the Mississippi Delta and the agriculture to the south. We do a lot of vegetable cooking and have a garden on-site, so that's how delta comes into play.

What's on the menu?

Our menu changes quarterly. Guests can find anything from a canelé (a French pastry) with caviar and freeze-dried plums; we've done chicken skin and caviar, cured swordfish that's treated like ham, smothered oxtails done in a fine dining way with Cheerwine, which is a cherry soda from North Carolina. It's disgusting but great to cook with. We have a scallop dish with butter beans and country ham – that one is one of my favorites.

We try to have fun with the menu. For years I did fine dining and I got kind of turned off with it because the dining room felt quiet, proper, stoic...it was like, relax! We've got hip-hop, jazz, neo-soul music playing. I want to hear joking, laughing and people having a good time.

What's the inspiration behind the dishes?

My ancestors. I cooked American dishes when I was at Bradley's, but it wasn't the food I knew or that I grew up eating. I wanted to be able to do things that made my family proud, because when I first started they were wondering why this was the path I'd chosen. When I took my parents out to experience the food, they finally got it.

I'm also a history buff when it comes to food. I want to know where it came from, where'd the name come from, who is credited with the dish. I want to tell the history of my ancestors. We're not a soul food restaurant, I want people to know that. Our dishes pay homage to the south, there's a story behind each of them. That's why we do a lot of vegetables too, because we want to pay respects to all the farming that was done.

What's the most unique thing you've cooked?

Rhinoceros – and that was wild. There was a guy who came into The Boulders who was an exotic animal importer. He would show up fully dressed in a three-piece suit in these wild colors and was such a character. He

walked in one day with giraffe, rhinoceros, whale and camel tongue and goes 'check it out, chef!' My first thought was; is this legal? But I'll try anything once, so I cooked the rhino and it was a thinner cut so it wasn't tough and kind of tasted like wild boar. It was a little gamey and leaner than I thought it'd be.

You were also on television for a time.

I was on *Beat Bobby Flay* and beat him with our vegan version of Hoppin John, which is traditionally cooked with pork, rice and peas. I took the pork out. I won a tournament on *Guy's Grocery Games*. I beat Robert Irvine in the final. I also got to do a show for the Travel Channel and meet Anthony Bourdain, but after three years I was ready to go home.

What was Anthony like?

It was talking to any other chef, because he'd been through so much and understood what I was going through. He was a great guy. There was no judgement from him. I still can't watch any of his shows. It broke everyone's hearts when he passed. I will always remember some of the things he told me.

What is your favorite part of the industry?

The people. The restaurant industry kind of has a negative connotation of being a dark place that's just for misfits. And it is, there are more misfits in this business than I've seen in my entire life, but they're really *good* misfits.

I'm also a history buff when it comes to food. I want to know where it came from, where'd the name come from, who is credited with the dish. I want to tell the history of my ancestors.

No one is perfect and running a restaurant is hard and demanding. People that choose to get into restaurants and hospitality deal with all of those challenges and keep coming back. I like to surround myself with those people.

Who are some chefs that inspire you?

Toni Tipton-Martin, Edna Lewis – whose quotes are throughout the restaurant and on the menu; she's a major influence in what I do. Erick Williams out of Chicago. Rodney Scott, Bernie Kantak, Gio Osso. There's so many people who inspire me. Seeing what the younger kids are doing out there these days is inspiring – René from Bacanora, Armando from Tacos Chiwas, Devan Cunningham – I'm the old guy now so it's wild to see what they're doing. I take little tidbits from each person I meet.

Will your kids follow in your footsteps as far as careers go?

No, my oldest son is already in his profession. He's a photographer for a motorcycle company. My youngest is nine and he grew up in the kitchen, but he's now more in what I call 'the family business,' which is football. He plays year-round and his dream is to be in the NFL. If I'm not here at the restaurant, I'm coaching him. It's my first love too and I love teaching the kids, so that's what I'm doing.

What's next for Chef Jones?

What I would really love is for the restaurant to get going on its own and seeing one of my guys take over; passing the torch. I have a few more years left and then I owe time back to my family.

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"Meet Mr." | *Ray Artigue*

Patrick O'Neill

It was 20 years ago this month that Patrick O'Neill became a firefighter. Today, he is captain of Engine 12, and he and his crew are responsible for many of the treacherous air, water, and mountain rescues in the Valley.

Even before he completed a rigorous Air Rescue Training Program, he became familiar with family rescues.

His parents divorced when he was two, and he was raised by a single mom who worked several jobs to make ends meet. They moved frequently, which meant new schools, friends, and learning to start over. None of that compared to the greatest upheaval in his life, when – at the age of 15 – his mom died. Mother and son were scuba diving together, and after a medical incident, he carried her lifeless body to shore.

"Our life script isn't always a happy one," O'Neill said. "It requires picking yourself up and not feeling sorry for yourself. I remind myself that somebody out there has gone through worse things."

O'Neill grew up in foster families and when the first arrangement didn't work out, he went to live with Arcadia family Tim and Kim Haren.

"I had never seen a green lawn and thought I was in perfectville. It was such a blessing, and

today, the Harens are like parents and grandparents," he said.

O'Neill said it took him a while to unpack the baggage that he carried as a teenager. He ran cross-country in high school, and running became his therapy.

"I ran through my anger while crying. It was a form of escape," he said.

It wasn't until many years later that O'Neill got grief counseling through a firefighter's employee program.

"I didn't always want to be a firefighter. I only decided on that when working for a company that happened to be firefighter-owned. My childhood aspiration was to do something in the military and fly helicopters," he said. He would ultimately get his wish but in a far different way.

"My mom beat it in my head that I was to go to college, maybe even one of the military academies," O'Neill said.

He used money from her life insurance policy to honor his commitment and graduated from ASU with a degree in kinesiology. Soon after, he joined the Phoenix Fire Department and found a new home.

He said he's been part of some really great crews and involved in incredible miracle rescues, including saving the life of a 20-month-old girl who had no heartbeat for 30 minutes after she fell in a pool.

O'Neill met his wife, Julie, at an ASU football tailgate party, and they married in 2011. They have two children, Makena, 11, and Harrison, 9.

"Patrick is a devoted family man, very earnest,



hardworking, and selfless," neighbor John Heckenlaible said.

O'Neill said his trials early on in life taught him to trust God and move forward.

"Everyone is going to face some hardship; it is just a matter of when. To be resilient, you have to keep a perspective on things. I am fortunate because I was baptized when I was eight, and I told myself then that God has a plan for me," he said.

The plan is still unfolding, and he suggested that an apt title for his autobiography could be "How Did I Get Here?"

"To be resilient, you have to keep a perspective on things."

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A few of the winners from the 11-14 age category.



The AZ Children's Business Fair is dedicated to empowering young entrepreneurs.

Fostering the next generation of entrepreneurs

By Mallory Gleich

Arcadia Park was the scene for the annual AZ Children's Business Fair, an event dedicated to inspiring and empowering young entrepreneurs aged 6 to 14.

The fair is part of a bigger movement that began in Austin, Texas, through the Acton Children's Business Fairs. What started as a single event in 2014 has now grown into a worldwide initiative with more than 3,000 events in over 25 countries, serving over 73,000 young entrepreneurs. Arizona's first was held in downtown Phoenix in 2015, and by 2016, the event moved to its current location at Arcadia Park, where it has grown year after year.

Around 50 booths were set up in 2015. In 2024, the event boasted 140 businesses. Products varied from handmade jewelry and custom 3D-printed items to unique games, dog treats, homemade toys, custom books, and plants.

Private, public and homeschooled students spend months leading up to the fair researching, creating and perfecting their products. For students at Acton Academy Phoenix and Phoenix Modern, the fair is an integral part of their entrepreneurship curriculum, where they are given the tools and challenges to prepare for the real world.

The fair is more than just a fun day of shopping – it's a learning experience. Participants are introduced to concepts like branding, marketing, sales and financial



More than 140 booths offered everything from handmade jewelry to complex business presentations.

management. They learn firsthand about the responsibility and freedom that comes with managing their own company.

One of the core principles is teaching children about business fundamentals, including the difference between revenue, expenses and profit. Many even get loans from their parents to cover initial expenses, learning about the importance of managing money, paying back debts and achieving profitability.

"I love seeing each person's energy and excitement at the start of the fair," Director Andrew Collins said. "They have worked so hard to prepare their business and can't wait to make their first sale. It is also so fun to see how much pride they have in their creations

and the pure joy in selling something they have created."

The fair also serves as a confidence booster. Each entrepreneur gets the chance to practice their public speaking, interact with customers, and experience the satisfaction of making a sale, which helps them build self-esteem and critical life skills.

The event brings together children, families, and local businesses, fostering a sense of connection and pride as young entrepreneurs share their successes and challenges while also learning from their peers. At the fair, children are given real-world challenges that teach them to embrace failure, focus on self-improvement, and understand the importance of perseverance.

childrensbusinessfair.org

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

In the 5-8-year-old category:

Most Original: Lola's Art Pawty (Lola Hunt)

Best Presentation/Pitch: Vivienna Energy Bar (Vivienna Lamore)

Highest Business Potential: Date Doctor (Sawyer Donnell)

In the 9-11-year-old category:

Most Original: Fields of Fun (Skyler Fields)

Best Presentation: Techno Printing (Santiago Arboleda, Milton Manley)

Highest Business Potential: Cards of Kindness (Alison Williams)

In the 12-14-year-old category:

Most Original: La-La's Bath Sweets (Lydia MacIver and team)

Best Presentation/Pitch: Pearl's Pantry (Pearl Sadira)

Highest Business Potential: Mari Gold (Mari McWilliams)



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Lori, Rick, Adam and Erik Ersland.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ADAM ERSLAND

From one man, with one mower: Ersland Touch celebrates 40 years

By Mark Hays

Ersland Touch Landscape has been a fixture in the community for four decades. Founded by Rick Ersland, the family owned and operated business has grown significantly over the years, expanding its services while staying true to its roots.

