

PINEWOOD NEWS

THE GOOD LIFE, COMMUNITY & MOUNTAIN LIVING SINCE '93

VOL. 31 NO. 4 APRIL 5, 2024

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Becky McBride
Associate Broker/Owner

928.606.1385

Becky@flagstaffrealestate.com



Regina Bailey
Associate Broker

928.699.7069

Regina.Bailey@ProvidentAZ.com



Sonia Draper
REALTOR®

928.699.8621

Sonia@Draper-Realtor.com



Deavin Sedillo
REALTOR®

928.679.5505

sedillo.d.r@gmail.com



Crystal Welbaum
REALTOR®

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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

MUNDS PARK MOBILIZES AGAINST FLOOD MAP CHANGES

The community is rallying together today, April 5, to entice Coconino County to reconsider FEMA's flood plain mapping of Munds Park.

Recent revisions to flood maps now classify a significant portion of cabins and land in Munds Park as being within the floodplain. This reclassification presents challenges to property values, infrastructure, and our way of life, translating to higher insurance premiums, increased costs for vital projects—including the construction of a new Fire Department—and an elevated risk of flood damage. Even properties not within the newly designated floodplain are affected, as the infrastructure impacts the whole community.

However, there is hope. The Munds Park Project, a volunteer collaboration of locals, historians, and engineers, offers a practical solution aimed at protecting the Park. Despite the County dedicating 12 years to creating these flood maps, it has yet to propose concrete measures to mitigate this threat. The sole solution they've offered would impose significant financial burdens on Munds Park residents, especially in the event of a flood. Requests for additional time to explore and implement the effective, historically proven measures proposed by the Munds Park Project have been disregarded by the County.

The deadline to appeal is April 22. Residents or businesses with supporting technical and scientific information, such as detailed hydraulic or hydrologic data, can appeal the flood risk information on the preliminary maps and/or provide comments. Appeals, comments, and questions can be emailed to FEMAFloodMap@coconino.az.gov or call 928-679-8881.

Please visit MundsParkProject.com to view the proposed plan and join the Pinewood News Facebook page and the Facebook Group "Munds Park Project Floodplain" while we continue the discussion.

WILLARD SPRINGS REOPENS FOR FREE GREEN WASTE DISPOSAL

Willard Springs Green Waste Site opens on April 5 for free green waste disposal like pine needles, branches, and leaves to help residents prepare for wildfire season. The site is open Fridays and Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., until October 26, 2024, with no load limits. Located 15 miles south of Flagstaff near I-17 (Exit 326), it does not accept bulk or household waste.

LAKE MARY ROAD BECOMES RECREATIONAL CORRIDOR



In a strategic move that marks a significant step forward for outdoor recreation and safety, Coconino County's Board of Supervisors has officially designated a 21-mile stretch of Lake Mary Road, from milepost 338.5 at the Flagstaff City Limits to milepost 317.5 at the South Mormon Lake Entrance, as a recreational corridor. This unanimous decision, made on March 19, 2024, aims to bolster safety and enjoyment for a myriad of users, including cyclists and runners, who frequent this picturesque route.

Following in-depth dialogues with local stakeholders, the county has initiated a comprehensive safety improvement strategy, led by the Coconino County Public Works Department. Key immediate measures include the implementation of new signage, the addition of centerline rumble strips, and enhanced maintenance operations, particularly during peak seasons. These initiatives are complemented by a collaboration with local law enforcement to ensure a heightened patrol presence along the corridor.

The future vision for Lake Mary Road includes substantial infrastructure upgrades and the introduction of separate pathways for various uses, with potential funding support from Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grants. Historically, these grants have already contributed to over \$26 million in road improvements, facilitating safer and more accessible outdoor pursuits.

Positioned at an elevation of 7,000 feet, Lake Mary Road is not just a pathway but a destination renowned for its high-altitude training benefits, attracting world-class athletes in swimming, cycling, and running. This new designation is expected to enhance its reputation further, creating additional recreational and economic opportunities for the county. Vice-Chair Judy Begay has highlighted the resolution's dual benefits: enriching the corridor's safety features for all users and leveraging its potential as a hub for major athletic events and tourism, ultimately delivering a win-win scenario for Coconino County's economy and its outdoor recreation landscape.

Local Highlights continued on page 6



Nancy Shelton

Associate Broker

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435 Hillside

Nearly new and move-in ready! This 3 bedroom/2bath home has all the modern features and upgrades. Single level, vaulted ceilings, open floor-plan, wood burning fireplace, central heat and air conditioning AND a two car garage. The great room has a rock-faced wood burning fireplace as a focal point, high ceilings and an abundance of natural light. The kitchen layout is perfect for entertaining featuring ample counter space, an island with a breakfast bar, upgraded appliances and cabinetry, gas stove and a full pantry. Plenty of room for a full-sized dining table. The primary suite has attached bath with oversized shower, dual sinks and a walk-in closet. The backyard is perfect for gatherings with both a covered deck and an open patio with pavers. Comes mostly furnished.



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YAVAPAI COUNTY FLOOD SEASON IS HERE

Springtime in Verde Valley isn't just about the blossoming flowers and returning warmth; it's also a season that brings with it the risk of flooding. Here's how to stay safe and ahead of any potential water woes.

Stay Connected

First things first, let's ensure you're always in the loop. Sign up for Yavapai County's Emergency Alert System to get critical updates directly to your phone or inbox. Whether it's severe weather alerts or road closures, you'll be the first to know. Find the sign-up link at the Camp Verde official website or download the Everbridge App and search for Yavapai County Sheriff's Office. Don't miss out; staying informed is your first line of defense.

Understand the Risks

Spring brings more than just new blooms; it ushers in a mix of weather conditions that can significantly increase the risk of flooding. From the thawing of winter's snow to unexpected spring rains, knowing what contributes to flooding is crucial. It's not just heavy rains; rapid snowmelt and even the condition of levees and dams play a part. Awareness is key.

You don't have to be in a high-risk flood area to experience damage. Roughly 20% of flood insurance claims come from areas not considered at high risk. From making a family evacuation plan to assembling an emergency kit and understanding your insurance options, taking steps now can save you a lot of trouble later. Remember, most standard homeowners policies don't cover flood damage, so checking your coverage could be a game-changer.

Before, During, and After a Flood

Before a Flood: Have your evacuation routes ready and practice them. Knowing where to go and what to take can save precious time when every second counts.

During a Flood: If flooding occurs, prioritize safety. Move to higher ground and remember, never drive through flooded roadways.

After a Flood: Once it's safe, assess any damage to your property and start the recovery process promptly. Mold can develop quickly, so don't delay.

Spring in Verde Valley is beautiful time of the year, yet it demands preparedness. Stay informed, understand the risks, and take proactive steps to keep your family safe.

YAHOO! FINANCE LABELS TWO ARIZONA TOWNS AS RETIREMENT STINKERS

In the pursuit of a serene and budget-friendly retirement haven, many turn their gaze towards Arizona, lured by its inviting climate and picturesque landscapes. However, retirees might need to navigate carefully; not every Arizona town aligns with the dream of an affordable, leisurely retirement.

Recent analyses highlight six Arizona cities that might not be the best choices for retirees looking to stretch their savings and enjoy a worry-free retirement. The focus here is on two particularly noteworthy cities: Flagstaff and Sedona, both of which present unique challenges.

Flagstaff: Often pictured as a sunny, desert oasis, Arizona does offer chillier surprises, such as Flagstaff. This city, despite its beauty, comes with a chill in the air, boasting winter temperatures that can dip into the 30s and 40s, alongside a significant annual snowfall reaching up to 100 inches. This climate reality could deter those seeking to escape colder weathers in their retirement years. Moreover, the financial feasibility of settling down here is questionable, with a median home value of \$622,412, marking a 4.4% increase over the last year according to Zillow. Flagstaff's living expenses are considerably higher, about 28.7% more than Phoenix, as per the Numbeo Cost of Living Index. Such statistics have led to its ranking as the sixth worst U.S. city for retirees by ConsumerAffairs, largely due to the financial pressures its high cost of living can impose on retirees, as pointed out by Jonathan Faccone, a real estate investor.

Sedona: Sedona captivates with its breathtaking red sandstone formations and vibrant cultural scene, making it a tourist magnet. Yet, this popularity comes at a cost, particularly for retirees seeking affordability. The median home value in Sedona is a staggering \$918,780, a figure that places homeownership well beyond the reach of those relying on a fixed income. Rental prices too, soar, especially during peak tourist seasons, further exacerbated by the city's remote desert setting which limits access to essential amenities and healthcare services. This combination of factors ranks Sedona unfavorably for retirees in need of cost-effective living and accessible care options.

These findings suggest that while Arizona remains a sought-after retirement destination, Flagstaff and Sedona may not fulfill the financial and lifestyle aspirations of many retirees. The search for the perfect retirement locale, it seems, requires a deeper dive into the state's varied cities, beyond the allure of scenic beauty and warm climates, to ensure both the heart and the wallet find their peace.

This article is based on original reporting by Madeline Duley of Yahoo! Finance.



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WORKERS IN PARADISE FORCED TO SLEEP IN CARS DUE TO HOUSING CRISIS

In Sedona, a tourist hotspot, a deepening affordable housing crisis has compelled some local workers to live out of their vehicles. In response, the Sedona City Council approved a controversial plan to establish “the safe place to park” at Cultural Park, offering up to 40 vehicles a place to stay overnight from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. The facility includes showers, restrooms, trash bins, and on-site management. This decision aims to provide a temporary respite for employees who, due to soaring property costs and a scarcity of affordable housing, find themselves without a place to call home. However, this decision has sparked a new development as Sedona residents have started the process to force a referendum over the city council’s recent decision. Frustrated residents filed a referendum application with the city clerk, indicating that the issue could go to voters before implementation. They need 579 valid signatures from registered voters in Coconino and Yavapai counties before April 11 to force a public vote, which could appear on the November election ballot. Sedona Mayor Scott Jablow told the Verde Valley Independent that the project will remain on hold because they don’t want to spend any of the grant money if the referendum does stop the project.

The initiative, funded mainly by an \$875,000 state grant and set for a two-year trial, requires proof of local employment or school enrollment for participation. The ordinance change permits full-time workers to sleep in their cars at the site, emphasizing that the program is a “last resort” and is only available to those employed full-time within city limits, excluding seasonal workers or those who voluntarily choose to live in their vehicle. Campers will be required to work with local social services with an end goal to secure permanent housing. Sedona’s housing dilemma is multifaceted, exacerbated by the conversion of homes into short-term rentals, which constitutes about 17% of the housing stock, and economic conditions that hamper new development. The median home price in Sedona exceeds \$930,000, making homeownership and even renting far beyond the reach of many service industry workers essential to the town’s economy.

Despite the plan’s approval, it has faced significant opposition. Some residents fear it will lead to unsanitary conditions and detract from the community’s character, equating the initiative to a homeless encampment. Meanwhile, city officials and advocates argue it’s a necessary, albeit temporary, measure to address an urgent problem. Sedona’s leaders are also exploring long-term solutions, including partnering with developers on projects that could add over 500 new housing units.

