

ARCADIA News

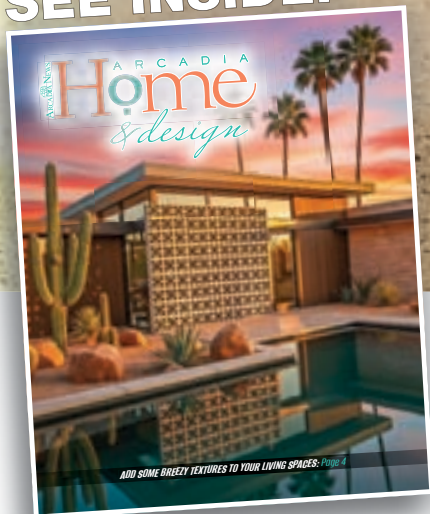
VOL. 33 NO. 8

ARCADIA • BILTMORE • CAMELBACK CORRIDOR

NOVEMBER 2025



SEE INSIDE!



THAT HORSE HAS MOVES!

A love for horses and inspiration from her mom helped Sami MacDonald become a dressage champion.

PAGE 22

RALLYING FOR MAX

From a life-changing accident to a recovery journey in Colorado, Max Allen's story is one of resilience.

PAGE 12

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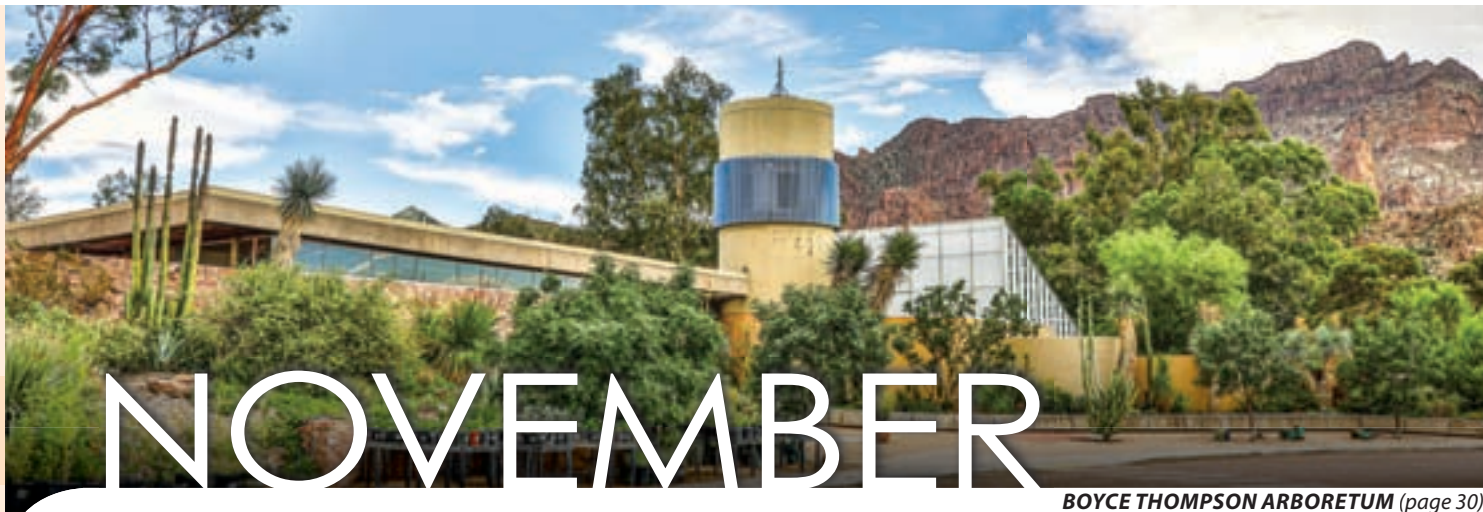
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NOVEMBER

BOYCE THOMPSON ARBORETUM (page 30)

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Arcadia's hiking golfer, Kevin Riley, discovered that the Camino Portuguese provides more than a trail – it offers connection, solace, and unforgettable stories.

26 A labor of love

What started with a painted pot and a holiday party has blossomed into a legacy of love – see how this father-daughter team is turning memories into art.

33 The Story That Wouldn't Die

Former reporter Christina Estes channels her love for Phoenix and journalism into her second book, *The Story That Wouldn't Die*, a thriller that spotlights power and corruption.

38 Aim. Set. Spike.

What started as a casual after-school club has turned into something bigger – Arcadia High's boys beach volleyball team is having a blast in its debut season.



Sami MacDonald began riding at seven and has since become a four-time Arizona State Champion.
PHOTO COURTESY OF KEVIN MACDONALD



BUILDING A

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1 SWIM LESSON AT A TIME

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Last month, I was in a fender bender that resulted in me having to get a rental car while they repaired my Volkswagen Jetta. Thankfully, all parties were okay – but as I drove out of the parking lot in a gold Chevy Malibu, all I kept thinking was, “Man, I will be so grateful to have my car back – hopefully sooner rather than later!”

Thanksgiving and Veterans Day are two of November’s main events, and we’ve got plenty of spots that are celebrating with live music, football games, and all the foods. What’s great about Valley resorts and eateries offering these meals – aside from not having to clean the kitchen – is that they all put their own spin on the food; you could go to each restaurant and have three different kinds of ham, turkey, potatoes or stuffing for breakfast, lunch and dinner, if you wanted!

This month, we highlight the hard work of Sami MacDonald, who participates in dressage competitions in her home state and across the country.

Most recently, she won the 2025 National Dressage 16 and under Championship in Illinois and has her sights set on the North American Youth Championships, hoping to compete in the next two years.

Our Fall 2025 *Arcadia Home & Design* is also included in this month’s edition. This issue of our seasonal, home-centric magazine features a story on breeze blocks, holiday home tours and how to create the perfect urban garden.

We are so grateful for our Veterans, our families, our friends and our readers. Happy Thanksgiving, and thank you for reading *Arcadia News* and *Arcadia Home & Design*,

Mallory

– Mallory



UPCOMING THEMES:

DECEMBER

Happy Holidays

JANUARY

Fitness

FEBRUARY

History

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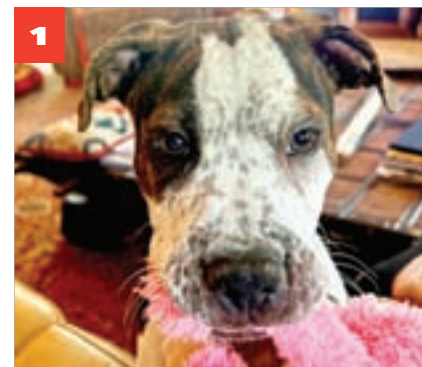
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“Neither a wise man nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him.” – Dwight D. Eisenhower

ARCADIA'S PETS

1. This is **Kellie**! She’s nine months old, weighs 65 pounds and has been a part of our family for six months. Her two favorite things to do are lay in the sun and eat! She’s very sweet and loving and has been a great addition to our family.

– Kris G.



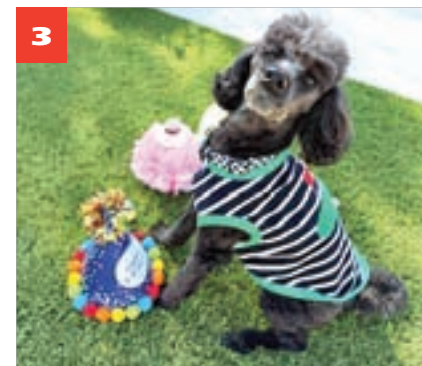
2. Meet **Otis**, a six-year-old Pembroke Welsh Corgi with a PhD in Human Interaction and a minor in Herding Management. Always on duty, Otis won’t take a single bite until he’s rounded up his older brother, **Banks**, a seven-year-old French Bulldog with a heart of gold and a talent for stealing warmth (and sometimes attention). Otis loves scratches behind the ears and getting Banks to chase after him. Banks lives for tennis balls, prefers cozy snuggles and keeping things chill. They’re a hilarious mix of energy and attitude, proving that teamwork (and treats) make the dream work.

– John B.



3. Hi everyone, I am **Sophia** and I just turned seven years old. I moved to the neighborhood a couple of months ago to live with my red golden retriever brother, Woody. I love my new family and can’t wait to meet you all!

– Karen M.



4. My name is **Woody**. I was named for the Redwoods in northern California, where my family is from. I have a new sister, Sophia, and we have quickly become best friends. She follows me everywhere and chases me when I get the zoomies. I’m so happy it’s fall, now we can go on long walks in the neighborhood!

– Karen 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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'Ride Around Arcadia' puts a fun spin on podcast interviews

A popular Instagram video series has businesses rolling – your favorite neighborhood newspaper included! Ride Around Arcadia, a video podcast created by resident Charles Sidi, takes guests on a virtual bike ride through the scenic neighborhoods while asking fun questions, allowing viewers to learn more about the businesses they frequent.

Charles, who moved from England to Phoenix nearly 20 years ago with his wife, Sarah, and their two sons, says it was love at first sight when they discovered Arcadia.

Over the years, he established strong ties in the community, and now he's channeling that connection into a creative new venture. The idea for Ride Around Arcadia came to him in an unlikely moment – while he was at home, sick, and scrolling through Instagram.

"Wasn't there a more exciting way to interview than just sitting in chairs with microphones?" he wondered. That thought led to a full-fledged production. The show officially launched in July 2025 and features a new guest every week.

"I'm a doer," Charles said. "Once I got the idea for creating a podcast with people riding bicycles around Arcadia and talking business, we were off to the races."

He connected with the production team at Pixelist Media. In just a couple of weeks, a green screen and stationary bikes were set up inside The Brokery's office, and Charles was already lining up guests.



Arcadia News' editor with Charles Sidi, host of the Ride Around Arcadia podcast.

Each interview lasts between five and seven minutes. Once the bike seat was situated (Our editor is 5'1"), and the latest edition of the paper was placed in the front basket, the interview began. Charles asked questions like, 'How did you become interested in the industry? What stories inspire you most?'

After recording, the team edited the

video to create a backdrop of a virtual bike ride through Arcadia, including a view of Camelback, of course. So far, other guests have included a medium/intuitive, a public relations professional, and a homebuilder, among others.

Each episode blends personal insight with community-focused conversation, covering the guest's area of expertise, their

connection to Arcadia, and a round of fun rapid-fire questions – including the fan-favorite: "Postino or LGO?" (P.S. Mallory said Postino.)

Full episodes of Ride Around Arcadia are available on YouTube, and you can follow the show on Instagram at @ride_around_arcadia.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

BRIEFS



The second annual **Arcadia Turkey Trot** is happening on November 27 at 8:30 a.m. starting at Arizona Falls (5802 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix). Families and friends can walk, jog or run to benefit Good Soles, a charity dedicated to providing kids with new shoes for the school year. Since its founding in 2017, Good Soles has donated new shoes to Child Crisis Arizona each summer. Registration is \$40 for adults, \$20 for kids. arcadiaturkeytrot.org



The **Arcadia Osborn Neighborhood Association** is hosting its GAIN Fall Festival on Saturday, November 8, from 1-4 p.m. at Arcadia Park, 56th St. and Osborn Road. This free event will have games, activities, bounce houses, a face painter, a balloon artist, Phoenix PD reps, lunch and ice cream. arcadiaosbornphx.com

Scooptacular launched its “**Scooping Kindness Campaign**,” inviting the community to purchase \$6 stars representing a scoop of kindness to be gifted to others. These can be dedicated to anyone: friends, strangers, or even someone meeting a fun description like “anyone who had a flat tire today.” The goal is to foster connection and gratitude while spreading joy through small acts of generosity. The campaign runs through January. scooptacular.net

Join Program Director Maribeth Gallagher on November 18 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the **Dementia Care and Education Campus** (3811 N. 44th St., Phoenix) for a free workshop focused on creating a dementia-friendly approach to holiday planning. This session will offer practical strategies to help families modify traditions. While care partners attend the workshop, staff-led activities will be available for individuals living with dementia. Registration is required. dementiacampus.org

Arizona-based artist, professor, and author Sal Cosenza's new book, **Manhattan: The Rising War** (studio edition), transforms New York's skyline into titans, where skyscrapers breathe and legends live. Alongside the novel's battles, this edition unveils never-before-seen concept drawings, production notes, and five paintings crafted over nearly two decades. The book is available on Amazon and at Barnes & Noble. salcosenza.com



The Arcadian (4220 N. 32nd St., Phoenix) has officially launched Phase 2 of its townhome community, offering modern new-construction homes with high-end finishes, rooftop patios, and floor plans ranging from two to four bedrooms. A grand opening event will be held on November 22, featuring a limited-time 3-2-1 buydown financing incentive. arcadianphx.com

Bricks Studio's specialty classes are happening throughout the fall. Parent Dance with Me classes, for ages 2-3 years old, include dancing, reading and creating playful movements. On November 21 there will be a Thankful for Dance themed party for ages 1.5 to 3; November 22 offers a TikTok Talent Show class for kids 4+. bricksstudio.com



Leo & Luca (6102 N. 16th St., Phoenix) unveiled a new outdoor area featuring playhouses, musical components, and a dedicated track for bikes and trikes. They also have a fun-filled November planned, with events like Italian Night with Niccoli's (11/07), Tacos & Toddlers with Don Taco, (11/14) a Small Business Saturday Market (11/29) and more. Registration for the dinners is \$25 for adults, \$20 for kids. leoandlucaaz.com

EVENTS

SATURDAY 11/1

Sit. Stay. Brunch.

10:30 a.m. at the Omni Scottsdale Resort, 4949 E. Lincoln Dr. Benefiting the Lost Our Home Pet Rescue, the 16th annual holiday champagne brunch and auction is back. This event raises funds needed to support services and programs for pets and people in the community. Guests will be served drinks and brunch, watch adoptable pets on the catwalk and participate in the silent auction. This year's theme is “with grateful tails and hopeful hearts.” Tickets start at \$180. lostourhome.org

Mammals in the Moonlight

5:30 p.m. at Liberty Wildlife, 2600 E. Elwood St., Phoenix. This annual fundraiser bears a special theme – Mammals in the Moonlight – to welcome the opening of new enclosures for Liberty Wildlife's resident bobcat, coatimundi, raccoon, and more. This evening's fundraiser will include a catered dinner, themed cocktails, wildlife presentations, an auction and more. Tickets start at \$300. libertywildlife.org

SATURDAY 11/1 – SUNDAY 11/2

Shemer Arizona Art Festival

10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Shemer Art Center, 5005 E. Camelback Road. Patrons can revel in two days of holiday shopping with more than 40 artists selected from across Arizona showcasing their works. There will also be demonstrations, Arizona authors, activities, live music, food and beverage vendors, a silent auction and the signature sidewalk chalk festival. This event is free. Also, mark your calendars for the Shemer Honors event, upcoming on November 15. shemerartcenter.org

Día de los Muertos

9 a.m. at the Phoenix Zoo, 455 N. Galvin Pkwy., Phoenix. Spend a day at the zoo and see much more than the animals! There will be altars, art, festive performances, food and bev, live music and family-friendly activities inspired by the rich traditions of Día de los Muertos. The zoo will also host an art sale featuring works inspired by the spirit of the holiday, including paintings, sculptures and masks. Tickets are \$40 for adults, \$30 for kids. phoenixzoo.org

WEDNESDAY 11/5

Education Expo

5 p.m. at Saguaro High School, 6250 N. 82nd St., Scottsdale. SUSD invites families to its second annual Education Expo, where attendees can explore all

30+ SUSD schools, learn about unique academic programs and connect with staff from departments across the district. This event is free but registration is required. sUSD.org

THURSDAY 11/6

Women in Leadership

11:30 a.m. at Hilton Scottsdale Resort & Villas, 6333 N. Scottsdale Road. The Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to present Women of Valor, an inspiring Women in Leadership luncheon sponsored by HonorHealth. This event will feature four women whose military service shaped their paths to leadership in business, advocacy and community impact. Tickets are \$90 per person. business.scottsdalechamber.com

FRIDAY 11/7

Morning of Gold Breakfast

7:30 a.m. at the Arizona Biltmore, 2400 E. Missouri Ave., Phoenix. The Desert Mission Morning of Gold breakfast provides funds for Desert Mission, supporting the Lincoln Learning Center, Adult Day Healthcare Center and the Desert Mission Food Bank. Guests can start the day with coffee and networking, followed by breakfast and a program with guest speakers. Tickets start at \$150 per person. honorhealthfoundation.org

Heroes Gala

6 p.m. at the Arizona Biltmore, 2400 E. Missouri Ave., Phoenix. The Veterans Medical Leadership Council will honor the 250th anniversary of the United States Armed Forces at this evening's event while also raising funds to support America's Veterans. There will be a cocktail reception followed by formal programming with special guests, an auction and raffle, dinner and dancing. Tickets start at \$300. arizonavmlc.org

SATURDAY 11/8

Tempe Jam

6 p.m. at Tempe Sports Complex, 8401 S. Hardy Dr., Tempe. The fifth annual Tempe Jam blasts off with free live music from Mega Ran, DJ alicem.km, and Teri Tobin & Friends, plus art, food trucks, performances, and a drone show. Space-themed attire is encouraged for this cosmic celebration. This event is free. tempe.gov

Canines + Cocktails

10 a.m. at Culinary Dropout, 15125 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale. To celebrate the 900+ dogs who have found loving homes and raise much-needed funds for the dogs at Forever Loved Pet Sanctuary comes the annual Canines + Cocktails

WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

event. Guests will find live entertainment from Blaine Long, food and drinks, live pet portraits, a wine + spirit pull, senior dog kissing booth and more. Tickets are \$150 per person.

foreverlovedpets.org

SATURDAY 11/8 – SUNDAY 11/9

Bentley Scottsdale Polo Championships

10 a.m. at WestWorld, 16601 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale. This famed event is celebrating 14 years with even more fanfare than before! Along with polo matches, guests will find live music and performances, human and canine fashion shows, a car show and an all-around good time. The event will also run alongside the WestWorld Art & Wine Experience. General admission starts at \$45.

thepoloparty.com

SUNDAY 11/9

Phoenix 10K and Marathon

6 a.m. at Biltmore Fashion Park, 2502 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. The Phoenix 10K & Marathon celebrates its 50th anniversary with the exciting debut of a full 26.2-mile marathon, alongside the traditional 5K, 10K, and half marathon races. Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego will kick off the race and present the Mayor's Cup to the marathon winner. Runners and spectators can enjoy a post-race VIP lounge, recovery zone, and more. Registration is \$30-\$160.

phoenix10k.com

TUESDAY 11/11

Phoenix Veterans Day Parade

11 a.m. in downtown Phoenix, starting at Montebello and Central Ave. This event has been happening for 25+ years – and it's all about honoring our Veterans. Parade-goers are encouraged to arrive early to find parking. The parade will last for two hours and will feature over 80 participants.

honoringamericasveterans.org

WEDNESDAY 11/12

Spellbound Burlesque

6:30 and 8 p.m. at Century Grand, 3626 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. Experience a night of glamour with Spellbound Burlesque, featuring Arizona's award-winning burlesque troupe in an intimate cabaret setting. Admission includes a culinary and cocktail experience with champagne, caviar, small bites and drinks. Tickets are \$125.

bartershake.com

FRIDAY 11/14

Phoenician Fall Fest

6 p.m. at The Phoenician, 6000 E. Camelback Road, Scottsdale. The iconic resort is hosting its second annual Fall



Bentley Scottsdale Polo Championships at WestWorld.



