

ARCADIA NEWS

VOL. 33 NO. 6

ARCADIA • BILTMORE • CAMELBACK CORRIDOR

SEPTEMBER 2025



ARCADIA'S ALL-STARs

Arcadia Little League honored its All-Star teams and District 6 titles, led by 12U's historic Regionals run.

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SUMMER VACATION PHOTOS

Check out this year's summer vacation photo spread to see where Arcadia families traveled in 2025!

PAGE 28

FAREWELL, ART ONE

After three decades supporting local student and emerging artists, Art One Gallery has closed its doors.

PAGE 5

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Publisher Emeritus: Greg Bruns
greg@arcadianews.com

Editor: Mallory Gleich
mallory@arcadianews.com

Designer: Gabe Turner
gabe@arcadianews.com

Advisor: Brett Brooks
brett@arcadianews.com

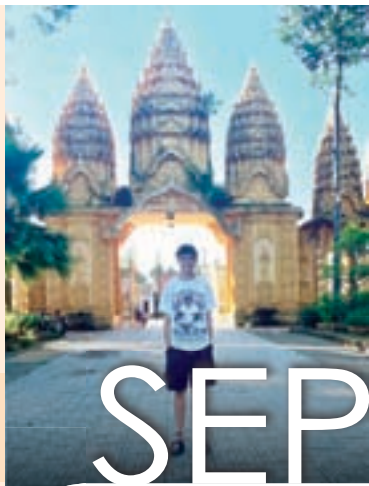
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SEPTEMBER

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As the golf season begins, Arcadia-area programs are focused on competition and growth with returning talent, dedicated coaches, and a shared goal of making it to state.



Ben Downing, Gavin Martinez and Kenji Martinez swam with other boys from camp in the crisp water of Flathead Lake in Montana.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JEN DOWNING



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1 SWIM LESSON AT A TIME

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EDITOR’S NOTE

This summer, I headed to Wisconsin and Minnesota to spend time with my mom and her side of the family. I told anyone who asked that I was so excited to plop myself in a tube and veg out on the Mississippi River – good book in one hand, cold beverage in another.

That is, in fact, not what happened. My boyfriend and I split time between my mom, my brother and his fiancée, an aunt, three cousins who each have 2+ children, various friends and one concert that I was not going to miss, come rain or not. And rain it did – but you know what? I wouldn’t have changed it for the world. It was a blast!

Our September edition shines a spotlight on school sports previews, including golf, volleyball, beach volleyball and a profile on Brophy Prep’s Ryder Noche, who won a gold medal over the summer with the U17 Team USA at the Junior International Cup in Los Angeles. The team secured the championship with a 38-19 victory over Canada.

Noche also played on the USA Jr. National Flag Football Team, and in 2024, he was honored as the NFL Flag 14U Player of the Year.

Football in all its forms is back, and we’re here to cheer on all our high school teams from the sidelines.

This year’s summer vacation photo spread has got to be one of our best. It has been such a pleasure watching our neighbors – especially the little ones – grow. You all traveled the world this summer – we’re glad you’re back home with us!

Have a wonderful September, and thank you for reading the Arcadia News,

Mallory
– Mallory Gleich



UPCOMING THEMES:

OCTOBER
Fall Events

NOVEMBER
Honoring Veterans

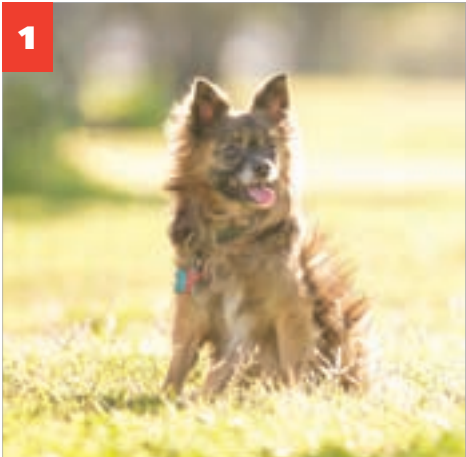
DECEMBER
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CORRECTION:

We apologize for the oversight in our coverage of Xavier Prep’s crew team in the August 2025 edition. We remain committed to accuracy and integrity in our reporting and are devoted to learning from our mistakes. Please find a correct, updated version of the article online, at arcadianews.com, and thank you for understanding.

ARCADIA’S PETS



1. Meet Rocket! He’s my 13-year-old-long-haired Chihuahua, and he is cute as a button. He both wants space and affection, and I’m always giving him both. He’s always so happy to see me when I get home and just loves walking around the neighborhood. Thank you, Rocket! You make my life joyful.
–Teresa T.

cracker – although she doesn’t eat those, she just stares at them and then buries them in her yard!
–Jaxson G.

2. Patricia is our tiny calico hamster with a big personality. When she’s not digging out a new spot to nap, she’s on the lookout for snacks or jogging in her exercise ball like she’s trying to win a race. At 1.5 years old, Fat Pat (our term of endearment for her) loves strawberries and the occasional goldfish

3. Stanley – or Stan (age five) – and Darla (age nine) are our great dane fur babies who are always making us laugh! Stan has anxiety, is scared of babies and always needs an emotional support stuffie. He gives the best hugs and snuggles. Darla loves to sleep under the blankets in mom and dad’s bed and loves to steal food off the counter – when she can get away with it!
–Emma M.

Would you like to share your pet? Send a photo and a description (50 words max) of your pet to editor@arcadianews.com or text it to 602.840.6379. 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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ART ONE GALLERY SAYS GOODBYE

Cherished local art haven shuts doors after 30+ years

By Michael P. Murphy

The door is locked and no longer open to the public. The business inside closed for good on August 30. It will be completely empty by September 15, when all the stock is expected to be cleared out. Walls and shelves that were once covered with a great variety of art will be uncharacteristically bare.

Art One Gallery, at one time a vital component of the Scottsdale art community, has now become memories that live on in the hearts of all who entered its doors. One man's fulfilled vision became the shared passion of those who love to create art.

It began in 1993, when Kraig Foote was inspired to open a gallery for students. Art One quickly became a place for emerging artists in the surrounding neighborhoods to display and sell their work, from sculptures to oil and acrylic paintings and beyond. The gallery sponsored events and promoted their artists. Hundreds, if not thousands, were represented throughout the years.

The gear logo, designed by Kraig's brother, represented an active body that won't sit still, which perfectly described Art One. *Get the*

juices flowing! Get moving! The logo will still represent the Art One Foundation, whose mission to raise funds for high school and college students who need anything helpful to their art education will continue.

"Kraig has been a really important mentor in my life," Gallery Manager and Foundation President Max Smith said. "As his health deteriorated he asked me to take over the daily operations, and I've tried to keep it as close to Kraig's initial mission as possible and continue his legacy."

Time and an evolving art community can sometimes be cruel. Kraig made tremendous personal sacrifices to keep the gallery open but low sales in recent years, along with his own failing health, were the last straw. It became time to return home, to his family in Utah. His good work is done.

"I didn't do it by myself," Kraig wrote. "I feel like we accomplished a great deal as a team and did an amazing job. We watched our artists grow and evolve. My hope is that we gave those afraid of making art a space to show and grow into their next chapter of life. It's been very hard to see it go."

“My hope is that we gave those afraid of making art a space to show and grow into their next chapter of life.”



Rebecca, Clayton, Kraig and Max: the faces behind Art One Gallery.

Like the gear logo that has represented Art One Gallery for over 30 years, Kraig Foote's legacy will carry on through the foundation and the many artists he supported over the decades. His parting words as the doors officially closed in August reflect his integrity:

"Thank you to my employees for their sacrifices behind the scenes, our faithful

clients who have supported us throughout the years, and our incredible artists for making an impact on the lives of so many," he wrote. "If it wasn't for those artists, we wouldn't be able to do what we've done for so long. Most of all, thank you for all the hugs and unforgettable memories. I will never forget this incredible chapter of my life and wish all the best to everyone in their future."

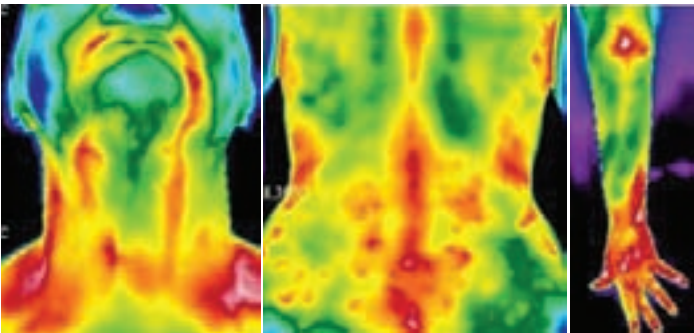
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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

BRIEFS

Free Arts and **Dance Theater West** are inviting the public to a reception and performance of Peter Pan, taking place September 14 at Scottsdale Center for the Arts (7380 E. 2nd St.) at 2 p.m. This Professional Artist Series showcases kids aged 8-18 years old, from foster care group homes, that studied with DTW for four weeks. Guests can view exhibits, enjoy the performance and participate in an art activity. Attendance is free, registration is required.

freeartsaz.org



Arizona Restaurant Week is back for the fall season. This Valley-wide event offers various dining options for every palate – and from September 19-28, diners can get outside the neighborhood and try something new. Restaurants range from Southwestern faves, comfort food and snacks, five-star dining, and everything in between; participants include Aftermath, Chula Seafood, Saint Urban, The Ends, and more. Prices are \$33-\$55 per person.

arizonarestaurantweek.com

Southwest Human Development will debut the annual **“Birth to Five Helpline Awareness Week”** from September 29-October 5. This event showcases the organization’s free support line for Arizona parents, caregivers and professionals to call, text, or email questions or concerns about parenting and the early development of children from birth to age 5. Childhood specialists are available at 877-705-KIDS, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

birthtofivehelpline.org

The America First Credit Union Charitable Foundation is now accepting applications for its **100% For Kids Teacher Grant Program**. This year, 20 teachers will be awarded grants of up to \$2,500 each to bring innovative classroom projects and ideas to life. Teachers can apply online through September 30, 2025.

americafirst.com

Hospice of the Valley’s **Dementia Care and Education Campus** debuted Helping Hands, a volunteer group designed for people living with dementia and their caregivers. On September 5 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. (and the first Friday of each month going forward),

the group will partake in crafts and activities geared toward the interests and abilities of the participants. One example is making and painting bookmarks for the library. This event is free.

dementiacampus.org

Arcosanti has unveiled its **Agriculture Program**, a series of hands-on workshops running from September 2025 through 2026, beginning with Seminar Week and continuing with in-depth training in sustainable farming, food systems, and regenerative practices. Participants will gain experience in composting, irrigation, and food preparation, while exploring the integration of agriculture within the broader vision of arcology. Tuition starts at \$630 per person.

arcosanti.org



Send some snuggles this year with PANDA’s annual **Pandas for Patients** campaign from September 29-October 5. Community members can help further pediatric research by purchasing a stuffed panda bear for \$35 online or at PANDA’s “pop-ups” at select Fox Restaurant Concept locations. All bears will be delivered to children at the Steele Children’s Research Center. Find pop-up dates and locations on the website.

azpanda.org



The Shemer Art Center (5005 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix) is now accepting entries for Arizona artists interested in participating in its **2025 Shemer Arizona Arts Festival**, to be held November 1-2, 2025. This annual event features fine art created by artists from across Arizona, as well as chalk artists and blacksmiths. Those interested can reach out to Shonna James for more information.

shemerartcenter.org



Junk in the Trunk Vintage Market at WestWorld.

EVENTS

MONDAY 9/1

Saboten Con

Times vary; at the Sheraton Grand Phoenix, 340 N. 3rd St. Saboten (cactus in Japanese) is the largest anime convention in Arizona – and they’re celebrating their 17th anniversary this year. This is the final day of the event, so dress in your best anime costume for panel discussions, contests, a talent show, fashion and photo ops, music, themed cafes, workshops and vendors. Events vary from day to day. Ticket prices are \$20-\$450.

sabotencon.com

WEDNESDAY 9/3

Dinner and a Movie

5:30 p.m. at Marcellino Ristorante, 7114 E. Stetson Dr., Scottsdale. Guests are invited to Marcellino for a three-course summer special dinner while watching a classic film on the house. Tonight’s movie is *Moonstruck*: Cher and Nick Cage battle family and cultural differences while falling in love under the New York moon. Dinner starts at \$50 per person.

marcellinoristorante.com

FRIDAY 9/5

Sushi Making Class

3:30 p.m. at Grand Hyatt Scottsdale Resort, 7500 E. Doubletree Ranch Road, Scottsdale. Guided by expert chefs, guests will learn the techniques and history behind this iconic Japanese cuisine. Participants aged 11+ can sample appetizers while grown-ups sip on a signature nitrogen sangria cocktail. There’s also a goodie bag to commemorate the experience. Registration is required, and tickets are \$45 per person.

tikitakascottsdale.com

SATURDAY 9/6

Murder Mystery Dinner

6-9 p.m. at the Embassy Suites, 4400 S. Rural Road, Tempe. It’s dinner and a show. While enjoying a meal, guests will

interact with the actors, disguised as diners, who will have to figure out who the bad guy is before dinnertime ends. This event’s theme is “Game Over.” Tickets start at \$80 and include dinner, the “murder mystery experience,” and a prize for the person who figures out whodunit.

thedinnerdetective.com

WEDNESDAY 9/10

Mahjong & Shopping

6:45 p.m. at ICONIC by Kaitlyn Wolfe, 16419 N. 91st St., Scottsdale. Scottsdale Mahj Society is hosting this evening of mahjong and shopping at designer Kaitlyn Wolfe’s Shop my Warehouse. Enjoy friendly competition – and come ready to play – browse through unique items, and socialize with fellow enthusiasts. Attendees will receive 20 percent off their purchase, and tickets include snacks and beverages. Admission is \$35.

[Instagram @scottsdalemahj](https://www.instagram.com/scottsdalemahj)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Phoenix Small Business Expo

10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Phoenix Convention Center, 100 N. 3rd St. Learn about some of the small businesses in the Valley with this one-day networking event. Guests can attend workshops led by leading experts, shop and learn about new products at the vendor marketplace and check out the industry meetup and networking mixer. Registration for general admission is free. For add-ons, tickets start at \$25-\$300.

thesmallbusinessexpo.com

FRIDAY 9/12 – SUNDAY 9/14

Junk in the Trunk Vintage Market

10 a.m.-3 p.m. at WestWorld, 16601 N. Pima Road. More than 160 local and national artists, curators and vendors will be on-site showcasing their wares – everything from vintage to handmade – at this 13th annual market. There will also be live music and food trucks. Sign up for early admission and receive a reusable shopping bag. Tickets are \$10 online and \$12 at the gate, with VIP options available.

junkinthetrunkvintagemarket.com

WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?



Murder Mystery Dinner at the Embassy Suites in Tempe.