As Sedona grapples with these challenges, the situation underscores the broader issue of housing affordability in desirable locations across America. It’s a poignant reminder of the struggles faced by the very workers who keep these tourist destinations running. In light of this, when visiting places like Sedona and Munds Park, patrons are encouraged to recognize the hardships of service staff by tipping generously and, when possible, in cash. This small gesture of appreciation can make a significant difference in the lives of those who contribute so much to the experience of visitors.

MEASLES ALERT WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In a recent update from Coconino County Health and Human Services, northern Arizona faces a measles caution, with one confirmed and one probable case identified in Flagstaff. Measles, a disease that many consider a relic of the past, has shown its capacity to resurface, posing significant risks, especially to children under five due to its high contagion levels.

SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

Measles symptoms usually manifest seven to 21 days after exposure and can include: High fever, Cough, Fatigue, Muscle aches, Red, watery eyes, Runny nose, and Blotchy rash.

Given its contagious nature, measles poses a significant threat, especially to unvaccinated individuals. Approximately one in five unvaccinated Americans who contract measles require hospitalization.



PREVENTION & ACTIONS

The best defense against measles is vaccination. The measles vaccine has proven highly effective in preventing the spread of this disease. Coconino County Health and Human Services Director, Kim Musselman, emphasizes the importance of vaccination for protection against measles.

For those who suspect they may have been exposed to measles or begin to show symptoms, health officials recommend:

- Self-isolating to prevent further spread.
- Contacting your healthcare provider by phone to report your concerns and symptoms.
- If you lack a regular healthcare provider and need medical attention, call ahead to a hospital or urgent care to inform them of your measles suspicion before arriving.

Community members are urged to stay home, take precautionary measures, and seek medical advice if they believe they’ve been exposed to measles.





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INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING THE NIGHT'S NATURAL WONDER

By Sandee Caviness

Founded in 2003 by Jennifer Barlow and now led by DarkSky International, International Dark Sky Week is more than an event; it's a global movement addressing light pollution. This annual celebration, set against the backdrop of the darkest skies in April, highlights the simple yet profound steps we can take to combat light pollution, thereby preserving the awe-inspiring beauty of the natural night sky for future generations.

Scheduled annually in April, International Dark Sky Week coincides with Global Astronomy Month and the week of the new moon, when the skies are at their darkest. The event invites us to turn our gaze upwards and appreciate the universe's vastness. The 2024 edition, set for April 2–8, promises an extra layer of celestial drama, concluding with the Great North American Eclipse.

THE JOURNEY FROM FLAGSTAFF TO THE WORLD

The story of dark sky preservation is deeply rooted in the history of Flagstaff, Arizona, which became the world's first International Dark Sky City in 2001. This historic designation was the culmination of decades of effort, beginning with the city's pioneering outdoor lighting ordinance in 1958, aimed at protecting Lowell Observatory's celestial research. Despite challenges, including increasing light pollution and the economic pressures of development, Flagstaff's community and its astronomers have worked tirelessly to develop lighting standards that safeguard the night sky while supporting urban needs. This commitment has not only protected local astronomy but also nurtured a cultural appreciation for dark skies, setting a precedent for communities worldwide.

As we reflect on the pioneering efforts of places like Flagstaff and the broader impact of International Dark Sky Week, it's essential to understand why protecting the night sky is vital not just for astronomers but for all life on the planet.

WHY PROTECT THE NIGHT SKY?

The necessity of preserving the night sky extends beyond the realms of astronomy. The natural day-night cycle is a fundamental rhythm that all life on Earth has evolved to follow. Disrupting this cycle with artificial light has far-reaching consequences. Wildlife, for instance, relies on the darkness for navigation, foraging, and reproduction. Light pollution disorients migratory birds, misleads hatchling sea turtles, and disrupts the feeding patterns of nocturnal animals, posing a significant threat to biodiversity.

For humans, the encroachment of artificial light into the night has been linked to numerous health issues, including sleep disorders, depression, and an increased risk of chronic illnesses. Moreover, this intrusion of light pollution extends beyond physical health, eroding our deep-seated connection to the cosmos—a source of inspiration, navigation, and storytelling that has enriched human culture for millennia. The stars and celestial phenomena, which have spurred scientific discovery, philosophical inquiry, and artistic expression, are veiled, distancing us from the astronomical heritage that has shaped our understanding of the universe and our place within it. Thus, the pervasive glow of artificial lighting not only poses significant health risks but also dims the wellspring of creativity and existential reflection that the night sky has offered humanity throughout the ages.

UNDERSTANDING LIGHT POLLUTION

Understanding light pollution is key to addressing it. Light pollution refers to unnecessary and unwanted artificial light that infiltrates the natural night. It not only obscures our starry view but also disrupts ecosystems, wastes energy, and impacts human health. Misguided lighting can lead to "light trespass," glare, and a cluttered visual environment, exacerbating the problem. In Flagstaff, efforts to combat light pollution through better lighting ordinances have shown that mitigating these effects without compromising safety or economic growth is possible.

COMPONENTS OF LIGHT POLLUTION

Light pollution comes in various forms, each with distinct environmental and health impacts. Key components include Sky Glow, Glare, Light Trespass, and Clutter, which together contribute to the complex challenge of preserving the natural night.

Sky Glow: The bright halo that hangs over urban areas is known as sky glow. It's caused by the scattering of artificial light by atmospheric particles and gases, obscuring the view of stars and planets. This phenomenon not only affects astronomical research but also disrupts the natural behaviors of nocturnal wildlife.

Glare: Excessive brightness that causes visual discomfort and reduces visibility. Glare is often a result of unshielded lighting fixtures that emit light horizontally or directly into the eyes. This can compromise safety, especially for drivers and pedestrians at night, as it can temporarily blind individuals to potential hazards.

Light Trespass: Occurs when unwanted artificial light enters one's property, such as a neighbor's outdoor light shining into a bedroom window. This intrusion can disrupt sleep patterns and personal comfort, leading to reduced quality of life and health issues.

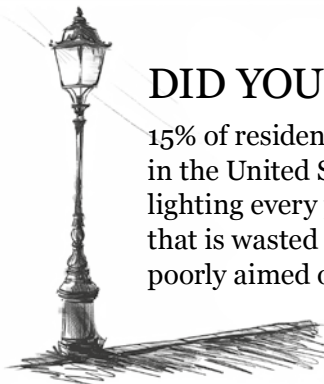
Clutter: An excessive grouping of bright lights, particularly in urban areas, which creates a confusing and distracting environment. This can lead to visual clutter, making navigation difficult and diminishing the aesthetic quality of the night environment.



Continued on page 11

DID YOU KNOW?

15% of residential electricity used in the United States is for outdoor lighting every year. About 35% of that is wasted by unshielded and/or poorly aimed outdoor lighting.





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With 38 years of real estate experience in Munds Park, Debi Bright is a community cornerstone. As Munds Park's longest-standing realtor, she offers unmatched insight and expertise in real estate transactions. Her deep community connections and thorough understanding of local market trends benefit both buyers and sellers. Debi's commitment to excellence and personalized service has built her reputation, guiding clients through complex transactions successfully. Whether buying or selling, her professionalism and passion for real estate mean you're in capable hands.



Megan Weller

Joining RE/MAX Pinewood as a newly licensed agent, Megan Weller is marked by enthusiasm and ambition. With a fresh perspective and a drive to excel, Megan's talent for communication and attention to detail set her apart. Under the mentorship of seasoned professionals like Debi Bright, she's quickly adapting to the Munds Park market, promising to become a significant presence. Megan's commitment to growth keeps her informed of industry trends and best practices, ensuring her clients receive exceptional service.

Whether you're embarking on your real estate journey for the first time or seeking seasoned guidance from a local expert, rest assured that RE/MAX Pinewood Real Estate is here to make your experience seamless, rewarding, and truly unforgettable.



\$947,500

17955 GOLDEN LAKE TRAIL

Log sided cabin with open floor plan, large new front deck and another large covered deck off the back door. 5 large bedrooms, 4 baths. This home is only 3 lots from the National Forest. Lake O'dell is just a small hike into the forest. Central propane heat, 2 fireplaces, one is woodburning in the living room and a large propane fireplace in the primary bedroom. Fenced in backyard. Primary Suite is on main level with a fireplace, double doors opening to the back covered deck. Primary bath has double sinks and walk in closet. Home has distressed wood flooring, tile and carpet throughout. Large loft and sleeps 4 or more. Home is furnished and ready for your preview.

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17810 S WALAPAI ROAD, 62

Come take a look at this updated townhome. This townhome has the perfect location. Short stroll to the Country Club, Park and tennis courts. South facing covered deck, looking into the open court yard. Views to the golf course and great sunsets. Primary suite on the main level. Washer and Dryer located on the main level. Updated kitchen and baths, newer carpet. Upstairs to another large bedroom and extra large loft with walk in closet. Skylight above loft. Townhome is being SOLD with most furnishings.

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1075 E CARIBOU

This double wide has all the bells and whistles. Also sits on a lot and 1/2 for a total of over 7000 square feet lot. Cedar siding 1/2 log siding wraps this 1430 sq ft livable home. New synthetic deck covered with large overhang. Perfect for sitting and enjoying the large flat lot with a fire pit surrounded with pavers, multiple fruit trees, double gates and extra large Tuff Shed storage shed. Seller has made this property so desirable. The other great perk is home is being Sold furnished. Seller prefers to perform a 1030 Tax Free Exchange with Buyer participating at no cost to Buyer.

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\$259,500

405 E OAK DRIVE

This is a two bedroom, 1.5 bath with brand new carpet, newer dishwasher and garbage disposal. Also a newer roof. All electric split floor plan, open kitchen. Property is ready for your occupancy. Covered and exposed front deck for those cool summer days. Carport with an entrance right into the utility room. A couple of sheds off the backside.

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INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK

Continued from page 9

SIMPLE STEPS TO PREVENT LIGHT POLLUTION AT HOME AND BUSINESS

Creating a night sky abundant with stars visible to the naked eye starts right at our doorsteps. Both at home and within our businesses, small changes in how we manage outdoor lighting can collectively lead to a significant reduction in light pollution. Here's how you can contribute to preserving the celestial canvas:

At Home: Become a Guardian of the Night

1. **Opt for Downward Lighting:** Adjust outdoor fixtures so they point downwards, ideally at an angle of less than 45 degrees. This simple redirection helps ensure that light illuminates walkways and entrances without casting a glow into the night sky or into your neighbor's window.
2. **Choose Narrow-Spectrum Amber LEDs:** When replacing bulbs, opt for energy-efficient, Narrow-Spectrum Amber LEDs. These bulbs are not only kinder to the environment but also emit a wavelength of light less disruptive to wildlife and the night sky.
3. **Minimize Excessive Lighting:** Evaluate whether all of your outdoor lights are necessary. Removing redundant fixtures or using timers and motion sensors can reduce light pollution while saving energy.

In Your Business: Lead by Example

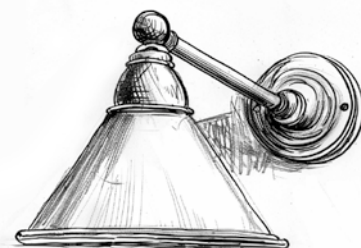
1. **Conduct a Lighting Review:** Businesses often use more outdoor lighting than necessary. Conduct a review of your premises to identify where you can reduce or better direct lighting. This not only contributes to dark sky efforts but can also significantly cut down on energy costs.
2. **Implement Smart Lighting Solutions:** Embrace technology by installing motion sensors and energy-efficient lighting. Such measures ensure that light is used judiciously, reducing waste and minimizing light spill.
3. **Educate and Encourage Participation:** Use your business's visibility in the community to advocate for dark sky practices. Whether it's through informational displays or adopting dark sky-friendly policies, businesses can play a pivotal role in raising awareness.

