

# ARCADIA NEWS

VOL. 34 NO. 5

ARCADIA • BILTMORE • CAMELBACK CORRIDOR

AUGUST 2026



## CREW PULLS AHEAD

Xavier Prep's Crew achieved success at the SRAA Championship and USRowing Youth Nationals.

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## THRIFTER'S PARADISE

Rodeo Rose is a women's thrift market connecting shoppers, vendors and entrepreneurs through local events.

PAGE 28

## OUR HUNGER HERO

SUSD Nutrition Services Director Patti Bilbrey helped 135,000 children receive nutritious food during summer break.

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Did you know? Agave (page 36)

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### 35 2026 football preview

Arcadia, Brophy, Veritas and Xavier enter the 2026 season with high expectations, relying on a mix of experienced returners and emerging talent to make a deep postseason run.



Xavier Prep's Olivia Moshiri, Raphy Capozzi, Lauren Aldrete and Emma Perry at the USRowing Youth National Championship in Florida.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GEOFF STRICKLIN



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EDITOR'S NOTE

In the past year, I've attended three baby showers for friends, and I'm always amazed when I go to the store for the gift (aside from absolutely dying from how cute the baby clothes are and having to stop myself from buying the entire store) that diapers are so expensive.

Not only that, but there are also so many brands to choose from, so many sizes, comfort over cruisers, etc. It's possibly factors like these that inspired NourishPHX – and subsequently St. Theresa student Sloan Petty – to hold diaper drives for families in need.

After noticing that the diaper shelves were close to empty, Sloan decided to help. That first year – 2022 – she donated just under 7,500. Last year? She donated almost 21,000, and during this year's drive in August, she's hoping to beat that number and help as many families as possible.

It's back to school time and our area students are ready to hit the halls with new outfits, shoes and school supplies to tackle a brand-new year. The Creighton Kids Congress is up and running, ready to help their schools make big decisions (find out what that means on page 27). Our August edition includes the annual high school football preview, and it's clear our teams are preparing for big goals on and off the field.

There are 13 days left to submit photos for our Summer Vacation Photo Spread. Send photos to [editor@arcadianews.com](mailto:editor@arcadianews.com) for a chance to be in the September issue. Your photo might be on the cover!

We hope you're staying cool out there – and thank you, as always, for reading the Arcadia News.



*Mallory*  
– Mallory Gleich

UPCOMING THEMES:

**SEPTEMBER**  
Fall Sports Preview

**OCTOBER**  
Halloween

**NOVEMBER**  
Veterans

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**"If you are not willing to learn, no one can help you. If you are determined to learn, no one can stop you."** – Zig Ziglar

ARCADIA'S PETS

Meet **Georgie**, a 2-year-old Saint Bernard rescue. She's a gorgeous girl who loves morning walks and romps at Chaparral Dog Park. She looks forward to happy hour at OHSO and breakfasts at NYC Bagels and Bakery Cafe. She's not a fan of our pool but adores daily soaks from the garden hose. She's dearly loved by her mom, dad and kitty sibling, Dash.

– Carol J.



Meet **Oliver** (or Ollie for short). He is a three-month-old dapple long haired dachshund and our newest family member! We know how much it takes to bring someone new around, especially a puppy, and it took a lot of thought – and also no thought whatsoever – to bring him home. I'm in love every single day and my daughter is obsessed. It's all she's ever wanted so I am beyond thankful and grateful that we were able to connect with the right person at the right time. He is forever our family!

– Angie & Gracie K.



**Hermes** is a Seal Point Siamese who was born in July 2011 in Casa Grande. He joined brilliant half bro Harry, from same breeder, born in 2007. The boys were inseparable with Harry, the leader, who enjoyed long walks on a leash in Arcadia! Harry passed in 2024, and Hermes has become more vocal, enjoying special treats, constant grooming and playing with his favorite catnip toys.

– Georgette H.



Hi! I'm **Wylie** and my little sister is **Ivie**. We were welcomed into our family as #10 and #11 adopted greyhounds! Obviously, our family LOVES greyhounds. We all have very different personalities, but we all love our Greenies treats. We make the greatest pets because we love our daily walk, hugs and rubdowns, and giving lots of love!

– Linda M.



Would you like to share your pet? Send a photo and a description (50 words max) of your pet to [editor@arcadianews.com](mailto:editor@arcadianews.com) or text it to 602.840.6379. Include your pet's name and age, along with any fun facts about them you'd like to share. All animals are welcome!



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The Summer Hunger Hero award is sponsored by No Kid Hungry and focuses on helping children gain access to nutritious meals during summer.

# SUSD director recognized as National Summer Hunger Hero

By Olivia Garcia

After more than two decades serving students in Scottsdale Unified School District, Patti Bilbrey has earned national recognition for her commitment to ending child hunger.

Bilbrey, the Director of Nutrition Services, was named a 2026 Summer Hunger Hero by No Kid Hungry, a national campaign recognizing individuals who ensure children have access to nutritious meals during the summer months. She said the award reflects the dedication of her entire team, and although grateful for the honor, she emphasized that commitment.

“It’s truly an honor, but if I didn’t have the help of my spectacular team, this wouldn’t have been possible,” Bilbrey said. She credits her staff with making the district’s vision a reality. “This award means so much to me, but it’s also incredible to see how much this recognition means to my team. To be recognized nationally for the work we’re doing is very special.”

With approximately one in four Scottsdale Unified students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals, Bilbrey said the district has worked hard to ensure that families continue to receive food when school is out.

Partnering with Scottsdale Community College, the district developed a non-congregate program that allows families to pick up a week’s worth of meals in a visit. Bilbrey said the college met the rural designation required to administer and distribute weekly meals for the community.

Each Wednesday, staff members arrive at 5:30 a.m. to prepare for distribution. By 6:30 a.m., families begin driving through to receive meals. The team works until mid-morning, distributing food from two

trucks and providing approximately 23,800 meals for 1,700 children each week. This program runs every Wednesday from early June through July 22 and serves families from the surrounding communities.

Scottsdale Unified expects to serve nearly 250,000 meals by the time summer ends. Bilbrey said the program is supported by the USDA Summer Food Service Program, which reimburses schools for eligible meals and provides summer employment for nutrition staff.

Stories from families continue to motivate Bilbrey’s work, including that



Patti Bilbrey

of a teenager who walked to the meal distribution site every week. The previous summer, he could only take canned food because he did not have a refrigerator. This year, he proudly shared that he finally had one, allowing him to bring home perishable food.

“It’s really the kids,” Bilbrey said. “You hear their stories, and they don’t even realize they’re making an impact on you.” She hopes that recognition also raises awareness about food insecurity in Scottsdale.

“Oftentimes people may judge a certain district, but I want them to remember that in Scottsdale, 25 percent of children qualify for reduced meals,” she said. “That means one in four children has a need.” Bilbrey encourages the community to replace judgment with compassion.

“You have no idea what someone’s circumstances are. Hunger doesn’t have a face or a look,” she said. “These are kids; we need to open our hearts. We shouldn’t have people going hungry.”

[nokidhungry.org](http://nokidhungry.org)

# ALWAYS a TITAN

## Arcadia PTO extends an enthusiastic CONGRATULATIONS to Arcadia High School’s Class of 2026!



**363 Graduates**  
**83 Students with a GPA of 4.0 or higher**  
**\$4 Million awarded in scholarship dollars**  
**300 college bound students**  
**6 enlisting in US Military**  
**75 CTE Program Completers**  
**134 Distinction Seals**

**Your Arcadia community is so proud of you, Class of 2026!**  
**We wish all of our Titans well on their next big adventures!**

Arizona State University, Barrett Honors College  
Barrett Honors College  
Biola University  
Boston College  
California Aeronautical University  
California Lutheran University  
California Polytechnic State University  
California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo  
California State University Long Beach  
Chapman University  
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Colgate University  
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University of South Carolina  
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University of Wyoming



# WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?

## BRIEFS

What started with an entrepreneurial idea between Arcadia cousins George and Finn Burch has grown into **Viral Tee**, an online platform designed to make custom T-shirt creation simple. Every design automatically receives its own online storefront, allowing creators to share their shirts and potentially earn money if a design takes off.

*viraltee.co*



Pizza lovers have something to look forward to with the upcoming arrival of **Arcadia Pizza Company** (3122 E. Indian School Road). The neighborhood eatery promises handcrafted pizzas made with quality ingredients in a family-friendly setting. Stay tuned as we learn more!

*arcadiapizzacompany.com*

Through August 31, LDV Winery (7134 E. Stetson Dr., Scottsdale) is collecting school supplies for the City of Scottsdale's **Back to School Program** as part of a Scottsdale Wine Trail initiative. Guests who donate items such as backpacks, notebooks, pens, pencils and other classroom essentials at the Tasting Room in Old Town will receive \$5 off a glass of select wine.

*ldvwinery.com*

**Arizona Chef's Week** returns through August 9, offering 10 days of exclusive three-course prix fixe menus priced at \$55 or \$66. The event supports Valley restaurants – Beckett's Table, Collins Brothers Public House, Tarbell's and Vecina, to name a few – during the slower summer season while showcasing creative, limited-time dishes. New in 2026, the series will feature exclusive ticketed dining experiences at select restaurants.

*arizonachefsweek.com*

The eighth annual **Bar Brawl** hosted by Chef Beau MacMillan will be held at Hotel Valley Ho (6850 E. Main St., Scottsdale) every Sunday through August 23. Across three rounds of craft cocktail challenges, competitors will put their talent to the test as they battle for the title of Bar Brawl Champion. Attendees can watch the action unfold, listen to live music, and enjoy bites and drinks available for purchase. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Admission is complimentary and reservations are required.

*hotelvalleyho.com*

The **Arizona Twirling Athletes** Baton Twirling Corps is accepting registration for children ages 5-15. An eight-week introductory session begins August 24, teaching baton twirling, dance, gymnastics and marching at Valley schools.

*arizonatwirlingathletes.org*

**The Beau Collective** (5115 N. Central Ave.) is hosting a grand opening on August 8, 2026 from 8-11 a.m. offering a sampling of mini fitness classes, light bites, shopping and raffles every hour. The Beau is bringing fitness, retail, and community; founded and run by Arizona natives Whitney White Kozlowski and Sarah Duncan, the concept will offer HIIT-style classes, shopping, and gathering space for events and workshops.

*thebeauctollectivephx.com*

## EVENTS

### SATURDAY 8/1

#### Slide the Rails

9 a.m.-1 p.m. at McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, 7301 E. Indian Bend Road, Scottsdale. One last hurrah before school starts takes place at the railroad park this weekend. Guests will find water slides, obstacle courses, a giant bubble foam pit, and access to the train and carousel. There will also be food and beverage options – Hartley's General Store has ice cream covered, while Kade's Deja Brew and Pop Stroke will be on-site serving up sweet treats. Tickets are \$10 per person.

*therailroadpark.com*

#### Petals and Prosecco

10 a.m. at Hope Women's Center HQ, 1640 E. McDowell Road, Phoenix. Hope Women's Center is hosting a fundraiser that combines floral design, brunch, and philanthropy. Attendees will participate in a hands-on floral arranging workshop led by Array Designs while sipping mimosas and enjoying brunch bites. Proceeds will go toward Hope Women's Center's mission of providing free programs, resources, and support services. Tickets are \$65.

*hopewomenscenter.org*

### SUNDAY 8/2

#### 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 *The Shootist*: J.B. Books is an aging gunfighter diagnosed with cancer who comes to Nevada at the turn of the 20th century. There will be a post-screening discussion. Tickets are \$10.

*westernspirit.org*

### WEDNESDAY 8/5

#### Sushi Making Class

5:30 p.m. at Sanctuary Camelback Mountain, 5700 E. McDonald Dr., Paradise Valley. Sushi lovers – this one is for you! Guided by Sanctuary's expert chef, guests will experience the art of sushi making by creating three different rolls. The evening includes tastings, two pieces of nigiri, a selection of wine, dessert, and a hands-on opportunity for guests to craft their own roll. Tickets start at \$100.

*sanctuaryaz.com*

### THURSDAY 8/6

#### Petals for Paws

5:30 p.m. at The Esplanade, 2501 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. Raising funds for Arizona Humane Society, this event is hosted by The Flower Garage and will teach attendees all the tips and tricks needed to create a beautiful flower arrangement. All materials are included and beverages will be available for purchase. Registration is required, tickets are \$125 per person.

*the-flower-garage.com*

### SATURDAY 8/8

#### 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*

#### 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*

### TUESDAY 8/11

#### Q&A with Peter Santenello

6:30 p.m. at Changing Hands Bookstore, 6428 S. McClintock Dr., Tempe. Peter Santenello spent years traveling through 85 countries, including his own American backyard. He visited communities across the country, from tiny towns in Appalachia to the streets of East LA, and that's the topic of *Your Fellow Americans* – a journey that reminds us of the many reasons we've got to love the USA. Tickets are \$40 and include a signed copy.

*changinghands.com*

### THURSDAY 8/13

#### Wine and Watercolor

6 p.m. at Shemer Art Center, 5005 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix. Watercolor expert John Erwin is here to teach students all the tips to crafting a beautiful painting – vino included. Guests will learn the basics as well as some advanced techniques while also making new friends in an intimate setting. All supplies will be provided. Registration is \$45 per person.

*shemerartcenter.org*

### FRIDAY 8/14 – SATURDAY 8/15

#### 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 August 14, featuring a three-course meal prepared by Chefs Russell LaCasce and Beau MacMillan. 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 is \$149 per person.

*hotelvalleyho.com*

### SATURDAY 8/15

#### Spirited Sipping Seminar

3 p.m. at Mountain Shadows Resort, 5445 E. Lincoln Dr., Scottsdale. Hosted by Hearth '61, these seminars are designed to teach attendees about the history of wine and spirits through savory sips. Students will learn about classic and modern drinks – anything from vino to cocktails is on the table. This month's theme is vodka vs. gin. Class size is limited to 20 people. Tickets are \$45 per person.

