

ARCADIA NEWS



VOL. 33 NO. 10

ARCADIA • BILTMORE • CAMELBACK CORRIDOR

JANUARY 2026



SAY CHEESE!

Cheese 'N Stuff is back with a new look, blending historic charm with a fresh new vision for the future.

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SHEMER & BEADLE

Shemer Art Center honors architect Al Beadle's legacy with a new pavilion and sculpture garden.

PAGE 24

THE DORRANCE DOME

Arizona Science Center introduced an immersive learning experience that feels out of this world.

PAGE 22

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The Spirit of Arcadia Marching Band claimed the Division IV State Championship with an original, high-energy performance celebrating teamwork and dedication.

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Lagree at The Body Lab puts slow and controlled movements to the test, delivering a full-body workout that left our editor sore, strong...and hungry.

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Arcadia-area high school basketball programs are running the court with energy, early wins, and a focus on teamwork as the 2025-26 season gets underway.

38 Building a new legacy

AHS and Veritas Prep football teams made history with undefeated regular seasons and deep playoff runs, showcasing record-breaking performances.



The team behind the newly renovated and reopened Cheese N' Stuff in Uptown Phoenix: Cooper, Jane, Kat, Nick, Julie, Scott, Rocco and Jard.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JULIE PALMER



BUILDING A

Safer Community-

1 SWIM LESSON AT A TIME

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Have you ever loved something so much that you would attempt anything to be closer to whatever – or whoever – that may be? I haven't, but the same can't be said for some fans of Elvis... did you know there were multiple people who supposedly attempted to dig a tunnel to Graceland? There was even a young woman who literally packed herself into a crate and attempted to mail herself to Elvis.

A freight company actually picked up the package but the higher-ups wouldn't accept it, until the teen emerged to let them know she was inside. Guess what? Elvis was so amused that he actually met with the fan after realizing what she'd done. Don't get me wrong – there are a lot of things in life to love and enjoy... but to mail yourself somewhere? I'd rather take a plane!

January 2026 kicks off with our fitness features – we've got a story on Taoist Tai Chi's new location (opening this month!) and a story on my attempt to conquer lagree - a high-

intensity, low-impact workout executed on a megaformer. The name comes from Sebastien Lagree, a French fitness trainer who developed the method. If you don't mind going slow, this workout might just be for you.

We've also featured stories on our students: high school golf teams finished their seasons and basketball has begun. Tavan spent its holidays participating in the annual Turkey Bowl and Jingle Jog, and SUSU celebrated the brand-new athletic facility built for the public to enjoy.

Happiest of New Years to you, dear readers. We hope 2026 treats you well, and thank you for reading the Arcadia News!

mallory
– Mallory Gleich



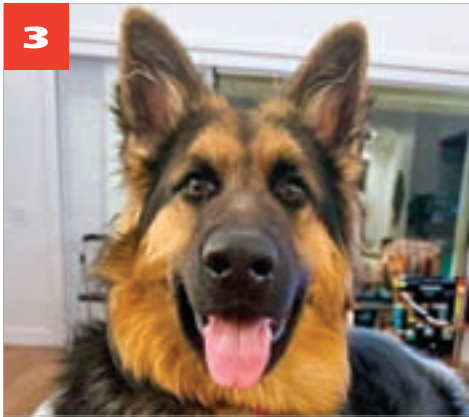
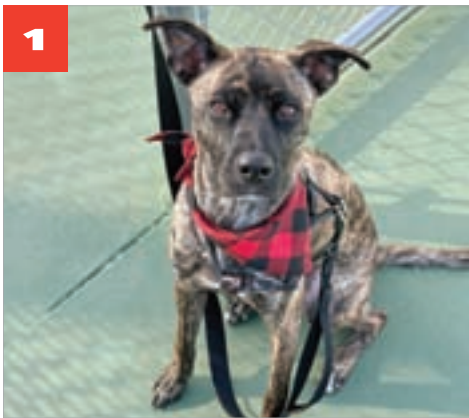
UPCOMING THEMES:

- FEBRUARY
History
- MARCH
Spring
- APRIL
Camp Guide

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“Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.” – Oprah Winfrey

ARCADIA'S PETS



1. **Chicken** is a three-year-old mutt that we adopted from the Arizona Humane Society. He loves to play fetch all day long. He has a big bark but is a chicken about things, like...he loves and protects his human sister, but won't let her close enough to pet him. His first toy at the adoption center was a plush chicken – that's part of how he got his name!

– Riley and Vivian H.

2. **Jack** is a seven-year-old Pointer-German Shepherd mix rescued from Telluride. He has a remarkably human-like personality, is quirky, and is wonderfully particular about his meals. Jack showers his family of five with love every single day and can often be seen enjoying life with his head out the car window.

– Rebecca H.

3. Please meet **Sabrina**, an 11-month old German Shepherd. She loves walks, playing ball, car rides, and following us everywhere we go. She always greets us with unbridled enthusiasm and takes her security job duties very seriously. To sum it up: she is large and in charge.

– Kathy and Al C.

4. We have a very handsome Siamese cat named **Bocephus** (Bo for short). His pastimes include opening up cabinets and collecting hair ties. Bo is three years old and has been a member of our family for two years. We adopted him from the Arizona Animal Welfare League, and boy did we luck out!

– Nicole P.

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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Titan spirit soars to first place at State Championship

By Rachael Bouley

The Spirit of Arcadia Marching Band brought home state glory, dazzling judges and audiences with their epic performance at the ABODA (Arizona Band and Orchestra Directors Association) State Championships. Competing in Division IV, the band claimed first place, along with special caption awards for Music Performance, Visual Performance, and General Effect.

Nate Conell, Director of Instrumental Music, composed and arranged all original music for the occasion and guided the students through an intense schedule: eight hours of practice a week, including early morning and evening rehearsals, on top of performances at home football games.

Their hard work culminated in a spectacular production titled “Life on the High Seas,” following the adventures of a pirate crew.

“We had three parts to the production. First, we sailed off to sea, then there was a sea shanty section with a sword fight,

then finally we braved a major storm and landed safely on shore,” Conell said.

With 18 bands competing in the division, Spirit of Arcadia’s win was an exhilarating achievement.

“We weren’t even sure we would make the top cut for finals, so ending up in first place was an amazing honor and a testament to the hard work the students put in,” Conell explained.

This year’s marching band consisted of 31 students – nine freshmen, seven sophomores, four juniors, and 11 seniors – performing on flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, mellophone, baritone, tuba, percussion, and color guard with flags, rifles, and sabres. Students and staff

are excited to build on this success, including collaborations with other schools during winter concerts to encourage continued musical growth.

“The most rewarding part of leading them is watching them come in as strangers and leave having made lifelong friendships,” Conell said. “That is why I believe this activity is so special.”

“It felt surreal. I couldn’t believe that

“
Ending up in first place was an amazing honor and a testament to the hard work the students put in.
”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ABODA

ABODA President Jennifer Howard with color guard member Val Escalante, drum major David Toscano, and color guard member Emma Ganser.

we made it so far and that all of our hard work paid off,” junior saxophonist Mar Lopez said.

Sophomore clarinet player Sean Bump-Reagan agreed: “I loved working and playing with all these incredible people. It was great to see how hard everyone worked, which eventually led to our State Championship. I will never stop playing,

because I’m having such a great time right now.”

The victory is a celebration of teamwork, creativity, and perseverance. With their sights set on next season, the Spirit of Arcadia Marching Band is already composing the next chapter of their musical adventure.



SPRING 2026 SEASON

Registration Open

REGULAR SEASON pricing ends Jan 15

LATE REGISTRATION pricing ends Jan 31

REGISTRATION CLOSING January 31

WWW.ARCADIALITTLELEAGUE.COM

baseball softball tee-ball



WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

ARIZONA AUTO WEEK



BARRETT-JACKSON

Westworld of Scottsdale
16601 N. Pima Road

Headquartered in Scottsdale, Barrett-Jackson is the granddaddy of collector car auctions. The event draws visitors from all over the world. In 2025, the auction sold over \$198 million – plus 2,013 collectible vehicles and more than 6,000 registered bidders. Over 950 pieces of automobilia were sold for \$5.2M+ and \$6.2 million was raised for charity through the sale of five vehicles, led by the 2025 Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 for \$3.7 million.

When: January 17-25, 2026
barrett-jackson.com

ARIZONA CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

Scottsdale Civic Center

3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd. Scottsdale

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

When: January 18, 2026
scottsdaleperformingarts.org

BONHAMS

The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa

6902 E. Greenway Pkwy., Phoenix

Historic British auction house Bonham's offers a more intimate auction environment with unique autos like a 1932 Chrysler CI-6 Sport Roadster, 1956 Ferrari 250GT Coupe or a 1957 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Convertible.

When: January 23, 2026
bonhams.com

RM SOTHEBY'S

The Arizona Biltmore

2400 E. Missouri Ave., Phoenix

RM Sotheby's will return for the 27th annual Arizona sale, kicking off its 2026 auction calendar. RM Sotheby's is set to present a wide variety of makes and eras (like a 1917 Detroit Electric Model 68 Brougham) across different price points. The preview on January 22 (9-11 a.m.) is open to the public, but tickets are required for the auction.

When: January 23, 2026
rmsothebys.com

BRIEFS

Mark your calendars: The 11th annual **Arcadia Cares: Food for Kidz Packathon** is back and scheduled for March 6 (4-7 p.m.) and March 7 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (3641 N. 56th St., Phoenix). The community is welcome to volunteer to help pack meals for underprivileged families. Sign-up will open in January.
popphoenix.org

The first annual **AONA Car Show** is rolling into Arcadia Osborn on February 28, 2026, from 8 to 11 a.m. at First Chinese Baptist Church (4910 E. Earll Dr., Phoenix). Spectators are free, so bring your friends, family, and appreciation for great cars to enjoy a morning of automotive fun. Have a vehicle you'd like to show off? Participants can register via a QR code on Instagram.

arcadiaosbornphx.com

Elizabeth Hamill Interiors is a high-end luxury interior design firm specializing in residential, commercial, and hospitality projects that moved from Old Town Scottsdale and took over the former flower shop space next to Chick-fil-A at 44th St. and Indian School Road. The team offers creative and technical services from full-service interior design, furniture packages, and custom selections to architectural drawings, space planning, project management, and more.

elizabethhamillinteriors.com

Good Guygiene personal care boxes are an Arcadia-mom created venture that "opens a space for teen and tween boys to try products, find their favorites, and own the hygiene process." Boxes are packed with toxin-free, cruelty-free products. Order through the website use the code ARCADIA at checkout for 15 percent off.

goodguygiene.com

Phoenix native Carrie Jamison founded **Valley Boutique**, an online clothing store, to make shopping for stylish clothing simple and confidence-boosting. After years in the industry and raising her daughters, Jamison returned to her passion by curating a collection with a goal to help women feel beautiful while also showing her daughters that it's never too late to return to your dreams.

shopvalleyboutique.com

Pompeii: The Exhibition is now on display at the Arizona Science Center through April 2026, inviting guests to step back in time as they explore the story of a once-thriving city suddenly lost to a volcanic eruption. Featuring 150 preserved artifacts, the exhibition offers an intimate look at daily life in Pompeii before it was hidden for centuries. This add-on experience requires a separate ticket from general admission. Tickets start at \$20; \$15 for members.

azscience.org

EVENTS

SATURDAY 1/3

Million Dollar Quartet

2 p.m. at the Phoenix Theatre Company, 1825 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. Inspired by true events, the Million Dollar Quartet experience takes guests behind the scenes of the 1956 recording session that brought Elvis Presley, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis together. "Blue Suede Shoes," "Great Balls of Fire," and "Folsom Prison Blues" are on the set list tonight. Tickets start at \$60.

phoenixtheatre.com

SUNDAY 1/4

Sunday Smokeout

12 p.m. at the Adobe Bar & Grill, 2400 Biltmore Estates Dr., Phoenix. The Arizona Biltmore Golf Club turns up the heat with Sunday Smokeout, a weekly event that serves up house-made BBQ, Bulleit Bourbon cocktails and live country and southern tunes on the lawn. Guests can grab a plate, sip a signature cocktail and end the weekend on a high note.

azbiltmoregc.com

FRIDAY 1/9

Boots at the Ranch

4:30 at the Scottsdale Resort & Spa, 7700 E. McCormick Pkwy., Scottsdale. Tonight's event is a songwriters' showcase featuring eight Warner Chappell Records artists performing their songs and sharing the stories behind them. Start the evening with a pre-party in Bennie's Courtyard or with a three-course pre-fixe dinner. The lineup includes Tucker Wetmore, Sasha Alex Sloan and more. Tickets start at \$35.

thescottsdaleresort.com

FRIDAY 1/9 – SUNDAY 1/11

Home and Garden Show

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

maricopacountyhomeshows.com

SATURDAY 1/10 – SUNDAY 1/11

Arizona Wedding Show

8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Phoenix Convention Center, 33 S. 3rd St. This event features more than 200 of the Valley's top wedding experts. Find resources for venues, photographers, honeymoons, dresses, flowers, and music – all the things a couple needs to make their wedding memorable. There will also be

bridal gown fashion shows, giveaways and workshops. Tickets are \$12 per person.
arizonaweddingshowjanuary.com

Merchantile Market

10 a.m. at the Scottsdale Civic Center, 3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd. Featuring over 200 local makers, this vendor market will offer handmade jewelry, art, apparel, accessories, health and beauty products, piercing and tattoo booths, sweets and treats, make and take experiences, beer and cocktail tents, live music, food trucks, and activities for the kids. This event is free.

merchantilemarket.com

SUNDAY 1/11

Heist

3 p.m. at the Tempe Center for the Arts, 700 W. Rio Salado Pkwy. Heist is the story of a meticulously planned jewel theft where every second counts, every team member has a secret, and nothing goes according to plan. With plenty of twists, this show is like *Ocean's Eleven* meets *Inception* and playing until January 25. Tickets start at \$60.

atc.org

THURSDAY 1/15 – SUNDAY 1/18

Festivin

Times vary, at the Wrigley Mansion, 2500 E. Telawa Tr., Phoenix. Four days of wine, food, and education. At the sixth annual Festivin weekend, guests can check out vinos, food, and education featuring over 15 events like exclusive dinners, classes, demonstrations, and Grand Tasting. A portion of proceeds will benefit Almost There: A Mom and Pup Rescue. Festivities kick off with two dinners on opening night. Prices vary.

wrigleymansion.com

SATURDAY 1/17 – SUNDAY 1/18

Rock 'n' Roll Arizona Marathon

7 a.m. starting at S. Mill Ave. and 3rd St. in Tempe. Start the new year with a flat and fast race that takes runners through Arcadia. The Rock 'n' Roll Arizona Marathon. Saturday is the 5K, and Sunday will have the marathon, half marathon, 10K, and kids' run. There will be live music throughout the course, a finish line festival, health and fitness expo entrance, and an awards ceremony. Registration is \$99-\$170.

runrocknroll.com

THURSDAY 1/15

MLK Celebration Dinner

5:30 p.m. at the Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts, 7380 E. 2nd St. Celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day with the 32nd annual MLK Celebration, hosted by the Community Celebrating Diversity organization. Guests can enjoy dinner and featured presenter; this year, Chairperson of the US Civil Rights Commission Dr. Mar

WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?



Time Travelers Vintage Expo at the Phoenix Convention Center.



Rock 'n' Roll Arizona Marathon in Tempe.