Rick started the landscape company in 1984 as a one man, one mower operation in the heart of the Arcadia neighborhood, where it operated exclusively for the first decade.

“When I started 40 years ago, I was only in my 30s and my sons were just young kids,” Rick said. “My only concentration at the time was serving my customers and my day-to-day responsibilities.”

The road to success wasn’t without challenges. In the early days, Rick worked tirelessly to build a clientele, using hard work, honesty and integrity, which his son Adam said led to new clients through word of mouth and referrals.

Over time, the business expanded to east Phoenix, Scottsdale, Paradise Valley, and Ahwatukee. Rick’s wife, Lori, worked in the banking industry until joining the team in 1996 as the office manager and in marketing and customer service.

As the business grew, the challenge then became when and how to hire more employees and manage cash flow.

Sons Adam and Erik were both part of the company growing up. The pair would join different crews and learned the basics of landscape maintenance. After high school, Erik attended college on the east coast and worked in the financial industry in Boston before officially joining the family business in 2003.

Adam worked in the banking industry for

“**Being able to keep our family name in the community we were raised in through our business is probably one of our favorite things.**”

several years before joining Ersland Touch in 2006. The brothers bought the company from their father in 2020 and now offer a wide array of services, including landscape maintenance, irrigation installation and repair, low-voltage lighting, chemical spraying, olive tree spraying and deep root tree fertilization.

“Being able to keep our family name in the community we were raised in through our business is probably one of our favorite things,” Adam said.

“I had no clue that 40 years later the company would still be thriving and in the competent hands of the next generation,” Rick said. “I am very proud of that and that we continue to serve our loyal customers.”

These days, Adam and Erik are happy to continue the work their father started while emphasizing the company’s dedication to communication and client satisfaction:

“We take pride in the company name and being able to sustain our business,” Adam said. “We have deep roots in Arcadia and are proud to continue servicing the clientele. The future of Ersland Touch Landscape is bright as the company continues to grow while maintaining the original core values established from the beginning.”

erslandtouch.com

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Titan's statistician ends senior season with a varsity letter

By Mallory Gleich

As Principal Margaret Serna prepares for retirement in 2025, her 48-year career with Scottsdale Unified School District (SUSD) leaves countless memories, celebrations, and success stories behind. Among those is that of Phoenix Jose, a student whose journey has been defined by perseverance and the support of family, friends, and educators.

Margaret first met Phoenix in 2012 when his mother, Robyn Broyles, reached out with a request. Robyn was searching for a school that would not only meet his academic needs but also accommodate his physical challenges due to cerebral palsy. Robyn wanted her son to be placed in a regular classroom environment where he could thrive alongside his peers, instead of isolated in a self-contained classroom.

"My response was an eager 'let's do it!' Phoenix is in a wheelchair with physical challenges, but his mother insisted that although his body may have difficulties, his mind and his will are healthy and strong," Margaret said.

With support from dedicated teachers, staff, and classmates, he flourished. He successfully passed every grade, became the student council president, led the fifth-grade Olympic Flame Parade, and even managed the Tavan Turkey Bowl team. His journey continued as he transitioned to Ingleside. While the staff initially considered placing him in a self-contained classroom, Robyn and Margaret worked to ensure Phoenix remained in a regular classroom.

With the support of the SUSD team, Superintendent John Kriekard, and his teachers, Phoenix was placed in a mainstream learning environment. Margaret and Robyn's bond grew stronger, and they affectionately became "comadres" (Spanish for co-mothers), committed to supporting his educational journey and personal growth.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROBYN BROYLES

After graduation, Phoenix hopes to be involved in sports at the collegiate level.

The same collaboration continued when he reached Arcadia High. A unique opportunity highlighted his senior year: Phoenix was made the statistician for the varsity football team. Wearing the #50 jersey, he proudly contributed and even delivered a few pregame speeches to inspire his teammates.

"I've loved sports for as long as I can remember. I wish I could play, but I love watching and being part of the team

in any way possible," he said. "I helped out the Titans by keeping MaxPreps up-to-date, and during the games, I was always there for inspiration and support."

Phoenix was later recognized for his contributions by lettering in varsity football to finish out his final year on a strong note. He said he's proud and excited to wear an Arcadia letterman's jacket.

"The letter represents the love and support he's received the entire time he's been going to school in the neighborhood," Robyn said. "We planned for his involvement with the football and basketball teams when he started at Tavan. It is like a dream that became a reality."

"I wasn't surprised when Phoenix lettered in football," Margaret said. "He's always gone above and beyond, and his positive attitude is contagious. It's hard to believe how far he's come. From Tavan to Arcadia, he's shown us all the true meaning of resilience. I can't wait to stand beside him as he receives his diploma and celebrates that hard work."

Phoenix's future is filled with promise. He has already begun DJing and hosting events, and his love for sports will continue after graduation. He plans to attend a community college or take his freshman year online. After that, he hopes to transfer to a state school and continue to be involved in sports at a collegiate or professional level.

"I loved the brotherhood at Arcadia High. I made some great friends," he said. "The coaches, players, boosters and the athletic director made me feel very included and important. I will never forget this time in my life!"

"Watching Phoenix grow, overcome challenges, and achieve his dreams has been one of the greatest celebrations of my professional life," Margaret said. "I have no doubt he will continue to surprise us with all the amazing things he will accomplish in the future."

Team spirit and festive fun helped Tavan finish out 2024

By Mark Hays

Two events bring students, families, and staff together during the holidays at Tavan Elementary: the Turkey Bowl and the Jingle Bell Jog. These traditions combine physical activity and community spirit, making them highlights of the school's winter months.

The Turkey Bowl, an event with a 30-plus-year history, invites fifth graders to play flag football on the Arcadia High School field. The teams – Ballard's Brood and Figueroa Fighters – were named after Principal Julie Ballard and Assistant Principal Suzi Figueroa. This year's game ended in a 20-20 tie.

"I liked that the scores were even," fifth-grader Bronson, a member of the Figueroa Fighters, said. "We scored a lot in the first half, and the other team scored more in the second half. It was a good game!"

Community involvement played a key role in the event's success. John Thomas and John Albright, announcers for Arcadia High's varsity games, volunteered to call the plays and energized the crowd with music and dance competitions. David and Katrina Alfaro of Arcadia Sports Central contributed significantly to the day's festivities.

"They coach our students during the school day, helping them run plays and working with each team to make sure they know the proper way to play and the rules," P.E. Teacher Ellen Young said. "They also donated brand-new football shorts to each player. They are the most generous community members I've ever worked with."

Arcadia High students joined in on the fun, with cheer coach Sophia Digati and several varsity cheerleaders helping out Tavan's spiritline by providing a routine and showing them some moves.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELLEN YOUNG

Tavan and Arcadia High students participated in the 2024 Turkey Bowl.

"It was very fun and exciting," Tavan students Olivia, Andie, and Arielle said. "We loved cheering with the Arcadia cheerleaders!"

"I had a lot of fun. There was great sportsmanship where we were helping each other up, and it was such a good game. The quarterbacks had some great throws," fifth-grader Gustavo said.

Katrina agreed that the Turkey Bowl was a special event for all who participated.

"They practice for a couple of weeks before the big game played the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, and the entire school walks over to fill the stands and cheer the kids on," she said.

The Jingle Bell Jog brought holiday energy to the school,

with students running laps around a decorated course. Bells were attached to each student's wrist, and they were encouraged to wear themed clothes, socks, and hats to really bring out the spirit. Families were also welcome to join the event, cheering on the sidelines or running alongside the students.

"It is an enjoyable way to get all our students active and having fun at the same time," Young noted.

This year's jog was a success, with attendees totaling 4,191 laps at the end of the day. The winning class was Ms. Waltuch's first graders, who averaged 6.94 laps per person. Each grade level with the highest average will pick a prize from the treasure box when Tavan gets back to school on January 6.

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Trainer helps new puppies – and owners – feel right at home

By Cliff Summerhill

Training a dog takes a village... and a good trainer. That's where Jane Nelson comes in. The Arcadia local has returned to the training industry after 25 years to help families feel a little less overwhelmed when they bring home a new furry friend.

"I started my business because I'm passionate about helping people train their dogs," Nelson said.

"It's fascinating to me to watch people learn how to train their dog with confidence, love, and consistency."

Nelson describes herself as both a people and a dog person, creating a natural combination for her to focus her energy on both families and their furry friends.

Having a new puppy is a huge commitment and a lot of work, so she hopes to help people rise up to the challenge.

One of her early clients was Callie, a German Shepherd seeing eye dog, who Nelson trained for the Seeing Eye Foundation in Phoenix.

"Callie lived with our family and our two other dogs for a year," Nelson said. "I took her to the movies, church, on a plane,

school cafeteria, and the park to socialize her with other dogs, little kids and adults."

One year later, Nelson's family took Callie to the training center, where she was connected with her new owner. While it was tough to give Callie up, she was able to give the woman the gift of companionship, freedom, and independence.

More recently, Nelson trained a dog named Lola for therapy work. After training, Lola joined Gabriel's Angels and worked with special needs children at Banner Hospital and the Crisis Nursery.