9/11 Memorial Stair Climb at Salt River Fields.

facts thrown in. Admission is \$70 and registration is required.
phoenixzoo.org

Sippin' Series

7 p.m. at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, 7380 E. 2nd St. Sippin' Series is an intimate discussion that explores the world of spirits, wines and cocktail concepts with the professionals. Each event will develop participants' knowledge on the topic through in-person experience. Tonight's bevvie is rum, and guests will be able to sample three different kinds from Club Kokomo. Tickets start at \$50.
scottsdaleperformingarts.org

SUNDAY 9/21

True Crime Ghost Tour

7:30 p.m. starting at 1221 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. True crime aficionados, this one is for you. Spirit of Arizona Tours will take guests to some of the most haunted locations in Phoenix. Learn dark historical facts and urban legends while maybe experiencing supernatural sightings, psychic encounters, and unexplained moments. If you scare easily, you might want to sit this one out. Tickets start at \$70.
spiritofarizonatours.com

SATURDAY 9/13

Parks and Rec Rewind

5 p.m. at Scottsdale Civic Center Park, 3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale. Parks and Rec Rewind is back for a night of throwback fun, nostalgia, and all-ages good vibes. Attendees will find a DJ dance party, live music, laser tag, historic exhibits, craft stations, arcade zone, movie-themed photo ops, food and drink vendors and more. Admission is free for this all ages bash.
scottsdaleaz.gov

9/11 Memorial Stair Climb

4-9 p.m. at Salt River Fields, 7555 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale. The ninth annual 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb honors the people who lost their lives during the attacks on the World Trade Center. Participants will climb the bleachers for an equivalent of 110 stories – the same amount in the WTC – to raise funds for the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation programs. Registration starts at \$35.
saltriverfields.com

Bingo Loco

6 p.m. at Marquee Theater, 730 N. Mill Ave., Tempe. This is not your typical bingo event, this is a bingo rave where attendees can check out comedian MCs, throwback anthems, lip sync battles, dance-offs, dancers, confetti showers, CO2 cannons, conga lines, and – of course – play a game of bingo! This event is for ages 18 and up. Tickets are \$48 per person.
bingoloco.com

Fall Garden Prep Class

10 a.m. at Dig It Gardens, 3015 N. 16th St., Phoenix. Tomatoes, basil and carrots, oh my! Beginner and expert gardeners can head to Dig It to learn all about how to plant your herb and vegetable garden this fall. Whether it's from seed or seedling, you will learn everything you

need to know about growing your own food and taking care of your plants so they thrive in Arizona's unique climate. Admission is \$10 per person.
digphx.com

TUESDAY 9/16

Chef Silvana Book Debut

7 p.m. at Changing Hands Bookstore, 6428 S. McClintock Dr., Tempe. Award-winning chef Silvana Salcido Esparza has spent her life breaking barriers and challenging the status quo – and now, she's sharing her story in the pages of her new book. Guests will hear those stories and may just leave the event feeling ready to take on the world. This event is free, registration is required.
changinghands.com

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

6 p.m. at the Scottsdale Public Library, 3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd. The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable will host Dr. George C. Rable, a Civil War historian and Professor Emeritus from the University of Alabama. Dr. Rable has published numerous books; his most recent is *Conflict of Command: George McClellan, Abraham Lincoln* which garnered numerous awards. Doors open at 5 p.m. for meeting the speaker, book sale, and viewing Civil War videos. This event is free.
scottsdalecwrt.org

FRIDAY 9/19

NICU High Tea and Luncheon

11 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Scottsdale Resort, 7500 E. Doubletree Ranch Road, Scottsdale. September is NICU Awareness Month, and in honor of the resilience and innovation of the HonorHealth NICU team, guests are invited to the eighth annual NICU High Tea Luncheon. The event will start with a reception and silent auction before attendees are treated to lunch, a special program and live auction. Tickets start at \$300 per adult.
honorhealthfoundation.org

SATURDAY 9/20

Animals in Focus: Photography Class

8:30 a.m. at the Phoenix Zoo, 455 N. Galvin Pkwy., Phoenix. Join Phoenix Zoo for a 90-minute walk, where attendees will learn the basics of photography including composition, lighting and capturing emotion. Experts will explain how to photograph through fences, glass and foliage in addition to learning more about the zoo and the animals that call it home – with a few other nature



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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

SATURDAY 9/27

Ballet Under the Stars

7 p.m. at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. This year's Ballet Under the Stars brings the beauty of the art to the outdoors. Guests will experience excerpts from Robert Bondara's "Take Me with You," set to recorded music by Radiohead; two works by Artistic Director Daniela Cardim and a duet with Frederic Chopin's "Nocturne No. 13" as the set music. This event is free.
balletaz.org

Uptown Anniversary

5 p.m. at Uptown Plaza, 100 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. In honor of its 70th birthday, Uptown Plaza is inviting guests to 'party like it's 1955' with live entertainment, a vintage photo booth, event-only deals, and 70th birthday gear. The first 250 guests to 'check in' at the event's welcome booth will receive a commemorative pin that will unlock one-night-only "1955 pricing" on select food and drink items from spots like Shake Shack and Dynamite Beer Co.
uptownplazaphx.com

Walk for POP

7 a.m. at Kiwanis Park, 5203 S. Ash Ave. Arizonans can join friends and family in the 16th annual Walk for POP (Prostate On-site



Ballet Under the Stars at Steele Indian School Park.

Project) dedicated to the memory of Tim Barber, a Tempe police detective who was tragically lost to prostate cancer. Attendees can also check out the vendor village, food trucks and entertainment after the walk and 100 free prostate cancer screenings will be offered. Registration is \$30 for adults, \$15 for kids.
prostateonsiteproject.org

SATURDAY 9/27 – SUNDAY 9/28

Arizona Women's Expo

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, at the Phoenix Convention Center, 33 S. 3rd St. For the girls! The Women's Expo boasts vendors focused on personal style, uncovering passions, shopping and relaxing. There will be workshops, wine

tastings, beauty treatments, speaker series, make and takes, and more. Tickets are \$5 for general admission, with VIP packages available.
azwomensexpo.com

SUNDAY 9/28

Miss Mac Alpines 2025

12:30 p.m. at The Rhythm Room, 1019 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. Miss Pinup AZ is hosting this Pinup Pageant fundraiser for Mac Alpines Diner – and it's for grownups only. Attendees will find live music, a car show with hot rods, motorcycles and vintage vehicles, dancing, vendors and a raffle. Admission is \$10 per person, and pinup costumes are encouraged.
rhythmroom.com

Scottsdale Bridal Expo

10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, 7380 E. Second St. Get ready to find all your wedding needs in one place. This event will have over 35 vendors on-site, showcasing food, cakes, music, flowers, party favors, tuxes and dresses. This event is free.
scottsdalebridalexpo.com

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Phoenix Market Check-In: Q3 Momentum is Building

The new school year is underway and our family is back into our full routine! My son, Cash, started 5th grade at Hopi and is in hockey season where he now plays for the Junior Sun Devils program at ASU. My daughter, Kenzie, is now in 3rd grade at Hopi and is back in the pool with her swim team at ACC. Between school, sports, and everything else, fall always comes with a faster pace.

This summer we opted for a different experience and ventured to Bend, OR along the Deschutes River where we hiked, biked, and rafted with the kids. It was a nice change of pace from our typical San Diego destinations and allowed us to explore the Pacific Northwest a bit more. It was a welcome break of cooler weather before we jumped back into Phoenix life.

Here at home, I have seen showing activity pick up significantly over the past couple of weeks as residents returned from vacations. **At The Brokery we currently have over \$100,000,000 in escrow across July, August, and September.** That volume reflects a very real demand for homes in our area, even as the broader national market is sending mixed signals. The Camelback Corridor continues to attract buyers who value our central location, nearby amenities, and character of the neighborhood. We expect to have a robust Q3 and Q4 to finish the year as momentum picks back up.

I wish your kids and grandkids all the best on their new school year.
As always, I'm here when you need. Call or text anytime at 602-561-0445.

Tucker Blalock



THE BROKERY

Tucker Blalock Managing Broker, Co-Founder
602.561.0445 | Tucker@TheBrokery.com

Oleg Bortman Associate Broker, Co-Founder
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WHERE EXPERIENCE MATTERS www.LTAAG.com | 602.748.2800

OUT OF THE AREA, BUT WORTH THE DRIVE

MONDAY 9/1

Grill at the Mill

10 a.m. at Queen Creek Olive Mill, 25062 S. Meridian Road. Spend your Labor Day among the olives with this free all-ages event. There will be a grill-inspired menu and cocktails, games in the grove, shopping and more. Guests can also sign up for an Olive Oil 101 Tour and learn how to make extra virgin olive oil, plus how to use it in the kitchen and health benefits. P.S. The 12th annual Garlic Festival also takes place at the Mill on September 12 and 13!
queencreekolivemill.com

Experience India

9 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Musical Instrument Museum, 4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix. Celebrate a different culture at the MIM. Guests can listen to music played with genuine Indian instruments, learn about the musical history of the country, watch a live performance, participate in family-friendly crafts, curator talks and instrument spotlights and enjoy a lunch of authentic Indian cuisine. General admission is \$20, \$10 for kids.
mim.org

FRIDAY 9/5

Jazzbird Nights

7-9:30 p.m. at The Ravenscroft, 8445 E. Hartford Dr., Scottsdale. Fridays are good days to get jazzy! This evening, Jazzbird welcomes drummer and composer Anthony Fung (a graduate of the Thelonious Monk Institute of Jazz Performance), joined by pianist Michael Ragonese and bassist Luca Alemanno. Guests can revel in the music while sipping on a glass of vino and enjoying catered dinner options. Tickets are \$35-\$50.
theravenscroft.com

SATURDAY 9/6

9/11 Tower Challenge

7 a.m. at Desert Diamond Arena, 9400 W. Maryland Ave., Glendale. This event honors the paramedics, firefighters and law enforcement who lost their lives during



Miles for Mentorship 5K at State Farm Stadium.

the attacks on the World Trade Center. Participants will climb 2,071 steps, the same number found in each of the Twin Towers, to raise funds for The 100 Club of Arizona and its programs. Registration starts at \$45.
desertdiamondarena.com

Fiesta de Septiembre

11 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Wickenburg Community Center, 160 N. Valentine St. This colorful event celebrates Wickenburg’s early Hispanic pioneers. Guests can enjoy entertainment from the Mariachi Azteca De Oro and Barrio Latino, kid activities, and food and beverage vendors. There will be salsa, guacamole, and margarita contests – may the best one win! This event is free.
wickenburgchamber.com

SATURDAY 9/6 – SUNDAY 9/7

Briar Patch Marketplace

9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Ironwood High School, 6051 W. Sweetwater Ave., Glendale. Kick off the fall season and support local businesses and crafters. The Briar Patch Market will have over 100 vendors – artists, handmade gifts and décor, holiday pieces,

baked goods, and treats for four-legged friends. This event is free – and the best part? It’s all indoors!
briarpatchmarketplace.com

SUNDAY 9/7

Tootsie

2 p.m. at Arizona Broadway Theatre, 7701 W. Paradise Lane, Peoria. Michael Dorsey is a talented but difficult actor who struggles to find work thanks to his reputation. But he’s willing to go above and beyond to land a role... even if it means disguising himself as a woman. Tootsie brings audiences on a journey as Michael navigates the complications of a double life. Tickets start at \$80 for show only, \$115 with the meal.
azbroadway.org

SATURDAY 9/13

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Walk

7:30 a.m. at the Rotary Community Park, 1400 S. Smoketree Ave., Lake Havasu City. Join the Havasu Community Health Foundation for the #YOUmatter Suicide Awareness Walk, dedicated to raising awareness about suicide and its impact. Attendees will receive a baseball cap to commemorate and wear during the walk. There will also be a 50/50 raffle. This event is all ages; registration is \$25.
havasucommunityhealthfoundation.org

SATURDAY 9/20

Miles for Mentorship 5K

6 a.m. at State Farm Stadium, 1 Cardinal Way, Glendale. The Miles for Mentorship 5K benefits the programs and mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona to “create and support one-to-one mentoring relationships with youth.” There will be a 5K and one-mile fun run, plus an awards ceremony, vendors and food trucks at the ready for after the race. Registration is \$39 for adults, \$19 for kids.
bbbsaz.org

Peach Market

8 a.m. at Tractor Supply Co., 17130 E. Shea Blvd., Fountain Hills. The fifth annual Peach Market is back for a limited time, boasting tree-ripened Freestone Peaches sourced directly from mountain farms in Utah. Attending vendors include The Bomb Pie Company, 3D Salsa and more, and this morning’s event will also feature a Children’s Entrepreneur Market, where vendors ages 5-16 will sell handmade or home-baked goods. This event is free.
fountainhillsaz.gov

FRIDAY 9/26

Fish and Sips

5-9 p.m. at Odysea Aquarium, 9500 E. Via de Ventura, Scottsdale. Try a new happy hour and drink with the fishes. Guests can enjoy craft brews, cocktails and food while touring the aquarium. There will also be lawn games and live music. Guests can get close to sharks and sea lions through one exhibit and may even get a behind-the-scenes look at a few other creatures. Tickets start at \$35.
odyseaaquarium.com

FRIDAY 9/26 – SUNDAY 9/28

Mexican Baseball Fiesta

Times vary, at the American Family Fields of Phoenix, 3805 N. 53rd Ave., Phoenix. Don’t miss the first-ever “Vamos a Maryvale Mexican Baseball Fiesta,” a three-day celebration with live music, food and drink vendors and preseason baseball from Liga ARCO Mexicana del Pacífico. This event brings Mexican baseball to life with fun for the whole family. Tickets start at \$22.
mexicanbaseballfiesta.com

SATURDAY 9/27

Fall Festival

10 a.m. at Arizona Athletic Grounds, 6321 S. Ellsworth Road, Mesa. It’s officially pumpkin season which means the fall festivals are ready to go. This event features over 150 vendors, live music, bounce houses and activities for the kids, face painting, mini golf, food trucks, drinks for the grownups, and more. Admission is \$5 per person, and parking is \$5 per vehicle.
azgrounds.com

SATURDAY 9/27 – SUNDAY 9/28

National Alpaca Farm Day

9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Desert Mirage Alpaca Ranch, 19007 W. Roadrunner Road, Wittmann. Finish out the month with funny, furry alpacas at Desert Mirage. The ranch will offer an up-close tour, picture opportunities, live demos, educational talks and lots of time to pet the alpacas. This event is free for all ages.
desertmiragealpacaranch.com

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Arcadia Little League celebrates first-time Regional showcase

By Mark Hays

Arcadia Little League had a summer to remember, as all three of its All-Star baseball teams – 10U, 11U, and 12U – captured District 6 titles in an impressive display of talent and determination.

The 12U squad led the charge, not only clinching the district crown with a victory over Scottsdale Little League but also dominating the Arizona State Tournament to emerge as champions. Their triumph secured them a coveted spot in the West Region Tournament, a major milestone.

The 11U team earned its district title by defeating Fountain Hills and made a strong push at state, advancing through the bracket before falling in its third matchup. The 10U team claimed the district championship over McCormick Ranch before bowing out after two hard-fought losses at the state level.

