

PINEWOOD

THE GOOD LIFE, COMMUNITY & MOUNTAIN LIVING SINCE 1993

VOL. 32 NO. 17 NOVEMBER 8, 2025

FREE!



 **PINEWOOD
NEWS
KIDS!**
PAGE 14B

NOVEMBER–DECEMBER
Celestial Highlights

Living under a certified Dark Sky means something magical happens after sunset in Munds Park. While most of Arizona sleeps beneath a haze of light pollution, our community has made a choice: shield the porch lights, dim the streetlights, and let the night sky shine.

You don't need to drive anywhere special or scout the perfect location. The best seat in the house is already yours—right in your backyard. Twenty minutes after you step outside, your eyes will adapt, and suddenly the universe reveals itself. The Milky Way doesn't just appear; it dominates. Meteor showers don't disappoint. And planets look like they're close enough to touch.

As we move deeper into fall and winter, the show only gets better. Here's what's lighting up the skies above Munds Park in the months ahead.



Lunar Moments & Seasonal Markers

Winter Solstice – December 21

Mark your calendar for December 21 at 10:03 AM—the official start of winter in the Northern Hemisphere. It's the shortest day and longest night of the year, a natural reset that ancient cultures celebrated long before calendars told them to.

Meteor Showers to Watch

Fall brings a string of meteor showers, each with its own personality. Some offer a few brilliant streaks, others fill the sky like cosmic confetti. All are visible from Munds Park if skies are clear.

Supermoon	Date	
Full Cold Moon	Dec 4	A supermoon happens when a full or new moon occurs near the Moon's closest point to Earth, called perigee.

Meteor Shower	Peak	Best Viewing Time	Meteors/hr*	Why It's Worth Watching
Northern Taurids	Nov 9 - 12	Late evening	~3	A slow, steady shower known for dramatic fireballs. The bright moon will dull most, but the occasional big one can still surprise you.
Leonids	Nov 16–17	After midnight	10–15	Famous for their history of meteor "storms." This year's thin crescent moon makes for excellent viewing conditions.
Geminids	Dec 13–14	Late night	Up to 120	The season's showstopper. Even with some moonlight, the sheer number and brightness make this one worth the thermos and gloves.
Ursids	Dec 21–22	Night through dawn	5–10	A quiet but pretty shower that peaks near the solstice. With almost no moonlight this year, it's a great excuse to bundle up and stargaze.

Keep the lights low, keep your eyes up, and together we'll keep Munds Park's night skies shining bright.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
& STORY TIPS!

The *Pinewood News* welcomes feedback and story tips from our readers. We encourage comments on any subject or article we publish. We will consider publishing received letters, except those that invade privacy or are libelous. All letters must be signed and include an address and phone number for verification. Note that letters may be edited for space and clarity.

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The next issue of the *Pinewood News* will hit the stands, **Friday, November 7, 2025**





COLDWELL BANKER NORTHLAND



\$429,000

17810 S WALAPAI RD • UNIT #: 55

Exceptional townhome! Spacious treed area on south of unit. Vaulted ceilings and cozy pellet stove insert in fireplace provides warmth and ambiance. New flooring, refrigerator, portable air conditioner and dishwasher. This home comes furnished and ready for your summer and winter enjoyment.



REDUCED

\$400,000

1170 E COUGAR ST

Cozy 2-bed, 2-bath home among pines and oaks, bonus room, private deck overlooking Munds Canyon, fenced yard, gazebo, bunkhouse, garage, granite upgrades, mostly furnished. Peaceful mountain retreat.



\$437,000

245 BARNWOOD TRL

Darling little getaway on a beautiful large treed lot (9750 sq ft). Cozy wood interior with vaulted ceiling and a pellet stove in living room. Plenty of room on the lot for a garage or to add on. Home comes furnished too?



REDUCED

\$475,000

17165 ELK PL

Tucked beneath the towering pines, this cozy mountain retreat blends rustic charm with modern comfort. Vaulted ceilings, open living, wood-burning fireplace, and a large deck create the perfect space to relax and enjoy.



SALE PENDING!

\$475,000

17380 CRYSTAL BROOK PL

Move-in ready Munds Park cabin with modern upgrades, vaulted ceilings, and cozy charm. New roof, floors, kitchen appliances, and more. Ideal for weekends or year-round living. Great community amenities.



SALE PENDING!

\$1,295,000

**17612 E FAIRWAY DR
MUNDS PARK**

Closed restaurant with HUGE potential! Includes land, building, and all contents. Community is eager for a great eatery! Call Bill Spain at 602-622-1196. Owner may carry with strong terms.



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17050 Big Sky Dr - \$345,000
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PINEWOOD

THE GOOD LIFE, COMMUNITY & DESERT MOUNTAIN LIVING

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AA Meetings - Feel Better!

Munds Park Community Church

Every Monday, 6 pm

17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Munds Park Community Church Services

Services Sunday, 10:45 am

17670 S Munds Ranch Rd • Munds Park

Munds Park Town Hall

All residents are encouraged to attend.

Stay informed. Your presence and participation is essential!

Thursday, May 21, 2026

6:30 pm • Pinewood Country Club

Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary meeting

The Community is Welcome!

Tuesday, December 2

6:30 pm • 17670 S Munds Ranch Rd
Munds Park

Pinewood Fire District Board Meeting

Public Welcome

Tuesday, November 18

3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr • Munds Park

Pinewood Sanitary District Board Meeting

Public Welcome

Thursday, November 13

3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr • Munds Park

*What are you making for
thanksgiving dinner?*

A scene...



*"What if, today,
we were grateful
for everything?"*

—Charlie Brown

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS 8A

Stay in the loop with everything local: public notices, community updates, and helpful info that keeps our community connected.

MISSION IN THE MOUNTAINS 10A

Ray Byrne walked away from college and into the Marines, a choice that shaped his life and many others. This is the story of a veteran who built a business, found purpose, and now helps others do the same.

THINGS TO DO 16A

Local events, activities, and outings to make the most of your time in the pines.

HOME MADE & WONDERFUL 18A

Cool mornings mean it's time for comfort food. This classic beef stew is hearty, warm, and perfect for fall.

SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD 19A

A quiet drink for the quiet hours. The Maple Bourbon Smash is made for the moment after the noise fades, when all that's left is warmth, stillness, and gratitude.

MARTINO'S TO SAIGON 2A

He grew up in his mother's kitchen and built his own from the ground up. Now Dennis Tran is bringing his food, family, and story to Munds Park.

TRAVEL 7A

The ground once split Lisbon apart. Inside its earthquake museum, I found a deeper understanding of faith, loss, and what it means to rebuild.

GARDENS IN THE PARK 11A

From towering firs to blooming bulbs, here's your guide to making this Christmas season merry, fragrant, and full of festive color.

PINEWOOD NEWS KIDS 14A

Feathers, fossils, and wishbones, your Thanksgiving turkey has some serious dinosaur DNA.

FEATURED MOUNTAIN HOMES BY DEBI BRIGHT



\$750,000

1350 E THUNDERBIRD TRAIL

Large Chalet with easy access to deck and entry. Covered carport that leads to a single car garage with entry up to the upstairs family room. Fenced in yard. All showings must have an appointment.



\$774,000

1410 E LOBO LANE

Remodeled home with vaulted ceilings, propane fireplace, Trex decking, and updated kitchen. Main-level primary suite, bonus room, guest bath, garage with remote, and covered front and back porches. Great for entertaining.



\$595,000

75 BISON DRIVEL

Charming chalet with open floor plan, fireplace, and extra-large covered Trex deck off the kitchen and living room. Main-level primary bedroom opens to private deck. Two furnished bedrooms upstairs, garage with backyard access, shed for storage, and Starlink included. Backs to acre lots.



\$446,000

405 E CEDAR WOOD DRIVE

Brand-new four-bedroom, two-bath Cavco with over 1,600 sq ft, vaulted ceilings, large windows, and open floor plan. Features deep covered front porch, ceiling fans throughout, abundant natural light. Completion expected by end of April.



\$319,500

110 E OAK DRIVE

16-wide manufactured home: new flooring, appliances, roof, dual-pane windows; solid foundation, dog run, two powered sheds. Fully furnished, covered porch.

LOTS FOR SALE

46 E OAK DR \$279,00

Over 40,000 square feet lot. Absolutely incredible views from the top. Heavily treed.

17615 S MUSTANG RD \$300,000

One of the last remaining lots available on Animal Hill, well over 6800 sq ft, sloped toward the street and around the corner from the National Forest

17375 CRYSTAL BROOK PL \$199,500

Secluded from the road. A long driveway that opens to an extra large lot with beautiful oak trees surrounding the perimeter.



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NOW BOOKING FOR SPRING 2026!

Happy Thanksgiving

from our family to yours

Thanksgiving is here, and we're feeling it. Not just in the calendar flip. The days grow shorter, smoke curls from chimneys, mixing with the scent of pine, and there's a chill that finally pushes out the summer heat. Those who travel from Phoenix in the summer would laugh at that last sentence, now wouldn't they?

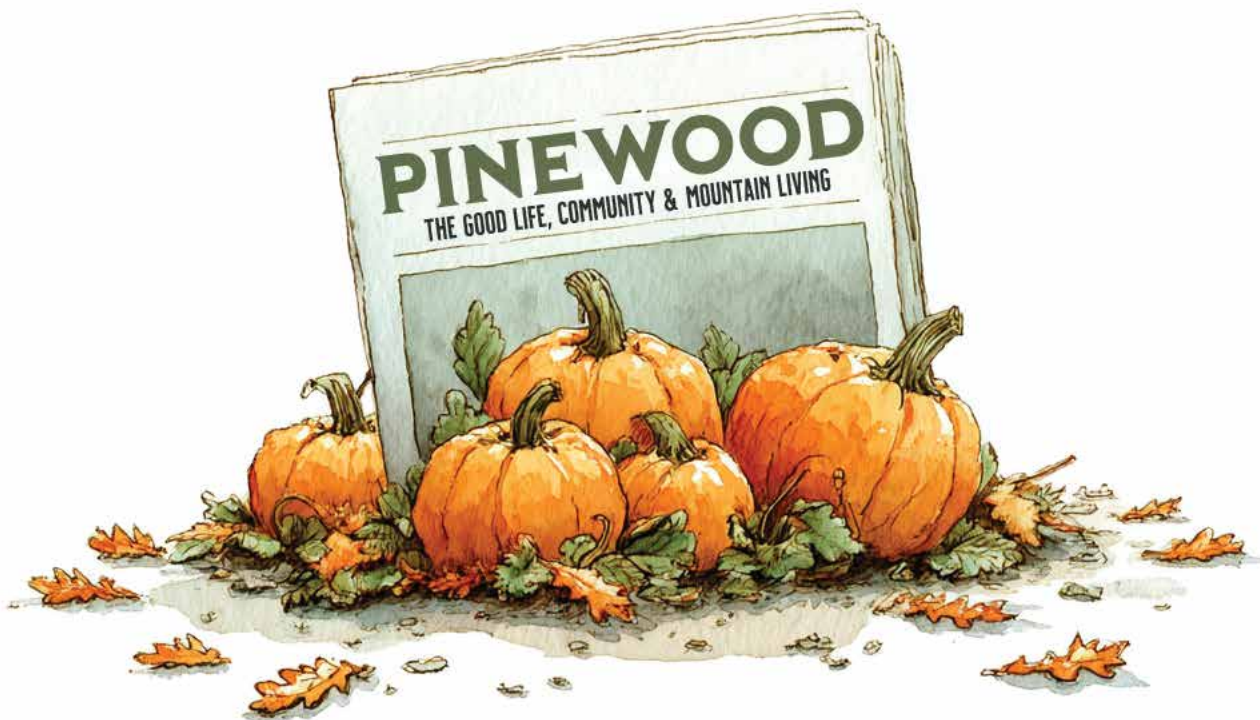
We no longer live in the Park, but we work here and we're grateful to support a community where people still wave as strangers drive by, where someone always seems to show up when you need a hand, and where folks do good without needing a spotlight on it. You've probably seen it. Maybe you've done it, picked up a fallen trash can, helped a neighbor load firewood, kept an eye out for someone's lost dog. That's what makes Munds Park special, the kind and giving people who live here.