By taking these steps, each of us can contribute to a larger movement towards preserving the natural beauty of the night sky. It's a commitment to a legacy that allows future generations to gaze upward and find inspiration, wonder, and perhaps a sense of connection to the vast universe beyond our own small world.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Flagstaff Dark Skies Coalition
www.flagstaffdarksbies.org

Dark Sky International
www.darksky.org



DID YOU KNOW?

Replacing unshielded porch or garage lights with shielded fixtures helps dark skies, keeps your light on your property, and makes your lighting more neighbor-friendly! Consider using amber lights to decrease glare and other adverse effects.

HOMEMADE & WONDERFUL

THE JOY & HEALTH BENEFITS OF HOME COOKING

By Sandee Caviness

In a world that rushes past us, where convenience meals flash before our eyes and vanish just as quickly, we've begun to miss the magic hidden within the walls of our own kitchens. If you don't cook at home, it's time to rediscover the enchantment of home-cooked meals. Forget the dread of meal prep after a long day; embrace the sizzle, the chop, and the stir as acts of love and creativity. Enrich your life and fill your and your family's body with goodness and health, one homemade dish at a time.

Let's explore why whipping up your own dishes is more than a mere act of sustenance—it's a vital ingredient for a healthier, happier life.

MIND & BODY ENRICHED BY THE AROMAS OF HOME COOKING

Beyond the flavors, cooking is a stimulant for the brain. It's a dance of creativity. Cooking alone or with company transcends the mere act of eating. It boosts mental and physical well-being, a holistic benefit that lingers long after the plates are cleared. Cooking at home is a recreational activity, a form of stress relief that invites joy and creativity into your routine. Turn off the TV, gather around the kitchen, and enjoy a culinary adventure together. Whether it's experimenting with spices or trying your hand at an old family recipe, these moments are the ones that nourish not just our bodies, but our souls.

THE WHOLESOME CHOICE OF HOME-COOKED MEALS

There's an undeniable truth to home cooking: it's healthier. Restaurants and fast-food joints often pack their dishes with sodium, fats, calories, and chemicals. But when you're the chef, you call the shots. You choose the

ingredients, sidestepping chemical additives and all that GMO business. This is real food, nourishing food that honors your body and the environment.



Speaking of choices, cooking at home puts you in control of your diet in a way that dining out never can. It's easier to manage calories, to tailor each dish to your nutritional needs and taste preferences. And in doing so, you engage with your food more mindfully, appreciating the flavors, the textures, and the love that goes into each bite.

SAVING PENNIES, SAVORING MOMENTS

Let's talk numbers for a moment. Cooking at home is not just good for your health; it's good for your wallet. With home cooking, the cost of a meal plummets compared to dining out. Forbes reports that it's up to five times more expensive to order from a restaurant than to cook at home. Imagine the savings! Your wallet will be so heavy!

Embracing the joys of home cooking is about so much more than just food. It's about health, happiness, and creating moments that matter. It's a chance to kick fast and processed foods to the curb and reclaim the kitchen as a space of creativity, connection, and contentment. So, if you eat out more than cook home meals, take the time to rediscover the wonders of cooking at home—it's guaranteed health and happiness!

P.S. Sara Bowyer will be back next issue with recipes that are sure to please!

"The fondest memories are made when gathered around the table." — Anonymous



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7 BEST GUIDED WALKING TOURS OF EUROPE & THE US

By “Unstoppable Stacey” Wittig

May I suggest experiencing walking tours of Europe and the US as effective and enjoyable ways to familiarize yourself with a city during brief visits? Such downtown walking tours offer splendid opportunities to not only shake off jet lag through physical exercise but also to immerse yourself in the vibrant city streets. US and Europe walking tours help you orient quickly to a new urban landscape. And if you can snag one of the increasingly popular walking food tours – all the better! Below are some of my top picks for downtown walking tours:

Walking Tours Europe: Florence, Italy – My favorite memories of Florence spring from an Original Florence Walking Tour years ago. The university student from North America gave our small group a comprehensive tour of all the breath-taking sites: Brunelleschi’s Dome, the Baptistery, Bell Tower, Gates of Paradise, Vasari’s Corridor, Piazza della Signoria, Ponte Vecchio and more.

She wove the fascinating history into the great sites and gave us tips about the best places to

- taste gelato,
- hear a Gregorian chant or
- shop for colorful leather goods.

This tour helped me spread my wings in Florence ... and fly away into the past. I always endorse this sort of walking tour for my friends traveling to Tuscany.

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOURS: Santa Fe, New Mexico – Historic Walks of Santa Fe packs into a two-hour tour, much more than I could ever read in history books. Our knowledgeable guide sifted it all out and made Santa Fe’s stories come alive as we walked streets that have been trod since the 1600s. Santa Fe, the oldest continuous capital city in the United States, has been under the rule of Spanish kings, Mexico, the US and even the Southern Confederacy. Santa Fe’s downtown walking tours include walking food tours, tours of Santa Fe’s most beautiful and historic sites and architectural walking tours.

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOURS: Pasadena, California – Experience the history, architecture and folklore of Pasadena, California, on the Old Pasadena Food Tasting Walking Tour. You’ll discover spectacular ethnic eateries as you are led through colorful alleys and secret thruways by California foodie guides. I sampled delish cuisine as I learned about the fascinating California heritage of these ma and pa restaurants that I would never have discovered on my own.

WALKING TOURS EUROPE: Rome, Italy -- Rome Free Walking Tour, a group of licensed tour guides, offers tours in English and Spanish Monday through Saturday at 10 a.m. for the Vatican Tour and 4 p.m. for the Colosseum Tour. No reservations are needed; simply meet at Piazza di Spagna, next to the tall column and the big Spanish flag of the Spanish Embassy. The professional guides for these European walking tours work for your tips, so make sure you give them what they deserve!

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOURS: Flagstaff, Arizona – For the allure of experiencing something potentially supernatural, take a Freaky Foot Tours in historic downtown Flagstaff. From a phantom hotel bellboy to the restless spirits of NAU students, you’ll learn stories that testify to Flagstaff’s haunted heritage during these engaging downtown walking tours.

MACKINAC ISLAND WALKING TOURS: Upper Peninsula, Michigan – Wander by grand residences and famed sites of the Victorian era and make your way to the stunning natural attractions of Mackinac Island State Park. Walking tours offer glimpses into the territory’s rich history, once known to Native Americans as the “Great Turtle.” With its ban on motorized vehicles,

the island offers an ideal setting for walking, providing an experience akin to traveling back in time. Indeed, Mackinac Island gained recognition as a spot for romantic retreats, especially after the release of the film “Somewhere in Time,” which starred Jane Seymour, Christopher Reeve and Christopher Plummer.

WALKING TOURS EUROPE: San Sebastian, Spain – What better way to acclimate to the city with the most Michelin stars per meter (square foot) in the world than walking food tours? That’s precisely what I will do when I visit San Sebastian at the end of May.

DEVOUR TOURS is building my understanding of pintxos (Basque tapas) traditions by introducing me to the families

behind the pintxos bars that create seafood-forward delicacies. The Europe walking tours company has top-notch local guides that unveil the culture of the place. I experienced one of their walking food tours in Seville, Spain. Get the inside scoop about Devours tours at my walking tours Europe story, Best Tapas in Seville.

Book your walking tours in advance so you can make the most of your time while you’re at your destination. And this year, with the summer Olympics in Paris, walking tours in Europe may be booked quickly. I use Viator, TripAdvisor or Get Your Guide. They’ve always been reliable for me for downtown walking tours and walking food tours.

Enjoy this article? Then subscribe to Stacey’s travel blog at www.unstoppablestaceytravel.com/subscribe. “UNSTOPPABLE Stacey” Wittig is a travel writer based in Munds Park, AZ. Find links to these guided city tours on her website!



One’s destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.

– Henry Miller.



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THINGS TO DO

THE NORTHERN ARIZONA SCENE



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Check Website for Details: www.mortimerfarmsaz.com/PicknPlay

Mortimer Farms: 12907 E. State Route 169 • Dewey, AZ



SIP! THE VERDE VALLEY WINE & MUSIC EXPERIENCE

Get ready for an amazing experience along Page Springs Rd. in Cornville, Arizona the weekend of April 27-28.

Sip! at the source ~ 5 wineries/tasting rooms, and several restaurants: D.A. Ranch Vineyards & Estates, Page Springs Cellars, Cove Mesa Vineyard, Oak Creek Vineyards, Javelina Leap Winery, BrewHa Social Eatery, Up the Creek Restaurant, and The Old Corral Bar.

Sip! and sound ~ Over 20 musical acts playing at multiple wineries/venues all weekend long.

Sip! and savor ~ Enjoy food from area restaurants and local food trucks.

Sip! and shop ~ Local craft vendors will have goods and craft items for sale.

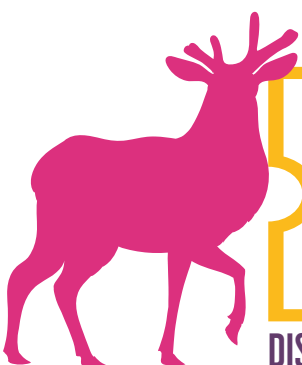
Sip! shuttle ~ Ticket holders can ride the wine shuttles to every winery and participating business along Page Springs Rd. throughout the day, with extra parking areas dedicated to ticket holders only.

Sip! and stay ~ Enjoy discounted room rates from The Tavern Hotel in Old Town Cottonwood, and Courtyard Marriott Sedona.

Sip! and support ~ We're giving back to local organizations and schools such as Desert Star Community School, Low Income Student Aid, Inc. (LISA), and Friends of the Verde River. We'll hold raffles and drink specials throughout the entire weekend.

11 am - 7 pm

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DISCOVER MORE THINGS TO DO WITH A QUICK SCAN!

MOGOLLON RIM WATERS TO RECEIVE FIRST-EVER MARCH TROUT STOCKING

Get ready, fishing aficionados and outdoor lovers! It's almost that time again when the Mogollon Rim waters get a splash of excitement with early trout stockings. Yup, you heard that right!



There's so much more to fishing than just catching.

This year, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is shaking things up by releasing those shimmering, catchable-size rainbow trout into Canyon, Haigler, and Tonto creeks as early as March. It's a first for these spots, kicking off the fishing season sooner than ever before in the splendid backdrop of Payson on the Mogollon Rim.

While these select creeks get an early start, don't worry, the rest of the area's streams aren't left out. They'll stick to the traditional April stocking schedule. To stay in the loop and not miss out on any updates (because who likes being the last to know?), make sure to hit up the AZGFD's website for all

the latest on when and where the trout will be making their grand entrance. Just a heads up, though, those stocking schedules are more like guidelines and might change if the weather decides to be a party pooper or if there are other surprises at the sites. So, pack your gear, prep your lines, and get ready for some top-notch trout fishing adventures this spring!

GET OUTDOORS WITH MUTS!