*mountainshadows.com*

### SUNDAY 8/16

#### 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 8/18

#### Dinner and a Movie

5:30 p.m. at Marcellino Ristorante, 7114 E. Stetson Dr., Scottsdale. Guests are invited to Marcellino for a three-course summer special dinner while watching a classic film on the house. Tonight's movie is *Breakfast at Tiffany's*: Audrey Hepburn stars as a New York socialite who becomes interested in a man – but will her past get in the way of love? Dinner starts at \$50 per person.

*marcellinoristorante.com*



# WHAT'S HAPPENING, ARCADIA?



Street League Skateboarding at Mullett Arena in Tempe.



Matilda The Musical at Herberger Theater Center in Phoenix.

## WEDNESDAY 8/26

**Sunrise Yoga**  
7 a.m. at Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Pkwy., Phoenix. Begin your morning connecting with nature at a 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 in the garden before or after. Admission at \$20.  
[dbg.org](http://dbg.org)

## THURSDAY 8/27

**Mahjong at the Mansion**  
4 p.m. at Wrigley Mansion, 2501 E. Telawa Tr., Phoenix. Gather your friends and your finest Mahjong set to play, sip, and indulge at the Wrigley. Guests can hang out at 4 p.m. for social time or start play right away. This event includes snacks and sweets. Cash bar is available. Tickets start at \$65 per person.  
[wrigleymansion.com](http://wrigleymansion.com)

**Murder for Two**  
7:30 p.m. at the Phoenix Theatre Company, 1825 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. When a famous novelist is murdered at his own birthday party, an eager police officer must interrogate all 13 suspects, played by one other actor. This musical comedy is “a non-stop sprint through suspects, accents, and a live piano score.” Tickets start at \$60.  
[phoenixtheatre.com](http://phoenixtheatre.com)

## SATURDAY 8/29

**Rosson House Theater Event**  
7 p.m. at The Square PHX, 113 N. Sixth St., Phoenix. Sounds of Suffrage will take place at the Rosson House this evening. The suffrage movement defined the fight for equal rights and impacted many different groups in the years to come. Guests will experience the songs, testimony, and memorabilia during a 30-minute performance from the Arizona Curriculum Theater in honor of America 250. Admission is \$20.  
[thesquarephx.org](http://thesquarephx.org)

## SATURDAY 8/29

**Street League Skateboarding**  
2 p.m. at Mullett Arena, 411 S. Packard Dr., Tempe. The SLS Takeover will transform Mullett Arena into a celebration of skateboarding culture, featuring Arizonans Dashawn Jordan, Jagger Eaton and Paige Heyn competing on a custom-designed course inspired by the desert, street spots and the region’s skateboarding legacy, marking the league’s return to the Valley more than a decade after its first event. Tickets start at \$24.  
[streetleague.com](http://streetleague.com)

## SUNDAY 8/30

**Alaskan Traditional Youth Games**  
10 a.m. at the Heard Museum, 2301 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. This is the last day to experience Molly of Denali: An Alaskan Adventure at the Heard Museum. Guests can check out a closing celebration focused on traditional youth games from Alaska. Find live demos and an interactive workshop to learn how games are played – and play them! Discover how movement and skill are connected to community and culture. Tickets are \$26 for adults, \$10 for kids.  
[heard.org](http://heard.org)

## SUNDAY 8/30

**Matilda The Musical**  
2 p.m. at Herberger Theater Center, 222 E. Monroe St., Phoenix. Matilda is a child with astonishing wit, intelligence – oh, and psychokinetic powers. Matilda’s school life is made worse by Miss Trunchbull, but her courage and cleverness will save the day. Packed with high-energy dance numbers and catchy songs, this performance might give kids and grownups the dose of daring they didn’t know they needed. Tickets start at \$28.  
[herbergertheater.org](http://herbergertheater.org)



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# OUT OF THE AREA, BUT WORTH THE DRIVE

## SATURDAY 8/1 – SUNDAY 8/2

### Flagstaff Chili Festival

10:30 a.m. Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Sunday, at Thorpe Park, 191 N. Thorpe Road, Flagstaff. The Flagstaff Chili Festival returns with two days of family-friendly fun, with award-winning chili, tastings, live music, a beer garden for the grownups and area vendors. Tasting kits are \$10, and proceeds benefit Big Brothers Big Sisters of Flagstaff – a flavorful way to support a great cause.

[flagstaffarizona.org](http://flagstaffarizona.org)

## FRIDAY 8/7

### Annie

7:30 p.m. at Fountain Hills Theater, 11445 N. Saguaro Blvd., Fountain Hills. Based on the well-known comic strip (and a couple of subsequent films), Annie is a timeless, Tony Award-winning musical following a spunky, optimistic orphan in 1930s New York City. She escapes a cruel orphanage to find a new life with billionaire Oliver Warbucks – and don't worry, you'll hear iconic songs like "Tomorrow" and "It's a Hard Knock Life"! Tickets are \$40 for adults, \$18 for kids.

[fhtaz.org](http://fhtaz.org)



Annie at Fountain Hills Theater.



Plein Air Art Festival in Prescott.

### Friday Night Barn Dance

6 p.m. at Mortimer Farms, 12907 E. State Route 169, Dewey. Those who love shopping local – and also love going up north – will find much to do at Mortimer Farms. Today's events include "u-pick" experiences, farm-to-table dining and shopping, animal encounters and an evening barn dance that's family friendly and includes music, dinner and of course, plenty of dancing. Tickets are \$30 for adults (including dinner) and \$20 for kids.

[mortimerfarmsaz.com](http://mortimerfarmsaz.com)

her voice for a pair of legs and a chance at true love. Featuring songs like Part of Your World and Kiss the Girl, this show will be a good dose of nostalgia for grownups and fun for the kids. Tickets are \$65 for adults, \$45 for kids.

[haletheatrearizona.com](http://haletheatrearizona.com)

## FRIDAY 8/14

### Free Summer Concert Series

7 p.m. at the Chandler Community Center, 125 E. Commonwealth Ave. As the Chandler Center for the Arts undergoes renovations, the music plays on – just down the street. This evenings concert features Medio Pinto Band, a world music and Latin fusion group "fueled by Latin soul, alegría, and a deep connection to their Latin American roots." Founded by Venezuelan musicians, they create original music and reimagine covers. Bevvies will be available for purchase.

[chandlercenter.org](http://chandlercenter.org)

college's Performing Arts Center and the Yavapai College Prescott Art Gallery at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday.

[sedonaartscenter.org](http://sedonaartscenter.org)

## FRIDAY 8/28

### Worlds Revealed Speaker Series

7 p.m. at Lowell Observatory, 1400 W. Mars Hill Road, Flagstaff. This program invites staff and experts to share their unique perspectives, bridging the gap between science, art, and exploration. Visitors will learn about topics like the intersection of music and astronomy, the operations behind world-class telescopes, or unexpected connections like animals and stars. Worlds Revealed offers an inside look at what shapes our understanding of the cosmos. Admission is \$35 for adults, \$20 for kids.

[lowell.edu](http://lowell.edu)

### Fish and Sips

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

[odyseaaquarium.com](http://odyseaaquarium.com)

### Chillin' at the Chul

6 p.m. at Tohono Chul, 7366 N. Paseo del Norte, Tucson. Chillin' at the Chul is an 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 Garrett James & The Wanderers), art, food, drinks, and activities, including a silent disco with Silent Adventures. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$5 for kids.

[tohonochul.org](http://tohonochul.org)

## SATURDAY 8/8

### Mesa Night Market

6 p.m. at 1920 W. Broadway Road, Mesa. The Mesa Night Market brings together Asian food vendors, anime artists and area retailers for a free evening celebrating diverse cuisines and small businesses. Make sure you arrive hungry – on-site will be Lumpia Queen, Duplex Boba, Yuki Cheesecakes and more. Free parking is available.

[downtownmesa.com](http://downtownmesa.com)

## TUESDAY 8/11

### Pizza & Pilates

6:30 p.m. at The Park at PV, 12636 N. Tatum Blvd., Phoenix. Celebrate Federal Pizza's one-year anniversary with a pilates class hosted by Reformed Pilates. Attendees can partake in a sunset mat class, a slice of pizza, goodie bags and giveaways. If you want, you can also join the group at Pie & Pour: a pizza and bottle of wine or pitcher of beer for \$30. Don't forget your mat and water. Registration is \$10.

[reddevelopment.com/pvphx](http://reddevelopment.com/pvphx)

## THURSDAY 8/13

### The Little Mermaid

7:30 p.m. at the Hale Theatre, 50 W. Page Ave., Gilbert. This timeless musical – that starts off "under the sea" – tells the story of Ariel, a headstrong mermaid who longs to be human. In a fateful bargain, she trades



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# Welcome Back, Phoenix!

This summer, my family and I traded the Arizona heat for a couple of weeks in La Jolla, CA and Sunriver, Oregon. If you are looking for a summer vacation spot in the Northwest I highly recommend Sunriver. It's a tight community of 4,000 homes and sits just 20 minutes south of Bend. It has endless trails, rivers, golf, and more for the whole family to enjoy amongst the pines.

As beautiful as those places are though, I always love coming back home to our neighborhood. There are very few places that offer the lifestyle, charm, and sense of community that we enjoy every day with all of the amenities we could ask for within a few miles.

That same desirability continues to show up in our real estate market especially as places like Washington and California impose more taxes on their residents.

During June and July, 21 homes sold in Arcadia Proper, and there are currently just 21 homes on the market which is only two months of inventory. The average sales price this summer was an impressive \$4,376,000, a reminder that demand for quality homes in Arcadia remains incredibly strong.

One thing I continue to see is that many homeowners have no idea what their home is actually worth. Over the past several years, values have climbed significantly, and many properties are worth far more than their owners realize.

Even if you have no intention of selling, it's important to understand what you own. Your home is likely your largest financial asset, and keeping up with its value is simply good knowledge for financial and estate planning.

Whether it's with me or someone else, I would highly recommend that you have someone put together a broker price opinion or appraisal for you and your counsel to review.

Enjoy the rest of your summer, and I'll see you around the neighborhood!



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# St. Theresa student's diaper drive tops 48k donations



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SLOAN PETTY

Sloan Petty, founder of Sloan's Diaper Drive, received 20,780 diaper donations in 2025 and is hoping to break that record in 2026 with the upcoming drive in August.

By Kylie de Best

When St. Theresa Catholic School student Sloan Petty was in third grade, she needed to complete a service project for school. She and her mom volunteered at NourishPHX, a community-based organization supporting vulnerable individuals and families by “meeting their immediate needs and helping them achieve long-term self-sufficiency.”

During their tour, Sloan recalls seeing that the diaper shelf was almost empty, and it really stuck with her. After she got home, she talked with her family about how she could make a difference beyond volunteering, which led to the idea of starting Sloan's Diaper Drive.

The first initiative kicked off in 2022 and has continued annually each August – this year happening from August 1-15. Initially, Sloan reached out to family and friends while her mom posted information on social media. She collected 7,433 diapers that first year, and donations have increased exponentially since: 20,780 diapers were collected during the 2025 drive.

With the community's support, Sloan has collected and donated more than 48,000 diapers to families served by the organization.

To make it easier for people to get involved and expand outreach, Sloan launched a website. As donations come in, she keeps track of the inventory, creates a spreadsheet of donor addresses to send thank-you notes, and, after the drive ends, she and her parents will deliver the diapers.

“I'm so grateful for the support from our community,” Sloan said. “Every donation makes a difference for families in need, and it's amazing



to see how many people come together each year to help.”

Sloan was presented with the NourishPHX Youth Volunteer of the Year Award, which she said she was very excited to receive. Throughout the year, the family continues to volunteer while encouraging others to do the same.

Sloan – who also volunteers at UMOM and St. Vincent De Paul – shared that her parents have instilled in her the importance of giving back, helping out in her community, and understanding the needs of people around her. Her goal is to continue the diaper drive for as long as she can.

To participate, people can either drop off diapers at NourishPHX or arrange for pickup and delivery. Monetary donations are also welcome and can be sent via Venmo.

@nourishphoenix  
sloansdiaperdrive.org

## The heart health statistic women get wrong

By Robin Sewell

What's the biggest health threat facing women today? Breast cancer? Ovarian cancer?

Most people might answer one of those – but the correct answer is heart disease.

In fact, heart disease remains the leading cause of death among women, claiming more lives than all forms of cancer combined. To help answer some of the most common questions about women's heart health, I spoke with Dr. Sirisha Vadali, a preventive cardiologist and advanced lipidologist who specializes in women's heart health. Her message was simple: don't wait until symptoms appear to start thinking about your heart.

“Many women still view heart disease as a ‘man's disease’ and often prioritize the health of their families above their own,” Vadali said.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that feeling healthy means your heart is healthy.

“Feeling well does not always equal being at low risk.”

Heart disease often develops silently over decades. Some women with significant coronary artery disease have no symptoms until they experience a heart attack or stroke. While high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking and obesity remain important risk factors, women also face risks that don't always make headlines.

“I often tell patients that pregnancy serves as a ‘stress test’ for the heart,” Vadali said. “Complications may reveal underlying vascular or metabolic vulnerabilities years before cardiovascular disease appears.”

Conditions such as preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, gestational hypertension, polycystic ovarian syndrome

(PCOS), autoimmune diseases and hormonal changes during perimenopause can all affect a woman's future heart health. So what can women do?

Vadali says it starts with knowing your numbers. Every woman should know her blood pressure, total cholesterol, triglycerides, blood sugar and body mass index (BMI), as well as her family and pregnancy history. Cholesterol screening should begin around age 20 and be repeated based on individual risk factors.