Friends of Erma Bombeck Luncheon at the Arizona Biltmore.

Fest, an evening that kicks off with line dancing lessons. There will be live country music from The Kruse Brothers, food, cocktails and western-themed activities like a mechanical bull, caricaturist, lawn games and an after party at the Thirsty Camel Lounge. A portion of proceeds will be donated to Home Fur Good animal rescue. General admission starts at \$60 per person, with VIP packages available.

thephoenician.com

SATURDAY 11/15

Arcadia Neighborhood Picnic

11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Hopi Elementary, 5110 E. Lafayette Blvd. Head to Hopi for the annual Arcadia Neighborhood Picnic. Guests can enjoy live music, meet public service agents and K9, check out a Phoenix ladder fire truck and find games for all ages, a balloon twister, lunch and ice cream from Leo's – and hang with the neighbors, of course! Admission is free.

acmna.org

Friends of Erma Bombeck Luncheon

12 p.m. at the Arizona Biltmore, 2400 E. Missouri Ave., Phoenix. Presented by the Arizona Women's Board, the 46th annual Erma Bombeck Author's Luncheon brings together writers from all over the country to discuss their latest releases. There will be panel talks with authors Lisa Gardner, Jodi Picoult, Peter Wolf and more, plus opportunities for purchases and book signings. Registration starts at \$300 per person.

authorsluncheonaz.org

Arizona Barrels, Bottles & Brews

2-5 p.m. at Salt River Fields, 7555 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale. This event is the only one in the country to feature samples produced exclusively in the Grand Canyon State. Brew lovers can try new releases from over 25 Arizona breweries, wineries and distilleries. There will also be various food trucks. Tickets start at \$60 for general admission, with VIP packages available.

azbottlesandbrews.com

Festival of the Arts

11 a.m.-6 p.m. at Herberger Theater Center, 222 E. Monroe St., Phoenix. An outdoor, admission-free event that celebrates the art community. Patrons will find performances by more than 20 local and diverse groups, like Ballet Folklórico Quetzalli-AZ, Phoenix World Collective, vocalist Lisa Hightower, and more. There will also be art demos, live music, activities for kids, food and drinks and a vendor market.

herbergertheater.org

Arizona Indigenous Culinary Experience

6 p.m. at Scottsdale's Museum of the West, 3830 N. Marshall Way. The Arizona American Indian Tourism Association presents this event in celebration of Native American Heritage Month. Attendees can indulge in authentic cuisine, arts, and live performances with curated tasting stations and demonstrations. This event is in conjunction with the Arizona Indigenous Food Symposium on Friday. Tickets start at \$45.

arizonanativeculinary.org

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SATURDAY 11/15

Howl & Harvest

5 p.m. at Sidecar Social Club, 3243 N. 3rd St., Phoenix. Howl & Harvest, a free fall pop-up market, will have vendors, a DJ, and artisan goods ranging from pet products to vintage clothing and flash tattoos. The event supports Heart of Infinity Dog Rescue, with 100 percent of cocktail special proceeds benefiting the nonprofit.

sidecar-social-club.com

SAT. 11/15 – SUN. 11/16

Phoenix Pizza Festival

11 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, at Margaret T. Hance Park, 1202 N. 3rd St., Phoenix. Head downtown for all the slices your belly can handle at the 10th annual Phoenix Pizza Festival. More than 20 pizza vendors and other food vendors will be on-site, along with beer stations, lawn games, live music and a kids zone. Tickets start at \$16 per person; slices are \$2-\$5 and whole pies will also be available for purchase.

phoenix.pizza

SUNDAY 11/16

Sparkle Brunch

12 p.m. at Seasons 52, 2502 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. The Sparkle Foundation is hosting its inaugural Sparkle Brunch to give

back to single moms and their children. Guests will hear from keynote speaker Dr. Judy Robles while enjoying lunch and a champagne toast. This year's theme is lemon al fresco – dress in your best yellows, whites, and blues – and hats are strongly encouraged. Tickets are \$125 per person.

sparklenow.org

Basso Ostinato

4:30 p.m. at Christ Church of the Ascension, 4015 E. Lincoln Dr., in Paradise Valley. Music Director Tigran Buniatyan is the star of today's concert. Basso refers to a musical technique common to both Renaissance and Baroque music, and later echoed in jazz. A short, repeating bass line provides the structure for the musical piece, allowing musicians to improvise, embellish and explore new harmonies, textures, and ornamentation. This concert is free, but donations are welcome.

ccaaz.org

TUESDAY 11/18

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

6 p.m. at the Scottsdale Public Library, 3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd. The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable will host historian, blogger, vlogger, and podcaster John Banks, who authored *A Civil War Road Trip of a Lifetime, Connecticut Yankees at Antietam*



Phoenix Pizza Festival at Margaret T. Hance Park.

and *Hidden History of Connecticut Union Soldiers*. His work has been featured in notable publications. Doors open at 5 p.m. for meeting the speaker, book sale, and Civil War videos. This event is free.

scottsdalecwrt.org

WEDNESDAY 11/19

Wicked for Good Experience

Times vary, at Harkins Camelview, 7014

E. Camelback Road. Be among the first to experience *Wicked: For Good* at an exclusive early screening benefiting Phoenix Children's Hospital. Bring along friends and family to sip on a pre-show cocktail or mocktail and see the film with complimentary popcorn and a themed goodie bag. Tickets are \$100 and all proceeds support Phoenix Children's Behavioral Health Program.

2025wicked.raiselysite.com



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From the Marine Corps to Main Street

Each November, Veterans Day reminds me where I came from and why I do what I do. Before I was helping people buy and sell homes in Arcadia, I was serving in the United States Marine Corps.

Those years shaped the way I see the world. In the Marines, you learn quickly that nothing worth doing is easy. You learn to show up early, to stay calm under pressure, and to take responsibility for every outcome. You learn that your word matters. Those lessons stuck with me long after I left active duty, and they've guided how I run my life and my business ever since.

When I founded The Brokery, I wanted it to stand for something real. Something rooted in discipline, integrity, and service. That is why I created something of my own rather than joining a corporate platform that I didn't believe in fully. We are proud to stand alone as an independent and Relentlessly Local™ real estate company where our mission is to provide the best service possible to the neighborhood. Whether it's preparing a home for market, negotiating a deal, or making sure every detail is handled the right way, our approach comes straight from that Marine Corps mindset: no shortcuts, no excuses, no half-measures.

This Veterans Day, I'm especially grateful for the men and women who served and for their families who carry so much of the weight behind the scenes. Service doesn't end when you take off the uniform. It just takes new forms: raising families, building businesses, volunteering locally, and contributing to something bigger than yourself.

For me, that "something bigger" is this community. Arcadia has given me a place to raise my family and build a company I'm proud of. The least I can do is serve it with the same pride and dedication I gave my country.

To my fellow veterans here and across Phoenix, thank you for your service and for continuing to make a difference every day.

Semper Fi,

Tucker Blalock

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Tucker Blalock Managing Broker, Co-Founder

602.561.0445 | Tucker@TheBrokery.com

Oleg Bortman Associate Broker, Co-Founder

602.402.2296 | Oleg@TheBrokery.com



OUT OF THE AREA, BUT WORTH THE DRIVE

SATURDAY 11/1

Fountain Hills Day

4 p.m. at Fountain Hills High School, 16100 E. Palisades Blvd. The Fountain Hills Chamber of Commerce is offering a free, family-friendly evening filled with live music, a Ferris wheel, food samples and a classic car show. Guests can explore themed expos including Health & Wellness, Home & Garden, Wild About Pets and Philanthropy in the Hills.

fhchamber.com

SATURDAY 11/1 – SUNDAY 11/2

Kierland Fine Art and Wine Festival

10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Kierland Commons, 15210 N. Kierland Blvd., Scottsdale. Main Street will have the vino flowing at this annual event. Guests will find over 100 world-class artists showcasing their wares in an outdoor gallery, plus 16 of the region’s best wineries pouring more than 150 wines, and live entertainment from local faves Rock Lobster, Sandra Bassett’s Motown Experience and more. Admission is free, wine tastings start at \$35.

kierlandcommons.com

SUNDAY 11/2

BreadFest

10 a.m. at Don Guerra’s Barrio Bagel and Slice, 689 N. Arizona Ave., Gilbert. This inaugural event will host several vendors serving up bread-based concoctions, plus a sourdough bread contest, vendors, samples, live music, butter sculptures, and games for the family. General admission is \$7 and \$40 for VIP – which includes a commemorative t-shirt.

haydenflourmills.com

Legacy Concert

3 p.m. at Centennial High School, 14388 N. 79th Ave., Peoria. Three dynamic choirs – the Orpheus Male Chorus of Phoenix, the Phoenix Children’s Chorus, and Centennial High School’s Chorus – will unite for a multigenerational musical experience at the annual Legacy Concert. The program will



BreadFest at Don Guerra's Barrio Bagel and Slice in Gilbert.

showcase styles from contemporary classics to timeless choral works. This concert is free. orpheus.org

MONDAY 11/3

Tournament of Hope

7:30 a.m. at Troon North Golf Club, 10320 E. Dynamite Blvd., Scottsdale. Help support Hope Ignites, a nonprofit that “empowers low-income, first-generation youth to achieve their dreams of a college degree.” Golfers will receive a continental breakfast, putting practice, on-course games, raffle prizes and a gift card. Registration prices vary.

hopeignitesphoenix.org

TUESDAY 11/4

Ballet Class

6 p.m. at Eastlake Park Community Center, 1549 E. Jefferson St., Phoenix. Eastlake Park Community Center is offering a free, engaging ballet class for children ages 7-13. This class focuses on the fundamentals of ballet, helping dancers develop poise, flexibility, and technique in a supportive atmosphere. Whether they’re just starting out or already have a bit of experience, kids will enjoy learning classic ballet moves and expressing themselves through dance.

phoenix.gov

THURSDAY 11/6

Peace, Love and FUN-draising

5 p.m. at Backyard Desert Ridge, 21001 N. Tatum Blvd., Phoenix. Neighbors Helping Neighbors is turning up the good vibes. This celebration will feature live music, food, drinks, auctions, and a dance floor full of energy. Proceeds go toward helping first responders, assisting seniors with home access projects, supporting veterans and supporting the Shop with a Cop program. The theme is 1970 so dress in your grooviest outfit. Tickets are \$50 per person.

nhnarizona.org

FRIDAY 11/7 – SUNDAY 11/9

Carefree Fine Art and Wine Festival

10 a.m.-5 p.m. at 101 Easy St. in downtown Carefree. Take the day, relax and stroll through more than 155 juried fine arts displays. Artists from across the U.S. will be on-site showcasing their paintings, sculptures and photography while guests sip domestic and imported wines. For \$30, patrons will receive an engraved souvenir wine glass along with 10 tastings. There will also be live music, food and entertainment. Tickets are \$5.

thunderbirdartists.com

SATURDAY 11/8

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

2 p.m. at The Gyder Mainstage Theater, 10580 N. 83rd Dr., Peoria. Get ready for a hilarious and heartwarming competition between six adolescent spellers – played by adult actors – with big dreams and a love for words. With improvised moments, audience participation, and a Tony Award-winning score, this musical comedy is full of surprises – including a lobby that’s transformed into Putnam Middle School. Tickets start at \$47.

theaterworks.org

FRIDAY 11/14 – SATURDAY 11/15

Arizona Pinners Conference

10 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday,

at WestWorld of Scottsdale, 16601 N. Pima Road. If Pinterest is your favorite go-to app, then you won’t want to miss the 10th annual conference. Guests can enjoy everything from beauty, makeup, food, arts, crafts and more with over 250 businesses, 100 classes, and all things DIY. General admission is \$12; classes are \$22-\$40 each.

az.pannersconference.com

TUESDAY 11/11

East Valley Veteran’s Parade

11 a.m. in downtown Mesa on Center St. The annual East Valley Veterans Parade will be held in its traditional format in Mesa this Veterans Day. More than 100 parade entries and aerial demonstrations of vintage aircraft are planned. This year’s theme is “250 Years. Ready Then, Ready Now,” which honors the enduring legacy to the readiness and resilience of America’s Armed Forces.

evvp.org

SATURDAY 11/22

El Tour de Tucson

Times vary, starting at the Tucson Convention Center, 260 S. Church Ave. El Tour de Tucson is a fundraising ride that captivates nearly 7,500 cyclists of all ages. Participants tackle either the 102-, 62- or 32-mile rides. A fun ride with shorter distances is also available. Cyclists can attend the post-ride party with music, food vendors, activities, and an award ceremony. Registration starts at \$15 for the fun ride and \$40-\$300 for the longer rides.

eltourdetucson.org

SUNDAY 11/23

Tianyu Lights Festival

6 p.m. at Camelback Ranch, 10710 W. Camelback Road, Phoenix. The Tianyu Lights Festival is a nighttime walk-through experience that brings nature and art together. Open to all ages, the festival boasts more than 40 sets of lantern sculptures crafted by artisans using metal, steel, fabric and LED lights. The walk-through experience has four themed sections. There’s also a marketplace and a food court. Tickets start at \$33.

tianyuculture.us

THURSDAY 11/27

Mesa Turkey Trot

8 a.m. at Red Mountain Park, 7745 E. Brown Road, Mesa. Get your running shoes ready; the Turkey Trot is here! Attendees can participate in the one, five or 10K timed race to see who gets to the turkey first. All ages can attend. There is a one mile walk available for kids 12 and under. Registration starts at \$40, and proceeds will benefit various nonprofit organizations.

racerooster.com

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Bronco grad's road to recovery after tragedy down under

By Rachael Bouley

What was supposed to be an incredible year-long adventure down under changed in an instant for Max Allen. After graduating from the University of Arizona with a degree in Urban Planning, the Brophy Prep alum set out for Sydney, Australia, where he planned to split his 12-month work visa by working at a bakery and a ranch. He arrived late on September 4 for what should have been the trip of a lifetime, but within the first 36 hours, the unthinkable happened: he suffered a severe spinal cord injury.

“On Saturday morning, Max went to the beach with a couple of friends,” his sister, Olivia Allen, shared. “While wading in waist-deep water, he dove forward and unknowingly struck a hidden sandbar, fracturing his C5 vertebra. His friends and an off-duty lifeguard acted quickly to prevent the injury from becoming fatal.”

Max was rushed to Royal North Shore Hospital, where he underwent emergency surgery to remove his C5, perform a bone graft, and secure his neck with plates and screws. The C5 nerves control breathing, so for three days, he was sedated and intubated until his diaphragm grew stronger and doctors were able to remove the tube.

He remained in the ICU, where they gave him medication to increase his blood pressure, before being moved to the acute short-term trauma ward.