Join the Munds Park Trail Stewards (MUTS) to maintain the natural beauty of our trails! Volunteering with MUTS offers an enjoyable opportunity to get outside, connect with nature, and contribute to a great cause. Our 2024 Volunteer Events are scheduled monthly from April to October, in partnership with the Coconino National Forest Service.

Here's your chance to make a difference: April 20, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, and October 12

We kick off our season focusing on clearing fallen logs and drainage on the trails, with special attention to the Crystal Point Trail.

Event Day Snapshot:

Safety First: Join us at 8:15 a.m. for a morning safety meeting.

Hard Work Pays Off: Trail work concludes at 12 noon, followed by a complimentary lunch as a token of our appreciation.

What to Bring: Work gloves, long pants, sturdy shoes, sunblock, and attire suitable for the weather. We'll provide water and all the necessary trail tools.

Stay Informed: As outdoor conditions can change, please visit our website or check the Pinewood News for the latest updates on event dates and details.

We're excited to welcome volunteers who share our passion for the outdoors and community service. Your support helps ensure our trails can be enjoyed by everyone for years to come. Thank you for considering lending a hand with MUTS — where every volunteer makes a difference!

SIGN UP FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!

Sign-ups start April 1 at vbspro.events/p/be6bec

Date: June 10-14

Time: 9 am - 12 pm

Ages: K-6 grades, must be 5 by August 31

Offered by Munds Park Community Church

DEFEND YOUR HOME FROM WILDFIRES

WITH AFFORDABLE ROOFTOP SPRINKLERS

By April Plonski, Owner of Lucky Penny – Goosehead Insurance

As the threat of wildfire continues to loom over northern Arizona, innovative solutions are emerging to help communities protect their homes and properties. Among these solutions are rooftop sprinkler systems which are gaining attention for their effectiveness in mitigating the risk of wildfire damage.

Rooftop sprinkler systems, designed specifically to combat ember attacks during wildfires, have become a valuable tool in the fight against these destructive blazes.

A proactive approach to wildfire defense that aims to create a protective barrier around homes and structures, rooftop sprinkler systems typically consist of strategically placed sprinkler heads mounted on rooftops, connected to a dedicated water supply. When activated, the sprinklers release a steady stream of water, wetting the roof surface and surrounding areas to reduce the likelihood of ignition from ember showers.

The effectiveness of rooftop sprinkler systems lies in their ability to create a moisture-rich zone that acts as a buffer against embers. By keeping the immediate vicinity of a home damp, these systems can significantly decrease the risk of ignition and prevent the spread of wildfires to nearby structures.

This product has great versatility and can be retrofitted onto existing houses with ease. Simply set the device on the ridge of your rooftop's home. And here is the best part: A quick search on Amazon reveals basic systems of this nature that cover an area of 3300 square feet for as little as \$43! Other models include customizable features such as adjustable spray

patterns and automatic activation mechanisms. If you're a DIY-type of homeowner, check out Youtube's videos for building this device with \$10 of PVC pipe.



Rooftop sprinkler system installed on the Hedgecock home. Photo courtesy of Joe Hedgecock.

While this apparatus is by no means a catch-all solution for mitigating wildfire risk, it represents a proactive and effective tool in the broader toolkit of wildfire mitigation strategies. As homeowners and communities confront the growing threat of wildfires, investing in precautionary measures such as rooftop sprinkler systems can make a significant difference in reducing vulnerability and enhancing safety. By harnessing the power of innovation and technology, we can build a more resilient community that is better equipped to withstand the challenges of increasing wildfire risk.

Special thanks to my new clients, Joe and Terri Hedgecock, for introducing me to this revolutionary and affordable product and for taking extra steps to keep your home in Munds Park safe. As Joe put it, "if something happens, I'll just hook the hose up and go".

Stay informed and prepared for wildfire season by visiting the National Fire Protection Association's wildfire resources page at [nfpa.org/Education-and-Research/Wildfire](https://www.nfpa.org/Education-and-Research/Wildfire). As always, we defer to the guidance of our Pinewood Fire Department as far as how to proceed in the event of this sort of emergency and follow their instructions as they pertain to evacuations. Celebrate Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Saturday, May 4, 2024 by preparing your home for the upcoming wildfire season.



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SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD

THE COCKTAIL CONNOISSEUR'S CORNER

THE LAVENDER HONEY BEE

Not Your Grandma's Cocktail

By Venita Dee

It's spring. The kind of spring night that feels like the universe is flirting with you, whispering sweet nothings made of starlight and secrets into the nape of your neck. And there you are, standing in the middle of this cosmic dance floor, feeling like you should be holding something as exquisite as the moment itself—A perfect moment for the Lavender Honey Bee Cocktail. This isn't just a drink; it's your gateway to savoring the night's glory.

A SIP OF HISTORY, WITH A SIDE OF REBELLION

Let's wind the clocks back to the 1920s - a time when the word "prohibition" was doing more than just cramping everyone's style; it was an outright party pooper. But humans, being the resourceful rebels we are, decided that if life gave us lemons (and illicit gin), we'd make the Bee's Knees. And oh, was it the bee's absolute knees! A delightful concoction made to mask the taste of gin that was, let's be honest, as smooth as sandpaper.



Fast forward to today, and we're giving this classic a makeover it didn't know it needed. Because why stop at "good" when you can be fabulous? The Lavender Honey Bee is not just a cocktail; it's a declaration of war against all things mundane. With gin, lemon juice, and the pièce de résistance - lavender honey syrup - this drink is like dropping a floral bomb in the middle of a citrus grove.

DIY OR DIE TRYING

Ingredients:

- 2 oz of the boldest gin you can find (because life's too short for bad gin)
- 0.5 oz lemon juice, freshly squeezed (none of that bottled nonsense)
- 0.5 oz lavender honey syrup (because if you're going to do it, do it with style)
- Sparkling water (just a splash, to keep things interesting)
- A sprig of lavender or a lemon twist, for when you're feeling fancy

Lavender Honey Syrup:

Equal parts honey and water, with a bunch of lavender thrown in for good measure. Because we're sophisticated like that.

The Method to the Madness:

- Syrup Shenanigans: Combine honey, water, and lavender. Warm it up just enough to get them mingling, then let it cool. This isn't a speed dating event.
- Shake It Like a Polaroid Picture: Gin, lemon juice, lavender honey syrup. Ice. Shake. This is where the magic happens.
- The Grand Finale: Pour it over ice, top it with a whisper of sparkling water, and garnish. Because if you're not garnishing, are you even trying?

EPILOGUE: WHY THIS DRINK?

Because some nights are too damn beautiful to spend with anything less than extraordinary in your hand. The Lavender Honey Bee is more than a cocktail; it's a statement. A reminder that sometimes, the best way to deal with life's lemons is to squeeze them into a gin and toast to the stars. So here's to the nights that turn into stories, the drinks that taste like adventures, and the wild hearts who refuse to settle for ordinary. Cheers, you magnificent rebels.



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WORD SEARCH

Created by Paul Mason • Solution pg. 38



absurd	deception	kooky	scam
All FoolsDay	dupe	lighthearted	scheme
amuse	foolish	mislead	silly
amusing	funny	mockery	spoof
April	gag	nonsense	stunt
celebrate	hoax	play	surprise
chicanery	humor	practicaljoker	trick
chump	infantile	prank	victim
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STARLIGHT STORIES

THE MAGIC OF DARKNESS

Experiencing the Total Solar Eclipse of April 8th

By Richard Pipkin

By far the most exiting astronomical event this month is the total solar eclipse of April 8th. If you've never seen a total eclipse of the Sun, making the effort to see one is unbelievably rewarding. Typical comments you'll here people make during and after a solar eclipse are "breathtaking,"

"humbling," "spiritual," and even "life changing." That last statement is true for many of us. An eclipse is a unique demonstration of the wonders of nature and of the universe. It's as if you've witnessed magic, a true miracle of the Heavens.

Unfortunately, the April eclipse will completely miss Arizona. It will begin in the Pacific Ocean, pass through southern Mexico and reach southwest Texas around 1:27 CDT in the afternoon. From there it passes through Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, and then into New Brunswick, Canada at around 3:30 EDT.

The nearer you can get to the center of the eclipse path, the longer it will last. But generally, being within 20 miles or so of the center only shortens the period by a few seconds. On the very edge of the path is where the period gets very short.

So, what is it that makes a solar eclipse so special? I suppose it's a combination of many factors: the excitement of the buildup—watching the moon through solar glasses slowly eat its way across the Sun. The surrounding landscape also takes on a strange appearance: colors and shadows become more saturated and prominent. And at last, the extraordinary sight of the so called "diamond ring" will appear in the seconds before totality, and it's time to take off the solar glasses and watch the spectacle.

The temperature will have dropped markedly by this point. The sky will darken to a dusk-like hue and amazingly, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, and Mars and a few bright stars may become visible. It's a weird and magical sight.

Wildlife, if you're lucky to be around some, will behave strangely: birds begin to roost; owls and other nocturnal creatures may appear. If you're among a crowd of people, you'll hear cheers, screams, and gasps of amazement.

During the all too brief minutes that the Moon totally covers the Sun, prominences, orange bursts of nuclear flame will appear around the edges

of the disk, you'll see the beautiful corona—a wispy cloud of atoms literally blown apart by the intense heat of the Sun into their constituent particles of protons neutrons and electrons. No photograph ever taken of a total eclipse can prepare you for this sight.



Path of the April 8, 2024 solar eclipse. Courtesy NASA.

Finally, the spectacle approaches its end: the famous Bailey's Beads appear—bright red dots at the Moon's trailing edge. A second diamond ring appears signaling it's time to put our solar glasses back on. By that point, many people will sob. It's nearly impossible not to. And when it's over, your first question may be, "When's the next one?"

So, what if you can't get to the totality path? The next best thing is to find a local eclipse event. Especially, check out the Great American Eclipse Party at Lowell Observatory, <https://lowell.edu/event/the-2024-great-american-eclipse-party/> They will

have solar telescopes you can look through to observe the Sun in real time and probably live showings from cameras along the elipse path. Also, take time to look at shadows beneath trees. The gaps between leaves often display crescent shadows of the Sun on the ground. You can get a similar effect with a kitchen colander held above a light surface. And if you have binoculars, point them towards the Sun and hold a sheet of white paper a few inches from the eyepieces to get a more pronounced effect.

Sadly, if you miss this month's eclipse, you'll have to wait about 20 years for the next one to appear in the United States. But if you're fortunate enough to be able to travel, noteworthy total eclipses of the decade will occur in Spain in 2026, followed by a six-and-a-half-minute totality in north Africa in 2027, and a five-minute-long eclipse will pass across much of Australia and south New Zealand in 2028, and finally, a 2030 eclipse across Africa and Australia.

If your travels are limited to the United States, Canada, and Europe, we'll see our longest-ever solar eclipse on August 12, 2045. It will be six minutes of totality running from Northern California across to Florida. Seven years later, Floridians will experience another event on March 30, 2052. The U.S. will experience an eclipse drought for the next 27 years and then get two eclipses within a 12-month span, on May 11, 2078, and May 1, 2079.

MUNDS PARK & RIMROCK ARE DARK SKY COMMUNITIES

Celebrate International Dark Sky Week - April 2 - 8, 2024!

International Dark Sky Week is a worldwide celebration of the dark and natural night.