“I believe every woman should know her LDL cholesterol and have lipoprotein(a) measured at least once in her lifetime,” she said. “These numbers can uncover risk that might otherwise go undetected.”

For many women, routine screenings are enough. But depending on your personal or family history, additional testing may be appropriate. One example is a coronary artery calcium (CAC) scan, which can detect silent plaque buildup and may be especially helpful for women whose risk appears borderline using traditional risk calculators.

Knowing the warning signs can save your life. Women can experience the chest pain or pressure commonly associated with a heart attack, but symptoms may also include shortness of breath, jaw pain, left arm discomfort, back pain, sweating, indigestion or unusual fatigue.

“Women frequently dismiss symptoms because they don't match the dramatic ‘Hollywood heart attack’ depiction,” Vadali said. “When in doubt, seek immediate medical evaluation. Time matters. Early treatment saves heart muscle and saves lives.”

The good news is that heart disease is often preventable. Vadali says early prevention is critical, noting that LDL



cholesterol is “the number one modifiable risk marker to preventing a heart attack.” She recommends focusing on realistic, sustainable habits: take a brisk 20- to 30-minute walk most days of the week, improve one meal a day by incorporating more vegetables, fruit, legumes, whole grains and healthy proteins, and make sleep and stress management a priority.

“Your heart health is not something to think about later,” Vadali said. “It is one of the most important investments you can make in your future health, vitality and longevity.”

Through education initiatives like this one, the Phoenix Heart Ball hopes more women will understand their personal risk and take action before symptoms ever develop.

phoenixheartball.heart.org



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# Small donations that are making a lasting impact

By Michael P. Murphy

The program is Scottsdale Cares – and the name could not be more appropriate. The need to help the less fortunate is present across all cities in Arizona, but with this program, the City of Scottsdale has risen to the occasion, collecting \$143,000 annually for various qualifying organizations through a small donation added to residents' utility bills. Nonprofits do so much of the heavy lifting to support the community – a little help is not a bad thing.

It began in 1995, when a City of Scottsdale program was developed to work in conjunction with the Human Services Commission. The city council unanimously approved a voluntary \$1 utility bill donation, and the program now known as Scottsdale Cares was born. Neal Shearer served as Human Services Director at that time. He reflects on the ongoing success:

"We were not the first city government in the Valley to create a utility bill donation program," he said. "But when we saw what other cities were doing, it seemed like the natural thing for us to also participate."

Neal makes it clear this is not a city government type of program. Instead, it serves as a pass-through from the utility billing. Donations can also be made online, with 100 percent of the funds raised going to the nonprofits that support a variety of Human Services programs.

"All nonprofits stand out," said Interim Human Services Director Mary Witkowski. "They meet all the needs we have in Scottsdale. We'll always have needs that we can't serve, that's why we rely on our nonprofit partners. There

are priorities we fund based on what the Human Services Commission requests."

Those priorities are emergency housing assistance, crisis case management, positive youth development and aiding the vulnerable population. A small sampling of the nonprofits currently served include Family Promise Greater Phoenix, who received \$20,000 to help with the Step-Up Housing Program that provides families with up to three months of affordable apartment-style housing.

Valley of the Sun YMCA also received \$20,000 to help expand the program to Scottsdale and Desert Foothills branches. Scottsdale Training and Rehabilitation Services, Best Buddies International, and Phoenix Rescue Mission received funds this year. There is also the Brown Bag Program, a service offering a bi-monthly food distribution to senior citizens on the first and third Thursday of each month.

"There's no precipitating event other than staff being aware of the ongoing funding challenges and opportunities for supporting Human Services programs," Neal said. "And especially our nonprofits who are the beneficiaries of Scottsdale Cares."

This July, Scottsdale City Council approved an increase in monthly donations to \$2, but this is simply keeping up with inflation.

Neal's belief and dedication to Scottsdale Cares remains solid. He now serves it in a volunteer capacity, and he is excited that the program is still going strong over 30 years later. The need is great, and perhaps always will be, but it is good to have a program such as Scottsdale Cares to help the less fortunate – two dollars at a time.

[scottsdaleaz.gov/scottsdale-cares](http://scottsdaleaz.gov/scottsdale-cares)



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY BLAKEMAN

Mary Blakeman, volunteer coordinator for Family Promise, helps families transition to apartment-style housing.

# Bringing women's sports to the center of the court

By Kylie de Best

Kristen Carli and her husband, Anthony, are familiar with the frustration women's sports fans know well: wanting somewhere to watch a game and coming up empty. From walking into a sports bar during a big game and having to ask (and often be denied) to switch a screen, the duo knew there needed to be a dedicated space built around fandom. They created Her Court, a women's sports bar in Old Town.

Her Court is projected to open next year and operate under Carli Hospitality Group. Kristen will lead the concept from the ground up, while Anthony will take on day-to-day operations, including staffing, hiring, and management, once the doors open.

The bar will feature more than 40 screens, all airing women's sports (WNBA, NWSL, PWHL, LPGA, Grand Slams, Olympics, NCAA, national teams). A full food and beverage program will be available, including cocktails, craft beer, wine, and non-alcoholic beverages.

For those looking for a more exclusive experience, Her Court will offer something called The Locker Room – a private, bookable event space for watch parties, corporate events, and team celebrations. A weekly published calendar will also be made available so fans can plan around games that matter to them. Airing women's sports is a priority at Her Court, but it's not exclusive – they'll also air the Super Bowl and men's games on request.

Currently, Scottsdale sits in the middle



PHOTO COURTESY OF KRISTEN CARLI

Her Court hosted a WNBA viewing party to introduce the concept.

of the fastest-growing women's sports markets in the country, making this the perfect place for the bar. The Mercury sell-out, ASU women's basketball is pulling record crowds, and the new soccer league expansion rumors are just the start.

"While women's sports viewership has exploded, with WNBA viewership up 170 percent in a season and NWSL attendance up over 400 percent since the league launched, Her Court is looking to

close the gap with a dedicated physical space in Scottsdale," Kristen said.

Her Court launched a Kickstarter with a goal of \$30,000. They also partnered with Girls on the Run in Maricopa and Pinal Counties by committing \$5,000 from proceeds to support the nonprofit's girls' athletics and mentorship programs.

On June 22, they held a launch event featuring an inaugural WNBA watch party for the Phoenix Mercury vs. Indiana Fever.

The event drew community supporters and athletes.

Once open, Kristin and Anthony plan to continue programming with female founder/athlete roundtables, corporate partnerships, and regular events celebrating women athletes at every level. They also plan to build out sponsorship relationships with local women-owned businesses and sports and fitness brands in the Valley.

[hercourtbar.com](http://hercourtbar.com)



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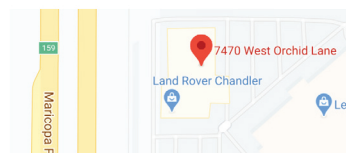
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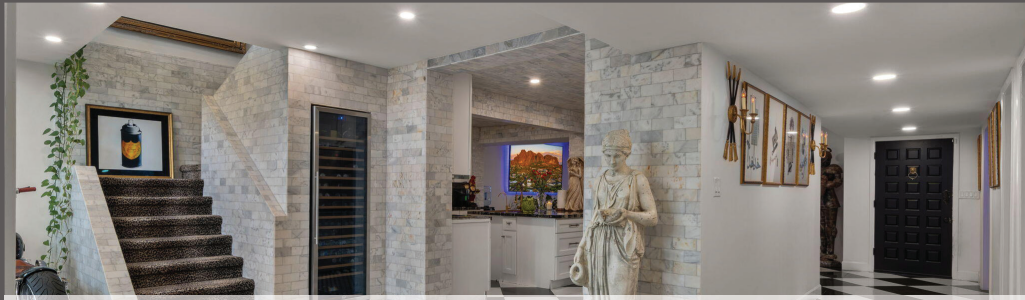
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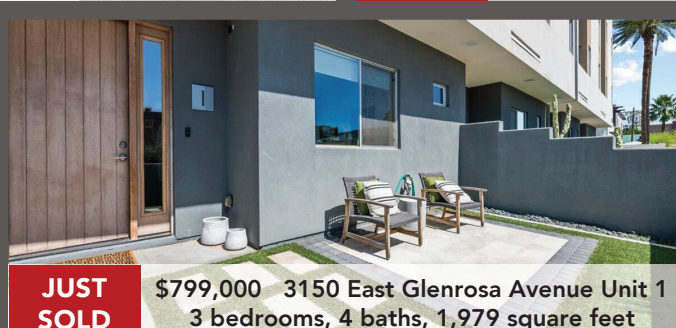


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# In the Kitchen

## In the Kitchen with Hotel Valley Ho's Pastry Chef Maria Arenas

6850 E. Main St., Scottsdale • [hotelvalleyho.com](http://hotelvalleyho.com)

**F**or Maria Arenas, every dessert tells a story. Whether she's putting an Argentinian spin on a classic, gathering ideas while traveling or creating whimsical cakes for Hotel Valley Ho, the pastry chef pours plenty of heart into her work.

### Where are you from originally?

I was born and raised in Argentina and came to Arizona in 2018. My husband is also from Argentina, but he lived in Arizona with his parents as a kid. We met in high school in 2008 and married in 2017. We went to Las Vegas for our honeymoon, and he suggested we also check out Arizona to see where he grew up, and we decided to stay.

### Was it tough to acclimate to the Arizona weather?

I'm from Buenos Aires; it's way more humid there – kind of like Miami. In the summer it's very hot, in the winter it's very cold but it's also humid. If you go south, there's snow; if you go north, it's dry and hot, so kind of like Arizona. We have all different types there.

### What about your parents? Are they in the food industry?

Not my parents, but my grandmother. She was a pastry chef and used to run a pastry school. Growing up, I would go with her to the school and see this big studio with all the things, the instruments and bowls and things to decorate cakes, and she'd set me in the corner like, 'Okay you stay over here. [laughs]' I loved it.

### Did you attend culinary school?

It's kind of a funny story. When I finished high school, I didn't go immediately to culinary school. I guess I didn't realize how much I loved it, because I ended up at film school first!

I've always loved films but as I was going through the courses, I thought to myself, 'I don't know if I like this.' I decided to try pastry and attended a pastry school – not my grandmother's, but a different one – and I loved it so much. I think my favorite thing to cook in school was macarons. I don't have a

good memory, but I remember that class being really fun.

I graduated from that school and wanted to continue my education, so I signed up for more challenging courses at a different school and after graduation, I worked at a couple different restaurants. I ended up working in a kitchen – not in pastry – and I noticed that I liked that area, too, and as I grew and learned more, I realized that I enjoyed every aspect. Not just pastry, not just savory, I like everything from the culinary world.

### Then what happened?

The owners of that restaurant offered me a front-of-house position so I could learn all about those areas as well; I worked that and became a general manager before they asked me to help open a few other spots.

I was charged with building the menu and was running what you could call a production center that had a kitchen that would provide for all the restaurants. I built the menu and the team and managed three restaurants. I was working nonstop. It was fun! That was my last job in Argentina before moving to Arizona.

### Where else have you worked?

When we got to Arizona I started at Chico Malo for a couple months, until my husband – who also works here – told me that Hotel Valley Ho was looking for a pastry cook. I wanted to work so I accepted the position in 2019. I was the cook, the lead and now I'm the chef.

### What are your responsibilities?

Oh boy, everything [laughs]. We have Zuzu, amenities for the rooms, special events and banquets – I do the menus for all of those. I manage the team – there are four of us.

There are so many special events and we are always trying new things... for example, there's an Italian dinner coming up, so I do my research and find the most popular desserts in Italy. From there I try to do something Italian but adding my spin to it. That's what I do with everything.



### When you're hanging at home, what are you cooking?

Well, that's tough because I have a seven-month-old [laughs] but before the baby I would make crepes with dulce de leche. It's easy, fast and delicious.

### Do you travel for food inspiration?

In the last couple of years my husband and I have gone to France, Spain, Italy, Japan and Korea and we ate so much

food. It was amazing. We love to eat and every place we went we took notes.

We both work in the culinary industry so it's the best thing to travel and try things – not just the food but also the service. We watch how the restaurants are being run, too. I loved everything in France – I'd go back a million times.

### Your signature dessert is the Grand Finale – tell us about that.

We used to have a dessert called the



Showstopper that was an over-the-top milkshake, and we wanted to try something new and different. We all love to make cakes, so we thought, ‘let’s just have a different cake every month.’

We make custom cakes for weddings, events, birthdays and we always get good feedback, so we decided to create a mini cake with a theme and sweet treats on top for each month. The August Grand Finale is a surprise, but I will say it’s a very popular, viral flavor.

**Have you ever had an idea for a dessert that didn’t quite work out?**

[laughs] I overthink all of my desserts. The short answer is yes but usually everything works out okay. Sometimes if I use, say, an Argentinian flavor that I think people might not like, I worry that it won’t work.

For example, dulce de leche – people think it’s like a caramel but it’s not, it’s different. I work really hard to bring dulce de leche from Argentina, so any time you have it in the restaurant it’s coming straight from my home country. I’m used to it, but I worry that sometimes people won’t like how sweet, sweet, sweet the flavor is.

**Do you change the dessert menu on a regular basis?**

There’s one dessert on the menu that hasn’t changed in the last four years and that is the brookie. We changed it up a bit but it’s the classic brownie/cookie base. It’s one of the most popular. Who doesn’t love a warm dessert?

**What is one baking tip every baker should know?**

You see these recipes on Instagram and TikTok and the people will put a baking time or a temperature, but

“

***I have the best team ever. I couldn’t have done anything without them – every one of them has strengths that contribute to our success.***

”

if the video comes from a professional kitchen, those ovens are high-powered. If I use my oven at my house, I bake a little longer because it’s not as strong as a professional oven. And practice makes perfect.