We're thankful for that. And we're thankful for you, our readers and advertisers. For 32 years, you've supported this paper and trusted us to tell the stories that matter. You stop us in town to share kind words. You send thoughtful emails expressing gratitude or offer feedback that helps us do better. With each year that passes, we feel that loyalty grow, and it means more than we can say.

So this Thanksgiving, we just want to say thank you. Thank you for being here, for caring, and for helping make this community what it is. We are blessed, and we give thanks to God for this community and for the chance to be a part of it.

Thank you for being part of our journey.

Genna & Sandee Caviness



YOUR LINK TO WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUNDS PARK

NEED TO KNOW

Utility Easement Access Required

Pinewood Sanitary District (PSD) will be conducting essential sewer main repairs through-out the park. These repairs are critical to repairing and restoring our infrastructure and preventing inflow and infiltration (I&I) issues. Please see the letter included in your recent billing for more information.

To complete this work, PSD must access utility easements, which are legally designated areas for public utilities. Unfortunately, many of these easements have become inappropriately obstructed by fences, sheds, boulders, and other personal property.

We respectfully ask all residents to:

- Clear all obstructions from utility easements.
- Work cooperatively to ensure timely access for work crews

IMPORTANT: If PSD is required to remove any obstructions to access easements for PSD lines and equipment, the homeowner(s) will be responsible for any associated costs.

Winterizing Your Home with Propylene Glycol

Propylene glycol (PG) is a safe and effective antifreeze commonly used to winterize homes, particularly in plumbing systems and seasonal properties. It works by lowering the freezing point of water, helping to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting during cold weather.

When used properly, PG is non-toxic and environmentally friendly, making it PSD's recommended choice for residential winterization. Before use, please ensure that any PG based antifreeze is clearly labeled as non-toxic.

Lateral Sewer Scopes

Effective September 10th, 2025, PSD will no longer require lateral sewer scopes during property transfers. While this inspection is no longer mandatory, PSD strongly recommends that both buyers and sellers consider having a lateral sewer scope performed. This proactive step can provide valuable peace of mind by identifying potential issues early and ensuring transparency in the transaction.

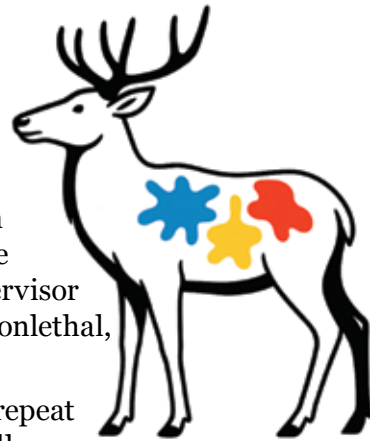
ELK HAZING AT COUNTRY CLUB APPROVED BY WILDLIFE OFFICIALS

A reader got in touch with a question: Is Pinewood Country Club really using paintball guns on elk to keep them off the golf course? So we checked it out.

General Manager Gary Pearce confirmed that they are using paintball markers, with guidance and approval from Arizona Game and Fish. Larry Phoenix, the regional supervisor in Flagstaff, said the method is effective, nonlethal, and safe for the animals.

He explained that the paint helps identify repeat visitors. If the lead cow—the one that usually brings the herd in—is marked, staff can focus on her to discourage her from coming back, which usually keeps the rest away too.

We're always glad to follow up on local questions like this. If you've got something you're curious about, send it our way: Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com.



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1159 Coyote

Affordable and Adorable. This stick-built 2/2 cabin checks all the boxes. Great curb appeal, lots of outdoor living space, open great room with vaulted ceilings, wood burning stove, central heat and air conditioning. Upgraded, cared for and priced to sell!



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REALTYONEGROUP
MOUNTAIN DESERT

PASTOR STEVE HONORED AS PINEWOOD’S NEWEST FIREFIGHTER



The Pinewood Fire Department recently welcomed a special addition to its ranks—not through a traditional swearing in, but through heartfelt recognition. Upon his retirement from Munds Park Community Church, Pastor Steve was named an honorary firefighter by Fire Chief Josh Tope.

The honorary title is more than symbolic. It’s a way for the department to recognize individuals who, though not firefighters themselves, have made a lasting impact on the team and the community. In Pastor Steve’s case, the honor reflects years of quiet, steadfast support.

Since 2015, Pastor Steve has served as the department’s Chaplain, offering comfort, guidance, and a steady presence through difficult times. His role extended beyond spiritual care. As President of the Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary an office he held for approximately four years. He was a driving force behind the development of the new fire station and a consistent advocate for the firefighters and their mission.

“His support and leadership made a real difference,” said Chief Tope. “This is our way of saying thank you and recognizing his service to the department and our broader community.”

Though he may be stepping away from church leadership, Pastor Steve’s legacy in Munds Park is anything but over. His honorary badge stands as a symbol of gratitude, respect, and enduring connection.

Help Shape Flood Mitigation Plans for Munds Park

Join the Coconino County Flood Control District
for a community meeting:

Wednesday, November 12 • 6 p.m.
Munds Park Community Church
17670 S Munds Ranch Rd • Munds Park

District representatives will share conceptual flood mitigation projects identified for the Munds Park area and provide an update on the Countywide Long-Term Flood Mitigation Plan.

Your input matters—come share your thoughts and help guide future flood control efforts.

If you can’t attend, the presentation will be recorded and posted on the District’s website. You can also submit comments by email following the meeting.



www.coconino.az.gov/3438/Flood-Mitigation-Planning-Process

WINTER PARKING ORDINANCE BEGAN SATURDAY, NOV. 1

Coconino County’s Winter Parking Ordinance went into effect Saturday, November 1, prohibiting vehicles, trailers, and storage containers from being parked on County-maintained roads during snow season to ensure safe and efficient snow removal.

This Thanksgiving, Keep the Feast Pet Safe!

AVOID

Alcohol

Grapes/Raisins

Gravy

Ham

Nuts

Onions/Garlic

Stuffing

Turkey Bones

Turkey Skin

OK

Beans

Carrots

Cranberries

Potatoes(plain)

Pumpkin(plain)

Turkey(plain)

Sweet Potatoes(plain)

A photograph of three dogs sitting at a wooden table set for a meal. On the left is a black dog, in the middle is a golden retriever wearing a plaid bandana, and on the right is a white dog. There are plates of food, including turkey legs and potatoes, on the table. In the background, a Christmas tree is visible.

Midtown Animal Clinic

PET POISON HELPLINE 1(855) 764-7661

A circular logo with 'VOTED' at the top, 'Best of Flag' in the center, and '2024' at the bottom.

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A square QR code located at the bottom right of the advertisement.

A MISSION IN THE MOUNTAINS

How One Marine Built a Refuge for Our Wounded Warriors

BY SANDEE CAVINESS

Each November, the Pinewood News chooses a local veteran to honor for their service. Over the years, Genna and I have felt deep gratitude for every veteran we've highlighted, their sacrifices and stories never fail to touch us. But this year's profile is something different altogether. This veteran's grace and humility stayed with us long after the interview ended. We hope our readers find their story as meaningful as we did.



Cpl. Raymond Byrne, U.S. Marine Corps; later Sgt., U.S. Army.

Ray Byrne had intended to go to college. He'd earned a football scholarship that covered everything except books, a golden ticket for a young man from modest means. One morning, he headed toward campus to begin that new chapter. But something stopped him in the turn lane.

Call it a gut check. Call it grace.

He looked toward the campus, then straightened the wheel and drove straight to the recruiter's office.

"I want to join the Marines," he said. "And I want to leave as soon as possible. Just not before November 15th."

The recruiter, accustomed to impulsive young men, studied him carefully. "Law looking for you? Girl pregnant?"

"Neither," Ray said. "I just know myself. If I go to college, I'll screw it up."

Ray laughs now when he tells that story. He wasn't book smart, he admits, not at the time. He was a young man who enjoyed a good time and found trouble more often than he should have. But in that moment, the quiet voice telling him to pause revealed a different kind of intelligence. It showed wisdom. Ray knew what kind of man he didn't want to become.

He asked to leave after November 15th because he had deer tags. He figured he'd squeeze in one more hunt. The Corps shipped him out on December 2nd.

Learning to Lead

Ray made it through boot camp and trained in North Carolina. Then he requested a post in Okinawa with the Third Marine Division, not a choice many made willingly.

"Every Marine ends up in Okinawa," he said. "I figured it was smarter to go early rather than late. I didn't have a wife or children. Nothing was holding me back."

It was another act of quiet wisdom. While he prepared for military life overseas, unbeknownst to him, he had twins on the way.

In Okinawa, they sized up his frame and sent him to the armory. Ray had trained as a motor vehicle operator, but the Marines put you where you're needed. His master sergeant had different plans, Ray would run the motor pool.

The work demanded precision. No computers. No networks. Everything depended on paper, process, and memory. Stacks of manuals replaced

the convenience of a search bar, and every answer had to be earned.

His supervisor challenged him constantly, testing what he knew and pushing him to learn what he didn't. Once, he asked, "What's the only vehicle in the military you can't fire on under the Geneva Convention?"

Ray didn't know. So he dug through manuals, page after page, until he found the answer — the ambulance.

It was a simple challenge, but it taught Ray how to dig for information and solve problems without anyone handing him the solution.

His work didn't go unnoticed. After two years managing the motor pool overseas, Ray returned to Camp Pendleton and checked in with the 1st Marine Regiment. They put him in charge again. He'd already managed four times the equipment overseas—if he could handle that, they figured, he could handle anything. Even giving orders to Marines who outranked him.

Ray understood the difference between rank and respect.

"With senior guys, I'd ask for help instead of barking at them," he said. "No hard feelings. With the younger ones, I kept it simple: get it done. Got the same result."

This practical, ego-free leadership stayed with him long after he left the Corps.

Building a Life

When his time in the Marines ended, Ray entered law enforcement. He started as a detention officer in Coconino County, then became a deputy. But the job, though honorable, couldn't support a family with three children. Ray needed more.

He turned to construction and joined the Army National Guard at Camp Navajo to supplement his income.