For many, the dark night is often misunderstood, unfamiliar, and frightening. But the natural night is filled with wonder and awe, and is critical to the health and wellbeing of our planet.

We invite you to join us as we discover the night together and learn about the harmful effects of light pollution and what we can do to embrace the dark and save the night.

Learn More at www.idsw.darksky.org



BUYING OR SELLING A MOUNTAIN RETREAT? DISCOVER THE POWER OF LOCAL EXPERTISE.

By Sandee Caviness

In the kaleidoscopic world of real estate, among the rapid evolution of online listings and the seductive dance of digital walkthroughs, the quintessential question emerges: Can the traditional realtor still climb the mountain of modernity and plant their flag at its peak? Absolutely, and nowhere is this more true than in the pines of Munds Park and its neighboring highlands. I recently had the pleasure of both selling and buying a home, guided by the unparalleled expertise of a local realtor. This wasn't just a transaction; it was a masterclass in what makes local insight so invaluable. The tailored advice and intimate market knowledge I received were second to none, proving that a realtor from outside our area simply couldn't offer the same level of service. I could not be happier with the outcome, affirming the value of the local realtor in our ever-changing world.

THE INSIDERS OF THE MOUNTAIN TRAILS

First, let's debunk a myth: not all heroes wear capes, some carry house keys. The local realtor is the Gandalf of your mountain real estate journey, guiding you through the misty forests of listings to the clearings of your dream cabin. They're not just selling you a cabin; they're inviting you into a community. Imagine knowing the best sunrise hike, the coziest coffee spot like Kota's, or the ideal tee time for catching the morning dew on the greens at the Pinewood Country Club before you've even unpacked.

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Imagine selling your home and the buyer's agent turns out to be the person you've never seen at the local Shell Gas station or never nodded to at the Pinewood Restaurant. It feels impersonal, right? Your local realtor doesn't just work here; they live here. Their investment in the community mirrors your own, making them not just agents, but neighbors. They champion local causes, from helping keep the forest pristine to fundraisers, ensuring the fabric of the community remains tight-knit and vibrant. When they help you buy or sell, it's not a transaction; it's an act of communal love.

A ROLODEX OF MOUNTAIN WIZARDS

Ever tried to find a reliable chimney inspector in mountain country? It's akin to seeking a needle in a haystack, especially with Google searches not behaving the same as in the city. Your local realtor, however, has a magical Rolodex (If you remember those!) of tried-and-tested professionals. From staging your cabin to ensuring the plumbing can withstand mountain winters, they have the connections to streamline your journey, transforming what could be a Herculean endeavor into a walk in the park.

TREND WHISPERERS

In a market as dynamic as mountain real estate, being ahead of the curve isn't just advantageous; it's essential. Local realtors have their fingers on the pulse of the community, sensing shifts before they become trends. They know if that quaint cottage is priced right or if the market's about to heat up like a cozy fireplace. This insight allows them to navigate the market with a finesse that's both rare and invaluable.

THE STRESS-ALLEVIATORS

Imagine the peace of mind knowing your home's pricing strategy isn't just based on comps, but on a deep understanding of what makes mountain homes special. Your local realtor doesn't just see square footage; they see potential, value, and dreams. They're adept at making your home stand out in a crowded market, ensuring it doesn't just get listed, but loved and lived in. On the flip side, buying through them means you're not just making an offer; you're making the right offer.

THE DOOR OPENERS

Lastly, let's talk accessibility. In the dense forests and winding roads of mountain country, having someone who can physically open doors for you is not just convenient; it's critical. Your local realtor does more than show homes; they show commitment, attending inspections, walkthroughs, and closings to ensure no detail is missed. Their expertise extends beyond the home, ensuring you understand every facet of the transaction, making what could be a complex process surprisingly straightforward.

Finally, skip the detour through Aunt Suzie's real estate network. For those eyeing the mountain dream, the Pinewood News is your golden ticket. We've got the local realty wizards who know the lay of the land better than anyone—no need to gamble on a friend of a friend from the Valley. Our experts blend market genius with local knowledge, ensuring your real estate journey is nothing short of legendary. Remember, when it comes to mountain living, the best and most seasoned guides are found right here, in the pages of the Pinewood News.

THE BEST OF THE BEST CAN BE FOUND RIGHT HERE!

Coldwell Banker North Land.....	Page 3
Lorraine De La Cruze Realtor®	Page 18
Mountain Dreams Realty	Page 8
Nancy Shelton Realtor®	Page 5
Re/max Fine Properties Pinewood	Page 10
Steve Valentine	Page 28
Wild Elk	Page 40

START YOUR JOURNEY WITH THE BEST BUY OR SELL YOUR CABIN RETREAT WITH A MUNDS PARK PREMIER REALTOR



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See listing on page 3



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GREAT OUTDOORS

ARIZONA'S HIDDEN GEM

A Journey Through Time & Nature at Rockin' River Ranch

By Sandee Caviness

THE REBIRTH OF A GEM

The story of Rockin' River Ranch State Park's rebirth is a captivating one. Once a private guest ranch, it has been transformed into a public treasure offering a myriad of outdoor activities. Acquired by State Parks in 2008 and officially opening its gates to the public on February 9, 2024, the park has been meticulously planned to blend outdoor recreation with conservation efforts. It stands as a testament to Arizona's dedication to preserving its natural and cultural heritage, offering an escape into nature on Fridays through Sundays, equipped with amenities that ensure a comfortable experience.



Photo courtesy of Rockin' River Ranch State Park



Photo courtesy of Rockin' River Ranch State Park

FISHING: Anglers will find the Verde River a haven for fishing, with opportunities to catch largemouth bass, redeye and smallmouth bass, catfish, and even the occasional rainbow trout. The river's rich ecosystem provides both a challenge for seasoned anglers and a delightful introduction for newcomers to the sport.

WILDLIFE VIEWING: The park's diverse environments make it a prime spot for wildlife viewing. Each visit brings new wildlife surprises thriving within the park, from javelina to river otters, deer to great blue herons, and the summer tanager.

A DAY AT THE RANCH

Planning your visit is easy. The park operates from Friday through Sunday, offering a perfect weekend getaway. Whether you're exploring on foot, casting a line in the Verde River, or simply enjoying a picnic while soaking in the sweet surroundings, Rockin' River Ranch State Park is a place where memories are made.

A STROLL THROUGH TIME

The Verde Valley has a rich history shaped by water, innovation, and resilience. The early inhabitants of this region, including the Sinagua people, thrived through their adept use of the land, developing sophisticated agricultural techniques and crafting settlements that have stood the test of time. Today, the echoes of their legacy can be explored through the area's archaeological sites, providing a glimpse into the past that has shaped the present.

LOVE THE GREAT OUTDOORS?

Rockin' River Ranch State Park is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts. Whether you're drawn by the call of the trails, the lure of the river, or the chance to witness wildlife in its natural habitat, there's something here for everyone.

HIKING: With nearly four miles of multi-use trails, the park invites visitors to wander through its landscapes. These trails are a gateway to discovering the park's riparian zones, high desert vistas, and the serene beauty of the Verde River.

FINDING YOUR WAY

Burrowed between the West Clear Creek and the Verde River, the park is a scenic drive 45 minutes away from Munds Park and an easy 30 minutes from Rimrock. Its location, bordered by the Coconino and Prescott National Forests, ensures that your journey to the park is as captivating as the time you'll spend there.

Rockin' River Ranch State Park is an experience rich in history, nature, and community. It invites us to step outside our daily routines into the serenity of Arizona's outdoors. Whether you come for the history, the hiking, the fishing, or the wildlife, you're sure to leave with a deeper appreciation for the natural world. Planning resources can be found on the Arizona State Parks website, www.azstateparks.com/rockin-river, to ensure your visit is both enjoyable and unforgettable.



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PAGES *In The* PINES

FALLING

- by T.J. Newman
- Simon & Shuster 2021
- 304 pages

By Sandy Wright

Bill Hoffman is flying a red-eye from LA to New York, and feeling guilty because he'll miss his son's baseball game.

What he doesn't know is that thirty minutes before the flight, his family was kidnapped.

The terrorists order Bill to crash the plane with 143 passengers on board, or his family dies.

He lets his chief steward, Jo, in on the secret, and she, in turn, tells her FBI-agent nephew Theo, and now it's a race against time to save both the family and passengers.

This high-concept thriller delivers at Mach speed. Bill and the flight crew are well-fleshed out. Key passengers who help out are told in quick brushstrokes, which fits with the pace of the story. Newman's background as a flight attendant gives the book a ring of authenticity and a bit more depth. It's clear that she is adept in aviation safety, procedures the well-traveled person knows all too well, and it gives the reader that extra sprinkle of alarm.

You're drawn into the story by the first line: "When the shoe dropped into her lap, the foot was still in it." It caught me off guard and I relished the feeling.

I read this book in a little over two days, racing to find out each cataclysmic consequence to Bill's choices at the same time he does. The detailed backstories of each character, interwoven into every chapter, was like getting an unexpected exchange of personal histories from the person in the seat next to me, while being completely incapable of coming to their aid. I felt personally involved in the story, and wonder what they are all doing with their lives now.

The book has the ingredients to go from page to screen. I hope we get to see it happen.

As a debut novel, it's a winner. We are in a world where terrifying ordeals happen all around us. If there was ever a book to show how you might feel in such a catastrophe, this is it.

I understand Newman has a second book out now, titled *Drowning*. If you like *Falling*, perhaps you'd like to read *Drowning* next.



HIDDEN PICTURES Solutions



PLUTO

THE COOLEST DWARF PLANET IN THE KUIPER BELT

Hey there explorers! Get ready to learn the fascinating story of Pluto, the icy world that dances in the distant and dark corners of our solar system. This tale is not just about a faraway place; it's a journey that starts right here on Earth, in the beautiful state of Arizona. So, buckle up for a cosmic adventure that spans over a century and brings us face-to-face with one of the coolest places in space!

PERCIVAL LOWELL, THE DREAMER

Our story begins with a man named Percival Lowell, who had a big dream while studying the stars from his observatory in Northern Arizona. In 1902, Lowell suggested that there must be a ninth planet hiding beyond Neptune. He spent years searching the skies, using special telescopes and a cool gadget called a blink comparator to spot this mysterious world. Although Lowell never found the planet during his lifetime, his dedication laid the groundwork for one of the most exciting discoveries in space science.

A DISCOVERY IN FLAGSTAFF

Fast forward to 1930, and enter Clyde Tombaugh, a young and eager astronomer working at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff. Using the blink comparator and a lot of patience, Tombaugh spotted something moving on the photographic plates he was studying. This wasn't just any star; it was the planet Lowell had dreamed of finding—Pluto! The

discovery was announced on March 13, 1930, as tribute to Lowell and a nod to the discovery date of Uranus by William Herschel.



Pluto has a large heart-shaped feature on the planet's surface. Pluto's "heart" measures approximately 1,000 miles (1,600 km) across. It's a vast plain of nitrogen ice. Image via NASA/ JHUAPL/ SwRI/ The University of Arizona.

THE DWARF PLANET

Now, let's zoom in on Pluto itself. This tiny world is a dwarf planet, located in a chilly neighborhood called the Kuiper Belt, way beyond Neptune. Pluto is so cool (literally and figuratively) because it's different from anything else in our solar system. It has mountains, valleys, plains, craters, and even glaciers!