**Who are some other chefs that inspire you?**

Argentinian pastry chef Damián Betular. He is one of the best in Argentina. From France, pastry chef Cédric Grolet. And from America I’d say Thomas Keller.

**What is your least favorite baking techniques?**

My least favorite became anything with chocolate – tempering chocolate when it’s really hot outside makes it more challenging. You have to be in a very cold room for everything to work.

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

Right now it’s baby, baby, baby [laughs]. Before that, though, I loved to go out and try new restaurants and bakeries. That was my hobby.

**What spot would you recommend to someone who is new to the Valley?**

I’d recommend JL Patisserie. You can see that and they make everything from scratch – it’s delicious and very French. My husband and I love their croissants!

**What’s one ingredient that you wish you could work with?**

For pastry, it’s hard to answer with just one ingredient, but I’d say dairy. Milk and butter from Europe would be an amazing thing to have. It’s not that American dairy is bad, it’s not, but in Europe the dairy has more fat and it’s more flavorful. I don’t know if it’s because of the processes or what – but I’ll stick with dairy.

**What’s your favorite part of the industry?**

The people that I work with. I have the best team ever. I couldn’t have done anything without them – every one of them has strengths that contribute to our success. And Chef Russell. I couldn’t have a better boss. In this industry it’s difficult to find nice people, so having him as a boss is really great. It’s like a big family.

**What advice would you give someone who’s just starting out in the industry?**

Be patient. Working in a kitchen is hard. There are long hours, you’re going to be tired. But if you’re patient and you work hard, there’s so much to learn. If you have perseverance, you can learn a lot and go really far in your career.



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“Meet Dr.” | Ray Artigue

Bill Bracken

Longtime veterinarian Bill Bracken cares for Arcadia neighborhood pets as though they are people, and in fact, he regards them as such. It’s doubtful that any of their doting owners would disagree.

“What I do is so rewarding because when you treat someone’s pet and they get better, it brings great joy to their owners,” Bracken said. “Then when the animals give you a big kiss, well, there’s no greater reward than that.”

Bracken’s father was a dentist and he almost followed in his footsteps. He attended the University of Arizona, majoring in animal science, but applied to both dental and veterinary school and would trust in the outcome.

He was one of many applicants to Colorado State’s veterinary school. “It was extremely competitive getting into any vet school and I was fortunate to be admitted.”

Bracken began working at Arcadia Animal Clinic in 1974, when it was located at 40<sup>th</sup> Street and Camelback. It moved to its current location in 1982 and today treats an endless procession of dogs and cats six days a week.

The 16-person, all-female team that makes the clinic “go” has been together for a long time. Their practice manager, Kristin, is celebrating almost 30 years there.

“The office has become my home and we are one big family,” said Bracken proudly. “We are now treating pets

“*When the animals give you a big kiss, there’s no greater reward than that.*”

of the children and grandchildren that came in with their parents many years ago.”

For those who aren’t familiar with what Bracken does, they might confuse the puncture marks on his arms as something other than a bite mark. Pushed to reveal his favorite breed of dog and he says he’s partial to retrievers.

“I love all animals but truthfully, I’m afraid of chihuahuas,” Bracken admits.

He refers to himself as a “renegade” because he has resisted repeated overtures of a corporate takeover. “The venture capitalists are hurting veterinary medicine. They are driving up the costs while lowering the level of animal care.”

Bracken and his five siblings grew up in Arcadia, living in a house that his father had built in 1963.

He refers to it as “the ‘hood” and credits the neighborly feel, bike paths and friendly people for its ongoing popularity.

He and his wife, Missy, both attended Arcadia High School and then met at U of A. They have been married over 40 years and have two daughters – both nurses – and four grandchildren.

William Bracken is unabashed in his opinions and his advice is straightforward.

“Don’t listen to what other people say; if you want to do something, do it. And most importantly, always try and look for the positive in people and circumstances.”

The doctor’s leisure pleasures include weekend trips to California and gardening. “I love spending time in our flower gardens but Missy can tell when I’ve had a difficult week because I cut the plants too short.”

Dr. Bracken isn’t sure when he’ll retire because he so enjoys the people and their lovable pets.

“One day I’ll move on and then I hope to treat dogs



living on the streets. Homeless people will often feed their pets before themselves. That’s because our pets are our family and you do whatever you can to keep your family healthy.”

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# How The Foundry built a community through yoga and fitness

By Mallory Gleich

For many people, walking into a yoga studio is about getting a workout in – but at The Foundry, it's about something more.

What began as a single hot yoga studio in Paradise Valley has grown into nine locations over the past two decades, creating a program centered on movement, wellness, and connection. This year, The Foundry is celebrating its 20th anniversary – a milestone that reflects its growth and the evolution of wellness.

The Foundry was established by Scottsdale natives and siblings Nicole Deacon-Miller and Todd Deacon, whose yoga journey began in 1993 at Arizona's first hot yoga studio in Old Town. There, they met their teacher, Cintra Brown, who helped spark what would become a lifelong passion.

Nicole eventually completed Bikram Yoga Teacher Training in 2005 and went on to volunteer and serve on the faculty of more than 15 teacher trainings worldwide. The following year, she and Todd took a leap of faith and purchased a yoga studio in Paradise Valley.

Although many people associate The Foundry with heated yoga, today's schedule includes a variety of classes with different aspects and fitness levels.

Students can choose from traditional 26&2 hot yoga, basic hot yoga, hot flow yoga, hot Pilates, hot HIIT, hot barre, and non-heated Yin Yoga. Classes range from 45 to 90 minutes and are designed to build strength, flexibility, mobility, and resilience.

One of the biggest misconceptions, according to Arcadia Studio Manager Lauren Carrizales, is that newcomers have to be experienced before stepping into a class.

"Our biggest advice? Don't wait until you feel 'ready,'" Carrizales said. "Everyone was a beginner once, and our community is incredibly supportive. Just show up, and we'll take care of the rest."

Every class is designed with modifications and progressions, allowing first-time students and long-term practitioners to work side by side at their own pace.

Like much of the fitness industry, yoga



The Foundry has grown from a single Paradise Valley yoga studio into nine locations offering yoga, Pilates, HIIT, barre and more.

has evolved over the years. Carrizales said one of the biggest shifts she's seen is that people are seeking more than just exercise.

"We've noticed people are looking for more than just fitness," she said. "They want connection, community, and places where they can invest in their overall well-being."

That philosophy extends beyond the movement. The Foundry emphasizes how the benefits of yoga and fitness can carry into everyday life, whether that's feeling calmer during stressful moments, becoming more patient with family members, or simply building confidence. For Carrizales, who has worked in the fitness industry for eight years and now manages the Arcadia studio, those relationships are what make the work meaningful.

"The community and genuine care that every person has is my absolute favorite part," she says. "Nicole and Todd truly have

the best hearts, and their love of movement and wellness has spread to every single person who works for and attends classes."

The Foundry has been marking its 20th anniversary throughout 2026 with special events and member challenges. The celebration will continue this fall with Foundry Fest, an outdoor wellness event planned for October 18 in Phoenix, bringing together members from all nine locations for a day focused on movement.

While fitness trends continue to evolve – Carrizales mentioned the recent surge in Pilates' popularity as one example – The Foundry's focus has remained consistent since opening its doors two decades ago.

"Pilates has exploded in popularity over the past few years. It's exciting to see, especially because we've been offering hot Pilates at The Foundry for the last 10 years," she said. "Long before it became

one of today's biggest fitness trends, we saw how effective it was at building strength, improving mobility, and helping people feel their best."

The Foundry's program was created by Julie Valenzuela, now co-owner of the Arrowhead Ranch location, and follows a format rooted in classic principles.

The studios are currently offering a free first class through the app; they're also offering two weeks unlimited for \$30 – an intro special that allows guests to experience everything – from yoga and Pilates to HIIT, barre, and yin – at all locations.

The Foundry's goal is creating a place where people leave feeling stronger, healthier, and more connected than when they arrived – a mission that has helped transform a neighborhood yoga studio into one big family over the last 20 years.

[thefoundryyoga.com](http://thefoundryyoga.com)

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# The Olive Farmer

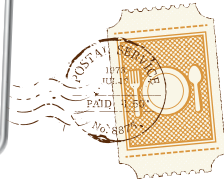
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# Common Ground Culinary creates six-in-one restaurant concept

By Rachael Bouley

The latest eatery to hit Arcadia's dining scene is more than just a place to eat – it's six restaurants in one! One Sixth, created by Chef Christopher Collins (Collins Small Batch, Arcadia Catering Company, and more), is a culinary concept inside Bond Phoenix, a luxury office building at Camelback and 32nd Street.

The modern co-working space has a central atrium that now features Collins' latest endeavor. As a fourth-generation restaurateur, Collins has been cooking and running kitchens professionally for over two decades.

The idea for One Sixth was born from Collins' desire to expand his playground, helping his team experiment creatively while also innovating the workspace dining industry.

"I see how connecting over a meal brings people together every day in my restaurants, so helping facilitate that in a high-end space like Bond is very gratifying," Collins said. "We wanted to build something that eliminates the headache of traditional restaurant operations while giving tenants maximum variety. And it gives me an outlet to create the new recipes that are always swirling around in my head, so it's a win-win."

Developing six separate menus to reflect global cuisines was a massive puzzle, with late-night brainstorming and discussions down to the ingredients in every recipe to identify overlaps. Collins was up for the challenge of creating distinctly authentic recipes while also ensuring the kitchen line could execute everything flawlessly and quickly during a busy lunch rush.

"We really wanted to span the globe here so you never get bored," Collins said.

There's Bobo Jefe's Vecina Cocina with bold Sonoran flavors, from traditional pork al pastor to fiery *camarones diablo*. SBK Pizzeria is a spinoff of Collins Small Batch Kitchen, drawing from neighborhood pizzeria



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHRIS COLLINS

(left) Chris Collins with Director of Special Events Katelyn Stoichkov and Director of Operations Richard Provencal. (right) Saltwater Saint is a seafood-forward option.



traditions to serve artisan wood-fired pizzas and fresh salads.

At Perissa Mediterranean Café, guests will find clean, coastal flavors in rice bowls, shawarma, hummus plates, and za'atar-seasoned salmon. Saltwater Saint offers a coastal dining experience centered around seafood and shareables for a nautical break in the workday.

Misfit Cowboy pairs competition-style smoked meats with elevated comfort food classics like low-and-slow barbecue, aged cheeses, and grill-driven staples. Last but not least, there's Sweet Provisions, a dessert sanctuary featuring handcrafted ice cream, pies, cookies, and nostalgic treats to end the day on a sweet note.

"Nothing beats the feeling of opening a neighborhood staple. We build great relationships with our locals, and it's great to see them come back week after week," Collins said. "One Sixth is definitely a new pinnacle for us because it pushes the boundaries of where hospitality can live, and it was a labor of love to execute the way I envisioned."

Over the years, Collins has learned that

everything in the industry matters, from the ingredients you choose to the people serving guests. He's proud of his team's hospitality and attention to detail.

"In a traditional restaurant, you control the environment. Moving into an office setting, we had to learn how to translate that exact same 'soul' into modern convenience," Collins said. "Whether you're grabbing a salad from our frictionless market or ordering 'room service' directly to your office suite via the building's app, know that each detail was thought out with the guest in mind."

Collins was intrigued by the opportunity to open a restaurant at a luxury office building, and with a trusted team leading the way at Common Ground Culinary, he can bounce around between his different concepts. In addition to the One Sixth staff, there's a catering team that handles everything from intimate dinners in the boardroom or Bond's hidden speakeasy to 200-person corporate events.

Collins is excited to share the freedom of choice. He said that he loves that co-workers and friends can come in together and order

different cuisines while still enjoying a memorable meal together. What's more: although it's technically inside a luxury office destination, One Sixth is 100 percent open to the public.

"Arcadia has a tight-knit energy where people deeply care about supporting local," Collins said. "I want the neighborhood to know they can swing by and come to try out the menu, or even host their next private party in these gorgeous event spaces. We built this for the community just as much as the tenants."

As for the future, Collins wants to perfect the One Sixth model at Bond, keeping it focused on what comes next.

"Because this hospitality framework is scalable, we're looking at it as a live incubator. Don't be surprised if you see some of these micro-concepts break out into their own standalone restaurant brands down the road, or see One Sixth debut in other premier property developments," Collins added. "We're just getting started!"

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# Author mixes murder and mai tais in debut beach thriller

By Sherry Sklar

Dawson Fearnow understands the appeal of a good beach read: toes in the sand, drink in hand, with the action and suspense building with each page turn and crashing wave.

His debut novel, "Murder at the Mai Tai Bar," set in Waikiki, explores the shadows of paradise where suspicious intentions bubble beneath the glossy surface. The book follows sharp-witted investigator Eva Pierce, a.k.a. Sandi Beach, as she goes undercover as a luxury travel influencer to catch a cheating CEO, only to find herself pulled into a darker mystery.

The idea arrived as an unexpected thought. While in Waikiki with family, Dawson was watching surfers, clear water, beach hotels, and people enjoying themselves when he asked himself the classic crime writer's "intrusive thought": what if someone came plummeting from a hotel balcony? From there, he began shaping a narrative.

Fearnow had a virtual archive of capers and crimes to draw upon, based on his own work as an investigative journalist. An award-winning Valley writer and communications professional with an extensive portfolio of magazine and nonfiction work, Fearnow has spent much of his career investigating and writing about true crime.

He has written several pieces covering Arizona's notorious mob activity over the decades and has appeared as a guest on the popular true-crime podcast Wicked Words.