“Max worked hard in therapy and slowly began regaining some movement,” Allen said. “He gained some strength back in his left leg and left arm, and most of his right arm. On September 25, he wiggled the toes in his right leg.”

His dad arrived a few days after the accident, and his mom wasn’t far behind, there by his side during the early

weeks of his recovery. Once Max was deemed medically able to fly, he was repatriated alongside his parents as they flew back to the U.S. with two traveling nurses.

They arrived in Denver and within a few days, Max was being transitioned into Craig Hospital, one of the leading spinal rehabilitation centers in the country.

“Through it all, he has continued to stay positive. My brother is kind, funny, and polite by nature,” Allen said. “Growing up, he was always active – constantly playing in the backyard or on the playground. He played a variety of sports over the years, including soccer, flag football, tackle football, wrestling, and track and field.”

Max attended Echo Canyon and Veritas before graduating from Brophy.

He has a close-knit group of friends from the Arcadia area, and friends and their families in Australia also showed immense support by visiting him regularly and staying in constant contact with his loved ones before they could get there.

The family started a CaringBridge site to provide regular updates on Max’s journey, and a GoFundMe to raise crucial funds to support his recovery. Allen said they’re amazed by the response and support from Arcadia neighbors and those in Sydney.

“So many family, friends, and neighbors have reached out – whether donating, sharing his story, sending kind thoughts, or even bringing meals to our family,” Allen said. “The support has been overwhelming in the best way, and it means so much to us.”

The fundraiser has already made an enormous difference, raising over \$120,000, which allowed Max’s parents to get to Australia and bring their son home safely. These funds will continue to help with rehabilitation, physical therapy,



Max Allen, known for his adventurous spirit and big heart, suffered a C5 spinal cord injury at an Australian beach.



home healthcare, medications, mobility, and assistive equipment, as well as ADA home modifications, travel-associated expenses, and medical bills.

The family partnered with a church in Englewood, CO, which allows donations to be tax-deductible, ensuring that 100 percent of every gift goes directly toward Max’s care. He currently has limited mobility in his limbs, and while the future holds many unknowns, no one is giving up.

“If you know Max, you know his strength, stubborn determination, and big heart,” Allen said. “Our family mantra has become ‘little victories lead to big victories.’ Already, Max is working toward those victories every single day.”



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Scottsdale Civic Center

Saturday, December 6 | 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

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Scottsdale Waterfront Canal Bank

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7157ranchovista4001.com



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4843north72ndway.com



\$7,699,000 6216 North 38th Place
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6216north38thplace.com



\$1,400,000 7039 East Main Street A206
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6836hummingbird.com



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8108delcristal.com



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5819calledelmedia.com



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6716malcomb.com



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In the Kitchen

with **Executive Sous Chef Mireya Ryan** of **T. Cook's**

5200 E. Camelback Road • royalpalmshotel.com

Chef Mireya Ryan’s culinary journey is one rooted in tradition, hard work, and a love for food. A fourth-generation Arizonan with a passion that sparked in childhood, she’s carved out a career that blends cultural heritage with creativity. Now at the helm of T. Cook’s at Royal Palms, Chef Ryan reflects on her path, the flavors that shaped her, and the evolving world of resort dining.

Give us a little insight into your upbringing.

I’m from Tucson, so I was born and raised in Arizona, just not in the Valley. I’m a fourth-generation Mexican American so food is really centralized for us, holidays and family gatherings are important. Tamales, right? Like a week or so after Thanksgiving, we pick a day

and coordinate this whole thing where we make a ton of tamales. That’s been an ongoing theme throughout my childhood.

Are any of your family members in the restaurant industry?

No, actually – no one in my family is in the industry, but my mom worked two jobs, so I got my work ethic from her.

I’ve been in restaurants since I was 13. One of those ‘paid under the table’ kind of things [laughs]. I’m 33 now, and that feels like forever ago. My mom told me that when I was little, like four or five, I would walk around the kitchen telling everyone ‘I want to be a chef.’ I don’t remember that, but she says it was fate that brought me to where I am now.

Did you attend culinary school?

I went to Le Cordon Bleu when it was open in Scottsdale, and it gave me a great foundation for the restaurant industry, but it was more day-to-day stuff.

What other establishments have you worked at?

Funnily enough, T. Cook’s was my first real job, back in 2012. I started under Chef Lee as a line cook and worked my way up. My husband and I – he was a chef at the time as well – moved to San Diego for his career, and we were there for about five years.

We really missed our families and wanted to come back to the Valley. I don’t know if the stars aligned or it was kismet or what, but Chef Lee was hiring a sous chef and an acquaintance that was working here said, ‘Hey, you should look into this,’ and I thought ‘Why not?’ It was destiny.

What are the most popular dishes at T. Cook’s?

During the Chef Lee era, the most popular dishes were probably paella and the bread and pesto. Something my team and I are proud of now is the elote rigatoni, which was featured in the *Phoenix Eats + Drinks* book, which is cool. It touches on our roots, and I love that. We used to be known as Mediterranean cuisine and now I think we’re more global and take inspiration from other cuisines.

Another staple is Chef Lee’s carbonara, that one does really well. The polenta, too,



but I think across the board everyone has their faves here.

What’s one item in the kitchen you find yourself using all the time?

For a while my sous chef and I were putting chili crunch on everything. I don’t know why. We just really loved it, to the point where servers were asking if we were planning on adding it to every dish. We have a ton of it [laughs].

Do you have a process for coming up with new menu items?

Yes, and it’s been the same process forever [laughs]. My sous chefs and I create a little ‘war room’ and we discuss where we are seasonally, check if anyone

has any new ideas, anything they’ve seen or read, and of course, we ask, ‘What tastes good together?’ We’re ingredients first, technique and execution later. Does this work together? How do we make it taste and look good?

Any awards or accolades you’d like to shout out?

Last year, Royal Palms received a Michelin Key, which is really rad and humbling to be part of. Earlier this year, we got the No. 4 spot for *USA Today’s* Top 10 for Hotel Restaurants so that was awesome. Personally, being featured in the *Eats + Drinks* book was so cool because there are a lot of amazing chefs in there and it’s awesome to be among them.

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What's new on the menu now?
New menu items for the fall and winter include a bone-in ribeye from K4 Ranch, a pork tomahawk, winter veg, etc. We brought the rigatoni Bolognese back. All of our pastas are made in-house, every couple of days. We make a lot of pasta [laughs].

Working in a resort setting, does it get crazy busy for the holidays?
Absolutely! The big holidays see a lot of families – and it's returning families, which makes it even more special. That's why we don't mess with the main dishes. Thanksgiving and Christmas, we know which dishes people are looking for. We try to switch up a few things, keep it fresh and absolutely worth the experience of dining here.

“
...it was fate that brought me to where I am now.
”

What eateries would you recommend to someone who is new to the Valley?
My mind goes immediately to Mexican food. I immediately think of Taco Boys, Carolina's and The Tamale Store. If you go to Carolina's, get the butter tortilla. They make them to order and they are insane.

Who are some other chefs that inspire you?
José Andrés and his humanitarian efforts is the first that comes to mind. I think of Francis Mallmann; he's got a central approach to food, especially with the way he talks about meat and vegetables; Nancy Silverton and her perfectionism.
With 'real life' people, there are too many to mention. It's not just chefs, it's line cooks and prep cooks and dish staff. I've learned a lot from a lot of different people. Chef Lee right off the bat has taught me so many valuable lessons.



What is your favorite part of the restaurant or hospitality industry?
The diversity amongst coworkers. I really enjoy all the different personalities you come across. I've heard about countless once-in-a-lifetime experiences from so many people. I've learned about different cultures and lifestyles. This industry has become an education in people.

How do you balance creativity with the diverse tastes of guests?
I think knowing your guests is a huge advantage. We see a lot of returning families. Also, for instance, you know someone who orders a steak isn't looking for you to reinvent the wheel. Just give them a solid meal and make it with love. Make a sauce, but make it really well. Pick a steak, but from a good ranch and of quality.

On the flip side, what's your least favorite part?
It's bittersweet, but definitely the consuming aspect of those early years of being in a kitchen. To an extent, ambition requires this isolating drive. I think that's why kitchens become like your second family. Things are much more balanced for me now, but there are still days where I only get to see my son active and awake for a couple hours.

What trends or changes do you see shaping the future of resort dining?
I think guests are looking for more intentionality with their food. Sustainability, local sourcing, and more transparency. We've definitely already seen this happening, but I think more from a health standpoint – like seed oils versus palm oil – that sort of thing. Wellness driven menus are what comes to mind.

What's next for Chef Ryan?
It's still T. Cook's. I started here when I was 18 and I'm 33 now; I've spent a good chunk of my life here. I have a different kind of love for this place, it's kind of spooky, like – why was I brought back here? I think (without too much ego, but a little bit) I want to leave it better than I found it, but I'm not going anywhere any time soon!

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“Meet Mr.” | Ray Arsigne

Josh Garcia

It’s been said that the way to a man’s heart is through their stomach – which is just another way of saying people can easily be enticed by a great meal. For Josh and Desiree Garcia, the formula worked in reverse.

In 2005, Desiree and her mother discovered the legendary Miracle Mile Deli. After enjoying one of Miracle Mile’s New York-style sandwiches, they were hooked. They began meeting for lunch weekly and that regularity made them known to the staff – and in particular, one agog busboy.

“I wasn’t looking but she was hard to miss. She just kept coming in and I kept finding opportunities to see her,” Garcia confesses. They began dating and were married two years later.

His grandfather, Jack Grodzinsky, opened the first Miracle Mile on McDowell Road in 1949, and Garcia began working in their Chris-Town restaurant when he was just 11. He used a milk crate to stand on so he could see over the counter.

“I literally grew up in the restaurant, did my homework on a pickle bucket, and then started working; first serving coffee on Saturday mornings and eventually learning everything else,” Garcia said.

Twenty years later, he is vice president and oversees all aspects of daily operations, having taken the leadership baton from his parents, Jill and George.

“Our entire staff is like family and several of our team members have been with us for over 20 years. Naturally, it’s just as important that our customers feel like family, too,” Garcia said.

Quality food, consistency in presentation, and good service has translated to Miracle Mile’s success. It’s assuredly working because the iconic establishment is celebrating 76 years in business.

The restaurant has served over 10 million meals and sells 4,000 pounds of pastrami every month. The Straw Sandwich:

hot pastrami, melted Swiss and hot sauerkraut, is their best-selling item.

Asked about the chaotic nature of the business and Garcia laughs. “The restaurant is calm compared to my house. We have two kids, three dogs, two birds and a 110-pound pig named Gordon. We call it the zoo and there’s not a lot of quiet moments in our home. It’s a real hoot.”

The 43-year-old Phoenix native attended Central High School and the University of Redlands. While abroad in London in 2002, he was fortunate to intern at the All England Club and then returned for two more summers of full-time work at the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum. “It was a dream job,” he said.

The Garcias and their children, Sophie (16) and Jack (13), are recent residents of Arcadia but have fallen in love with the neighborhood.



“After just two years, it’s easy to see why it captures the heart of families. Arcadia is the perfect blend of charm and community warmth which we are grateful to be a part of,” Garcia said.

Asked where their family goes to eat out and he names all local favorites. “It’s important to patronize those families and owners who are a part of our community,” he said.

For Josh Garcia, a restaurant is more than just a place to eat. It is where you can connect with people and touch their lives.

It’s also, apparently, a place where you can fall in love.

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How you can help others this holiday season

By Mark Hays

Arizona nonprofits have kicked off their donation drives, offering a platform for people to contribute essential food, water, toys, and more to underserved populations while fostering community and purpose. Below are 11 Valley organizations where folks can get involved and help out.

PHOENIX RESCUE MISSION

2515 N. 34th Dr., Phoenix
phoenixrescuemission.org

Phoenix Rescue Mission is focused on transformation and healing for men, women and children trapped in cycles of homelessness, addiction and poverty. This year, the organization is accepting donations for its 'Fill-A-Bag' holiday drives.

For Thanksgiving, PRM is looking for canned fruit and veggies (green beans, corn, sweet potatoes, etc.) as well as cranberry sauce, gravy, mashed potatoes and mac and cheese. Turkeys are also being accepted. For Christmas, the nonprofit hopes to fill 2,000 bags for its meal and gift drive. New, unwrapped toys, wrapping paper and gifts for kids up to 18 years old (puzzles, bath toys, coloring books, sports equipment, journals, etc.) will be accepted.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

420 W. Watkins Road, Phoenix
stvincentdepaul.net

Extra help is needed in SVdP's kitchen, dining rooms, and central food bank. Turkey Tuesday takes place on November 25. Before that, Arizonans can donate a frozen turkey at any Basha's or Food City location across Arizona – SVdP volunteers will be on-site to collect donations.

The Feeding Our Neighbors Together campaign is a statewide food drive "that harnesses the power of community to feed more people facing food insecurity across Arizona." Individuals can register to host a food drive or donate nonperishable goods to support SVdP's goal of collecting 500,000 pounds of food.

The organization invites individuals, families, and businesses to sponsor families



(left) Through November 16, Prince of Peace is collecting items to assemble Thanksgiving meals. (right) Duet is looking for donations for its holiday toy drive, open until December 5, 2025.



in need during the holidays. Sponsors are matched with a family and asked to provide at least two new, wrapped gifts for each child under 16 (one toy and one clothing item), a gift for each older sibling and adult in the household, and a grocery store gift card for the family's holiday meal. Once matched, sponsors should contact their family promptly and ensure all gifts are delivered by December 23.

PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH + FEEDING STUDENTS USA

3641 N. 56th St., Phoenix
feedingstudentsusa.org

Feeding Students USA, a pantry located on the Prince of Peace campus, supports working families who "fall through the cracks of public aid." Now through November 16, Prince of Peace is collecting boxed stuffing, canned goods, and shelf-stable sides to assemble Thanksgiving meals for those in need.

PARADISE VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

4455 E. Lincoln Dr., Paradise Valley
pvumc.org/events

PVUMC is hosting several events that turn festive fun into charitable support. The Christmas Bazaar & Craft Show takes place on November 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., where vendors donate 10 percent of

sales to nonprofits like UMOM, Audrey's Angels, and PEO.

From November 1-19, PVUMC is also holding a Navajo Nation Supply Drive, collecting nonperishable foods, diapers, winter gear, and gift cards for families in partnership with FaithWorks in Flagstaff.

HOMELESS YOUTH CONNECTION

9100 N. 2nd St., Phoenix
hycac.org

Homeless Youth Connection supports youth ages 13-21 experiencing homelessness across Maricopa County and Flagstaff. This holiday season, their "Holiday Magic Starts Now" campaign focuses on "showing young people that they matter."

For Thanksgiving, donors are encouraged to give grocery gift cards (up to \$75) to help youth enjoy a warm holiday meal.

To contribute to its Winter Holiday Gift Bags campaign, individuals can fill festive bags with gift cards and treats. Suggested items include Walmart, Target, Amazon, or fast food restaurant gift cards for \$25 or more.

HARVEST COMPASSION CENTER

4744 E. Thunderbird Road, Phoenix
harvestcompassioncenter.org

Harvest Compassion Center provides food, clothing, hygiene, and baby supplies across three Valley locations. They are currently accepting donations for their Holiday Toy Drive, now through December 23.

Volunteers are always needed, especially at HCC's Maryvale and West Phoenix sites. A quick online application is available for those interested in getting involved.

THE FOSTER ALLIANCE

3110 E. Thunderbird Road, Phoenix
thefosteralliance.org

The Foster Alliance's holiday toy drives are in full swing. Upcoming events include Fill Santa's Sleigh on December 2, where individuals and families can drop off toys at the Phoenix office. Folks can also drop off donations at Scottsdale Quarter, at the Flagstaff Pub Crawl on December 5, and at the Cardinals Game Toy Drive on December 21.

Each of these events will also have hot chocolate and treats available to make the day even more fun. For those who can't attend, the website offers a link to TFA's Amazon wish list, and the organization is also looking for volunteers to help pack gift bags.

DUET

10000 N. 31st Ave., Phoenix
duetaz.org

Duet: Partners in Health and Aging has been in the Valley for 40 years, originally starting their services to help grandparents who are raising grandkids. They offer support groups, legal assistance, respite assistance, educational workshops, and grandfamily outings.

The holidays are challenging for these grandparents on fixed incomes, so Duet is looking for donations for its holiday toy drive. Bring new toys or gift cards to the office Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. until December 5, 2025. There's also an Amazon Wishlist.

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS UCC

5524 E. Lafayette Blvd., Phoenix
sohucc.org

This Arcadia-area congregation supports Nourish Phoenix, one of the only non-geographic food banks in the Valley. In November, they are collecting new, unwrapped toys for Santa's Workshop, which will provide gifts for children in need.

In December, the church is collecting new and gently used blankets to support unsheltered neighbors. Hygiene items, clothing, and small household goods can be dropped off at the donation box under the front patio at any time.