Frances Berry will take the stage. Individual tickets are \$75 per person.

ccdazona.org/mlk-events

SATURDAY 1/17

Zoo Move and Groove

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

phoenixzoo.org

Drunk Shakespeare

7 p.m., at The Rose Theatre, 455 N. 3rd St., Phoenix. The stage is set, the actors are ready, and one of them is...drunk? This comedic take on a Shakespeare play is for guests 21 and up. Sit back and watch as one performer attempts to act out Shakespearean sonnets while the others follow along and try not to break the scene. Guests can purchase beverages and snacks at the show. Tickets start at \$70.

drunkshakespeare.com

How to Train Your Dragon

7:30 p.m. at Symphony Hall, 1 N. 1st St., Phoenix. DreamWorks' *How to Train Your Dragon* is about a young Viking named Hiccup who befriends one of his deadliest foes – a ferocious dragon he calls Toothless. Together, these unlikely heroes must fight against all odds to save their worlds. This show features John Powell's Oscar-nominated score performed live to picture by Conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos. Tickets start at \$40.

phoenixsymphony.org

TUESDAY 1/20

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

6 p.m. at the Scottsdale Public Library, 3839 N. Drinkwater Blvd. This month's

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable will host Dr. Lucas Wilder, historian of the American Civil War who will present "Chattanooga & Chickamauga." Doors open at 5 p.m. for meeting the speaker, book sale, and viewing Civil War videos. This event is free.

scottsdalecwrt.org

SATURDAY 1/24

Time Travelers Vintage Expo

10 a.m. at the Phoenix Convention Center, 33 S. 3rd St. The largest traveling vintage market in the United States is making its

way to AZ. Attendees can find a "retro wonderland" that boasts vintage clothing, home goods, retro-inspired handmade items and more. Up to 120 small businesses, curators, and artists will be on-site. This is an all-ages event; tickets are \$20.

timetravelersexpo.com

Scottsdale Book Festival

10 a.m. at Civic Center Park, 7380 E. 2nd St. The inaugural Scottsdale Book Festival celebrates books, literacy, and storytelling. Attendees will find 200+

authors, publishers, and exhibitors, plus food vendors and live entertainment. Explore the festival to meet authors, uncover new voices, and enjoy stories spanning every genre...from fiction and nonfiction to YA, children's books, poetry, and more.

scottsdalebookfestival.com

SATURDAY 1/24

Diplo's Run Club

9 a.m. starting at Margaret T. Hance Park, 67 W. Culver St., Phoenix. Diplo's Run Club is heading to Phoenix. This 5K winds through the Roosevelt Arts District and city streets and keeps the vibes going with a post-race party and live performance from Diplo + friends. The 5K starts at \$80; VIP starts at \$160.

diplosrunclub.com

SATURDAY 1/24 – SUNDAY 1/25

Tempe Blooms

10 a.m., around Downtown Tempe, 1 W. Rio Salado Pkwy. Two days of award-winning, free floral and arts showcases. Guests will find 20 large-scale floral installations crafted by Valley designers, live mural painting, rotating live music, a flower-inspired market, and "flowerful specials" from area businesses.

downtowntempe.com

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Tino Ferrulli

WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

THURSDAY 1/29

A Beautiful Noise

7:30 p.m. at ASU Gammage, 1200 S. Forest Ave., Tempe. Created in collaboration with Neil Diamond, A Beautiful Noise is the true story of how a kid from Brooklyn became an American icon. With 120 million albums sold, an induction into the Songwriters and Rock and Roll Halls of Fame, and sold-out concerts around the world, Neil Diamond's story is one any fan won't want to miss. Tickets start at \$59.

asugammage.com

FRIDAY 1/30

Waterfront Fine Art & Wine Festival

10 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Scottsdale Waterfront, 7135 E. Camelback Road. Head down to Old Town for the 15th annual Waterfront Fine Art and Wine Festival. More than 125 juried fine artists will be on-site showcasing their masterpieces, from sculpture to painting to photography. Grab a glass of wine and enjoy live music while you browse. Admission is \$5; souvenir wine glass and tasting tickets are \$30.

thunderbirdartists.com



Parada del Sol and Trail's End Festival in Old Town Scottsdale.

SATURDAY 1/31

Parada del Sol and Trail's End Festival

9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Parade starts at Drinkwater Blvd. through downtown Scottsdale. Celebrate Arizona's "Most Western Town" with the 72nd annual

Parada and Trail's End Festival. Over 35,000 spectators will watch a parade of 150 entries, including bands, floats, horses and more, and then head to the festival for live entertainment, music, activities, food trucks, games, and dancing. Attendance is free.

scottsdaleparade.com

Doggie Street Festival

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

doggiestreetfestival.org

Gigi's Playhouse Gala

5:30 p.m. at Omni Montelucia, 4949 E. Lincoln Dr., Scottsdale. GiGi's Playhouse, a nonprofit dedicated to changing lives with educational, therapeutic-based, and career programs for individuals with Down syndrome, will host "Oh, The Places We'll Go!" The event kicks off with a cocktail hour, a formal dinner, an inspirational program curated by Carey Peña, a live auction and dancing. Tickets are \$500 per person.

gigisplayhouse.org

HAVE AN EVENT YOU'D LIKE FEATURED?

Contact editor@arcadianews.com

ARIZONA'S LARGEST SELECTION OF WAGYU



3126 E Indian School Road Phoenix AZ 85016
Indian School & 32nd Street • 480-966-7947

The Brokery's 2025 Community Impact

We opened The Brokery's Arcadia branch office in 2017 with 7 real estate advisors. Today, we have 5 locations and we are home to over 130 advisors who currently transact more than \$500,000,000 in real estate annually. Our growth has been fueled by neighbors like yourself who have referred and championed our business from day one. We are truly humbled by the support and we will continue to keep our promise of being "Relentlessly Local."

When you choose a local business like ours, more of your dollars stay right here to make an impact in our communities. In 2025, we are proud to say that we made a big effort to give back. With your support we had the privilege to help over 500 families with their real estate needs. Through these unique relationships, we gained a better understanding of what is truly important to our clients in their everyday lives. In turn, we made a purposeful effort to channel our profits back into the local schools, charities, and events that our clients are passionate about.

Here are some of our 2025 highlights:

Support And Donations:

- Phoenix Children's Hospital
- Fresh Start Women's Organization
 - Love Pup
 - Wigged Out
 - Good Soles
- Arizona Broadway Theater

Events Hosted or Sponsored:

- Turkey Trot Sponsor
- 5 community markets with over 100 vendors
 - 4 free coffee events
 - 2 free movie events
 - 2 free Santa photo events

Thank you again for a phenomenal year and we look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood in 2026!

Tucker Blalock



THE BROKERY

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Oleg Bortman Associate Broker, Co-Founder
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OUT OF THE AREA, BUT WORTH THE DRIVE

SATURDAY 1/3

Family Fun Winterfest

10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Arizona Boardwalk, 5500 E. Via de Ventura, Scottsdale. If you're looking for winter fun, this event has falling snow! Guests can take photos with Elsa and Anna, listen to music from DJ FLO, and enjoy bounce houses, slides and face painting. Parents can enjoy shopping with local vendors. This event is free, but registered guests can be entered into giveaways – tickets to the renaissance festival, aquarium, plus restaurant and gift cards.

arizonaboardwalk.com

SUNDAY 1/4

Tianyu Lights Festival

6 p.m. at Camelback Ranch, 10710 W. Camelback Road, Phoenix. Tonight is the final evening for the Tianyu Lights Festival, a walk-through experience that brings nature and art together. The festival boasts more than 40 sets of lantern sculptures throughout four themed sections. There's also a marketplace and a food court. Tickets start at \$33.

tianyuculture.us

WEDNESDAY 1/7

Art on the Avenue

10 a.m. at the Fountain, 12925 N. Saguaro Blvd., Fountain Hills. Art on the Avenue provides numerous Valley artists the opportunity to share and promote their one-of-a-kind pieces in a unique outdoor gallery. Visitors will find pottery, furniture, wall art, fiber, jewelry and more – plus, grab some snacks from the farmers market that'll be right next door. This event is free.

experiencefountainhills.org

THURSDAY 1/15 – SUNDAY 1/18

Buses by the Bridge

10 a.m. at the Lake Havasu State Park, 171 London Bridge Road. Spectators are invited to come out and see over 600 vintage Volkswagens and buses and partake in all the

activities at this annual event. There will be entertainment, fun stuff for kids, bounce houses, lawn games, air balloon rides and food vendors. Guests are also welcome to camp out. Tickets are \$5 per person.

golakehavasu.com

FRIDAY 1/16 – SUNDAY 1/18

Carefree Winter Fine Art Festival

10 a.m.-5 p.m., at 101 Easy St., Carefree. Take the weekend to stroll through more than 120 juried fine arts displays in downtown Carefree. Artists from the U.S. and abroad will be on-site showcasing their paintings, sculptures and photography while guests sip domestic and imported wines and grab a bite from various food trucks. For \$30 patrons will receive a commemorative wine glass and tastings. Tickets are \$5.

thunderbirdartists.com

FRIDAY 1/16 – SATURDAY 1/17

Dillinger Days

9 a.m., at Hotel Congress, 311 E. Congress St., Tucson. Travel back to the 1930s for this western-themed event. The Speakeasy on Friday (7 p.m.) includes a seven-piece swing band, whiskey tasting and dancing, all in honor of one of the most notorious mobsters in Arizona. On Saturday, guests can enjoy a reenactment of Dillinger's capture, walking tours, a vintage car show and more. Ticket prices vary.

hotelcongress.com

SATURDAY 1/17

Celebration of Excellence Gala

5 p.m. at The Holland Center, 34250 N. 60th St., Scottsdale. The Carefree Cave Creek Chamber of Commerce will host a 1970s-themed celebration honoring businesses, nonprofits, and community leaders during an evening of dinner, awards and live entertainment. Guests are invited to don their best retro attire and enjoy an evening with people who help the community thrive. Tickets start at \$95.

carefreecavecreek.org



Tianyu Lights Festival at Camelback Ranch.

Copper State Beer Festival

2 p.m. at Riverview Park, 2100 W. Rio Salado Pkwy., Mesa. Let the beer bellies have their moment at the fifth annual Copper State Beer Festival, a celebration of local brews, wines, ciders and seltzers. Guests can enjoy drinks, food trucks, live music, a vendor village and games like axe throwing, corn hole and giant Jenga. Tickets start at \$60 for general admission and \$130 for VIP.

copperstatebeerfest.com

TUESDAY 1/20

The Temptations

7 p.m. at Mesa Arts Center, One E. Main St. Kick off a new year with some old-school tunes at Mesa Arts. Legendary Motown acts The Temptations and The Four Tops will take to the stage, singing classics like My Girl, The Way You Do the Things You Do, Baby I Need Your Loving, and more. Make sure you wear your dancing shoes. Tickets start at \$65.

mesaartscenter.com

THURSDAY 1/22

Sunsets and Sips

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

franklloydwright.org

SATURDAY 1/31

Arizona Italian American Gala

6 p.m. at Hangar One, 15220 N. 78th Way, Scottsdale. Now in its fifth year, this annual event unites Arizona's Italian American community for an evening of philanthropy, with proceeds benefiting scholarships, programming, and outreach. The event will

honor Sandra Watson for her influential leadership and Leo Zacchino for his culinary contributions, all showcased with cuisine, entertainment, and recognition. Tickets are \$250 per person.

azitalianchamber.org

Asian Festival

11 a.m.-8 p.m. at Mesa Community College, 1833 W. Southern Ave. The mission of this event is to promote awareness of business, harmony and a celebration for the whole community. There will be cultural "villages," music performances, arts and crafts, rainforest music and a rainforest workshop, entertainment for the youngsters, plus food and drinks for purchase. This event is free.

asianfestivalaz.com

Kierland Fine Art & 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 live entertainment and 16 of the region's best wineries pouring more than 150 wines. Admission is free, wine tastings start at \$3.

kierlandcommons.com

Bookfest

10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Black Canyon Heritage Park, 33955 S. Old Black Canyon Hwy. This festival combines two events into one. Bookfest guests will get a chance to buy some new reads and meet authors, booksellers, illustrators, and experts in Arizona history. The Old Cañon School Museum will also be open for tours. Food will be available for purchase, plus arts and crafts, vendors, a virtual silent auction and a raffle. This event is free.

blackcanyonheritagepark.org

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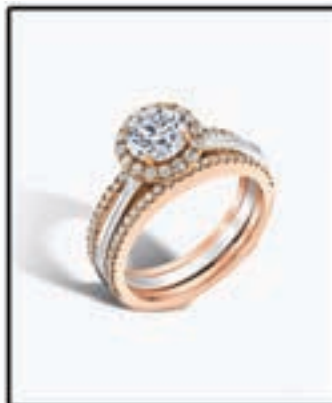
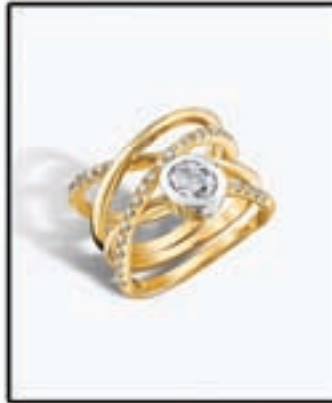
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Coming soon: Tavan's new innovative makerspace

By Rachael Bouley

Two Tavan Elementary teachers have received Innovation Startup Grants through Scottsdale Unified School District, opening the door to expand STEM resources for students of all grade levels to enjoy.

The grant program recognizes outstanding educators who are transforming teaching through creativity, and Katie Khan and Susan Green are eager to share their love of science and technology with more students.

According to Dr. Dave Priniski, SUSD Director of State and Federal Programs, the district launched the Innovation Startup Grants in 2023 to expand hands-on, future-focused learning opportunities. The SUSD Strategic Action Team inspired the grant, which was created to remove barriers and support innovation, helping schools bring forward-thinking ideas to life.

“Since then, we’ve seen remarkable creativity across classrooms, with teachers integrating problem-solving, design thinking, and technology into instruction,” Priniski said. “Katie and Susan are leading the initiative. Their vision is to create a hybrid makerspace and robotics/coding program that expands access to meaningful STEM learning for K-5 students.”

Creative educators spark curiosity, build confidence, and prepare students for a rapidly changing world. Grant funds support student-centered projects and may be used for materials, supplies, and other learning



Katie Khan and Susan Green with Alyson Sawkiw, Denise Nofi and Principal Julie Ballard.

resources. Through funding received this fall, teachers have greater flexibility to create a truly innovative and inspiring learning space.

Khan teaches kindergarten and first-grade CGP (comprehensive gifted program). This is her ninth year teaching, with two years of kindergarten at Tavan, one year teaching special education in Nevada, and six years in Virginia, leading kindergarten and third-grade classrooms.

Green teaches second- and third-grade CGP, where her students learn through individualized instruction and passion projects. Now in her 21st year of teaching, Green loves all subjects but especially science and social studies.

The duo said that receiving the SUSD

Innovation Startup Grant felt very exciting and rewarding.

“We are thrilled knowing we now have the opportunity to bring coding, robots, and hands-on learning experiences to our scholars,” Khan said. “It felt amazing to have our vision supported, especially knowing how much these tools will inspire creativity, problem-solving, and confidence.”

The new makerspace will feature tools like coding robots, BreakoutEDU boxes, microscopes, and scales to spark curiosity and exploration. It will supplement classroom learning while giving students opportunities to problem solve, create, and develop strong critical thinking skills.

“We can’t wait to see how this space empowers scholars to discover new

interests and confidently engage in hands-on learning,” Green said.

Khan discovered Wonder Robots and introduced them to her class. When she saw how quickly they connected with the robots, she teamed up with Green to apply for the Innovation Startup Grant.

“Our goal was to expand this success into a school-wide initiative, so all students benefit from creative learning experiences, including coding and science equipment,” Khan said.

Khan already integrates STEM projects into literacy lessons for kindergarten and first-grade CGP. Students use the stories they read as inspiration for design and build projects, which helps prepare them for Genius Hour investigations in the older grades based on their passions.

With a shared commitment to opening opportunities through curiosity and creativity rooted in science, these teachers are excited for the future.

“Our goal is to continue growing our makerspace initiative and expand it so every scholar at Tavan has access. We want to help build a school culture that values creativity, exploration, and perseverance,” Green said. “As we continue teaching at Tavan, we hope to support our scholars in becoming confident thinkers, curious creators, and collaborative problem solvers.”



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PHOTOS BY TORRENCE DUNHAM

DLR Group's Kristen Taylor-Foley, Willmeng Construction's Dr. Jason Reynolds, members of the SUSD governing board and Coronado High's band participated in the ribbon cutting in December. At the unveiling, community members were able to check out all facets of the new park, including the calisthenics machines.

Former SUSD school site transforms into athletic hub

By Kylie de Best

Have you driven by the old Tonalea Elementary campus and wondered what all the construction has been about? Well, now the wait is over: this former school has been transformed into a brand-new athletic facility designed for the entire community to enjoy.

Temporarily named the 68th and Oak Street Athletic Facility, the space offers something for everyone. Sports enthusiasts can enjoy eight competition sand volleyball courts, refreshed ball fields, and basketball courts, while community members can take advantage of a playground, walking paths, and calisthenics pods for stretching and fitness. Solar-powered lighting also ensures the facility is sustainable and welcoming after the sun sets.

The journey to this transformation took years of collaboration. In December 2020, the community met to discuss the future of the Tonalea campus.

Residents shared ideas and reviewed SUSD proposals, eventually leading to the formation of the Old Tonalea School Visioning Committee, tasked with shaping a clear vision for the site. In November 2024, an official proposal for an athletic facility was presented, developed in partnership with DLR Group, Willmeng Construction, and Bowman.

Construction required significant planning and effort. Extensive discussions with residents helped guide priorities before work officially began in April 2025. From site preparation and infrastructure to active

building and hardscape work, progress continued through spring and summer. By November, the updated ball fields, courts, playground and walking paths were ready for public use.

