

ARCADIA NEWS



VOL. 34 NO. 4

ARCADIA • BILTMORE • CAMELBACK CORRIDOR

JULY 2026



HAPPY FORTH OF JULY!

Patriotic events are not in short supply – check out our calendars for red, white and blue fun!

PAGE 6

RUN FOR THE FUN OF IT

This Phoenix Run Club brings hundreds together weekly across the Valley, building community through runs.

PAGE 12

AN UPDATE ON THE 'KIDZ'

Student-led Kidz4Causes has raised over \$200K for rare disease research through fundraising and awareness.

PAGE 28

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Departments

- 4 Editor's Note
- 6 What's Happening?
- 10 Worth the Drive
- 16 In the Kitchen
- 18 Meet Mr. [Stieg]
- 28 Robin's Adventures
- 32 The Dining Scoop
- 34 Sports
- 35 District 6 Update
- 38 Plant-Based Wellness
- 40 Did You Know
- 42 Thyme in My Kitchen
- 50 Titan Times

Articles

5 Arcadia's mini footballers

Arcadia High's annual Football Camp brought together more than 70 young athletes for two days of drills, mentorship and connection led by players and coaches.

24 BPA's new digs

Biltmore Prep is embarking on a campus transformation, rebuilding its 70-year-old school into a modern space designed to support future generations of Tigers.

25 Learning the ropes

SVP Teens gives high school students hands-on experience in philanthropy, fundraising and nonprofit leadership while supporting Valley organizations.

30 Happy vino-versary!

The Wine Collective is celebrating four years in Old Town Scottsdale by pairing education with hospitality, offering expert tastings from Arizona wines and beyond.



Fabulous Phoenix 4th takes place
at Steele Indian School Park and
features vendors, food, activities for
kids, live entertainment and more.

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1 SWIM LESSON AT A TIME

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF COLEY ARNOLD



Participants worked through football drills with AHS players during the two-day camp.

AHS hosts annual football mini camp

By Mark Hays

More than 70 young athletes from Arcadia High School's feeders and surrounding communities took part in an annual Mini Football Camp before the end of the school year, learning football fundamentals from Titans players and coaches.

The two-day gathering welcomed fifth- through eighth-grade students from Veritas Prep, Ingleside Middle School, and a few from the Madison School District. Arcadia football mom Coley Arnold explained that the camp was created as a way for the board and coaches to give back to the community.

Participants learned football skills, rotated through drills, and had opportunities to scrimmage. Current high school

players took the lead in running the camp and mentoring younger athletes.

"It's really great to see their leadership, as well as how they mentor the younger kids," Arnold said. For sixth-grader Dominick Smith, the camp was both fun and educational.

"I learned a lot," he said. "My favorite was the 7 on 7; I like the drills. I feel like it made me a better player."

Bodie Curtis said one highlight was being coached by familiar faces.

"I really liked that my brother Beck's friends were the coaches and they knew me," Curtis said. "I had fun playing with my school friends and doing drills."

Arnold said the camp is about more than football instruction.

"The biggest goal for us and for the camp is just to show

kids what's possible if they stay committed to football, no matter where they end up," Arnold said.

She also praised Arcadia's players for their patience and willingness to help younger participants learn new skills.

"The encouragement from the high schoolers was so apparent, and all the younger athletes felt like it was a safe space to learn and grow!" Arnold said.

The camp's strong showing last year helped boost attendance, Arnold noted, and the event has established itself a long-standing tradition in youth football.

"I think the success from last year played a role in the interest of kids; however, our numbers have been consistent, and we have been giving back like this for years now," Arnold said. "It is a staple and an event that the younger generations look forward to."

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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

BRIEFS

Arcadia's annual **Fourth of July Parade** is happening on Friday, July 4 starting at 3861 N. Jokake Dr. Families can decorate their bikes, strollers, golf carts, scooters – if it's got wheels, it can join in! There will be water, coffee and snacks available, and the Phoenix Fire Department will be there. Parade begins at 8 a.m., so get here early to find a good spot! Contact Emily Whitwell at eawhitwell@gmail.com for more.

Drivers traveling through **Arcadia Osborn** will soon see the speed limit on Osborn Road reduced from 30 mph to 25 mph, but neighborhood leaders are urging the city to ensure the change is clearly communicated and enforced. The Arcadia Osborn Neighborhood Association has requested additional signage and coordination with Phoenix police, citing aggressive driving issues that followed a similar speed reduction on 40th Street.

arcadiaosbornphx.com



WDS Integrated Design Build celebrated the grand opening of **MEND Wellness** at 36th St. and Indian School Road (next to Trevor's). The new business brings medical, wellness and holistic practitioners together under one roof, offering services ranging from concierge medicine and hormone health to yoga, acupuncture and massage therapy, all designed to support long-term, whole-person well-being.

mendwellnesscollective.com

Southwest Human Development is asking volunteers to support its school supplies initiative in two ways. You can host a school supply drive through July 10, collecting new backpacks, crayons, notebooks, folders, pencils, and more, with donations dropped off at 2850 N. 24th Street in Phoenix, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can join the virtual backpack drive by making financial contribution to help students start school prepared.

swhd.org

St. Vincent de Paul's **100 Days of Summer** campaign continues through Labor Day. The organization is asking for donations of canned proteins, peanut butter, dried pasta, canned fruits and vegetables and more to help fill the pantry. Folks can drop off donations at SVdP's main campus: 2120 S. 3rd Dr., Phoenix, Monday-Friday from 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

100days.stvincentdepaul.net



Local First Arizona's **Independents Week** returns through July 7, encouraging Arizonans to support the independent businesses that help drive the state's economy and shape our identity. The campaign highlights certified businesses across a wide range of industries; all featured in Local First Arizona's free online directory.

localfirstaz.com/directory

EVENTS

THURSDAY 7/2

Paint and Sip

6 p.m. at Greenwood Brewing, 922 N. 5th St., Phoenix. Join Andrea M. Art and the team at Greenwood Brewing for an evening of paint and sip. Attendees will be guided by a professional artist in creating a masterpiece while enjoying tunes, craft beer and good vibes. Materials are included. Prices vary. Secure your spot by calling the brewery.

greenwoodbrews.com

Rapunzel

10 a.m. at the Great Arizona Puppet Theater, 302 W. Latham St., Phoenix. We all know one version of Rapunzel or another – a fairy-tale heroine famous for her incredibly long, magical hair. Now, you can see the GAPT's version, portrayed from an antique trunk! Will Rapunzel escape the tower and the evil forces that keep her there? Head to the theater to find out. Tickets are \$10 for kids and \$16 for adults.

azpuppets.org

FRIDAY 7/3

Red White & Choo Choo

McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, 7301 E. Indian Bend Road, Scottsdale. The Train Park will host its fourth annual Red White & Choo Choo event with live music from Groove Machine, lawn games, activities for kids, face painting, train rides, food trucks and fireworks. Tickets are \$15 for everyone 3 and up.

therailroadpark.com

SATURDAY 7/4

Scottsdale 4th of July

5-9 p.m. at WestWorld, 16601 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale. Get ready to be red, white and cool at WestWorld's 13th annual Fourth of July celebration. Guests will find a rodeo, mutton busting, dancing, circus performances, a slider eating contest, a water balloon championship, walking history tours, musical chairs, photo booths, a backyard BBQ and the annual Parade of Heroes. Tickets start at \$25.

scottsdale4th.com

Fabulous Phoenix 4th

6 p.m. at Steele Indian School Park, 300 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. The Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department will sponsor its annual fireworks show – one of the largest in the southwest! Admission is free, while food and drink are available for purchase. There will be inflatables for kids, a car show, entertainment, an ice cream eating contest, yard games and a Veterans area.

phoenix.gov

Grand Fourth of July

5 p.m. at Grand Hyatt Scottsdale Resort, 7500 E. Doubletree Ranch Road, Scottsdale. This celebration will feature a BBQ buffet at Mesa Centrale, family-friendly activities, poolside programming, and a DJ at the adults-only pool. The evening will conclude with a fireworks display at 9 p.m., creating the perfect finale to a memorable summer holiday. Tickets are \$65.

hyattexperiences.com

SUNDAY 7/5

The Duke: Still in the Saddle Film Series

2 p.m. at Scottsdale's Museum of the West, 3830 N. Marshall Way. Step into the golden age of Western cinema with The Duke: Still in the Saddle Film Series. These events celebrate the legacy of John Wayne and his impact on the Western genre. Today's film is *Rio Lobo*, which follows Cord McNally as he tracks down the traitors responsible for stealing gold that his troops were protecting. There will be a post-screening discussion. Tickets are \$10.

westernspirit.org

THURSDAY 7/9

Music Bingo

6 p.m. at Pinnacle Brewing Co., 15111 N. Hayden Road, Scottsdale. Think you know music? Challenge yourself across categories ranging from classic 80s and 90s hits to rock, pop, and country favorites. Teams vote on each round's category, ensuring every game reflects the crowd's musical preferences. Gather your friends, grab a cold brew, and discover if you truly know your music. Participation is free.

pinnaclebrewing.com

SATURDAY 7/11

Winter in July

7-11 a.m. at the Phoenix Zoo, 455 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix. The temperature outside may be in the 100s, but at the Phoenix Zoo, it's cooling down. Participants can enjoy winter in July with more than 50 tons of snow, a snow slide, live music and crafts. They can also watch Chutti the greater one-horned rhino have a shower! Tickets are \$25.

phoenixzoo.org

Letterpress Workshop

10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Hazel & Violet, 1301 NW Grand Ave., Phoenix. Curious about letterpress printing? Hazel & Violet can help. Guests will learn the basics of letterpress with wood and metal settings to print their very own poster, card or coasters. All materials are provided. Registration starts at \$70 per person.

hazelandviolet.com



A campaign launched in June aims to raise \$30,000 to help bring **Her Court**, Old Town Scottsdale's first dedicated women's sports bar, to life. Founded by AZ natives Kristen and Anthony Carli, the concept will feature women's sports on every screen, a bar, event space and more. The pair hopes to create a permanent home for women's sports fans ahead of its planned 2027 opening.

kickstarter.com/projects/carli/her-court-womens-sports-bar

Early childhood and elementary educators are invited to attend **Educator Day & Resource Expo** at the Children's Museum of Phoenix on July 1 (215 N. 7th St., Phoenix). Educators receive free admission for themselves and one guest with school ID. The Resource Expo features organizations sharing educational products and services from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

childrensmuseumofphoenix.org

The **North Valley Symphony Orchestra** will host its annual Summer Strings Camp July 7-11, at Shiloh Community Church. Open to violin, viola, cello and bass students, the camp offers ensemble rehearsals, games and musical instruction led by youth directors and orchestra musicians. Camp runs Tuesday through Friday, with a student performance for family and friends on Saturday. Registration is open now; tuition starts at \$200.

northvalleysymphony.org

WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?



Scottsdale 4th of July at Westworld.



Winter in July at the Phoenix Zoo.

SUNDAY 7/12

Puzzle Rides

11 a.m. in Old Town Scottsdale. Puzzle Rides is an adventure game that combines a golf cart, an escape route and a scavenger hunt for a morning of fun. Copper Canyon Caper is Scottsdale's most challenging golf-cart tour. Teams race through Old Town landmarks to unlock a long-lost Arizona treasure. Piece together every clue, unlock the mysterious case at the final destination, and claim the legendary treasure – and bragging rights! Tickets start at \$69 per person.

puzzlerides.com

Summer Lecture Series

12 p.m. at The Square PHX, 113 N. Sixth St., Phoenix. Temperance & Trapdoors: Prohibition and the Rosson House Museum will regale attendees with the reasons why Arizona passed Prohibition five years before the passing of the Volstead Act. Learn about some of the first lobbying groups and the Rosson House's bootlegging past. Admission is \$5. Registration is required.

thesquarephx.org

FRIDAY 7/17

Ceili Dance Lessons

6:45 p.m. at the Irish Cultural Center, 1106 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. Hosted by the Irish Cultural Center and McClelland Library, the monthly Third Friday Ceili brings traditional Irish social dancing to the Great Hall in a family-friendly atmosphere. Guests of all skill levels can enjoy six lively group dances while Anne and Jim Daugherty lead a beginners session and call the dances. Registration is \$5-\$8.

azirish.org

FRIDAY 7/17 – SATURDAY 7/18

Sip + Shop Summer Market Series

6 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday,

at Hotel Valley Ho, 6850 E. Main St., Scottsdale. The Summer Market Series is back with a celebrity chef dinner on July 18, featuring a three-course meal prepared by Chefs Russell LaCasce and Jonathon Sawyer. Saturday's market will feature samples, live music, vendors, tastings and a voucher for ZuZu. The market is free to attend – but

registration is required; dinner starts at \$149 per person.

hotelvalleyho.com

SATURDAY 7/18

Create Playdate

11 a.m. at the Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 N. Central Ave. Want to make art inspired

by your favorite pieces at the museum? Create Playdate offers young artists to do just that with a hands-on activity during their visit. Each week's Create Playdate offers a new theme, an art making activity to do at the museum, and projects to do at home. Admission to the museum is \$15 for kids and \$25 for adults. No registration required.

phxart.org

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WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?



Drunk Pirates at The Rose Theatre in Phoenix.