PLUTO'S ORBIT

Imagine Pluto and Neptune are like racers on a cosmic track around the Sun. Most of the time, Pluto is the distant racer, zooming along the outer edge of our solar system. But here's a twist – occasionally, Pluto speeds up and takes a shortcut that brings it closer to the Sun than Neptune! For about 20 of its 248-year race, Pluto dashes ahead, slipping inside Neptune's path. It's like overtaking your friend in a marathon about 8% of the time.

PLUTO'S SIDEWAYS SPIN

Now, think of Pluto as a skateboard doing a cool trick in the cosmic skatepark. Instead of rolling straight like most skateboards, Pluto is pulling off an epic side slide – it's spinning on its side! This rad move isn't just for show; it gives Pluto some extreme seasons. And get this:

Continued on page 26



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PLUTO: THE COOLEST DWARF PLANET IN THE KUIPER BELT

Continued from page 25



Percival Lowell was a daring explorer from America who wasn't just good at math and writing but also had big dreams about the stars. He thought Mars had giant waterways and was super curious about a hidden ninth planet far out in space. He started a special star-gazing spot called the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff. This cool place he made helped other space adventurers find a tiny, icy world named Pluto more than a decade after he passed away.



An 11-year-old girl came up with the name for Pluto! Back in 1930, Venetia Burney from Oxford, England, had a brilliant idea. She told her granddad that the newly found planet should be named after the Roman god of the underworld. Her granddad thought it was a great idea and sent it over to the Lowell Observatory. Guess what? They loved the name too and decided to call the icy planet Pluto.

Pluto's big moon, Charon, is in on the action, doing its own gravity-defying spin. Together, they're like two skaters showing off their skills in a space-themed skate-off!

PLUTO IN POP CULTURE

Pluto may have been reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006, causing quite a stir, but it's still a superstar in our hearts and in pop culture. From memes about Pluto's "emotions" to its appearance as Mickey Mouse's faithful dog, Pluto continues to capture our imagination.

NEW HORIZONS: A VISIT TO PLUTO

In 2006, NASA's New Horizons spacecraft set off on a journey to visit Pluto and its moons. When it flew by Pluto in 2015, it sent back amazing pictures and data, showing us how incredible this little world is. Thanks to New Horizons, we got to see Pluto's heart-shaped feature, proving there's much love for this dwarf planet.

PLUTO'S LEGACY IN ARIZONA

Back in Arizona, the story of Pluto is a source of pride. The Lowell Observatory, where Pluto was discovered, is a place of historical significance and a testament to the curiosity and determination of astronomers. In fact, Arizona has such a strong connection to Pluto that there's been a move to make Pluto the state's official planet!

FUN FACTS

- Pluto was discovered by Clyde Tombaugh in 1930 at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Pluto is known as the "King of the Kuiper Belt."
- If you weigh 100 pounds on Earth, you'd weigh only 7 pounds on Pluto!
- Pluto has a heart-shaped feature on its surface, showing there's lots of love for this distant world.
- At Pluto's current distance from the Sun, the temperature on its surface is about 400 degrees below zero Fahrenheit! It will get even colder as it moves farther from the Sun.

So, there you have it, young adventurers – the incredible story of Pluto, from dream to discovery, all the way to the edge of our solar system. Who knows? Maybe one day, you'll be part of the next big discovery in space. Until then, keep looking up and wondering about the mysteries of the universe!

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WORD SEARCH

Search up, down, forward, backward, diagonal to find the hidden words.
Answers page 38.

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|--------------|-------------|
| Charon | Spin |
| Dreamer | Craters |
| Kuiper | Glaciers |
| Neptune | Moons |
| SolarSystem | Orbit |
| Cosmic | Discovery |
| Flagstaff | HeartShaped |
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EMBRACE THE PAST, VISUALIZE THE FUTURE: A UNIQUE GEM IN MUNDS PARK



“It’s not what you see, it’s what you don’t see!” Keith Cunningham’s “The Road Less Stupid” captures the spirit of Munds Park—A community defined by vision, transformation, and memories. Within this scenic setting is the unique property, Wagon Wheel, also known as 480 Cochise, ripe with potential.

Situated on a raised lot opposite the country club, Wagon Wheel provides panoramic views and an ideal spot for the annual 4th of July Parade. Some may see it as outdated, but its vintage appeal is a gateway to endless opportunities.

The property transports you to the Brady Bunch era, showcasing mid-century modern design, a spacious great room, and windows overlooking the club and golf course. Amidst areas with high new construction costs, Wagon Wheel shines with transformational promise.

Homes in Munds Park often cost \$600,000 to \$800,000 for similar sizes. Yet, Wagon Wheel’s

\$875,000 price tag comes with potential for enhancement. Envision adding a guest space, tailoring the interior without major structural shifts, and molding an environment tailored to your needs.

The seller’s openness to financing options adds appeal, letting you obtain this Munds Park gem while planning its renaissance.

Key Property Details: Price: \$875,000 / Size: Over 1600 sq ft / Bedrooms: 3 / Bathrooms: 2 / Floor Plan: Great room / Outdoor Feature: Large front deck

At Wagon Wheel’s entrance, picture the memories awaiting creation and the transformations possible within its walls. This isn’t merely a house; it’s a canvas for dreams and epitomizes Munds Park’s innovative essence.

Imagine owning a slice of Munds Park history. Wagon Wheel invites you to envision its potential. Seize this iconic property—Your Munds Park future beckons!

FEATURED PROPERTIES



\$849,900

725 Meadow

Stunning 2017 built property near 1900 sq ft. 3BR/2.5 baths. Great room concept with formal dining area. Split master floor plan with walk in closet, separate shower and tub. 9ft ceilings side entry garage. Near 17,000 sq ft cul de sac lot and beautiful screened in back patio and open deck to enjoy these cool summer days!



\$290,000

545 Cedarwood

Very cute single wide built in 1981 (financeable) great condition, fully furnished. Split floor plan with 2 bedrooms/2 baths large living space with 200 sq ft addition expanding the living space with fireplace. Fenced back yard with 10 x12 storage shed. Mature pines, circular drive and ready to move in.



\$300,000

17445 Sequoia

One of the last remaining Munds Canyon Lots. Great lot with great views comes with plans and permits. For 2000 sq ft home. No QR code on this one.

PINEWOOD PLAYERS PREPARE FOR TWO YOUTH DRAMA CAMPS

Applications for both Camps are available now at www.pinewoodplayers.com
Pinewood Players Summer Youth Camp will offer not one, but two great opportunities to sing, dance and have a ball with new and old friends!

Kids Camp: Ages 6-9 will be performing Pajama Party, by Christi Miller and Jay Ferguson.

- Camp dates-weekdays, 9 am -12:30 pm, from June 18-June 29. Also on Saturday, June 22 (make up day for June 17)
- Performances: June 28, 7 pm, June 29, 2:30 and 5:30 PM.
- Tuition is \$175 per child.

Tween Camp: Ages 10-18, will be performing Dear Edwina, JR. presented through special arrangement with Music Theater International (MTI) All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. (www.MTIShows.com) written by Marcy Heisler and Zina Goldrich and directed by Jennifer Adams and Tina Scarpaci.

- Camp dates: June 17-July 7, 2024
(Monday, June 17 will be a full day audition session, 9 am-4:30 pm)
June 18-June 28, 1-4:30 pm. July 1-5, 9 am-4:30 pm
- No session on July 4, 2024. Saturday, June 22nd, 1-4:30 pm.
- Performances: July 5, 7 pm, July 6, 2:30 & 5:30 pm, July 7, 2:30 pm
- Tuition is \$225 per child

Registration deadline for both camps is May 15, 2024.

Tuition assistance is available for families who may need it.

Questions: Nancy Cummings, Administrator: ncummings67@me.com · (623)-680-9022

Lu Cross, Administrator: lkcross67@me.com · (928) 890-9877


PINEWOOD PLAYERS SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Accepting Applications Now!

The Pinewood Players Scholarship Committee, chaired by Joy Stevens, is accepting applications for the 2024 Scholarship Award(s). Each year up to two \$2,000 scholarships are awarded to deserving students with strong ties to Munds Park who meet the program criteria.

For program information, instructions, and 2024 applications, visit www.pinewoodplayers.com and click the Scholarship tab to download the materials. If you know a deserving student, whether it's your child, grandchild or someone else, who may qualify for Pinewood Players Scholarship Award, please encourage them to apply.

The deadline for Scholarship applications is May 31, 2024



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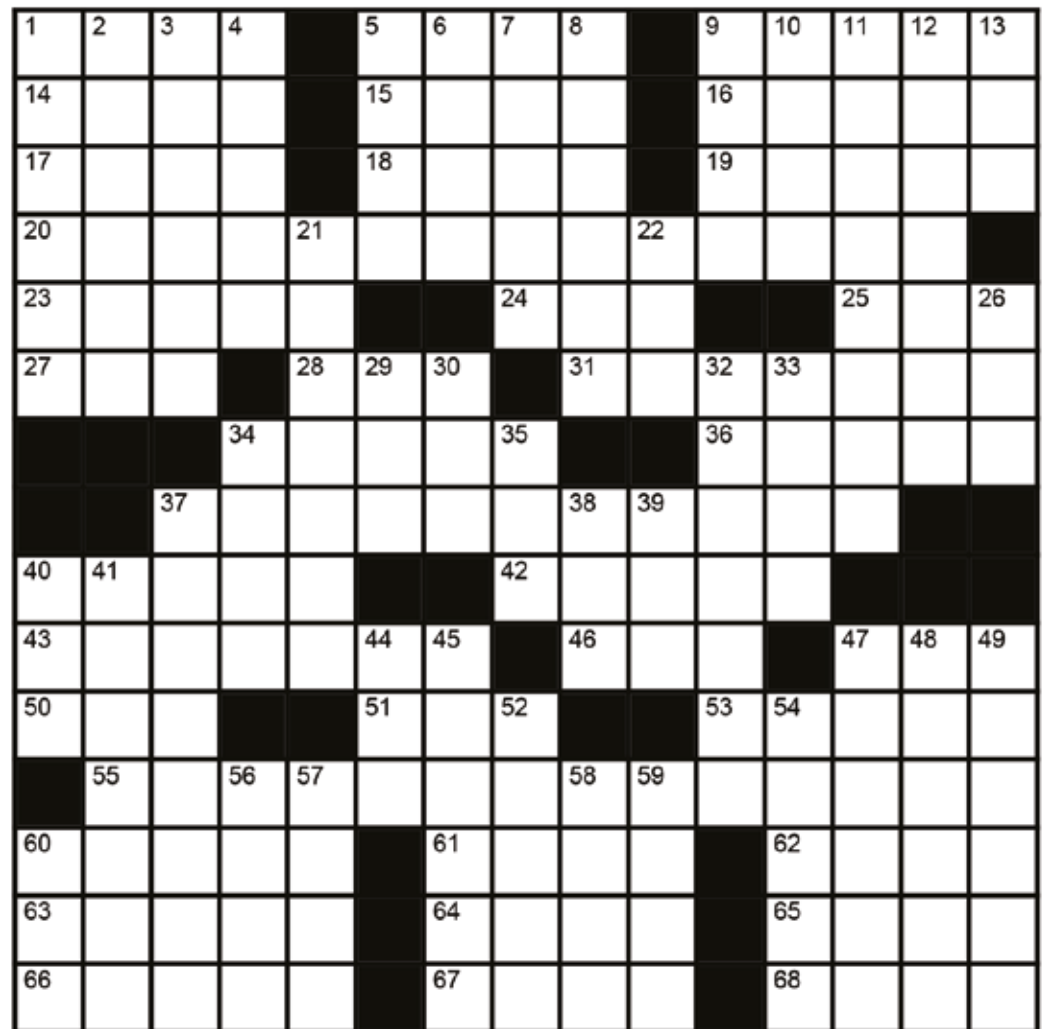
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Created by Paul Mason • Solution pg. 38