Nelson's approach to training is a little different than others. First, she believes praise works better than treats. She quickly learned this when

training dogs like Callie, noting that she was unable to give treats because of restrictions on seeing eye dogs. That is why Nelson has always felt that praise alone is the key.

Another exercise is leash training. Having a dog pulling on the leash while on a walk can be a frustrating experience. Nelson helps teach the dog how to heel right next to you – that way, you can enjoy exercise together.

"I started my business because I'm passionate about helping people train their dogs."



Jane Nelson with Lola.

In addition, Nelson has one prerequisite for the families she works with: everyone in the household must be involved. Nelson even takes roll call in each session to drive home the point. Her success rate is directly related to the family's dedication.

"It's fun for each child and adult to have responsibility for a specific job," Nelson said. "Then you see how your family can work as a team and everybody wins,

especially the new pup. If everyone's cohesive, the pup follows the family's lead."

Moving forward, Nelson wants to continue spreading the word about Fetch and helping educate families on how best to teach and implement basic obedience in their homes.

Find contact info for Fetch in the business cards on page 51.



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Getting your pup from the crate to your yard:

Pick a spot in the yard where you want the pup to do its business. This way, you can control where they go every time. As the dog gets a little older, you can take them on a leash and run to the same spot.

Make sure to praise them lavishly!

"Just imagine how great it would be for your pup to go poop in one spot rather than having it go everywhere. This will prevent your dog from leaving little gifts for you and your kiddos to step on all over the yard," Nelson shared.

Stop the squeal!

Don't "squeal" at your new puppy. Almost 100 percent of the time kids and adults start saying in an extremely animated high voice, 'buddy, oh my gosh, you are so cute' or 'do you want to come and play?' All this excitement leads to one thing – a potty accident.

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St. Joseph the Worker helps Valley residents who are struggling with homelessness or job insecurity.



Eric Jaegers, Carrie Masters and Power Design's Jesse Wheeler.

Be the Impact raises over \$200K for St. Joseph the Worker

By Mallory Gleich

St. Joseph the Worker (SJW) has empowered thousands of Valley residents to overcome barriers such as homelessness, lack of transportation and limited job experience while helping them build brighter futures, reach self-sufficiency and flourish without government assistance. Events like the annual Be the Impact Happy Hour have helped SJW provide assistance for 36 years.

The nonprofit has two main programs. Employment Without Barriers offers free support to individuals ready to work, regardless of their circumstances.

“Unlike traditional job services, SJW takes a holistic approach, evaluating skills, physical abilities, transportation options, backgrounds and personal goals to match individuals with long-term opportunities through their Preferred Business Partners,” COO Daren Strunk said.

SJW also provides resources like interview preparation and professional attire. Once employed, clients receive

essential tools or certifications needed for success.

The Workforce Villages program provides 90 days of free housing to full-time employees experiencing housing insecurity. Participants stay in SJW apartments, save a percentage of their post-tax income into a bank account, and aim to accumulate \$5,000, a lease in their own name, and a financial buffer for emergencies.

Participants attend weekly meetings with housing specialists to stay on track with their budgets and meet program goals. They also participate in life skills

classes designed to support long-term success. These workshops include Personal Finance 101, which teaches effective money management, a meal planning and budgeting class and a Professional Success Skills workshop.

The Be the Impact Happy Hour is held annually in the first week of November. The event invites community members, sponsors and supporters to enjoy live music, signature cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, and new this year was a bourbon tasting from O.H.S.O. Brewery & Distillery. The evening also features client testimonials

highlighting the impact of SJW’s programs. The events, which happened in 2023 and 2024, have raised over \$470,000.

A notable highlight was the \$100,000 matching donation from the DFIU Foundation, celebrated as a significant boost to their fundraising efforts.

“SJW plans to continue pursuing its mission, which includes strengthening and growing programs,” Strunk said. “They also want to continue building partnerships with local businesses to create a broader network of resources and employment opportunities, fostering long-term success for individuals on their path to financial independence, while also helping businesses retain quality employees affected by housing insecurity.”

The nonprofit is in the planning stages for the next event, but before then, they will host the 18th annual benefit concert by the feeney/winthrop group at the Tempe Center for the Arts in March and the 27th annual Hike for Hope in April.

sjwjobs.org

SJW plans to continue pursuing its mission... fostering long-term success for individuals on their path to financial independence.

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3 BEDS | 3.5 BATHS | 3,652 SF

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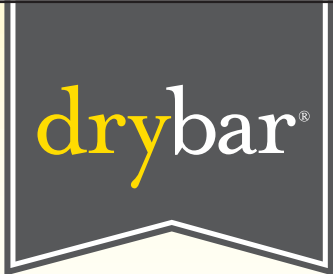
\$825,000 - 329 W Encanto Blvd
*Buyer Represented

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\$445,000 - 4220 E Zia Street
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\$440,000 - 914 E Osborn Rd #212
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DISTRICT 6 UPDATE

A fruitful future

With great honor I reflect on this year's 10th anniversary of The Leadership Consortium (TLC) Arizona Delegation to the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) in Washington, D.C. I had the privilege of co-hosting this event with Councilwoman Kesha Hodge-Washington.

In 2024, TLC reached new heights by launching the Leadership Consortium Student Leadership Institute. Through this program, we provided comprehensive support for 18 students, one alumnus, and their chaperones to attend the Congressional Black Caucus.

I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to Founder Michael Kelly for his dedication to organizing a successful delegation. His commitment to our communities is truly inspirational.

I am grateful to Governor Katie Hobbs for her unwavering support, and I thank all the leaders and partners who made this year's delegation a success.

As a co-chair, I led discussions on critical issues such as workforce development, supplier diversity, and access to capital. These issues will continue to drive our efforts toward a more equitable and fruitful future.

My dedication to advocating for the underserved, addressing inequalities, and building bridges across communities remains persistent. It was an honor to stand alongside such a distinguished and diverse group of leaders who share this common goal.

A special thank you to Tempe Mayor Corey Woods for his incredible contributions over the years, including his leadership of the Arizona delegation and his vital role as an advisor to TLC. His leadership has been instrumental, and together, we are making a difference.



KEVIN ROBINSON
Councilman
District 6
602-262-7491
District6@phoenix.gov

National Trail Trek

The 29th annual National Trail Trek, which celebrates South Mountain's National Trail, takes place on January 18. This historic trail stretches from Pima Canyon to the ridgeline at San Juan Lookout, which lies on the western edge of the park. The 15.5-mile hike will expose attendees to hundreds of Sonoran Desert flora and provide the chance to witness the abundant wildlife native to South Mountain. Registration is now open.

I am grateful for your ongoing support and contributions to our community. Wishing you a new year filled with joy, peace, and meaningful connections. I look forward to the successes that 2025 will bring!

Thank you,

Kevin

Xavier beats food donation drive record with 700K cans

By Rachael Bouley

Xavier Prep is wrapping up 2024 with pride, thanks to two achievements: a Blue Ribbon designation from the U.S. Department of Education and an impressive donation of almost 700,000 cans for St. Vincent de Paul's food drive.

Since 1982, the National Blue Ribbon Schools Program has recognized K-12 schools' overall academic excellence and progress toward closing achievement gaps. A Blue Ribbon signifies welcoming learning environments with exemplary teachers, and Xavier is proud to be on the list.

"We are deeply honored to receive this award once again," President Sister Joan Fitzgerald said. "This accomplishment is a testament to the dedication of our faculty, staff, students and families, all of whom play a vital role in maintaining Xavier's tradition of academic excellence and service to others."

Xavier was one of 356 schools nationwide awarded this distinction in 2024, making it Arizona's only school to be awarded Blue Ribbon status four times. A school can apply to the program once every five years.

To make Blue Ribbon status possible, Xavier faculty credit the school's rigorous Honors and Advanced Placement courses, STEM initiatives, humanities, visual and performing arts, and faith-based, service-oriented learning. Interim Principal Brittany Ecker attended the awards ceremony and educational conference in Washington, D.C.

"The conference's focus on creating outstanding school cultures was both inspiring and affirming, reminding me of the transformative power of education when



PHOTO COURTESY OF XAVIER PREP

NHS members (front row) Chloe Beery, Karina Saveri, Maryam Al Qaderi. (back row) Ellery Kerrigan, Jayla Sepulveda Silvain and Kaitlyn Markham.

rooted in a shared mission," Ecker said. "We strive daily to embody the excellence celebrated at this event."

Blue Ribbon schools nurture academic success, and one important aspect is developing leadership and service values to help students make a difference in the world. One of Xavier's biggest examples of service is the St. Vincent de Paul food donation drive, a school tradition going back four decades.

The National Honor Society leads the project, encouraging peers to play their part in alleviating hunger and supporting local families. Over four weeks, they spread the word and collect donations, with each Wednesday during the drive known as "Can Your Skirt Day," where students could wear sweats or jeans if they brought in donations.

There's also a friendly competition between the classes and their homerooms to out-

give each other. This year, the sophomores prevailed and received a "free" day off school.

In November, 693,683 cans were donated, the highest amount ever collected in school history. The Gators also raised more than \$70,000 in monetary donations to support St. Vincent de Paul's network of community food pantries.

"Participating in this tradition is an opportunity I am forever grateful for," NHS President Maryam Al Qaderi said. "Seeing the impact and the passion of each student, faculty, staff member and the entire community coming together to help give back and support St. Vincent de Paul is so inspiring. Every donation counts and makes a difference."