The facility brings numerous benefits. It offers a safe, engaging space for people to gather, be active, and connect. Students now have access to top-notch athletic resources without relying on rentals, while multiple schools can utilize the space for programs and events. The district views the facility not just as a practical solution but as a lasting asset for students, families, and the entire Scottsdale community.

"We're excited to have a resource like the new 68th and Oak Street Athletic Facility in the neighborhood," Comm Manager

Cymphanie Sherman said. "For years, Scottsdale Unified School District had to rent sand volleyball courts and other athletic spaces. Now our schools are beyond ecstatic to have these resources available close by."

On December 13, a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrated the grand opening. Superintendent Dr. Scott Menzel joined representatives from DLR Group, Willmeng, and Bowman, along with community members, to explore the transformed space. Attendees also had the chance to participate in a naming ballot for the property.

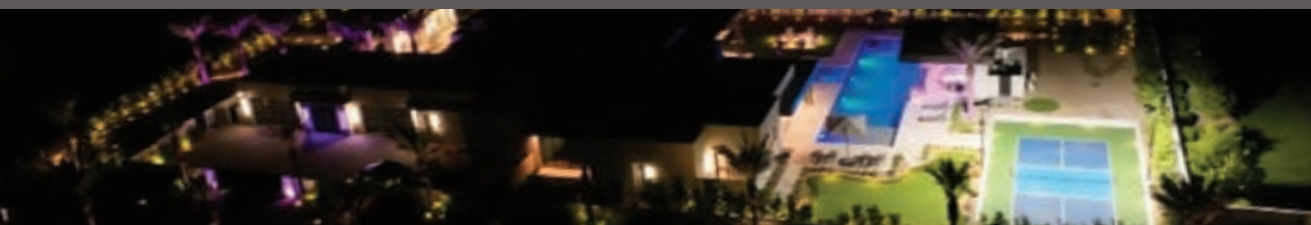
Looking ahead, the district plans to maintain and leverage the facility as a shared resource, ensuring it remains a hub where students and residents can safely learn, play, and thrive.



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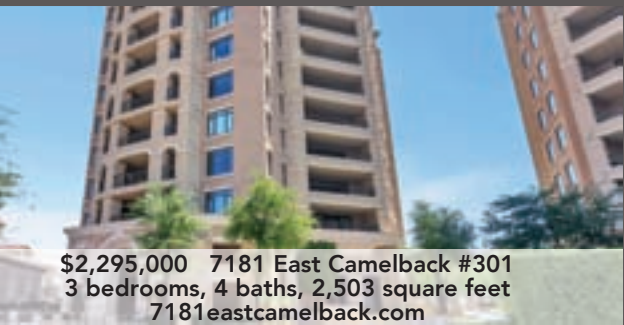
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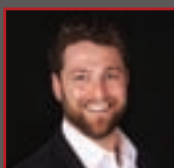
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In the Kitchen

In the Kitchen with **Ivan Jacobo**, Chef & Owner of Anhelelo

7007 E. 1st Ave., Scottsdale • anhelelorestaurant.com

What started as a slow, unexpected love for cooking eventually grew into a passion-driven career defined by creativity, perseverance, and a strong commitment to hospitality. Chef Ivan Jacobo has called Arizona home since childhood, shaping his path from construction job sites with his father to the finely tuned kitchen of Anhelelo in Old Town Scottsdale.

Give us some insight into your background.

I've been living in Arizona since I was three, and before that was California, where my dad's family is from.

My mom worked in warehouses. My dad worked in construction and retired two years ago, but that man doesn't stop! He helped build this restaurant by hand. Growing up, family time was him taking my siblings and I to do side jobs. I hated it! When we built the restaurant, we did the walls, the lighting... looking back, I can appreciate that we went to those jobs with dad.

Did you always know you wanted to be a chef?

No, and to be honest, I tried getting out of the industry several times. I fell more in love with the food aspect because of the possibilities and opportunities for something else. It was a slow love, and I don't see myself doing anything else.

Growing up, I wanted to be a mechanic. In my senior year of high school, I started watching Food Network and remember thinking it was pretty cool. I asked all the girls in my class who they'd rather date – a chef or a mechanic – and not one of them said mechanic [laughs]. That's literally how I decided on the industry. I knew I could fall back on mechanics if culinary didn't work out.

Is that how you met your wife?

I came to realize that no one wants to date a chef because they work nonstop. I got my first sous chef position when I was 21, the days when you want to go out and party, but I was constantly working. I'd get there at 7 and get out at 1 a.m.

I used to do pop-up dinners, and I did one at the Bentley Art Gallery where I gave two seats out for free. Each person was able to bring a plus one; I gave one to a designer whose plus one was a board member for Heritage Square, which is

how I ended up with my first restaurant. The second was a friend who brought her cousin... and that cousin is now my wife.

Did you go to culinary school?

I did, and I dropped out – it's still my biggest regret. I had two classes left and I was offered a full-time job and thought, 'Why finish school if I'm already working?'

A lot of the techniques I use were self-taught. There was a cafeteria at school and the chef that worked there told me to buy ingredients and during his 15-minute break between classes, he would come to the cafeteria and show me how to make things. I would watch a lot of videos to learn techniques and recipes.

Where did you work before opening Anhelelo?

I worked all over the Valley. There was never a specific place that was the goal to work at. My entire experience was, 'Where can I work to earn the funds to pursue opening my own place?'

Where have your food adventures taken you?

Everywhere! I had a food truck for a while and that was the most fun I've ever had as a cook, but also the most miserable... we would get tipped out with the most random stuff, some I can't even mention here [laughs], and I'll never forget it. It was super inconsistent.

The first time I made \$1,000, my tire popped and the generator blew. It was a disaster! But the truck evolved into a catering company where I got to work in some of the most luxurious homes. So in a sense, this industry has taken me everywhere.

What do you use as inspiration for menu items?

It's my team and I playing around with a bunch of flavors. This restaurant is tricky because it's smaller. I'd say the inspiration comes from the staff, and my brother – who runs the restaurant – is going crazy with trying all kinds of different stuff. Let's try this, let's try that, kind of thing; it's been a learning experience. For example, I completely ruined a \$4,000 piece of wagyu once because we let it go in the dry-age machine for too long. Wagyu and dry age doesn't mix well.



What's the craziest dish you've ever made?

We had a party where a diner pre-purchased a pound of white truffles and a pound of black truffles. To put that into perspective, white truffles right now are \$4,800 a pound. He also ordered a pound of caviar (\$1,200) and he had me bring in king crab.

What we did was steamed the crab and served it in a butter sauce with chives, truffles and the caviar. It was gnarly, and so popular that it evolved to be on the menu now, but with poached snow crab instead and half an ounce of caviar.

The menu changes frequently?

Yes – another learning experience. We launched a petit tasting to give people four or five options per course. As far as the menu changing, it's mostly once we get bored of cooking something, we swap it out. The big one for me is I cannot stay with the same dish for too long, and I don't want the staff to start feeling that way, too. It's cool that we don't have to ask permission to do so!

What happened with Anhelelo's downtown location?

Crazy story. I opened at Heritage Square as Hidden Kitchen – but in culinary school, they don't teach you anything about trademarks. We were working with LoveIAM, a nonprofit that works with

kids with heart defects, and I wanted to create a house wine for the restaurant that also sponsored the nonprofit.

We found Bokisch Vineyards in Lodi, California and they invited us to come and check out the vineyard – all this to say the name was already in use, so then came Anhelelo. And THEN came the pandemic. We shut down for a year and the city told us to wait six months to fix all the issues; by then I was over it and we relocated in 2021... I don't know – I don't remember what I did last week [laughs]. As soon as I found out about the current building, I bought it.

What's the most popular item on the menu?

We're rolling out a beef wellington that I'm excited about, even though it feels like it's on a lot of menus these days. People really love our steak tartare, we got a lot of backlash when we removed that, so we put it back. It's tricky for a tasting menu restaurant because our dishes don't stay on the menu that long. I'm known for creating a menu day-of and just letting it ride.

I won't taste my dishes either, I let the staff do that and let me know what needs changing. We have someone who's a vegetarian, and he won't taste anything but he'll smell it and he is so insane with pairing wines with the dishes just by the smell. It's crazy.

Tell us about the wine and cocktail programs.

My thing is this: when you're younger and you're at the club, you spend \$400 on a bottle of liquor. It feels awesome at the time, but the next day you're thinking, 'Why did I spend that kind of money?' Especially after seeing the same bottle for \$30 at the grocery store.

That's something I don't want my guests to feel. We don't price our wine with restaurant pricing so guests can enjoy themselves without worrying about spending all of their money on wine. It goes back to taking care of our guests and making them feel good.

Azalea, our bar manager, has never run a program – and her cocktails are amazing. Almost all of the cocktails can be done N/A. That was big for me, because we realized that those who can't drink or aren't drinking don't have many options. I want inclusion for all of our guests.

What is one item you find yourself using all the time?

Chives! If you ask anyone who's worked with me, they'll tell you I put chives on everything. Have you ever seen those

don't believe in luck – it all depends on how much work you put into it.

What do you focus on most within your position?

The thing I'm proudest about with Anhelio is the service. Growing up, I of course wanted to be the best chef. What I learned eventually and what took the restaurant to the next level was me realizing that food is a small portion of the dining experience.

If you eat at a restaurant and the food is good, but the service is horrible, chances are you won't go back. If you go to a restaurant and the server makes you feel amazing and shows you a good time even if your meal wasn't the greatest, chances are you'll go back and try them again. For the front of house, I want them to chime in and suggest to me how we can make the dining experience better.

When you're not working, what are you doing?

I like to spend as much time as I can with my daughter. During the buildout of the restaurant, she got used to me being home

“

What took the restaurant to the next level was me realizing that food is a small portion of the dining experience.

”

TikToks with the chopped cheese guy and he goes 'never, never, never'? No? That's how my staff clowns on me [laughs]. They say, 'Don't forget the chives, never, never, never!'

As far as equipment goes, I'd say the clock. We have one of those fancy ovens that we can program for all the dishes that go in there. Makes life so much easier.

What's a big red flag in the restaurant industry?

When you look at a resume and it says the person worked in one spot for six to eight months. You ask them why they left so early and their response is, 'I was able to learn and get as much out of the job as I could and decided to move forward.' That's the worst answer, because I know you're not learning as much as you can in the industry in six months. If I see you left a place within a year, and you're bouncing around, you're not going to work out here.

Working in the restaurant industry isn't just learning how to cook a dish. It's learning how to keep the dining room clean, how to deal with health inspectors, what to do if the oven light goes out, etc. I

a lot and now, I drop her off at school, and those are the best 20 minutes of the day. Mondays and Sundays are my days off, so we'll find fun things to do.

What restaurants would you recommend to someone new to the Valley?

Wrong person to ask [laughs] – to me, Café Monarch is the most romantic but I'd only go once in a blue moon. Christopher's is the most stunning restaurant in Arizona. As far as casual goes, I don't have a suggestion, because I'm big on checking out restaurants but it's hard to do with a five-year-old. My favorite restaurant is Oceans 44, but I'd also rather eat at home.

What's next for Chef Jacobo?

I want to continue our work with the scholarship program I created, as well as raising money for Arizona nonprofits. I want to see and pursue ways I can help the youth in the Valley. I want to spend more time with my family, and there are several projects in the works but that's all I can tell you about that!

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Todd Delano

Todd Delano believes in the principle of the greater good, or the well-being of everyone. It's his North Star, and it's a philosophy that suggests it's okay to plant a tree whose shade you may never sit in.

"There's a tale of goodness in serving others, and the feeling is long-lasting," Delano said. He becomes philosophical when describing how he grew up and the lessons he learned.

"I never set goals for what I wanted to be; rather, I set them for *who* I wanted to become," he said. "Strength of character is important, and consistency is who I am."

Delano hails from Texas and grew up in a broken home where "things weren't very stable." He bounced between his parents' homes, but at 16, declared his independence.

He struggled through high school, and a less-than-impressive SAT score initially kept him out of a university. Instead, he attended junior college, paying tuition by working as a hospital janitor. He applied himself, raised his grades, and ultimately graduated from Texas State University with honors in 1999.

"There was no strong push for academic achievement

in our family, and I was the first to graduate from college," he said with pride.

Delano met his wife, Carolyn, at a mutual friend's wedding, where they were both in the wedding party. They ultimately decided to have their own ceremony and 22 years later have three sons: Vincent (20), Tyson (14), and Sean (7).

Like most serial entrepreneurs, Delano is naturally curious, and that curiosity has driven him to start numerous businesses. He is a founding member and executive chairman of Delano Media Group, which is the parent company of four companies, including those responsible for producing major sporting events and marketing.

Before that, he founded ServRx, a financial technology firm serving the worldwide healthcare industry that processes prescription drug claims. *Inc. 500* has labeled it one of the fastest-growing private companies in the U.S. Just this year, he was designated as one of the "100 Most Impactful People in Men's College Basketball" by Silver Waves Media.

Delano downplays his accomplishments and suggests he is "more of a steward of other people's greatness."

His real passion is community service, and he calls it the "holy grail." In 2021, he and Carolyn cofounded the DREAM Foundation, which provides hands-on mentorship programs to hundreds of students attending historically black colleges and universities.

"Our foundation is what I'm most proud of. Our team has mentored and placed hundreds of college students in



roles at live sporting events across the country. Access and opportunities are what we're all about," Delano said.

Not surprisingly, his favorite book is *Learned Optimism*, which is about living a happier, healthier life by adopting a positive attitude. "My job is to embrace, learn, and recalibrate," he said.

He's always in perpetual motion, but his busy schedule doesn't prevent him from acting out his favorite role in life, that of a father. Delano becomes introspective, almost stoic, when asked about his life: "The fabric of who I am was woven by my mother's work ethic and my wife's relentless dedication and consistency."

One thing is for sure: Todd Delano will keep planting shade trees.

“There’s a tale of goodness in serving others.”

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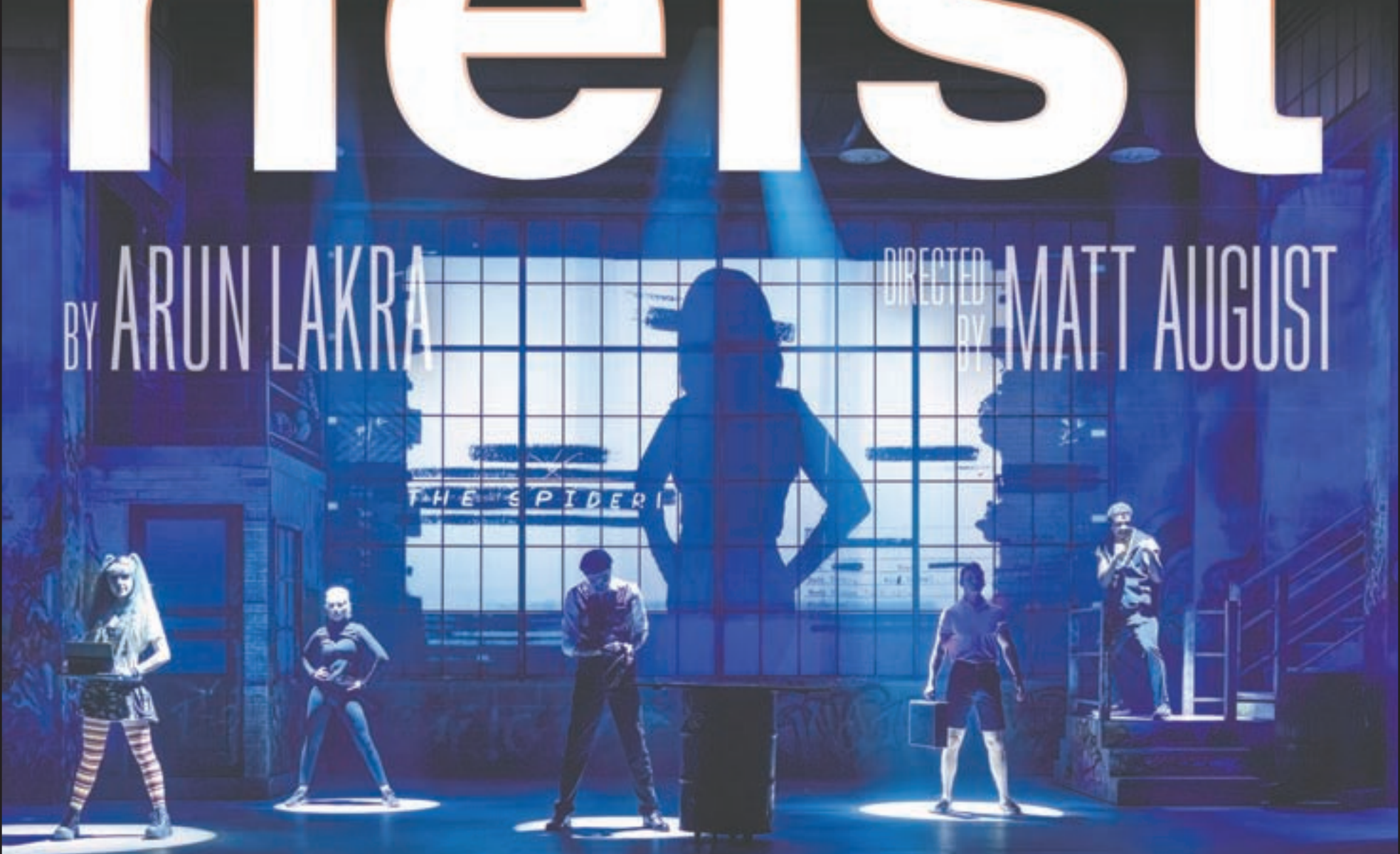
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Over 1M sandwiches sold: Cheese 'N Stuff is back in biz

By Kylie de Best

Cheese 'N Stuff has been serving generations of Phoenicians for more than 70 years. Founded in 1949 by Bill and Jane Dombroski, the delicatessen was later owned by three generations of the Zawatski family.