While all three teams showcased grit and skill, it was the 12U squad's historic run that set this season apart for Arcadia Little League.

"The 12U team officially won the Arizona State Little League tournament," Coach Danny Openden said. "It's the third straight year that this core group of kids has played in the state championship. They lost in 10U, but won in 11U... and this year they won it again."

It was the first time an Arcadia team advanced to the Little League Baseball West Region Tournament, held in August in San Bernardino, California. Games were broadcast on ESPN and ESPN+, which added to the excitement for the team.

Openden said the West Region is one of the toughest in the country, with nearly half of the Little League World Series championship games since 2000 including a team from that region. The week began with practices, team events, opening ceremonies, and a chance to play on what Openden called "the most amazing field... groomed perfectly... like carpet on the grass."

Arcadia's first game was against Northern California. Max Sapik threw five scoreless innings, and Arcadia led 1-0 in the sixth before a few miscues cost them the game.

The loss dropped them into an elimination matchup with Southern California, another powerhouse. Arcadia led early, highlighted by a defensive gem when Cody Openden blocked the plate and tagged out a runner after a throw from centerfield. But a controversial call swung momentum, and Southern California went on to win 5-1.

"We definitely thought we deserved to be there and



PHOTO COURTESY OF DANNY OPDEN

Will Clancey, Cole Luepker, Andrew Wachinski, Chase Amundson, Liam Voris, Jack Harvey, Olly Fouts, Jack Brandt, Cannon Olmsted, Walker Freckmann, Max Sapik, Cody Openden; Coaches Ryan Clancey, Steve Sapik, Dan Wachinski, Kyle Fouts and Manager Danny Openden.

deserved to be in that championship game. I am super proud of what these kids achieved," Openden said.

He highlighted standout performances from Max and Cannon Olmsted on the mound, shortstop Andrew Wachinski for "several incredible plays," and RBI hits from Cannon and Walker Freckmann. Openden also praised the community:

"The day of our last practice, Steak 44 donated dinner for the kids, and we probably had 75 neighbors and parents come out with signs sending our kids off. The number of people sending screenshots of themselves watching the games on ESPN... it was just incredible."

Manager Todd Gosselink praised his 11U team's fight.

"We went 4-0 in district play to win the championship by a combined score of 46-7," he said.

Season highlights include pitching 14 consecutive shutout innings. The team was knocked out of the state tournament by High Desert in a ninth-inning game in the bottom of the

ninth – a notable achievement in a game that typically lasts only six innings.

Cam Feldman batted .650 and played first base and pitcher, and Luke Gosselink batted .611 and played third base. Jaxon Greenleaf hit two home runs in the state tournament, one of which was his first ever career over-the-fence hit – a proud moment for the whole team.

Arcadia's 10U All-Stars advanced by beating McCormick Ranch Little League on a squeeze bunt in the bottom of the ninth inning, according to Little League parent Torrey Briegel.

"Our Arcadia Little League is a special group, and I think the most special thing is we've got this incredible community of kids, parents, families, supporters," Openden said. "All of these people are a big reason for our success."

arcadialittleleague.com

Valley author's new book encourages early money lessons

By Mark Hays

Walter Clarke is on a mission to close what he calls "the societal miss" in financial education – the failure to teach children about money during their formative years. His new book, *401Kid*, lays out age-appropriate strategies for parents to start money conversations well before kids reach their teens.

"We're just not teaching financial literacy early enough," Clarke said. "And that's really what I'm trying to do with the book – get parents to wake up to the extreme consequences that our kids face if parents are not guiding them in this critical area."

Clarke's approach comes from 25 years of teaching an education-only program for families who have come into sudden wealth – a program inspired by a candid conversation with legendary car dealer Lou Grubb. Despite his business success, Clarke said Grubb admitted he had little financial education and struggled because of it.

"Over the 25 years this class has been taught, the most common feedback we've heard from participants has been,



"I wish I had learned this earlier," Clarke said. "One day, I realized I was tired of hearing that phrase, and decided to do something about it."

In *401Kid*, Clarke argues that the most important developmental window for financial lessons is between birth and age 10.

"That span is this really interesting time in youth development where kids are willing to learn from us," he said. "Just as kids learn language, music, and sports easily in early childhood, the same holds true for financial concepts. Yet society ignores financial education in this age range."

Clarke says that parents don't need to be financial experts to start these conversations. The book breaks money down into five uses: spending, earning, saving, giving, and investing.

"Even if parents don't feel financially savvy, there's no excuse. The internet is full of free tools," he said. "By teaching something, you learn it. It's an amazing vehicle for the parent as well as the kid."

He warns about the risks of doing nothing to teach children financial literacy. If they don't learn with their parents, they



Walter Clarke

can pick up bad advice and bad habits from elsewhere. Clarke's message to parents is direct: kids learn from their parents' attitudes and behaviors.

"You're the educator," he said. "If you want your kids to be better, the same, or worse than you, it's your choice."

Alongside *401Kid*, Clarke has launched a children's series, *The Adventures of the Magic Penny*. The first book, *Dad, Why Do You Have to Go to Work?* is aimed at sparking age-appropriate financial discussions as early as preschool.

"We hire baseball, soccer, and music coaches," Clarke said, "and yet we're doing nothing in this area. If I can get the conversation started, we're going to change some lives."

Through *401Kid*, Clarke aims to help effect this change. Inside the book is a thoughtfully sequenced roadmap that, if followed, helps children build a healthy financial foundation, one that will carry them forward for the rest of their lives.

401Kid and Clarke's other books are available on Amazon.

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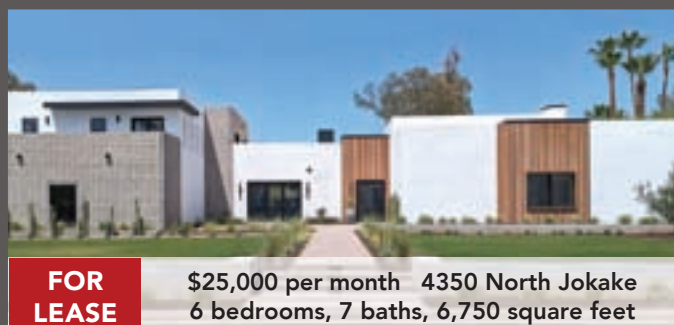
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In the Kitchen

with Executive Chef Gio Osso, Owner of Virtu Honest Craft

3701 N. Marshall Way, Scottsdale • virtuscottsdale.com

If you’ve ever dined at Virtu Honest Craft or Pizzeria Virtu, you’ve tasted the heart of Chef Gio Osso’s story – one steeped in Italian roots, East Coast tradition, and a passion for food. Before the accolades, the octopus, and the amaro collection, Chef Gio’s journey spanned his family’s farmhouse in Calabria to Arizona’s kitchens – with plenty of adventures along the way.

**Tell us about your childhood.
Are you from Arizona?**

I’m from the far-left coast of Italy, a little place called New Jersey. My kids hate that I tell that joke because they hear it all the time, but everyone else thinks it’s funny! My parents were born in Italy, so I spent summers there visiting my grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, everybody. My parents are the only ones that came to America from Calabria.

My grandparents’ farmhouse was a few minutes from the beach, but they grew everything you could think of. There were pigs, chickens, rabbits, all the good stuff. It was unbelievable.

What year did your parents head to Jersey?

When they got here it was 1960. Where they lived in Italy at the time was a very poor area, so a lot of people were coming over to try and make a better life, send money back, buy land so they could retire later... my grandfather came over several times to work. Everyone was just trying to survive.

What are your first memories of the kitchen?

I started being a chef in my highchair. I was in the kitchen, in my chair, while my mom was cooking because of course they didn’t want me running around being a maniac.

You wouldn’t be able to tell now, but back then I was a picky eater. My mom would put a pot of water in front of me, give me a wooden spoon – which would come back to haunt me when I was misbehaving – and she’d give me dried herbs and spices, and I would stir while she’d feed me.

My dad was a produce manager for a grocery chain so there was always food everywhere.

What was your first venture into the industry?

I started in restaurants when I was 13 as a dishwasher, busboy, all of the above. After high school I told my family I wanted to go to culinary school – no one was shocked at this news. This was in 1991. A long time ago, ya know... when they invented light [laughs].

I came up through a New York style pizzeria; that was one side of the restaurant. The other side was old school stuffed shells, baked ziti, veal parm, that kind of stuff. So, when I went to culinary school, it was all new. ‘Get your *mis en place* and your *mirepoix*’ was a far cry from breading eggplant. It was a little shocking, but I think all of it was so cool; learning ‘why we do *this* in the kitchen’ was exciting.

Where’d you go after graduation?

I went from culinary school to an ultra-fine dining restaurant called March under Chef Wayne Nish. It was on the Upper East Side, it was exclusive clientele, fine dining at its best. I worked there five days a week and on my two days off I would stage anywhere I could – whether it was a Chinese restaurant, a Greek restaurant, a diner, French, Italian – you name it, I worked it, and for about three years.

I wanted to learn as much as I could before I went to Italy to learn about my roots. I wanted be well-rounded in all the different techniques and styles, as well as the history. I spent a month here, a month there over the course of three years, in Italy.

What other restaurants did you work at?

I did the whole New York thing and then I wound up in New Jersey at a restaurant called Sonoma Grill, owned by John Foy who also the chef at the 21 Club in New York. At the Sonoma Grill the chef de cuisine was Richard Lowack, who was my chef. I was a line cook, worked my way up to sous chef, and went Richard left, he asked if I wanted to go with him.

We went to work at a place called Marlboro Inn, then a place called 44 East Madison. I followed him around because I felt comfortable, and he taught me a lot.



What’s one of the things he taught you?

This might be a little surprising, but Richard is a published poet, so he actually taught me how to write a menu. How to use certain words to make a menu more appealing. For example, I’ve got some Italian words on the menu at Pizzeria Virtu, to dress it up. It sparks conversation, which is what we want. We want people to be intrigued by what they read on the menu.

After the East Coast, you came this way?

By then, I was kind of doing my own thing, I worked in Connecticut for a bit and then Chef Rich had a restaurant in Michigan. He came out to Arizona

because his mom lives here and decided to open a restaurant and I went to help him – and it was a nightmare [laughs].

Oh no! What happened?

It was 2002 and it was in that era of restaurants that turn into nightclubs. It did not work, and it was not fun, so I don’t even want to mention the name. We tried to do such cool stuff and it was looked at as more of nightclub, which is not what we were going for. I ended up doing something else after Rich took me to a spot called Grazia Pizzeria [where Pizzeria Virtu is now].

They were Italian owners from Rome, so we had dinner and talked with the owner and he offered me a job slinging pizzas. They had recently opened so I

was there on the ground floor and worked there for two years. Twenty years later, the owner retired and I took over the space and turned it into Pizzeria Virtu.

What about Virtu Honest Craft?

I worked at Grazia and then at a whole bunch of other spots around town and ended up at the airport in 2010. Sky Harbor was transforming its restaurants and brands and bringing in Chelsea’s Kitchen and Olive and Ivy; I was part of that. I was the executive chef and helped with logistics, commissary, shipping, executing. Without that experience, I don’t think I’d be here today. I learned so much about the business side and met my business partner there.

How Virtu came about was a phone call mentioning a new restaurant in Scottsdale. We went there for breakfast and the owners of The Bespoke Inn were on-site and recognized me and asked if I wanted to open a restaurant in that space [where Virtu is now]. They were like, ‘We’re not restaurant people. We don’t want to do this part’ [laughs]. That was 12 years ago.

What is the inspiration behind the dishes?

That’s a two answer question. How Virtu’s menu happened was a trip to Italy back in 2005. My friends and I would go to these mom and pop restaurants all over southern Italy, and you’d walk in and there would only be three tables.

There’s a jug of wine on the table and, ‘Here’s the menu for the day.’ One antipasto, one entrée, one side – that’s it. The garden would be right outside the door. Whatever’s fresh that day is what’s on the menu; I wanted to do that. I wanted to change the menu every day – and we did when we first opened, and then I realized that was insane. Now, we change the menu once every couple of weeks.

The other part is that I really wanted to try and do the ingredients I grew up with in Italy and elevate them. Calabria is by the ocean, and it’s a bunch of farms, so it’d be what people would call peasant food. I wanted to elevate the peasant food and incorporate different ingredients and present it nicely.

Tell us about your awards and accolades.

Right out the gate, we got an Appetizer of the Year award with the octopus – four point five out of five stars, and the critic said, ‘I’d have given you five if you would have put bread on the table!’ We had a disagreement on that part [laughs]. We got a call from *Esquire* that we were in the Top 20 Restaurants in the Country, and that was insane. I went to the awards show for that one and I was starstruck. It was amazing.

I got a phone call and voicemail from AZ Republic’s Howard Seftel asking for a reaction from being nominated for Best New Restaurant under James Beard. I still have the voicemail. Twenty minutes later,

when I gained my composure, I called him back to learn more about the award. I was blown away.

Who are some other chefs that inspire you?

A lot of my friends inspire me in many different ways. All the local guys, I love them all. Beau, Chris Gross, Matt Carter, Tarbell, Bernie, Stephen Jones, Jacob Cutino, Binkley... they’re all friends. They all have such a unique way of looking at food, I love it. The community that’s been built here over the past 20 years is so admirable.

What is your favorite part of the restaurant industry?

I’m not the guy who walks the dining room – I can, I will, I have, but I’m not out here shaking hands and kissing babies, you know? I want people to eat and enjoy themselves. I enjoy standing back and seeing customers love the food; seeing the pure joy and satisfaction.

What’s your least favorite part?

Oh boy, there’s a lot [laughs]. It’s the amateur food critics. Sometimes you walk up to a table and the first thing they say is, ‘You know what you should do?’ How I respond depends on my mood, but there have been times where I want to respond with, ‘Oh, do you do that at *your* restaurant?’ It’s frustrating.

What’s your favorite comfort food meal?

We cook a lot at home. One of the meals is breaded chicken cutlets with a tomato salad, and the other is red sauce with pasta and a side salad. Simple and delicious.

Will your kids go into the industry?

If they do follow in my footsteps – which they say they want to, but my wife is adamant that they don’t – I will make sure they go about it the right way and not fall into the traps, the dark side of the industry.

In regard to the popularity of *The Bear* series and his ultimate goal of earning a Michelin star – is that a goal for any restaurateur?

No – I think that’s a stretch. There are chefs out there that want a star, and that’s all they want...but that’s *why* there’s a dark side to the industry. They’ll do whatever it takes to get there. Don’t get me wrong, it’s a great aspiration to have, but there’s more to it. The awards are nice, but you still have to feed your family, provide for your staff, get butts in seats. The ultimate goal is to survive, make money and provide meals people love.

Name a few places you’d suggest to a Valley newcomer to eat.

Hush Public House and Fire at Will from Dom Ruggiero – he’s fantastic. He changes things quite often and I love what he does. In Arcadia, Nook Kitchen and Beckett’s Table!