NHS board members also created new fundraising initiatives to increase engagement. They offered prizes for top donors in each grade, such as preferred graduation seating, premium parking, Gator Gear gift certificates, and lunch passes.

"We have incredible student leadership, which is the backbone of our entire organization," NHS moderator Jamie Itule said. "The officers come with strong, bright, fresh ideas that motivate the students and helped us surpass our goal."

They also launched the "protein push" to encourage donations of canned goods high in nutrients and protein. Anyone who donated four jars of peanut butter or eight cans of tuna entered a gift card drawing, adding an extra incentive to help families in need maintain a well-balanced diet.

Students help Vets preserve legacies through storytelling

By Lauren Geiser

Imprints of Honor, a nonprofit known initially as Veterans Heritage Project, was founded in 2004. For two decades, the organization has been connecting students with Veterans to record and honor their stories.

The nonprofit's mission goes beyond simple storytelling. It builds lasting bonds between students and Veterans, offering unique insights into the lives of those who have served. Since its founding, Imprints of Honor has documented the stories of almost 3,000 Veterans in 20 published volumes. With over 3,100 student chapters and nearly 60,000 interactions between the two groups, the program has created a deep and meaningful archive of American history through personal narratives.

The program's origins trace back to history teacher Barbara Hatch, who founded Imprints of Honor after her students expressed an interest in learning more about World War II following the release of *Saving Private Ryan*. Hatch invited Veterans to speak to her class, sparking the idea of creating a structured way for them to engage with and document experiences.

Sisters Natalie and Claire are among the many students impacted by this project. Participating as independent contributors, the duo each conducted detailed interviews with a Veteran to document their experiences and insights.

"I was so mesmerized by Imprints of Honor because you're able to represent what a Veteran did to serve our country," Claire said.

Throughout the semester, they learned about the

motivations, challenges, and defining moments of Veterans' lives, gaining a unique historical perspective through a personal connection.

After the interviews, participating students write in-depth articles that are later published for the Library of Congress to preserve each story for future generations. The interview is kept within in the Veterans History Project, an oral history archive at the Library of Congress American Folklife Center.

"It's impossible to capture the bravery, sacrifice and immense emotion when someone is sharing their story about the scariest and momentous parts of their lives," Claire said. "When you get it right, it's a great feeling."

The Xavier graduate is in her first year at Santa Clara University, and her participation in Imprints of Honor has guided her toward becoming a lawyer.

Natalie hopes to start a nonprofit for Veterans because of the impact Imprints of Honor has had on her. Through the administrative tasks before and after the interviews, Natalie and Claire learned how to become better writers while transcribing an essential piece of history.

"Imprints of Honor advocates for Veterans and the importance of their legacy and stories," Natalie said. "I want to advocate for people."

As Imprints of Honor enters another decade, the nonprofit will continue to ensure that stories of service are not forgotten.

imprintsofhonor.org



PHOTO COURTESY OF XAVIER PREP

Sisters Natalie and Claire took part in the Veterans Heritage Project.



THAT NEW GLOVE SMELL

*Restoring America's
favorite pastime,
one stitch at a time*



Chris Petroff with his dad, Dave.

By Cliff Summerhill

Everything has a story – even old baseball gloves. Chris Petroff, a Phoenix native and owner of The Glove Lab, has made it his mission to restore and repair baseball gloves, helping people cherish their history while creating new memories with loved ones.

“The gloves that get passed down from generation to generation are the stories that stand out the most,” Petroff said. “The gloves that shared special games of catch from father to son to grandchild are the ones that leave the biggest impression.”

Whether the gloves are brand new or decades old, their history is just as important as the threads that keep them together. He does hundreds of repair jobs each year – not just baseball gloves but softball ones, too – and does minor fixes or full-on restorations.

Arcadia resident Zach Lind and his son Zane, an eighth grader at Saint Theresa’s, once needed The Glove Lab’s services.

After finding Petroff through a mutual friend,

the family hired him to repair three gloves and even bought an original one Petroff made.

“I had two gloves I used in high school in the 90s that really needed some repair,” Lind said. “Both had been neglected and left outside. They needed cleaning, conditioning and relacing. Chris did an incredible job bringing them back to life.”

Lind said it meant a lot to him to continue using those gloves to play catch with Zane.

“One day, I can give them to him to use and hand down to his kids,” he said.

The gig started off as a family affair. Petroff’s father taught him how to repair gloves in high school after his own glove broke. But that lesson didn’t stop with Petroff – it’s become generational.

“The lesson that things can be repaired and not replaced stuck with me,” he said. “Fast forward to when the lace on my son’s glove broke, I passed along the lesson to him.”

Petroff was readily available when friends or family needed glove repairs. The Glove Lab, however, started as a full-fledged business after some urging from other friends.

It started simply: That friend – and the owner of

Some of the tools Chris uses are a cylinder arm sewing machine, lacing needles, lace snips, needle nose pliers, horse hair brushes and boar and goat hair brushes.



HOW IT WORKS

First, customers send Petroff their gloves in the mail. Depending on the service needed, the gloves will be back in hand from 10 days to three weeks. Pricing starts around \$75.



GLOVE REPAIR 101

- To restore a leather glove, Petroff begins by cutting out all existing laces and removing any old palm adhesive. Next, he brushes the leather to eliminate loose dirt and debris from the surface. He cleans the leather using a quality conditioner and a natural bristle brush to remove any excess cleaning particles from the crevices.
- For more complex repairs, Petroff works with leather craftsman KC Mack of Mack Provisions, who handles the complete rebuilds.
- After cleaning, he applies a leather conditioner, allowing it to set. Once it has absorbed, he brushes the leather once more to disperse any remaining conditioner. The finishing step is to relace the glove, and then it's ready for use!



PHOTOS: POLYMATH PHOTOGRAPHY

The final step of repair is to relace the glove.

C&S Sporting Goods in Phoenix – started handing out Petroff’s business cards.

He started posting his work on Instagram, eventually attracting the interest of professional players. By 2019, Petroff had a website, thousands of followers on social media, and orders from all over the country.

He received his first orders from professional players in 2020 and has worked with around 100 from the major and minor leagues. After more than 15 years in the construction and economic development industries and a rise in popularity on TikTok and Instagram, Petroff made The Glove Lab a full-time job, and it’s been a home run for the last six years.

Petroff’s two high school-aged children have continued the family’s sports legacy by participating in their schools’ baseball and volleyball teams. While The Glove Lab continues to help out little leaguers and professionals, Petroff is passing down his skills and still honing his craft.

“It’s one of those things you never really master,” Petroff said. “I’m always continuing to learn and improve. I have a small network of fellow glove craftsmen across the country with whom I’m always communicating and sharing different tips, techniques, and tools.”

Even though he has clients from all over the country, he’s still a proud Arizonan and native Phoenician. He continues to work out of his home, which is in the same neighborhood he grew up in, and plans to continue sharing the memories of baseball and softball gloves for years to come.

theglovelab.com



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PCDS senior goes from broken bones to breaking state records

By Kylie de Best

Being a student-athlete requires discipline and intense focus. Phoenix Country Day School diver Chase Sorosky has balanced it all – while also beating records and being recognized nationally for his achievements.

Chase grew up in Arcadia with his mom, dad, and older brother Cole. His diving journey dates back to his elementary school years at Hopi, where he attended an after-school gymnastics program with Coach Denise Decker.

Decker was the first to mention the sport of diving, and after his dad encouraged him to choose diving as an elective at summer camp when he was 9, Chase was hooked. He continued participating in gymnastics until the age of 12 when he decided to pursue diving full-time.

Chase’s long-time goal has been to beat the Arizona Interscholastic Association diving record – and this year was his year. Across all divisions, and by over 100 points, Chase beat a record set in 2009 by Arizona’s only male Olympic diver, Sam Dorman, who went to school in Tempe and was a silver medalist in the 2016 Olympic Games. Sam’s score was 574.75. Chase’s was 683.75.

Chase was listed as one of the finalists for swimmer/diver of the year for 2024, one of the Top 10 NCAA recruits for 2025, and on the “watch list” for 2023-24 *USA Today* Boys Diver of the Year in 2023-2024. To accomplish all of this while maintaining a 4.0 GPA, Chase has quite the routine.

“I have practices 20-30 hours a week with my high school team and the East Valley Dive Club. I consider myself a perfectionist, and find it important to stay balanced and get good rest,” he said. “I am extremely humbled to have been recognized as a top diver in Arizona and the United States. I worked hard to reach this point and have overcome injuries to become even healthier than before – both in mind and body.”

Those injuries include breaking his back three different times. While healing, he shared he learned not to take



Chase Sorosky.



Chase at the 2024 USA Diving Junior National Championships.

yourself for granted and to put your whole heart and effort into something while you can.

“I feel that if you give good, you get good. I am the loudest cheerleader for my friends, and feel that the energy you give out is the energy you get back,” he said.

Chase sees his mentor, Michele Mitchell, as one of his biggest inspirations. She is currently the Executive Director of Mission Viejo Nadadores, one of the top diving programs in the country, where Chase trains during the summer.

He hopes to one day represent Arizona and the United States in the Olympics, as Coach Mitchell did.

Chase was recruited to dive at the top schools nationwide and ultimately selected Princeton University as the perfect fit. He plans to major in economics and is strongly interested in political science and international relations.

Outside of diving he loves to work out, hang out with his friends, spend time with his family, and play with his dog, Rudy.

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A close-up portrait of a young woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling broadly at the camera. She is wearing a white top.

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A headshot of Matthew E. Nelson, a man with short dark hair, wearing a dark collared shirt.