His passion for noir fiction and suspenseful thrillers developed early, when he became a voracious reader. He read Stephen King, Nancy Drew, and The Hardy Boys growing up. His mother, also a fan, passed down her appreciation for detective novelist Agatha Christie. He always had a dog-eared novel nearby.

"I was riding the bus to school with my nose buried in a paperback," he said.

Although drawn to suspenseful storytelling and murderous twists, he describes himself as lighthearted and interested in travel and culture. He weaves in facts and details that bring readers along on the journey.

Working with professional content creators, Fearnow found it plausible that his main character would pose as the travel influencer "Sandi Beach." Eva hides in plain sight, wearing her flashy leopard caftan, filming with a painted-on smile and blinding others with her ring light. He wanted to poke fun at that world but also acknowledge the relentless work behind it.

"I wanted to both skewer it a little bit, but also get people to understand, you know, that this is a commitment," he said.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DAWSON FEARNOW

Author Dawson Fearnow.

Fearnow said Phoenix is "definitely a character" in the book, serving as the place the protagonist departs from for Hawaii. Arizona also remains steeped in the story through details such as monsoon storms and flood-irrigation systems rooted in centuries-old Native American practices. He wanted readers to recognize the desert as a distinctive, verdant, and sometimes stark destination in its own right.

Influenced by classic writers such as Raymond Chandler and John D. MacDonald, Fearnow did not want the book to become too dark or inaccessible as a beach read. His goal was to write in a fast, descriptive, noir-influenced style with just enough action and crime to keep readers turning pages.

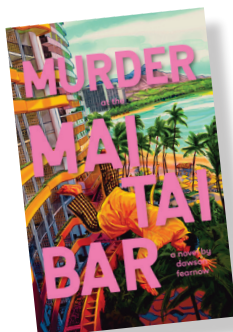
Born in Miami and raised in Arizona, he describes himself as a "beach seeker." He chose

Waikiki as a setting partly because of his own travel experiences, but also because he wanted to look beyond the resort fantasy and reveal the culture, pressure and contradictions of a place marketed as "paradise." Fearnow touches on ecological and housing issues in Hawaii, painting a fuller picture of the challenges facing its people.

"I wanted to lift the curtain and show a little bit more authenticity about these locations, the positives and the negatives," he said.

Fearnow plans to expand the Sandi Beach series, in which Eva's detective work leads her to other far-flung locales. Tahiti may be the next destination in the series, with the book expected to be released in 2027. Future books will be set in "beachy," honeymoon-style destinations, possibly including the South of France and the Caribbean. Find the novel online or on Amazon.

[fearnowink.com](http://fearnowink.com)



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

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# Arizona Highways Television's 'European vacation'

I've been fortunate enough to travel throughout Europe, wandering the vineyards of Italy, admiring the architecture of Spain, cruising the turquoise waters of Greece, and strolling across London's iconic bridges.

After years of exploring Arizona for *Arizona Highways Television*, I've discovered something unexpected: you don't always need a passport to experience a little bit of Europe. Some of the most surprising European-inspired destinations are hiding right here in our own backyard.

If you're looking for a Swiss escape, I always tell people to head north to Alpine. Sitting at more than 8,000 feet, it's a world

away from the Sonoran Desert. The crisp mountain air, towering pines, and lush meadows instantly remind me of the Swiss Alps. It's peaceful, refreshing, and one of Arizona's best-kept secrets.



*Robin's Adventures*

BY ROBIN SEWELL

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



London Bridge in Lake Havasu.



Mission San Xavier del Bac in Tucson.

Next, I make my way to Sedona. The red rocks always remind me of Tuscany meeting the Dolomites. One of my favorite stops is the Chapel of the Holy Cross, perched high within the cliffs. The views are spectacular and capture that same feeling of discovering a beautiful hillside sanctuary in Europe.

When I'm craving the charm of Italian wine country, I don't book a flight, I drive to Sonoita and Elgin and up north to Cottonwood. Arizona's wine region is filled with rolling vineyards, golden grasslands, and family-owned wineries that invite you to slow down and savor the afternoon. It's easy to spend a day tasting award-winning wines while imagining you're somewhere in the Italian countryside.

One place that surprises almost everyone is Lake Powell. Every time I see its brilliant turquoise water winding between towering sandstone cliffs, I'm reminded of the Greek islands. Whether you're exploring by boat, paddleboard, or simply relaxing along the shoreline, it has the same carefree feeling that makes Mediterranean vacations so memorable.

For a taste of Spain, I always recommend visiting Mission San Xavier del Bac in Tucson. The brilliant white façade, intricate Baroque architecture, and remarkable history make it one of Arizona's true treasures. Standing inside, it's easy to appreciate why it's considered one of the finest examples of Spanish Colonial architecture in the country.

And yes, you can even visit London

without leaving Arizona. Lake Havasu City's famous London Bridge never fails to make visitors smile. Walking across the original bridge, knowing it was carefully relocated stone by stone from England, is one of those uniquely Arizona experiences that perfectly blends history with a little bit of fun.

One stop I always encourage visitors to add is Jerome. Perched high above the Verde Valley, its winding streets, art galleries, cafés, and historic buildings remind me of the charming villages I've wandered through in southern France. It's the kind of place where the best itinerary is simply "take your time."

The more I've traveled, the more I've realized that memorable vacations aren't defined by passport stamps, they're defined by the places that make you stop, look around, and smile. Arizona has a remarkable way of surprising you, offering landscapes, architecture, history, and experiences that echo destinations across Europe while remaining unmistakably its own.

Before you book that overseas adventure, consider pointing your car toward one of Arizona's scenic highways instead. You just might discover that your next European vacation has been waiting right here all along.

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# Congress – but this one is for the kids

By Madalyn Paltzik

When school districts make important decisions, student voices are not always part of the conversation. At Creighton School District, however, students have a seat at the table thanks to the Creighton Kids Congress, a leadership program that allows middle schoolers to help shape the future of their schools.

Founded in 2019 by Superintendent Jay Mann and then-Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Dr. Eric Dueppen, the Creighton Kids Congress was created to ensure students have a meaningful role in district decision-making. Today, the program brings together two student representatives from nine schools every quarter to discuss important topics and provide feedback directly to leadership.

Unlike a traditional student council, the Kids Congress focuses on districtwide initiatives rather than individual school events. Students are selected by their principals because they are recognized as leaders on their campuses. In addition to participating in quarterly meetings, representatives are responsible for sharing information about upcoming projects with their classmates and staff while gathering feedback to bring back to future discussions.

Since its creation, the Kids Congress has played a role in some of the most significant initiatives. Student reps participated in the hiring process for Creighton's current superintendent, influenced the architectural design of three rebuilt schools, helped guide math and science curriculum adoptions, and contributed to the Student Outcomes Focused Governance goals. Members have also provided valuable insight on issues such as attendance, student mental health, and, most recently, renovations at Biltmore Preparatory Academy.

One of the group's most impactful contributions came during the pandemic. As a remote learning schedule was



Members of the Creighton Kids Congress help shape important decisions by providing input on various initiatives.

created, administrators initially planned separate lunch periods for different grade levels. Kids Congress members pointed out that allowing siblings to have lunch at the same time would make remote learning easier for students and parents. The district adopted the suggestion.

"That feedback feels obvious, but at the time was so incredibly important and powerful," Creighton School District's Emily Waszolek said.

During a recent science curriculum adoption, student representatives emphasized that they wanted more hands-on learning experiences in science classrooms. According to Waszolek, "One piece of feedback was more engagement with hands-on experience, which we took to heart."

The program develops leadership skills that extend beyond the classroom. Representatives are chosen not simply for academic achievement but for their creativity, collaboration, and willingness to think critically. Through the Kids Congress,

students learn to communicate ideas, represent their peers, and work alongside leaders to improve their schools.

"Kids Congress is about much more than just capturing student voice; it's about fostering our next generation of leaders," Superintendent Jay Mann said. "By understanding the learning process directly from the students who experience it daily, we gain an invaluable perspective that helps us make school more engaging, impactful, and experiential for everyone."

As the district prepares to welcome new representatives for the upcoming school year, the Creighton Kids Congress continues to demonstrate that some of the district's best ideas can come directly from the students it serves. By giving young leaders a voice in district leadership, Creighton School District has created a program that empowers students to help shape the future of education.



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# Thrift-lover's first "fashion" rodeo proves successful

By Sherry Sklar

Rodeo Rose, a women's thrift and fashion market that took off on TikTok, has become an indie shopping destination with more than 70 vendors and 1,200 attendees in search of their next coveted find.

Held twice monthly, this pop-up sensation brings its party atmosphere to downtown Phoenix, Scottsdale, and the East Valley. Shoppers can purchase one-of-a-kind clothing, beauty products, jewelry, and flowers, then refuel with specialty coffee or matcha while meeting old friends or making new ones.

Trinity Roraback, Rodeo Rose's 23-year-old founder, moved with her family from Oregon to Arizona five years ago to study business at the University of Arizona.

After her sophomore year, Roraback moved to Scottsdale and continued studying online while working full-time. Living in a new city with few friends, she posted to connect with other girls and build community.

Accustomed to Portland's commitment to buying local and its abundance of thrift shops and independent businesses, Roraback felt big-box stores often overshadowed Phoenix's smaller retailers. "Something I always missed was expressing myself through shopping local, thrifting, and the fashion I wore," she said.

One day, she posted a TikTok video that changed the course of her life.

"I was like, hey, if you live in Arizona, and you're a girl who wants to sell her clothes, thrift, or just meet up, please let me know," Roraback said. "I'm looking for friends and community."



Rodeo Rose brings together more than 70 vendors and 1,200 attendees at each market.

Though embarrassed at first, her sincere plea went viral. Within 48 hours, the video had 150,000 views and thousands of comments. Realizing she was onto something bigger than a simple meet-up, Roraback created a Google Form asking, "If I were to host this event, would you go?"

The answers flooded in, with 300 prospective vendors signing up to sell clothes at her first pop-up. And just like that, Roraback put herself in business, helping other women grow theirs.

Rodeo Rose's name honors Portland's official bloom and blends the Pacific Northwest's individuality with the Southwest's cowgirl cool.

Her parents, business owners themselves, gave her the courage to pursue her dreams outside the corporate world. She turned down a promising job offer to dedicate

herself fully to Rodeo Rose, a decision she said she does not regret. That passion from buyers and sellers has fueled the market's growth.

"The growth isn't because it's a great business model," Roraback said. "It's because it has people who love, care, and share their passion, and you can't find that at a lot of places nowadays."

While social media engagement and online shopping are common, human connection and in-person mingling are increasingly rare in today's screen-bound world. In that setting, the market also gives vendors real-time feedback to refine their businesses.

Bella Rivera, owner of Juniper Street Coffee, has been a regular vendor since Rodeo Rose's early days. She launched the business in May 2025 after studying at

Arizona State University and working as a barista for seven years. Her mobile coffee and matcha cart features locally sourced ingredients, including coffee beans from FourTillFour and house-made syrups.

"Rodeo Rose honestly put us on the map, essentially," Rivera said.

Roraback discovered Juniper Street through Rivera's online videos and invited her to serve as the coffee and matcha vendor at an early pop-up. That became Juniper Street Coffee's first event, and Rivera has participated ever since.

"We're planning our biggest event for December, which will be exciting," she said. "It will be held inside and outside at Scottsdale Stadium and host more than 200 vendors, including some from out of state."

Roraback said the venture would not have succeeded without the women who participated. "The community is how this market grew, and it is what its foundation will always be," she said. Rodeo Rose welcomes groups of friends as well as solo visitors who discovered the market online. Pariz Durazo, owner of The Disco Vixen Club and a Rodeo Rose regular, agreed.

"From the vendors to the attendees," she said, "it all just feels like a giant girls' party filled with shopping and good vibes."

"I'm grateful and blessed that I get to do this as my full-time job," Roraback said. "I am pushed to be the best version of myself when I'm with these women. It's very inspirational."

[rodeorosemarket.com](http://rodeorosemarket.com)

## Summer sandwich showdown draws hungry voters

By Mark Hays

Customers at Cheese 'N Stuff had more than lunch on their minds this summer. In June, the longtime Uptown deli launched its "Summer Showdown," asking customers to sample two new sandwiches and cast a paper ballot for their favorite.

The contest was inspired by summer intern Grant Musil, who brought a marketing background and a creative approach to the neighborhood deli.

"It was kind of Grant's brainchild," owner Julie Palmer said. "It was a fun idea that he came up with, and we ran with it."

Musil, who is pursuing an MBA at Arizona State University, said the contest was designed to bring customers through the doors during the slower summer season while introducing a pair of original menu items.

"We introduced two new sandwiches: The Biltmore and The Verde," he said.

The Biltmore offered the deli's take on a Caprese sandwich, featuring

mozzarella, basil, balsamic vinegar, and prosciutto on sourdough bread.

The Verde sandwich featured chicken, green chilies, cabbage slaw, and pepper jack cheese. "We wanted to do something Southwest-focused," Musil said. "We do live in Arizona, right, so we have a lot of Mexican influence in our cuisine. We wanted to pay homage to that." The Verde was crowned the winner of the competition — Grant said it was about a 60/40 split. Palmer added that customers embraced the friendly competition.

"You'd see two people each get one sandwich. They'd try it. They'd switch, and it really turned out to be a fun concept," she said.

Customers voted using a ballot box on the deli counter, with one voter selected each week to receive a free sandwich. The deli also created a custom cartoon graphic that appeared on promotional materials and T-shirts celebrating the contest.

Palmer said the Summer Showdown could return in the future as Cheese

'N Stuff continues balancing its longtime menu with new ideas. The contest showed the approach that Palmer and her husband, Tom, have taken since purchasing the historic deli last year.