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Nicholas Winger

Nicholas Winger is someone who believes – no, more like, is adamant – that everything in life happens for a reason. So much so that he follows the course of events in his life as though they were a preordained roadmap.

“I live my life on the basis of understanding that things happen for good reason. Experiences help us better understand ourselves and others,” Winger says with conviction.

His mother died at the hands of a drunk driver when he was just five years old. He refers to her as his “Guardian Angel” and regularly thanks her for the direction she provides from a distance.

During high school he confronted yet another tragedy when he lost three childhood friends who were on a remote cavern exploration.

Winger nearly lost his life, also due to a drunk driver, when he was 24. After coming out of a coma – and because he had no insurance – he facilitated his own rehabilitation regimen.

“I needed to do it on my own; to learn to be self-reliant,” he said. “I’m a man of faith and believe there’s a reason I am here, and I can persevere through anything.”

Winger and his older brother, Jacob, grew up in rural

“Experiences help us better understand ourselves and others.”

Minnesota. Their father raised his sons and imprinted them with an entrepreneurial spirit. Nick came to Arizona to attend ASU, then left when his dad asked if he would come home, admitting he missed his best friend.

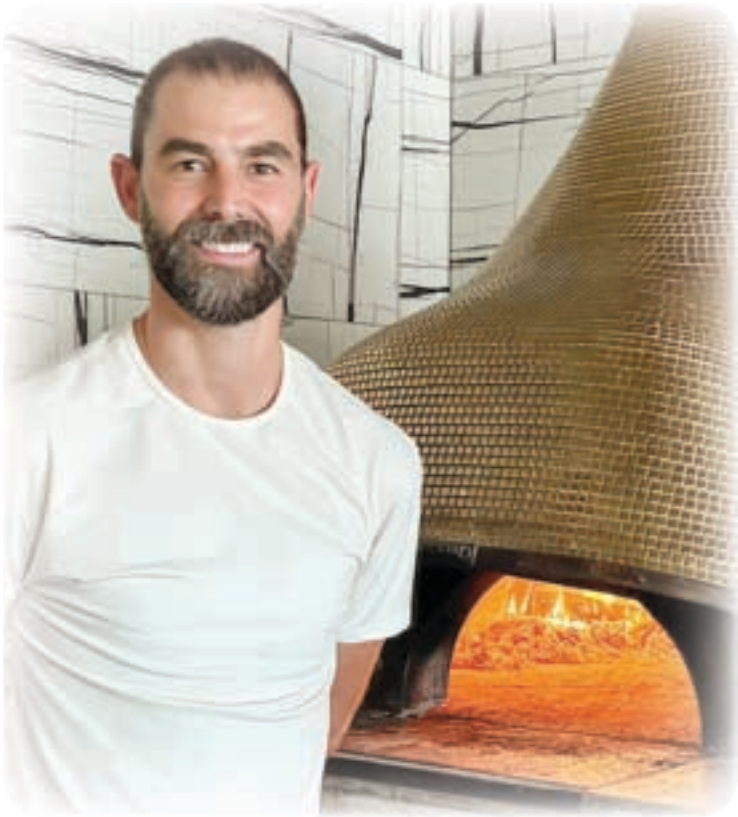
“What he really missed was his golfing, fishing and hunting partner,” Winger said, chuckling. “I had zero regrets about returning home as I was closer to family and friends. I also got to push the cornfields and shoot roosters – that was my morning routine, my gym.”

Winger graduated from Minnesota State University with a degree in finance and that would come in handy years later when he began managing a business. He was 16 when he envisioned owning and operating a restaurant one day, a goal he set after working at IHOP and “falling in love with hospitality.”

In 2014 he returned to Phoenix and began working at Nook Kitchen, first as a server and then as a manager. His work ethic and a penchant for customer service caught the attention of the owner and he ultimately was invited to become a partner in the popular Arcadia restaurant.

“What makes Nook so special is that it is staffed by people who love what they do. They are genuine, welcoming, and take pride in their work,” Winger said. “And the food is fresh, made from scratch and reminiscent of authentic Italian dishes.”

The restaurant business can be all consuming, and Winger was soon looking for an anchor to his life. He found it – or rather her – when he met Cassandra. “Part



of the reason I married her is she is someone I could trust; far more than myself.”

They have been married four years and have a son, Walker, and a brand-new daughter, Piper.

Winger’s eyes light up and he smiles broadly when talking about his wife and fatherhood. Like everything else in his life, he believes these are a part of his destiny.

The inscription on the door entering Nook Kitchen – Cen Tani – pays homage to an Italian tradition that begins every meal: 100 years of good fortune.

For Nicholas Winger, good fortune indeed.

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Xavier students earn Phoenix Youth Leadership honors

By Cliff Summerhill

Each year, the Youth and Education Office of the City of Phoenix hosts a program called the Outstanding Phoenix Youth Leader of the Year Awards. This honor highlights the achievements of high school students who are making positive impacts in the Valley.

Xavier Prep’s Maryam al Qaderi and Saniya Dwivedi began the next chapter of their lives on a high note after being recognized for their contributions to the local community. Maryam, who graduated last year, and current junior Saniya were announced as the District 4 winners.

The award recognizes high school students for leadership, community service, and positive contributions to the city.



Having my parents, mentors, and school members there to cheer me on was a proud moment.



Sixteen students are honored as council district winners, and two overall winners are chosen from that group.

Maryam’s selection is notable for another reason: she has now won the award twice; an achievement few students have matched in the program’s history. She was also awarded the Junior Achievement 18 Under 18 award before graduating and heading to Harvard on a pre-med track this fall.

Ever since middle school, Saniya has been interested in helping her community address health challenges. She led a variety of different projects over the last few years. In 2024, she won a Student of the Week award for her nonprofit,

Health in Movement, which focuses on improving mental and physical health for youth through exercise.

“It’s exciting to be recognized, and at the same time humbling and inspiring to see the impact my peers are making in their communities,” Saniya said. “To me, it means there is a real need for the work I’m doing and that others in the community value it.”

At the Outstanding Phoenix Youth Leader of the Year award ceremony, Saniya said she was honored to meet other teens who share her passion to make a difference.

“I learned more ways to get involved in improving my community, and it motivated me to do more,” she said. “Having my parents, mentors, and school members there to cheer me on was a proud moment, and I’m grateful I could represent my school well.”

At Xavier, Saniya serves as student council president, plays basketball, and is preparing for her *Bharatanatyam Arangetram*, a major milestone in the classical Indian dance form. She also plays piano, completing levels in both the Arizona State and National Federation of Music Clubs programs.

“In my time working with Health in Movement and in my community, I’ve seen the need for stronger representation in women and minority health, and I hope to be a voice for those who cannot advocate for themselves,” Saniya shared.

She hasn’t decided where she’ll go to college but hopes to explore other parts of the country and “maybe go somewhere cooler than Arizona,” she said.

The Outstanding Phoenix Youth Leader of the Year program is open to Phoenix high school students in grades 9-12 and involves an application and in-person interview process. Winners receive cash awards and are recognized by city leaders at a public ceremony.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SANIYA DWIVEDI

Saniya Dwivedi is the founder of Health in Movement, a nonprofit that teaches students about the importance of health and exercise.

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LET'S GO ON AN ADVENTURE!

Feel the ground beneath your feet, thanks to the Barefoot Trail

By Kylie de Best

Have you ever wondered what it feels like to climb or wander around barefoot in public? Of course, if you did this anywhere else, you would probably get strange looks from passersby. At the Barefoot Trail in Flagstaff, however, people are encouraged to walk barefoot – in fact, if you have shoes on, they might tell you to take a hike!

Founder Leah Williams was inspired to open this one-mile manicured trail after experiencing similar parks in Germany and Belgium while living in the Netherlands with her family. After searching for two years for the right property in Northern Arizona, followed by another two years of dealing with permits, and finally a year to build the trail, she was able to bring her vision to life.

Williams said that she adapted the concept to fit “American preferences,” with patrons walking through dirt, mud, water, sand, stone, and rocks. She also added 35 adventure segments and stations to enhance the experience, including an obstacle course, a zip line, a musical garden, and labyrinths.

Living in the Valley, where trails are aplenty, most may be aware of the benefits of hiking. But did you know there are even more benefits to hiking *barefoot*?

“Being barefoot counteracts the absorption of positive ions from computers, phones, and other electrical equipment, and allows the exchange with negative ions to detoxify our bodies. This helps reduce anxiety, depression, chronic pain, fatigue, and helps improve cardiovascular health,” Williams said.



On the trail are also creative sensation paths that provide visitors with a reflexology experience on their feet, helping to stimulate blood flow, strengthen muscles, improve balance, and overall enhance mental awareness of their physical surroundings.

“It increases awareness of how the different temperatures and textures make their feet



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LEAH WILLIAMS

The Barefoot Trail is a one-mile long path where patrons walk through dirt, mud, water, sand, stone, and rocks.

feel. Since people always wear shoes outside, they immediately notice how much more aware they are of their surroundings and how the sensory information is communicated from their feet to their brain,” Williams said.

Visitors come away from the experience learning more about their physical abilities and the strengths and weaknesses of their feet. Williams also mentioned that people know what they like and don't like walking on – for example, some people love walking on wine corks...some don't!

Once you've exhausted your toes, you might be hungry – that's where the Barefoot Boutique comes in, with a variety of snacks and water available for purchase. There are picnic tables at the front of the park for guests to use, as well as a picnic area halfway along the trail where they can rest and relax. Pack a lunch and make it a day-long adventure.

Williams has big plans for the future, as the park is currently in Phase 1 of the fully approved design. With the entrance fee, donations, and grants, the park



is excited to raise the necessary funds to start other phases and add more segments.

The Barefoot Trail Foundation is also looking to be involved in building more parks throughout the United States and is actively working with interested individuals and groups.

The Barefoot Trail will offer outdoor yoga classes beginning September 4. They will be held every Thursday and Sunday at 10 am and 1 pm.

thebarefoottrail.org



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Empathy, urgency key to suicide prevention and mental health

By Rachael Bouley

September is National Suicide Prevention Month, a time to reflect and acknowledge lives lost to mental health struggles, and the loved ones forever impacted by those losses. It's also an opportunity to generate awareness of alarming suicide statistics and what can be done to better support people of all ages going through tough times.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, suicide is the second leading cause of death for 15 to 44-year-olds in Arizona. Almost four times as many people die from suicide than in alcohol-related vehicle accidents.

Arizona ranks 14th in the USA for suicide death rates, and the total deaths to suicide reflect 28,597 years of potential life lost before age 65. The Arizona Suicide Prevention Coalition (AZSPC) has 30 member organizations on a mission to increase awareness, intervention, and action to address the ongoing mental health crisis.

Katey McPherson is one of the many passionate mental health advocates who share in the journey to reduce suicide rates and save lives. Her personal experience as a mother to four teens and her professional history as an educator, guidance counselor and school administrator inspired her to spread awareness.

For the past decade, McPherson has traveled around the country to teach school staff and parents about digital wellness and safety. She encourages an "all hands on deck" approach, achieved by normalizing conversations about mental health and including everyone, from

parents and teachers to law enforcement and government leaders. McPherson says Arizona is making strides to address the alarming suicide rates and strengthen community resources.

"School ID cards have Teen Lifeline on the back and the 988 crisis line has been a great value add. The hiring of social workers on elementary and middle school campuses and the addition of the Via Linda Pediatric Crisis Unit and the Hope Institute continue to put the Valley on the map," McPherson said.

In a first for the state, the Arizona Department of Health Services has put together several study groups digging into the issue of suicide across adolescents, middle-aged, and elderly age groups. The AZDHS is issuing a State of the Union to highlight updated efforts and resources.

McPherson recommends resources in Scottsdale and surrounding areas, such as Via Linda Hospital, which offers specialized

mental health treatment for acute inpatient or intensive outpatient care, and the Hope Institute, which provides short-term outpatient care with individual and group counselling to address suicidality and stabilize those in urgent need.

notMYkid is a nonprofit offering practical tools and compassionate guidance to support families in navigating teen mental health and substance use, and Community Bridges, Inc. offers integrated behavioral health and addiction treatment.

Another tool families can utilize is Bark, an AI app for parents and school staff that



Katey McPherson

has built-in software for safer technology use.

McPherson is Bark's director of professional development, and she explained that the parental control app scans texts, emails, and 30+ social

media platforms and apps to identify cyberbullying, profanity, adult content, suicidal ideation, and other threats.

Parents and caregivers receive text or email alerts when potential problems pop up, with options to block apps and websites, monitor locations, and manage screen time.

"The Bark app, phone, and watch are amazing resources to be alerted to distress and any sort of mental health and typical kid issues, to include predation, drugs, and alcohol offers or use, which all tie to suicide prevention," McPherson said. "These products allow parents to baby step into giving access to calls and texts without giving access to the explicit and outrageous content that can cause distress."

With more conversations and resources about mental health, Arizona families can take proactive steps to protect their loved ones.

"I would say that the best thing loved ones can do is to support kids and anyone in distress with good nutrition, routines, sunshine, water and empathy," McPherson added.

Active listening and paying attention to verbal cues of distress, comments about not being around anymore, and giving away personal items can help identify mental health struggles and suicidal concerns sooner.

"It is important to take distress seriously and not to underestimate

what a person is saying," McPherson said. "Jumping in front of the distress immediately is necessary so that it does not turn into a crisis."

To learn more about the resources mentioned, visit:

kateymcpherson.com
azspc.org
teenlifeline.org
vialindabehavioral.com
hopeinstitute.org
notmykid.org
communitybridgesinc.org
bark.us



SUICIDE DATA: ARIZONA

Suicide is a public health problem and leading cause of death in the United States. Suicide can also be prevented – more investment in suicide prevention, education, and research will prevent the untimely deaths of thousands of Americans each year. Unless otherwise noted, this fact sheet reports 2023 data from the CDC, the most current verified data available at time of publication (May 2025).

91% of communities did not have enough mental health providers to serve residents in 2023, according to federal guidelines.

Almost **four times** as many people died by suicide than in alcohol related motor vehicle accidents.

The total deaths to suicide reflected a total of **28,597 years** of potential life lost (YPLL) before age 65.

67% of firearm deaths were suicides.

Courtesy of afsp.org



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PHX community initiatives

The City of Phoenix continues to roll out community-centered initiatives designed to improve neighborhood safety, enhance quality of life, and encourage civic engagement.

Yard sign pilot program

Phoenix residents and businesses can now take part in the yard sign pilot program, an effort to remind drivers to slow down in neighborhoods where children and pedestrians are often present. The free yard signs are designed with bold colors and clear messages to catch drivers' attention. Two options are available:

A **blue and gold vertical sign** that reads "Slow Your Roll – Kids at Play"

A **red and gold horizontal sign** that reads "Arrive Alive, Drive 25"

Signs can be picked up at five Phoenix Parks and Recreation community centers or at City Hall (200 W. Washington St.).