Matthew E. Nelson, DDS

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Arcadia High's varsity and JV cheer squads.

They've got spirit, yes they do – now they're sharing it with you!

By Kylie de Best

The spiritlines at Arcadia High and Veritas Prep pour their hearts into every practice, dedicating countless hours to perfecting their routines. Their commitment is reflected in impressive achievements and support from the fans. Arcadia News caught up with the squads to see what they've been up to:

ARCADIA HIGH

The Lady Titans had the opportunity to cheer for freshman, JV, and varsity football this season and are currently supporting both the boys' and girls' basketball teams. This year, they competed in the USA Regional 1 Competition, earning second place in JV Show Cheer Novice and third place in Varsity Show Cheer Advanced, along with national qualifications for both teams.

"We moved up a division in difficulty (from intermediate to advanced) so our routine got a lot harder this year. Despite that we were able to place third at our first competition," senior Maya Campbell said.

In addition, they competed at the AIA Game Day State Championship, where they earned third place in the D2 Game Day category.

"Our team has been working very hard this year in order to move up, and I think we have the possibility to do really well at state," Maya said.

"Arcadia cheer plans to continue working hard, building a strong and supportive team culture, making lasting memories, and growing as athletes and individuals," Coach Sophia Digati said. "As we continue this season, we plan to upgrade our routines, represent our school, and develop lifelong skills."

The team is gearing up for the AIA State Championship on January 16-18 and the USA



(back row) Coach Coley Arnold, Mayson Stehl, Macy Almendarez, Catriona Varghese, Catherine Daley, Marlee Radermacher, Riley Schroeder, Julia Gottfredson, Ava Hickey, Coach Meghan Gottfredson and Simon Burki. (front row) Addison Morrow, Teagan Sullivan, Avery Charland, Hannah Fuller, Vivian Marvin and Stella Diede.

Spirit Nationals in Anaheim, California, from February 13-17.

VERITAS PREP

Veritas has just wrapped up their first football season and is now cheering on their basketball squads. As a brand-new team, many athletes had no prior dance or cheer experience, but their rapid progress has been nothing short of impressive.

The team is preparing a new halftime routine for basketball season, which they said they are excited to showcase. They are eagerly anticipating Hoopcoming on January 16, where the entire school rallies behind the spiritline squad, creating an electric atmosphere in the gym for the basketball teams. The spring season will also bring clinics with Suns dancers and GCU

cheerleaders, providing further opportunities for growth.

"Spiritline and my coaches have given me the opportunity to grow as a dancer, teammate, and role model to younger students on the team, and I am so grateful for that," senior Lila Handelman shared.

The idea of creating cheer squads at Veritas was born from the vision of Athletic Director Chase Beebe.

"He recognized the importance of having a spiritline as part of his larger plan to build school spirit and energy at sporting events," Coach Coley Arnold said. "We serve as a vital force, bringing excitement and enthusiasm to games while also offering athletes a sense of belonging and connection to the school."

Tryouts were held in May 2024, and the turnout exceeded expectations with over 20 athletes showing up.

This year, there were no cuts made, as every athlete had something special to contribute. The cheers and sideline dances are led by Coach Meghan, who brings her experience from the Pride of Arizona Twirling Line at the University of Arizona, while Coley, with years of dance experience in Paris and New York, choreographs the halftime routines and helps refine the team's performances.

"Practices have come a long way since the start of the season. Initially we focused on teamwork and the basics of cheerleading," Coley said.

They now involve more advanced choreography, and Coley said the athletes continue to impress as they develop their skills. So far, the highlight for the team has been cheering during football season, especially under the Friday night lights, as well as participating in pep rallies.



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IT'S GLEANING TIME

By Mallory Gleich

As the new year rolls in, it's the perfect time to start thinking about citrus gleaning season. Arcadia, known for its abundance of citrus trees, has plenty of ripe fruit waiting to be picked. Gleaning — the act of harvesting excess fruit from trees — has become a tradition for local residents, especially from January through March when fruits like oranges, lemons, grapefruits, and tangerines are in peak season.

Today, folks can donate their citrus or consider hiring someone* to pick and haul the fruit away. Donations should be clean fruits void of leaves, stems, decay, etc.

Reminder: Overripe citrus can attract pests, especially roof rats. These rodents are common in areas like Arcadia and can cause damage to your trees and property. They tend to nest in high places, such as attics or tree branches. If you're dealing with roof rats or want to know more about prevention, visit acmna.org/roof-rats-in-arcadia for helpful tips.

**This newspaper has tree and landscape advertisers to consider on pages 48 and 50. Arcadia News does not endorse or recommend one advertiser over another. Readers should do their research and due diligence when hiring.*

CITRUS DROP-OFFS

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS
5524 E. Lafayette Blvd., Phoenix
Every Saturday in February (1st, 8th, and 15th), from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Shepherd of the Hills, in partnership with St. Mary's Food Bank, will host a Citrus Saturday event for donation drop-offs.
firstfoodbank.org/citrus-gleaning-seasonal

ST. MARY'S FOOD BANK ALLIANCE
2831 N. 31st Ave., Phoenix
St. Mary's will continue to accept citrus donations, though they no longer provide gleaning services. Donations can be dropped off from January 13 until April 30, 2025, between 8 a.m.-3 p.m. daily at their Phoenix location.
stmarysfoodbank.org

PROJECT ROOTS
1200 W. Vineyard Road, Phoenix
Project Roots will be accepting citrus donations in 2025, but instead of dropping off, volunteers will come to your location to pick up. All you have to do is fill out this form: <https://wkf.ms/3dziik>.
projectrootsaz.org

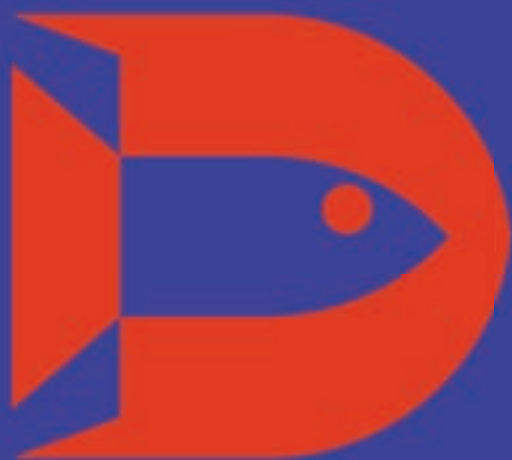
VIA LINDA SENIOR CENTER
10440 E. Via Linda, Scottsdale
The Via Linda Senior Center will be collecting citrus donations through the end of February. Drop off your fruit at the center between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Wednesday.
scottsdaleaz.gov/seniors

ROOF RAT INFO



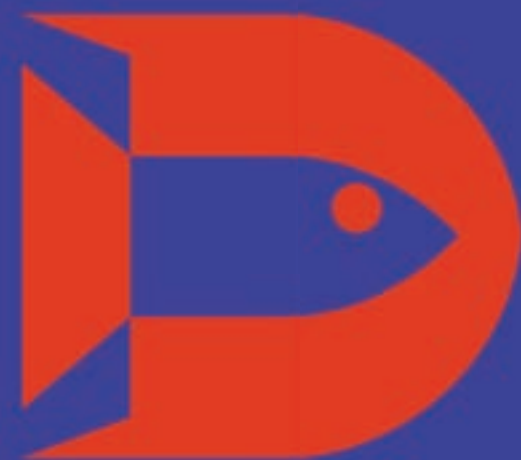
- The roof rat is dark brown or black and measures 13-18 inches, including the tail. They weigh 5-9 ounces and are slim, nearly hairless and have large ears.
- Common signs of roof rat activity include hollowed-out fruits, damage to plastics on electrical wires and unsettled pets.
- They are usually found around swimming pools, laundry rooms, attics, garages and patios. They spend 90 percent of their lives four feet or more off the ground.
- Roof rats nest outside in trees, woodpiles and dense vegetation like oleander bushes. Inside, roof rats prefer to nest in the upper levels of a structure in the attic and ceiling.

MINNOW



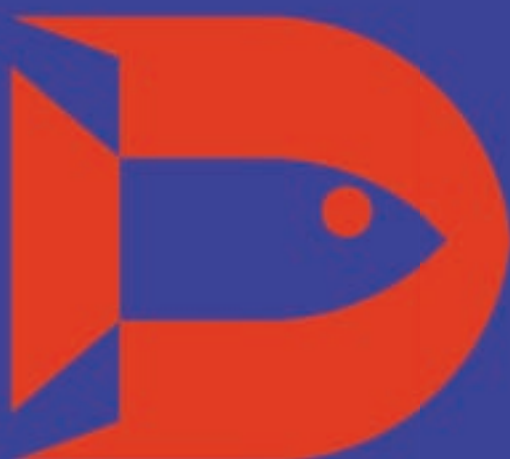
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The Dining Scoop

THIS MONTH: MEAL DELIVERY

As we welcome 2025, prioritizing healthy eating may be on a few resolution lists. Valley delivery services offer a convenient way to enjoy nutritious breakfast, lunch and dinner without the stress of planning or cooking. With various options tailored to specific dietary needs, these companies can help you stay on track throughout the year.



EAT CLEAN PHX

eatcleanphx.com

Eat Clean Phx was founded in 2018 by Ryan and Brittany Powell. The family-owned and operated service stemmed from the duo's experiences with national meal prep services. This prompted them to create a company specializing in organic, restaurant-quality, made-from-scratch dishes without seed oils.