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

2310 N. 56th St., Phoenix
ststephens.org

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church needs donations for its two annual holiday giveaways. For the Thanksgiving Giveaway on November 12, donors are asked to drop off shelf-stable food and cash donations by November 2 to help purchase Walmart gift cards. For the Christmas Giveaway on December 10, warm winter clothing donations are needed by December 4. Donations may be dropped off Monday-Thursday between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF PHOENIX

4633 N. 54th St., Phoenix
christchildphx.org

The all-volunteer Christ Child Society is organizing a Christmas Giving Toy Drive for Catholic Charities foster children. Donors are asked to provide unwrapped, labeled gifts for children ages 3-15. Gift cards valued between \$20 and \$25 are encouraged for kids over 10.

Items can be dropped off on December 4 between 9 and 10:30 a.m. at the St. Pope John Paul II Building at Mount Claret Retreat Center.

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YOU CAN LEAD A HORSE TO THE 'DANCE' FLOOR...

Arcadia teen makes a name for herself in the competitive dressage circuit

By Mallory Gleich

For the past nine years, Xavier sophomore Sami MacDonald has been mastering the art of dressage, a form of horseback riding that emphasizes precision, harmony and choreography. Dressage originates from the French word “dresser,” meaning “to train.”

Horse and rider perform a series of choreographed movements from memory while judges score based on accuracy, fluidity, and how well the horse and rider work as a team. Sami's been up for the challenge – she's a 4x Arizona State Champion and won the 2025 National Dressage 16 and under Championship in Illinois this summer.

Inspired by her mom's childhood riding photos, Sami saddled up at seven years old for the first time and never looked back.

“My mom rode horses growing up, and I was obsessed with them from a young age,” she said. “Seeing pictures of her with her horses made me want to be just like her.”

Dressage isn't just a weekend activity – it's a full-on sport and an Olympic event that requires immense discipline, strength, and hours of training. Sami competes with the Interscholastic Equestrian Association, where she has qualified for the National Championships for three consecutive years. She placed second in the top varsity class as a freshman.

“The goal is to show off the horse's training, obedience, strength, flexibility, and harmony



Sami with her mom, Kari, grandmother Ann, trainer Jess and dad, Kevin.

with the rider,” she explained. “Training is different for every horse and rider. They both have to develop gradually. The tests include various movements based on their difficulty level. The upper level tests have the hardest movements, and the lower levels are more basic.”

Sometimes, it's set to music in a routine

known as a freestyle, where riders choose songs that match their horse's movements and create an artistic routine.

Sami's horse is named Candy Crush, or Crush for short. For the past three years, this talented horse has been her partner in the ring, but as she moves up to more advanced divisions, it's time for her to level up with a

new horse. That means saying farewell to Crush, which she admits is “bittersweet.”

Competition days are intense – Sami and her team are up early, feeding and braiding the horses, riding, showing, and cheering on teammates. An important part of dressage is the fashion. Riders typically wear white breeches, tall black boots, a navy or black jacket, gloves, and a helmet. But there's room to express yourself, too. Sami and Crush once competed in red, white, and blue for a patriotic freestyle.

As for what's next, the teen hopes to head to the North American Youth Championships. To get there, she needs to be among the top twelve riders in the nation.

“I also want to earn my silver and gold medals,” she said. “I've already earned my bronze, but the next levels are even tougher.”

“At 4:30 a.m. the day of Nationals, I found Sami in the kitchen rehearsing her dressage program. I told her, ‘Just have fun today. You are prepared and trained, if the horse cooperates today you will win,’ and she said, ‘Dad, in six hours I will be the new National Champion!’” Kevin MacDonald said. “I am so proud of Sami. She worked very hard to achieve her goals.”

It's not every day you meet a teen who spends her free time choreographing routines with a thousand-pound dance partner, but Sami is proof that dreams can be built on four hooves and a whole lot of heart.

TOD CARSON

A photograph of a sophisticated interior display. In the center is a large, dark wood chest with ornate brass handles. On top of the chest are two large, ornate lamps with pleated shades and brass bases. Between the lamps is a framed picture of a clock face with a figure, and below it is a small clock. To the right of the clock are two decorative vases. The background is a light-colored wall with framed art.

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EVERY THUMBPRINT TELLS A STORY

How students are helping Veterans share their experiences

By Michael P. Murphy

There is more to the Imprints of Honor logo than meets the eye. The star symbolizes American patriotism, of course, but the thumbprint is curious. It makes sense when you realize every story is different, and those stories have meaning. The origin of Imprints of Honor is one such story.

It was 1998, and Steven Spielberg's masterpiece *Saving Private Ryan* was enjoying a popular run in theaters. The movie itself perhaps wasn't as enjoyable – there were disturbing parts and violent parts – it is a depiction of war, after all. It was thought-provoking enough to inspire a student in Barbara Hatch's history class to ask his teacher a question.

"Is *Saving Private Ryan* real?"

Mrs. Hatch had no experience in war to give an authoritative answer, so she reached out to a local VFW and recruited American Veterans who did: those who had served. They told their stories, providing students with a first-person account of their military service and battlefield experience.

The storytelling was so well-received that Mrs. Hatch kept inviting them back over the next few years. Then, in 2004, Salt River Project announced an educational grant opportunity to document history. That's when another student made an interesting proposal.

"Why don't we document our Veteran's history?"

Four years earlier, the Library of Congress had started the Veterans' History Project, for oral history and video archives. Mrs. Hatch was an English major who had experience in history and yearbook classes. She also had that list of Veterans who spoke in her classroom. She invited them back so that the students could record their interviews, then she sent those recordings to be archived in the Library of Congress.

She then went another step further. The students were tasked with writing the Veterans' stories and publishing them in a yearbook format. That book became a series known as *Since You Asked*. There are now 22 published volumes.

"There are a lot of good things that come out of this," Imprints' Executive Director, Michelle DiMuro, said. "For the Veterans, who will feel respected and appreciated, but also for the students and what they gain, not only from history and writing skills, but in their own development."

The students wanted to continue recording this first-person history and turn it into an after-school club. The success of the program helped it grow into a nonprofit in



PHOTOS COURTESY OF IMPRINTS OF HONOR

(above) At the signing event, each Veteran and student receives a copy of *Since You Asked*. (below) A sample page from the book.

2009, the Veterans' Heritage Project. Last year, the name changed to Imprints of Honor to better reflect the long-term impact of students preserving Veterans service stories and being inspired to live a life of honor.

Imprints of Honor now has chapters on 30 middle school, high school, and college campuses across Arizona. ASU offers a one-credit course at the Tempe campus and a three-credit course at the Glendale campus. Notre Dame Prep provides it as an elective course. An online independent contributor option is available for students to participate if the program is not yet at their school.

It's the personal relationships that make Imprints of Honor such a vital organization. The annual community reception and book signing event is the culminating activity. The free public event includes a speaker, the awarding of scholarships, and the recognition of a Teacher of the Year. Each Veteran and student receives a free copy of *Since You Asked*, which is signed at the conclusion of the event.

"It's just an amazing experience for everybody there, especially the Vietnam Veterans," DiMuro said. "They say it's the welcome home they never received."

Imprints of Honor is all about bringing Veterans and students together and preserving precious history. Real, first-person history.





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According to the hiking golfer, the Camino will provide

By Michael P. Murphy

Kevin Riley sits at a table inside Black Cat Coffee House, a favorite Arcadia hangout. He’s holding onto a Ping 2-Iron he has named Deuce. Yes, it’s a golf club – but it also serves him well as a walking stick for his other passion.

Thus, Kevin is known as Arcadia’s Hiking Golfer, and he has some terrific stories to tell about the awe-inspiring hike he returned from in September: The Camino Portuguese, a 150-mile, 12-day hike that runs from the Portuguese coast and into Spain.

“I saw a movie called *The Way, My Way* in March,” Kevin said. “It was about an Australian fellow who basically documented his Camino trip from 12 years ago. I read the book, and when I saw the movie, it seemed more personal.”

But it was the song that played over the end credits of the movie that really got Kevin’s attention. A beautiful tune called ‘Somewhere Along the Way’ by an Australian musician named Dan Mullins, who also had a podcast called *My Camino*. Kevin was intrigued.

“I went to his website and, lo and behold, I saw he was doing the Camino Portuguese hike that starts in Porto, about halfway up the Portuguese coast,” he said. “All the stops were predetermined. I thought, ‘Man, this looks like a walking concert. This is too good to pass up.’”



Kevin Riley



The group in Porto on the first of the 12-day hike.

And it was. In Porto, he joined Dan Mullins’ group of 35 hikers, a mix of Australians, Canadians, and Americans. They hiked at least 12 miles a day, but there were at least three days when they hiked 18 miles on mostly flat terrain. The worst, according to Kevin, was a five-mile stretch that went uphill from 50 feet to 1500 feet. Tough on the feet, among other things.

There was no camping on this hike. Every night was spent in hotels or hostels. Kevin had his bag of personal belongings transferred from one location to another, so he was never burdened with a heavy

backpack. Instead, he wore a fanny pack with minimal necessities. And he was right about it being a walking concert. Dan Mullins performed every night in a restaurant or bar.

Kevin hiked Camino de Santiago by himself some six years ago. This time, he hiked with a large group and quickly found himself enjoying the companionship. Not only the hikers in his group, but also others he met along the way.

“The Camino is about the relationships you build, and that’s what this one really was,” he said.

He has fond memories of the group he hiked with and the way they bonded. Dan Mullins had brought them together through his music and performances. The Camino is a hiking bubble where people are just people, a great getaway from all the everyday noise and conflict.

“Whatever you’re looking for, the Camino will provide,” Kevin said. “Whether it’s companionship, solace, scenery, it has a way of providing. I think everyone should walk a Camino trail if they’re able. A truly unique experience.”



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Students were encouraged to dress in traditional Hispanic wear for the parade.

Biltmore Prep celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

In October, students at Biltmore Preparatory Academy in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program honored Hispanic Heritage Month in a big way. From September 15 to October 15, students engaged in lessons and activities that highlighted the cultural richness of Hispanic communities.

Each week, students in the DLI program explored different Hispanic cultures. In their classrooms, they studied history, geography, traditions, and cultural practices, deepening their understanding of the connection between language learning and cultural awareness.

During the final week, the focus was on Puerto Rico, and students eagerly prepared for a school-wide parade held on October 15 to celebrate everything they had learned. “We learned about different countries that speak Spanish, like Mexico and Puerto Rico,” shared one kindergartner.

The celebration extended throughout the entire campus. The library featured books

by Hispanic authors and stories centered on culture. In art class, students learned about influential figures and created original digital posters inspired by their lives and contributions. “We learned about different flags and even made our own alebrijes,”

said a second grader. “They are magical creatures that are bright and colorful and are based on animals.”

“The month of activities and celebrations builds on the vision and mission of our school to promote biliterate and multicultural students who can thrive in a diverse world,” first grade teacher Ms. Salazar said.

The celebration concluded with a colorful parade showcasing the countries studied throughout the month. Each grade level represented a different country, dressing in traditional attire or the country’s flag colors and presenting artwork to share their learning with family, friends, and the community.

“The month promotes multicultural students who can thrive in a diverse world.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHANIE DEMAR

Father-daughter duo creates custom art from the heart

By Sherry Sklar

Dale Anthony and Debbi Douglas have joined artistic forces to launch a custom company named E. Gladstone Designs. This venture – inspired by their shared passion for creativity, community, and family history – pays tribute to Debbi’s grandfather, William Ellsworth Gladstone “Glad” Anthony, who the family fondly remembers for his warmth and graciousness.

“Friends called him Glad,” Dale said, “and we wanted our work to carry that same feeling forward.”

The family – three generations of Arizonans – has been residing in Arcadia for more than two decades. With Dale and Debbi living just a few blocks apart, their collaboration is familiar and effortless.

Specializing in both 2D and 3D art, each brings their own talents and interests to create gifts thoughtfully designed to be passed down through generations.

Their creative venture began in the community and grew through word of mouth. It started with a simple request: to create a centerpiece for a friend’s holiday party.

“One of my mom’s friends was putting together a Christmas party,” Debbi said. “My dad painted pots for the table’s centerpieces. Guests raved and encouraged us to do more.”

At the time, Debbi’s children attended Prince of Peace. Balancing family life, she began crafting original, monogrammed swings for friends, which quickly became a hit. Dale and Debbi contributed pieces of artwork to silent auctions and raffles for school charities, including Prince of Peace, St. Theresa Catholic School, and Notre Dame Prep.

Drawing inspiration from family life, Arizona’s landscape, and the stories shared by their clients, Dale and Debbi seek to capture something profound in each piece they create.

Dale specializes in detailed home renderings and painted ceramics. His choice of media – graphite, acrylics, watercolor, and ink – is often tailored to the piece being created. He designs and transforms terracotta blanks into one-of-a-kind objects. His drawings capture family homes, beach cabins, and desert blooms, making personal, meaningful gifts.

Debbi has expanded beyond painted custom swings to include decoupage garden accessories, such as watering cans, which she hand-finishes. She works closely with her clients, tailoring her approach to their color palettes and design preferences.

“Clients come up with different ideas



Dale Anthony and Debbi Douglas

PHOTOS COURTESY OF E. GLADSTONE ART



to decorate their swings,” she explained. “One wanted to gift a swing to her grandmother featuring character drawings of her grandkids; another wanted her children’s handprints on the seat surface.”

Debbi is considering working with resin and wood to offer charcuterie boards and serving trays embedded with pressed desert flowers.

Their work may differ in media and techniques, but the commonality is that each enjoys the process of creating together.

“We’re entering new phases of our lives – as a retiree and empty nester,” Dale said. “Our primary goal is to grow something lasting, anchored in relationships.”

E. Gladstone Designs’ mission reflects the values of its namesake: to create heartfelt keepsakes that carry stories from one generation to the next.

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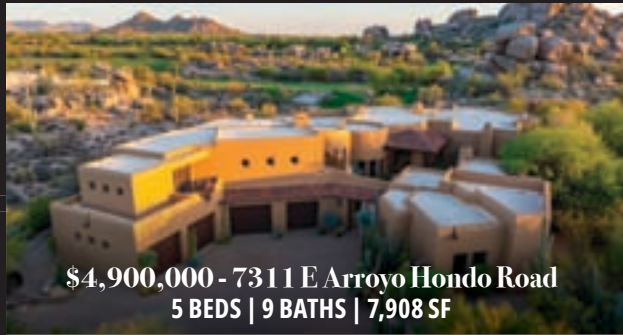
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\$2,195,000 - 4125 N 64th Street
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\$1,895,000 - 3628 N 49th Place
3 BEDS | 2.5 BATHS | 2,755 SF



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\$1,225,000 - 5971 E Orange Blossom Lane
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A desert

AWAKENING

Arizona's oldest botanical garden celebrates the season



By Sherry Sklar

Half an hour east of Phoenix, the desert begins to breathe again. The traffic thins, and buildings become sparser. Driving along US-60, your eyes adjust to the expanse: saguaros, rugged mountains, and a vast sky that takes the lead. Beyond Gold Canyon and Top-of-the-World lies Boyce Thompson Arboretum: a desert jewel tucked into the foothills near Superior.

For those seeking a brief escape into nature, the park offers a serene environment that can help alleviate stress.

The return of cooler temperatures invites exploration, offering a comfortable way to walk the trails and discover unique plant collections, active wildlife, and the only fall-coloring trees in the Valley. This more than a century-old botanical garden is both the oldest and largest in Arizona, enticing hikers, birders, ecologists, gardeners, and landscape enthusiasts alike.

Located just an hour from Phoenix, Boyce Thompson Arboretum occupies 100 acres within a larger 374-acre property.

Founded in 1924 by mining magnate William Boyce Thompson, the garden remains a living museum of arid-land biodiversity. His vision to establish both the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research in New York and the garden in Arizona was inspired by his service with the American Red

Cross relief mission during the Russian famine of 1921-1922.

What he saw and experienced left a lifelong impression and shaped his philanthropy in the areas of plants and plant science.

Thompson's business interests in railroads and mining, as the owner of the Magma Copper Mine, brought him to Arizona in 1910, where he purchased the land surrounding the garden and established his winter home.

"He was conservation-minded and fell in love with our landscape," Executive Director Kim Gray said. "He built his mansion, the Pickett Post House, which you can see from inside the botanical garden."

Thompson became interested in cultivating food-producing plants and other species that would grow in a desert environment.

His early plans included nut groves and experimental plantings.