In April 2025, when the eatery was slated to close, five high school friends and fourth-generation Phoenicians stepped in to help revive the neighborhood staple. Now, Tom and Julie Palmer are the owners, guiding the deli into its next chapter.

The Palmers and their friends refreshed both the interior and exterior of the deli while preserving the vintage, local charm longtime customers know and love.

As renovations began, the group was overjoyed to uncover the original red brick wall hidden behind 1970s-era wood paneling. They removed the old flooring, stained the concrete, and installed new ceiling lighting to brighten the space.

The vintage walk-in cooler also required updates to meet current code. Rather than discard the original materials, the owners repurposed the slatted wood shelves, incorporating them into countertops inside and outside the shop. A new back patio has been added, with plans for morning and evening community events.

Outside, the team power-washed the exterior to restore the original red brick, while intentionally keeping the wood



Cheese N' Stuff first opened its doors in 1949.



Julie, Susan Palmer Hunter, and Tom showing off the deli's updated menu board.

paneling on the south wall to maintain the nostalgic feel. The Palmers said over the years people have shared stories of friendships formed and memories made at Cheese 'N Stuff, and these updates create even more opportunities for connection.

One of the most significant upgrades was repairing the iconic neon sign that lights up the uptown skyline. Originally installed in 1950, the sign had been inoperable for more than a decade, but it now shines brightly each night.

"Our guiding goal was to honor the

history of this iconic neighborhood deli while bringing it up to current standards," Julie shared. "We hope historians and preservationists are happy with the results, as well as the locals who have decades of memories."

The Palmers are also honoring past owners by showcasing a gallery wall behind the counter, featuring photos, fun sayings, old newspaper ads, awards, and vintage signs. Among them is a favorite saying from original owner Emil Zawatski: "Today's special, so is tomorrow."

Menu offerings include hot, cold, and specialty sandwiches such as the New Yorker, Cactus Jack, and Doughboy.

Looking ahead, Julie says there are exciting ideas in store for the deli's future. Plans include expanding catering and online ordering, introducing merchandise, hosting events, and growing market offerings to include gourmet items and charcuterie. A mural is also coming soon to the north exterior wall – so stay tuned!

cheesenstuffdeli.com

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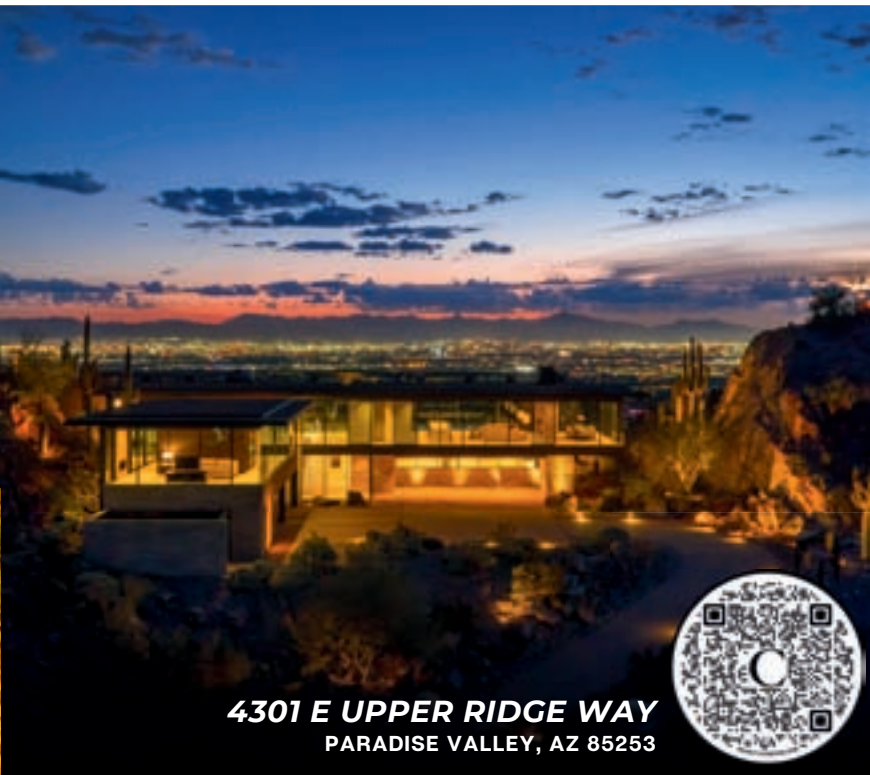
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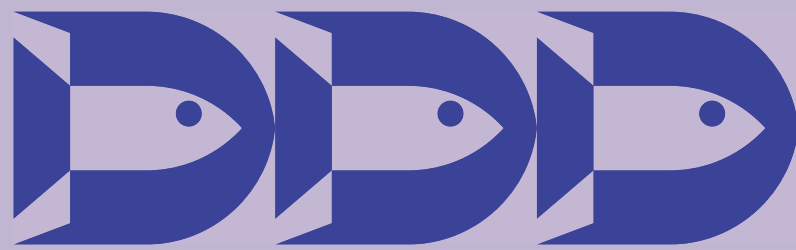
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The DOME is a \$10 million tech upgrade that is made up of over 40 million LED lights and over 9,000 panels.

A new era for Arizona science: Enter the DOME

By Sherry Sklar

First-time visitors to the new Dorrance DOME at Arizona Science Center are often awestruck by its immersive ability to transport them to another realm. Some visitors are even moved to the verge of tears. The center is in the midst of a renewal plan to bring the best in science and technology to the region, with the DOME being part of a larger investment to position it as a premier cultural asset in Phoenix.

The project, a \$10 million technology upgrade to the planetarium, features advanced LED panels and audio systems. Opening to the public in October 2025, the new space is powered by the cutting-edge Cosm CX System, which produces spellbinding 8K Ultra HD visuals, rendering images in breathtaking detail.

The venue seats 200 and offers programming for the community, with produced shows and events designed to appeal to different interests. There are even yoga classes that elevate yogis to another plane with immersive visuals and sound.

Since its opening, the new planetarium has already shifted perceptions of what a science experience can be. A field trip to Cosm's headquarters in Salt Lake City instantly convinced board members and leadership that its next-generation technology was a must-have for the new planetarium.

Sari Custer, Chief of Science & Curiosity, oversees exhibits and traveling exhibitions at the center.

"I was blown away in 15 seconds, and our CEO agreed. We brought some board members, and they said 'it took you 10 seconds too long,'" Custer laughed.

After several years of imagining what the planetarium could become, the project moved from planning to action in late 2023, when internal demolition began to clear the existing structure.

Construction officially began in early 2024, and over the next 20 months, the existing space was transformed through an unusually complex process. Guided by the DLR Group and Ryan Companies, the dome was a rare undertaking given how seldom planetariums are rebuilt from the ground up. They used the existing envelope, but had to rethink the weight of all the new electronics.

"The original 60-foot sphere was suspended in the space," Custer said. "Replacing it with a 60-foot

LED version meant supporting more weight, so the entire system had to be rebuilt."

With 9,025 panels and over 40 million LEDs, the system creates a seamless, crystal-clear projection overhead. Unlike traditional projection-based planetariums, the LED system allows imagery to appear sharper, brighter, and more dimensional, even during scenes that transition quickly or include fine detail. The technology also eliminates the shadowing and edge distortion common to older systems, creating a visual field that feels less like a screen and more like a window. For visitors, the result is not simply better resolution, but a heightened sense of presence.

The convergence of need, opportunity, and donor support came together at just the right time. The Dorrance Family Foundation and Richard F. Caris Charitable Trust helped make this dream a reality.

"We had wonderful, motivated supporters who made it possible," Custer said. "This was a multi-million-dollar project, and we had the backing we needed."

The theater is highly adaptable thanks to a revised layout that promotes flexibility. A leveled front floor now allows 88 of 205 seats, manufactured by Kotobuki Seating, to be removed for special events and diverse forms of programming. Arizona Science Center may still surprise those who've yet to visit.

"There are a lot of folks who don't yet know that they are science center people," Custer said. "We've got a lot of really cool things to show you."

While the center supports science, it also supports artists and creators who make Phoenix unique. Art 360 is the Dorrance DOME's signature evening series, bringing together music and immersive visuals produced for the planetarium setting.

"We want to be not just a community center, but the center of community for people," Custer said. "We want to be your first thought, both for science and everything else."

The most gratifying moments are when visitors have that "aha" moment that sparks conversation and awareness that science is woven into everyday life, from baking to computer games to gardening. And now, the new technology helps nurture those discussions through its immersive experience and sense of wonder.

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF AZ SCIENCE CENTER



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An iconic part of the White Gates home will now reside at the neighborhood art center. (bottom right) Gerri Beadle & architect Ned Sawyer.

Shemer honors Al Beadle's architectural impact

By Michael P. Murphy

January 2026 is an exciting time at the Shemer Art Center. The nonprofit's ambitious expansion fundraiser has collected an impressive \$1.3 million, President Shonna James was named a 2025 Piper Fellow, and there are plans in the works for a permanent exhibit of a local architect and builder whose work has made a big impression on our community.

Alfred Neuman Beadle (1927-1998) considered himself to be an architectural designer, but he was also a builder of homes and businesses. Widely thought of today as a pioneer of mid-century desert modernism, longtime metro Phoenix residents will probably know his work.

Remember the gone-but-not-forgotten Safari Hotel in Scottsdale, Ferguson's Cafeterias in mid-town Phoenix, and the Mountain Bell building at 3rd Street and Earl? All were designed and constructed by Beadle, as were the Executive Towers Condos on 2nd Ave. and Clarendon, the Three Fountains Apartments, and many other still-standing structures.

His modernistic style was also popular

in Phoenix-area homes, known as Beadle Boxes. Many were constructed in Arcadia – including the White Gates home near Camelback Mountain.

The White Gates home became controversial after being sold in early 2024, when the new owner immediately applied for a demolition permit. Many locals, preservationists, and architecture fans were upset that such a distinctive and historically significant structure – valued for its unique design and architectural heritage – might be torn down, especially since it isn't officially designated as a historic landmark, leaving few legal protections against demolition.

The situation highlighted frustrations with Phoenix's historic preservation processes and fears that the home could be replaced with a generic new build, prompting rallies and campaigns to save, or at least salvage, elements of the house. That's when Shemer stepped in.

Beadle's daughter, Gerri, and architects who had collaborated with Beadle, contributed to a series of architecture lectures. They discussed using the art center



to display critical artistic materials from the White Gates home if it is destroyed. What's more, Shemer is around half a mile from where the house has stood since 1954.

"For the historic commission to approve the demolition, there had to be salvage," James said. "Gerri reviewed all options and selected Shemer. It was important to her that they be in a public art space for future generations. Everyone involved wanted them to remain near the iconic Camelback Mountain."

The home is now gone. The salvaged architectural elements include the three ellipsoid panels that defined the front of the house, the meshed metal arch canopy that shaded the back patio, and the concrete

planters that anchored the landscaping in form and function.

"We will use items from the home to create a pavilion, and that building will be on our grounds to be used for events and weddings," James said. "It will be an open-air pavilion, like a gazebo, with screens replicating the home. A targeted completion date is spring 2026."

The Al Beadle Sculpture Garden will anchor the pavilion. Aside from being a builder and designer, Beadle was also a talented sculptor. Shemer procured two of his works, which will serve as anchors at the entryway to the new garden.

The center currently has an open call for artists for a new exhibition, Arizona Sunsets, opening in April, which will be juried by Gerri and colleagues. The event will celebrate the colors of the desert sky.

The White Gates Pavilion and Al Beadle Sculpture Garden will preserve an important piece of local history while elevating the profile of this remarkable architect.

shemerartcenter.org

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A new place to stretch, strengthen and smile

By Mallory Gleich

Taoist Tai Chi is ringing in the new year with good vibes, as the Arizona chapter opens its third Valley studio and continues its mission to make this ancient internal art accessible to people of all abilities. The expansion reflects not only the community's growing interest in mindful movement, but also the powerful health benefits practitioners continue to experience.

The group will host an open house for the new Tempe location on January 3, from 1-2:30 p.m. at Escalante Multi-Generational Center. The public can explore Taoist Tai Chi, try movements and discover its transformative effects.

Rooted in a spiritual tradition of self-cultivation, kindness, and compassion, the Taoist Tai Chi arts have been taught around the world for over 50 years by dedicated volunteer instructors. The practice combines gentle strength-building with mindful awareness, helping participants enhance their balance, flexibility, and resilience while cultivating a sense of inner calm.

Instructors often explain that the goal isn't performance, but connection – learning to listen to one's own body, soften into movement, and shift from effort to ease. Over time, many students find that the practice helps them release tension, stress, and old habits of holding on, replacing them with a sense of openness and grounded confidence.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF STEVE GREENBERG

Taoist Tai Chi's newest location will hold a grand opening celebration in January.



That shift is something Tempe resident Cherie Nelson knows well. For her, Taoist Tai Chi began with a simple photograph.

"I started Taoist Tai Chi because I saw a picture of people doing it and they looked really happy," she said. At the time, she was dealing with constant pain and congestive heart failure. But after eight months of practice, her pain disappeared.

"Four years ago, my echocardiogram showed a very strong heart with very little damage from congestive heart failure," she explained. "Even my cardiologist asked, 'what is this Tai Chi thing?'"

Beyond the physical changes, Nelson says the practice lifted her spirit as well.

"I have found true joy and happiness," she said. "My lack of self-worth went away, and

I discovered that I do deserve to be happy, healthy, and strong in all arenas of my life."

Fellow practitioner Steve Greenberg describes his experience in similarly heartfelt terms.

"My daily Taoist Tai Chi practice brings a much-needed pause to my life; a tranquil space in which I re-center and re-balance," he said.

A smile often appears during practice, he added, because Taoist Tai Chi gives him "a joyful vitality." For Greenberg, the magic lies in approaching each session with an open mind.

"The more I trust and consistently practice, the more open I become to receiving the benefits," he said. "When I consistently

practice, I seem to have all the time I need for whatever is important to me."

According to Greenburg, the Arizona chapter has nearly doubled its participants since its feature in Arcadia News in 2023. The group's commitment to compassion extends beyond the studio, too. Through regular partnerships with Arizona charities – including a recent collaboration with Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church – members have helped expand a neighborhood food drive from serving 55 families to more than 90.

Taoist Tai Chi sessions are held in Arcadia at St. Stephens Episcopal Church (56th St. and Oak) on Tuesdays from 6 to 7:30 p.m.; Fridays from 3:30 to 5 p.m., and Saturday mornings from 9 to 10:15 a.m.

taoisttaichi.org

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Kicking off a new year with a new workout always sounds great, until that first moment walking into a studio and thinking, ‘This was a bad idea.’ That’s exactly how I felt stepping into my first Lagree class: overwhelmed, curious, and a little intimidated. But at The Body Lab, the environment was welcoming, and the members were supportive, especially after I asked for the third and fourth times, ‘Am I doing this right?’

For anyone trying it out, the biggest tip from the regulars is simple: listen up! Lagree comes with its own language, cues, moves, and concepts, and the trainers are there to help make it doable. Grip socks are required – and if you forget yours, the studio has pairs available for purchase. I checked ahead and brought

the only pair I have, purchased from Stretch Lab years ago, although that membership didn’t last long.

“A Lagree class is high energy, even though the movements are slow and controlled. It lasts 45-50 minutes, the music is pumping, along with your heart, and people feed off each other’s energy,” Owner Paul Green said. “Our trainers are the best in class, and guide members through the workout with safety and desired results top of mind.”