Across

1. Chowder morsel
5. Muslim pilgrimage
9. Very, in music
14. Learning method
15. Curved molding
16. Enticed, with "in"
17. Missing from the Marines, say
18. Cropped photos?
19. Pacific salmon
20. Relating to the face value of a banknote, coin, or stamp
23. Grassy plain
24. Albanian currency
25. Martini ingredient
27. Building addition
28. Battle of Britain grp.
31. Sites of rods and cones
34. get foggy
36. A difficult, unusual or dangerous feat; usually done to gain attention
37. Tropical beach tree
42. Oyster's prize
43. A dispenser of a liquid cosmetic (such as a deodorant)
46. Boxing legend
47. Duffer's goal
50. Bigheadedness
51. "Look here!"
53. Everybody's opposite
55. A carpet with a strong linen warp and a heavy pile
60. Monetary unit of India

61. Sixth Jewish month

62. Moore of "G.I. Jane"
63. Chilean range
64. Baltic capital
65. Cleveland's lake
66. Has to have
67. Appear to be
68. A shag rug made in Sweden

Down

1. Hold gently and carefully
2. Astronomer Percival
3. Pleasing to the ear
4. Honeydew, e.g.
5. Kachina doll carver
6. Opposed, in Dogpatch
7. Windshield attachment
8. Court clown
9. "Giovanna d' ____" (Verdi opera)
10. Sometime today, say
11. Peat moss prized by gardeners
12. Carried or eroded by wind (var.)
13. Driver's lic. and others
21. "Casablanca" setting
22. Mamie's man
26. After expenses
29. "Give it ____!"
30. Good times
32. Catherine the Great, e.g.
33. " ____ be a cold day in hell ..."
34. April honoree

35. Part of a litter
37. Any compound containing a chlorine atom
38. Oolong, for one
39. Buddy
40. " ____ we having fun yet?"
41. Poisonous plant with milky juice
44. Dissenting votes
45. Clippers
47. The doctrines, practices, and ceremonies associated with the Pope or the papal system
48. Lack of vigor
49. Tie again or anew
52. Blast from the past
54. Command
56. Employed
57. Back talk
58. Herb in stuffing
59. Jam-pack
60. Cooking vessel



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THE TRUE COST OF MUDDING ON ARIZONA'S FRAGILE WILDERNESS



By Teddy Johnson

Attention all off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts: Our wildlands are calling for your respect, not just your adventure. It's high time we shine a light on mudding—a reckless joyride through nature's delicate habitats. This isn't just a fleeting thrill; it's a scar on the very land that fuels our passions.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is sounding the alarm, urging every rider to exercise restraint, especially after rain or snow. These conditions aren't your playground; they're a test of your commitment to the land that hosts

your adventures. The urge to accelerate into these areas, to splash and churn through the mud for kicks, doesn't just leave a mark; it wreaks havoc on ecosystems, tearing apart the trails and transforming vibrant meadows and streams into barren wastelands.

Consider this: even the lightest OHV, treading lightly on the softest tires, becomes a beast in the wild, capable of causing irreversible damage. And it's not just about the immediate impact. The consequences of your actions could lead to hefty fines and a lasting debt to nature that money can't mend. The cost of repair is steep, but the price of lost habitats? Immeasurable.

The destruction goes beyond the trails. Mudding strips the land of its native plants, leaving behind nothing but scars and inviting invasive species to take over. It compacts the soil, turning it into an impenetrable barrier that suffocates life, preventing water absorption and new growth. The damage extends to the wildlife, robbing them of their homes, their food, and their future. It even reaches the streams, destroying the breeding grounds for fish and amphibians.

But it's not just about the environment; it's about you. Navigating wet and muddy terrain poses serious risks to your safety. Handling an OHV under these conditions requires caution and a significant reduction in speed.

And remember, protection starts with preparation. Always wear a helmet, and be the guardian of our trails. If you witness reckless behavior, don't turn a blind eye. Report it. Your vigilance can save our lands.

This isn't just about following rules; it's about fostering a bond with the natural world. Every trail, every ride, carries with it the responsibility to protect our wildlands. It's a privilege to ride, but it's our duty to preserve. Let's not be the generation that loved adventure to death. Let's be the ones who rode into the future, leaving trails richer, not poorer, for our journeys.

ANYONE WHO OBSERVES MUDDING IS URGED TO CALL 1-800-VANDALS.

A license plate number and description of both the OHV and its operator, as well details about the area where the activity took place, will assist law enforcement personnel in their investigation.

"The great outdoors is a gift of unparalleled beauty, entrusted to us to safeguard and honor. As stewards of this land, it is our responsibility to tread lightly and preserve its splendor for future generations."

— Said a wise man

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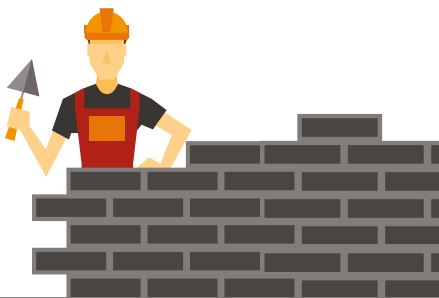
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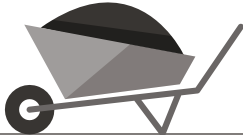
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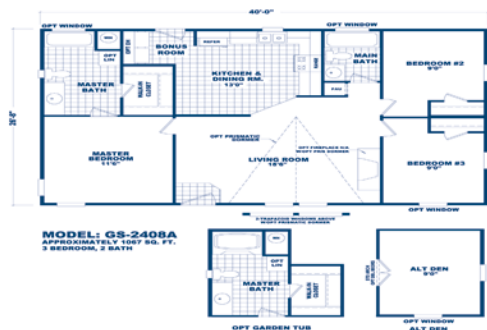


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Kathy Trainor

LADY NINER SCORES AN ACE

Pinewood Country Club Lady Niners member Kathy Trainor achieved a golfer's dream come true when she scored a hole-in-one at Continental Golf Course in Scottsdale on Jan. 10.

Kathy scored her ace on the 108-yard eighth hole using her 7 hybrid club. Two other Lady Niners, Marti Hansen and Elyse Webber, happened to be playing in her foursome at the time, and witnessed the exciting moment.

According to the PGA of America, the odds of the average golfer hitting a hole-in-one is 12,500 to 1, making this shot a very rare occurrence.

The Pinewood Lady Niners are a group within Pinewood Country Club that plays nine holes of golf every Wednesday morning. The group has fun games each week and hosts four luncheons every season. Tournaments, practice rounds and social gatherings are a part of the Lady Niners annual schedule which starts this year on May 1 with a Pinewood Derby themed competition.

The group is open to PCC lady golfers of all abilities who enjoy the sport, wish to improve their game, want to make new friends, and prefer to play only nine holes of golf. Please visit the Pro Shop for more information on membership in Lady Niners.



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Human beings have been measuring and studying celestial bodies since the dawn of civilization. Astrology helps us understand our life paths and experiences by observing the movements of the planets. Although not fortune-telling, it can be a predictive tool and provide insight into personal issues, patterns, fears, and dreams. Through observing the cyclical movements of the planets, we can gain a better comprehension of the cycles and patterns in our lives.



ARIES, FIRE SIGN, MARCH 21 - APRIL 20

In April, Aries can anticipate a surge of energy and motivation, particularly in physical activities and professional endeavors. With a strong willpower and organizational focus, one may find seamless progress in implementing their ideas. This month marks a period of self-affirmation and empowerment. Despite any hurdles this month, Aries' authenticity and charm shine through, guiding them towards transformative opportunities. Change can be a catalyst for realizing your full potential, so embrace it with confidence and optimism. By April's end, your confidence can reach new heights, empowering them to tackle challenges with resilience and determination.



LEO, FIRE SIGN, JULY 23 - AUGUST 22

April presents an energy of love and excitement for Leo, but be wary of the temptation for excessive freedom leading to potential consequences. Independence and change are on the horizon, alongside a favorable time for exploring new paths. Introspection is key as this period prompts reflection on life's trajectory, this time also ignites a spirit of adventure and growth. Though you may yearn for swift progress, understand that significant victories are cultivated over time. Focus on approaching connections and commitments with caution, while also embracing closure on emotional matters, restoring harmony in your life throughout the month.



SAGITTARIUS, FIRE SIGN, NOV 23 - DEC 21

This month, Sagittarians are urged to prioritize family connections, with opportunities for quality time with loved ones. Physical well-being receives a boost, motivating engagement in sports and exercises. Under the influence of current planetary energy, you are poised for decision-making and long-term planning, though caution is advised to avoid unnecessary risks. Prepare for a month of self-discovery and relationship empowerment, marked by reflection on creative passions and assertive communication. Embrace joy and spontaneity, indulge in life's pleasures, and invest in mental well-being for a brighter future ahead.



TAURUS, EARTH SIGN, APRIL 21 - MAY 20

The month promises positive shifts, with a focus on values and desired transformations. April brings a surge of energy, particularly in relationships, urging Taurus to seize opportunities with prudence and enjoy physical activities while maintaining one's health. Despite any challenges that arise, introspection will guide Taurus through this period, leading to renewed assertiveness and self-assurance. Boldness and innovation are key as you transition into a new chapter of your life. By April's end, you can be infused with power and confidence, ready to embrace new beginnings and attract abundance.



VIRGO, EARTH SIGN, AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22

This month brings a profound journey of emotional exploration for Virgo. During this time, you may even notice significant improvements in communication skills, opening up new opportunities to explore. Expect a fulfilling period with harmonious dynamics at home and work. Be open to a well-deserved break, you may find inspiration for new projects. Try to prioritize family time and embrace the peace you feel in your home life. Remember to be open to transformative shifts in April, clarity and breakthroughs can be expected.



CAPRICORN, EARTH SIGN, DEC 22 - JAN 20

Throughout April, Capricorns are driven by a strong desire to excel professionally. While focused on earning more, it's crucial for them to prioritize rest and savings over big investments. Despite work commitments, one must make time for family and friends. Guided by emotional balance and self-honesty, it is encouraged to embark on a journey of self-discovery and relationship empowerment, reassessing passions and fostering joy in love, creativity, and family life through reflection and mindfulness, paving the way for a brighter future ahead.



GEMINI, AIR SIGN, MAY 21 - JUNE 21

In April, Gemini may find themselves in a tumultuous period. However, amidst these challenges, Gemini's innate qualities of harmony and determination shine through, guiding them towards purposeful pursuits with the support of loved ones. April also presents an opportunity for closure on past grievances and the initiation of a new chapter. Geminis have the potential to find advancement in aspirations and long-term goals. This month, dreams begin to take root, marking a pivotal moment in your journey towards realization and fulfillment.