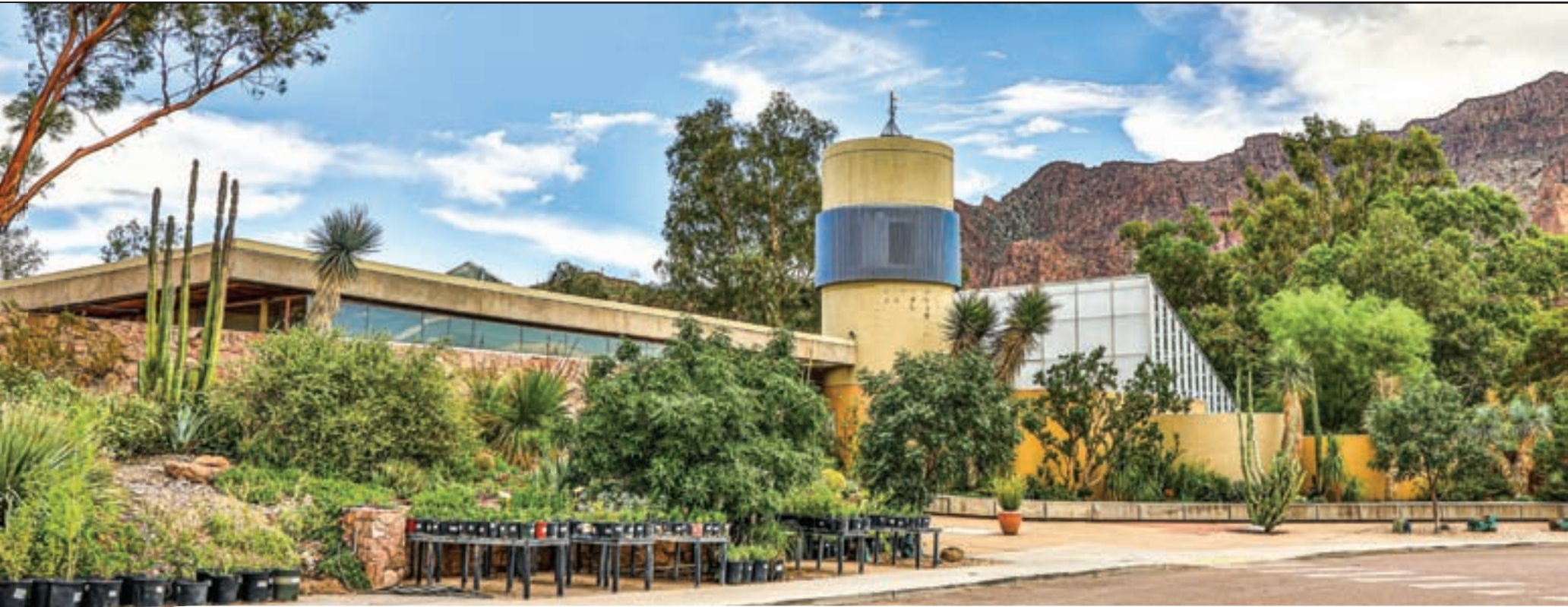
"He was curious to learn how you could grow food to feed people locally, and what would thrive in Arizona and the Sonoran Desert," Gray explained. "This became the

main impetus for him to develop the property during a time when we knew little about arid plants."

Today, the botanical garden continues to focus on water conservation, the ethical acquisition, cultivation, and maintenance of seed banks, and the propagation of plants.

Gardens feature collections from around the globe, educating visitors about sustainability, food production, and ecology.





The botanical park offers just under five miles of trails and 12 gardens. Visitors can navigate different elevations along paths and switchbacks through unique plant collections and diverse wildlife habitats.

“The best way to experience the arboretum is to come prepared to hike. Bring your boots, walk the main trail, and take time to be in nature,” Gray said.

Immerse yourself in the landscape through Forest Bathing – also known as *Shinrin-yoku* – a Japanese therapeutic practice that encourages spending time in nature to enhance health, wellness, and overall happiness. Participants are led on a 2.5-hour walk through the botanical garden’s large and diverse Eucalyptus Forest, accompanied by a series of guided “invitations,” culminating in a tea ceremony.

Boasting brilliant colors, the Chinese pistachio grove will be in full glory later in the month. Other unique spots include Ayer Lake and the canyon region alongside Queen Creek. In 2014, the nonprofit was gifted the Wallace Desert Gardens collection of thousands of mature trees, shrubs, cacti, and succulents.

The team designed a 13-acre garden, by region, with its main trail being wheelchair accessible. It features a bridge over Queen Creek, surrounded by 5,000 plants. Against this rich backdrop, big horn sheep, bobcats, various reptiles, and a resident group of coatimundi call the park home.

Voracious omnivores with a flexible, long snout and ringed tail, white-nosed coatimundi poke, push, and dig to find delicacies. These fantastic climbers can scale trees but also feed at ground level. Visitors might be surprised to see them congregating right off the trail.

While adorable and intelligent, Gray cautioned that they are still wild animals.

“If you feed them, they’re going to become nuisances, and if they spot food, they will raid your cart,” she warned. “We are careful to keep them wild, and people can see them within 10 feet of the trail, foraging, doing their thing as wild animals.”

Named as a birding hotspot by Audubon, the arboretum will host its second annual Bird Week, November 1-7. Join docent-led bird walks, talks, and “sits” to identify common birds that fly by. Celebrate the season during “Holiday Hangout,” December 6-21, featuring vendors and gifts at a holiday marketplace.

Through January 26, visitors can catch the garden’s art installation, “Glass in Flight,” featuring luminous steel-and-glass sculptures by Tucson artist Alex Heveri. A short drive that feels like an escape to inner peace, the arboretum offers more than a change of scenery. It gives us space to breathe, to slow down, and reconnect with the natural world.

btarboretum.org



Where strength meets community

By Michael P. Murphy

Team 44 is a curious name for a personal training studio. Co-owner Tony Rice doesn't even pause when asked where the inspiration came from.

"The name comes from the fact that my father was in the best shape of his life at age 44," he said. "He was an athlete and always very active, but later in life, he got more into strength training, so he started to train hard in our basement."

Those basement workouts made a big impression on young Tony when he began his own strength training at age 14. He

looks back and realizes that 4 or 44 have been a constant presence in his life, especially since opening a personal training facility at 3744 Indian School Road in 2012.

A year later, Tony joined forces with former professional soccer player

Neema Doroudian to build the community that is Team 44.

"We do personal training and group training classes," Neema said. "We offer to all ages and abilities, and we specialize in performance training, whatever that means for the client. Our mission is to empower every individual no matter where they are in their fitness journey. We're community builders and connectors."

They do it through expert training and a culture rooted in inclusive support and genuine connection. Tony and Neema passionately believe that fitness should

be welcoming and not intimidating. They feel they have created a space where everyone feels motivated to be a part of something big.

"I think what sets us apart from our training program is we have a very experienced core of coaches, all highly educated and experienced," Tony said. "We come together to create programs that are thoughtful and well-balanced. We're not here to impress our clients on how hard we can work them out; instead, we want them to move better and feel better."

Back to that number 44. This is the year Tony celebrates his 44th, but he's not one for birthdays.

"I thought it might feel a little different, but it wasn't as big a deal as I thought it would be," he said. "I'm growing a young family, I've got an awesome business partner,

a thriving business, and I'm connected in the community. My fitness level is high. I don't have any injuries. I feel it's not a turning point number but the next step for growth."

Team 44 is more than just a personal training facility. There's a well-established community there, a place where people connect through shared goals, positive energy, and a commitment to collective growth. That philosophy reflects the two men who own and lead it.

teamfortyfour.com



Tony Rice and Neema Doroudian.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TONY RICE



Bob Silver, Christi Warner-Beyer, Jessica Hendricks, and Karin McFetters at the Two Pups Wellness Fund's Booze and a Band event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOB SILVER

Two Pups continues to grow and honor founder's legacy

By Mark Hays

Two Pups Wellness Fund, a Valley nonprofit dedicated to helping critically ill and homeless animals, hosted its cherished "Booze and a Band" fundraiser in October – for the first time since the organization's founder, Nancy Silver, passed away.

Held at Handlebar J in Scottsdale, the event drew a lively crowd, coming together to celebrate Silver's legacy and raise funds for animal rescue efforts across the state. Founded in 2017, the organization was born out of a heartbreaking moment at a veterinary clinic.

"Years ago, Nancy was at the emergency veterinarian with one of her beloved dogs," brother Bob Silver said. "While in the waiting room, she saw a family come in with an injured dog and leave without treatment after learning of the cost of treatment."

Feeling compelled into action, she founded Two Pups Wellness Fund, named in honor of her dogs, Mr. P and Miss Lacie. Since its founding, the organization has provided emergency and ongoing medical assistance to more than 16,000 animals.

Within are four main programs: a medical-surgical fund for veterinary care, Project Get Out, which rescues dogs from overcrowded shelters, an emergency rescue relief fund, and a Return to Owner microchip program, which has microchipped over 10,000 lost dogs to date.

"Two Pups provides vital financial aid and emergency support to animal welfare organizations throughout Arizona, empowering them to care for critically ill, injured, neglected, and homeless animals that deserve a second chance to find loving homes," Bob explained.

"Booze and a Band," the nonprofit's signature fundraiser, returned this year in full spirit, honoring both its mission and its late founder.

"The event was a huge success," Event Co-Chair Jessica Hendricks said. "We had a great turnout, and the evening was fun for all who attended. Our community really showed up to celebrate the incredible work Two Pups continues to do, but also to remember and honor Nancy's legacy, which we will continue to do for years to come."

Putting on the event without Nancy was an emotional challenge, but also a labor of love.

"She was the queen of event planning – she had a magic touch and always made a party fun and festive," Hendricks said. "As

co-chair, I tried to fill her shoes and think about what she would've wanted. Almost daily, we looked at each other and said, 'What would she have done?'"

Everyone showed up in their cowboy boots and hats, dancing and enjoying themselves – and Hendricks said that would have made Nancy happy.

"She'd still be in tears to see the outpouring of support," she added.

As for the future of the organization, Bob says the mission remains clear:

"Nancy's vision was that no dog or cat that finds itself in the animal welfare system is without medical treatment or assistance so they can get well enough to find their forever home," he said.

With growing interest from area shelters and the community, Two Pups hopes to expand its programs – especially Project Get Out – to serve more animals in need. Early estimates suggest the fundraiser surpassed its goals, ensuring that the legacy Nancy Silver started will continue to change lives – both human and animal.

twopups.org

“Our community really showed up to celebrate the incredible work Two Pups continues to do.”

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Phoenix's own mystery maven

By Michael P. Murphy

If you're a mystery writer who loves the city you live in, it's only natural to use that city as the setting of a novel when you find a quiet place to write and let your imagination run wild. Why? Because writers write about what they know and what they love.

Christina Estes is one such person. She loves Phoenix, her adopted hometown, and, as a former reporter for ABC 15 TV and KJZZ radio, she knows and loves local news. So ... she writes what she knows and what she loves.

Her new novel, *The Story That Wouldn't Die*, is the second mystery to feature Phoenix TV reporter Jolene Garcia. Arizona-based readers can enjoy the many references to familiar street names and businesses, particularly Miracle Mile Deli, one of Christina's favorite eateries. The story itself is intriguing, too.

"When a small business owner dies, Jolene is not convinced it was an accident. He might have been asking too many questions of the wrong people. Jolene begins asking questions, too, like who keeps getting lucrative

deals at City Hall? Powerful people don't want her questions answered, but Jolene keeps digging. As the mystery deepens, some are about to kill the story. Maybe even kill her."

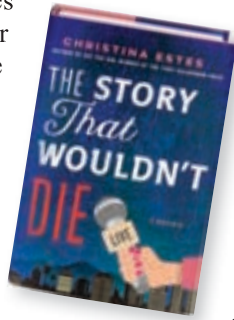
"My character keeps pushing, but she keeps getting pushed back by her manager, who doesn't think the story is interesting enough, or that the death of a small business owner is worthwhile," Christina said. "The book is a nod to her persistence, but it's also about my own persistence as an author."

That persistence paid off in getting her first book, *Off the Air*, published after a 15-year effort. Before she began to write, she wondered where the setting for her story should be. Reading one of J.A. Jance's Ali Reynolds mysteries gave her the inspiration she needed.

"In the book, I saw a reference to I-17 and Northern," she said. "I had never read a book that I connected with so closely. That book planted the seed for my writing."



Christina Estes



When Christina moved to Phoenix 25 years ago to work for ABC 15, she figured she would move on after her three-year contract was up. She didn't expect to fall in love with Phoenix, but she did. She is especially pleased with *The Story That Wouldn't Die*.

"I really love this book," she said. "It's local, but it also has national appeal because the story is about development and displacement. I love that people outside of Phoenix and Arizona are reading about the city I call home, a place I never expected to stay."

What an interesting twist: six months ago, Christina left her reporting job with the City of Phoenix, but she makes it clear that she had already written *The Story That Wouldn't Die* before taking the position. Don't be surprised if another Jolene Garcia mystery shows up on bookshelves sometime.

"Writing is a passion, especially sharing the story of my character that is dear to my heart," Christina said. "It's exciting to see where she's going."

christinaestes.com

The most outdated hiring practice

Hiring in 2025 has become disconnected from corporate realities. Companies are laying people off. Things are hard. And, frankly, they have been since 2020. Most job seekers look for and apply to jobs online. Applications and resumes are fed into what's called an applicant tracking system or (ATS). Companies use that to track and put candidates through interview steps.

I recently had the opportunity to take a behind the scenes peek inside of an ATS. What I saw was disappointing. When a candidate is rejected, the company selects a reason from a list. Included are things like "lives too far away," "not qualified," or "high salary expectations."

However, there's another item on the rejection list: "job hopper." That's right. "Job hopper" is ranked along with not being qualified or being too expensive.



Career
Corner

BY ANGELA COPELAND

Career expert
and founder of
Copeland Coaching.
copelandcoaching.com

Companies are still making decisions this way. I have heard of multiple CEOs who rejected qualified candidates for this reason. The other managers at the companies felt the candidates were valuable and qualified, but the CEOs overrode their recommendations.

In one case, an HR recruiter asked the candidate for help explaining to the CEO why job hopping

occurs – because all of the good candidates they received were job hoppers.

Rarely does anyone want to change jobs. It's painful and risky. Employees do not begin to actively look for a new job unless they believe there is nothing else they can do to salvage their relationship with their current company.

Why do employees leave jobs? One issue is that an employee may be significantly underpaid. Salaries are more commonly posted online today. When an employee finds out they are paid 30 or 40 percent less than their peers, they may ask for a raise – but they'd be lucky to get six percent. The only option may be to change jobs, if they want to be compensated fairly.

This is not the most common reason people leave jobs today. Companies make decisions differently now than they did 20 years ago. It is not unusual for a company

to lay off hundreds or thousands of employees to help their bottom line, or to bump up their stock price. It's common for companies to be bought and sold as part of private equity deals that may leave an entire workforce out of jobs.

There are also cases where an employee specializes in a very specific role. These employees may have to consider changing companies if they want to continue to gain new skills and experience.

Very rarely is any employee jumping from job to job carelessly.

Employers need to rethink their perspective on this issue. Employees have been put through the ringer, by no fault of their own. These job hoppers are resilient. They value a good company and a stable job. It's time to adjust hiring practices to match today's business environment.

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Take a trip down historic Grand Avenue

I always say, the best way to get to know a city is to walk its streets, explore the neighborhoods and then plop yourself down in a coffee shop to people watch. That's exactly what my Arizona Highways crew and I did a few weeks ago along Grand Ave.

Our first stop on this eclectic stretch was Pueblo. At first glance, you might think it's just a lush, green plant shop but keep wandering and you'll discover, it's a place filled with curiosities. The owner told me

he wanted Pueblo to feel like a natural history museum, and it does. Specializing in indoor plants that surprisingly thrive in the desert, Pueblo also has books, gifts and unique trinkets that makes it as fun to browse as to buy.

What makes Pueblo truly special is the vibe. It's peaceful, welcoming, a place you want to linger and where you can also get a fabulous cup of coffee.

Step outside on their patio, you'll spot a vintage, Italian farm truck serving espresso that just might transport you to a piazza in Rome or Florence.

That's Caffio, the brainchild of Anthony Fiorelli. When he brought his coffee truck or

vespa to the garden at Pueblo, it was a marriage made on Grand Ave. You can spend hours here soaking in the calm enjoying your favorite caffeinated or decaffeinated creation. Anthony's traditional Italian brew is perfection, but if you prefer your drinks with a



Caffio coffee truck sits just outside Pueblo, a plant and gift shop. A few steps away is Bacanora, famous for its Sonoran cuisine.



little froth and flair, he'll whip up something to satisfy even the most discerning coffee connoisseur.

Just a few blocks away sits a place that defies easy description: Hawk Salvage. Think vintage meets gallery meets antique store. Hawk Salvage is a little bit of everything. Owner Greg Hawk, a retired fire department captain, says he's found solace in rescuing discarded junk and breathing new life into unwanted treasures. Greg crisscrosses the country and even travels overseas to find those one-of-a-kind pieces – everything from art to eyeglasses to items that might even border on the bizarre. But as the saying goes, one person's junk is another's treasure.

Our final stop was the renowned and critically acclaimed Bacanora. It's one of the toughest reservations to snag in Phoenix, so this might have been my only shot at tasting Chef Andrade's famous Sonoran cuisine. This young chef worked his way up from dishwasher to award-winning restaurateur

and he is as humble as his food is extraordinary. We chatted for 20 minutes about family and community. He credits his grandma, his mentors and Arizona for shaping his success. We tried three of his signature dishes: the corn elote, the cucumber salad and the short rib, and let's just say, weeks later, I'm still dreaming about those flavors. Bacanora is more than an award-winning restaurant, it's an expression of love and cultural identity beautifully intertwined and just waiting for you to explore.