KEVIN ROBINSON

Councilman
District 6

602-262-7491
District6@phoenix.gov

Stop on red

August marked National Stop on Red Week, a campaign to reduce red-light running and related accidents. Phoenix drivers are reminded to always stop at red lights, including when school buses extend their stop signs and flash red lights. With schools back in session, caution in neighborhoods and school zones is more important than ever.

Help shape the city's homelessness strategy

Phoenix is refreshing its approach to homelessness and is seeking resident input. The city has outlined five focus areas to prevent homelessness, shorten its duration, and provide stronger long-term support. Residents can learn more and provide feedback at phoenix.gov/solutions.

Free tickets for Phoenix Rising soccer

Phoenix Public Library cardholders can receive two free general admission tickets to select Phoenix Rising FC games. Tickets are available first-come, first-served at library service desks and can be redeemed on game day at the stadium box office. Library cardholders can also purchase additional tickets for \$16 each.

Neighborhood tree planting grant

The Community Canopy grant, offered through the Office of Heat Response and Mitigation, provides free trees and planting support. Single-family homes may receive up to two trees, businesses and multi-family residences up to 20, and neighborhoods between 30 and 200. Recipients also receive supplies to ensure planting success.

From driver awareness campaigns to free entertainment and environmental efforts, there's something for everyone to get involved in. For more information, visit the City of Phoenix website or your local community center.

Happy September!
Councilman Kevin Robinson

30 YEARS AGO



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Thanks to that trusty Arcadia Living Facebook group and our super helpful neighbors, Arcadia News was able to connect with Elaine Ajamie, John and Mary Casciato's daughter. The couple was pictured on the September 1995 cover, celebrating their almost 40 years in the area. John continued living in the neighborhood until his passing in 2013. We asked Elaine what she'd like to share with readers, and this is what she said:

"Mary and John Casciato made their Arcadia home a sanctuary of love and tradition for 52 years, leaving behind a rich legacy rooted in faith, family and food.

Their Catholic faith was the foundation of their lives. As devoted parishioners of

St. Theresa's Catholic Church since 1956, Mary and John instilled faith in their three children, six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren – who now continue that legacy with six great-great-grandchildren.

Family was everything to them. Even into their 90s, the home remained a warm gathering place where loved ones dropped by for coffee, cookies and conversation. The Casciato family continues to honor their heritage through recipes passed down through generations – homemade Italian favorites like shadone (Italian 'Easter' pie), Easter bread, bracirole, pizzelles and more.

The home they filled with faith, laughter and the aroma of Italian cooking still belongs to the family, a living testament to the enduring spirit of Mary and John."



Shawna Warner



Rebecca Clayton-Hoyt



Lara Broadrick

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SUMMER Vacation Photos

FROM OUR READERS

Here are a few vacation snapshots that capture the spirit of summer vacation - Arcadia style!



1. **Health in Movement Founder Saniya Dwivedi** traveled to **Balvantray Mehta School in New Delhi, India** to drop off a book donation. Photo courtesy of Saniya Dwivedi
2. **Anna, Chloe, Andrew and Elliott LeBlanc** cheering on the **Red Sox at Fenway Park**. Photo courtesy of Anna LeBlanc
3. **Megan Van Wolvelaerd, Zach Bohr, Rory and Penn** having a blast in **Coronado for the fourth**. Photo courtesy of Megan Van Wolvelaerd
4. **Grace and Ford Campbell with Jamesby and Will Leonetti**, cooling off in **Pinetop**. Photo: Jen Leonetti
5. **Carter, Greg and Noah Bruns** getting soaked during the **Patriot Jet Boat Tour in San Diego Harbor**. Photo: Jennifer Bruns
6. **Six-year-old Lottie Blitz** visited her aunt in **Long Beach** this summer and learned to boogie board. Photo courtesy of Jen Blitz
7. **Andrew, Carolyn, Grace, Jack and Henry Cheney** in the **Swiss Alps near the Jungfrau**. Photo courtesy of Andrew Cheney
8. **Anthony, Molly, Deb, Shane and Mallory** decked out in **Fourth of July gear** for the annual parade in **Harmony, Minnesota**.
9. **Bobby and Grace Ferguson** with **Vaughn and Jude Kekic** waiting for lunch **Fourth of July weekend in Newburyport, MA**. Photo: Retta Kekic
10. **Brendan and Morgan Domaracki** surprised **Lincoln and Lilah** with a trip to **Disneyland** this year! Photo courtesy of Morgan Domaracki
11. **Colin, Jenny, Connor and Maddie Tetreault** enjoying the scenery from a boat in **Bergen, Norway**. Photo courtesy of Jenny Holsman Tetreault



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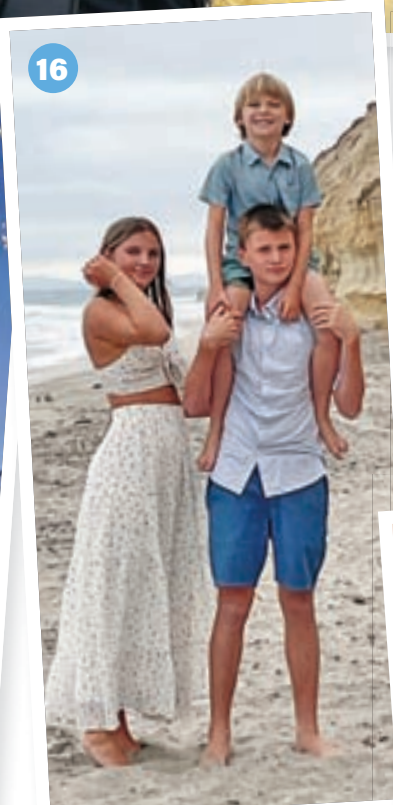
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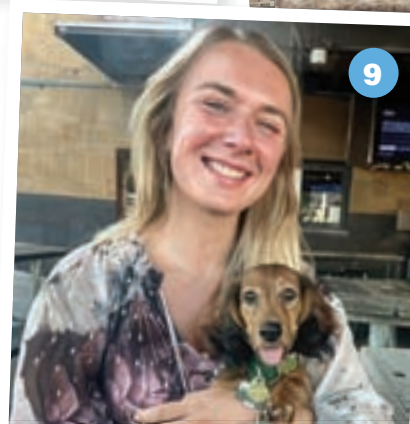
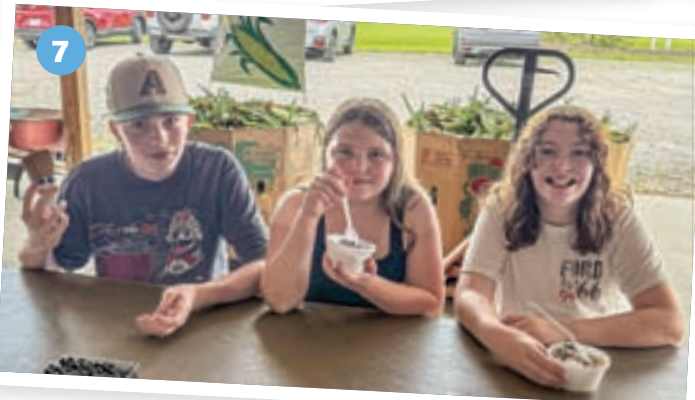


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12. Sterling and Shane Pearson playing in the sand in Carlsbad, CA. Photo: Hailey Pearson
13. Brett, Chloe, Kristin, Carter and Caiden Brooks visited Lady Liberty in NYC. Photo courtesy of Brett Brooks
14. Deuce, Katrina and Jordan Alfaro traveled to Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto – and stopped by Disneyland for a day. Photo courtesy of Katrina Alfaro
15. Carter Hain played in the Northwoods League with the Traverse City Pit Spitters in Michigan. He got to sign autographs for a few fans! Photo: Christine Hain
16. Grace, Charlie and Henry McCarty in San Clemente, California. Photo: Meghan McCarty
17. Bristol, Carl, Austin, Aspen, Brooklyn and Amy Kasalek traveled to Cape Canaveral, Florida, where they toured all the rockets and did simulators. Photo courtesy of Amy Kasalek
18. Garrett, Stephanie, Hendrix and Stevie Simpson in Lake Tahoe, California. Photo courtesy of Stephanie Simpson
19. Antonella, Angeles, and Avianna Klein in Rocky Point, Mexico. Photo courtesy of Angeles Klein
20. Sham, Isha and Rehan Lalani at the Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi. Photo courtesy of Shirin Lalani
21. Sarah Klusman, Fallon Liles, Coley Arnold, Shayne Singleton and Molly Millard hanging out on the Fourth of July. Photo courtesy of Sarah Klusman
22. Philip Miller on the Root River Bike Trail in Peterson, Minnesota. Photo: Tessa Miller
23. Deuce and Jordan Alfaro in Osaka, Japan. Photo courtesy of Katrina Alfaro



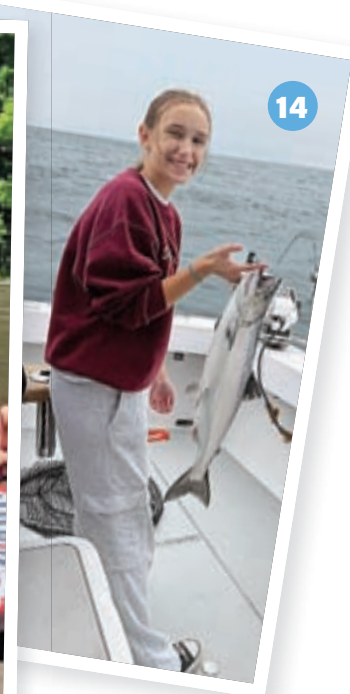
1. Tessa Miller at the SPAM Museum in Austin, Minnesota. Photo: Philip Miller
2. The Kekic and Byron families at Pike Place Market in Seattle, Washington. Photo courtesy of Retta Kekic
3. Heidi and Bill Staudenmaier hiking in the Lofoten Islands of Norway, just north of the Arctic Circle. Photo courtesy of Heidi Staudenmaier
4. Blair and Winston Marvin at Mirabell Gardens in Salzburg, Austria. Photo courtesy of Shauna Marvin
5. Maxton, Mayson, Magnus and Merrit Stehl spent their summer touring around Scotland. Here they are at the medieval Caerlaverock Castle in Dumfries. Photo: Alyse Stehl
6. Garrett, Katie, Riley, Parker and Frances Otondo hiking the Wonderland Trail in Acadia National Park, Maine. Photo courtesy of Katie Otondo
7. Henry and Stella Bragg with Nora Packer enjoying some ice cream at College Run Farms in Surry, Virginia. Photo: Nicole Packer
8. Jackson Folger and Suzanne Shupe traveled to Tra Cu, a city in Vietnam. Photo courtesy of Jackson Folger
9. Christine Hain visited her daughter Kendall (pictured) and her husband Andrew (both 2012 Arcadia graduates) to puppy sit Wrigley in Austin, Texas. Photo: Christine Hain
10. John, Aimee and Addie Heckenlaible in Carmel, California. Photo courtesy of John Heckenlaible
11. Beth Formanek played Course Marshall at the Celebrity Golf Tournament in South Lake Tahoe where celebs had the chance to win a boat with a hole in one – Jimmy Rollins did just that! Photo courtesy of Beth Formanek



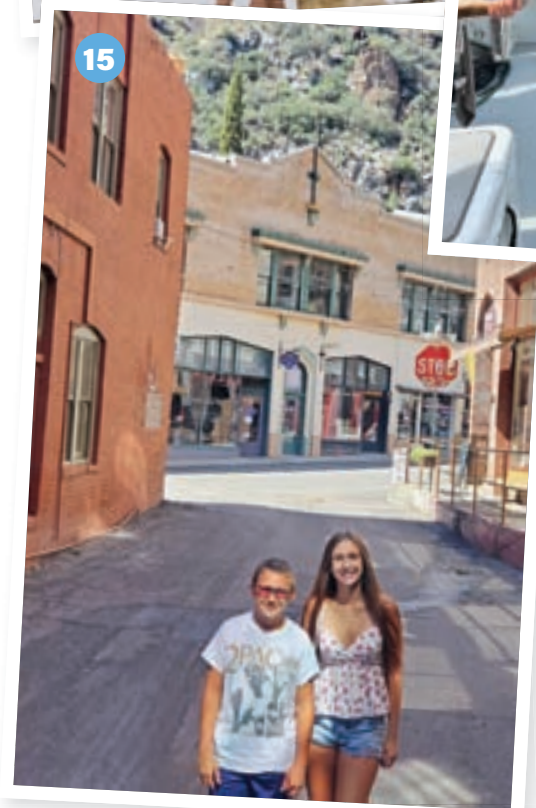
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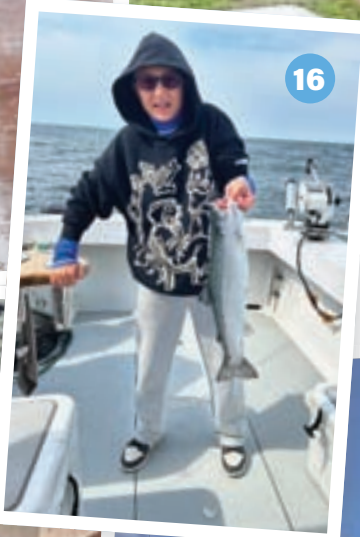
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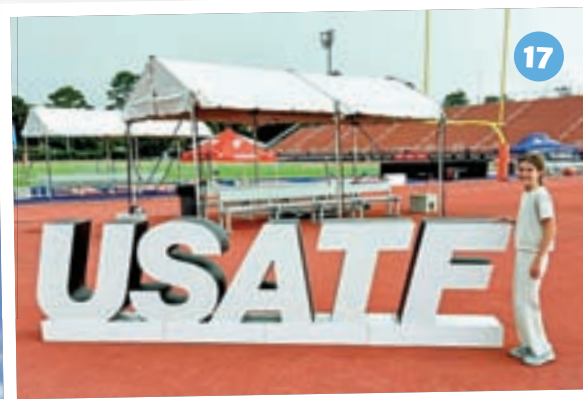
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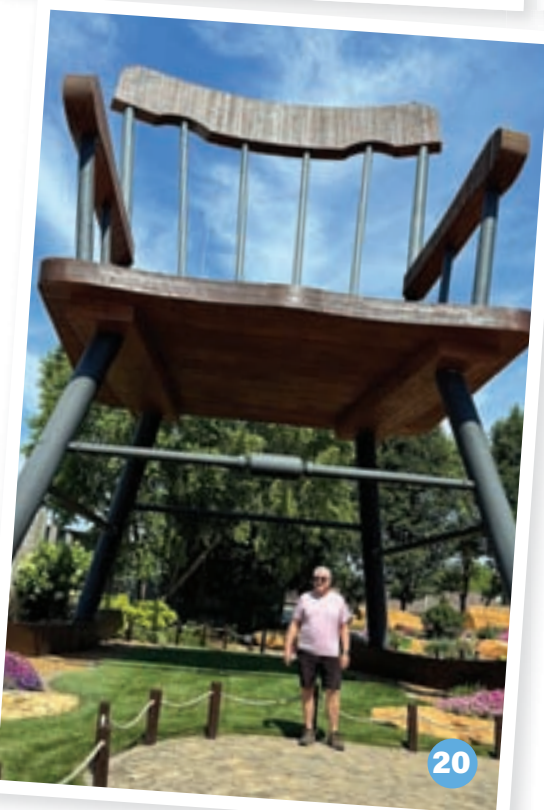
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12. The Low family in Coronado, California. Photo courtesy of Tayler Low
13. Arcadia News' editor with aunts, cousins, second cousins and friends getting ready to tube the Root River in Lanesboro, Minnesota.
14. Martina Morton on a Salmon Charter on Lake Michigan. Photo: Anne Morton
15. Martina and Logan Morton in Bisbee, Arizona. Photo: Anne Morton
16. Logan Morton on a Salmon Charter on Lake Michigan. Photo: Anne Morton
17. Hopi fifth grader Essie Hustedt competed in the Junior Olympics National Championship USA Track and Field meet in Savannah, Georgia. Photo: Madison Hustedt
18. Pat and Dave Foster with Emma, Addie, Megan and Adam Livingston at Disneyland. Photo courtesy of Megan Livingston
19. Andrew Cheney hiking the Haute Route trail in the Swiss Alps. Photo courtesy of Andrew Cheney
20. Philip Miller visited the World's Largest Rocking Chair – standing at 56.5 feet tall – in Case, Illinois. Photo: Tessa Miller
21. Eliana LeBlang and Charlotte Goldie in Paris, France. This is the view from above the Eiffel Tower! Photo: Erica LeBlang
22. Eight-year-old Parker Shock in front of the original house from the 1985 movie The Goonies, in Astoria, Oregon. Photo: Mindy Shock



Elvira's Mexican restaurant has been owned and run by the Monroy family since 1927. (right) The Rogoway Turquoise Tortoise Gallery is one of hundreds of shops in Tubac.