SUNDAY 7/19

Cocktail Camp

1-3 p.m. at The Mission Kierland, 7122 E. Greenway Pkwy., Scottsdale. Summer Cocktail Camp is a rotating event series that brings attendees up-close-and-personal with Valley mixologists and bartenders to showcase their craft. Guests will taste up to four cocktails, learn about mixology and maybe leave with new recipes to add to their roster. Tickets start at \$50.

phoenixmag.com

FRIDAY 7/24

Drunk Pirates

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 Treasure Island is for guests 21 and up. Sit back and watch as one performer attempts to act out scenes from the play while the others follow along and try not to break the scene. Guests can purchase beverages and snacks at the show. Tickets start at \$53.

drunkshakespeare.com

WEDNESDAY 7/22

Sunrise Yoga

7 a.m. at Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy., Phoenix. Begin your morning connecting with nature during this memorable Sunrise Yoga session, led by Metta Yoga. Together, in a Sonoran Desert oasis, breathe, stretch and embrace the cooler morning air whilst enjoying garden views. This is an all-levels class. Weather permitting, classes are held in a shaded outdoor pavilion. Enjoy a morning stroll before or after. Admission at \$20.

dbg.org

SUNDAY 7/26

Tai Chi & Qigong Experience

8 a.m. at the Japanese Friendship Garden, 1125 N. 3rd Ave., Phoenix. Experience the healing arts of Tai Chi and Qigong in the serene setting of the Japanese Friendship Garden. Guided by instructor Ping Wei, this workshop blends the flowing movements of Tai Chi with the energy-balancing practice of Hunyuan Qigong to enhance balance, strength, and inner harmony. Tickets are \$20.

japanesefriendshipgarden.org

TUESDAY 7/28

Devour Summer Chef Series

6 p.m. at Hana Japanese Eatery, 5524 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix. The Devour Summer Chef Series is a collaborative dinner experience celebrating Arizona restaurants. Each month, two top chefs come together to create a four-course pairing menu featuring local ingredients and seasonal flavors. Tonight's chefs are Gio Osso of Virtù Honest Craft and Lori Hashimoto of Hana Japanese Eatery. What's on the menu? Head to Hana to find out. Tickets are \$250.

devourgoodfood.com

THURSDAY 7/23

Tempe Brewery Tour

1 p.m. starting at Moxy, 1333 S. Rural Road, Tempe. Experience Arizona's craft beer scene on a guided tour of four handpicked breweries and cideries. Guests can try out pints and flights, shared appetizers, snacks and bottled water, and a "how beer is made" tour with opportunities to meet master brewers or brewery owners. Tickets are \$135 per person.

arizonabrewhopping.com

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OUT OF THE AREA, BUT WORTH THE DRIVE

FRIDAY 7/3

C4 Foundation Benefit Concert

6 p.m. at the Hotel Del Coronado, 1500 Orange Ave., Coronado, CA. This event will be worth the drive! Nate Nathan and the MacDaddy-O's Band will put on a concert at this famed hotel in honor of Charles Keating IV and the C4 Foundation, which provides support and resources to active duty Navy SEALs and their families. Make sure to save room for snacks and drinks. General admission tickets start at \$250 per person. c4foundation.org

SATURDAY 7/4

Fourth at the Fountain

7-10 p.m. at 12925 N. Saguaro Blvd., Fountain Hills. Fountain Park is all about Independence Day, with live music from Roger Clyne and The Peacemakers, along with family-friendly games and prizes. Food vendors will also be on hand to serve up those all-American treats we know and love. Fireworks start at 9 p.m. overlooking the fountain. This event is free. experiencefountainhills.org

All-American Bash

7 p.m. at Dr. AJ Chandler Park, 178 E. Commonwealth Ave. Downtown Chandler



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District Splash Days at Desert Ridge.

is inviting revelers to enjoy live music by the Pickup Lines, yard games, balloon art and glitter tattoos for the kids, food vendors and more. This year, there will be tickets for fun raffle baskets, and a 15-minute pyrotechnic show as part of the concert. This event is free. chandleraz.gov

SUNDAY 7/5

Esteban Concert

7 p.m. at Musical Instrument Museum, 4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix. Esteban, Arizona's flamenco guitarist, will celebrate 250 years of America's blend of cultures through "the fire and passion of flamenco music." The charismatic musician launched his international Billboard-charting career in Scottsdale, where he earned multiple "Best of Phoenix" awards. Tickets start at \$55. estebanmusic.com

WEDNESDAY 7/8

District Splash Days

10:30 a.m. at Desert Ridge, 21001 N. Tatum Blvd., Phoenix. Desert Ridge is bringing back District Splash Days, a family-friendly themed summer series. This morning's event is "Dino-Mite" and features dinosaur-themed fun like photo ops, fossil digs, crafts, mini golf, giveaways, and stuffed dinosaur take-home prizes for the first 120 children, plus music from DJ Alakazam. This event is free. shopdesertridge.com

SATURDAY 7/11

Chillin' at the Chul

6 p.m. at Tohono Chul, 7366 N. Paseo del Norte, Tucson. Chillin' at the Chul is a new evening event series offering a fresh way to experience the 49-acre desert botanical garden. The get-togethers feature live music (tonight guests will hear from Edna and Ely B-Cool), art, food, drinks, and activities, including nature play with



Esteban Concert at Musical Instrument Museum.

Children's Museum Oro Valley pop-ups. Admission is \$5. tohonochul.org

FRIDAY 7/10 – SUNDAY 7/12

Mad Monster Party

Times vary, at the Renaissance Hotel, 9495 W. Entertainment Blvd., Glendale. Mad Monster Party Arizona returns, bringing horror, sci-fi, and fantasy fans together at the for a weekend packed with celebrity guests, panels, autographs, photo ops, vendors, costume fun, and parties. Attendees can meet stars from iconic films and shows – like Linda Blair, Warwick Davis and Gene Simmons (yes, that one!) – and enjoy immersive events. Tickets start at \$35, VIP packages are available. madmonster.com

FRIDAY 7/17 – SUNDAY 7/19

Maricopa County Home & Landscape Show

10 a.m.-5 p.m. at State Farm Stadium, 1 Cardinals Dr., Glendale. For those looking to get a jump start on home projects, this event might help. The Home and Landscape Show will have landscape design consultations, DIY workshops, presentations and demos. If you get hungry, food trucks will be on-site with bites and sips. All ages are welcome. Tickets are \$10. maricopacountyhomeshows.com

SATURDAY 7/18

ABBAFAB

8 p.m. at Gila River Resorts & Casinos, 15091 S. Komatke Lane, Laveen Village. Abba fans, you won't want to miss this! Relive the magic of ABBA as ABBAFAB brings the band's music to life in a high-energy show. Note-perfect vocals, costumes, and ABBA's biggest hits are on the docket: Dancing Queen, Mamma Mia, Take a Chance on Me and more. Tickets start at \$30. playatgila.com

THURSDAY 7/21

Behind-the-Scenes Tour

2 p.m. at Odysea Aquarium, 9500 E. Via De Ventura, Scottsdale. As part of OdySea's 10th birthday, guests are invited to an exclusive experience into rarely seen areas of the aquarium. Explore jellyfish breeding, coral nurseries, and backstage spaces above Shark Waters while discovering how care experts support the marine life. This tour is offered with general admission so you'll get to explore the whole place! Tickets are \$65 for adults, \$55 for kids. odyseaaquarium.com

FRIDAY 7/22

Paint & Sip at the Mill

6:30 p.m. at Queen Creek Olive Mill, 25062 S. Meridian Road, Queen Creek. Join in on a delightful evening of creativity under the olive trees. Admission includes a glass of prosecco and art supplies. Guests will paint "Desert Watermelon Spritz," which shows an olive tree in a desert sunset. Other drinks and food are available for purchase; tickets are \$60. This is a 21+ event. queencreekolivemill.com

SATURDAY 7/25

Annie

7:30 p.m. at the Peoria Center for the Performing Arts, 10580 N. 83rd Dr., Peoria. Directed by Molly Lajoie, this well-known musical features Azra Kearns in the title role alongside a cast of 44 performers and Bailey the Book Dog as Sandy. This show is packed with iconic songs – we know it'll be hard not to sing along – and heartwarming themes, with tickets starting at \$38. theaterworks.org

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PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSH WALKER

The club offers more than steps – participants can find coffee dates, yoga sessions, volunteer opportunities and more.

Run, Phoenix! Ruuun!

By Kylie de Best

If you happen to be at, or pass by, Biltmore Fashion Park on Wednesdays, you have likely seen people running. Dozens of people. All year round, the Phoenix Run Club encourages runners and joggers to hit the pavement and connect with others – yes, even in July.

The Phoenix Run Club is a community-based initiative built around movement, connection, and creating experiences that bring people together. While the founders started as a smaller meetup, they have grown into one of the largest and most active running communities in Arizona.

The club hosts multiple weekly runs and workouts across the Valley, including locations in Downtown Phoenix, Tempe, Paradise Valley, and the Biltmore area.

Attendance varies, with weekly runs typically drawing anywhere from 50 to 200 participants. Larger events and special activities can draw over 1,000 people.

“Over time, PRC has evolved into much more than just group runs,” Founder Josh Walker said. “It has become a space where friendships are built, people challenge themselves, and the Phoenix running culture continues to grow.”

While weekly runs are free and open to everyone, those looking to get more involved can purchase memberships directly through the club’s platform, Heylo. Benefits include discounts from brand partners, early access to special events and activations, perks and giveaways, structured training support, race team and

coaching opportunities, and priority access to select experiences and travel.

The memberships are currently offered in two tiers: a Supporting Membership for \$100 per year and a Race Team Membership for \$360 per year. Phoenix Run Club also launched PHX Elite and the PRC Race Team, which aims to support runners pursuing higher performance goals while still staying connected.

According to Walker, the teams will create access to high-level training, coaching, and support that many runners may not otherwise be exposed to or know how to pursue independently. This upcoming season will kick off in August and September as training starts for fall races and will include structured programs focused on distances ranging from 5K to

the marathon, with blocks leading into upcoming races.

Phoenix Run Club’s future goals include expanding participation in trail and ultra-running, elevating the camp and travel experiences, growing large-scale activations, developing more partnerships, expanding weekly runs, and programming across the Valley.

One of the biggest goals is building beyond the miles. The club hosts coffee meetups, brunches, recovery events, yoga sessions, volunteer opportunities, and social gatherings, including a Valentine’s social, Mother’s Day bouquet-making, and karaoke parties. Are you ready to run? They’ll meet you at Biltmore!

phxrunclub.com

AZ recognizes Hopi educator for classroom success

By AJ Stone and Mallory Gleich

The Arizona Educational Foundation’s (AEF) Arizona Teacher of the Year award is the highest honor a public school teacher in Arizona can receive and recognizes educators who inspire students, strengthen their school communities, and exemplify excellence in public education.

Established as part of the foundation’s mission since 1983, the program has celebrated Arizona educators for over 40 years and serves as the state’s official pathway to the National Teacher of the Year competition. Each year, teachers are honored during AEF’s annual awards ceremony, with this year’s winner set to be announced live in August.

After more than 20 years in the classroom, Jennifer Fox, a second-grade teacher at Hopi Elementary, earned her first major recognition as semifinalist for Arizona Teacher of the Year. When she received the nomination announcement, she reacted accordingly:

“I was completely shocked,” she said. “That nomination was truly humbling.”

The selection process begins with public nominations, which can be submitted by students, parents, administrators, colleagues, community members, or the teachers themselves. Nominations highlight the same qualities AEF seeks to honor: leadership, dedication, community impact, and the ability to make a lasting difference in students’ lives.

From there, AEF’s scoring committee – made up of



PHOTO: EMILY JAMES

Hopi’s second grade teachers Sarah Engels, Chrissy Montoya, Kelli McClain, Jennifer Fox and Heather Bowman.

community leaders, former awardees, and industry partners – reviews applications, scores candidate videos, and conducts interviews to narrow the field to five finalists before selecting the winner. Fox didn’t win the overall competition, but she did receive a prize package that is awarded to the Top 10 teachers.

While her accomplishments in the classroom have earned statewide recognition, Jennifer has another full-time job: being a mom.

“My biggest challenge this year was balancing home

life and school responsibilities. I have twin boys who are entering their senior year at Arcadia, as well as a daughter entering her junior year,” she said. “Balancing being the best mother I can be while also being the best teacher I can be has always been challenging.”

Jennifer said her students keep her motivated every day, explaining that she often sees them as her own children.

“I think about my students before the school day even begins – what worked or didn’t work, who may need a different strategy, how I can adapt lessons, how to better engage students, and how to involve families in learning at home,” she said. “I constantly ask myself how I can connect with my students and encourage them to push themselves to be their best.”

Jennifer also extended appreciation to her co-workers.

“In many ways, any success I have achieved is also a reflection of the amazing colleagues I work alongside. We collaborate, share ideas, and encourage one another daily,” she said.

Semifinalists receive a package that includes \$1,000 in cash, along with a commemorative plaque and medal recognizing their achievement. The package also includes a Fiesta Bowl Experience, including participating in the Fiesta Bowl Parade, and a few other prizes.

azedfoundation.org

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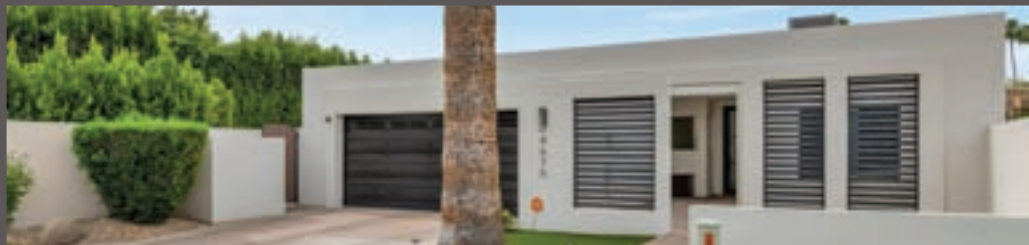
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In the Kitchen

In the Kitchen with Head Chef Jesus Rodriguez at My Slice of the Pie Pizzeria

3724 E. Indian School Road • mysliceofthepiezzeria.com

Born in Mexico and shaped by kitchens across New York, San Francisco, New Orleans, Europe, and Australia, Jesus Rodriguez’s culinary journey has taken him around the world before landing in Phoenix in 2023. Now the head chef at My Slice of the Pie Pizzeria, Rodriguez blends fine-dining discipline, global technique, and personal inspiration into every slice he creates.

Where are you from originally?
I was born in Mexico but lived a good chunk in New York and San Francisco. I lived in New Orleans before I moved to Arizona in 2023. I also lived in Australia, where I had the privilege of studying the business part of the restaurants. During my time there, I learned basically the 360 of the restaurant business, because I was studying during the day and working for a Spanish restaurant in the evening.

What industries were your parents in?
My father has always worked in the food industry, either at soda companies or within the restaurant realm. My mother has always been involved with kitchens and food. I used to work with my father in the operations part of the restaurant. Other than the kitchen itself, that was one part of the industry that made me fall in love with it.

Where else have you worked?
A lot of places; I’ve been privileged to work in some of the best kitchens. I worked in New York, in Napa Valley, Houston, in Europe – Barcelona and Madrid, Mexico City. If you have a passion for cooking, those are definitely some of the places you want to be. I’ve been around the world, basically. In Napa, I worked with French cuisine and French techniques. In New York, I had my first encounter with pizza in basically getting to know everything about it.

Did you work in fine dining, or mom and pops?
Well, pizza has always been a passion of mine but I did a lot of work in fine dining. It’s a lot of pressure; a lot of hours. In fine dining, everything is time consuming and

everything has to be perfect. There’s not much space for creativity. It all has to be done by the book, so you can learn a lot but you can’t really create anything for yourself. I did work for a couple mom and pops and a ghost kitchen or two during the pandemic.
When we first arrived in Arizona, it was a little hectic just trying to find a place to set down roots. In 2024 I found My Slice and I’ve been here since.