The 2025 Grand Avenue Arts Festival celebrating art, culture, and business takes place on Saturday, November 8, 2025. This festival attracts thousands of attendees and features artists, musicians, and a variety of interactive activities. The festival has been a yearly highlight of the neighborhood since 2008. Come enjoy great food, great community, and see what all the fun is about.

A place for families to grow, connect and thrive

By Mallory Gleich

In Scottsdale, something is quietly taking shape: a place where families of children and young adults with special needs can find hope, community, and meaningful support. It's called Lexie's Ranch, the newest extension of the nonprofit Lexie's Voice, founded by Andrea Robertson in 2016.

"As a young mother with limited resources who was told that Arizona's education system could not meet my daughter's needs, I was thrust into defense mode and began fighting for her future," Robertson said. "Through time, support and education, I transformed that defensive fight into an offensive one."

That led to the creation of Lexie's Voice, named after Robertson's daughter. The nonprofit began as a way to help other parents navigate the confusing and often isolating world of special education and developmental disabilities. Today, it has grown into a resource for families in Scottsdale and beyond.

The Tutoring and Life Skills Program is designed for teens and young adults with autism and intellectual or developmental disabilities, ages 15 to 22. It's a year-round program offering individualized plans focused on education, independent living,

social and vocational skills, and recreation. Many participants are nonverbal and require high levels of support – but Robertson says they flourish in this inclusive environment where they are celebrated for who they are.

"We also offer a day program through the Arizona Division of Developmental Disabilities called Charlie's Treehouse," Robertson said. "This program is open to adults 18 and older and operates out of our Scottsdale location."

The next phase in Lexie's Voice's evolution is already underway with the development of Lexie's Ranch. While it currently houses the Tutoring and Life Skills Program, future plans include equine therapy, a petting farm with miniature animals, a garden, and a fully accessible park for families of children with special needs.

"The community space is not open yet, but major renovations are underway," Robertson said. "It will be a place for families to connect, access resources and advocacy, and experience something truly new for Scottsdale's special needs community. We anticipate completion in 2026."

Access to Lexie's Voice programs depends on the individual's age and needs.

Teens in the tutoring and life skills program must have Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) funding, while the adult day program is open to those enrolled with Arizona's Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). As more parts of the ranch are completed, community members will be welcomed in to learn, support, and get involved.

Lexie's Voice participates in something called The Family Fund, which is direct financial assistance to families caring for individuals with autism and developmental disabilities. Recognizing the financial challenges these families face – from therapy and equipment to education and respite care – the fund helps remove barriers by providing competitive grants, connecting families with resources, and fostering a supportive community to ensure the best care for their loved ones.

When asked where she hopes to see the nonprofit in the years ahead, Robertson's answer was clear: "My dream for Lexie's Voice is to grow into a true hub for



Andrea Robertson

special needs families in Scottsdale and beyond. The ranch is just the beginning."

That dream includes expanding vocational training, offering respite care for families, and hosting more community events that celebrate milestones and joy – not just challenges.

One story in particular illustrates the heart of Lexie's Voice: a young girl

named Piper, who arrived in a wheelchair and seemed permanently reliant on it.

"Through consistent therapy, encouragement and a community that never stopped believing in her, she no longer needs it," said Robertson. "Watching her take those steps, both literally and figuratively, reminded me why we fight so hard for every child. It's about dignity, independence and hope."

Lexie's Voice may have started as one mother's mission, but today, it's a movement. In this growing community, families find not only resources, but belonging, strength, and joy.

lexiesvoice.org

DISTRICT 6 UPDATE

Arts, culture and celebration

This fall has been full of exciting milestones, inspiring community recognition, and important cultural events across District 6. Here's a look at some of the moments that made October memorable and what's coming up in November.

I had the pleasure of attending the Neighborhood Services Department's 2025 Synergy Conference in October, where our District 6 neighborhoods were honored for their exceptional contributions. Congratulations to Ginnie Ann Sumner, recipient of the Outstanding Neighborhood Beautification award; the Village Center Neighborhood Collective, recognized for Excellence in Connectivity & Communication; and the Arcadia Osborn neighborhood, celebrated as the Inclusion and Engagement Champion. These awards are a testament to the passion and dedication that make our communities truly exceptional.

We celebrated a major milestone at St. Thomas, where construction is underway on their new school building.

The first floor is expected to open in Spring 2026, and I'm thrilled to watch the progress unfold. A heartfelt thank you to Father Steve Kunkel for the warm hospitality during the site visit, and congratulations on such an exciting and transformative project.

Visit Phoenix was recognized as the Tourism Honoree of the Year at the annual ATLAS Gala. It was a joy to attend, a wonderful evening celebrating leaders who help make Arizona a place we're all proud to call



KEVIN ROBINSON

Councilman
District 6

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home. Congratulations to Kim Grace Sabow and the team for organizing such a powerful event, and to Visit Phoenix for continuing to shine a spotlight on our incredible city. Another moving evening took place with the Coalition of Blacks Against Breast Cancer (CBAC), who hosted a powerful event dedicated to survivorship, awareness, and hope.

Honorees included Larry Fitzgerald Jr., Renae Boone-Linden, and Arizona Complete Health, all recognized for their tireless efforts in the fight against cancer. Congratulations to CBAC for another successful year of empowering lives and reducing health disparities – your impact is truly inspiring.

As we head into the season of gratitude, I also want to thank all who are participating in our D6 Turkey Drive. We're proud to support families in need and ensure everyone can enjoy a holiday meal this Thanksgiving.

Be sure to check out our OAT (Office of Arts and Culture) Hiring Updates, with photos of recent events and job opportunities in the arts community. Don't miss the 2025 Shemer Arizona Arts Festival, taking place Saturday and Sunday, November 1 and 2, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Held at the historic Shemer Art Center, this annual festival is a great way to kick off your holiday shopping while supporting artists.

As always, thank you to every resident, leader, and neighbor who continues to contribute to the vibrancy and strength of District 6.

Happy Thanksgiving!
Councilman Kevin Robinson

20 YEARS AGO



MELISSA TIDWELL

I graduated from Arcadia in 2009 and played D1 volleyball at The University of Texas at El Paso and at Texas State. In 2011, my team made it to the NCAA tournament and I am proud to say I got my ring! I currently work at SRP. I married Richard "Seth" Tidwell – also an AHS grad – in 2021. We have a 2-year-old daughter named Bristol and are expecting identical twin boys in January 2026. I currently reside in Ahwatukee. Our dad, Mark, graduated from Arcadia in 1979. Our mom, Myra, worked in the area until she retired in 2019. I will always cherish the glory days playing the sport especially alongside my big sister in high school – they called us the Twin Towers!



MEGAN EVENSON

After graduating in 2007, I went on to play four years of volleyball at Grand Canyon University and received my Bachelor's in secondary education with an emphasis in mathematics. After completing a semester of student teaching I decided it was not my passion and went back to school to pursue my degree in dental hygiene. I graduated in 2015 and have been working as a dental hygienist for the past 10 years. Just before graduating I purchased a house with my then fiancée, Jacob. We still reside in that same house in Peoria. After marrying in November 2015, we had two children, a daughter, Teagan, and a son, Tucker. Although my sister and I no longer play volleyball due to being busy moms nowadays, I hope that it will be part of my future with my children and nieces and nephews.

Created for your journey. Committed to those in need.

By Kylie de Best

To Phoenician Dayton Schumacher, running is more than exercise – it's a way to clear his mind, strengthen his body and bring balance into his life. It also became the inspiration for his running apparel brand, Your Pace, Your Peace – a hobby he uses to support a cause.

A few years ago, while running on the Arizona Canal, Dayton began pondering how common mental and physical health problems are in society these days. This led him to develop a brand idea that promotes self-improvement while also raising money for organizations with a mission to help, leading to the birth of Your Pace, Your Peace. Launched in 2025, Dayton sees the brand as a mission.

"Your Pace, Your Peace is built on the belief that it doesn't matter where you start or how naturally gifted you are," he said. "What matters is showing up for yourself every day. This message extends beyond running. Self-improvement can be achieved through any form of movement, mindfulness, or activity that brings strength and clarity."

The Harmony Hoodie, Sereni-t shirt, Cadence Cap, and Tempo Tank feature the brand's logo, a combination of two footprints and the yin-yang sign. The feet represent the journey everyone takes, while the yin-yang reminds us that peace is found in harmony. This logo serves as a reminder that every journey is unique and every step forward brings you closer to your best self.

The brand aims to give back to causes

that enable more people to find healing and growth. In that spirit, 10 percent of sales are donated to organizations assisting mental health and addiction recovery. Every quarter, Dayton announces a specific organization to which the percentage will be donated for three months. So far, the brand has donated to Speak Your Mind/Peace of Mind, 22 Too Many, and Emily's Hope.

Your Pace, Your Peace has already made a significant impact in the community while spreading their message. In May, they helped sponsor the Peace of Mind 5K, which was dedicated to raising funds for programs that help individuals overcome mental health challenges.

They had a table set up at the finish line to chat with racers and raised funds which were donated to Peace of Mind. They also sponsored the 22 Too Many 5K, which raised funds to provide resources, support, and comfort to the grieving families left behind by Veterans who take their own lives. In Q3, they donated 10 percent of sales to Emily's Hope, a nonprofit committed to removing the stigma of substance abuse disorder through awareness, education, and prevention, while also eliminating financial barriers to treatment and recovery.

Coming up, Your Pace, Your Peace plans to donate to SAFE (Stop Addiction Fatality Epidemic) Project. Dayton and his team plan to be on-site at the Phoenix Marathon Expo on December 12.

yourpaceyourpeace.com



Dayton Schumacher, Mary Pearson and Melonie Schumacher.

Discover the joy of creativity and artistic expression at HappyCraft

By Chrissy Doern

Tucked into a cozy corner of Arcadia, where community thrives and creativity blossoms, you'll find HappyCraft – a studio that's one-part art, one-part community.

Founded just over a year ago by longtime Arcadia resident Allison Siegel, HappyCraft is more than just a place to make things – it's a joyful haven where imagination takes center stage, and people of all ages are encouraged to play, explore, and create.

"I love to make stuff, and I love working with people," Siegel said.

A former English teacher, nanny, and mom of two, she's spent more than 25 years in Arcadia building connections and nurturing creativity – both in the classroom and at home. Her journey from teacher to entrepreneur began in her early days of English classes, where she often wove artistic projects into her lessons.

"I was always blown away by their efforts," she recalls. Seeing how her students lit up when engaging in hands-on projects sparked something in her. That spark eventually grew into the vision for

HappyCraft: a creative space where anyone – child or adult – could reconnect with their inner artist.

"I wanted to open my business in my neighborhood because I love it here," she said.

That need, coupled with her deep roots in the community, made the decision easy. And the result? A welcoming studio filled with laughter, color, and limitless possibilities.

From sparkly 3D projects perfect for kids, to intricate workshops that challenge and inspire adults, HappyCraft offers something for everyone. Siegel's experience as a nanny also played a powerful role in shaping the studio's inclusive spirit.

"Being with children every day gave me permission to nurture my own creativity as I was nurturing theirs," she said.

Step inside HappyCraft and you'll see it: the quiet concentration of a child



carefully placing beads on a bracelet, the joy of adults rediscovering the simple pleasure of making something with their hands. The studio regularly hosts workshops, classes, and open studio times for anyone ages six and up.

And Siegel's vision for the future? It's as heartfelt as her mission:

"I just hope people will embrace the opportunity to be creative," she said. "It

makes me feel so good to see people fully engaged and proud of their creations."

Whether you're an experienced crafter or simply curious to try something new, HappyCraft invites you to come in, relax, and let your imagination lead the way. Check out their upcoming classes and workshop schedule online – and get ready to discover the joy of creativity, right here in Arcadia.

happycraftaz.com



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4 Beds | 3.5 Baths | 3,450 SF



115 W Rose Lane | Phoenix
4 Beds | 3 Baths | 2,897 SF



7117 E Rancho Vista Drive #4005 | Scottsdale
2 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,327 SF



7117 E Rancho Vista Drive #3010 | Scottsdale
2 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,310 SF



10301 N 70th Street #238 | Paradise Valley
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Keep an eye out next month for details on our annual holiday toy drive, one of our favorite ways to give back.



Arcadia High debuts boys beach volleyball

By Mallory Gleich

What began as a student-led club has officially evolved into Arcadia High's first-ever boys beach volleyball team – and for the players who made the roster, this has the makings to become a legacy.

A year ago, seniors Jack Wahl and Bennett Murphy created a volleyball club. Joined by fellow students Bradley Sayre and Jackson Folger as officers, the group grew quickly. About 15 to 20 boys met after school twice a week to learn, play, and fuel their passion for volleyball – even traveling to Pinnacle High for Friday night matches.

Now, under the leadership of Coach Sam Costanzo, Arcadia has officially fielded a team. Tryouts in August drew 30 hopefuls, and although the roster had to be capped at 14, the squad has come together, fueled by hard work and a passion for the game.

“Arcadia doesn’t have a boys’ indoor team, but most of our seniors are close friends who’ve been playing beach together for the last three years,” Costanzo – a veteran coach and counselor who returned to his Arcadia roots after retiring from the PV School District – said. “I couldn’t ask for a better team of student athletes who have a solid work ethic, outstanding sportsmanship, and are a lot of fun to be around.”

Coach Costanzo brings decades of experience to the sand, having coached at the freshman, JV, varsity, and club levels. A former club volleyball player at NAU, his



(front) Bennett Murphy, Johnny McCormack, Lance Wiggington, Aiden West, Andres Cordova, Easton Pagano, Jack Wahl and Coach Sam Costanzo.
(back) Brody Truax, Casey Krawczyk, Dominic Gajlewicz, Bamelak Yaye, Max Mueller, Jackson Folger and Bradley Sayre.

passion for beach volleyball was sparked in the 1980s while playing in leagues at Indian School Park and Mission Beach.

“I never thought beach volleyball would

become an AIA-approved sport,” he said. “Watching legends like Sinjin Smith and Randy Stoklos inspired me as a young player. Now, it’s incredibly rewarding to see the sport grow and to be part of Arcadia.”

“I’ve played several sports, but something about volleyball, the team spirit, and great guys who would show up for the club every week made me want to push for a school team. It’s great that it happened during our senior year,” Jack Wahl said.

The season ran from September 8 to October 29, with 10 scheduled matches – four away and six at the new SUSD sand courts on 68th Street and Oak. As of press time, the Titans were 2-6, but two of their losses came in close 2-3-point battles, showcasing the team’s resilience and potential.

“My first experience with volleyball was in middle school PE. I realized then how much fun it was. I played club volleyball but was eager to play the sport and represent my high school,” senior Bennett Murphy said. “After a couple years, that dream was realized. This has been such a great culmination of teamwork, perseverance, and all those pieces falling into place.”

Because beach volleyball is still relatively new to many high schools, the West Valley Division (where Arcadia competes) doesn’t have any rivalries – yet. However, the culture is starting to take shape, and with each match, the Titans are helping to set the tone.

The pair-based format means each duo competes in matches that demand not only athleticism but also strong connection. Those who’ve played together longer tend to find success more quickly.

“The growth I’ve seen is incredible. This sport will only get stronger with time.”

Even after the fall season ends, the volleyball momentum at Arcadia doesn’t stop. The original club, which laid the foundation for the current team, will continue in the spring, giving new players and multi-sport athletes another opportunity to get involved and grow the program. Coach Costanzo believes this is just the beginning.

“We practice two to three times a week and focus on fundamentals, repetition, and building player communication. The growth I’ve seen is incredible. This sport will only get stronger with time,” he said.

Arcadia’s first boys beach volleyball team has already left a mark, proving that sometimes, the best teams start with a few determined players and a little patch of sand.

ARCADIA TITANS 2025 BOYS BEACH VOLLEYBALL PAIRS

Jack Folger / Bradley Sayre – seniors

Bennett Murphy (senior) / Dominik Gajlewicz (junior)

Jack Wahl / Lance Wiggington – seniors

Andres Cordova / Casey Krawczyk – seniors

Max Mueller (senior) / Johnny McCormack (freshman)

Easton Pagano (senior) / Brody Truax (freshman)

Aiden West (freshman) – alternate



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The Dining Scoop

Thanksgiving means families gathering together, kids running into – and out of – the kitchen, lots of laughs and lots of food. Perhaps you would like someone else to do the cooking this year? If so, there are plenty of restaurants and businesses offering Turkey Day specials. Here are a few!