Eat Clean Phx doesn't cater to specific diets but focuses on providing meals that families can enjoy while supporting a healthy lifestyle. They use organic, cold-pressed extra virgin olive oil for cooking. For those on the diet train, there are low-carb options for different preferences. New menus are posted and meals are delivered weekly.

"Our pastas are customer favorites, but one of our all-time top sellers is the organic crispy lemon chicken, loved for its vibrant flavor and satisfying crunch," Ryan said. "Our meals are designed with balanced macros and controlled portions, so you can enjoy delicious, nutrient-dense food without worrying about overeating."

Eat Clean Phx also offers a selection of 100 percent organic, cold-pressed juices. The G.O.A.T, and the MVP, are top sellers.

Pricing varies depending on the menu item, but on average, "mains" are around \$15 per meal. ECP offers a full breakfast menu and a la carte options sold by the pound.

"Our mission has always been about more than food. It's about creating a community centered around health, wellness, and trust. We pour our hearts into every dish, knowing that what we feed our families matters," Ryan said. "It's a privilege to provide meals that taste amazing and also nourish the body and soul. Seeing our customers thrive is the greatest reward of all."



LEAN LIFESTYLE

yourleanlifestyle.com

Lean Lifestyle began in 2013 as a solution for individuals seeking convenient, healthy meal options tailored to their dietary goals. The business offers chef-prepared meals delivered to customers' homes twice weekly on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Using a subscription management website, clients choose from four meal plans (lifestyle, paleo, keto, or macro-focused) and customize dishes based on their preferences. Flexible scheduling allows users to adjust plans weekly or skip entire weeks as needed.

"Lean Lifestyle's mission is to simplify healthy eating, making it accessible for busy individuals and families," owner Steve Fleming said.

The customizable menu offers protein sizes up to six ounces per meal and one-off non-subscription ordering through the a la carte selection. Popular items include the Southwest breakfast bowl, island teriyaki bowl, yellow coconut curry bowl, Baja shrimp tacos, and açai bowl.

"Our easy solution allows customers to create an account, set preferences, and forget about the rest," Fleming said. "Then, each week, we deliver amazing meals directly to you in refrigerated vans, insulated bags, and ice packs to ensure freshness."



NATURE'S PURPOSE

npdelivered.com

Owner Mikey Mitschele founded Nature's Purpose in 2016, thanks to his passion for nutrition and healthy living. After 10 years in corporate America and watching his grandpa live until he was 97 years old as a healthy and active Phoenix farmer, Mitschele realized he could live

a healthier and happier life and provide a greater impact on those around him.

Mikey and the team at Nature's Purpose create healthy and affordable meals for grown-ups and kids.

"Nature's Purpose has become a staple in thousands of lives and continues to grow and thrive in the community, and that feels awesome," Mitschele said.

The made-from-scratch menu of 70+ items can be filtered for multiple dietary or allergy preferences (paleo, pescetarian, vegetarian, nut-free, dairy-free, gluten-free, etc.). Meals can also be filtered by size. Some of the most popular items include the gluten-free chicken egg roll bowl, spaghetti squash and turkey meatballs, and 100 percent organic, grass-fed steak with potatoes and carrots, topped with truffle aioli.

Meals are priced individually, ranging from \$8 for smaller breakfasts and lunches to \$18 for larger lunches, dinners, and the organic menu. Orders are placed online each week and delivered directly to your home, office, or gym. New meals are added weekly. Retail locations and website subscriptions are coming in 2025.



THE VEGAN TASTE

thevegantaste.com

The Vegan Taste is one option for those who want to try a fully plant-based diet in the New Year. Founded in 2006 by vegan Chef Jason Wyrick, The Vegan Taste delivers healthy meals to subscribers' doorsteps.

"In 2001, my life changed when I got diagnosed with diabetes. I quickly transitioned to a healthy, plant-based diet and completely reversed my diabetes without the use of medication," Wyrick said. "I knew people needed healthy, sustainable food that never compromised on flavor, so I became a chef and started The Vegan Taste, which is now the longest-running plant-based meal delivery service."

Meals are fully prepared and ready to heat and eat. PK Newby, also known as "The Nutrition Doctor," consults on the menus and ensures that each has the right ingredients for optimal nutrition.

The Vegan Taste centers around the Blue Zone philosophy. All meals are 100 percent vegan, and nearly all ingredients are organic, GMO-free, and ethically sourced when possible. The menu changes weekly and covers cuisines from around the world, with dishes like French dip,

lasagna, quesabirria veggie tacos, and Tuscan harvest stew.

Special requests for gluten-free, oil-free, extra spicy, and faux-meat-free dishes can also be made. New orders must be placed by Thursday, and deliveries are every Monday. A six-meal package is available for \$93, or a 12-meal package is available for \$156. The 12-meal plan includes double servings of the six dishes prepared every week.



THE SIMPLE CHEFS

thesimplechefs.com

The Simple Chefs, founded in 2017 by Alaina O'Donnell and Shannon Ward, started as a small business inspired by Alaina's health journey. After struggling with hormonal imbalances and burnout while working as a physician assistant, Alaina started a Whole30 diet, which led to improved energy, weight loss, and better sleep.

Encouraged by the positive changes, she and Shannon began experimenting with alternative ingredients and eventually sold their meals to family and friends.

"I rarely do anything less than 100 percent, so within months, The Simple Chefs was born," Alaina said. "By 2020, we were ready to take the chance and invest in ourselves full-time."

Over the years, the business expanded, reaching over \$1 million in sales and launching a second concept, Simply Fit, which provides macro-based meals.

The Simple Chefs offers a variety of diets, including paleo, vegetarian, and "wildcard" options, emphasizing portion control and home-cooked meals.

They provide weekly delivery, with two menus released – a larger one on Mondays and smaller one on Thursdays, and no subscription is required.

"Without question, our most popular item is the pot roast entree, and it has been since day one," Alaina said. "It is a version of the one I grew up with replaced with paleo ingredients. Even after several menu expansions, that item has never changed."

Other popular dishes include beef stroganoff and chicken pot pie. Pricing is \$14/meal for three-four meals, \$13/meal for five-nine meals and \$12/meal for 10+ meals.

Alaina and Shannon remain connected to their Arcadia roots, and are offering a standing discount code (ARCADIA) that will apply a 10 percent discount any time a customer orders.



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Winslow helps Route 66 stand the test of time

Route 66, often called the Mother Road, is a historic highway that stretches from Chicago to Santa Monica, covering more than 2,400 miles and crossing eight states. Established in 1926, it became a lifeline for millions of Americans seeking opportunity

and adventure, especially during the Dust Bowl migration and the post-World War II boom.

A symbol of the American dream, Route 66 represents freedom, mobility, and the pursuit of a better life. It embodies the spirit of exploration and the belief that the open road offers endless possibilities.

Along its winding path, small towns flourished,

diners and motels came to life and the promise of a brighter future unfolded mile by mile.

Winslow, a town steeped in history and culture nestled along the iconic



Robin's Adventures

BY ROBIN SEWELL

Robin is the host and executive producer of the Arizona Highways Television, Saturdays and Sundays on CBS.



Winslow boasts a shop called *Standin' on the Corner*, a tribute to the Eagles lyric from "Take It Easy." (right) Sipp Shoppe offers the "Take it Easy" hot dog, one of its most popular menu items.



Route 66, was once a bustling stopover for travelers journeying westward. Winslow gained fame as a railroad hub and was later immortalized in the Eagle's classic song, "Take it Easy," thanks to the line, "...standing on the corner in Winslow, Arizona."

This lyrical reference helped make the town a must-visit destination. A vibrant corner commemorates the song and offers a perfect blend of nostalgia and Americana.

On another corner, just across the street, is the Sipp Shoppe, a café and ice cream parlor. Their most popular items are the "Take it Easy" hot dog and the "Painted Desert Sundae," inspired by the nearby badlands of the Painted Desert. In 1904, the Sipp Shoppe building opened its doors as the Navajo County Bank

Building. The historic original vault door and beautifully restored tin ceilings remain today. The exterior features Navajo rug patterned trim as an homage to the area's Indigenous people.

Winslow's historic La Posada Hotel, an architectural gem designed by Mary Colter, reflects the town's rich cultural heritage and offers a glimpse into the golden age of train travel.

During your visit, check out the Affeldt Mion – part historical museum and part contemporary gallery – conveniently connected to the La Posada. Front and center, you will find items like original Harvey China and other pieces that help to tell the story of the hotel's history. Inside the gallery, fine artwork by celebrated artist Tina Mion are on display, surrounded by pieces from

artists and designers past and present who have elevated Winslow, Route 66, and the Santa Fe Railroad through their mediums.

Winslow is also a gateway to stunning natural wonders, including the breathtaking Painted Desert, petrified forest, and awe-inspiring meteor crater.

There is so much to see and do in Winslow, but what makes the town so endearing is that it stands as a testament to the enduring spirit of Route 66 and the unique charm of small-town America. Route 66 will forever stand as an icon of resilience and optimism, a reminder of America's ingenuity and the shared dream of seeking new horizons. The best part is that so much of it is right off an Arizona highway!

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Arizona Water VP recognized with Women Achievers award

By Eliana Ganz

With nearly 38 years of experience in water resources, Terri Sue Rossi is excited about what lies ahead in her career and personal life. The new year is starting off well, as Rossi – who is the vice president of the Arizona Water Company – was recently recognized as a 2024 Women Achiever.