"One weekend a month, two weeks a year," he said. "And I loved it."

Eventually, Ray founded America Roofing in the Valley, a business his sons still run today. But it wasn't just shingles and contracts. Ray understood the value of service. As both a veteran and a first responder, he knew what those roles demanded. So his business gave back—discounts, support, honor.

"We always helped where we could," Ray said. "It was the right thing to do."

Ray Byrne never claimed to be a scholar. But in every moment that mattered, he showed wisdom. From that split-second turn away from college to years of managing men and missions with quiet command, Ray built a life on grit, instinct, and deep respect for duty.

That's the kind of man worth honoring. The kind who kept his word, carried his weight, and never forgot where he came from.

A New Mission

Ray retired young and handed the business to his sons. Now he spends his days in the woods on a quiet stretch of Mormon Mountain.

"I never thought I'd have a cabin here," he said. "My dad hates when I bring this up, but it speaks to where we came from, and I'm proud of it."

His father grew up in a house with dirt floors and tar paper walls. The house burned down, and they lost Ray's great-uncle Franklin. After the fire, the family moved into a home with concrete floors and block walls. It wasn't much, but it was more.

“My parents had five kids to feed. Money was always tight. So owning a cabin in the woods feels like a miracle, and I don’t take it for granted.”

With the gift of time and land he never expected to own, Ray began asking what should come next. He’d been blessed. It was time to give back, he thought, not through a donation but through work that carried meaning.

Ray started looking for the right organization. He did his homework. There were plenty of veteran programs, but he wanted one that invested its money in the mission, not overhead.

That’s when he found the Arizona Elk Society and their Heroes Rising program. Volunteers ran it. Donations went straight to the mission. One program in particular caught his attention: Guiding Our Heroes on a Hunt, designed to reconnect veterans with hunting and the wild places of Arizona.

“I love the forest. I love to hunt. I love being out in nature,” Ray said. “It was a perfect fit.”

Since 2019, Ray and his volunteer crew have been taking veterans on hunts. “It’s hard work and exhausting”, Ray says. Every year, he hits a wall. He’s tired. He asks himself why he’s doing this. But each year, something happens that gives him the answer—a moment, a conversation, a quiet reminder of why it matters.

Stories from the Mountain

“Some of these vets show up with more challenges than I’ve ever seen,” Ray said. “And to be honest, it helps me just as much as it helps them.”

One of the toughest cases was a Navy SEAL from Vietnam. Sixty-eight confirmed kills. Trained as a master chef in Italy. Played for the Miami Dolphins. Now he has dementia, he’s missing a leg, and he’s legally blind.

“Around here, we call him Blind Bob,” Ray said. “And we say it with nothing but respect. That’s the kind of man I want to see succeed. But I remember thinking, how am I going to make this work?”

Ray remembers Blind Bob vividly. “We called it divine intervention,” Ray says. “And I’m not exaggerating.

The first day they took him out, they spotted five bucks. Ray quietly pointed them out, clear as day, just 50 yards away. But Bob couldn’t see a thing. The light wasn’t right.

They went back to camp empty-handed.

The next morning, Ray asked him, “Bob, what can I do to make this easier for you? How can I help?”

Bob thought for a long moment. Then he said, “If you could find a deer standing in the open, in the sun, with the light just right... I think I could see it.”

Ray nodded, but inside he was already mourning the moment. This is impossible, Ray thought. That kind of shot doesn’t happen. Not like that. Not on command.

So Ray did the only thing he could, “God, I need a hookup here,” he said, half pleading, half hoping.

But that afternoon, something shifted.

A deer stepped into an opening. Standing in full sun. Perfect light. Perfect distance.

Ray whispered, “I’ll be damned.”

... Continued on page 13A

They used a special scope synced to a phone so the team could guide Bob by watching the sight on screen. It took coordination, patience, and trust.

Bob pulled the trigger.

The shot landed.

And the mountain, once again, gave something back.

There’s no trophy on Bob’s wall. There’s no memory he’ll hold onto for long. But for a second, everything came together, and Blind Bob got to be a hunter again.

And for those who were there, it didn’t feel like chance. It felt like grace.

Then there’s Nick and Vinny.

Nick carries a weight of PTSD, survivor’s guilt, the things that cling to you after war even when you scrub yourself raw trying to get clean.

He had a buddy named Vinny, who also suffered from PTSD, and hadn’t left his house in five years.

Five. Years.

Somehow, Nick convinced him to come on a hunt. Vinny didn’t carry a gun. He wasn’t ready for that. He came to be with Nick, and for now, that was enough.

But once Vinny got into the mountains, once he breathed the air and felt the brotherhood around him, something shifted. He didn’t want to leave.

Six months later, Nick and Vinny came back for a weekend. Four months after that, when Ray was gearing up for Blind Bob’s deer hunt and needed help, he called them both.

They said yes.

Then Nick and his family came down with COVID and had to cancel,



Left to right: Scott L, Dan B, Rob O, Bob B, John B
Kneeling: Chris A, Ray B



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A MISSION IN THE MOUNTAINS

... Continued from page 11A

but Vinny came anyway.

The same man who hadn't stepped outside his home in half a decade drove up the mountain alone. He got out of his truck, smiling.

"You're not going to believe this," he said.

"What's that?" Ray asked.

"I got a job." Then he paused. "And I got baptized!"

Vinny never came for the hunt. He came for a friend. But something about the mountains, the air, the people, and the silence cracked through the walls he'd built around himself.

He found purpose again. He found God.

And that's why Ray does this. That's what keeps him going when the season wears him down. That's what the mountain does sometimes. It doesn't just hand you a deer or a good story. It hands you a mirror. A moment. A second chance.

And Ray—he keeps going. Keeps hauling gear and hope and sorrow up the hill. Not for glory. Not even for healing, really. Just for the chance that someone might come down changed.

The General Who Never Wore Stars

Six years ago, a man named Dan came to enjoy the land and hunt. He and Ray have been good friends ever since. When Dan joined our interview, the depth of what Ray's mission means became impossible to miss.

"What Ray and his family are doing is incredible," Dan said. "They opened their home to help us enjoy the outdoors and hunting. They're sharing what they have with those who sacrificed their minds and bodies in service to our country. I am one of them, and I can't tell you how much this program means to me."

Dan started college studying marine biology. But over time, he felt called to something different. He attended a missionary conference, and the advice he received surprised him: become a nurse.

"I remember thinking I was pretty big to be a nurse at six-foot-seven," he said. "But I felt led to follow that path."

He attended nursing school at the University of Washington, spent a year in critical care, then worked as a paramedic nurse in Seattle. It wasn't what he'd originally planned, but it turned out to be exactly where he was meant to be.

At 38, while volunteering with FEMA after the Northridge earthquake, members of an Air Force evacuation crew approached him. They were launching a new program and wanted him to join.

So he did. Dan joined the Air Force Reserve as an AirEvac nurse.

Dan was selected with about 70 others to help launch a program that would address a brutal reality: throughout all our wars, the most severely wounded were left behind. There was no way to get them out safely or alive. The system simply didn't exist.

That changed with the Critical Care Air Transport Team, or CCATT.

Think of an ICU at 30,000 feet. A doctor, a critical care nurse, and a respiratory therapist working together to stabilize severely injured warfighters during flights to hospitals in Germany, the San Antonio Burn Unit, or wherever care was waiting.

Each CCATT mission could last up to 30 hours. They could carry up to four critical patients, though sometimes injuries were so severe they could only take one. The walking wounded rode up front. Dan and his team worked in the back, managing every breath, every heartbeat.

"As soon as dustoff (medevac by chopper) called us, we moved," Dan said. "We usually arrived within two hours of the incident. After emergency surgery at the MASH unit, we took over—put them on ventilators, drips, whatever was needed, and got them out."

The job took a toll.

Dan shattered his spine while offloading a patient from a transport plane. He'd just spent 14 hours monitoring critical care in the air. When they landed, he and two Marines prepared to transfer 700 pounds of patient and gear onto a K-loader—an unstable scissor lift designed for cargo, not people.

"I kept yelling, 'Watch the rollers, watch the rollers,'" Dan said.

... Continued on page 15A



AIR FORCE
HALL OF FAME
INDUCTEE
21,000 Lives Saved

By 2013, when Lt. Col. Dan Berg was inducted into the Air Force Hall of Fame, the program he helped launch had saved over 21,000 lives.

Before the Critical Care Air Transport Team (CCATT), the most severely wounded warriors were left behind. There was no way to evacuate them safely. Throughout all our wars, that brutal reality remained unchanged until CCATT.

Dan was one of about 70 selected to build the solution: an ICU at 30,000 feet. A doctor, critical care nurse, and respiratory therapist working together to stabilize the critically injured during flights that could last 30 hours.

Dan personally managed more than 21,000 trauma transports, including 104 critically wounded during 46 alert missions in Afghanistan and Iraq. Flying primarily in C-141 aircraft, he responded within two hours of dustoff calls, taking over after emergency surgery to get warriors to definitive care.

His most striking statistic? He has never lost a patient in transport.



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WORD SEARCH

Solution Page 18B

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A MISSION IN THE MOUNTAINS

... Continued from page 13A

When one Marine slipped, the stretcher twisted. Dan turned instinctively to steady it and protect the patient. In that instant, his spine shattered.

Injured and in blinding pain, Dan helped load the patient onto the transport. As they boarded, the doctor looked at him and said, “You still have to care for the patient.”

So he did. With no feeling in his legs and pain searing through his back, Dan kept going.

That wasn’t his only injury. He’s a tall man moving fast in tight quarters. Twice, he stood up too quickly on the plane and was knocked unconscious, suffering traumatic brain injuries both times. He lost much of his hearing. He shattered his wrist, which had to be surgically rebuilt. And then there was the smoke.

Dan was exposed to toxic burn pits filled with discarded munitions, including depleted uranium. The smoke drifted through the base and into their lungs. He now lives with diabetes, pancreatic disease, and a list of chronic illnesses with no family history. He knows exactly where they came from.

And still, the worst wounds may be the ones that don’t show.

Dan’s PTSD is severe. He remembers every patient. He still sees them in his nightmares.

“This is why I need Ray,” Dan said. “He helps me face these challenges every year. It’s an amazing thing he’s done.”

Dan had hunted his whole life. “I figured I was done,” he said. “That part of my life was over. But I wasn’t ready to let it go.”

The Arizona Elk Society and Ray changed that.

“I retired as a Lieutenant Colonel,” Dan said. “That meant something to me. But Ray—Ray’s like a general. You don’t have to wear stars to lead men. You just have to show up when it counts.”

The Table in the Woods

To understand what Ray has built, you have to know the setting. Ray and his wife Kim have a separate living space beyond their main cabin, nestled among the pines on Mormon Mountain. The land is still and peaceful. Inside stands a long, solid wood table capable of seating a dozen men. Great windows run floor to ceiling, letting filtered light pour in from the forest.

The walls are timber. Everything about the space whispers the same thing: You are welcome here. You may lay down what you carry.

Around that table, the men speak in the language of soldiers. No one needs to translate. No one asks for clarification. They can just be.

“We’re brothers,” Dan said. “We understand each other.”