LIBRA, AIR SIGN, SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22

April brings Libras creative energy and new paths may emerge. You may even notice significant improvements in communication skills, opening up new opportunities to explore. Expect a fulfilling period with harmonious dynamics at home and work. Be open to a well-deserved break, you may find inspiration for new projects. Try to prioritize family time and embrace the peace you feel in your home life. Remember to be open to transformative shifts in April, clarity and breakthroughs can be expected.



AQUARIUS, AIR SIGN, JAN 21 - FEB 18

Aquarians can expect April to be a month of intense focus and determination, with opportunities for significant progress towards their goals. Guided by the current planetary energy, one should embrace their thirst for discovery and make meaningful changes in their lives. Communication and career opportunities will be abundant. Reflect on your communication style and leverage the power of organization to structure your motivations effectively. April is empowering them to articulate their passions confidently. Trusting in your inner guidance, Aquarians should approach the month ahead with optimism and determination.



CANCER, WATER SIGN, JUNE 22 - JULY 22

April presents Cancer with an emotional journey, urging a focus on managing intense feelings that may impact personal and professional spheres. This period requires careful navigation through inner peace and empathetic communication. Focus on a drive towards personal goals, balanced by thoughtful decisions. Engaging in physical activities and mental exercises provides an outlet for overwhelming emotions, facilitating self-control. The Full Moon prompts introspection on love and fulfillment. April's energy is igniting confidence and assertiveness in steering life's direction towards self-determination and fulfillment.



SCORPIO, WATER SIGN, OCT 23 - NOV 22

In April, Scorpions may find themselves navigating heightened emotions and energy levels. This period urges caution to maintain emotional balance and avoid alienating loved ones. Restlessness may lead to mental obstacles, necessitating careful consideration of actions and motivations. However, planetary energy this month promises rewarding weeks ahead, highlighting any desire for personal growth and strategic thinking. Embrace the transformative nature of April. Trust in cosmic guidance, embrace authenticity, and come alive through the transformation journey.



PISCES, WATER SIGN, FEB 19 - MARCH 20

April brings energy to embark on a journey of self-discovery and knowledge, driven by Pisces' remarkable capacity for learning and absorbing information. While this presents opportunities for personal growth and overcoming challenges, Pisces must remain considerate of others and mindful of the impact of their actions. This month's planetary influence urges introspection, guiding one to align their priorities with aspirations. Pisces will feel a sense of purpose and direction, leading to progress and stability. This time encourages spiritual exploration and expansion, urging Pisces to embrace the unknown with courage and curiosity.

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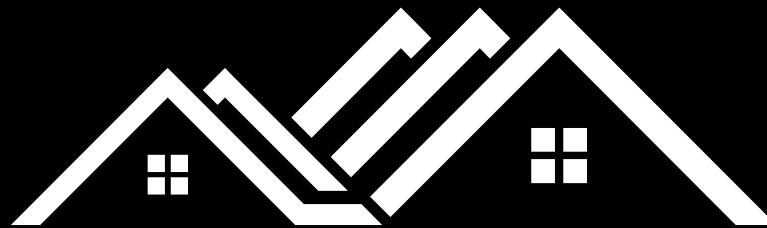
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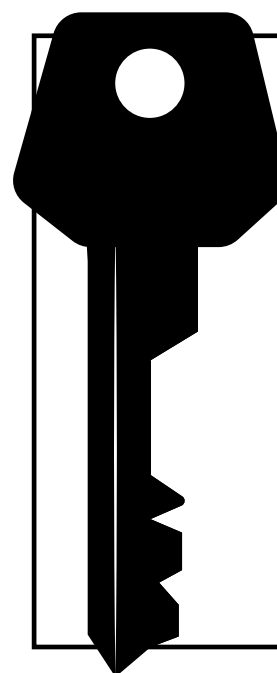
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JESUS DID THE HARD THING SO WE CAN DO THE EASY THING

By Pastor Steve Bowyer

Hard things. Childbirth. Parenting 2-year-olds and teenagers. Launching young adults. Watching our children make the same mistakes we did when we were their age. So many things families face together are wonderful, beautiful, and ridiculously hard all at the same time.

The end of life is hard. It is not for the faint of heart. My mother-in-law used to say whoever labeled the last phase of life the golden years must have been color-blind.

Sara and I have been through this with all four of our parents and most of our grandparents. If I could place an order with God, it would be to go the way my grandmother went. Sitting at the breakfast table, she had an aneurism. She fainted, never to regain consciousness. She survived a week giving the family the chance to get used to the idea. No pain. No suffering. Then, Heaven. Perfect.

If we knew ahead of time how we would go, would we want to go there? I doubt it.

Jesus knew from the beginning how His life on earth was going to end. And, when I say from the beginning, I mean from creation. And He did it anyway. Why would He do that when He had so much time to do something about it?

We spend most of our life trying to avoid hard things. We try to make them easier. We look desperately for shortcuts and workarounds. And Jesus plowed right through it.

Knowing everything that was going to happen, Jesus did the hard thing by dying for us so that we can do the easy thing of living for Him.

We get the clearest picture of this in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus that John wrote about in John 3. They met at night. Nicodemus came under the cover of darkness so his cohorts would not know about the clandestine meeting.

Buried in his questions for Jesus, the big question on his heart was, "Am I in? Do I have a place in Heaven when I die?" His bottom-line belief was based on his bloodline, he was born Jewish, so his hope was that this guaranteed him a place at Jesus' table.

Jesus offered Nicodemus an entirely different paradigm. He told him he had to be born again. Everyone is born once. And it threw Nicodemus off to consider how that process worked. He was a full-grown adult. How could his mother go through that process with him again at his size and age. Ouch!

Jesus went on to explain the first time he was born it was a physical process. If he was to be born again, it would be a faithful process. His mother would have no part in it. He would have to recognize his need of a second birth, acknowledge it, then by faith go through it.

This was hard for Nicodemus. Hard for him to understand. You could almost hear the cogs and sprockets turning in his head. How? Jesus used this illustration that Nicodemus would have been very familiar with.

Israel, as they wandered in the wilderness, began to gripe and complain about their situation. God had redeemed them out of slavery and was leading them to freedom in their Promised Land. And the people complained.

God sent venomous snakes to bite the complainers, which was pretty much everyone. They did. The people were going to die. God then instructed Moses to form a snake out of bronze and place it high on a pole. If the people would just look at the snake and have faith that God would save them, He would.

Jesus was telling Nicodemus that he was going to have the chance to look at his Savior up on a pole. All he would have to do is have faith in God to save him. Just by looking at and looking to Jesus to be saved, he would have his reservation at Jesus' table in Heaven secured.

Why would Jesus willingly do this for Nicodemus, and us? That is the question that the most famous verse in the bible answers.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Why did Jesus go through all that? Because He loves Nicodemus, and you, and me. All we must do is look to Jesus believing in Him and His work on the cross and we will be saved.

Knowing everything that was going to happen, Jesus did the hard thing by dying for us so we can do the easy thing of living for Him.

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T	E	E	N	D	J	O	C	L	T	V	C	S	G	L	E
A	O	M	C	M	V	I	R	S	R	E	P	I	U	K	O
R	L	E	T	X	E	E	G	B	S	N	T	U	K	G	W
C	L	L	T	R	J	A	R	C	I	E	N	U	T	P	E
B	H	Y	S	F	L	W	E	Y	Z	T	M	C	A	M	L
G	C	L	S	F	X	L	J	G	U	G	W	R	V	R	L

WORD SEARCH Solutions

J	L	E	Y	K	R	I	U	O	G	A	M	U	S	I	N	G
R	M	S	A	P	R	I	L	A	R	A	V	S	T	U	N	T
E	F	U	N	N	Y	K	G	A	C	E	Y	I	P	Y	Z	A
K	L	R	C	M	N	I	B	S	X	A	O	H	A	O	D	A
O	A	W	Y	A	D	S	L	O	O	F	L	L	A	C	O	O
J	C	D	R	M	U	E	P	U	D	I	P	Z	H	S	L	P
L	I	P	R	S	U	J	E	G	S	O	I	A	I	P	W	
A	M	U	D	I	R	O	C	H	E	A	C	K	N	Q	B	
C	O	K	L	O	K	E	T	S	E	A	H	C	O	Y	E	
I	C	L	N	E	P	H	N	I	N	W	K	M	E	I	L	
T	Y	U	S	T	E	E	S	E	J	S	O	F	L	M	R	I
C	H	T	I	A	S	I	R	H	V	C	O	U	E	R	E	T
A	F	O	R	N	M	Y	B	K	K	O	W	B	E	C	N	
R	N	T	O	A	M	U	S	E	L	D	W	V	R	T	H	A
B	E	N	S	U	R	P	R	I	S	E	X	A	S	U	F	
D	N	S	M	C	Q	Y	S	A	E	D	E	N	T	E	M	N
V	I	C	T	I	M	H	O	E	C	E	I	V	E	J	P	I

SUDOKU Solutions

3	6	4	5	8	7	2	9	1
8	7	5	2	1	9	3	6	4
9	2	1	3	6	4	5	8	7
7	8	6	1	3	2	9	4	5
2	5	9	4	7	8	6	1	3
1	4	3	9	5	6	7	2	8
6	1	2	7	4	3	8	5	9
4	9	7	8	2	5	1	3	6
5	3	8	6	9	1	4	7	2

JUST A FEW MORE

From distant travels to your favorite cozy nook, every moment is perfect for a Pinewood News snapshot!
Share your adventures, coffee breaks, and reading moments with us at hello@ThePinewoodNews.com.



Mark and Terry Giebelhaus took one look at the October cover of the Pinewood News and saw more than just a newspaper; they saw a puzzle waiting to happen. They turned what could have been a forgettable cover into unforgettable quality time together. Here's to finding joy in the simple things and making memories out of moments! Thank you so much for sharing, Terry and Mark!



The unstoppable trio, Karen Zintak, Fran Thal, and Nancy Mickle, embarked on a wild adventure through the heart of Belize's lush paradise, with the Pinewood News in tow. These ladies don't just have fun; they redefine it!



Valley Girls Coffee Club in Anthem

From left to right: Debby Ridge, Yolanda Celestino, Jill Rhodes, Maryanne Winters, Zoe Anderson, Debby Weed, Cheryl Orr, and Tammy Baldi

Dave Kramer taking
Pinewood to Rocky Point!



Cheryl & Robert Rydzynski always hit the road with Pinewood in their hands! Thank you for the support!



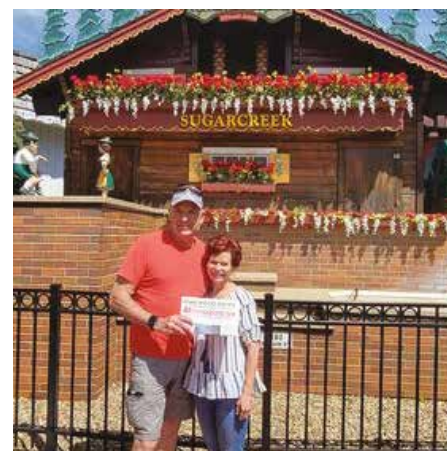
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Alaska



Norwegian Cruise



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