There are four key training principles: progressive overloading, slow and controlled movement, constant tension, and multiple

muscle group engagement. Each trainer prepares a workout incorporating these principles to maximize “time under tension,” keep heart rates elevated, and minimize rest between movements. I just kept picturing the giant breakfast burrito I was going to have after class.

“There’s nothing like the feeling at the end of class, knowing you’ve achieved something most people haven’t that day,” Green said.

Green – who played football at USC and in the NFL – first discovered Lagree in Brentwood before bringing it to the Valley in 2010. Fifteen years later, the studio has grown into a staple with locations in Arcadia, Kansas City, and beyond.

Now, we can’t forget to mention the megaformer – the star of the show. It’s a specialized piece of exercise equipment that combines elements of a Pilates reformer, strength training, and cardio.

It features a moving carriage, adjustable springs, and pulleys, allowing for low-impact, high-intensity exercises that engage the core, glutes, legs, arms, and back. Workouts are slow and controlled, maximizing muscle tension for improved strength, endurance, flexibility, and stability. It looks intimidating, but if there’s one thing to know about me, it’s that I’m always up for a challenge. No matter how many swear words were going through my head.

“I’d say it takes between five and 10 classes before someone feels genuinely at home on a megaformer,” Green said. “Balance is a big key.”

Coaching styles, according to Green, are all about form, tempo, and intention. Each trainer uses precise cueing and a stopwatch to keep movements at the exact duration



The toughest part was making sure I moved slowly with each exercise.

needed for results. The most challenging part was moving slowly and resisting the urge to go all out with each movement.

“Slowing down is the secret sauce, and arriving at least 10 minutes early helps first-timers get acquainted with the megaformer before class kicks off,” Green said. “You’ll feel fatigue, shaking, and soreness in places

you didn’t know existed. It fades after a few days, but the confidence boost? That sticks around.”

He’s not kidding. After the class, I burst through the door like Rocky when he gets to the top of the stairs. And that burrito? Worth the wait.

thebodylabus.com



Things
we tried
BY MALLORY GLEICH



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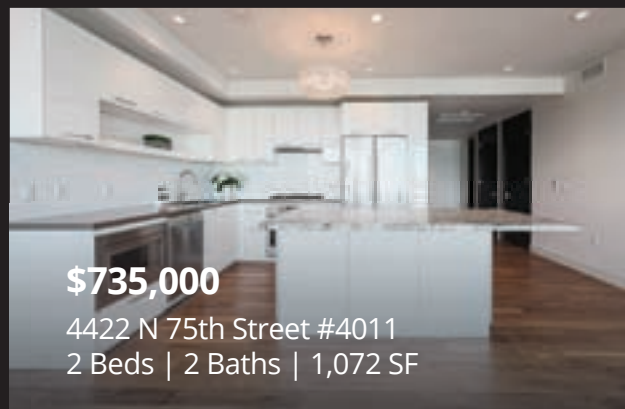
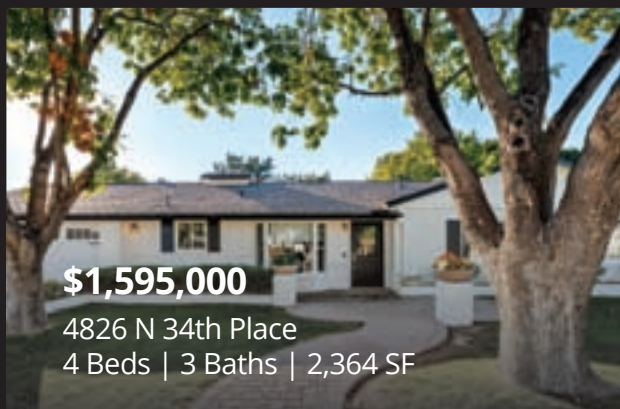
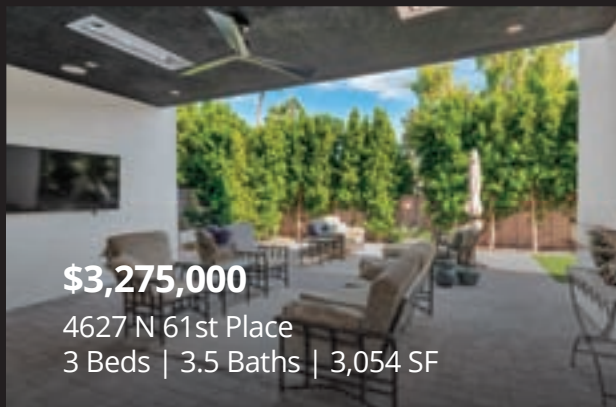
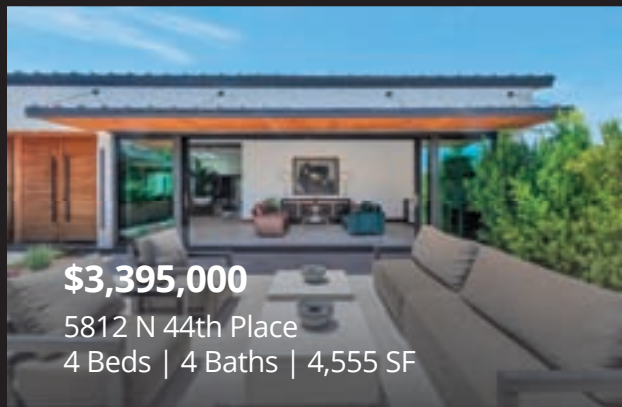
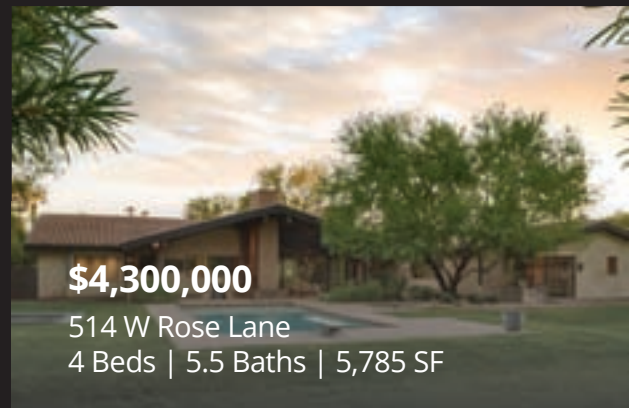
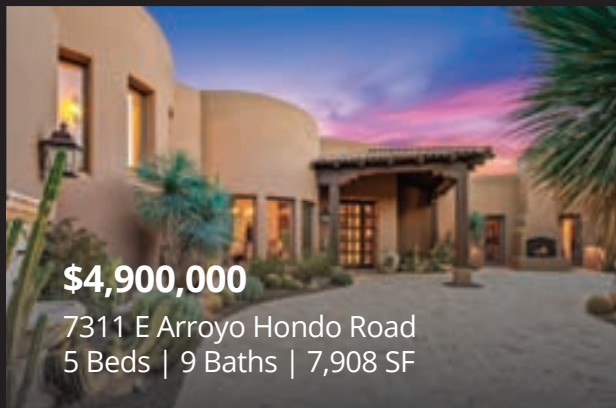
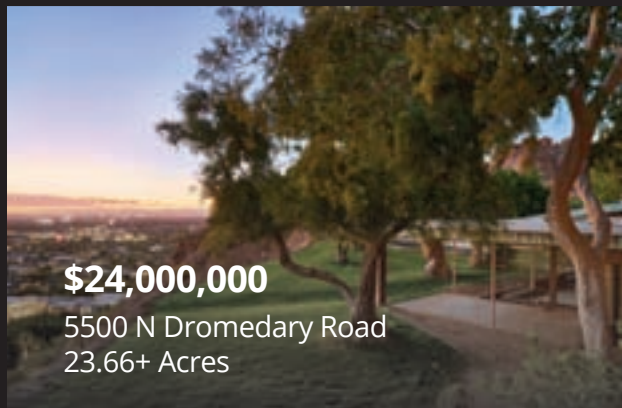
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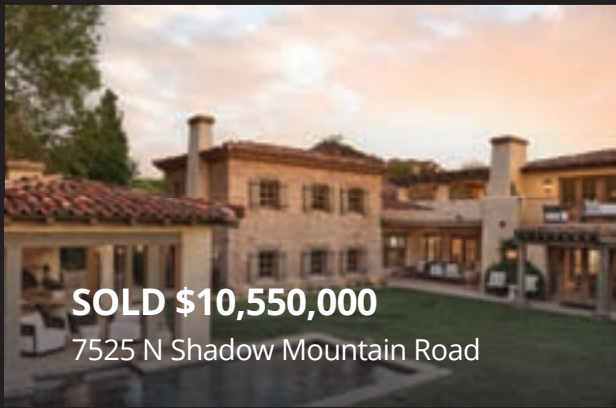


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Nonprofit helps grieving children find hope after loss

By Michael P. Murphy

Losing a family member, and especially a child, is one of life's worst tragedies. In the dark cloud of grief, there is a need for hope and support. To move on, but not forget.

New Song Center for Grieving Children, a program of Hospice of the Valley since 2009, is a nonprofit with compassionate staff and volunteers, offering well-designed programs to help with the process.

Cindy Widner, Gabrielle Lawrence, Heather Devich, and original board member Eloise Cole founded New Song in 1989 to support kids and families grieving a death.

Gabrielle had completed her doctoral thesis in this exact topic. She set out to provide services for children beyond professional therapy.

“
Kids support each other, and
we're there to facilitate.
”

New Song offers age-appropriate groups for children, teens, and young adults. In addition, there are groups for families whose child has died (Enduring Ties) and for bilingual families (Luz del Corazon). All are well structured and led by volunteer facilitators twice a month across the Valley.

Arcadia resident Jill Lovill, who serves as clinical director, said the organization is all about being there for others – not counseling.

“Especially the peer support group model,” she said. “Kids support each other, and we're there to facilitate. We start in a small group with an icebreaker to get them into a group communication mindset. Then we go over the rules.”

Those are straightforward: *It's okay to laugh. It's okay to cry. It's okay to be emotional.* It's also okay to pass, as no



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINDSEY FLOOD

New Song Center offers programs for children who are grieving a family member's death.

one is ever put on the spot or forced to say anything until they're comfortable sharing. This is followed by a sharing circle, where participants name their special person and any other details they may want to speak on. “We do a grief-processing activity for the kids,” Jill said. “It's play-based or art-based, with a little bit of creative expression. Then

everyone comes back together and we have a little closing ceremony.”

One facilitator marveled at how open teens are in a group environment: “Kids want to talk,” he said. “They may not always tell their parents what's going on.”

It's about listening, sharing, and supporting one another in a group setting, which leads to healing. Many who have

attended New Song have said they do not know how they could have worked through their grief otherwise.

When the joy of life has faded because of a lost loved one, hope can be found through shared experiences with other grieving families, bringing comfort, understanding, and healing. A new life. A new song.

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By Mark Jacobson

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Miami's past comes alive on Sullivan Street

Arizona Highways Television kicks off its 22nd season in 2026, and the journey continues with fresh adventures, unexpected stops, and stories that reveal the heart of the Grand Canyon State. This year's travels aren't just about the well-known landmarks; they're about the places you might drive past without realizing how much they have to say.

In January, we decided to head over to Miami – not Florida – but the Miami in Arizona. There's no beach here. No ocean views or palm trees. What Miami does have are steep stairways carved into hillsides, century-old bridges, and a downtown that quickly proves it's more than just a place you pass through on U.S. Route 60.

Our first stop revealed Miami's mining roots in plain sight. The Keystone Steps trace the path miners once walked to work, a daily climb that shaped the landscape and the town itself. Nearby, a rare row of five arched bridges built in 1918, just after Miami was incorporated, still spans the roadway. Their straight, uniform alignment is unusual and striking, quietly tying the present-

day community to its early beginnings.

The real discovery came when we turned off the highway and onto Sullivan Street. Every building seems to have something to say. Brick walls double as storytellers, lined with photographs that capture Miami's past from early town scenes to championship teams and



Sullivan Street is the central hub of Miami, Arizona. (right) Miami Flats is a hangout with food, music and activities like axe throwing.



long-gone favorites. It's the kind of place where people don't just look at history, they talk about it.

That sense of shared memory is powerful inside Sweet Memories, a treat shop that feels as welcoming as it sounds. Owned by lifelong Miami resident Lisa Zaragoza, the space blends comfort food with nostalgia. Guests come in for coffee, paninis, soft-serve ice cream, or fresh-squeezed lemonade, then linger as old photos spark conversations and familiar faces greet one another.

Sweet Memories is a family effort in every sense. Zaragoza's daughters handle everything from baking to sauces, while other relatives pitch in when needed. The result is less like a traditional restaurant and more like a community living room, a place where someone might stop in for a coffee in the morning and return later for ice cream, striking up conversations with whoever happens to be nearby.

As the sun dipped lower, Sullivan Street shifted again.

Friday night brought us to Miami Flats, one of the newer additions to downtown, and a clear sign that Miami is no ghost town. Housed in a 1915 building that once served as a car dealership, the space has been reimaged as a modern hangout while preserving its historic bones.

Family-run by brothers-in-law Gary Wilson and Claudio Rodriguez, Miami Flats started simply: drinks, music, and dancing, before expanding to include pizza and axe-throwing. The energy spills out onto the street as locals gather, laugh, and stay awhile, proving there's room for something new without losing what makes Miami feel like home.

By the end of our first trip of the year, one thing was clear: Miami, Arizona, isn't a place to rush through. It's a place to explore on foot, to talk with people who know its stories, and to leave with a few memories of your own. No beach required – and it's just off an Arizona Highway.

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DISTRICT 6 UPDATE

Phoenix in action

Phoenix has shown the true power of community, innovation, and opportunity, from acts of generosity to international connections – our city is making a difference locally and globally.

Turkey drive success

The 2025 turkey drive exceeded all expectations this year, thanks to the incredible turnout and generosity of our residents. Whether donating a turkey, contributing online, or sharing the drive with friends, every gift helped ensure families across Phoenix could enjoy a comforting holiday meal. A special thank-you goes to Councilwoman Stark and District 3 for participating in the friendly competition that brought even more support, and to the Desert Horizon Precinct for making this collaboration possible.



KEVIN ROBINSON

Councilman
District 6

602-262-7491
District6@phoenix.gov

Help with tax assistance

The City of Phoenix is seeking volunteers for the 2025 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program, which prepares free tax returns for low-to-moderate-income individuals and families. Training is provided for basic tax prep, and volunteers are also needed as greeters, screeners, bilingual interpreters, and site coordinators.

2025 Energy Access Plan

Phoenix is taking proactive steps to make energy more affordable for households most affected by extreme heat and rising utility costs. The City Council recently adopted the 2025 Energy Access Plan, which aims to increase household participation in low-income energy assistance programs by 25 percent by 2030. The plan outlines strategies to reduce high energy burdens and improve energy affordability.

Building global connections

Phoenix made history with the first-ever nonstop flight between Sky Harbor and Taipei, opening a gateway for trade, travel, and cultural exchange between the two cities. Leading the delegation to Taipei was a remarkable opportunity to meet influential leaders and showcase Phoenix as a city ready to expand, partner, and thrive on a global stage.

Celebrating youth creativity

The Phoenix Public Library invites students in kindergarten through 12th grade to participate in its annual Celebrate Black Voices virtual art exhibit. Selected works will be showcased in a virtual gallery on the library's website from February through December 2026, with special highlights during Black History Month. Students can submit one artwork per person, using any medium, no larger than 11x17, on white paper. Artwork can be submitted at any library location or via email to socialmedialibrary@phoenix.gov.

This month, we celebrate generosity, engagement, and the countless ways our city continues to grow and connect – both at home and around the world. Wishing you a wonderful new year!

Councilman Kevin Robinson

30 YEARS AGO



Arcadia News was unable to locate additional information on Mr. Lemire, who retired from Tavan some time ago – and while the Ballet Folklórico group is no longer active, Tavan continues to foster a culture of kindness through its participation in The Be Kind People Project, a nonprofit that encourages kindness, character development, respectful

behavior, and positive learning environments through initiatives such as The Be Kind Pledge.

As a participating Be Kind school, Tavan Elementary has embraced this framework on campus, using character education to help students grow into responsible, respectful, and compassionate members of their community.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARCADIA HIGH
Arcadia's Greta Patterson, Emily Daniels, Justine Uwamahoro, Gianna Marquez Ramirez, Julianna Gonzalez Martell, Emily Burnett, Layla Ramirez, Sophia Balinkie and Nina Tawney.



PHOTO COURTESY OF VERITAS PREP
Head Coach Brooks Dockter, Rocco Guido, Gabe Jackson, Jaspar Loel, Baylor Arnold, Will Barrett, Jackson O'Malley, Jack Mason, John Houle, Miles Perry and Assistant Coach Brevik Clark.