What he didn’t say outright, but what was deeply felt, is that there are things which, once experienced, separate a man from the world he once knew. Only those who have endured similar things can understand the weight soldiers carry—the losses, the guilt, the grief. Here, that weight can rest on the table like another guest. And unlike elsewhere, it’s not asked to leave.

This is the power of Ray’s place. For combat veterans who’ve returned to a world that cannot comprehend what they carry, the table, the mountain, the hunt, the men—it all matters. Here, at last, they speak. And more importantly, they’re heard.

“Kim is the backbone of this mission”, Ray explains. “She’s the one who makes it all happen, taking care of every detail—from having cleaning wipes ready for eyeglasses to putting out incredible meals. Nobody goes hungry. In fact, it’s probably the only hunting trip where people gain weight.”

Most hunts involve tents and outhouses. Ray’s camp offers something more: a warm cabin, a bed, a table, and a place to let go. But the veterans don’t come for the extras. They come for the hunt. For each other.

“Every day I think about coming here,” Dan said. “Not about what’s wrong in my life. I think about the five days I get to spend with Ray. The five days I get with my cousin Scott, who believes in this so much he flies up just to be here with me and the guys.”

Ray’s goal is simple. “Give them a place where they can be comfortable,” he said. “Where they don’t have to carry everything all the time. If they can get to that point, where they can let it go, even just for a while, then we’ve done what we came here to do.”

This isn’t just a hunting trip. It’s healing. It’s hope. It’s a lifeline. And you can feel it: something greater is at work here.

A Note of Thanks from Ray

None of this would be possible without the incredible people who give their time, year after year, expecting nothing in return. Every single person listed here is a volunteer. The non-family members have devoted hundreds of hours to scouting and spending time with hunters in the field. Their generosity and dedication mean everything to this mission—and to me.

Family

- Kim Byrne
- Robert “Bob” Byrne
- John Byrne
- Kevin Byrne
- Mario Perez
- Colleen Perez

Volunteers

- Chris Adams
- Anthony French
- Lucas Longtine
- Tanner Bunch
- Hayden Jacobs
- Sam Pesuti

How You Can Help

Ray and the vets go through the same draw process as every other hunter in Arizona. They don’t get special treatment. Every tag has to be applied for, and most years, it’s a mix of luck and generosity.

Hunters who pull a tag and want to donate it can do so through the Arizona Elk Society. They accept tags for elk, deer, ram, even buffalo. Once the tags are donated, the Elk Society reaches out to people like Ray, who run hunts for veterans across the state.

If you’re a hunter and you pull a tag for Zone 6A, you can donate it to Ray’s program through the Arizona Elk Society. It’s a way to give back — one tag, one vet, one life-changing experience at a time.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8

WALKIN' ON MAIN



Stroll through historic Old Town Cottonwood while enjoying local wine tastings, art exhibits, classic cars, and live music in a lively street festival atmosphere.

Time: 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Location: Old Town

Cottonwood, AZ

For information: cottonwoodaz.gov

Admission: Free; wine tasting priced

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21 &
THROUGH DECEMBER 24
NORTH POLE EXPERIENCE



Climb aboard a festive trolley ride to Santa's workshop for a holiday adventure filled with elves, toy building, and Christmas magic. Multiple daily departures are available throughout the season.

Time: See website for departure times

Location: Little America Hotel, Flagstaff, AZ

For information: northpoleexperience.com

Admission: \$58–68 per person

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22
JOIN OUR FAMILY FOR
THANKSGIVING DINNER



Far from family or spending Thanksgiving alone?

You're not alone here.

Munds Park Community Church warmly invites you to join us for a family-style Thanksgiving meal — no cost, just a place at

the table, good food, and friendly faces.

Time: 1 pm

Location: Munds Park Community Church

Please RSVP: office@mpcc.church or 928-286-2022 (RSVP appreciated)

Admission: Free

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22
HOLIDAY BAZAAR: SHOP LOCAL
VENDORS & ARTISANS



Celebrate the season with local makers, food trucks, a gingerbread decorating contest, and a festive holiday movie under the stars. Enjoy free hot chocolate, popcorn, glow sticks for kids, and cozy vibes all around.

Time: 4:00 – 8:00 pm

Location: 406 S. 6th Street, Cottonwood, AZ

For information: manzanitaoutreach.org/holiday

Admission: Free



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28

MUNDS PARK 4TH ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS LIGHTING FESTIVAL



Munds Park Business Alliance hosts the 4th Annual Lighting Festival with carols, kids' crafts, cozy fire pits, cookies, popcorn, cocoa, and coffee. Bundle up and bring a lawn chair. After the ceremony, cruise Pinewood

Blvd to see the lights.

Schedule of Events:

5pm - Family crafts, face painting, kids activities and food

5:30pm - Kids performance

6pm - Music and Christmas Message

6:30pm - Lighting countdown

Time: 5-6:30pm

Location: Munds Park Community Church

17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Admission: Free

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29
PRESCOTT HOLIDAY LIGHT
PARADE & BONFIRE FESTIVAL



Kick off Arizona's Christmas City season with Santa, over 40 glowing floats, school bands, and festive cheer in downtown Prescott. After the parade, head to Mile High Middle School for the Bonfire Festival and keep the celebration going.

Time: Parade at 6:00 pm; Bonfire Festival from 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Location: Parade on Cortez Street; Bonfire at Mile High Middle School, Prescott, AZ

For information: www.prescott.org

Admission: Free

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5
SEDONA TREE LIGHTING
& SANTA VISIT



Celebrate the season with a traditional tree lighting, local holiday entertainment, refreshments, and a visit from Santa. A festive, family-friendly evening in the heart of Sedona.

Time: 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Location: Tlaquepaque North, 313 AZ-179, Sedona, AZ

For information: www.tlaq.com

Admission: Free

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5
HOLIDAY BAZAAR AT THE
ORPHEUM THEATER



Sip, shop, and celebrate the season with local artists, crafters, and vendors during this festive First Friday ArtWalk event. Enjoy holiday drinks, live art, and support the Salvation Army's Angel Tree Toy Drive by bringing a new, unwrapped toy.

Time: 5:00 – 9:00 pm

Location: The Orpheum Theater, 15 W. Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ

For information: www.orpheumflagstaff.com

Admission: Ticketed (see website for details)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

SANTA IS COMING TO TOWN!



The Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary is bringing holiday magic to town! Santa and Mrs. Claus will be making their grand arrival at Munds Park Community Church.

Bring the kids to snap a picture with Santa and his reindeer and take home a stocking full of holiday goodies.

RSVP: Linda Burnett (call or text) 619-954-6901

Time: 10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Location: Munds Park Community Church

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6
WINTER WONDERLAND & TREE
LIGHTING AT HERITAGE SQUARE



Celebrate the season with hot cocoa, s'mores, crafts, live music, and festive fun for all ages. Don't miss the tree lighting at 5:45 pm—and snap a selfie with Santa!

Time: 2:30 – 7:00 pm

Location: Heritage Square

22 E. Aspen Ave, Flagstaff

Admission: Free

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6
OLD TOWN COTTONWOOD
CHOCOLATE WALK



Stroll historic Main Street and sample handcrafted chocolates from local shops, tasting rooms, and restaurants during this sweet holiday tradition. Enjoy festive lights and music starting at 5:30 pm.

Time: 3:00 – 7:00 pm

Location: Old Town Cottonwood

For information: oldtown.org

Admission: Ticketed (see website for pricing and availability)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13
CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK AT
SEDONA HERITAGE MUSEUM



Step into a nostalgic holiday celebration with hot cider, cookies, vintage décor, live music, storytelling, author signings, hands-on crafts, and the Museum's iconic tumbleweed snowman. A festive, family-friendly favorite.

Time: 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Location: Sedona Heritage Museum, 735 Jordan Road, Sedona, AZ

For information: sedonamuseum.org or 928-282-7038

Admission: Free



Farmer's
MARKETS

SEDONA COMMUNITY
FARMERS MARKET

Join us every Sunday for a sunny marketplace experience! Discover a wide array of local fresh seasonal produce to unique artisan creations.

Date: Every Sunday

Time: 11 AM - 3 PM

Location: 2201 W SR 89A, West Sedona

PRESCOTT FARMERS
MARKET

Support local farmers, enjoy seasonal flavors, and help grow a healthier, stronger local economy with every purchase.

Dates: Every Saturday, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Location: 900 Iron Springs Road, Prescott,

WINDMILL PARK FARMERS
MARKET

Shop fresh and local every Thursday at Windmill Park! Find farm-to-table produce, sprouts, fruits, nuts, eggs, vegan organics, fresh bread, and honey—straight from local growers.

Date: Every Thursday

Time: 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Location: 9950 E Cornville Rd, Cornville,

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN
DOWNTOWN FLAGSTAFF



Celebrate with the iconic Pinecone Drop at noon, 10:00 pm, and midnight—plus live music, parties, and family fun all day long. Don't miss the free Noon Year's Eve celebration at Heritage Square and take advantage of free Mountain

Line bus rides until 1:45 am.

Location: Heritage Square & surrounding downtown area, Flagstaff

Admission: Free access to main events



Community
MARKETS

FLAGSTAFF URBAN
FLEA MARKET

Explore the eclectic and vibrant Flagstaff Urban Flea Market, a gathering of artisans and peddlers offering a unique variety of goods. Find everything from records, antiques, and books to handmade woodwork, ceramics, and vintage clothing. Plus, discover gems and minerals, soaps, used tools, comics, toys, jewelry, up-cycled goods, flowers, and other funky treasures.

Date: 2nd & 4th Saturdays, June 14th through October 25th

Time: 9 AM - 2 PM

Location: City Hall parking lot, 211 W. Aspen, Downtown Flagstaff on Historic Route 66

Admission: Free

PEDDLER'S PASS OLD-TIME
FARMERS & FLEA MARKET

Visit Peddler's Pass Old-Time Farmers & Flea Market in Prescott Valley, a bustling open-air swap meet offering a diverse array of items. From seasonal farm produce and yard-sale secondhand goods to antiques, tools, collectibles, and rocks & gems, there's something for everyone. Known as "the best swap meet in Arizona," this family-friendly market features affordable finds and a wide variety of vendors.

Date: Every Saturday & Sunday, Year-Round

Time: 6 AM - 3 PM (Early morning is prime time for the best picks)

Location: 6201 E. State Route 69, Prescott Valley

Admission: Free



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“Be present in all things and thankful for all things.”

— Maya Angelou

HOME MADE & WONDERFUL CLASSIC BEEF STEW

BY SARA BOWYER



Classic Beef Stew

It's my favorite time of year! I love the fall in the mountains. Mornings so cool that you might need a fire for a bit to warm the house, yellow flowers everywhere, the smell of juniper being delivered for the winter, and beautiful skies and sunshine. I could go on and on about the things I love about fall. But the number one thing I look forward to is the return of comfort food. During the summer, it's hot and we eat lighter. We take advantage of those fresh

fruits and vegetables in our gardens or in the store. Don't get me wrong, I love the summer fare, but by the time October comes around, I am ready for comfort food.