"We're trying to keep a local institution alive and running," Palmer said. "We're really leaning into remaining that neighborhood, non-corporate place that you can come have a great meal for lunch or dinner."

She credited the deli's longtime customer base with contributing to the business's success.

"We've kept the same menus, the same suppliers, and we're now a year into the project, and it's been a fun, wild, exciting ride," Palmer said. "Thanks to our team, our customers and supporters."

As Cheese 'N Stuff enters its second year under new ownership, Palmer said the goal remains the same: preserve what longtime customers love while finding fresh ways to keep the neighborhood deli thriving.

[cheesestuffdeli.com](http://cheesestuffdeli.com)



Owner Julie Palmer with the Verde: chicken, green chilies, cabbage slaw, and pepper jack cheese.





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SACKS SANDWICHES



ZOOKZ SANDWICHES



NOBLE EATERY

# The Dining Scoop

Whether you're loyal to a classic Italian sub, crave a hot pastrami piled high or prefer a veggie-packed masterpiece, National Sandwich Month is the perfect time to explore some of the Valley's best sandwich shops. Here are a few local favorites to add to your list.

## SACKS SANDWICHES

4247 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix  
sackssandwiches.com

For 36 years, Sacks Arcadia has been serving the neighborhood with a simple mission: create great sandwiches in a welcoming, community-focused environment. Founded by brothers Cary and Ivan Morrow, who both came from restaurant backgrounds, the family-owned business grew from a single shop into three locations in Arcadia, Uptown Phoenix and Tempe.

"Every element, from the bread to the signature spreads, is made with consistency and quality in mind, creating combinations that have earned a loyal following over the years," Ivan said. "Many visitors gravitate toward the signature sandwiches, which have become customer favorites and continue to bring guests back time and again."

The menu also boasts salads, sides and sweet treats. One of the restaurant's most cherished traditions is the complimentary cookie that accompanies every order. Those are inspired by family matriarch Wanda, who remains involved at 93 years old. Her "Wanda's Magical Cookie Dough" has been sold at AJ's Fine Foods for more than three decades.

"We choose ingredients with care. Freshness, consistency, and flavor always come first. We work with suppliers who understand our standards, and we only use ingredients that help us deliver the quality

our customers expect every time they walk through our doors," Ivan said. "Our hope is that people feel at home. Sacks Arcadia is meant to be warm and friendly, a place where the food is great and the service is genuine."

## ZOOKZ SANDWICHES

3164 E. Camelback Road, Phoenix  
zookzsandwiches.com

Owner Carole Meyer was born in Alexandria, Egypt and raised in North Africa. Her mother was Armenian and her father was an American who worked in North Africa as a petroleum engineer. The inspiration for Zookz dates all the way back to her childhood.

"I was raised in a multicultural family that took great pride in preparing meals from scratch. It was my grandmother who introduced me to what has become Zookz sandwiches, which in those days were toasted over an open flame on a crude stove-top cooking," Carole said.

Her grandmother's crunchy creations were perfectly toasted and filled with ingredients and unexpected textures.

"Decades later, after other culinary pursuits, I developed a commercial cooking device that enables me to offer a variety of the creations of my youth," she said. "It brings me immense joy to be able to share my grandmother's 'comfort food' with today's ever on-the-go consumer."

Zookz's round sandwiches are toasted on a custom proprietary press that turns them into a sandwich shaped like a flying saucer with a variety of fillings.

Daybreak in Mexicali (two eggs, pork chorizo, avocado, sliced potatoes, jack cheese and picante dressing); Amarillo by Morning (two eggs, ham, crisp bacon, black beans, avocado, cheddar cheese and chipotle); and Days of Summer (sliced turkey, Parmesan cheese, apples,

cranberries, roasted almonds and sweet heat mustard sauce) are three of the most popular.

"The ingredients come from my love of food, my love of travel and what I was exposed to growing up in a family who was all about food. There is a definite Mediterranean bend to our menu, but there is something for everyone and sandwiches can be customized," Carole said.

The shop also offers salads with house-made dressings, cookies and dessert Zookz, specialty coffee drinks, including "Velvet" coffee drinks and mimosas. As far as future plans are concerned, Carole said there have been discussions "with a chain of grocery stores in Canada who are considering adding a Zookz kiosk."

## NOBLE EATERY

4525 N. 24th St., Phoenix  
noblebread.com

Noble Eatery got its start on accident, according to owner – and Chicago transplant – Jason Raducha. When the bakery moved to its current location, there was another deli in the front space. The owner was ready to transition away from the deli's day-to-day operations to focus on wholesale operations involving meats and sausages, so Jason and his team took over and opened the original eatery.

"We bake all the bread for the sandwiches. What makes some of them unique is that we use *pide* bread, which is baked in our wood burning oven. It is our take on a Turkish-style pita," Jason said. "All produce comes from McClendon Select. We slice everything in house daily for that day's service from meats, cheeses, and all produce."

Jason said the most popular sandwich on the menu is a classic tuna, but the weekly sandwich special is always a must-get, and they also offer a different pizza every week. Noble uses seasonal produce as much as possible and prides itself on the meats it uses.

"One of our favorite times of year is the two weeks of summer when the heirloom

tomatoes are in season, and we feature them throughout the menu," Jason said, stating that they are always on the lookout for the next meat, cheese, or item for customers to love.

Two new Noble concepts will be rolling out in fall 2026. The first is Noble Roam, a custom-built food trailer designed to expand on Noble's offerings and give them a platform to explore new menu items, seasonal ideas, and event catering.

Noble Roam will debut at Uptown Farmers Market on Wednesdays and Saturdays, along with appearances at farmers markets around town. The second concept is Noble at Nite, a series of evenings when the eatery opens for dinner with a specialty menu.

## 56TH ST. DELI

5619 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix  
(480) 423-5733

The menu at 56th St. Deli & Market offers an array of classic favorites. The Reuben is one of its more popular offerings, with corned beef, sauerkraut, Swiss cheese, and Russian dressing, all served on toasted rye.

If you're in the mood for something lighter, the turkey club sandwich provides a fresh, satisfying option with layers of turkey, bacon, lettuce, tomato, and mayo on toasted bread. For a true deli experience, try the hot pastrami on rye, which is as flavorful as it gets with tender, well-seasoned pastrami and a smear of mustard.

The bagels with lox and cream cheese are a go-to for those looking for a traditional breakfast or snack. For soup lovers, the matzo ball soup is a comforting choice, with fluffy matzo balls swimming in a savory broth. The pastrami burger is another unique offering, blending the rich flavors of a juicy burger with the distinct taste of pastrami, making for a truly indulgent bite.

The grilled cheese sandwich is also a great option for those seeking simplicity, with melted cheese oozing between grilled bread.





56<sup>TH</sup> ST. DELI



THE SANDWICH SPOT

THE SANDWICH SPOT

1219 E. Glendale Ave., Phoenix  
sandwichspotphoenix.com

SoCal transplants John and Kirstin Freeman moved to Arizona in 2015 to be closer to John’s parents – but a few years before that, they discovered The Sandwich Spot in Simi Valley. They fell in love and would frequent the shop almost every week.

In early 2013, John took a break from his career in the construction industry to care for his grandfather. At the end of 2014, he realized he didn’t want to go

back to construction and decided to go to the Arizona Culinary Institute to build on his passion of cooking. Over the next eight years, the duo continued talking about opening their own Sandwich Spot.

“Every time the idea came up, the same things kept stopping us...time, fear, money,” Kirstin said. “Finally in 2022, we decided that life was too short and it was time to take the leap!”

The first shop opened in Phoenix in January 2023; the second in Glendale in 2025. The restaurant uses high-quality

meats, fresh vegetables and artisan bread from a Northern California bakery. The bread is baked throughout the day and kept warm in a proof box to maintain its freshness.

Many menu items are made in-house, including the restaurant’s signature Secret Sauce, a garlic olive oil blend; Bomb Sauce, a jalapeño ranch; Psycho Sauce, a blend of Secret Sauce, Bomb Sauce, barbecue and teriyaki; and Lava Sauce, a spicier version of Bomb Sauce with extra sriracha and jalapeños.

First-time visitors often gravitate toward favorites like the Grand Canyon, the Wil E. Coyote or the Arizona Rattler, featuring hot turkey, pepperoni, capicola, pepper jack, avocado and Bomb Sauce. Vegetarian guests can choose from signature sandwiches like the Ocotillo, Saguaro or Roadrunner, and every sandwich is customized with a choice of Dutch Crunch, sourdough, wheat or white bread.

Guests can add chips, potato or macaroni salad to their meal, plus house-made desserts like homemade cheesecakes in flavors like traditional, Oreo, raspberry honey habanero, Biscoff and more.

The Sandwich Shop’s motto is “Love All Feed All” and Kirstin said she hopes that customers find a comfortable, happy vibe where they feel safe, welcomed, loved and full.

WHAT’S NEW?

Throughout August, guests can enjoy one of **Miracle Mile Deli’s** award-winning sandwiches paired with a side, kosher dill pickle and a slice of pie for \$19.49. The promotion includes several customer favorites, including the New Yorker sandwich, Brisket sandwich, Combo sandwich and the restaurant’s signature Straw sandwich.  
[miraclemiledeli.com](http://miraclemiledeli.com)



**d’Lite Healthy On The Go** is inviting customers to enter its “Show Us Your Buzz” summer social media contest through August 19. Guests who share photos with a d’Breakfast Buzz shake and tag the brand can win weekly prizes, including a \$100 gift card and exclusive swag.  
[dlitehealthyonthego.com](http://dlitehealthyonthego.com)



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# Xavier crew reaches new heights at national championships

By Olivia Garcia

The Xavier Prep rowing team had a remarkable season, earning a bronze medal at the Scholastic Rowing Association of America (SRAA) and placing seventh overall at the USRowing Youth National Championship, solidifying the program's standing among the nation's best.

The two national regattas brought together elite high school and club rowing programs from across the country. The SRAA National Championship is held in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, while the USRowing Youth National Championship takes place in Sarasota, Florida. For Xavier's rowers, reaching Nationals was the result of discipline, teamwork, and determination.

To qualify for USRowing Youth National Championships, teams around the country send the best of their best to 10 regional qualifying events around the nation.

"Our qualifying event was the Southwest Youth Championships in Sacramento. At each of these regional championships the top three or four crews earn bids to Youth Nationals," Head Coach Geoff Stricklin said. "In a three-day racing event involving time trials, semifinals, and grand finals, among the 14 crews who competed in our Southwest Region this year, our Under 17 Quad earned a top 4 position, automatically qualifying them for Nationals in Florida."

Obtaining that goal required early mornings and demanding practices. The Gators train on Tempe Town Lake four



Coach Kevin Boyle, Olivia Moshiri, Raphy Capozzi, Lauren Aldrete, Emma Perry and Coach Geoff Stricklin.

days a week for 2.5 hours, including 5 a.m. practices during the hotter months of the season, while also completing after-school workouts and individual training.

"Rowing involves the integration of the physical output of a power lifter, the speed of a mile runner, and the precision of a ballet dancer," Stricklin said.

A standard rowing race covers 2,000 meters – about 1.25 miles – and requires roughly eight minutes of full-body effort. To prepare for Nationals, the rowers had to complete multiple races at that intensity over several days.

"Training off the water is harder," rower Cara Boyle said. "Self-discipline really comes into play; you have to motivate

yourself, push yourself, but also be aware of your limits."

The junior quad of Cara Boyle, Izzy Castro, Alayna Zimmerman, and Sienna Goforth earned Xavier's bronze medal at the SRAA National Championship. Boyle admitted she felt nervous entering the regatta because competing teams were unfamiliar, but once the race began, she felt more confident.

Before every race, the team follows the same routine: cardio, stretching, and a quiet walk to the water. Izzy said encouragement from her teammates helped settle her nerves.

The competition only intensified at the USRowing Youth National Championship, where Xavier faced the country's top club and scholastic programs. That boat featured

Emma Perry, Lauren Aldrete, Raphy Capozzi, and Olivia Moshiri, who finished seventh overall.

"When we're in it mentally, we're in it physically," Olivia said. Raphy emphasized the importance of mental strength: "It's mentally pushing yourself to be a better racer," she said. "During a race, you're anxious, and it's physically demanding."

The team also credits its sisterhood for its success. Before practices and races, the rowers pray together, sing, and share words of encouragement to help one another stay confident.

"Although it's cliché to say, this is a true team effort," Stricklin said. "I'm so grateful for all the parents who sacrifice to make this program possible, for our board of directors which handles all the administrative tasks, and for our coaching staff. Coach Kevin Boyle, in particular, worked most closely with both of these national level crews, preparing them technically and mentally to perform as well as they did."

The season's accomplishments have also created momentum for the future. This fall, Xavier will return to the national stage at the prestigious Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston after Emma Perry and Ella Boyle earned an automatic bid by finishing in the top half of a 70-boat field race last season. With national medals, top finishes and major competitions ahead, Xavier's rowing program continues to establish itself as a force to be reckoned with!

# Bream sisters continue to shine at the University of Nebraska

By Mark Hays

What began as a way to stay active quickly became a passion, leading Arcadia sisters Brooke and Mackenzie Bream from first-time golfers at AHS to Division I student-athletes at the University of Nebraska. Both have built accomplished collegiate careers while continuing to set new goals on and off the course.

After developing their games through the Junior Golf Association of Arizona's year-round tournament circuit, both sisters signed with Nebraska, where they spent three seasons as teammates. Brooke graduated in May after completing both her undergraduate degree and a master's degree in business. Mackenzie will return for her senior season this year.

For Brooke, the relationships built through golf stand out more than any single tournament.

"When I look back at my journey, the thing that stands out most is how much fun I've had competing and how grateful I am that I decided to start playing," she said. "Some of my favorite memories are with my family, playing golf with my dad and sister while my mom rode along."