Which cuisine is your favorite?
Mexican food is much more than just one country’s cuisine, because the food can change so dramatically from one region to another. That’s what makes Mexican food so special. You can basically find a whole country’s food identity in just one region. It’s one of the best cuisines in the world.

Did you always know you wanted to be a chef?
Yes! Food and kitchens are something I’ve grown up with. My grandparents loved to cook and were always trying to get the family together on Saturdays. My mom studied in culinary school and my dad worked in restaurants so it’s something I’ve always enjoyed doing.

When you find something you’re passionate about, you can put in as many hours as you want and you may be physically tired but it won’t feel like work. You’ll wake up with a smile, wanting to go to work, wanting to learn as much as you can.
Food is so special. It’s how we survive, how we come together. Kitchens are hectic and if you don’t have the stomach for it, this industry is not for you. If you don’t mind burning your hands and getting your hands dirty and getting your apron wet, you’ll be okay [laughs].

What’s the first thing you remember cooking?
Tomato sauce with my mom. Mexico has a super-traditional dish called *entomatadas* that’s basically a quesadilla with tomato sauce on top of it. It’s one of my father’s favorite dishes. I remember starting to want to get to know the kitchen and remember my mom was always there – she cracked open a can of tomatoes and the rest is history.



Who are some of your favorite chefs?
Being around pizza, the greatest is Chris Bianco. I think what he’s done for the pizza industry is amazing. He’s given the world a chance to see the human part of the kitchen by telling people the stories from those employees that aren’t necessarily in the customer’s view. Those that “run the show.” I think Chris has been doing amazing work. He’s the greatest to do ever do it in creating pizzas, the dough, sauces,

etc. I got to talk to him a couple times and what a great human being.
His personality and the way he does things is what I think the restaurant industry has been lacking a little bit, lately. Letting people hear the voice of the people in the kitchen. It’s more than just a dish. It’s a story. Everyone in the restaurant is important to that restaurant.
In other cuisines, I think what Thomas Keller has been doing with technique is amazing. What Massimo Bottura did with

Osteria Francescana is amazing. We of course cannot forget about Anthony Bourdain and all the things he did for the industry. If you want to go way back, the technique of Paul Bocuse – we still use those sauces today.

What is the inspiration behind the menu at My Slice?

Everything starts with our dough. We’re really proud of it. The sauces, the dough, everything is made in house. We’ve got your classic pep and cheese, but we also have pizzas with a southwest spin – the al pastor, the carne asada...

Arizonans might be used to those flavors but maybe they want to try something new, and they can find that at My Slice. But there’s definitely something for everyone. The most popular is our cheese slices but the al pastor is a surprise. People try it and come back for more.

What do you use for inspiration?

I try to keep up with trends. I read, and keep an eye out on the new things or the ‘latest’ things. Not everything popular is good. Just because someone posts something on social media doesn’t mean it’s the best thing for everyone. Just because everyone is making or eating a spicy vodka rigatoni doesn’t make it the best pasta ever, right?

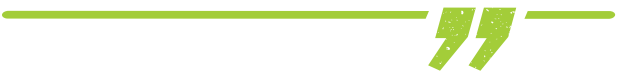
I use my family’s recipes. My grandmother made a recipe book and I read it from time to time, especially when I feel stuck in the kitchen. I don’t know what those recipes have, but somehow they always feel like home.

I always go back to the basics. The first rule is to never copy what someone else has done. You can get inspiration, or create your own flavors, but use what you have and make your own thing. The freshest ingredients will always be the best inspiration because you can always rely on them. If something doesn’t work, the customers will tell us [laughs].

Besides being in the food industry, we’re also in the emotions industry. We can create an emotion with a dish.



When we cook, we’re not just preparing food. We’re sharing a piece of ourselves. Every ingredient, recipe, detail reflects the dedication of the people behind it.



You can be amazed by a great dish. If you feel something, we did our job right. This is not a one person show – the team, the owners, the customers, we’re all part of it.

How do you keep yourself calm when things get crazy?

It’s something you learn over time. Being in a kitchen, sometimes things get really hectic and it’ll continue until the end of the night. I remind myself that we’re all in the same boat, we’re all crazy at the same time, but it’s that rush that keeps us going. I’m always seeking that feeling. One ticket at a time.

What’s one lesson or technique you learned elsewhere that you bring to My Slice every day?

The sauces by Auguste Escoffier – we make all our sauces from scratch, so that’s one technique that I use every day. And most important, the dough, because measure-wise, not every batch is going to be the same as others. That’s where technique comes in, because you need to be able to make small changes here and there so you can get to the final result.

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

I’m working [laughs]. When you work in a kitchen, you’re always working. You might not be in the kitchen, but mentally you might be trying to come up with new concepts, reading up on things. I always tell the team, when we have a chance to relax and be out of the kitchen, go out and be creative in another way. Play games, get outside.

What is one pizza on the menu that you think deserves more attention from customers?

The tomato pie. When you rely on the best and freshest ingredients, everything is going to come out to perfection. And it’s amazing how something as simple as a tomato pie can be so delicious.

If you could create a dream pizza with no limitations, what would be on it?

A *steak au poivre* pizza. Whenever it’s my turn to cook family meal, *steak au poivre* is always something I go for. There’s something magical in cooking the perfect sauce.

What would you like readers to know about the restaurant industry?

In today’s world, where so much of our daily lives feels rushed and automated, I believe it’s more important to remember the people behind every meal. Every dish represents someone’s time, effort, sacrifice, and passion.

When we cook, we’re not just preparing food. We’re sharing a piece of ourselves. Every ingredient, recipe, detail reflects the dedication of the people behind it. I think we need to bring more attention back to the human side of hospitality.

We are all human beings serving other human beings. That perspective matters. It encourages appreciation for the people who show up every day with the goal of making someone else’s day a little better.



“Meet Mr.” | Ray Artigue

Dr. Mark Stieg

To capture the scope and impact that Dr. Mark Stieg has had on generations of Arcadia families is near impossible. He isn't certain how many youngsters and adults he has treated in his orthodontic practice over the past 38 years.

“I'm not sure of the actual number but I would say that it includes multiple generations,” he said modestly.

The fact that he went into dentistry is a bit of serendipity. When he was young, his mother needed an emergency root canal. So, at the spur of the moment, he drove her to the dentist and watched the procedure.

“I thought the timing of that was interesting. It was a weekend and our dentist trusted me to assist him as he had no staff,” he remembers. Stieg considers that a turning point. “We have these little tipping points in our life, and we need to pay attention to them.”

Stieg was born in Columbus, Ohio and also lived in Cedar Rapids. His parents relocated to Scottsdale in 1964 where he and his brother, Scott, were raised.

He attended Scottsdale High and then ASU where he majored in microbiology. Stieg then earned a Doctorate in Dental Surgery from Ohio State University and a Master of Science in Orthodontics at University of Iowa, where he did his residency.

He initially planned on being a general dentist but

then decided an orthodontic practice might be a better fit after he received some sage advice from one of his professors.

“He told me that ‘orthodontists as a whole love what they do,’ and that had a real impact on me. And true enough, I’ve thoroughly enjoyed my career and would do it all over again,” Stieg said, adding, “People are the X-factor in my work and are the reason it is so very pleasurable.”

The feelings have been mutual.

“We were fortunate to be referred to Dr. Stieg 26 years ago when my daughter needed braces. I decided to get them at the same time, making it a father-daughter experience. All these years later, we are grateful we ended up with beautiful smiles – and a good friend,” neighbor Mike Flynn said.

When he isn't crisscrossing town treating patients at three Stieg and Wachtel Orthodontics offices, or teaching at Midwestern University College of Dental Medicine, he is involved in a myriad of community activities. He is a longtime member of the Scottsdale Charros and past president of the Scottsdale Unified School District Foundation.

“I love teaching and mentoring the next generation of dentists and orthodontists. I hope to have a positive impact on these students and help them achieve their professional goals,” he said.

Stieg met his wife, Kathy, when they were in high school and continued dating while at ASU. They have been married for 46 years and have two children, Kelli and Matt.

His advice for the next generation is straightforward. “Play to your strengths and you will be successful.

“
Play to your
strengths and you
will be successful.
”



And don't give up on the things you feel are most important to you.”

Stieg's hobbies are many. Foremost among them are college football – particularly cheering his alma mater, snow skiing, ranching and golf. Asked about any guilty pleasures and he reports he has one that stands out: “I'm a total sweet tooth and have the fillings to prove it,” he said, laughing. “Cupcakes are my absolute favorite!”



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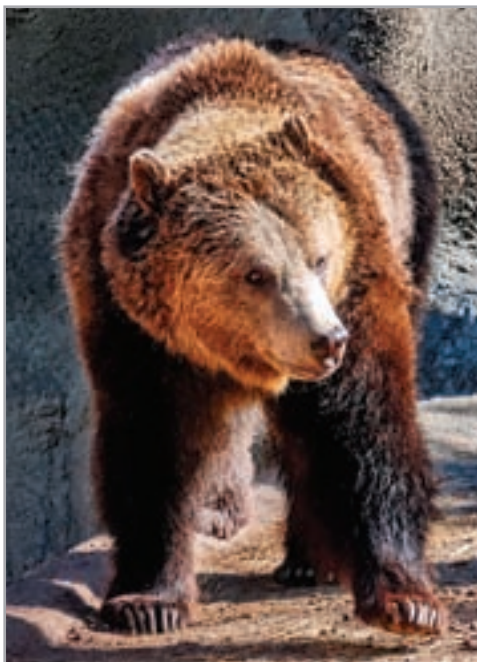
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SEDONA WOLF SANCTUARY

LIONS and TIGERS and BEARS, oh – wait, WOLVES too

By Rachael Bouley

As temperatures in Phoenix peak, why not head north and enjoy cooler weather and fun family adventures? Sedona, the surrounding Verde Valley, and the nearby San Francisco Peaks offer a break amidst stunning natural beauty and awesome animal adventures. Here are three wildlife attractions that might become the highlight of a summer getaway.

BEARIZONA

1500 E. State Route 66, Williams
bearizona.com

If you're exploring Sedona or Flagstaff for the weekend, Bearizona is a must-see. The drive-through safari park was founded in 2010 and has gained a reputation for its black bear cubs. Located 60 miles northwest of Sedona and 30 miles west of Flagstaff, the park is near Williams on Historic Route 66 and covers 160 acres, home to bears, badgers, bison, burros, deer, wolves, and more.

Visitors can see the park's residents up close from a car or shuttle as they drive through over three miles of Ponderosa Pine Forest, where North American animals roam in their natural habitats. More animals can be

found in Fort Bearizona, which is a 20-acre walk-thru plot with winding paths – more of a zoo vibe.

Over half of the park's residents are orphaned wildlife, and the junior black bears are the stars of the show. Bearizona is also known for its conservation pond for Northern leopard frogs, which are endangered in the Western and Rocky Mountain populations. When you go, don't forget to check out the in-person chats (from a safe distance, of course) with grizzlies, elk, and jaguar, plus animal training shows.

OUT OF AFRICA WILDLIFE PARK

3505 W. State Route 260, Camp Verde
outofafricapark.com

You will likely pass Out of Africa Wildlife Park on your way into Sedona, and it's a worthwhile stop if you want to see lions, tigers and bears. Not far from I-17 and 25 miles southwest of Camp Verde's town center, the park is highly regarded for its spacious habitats and its focus on preservation, rehabilitation, and positive public interaction.

The preserve was founded by Dean and Prayeri Harrison in 1988 and bears a notable

resemblance to the natural African habitats of many of its residents. The park spans more than 100 acres of rolling hills and valleys, with the Mingus Mountains providing a picturesque backdrop. Many of the habitats have unobstructed photo platforms so you can snap fence-free photos of the animals as they roam.

In addition to the big cats, there are hundreds of other exotic mammals, reptiles, and birds to observe, including antelopes, hyenas, rhinos, zebras, monkeys, and snakes. You can explore the park on your own or upgrade to an African Bush Safari tour. Other encounters include getting up close and personal with a sloth, feeding a tiger, and zip-lining over the park grounds.

SEDONA WOLF SANCTUARY

Camp Verde, AZ 86322
sedonawolfsanctuary.org

While Bearizona and Out of Africa are open to families of all ages with general admission available on the day, Sedona Wolf Sanctuary is an adults-only adventure by appointment only. It's worth the drive, as the sanctuary is highly regarded as a refuge for

rescued wolves and a sacred place for humans to meet and interact with them.

The sanctuary was founded over 25 years ago by HealingWolf, a local shaman who was called to create a refuge where wolves and people could find peace, healing, and mutual respect. Like many Native traditions, HealingWolf believed that wolves are both spirit animals and profound teachers who can enlighten humans with valuable lessons on family, instinct, trust, and resilience.

Most of the wolves were rescued from situations of neglect, abuse, or abandonment, and were left unable to survive in the wild. Some were taken in by people who thought they would be good pets, only to realize these creatures need open land to roam.

The sanctuary offers Wolf Experiences that you can book either solo or as part of a group. It begins with an orientation covering the pack and sanctuary history, before you are invited inside the enclosures for an organic encounter. The animals are never forced to approach but tend to be more curious and social when they feel safe. Each visit also includes a guided journey through the sanctuary's sacred spaces to strengthen your connection with nature.



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Knives and forks out! The Battle of the Bruschetta is underway

By Sherry Sklar

Postino’s summer bruschetta battle turns guests into tastemakers. Rather than simply introducing seasonal specials, Postino invites customers to help decide which experimental bruschetta earns a place on the fall menu.

The contest began in 2023, when Mexican Street Corn took the prize, and has gained popularity and culinary inventiveness with each passing year. In 2024, four contenders faced off across two initial battles, with French Onion ultimately winning.

In 2025, the contest expanded to six contenders, with Boquerones named the winner. The 2026 release continues the six-flavor format, with three two-week series and a final August championship. The competition kicked off in mid-June and runs for two months.

During July and into August, customers can participate in Series 2, Series 3 and the championship round, which runs from August 1-15; the top two from each series compete for the winning recipe.

“We are excited to have the top two compete in that last round,” said Lauren Bailey, CEO and co-founder of Postino and its parent company, Upward Projects. The bruschetta champion will receive a permanent spot on the fall menu, and the winner will be announced August 17.

The culinary team leads this collaborative effort. Postino team members and Upward Projects employees created the limited-edition contenders. All were invited to submit recipes for consideration and the culinary team then held a tasting workshop to evaluate the final flavor combinations.