Pre-order your **Pie Snob** pies now! Guests have until November 14 to order for pick up on November 25 and 26 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Flavors include apple crumb, caramel apple, green chile apple crumb, chocolate pecan, pumpkin praline, pumpkin cheesecake and raspberry double-crust. Prices range from \$26-\$48.

piesnob.com

Arcadia Meat Market (3950 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) has Thanksgiving proteins available for preorder starting November 1, including pasture-raised turkeys from Chiricahua, beef tenderloin at \$50/lb., rib roast at approximately \$45/

lb., porchetta at \$30/lb., and smoked hams at \$24/lb. Additional provisions include assorted cheeses, wines, and Wild Rye baking mixes for cakes, frosting, and cookies. House-made sides prepared by the AMM staff include mashed potatoes, candied yams, cranberry sauce, gravy, green bean casserole, sausage stuffing, and chicken liver mousse.

arcadiameatmarket.com

Royal Palms Resort and Spa (5200 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix) is celebrating with four dining experiences. Guests can start with T. Cook's à la carte breakfast, served from 6:30 to 11 a.m., where they can enjoy refined morning favorites while streaming the holiday parade. From 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the Thanksgiving Banquet Buffet offers a carving station with roasted turkey, prime rib, and honey-glazed ham, complemented by classics like pumpkin soup, cornbread stuffing, and a full pie bar. T. Cook's will serve a three-course prix-fixe Thanksgiving dinner from 1 to 8 p.m.



Miracle Mile Deli

The Mix Up Bar, open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., will have an à la carte holiday menu available.

royalpalmshotel.com

On November 27 from 12 to 7 p.m., **Lon's at the Hermosa Inn** (5532 N. Palo Cristi Road, Paradise Valley) will offer a three-course feast that "perfectly captures the essence of the season." Pricing starts at \$120 for adults, \$35 for kids.

hermosainn.com

J&G Steakhouse (6000 E. Camelback Road, Scottsdale) invites guests to celebrate Thanksgiving with brunch or dinner. Brunch seatings run from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and feature a buffet with a carving station, a seafood and raw bar, sushi and sashimi, breakfast, pastries and desserts. In the evening, from 5:30-9 p.m., diners can enjoy J&G's full dinner menu or opt for a special prix fixe offering. Brunch is priced at \$175+ for adults and \$87 for children ages 3 to 12.

jgsteakhousescottsdale.com

The Phoenician Tavern (6000 E. Camelback Road) is offering Thanksgiving dinner buffet on November 27 from 4 to 8 p.m. that features appetizers like roasted butternut squash bisque, little gem Caesar salad, and citrus poached shrimp. A chef's carving station will offer roasted turkey breast and salt-crusted prime rib, complemented by sides such as dried apricot stuffing, potatoes, and garlic green beans. The meal ends with vanilla cheesecake, pumpkin tart or pecan tart. The buffet is priced at \$90+ for adults and \$45+ for children ages 3 to 12.

thephoenician.com

Marcellino Ristorante (7114 E. Stetson Dr., Scottsdale) is offering family-sized Italian take-out for Thanksgiving. The menu includes handcrafted pastas such as ravioli, paccatelli, gnocchi, and tortelloni, along with chicken and lamb options. Prices range from \$70 to \$220, serving between

six to 14 people. Guests can also enjoy a chef-prepared Italian dinner at the restaurant on Thanksgiving Eve. Orders must be placed by November 25 and can be made Tuesday-Saturday between 3-5 p.m. Final pickup is on November 26, from 2-4 p.m.

marcellinoristorante.com

Fab Delivery (2536 E. Madison St., Phoenix) has a Thanksgiving dinner menu available for pickup or delivery on November 26. Designed to serve six to eight, the package features a 16- to 18-pound herb-rubbed roasted turkey with stuffing, sides like cranberry relish, green beans amandine, buttermilk herb mashed potatoes, and sweet potatoes topped with pecan crumble and marshmallows. Dinner rolls and a pumpkin pie with salted caramel whipped cream complete the spread. A selection of à la carte add-ons is also available. Orders must be placed by 4 p.m. on November 19. The full dinner package starts at \$360+, with the option to substitute a bone-in turkey breast for \$385+.

fabulousfood.net

On November 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., guests can gather at **Chompie's** (9301 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale) for a traditional Thanksgiving dinner featuring sliced oven-roasted turkey breast, stuffing and gravy, cranberry relish, mashed potatoes, candied yams, green beans, rolls, and a slice of pie. The to-go traditional feast (\$299+) includes an oven-roasted turkey, sides and two nine-inch pies; Basic to-go dinner (\$249+) includes the turkey, stuffing, gravy, cranberry relish, rolls, and pies.

chompies.com

Weft & Warp (7150 E. Rose Lane, Scottsdale) is hosting a Thanksgiving celebration from 12 to 8 p.m. The meal begins with roasted corn and pumpkin bisque or a harvest salad, followed by entrées like roasted turkey, prime rib, pan-seared salmon, or a roasted cauliflower steak. Family-style sides

accompany the meal, and diners can finish with either pumpkin or apple pie. Weft & Warp also offers to-go feasts – orders are due by November 17 for pickup on November 26 or 27. Priced at \$170 for two or \$500 for six, each meal includes turkey, rolls, sides, and a choice of pie. The prix-fixe menu starts at \$95.

andazscottsdale.com

Boulders Resort & Spa (34631 N. Tom Darlington Dr., Scottsdale) welcomes guests from 1 to 8 p.m. at the Palo Verde. Diners can enjoy a four-course dinner featuring salad, followed by fire-roasted corn bisque. Entrée choices include herb-brined turkey, prime beef tenderloin, or steelhead trout. Price: \$108 per adult, \$55 per child. Boulders take-home dinners that serve four-six. Choose between the pepper-crusted prime rib dinner (\$295) or the herb brined roasted turkey dinner (\$245). Each includes a choice of three sides and dessert.

theboulders.com

Miracle Mile Deli's Thanksgiving Family Feast and à la carte holiday menu is available for pickup on November 26. The feast, priced at \$245, serves six to eight and includes three pounds of oven-roasted turkey breast, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, baked mac and cheese, cranberry sauce, Kaiser rolls, and a whole pie of your choice. Individual turkey dinners are also available for \$24, along with a variety of sides like coleslaw, potato salad, and more. Fresh-baked pies (\$23) come in flavors such as pumpkin, pecan, lemon meringue, and apple. Orders must be placed by November 22.

miraclemiledeli.com

The Italiano's (9301 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale) spread will feature carving stations, seafood towers, charcuterie displays, an array of entrées, and a grand dessert selection, plus everything in between. The buffet takes place from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Price is \$89 per adult and \$39 per child.

theitaliano.com

Celebrate Thanksgiving at the **Wigwam** (300 E. Wigwam Blvd., Litchfield Park) ballroom buffet on November 27, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., where guests can revel in a festive spread featuring creative takes on turkey, honey ham, and autumn salads. Price is \$99 per adult and \$30 per child.

wigwamarizona.com

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ VETERANS DAY DEALS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Kona Grill is offering free entrees (maximum \$75 value) to all Veterans who show their ID on November 11 – dine-in only.

konagrill.com

Original Breakfast House will host its 10th annual Veterans Day bash with free meals for all Veterans and active-duty military. The event features live music, a car show, entertainment, and serves as a fundraiser for Tunnel to Towers, supporting fallen first responders and military heroes.

originalbreakfasthouse.com

Veterans dining in will receive 25 percent off one menu item at **Picazzo's**. The eatery is also offering a Black Friday gift card special from November 28-30; guests who purchase a \$100 gift card will receive a \$30 bonus card.

picazzos.com

Macayo's is honoring Vets and active-duty military personnel with a free entrée from a special Veterans Day menu for dine-in. Rita Rewards members will also earn 10x points on the table's order all day long.

macayo.com

The oldest bar in Scottsdale – **Rusty Spur** – is offering a free t-shirt to Veterans and active military members. No purchase necessary, while supplies last.

rustyspursaloon.com

32 Shea is offering free medium coffee of any kind to Veterans and active military members.

32shea.com

Lakeside Bar & Grill is offering a free American Burger to Veterans and active military members.

lakesidebarandgrillaz.com

Swizzle Inn is offering a free t-shirt to Veterans and active military members.

theswizzleinn.com



Red, White & Brew is offering a free appetizer to Veterans and active military members on November 11. No purchase necessary.

rwbaz.com

Rainbow Ryders is offering a special Veterans Day discount. Use code "SALUTE505602" to book a shared basket sunrise hot air balloon flight for just \$175 per person. Military ID is required at the time of flight.

rainbowryders.com

Streets of New York will offer a 20 percent discount for veterans and active military on Veterans Day.

streetsofnewyork.com

The restaurant group **Westside Concepts** will be offering free 'handheld' menu items (burgers, sandwiches, tacos, etc.) to all past and present military at Haymaker and Copper & Sage.

westsideconcepts.us

Over Easy offers a year-round discount for veterans with 10 percent off their bill every time they visit.

eatatovereasy.com

Hash Kitchen, The Sicilian Butcher, The Mexicano and **The Italiano** offers a year-round discount for veterans with 10 percent off their bill.

maggioregroup.com

Ling's Wok Shop (20511 N. Hayden Road, Scottsdale) and **Ling & Louie's** (9397 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale) are giving a heartfelt thanks to those who've served with 50 percent off all entrées for Veterans on November 11.

lingswokshop.com or lingandlouies.com



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Lettuce celebrate roasted veggies for World Vegan Month

November marks World Vegan Month, a time to celebrate the growing movement toward plant-based eating and the positive impact it has on our health, the planet, and animals. People choose a vegan diet for three main reasons. Health is often the first motivator. Research shows that a plant-forward lifestyle can lower cholesterol, improve digestion, reverse heart disease, and support long-term wellness.

Others are inspired by environmental benefits: reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving land and water resources. Many choose to live in a way that aligns with their values of kindness and sustainability toward animals and the planet. Coincidentally, November is also National Roasting Month, and there's no better cooking method to highlight the vegan movement with the natural sweetness and depth of vegetables. Roasting transforms humble produce into caramelized, crave-worthy dishes that are festive enough for the holidays.

Easy eight-ingredient roasted soup

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

is simple, hearty, and packed with fall flavor. Maple Dijon roasted potatoes are crispy on the outside, tender inside, with a tangy-sweet glaze, and kale and brussels holiday salad is a stunning dish with roasted Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and sweet potatoes tossed in a bright dressing. Together, they showcase how plant-based cooking can be both approachable and indulgent.

Join my monthly membership for printable recipes, health videos and live Zoom cooking classes – fall classes are available now! Only \$10 a month!



Eight-ingredient roasted soup Serves 6

• INGREDIENTS •

- 1 carton chopped butternut squash
- 2 red peppers, rough chopped
- 1 onion, rough chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, rough chopped
- 1 tsp. thyme
- 2 ½ cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1 tsp. balsamic vinegar

• DIRECTIONS •

1. **Preheat oven to 400 F.**
2. **Add the chopped vegetables to a sheet pan, spray with cooking spray and add the thyme. Bake for 45 minutes.**
3. **Add the cooked vegetables to a blender along with the broth, coconut milk, and balsamic. Blend until smooth and pour into a pot to warm up. Season with salt and pepper to taste!**



Maple Dijon roasted potatoes Serves 4-6

• INGREDIENTS •

- 8 cups chopped Yukon gold potatoes
- 1 tbsp. maple syrup
- Avocado oil spray, salt, pepper, garlic granules
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

• DIRECTIONS •

1. **Preheat oven to 400F.**
2. **Spray potatoes with avocado oil spray and shake on some salt, pepper and garlic granules. Bake for 30 minutes.**
3. **In a small bowl, combine the olive oil, maple syrup, Dijon and a little more salt, pepper, and garlic. (You may not need the salt, pepper, and garlic depending on how much you put on before roasting)**
4. **Change oven temp to broil when the potatoes are done, then put under the broiler for five minutes to get them extra crispy.**
5. **Put the potatoes in a bowl and toss with the maple mustard mixture.**
6. **Garnish with chopped parsley.**



Kale and brussels holiday salad Serves 6

• INGREDIENTS •

- 2 cups brussels sprouts, quartered
- 2 cups cauliflower florets, bite size
- 2 cups cubed sweet potato
- Avocado oil spray, salt, and pepper
- 1 bunch Dino Kale, stems removed
- Juice of one lemon + salt to shake on
- 1 cup cooked farro or quinoa
- ½ cup golden raisins
- ½ cup spicy and sweet pecans
- ⅓ cup toasted pumpkin seeds

• DRESSING •

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 diced shallot
- 2 tbsp. Braggs vinegar
- 2 tbsp. maple syrup
- 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp. vegan Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp. grainy mustard
- 1 tsp. each: garlic granules, pink salt
- ½ tsp. mustard powder

• DIRECTIONS •

1. **Preheat oven to 400 F.**
2. **Spread the veggies on a baking sheet and spray them with avocado oil, salt, and pepper. Bake for 20-30 minutes.**
3. **Cut the kale into slivers and put it in the serving bowl.**
4. **Squeeze the lemon juice on and add some salt to the kale. Massage for a few minutes with gloved hand.**
5. **Mix up dressing.**

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*Source: 2023-2024 CVC
Publication Report Audit

DID YOU KNOW? OCTOPUS

HOW MANY? 300

There are around 300 recognized species of octopus, all belonging to the order Octopoda. These are divided into two main groups: Cirrata, which are deep-sea octopuses with fins and internal shells and Incirrata, which are the more familiar, shell-less octopuses, including most shallow-water species. New species are still being discovered, especially in deep or unexplored ocean regions, so that number could grow in the future.



FUN FACT: The word “octopus” comes from Greek, not Latin. So the proper plural is octopuses. Octopi comes from applying Latin rules to a Greek word, so even though it might-sound like the correct version, it’s not.

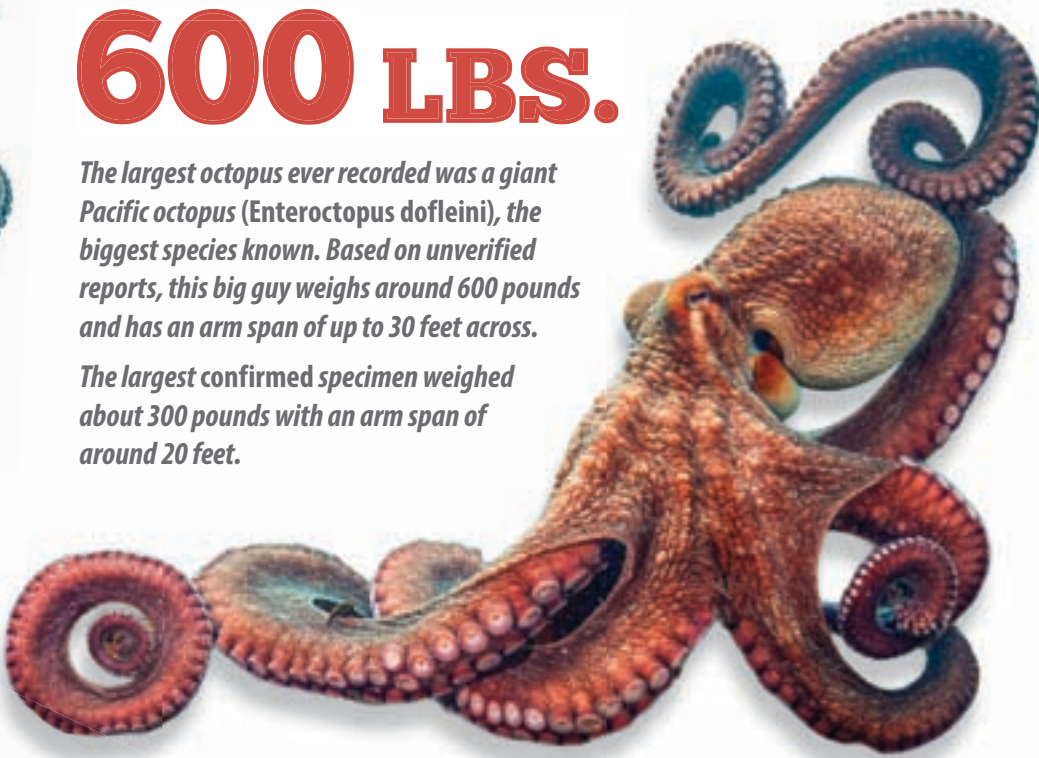
33K

The genetic makeup of octopuses is so bizarre that some researchers have called it “alien” in a biological sense. In 2015, scientists sequenced the octopus’s genome and found 33,000 protein-coding genes – more than humans. What shocked them was the massive number of gene-editing abilities. Octopuses can rewire their RNA on the fly, changing how their genes are expressed without altering the DNA itself. This allows them to adapt their brains and nervous systems in real time, a trait almost unheard of in animals. So essentially, octopuses can edit their own biology while alive – kind of like reprogramming their software as they go. This is something humans can’t do – yet.



HOW HEAVY? 600 LBS.

The largest octopus ever recorded was a giant Pacific octopus (*Enteroctopus dofleini*), the biggest species known. Based on unverified reports, this big guy weighs around 600 pounds and has an arm span of up to 30 feet across. The largest confirmed specimen weighed about 300 pounds with an arm span of around 20 feet.



HOW MUCH? \$2K

High-end restaurants have served octopus dishes priced at \$100-\$300 per plate, especially in luxury sushi bars. The most expensive octopus ever sold at auction was part of a premium seafood lot in Japan, fetching over \$2,000 for a single large specimen.



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DID YOU KNOW? OCTOPUS

WORD SEARCH

Octopuses have three hearts – Two pump blood to the gills, and one pumps it to the rest of the body.