Her journey began as an intern at the Natural Resources Committee in the legislature. She has since made significant contributions to the industry, playing a pivotal role in creating numerous opportunities in the workforce, notably as the first water resource manager for several local companies. As vice president, Terri Sue oversees the utilities, supply, rights, and conservation efforts at Arizona Water Company.



Terri Sue Rossi

“The closer I get to retirement, the more I feel like what I do outside of work defines me,” Terri Sue said while reflecting on her career with the second-largest water provider in the state.

In addition to her professional achievements, Terri Sue is also an accomplished musician. She

is a member of Red Rock Crossing, a folk grass band, and Ripple Cats, a rock band. Red Rock Crossing has released several records and maintains an active social media presence. They also perform at assisted living facilities for those who are unable to go out and enjoy live music. Terri Sue said she finds immense joy in bringing music to those who appreciate it.

Co-worker Raluca Mihalcescu nominated Terri Sue for the award without her knowledge.

“I got an email from the Capitol Times, but I didn’t think it was real,” Terri Sue said.

Upon closer inspection, she realized the email was legitimate and, to her surprise, Terri Sue had indeed been recognized as a Women Achiever. She said she was shocked and grateful, as she had never experienced this level of recognition before. She set out to discover who had nominated her.

After Terri Sue identified Raluca as the nominator, she gladly accepted the award. Although it was “hard to be the focus of that kind of attention,” she viewed it as a learning experience and an opportunity for growth. She was honored at a luncheon in the fall, where she celebrated her remarkable achievements alongside her daughter, Savannah, and her mother, Jan.

Terri Sue said she’s “committed to creating a water resource system that will outlast me.” She considers Arizona Water Company her final professional destination before retirement.

“If I could have written the story of my life and career, I could not have found myself in a better place than I am right now,” Terri Sue said.

Women Achievers of Arizona is an initiative that celebrates the accomplishments of remarkable women across the state who have excelled in their respective domains and worked tirelessly to positively impact Arizona’s communities and shape its future.

30 YEARS AGO



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Mona and Mike Smith raised three daughters in Arcadia and still live in that same home near Camelback Mountain. Morgan, Adrienne and Kimberly went Hopi, Ingleside, Arcadia High and University of Arizona.

Morgan moved to Denver and lived there for 13 years, while embracing a career in a commercial insurance brokerage role. She moved back to the Valley two years ago and is still in the insurance industry.

Adrienne moved to Los Angeles after a year in South Korea, where she taught elementary school. After LA, she moved to San Francisco, worked as a Child Life Specialist in the hospital environment and lived there for seven years with her husband, Aron. They currently live in Amsterdam with their son, Boyd.

Kimberly moved to Denver and enrolled in Regis University to obtain her BSN. She worked in the ICU for nine years, then secured another graduate degree as a Nurse Practitioner and currently works in urgent care. Kimberly and her husband Paul have two daughters, Charlotte and Audrey.

Mona and Mike love to take early morning walks up to the castle on Camelback Mountain, hang out with friends, travel, golf and spend time with their daughters as much as they can.



Recipes to help kick start those resolutions

The start of a new year often brings a surge of motivation to make healthier choices. This January, why not focus on going back to basics with food? By simplifying your approach to meals and reducing processed foods, you can set a strong foundation for lasting wellness.

Processed foods are convenient, but are loaded with added sugars, toxic food additives, and excessive sodium. Try to select foods that are grown in the earth or minimally processed. Look at food labels and go for foods with five ingredients or less, without added sugar or chemicals you can't pronounce.

Preparing meals from scratch allows you to control what goes into your food. Start small by mastering a few easy recipes, like a hearty soup, a grain bowl with roasted

Plant-based Wellness



BY MIRIAM HAHN
Owner of YouCare-SelfCare, a private wellness practice specializing in plant-based lifestyle and disease prevention. youcare-selfcare.com

vegetables, or a quick sheet pan meal. By focusing on whole foods and home cooking, you can make the transition to a simpler, healthier lifestyle. Let this be the year you nourish your body with intention, create habits that support your well-being and make you feel your best!

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Tortilla soup SERVES 6-8



Ingredients

- 1 diced onion
- 1 diced red pepper
- 1 diced jalapeno (seeds discarded)
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- ½ bunch chopped cilantro
- 1 tbsp. + 2 tsp. olive or avocado oil, divided
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 (28 oz.) can fire-roasted tomatoes (undrained)
- 2 cans black beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 tsp. each: chili powder, cumin
- 1 ¼ tsp. salt, divided
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1 cup frozen organic corn
- Juice of one lime
- 8 six-inch corn tortillas
- 1 avocado for topping
- Optional: red onion, dairy-free cheese, dairy-free sour cream

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Put one tbsp. of oil into a large stock pot and bring heat to medium-high. Add the onion, red pepper, jalapeno and garlic. Cook for five minutes, stirring frequently.
3. Add broth, fire-roasted tomatoes, black beans, chili powder, cumin, salt and pepper.
4. Bring to a boil then lower to simmer, cover and cook for 30 minutes.
5. Slice four of the tortillas into two-inch by two-inch pieces (to go in the soup). Slice the remaining four tortillas into ¼-inch by two-inch thin strips (for topping).
6. Toss the strips with the remaining two tsp. of oil and ¼ tsp. salt. Lay these out on a baking tray and bake for 10 minutes, flipping halfway.
7. After the soup has simmered for 30 minutes, add the cilantro, corn, lime juice, and the two-inch tortilla squares. Stir to combine.
8. Top with the toasted strips, sliced avocado and any other toppings.

Cranberry mocktail SERVES 5-6



Ingredients

- 3 cups cranberry juice
- ½-1 cup orange juice
- 1 can LaCroix or soda water
- ½ cup frozen cranberries
- ½ diced apple
- 3 orange slices, cut into small triangles
- Basil leaves for garnish

Directions

1. Add the cranberry juice, orange juice and seltzer to a pitcher.
2. Now add the frozen cranberries, apples and orange slices.
3. Pour over ice, add a basil leaf and serve.

Mushroom pizza SERVES 10



Ingredients

- 1 ball refrigerated pizza dough (left out for one hour so it's room temperature)
- 1 box mushrooms, sliced
- Pizza sauce
- ½ cup Miyoko's pourable mozzarella (available in the non-dairy cheese section)
- Fresh basil for topping

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450F.
2. Add flour to a cutting board and roll out dough to a 12" circle.
3. Spray a pizza pan with cooking spray and transfer dough to the pan.
4. Spread out some sauce and the pourable cheese. Top with mushrooms.
5. Bake for about 15 minutes or until the edges are brown and the cheese sets.
6. Top with fresh basil and cut into eight slices.



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DID YOU KNOW? LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

HOW MANY?



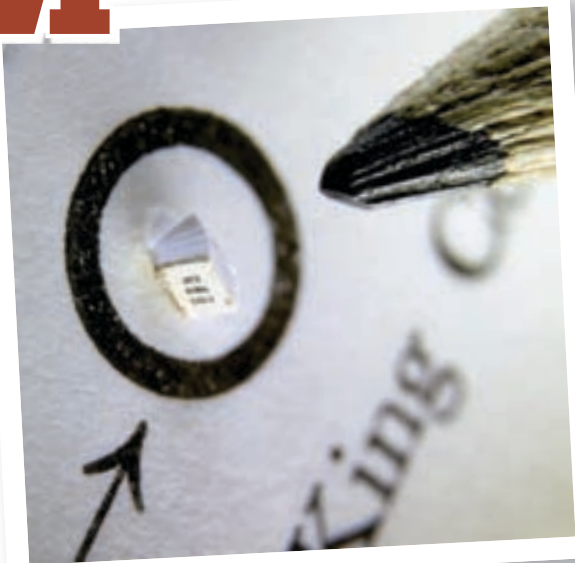
173M

The Library of Congress holds over 173 million items, including books, manuscripts, maps, photographs, and recordings. It is the largest library in the world. The items are printed in more than 470 languages, making it a global resource for research and cultural preservation.

HOW SMALL?

1MM

A remarkable example of miniature printing, "Old King Cole" is the smallest printed book in the Library of Congress. Created in Scotland in 1985, this miniature volume measures less than 1mm x 1mm, or about the size of the period at the end of this sentence. The tiny volume contains the classic nursery rhyme and was published in a limited edition of 85.



HOW RARE?

3 COPIES



The rarest treasure at the Library of Congress is a complete Gutenberg Bible, one of only three surviving copies printed on vellum (treated calfskin). Created in 1455 by Johannes Gutenberg, this was the first book in Western Europe to be printed with movable metal type. Out of the original 180 copies, only 49 remain today, and just 21 are complete. The other two perfect vellum copies are housed in Paris and London.

HOW OLD?

365 YEARS

The Library's Serial and Government Publications Division holds the world's most extensive newspaper collection. The oldest original newspaper there is "Mercurius Publicas, Comprising the Sum of Forraign Intelligence," which was printed on December 29, 1659.