This year’s board includes a series

of face-offs: Cherry Mostarda (ricotta, cherry mostarda, mint) vs. Peanut Butter, Bacon and Banana (an ode to Elvis Presley) from June 15-30; Roast Beef & Horseradish (topped with pickled red onions) vs. Muffaletta (white cheddar, mortadella, olive tapenade), from July 1-14.

Smashed Pea (smashed peas, whipped feta, spicy Marcona almonds) vs. Pear & Cambozola (topped with crispy pear and a drizzle of spicy honey) are on the chopping block from July 15-31. During each round, guests can order two competing limited-edition bruschetta flavors and vote on their favorite by scanning a QR code in-restaurant or online.

“We definitely keep a pulse on what’s having a moment in the food world when coming up with flavor profiles,” Bailey said. “But we know that our guests want to see something new and true to Postino.”

The team, Bailey said, likes to put its own spin on recipes, ensuring the dishes complement the wines that Postino is known for.

With roots in Arcadia, the restaurant was founded in a historic 1940s-era neighborhood post office in 2001 and has grown into a national brand with more than 35 locations. Upward Projects also includes Windsor, Churn ice cream, Joyride Taco House and Federal Pizza.

For those looking to challenge their taste buds without straying far from home, the Battle of the Bruschetta offers a summer culinary adventure with a say in what lands on the menu next. Guests can taste, vote and follow the competition as Postino’s newest flavor contenders battle for a place on the bruschetta board.

postinowinecafe.com



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Four new buildings totaling 82,000 square feet of space are slated to be completed in the 2027-28 school year, but the school will be open during construction.

Biltmore Prep reimagines its campus from the ground up

By Sherry Sklar

When Biltmore Preparatory Academy students return in August, they will see their school being transformed around them. They will also see construction fencing along the west side of the campus, with viewing panels that let them track the project's progress throughout the year. A 70-year-old campus is being rebuilt into a modern home for Biltmore Prep students, staff, and faculty, while everyone continues learning on-site as the renovation unfolds.

The new campus will give Biltmore Prep's dual-language immersion model a physical home, using color, texture, and shared spaces to support the daily movement between English and Spanish instruction.

This redefined design will support the growing population, celebrate the school's unique learning model, and reflect its identity. Four new buildings totaling 82,000 square feet of new space form the centerpiece of the project. The existing gymnasium, built in 2019, will be the only

major structure retained as the rest of the campus is rebuilt from the ground up.

A phased implementation will allow the campus to remain functional and give students the opportunity to witness the construction of a new school they helped create. Construction is scheduled to begin this summer, with total completion expected in late fall 2027. Students are expected to transition to new classrooms for the 2027-28 school year. The new campus will expand capacity from nearly 500 students and 60 staff members to around 750 students and 75 staff members.

"Our new spaces will honor who we are as a school while opening doors for future generations of Tigers to learn, connect, and lead in English and Spanish," Principal Stephanie De Mar said.

The project is funded through Creighton Elementary School District's voter-approved \$85 million bond program, which supports major facility improvements across the district, including the rebuild-in-place project at Biltmore Prep. Ben Parker,



Aurora Garcia, Dr. Stephanie De Mar, Jay Mann, Phoenix City Councilman Kevin Robinson, Sophia Carrillo, McCarthy Construction's Paul Kubic and Morgan Ellig of SPS+ Architects.

Creighton School District's director of bond projects, is helping oversee the work with Superintendent Jay Mann, district leadership, SPS+ Architects, and McCarthy Construction.

Students, teachers, families, and community members were instrumental in the design process. The district brought diverse perspectives into planning, ensuring that the school community had a voice in the redesign. Student input, gathered through the district's leadership and the Creighton Kids Congress, helped shape several unique ideas.

Teachers contributed valuable insights on layout and technology integration. The district hosted two community forums to share updates and gather direct feedback from families.

"What excites me most about this rebuild is that the new campus will finally be as

innovative as the teaching inside," parent Emily Hughes said.

A two-story middle school building will feature a modern media and learning center, STEM labs, a maker space, and music and arts classrooms. The new buildings will frame a central courtyard anchored by an outdoor learning stair that descends from the second story of the elementary building into the shared outdoor space.

The new courtyard will host outdoor learning, assemblies, performances, and parent-teacher events. The updated admin building and cafeteria will serve as an anchor and a gathering place.

"As a dual-language, Spanish-immersion school, we are especially excited to create a campus that celebrates and embraces language, culture, and the diverse experiences that make our community so special," De Mar said.

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Teen philanthropists take the lead

By Sherry Sklar

Social Venture Partners Arizona (SVP) has relaunched its SVP Teens program, giving high school students hands-on experience in philanthropy, fundraising and community leadership. The newly revived program, which operated from 2002 to 2009, teaches philanthropy to active participants, who take part in decision-making while learning about community impact.

For nearly three decades, SVP Arizona has cultivated philanthropic leaders, strengthened nonprofits and invested in collaborative solutions to address social challenges. The organization provides both expertise and funding to nonprofit partners. Launched in Seattle in 1997, SVP now operates in more than 40 cities worldwide and has roughly 3,200 members.

The SVP Arizona Teens program empowers its participants, referred to as partners, to make a difference in their community and seeks to broaden their understanding of philanthropy.

The initiative follows the parent organization's investment model. Members of the inaugural cohort built their expertise through fundraising, evaluating a nonprofit's financial stability and impact, conducting site visits, and using this research to make their selection.

"Our tagline is that we take a venture capital approach to philanthropy," Program Manager Hailey Hershkowitz said.

The teens were engaged in the full investing and grantmaking cycle. They raised \$1,000 by selling cookies and brownies to fund the grant, which was then awarded to a Valley nonprofit.



Joey Cuevas, Ellie Weiss, Cameron Estrada, Sophia Martine, Hailey Hershkowitz and Alberto Gordillo.

After evaluating more than 15 candidates, the teens chose Friends of the Children, a group that supports schoolchildren in vulnerable populations. The nonprofit works with kids in the Roosevelt School District to provide care, build relationship skills, foster empathy, and provide long-term support. A mentor is paired with a child and follows that student from kindergarten through 12th grade. This was the organization's first time participating in SVP. Mentors Joey Cuevas and Alberto Gordillo were grateful that the group chose their organization.

SVP Arizona Teens was relaunched with funding from The Pharos Foundation. Hershkowitz, a former educator, updated the curriculum.

The first revived cohort drew 10 applicants and included five students from Xavier, Camelback High and Arcadia High. Applications are now open for the next cohort.

Cameron Estrada's entrepreneurship teacher introduced her to the program, knowing that she was service-oriented and interested in giving back. Interest in charity started early. She often tagged along with her mom, a grant writer, to fundraising events as a child. Estrada wanted to understand the financial side of philanthropy better and intends to pursue a career in the sector. The program showed her, through action, how philanthropy can create meaningful change, and that experience reinforced her chosen path. "Making that impact was so powerful, and I'd like to keep doing this," she said.

Amber Cordoba, a partner at SVP Arizona, has been involved with the organization for the past three years. She is the executive director of Relational Life Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to fostering community and combating loneliness.

As a guest professional, Cordoba worked

with the teens just before they reviewed and narrowed the applications. A member of SVP's investee selection committee, she explained what the committee looks for in an application and encouraged the group to focus on the big picture.

SVP provided resources to help the teens make informed decisions. The participants were involved every step of the way. "I think SVP has done an amazing job uplifting our voices," Estrada said. "We were the ones in charge of the conversation."

Cordoba hopes the teens learn that philanthropy is not only about donating funds but also about time and talent. This view aligns with SVP's model of giving and capacity building.

Ellie Weiss learned about SVP Teens through her mom. Although a few years younger than the other cohort members, she appreciated the kindness shown and the connections made. "I love how everyone is so nice, and I like helping others out," she said. Weiss was surprised to learn how thorough the grant evaluation and funding process was. "It was cool raising money and discovering organizations I'd never heard of before," she said.

Weiss plans to rejoin next year and encouraged her peers to get involved. "Learning about philanthropy and getting to meet people from different high schools was a great experience," she said. Through SVP Teens, students are building relationships, learning how nonprofits work and beginning to see themselves as part of the Valley's next generation of civic leaders.

svpaz.org/svp-teens

Fairy tales and the healing power of dance

By Michael P. Murphy

Susan Silverman grew up on classical dance, but she never thought it'd become her profession. In college, she was a political science major, and a chance meeting 40 years ago helped her switch gears. ...she co-founded Dance Theater West (DTW), and that's where she's remained as the owner and director. It is a studio with a long history of giving back – providing magic and healing through dance.

"I had a friend who was at a support group called Free Arts, and they talked about healing through the arts," Susan said. "I was asked to be on the board – which is not my thing – so I told them I would love to put on a program instead and was invited to work with them."

Now known as Art Heals Arizona (AHA), the organization is dedicated to bringing transformative programs to young people who have experienced abuse, neglect, and homelessness. Their long association with Susan and DTW began with a 2001 production of *Swan Lake*, in which the dancers served as mentors to the youth.

The DTW studio company is Story Book



DTW members Carolina Togno, Zoraya Palacio, Christian Graeff, Francesca Mena and Elizabeth Ramsey.

Ballet, which produces a performance every spring inspired by a popular fairytale. The choreography is then adapted into something positive and acceptable for a fall performance with AHA dancers, creating a bridge between the two groups.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the kids to know there is a place where they can be happy, accepted, and comfortable," Susan said. "That is what is so remarkable about Art Heals. They put their kids in situations where there is trust, understanding, and

the opportunity to be expressive." Her students concur.

"Art Heals Arizona proves the power of dance, and I'm so grateful that I get to experience that with the sweetest kids," dancer Francesca Mena said.

"It's truly a heartwarming experience to dance with these children," dancer Elizabeth Ramsey said. "They put themselves out there, bravely and boldly performing on a stage in front of strangers. It's wonderful to forge connections with them through dance

and show them the world of performance art in a way that can be healing."

The studio's upcoming 40th anniversary will highlight the best of DTW and Story Book Ballet with productions of *Swan Lake*, *Coppelia*, and *The Toy Shop*. This fall, they will team up with AHA for a production of *Alice in Wonderland*, where dancers can improvise original poetry into elements of the story, such as wonder, falling, feeling lost, fear, magic, and friendship. It gives them the opportunity to own a character.

"The children are extraordinary to work with," dancer Carolina Togno said. "They come in with a strong spirit and passion to learn, dance, and share their stories. Getting the opportunity to meet new people and help guide them has truly been an honor. They taught me you can try new things even if they are difficult and do it while having fun."

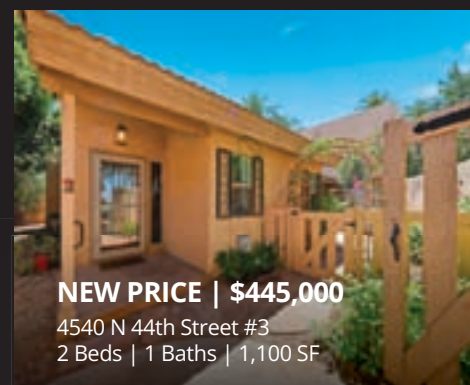
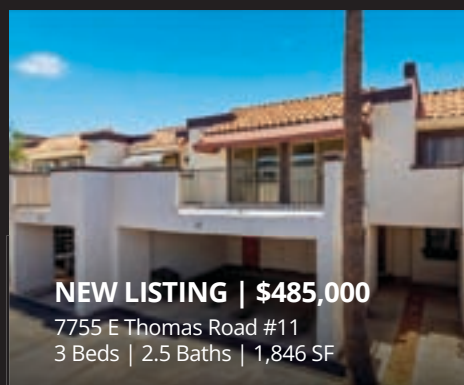
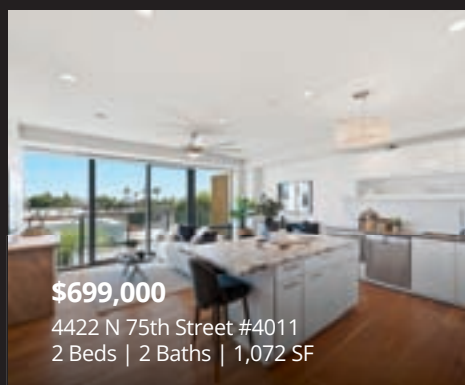
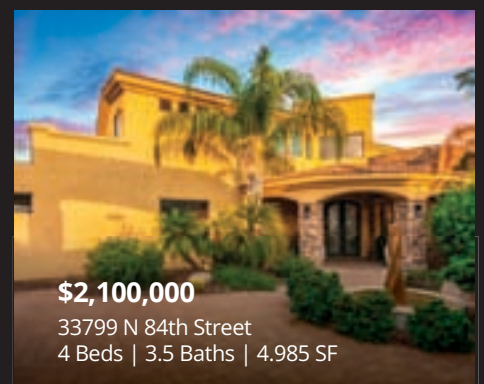
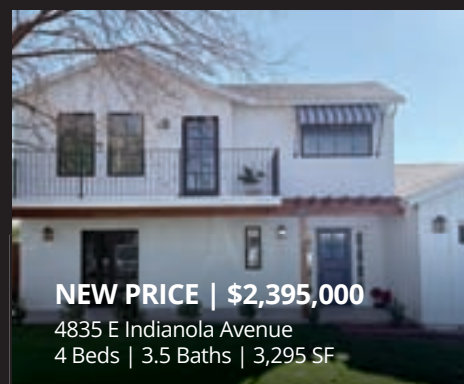
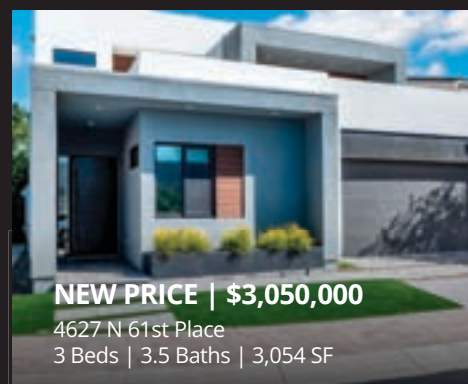
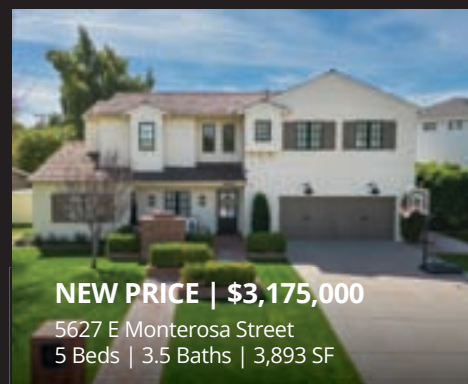
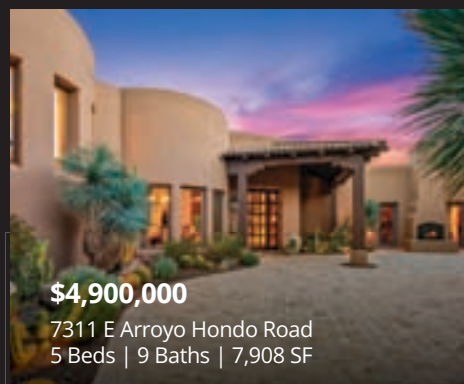
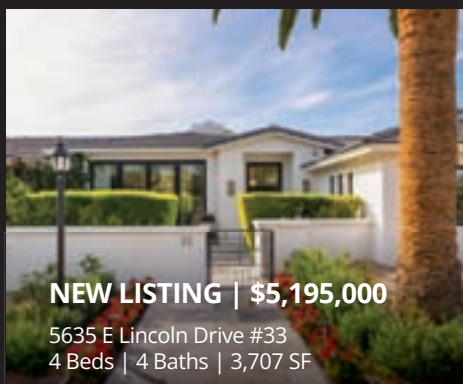
"The collaboration is great," Susan said. "What has been noteworthy over the years is how my dancers have been profoundly affected. It brings out such an incredible amount of compassion for my students, and it's magical."

dancetheaterwest.com



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A return visit to one of Phoenix's greatest treasures

Some places lose a little of their magic the second time around. The Musical Instrument Museum isn't one of them.