The heart that pumps to the body actually stops beating when they swim.

Octopuses use a copper-based molecule called hemocyanin to transport oxygen, which turns their blood blue.

Octopuses are known for problem-solving – they can even navigate mazes and unscrew jars to get food.

Specialized skin cells called chromatophores allow them to change color and blend into surroundings in an instant, mimicking textures like rocks or coral.

If an octopus loses an arm, it can regenerate a fully functional one without permanent damage. Their arms can act semi-independently, even reacting to stimuli after being severed.

Most octopuses live only 1-2 years. The giant Pacific octopus, the longest-lived species, may reach 3-5 years.

With no bones and a soft, squishy body, an octopus can squeeze through tiny gaps – any opening as small as their beak (the only hard part of their body).

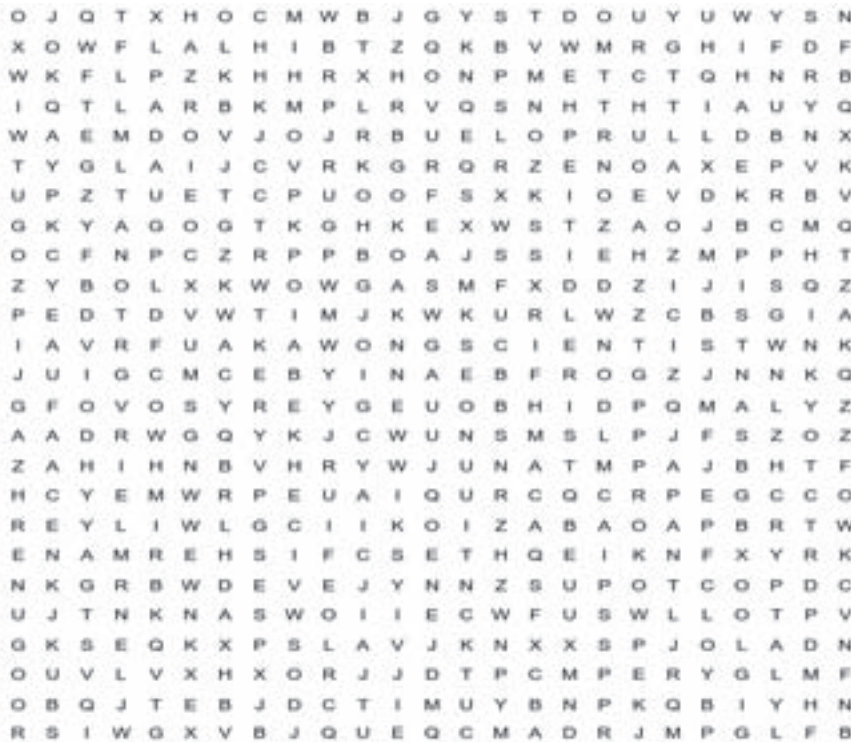
Most species prefer to live and hunt alone, and they can become aggressive or even cannibalistic when forced into close quarters.

Males typically die shortly after mating. Females lay thousands of eggs and often stop eating to guard them, dying soon after they hatch.

The suckers on their arms have chemoreceptors, meaning they can sense chemicals in the water – essentially "tasting" whatever they touch.

A famous octopus named Inky made headlines for escaping his tank at New Zealand's National Aquarium. He slipped through a gap, crawled across the floor, and down a 164-foot drainpipe to the ocean.

In Japan in 1998, a fisherman caught a rare octopus with 96 arms – a condition known as "multiplicity" due to regeneration errors or deformities.



- AKKOROKAMUI
ARMS
BEAK
BIOLOGY
BOAT
- CHROMATOPHORES
FISHERMAN
INKY
JAPAN
KRAKEN
- NEW ZEALAND
OCTOPODA
OCTOPUS
SCIENTIST
SUSHI

SAY WHAT?

MOVE OVER, KRAKEN, THERE'S A NEW GIANT IN TOWN

In Ainu and Shinto mythology (from Japan and the indigenous Ainu people of Hokkaido), there's a terrifying sea creature called the Akkorokamui. It's described as a gigantic, red, octopus-like monster with a body so enormous that it could blot out the sun and crush ships just by surfacing. It supposedly grew to its monstrous size after a rampage of destruction, and some versions of the legend say it absorbed the rage and pain of the creatures it killed. Many early sailors and fishers reported seeing something massive and red in the water – and some accounts claim whole boats simply vanished. Sailors would leave offerings to the Akkorokamui before setting out to sea. Some even claim it had regenerative powers (like real octopuses), and even healing abilities, which is why – to this day – some still pray to it for recovery from injuries or illnesses.



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Thanksgiving: A season of finding gratitude and grace

When you're young you rarely catch yourself saying "I remember when ..." or "years ago I had this experience ..." because you were too busy living life. As you matured, the memories found a way of entering everyday conversations and at times surprised you with their clarity. Memories have an uncanny way of tiptoeing back into our minds.



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

Most of us are anticipating with great delight the move from the languid days of summer to the crisp days of autumn. The air, with its chilly, musky scent, settles in and brings colored leaves swirling in chaotic movements through our neighborhoods.

The sound of leaves rubbing against each other is soft and chime-like, announcing that Thanksgiving is right around the corner. For sure there will be cozy fires to build and hearty meals to enjoy.

The season is synonymous with feelings of gratitude, warmth, and togetherness. It's a time when families gather around tables laden with food, when we take a moment to reflect on our blessings, and when we express our thankfulness. It's also a time

when some individuals find the season to be more complex, possibly evoking feelings of anxiety or sadness. The Thanksgiving season then becomes one of redefining gratitude.

How many of us remember sitting around a table holding hands, saying grace, then taking turns naming things we were grateful for? Grace wasn't just a church word, it was a force that healed our past, reshaped our identity, and fueled our futures. Being young, the ability to embrace the depth of feeling truly grateful seemed oddly superficial. Of course, I was grateful for my family, my health, and the warmth and joy of getting together with friends and family over a meal without the stress that gift-giving can bring, but what seemed lacking were the layers of emotions I had yet to experience.

Coming from a divorced family, I hadn't learned to embrace gratitude for the positive aspects of my life and acknowledge the pain and struggles that went together. Years passed before realizing there was no need to choose between the two. Maturity brought with it the ability to embrace the complexity of my feelings, allowing room for both gratitude and pain to exist at the same table.

Years ago, I committed to memory these words from Melody Beattie: "Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.



Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."

Thanksgiving looked quite different in 1565 with the first recorded celebration in St. Augustine, Florida. From 1621, when the Plymouth Colony settlers and the Wampanoag people shared a meal celebrating the harvest, to the American wars that significantly impacted Thanksgiving with food shortages and rationing, the holiday has continued to symbolize resilience, peace and gratitude. Food has always had the universal power of drawing people together across time, between cultures and helped to gain perspectives on life. The more we experiment with old flavors, processes, and ceremonies, the quicker we recognize that we aren't far removed from the past.

The kitchen is a special place during the holidays because of its warmth, coziness, and satisfying aromas. It's a place where time becomes frozen, and you surrender to your senses the flavors of the harvest. With eyes closed, the scent of butternut squash soup with apples and maple syrup, creamed pearl onions, cranberry sauce with wildflower honey, mashed parmesan potatoes, green bean almandine, a roasted turkey with sage butter, and the American favorite apple pie elicits the joyous comment, "This is the moment we've all been waiting for."

Recipes should sound like you, smell like you, conjure up your past and present and pay homage to the place you call home. As long as our hearts continue to beat, there will always be memories associated with recipes from our childhood. Life is built on experiences and the telling of personal stories. Cooking has become the greatest pleasure. It has become personal and impassioned with a lot of meaning. There's no greater joy than seeing my grandchildren research a recipe that tantalizes their taste buds and then witnessing the effort put into following the directions and serving the item with style. The one invisible ingredient missing from most recipes is "pride."

I was raised in a household of Danish and German ancestry, so creamed pearl onions never missed an appearance at holiday time. Originating in England, then appearing in

Creamed Pearl Onions

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ½ lbs. pearl onions
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1½ tsp. sugar
- ¼ tsp. nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. thyme
- ½ tsp. garlic powder
- ½ tsp. paprika
- ½ white pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tbsp. sherry wine (do not use cooking sherry)
- 1 tsp. fresh parsley, minced
- 3 tbsp. of grated cheese*

INSTRUCTIONS

- 
1. Fill a saucepan two-thirds full of water and bring to a boil.
 2. Add the onions and blanch them until their skins are tender, about one minute.
 3. Transfer them to an ice water bath to stop the cooking. Drain and cut off the root end and squeeze at the stem end to slip the onions from their skins. Set aside.
 4. Melt the butter over medium heat. Sprinkle in the flour stirring continuously until the sauce is smooth and has thickened.
 5. Add all the remaining spices and the wine. Stir for one to two minutes then add the heavy cream. Pour over the onions and gently blend.

*For a luxurious twist, grate gruyère or parmesan cheese in with the cream mixture.

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COOKBOOK: "ALL DAY BAKING" BY MICHAEL JAMES WITH PIPPA JAMES
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French and Italian cuisines, they made their way to the United States where they are still popular in the Midwest, the South and New England. They have taken on a new popularity for non-meat eaters seeking a side dish that's hearty – a stick-to-your-ribs kind of food.

These miniature onions are a close relative of the leek and can be distinguished from common onions by having only a single storage leaf, like cloves of garlic. Pearl onions are mild, tender, sweet and less pungent. When cooked, they become melty and develop a rich flavor. There are many variations for a savory taste that's indulgent. The choice to use fresh or frozen pearl onions is one of convenience. The payoff for using fresh onions is tasted in a lighter flavor and slightly firmer texture.

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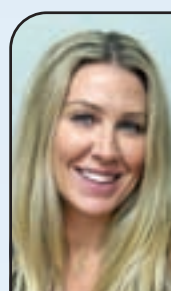


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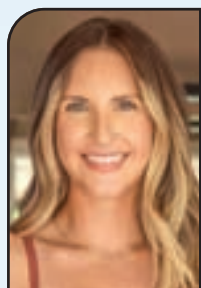
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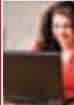
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Titan Times

VOL. 3 NO. 1

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From the students of Arcadia High School

Senior Spotlight: Meet Elsa Nunley



PHOTO BY LEILA BENDER

Varsity and JV cheer hype up the student body at homecoming.

"I have been swimming as long as I can remember, and I know that I will keep swimming for the rest of my life," AHS senior Elsa Nunley said. For her, swimming isn't just a sport – it's a language. Elsa has been swimming since she was nine years old, and she is now the captain of Arcadia's swim team.

She found her love of the sport thanks to soccer: "Before I started swimming, I was playing soccer, but was not happy going to practice and games anymore, so I decided to try out for the swim team and fell in love with it."

Swimming has changed Elsa's life immensely, she said, because of the friendships she's built and the confidence she's gained. Even through challenges, she's never considered quitting, and she can't imagine a life without swimming.

"I see myself swimming for the rest of my life in some way, whether on a team, or just going to the pool daily for a good workout because it makes me feel really good," she said.

Over the course of her career, Elsa has faced moments of self-doubt. Participating in such a hard sport can take a toll on someone mentally and physically, and Elsa is no stranger to the feelings.

"I would psych myself out because of nervousness and how much I was hurting when swimming as hard as I could." Now, she competes with full confidence, having learned to trust her abilities and her training.

Elsa isn't just a swimmer, she is a role model for the younger generation, especially her two younger brothers. She gives advice that applies not only to swimming, but to life as well.

"Work as hard as you can now so that in the future life will be easier," she said. "Take advantage of every single opportunity you get – you will never regret it."

– Armeen Ghazanfari



Elsa Nunley

friends and make memories that will last them a lifetime.

Beginning on Friday October 3, the day before the homecoming dance, students were completely immersed in school spirit and celebration. Everyone was packed into the bleachers in the gym, where the electric energy radiating about the room was felt from near and far.

There was a great display of school spirit, with all attending participating in a white-out. For the duration of the assembly, students and teachers were all engrossed by each group, from the numerous dance performances to special guests from the Phoenix Suns' Dunk Team.

Shortly after school ended on Friday, students from Arcadia, Ingleside Middle School, and Hopi Elementary School participated in the homecoming parade. Friends and families lined the streets to watch the procession, commencing with the senior class of Arcadia's float, and their homecoming king and queen, Ian Slater and Claire Christensen.

The junior, sophomore, and freshman floats quickly followed, accompanied by the homecoming king and queen of each class. Behind them followed many different clubs and activities, like Arcadia's cheer team and girls flag football team.

On Friday night, students, teachers, and parents arrived at the football field, filled with anticipation of the upcoming game. The Titans, undefeated, faced off against Combs High School, who was undefeated – at the time. Dressed once again in white, Arcadia fans and players were hungry for a win.

The student section, affectionately called Chaos Corner, was buzzing with excitement. At the beginning of the second half, students set off color bombs, jumping up and down with liveliness. The Titans finished the game with a score of 37-0, remaining undefeated.

The weekend ended with the *La La Land*-themed homecoming dance, organized by student government members Tessa Dwyer-Kim and Claire Christensen, who have been working on the project since August. With help from the rest of student government, the Arcadia administration, and PTO, they were able to put together a memorable dance that students and teachers will reminisce about for years to come.

– Jenna Detwiler

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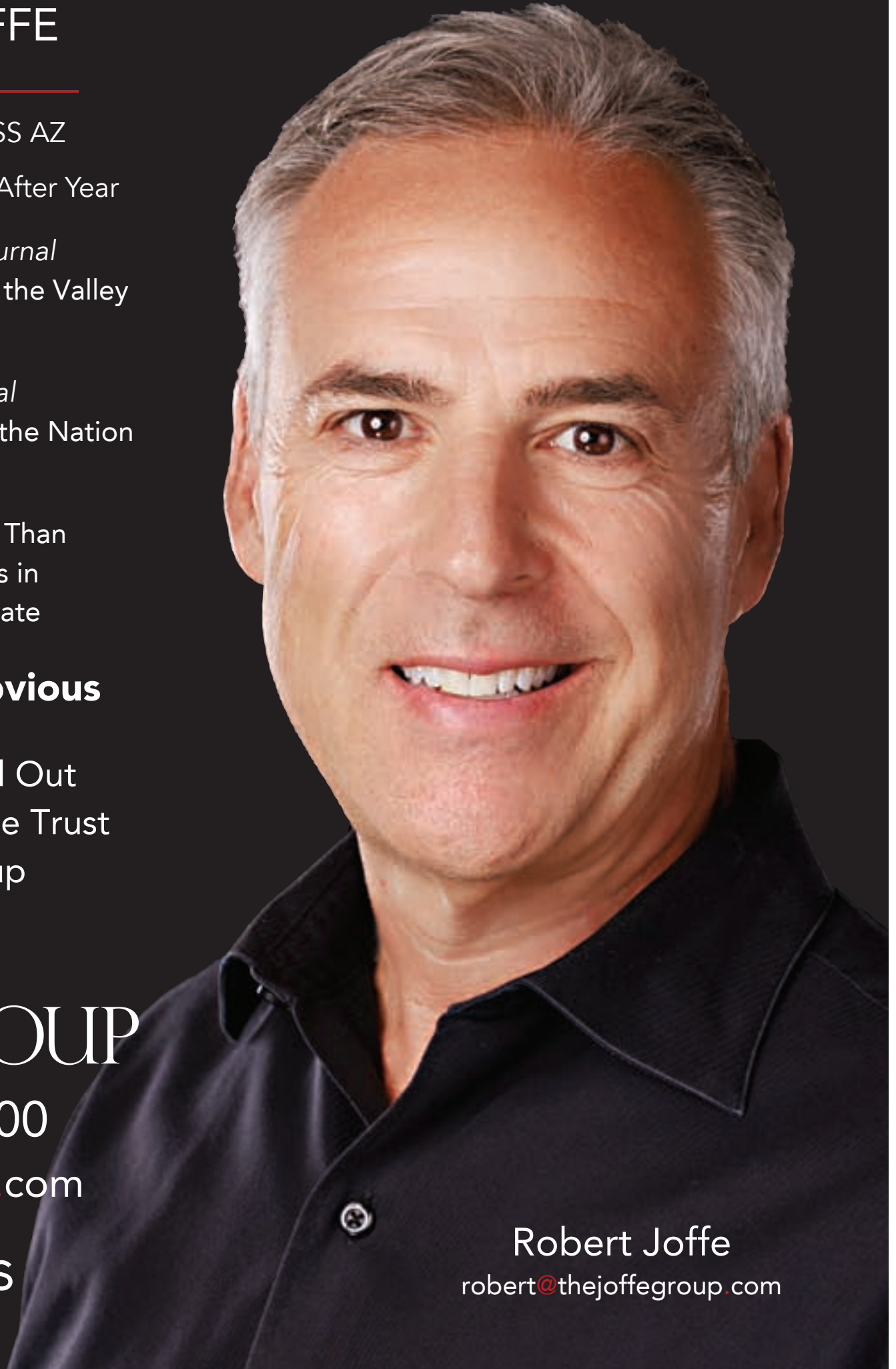
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