A hidden gem of art, history, and culture in Tubac



Robin's Adventures

BY ROBIN SEWELL

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

In southern Arizona lies Tubac, a charming village with a rich tapestry of creativity and culture, where the dust and dreams of another era still linger. Understanding the history starts with the story of Tubac Presidio State Historic Park.

Wandering through the museum and the ruins of the old presidio, visitors find a story of passion and persistence, where Spanish soldiers and Native O'odham people worked together and shared this land long before statehood was considered. Artifacts, including tools of the trade from Arizona's earliest settlers to the 1885 schoolhouse, stand as a reminder of how deeply rooted Tubac's story is.

From the state park, follow the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail, an eight-mile round-trip hike that will lead hikers to Tumacacori National Historical Park. The trail hugs the Santa Cruz River, where as many as

350 bird species are known to flutter through the cottonwoods.

Tumacacori National Historical Park is where the O'odham, Yaqui, and Apache peoples crossed paths with Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries, settlers, and soldiers from distant lands – in both conflict and harmony. The paths tell stories of culture, connection, and tradition.

In the 1930s, Tubac blossomed into a vibrant artist colony, and now there are more than 100 galleries and shops highlighting everything from fine art to handcrafted jewelry. Tubac is known as one of the great art towns of the American West, and has become a creative retreat for painters, sculptors, potters, and jewelers.

Tubac's charm lies in how it blends artistic expression with historical depth and its roots. The best place to savor the heritage and soul of those roots is Elvira's, a Mexican fusion

restaurant where the décor is as bold as the flavors. Whether it's the scampi al mojo de ajo, the mole, or the chile rellenos, every bite is layered with tradition that has been lovingly curated by generations of the Monroy family since 1927.

If you are feeling dusty from travel, galleries, and culinary fiestas, the Tubac Golf Resort & Spa is the perfect place for rest. This property was once part of the historic Otero Ranch and is famous for its 27-hole golf course (Remember *Tin Cup* with Kevin Costner? Yep, that was filmed here!), desert views, and the cows that enjoy grazing the fairway – a charming blend of ranch life and golf resort vibes.

Tubac is the picture of small-town Arizona, where history, art, and cultural heritage converge. It isn't just a town to visit – it is a place to slow down, celebrate with food and drink, explore, be inspired, and belong.



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 CAMPUS SIZE 40 acres Athletic fields, aquatic center, gyms, auditorium, music spaces, and science, art & tech center	 ATHLETICS 18 state championships in the past 4 years 12 Upper School sports and 13 Middle School sports	 SCHOOL HOURS 7:50am–3:00pm Hot lunch included daily for Lower and Middle School, optional for Upper School

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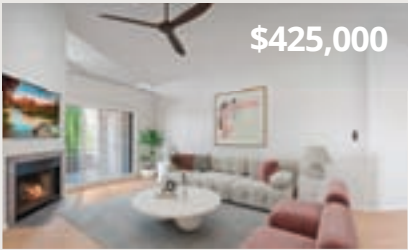
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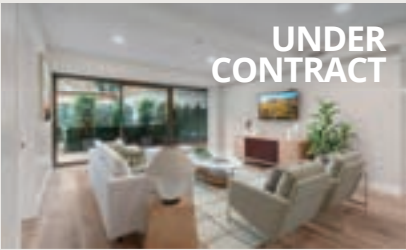
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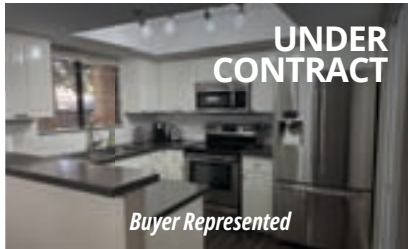


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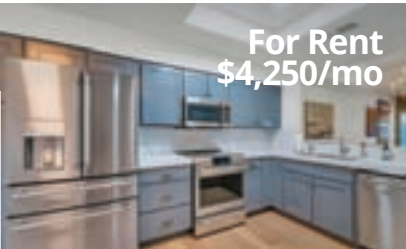
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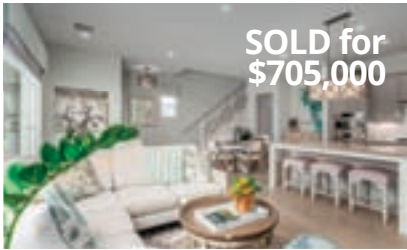
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The Vig



The Collins Small Batch Kitchen



The Phoenix Tavern

The Dining Scoop

September is National Chicken Month, and restaurants around the Valley serve a variety of chicken dishes that arrive piled high on plates or in sandwiches, as tendies or in bowls. In the Arcadia neighborhood and beyond, several spots offer a variety of flavored chicken dishes. You name it, these restaurants may offer it – for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

The Vig

4041 N. 40th St., Phoenix
thevig.us

One of the most popular dishes on the menu are the poblano chicken enchiladas: chicken tinga wrapped in warm tortillas, smothered in creamy poblano sauce, and topped with Oaxaca cheese, sweet roasted corn, zesty pickled onions, fresh cilantro, and crisp radish.

The Collins Small Batch Kitchen

3160 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix
thecollinsaz.com

Rotisserie chicken is one of Chef Chris Collins' founding dishes: a hearty Nor-Cal raised chicken, seasoned with herb rub and served with pan jus, alongside spaghetti squash, blistered tomatoes, and a bold pommery mustard.

"Our rotisserie is popular because of the behind the scenes work. We start with all-natural chicken, then brine it in apple juice, sugar, salt and pickling spices, allowing the chicken to absorb a sweet and herbaceous undertone that complements our signature dry rub applied prior to roasting," Collins said. "From there we collect all the drippings to create a flavor packed jus that is drizzled over the chicken as we plate it for our guests."

Not to be outshined is the chicken and brie sandwich, a stack of juicy chicken and creamy brie, layered with dressed arugula, truffle aioli, and a kick of spicy tomato jam in a toasted Noble baguette.

Frasher's Smokehouse

3222 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
frasherssmokehouse.com

Frasher's chicken cordon bleu starts with a hand-breaded chicken breast, filled with the eatery's signature smoked ham and rich Provel cheese that's shipped in straight from St. Louis for that unmistakably creamy flavor. It's pan-seared to a golden crust, then oven-finished for juiciness and served over a bed of garlic mashed potatoes, topped with a Dijon thyme sauce, and finished with a side of grilled asparagus.

Over Easy

4730 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
eatatovereasy.com

As seen on TV as the "Best Food Ever" from TLC, the chicken and waffle dish mixes savory and sweet flavors. Over Easy blends both hot sauce and real maple syrup for this straightforward meal – a waffle topped with fried chicken.

The Phoenician Tavern

6000 E. Camelback Road, Scottsdale
thephoenician.com

"Nashville hot" fried chicken bites start with dark meat chicken marinated in spicy buffalo sauce, buttermilk and pickle juice. The chicken is dredged in a seasoned flour and buttermilk, and then fried and tossed in a house-made hot sauce. They're served over slices of white bread, with chopped and sliced garlic dill pickles, and a side of buttermilk ranch for dipping.

A Japanese twist on a classic, the Tokyo crispy chicken sandwich features sweet, salty, spicy and umami flavors.

The chicken is lightly breaded in a panko crust seasoned with furikake, fried extra crispy, and tossed in a soy glaze. The sandwich is topped with a furikake-cabbage slaw, house made ginger pickles, and sriracha aioli, served on a brioche bun.

Pita Jungle

4340 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
pitajungle.com

One of Pita Jungle's signature entrees, the chicken tikka masala, is equal parts healthy and delicious. Made up of grilled, marinated all-natural chicken breast, coconut masala sauce, turmeric brown rice, and sprouts, this entree allows guests to celebrate National Chicken Month guilt-free.

Miracle Mile Deli

4433 N. 16th St., Phoenix
miraclemiledeli.com

Founded by Brooklyn native Jack Grodzinsky in 1949, Miracle Mile Deli is a Phoenix landmark, owned and operated by three generations of the Grodzinsky/Garcia family.

Known for their massive New York-style offerings, Miracle Mile also boasts comfort classics, fresh salads, beer on tap and the Brooklyn sandwich: white meat chicken breast, bacon, sliced avocado, melted provolone, green leaf lettuce, tomato, and homemade spicy mayo.

Mastro's Restaurants

6991 E. Camelback Road, Scottsdale
mastrorestaurants.com

Mastro's may be known for its steaks, but the herb roasted chicken is a showstopper, too: A golden, herb-infused masterpiece made with free range and organic Jidori chicken, brined and oven roasted with extra virgin olive oil, rosemary, thyme, garlic, butter, salt and pepper.

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Miracle Mile Deli



The Hot Chick



Persepshen

Aftermath Bar & Kitchen

1534 E. Bethany Home Road, Phoenix
aftermathphoenix.com

Aftermath’s crispy fried chicken combines the soul of Creole classics with the flavors of Korean and Southeast Asian fried chicken, served with Aftermath banchan, Brussels sprout slaw, and a rich pho gravy that might just steal the spotlight.

Royale Kitchen + Cocktails

635 W. Glenrosa Ave., Phoenix
royalekitchenphx.com

In the Melrose neighborhood, Royale Kitchen + Cocktail’s peachy keen chicken sandwich offers sweet and savory with grilled or crispy chicken, Swiss cheese, bacon, red onion, arugula, and grilled peach slices drizzled with hot honey and served with a side salad or salt and pepper fries.

Persepshen

4700 N. Central Ave., Phoenix
persepshenarizona.com

Persepshen is a husband-and-wife-owned restaurant that serves organic food and drinks using ingredients from local farms and purveyors. Jason and Katherine Dwight believe that “the simplicity of cooking ingredients over an open fire will never disappoint.”
The menu changes based on what’s available in

season. For September, the cheesy chicken spinach dip and the crispy buffalo chicken dish are two must-try items.
The dip is made up of chicken from Two Wash Ranch in New River, spinach, Parmigiano-Reggiano, Dubliner, caramelized onions, garlic, and sesame seed lavash; the chicken dish features Two Wash Ranch chicken backs and necks, fermented buffalo sauce, arrowroot roasted carrots, spicy dill pickles, creamy Point Reyes dressing and celery leaves.

The Italiano

9301 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale
theitaliano.com

The Italiano’s chicken and sausage scarpariello is a rustic Italian-American dish, with pan-roasted chicken, sausage, roasted garlic, and cherry peppers brought together in a zesty lemon wine demi-glace.

The Hot Chick

4363 N. 75th St., Scottsdale
thehotchickaz.com

Love chicken tacos? This dish is for you! Choose from grilled or crispy chicken topped with cabbage, cilantro, onion, and house made ranchero sauce embedded in a corn tortilla.

WHAT’S NEW?

Minnow (4501 N. 32nd St., Phoenix) is now open in the space previously occupied by Seedhouse Coffee. The menu’s main fixtures are its matcha and sushi (specialties and classic rolls), but guests can also find coffee, cocktails, pastries, entrees and desserts. The eatery is under the In Good Spirits hospitality umbrella, the team behind The Gladly, Beginner’s Luck and more.



eatminnow.com

The Original **Arcadia Tavern** (3950 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) is reopening this September in the plaza at the northwest corner of 40th St. and Indian School. Guests will find a patio, HD sports screens, and a scratch-made menu with shareable starters, smash burgers, sandwiches, entrées, salads, kids’ meals (free on Tuesdays), and desserts. Created by the original 2009 team, the reimagined tavern promises happy hour, weekend brunch and more.

arcadiatavernaz.com



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Arcadia High golfers Jackson Malatesta, Hank Hubbard, Coach John Dadam, Oliver Smith, Beck Sage, Cooper Fitzgerald and Coach Eric Sage.



Xavier golf team: Coach Tui Selvaratnam, Aida Vagas, Emily Moussa, Maya Bleyl, Natalia Lamadrid, Alexis Lamadrid, Carrie Doss, Aanvi Goel, Sophia Pe Benito-Brooks, Ellie von Kolen, Isabella Piazza and Assistant Coach Jane Ladensack.

High school golfers are looking forward to tee time

By Mark Hays

As the 2025 golf season tees off, Arcadia programs are swinging into matches and competition with hopes of strong performances, State contention, and growth – both on and off the green.

ARCADIA BOYS

Arcadia High's boys' team, led by coaches Eric Sage and John Dadam, takes a stat-driven approach, having players review each round to identify mistakes and make improvements. Examining the round after it happens to find any errors makes huge improvements going forward.

With nine matches and two major tournaments – the Dobson Classic and Arizona High School Preview – Arcadia fields a strong roster led by seniors Hank Hubbard and Jackson Malatesta and juniors Cooper Fitzgerald and Beck Sage.

ARCADIA GIRLS

The lady Titans are looking forward to a season of fresh starts. With no seniors, Coach Heidi Ferguson is building skills, sportsmanship, and enjoyment of the game.

"Golf is a lifelong sport. It's empowering for these young women to build confidence on the course and beyond," Ferguson said. "Our goal is to develop each player's individual skills while fostering a love for the game, teamwork, and an understanding of tournament play."

The team practices at the remodeled Arizona Biltmore Golf Club, gaining access to top facilities with support from pro Leo Simonetta.