The *Arizona Highways Television* crew recently returned to the MIM for the second time, and if anything, the experience was even more impressive than we remembered. In a state known for its stunning landscapes, rich Native American history and world-class attractions, the MIM remains one of Arizona's most unique treasures, a place that surprises, inspires and connects people through the universal language of music. Walking through the museum feels



Robin's Adventures

BY ROBIN SEWELL

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

less like visiting an exhibit and more like embarking on a journey around the world. One moment you're listening to instruments from West Africa, the next you're exploring traditions from South



Every year, more than 50,000 students visit MIM through educational programs and field trips.

America, Asia or Europe. It's impossible not to be amazed by the sheer scope of the collection and the stories behind every instrument. What stood out most during our visit was how deeply the museum is woven into the community.

Every year, more than 50,000 students visit MIM through educational programs and field trips. For many, it's their first opportunity to experience cultures from around the world in an immersive way. Mike Silvers, MIM's Curator of Education, has seen firsthand how those experiences can spark curiosity and create meaningful connections.

"A trip to MIM is exciting because they

get to travel the world when they're here," Silvers said.

He shared stories of students proudly showing classmates exhibits connected to their family's heritage and cultures. In one memorable moment, a student from Ethiopia eagerly explained his family's background to his peers while standing in front of an exhibit from his homeland.

Those moments are exactly what make MIM so special. It isn't just about instruments, it's about identity, discovery and understanding.

One exhibit that particularly resonated with Silvers is the Recycled Orchestra display from Paraguay. The exhibit

tells the story of children who lived near a landfill and, with the help of a teacher, built instruments from discarded materials. Visitors can see a cello made from an oil can and guitars crafted from everyday refuse.

"It's such an exciting expression of human creativity," Silvers said. That spirit of creativity can be felt throughout the museum.

Whether students are learning the science of sound through STEM programs, adults are attending workshops and lectures, or families are exploring galleries, education remains at the heart. Beyond the exhibits, the museum regularly hosts cultural celebrations, live performances and community events that bring people together through music.

The MIM's concert hall welcomes artists from around the world, giving Arizona audiences the chance to experience global music traditions without ever leaving the Valley. Despite its international focus, the museum feels distinctly Arizona. It represents the state's growing cultural diversity, curiosity and commitment to lifelong learning.

In a city filled with incredible attractions, the Musical Instrument Museum continues to stand apart. It's educational without feeling academic, global while remaining local, and inspiring for visitors of every age.

Kidz4Causes continues support for rare disease fundraising

By Madalyn Paltzik

As co-president of Kidz4Causes, I've had the opportunity to see firsthand how much a group of dedicated students can accomplish when they come together for a cause larger than themselves. Kidz4Causes is a student-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit that raises funds and awareness for the Translational Genomics Research Institute's (TGen) Center for Rare Childhood Disorders.

Since its founding in 2015, the organization has raised more than \$200,000 to support research and families affected by rare childhood diseases. This year, I am honored to serve as co-president alongside Camila Saenz. Together, we lead a team of passionate student volunteers who work throughout the year to organize fundraisers, coordinate events, recruit volunteers, and spread awareness about the importance of rare disease research.

For my family, this mission is personal. My younger brother, Benjamin, was diagnosed with Chronic Recurrent Multifocal Osteomyelitis (CRMO), a rare inflammatory bone disease, when he was in fourth grade. Watching him navigate doctor appointments, treatments, and the uncertainty that often comes with a rare disease gave our family a firsthand understanding of the challenges many families face.

His experience inspired both of my older sisters, McKinley and Michaela Paltzik, to become involved with Kidz4Causes, each serving as president before me. Their leadership helped the organization grow over the years, and I am proud to continue that legacy while supporting a cause that has impacted my own family.

Our leadership team this year includes Event Coordinator Olivia Wiley, Event Logistics Coordinator Claire Kahn, Fundraising Directors Ula Stratz and Isabel Hargreaves,



Benjamin, Michaela, Madalyn, and McKinley Paltzik. All three sisters have served as president of the organization.

Volunteer Coordinator Julian Avila, Secretary Alaina Kieran, and other dedicated students who help make every event possible.

Over the past year, Kidz4Causes has partnered with Raising Cane's, Zoyo Neighborhood Yogurt, Chipotle, and, most recently, Flower Child to host fundraising events. These partnerships allow families, students, and residents to support an important cause while gathering together.

While raising funds remains a central part of our mission, Kidz4Causes is also about empowering young people to make a difference. Through planning events and working directly with partners, students gain leadership experience while learning the value of service and philanthropy. The cause itself is one that deserves attention.

Rare childhood diseases affect countless families, many

of whom spend years searching for diagnoses and treatment options. Through our support of TGen's Center for Rare Childhood Disorders, we hope to contribute to research that can provide answers, treatments, and hope for children facing these challenges. As we look ahead, our board is excited to continue growing our impact through new partnerships, additional fundraising events, and expanded outreach.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has attended an event, made a donation, volunteered their time, or supported our mission in any way. Kidz4Causes began with the belief that young people can make a difference. More than ten years later, that belief continues to guide everything we do.

kidz-4-causes.org

Arcadia News designer finds connection through movement & music

For much of my life, I felt like I was standing in my own way.

My name is Gabe Turner. I'm the creator of UNTZ Apparel, a graphic designer and someone who has spent much of his life searching for connection and confidence.

From the outside, things looked fine. I played baseball as a kid, softball as an adult, stayed active and built a career as a graphic designer. Inside, though, I often felt like something was holding me back.

It wasn't a lack of effort.

It was a poor self-image and negative inner dialogue.

For as long as I can remember, a voice in my head questioned my decisions, second-guessed my abilities and convinced me to play it safe and isolate. I focused less on what could go right and more on what could go wrong.

That pattern followed me beyond sports.

I struggled with social anxiety and spent years avoiding situations that made me uncomfortable. That felt safe, but I felt disconnected from the people around me, and it cost me close friendships as well as relationships.

For a portion of my life, I also suffered from frequent migraines. They often left me feeling mentally and physically drained, making it even easier to retreat from the world instead of engaging with it.

Part of that came from how I was raised. One of the messages I grew up hearing was that you should be seen and not heard. Over time, I internalized that deeply. I learned to stay quiet, avoid attention and keep many of my thoughts and ideas to myself. It made me more reserved in most of the things I did, more comfortable observing life than actively participating in it.

Ironically, one thing that helped me find myself was something I spent years avoiding: electronic dance music (EDM).



Gabe Turner (left) created UNTZ Apparel in hopes of inspiring others through music, movement and connection.

Growing up around ‘music snobs,’ EDM, especially techno, was treated as a joke. People in my friend group would imitate the beat by repeating the word “untz, untz, untz” and mock it for its simplicity and repetitive nature. For years, I accepted those opinions without giving the music much of a chance.

Then, four years ago, my life changed. I lost my father.

My dad and I were not always especially close, and we rarely talked about life. Much of that was my own fault, because of the self-isolation I mentioned earlier. That made one of our final conversations even more meaningful. He had spent years dealing with serious health problems and understood how quickly opportunities can disappear.

During that conversation, he spoke honestly about missed opportunities and things he wished he had done while he still had the chance. Then he gave me a piece of advice that changed my life.

He encouraged me to start experiencing life, try new things and, half-jokingly, said to do everything once. Because conversations like that were rare for us, those words carried even more weight.

After he passed away, I returned to them again and again.

That conversation became the start of an unexpected journey. My father set me off on an adventure to reclaim my life – not through grand gestures, but through a simple decision to stop letting fear make my choices.

It sparked something in me, I began saying yes more often. Yes to travel. Yes to new experiences. Yes to meeting people. Yes to stepping outside my comfort zone.

That decision led me to places I never expected. Along the way, I got more into fitness, electronic music and festival culture.

While there are positive and negative aspects to most cultures, my festival experiences have been mostly positive. I found a community built around music, movement and connection. For the first time in a long time, I felt like I belonged.

Festivals are where I feel most alive. The EDM genre and dancing has helped quiet the noise in my head and allows me to constructively confront the hurdles in my life.

Fitness has had a similar impact. Movement became more than exercise. It became a source of confidence, focus and growth. Whether

through sports, training or dancing, movement taught me to trust myself. Growth often happens when we step into discomfort instead of running from it.

The name UNTZ comes from those old jokes about electronic music. What was once used to mock a sound became a symbol of something meaningful.

That idea evolved into UNTZ Apparel and a message that has become deeply personal to me: Unleash Your Freq.

To me, that message has a double meaning, it's about unleashing your frequency and your freak.

Not “freak” in the negative sense, but in the sense of embracing the parts of yourself you’ve spent years hiding. It’s about letting go of the fear of standing out and pursuing what makes you feel alive.

Whether that is fitness, music, creativity, competition, entrepreneurship or self-expression, we all have something that energizes us and makes us feel most like ourselves.

To me, unleashing your frequency means finding that authentic part of yourself and putting it into the world. It’s your energy, passion, creativity, self-expression and purpose. By broadcasting it, you can help inspire others to find their own path.

That is what UNTZ represents: movement, connection, self-expression and the courage to fully participate in life.

The voice that once told me what I couldn’t do has never completely disappeared. The difference is that I’ve learned to quiet it.

Life is meant to be experienced. Every workout, festival, friendship and experience outside my comfort zone feels like a way of honoring that final conversation.

My dad told me to start living. I’m working on it.

For more info, follow UNTZ Apparel on the gram @untz.apparel & untzapparel.com

Speed, skill and international success follow this Arcadia racer

By Olivia Garcia

For Gio Santora, there is nothing like stepping onto a racetrack after a long day. At 17 years old, the professional race car driver has already spent more than a decade behind the wheel and has no plans to slow down.

Santora’s racing journey began when he was four years old, at CrackerJax, where he first discovered go-karting. What started as a childhood pastime quickly became a passion as he spent hours developing his skills.

As his interest in racing grew, Santora continued training at K1 Speed and Octane Raceway in Scottsdale. During those early years, he focused on mastering passing, the art of out-timing competitors, and quick decision-making under pressure.

His dedication soon translated into success on a larger stage. After establishing himself in national karting competitions, Santora represented Team USA at the Rotax Grand Finals in West Asia in 2023. He then gained further momentum by winning the FEED Racing Shootout, a motorsports scholarship competition that earned him a Formula 4 scholarship in France.

Since then, Santora has advanced to the MINI Challenge UK, where he competes as the series’s only American driver and one of its youngest racers.

Most recently, Santora competed during the Snetterton TOCA weekend in May. He qualified 15th for Round 6 with a lap time



From go-karts at CrackerJax to racecars across the pond, Gio Santora has big plans for his summer – including multiple races in the UK.

of 2:21.330. Even with those accomplishments, Santora said the transition from karting to race cars brought a new set of challenges.

Unlike open-air karts, race cars require drivers to adapt to new braking techniques, and vehicle controls become essential as they progress through the ranks.

“Overall, it’s adapting to the car’s conditions,” he said. “We drive four different race cars, and they all tend to handle a little

differently. The most challenging being a setup designed for an opposing driving style.”

To manage those challenges, Santora relies on mental preparation as much as physical skill. Before races, he listens to “Interbloom (Radio Edit)” by RÜFÜS DU SOL, says a prayer, and writes motivational phrases on his steering wheel. Another lesson that continues to guide him came from racing coach Simon Dawson of Dawson Racing.

“Never let anything get in your head,” Santora recalled. “At the end of the day, it’s you and you only, and anything that distracts you, you should take out of your mind.”

His father, George, said he is grateful for the opportunities his son has earned.

“The experience he’s getting, the independence, and how much he is learning is incredible,” George said. “We’re lucky to have a good foundation over there.”

Santora competed in Pembrey in June in the MINI Challenge UK. He will race at Thruxton in July - one of the fastest and most demanding circuits.

“I’ve learned you can’t skip any steps because if you do, something will fall down,” Santora said. “You have to give your dreams 110 percent, which means always looking onwards and upwards.”

The Wine Collective pours knowledge into every glass

By Michael P. Murphy

Imagine going into a Valley bar or a restaurant and ordering a glass of wine. As the server pours, you ask about the details – vintage, flavor profile, etc. It might happen that the server knows nothing about it. Their job is to pour, right? Did you know there's a wine bar in Old Town Scottsdale where every single employee is certified and knows how to talk wine? Welcome to The Wine Collective – a shop that's celebrating its fourth anniversary in 2026.

Owner Zoya Vero-Shah is proud of her staff's knowledge. It's a standard she expects as a customer, she said, because she is passionate about wine, hospitality, and people. She loves making people feel good. Her background conveys her experience in the industry.

"I have been in the business for 20-plus years," she said. "I started out as a bartender and a server, then I became a distribution rep in Florida, then a specialist. I opened my first bar, the Wine Cellar, in 2011, then a second location. This is my third, which is also a tasting and bottle shop."