High school basketball builds momentum as season kicks off

By Mark Hays

With the high school basketball season underway, Arcadia-area programs are navigating early challenges, developing rotations, and laying the foundation for postseason contention. Here's a behind-the-scenes look at Arcadia, Brophy, Veritas, and Xavier's basketball teams:

ARCADIA HIGH BOYS

Arcadia's boys team, led by Head Coach Greg Richards, opened region play with wins over Coronado, Chaparral, Douglas, Prescott, and Camelback. With upcoming region matchups against St. Mary's, Saguaro, Mesquite, and Cactus Shadows, the Titans are positioned for a competitive stretch of the season.

ARCADIA HIGH GIRLS

Arcadia's girls program will play 18 regular-season games in addition to tournament competition. Head Coach Gavin Tolan said the team is preparing for key matchups against Coronado, Camelback, and Marco de Niza. "Those are three schools that we have had good battles with," Tolan said. With a young roster, development has been a primary focus. Tolan said the team has great chemistry, is full of energy, and is improving quickly. Practices run over two hours and include conditioning, drills, sets, film, and scrimmages. He cited senior leadership as a team strength. "I hope we can become closer as a team, give our best effort toward every game we play, and make the most out of the season," senior Greta Patterson said. Senior Julianna Gonzalez Martell added to that: "Our goals are for the team to play with heart, play with hustle, and play with pride!" Press time saw the Titans with two wins, seven losses (including the Coronado Thanksgiving Invitational), but there's plenty of time for this team to show the Valley what they're made of.

BROPHY PREP

Brophy entered the season following the school's first State Championship, and Head Coach Matt Hooten said three returning players led the team from last



PHOTO COURTESY OF BROPHY PREP
Assistant Coach Mike Schwertley, Aiden Williams, Donovan McNabb, Jr., Bray Gray, Enoch Reasy, Brady Powell, Collin Goossen, Oliver Burbach, Tyrese Holmes, Parker Mohrhauser, Amaru Williams, Rocket Schwertley, Daylen Sharper, Cooper Frakes, Head Coach Matt Hooten, Hale Hansen and Brady Lauer.

year's title run. Hale Hansen, Rocket Schwertley, and Daylen Sharper are at the core of this group, so Coach Hooten believes the "engine" of the team will start with that trio. He also said ball movement and unselfish play remain central to the program's identity. "When you have three players with their abilities that share the ball the way they do, it bleeds into your team's culture," he explained. Depth is also expected to play a role in the season. "We have six coming back, but we also have eight guys who are getting their first taste of varsity experience. They have been challenging their teammates and building them up," he said. Senior forward Hale Hansen said the team showed early signs of growth, and as of press time, the Broncos were three for three against Mountain Ridge, Boulder Creek, and Pinnacle High. "It is really exciting," he said. "After the first game, we showed significant upside. We are excited to see where we go this season." Most recently, Daylen sealed the title at the free-throw line as Brophy beat Cathedral Catholic 63-59 to win the annual Father Barry Classic, claiming back-to-back championships for the first time and the fifth title in school history. Daylen scored a game-high 19 points to earn all-tournament honors and Hale was named MVP.

VERITAS PREP BOYS

Veritas will play 18 regular-season games and compete in two Valley Region tournaments. Head Coach Brooks Dockter said region matchups remain a focal point, and the program emphasizes pressure and pace. "We like to put on a lot of defensive ball pressure and get up and down the floor offensively," Dockter said. Practices are structured around "small-sided games... no longer than 90 minutes," with a focus on speed and execution. Dockter said the goal is to peak late in the season. "To be playing our best basketball in February and allow ourselves to make a deep playoff run, that's our goal," Dockter said. The Falcons have a good start, with the boys' team winning their first five games against teams from Chandler, Scottsdale, and Fountain Hills, and the girls' team winning two of five against Chandler and Fountain Hills.

VERITAS PREP GIRLS

Veritas' girls' basketball team plays 17 regular-season games plus two tournaments for a total of 25 contests. Coach Rebecca Lane said some of the most anticipated matchups come against familiar rivals. "We always look forward to competing against our sister Great

Hearts schools," Lane said. "Scottsdale Prep and Glendale Prep consistently provide strong, physical competition. These matchups are especially meaningful there is a deep sense of camaraderie and mutual respect, and they push our athletes to rise both in skill and in character." Lane's coaching is rooted as much in formation as in results. "At the heart of our program is a simple truth: we love basketball, and we love one another and it shows," she said. "We prioritize character, discipline, and mastery of fundamentals. I trust my players. Practice is where we learn and refine; games are where we compete."

XAVIER PREP

Xavier is scheduled to play a 26-game regular season and, as of press time, is 4-2 in the 6A Central region. Head Coach Jenn Gillom, a former Olympian, said the program's focus is on internal development rather than external rivalries. Since it's only been a year playing in a different region, Gillom said they don't have a particular team that is a rival... yet. With a coaching style described as "a fast pace run and gun with a defensive focus to have our defense create offense," practices are intense, emphasizing individual skills and fundamentals. Players said the team's culture has been a key component of its approach. "Being part of the team means being a part of a support system," senior Sariah McNabb said. "I have people who are there to support me and always have my back. This season, I am looking forward to the playoffs." "The basketball team is like a second family," junior Sade Charles said. "I have learned the importance of confidence and moving with a positive attitude every day. I most look forward to the playoffs as it is an opportunity for us to put all our hard work together and perform."

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We are humbled by the success of The TE Team's toy drive and want to thank every person who helped us bring gifts to the patients at Phoenix Children's Hospital. ***Serving this community is our greatest privilege.*** We wish you and your family a prosperous 2026 and look forward to being your trusted resource in the year ahead.

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The 2025 Tavan Turkey Bowl saw the Figueroa Fighters winning 14-7 against Ballard's Brood.

Tavan's traditions take place on the field

By Sherry Sklar

Tavan Elementary brings its community spirit to the playing field through two signature events in the fall and winter: the long-running Turkey Bowl and festive Jingle Bell Jog, held each November and December. These events have become meaningful for students, staff, and parents alike, blending physical activity with school pride.

PE teachers Ellen Young and Jordan Goshie work hard to introduce these events to students with fresh creativity each year. Their

goal is to keep cherished traditions alive while expanding participation opportunities for students, staff, the community, and parents.

THE BIG GAME

Tavan's Turkey Bowl, played the day before Thanksgiving break, dates back more than three decades and is held on Arcadia High's football field. Participating fifth graders are trained in flag football by volunteer coach David Alfaro, who practices with the teams

for two to three weeks before the big game to get into top form.

David and his wife Katrina own Arcadia Sports Central and are sponsors and ardent supporters of the Turkey Bowl.

Ellen began teaching physical education at Tavan four years ago. However, as a mom of four boys who've attended and played sports, she has been involved for 16 years.

Drawing on her experience as a parent and an educator has been helpful in her job, but she admits it takes a team to make it all happen.

"I could not do it without partners like the Alfaros," Ellen said. "As a teacher, I really depend on others with long-term involvement who know how to run something like this. They've helped me immensely."

Two coed rival teams, named after the school's top administrators, battled for supremacy on the gridiron. Principal Julie Ballard (Ballard's Brood, the "blue team") and Assistant Principal Suzi Figueroa (Figueroa Fighters, the "green team") went head-to-head at the line of scrimmage.

Arcadia's football announcers – John Thomas and John Albright, or "the Johns" – called the game like a varsity matchup, giving the kids a true on-field experience. This year, the Figueroa Fighters won 14-7 against Ballard's Brood in a tightly matched competition. For the first time, the Arcadia Titans attended the game and were recognized as Desert Sky 4A Champions.

Halftime featured dance competitions and other games, like the hand clap and the cupid shuffle. Arcadia High School's cheerleaders led spirited routines. The game bridged the elementary and high school communities for an afternoon of friendly competition and excitement.

Fifth-grader Kennedy Stephenson shared that her game day experience was 10 out of 10. "I liked the Arcadia cheerleaders coming to talk to us and cheering with us," she said. "I enjoyed cheering for the team when they ran out of the big tunnel."

Camila Silva Dominguez agreed that the cheering routines were a favorite. "I liked the

rowdy cheer and the practices," she said. "I also enjoyed watching the game and cheering for the players. It was such a fun experience!"

Running through the big tunnel onto the field left many students charged as the crowd's energy swept over them. Flag football player Ivan Jenson enjoyed Coach David and Coach Smith's plays and described the excitement of running the ball down the field.

"It was exciting when I got the ball. I was able to gain at least five yards," he said. His classmate Noah Benton added that the whole experience was his favorite part of the year. "I liked playing football with my friends, and we had a great time!"

A JOLLY JOGATHON

The Jingle Bell Jog, a schoolwide fun run for all ages, was held on December 19 on Tavan's field. Designed to bring parents onto campus for a shared physical activity experience, families were invited to join students in running or walking a quarter-mile zigzag course.

Music kept energy levels high as kids ran laps for the 28 participating classes. Each received a class-level, color-coded hash mark upon completion to keep pace.

"Last year, the kids completed nearly 480 miles, which is crazy!" Ellen said. Two years ago, the school's pre-K class joined, sparking a little class rivalry and zaniness on the field.

"It was hilarious," Ellen said. "Our 4-year-olds were trucking down, and they actually beat the kindergarten kids!" At the finale, Ellen and Jordan asked the children to count their laps, which were averaged, and the class winner received a medal of achievement.

Bringing parents and kids together matters deeply to Ellen. "One of my main goals is to have parents be involved in their kids' education. That's important to me. We play good music, which makes it fun. Add a dash of competition, and get the kids moving to create an exhilarating experience for everybody."

Tavan's Turkey Bowl, Jingle Bell Jog, and other school sporting events get everyone involved in creating memories while enjoying some fresh air and exercise.



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PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE SANFRATELLO



Anthony Sanfratello with his mom and dad, Coach Mike Sanfratello.

PHOTO COURTESY OF COLEY ARNOLD



Defensive backs Baylor and Broden Arnold.

Historic football seasons mark milestones for two programs

By Alex Gross

The Arcadia High School and Veritas Prep football teams both cemented their names in the history books this fall with undefeated regular seasons that led to deep playoff runs. For Arcadia, the success marks a return to form for an established program.

For Veritas, it proves that the traditionally academic Great Hearts school still can field a formidable football team.

In his first year as the head coach of Arcadia, B.J. Pasquel led the Titans to a 10-0 record, earning them the top seed in the 4A State playoffs. He spent the previous two seasons as the school's offensive coordinator before stepping to the helm and being named the 4A Desert Sky Region Coach of the Year.

Despite a heartbreaking loss in the 4A State Championship, the Titans' three playoff wins gave the team its first title game appearance since 1962.

"We've had a good run the last three, four years as far as making the playoffs, but this group of seniors took it to the next level with their work ethic," Pasquel said.

This class included the Region Player of the Year in quarterback Zach Smith as well as standouts Nick McCormick, Ian Slater, and Walter Driggs, all earning region first-team nods.

"I started as a freshman coach, so a lot of these kids I've known for four years," Pasquel said. "I've watched them on their journey, watched them grow and get better. They are really good young men."

It was a strong group of seniors that also set the tone for Veritas' success. There were 25 total upperclassmen on the Falcons' roster, an impressive number given that the school only has a few hundred students enrolled at the high school level.

Head Coach Mike Sanfratello, who attended and coached at Coronado High School with Pasquel in the past (and who, along with Pasquel, earned nominations in the Coach of the Year poll for contributions to their teams' record-breaking seasons), has helped rewrite the program's reputation.

"We haven't been a football power by any stretch," Sanfratello said. "Last year



B.J. Pasquel

we went 8-4 and won our first playoff game in school history."

This year's squad managed an even better showing, cruising through a perfect regular season that earned them a number one seed in the 2A State playoffs. The Falcons also got to host their first-ever postseason games, the second of which they narrowly lost in the quarterfinals.

"For us to go undefeated, that's a first. For us to finish number one in the polls, that's a first," Sanfratello said. "We landed five guys on the All-State team, which they have not done, ever."

Among those were seniors Rocco Guido and Will Barrett, who earned Offensive and Defensive Players of the Year in their region, respectively, while junior Baylor Arnold led the state with 10 interceptions and is 14th in the nation on interceptions out of 56,000 people in his position.

Baylor and his brother, Broden, are both

defensive backs, but they've each pursued a high school career in different places.

Baylor chose to stay at Veritas after his eighth-grade year when he learned that Sanfratello, his childhood coach, would be taking over the football team. Broden, on the other hand, switched to Arcadia.

"My main reasons for staying were a great group of guys who wanted to change the program and a great new head coach coming in who was going to lead the way," said Baylor, who hopes to take his talents to the collegiate level following some Division II offers.

While he trains a lot with his older brother, Broden, a sophomore, he also looks up to the seniors who distinguished themselves on this year's Arcadia squad.

"I've learned from Nick McCormick as a position player; watching him play has taught me so much," Broden said. "Ian Slater also led the team a lot this year."

The two schools are hoping that a strong batch of underclassmen talent can fill the voids left by graduating players and continue their trends of postseason success.

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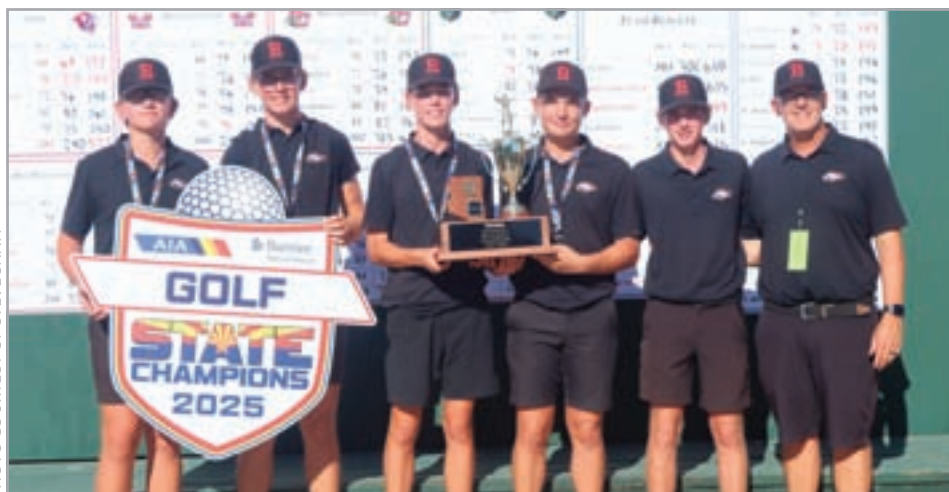


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Jack Langbein, Asher Nelson, Hank Miller, Mateo Berastegui, Evan Tyree, Head Coach Jon Shores.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LISA ZUBA



Head Coach Tui Selvaratnam, Danica Bustos, Maia Bleyl, Audrey Smith, Ellie Von Kolan, Sophie PeBenito Brooks, Jaina Bhatnagar, Isabella Piazza, Addison Taylor, Alexis Lamadrid, Natalia Lamadrid, Emily Mousa, Piper Vega-Fortney, Gabrielle Doss, Paige LaRocco, Assistant Coach Jane Ladensack.

Rising talent, record rounds; Arcadia area high school golf

By James Furcini

Arizona is home to some of the most premier golf teams in the country. Boasting 13 of the PGA's top 30 boys' golf programs and six of the top 30 girls' programs nationwide, the Grand Canyon State has become a proving ground for young players.

As the high school postseason came to a close, several of Arizona's top teams – including Arcadia, Brophy and Xavier – delivered standout performances on the biggest stage.

ARCADIA BOYS

Led by Head Coach Eric Sage, the Titans delivered one of their strongest seasons in years, rising to No. 5 in Arizona and No. 21 nationally before finishing third at the AIA Division II State Championship.

Senior Jackson Malatesta (USA No. 50) led with a seventh-place finish at two under par, while senior Hank Hubbard (Arizona No. 57) and junior Beck Sage (Arizona No. 24) anchored a tournament lineup defined by depth and consistency. Malatesta said Arcadia's rise came from genuine internal growth.

"We felt tighter this year. Rather than competing with each other as individuals, we relied on each other as a team," he said.

One of the season's defining moments came from Beck, who fired a district-record 62 to win the Scottsdale District Championship and earn District Golfer of the Year.

Sage emphasized the support behind the program's rise, crediting assistant coaches John Dadam and Marv LaVasseur, booster managers Scott and Jamie Fitzgerald, and the ongoing partnership with Nigel Spence and the Arizona Country Club.

"The best part about golf is just the relationships that you can create in the sport," Sage said. "That's what I love about the game, and that's why I coach. I really enjoy it."

With only three graduating seniors, the Titans return a strong core and expect continued momentum next fall.