"What I love about being on the team at Arcadia is the relationships I build with my teammates," Captain Tessa Roth said. "With golf, I've learned to cooperate with others, be a good teammate, and have a lot of fun in the process."

"To see my girls improve and develop a genuine love for golf and each other is the most rewarding part of coaching," Ferguson said.

BROPHY PREP

Head Coach Jon Shores will lead a competitive squad through nine dual 9-hole matches and five 36-hole tournaments, often facing 10 to 20 teams per event. Rivalries with Chandler Hamilton and Notre Dame Prep fuel the intensity.

"I try to let the players decide who plays so we have qualifiers for every event. It puts the pressure on them to perform when they need to," Shores said. "If they aren't growing as young men and leaders, I am not doing my job as a coach."

Junior Asher Nelson said he's hoping to "keep the team competitive, fun, and hold everyone accountable to get better."

"I'm most looking forward to competing and becoming better on the course and off of it," senior Adone Panattoni added.

VERITAS PREP

Veritas Prep enters the seasons with renewed energy under Head Coach Pat Donaher, who returned after stepping away in 2023 to finish his degree and grow his business.

"I approach the game of golf from a fundamental-focused and fun approach," Donaher said. "I want to instill a culture of excellence but also keep it fun."

The middle school teams will play this fall, with 10 players each on the competitive and developmental squads. Donaher's priority is to evolve young talent into the high school program.

Veritas' high school team made it to its first State tournament appearance in over five years last season, with two individual qualifiers. Donaher said he hopes to qualify as many players as possible next spring when the school's high school squad steps out on the course.

XAVIER PREP

With 10 matches and three invitationals, Head Coach Tui Selvaratnam is optimistic:

"We have all our starters last year returning. Hopes for the team are to play well at every match, invite, and finally win State," Selvaratnam said.

Facing rivals like Casteel, Pinnacle, and Liberty, she emphasizes letting golfers "play their game" while fostering unity in a sport that's often individual.

Brophy junior impresses with Team USA gold medal honor

By Michael P. Murphy

The scores for the Junior International Cup in Long Beach earlier this summer were brutal – for the other teams. The 17U Team USA flag football squad rolled over the competition in the playoffs like a hot knife through butter. In the playoffs, they beat Korea 52-0 and Azteca 42-36 before humbling Canada 38-19. When the dust cleared, Brophy Prep junior Ryder Noche was wearing a well-earned gold medal for his outstanding play as wide receiver and defensive back.

"The camaraderie was there almost instantly," Ryder said. "The energy was high, probably the best flag football team I had ever been a part of. We were a bunch of guys with the same goal in mind. That's why we mixed so well and the scores were high."

How does a varsity football player end up playing flag football for the Junior International Team?

"One of my youth coaches heard about the

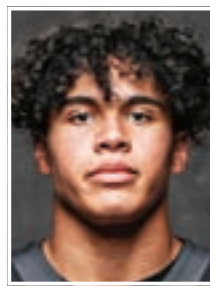
program and suggested that I try out for Team USA," Ryder said. "After that was successful, he helped me sign up. From there, I went to the US Sports Performance Center in Charlotte and made the team."

That was 2023, when Ryder was named NFL Flag 14U Player of the Year and honored in Las Vegas at the NFL honors show. For that, he was outfitted in Hugo Boss and walked the red carpet with the pros.

"It was inspiring," Ryder said. "Being around all those athletes and the advice they were giving. I never thought I would be able to talk to guys like Mike Vick and other big names everyone knows."

He played again last year for Team USA in Charlotte, NC, then earlier this summer in Long Beach. Next year, the Junior International Cup will be held in Panama, but that will pose a problem.

"I'll be too old," he said, laughing. "I'll have to try out for the men's team. I might,



Ryder Noche

depending on how this season and college recruitment go. It's something to think about."

To say that Ryder Noche is a rising star might be an understatement. His high school football stats over the past

two years bear that out – an athlete who has the self-discipline and made the sacrifices necessary to perform at the highest level.

Ryder scored 17 touchdowns for the Brophy freshman team, where he excelled in rushing and kick returning. He was called up to the varsity team for the playoffs that year and never left, playing varsity in his sophomore year, when he made All Central Region second team kick returner and earned an honorable mention at defensive back.

He remains focused on turning his time into something important, such as eliminating junk food, working out, and being with the team. He even considers himself to be a "big nap guy" because it leaves him well rested and more energetic. But there's an added element to Ryder's discipline that Brophy varsity football Coach Jason Jewell sees: a good grade point average.

"I think it says a lot about a kid and how they live their life based on their GPA," he said. "If they get a good point in school, I know I can rely on them."

"Someone I definitely look up to is my mom," Ryder said. "She's the reason I want to be not just a better athlete, but a better human being. I model my personality after her."

And with impressive accolades backing him, the coming varsity football season promises to be a good one for Ryder Noche. "I hope so," said Coach Jewell. "We're counting on him!"

Broncos add beach volleyball to roster

By Rachael Bouley

Student athletes have a new sport on offer this fall, thanks to the rising popularity of sand court competition across Arizona – a solid increase from 18 to 45 participating schools, according to the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). The organization officially sanctioned boys' beach volleyball in April, and the Brophy Broncos are looking ahead to the first official games.

The program comes after the indoor volleyball team reached the AIA 6A Conference quarterfinals earlier this year, under the leadership of Head Coach Tony Oldani and Assistant Coach Joaquin Santa Cruz, who is taking over the inaugural beach volleyball coaching duties.

"We are excited to have Coach Santa Cruz launch this new program," Athletic Director Josh Garcia said. "He brings an experienced coaching background that has benefited our volleyball program and will continue with the newest program."

Santa Cruz was a two-time all-conference selection as a libero during his time with Ottawa University from 2018 to 2020. He is the all-time career dig leader with 723 and ranked No. 2 nationwide in 2020 with 3.5 per set.

His coaching experience includes playoff runs with Desert Vista and Sandra Day O'Connor, winning the State Championship in 2022. He's the current head coach of the Boys U15 National Team for the 2025 Arizona Region High Performance program. With strong leadership and motivation to succeed, the Broncos are gearing up for a big season on the sand.



Coach Joaquin Santa Cruz

"I am looking forward to building a competitive and supportive team from the ground up and am committed to creating a program that not only develops skilled volleyball players but also fosters

leadership, teamwork, and character," Santa Cruz said. "I am proud to be part of this new chapter at Brophy and can't wait to see the growth and success ahead."

The coaching staff hosted several open sand sessions at the start of August, giving players the chance to practice before tryouts. The initial squad will feature 20 players, including eight seniors. Jude Keane is a seasoned beach player who led the indoor team to the State Championship as a sophomore.

"I have been excited about this opportunity since I came to Brophy as a freshman," Keane said. "It's going to be good for cross-training."

Brophy will compete in the Desert Valley region this fall alongside Barry Goldwater, Boulder Creek, Deer Valley, Mountain Ridge, Notre Dame Prep, and Sandra Day O'Connor.

The first contest will be against Seton Catholic at Chuparosa Park on September 8, and the first home game will take place against Higley on September 17.

Follow along with the team on Instagram @brophyprepbeach



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BROPHY PREP

Noah Heimer readies himself to spike the ball.

Volleyball squads are "set" for success

By Kylie de Best

Arcadia High, Veritas Prep, and Xavier Prep are poised to take the court by storm in a season marked by rigorous practices, intense competition, and the energy from players and fans. These schools are anticipating some major wins, all while building their skills and abilities as a team.

ARCADIA HIGH

The Lady Titans will have 17 matches and two tournaments in the regular season, followed by playoffs. The team mentioned games against Flagstaff, Chaparral, Desert Mountain, and Saguaro as schools they're ready and excited to face off against.

With six varsity returns this year, the team is considered younger in terms of age and experience. Coach Adrian Chang said that the varsity players have done a great job making everyone feel comfortable and welcome, with a long-term goal of building synergy between the younger athletes and finding success for years to come.

Practices consist of fundamental skill



drills and gameplay to portray the game day conditions as realistically as possible. Coach Chang likes to draw on the players' problem-solving skills and is a firm believer in training the small details while explaining the "why."

"I am looking forward to building a team with several new teammates and working our way to another playoff run," junior Emma Lindenmeyer shared. "I am also excited to have a fun and memorable season with my friends."

VERITAS PREP

Veritas' volleyball program has three teams this fall, and on most game days, all three will compete. The regular season includes 17 matches against other 1A-3A teams and three tournaments at ASU, in Payson, and in Page.

Practices are efficient, running 90 minutes or less. The first half focuses on technique and skill development, and the second half is dedicated to game play, where those skills are practiced.

Returning this year is one of the top offensive players in the State, senior captain Mary Hamann, and two other starters from last year, Bella Espinosa and Grace Hamann.

The team is looking forward to making progress in their preseason practices on the defensive side, and has a long-term goal of improving every match and putting themselves in a position to make a long playoff run.

"This program has meant so much to me over the past years," Mary said. "I have loved watching it grow along with me. Veritas volleyball will always have a special place in my heart."



XAVIER PREP

Volleyball games are known to be highly competitive for this 6A division volleyball team, which will play 17 regular-season games and one tournament this season, taking place September 5.

This year, the Gators were also awarded the 2025 AVCA Team Academic Award, which recognizes collegiate and high school volleyball teams that maintain a year-long GPA – so things are starting on the right foot already.

"I can't wait to compete at a high level and bond with my team, finishing my

last year at Xavier strong," senior Mattea Saunders said.

Over the last 20 years, Coach Lamar-Renee Bryant has fostered an environment where players are taught to respect one another both on and off the court.

For instance, she encourages players to support each other, share constructive feedback, and avoid negative comments or behaviors, creating a respectful team culture.

Being a faith-based institution, Coach Bryant incorporates daily prayers before and after practice or games, using those moments to teach players about gratitude, perseverance, and the importance of ethical behavior in sports and life.

"As defending 6A State Champions, my hope for this season is to embrace the pressure of being at the top," Coach Bryant said. "Pressure is a privilege, and we need to work to get better each and every day to achieve our goals for this season."



Boring dinners? Not with these recipes!

As the excitement of new schedules starts to fade, we're back to juggling after-school activities, work demands, and the constant question of, "What's for dinner?" With summer produce still abundant, it's the perfect moment to lean into meals that are both nourishing and no-fuss.

This month, I'm sharing three plant-based dinner ideas that are ideal for busy weeknights. They're simple enough to pull together after a long day, made with ingredients that are easy to find (and still in season), and satisfying enough to please the whole table.

First up is a skillet orzo soup that comes together in one dish – easy clean-up! It's loaded with zucchini, sweet red peppers, and tomatoes, making it a late-summer comfort meal that's quick enough for a weeknight and pairs well with just about anything.

Next is a taco salad that stars a flavorful, protein-dense crumble made with lentils, walnuts, and mushrooms. The mixture can be made in advance and repurposed into wraps, bowls, or

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

tacos. Charred corn tostadas bring a balance of convenience and crunch.

Canned refried black beans keep things simple, while fresh corn – grilled or sautéed – adds a smoky sweetness. Topped with lime, avocado, or whatever you have on hand, they're an easy go-to. All three meals are rich in fiber, full of color, and proof that eating well doesn't have to be complicated.

Join my monthly membership for printable recipes, health videos and live Zoom cooking classes. Only \$10 a month!

Taco salad SERVES 4-6



Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked lentils
- 1 cup raw walnuts
- 2 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. each: cumin, chili powder, smoked paprika, garlic granules, onion granules
- 2 cups diced mushrooms
- 1-2 romaine heads, chopped small
- 1 can black beans, drained
- 2 cups corn
- 2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
- 1 avocado
- ¼ cup cilantro

Dressing

- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 tbsp. vegan mayo
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup
- 2 tsp. Sriracha or chipotle sauce
- ½ tsp. each: salt, garlic granules
- ¼ cup water as needed to thin out
- 1 lime

Directions

1. Put the lentils, walnuts, and soy sauce in a food processor and pulse to get a chunky texture like ground beef – you'll have leftover taco "meat."
2. Add the oil to a skillet and bring heat to medium. Add the mushrooms and sauté for a few minutes, then add the taco meat.
3. Whisk up the dressing.
4. Add the romaine, black beans, corn, taco meat, avocado and cilantro to a bowl and toss with dressing.

Skillet orzo soup SERVES 3-4



Ingredients

- 1 tbsp. oil
- 3 minced garlic cloves
- 1 diced red pepper
- 1 diced zucchini
- 1 cup uncooked orzo
- 3 cups veg broth
- 2 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- 1 tsp. pink salt
- 1 cup halved grape tomatoes
- 2 cups baby spinach, stems removed
- ½ diced onion
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- Juice of ½ lemon

Directions

1. Add the oil to a deep skillet and bring heat to medium. Drop in onion and cook for four minutes. Then add the garlic, red pepper, and zucchini. Cook five more minutes.
2. Add the orzo, broth, nutritional yeast, and spices. Bring to a boil then lower to low heat and cook for 10-12 minutes until orzo is tender.
3. Stir in the spinach, tomatoes, and lemon juice. Cook on low until the spinach wilts. Top with fresh basil and serve.

Charred corn tacos SERVES 4



Ingredients

- ½ diced tomato
- 1 can refried black beans
- 1 diced jalapeno, divided
- 1 diced garlic clove
- 1 tsp. cumin
- 1 tsp. salt, divided
- 1 diced avocado
- 2 tbsp. oil
- 2 tbsp. diced red onion
- 3 tbsp. chopped cilantro
- 3 ears corn
- 8 corn tortillas
- Juice of 3 limes, divided

Directions

1. Add one tbsp. of oil to a cast iron or heavy skillet. Bring heat to medium high. Add corn and cook until charred, about 10-15 minutes, turning frequently.
2. Put the black beans in a pot with a little water, ½ lime juice, garlic, half of the jalapeno, cumin, and ½ tsp. salt. Warm it up on the stove. It should be smooth and spreadable.
3. Once the corn is cool, cut the kernels from the cobs into a bowl and add the rest of the jalapeno, avocado, red onion, cilantro, remaining salt, and remaining lime juice.
4. If you're using homemade tostada shells, heat up the oven to 400 F. Spray the corn tortillas with avocado oil spray and sprinkle with Tajin. Cook for five minutes on each side until crispy.
5. Layer on the beans, then top with the corn salsa and tomato.

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DID YOU KNOW? BOWLING

HOW MANY? 70M

Over 70 million people bowl annually. Many alleys have modernized offerings with food and beverage vendors, arcades, and themed events to attract a broader audience. As of July 2025, there are approximately 6,164 bowling alleys operating across the United States, ranging from traditional single-owner operations to entertainment complexes.