Zoya likes to stress that they are "representing the unrepresented" wineries that are too small to open a tasting room in the city. The goal is to cater to everybody, with a focus on vino from twelve Arizona wineries. They also offer wines that are difficult to grow in our desert climate, such as pinot noir. Libations from Italy, France, Oregon, and California are also available.

"People are usually interested in the Arizona wines," Zoya said. "We offer a wonderful variety for customers to enjoy. In one sitting, if you wanted, you could try up to 12 different sips, all from different parts of the state."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ZOYA VERO-SHAH

Shop owner Zoya Vero-Shah. The Wine Collective offers tastings, small bites and education.

The Wine Collective held its anniversary celebration with a Meet the Maker event featuring Todd Bostock of Dos Cabezas Wineworks.

Zoya hopes to begin a delivery service in the future, but in the meantime, there is much to appreciate for patrons of The Wine Collective, including the environment. There is a certain vibe to being in Old



Town Scottsdale that can't be duplicated elsewhere.

"I moved from DC 20 years ago, and I fell in love," she said. "It's very unique, so I wanted to have a place here. I love the energy and catering to people that are traveling and showing them amazing wines. It's a great community."

the-wine-collective.com

WHERE TO SIP

There is no shortage of wine in Old Town Scottsdale. Here are a few other spots to check out:

WINE GIRL

4205 N. Scottsdale Road

Locally owned and serving wines by the glass, flight and bottle, plus local craft beers and snacks.

winegirl.com

ARIDUS WINE AND TASTING ROOM

7173 E. Main St.

Aridus offers a space where folks can try award-winning wines produced in Southeast Arizona.

ariduswineco.com

LDV WINERY

7134 E. Stetson Dr.

Enjoy a wine tasting flight, wines by the glass or bottle to enjoy on one of two patios, or purchase wines to go.

ldvwinery.com

LOS MILICS VINEYARDS

4151 N. Marshall Way

Los Milics grows its own grapes and pair their wines with inventive bites at this Scottsdale tasting room.

losmilicsvineyards.com

0 say does that star-spangled banner yet wave...

By Michael P. Murphy

On April 25, 1976, two protesters with ill intent stepped onto the field at Dodger Stadium during an afternoon game against the Chicago Cubs. They dropped an American flag on the grass in left/center field, soaked it with kerosene and flicked a lighter.

That's when Cubs outfielder Rick Monday raced to the trespassers, grabbed the flag and ran away with it before the protesters could set it on fire. The crowd of baseball fans cheered. The protesters were arrested, fined \$80 each and given two years' probation.

That was 50 years ago. Monday not only saved the flag from destruction, but he also took ownership of it. It is now on exhibit at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, where visitors not even born that day can learn its history and appreciate it. The American flag matters. It should be treated with respect.

In 1942, a joint resolution of the United States Congress passed and later amended

what is now known as the U.S. Flag Code. While it stands as U.S. Federal law, following the code is voluntary, a guideline for how to display and not display the flag, how it should be handled, and how it should be properly disposed of. Here are some examples:

- A flag should only be displayed from sunrise to sunset unless properly illuminated at night. Only an all-weather flag should be displayed during foul weather.

- It is commonly thought that when a flag touches the ground it should be destroyed, but that is not true. If a flag is soiled, it should be properly washed or dry cleaned.

- The flag should never be displayed with the union stars upside down, unless to stand for dire distress.

- Most American Legion posts and Boy Scout troops hold retirement ceremonies for American flags, including Arcadia's Troop 6.

The United States Postal Service has a process, known as V-P approved, for displaying flags other than the American



flag at postal stations. Flags representing MIA-POWs and the US Postal Service are approved. County, state or any other flags are not allowed. No other flag should be at the same level, or above, to the right of the American flag.

According to Phoenix Fire Department

Captain DJ Lee, fire stations keep their flag raised around the clock, lowering it only when it needs to be replaced or lowered to half-staff.

"Half-staff is usually for when someone of significance gets hurt or dies," he said. "The City of Phoenix will usually tell us when to put it at half-staff, when we lower the flag halfway down the pole as a sign of mourning."

Would you believe there is a name for an expert in flags? A flag expert is known as a vexillologist, a term coined in 1957 by Whitney Smith, himself a scholar of flags.

While most of us are not destined to be a vexillologist, it is good to be well versed in the proper etiquette of the American flag – especially during the month of our nation's 250th birthday. Rick Monday's action serves as a reminder why the flag matters, because people still choose to protect and honor it.



VINCENT ON CAMELBACK



SANCTUARY CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN

The Dining Scoop

Lunch, dinner, sip and learn

Summer is the perfect season to check on those kitchen skills, experiment with new flavors, and learn the techniques behind your favorite dishes and drinks. Across the Valley, chefs, pastry pros, mixologists, and culinary instructors are opening their kitchens for intimate classes designed to teach everything from pasta-making and truffles to preserving summer produce.

Vincent on Camelback

3930 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix
vincentsoncamelback.com

Vincent’s is known for its refined French-Southwestern cuisine and in July it extends that culinary artistry into hands-on learning opportunities. These sessions are designed to immerse guests in the techniques and flavors that define Chef Vincent’s approach, blending classic French foundations with Southwest ingredients.

Participants work in an intimate setting (14 people total) and may learn plating techniques, sauce development, and the balance of flavors that has made Vincent on Camelback a Phoenix culinary landmark since the 1980s.

Celebrate 250 years of America and 50 years since Vincent arrived in the U.S. on July 2. This class will showcase watermelon feta salad with honey lavender vinaigrette, stuffed burgers on brioche with relishes and mayonnaise (made as a class) and strawberries provencal. July 12’s class focuses on tomatoes; July 14 is all about Bastille Day; July 20 is homemade ravioli, July 26 is “savory/sweet summer fruits” and July 27 will feature all things fish!

Sanctuary Camelback Mountain

5700 E. McDonald Dr., Paradise Valley
sanctuaryaz.com

There’s something satisfying about learning to make pasta by hand... especially when wine and dinner are included.

Sanctuary’s pasta-making class transforms a regular summer evening into an Italian-inspired culinary workshop where guests sip wine while learning from the resort’s culinary team. The July 8 class, scheduled from 5-7:30 p.m., will have participants watch demonstrations of handmade pasta techniques before sitting down for a three-course dinner that includes salad, a mushroom pasta entrée, and dessert.

For those who prefer cocktails over carbs, Sanctuary also offers a Sours Mixology Class on July 25 at Jade Bar. The session explores the history of sour cocktails while guests craft and taste multiple drinks highlighting different spirits. Led by mixologists, attendees learn recipes and also why balance, acidity, and technique matter when building cocktails at home.

Royal Palms

5200 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix
royalpalmsotel.com

At Royal Palms, culinary education comes with a side of storytelling.

One of the more unique offerings centers around ceviche – a dish that consists of fish or shellfish marinated in citrus and various seasonings. Starting July 3 and happening Fridays at T. Cook’s Chef’s Table, the class explores the surprising journey behind a dish that originated 2,000 years ago. Small groups

gather to learn culinary traditions while enjoying the intimate atmosphere of one of the Valley’s resorts.

Cocktail enthusiasts have their own educational outlet. Royal Palms’ mixology sessions focus on crafting signature cocktails while breaking down the fundamentals behind balance, flavor layering, and technique. Guests learn directly from mixologists, picking up practical tips to take home and enjoy.

Hearth ‘61

5445 E. Lincoln Dr., Paradise Valley
mountainshadow.com

The Brunch & Learn series at Hearth ‘61 brings a hands-on culinary experience to summer dining with seasonal flavors and chef-driven demonstrations. Held one Saturday a month at noon, each event features a different theme and a live cooking demo led by one of the restaurant’s chefs. Guests gather in a private dining room setting, where they can watch the preparation of a featured dish while enjoying a specialty beverage.

After the demo, the experience continues with a three-course brunch served in the dining room. The menu includes the two dishes highlighted during the demo, a seasonal dessert, and a paired glass of wine or a craft cocktail, creating a full tasting experience from start to finish. The series continues with sessions on July 25, August 22, and September 19.

Tracy Dempsey Originals

1323 W. University Dr., Tempe
tracydempseyoriginals.com

Pastry chef Tracy Dempsey is serving up a summer full of interactive culinary experiences. Intimate three-hour classes invite participants into the kitchen to cook alongside Chef Dempsey while learning techniques to take home.

July 18 is Light Summer Lunches for Two: a class designed around approachable dishes beyond predictable

salads. Guests tackle everything from BLTs with spicy gochujang aioli and blackened shrimp bowls to bruschetta topped with roasted beets, chèvre, and Arizona pistachios before finishing with key lime pie.

Chocolate lovers may want to keep August 1 open. Inspired by legendary pastry chef Marcel Desaulniers and his famous Death by Chocolate creations, the class dives headfirst into rich desserts including fudge cookies, truffles, sorbet, and mocha while offering a sample of the towering cake that helped inspire generations of bakers.

The series wraps August 22 with a vegetarian French feast that explores classic techniques through dishes like mushroom crêpes, melon soup, baked brie with roasted grapes, and profiteroles with vermouth-soaked berries. Small class sizes mean participants get plenty of time to ask questions, troubleshoot techniques, and leave with recipes.

Classic Cooking Academy

10411 E. McDowell Mountain
Ranch Road, Scottsdale
ccacademy.edu

For those who have been curious about preserving fruits, vegetables, and sauces but felt intimidated by the process, Classic Cooking Academy’s six-week canning series (that starts in late June) can help! The course is designed for beginners. Over six weeks, students move from foundational techniques into more advanced recipes while learning how ingredients, acidity levels, and processing methods affect shelf stability and flavor.

Recipes range from sweet to savory and seasonal to practical. Participants might spend one class mastering lemon ginger marmalade and another creating smoky barbecue sauce or tomato pasta sauce. Later sessions explore pantry staples and gift-worthy creations like cranberry orange chutney and hot-sweet chili sauce. Each class produces roughly six



HEARTH '61

Each class produces roughly six half-pint jars, ensuring students leave with something tangible along with growing confidence. The program also emphasizes understanding the “why” behind canning, helping participants recognize the differences between jams, preserves, marmalades, relishes, and sauces.

La Zozzona

7500 E. Doubletree Ranch Road, Scottsdale
lazozzona.com

Not every culinary class requires a stove. At La Zozzona inside Grand Hyatt Scottsdale Resort, tasting experiences take center stage with customizable sessions

built for groups of up to four. Guests choose from wine, spirits, champagne, or non-alcoholic tastings while learning how production methods, ingredients, and regional traditions shape what ends up in the glass.

Whiskey lovers can explore bourbon and Japanese whisky side by side. Tequila tastings compare expressions ranging from blanco to añejo. Champagne enthusiasts sample well-known labels while learning how production methods influence taste and texture.

Because experiences remain small, instructors can tailor conversations to guest interests, whether that means digging into production methods, food pairings, or cocktail construction. Add-ons like antipasti boards, macarons, truffles, and chocolate-covered strawberries turn the tastings into full-fledged meals meant to be savored.

AC Hotel Scottsdale

15200 N. Kierland Blvd., Scottsdale
marriott.com

Empanadas might look simple, but anyone who has attempted homemade dough knows there’s an art to getting them just right.

At AC Hotel Scottsdale on July 11, attendees will learn how to build empanadas from scratch, focusing on authentic Argentine-inspired fillings and techniques. The class walks guests through dough preparation before moving into savory and sweet versions, including seasoned ground beef fillings and apple-cinnamon varieties.

Participants also learn how to properly fill and seal pastries, avoid leaks, and achieve the golden flaky exterior that makes them so addictive. Guests work with their booking groups, share equipment, and finish by eating together.

WHAT’S NEW?

LDV Winery (7134 E. Stetson Dr., Scottsdale) is offering a series of interactive wine experiences, including winemaker talks with guided tastings and themed discussions, wine and cheese pairing evenings featuring curated flights with artisan cheeses, and hands-on charcuterie master classes where guests build their own boards while enjoying a glass of wine. Reservations are required.
ldvwinery.com



Sphinx Date Co. Palm & Pantry (3221 N. Hayden Road, Scottsdale) is launching a weekly Farm Stand popup in partnership with Rhiba Farms. Every Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., guests can pick up farm boxes filled with seasonal produce, with additional add-ons like bread and dairy expected to rotate. Items from Palm & Pantry will also be available alongside the produce offerings.
sphinxdateranch.com



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Village tennis pro still serving after 47 years

By Sherry Sklar

When Brian Cheney talks about his family's relationship with tennis, the story reaches far beyond his own career. He is tracing a family history that shaped the sport across generations.

For Cheney, tennis professional emeritus at Village Health Clubs & Spas, tennis has been his life's work for nearly five decades. Now in his 47th year teaching at the Camelback and 44th Street location, he has helped generations of Arcadians pick up a racket and work toward their personal best.

Cheney comes from a Southern California family of champion players. His grandparents, May Sutton and Tom Bundy, competed at the sport's highest levels, as did great-aunts, cousins and members of his immediate family.

"The story I get from my parents was that when I was in the crib, they hung a tennis ball over me," Cheney said.

His mother, Dorothy, became one of his earliest models. A prolific tournament winner and the first American to win the Australian Championships, she introduced him to the game as a child.

"My first tournament was at 7, and I've been playing in tournaments ever since," Cheney said.

He also credits his mother with shaping his competitive spirit by making everything a game.

"If we were peeling potatoes, it was a contest as to who could get the most potatoes done," he said.

Although his parents never pressured him to play competitively, a tournament encounter with Perry Jones, then president of the Southern California Tennis Association, helped him begin to see tennis as a more serious path.

Cheney went on to the University of Arizona, where he earned All-America honors, played at Wimbledon and traveled across Europe one summer with four classmates, sponsored by the Tucson Conquistadores, a civic organization that supports amateur athletics.

After college, Cheney served for five years as an instructor pilot at Williams Air Force Base during the Vietnam War. When his military service ended, he and his wife, Ann,



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIAN CHENEY

Brian Cheney teaches at Camelback Village Health Clubs.

had two young children and wanted to remain in Arizona. While playing at the Tempe Racquet and Swim Club, Cheney was invited by an interim pro to begin teaching, a role that let him support his family and build a career around the sport he loved.

In May 1976, Cheney joined Village Camelback, which had opened only months earlier. The setting quickly made an impression.

"It was a wonderful opportunity," Cheney said. "You can't get tired of the view from the Village courts, looking up at Camelback Mountain."

Cheney helped develop a tennis program and a culture at Camelback Village. The club, he said, became "like a family,"

with members who were friendly, active and happy to be on the courts. As tennis director, Cheney ran tournaments, worked with other pros and focused on making the club welcoming for players of different ages and skill levels.