ARCADIA GIRLS

Arcadia girls' golf entered a rebuilding year under head coach Heidi Ferguson, who returned a roster with no seniors and only seven players after graduating six upper-class athletes the year before. Despite the transition, Coach Ferguson said coaching the group remained deeply fulfilling.

"Coaching golf is the highlight of my day," she said. "Watching these girls grow, work hard, and learn life skills on and off the course is so rewarding. People like me don't do this for money; we do it because seeing young adults flourish is the greatest reward there is."

The season's brightest moment came from junior Annie Dreier, the Titans' captain and lone State qualifier. Dreier posted consistent rounds of 83 to finish tied for 60th at the

PHOTO COURTESY OF JACKSON MALATESTA



(back) Coach John Dadam, Jack Cowley, Luke Zavislak, Jackson Malatesta, Hank Hubbard, Cooper Fitzgerald, Beck Sage, Luca Hogan and Coach Eric Sage. (front) Jayden Diaz, Cody Dreier, Ryder Erickson, Michael Cunningham and Kalen Sorokin. Not pictured: Coach Marvel LaVasseur.

AIA Division II girls' championship – a strong marker of her rapid improvement over the past year.

"Throughout the season, I watched attitudes shift, and our collective love for the game grow stronger," Dreier said. "Golf can be incredibly frustrating, so developing that genuine passion is essential – it's what keeps you coming back and pushing to improve."

Coach Ferguson said she is encouraged by the foundation being built.

"We're hoping to get new talent with our incoming freshmen and continue building a team that wants to stay together, improve, and maybe even play in college someday," she said.

BROPHY PREP

The Broncos added another chapter to their storied tradition, capturing the 2025 AIA Division I State Championship in dominant fashion. Under head coach Jon Shores, the team closed the year ranked No. 1 nationally while carrying an exceptional team scoring average of 274.5.

Senior and Fort Lewis College commit Mateo Berastegui (Arizona No. 22) said Brophy's steady progression throughout the season prepared them all for postseason dominance.

"We started a little slow, but coach put us in the right moments," he said. "Playing tough tournaments in Florida and Flagstaff helped us handle pressure. By State, we didn't feel nervous – we just played our game."

At the Championship, Brophy opened with a blistering 16-under round and followed it with an 11-under finish to reach 27 under par – one of the strongest performances in recent memory.

Junior and Oklahoma State commit Asher Nelson and sophomore Hank Miller (both USA No. 5) tied for third at nine under, and Brophy placed four golfers inside the

top 12, showcasing unmatched depth. Coach Shores said the culture behind the program is as valuable as the talent.

"There's something special about playing for Brophy," he said. "These guys really want to be here. It's an honor for them to make the team, and they push each other because they don't want to let one another down."

Brophy claimed its 11th state title, tying Arcadia for the most in Arizona history.

XAVIER PREP

Xavier continued its unprecedented dominance, capturing its 40th state title and third straight AIA Division I Championship. Under Head Coach Tui Selvaratnam, the Gators finished the year ranked No. 1 nationally with a scoring average of 288.5 – nine strokes better than any other girls' program in America.

After ending the first day tied at 292 with Casteel, Xavier fired a 285 on Day 2 to pull away and win State by 12 strokes. Junior and Texas commit Alexis Lamadrid (USA No. 1) claimed her second consecutive individual title at nine under par.

Senior and Colorado commit Isabella Piazza (USA No. 28) added a top-six finish, while freshman Addison Taylor (USA No. 58) placed inside the top 10. All five Xavier golfers finished inside the top 20, a testament to the program's talent.

Coach Selvaratnam said her coaching philosophy centers on preparing athletes for the next stage of their careers.

"I'm here to help the girls through their high school journey," she said. "Almost all of our players go on to play college golf. It's about helping them grow in confidence and maturity as the next stepping stone."

With multiple returners and another strong freshman class expected, Xavier is positioned to extend one of the most dominant runs in American high school sports.



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The Dining Scoop

BUILD-YOUR-OWN-BOWLS

Arcadia's fast-casual scene is having a moment, and nowhere is that more evident than in the variety of build-your-own bowls, smoothies, and customizable eats across the neighborhood. From protein-packed power to Mediterranean greens, poke creations, and plant-forward mixes, diners can tailor every meal to fit their cravings and nutrition goals.

PROTEINHOUSE

3141 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
protein-house.com

The Build Your Own Bowl option – the eatery's most ordered item – lets guests create a meal that's tailored to their favorite flavors. Start with a base of veggies and other fresh ingredients, then choose your preferred protein and add a selection of extras or sauces. Lean proteins include all-natural chicken,

turkey, grass-fed bison, steak, salmon, or tofu, along with customizable vegetables and toppings.

Also on the menu are breakfast items like sandwiches, burritos, omelettes and protein pancakes, shakes, coffees, and smoothies.

CAVA

4355 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
cava.com

CAVA is a Mediterranean-inspired restaurant brand founded in 2010 by childhood friends Ike Grigoropoulos, Chef Dimitri Moshovitis, and Ted Xenochristos, who drew on their heritage to bring healthy flavors to customizable dining.

CAVA's menu centers around build-your-own bowls, letting guests completely customize every meal. You start with a base of greens and/or grains – like SuperGreens, romaine, saffron basmati rice, brown rice, or black lentils – and then layer in your choice of dips and spreads such as hummus, tzatziki,

“Crazy Feta,” roasted red pepper hummus, and harissa.

From there you pick proteins (grilled chicken, falafel, lamb meatballs, roasted vegetables, and more), add unlimited toppings like pickled onions, cucumbers, and olives, and finish with your favorite dressing. This goes for pitas, too.

SWEETGREEN

3225 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix
sweetgreen.com

Sweetgreen's create your own option lets you build a custom, plant-forward bowl exactly how you like it, starting with a base of greens and/or grains and then adding your favorite mix of toppings, proteins, and dressings.

This customizable format gives you control over every ingredient – letting you choose the kinds of greens or grains (kale, romaine, wild rice, quinoa, etc.) you prefer, pick proteins or premium add-ins, and top your bowl with fresh vegetables (15+ choices), crunchy seeds, cheeses, and dressings.

The eatery offers high-protein salads and bowls, kids meals, sides – even dessert, all in the name of healthy eats.

CHOPSHOP

4503 N. 32nd St., Phoenix
originalchopshop.com

Original ChopShop is a health-focused fast-casual eatery known for its “just feel good food” made with fresh ingredients prepared daily.

The menu highlights customizable protein bowls with options like Thai coconut chicken, teriyaki chicken, spicy Korean steak, and a vegan green curry tofu bowl, along with salads, sandwiches, superfruit bowls, fresh juices, and protein shakes.

Many items can be tailored to dietary preferences, offering gluten-free, vegetarian, and dairy-free choices for a nourishing breakfast, lunch, or dinner that's flavorful and made-to-order.

KOIBITO POKE

4280 E. Indian School Road
koibitopoke.com

Koibito Poké is a fast-casual concept founded in 2018 and led by former MLB pitcher and co-founder Todd Stottlemire. The brand focuses on fresh, wholesome Hawaiian and Japanese-inspired ingredients for their build-your-owns.

First, you pick a bowl size (small, medium, large, or a kid's bowl) which determines how many protein scoops you'll get, then choose a base like cauliflower rice, spring mix, brown rice, or white rice. Protein options include tuna, salmon, shrimp, grilled chicken, octopus, tofu, spicy tuna, Hawaiian tuna, or Asian chicken.

Next comes sauce: options include shoyu, spicy shoyu, sweet chili lime, wasabi aioli, sriracha aioli, citrus ponzu, champagne butter, house, or teriyaki. After that you add fresh toppings like shaved Brussels sprouts, jalapeño, kale, red onion, edamame, cucumber and pineapple, or upgrade to premium toppings such as crab mix or seaweed salad.

RICEMILL

201 E. Washington St., Phoenix
eatricemill.com

Ricemill is a fast-casual restaurant inspired by the Asian rice bowl tradition. Born from the founders' family memories and guided by Chef Yiyi's experience in Michelin-starred kitchens, Ricemill's menu blends Asian flavors with modern ingredients.

Guests can enjoy signature rice bowls like Seoul garlic chicken and Shanghai-style steak that showcase Korean, Chinese, and Japanese influences. There's also a build-your-own option: start by choosing a base (white rice, brown rice, or rice noodles) and then select a protein, with options like steak, chicken, shrimp, or tofu.



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Koibito Poke



Ricemill

Guests can customize their bowl with up to three hot toppings, unlimited cold toppings, and up to two sauces. The menu also offers sides, handcrafted drinks such as milk tea, and sweet rice puddings.

We didn't forget about the smoothie spots – here are a few nearby places that offer build your own smoothies and bowl options:

Pure Green (4730 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) has superfood smoothies, cold pressed juice, acai bowls, oatmeal bowls, cold pressed shots, cleanses and more.
puregreenfranchise.com

d'Lite (3214 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) offers five specialty smoothies and three protein shakes, like the d'breakfast buzz with chocolate whey protein and vitamin blend, espresso shots, nonfat milk, banana and peanut butter.
dlitehealthyonthego.com

Playa Bowls (4528 E. Thomas Road, Phoenix) has cold-pressed juices, cold brews, smoothies and bowls – and if you like a lot of options, this might be your spot – there are 40 bowls to choose from.

Insider tip: try the Electric Mermaid if you're a fan of pineapple!
playabowls.com

Paradise Juice (4325 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) is new to the Arcadia neighborhood, but their menu has plenty to check out. There's cold-pressed juices, wellness shots, smoothies and protein shakes, açai and pitaya bowls, plus salads, sandwiches and breakfast.
paradisejuice.com

One Stop Nutrition (4115 N. 44th St., Phoenix) centers on customizable shakes, where you pick a base like almond milk, coconut milk, juice, yogurt, or ice cream, and then add your favorite flavors (banana, chocolate, strawberry, mango) and add-ins like protein, creatine and other supplements.
onestopnutrition.com

Kaleidoscope Juice (3802 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) offers organic cold-pressed juices, smoothies and wellness shots, açai and protein bowls, salads and sandwiches, and gluten-free snacks like protein cookies.
kaleidoscope-love.square.site/arcadia

WHAT'S NEW?



Sogno Toscano (3950 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix) has officially opened its first full-service restaurant and market at 40th St. and Indian School Road, with a grand opening celebration planned for January 2026. The new location offers authentic pasta flown in from Italy, sandwiches, tortellini, focaccia pizzas, and charcuterie boards, plus a market with imported Italian products, specialty goods, and Tuscan wines.
sognotoscano.com

Neutral Ground Lounge is a neighborhood driven concept that opened at The Marilyn (4602 E. Thomas Road) in December. Focused on small plates, cocktails, wines and zero-proof bevies, the eatery is built on hospitality and a seasonal menu that changes often and is designed so guests can snack, share, or settle in for a full evening.
nglphx.com



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Comfort food – with a twist

Each January, millions of people around the world take part in Veganuary, a 31-day challenge to explore a vegan lifestyle. Whether you're plant-curious or just want to eat more veggies, it's a great time to reset and discover how flavorful and satisfying plant-based meals can be. The easiest way to try more vegan foods? Start with dishes you already love and make simple swaps.

Love chili? Try a spicy soy chorizo and bean chili - it's smoky, hearty, and full of bold flavor, with protein-packed beans and a kick from vegan soy chorizo. Craving a burger? Go for a black bean smash burger - crispy-edged, savory, and loaded with spices, they cook fast and satisfy that burger craving in a fresh, plant-based way. Can't give up pasta? Make a hearty lentil mushroom bolognese. It's rich, savory, and tastes just like comfort in a bowl. Other ideas include dairy-free milk, tofu or tempeh, and creamy cashew-based sauces. You don't have to be 100 percent vegan to benefit from more plant-based meals.

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

Veganuary is all about exploring and experimenting with foods that support your wellness goals and can also benefit the planet and protect animals. This January, let your plate be a place of curiosity and creativity. You might be surprised at how much you love the plant-based versions of your favorite meals.

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



Lentil mushroom bolognese sauce Serves 6

• INGREDIENTS •

- 1 tbsp. avocado oil
- 2 (8-ounce) containers diced white or cremini mushrooms
- 1 diced onion
- 1 diced carrot
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tsp. fennel seeds
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- 2 tbsp. each: soy sauce, nutritional yeast
- 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp. oregano
- 1 tsp. each: dried basil, salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper

• DIRECTIONS •

1. Add the oil to a large pot and heat up for two minutes. Add the onion, carrot, garlic, fennel seeds, and mushrooms and cook for eight minutes stirring frequently.
2. Add the walnuts, diced tomatoes, tomato paste, soy sauce, nutritional yeast, balsamic vinegar, oregano, basil, salt, and pepper. Stir.
3. Bring to a low boil, then cover and simmer for 30 minutes or more.
4. Serve over organic whole wheat pasta, spaghetti squash, or zucchini noodles.

Black bean smash burgers Serves 4-8

• INGREDIENTS •

- Avocado oil as needed for pan
- 1 can black beans, drained
- ½ cup cooked lentils
- ½ cup oat flour
- ¼ cup breadcrumbs or panko
- 2 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. nutritional yeast
- 1 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 tsp. each: garlic powder, smoked paprika
- ½ tsp. each: onion powder, salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 4 slices vegan cheese
- 2-4 burger buns + whatever toppings you like!



• SAUCE •

- ¼ cup vegan mayo
- 1 tbsp. ketchup
- 1 tbsp. mustard
- 1 tsp. dill pickle relish
- ½ tsp. each: garlic powder, smoked paprika, salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper

• DIRECTIONS •

1. In a small bowl combine the burger sauce ingredients. Put it in the refrigerator to chill until the burgers are ready.
2. Add the beans to a bowl and mash with a fork or use a food processor to break down the beans. If using a food processor, transfer the mashed beans to a bowl.
3. Add the lentils, oat flour, breadcrumbs, soy sauce, nutritional yeast, tomato paste, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, smoked paprika, and pepper.
4. Mix with your hands to blend all of the ingredients together. Divide the mixture into four balls.
5. Add oil to a cast iron skillet or stainless steel pan and bring the heat to medium-high. Place one of the balls in the skillet and using a flat lid, smash it down until it is about ¼-inch thick.
6. Cook for three minutes until crispy, then flip and add a slice of vegan cheese. Cover and cook for three more minutes. Repeat with the other patties.
7. To assemble, spread the burger sauce on both sides of a lightly toasted bun and layer on two patties, onion, tomato, lettuce, and pickles.



Spicy soy chorizo & bean chili Serves 6

• INGREDIENTS •

- 1 tbsp. avocado oil
- 1 diced onion
- 1 package soy chorizo, casing removed
- 1 can each: black beans, kidney beans, and pinto beans, undrained
- 1 can diced green chilis
- 1 tsp. each: cumin and salt
- 2 (15-ounce) cans fire-roasted tomatoes
- Red onion, cilantro, avocado for topping

• DIRECTIONS •

1. Add the oil to a large pot. Once hot add the onion and sauté for five minutes, then add chorizo and cook 5-8 more minutes.
2. Add everything else and bring to a low boil, then simmer for 15-30 minutes (or more).
3. Add toppings and serve.

This senior athlete's goal? Reaching new heights every day

By Michael P. Murphy

At her school, the girls' varsity high jump record of 5'4" had gone unchallenged since 1981. Senior Christina Keller broke that record as a junior with a 5'5" jump. She then promptly broke her own record a few weeks later with a 5'6" jump.

On the surface, Christina is a typical American teen. She loves her dogs, enjoys hanging out with friends, has a particular passion for coffee, and a fondness for "bling." Beyond that is a very focused and competitive athlete driven to be the best – and she has the medals to prove it. She says it's her faith that keeps her grounded.

Her mom believes the 10 years Christina spent as a ballerina primed her for track and field, but volleyball became her primary sport when she entered high school. High jump was a sport she resisted until her sophomore year.

"My weight trainer told me I would be really good at track and field," Christina said. "I told him I would never do it, but eventually I joined my school team and broke the record. That was the start of my high jump career."

And what an impressive career it has become: Christina is a two-time USATF AZ State Champion, and last year she earned the All-American title at the National Championship at Icahn Stadium in New York City. She said it was a fantastic experience stepping onto that field and competing against so many talented high jumpers.

"It was cool to be at that stadium," she said. "It's where a lot of high-level track athletes have competed. I was honored to make it there."

Early in her athletic career, Christina joined the Kangaroo Track Club in Houston, which was founded by Hugo Munoz, a two-time high jump Olympian who serves as the club's



Christina Keller is a two-time USATF AZ State Champion and holds an All-American title from the National Championship.

only coach. She credits Hugo for improving her jump from 5'2" to 5'6". Outside of school season, Christina trains with the Phoenix Bobcats under the direction of Coach Erwin Jones, another mentor.