What does comfort food mean to you? I think we all have different ideas of what foods comfort us. Maybe it was your favorite meal your mom made when you were a child, or it was a particular food from a happy season in your life. For me, comfort foods are those hearty recipes that are warm and stick to your bones. They are too heavy for hot summer days but just perfect for those cool fall evenings.

Steve and I have lived all over the United States and I have found that comfort food is very different depending on the region of the country you live. When we lived in North Dakota, it was anything meat and potatoes. Living in Indiana, it was Amish chicken and noodles. In the south, it might be fried chicken and mashed potatoes. Whatever your favorite comfort food is, now is the time to bring it out! And I'm ready for it! Now you may associate calories with comfort food but here's the truth. All the sweatshirts and baggy clothes we wear in the fall cover up any calories we gain from said comfort food! (insert my smiling face!)

So here is one of my favorite comfort foods. Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 2 lbs Stew Beef – cut into 1” cubes
- 2 tsp Olive Oil
- 2 Cups Water
- 1 Tbs Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 tsp garlic powder (or one fresh clove garlic minced)
- 2 Bay leaves
- 1 medium onion – chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp raw sugar
- 1/2 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/2 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 4 large carrots – quartered and cut into small pie shaped pieces
- 3 celery stalks – halved and cut into small pieces
- 2 Tbs corn starch
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 packet of Hidden Valley Ranch dressing mix

Directions

1. Brown meat in the olive oil in a skillet, on the stove top over medium high heat (2-3 minutes). Place into crock pot
2. Add the 2 cups of water and all ingredients to the crock pot. Cook in crock pot on low for 8 hours or on high for 4 hours.
3. 45 minutes before serving, in a small bowl mix 1/4 cup of cold water and 2 tbs of corn starch together and mix until corn starch is dissolved. Once dissolved, add to the crock pot. Add the packet of Hidden Valley Ranch dressing mix as well.

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THE MAPLE BOURBON SMASH



There's a moment, just after Thanksgiving dinner is over and the dishes are stacked, when the house turns quiet in a way that feels earned. The fire's still going. The dog's asleep under the table. You're full in every sense of the word—belly, heart, and maybe just a little bit tired of small talk. That's when I make this drink.

The Maple Bourbon Smash isn't a cocktail built for celebration. It's built for reflection. It doesn't sparkle or shout. It doesn't come with a garnish or demand a photo. It's the kind of drink you sip after everyone's gone home, when the leftovers are packed, and there's nothing left to do but be grateful.

The Smash, historically, is one of the oldest cocktail styles on record. Born out of the 1800s, it was meant to be simple—spirit, citrus, sweetener, and whatever fresh herbs you had nearby. But this time of year, the garden is resting. The basil's long gone. The mint is a memory. So we lean into what is in season.

This version uses real maple syrup, the dark amber kind that tastes like woodsmoke and campfire mornings. A splash of orange juice and a touch of lemon bring brightness. Angostura bitters pull it all together. And the bourbon—well, the bourbon speaks for itself.

Top it with just a bit of seltzer to keep it light, but not so much that it forgets who it is. This isn't a summer drink. This is flannel, wool socks, low light. The kind of cocktail that keeps you company while the wind moves through the pines outside.

Settle in with a short glass by the fire, and toast to the season's quiet rewards—the warmth, the stillness, and the comfort of being right where you are.

The Method

Ingredients

- 1/2 ounce pure maple syrup (preferably Grade A dark amber)
- 1/2 ounce fresh orange juice
- 1/4 ounce fresh lemon juice
- 4 dashes Angostura bitters
- 1/2 orange wheel
- 2 ounces bourbon
- Ice
- 1 1/2 ounces chilled seltzer

Instructions

1. In a rocks glass, combine the maple syrup with the orange juice, lemon juice, and bitters.
2. Add the orange wheel and lightly muddle.
3. Add the bourbon and stir well.
4. Top with seltzer. Sip slowly.

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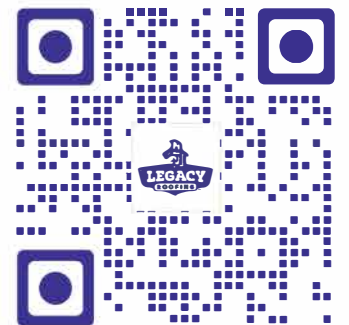
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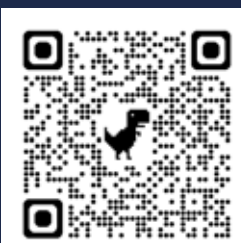


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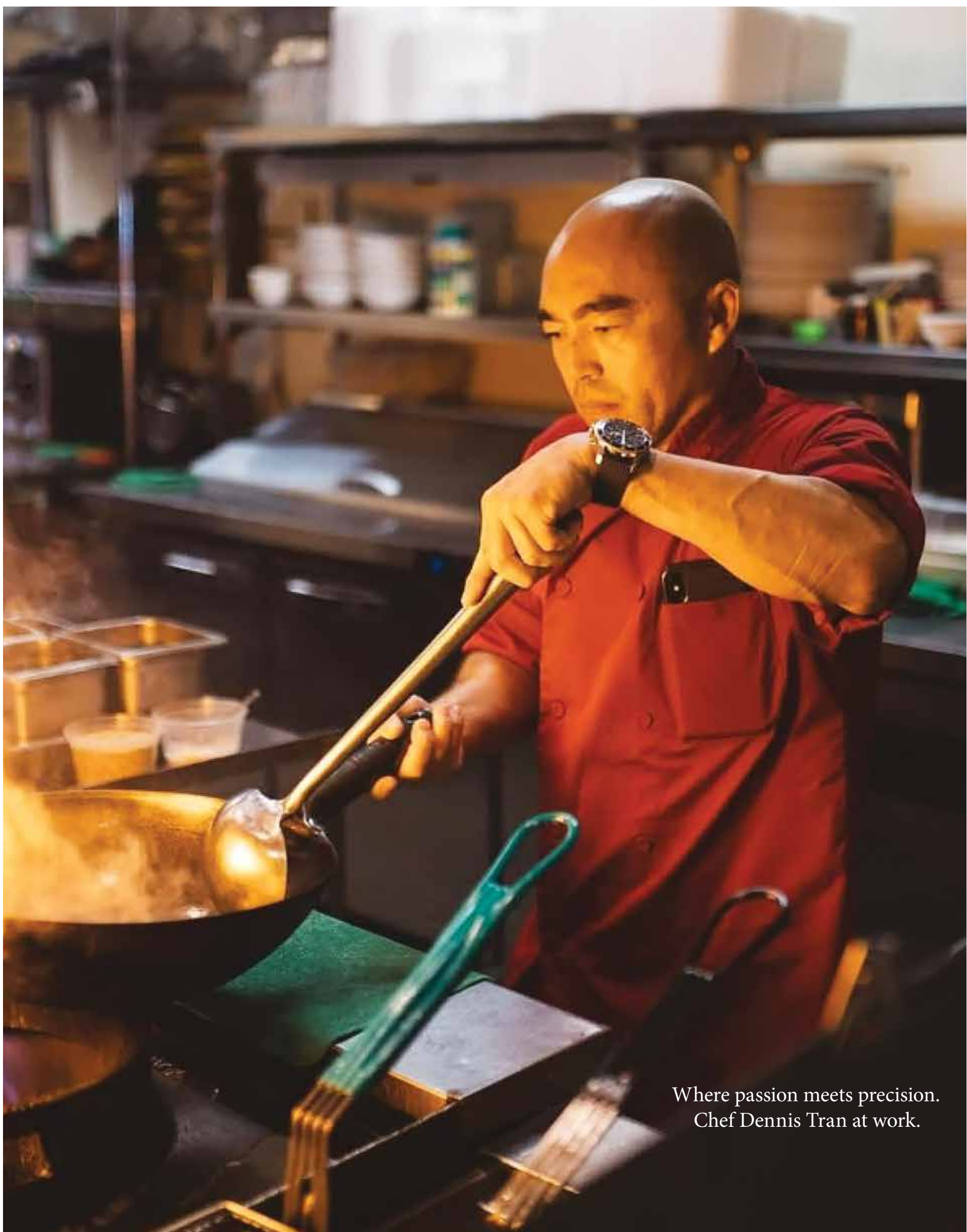
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Chef Dennis Tran at work.

MARTINO’S RESTAURANT HAS SOLD

Dennis Tran Owner & Chef of Saigon Kitchen Has Big Plans for What Comes Next

BY SANDEE CAVINESS

I have to say, after talking to Dennis on the phone to set up this interview, I already knew I was going to like him. At one point, he said with a smile in his voice, “We are looking to bring much love, peace, and happiness,” and I fell in love a little right then. I learned it wasn’t a line. It was just who he is.

When we met in person, that happy and positive energy came through. He greeted us with a huge smile, and it was clear how much this new chapter means to him. He’s excited to bring his food to the Park, and even more excited to build something that brings people together.

Genna and I visited him and his wife, Jenny, at Saigon Kitchen in Surprise. He gave us the full tour—the kitchen, the walk-in freezer, the bathrooms—every corner spotless. He takes pride in that, and he should.

And the food? Incredible.

He served us his mother’s crispy egg rolls with minced pork, shaken beef platter, Saigon garlic noodles, chicken broth, and more. It was way too much to eat in one sitting, so we packed it up and stopped for ice on the way home to keep it cold. That should tell you everything.

We also got to see Dennis with his staff, most of whom are kids who grew up eating at the restaurant. Their parents were regulars, and now they’re behind the counter. Watching him with them felt more like a big brother checking in than a boss managing a shift. It was genuine, and it was moving.

I am confident that Munds Park will fall in love, too.

Now, on to the interview.

Dennis Tran grew up surrounded by the warmth of a kitchen and the steady rhythm of a family that loved to cook. His parents shared a deep appreciation for food, and that passion shaped him early on. His mother owned and operated a Vietnamese restaurant in San Diego’s Gaslamp Quarter, right on 4th and Broadway, across from the Grand Hotel.

Some of the dishes on his current menu are tributes to his mother’s recipes, like her crispy egg rolls with minced pork and a signature hot sauce for those who like it spicy. Her influence runs deep, not just in the food but in Dennis himself.

Dennis learned to cook by doing. As a kid in his mother’s kitchen, he soaked up more than recipes—he learned hustle, hospitality, and how to feed people from the heart. That hands-on experience became the foundation

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of his love for good food and people. He’s a self-taught chef whose skills were forged through experience, not a classroom. Growing up in his mother’s kitchen, he learned by doing and developed an instinct for flavor that can’t be taught. Inspired by his parents and driven by a deep love for the craft, Dennis built his life around food.

That life, however, was moving fast.

At the time, Dennis was working nonstop and rarely home. He knew it was time to start a family. He told his wife Jenny, “Wherever you want to move, we’ll move.”

Her brother lived in Surprise, so they went to check it out. The town had a family-oriented feel, the kind of place where they could plant roots and build a life. They quickly fell in love with the community, and it’s been part of their story ever since.

Back in 2007, Surprise was nothing like it is today. It was mostly farmland, with fields of corn, orange groves, and watermelons stretched for miles. Dennis and Jenny watched the town slowly evolve.