Her college career finished on a high note. Brooke qualified for the Big Ten Championship, won the 2026 Nebraska Women's Amateur to earn a spot in the U.S. Women's Amateur Championship, captured her fourth Academic All-Big Ten honor and was named a First Team Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar.

"I'm especially proud of winning the Nebraska Women's Amateur after finishing college," Brooke said. "It earned me a spot in the USGA Women's Amateur in August, and my dad will be caddying for me. Getting to share that experience with him will be very special."

Brooke said one of her proudest accomplishments was



Brooke, Mackenzie, Shelly and Scott Bream at a tournament in Vegas.

earning a consistent spot in Nebraska's lineup during her final season after years of competing for one of the team's five travel positions.

"Serving as team captain during my final year made that season even more meaningful," she said.

Mackenzie said the opportunity to attend Nebraska alongside her sister has made the experience especially rewarding.

"What stands out the most is how incredible the journey was," she said. "From never picking up a golf club to managing

a Division I spot at a school that means a lot to my family is so incredible. Being able to do it with my sister made it even better."

Mackenzie has earned two Academic All-Big Ten honors, a First Team Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholar Award, and several leadership and academic recognitions while continuing to develop her game.

"My favorite college memory so far has been playing in a tournament in Vegas this past year with my sister," Mackenzie said. "Both of my parents got to come watch, and it was sort of a full-circle moment that reminded me why I play."

While Brooke is spending the summer working 70+ hours a week across three golf courses, helping with junior golf, women's programs, and golf operations as she explores a career in the industry, Mackenzie has been enjoying time with family and friends while hosting a weekly golf radio show with a former Nebraska teammate. After graduation, she hopes to combine her background in sports media and management in a sales or marketing role with a university or professional sports organization.

Their mother, Shelly, said the family's unexpected introduction to golf has become one of life's biggest blessings.

"It's never too late to take up a sport and your passion, because it's surprising if you have the passion for something how good you can get," she said. "That's what they did."

That same message is one Brooke hopes young athletes will remember.

"Take the chance, because you never know where it might lead," she said. "Some of the best opportunities in life come from stepping outside your comfort zone and taking a chance on yourself."



DISTRICT 6 UPDATE



Heads up, Phoenix!



KEVIN ROBINSON  
Councilman  
District 6  
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District6@phoenix.gov

Residents will notice a few important changes and reminders this August, from a temporary trail closure near Camelback Mountain to updated animal welfare regulations and ongoing efforts to conserve water amid drought conditions.

CHOLLA TRAIL TO CLOSE FOR SEWER PROJECT

The City of Phoenix Water Services Department has begun the Cholla Sewer Diversion and Abandonment Project, with

construction starting July 13. As part of the project, Cholla Trail will be temporarily closed August 10-21 to accommodate the work.

Hikers planning to visit Camelback Mountain during that time are encouraged to use alternate trailheads while the improvements are underway.

NEW ANIMAL CRUELTY ORDINANCE TAKES EFFECT

The City of Phoenix has also updated its animal cruelty ordinance with new protections for dogs. Under the revised rules, dogs may not be tethered without direct supervision, and any tether used must be at least six feet long, allowing the animal adequate room to move comfortably.

District 6 officials say the changes reflect the city’s commitment to protecting the health and well-being of pets while encouraging responsible ownership.

The city is also reminding residents that shelters continue to face overcrowding.

According to the Arizona Humane Society, more than 25,000 pets entered its care in 2025. Officials say one of the most effective ways to help reduce pet overpopulation is by spaying and neutering pets, helping ease the burden on shelters while improving animal health.

WATER CONSERVATION REMAINS A PRIORITY

With Phoenix currently operating under a Stage 1 Water Alert as part of its Drought Management Plan, city officials are asking residents and businesses to continue making water conservation a daily habit.

Simple ways to reduce water use include repairing household leaks, reviewing monthly water bills for unusual usage, replacing thirsty landscaping with native desert plants, installing smart irrigation controllers and encouraging others to embrace water-wise practices.

As drought conditions persist and uncertainty surrounding the Colorado River continues, the city says every drop saved helps strengthen Phoenix’s long-term water future.

Residents can learn more about conservation efforts and water-saving resources at [phoenix.gov/waterfuture](http://phoenix.gov/waterfuture).

– Kevin

30 YEARS AGO



The story behind the doors, straight from the painter...

“In 1996, my son just completed second grade and his teacher Bea Simmons asked me to paint a tree on the inside of her classroom door. One door led to painting another, and another and eventually all the doors at the school. Most teachers chose a picture based on subjects they were teaching at the time. I spent that summer painting, bringing my two kids with me. It truly was such a wonderful experience!

Unfortunately, about two years later, the doors were discovered to have asbestos and had to be removed. I have continued painting and creating since I retired. The experience I had at Tavan was the best! I’ve always felt my artwork was a gift. To quote Pablo Picasso: ‘the meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.’”

– Cathy Mitchell, who retired from teaching in 2018

ARCADIANEWSARCHIVES.COM



# One (ish) pot or pan meals for easy weeknight dinners

August means the kids are back in school and dinner just got a whole lot trickier. Between homework, practice, and everything else, there's not a lot of time to stand around the kitchen. And it's still 110 outside, so nobody wants anything fussy anyway.

These three recipes are my go-to meals for nights like that. They're quick, they're easy, and they're light enough that you won't feel stuffed before bed. Bonus: most of the work happens in one pot or one pan, so cleanup is easy, too. The fire-charred corn chowder with lime is sweet corn at its best, creamy and a little smoky with lime squeezed in at the end. It makes six servings, so pack up the leftovers and lunch tomorrow is done.

## 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

The sheet pan bean quesadillas with creamy green sauce are always a hit with kids. The whole batch gets crispy in the oven at the same time, no flipping one at a time at the stove, and you'll want to put that green sauce on everything. And the three-ingredient black bean veggie burgers are proof you don't need a mile-long ingredient list for a great burger.

### Fire-charred corn chowder with lime Serves 6



- 3 tbsp. avocado oil, divided
- 4 ears corn, husked
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 jalapeño, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 8 ounces dairy-free cream cheese
- 3 cups chopped Yukon gold potatoes
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 cup chopped cilantro, plus more for garnish
- 1 tsp. each: ground cumin, salt
- ½ tsp. each: celery seed, smoked paprika
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 lime

1. Add two tbsp. of avocado oil to a cast iron skillet and bring the heat to medium-high.
2. Add the corn to the skillet and cook for about 15 minutes, rotating to char all sides.
3. While the corn is cooking, add the remaining oil to a soup pot and bring the heat to medium. Add the onion, red pepper, jalapeño, and garlic and cook for five minutes.
4. Add the cream cheese and stir to melt.
5. Stir in the potatoes, broth, cilantro, cumin, salt, celery seed, smoked paprika, and pepper.
6. Bring the soup to a boil, then lower the heat to medium and cover the pot. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes until the potatoes are tender.
7. Cut the corn off of the cobs and stir them into the soup pot and add the juice of one lime.
8. Ladle chowder into bowls to serve, optionally garnished with extra cilantro.

### 3-ingredient black bean veggie burgers Serves 2



- 1 tbsp. ground flax seeds
- 1 (15-ounce) can spicy black beans
- ½ cup rolled oats
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. olive oil

1. Stir together the ground flax seeds and 2 ½ tbsp. of water in a small bowl and set it aside to thicken.
2. Drain the black beans over a bowl to reserve the liquid.
3. Add the drained black beans to a food processor and pulse a few times to break them down. Then add the oats and pulse a few times to incorporate them.
4. Add the thickened flax, salt, pepper, and 1 tbsp. of the reserved bean liquid to the food processor and pulse a few times to get a chunky mixture.
5. Transfer to a bowl and let the mixture sit for five minutes so the oats can absorb the liquid. Shape the mixture into two patties, then refrigerate for 30 minutes.
6. Heat the olive oil in a cast iron skillet over medium heat. Add the patties to the skillet and cook for five minutes on the first side then flip and cook for five more minutes.
7. Serve in a bun with your condiments of choice or serve over greens.

### Sheet pan bean quesadillas Serves 4



- 1 can pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ tsp. each: chili powder, cumin, salt
- ⅓ cup red salsa
- 1 tbsp. lime juice
- 8 small flour tortillas
- cooking spray and tajin

1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Add the beans to food processor with the seasonings, lime juice, and salsa.
3. Spread some of the bean mixture on each tortilla. Top it with another tortilla and flatten with your hand.
4. Spray with cooking spray and sprinkle on Tajin.
5. Roast for 10-15 minutes until golden and crispy.
6. Put sauce ingredients in small blender and blend until smooth. Dip and enjoy!





PHOTO: AUDREA WALSHIRE

Arcadia High



PHOTO: PATTY KENNEDY

Brophy Prep



PHOTO COURTESY OF STACY BARRETT

Veritas Prep

# 2026 HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL PREVIEW

By Alex Gross

After historic seasons from our area high schools last year, excitement is quickly building coming into the 2026-27 football season. While fans have to wait until the end of August for kickoff, players and coaches started their season months ago with summer practices and workouts. Here's how Arcadia, Brophy, Veritas and Xavier are looking heading into fall's quest to win a state title.

## ARCADIA

After leading the school to its first championship appearance in 63 years, BJ Pasquel still has title hopes heading into his second season as head coach. But the team's formula will have to undergo changes with this year's personnel.

"We had a really good defense last year, but our offense kind of led the way. This year it might be reversed since we have quite a few returners on defense," Pasquel said. "Out of the gate our defense is going to be our strong suit."

The Titans have their first three games at home to get acclimated before facing familiar region opponents in Snowflake and Combs. Defensive lineman Milo Marinic and linebacker Braden Knaub, who led the team in tackles last season, are expected to get off to hot starts.

The main challenge will be replacing former 4A Player of the Year Zach Smith and the offensive weapons who surrounded him.

"Is it going to be easy? No, but our expectations are the same," Pasquel said. "We want to be playing our best football at the end of the season and make a deep playoff run."

## BROPHY

While last year's squad was led by now-graduated powerhouses like Devin Fitzgerald



PHOTO: PATTY KENNEDY

Xavier Prep

and Daylen Sharper, a returning core of lineman have the offense looking promising.

"The teams that beat us last year were better on the O-line," Head Coach Jason Jewell said. "We were young, but now having a year under our belt is huge."

University of North Dakota commit Shane Reiersgaard will lead the line anchored by junior tight ends John Chrostowski and Brady Powell. Bolstering the trenches will help open up Jewell's run game instead of having to favor the pass like last season.

The Broncos will have a chance to avenge one of their four regular season losses at this season's home opener against Hamilton. They drew the one of the hardest schedules in Arizona for the second consecutive year, having to play three semifinalists from last year's open division playoffs.

The calendar hasn't affected their preparation, however, as Brophy's summer

has been packed full of 7-on-7 tournaments and time in the weightroom.

"Expectations are high. Now we've just got to perform," said Jewell.

## VERITAS

Head Coach Mike Sanfratello led last year's Falcons to new heights, but he won't have most of that team back this season.

"We had 23 guys with varsity experience, and this year we probably have half of that," Sanfratello said. "Those dozen kids are going to help us try to defend our region championship."

Behind that battle-hardened senior class is inexperienced youth who will look toward returners Will Young and Miles Perry to lead them on the field. Lineman Gabe Jackson will be a key part in keeping last year's defensive scheme intact – a system that held

opponents to under ten points per game seven times in 2025.

"We're going to be pretty solid on the edges against the pass," Sanfratello said. "We've got first team Brayden Barrows and second team Aiden Bailey coming back as defensive backs."

The biggest question mark for Veritas is at quarterback, as the offense will be run by a junior without any varsity experience behind center. It'll be up to veterans to establish a strong run and play-action game as their play caller gains valuable experience early in the season.

## XAVIER

The Gators have established themselves as a strong program heading into flag football's fourth season as an AIA-sanctioned varsity sport and Xavier's second with Head Coach Matthew Reum.

After graduating 11 seniors last season, eyes are on returners like Madie Endredy, Dahlia Young, Mae Rawls, Molly Lim, Emma Barney and Ava Gage to see the field more. Leading the pack is sophomore Evie Maas, a member of Team USA's 15U squad last year.

Xavier got off to a 6-0 start in 2025 and are hoping to come into this season with the same momentum.

"We really have to start out day one as a really focused group," Reum said. "In order to win the games, we've got to win the individual plays."

They open their season September 22 against Higley, with games against rivals St. Mary's and Sunnyslope following in October. After stalling in the first round of last year's playoffs against Mountain Ridge, Reum's squad is hoping for week-to-week growth in order to mount a playoff run.





# DID YOU KNOW? AGAVE

## HOW MANY? 200 SPECIES

There are over 200 species of agave. Each species has its own distinct characteristics and uses.



## HOW OLD? 30 YEARS

Agaves typically live for 10 to 30 years – despite their “century” nickname. After they produce a massive, towering flower stalk – just once! They die and disperse their seeds. They are called “century plants” because people originally believed they took 100 years to bloom.