"In high jump, you fail three times to be out," she said. "If you don't clear your next bar, you're out. Even when you win, you still fail the bar. It's an interesting sport, and immensely tough."

Her success as a track and field athlete led to her recent

commitment to Grand Canyon University. She looks forward to living on campus and immersing herself in the experience while pursuing a marketing degree.

"I wanted to play volleyball in college," she said. "But I saw there was more opportunity in track, so I had to trust in God's plan, and that's where He led me. I'm excited about GCU, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to jump for them."

For Christina Keller, there is no limit to how high she can jump – literally and figuratively.



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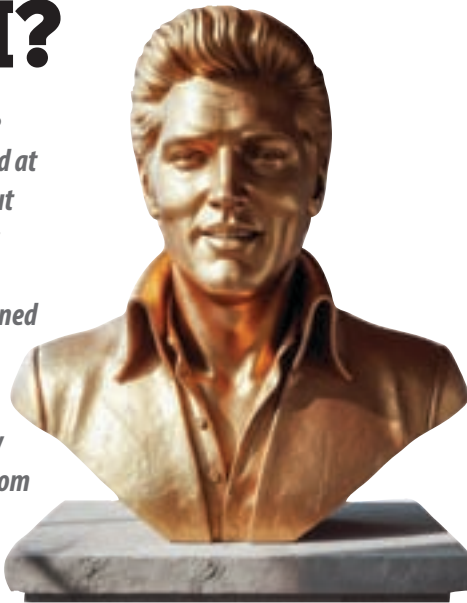
DID YOU KNOW? **ELVIS**

HOW MUCH?

\$2B

Presley's total lifetime earnings are estimated at the equivalent of about \$1 billion today, though he personally kept far less due to high expenses and controlling contracts. In actual dollars from the 1950s through 1977, he earned roughly \$100 million, which adjusts to \$400-600 million today.

After his death, Elvis became even more financially successful, with the estate earning \$1.5-2 billion from Graceland tourism, licensing, merchandise, and ongoing media use, cementing him as one of the most profitable cultural icons in history.



FUN FACT: At one point, he owned over 200 cars, including multiple Cadillacs he famously gifted to friends and strangers.

HOW BIG?

13.8 ACRES

Graceland, Elvis Presley's iconic mansion in Memphis, spans 17,552 square feet on approximately 13.8 acres of land. It opened to the public as a museum in 1982. Since then, more than 20 million people from over 140 countries have toured the home.

The mansion features five staircases, three fireplaces, and a swimming pool, and the larger complex includes museums, auto exhibits, memorabilia, and a hotel. The property was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1991 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 2006. Today, it stands as the second-most visited home in the United States, drawing fans, dignitaries, and tourists from around the world.



HOW MANY?

62,500

Elvis Presley's largest live audience was at the Pontiac Silverdome on December 31, 1975, where about 62,500 people attended. This New Year's Eve show set a world record at the time for the largest indoor concert audience.



HOW EXPENSIVE?

\$1.32M

Elvis's 1942 Martin D-18 "Sun Sessions" guitar sold for approximately \$1.32 million, while the white "eyelet" jumpsuit and cape he wore during his 1972 Madison Square Garden concerts fetched over \$1 million, setting a record for Elvis clothing at auction.

Fun fact: The Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix has hosted exhibits that include instruments and performance outfits once owned or used by Elvis.



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DID YOU KNOW? ELVIS

WORD SEARCH



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PONTIAC
TUPELO

Elvis Presley was born on January 8, 1935 in Tupelo, Mississippi.

He was a natural blonde, dying his hair black to achieve that signature look.

He never performed outside North America.

Elvis bought Graceland at age 22 for just over \$100,000.

He served in the U.S. Army from 1958 to 1960.

Elvis earned his first Grammy for a gospel song called "How Great Thou Art."

He had a black belt in karate and often incorporated martial arts into his stage moves.

Elvis' first recording was for his mother, a \$4 gift he made at Sun Studio called My Happiness.

He starred in 31 feature films.

One of his biggest hits was "Hound Dog," which topped the charts for 11 weeks. Another contender often cited is "Jailhouse Rock," which became iconic thanks to the movie.

Elvis' TV debut was on regional television – a show called *Louisiana Hayride*.

He loved peanut butter, banana, and bacon sandwiches, often grilled.

Elvis' live "Aloha from Hawaii" special was the first concert broadcast globally via satellite.

He held the record for most Billboard chart hits for decades.

It's alleged that woman – one of a few people – tried to tunnel into Graceland. She believed that if she could just reach the mansion, she would somehow encounter Elvis himself – or at least be near his spirit after his death.

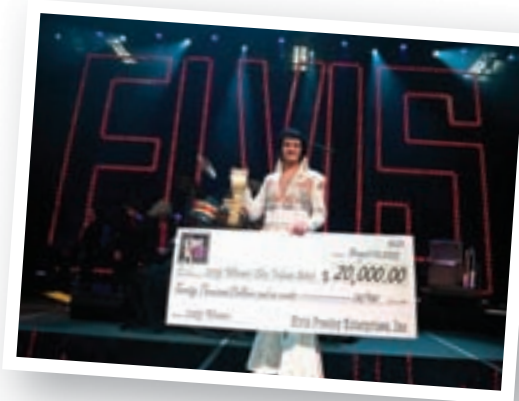
SAY WHAT?

IT PAYS TO BE KING!

Elvis impersonations started while the King himself was still very much alive. In 1956, sixteen-year-old Jim Smith was crowned the official Elvis Presley of Victoria, Canada. Lacking both vocal prowess and guitar skills, Smith nevertheless threw himself into performance with full-body commitment.

By the early 1970s, impersonation had become a viable career path. Vegas pro Johnny Elvis Foster built his act through small-town talent competitions until his major break came one month after Elvis' death, when the Dunes Hotel booked him to replace the King in its main showroom. Foster's career expanded to major resorts and international tours, and today his LinkedIn page lists a \$3,650 "meet and greet" fee, with additional requirements that include airfare, security, and limo transportation.

In August 2025, an Indiana man named Jimmy Holmes won Elvis Presley Enterprises' 2025 Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist contest – which came with a \$20,000 grand prize. Jimmy competed in the Final Round of the Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contest at the Graceland Soundstage, where he took home the crown.



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For those busy days, beef stew comes to the rescue

Temperatures have dropped, snugly sweaters, scarves and boots feel cozy and stews that perfume the air with their aromas are ever-present. Neighborhood landscapes might have lost their radiant hues, but cooking captures its own pallet of colors. Making stew reminds me of home and of the carefree feelings associated. Stew is a hearty comfort food that symbolizes warmth and community and has a time-honored cooking technique. There are many facets of loss we never understand until a loved one is gone. What I didn't fully grasp when my grandmother passed was that I wasn't just losing her, I was losing her cooking. She had a knack for lemon meringue pie and made terrific spaghetti sauce and pork chops, but what I missed the most was her stew. Old-fashioned beef stew that was rustic and nourishing – pure magic.

Amazonian tribes as well as other cultures used the shells of turtles and large clams to boil foods. Fortunately, my memory recalls only the large quick-gauged aluminum pot on the stove and the pressure cooker that made special meals happen quickly. I used to impatiently watch for the red pop-up indicator to alert me to the doneness of the meal hidden within. To streamline bringing old favorites to the table and inspire new ones, slow-cookers and Dutch ovens have replaced these vintage pieces. Stews minimize effort, require little cleanup, yield unbelievable results and can be served in cherished character-enhanced cookware.

Stew was not “invented” at a single moment in time – it is one of the oldest dishes in human history. The practice of making stew to stretch a meal and use what's available dates to prehistoric times with evidence of cooking meat, roots, and herbs in vessels over an open flame. During the Babylonian Empire, one of the oldest recipes found on a cuneiform tablet from approximately 4,000 years ago was for a lamb stew with ingredients like barley, garlic, and leeks.

During the Roman Empire a recipe for beef stew appeared in a Roman cookbook which is thought to have been written in the 1st century AD using wine, spices, and raisins. Vikings cooked combinations of meats and fish, beans, and vegetables in large soapstone pots over hot coals. There's even mention of stewed meat consumption in the Old Testament. Our modern-style stew is believed to have originated in 14th-century France. With recipes first printed by Taillevent, a royal chef and cookbook author, beef stew materialized in history and hasn't faded.

What's the difference between soup and stew? On the most basic level there's no difference except for the amount of liquid used for each. Like ancient pottage, both

soup and stew descend from economical, healthy means. Throughout time, these two related menu items converged. Modern American culture separated soup from stew quite simply. It's not in the ingredients or method, but which course it's served. Soup is a starter or accompaniment; stew is the main course.

French renditions are particularly engrained into the cuisine's past. The word “stew” is said to have come from the Old French word “estui,” meaning to enclose or confine within a container with a lid and has been described as an assortment of foods simmered in the smallest possible quantity. Adding everything to a clay pot was a predecessor to the crowd-pleasing *pot au feu* which translates to “a pot always left on the fire.” It took longer for the word “stew” to become associated with the slow-cooked beef dish mainly because of its risqué description in the 18th century alluding to public bathhouses or brothels.



Thyme in My Kitchen

BY SHERRY KLUSMAN

@thyme.in.my.kitchen

The best recipes take time to cook and develop great flavor. The goal is to have everything melt-in-your-mouth tender. The secret is to simmer, not boil! Stew uses collagen-rich, tough

cuts of meat, which need at least two hours to break down. If you try to rush it and boil the stew, the muscle fibers will shrink and become tough. Slow cooking over low heat is crucial for a concentrated, intense flavor. Stew is rarely as complex as its aroma suggests. Whether one associates themselves as an overscheduled parent, a busy professional, or an accomplished cook, food served deserves to be bold in flavor and simple on steps. Foods prepared at home using ingredients that don't contain preservatives and artificial flavorings are more intimate and healthier.

Cooking can often be considered a chore, yet watching my grandmother drift through recipes with ease helped me realize that everything a child sees and experiences has an impact on his or her development and behavior. Beef stew is one of my all-time favorite dishes to make during cold-winter months. Recreating this classic dish brings childhood memories back to life. There's almost no occasion that isn't made just a little better by placing a freshly made dinner on someone's doorstep along with a small bouquet of roses from the garden.

Recipes, such as a lazy-day stew, aren't about the final crave-worthy meal, but



the actions of indulging in the process. Cut the meat into 1½-inch-thick cubes. Place in a gallon-zip lock bag and marinate in red wine, minced garlic and Worcestershire sauce (Lea & Perrins – it contains the “secret ingredient” of briny and buttery anchovies) overnight. The wine assists in helping to break down the tough sinew in the beef.

The following day, wipe the Bella mushrooms, de-string the stalks of celery, peel the onions, carrots and potatoes. There's no right or wrong potato for beef stew. Russets or red potatoes are great, but Yukon Gold potatoes have the best balance of texture and flavor. Rough chop everything and place in a big bowl. Sprinkle on the spices and toss to combine.

Remove the meat from the marinade and lightly dab to dry. Fill another gallon Ziploc bag with flour and dredge. Heat olive oil, tap excess flour from the meat, and sear in batches. This method creates a desirable crust and enhances the caramelized flavor while improving the deep color. It's also a great shortcut to thickening the stew without making a roux.

Remove the meat to a size-appropriate plate. Deglaze the pot with more red wine and water. The “fond,” which are those bits of food left in the pan after browning, further infuses flavor into the broth as does the red wine once the alcohol has burned off. Add tomato paste and gently stir for a touch of sweetness and acidity that will provide a savory “umami” flavor and help thicken the stew without adding extra liquid. Gathering around the table and sharing our lives with one another is a blessing we can delight in celebrating every day!

Rustic beef stew

MARINADE (RESERVE LIQUID)

- 2 ½ pounds chuck roast, trimmed and cut into 1 ½” pieces
- ½ cup chocolate red wine
- ½ tsp. fresh garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce

DREDGE (RESERVE LIQUID)

- 1 cup flour
- ½ tsp. each: garlic powder, onion powder, salt and pepper
- 3-6 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ cup chocolate red wine
- 2 cups water
- 6 oz. tomato paste

VEGETABLES

- 8 oz. Bella mushrooms, quartered
- 5-6 Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled, quartered
- 6-7 celery stalks, destringed, large dice
- 2 large yellow onions, peeled, large dice
- 2 ½ cups carrots, peeled, large dice

SPICES (BLEND TOGETHER)

- 1 tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. dried parsley
- 1 tsp. dried tarragon
- 1 tsp. dried marjoram
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. sweet paprika
- ¼ tsp. thyme
- ¼ tsp. rosemary
- ¼ tsp. Kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- ¼ tsp. fennel
- 2 bay leaves

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Gather all ingredients; this is the main time investment of the recipe.
2. Line a large slow cooker.
3. Prep all vegetables, meat, and liquids according to the recipe you're following.
4. Add the vegetables to the bottom of the slow cooker.
5. Layer the remaining ingredients, ending with the meat and any reserved liquids on top.
6. Secure the lid and set the slow cooker to low for 5-6 hours.
7. Allow the dish to simmer.
8. Serve with warm sliced baguette and butter.
9. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for 4-5 days.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

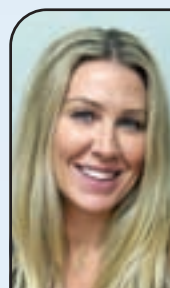
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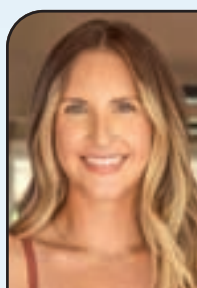
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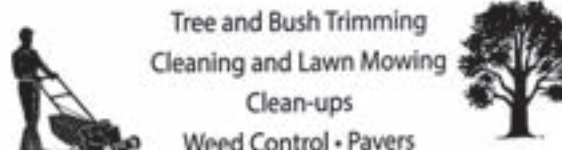
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Titan Times

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From the students of Arcadia High School

A winter break fit for Titans

By Ana Redzic

With the end of the first semester at hand, students were eager for winter break to begin. From traveling to studying, here is how Arcadia High School spent its holiday.

"I started planning by asking my parents to go skiing because I haven't gone in a while," sophomore Samantha Gagnon enthusiastically said. "They decided to incorporate it into a trip with my cousins from Colorado, and we eventually decided to spend our Christmas with them."

All students and staff were looking forward to their holiday trips.

"I was very excited for winter break! I went up north to Flagstaff to a cabin with my family, went snowboarding, had hot chocolate by the fireplace, you know, the typical Christmas," senior Kiara Vicario Nueva said. Spending quality time with family was a trend this winter, as sophomores Evelyn Udvardi and Cooper Janson also traveled to visit relatives.

"I went to my grandparents' house in Newport Beach," Evelyn said with a smile. Cooper went to Idaho to ski with his cousins. Junior Lily Trieu was eager for the festivities to begin.

"I visited my grandparents in Kansas, where I moved out all of their old stuff and went through my parents' childhood memories," she said. "I also wrote my research paper for AP Language, which I was excited to do because I put a lot of work into it."

Lily was not the only junior planning on taking advantage of the sixteen days of break.

"I studied for AP tests and applied for scholarships during my break," junior Evra Therien said. "I was glad I got time to study and work on the AP Lang research paper since it allowed me to zone in and focus, I don't have as much time during school."

One thing is for sure: Titan holidays are always packed with lots of festive fun.



Avery Liu, Sophia Elena Mignacca, Emily Rios Quinto, Elsa Nunley and Caitlin Attwood.

A MARKETABLE SUCCESS

On December 3 and 4, students at Arcadia High participated in an exciting yearly tradition called Market Day. The name might not make it sound very exciting, but it's something we look forward to every year.

Market Day is a school event where seniors in economics classes are given several assignments that require them to work with real-world concepts of company creation, such as business plans, invoices, and pitches, to create their own product and brand. The fun part comes when students work with teams to develop a product that they can sell to other students during Market Day.

Something worth noting is that the students cover all the costs of creating the products, and that all the money they make from sales also belongs to them. However, financial success does not affect academic success... that would just be cruel! Rather, the work that they put into planning and

executing the sale of their product is what is reflected in the gradebooks.

Students have a great time on Market Day, and this year was no exception. Ms. Morrison, one of the economics teachers who oversees the entire process, said: "Our Market Day was very successful! There were a lot of great designs and products that students put together, and it was fun to see students using or wearing the products that they had purchased on later dates."

"It was pretty awesome seeing everybody's Market Day projects come together. My group worked very hard on our project, so knowing that everybody else put in that same amount of work and seeing it all pay off was very cool," senior Paul Huisman said.

This year's Market Day was a great success and may just be the start of impressive careers for all of Arcadia's aspiring entrepreneurs.

—Hutch Corey

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