By late 2009, Dennis had an idea. He told Jenny, “You know what? I think this city needs a good place to eat.” He began researching the area, asking himself and community leaders if Surprise would welcome something new, like Asian cuisine.

After much thought and research, in 2010, they decided to go for it.

Opening from scratch was brutal. Banks won’t touch restaurant startups—too risky. “They wait until you survive the first three years,” Dennis says. “Then your name starts to mean something.”

Construction began that year, but progress was slow. The City of Surprise was backed up with permits, and Dennis refused to cut corners. He was committed to doing everything the right way. After months of patience and persistence, the restaurant opened its doors in July 2010.

At first, the community was mostly retirees who were used to more traditional fare—“meat and potatoes,” as Dennis puts it. Asian flavors were unfamiliar to many. So he met the challenge head-on: personally delivering dishes to tables, introducing the food himself, and asking for honest feedback. “Try it. See if you like it. Tell me what you think.” That simple gesture helped build trust and relationships.

Word spread. Year by year, more people came—not just for the food, but for the warm,

...Continued on page 4B

MARTINO’S RESTAURANT SOLD

... Continued from page 3B

welcoming atmosphere. Guests came from Sun City, Sun Village, even as far as Goodyear. Wine groups gathered for happy hour. Golf leagues and baseball teams held regular meetups. The restaurant became a local hub.

Running a restaurant isn’t glamorous. It’s long hours, constant pressure, and hard work. Ten to fifteen-hour days are standard. As Dennis puts it, “If your heart’s not in it, it shows.”

Today, Dennis still walks the floor, checks every dish, and greets regulars by name. He hasn’t forgotten where it all began: a small kitchen in San Diego, watching his mother cook with care and purpose. That same spirit lives in every plate he serves. For Dennis, food isn’t just a business. It’s how he honors his roots and connects with people through good food made with love and packed with flavor.

A Taste of Saigon in the Mountains

So what brought Dennis and his family to Munds Park?

It started with a longtime family friend, his real estate broker, who had built a home in Munds Park nearly twenty years ago. For years, he and his wife kept inviting Dennis, Jenny, and Dennis’s brother to come visit. But life was busy, and they never made the time.

Then, one summer, they finally did. And that was it.

It was love at first sight. The peace. The trees. The community. It was everything they didn’t know they were missing. Dennis remembers the moment clearly: “My wife looked at me, I looked at her, and I asked my two boys, ‘What do you think about being here?’ They said, ‘We love it!’”

Munds Park offered just the right balance. It was close enough to Surprise to stay connected, but far enough to feel like a true getaway. The boys love to ski. Jenny does too.

At first, they considered Flagstaff, but it felt too crowded and too much like a city. Munds Park had the quiet, peace, and beauty. It was exactly what they were looking for.

They bought a home and completely remodeled it. The family was happy.

Dennis hadn’t planned on opening a second restaurant—until something caught his eye. One day, while driving around the Park, Dennis spotted the for sale sign at Martino’s. He looked at Jenny and said, “Honey, maybe we should open a restaurant here.”

And just like that, the seed was planted. It wasn’t part of the plan, but it felt right. Over time, Dennis and the property owners, Dee and Bill Spain, not only struck a deal to purchase the old Martino’s restaurant, they also became fast friends.

Before Dennis can officially bring his vision to life in Munds Park, there’s one critical piece still pending: the liquor license.



Dennis, with his wife Jenny and their two boys Ethan who is now 15 and Jacob who is now 12.

“We’re still on a contingency for that,” he says. “To be honest, if the liquor license doesn’t come through, the deal’s done. It’s that important, especially up here.” The ability to serve beer, wine, and cocktails is essential to the restaurant’s concept and experience. However, there is no real concern that the license won’t come through.

In the meantime, the work has already begun.

Dennis is already gearing up for a full renovation. Inside and out, everything will be transformed—fresh paint, new floors, updated fixtures, and comfortable seating throughout. The kitchen will be fully opened up, giving guests a clear view of the team at work and the care they put into keeping everything spotless. The exterior will also get a major refresh to match the warmth and quality found inside.

Jenny has a special vision for the exterior. She wants to create a lush, welcoming landscape, the kind of garden that makes you want to stay awhile. The whole space will feel warm, peaceful, and alive.

The layout will include a cozy lounge, a spacious dining area, and beautiful outdoor seating. Central heating and air conditioning will be added too, ensuring guests are comfortable year-round so they can relax and enjoy.

Dennis is aiming to open before the Fourth of July 2026, but his target is mid-June. Either way, he’s not rushing. He plans to start with a soft opening to train staff thoroughly and dial in every detail before fully launching.

When it comes to staffing, he’s staying true to his values.

Unlike many restaurateurs, Dennis won’t be bringing staff from his Surprise location. He wants to hire locally—teenagers, college students, and people from the community who

are eager to learn. “I actually prefer people with no experience,” he says. “That way, they learn everything my way, from scratch.”

Every sauce and every recipe will be his own. He plans to personally oversee all food prep and cooking to ensure the kind of consistency that built his reputation. “When I train people myself, they understand how I want things done. That’s what keeps the food right.”

Operating seasonally? Not a problem.

Some might worry about operating only part of the year, but Dennis sees it as a perfect balance.

“I’m not too worried about being open six to eight months out of the year,” he says. “Winter in Surprise is our peak season, with all the winter visitors. Summer slows down there, but that’s when Munds Park is at its busiest. It balances out perfectly.”

This seasonal rhythm also gives him the rare opportunity to be fully present in both locations. “Even though I have a kitchen manager, a chef, a sous chef, and a prep team, I still like to be there during peak season. I want to make sure the food stays consistent and the quality never slips.”

Right now, the plan is for the Munds Park restaurant to operate from April through the end of December.

And yes, he’s already thinking about the parking situation.

Dennis knows parking will be a challenge, especially during busy weekends. While he’ll have access to his own lot and the neighboring Coldwell Banker spaces after 5 p.m., he’s also exploring long-term options. One possibility is the nearby Woody’s property, owned by the Shuster family, which he hopes might be available for overflow parking. “It could really benefit the whole area,” Dennis says. “A clean, well-maintained space would be an improvement until the land is developed.”

Bold Flavors, Thoughtful Choices

The menu honors Vietnamese tradition, with bold flavors and a fresh, modern flair. From pho and crisp salads to crowd favorites like Saigon Garlic Noodles and the signature Shaken Beef Platter—a sizzling dish of stir-fried filet mignon with caramelized onions and Jasmine rice—Saigon Kitchen is known for bold flavors and quality ingredients.

Healthy dining options in Munds Park are limited, especially for those who are mindful about what they eat. Whether it’s due to a special diet, food allergies, or simply a preference for lighter, healthier meals, many people are looking for choices that feel good and taste great too.

When I mentioned this, Dennis nodded. He hears it all the time.

“We get that a lot,” he said. “In Surprise, we serve a large senior community and a lot of athletes, too. Some guests are managing health conditions, and others just want to eat clean. The athletes usually go for high-protein meals. We’ve also got people who need low-sodium, gluten-free, vegetarian, or allergy-friendly options. We’re happy to accommodate.”

“Our food is healthy anyway,” he added. “But we’ll always do what we can to meet someone’s needs. Just let the staff know, and we’ll take good care of you.”

For Dennis, it’s not just about serving great food. It’s about making sure everyone can enjoy it.

He’s also thinking beyond the menu.

The new restaurant in Munds Park will be more than just a place to eat. Dennis is planning a full calendar of community-friendly events, all open to the public.

He’s excited to host wine tastings paired with chef-curated menus, whiskey and tequila dinners paired with chef-curated menus, live music, catering for private events, and Sip & Paint nights.

No memberships. No exclusivity. Just good food, good people, and a space where everyone is welcome.

At the core of everything Dennis does, whether in Surprise or Munds Park, is community. He’s built a business where customers become friends, and their kids grow up to join the team. He’s kept his mother’s recipes alive while building his own. And there’s always a place at the table.

If you haven’t visited Sigon Kitchen, we encourage you to do so. You won’t be disappointed. Ask for Dennis, and say hello from Munds Park!

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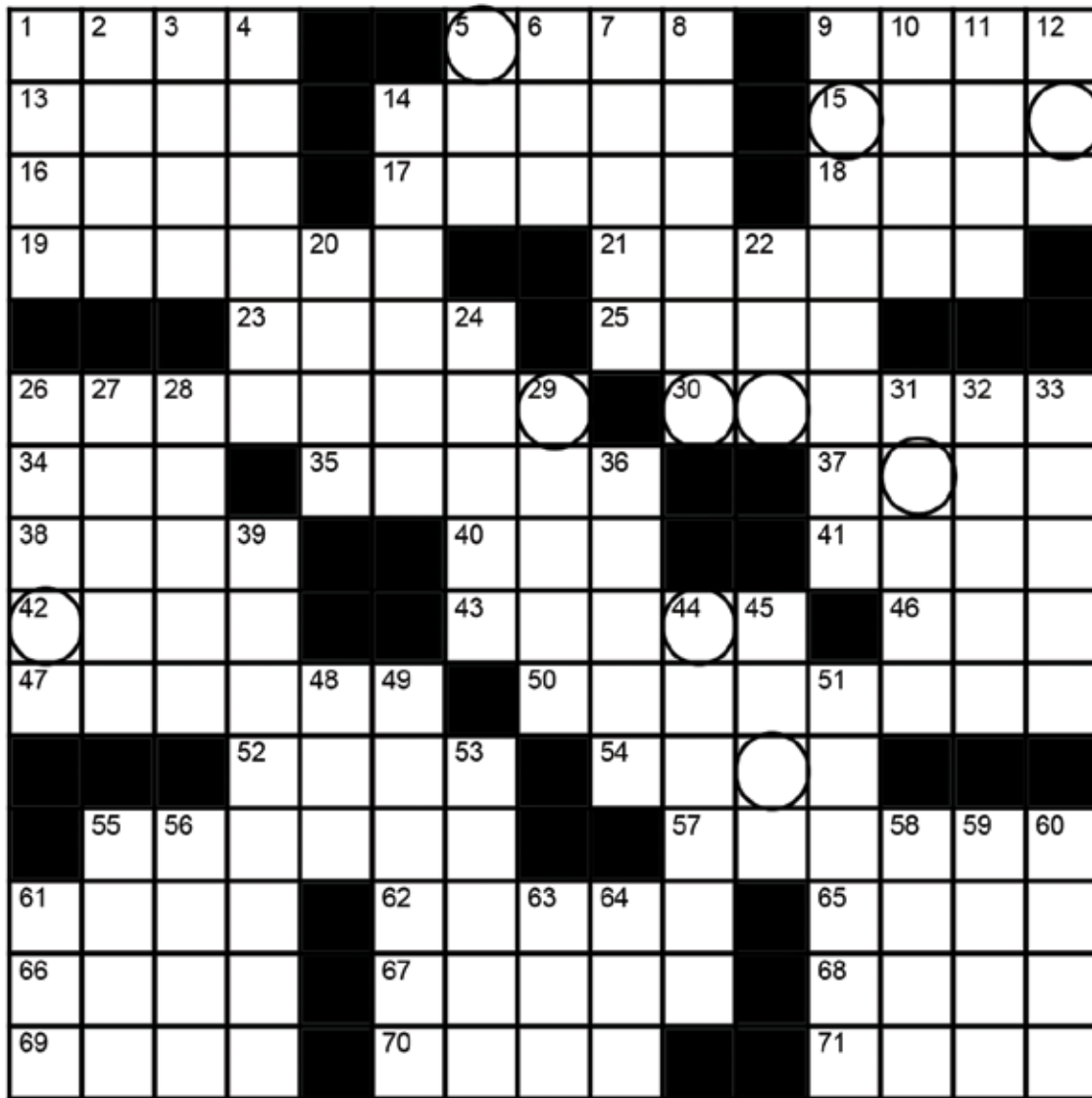
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BONUS CHALLENGE: Finish the crossword, collect the circled letters and see if you can crack the hidden word! Clue: Thanksgiving Treat