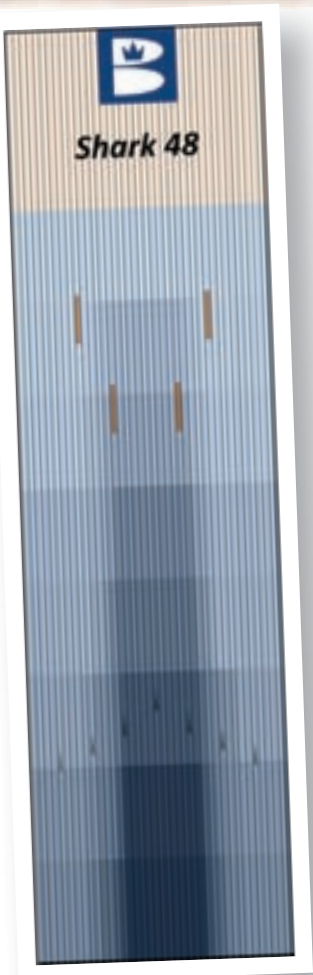
New York has 360 bowling alleys, accounting for about 5.8 percent of the total market share. Following close behind is Texas with 325 alleys, California with 314 and Illinois with 280.



HOW LONG? 48 FT.

Bowling lanes are oiled to protect the surface from friction, but the oil is applied in specific patterns that affect how the ball moves. More oil means the ball slides; less oil causes it to grip and curve. Recreational lanes use “house patterns,” with heavy oil in the middle and lighter oil on the edges to help guide the ball toward the pins.

In competitive play, “sport patterns” are used, which have more complex oil distributions and require greater precision. Common sport patterns include the PBA Shark (44 feet), Cheetah (35 feet), Scorpion (42 feet), and USBC Blue (40 feet). The Shark 48 is the longest oil pattern (48 feet).



HOW HEAVY? 16 LBS.

In ten-pin bowling, the maximum legal weight for a bowling ball is 16 pounds. Many adult bowlers use balls between 12-15 pounds for better control.



WHAT YEAR? 1958

The Professional Bowlers Association (PBA) was founded in 1958 by a group of 33 bowlers aiming to professionalize and popularize the sport of bowling. Among its founding members was Dick Weber, a legendary figure who won 30 PBA Tour titles and helped bring bowling into the mainstream spotlight.

His legacy carried on through his son, Pete, who became one of the most famous and successful bowlers in history with 37 PBA titles and an intense personality.



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DID YOU KNOW? BOWLING

The earliest evidence of a bowling-like game was found in an ancient Egyptian tomb from 5,000 years ago. Pins and a stone “ball” were buried with a child, suggesting people were rolling balls at targets millennia ago.

Bowling balls are made with a core and coverstock, often using urethane, reactive resin, or plastic. The core is shaped to influence spin and movement.

In the 14th century, King Edward III banned bowling because soldiers spent too much time playing and not enough time practicing archery.

A perfect ten-pin bowling score is 300, achieved by rolling 12 consecutive strikes (one per frame, plus two bonus strikes in the final frame).

It was featured as a demonstration sport at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, but it has still yet to gain lasting international recognition as an official Olympic event.

The Inazawa Grand Bowl in Japan is the world’s largest bowling alley, boasting an incredible 116 lanes all on a single expansive floor and attracting bowlers worldwide!

A score of 299 happens when a bowler gets 11 strikes and leaves a single pin on the last ball, making it one of the most frustrating scores in the game.

There are around 32 bowling alleys in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

A traditional ten-pin bowling lane is 60 feet long from the foul line to the center of the headpin. The lane is about 41.5 inches wide.

In 2020, Chad McLean from Brigham City, Utah, impressively set a unique world record by simultaneously holding an astonishing 16 bowling balls at once.

The most bowling balls juggled is three. This was achieved by Milan Roskopf from the Czech Republic in 2011; then again in 2018 by Idahoan David Rush and once more in 2022 by Texan Mike Johns.

Duckpin bowling is mostly played in the eastern U.S., especially around Maryland and New England. It uses smaller balls without finger holes and shorter, wider pins that look like ducks.

SAY WHAT?

WHO’S THAT ON THE SILVER SCREEN?

The movie Kingpin (1996), starring Woody Harrelson and Bill Murray, is a cult classic in bowling and comedy genres. The characters weren’t directly based on specific real-life bowlers, but they do parody and exaggerate real personalities.

Murray’s character, “Big Ern” McCracken, presented a flashy style, arrogance, and womanizing attitude – these are likely an over-the-top parody of real-life bowling showmen, possibly inspired in part by personalities like Pete Weber, who was known for his confidence and on-lane theatrics (Pete himself was still actively competing at the time). However, Murray ad-libbed much of his performance, which added to McCracken’s larger-than-life persona.



FUN FACT:
Bill Murray actually bowled all his own shots, including the final dramatic strike in the tournament scene – impressively done in one take with a live crowd!



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THE BEAUTY OF SIMPLE FOOD

Everyone talks of apples trees, lemon trees and orange trees, but not often does the conversation circle back to fig trees. The origin of items growing in the garden captivates me. Once upon a time things grew silently, their voices never heard. Now there's an in-depth appreciation for the herbs, fruits, and vegetables I have the privilege of caring for.

The fruit-bearing fig tree is the only member that is cultivated for its honey-sweet fruit and is unique in the world of botany because, unlike other fruit-bearing trees, it doesn't burst into glorious blossoms before the fruit forms. Instead, the tree produces small hard green balls (called peduncles) that look like green olives. Each peduncle grows into a pouch called the syconium. The interior is lined with hundreds of tiny flowers, which develop into drupelets. When the fig is cut open, these minute flowers make up what is known as the fig's pulp. We catch ourselves considering the fig a fruit, but it's actually a flower that is inverted into itself. The interesting thing is that it's formed on branches from the year before.

The tree is steeped in ancient meaning and symbolizes wisdom and success. They were so highly valued by the ancient Greeks that it was considered an honor to bestow leaves upon the winner of competitions. The early Romans

fed their hogs figs to fatten them up and to sweeten the meat. Apicius, the first-century Roman cook, in his "De Re Coquinaria," the oldest known cookbook in existence, had a recipe for ham boiled with "25 dried figs." Even today ham and figs remain a classic combination that has survived 2,000 years of cooks.

Spanish explorers first brought figs to Florida in the late 1500s with missionaries introducing figs to Parris Island, South Carolina, in 1577. In 1769 the Franciscan missionary Father Junipero Serra planted fig trees at the Mission San Diego. In 1787 Thomas Jefferson ordered cuttings from France of the Marseilles variety to be sent to Monticello. Although fig trees were planted throughout the South and continue to grow in backyards today, a commercial crop was never developed there. It's in the rich soil and climate of California that the fig began to truly thrive in North America.

The common or persistent figs, including Black Mission, Brown Turkey, Kadoka, and Adriatic, are self-pollinating while other varieties require pollination by female wasps, who enter the fig through a small hole in the stem and lay eggs inside. The wasps are about the size of a mosquito and pollinate the internal flowers.

Trees grow in various shapes and sizes in warm and humid regions. There are hundreds of varieties, but not all are fruit-bearing and not all the fruit is edible by humans. The banyan tree of eastern Asia, called the "world tree" because its tall branches were said to link earth to heaven, and the bodhi tree, known as the "tree of enlightenment" because it's where Buddha sat and studied, are both enormous fig trees.

Turkey leads the world in fig production, then Greece, then California. Most are commercially dried by placing them in the sun or through a dehydration process. Only 20 percent of the harvest is sold fresh. The majority of the crop is dried whole, with a large percentage ground into paste and sold for baked goods and confections.

Figs are the inspiration for perfumes, candles, on the fabric

of scarves and aprons, even body lotions, bubble baths, and soaps. They come fresh or dry, in yellow or purple, from California and the Mediterranean to Middle Eastern countries. They can be found in restaurants, supermarkets, fruit stands, and sometimes even in backyards. Figs are packed with fiber which slows down the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. Calcium, potassium, iron, and magnesium are beneficial antioxidants as well as being a guilt-free indulgence that can be enjoyed in countless ways.

I grew up knowing of figs but never acquired a taste for them. Seasonally, mom would come home from walks with pockets bulging with these gems. She urged me to try them and as much as I voiced my displeasure, the taste is remembered to this day. My grandmother knew that there was no better way to calm her grandchild than with smiles and the scent of flour and figs woven deep within the cloth of her apron, yet the magic of this fruit remained lost on me.

My introduction to incredible figs came late in life. Over the past few years, the Black Mission fig tree, which was planted in memory of my mom, has produced relatively well. With warm valley temperatures we get to enjoy a small crop of large-sized fruit called the breba crop in June, followed by a more bountiful crop of medium-sized fruit from July until late August. The later crop will continue ripening as long as the weather stays warm.

The fig tree has essentially become a jam tree. Purplish-black ones have greeted me with their rounded cheeks tinted with a blush of purple, while others remained greenish and firm. Hours later the colors and texture changed, some soft and fragrant. When these figs start maturing, they come abundantly. By picking one ripe fig the energy flow stops and gets diverted to those around it. If those figs are still able to grow, they will, if not, they will become sweeter. Patience is golden! Ripe figs will let you know when they're ready by drooping slightly thereby separating more easily from the stem end of the tree.

Daily my fingers gently test each fig and when the time is right, they fall into my hand with very little twisting needed. A flawless demonstration of ripeness which always made my heart skip a beat was seeing that perfect teardrop of syrup oozing from its blossom end. This is called the "eye" of the fig. When it came to rest in the palm of my hand, so heavy with sugar that its sides were literally bursting with rivulets of syrup, I knew that I was in 'fig heaven.' Heavy fruit hangs low, soft, and warm in the sun, and if you've ever been fortunate enough to grab one from a tree, have some toast nearby – maybe gorgonzola cheese, a drizzle of honey or some toasted pecans.

Mature figs should be consumed immediately or at least one day after they're picked. If collected underripe they will soften slightly when left at room temperature. Left in the refrigerator for more than two or three days and they will begin to spoil. Just before using the figs, rinse them in cool water, pat them dry with a soft towel, and trim off the stems. Figs only need to be peeled if the skin is thick and rough – remember the skin helps to hold the flesh intact. Cut fresh figs with a knife and try to avoid chopping them which will turn them to mush.

Figs represent a return to family and home triggering cherished memories of conversations and activities. Strangers

have driven by, observed me perched on the ladder picking fruit and have stopped in to inquire. What could be better than welcoming inquisitive souls into your garden to educate them on the wonders of life under a fig leaf?

Diverting momentarily from the delightful aspects of this fruit, one mustn't ignore the sweet aroma that emanates from its bark. The smell envelopes the senses with a fragrance that is unforgettable. Though fig season can never run long enough, the leaves remain on the tree for most of the year and you can cook with them. The beauty of the leaves comes from them being broad, green and enormous. They have a rough texture much like a cat's tongue and range in size from 4-10 inches wide.

Most leaves are large enough to wrap around portions of fish, cheese, or poultry. Simply wash them in water with a little mild soap and rinse well. Cut off the stems close to the leaf and blot away any sap. Blanch the leaves up to one minute which will make them more pliable. Remove the leaves with tongs and drain. Place 3-4 leaves smooth side down on a work surface, overlapping slightly, and place your meat of choice on top. Wrap with cooking twine and grill, steam, broil, or roast as desired.

Most often five to 10 minutes is sufficient for individual portions. Like the mystery a bay leaf imparts on food, when a fig leaf is heated it invites an elusive taste of nuts, spice, a mellow smokiness and a hint of vanilla that's clean and pleasant.

With the fig harvest numbering well over 500, multiple halves got frozen on cookie sheets and placed in gallon freezer bags for later use. What felt like never-ending batches of homemade fig jam turned into the adventure of a lifetime. Making fruit jam is satisfying. I'm a big fan of dark brown sugar and bourbon in cooking and in recipes – why not blend the two? The only goal to making jam is to capture the flavor of the fruit. Some like the consistency to a bit runny, the following recipe does not use pectin but relies on the natural pectin in the figs. I choose to control the gelling by the amount of lemon juice, sugar and length of cooking time. Every fig tree has a story to tell!



Thyme in My Kitchen

BY SHERRY KLUSMAN
@thyme.in.my.kitchen

Fig jam

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds ripe figs (roughly 36) stemmed and quartered
- 1 ½ cups dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup bourbon
- 4 strips of lemon peel (minus the white pith)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a large, nonreactive pan, toss the fig pieces with the sugar, lemon juice, water, bourbon, and lemon peels.
2. Bring to a boil, stirring with a wooden spoon until the sugar is completely dissolved.
3. Simmer the jam over medium-low heat, using a rubber spatula to keep the sides of the pan clean and move the mixture to avoid burning.
4. At the end of 35 minutes, remove the lemon peels and mash the figs to desired consistency.
5. Spoon the jam into four 4 oz. jars, leaving a ¼ inch of space at the top. Close the jars and let cool to room temperature.

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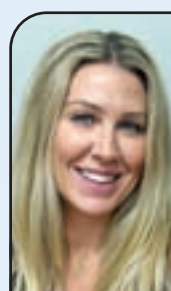


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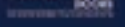


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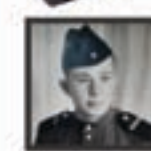


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Titan Times



VOL. 2 NO. 11

SEPTEMBER 2025

From the students of Arcadia High School

Meet the other editor



Eliana Ganz

I'm Eliana Ganz, and I am excited to be one of the new editors for the Titan Times this year. I'm a junior at Arcadia High and I grew up in the neighborhood, going from Hopi to Ingleside to now Arcadia. If you're from Arcadia, too, you know how tight-knit the community is. I'm excited to bring that energy into our paper and make sure everyone feels involved and represented.

Outside of school, I'm all about soccer. I've been playing club for 14 years and am also on the varsity team at AHS. If I'm not in class, you'll probably find me on the field. Soccer has taught me a lot about teamwork and dedication, and I hope to bring that same collaborative effort to the Titan Times. I want this paper to be a space where everyone can contribute, share ideas, and be heard.

I love to travel and spend time with my family. Traveling satisfies my curiosity for new places and experiences, and time with family reminds me to appreciate the connections I

have. Both are such important parts of my life and have shaped the way I see the world.

My goal with the Titan Times this year is simple. I want this paper to be more than just stories from a high school. I want it to be something that connects everyone in the neighborhood – whether you're a student, a teacher, or someone who's been here for years. We have so many great stories to tell, and I believe everyone deserves a voice in what's happening around us.

– Eliana Ganz

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

By the time you read this, we year, you will have met the new vice president and my good friend, Eliana Ganz, and the Titan Times will have grown from one junior student to a staff of eight writers and two photographers from every grade - freshman to senior. Now that we have all these wonderful people, what's the plan?

GREAT QUESTION!

We've selected a small group of student-writers from each grade to write about the things on campus and in the community that are important to them. Our goal is that each month three students will have a short piece published in the paper. Having a small group of writers ensures that each student gets to be featured at least twice this school year.

Our column is only about 750 words long, but as we all know, "a picture is worth a thousand words," so we'll of course need some photos to tell our stories. This is where our photographers come in. Depending on the topic, they will get the chance to go out and take original, relevant photos used to enhance our writing.

My ultimate goal is to share my love of journalism with as many people as I can, whether that be through reading, writing, or photographing. This is just the first step, and I can't wait for the Titan Times to grow!

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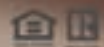
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