What once may have drawn about 120 players to a tournament can now draw more than 200, Cheney said. As adult play expanded, the level of competition rose, bringing former college players and highly skilled club players onto the courts.

In 2015, he became a tennis professional emeritus, stepping away from the director role while continuing to do what he enjoys most: teaching.

"I played with a wood racket until 1989," he said. "I was one of the last ones to ever switch from a wood racket. You have to adjust your teaching to the new technology."

The move from wood to modern rackets changed more than the feel of the game. Cheney said larger frames, new strings and improved technology have allowed players to hit harder, move faster and use different techniques than earlier generations.

The evolution of the game also shaped Cheney's teaching. Early in his career, he focused heavily on mechanics: grip, stance, swing and contact point. Over time, he came to see that tennis is as much mental as technical. If players think too much about their bodies while the ball is coming toward them, he said, they can lose sight of the point itself.

"What's most important when you play is where the ball goes," he said.

That means teaching players to think beyond the stroke: where the ball is coming from, where it should go, how it should bounce and what the opponent may do next. Today, he continues to teach at Village Camelback, Village Ocotillo and his home court in Chandler, often logging 15 to 25 hours a week.

villageclubs.com

New leadership, same title hopes for Xavier's Gators

By Mark Hays

Elijah Knox will take over the varsity basketball program at Xavier Prep this August, bringing a background spanning youth development, professional training, and WNBA player development. Knox, a Chicago native and former collegiate player at Iowa's Simpson College, has a foundation in the game that was shaped early and carried through his playing and coaching years.

He began with youth basketball in 2011 and later expanded into professional development roles, including work with the Phoenix Mercury in 2021.

Alongside that role, he has operated Arizona Athletics, a youth development program focused on training athletes across multiple sports. At Xavier, Knox said his approach will center on physical effort and efficiency on the floor.

"Defend and rebound better than everyone," he said of his goals. "Get high percentage shots off two feet in the paint, free throws, and wide open threes."

The upcoming season, he added, will feature a young roster and a learning-heavy environment as the program adjusts. Still, he said it "should be a lot of fun."



PHOTO COURTESY OF XAVIER PREP

Coach Knox with Jayda Lange, Ellie McLaughlin, Neeya Nuez, Gabrielle Doss, Sophie Cloud, Abigail Neal and Evania Maas.

"The majority of the roster has no varsity experience and will be underclassmen," he said. "We will all learn a lot and try to be disruptive toward the end of the year and into the playoffs."

Beyond wins and losses, Knox said he is focused on building a stronger connection between the program and the school community and on setting personal development goals for his players.

"I want the students, alumni, and businesses to be involved more than ever

because of the product we put out on the floor," he said. "I want to partner with Brophy's basketball team as much as possible to play games on the same nights at the same venue."

Encouraging strong academic performance among athletes, he added, is a key goal.

"If we have the highest GPA on campus and all my seniors achieve the personal goals they set, I'll call it a successful season," Knox said.

Knox succeeds longtime coach Jennifer Gillom, who also made a lasting impact on the school. Gillom, a former WNBA star with the Phoenix Mercury, two-time Olympic gold medalist, and a Women's Basketball Hall of Fame inductee, returned to Xavier to coach the varsity basketball program in 2017, after beginning her coaching career there in 2004.

Director of Institutional Advancement Lisa Zuba said Gillom's tenure included a historic achievement for the program, taking the school to its first-ever state basketball championship. Zuba also noted Gillom's connection to students beyond athletics, as well as her ability and influence on players.

"She is loved, including by students not on athletic teams," Zuba said. "She was an excellent coach, an excellent PE teacher, and was able to scope out talent and inspire players to success."

As Knox steps into the role, he will inherit a program built on past success and an established culture. He also looks ahead to a younger roster and a development-focused approach.

DISTRICT 6 UPDATE

This summer:
Read, explore and
stay informed

The Phoenix Public Library is encouraging residents of all ages and abilities to participate in its annual Summer Reading Program.



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

The free initiative challenges participants to read for at least 20 minutes each day while completing literacy activities that earn points, unlock digital badges and qualify readers for prizes. Participants who reach 1,000 points are eligible to receive a free book and additional rewards.

This year, readers can also take part in the Robinson Summer Reading Challenge, which encourages participants to select books with covers representing each color of the rainbow.

Along the way, readers can complete online challenges, attend events at libraries throughout the city and enjoy special experiences. Registration is now open, and residents are encouraged to sign up and begin logging their reading minutes. More information is available at Phoenix Public Library’s Summer Reading Program website.

STAYING SAFE ON THE TRAILS

Summer temps are here, so Phoenix officials are reminding residents to prioritize safety when exploring the city’s desert and mountain parks and preserves. More than 200 hikers are rescued from Phoenix trails each year, often due to heat-related illnesses and lack of preparation.

Officials recommend hiking during the cooler hours of the day, such as early mornings or evenings, and checking weather conditions before heading out. Proper footwear, lightweight clothing, hats and sunscreen can help reduce the risks associated with extreme heat.

Hydration remains one of the most important safety precautions. Hikers should drink water before beginning a hike, carry more water than they expect to need and turn back before supplies run low. Carrying a mobile phone, hiking with others and informing someone of planned routes and expected return times can also improve safety.

Residents are encouraged to be mindful of their physical limitations and any medical conditions that could be affected by strenuous activity or extreme temperatures. Staying on designated trails helps protect both hikers and the Sonoran Desert landscape. Officials emphasize that preparation and personal responsibility are key to ensuring a safe and enjoyable outdoor experience.

NEW TRANSPARENCY RESOURCE AVAILABLE

The City of Phoenix has also launched a new multilingual reporting platform as part of its Community Transparency Initiative. The Federal Enforcement Complaint Reporting Portal is designed to strengthen transparency and support civil rights protections within the community.

Residents seeking information about the initiative or the portal can visit the Community Transparency Initiative webpage at phoenix.gov/cti.

30 YEARS AGO



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Hello neighbors, Amy and Jim Gieszl here!

Well, 30 years later and we still call the Arcadia area home, having downsized from our Exeter house to living in a patio home near The Village. And yes, we still have a great view of Camelback Mountain! Collectively, we have lived in the Arcadia neighborhood for 150 years... Old Timers and Arcadia Titans for sure. We are celebrating our 45th wedding anniversary as I write this.

Our family has spread out a bit over the years. Daughter Nancy (not in 1996 photo as she was away at U of A) is a physician, living in north Phoenix with her family and many horses. Katie is a teacher, and lives with her family in a suburb of Raleigh, North Carolina. Matt is a financial advisor with Edward Jones, also living in North Carolina, very



near Katie. We enjoy several visits a year to catch up with kids and grandkids, and usually are able to catch some beautiful fall leaves as well.

Jim is active with his business, Maricopa Land & Cattle Co. Amy helps out with the business as well as volunteering with Delivering Dreams of Arizona (formerly Assistance League of Phoenix). Summer weekends will find us headed north to our home in Flagstaff.

We are always amazed at the incredible changes to the Arcadia area. We’ve built so many friendships over the years, and it is great to run into familiar faces at our favorite haunts...Wally’s, TeePee, or even the aisles of Safeway! What a privilege it has been to live and work in such a wonderful community!

WANTED: SUMMER VACATION PHOTOS

Send to: editor@arcadianews.com
or instagram: [@arcadianews](https://www.instagram.com/arcadianews)



YOUR PHOTO MAY BE FEATURED ON THE COVER!

2025: Ben Downing, Gavin Martinez and Kenji Martinez swam with other boys from camp in the crisp water of Flathead Lake in Montana.

2024: Bill and Su Byron with grandson Vaughn near Durango, Colorado.

2023: Garrett, Katie, Riley, Parker and Frances Otondo at Glacier National Park.

2022: Henry McCarty (with Zane Gulick behind) at the Arizona Country Club.

Send your photos to editor@arcadianews.com
Be sure to let us know the names of the family or people
in the photo, where you went and what you did!

DEADLINE: MONDAY, AUGUST 14



PHOTO COURTESY OF VESSA TURLEY

Jo-Yee Chan and Vessa Turley's 31 doubles wins set SDSU's single-season record.

Arcadia alum Vessa Turley thrives in first year at SDSU

By Kylie de Best

If you don't keep up with tennis but the name Vessa Turley at least sounds familiar, it might be because she's been featured in *Arcadia News* a few times throughout the years – and now she's back with big news: Vessa finished her first year at San Diego State and has plans to continue taking over the court – in the U.S. and beyond.

Vessa's journey began when she was eight years old. At a time when she was trying many sports – volleyball, soccer, and softball – she also tried tennis, and immediately fell in love. She was inspired by her mother's participation in a local league and was particularly drawn to its individual aspect. She only needed to find an opponent to play against rather than waiting for a whole team to show up.

Throughout her high school career, Vessa was the team captain during the 2021-2022 season and won the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Billie Jean King National Title. She competed in several countries, including the J100 International Tennis Federation in Lima, Peru, where she placed second, and the J60 International Tennis Federation in Guatemala City, where she was a doubles champion. She also had four National Doubles Titles and two National Doubles Top 3 finishes.

After graduation, Vessa moved to California and got to work right away. She noticed that college practices were at a much higher level than she was used to, with greater intensity, pressure, and higher stakes – especially considering everyone there had earned a place at the D1 level.

"Being on a team is one of the best experiences I've had in my tennis career," she said. "I love being able to go through the highs and lows with teammates."

During her first year at SDSU, she set the program's single-season doubles record. She won the Mountain West Qualifier Doubles Championship, was a champion of the ITA Conference Masters, and competed in the NCAA Division I Doubles Championship. All as a freshman.

Most recently, Vessa competed in two pro tournaments in May and June. During the first week, she reached the semifinal round with her partner, which she said was a big accomplishment. Her first pro tournament in January was a wildcard acceptance for a W100. She made the quarterfinals and received her first pro ranking.

"My favorite moment this year was when our team qualified for the NCAA and competed at ASU against UCLA in the first round," Vessa said. "The doubles point came down to me and my partner's court, and we won our match in a tiebreaker. It was such a high-stakes match with energy and pressure, which I enjoyed competing in."

Another notable moment was clinching matches to win the doubles point.

"When you clinch a match during doubles, a team secures the point, and the winning team starts 1-0. This is a very important point as it creates momentum and an advantage going into the following matches," she said.

Vessa had the opportunity to clinch the Mountain West Championship finals match against UNLV in a tiebreaker to win the first point. She also clinched the NCAA first-round doubles point against UCLA to close the final match during her freshman season.

With ambitions of becoming an All-American and eventually playing professionally, Vessa's next chapter promises to be just as impressive as the last.

Chocolate is always on-trend, in July it gets its own day

World Chocolate Day falls on July 7, and it could not come at a better time. The kids are home, the schedule is looser, and sometimes you just need a little something sweet to get through the afternoon. These three recipes are quick, satisfying, and made with simple ingredients you probably already have on hand. Two of them require absolutely zero cooking, which feels like the right call when it is 115 degrees outside.

Because they are all plant-based, they are lighter than your average chocolate fix but every bit as indulgent. Whether you are stocking the freezer for when someone comes wandering into the kitchen or treating yourself after the kids go to bed, this is the chocolate moment you've been waiting for.

Rich dairy-free chocolate meets toasted almonds and a hint of almond

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

extract in the easy almond chocolate bark – a crunchy, snap-able treat that looks impressive and comes together in minutes. Chocolate tahini balls are completely no-cook, naturally sweetened with Medjool dates, and freezer-friendly, making them the perfect grab-and-go snack to keep on hand. For something a little more luxurious, the chocolate mousse is rich and creamy with just three ingredients. Make a batch on Sunday and you are set for the whole week.

Chocolate mousse Serves 5



- **INGREDIENTS** •
 - 6 oz. 85% cacao chocolate
 - 1 ¾ cup plant-based milk (I use soy)
 - 12 pitted Medjool dates
- **DIRECTIONS** •
 - 1. Put the dates in a small bowl and pour boiling water to cover. Let sit for 20-30 minutes.
 - 2. Chop the chocolate and put in a double boiler or microwave to melt.
 - 3. Remove the pits from the dates and put in a high-speed blender with the plant-based milk. Blend until smooth.
 - 4. Add the melted chocolate and pour into five or six individual jars or ramekins. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Chocolate tahini balls Serves 18



- **INGREDIENTS** •
 - 1 ½ cup pitted Medjool dates (soften in boiling water for 15 minutes first)
 - ½ cup tahini
 - ¼ cup cacao powder
 - 1 tsp. vanilla
 - 1 cup shredded coconut
- **DIRECTIONS** •
 - 1. Put the dates, tahini, cacao powder, and vanilla in a food processor
 - 2. Roll into 18 balls.
 - 3. Roll the balls in the coconut and store in the freezer.

Easy almond chocolate bark Serves 10



- **INGREDIENTS** •
 - 1 cup slivered toasted almonds, divided
 - 12 oz. dairy-free chocolate chips
 - 2 tsp. coconut oil
 - ¼ tsp. almond extract
 - ¼ tsp. coarse salt
- **DIRECTIONS** •
 - 1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
 - 2. Add the chocolate chips and coconut oil to a small pot and bring the heat to medium low (or put them in the microwave for two-three minutes). Cook for five minutes, stirring frequently until the mixture is melted.
 - 3. Stir in ¾ cups of the toasted almonds, almond extract, and salt.
 - 4. Spread out the almond-chocolate mixture on the same sheet pan and then spread it into a ¼-inch thick rectangle of about 8x10-inches.
 - 5. Scatter the remaining almonds over the top and gently press them into the chocolate. Cover and refrigerate for 45 minutes until set.
 - 6. Break into pieces and serve.

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*Source: 2023-2024 CVC
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DID YOU KNOW? COINS



HOW MUCH?

\$18.9M

The 1933 Double Eagle was never officially released for circulation due to the Gold Reserve Act of 1934, which outlawed private gold ownership. Most were melted down, but a few survived – illegally. One ended up in the collection of Egypt’s King Farouk and resurfaced decades later. Its controversial past, legal battles, and status as the only 1933 Double Eagle legally owned by a private individual made it the most expensive coin ever sold – for over \$18 million in 2021.



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The heaviest coin in the world is the Australian Kangaroo One Tonne Gold Coin, produced by the Perth Mint. It weighs 2,231 pounds and has a diameter of 31.5 inches. The coin was minted in 2011 and is made of 99.99 percent pure gold, making it not only the heaviest but also one of the most valuable coins ever created (about \$137 million as of June 2026).