ACROSS

1. Office fill-in
5. Pots and ____
9. Mug
13. Length x width, for a rectangle
14. Drink served with marshmallows
15. Clickable image
16. Pinocchio, at times
17. Glorify
18. Blackjack request
19. Place for wine or salt
21. Ribs eater's need
23. "Iliad" warrior
25. Spinnaker, e.g.
26. Tot's speech
30. More timid
34. Victorian, for one
35. Siesta
37. Storage cylinder
38. At one time, at one time
40. Moray, e.g.
41. Fraternity party attire
42. Cookers
43. Sharp or abrupt blows
46. Functioned as
47. Gym wear
50. Robust
52. Pro follower

54. Needle case

55. "____ House"

57. Lease signer

61. Baker's need

62. Sonata section

65. Carhop's load

66. Ancient marketplaces

67. Bicycle part

68. Cork's country

69. Couples

70. Put up, as a picture

71. Flagmaker Betsy

DOWN

1. Soft mineral
2. Toledo's lake
3. Lunch or dinner
4. wager
5. Chicken ____
6. Part of a play
7. Middays
8. Bow
9. Dismalest
10. Berry
11. Succotash ingredient
12. Conclude
14. Granola
20. ____ and sciences
22. Pumpkin ____

24. Streamlined

26. Honks

27. Cupid's projectile

28. Butter up?

29. Animates

31. Plains tribe

32. "Pomp and Circumstance" composer

33. Cut of beef

36. Dish

39. Artisans

44. Philanthropist

45. Swerve

48. Tartan cap

49. Boldness

51. Season

53. Waikiki welcome

55. Swear to

56. Detective Wolfe

58. Threesome

59. Rabbit ____

60. Some whiskeys

61. Frequently

63. Masfield play "The Tragedy of ____"

64. Archaeological site

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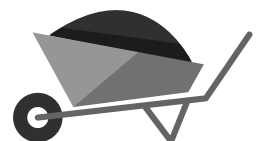
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A TRAVEL WRITER FOLLOWS A CENTURIES-OLD EARTHQUAKE TO LISBON & finds faith, history & grace in the city that rose from the ruins.

BY "UNSTOPPABLE STACEY" WITTIG



A faint lavender scent lingers in the air. Candles flicker on a distant altar. I'm sitting in a pew, somewhere in 18th-century Lisbon, when the first shudder rolls beneath my feet. The wooden floor trembles, just a whisper at first. Then the sound of stone cracking splits the air. The church walls sway, the bells toll wildly and for a moment, I forget I'm sitting inside a museum.

The tremor ends as suddenly as it began. My heart is beating faster. Around me, strangers exhale together, a collective prayer. This is the heart of Lisbon's earthquake museum — part science, part cinema, part resurrection story. But for me, it's also the end of a pilgrimage I didn't know I was taking.

I first heard of the great Lisbon Earthquake while walking the Camino Primitivo across northern Spain in 2017. In the Lugo Cathedral, a kindly church lady pointed to a fracture in one of the interior arches. "This cracked during the Lisbon Earthquake," her casual tone implied that I should know the story. I didn't—yet.

The thought that a tremor from Portugal could reach this far fascinated me. I tucked the mystery into my pilgrim pack, alongside my scallop shell and journal.

Back home in Arizona, I started reading about the disaster that struck on All Saints' Day, 1755. The more I learned, the more the story shook me.

That morning, Lisbon's churches were full — parishioners dressed for Mass, the air heavy with incense and wax. Then the ground convulsed. Marble cracked. Candles toppled. Walls collapsed over worshipers. The sea drew back, exposing the muddy floor of the Tagus River, before returning as a wall of water. Flames roared through the ruined city for days.

Tens of thousands perished. Philosophers in faraway Paris wrote about it. Priests wrestled with questions of faith and punishment. The earth shook Lisbon, but the aftershocks unsettled Europe's very idea of God.

The more I read, the more haunted I felt. Every cathedral I visited seemed to whisper of the quake. Cracked ceilings in Salamanca, Spain. Toppled Roman ruins in Morocco. A leaning medieval tower in Cambados, Galicia. I began to see the Lisbon Earthquake everywhere—and eventually realized I had to go to the Quake Museum.

Flights from Phoenix to Lisbon were expensive. I watched fares for

... Continued on page 9B

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... Continued from page 7B

years, waiting. Then, this September, while attending a travel-writers’ conference in Ireland, I saw a cheap fare pop up. Lisbon was a short hop away. I clicked ‘book’ before I could overthink it.

When my plane descended over the Tagus River, I caught my first glimpse of the city’s lights shimmering over rooftops. I thought of those same roofs collapsing in 1755 — and of the courage it took to rebuild.

The next morning, I walked to Belém, the riverside district where Portuguese explorers once set sail for the New World. There, beside the National Coach Museum, stood a modern glass-and-steel building with a single word above the entrance: Quake.

Inside, a young guide in a lab coat grinned like Doc Brown from Back to the Future. “Ready to travel through time?” they asked.

I nodded, half-smiling, but the moment the lights dimmed, my pulse quickened. We shot backward through centuries in a swirl of sound and light — Neil Armstrong’s moon landing, Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream,” Napoleon at Waterloo — until the reel stopped on November 1, 1755.

Then came the pews, the bells, the trembling floor. Heat lamps flickering like firelight. A choir’s chant melting into screams. I could almost feel the dust settle on my face.

When the motion stopped, no one spoke. It was as if we’d each survived something real.

The rooms that followed told how Lisbon rebuilt from the ashes — not just its streets but its spirit. Interactive displays showcased the new Pombaline grid plan, designed to withstand future earthquakes. Enlightenment thinkers debated whether the catastrophe was divine judgment or natural science.

As a Christian traveler, I lingered over those questions. Was the quake God’s wrath, or simply nature groaning under its own laws? Maybe the lesson wasn’t about punishment but perseverance. Faith doesn’t prevent the earth from shaking; it steadies your heart when it does.

When the final doors opened, I stepped back into sunlight. The Tagus shimmered gold, as calm as glass. Tourists hurried toward the Jerónimos Monastery, unaware that this very river once rose up in fury.

I stood still, letting the breeze touch my face. For years, I’d carried this earthquake in my imagination. Now, after feeling it rumble beneath my feet, something inside me finally stilled.

Pilgrimages don’t always end at shrines. Sometimes they end in the understanding that life — like Lisbon — must be rebuilt again and again.

The earthquake museum sits at Rua Cais da Alfândega Velha 39 in Belém. Each 90-minute session moves visitors through timed rooms where stories unfold in sound, motion and scent. Shows are offered in several languages. Book ahead — time slots fill quickly.

The next day, I wandered through Lisbon’s downtown grid, tracing the wide boulevards and uniform buildings born from the ruins. Bells rang for Mass. I wanted to duck into a small church, light a candle and whisper a prayer of gratitude.

For survival.

For faith that rebuilds.

And for a God who still speaks through the shaking.

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WOODY'S PROGRESS REPORT



Welcome to Woody's Progress Report (Or Lack Thereof), where we track the thrilling saga of absolutely nothing happening. This prime slice of pavement—complete with a post-apocalyptic gas station—has been sitting empty since 2013. Yes, 2013. So until this rundown gas station gets a purpose, we'll be reporting in every issue on the thrilling "developments" of absolutely nothing.

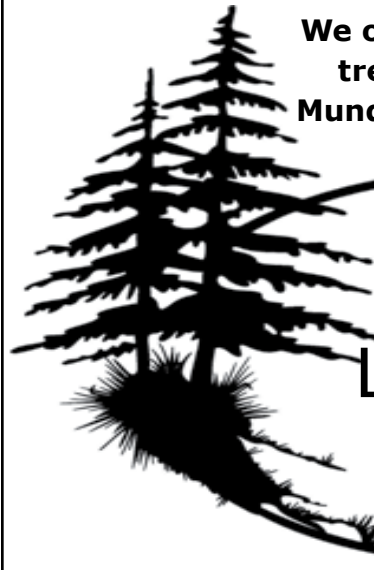


In this issue's report:

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THE MANY PLANTS OF CHRISTMAS

BY MISTI WARNER-ANDERSEN

The Christmas trees are almost here!

It's one of the most fun traditions families engage in every year in late November and early December - finding the perfect evergreen that will serve as the centerpiece of your home's holiday season.

As always, Warner's will have a wonderful selection of both potted and cut Christmas trees just before the Thanksgiving holiday.

If you prefer the classic fragrance and shape of a fresh cut tree, we'll also have Douglas and Noble Firs, available in sizes up to eleven feet tall. These stunning evergreens are freshly harvested and carefully selected for quality and fullness.

For those who love something they can enjoy year after year, our potted trees offer living beauty that can be planted in your yard after the holidays. This season's choices include Colorado Spruce, Baby Blue Spruce, Dwarf Alberta Spruce, and Austrian Pine, all standing about four to five feet tall.

Whether you're decorating a cozy living room or a grand entryway, Warner's can help you find the perfect tree for your home this season.

But your living decor doesn't have to stop with your tree. There are numerous seasonal plants that continue the holiday theme (or can serve as fabulous hostess gifts for any parties you go to!)

Although they are only sold for about 6 weeks each year, poinsettias remain the most popular potted plant in the United States, with 70 to 80 million sold annually. In addition to adding vibrant, showy "flowers" of red, white, and pink (they are actually modified leaves called bracts), poinsettias are easy to care for during their peak season. Plus, while they are most dazzling during the holidays, it's possible to keep them as a houseplant all year long.

With its festive blooms, the Christmas Cactus, is another staple of the holidays that is a lasting addition to your home. In fact, the plant can enjoy several blooming cycles during the year, but will usually stop flowering by fall. At that point, you should



Poinsettia



Christmas Cactus



Rosemary Cone



Paperwhites



Amaryllis

encourage its brief dormancy cycle by reducing water, light, and temperature, putting it in a cool place with about 12 hours of darkness. About six weeks before you want to see it bloom again, bring it out of the cold and start watering it regularly to encourage new buds.

A topiary rosemary cone plant adds festive cheer (and an amazing fragrance) to any Christmas decor. This perennial herb, with its silvery gray-green needle-like leaves, looks like a miniature Christmas tree. Easy to grow, it can be a centerpiece for your holiday table, or welcome your guests in containers by the front door.