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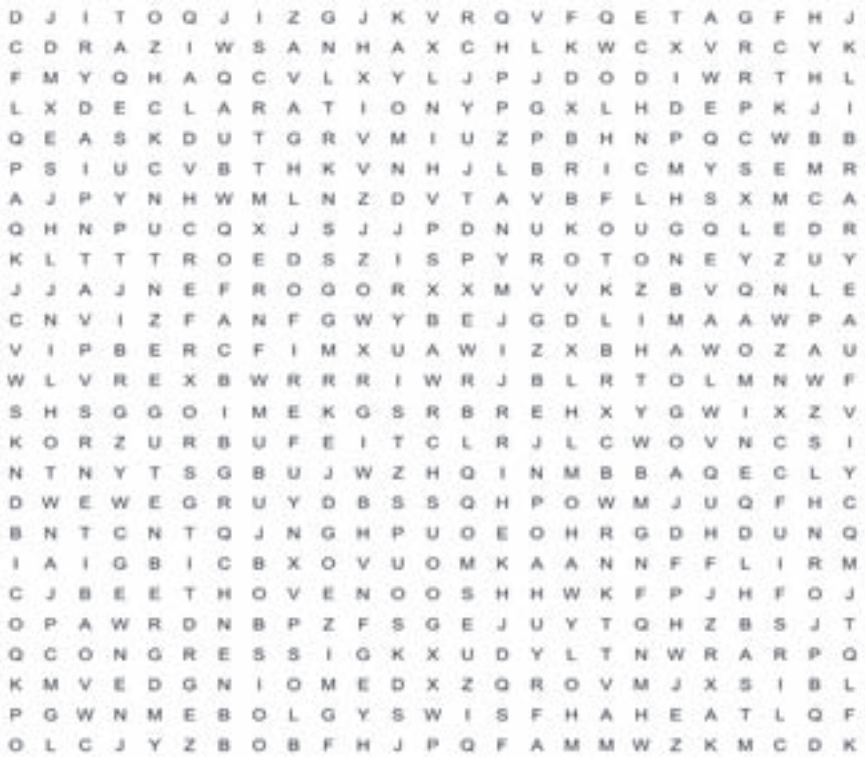
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DID YOU KNOW? LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

- The Library of Congress was established on April 24, 1800, to serve as reference collections for members of Congress.
- It is located on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., with three main buildings: The Thomas Jefferson Building, the John Adams Building, and the James Madison Building.
- The LOC has over 30 million cataloged books, with millions of other materials, including manuscripts, digital files, and microforms.
- The first woman librarian, Clara Bolton, was appointed in 1899.
- The LOC has a National Film Registry that includes iconic movies like *Star Wars* and *The Wizard of Oz*.
- It has one of the largest and most comprehensive map collections, including historical maps from around the globe.
- The library has a copy of the First Folio, published in 1623, which is one of the most important collections of Shakespeare's plays.
- Within the music room are also original manuscripts by famous composers, including works like Beethoven's "Fidelio."
- The official website is one of the most visited sites in the world, with millions of users accessing its resources daily.
- The Law Library is the world's largest, including one of the world's best rare law book collections and the most complete collection of foreign legal gazettes in the United States.
- It also contains U.S. congressional publications dating back to the founding of the country.

WORD SEARCH



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SAY WHAT?

THESE ARE FLAMMABLE MATERIALS...

The Library of Congress has faced a few significant fires in its history, including in 1814, when British troops burned the Capitol building and destroyed the library's core collection of 3,000 volumes. In January 1815, Congress purchased Thomas Jefferson's personal library of 6,487 books for \$23,950.

Another fire happened in 1851 that destroyed a large portion of the collection. The exact cause was never found, but it's believed it broke out due to faulty heating systems. The fire destroyed about 35,000 books, including a significant amount of Jefferson's donations, which was thought to be one of the most comprehensive libraries of its time.

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History of the casserole reimaged

When you think of the word casserole, where does your heart take you? Do you instantly recall walking through the door of your grandparent’s house, being greeted by the aroma of something rich and flavorful baking in the oven? Inhaling intoxicating herbs and spices mixed with pasta, vegetables, potatoes and savory meats make for luscious combinations.



Thyme in My Kitchen
BY SHERRY KLUSMAN
@thyme.in.my.kitchen

The provenance of casseroles spans centuries and continents and likely came from the ancient Greek word *kuathion*, which means “little cup.” *Kuathion* morphed into the Medieval Latin word *cattia*, which described a frying pan or saucepan, and

from there, the word transformed into the Old French word *casse*, meaning “pan” and finally became the diminutive form “casserole.”

By the 18th century, English speakers had adopted the word and used it to describe a dish of rice and meat that got pressed and baked in the oven. The

very first casseroles came from humble beginnings and were made in clay vessels. The American version came into its own in the early 20th century, thanks in part to the invention of lightweight metal and glass cookware.

The first meals included French cassoulet, British pot pies, Italian lasagna, and Greek moussaka. Macaroni and cheese is the oldest written casserole recipe – it was discovered in 1250! Casseroles provided affordable sustenance during the depressions of the 1890s and 1930s and the shortage of food items during both World Wars.

Let’s not forget Joseph A. Campbell, who founded Campbell’s Soup in 1869. The company’s goal was to connect with people through the food they loved. Condensed tomato soup was introduced in 1897, followed by cream of mushroom soup in 1934. Campbell’s green bean casserole, created by Dorcas Reilly – who oversaw the test kitchen – appeared in 1955. Her original 8x11 recipe card was donated in 2002 to America’s National Inventor’s Hall of Fame.

In the 50s, casserole came into its own with one signature ingredient – seafood. What I’m referring to is the classic tuna noodle casserole. In the post-World War II era, with the rise of convenience foods and streamlined kitchen appliances, casseroles became a symbol of modernity. Canned

soups, frozen vegetables, and pre-packaged ingredients became a cornucopia of flavors, making it easier than ever for home cooks to assemble a hearty, flavorful meal that had texture and soul in one dish.

There’s no denying that these meals have long held a special place in American kitchens, offering comfort, convenience, and a sense of nostalgia. At potlucks and social gatherings where people excitedly shared recipes and showcased their creations, casseroles became king.

During the late 1980s casseroles fell out of vogue, became passé, as Americans began to rely on fresh foods lower in sodium and processed additives. Casseroles were criticized for their emphasis on cheese, heavy cream and other fattening ingredients. As the United States experienced waves of cultural migration, the casserole evolved to incorporate a diverse range of ingredients and flavors. Italian-American families introduced baked ziti and lasagna, while Mexican-



American households contributed enchiladas. The casserole became a canvas for creativity, blending and reflecting cultural influences and societal changes into one harmonious dish.

The ingredients used depended on the country of origin and allow one’s mind to delve into the past. From gluten-free lasagnas to paleo-friendly casseroles, modern home cooks are

finding ways to reinvent this classic dish. No matter what you choose to call it – casserole, hot dish, covered dish, one-pot – the pinnacle of ‘comfort food’ is making a comeback. For sure, this isn’t the end of the casserole revolution because they remain a ‘comfort food’ and a far cry from what they were 100 years ago.

Casseroles are more than just a dish; they are an icon that are often the centerpiece of family gatherings. The communal nature where everyone digs into the same dish underscores their role in bringing people together. Casseroles instinctively show love and truth with even the smallest bite.

January’s cookbook recommendation: “Not Your Mother’s Casseroles” by Faith Durand
January’s novel recommendation: “The Saving Graces” by Patricia Gaffney
January’s recipe: Asparagus and mushroom breakfast casserole



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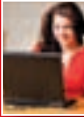
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Titan Times



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From the students of Arcadia High School



PHOTO COURTESY OF AHS

Sadie Schwartz

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Varsity Soccer Captain Sadie Schwartz

By Ahva Ghazanfari

As captain of the varsity girls' soccer team, senior Sadie Schwartz is kicking it both on and off the field this season. Known for her leadership, determination, and fierce competitive spirit, Sadie has been a pillar of positivity for the team.

What has your soccer journey been like?

I started as the JV starting goalkeeper my freshman year. The next year, I was bumped up to varsity, where I have continued to start and play for the past three years.

How has being on the team helped you grow as a person?

Soccer has shown me that sports exhibit more than just performance. It has helped me develop some of my core beliefs surrounding the importance of friendship and leadership, and it has allowed me to understand the advantages of maintaining a growth mindset.

What advice do you have for younger players who want to be in a leadership role like you?

Mindset is everything. While athletes may face challenges or mental blocks, we can choose how we respond to them and what we do with them. The best leader is one who can persevere, adapt, and lead their team to success despite setbacks along the way.

What are your goals for the rest of the season, for yourself and the team?

I hope to continue to foster a positive environment and make lasting memories with my team on and off the field. We have our eyes set on winning upcoming games to put ourselves in a position to advance into the playoffs. This year, we would love to have the opportunity to challenge ourselves by advancing even further than in previous years.

Tavan Twinkles

By Amelia Guzman

Last month, Tavan Elementary held its annual Tavan Twinkles Holiday Market and Craft event on Saturday, December 14. At this event, students showcase handmade items like toys, cards, sweet treats, and more.

Attendees had the chance to purchase these unique items while enjoying food from local vendors and hearing live music performances. Santa Claus made a special guest appearance, and pictures with many Tavan families were taken.

This event gave students an opportunity to explore their creativity and practice entrepreneurial skills in a welcoming and encouraging environment. Additionally, adults were welcome to contribute pieces to sell at this event, with all proceeds going to the Tavan Parent-Teacher Organization to be used for future events.

This holiday festival is put on by Arcadia students and Tavan's PTO volunteers. Every year, students from Arcadia's National Honor Society and the National Art Honor Society help decorate the campus to look like a winter wonderland. This year, they also assisted the student vendors selling crafts in the Reindeer Lane shop and at the card-writing station, where students wrote letters of appreciation to their teachers. They also helped take down decorations and cleaned up afterwards.

Tavan Twinkles is a free event that brings the entire community together to support local art and businesses while also spending an evening celebrating the creativity of these young students. Stay tuned for news of next year's event so you can participate in the fun!



Elementary by Bradley Stocum • mixed media on paper (framed) • 11" x 9.75" x 1" • \$200



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