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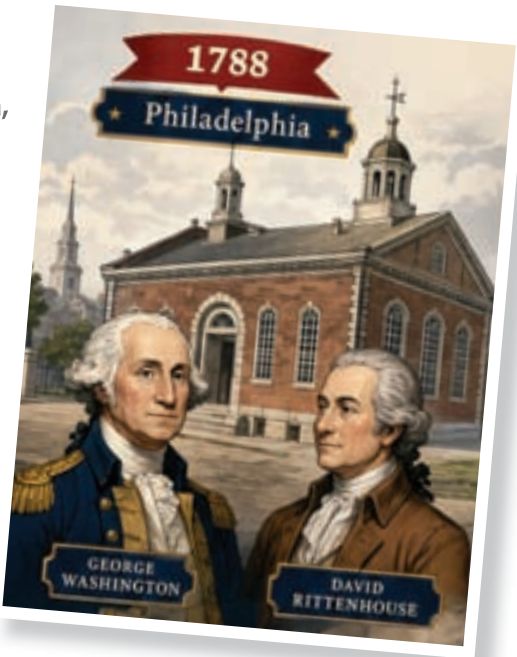
The 1913 Liberty Head Nickel, of which only five are known to exist, was never officially authorized by the U.S. Mint. One of these nickels, famously called the Hawaii Five-O Nickel, gained public attention through a television feature and is highly prized for its provenance and historical significance. Three of the five coins are privately owned, the others reside in museums.



WHAT YEAR?

1788

Congress selected Philadelphia, then the nation’s capital, as the home of the first U.S. Mint, and President George Washington appointed scientist David Rittenhouse as its first director in 1788. The Mint produced copper, silver and gold denominations, delivering its first circulating coins – 11,178 copper cents – in 1793. Today, the United States Mint operates four coin-producing facilities in Philadelphia, Denver, San Francisco and West Point, and also oversees the United States Bullion Depository, which stores the nation’s gold reserves.



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DID YOU KNOW? COINS



The U.S. didn't start minting its own coins until 1792. The Spanish silver 8-real coin, made in Mexico City, was so common that it was used as the basis for the value of the dollar. It remained legal tender in the U.S. until the mid-1800s.

That same Spanish silver coin could easily be cut into eight parts, called bits, hence the expression "two-bits."

Today's circulating coins contain no gold or silver.

The coin representing 1/100th of a U.S. dollar is a cent, not a penny.

The term penny came from European settlers, but it has never been an "official" term.

Two-cent coins were discontinued in 1873 and 3 cent coins were discontinued in 1889.

The nickel is the only U.S. coin that is called by its metal content, even though the metal in a nickel is only 25 percent nickel. The rest is copper.

Half-dimes (5-cent coins) were easily forged and were replaced by a copper nickel coin in 1873.

Federal law dictates that all U.S. coins carry the mottos "In God We Trust" and "E Pluribus Unum."

In 2013, a 1794 "Flowing Hair" silver dollar sold at auction for over \$10 million. 1913 Liberty Head nickels have sold for as much as \$5 million. A 1943 steel Wheat Cent can bring as much as \$110,000.

The 1792 Coin Act made counterfeiting or defacing coins punishable by death.

An estimated \$10 billion in coins is held in U.S. homes. Another 58 million is left behind on airplanes worldwide.

Since 2002, the U.S. Mint makes most half dollars for collecting only.

Coin collecting is known as numismatics. It's been a popular hobby as far back as ancient kings and queens, giving it the nickname "The Hobby of Kings."

A man from Karnataka, India, holds a record (recognized by the Worldwide Book of Records) for the most coins collected: 1,499 coins representing 537 different nations.

SAY WHAT?

A BUFFALO-SIZED ERROR

In 1937 at the Denver Mint, an inexperienced worker accidentally created one of the most famous coin errors in U.S. history while striking Buffalo nickels. When the coin press malfunctioned and the dies clashed without any planchets (the flat, blank metal disc that is prepared and stamped by dies to become a finished coin), impressions were left on both dies.

The worker attempted to fix the damage by grinding off the marks, accidentally removing parts of the buffalo's front and back legs in the process.

As a result, a small number of nickels were minted showing a buffalo with only three legs. Because the error was subtle and these



coins circulated heavily for decades, many went unnoticed, making authentic examples difficult to find today. If you do find one, they typically sell for roughly \$450 to \$1,000, while better-preserved coins can net \$700 to \$1,500!

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A SQUASH BY ANY OTHER NAME ...

Growing up, I was exposed to most of the commonly hated vegetables. Asparagus, rutabaga, pattypan squash, Brussels sprouts, broccoli and cabbage frequented my plate – all those but spaghetti squash. To this day it’s hard to believe that some folks haven’t heard of it or have only discovered it for the first time as adults. Because it’s a football-shaped, bright-yellow gourd, some walk right past it in the grocery store assuming it’s an ornamental decoration rather than an edible vegetable.

What we know as spaghetti squash today was officially recorded in 1850 in Manchuria, China and developed as a fodder crop called “shark-fin gourd.” It was given this name because its stringy, noodle-like flesh closely resembled finely shredded shark fin which was a popular and affordable substitute in traditional soups. While the exact origins of how the squash arrived in China is unknown, it was a plentiful food source.

We owe a debt of thanks to Takeo Sakata who founded Sakata Seed Corporation in 1913 and for six decades researched and improved a variety of this squash. By the 1920s, the seed traveled to Japan where it was commercially marketed as “noodle squash.” In the 1930s, Sakata was the exclusive marketer in the United States and as his breeding techniques improved, he licensed the seeds to W. Atlee Burpee who then brought it to North America in 1936 and sold it in the catalog under the name “vegetable spaghetti.”

During World War II, it served as a vital, low-cost substitute for traditional pasta. Because wartime rationing and supply chain disruptions made processed foods and grains scarce, home cooks utilized the squash’s naturally stringy texture to stretch their food budgets. Throughout the 20th century, it continued to appear in seed catalogs.

In 1960, Sakata reintroduced the seed line to the market in hopes of gaining more appeal. In 1964 the English seed company Thompson

and Morgan, which had a wide American distribution of catalogs, showcased the plant. California started growing it as a healthier alternative to traditional spaghetti and by the early 1970s the Green Revolution and the back-to-the-land movement exploded across America. The rise of natural foods and eating ‘healthy’ got intertwined with the idea of eating unprocessed foods. Then came the 1980s and 90s when the low-fat and low carb movements sparked even more interest in calorie-conscious folks. Knowing that the flesh of this squash had long been compared with noodles, for the first time, it was being marketed as a healthier alternative.

Mr. Sakata died in 1984. He didn’t live to see the success of his new ‘Tivoli’ squash variety, which was suitable for pots and container gardens, but he did live long enough to see the Manchurian shark-fin gourd he first cultivated some 90 years earlier reach its potential. Spaghetti squash had finally come into the limelight. All it took was a shift in food culture for consumers to embrace it. Now it’s widely available at farmers markets, grocery stores, and through online seed catalogs across the world.

We are told to “eat the rainbow” with a variety of veggies – green, purple, red, yellow, orange – to access the widest range of nutrients. When you add spaghetti squash’s yellow sunniness, nutrients like vitamin A, vitamin C, potassium,



calcium, fiber, antioxidants, and beta-carotene (the substance that makes carrots orange) are present. Growing this robust squash is surprisingly easy and rewarding if you have enough room in your garden for it to sprawl.

It’s a fast-growing annual with plump stems that can reach up to eight feet long with dinnerplate-size, three-lobed leaves. There’s no need for special soil, but it must be nutrient-rich, loamy or slightly sandy and well-draining. To ensure a good harvest, slip in a few extra plants or other squash varieties nearby to encourage the bees to perform their magic.

If you choose to plant seeds do so in March or July, and into early August. Seeds will germinate and emerge within 7 to 10 days. Stunning yellow, star-shaped flowers will appear in around 30 to 40 days. At first mostly will be male, followed shortly by female flowers. After the female flowers are pollinated, the green oblong squash will start to grow. This is when patience comes into play because it takes 90-120 days before they mature.

I recommend watering by hand so you can target the water directly to the root zone and keep the foliage dry. Like other squashes, these are prone to powdery mildew and other fungal diseases. As heavy feeders they need regular fertilizing that’s low in nitrogen and high in phosphorus. Companion planting of marigolds and nasturtiums helps to repel aphids and draw pests away as a “trap crop.” Beneficial insects like bees and ladybugs need a little encouragement to come visit.

Most squash starts out a pale green. Harvest time is approaching when you see the color change from creamy white to pale yellow then to a canary yellow. The next sign will be a bit subtler – in fact, you may not even notice a change, but if you watch closely the surface of the squash will become less glossy. Press your thumbnail into the rind. It should be tough to pierce. If the fruits are sitting on the ground, flip one over and look for a slightly lighter yellow spot on the bottom. It’s essential that they’re allowed to fully ripen on the vine because they won’t ripen once cut from the stem. As the season progresses you will start to see the vines and leaves die off and turn brown. When this happens, it’s a sure sign your squash is ready to be removed. Leave at least two inches of the stem intact and resist harvesting all at once. The squash will be happy sitting in a bowl on the counter for up to a month. In the refrigerator they will last even longer.

Before cooking, the flesh is solid and looks just like any other raw squash. It earns its “magical” reputation because of its dense, moist, neutral-flavored, fibrous flesh that when cooked, falls away in ribbons resembling spaghetti noodles, hence its name. It’s delicate both in texture and taste.

With a mildly sweet and nutty flavor it will absorb a wide variety of sauces like Bolognese, marinara, garlic pesto, curry or browned butter mixed with parmesan or gruyere. It pairs well with fresh herbs such as thyme, basil, oregano, parsley, sage and mint. Because it’s not as sweet as acorn or butternut, once dried, the strands are a perfect addition to mixed salads.

This squash can be difficult to slice and does take determination. Don’t be bashful asking someone in the produce section to vertically cut and wrap the halves for you. At home you can pierce the squash about a dozen times with a fork then pop it in the microwave and cook it for three-four minutes. The heat transforms the hard shell into something more manageable. This trick works with all hard-skinned squashes that can be cooked whole, sliced vertically in half or cut in rings.

Use a chef’s knife on a stable cutting surface (it helps to lay a damp kitchen towel or paper towel beneath the cutting board) and proceed. Vertically cut the squash in half or slice the squash into rings widthwise, not lengthwise. The fibers inside run horizontally, so cutting across them shortens the strands, cutting with the grain preserves their full length. Don’t discard the seeds, instead spread them on a baking sheet with a sprinkle of chili powder and salt and roast for a crunchy snack!

For either method, drizzle with olive oil (*not* vegetable oil) and season generously with ground pepper. Wait to salt until after it’s cooked which will guarantee that it roasts evenly – salt draws out excess moisture that can lead to uneven cooking. With spaghetti squash you want to preserve the subtle delicate floral flavor that is very different from other winter squash varieties. The goal is to strive for consistent al dente texture perfection.

For vertically cut squash, place cut side down in a size appropriate baking dish and place in a 400° oven and roast for 30-35 minutes. Pull the dish out of the oven and turn one of the halves over. Drag the tines of a fork through the flesh and if it shreds easily, it’s ready. If not, continue roasting cut side down, checking on it every few minutes. Over-roasting leads to sogginess so keep a close eye!



Thyme in My Kitchen

BY SHERRY KLUSMAN
@thyme.in.my.kitchen

Spaghetti squash with browned butter & gruyère

Roast at 400 for 35-40 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large spaghetti squash, halved and seeded
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- ¼ tsp. ground black pepper

PLATED

- 1 tbsp. butter
- 2 sage leaves
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- ¼ cup minced fresh herbs (chives, thyme, parsley)
- ½ tsp. sea salt
- ½ cup gruyère cheese, grated

DIRECTIONS

1. In a large skillet fry the sage leaves in butter until brown, add minced garlic.
2. Cook 1 ½ minutes. Remove leaves, add the spaghetti squash, toss with herb mixture and salt.
3. Heat through. Remove from heat and fold in gruyère cheese.
4. Adjust with salt and black pepper to taste.

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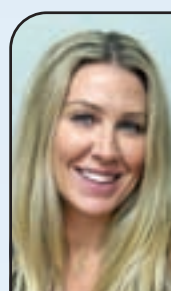


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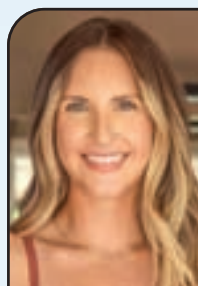
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Summer time reflections and new school wishes

It's July, and that means the campus is closed and the Titans are off enjoying their summer break. We've taken some time to reflect on this past year. Be sure to look for your very own copy of the Titan Times on campus in the upcoming school year, too! See you soon, Titans!

Being a writer for the Titan Times has been such a fun and incredible new experience for me. I wrote and published my first article, made new friends, and learned new journalism tactics along the way. I was appointed the new vice president of the club, and am ecstatic to help the Titan Times grow and gain popularity next year. I can't wait to see where the upcoming school year takes us, and I'm so grateful to be a part of this group of talented writers!

— Ana Redzic, rising junior

This was my first year being involved in the Titan Times, and I loved every minute of it. Writing articles about events and activities around the Arcadia campus and community gave me the opportunity to learn more about our school and the people that make it special. It was rewarding to inform others while also putting a spotlight on the dozens of stories and experiences that shape our community. Next year, I am excited to write even more pieces for the paper, helping everyone stay informed and up to date about all the events happening at Arcadia High School. I can't wait to see what the next year brings, and I know that Titan Times will capture every school event, milestone, and memorable moment along the way.

— Jenna Detwiler, rising senior



This past year was my first year being a writer for the Titan Times, and it was amazing. I learned about journalism, gained experience interviewing people with unique perspectives, and read and wrote pieces that demonstrated Arcadia's sense of community and discussed matters that our student body, and broader community, truly care about. As for this upcoming year, I am so excited to be part of our very own school newspaper as well as our column in the Arcadia News. I think the paper will bring new, exciting opportunities for collaboration among our students and staff, and it is going to be a great source of vital information and an equally vital source of school spirit!

— Tatum Klock, rising senior

Being a part of Titan Times has been so much fun, especially as a photographer. I've gotten to expand my camera skills and become more involved in the community, both of which have been an honor to experience. Last year was my first year in the club, and I was also a part of the yearbook staff. I spent a lot of time organizing photoshoots, editing, and being incorporated into events that I wouldn't have otherwise been lucky enough to participate in. I'm so thankful for the Titan Times allowing me to help represent our school and extremely excited to continue next year as secretary!

— Lola Lunsway, rising senior

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