Finally, there's the fun of watching holiday plants emerge and grow from modest bulbs.

Most spring flowering bulbs need 12 to 15 weeks at temperatures between 41 and 48 degrees in order to produce a good root system essential to flowering. But if you are looking to have lovely blooms this winter, we suggest Narcissus tazetta – better known as paperwhites, which are easy to start and give wonderfully scented, white trumpet flowers right into spring.

Paperwhites are most often (and most easily) potted in shallow containers of gravel or decorative stones with water that just reaches the base of the bulbs. Put the bulbs in a cool, dark place for about two weeks so the roots take hold, and then take the pot out into a brightly lit room. In about a month, your paperwhites will be in bloom. Pro tip: Plant them in succession so you have pots of paperwhites blooming all winter long.

Now is also the time to get your amaryllis bulbs started in order to have their big, showy flowers blooming by Christmas. With trumpets in a wide variety of colors, including red, pink, white, orange, and some bi-colored options, sitting atop stems that can grow to three feet tall, they will add a little drama to your living holiday decorations!

In addition to trees and plants, you can find many rustic touches to complement your holiday look at our nursery gift shop.

Happy holidays & happy gardening from all of us at Warner's Nursery!



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LOAVES & FISHES

BY SANDEE CAVINESS



This story started with a Facebook post. Genna was moved after reading that Sue Moning, someone she'd seen often on the Camp Verde Facebook groups, had gone fishing, caught her limit, and was offering the fish to neighbors who needed them.

That alone touched us. But Genna had already been following Sue for a while, and she'd noticed something: Sue quietly and consistently shows up for her community. Whether it's sharing a photo of the creek at sunrise for those who can't get out and see it themselves or making sure people know where to find food, Sue leads with kindness.

This latest act of generosity sealed it. We knew we had to meet her.

Meet Sue Moning

Sue Moning doesn't just fish for sport. Today, she's fishing because people are hungry.

From her spot near the creek in Camp Verde, Sue quietly runs a one-woman ministry... catching trout, handing out meals, and reminding people that kindness doesn't have to be complicated. "I just thought, if you need protein, get your pole, grab your license, and come down to the creek," she says.

But understanding not all people can get to the creek, she thought she would help out.

It started with a simple Facebook post. Sue had seen the state stocking trout in the stream, and she'd also seen the news about food benefit cuts. She knew some families in her area would struggle. "I saw it as another source of meat, and I wanted people to know. So I posted online, letting folks know where they could fish and that I'd been catching extras I could share."

The thing about Sue is, she understands hard times. A former police officer forced into early retirement by health issues and PTSD, she's known what it feels like to struggle. She's been helped by others and never forgot it. Like the fifth-grade teacher who brought dinner for her family when her brother was hospitalized. "She walked in with a bucket of chicken, side dishes, and a strawberry meringue pie," Sue recalls. "I'll never forget it."

That memory and her parents example lives in everything Sue does. Raised in a working-class Catholic family of six, generosity was non-negotiable. Her father shoveled snow for elderly neighbors before sunrise. They donated to food banks even when they needed food stamps themselves. "They didn't have much, but they still gave," Sue says. "They raised us to know we're not here just for ourselves."

Now, in her retirement, she lives out those values. Sometimes she delivers the fish she catches. Sometimes she posts to let others know the creek is full. Either way, she's feeding people. Literally and spiritually.

She's not looking to be noticed. "I normally don't talk about what I do," she says. "But this time, I shared it so people could help themselves. If I can help one family, that's enough."

And it ripples.

One fish went to a woman Sue once clashed with online over censorship issues at the library—a political disagreement that put a distance between them. But they'd recently started crossing paths in an exercise class and, slowly, got to know one another as people, not positions.

When Sue posted that she had extra fish, the woman reached out and asked if she could have them. Sue didn't hesitate. She delivered the fish herself. "Big hugs," she says. "She's a friend now."

Another delivery was to a family of four. "I can't do everything," Sue says, "but I can help this family, that's enough."

She calls it her "personal ministry," a way to honor her parents and serve others in a world that feels like it can use more kindness and generosity. "This

is my church," she says, looking around at the stream and the trees. "Nature. Service. That's where I feel God now."

With food insecurity growing and winter approaching, Sue knows small acts matter more than ever. "People think it has to be big to make a difference. It doesn't. Buy an extra box of potatoes. Hand out a meal. Fish and share it. Just do something."

Sue Moning may have retired from the police force, but she never stopped serving. Her badge these days is a fishing pole and a cooler full of trout.

And her message lands quietly, but clear: When you can help, you should.



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WHO INVITED THE DINOSAURS TO THANKSGIVING DINNER?

BY THE GREAT BRAIN

It's Thanksgiving. The table is set. The cranberry sauce is jiggling. The turkey is golden brown and ready to be carved. Then someone says:

"You know that turkey is basically a dinosaur, right?"

Wait—what?

Turns out, it's true. That bird in the center of your dinner table has ancient relatives. And we mean really ancient—like 150 million years old.

Let's talk turkey. Let's talk dinosaurs.

MEET THE TURKEY'S FAMILY

Turkeys are part of a group of animals called theropods. So were some of the most famous dinosaurs ever—like Tyrannosaurus rex and Velociraptor. These weren't the long-necked plant-eaters. Theropods were fast, fierce, and often covered in feathers.

That's right. Many dinosaurs had feathers.

Not just a few. A lot.

THE DINO CLUES

So how do we know birds came from dinosaurs? Scientists have found some awesome clues in fossils:

Feathers – Imprints of fluffy feathers in ancient rock.

Wishbones – That little V-shaped bone you pull apart after dinner and make a wish? Dinosaurs had it too.

Hollow bones – Lightweight bones that made movement (and later, flying) easier.

Three-toed feet – Just like a turkey's!

Similar eggs and nests – Birds and some dinos built nests and protected their young.

Put all those clues together, and it's clear: modern birds are living dinosaurs.

A TURKEY IS AN AVIAN DINOSAUR

Here's the cool part: birds didn't just descend from dinosaurs.

They are dinosaurs.

Paleontologists call them avian dinosaurs (avian means "bird"). All the big, non-bird dinos went extinct around 66 million years ago—but some small, feathered ones survived. Over time, they became the birds we see today.

So that wild turkey strutting across your backyard? It's got dino DNA.

FUN FACT TIME!

Turkeys can see in color and have better vision than you. Some dinosaurs likely did too.

Velociraptors were about the size of a turkey. (Not the huge ones from the movies!)

Feathers came before flight. Dinosaurs probably used them for warmth, protection, or showing off.

The wishbone helps birds flap their wings. It used to help dinosaurs move their arms and chests.

So... every time you see a bird, you're looking at a living dinosaur. They didn't go extinct.

They just traded their teeth for beaks and learned how to fly.

Happy Thanksgiving, Dino-fans.



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S J B C Q G K Z F E A S T E K N P

THANKSGIVING WORD SEARCH

Search up, down, forward, backward, diagonal to find the hidden words.
Answers page 18B.

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| Welcome | Thankful |
| Pumpkin | Kindness |
| Harvest | Gathering |
| Feast | Cornucopia |
| Celebrate | Autumn |
| Warmth | Share |
| Leaves | Home |
| Gratitude | Friends |
| Family | Cider |
| Blessings | Appreciation |



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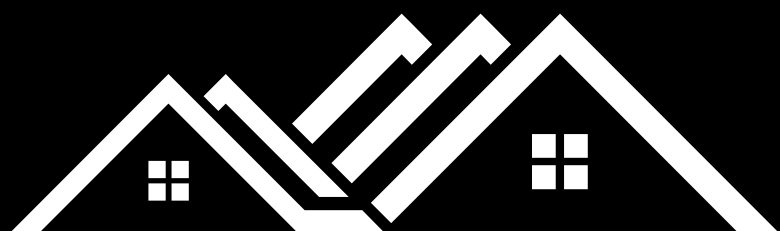


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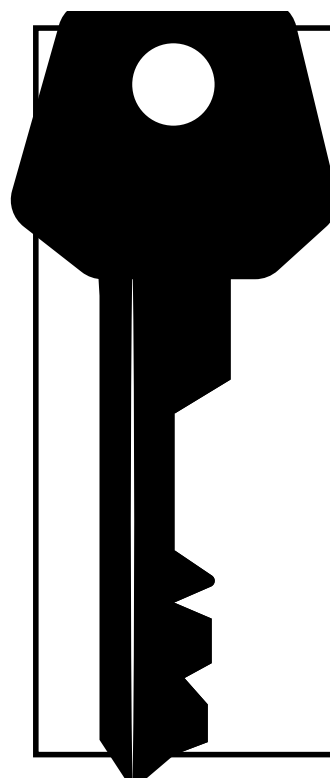
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Bonus Answer: Pumpkin Pie

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KIDS WORD SEARCH

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J	T	K	W	L	S	V	M	G	F	N	C	W	S	O	N	E
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Found a Stray?

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Note: Coconino County has leash laws. Dogs must be under control at all times—even in rural areas.

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Arizona Game & Fish (Flagstaff Region) (928) 774-5045

Weekends & after hours call 911

Don't feed wildlife. Keep trash secure. Report encounters with bears, mountain lions, or sick animals.

Loose Livestock

Department of Agriculture (press 1) (800) 294-0305

Environmental & Emergency Services

Illegal Dumping in Forests or Waterways

Environmental Quality Reporting Line (928) 679-8886

(press 1 to leave a message) Reports can be made anonymously.

Flooding Concerns

Coconino County Call Center: (928) 679-8525

Emergency Planning and Real-Time Updates

Coconino County Emergency Management (928) 679-8311

Email: emergencymanagement@coconino.az.gov

Fire-Related Concerns

Illegal Campfires on National Forest Land

Coconino National Forest Dispatch Center (928) 527-3552

Coconino County Sheriff's Non-Emergency Dispatch (928) 774-4523

(press option 1) Provide detailed location information, such as forest road numbers or GPS coordinates, when reporting.

Illegal Campfires (private property) during Fire Restrictions

Coconino County Sheriff's Non-Emergency Dispatch (928) 774-4523

(press option 1) Applicable to unincorporated areas of the county.

Fire Restrictions Information

www.coconino.az.gov/2595/Fire-Restriction-Information

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs)

Reckless Driving, Trespassing, or Noise Complaints

Coconino County Sheriff's Non-Emergency Dispatch (928) 774-4523

(press option 1) to report OHVs off designated routes, speeding near homes, or damaging property.

Short-Term Rental Questions & Complaints

Loud Parties, Parking Issues, Trash or Other Nuisances

Coconino County Sheriff's Non-Emergency Dispatch (928) 774-4523

(press option 1) For immediate issues with noise, trespassing, blocked roads, or safety concerns.

Ongoing STR Violations or Registration Questions

Coconino County Short-Term Rentals Compliance Officer,

Tristan Dowse (928) 853-5340

Know Your Rights: Short-Term Rental owners must give their contact details to Coconino County and provide them in writing to adjacent neighbors. If you live next door and never received this information, call the County STR Compliance Officer to confirm the property's registration. For unresponsive owners, recurring disturbances, or suspected unregistered rentals, report the issue to the County or the Sheriff's Office.



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