## HOW TALL? 30 FEET

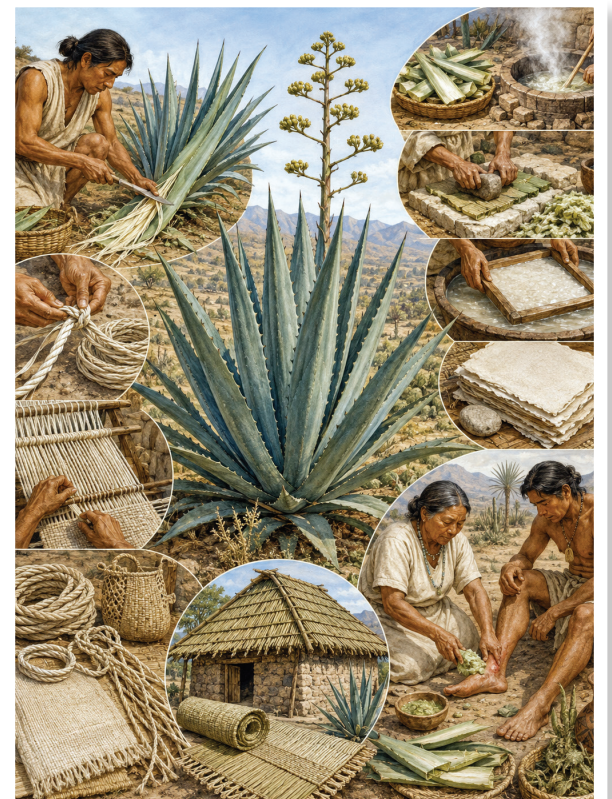
Agave plants bloom just once in their lifetime, producing a flower stalk that can reach up to 30 feet (they grow several inches a day) after 10 to 50 years of growth. The blooms provide nectar for pollinators before the mother plant dies, having exhausted its stored energy.



## USES:

Agave has been an incredibly versatile plant throughout history, serving far more purposes than simply producing tequila. Its tough, durable fibers have been woven into ropes and textiles for centuries, prized for their strength and longevity.

The plant’s leaves have also been processed into sturdy, eco-friendly paper. In traditional medicine, agave has been used to help treat a variety of ailments, including wounds and digestive issues. Even in construction, the plant proved its worth, with its fibers woven into mats and used as roofing material for homes and shelters.



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# DID YOU KNOW? AGAVE

Agave is a succulent that stores water in its thick, fleshy leaves, making it well-suited for dry climates.

Agave is a monocarpic plant, which means it flowers only once in its lifetime, usually at the end of its life cycle.

The name 'agave' comes from the Greek word 'agavos,' which means noble or illustrious.

Agave nectar is a natural sweetener. It is often used as a substitute for sugar or honey.

In ancient civilizations, it was traded and used as a form of currency.

In Mexico, there are festivals dedicated to the agave plant and its products, such as tequila and mezcal.

Agave is a symbol of resilience. Its ability to thrive in harsh conditions makes it a symbol of strength and endurance.

Agave is related to asparagus. Both plants belong to the *Asparagaceae* family.

Agave has sharp spines that are found along the edges of the leaves.

The Aztecs used agave to make a fermented beverage called pulque from the sap.

Agave was considered sacred by the Mayans. They believed it was a gift from the gods.

Instead of breathing during the day like most plants, agaves keep their pores closed to lock in moisture. They only open their pores at night to breathe in carbon dioxide.

Because of this "night breathing," agaves lose 90 percent less water to evaporation than standard agricultural crops like corn or wheat. They can thrive on as little as 10 inches of rain a year.

## SAY WHAT?

*I would walk 500 miles – or in this case, fly even further*

Agaves and long-nosed bats have a unique partnership. The flowers of night-blooming agave species rely almost entirely on these specialized bats for pollination. The bats have evolved elongated snouts and long tongues specifically to drink agave nectar, getting covered in pollen in the process.

A single lesser long-nosed bat can visit up to 100 agave and cactus blossoms in a single evening.

Migratory nectar bats travel a 700-mile "nectar corridor" annually between Mexico and the U.S. Southwest, tracking the seasonal blooming timelines of agaves and cacti. Agave nectar is incredibly rich, containing up to 22 percent sugar content to fuel the bats' high-energy flight, while the pollen they swallow provides a 50 percent protein boost.

Worldwide, bats are the primary pollinators for over 500 plant species.



Because the commercial spirits industry usually harvests agaves before they can bloom, organizations like Bat Conservation International work with farmers for a small ask: allow five percent of their agave crop to mature and flower to provide enough food to support more than two million bats.

## WORD SEARCH

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# When pasta meets fajitas: the ultimate fusion salad

Many gardeners find themselves navigating more than seasonal challenges this month. Weeds, heat, humidity, and fungus can derail even the most promising “fajita patch.” Tomato, bell pepper, zucchini and onion season usually coincide with the hottest months of summer and their ability to survive our harsh climate is largely due to their robust root systems, natural sun-shielding, and the specific ways they are cared for.

With a passion for regenerative growing practices, both tomatoes and peppers have been easy to cultivate. Tomatoes love warm sunny days, ideally temperatures between 65-85 degrees. When summer temperatures rise above 95, problems can emerge. Tomatoes stop producing red pigments, which means red fruits ripen to orange while still retaining their sweetness. Once a heat wave hits, maturing fruit fairs better off the plant than on. If tomatoes have begun to change color, they’ll ripen perfectly on a windowsill.

Nothing transforms an ordinary meal or side dish better than a true ‘farm-to-table’ experience, yet with extreme heat comes the challenge of putting in place the gardening practices of shade cloth, deep watering, and adequate mulching which reduces soil moisture loss by up to 70 percent. Understanding this garden-logic-trilogy will insure the continuation of flavorful, high-yield harvests.

While garlic and cilantro aren’t currently in season, an abundance of things are flourishing. Where do my recipe ideas come from? The answer is this: “it only takes a leisurely stroll through the garden to see what’s growing.” The gentle sounds of nature, the scents, the budding flowers, the sight of hummingbirds fluttering nearby – each moment brings a sense of calm, a reminder of the simple joys that go unnoticed. Capturing this tranquility brings forth so

many ideas. The inspiration for making fajita vegetables mixed with a hint of margarita flair in a pasta salad came much quicker than envisioned.

The Tex-Mex craving and the sizzling sound of fajitas in the back of my mind couldn’t be silenced. The sensory experience couldn’t come full circle until the trickiness of perfectly balancing the warm flavors, then grilling all the veggies, kept the heat and mess out of the kitchen. It’s a personal preference whether to go one step further and add chicken, steak or shrimp.

Wanting to capture the historical flavor profile of a classic ‘margarita,’ a marinade was developed. Attempting to bring the cocktail vibe to the table had to be all about translating those iconic flavors and scents to the bowl. Italian olive oil nicely compliments the plethora of spices that are mixed with the multi-colored peppers, onions, zucchini and tomatoes. Be still my heart, no salad is complete without the sunny golden-yellow accent of corn. Meaty and earthy dark brown portobello mushrooms help to enrich the savory richness while using lime juice and agave nectar turns this marinade into a masterpiece.

Harvesting fresh limes from your own backyard takes this marinade to another level. Growing citrus trees provides an unmatched, floral flavor one simply can’t get from bottled juice. The limes are typically medium-sized,



round with smooth, thin, green skin, which turns yellow when fully ripe.

For pasta salad, searing is generally the best method for both peppers and onions as it softens their texture and unlocks a sweeter, more mellow flavor. For best results, use a large cast iron skillet or the large griddle portion of the BBQ for the vegetables. Both will be exceptionally mounded when all the ingredients are added, but they’ll cook down during the five to seven minutes it takes to lightly sear them. Breathe in deeply while savoring the sound of the authentic, restaurant-style sizzle! Toss the vegetable mixture occasionally, scraping up any bits that stick and add reserved marinade as necessary, then remove to a size appropriate plate. Let everything cool completely before proceeding.

Choosing the pasta shape is the best part of making this salad because shapes act like culinary Velcro dictating the dish’s flavor, texture, and visual appeal. The geometry of the pasta dramatically changes how the salad feels in your mouth. Selecting the right shape turns the cooking process into a creative design challenge where you are essentially building an edible architecture. Short pasta shapes are designed to be stable on a fork so the best shapes should feature plenty of nooks, crannies, and twists to trap the flavors.

Penne has visual symmetry with its long, tubular shape that perfectly mirrors the strips of sliced vegetables and is great when you are loading your salad with large, chunky vegetables or proteins. Farfalle bowties are whimsical to look at, while cavatappi are tight, ridged corkscrews that

provide an incredibly bouncy chew that holds up well against peppers.

Complete freedom exists when choosing the “canvas” which will ensure that every bite captures the harmony between acid, fat, salt, and sweetness. Keep in mind that chilling dulls flavors, so seasonings need to be slightly stronger. Chilled pasta prevents “flavor fatigue” by keeping each bite bright and lively rather than overwhelming the palate with heavy, steaming richness.

The pièce de resistance appears when crumbled cotija cheese is blended in. It’s a deeply flavorful cow’s milk cheese from Mexico that has a very faint sour-milk aroma, almost like feta. Its predominant rich, slightly nutty flavor is saltier than most cheeses which makes it great for cooking. Cotija’s unique tangy flavor, plus its grainy texture and ability to soften but not melt when heated, enhances grilled vegetables and complements the chili powder and cumin.

The joy of nostalgia and the emotional connection to relaxation and happy memories elevates this pasta salad from a simple meal to a comforting experience. At the end of the day, food is about more than just physical fuel – it transcends mere sustenance. It’s a shared cultural ritual, an experiential journey of tradition that’s about the people we share it with and the stories it tells that make the meal truly memorable. Every bite celebrates the journey from soil to soul.

## Margarita fajita pasta salad

### MARINADE

- ½ cup fresh lime juice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp. ketchup
- 1 tbsp. chili powder
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. dried Mexican oregano
- 1 tbsp. amber agave nectar
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- ½ tsp. onion powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 3 tbsp. tequila

### COMBINE WITH MARINADE, REFRIGERATE 15-30 MINUTES

- 1 each red, yellow, orange and green bell peppers seeded, 1/2" slice
- 1 large red onion, ½" slice
- 1 cup fresh corn
- 2 portobello mushroom, ½" slice
- 1 cup each yellow pear and cherry tomatoes, sliced
- 1 tsp. garlic, minced
- 1 poblano pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 tbsp. fresh cilantro, roughly chopped
- 1 zucchini, rough cut

### GRIDDLE

1. Remove veggies from the marinade and sear until tender 5-7 minutes. Add the zucchini towards the end. Give the vegetables room to sizzle, not steam. Cool and roughly chop if desired.

### Toss with:

- 16 oz. box of your choice of pasta, cooked al dente
- ½-¾ cup crumbled cotija cheese
- Salt and black pepper (to taste)

Cover and refrigerate until thoroughly chilled.



Thyme in My Kitchen

BY SHERRY KLUSMAN

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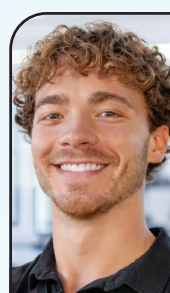
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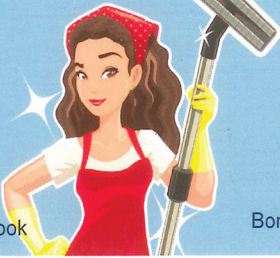
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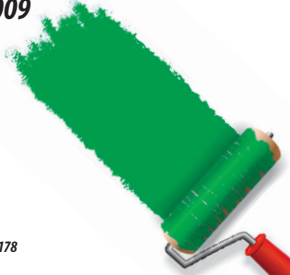
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*\*see more on page 4.*

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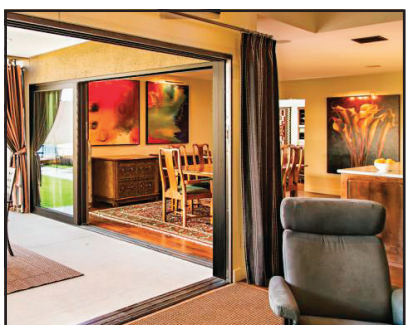
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# Titan Times

VOL. 3 NO. 10

From the students of Arcadia High School

AUGUST 2026

## Welcome Back, Titans!

By Francesca Mena

All good things must come to an end... even summer. But that's not a bad thing – in fact, school starting for the Arcadia Titans is a great thing! Early August has a special atmosphere of nerves and excitement for the new school year. Here's what some Titans are doing to get ready:

The student body leaders, Jane Ord (president), Vivian Speyer (vice president), Braden Knaub (treasurer), and Adam Blais (secretary), are hard at work preparing Campcadia for the class of 2030. Campcadia is a special orientation day for incoming freshman to get to know the campus and each other. In collaboration with student government, Arcadia ambassadors and members of the National Honor Society will lead orientation for freshmen on August 7.



Our football team has been hard at work preparing for the upcoming season. Throughout the summer, passing leagues and big man competitions have been going on to keep Titans strong and ready for any challenges coming their way.

The Titans also traveled to Northern Arizona University for cooler temperatures and more practices. Arcadia cheer also

went to a camp called The Spirit Consultants this summer. A highlight was the Michael Jackson skit created by varsity seniors.

Here at the Titan Times, we have been preparing for expansion. Starting this fall, students will be able to grab their own copy of a full Titan Times newspaper right on campus!

### A TITAN IN DC

This July, I was invited to attend the Washington Journalism and Media Conference in Washington, D.C. WJMC is a prestigious journalism event that invites high schoolers from all over the country to act as National Youth Correspondents.

Hosted at George Mason University, these students receive a unique and hands-on journalism education from award-winning leaders in the field, international media outlets, and prominent figures. One such figure was AZ Senator Mark Kelly.

I had a meeting scheduled with Senator Kelly to talk about our state, but



unfortunately, duty called and our meeting was canceled. Instead, I received a wonderful tour of our nation's Capital and got to speak with a few interns and members of Senator Kelly's staff – many of whom graduated from Arizona high schools and colleges not too long ago.

The biggest piece of advice I received is to talk to everybody; you never know who will help you in the future. I took that lesson to heart and made so many new friends and connections with the people who will be the future of journalism.

Everything I learned that week will be taken back to Arcadia High School's Titan Times. As the paper's editor I plan to teach the other student writers and photographers how to accurately report the happenings of our school with the community at large. The Titan Times is only going to get better, and we can't wait to share that with all of you!

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