

PINEWOOD NEWS

MUNDS PARK'S GUIDE TO THE GOOD LIFE & MOUNTAIN LIVING SINCE 1993

VOL. 33 NO. 65 OCTOBER 9, 2026

COMPLIMENTARY



YOUR OCTOBER SKY, MUNDS PARK

Fellow night sky lovers, this is our season. October hands us longer nights, crisp mountain air and a sky that rewards anyone willing to step outside and look up. This month we open with a moonless sky, catch bits of Halley's Comet streaking overhead and finish with a chance at a November fireball. Grab a jacket and your binoculars. Here's what's waiting for you.

October 10 | New Moon

We're kicking things off with one of the darkest nights of the month. The New Moon arrives at 8:50 a.m., which means no moonlight to wash out your evening. If you've been waiting for the right night to hunt down a faint galaxy or soak in the Milky Way, this is it. Time and Date

October 10–12 | Mars Visits the Beehive

Calling all early risers. Point your binoculars east in the hours before sunrise and you'll find reddish Mars drifting through the Beehive Cluster, a glittering swarm of stars in Cancer. Watch over a few mornings and you can see Mars change position against the cluster. Space.com

October 12 | Mercury at Greatest Elongation

Here's a challenge for you. Mercury reaches its greatest eastern elongation, swinging about 25° from the Sun, but from Munds Park it will still hug the horizon. Look very low in the west shortly after sunset, and find a spot with a clear, open western view. Mercury sits only a few degrees up and sets fast, so don't linger. If you catch it, you've earned bragging rights.

October 21–22 | Orionid Meteor Shower

Every Orionid you see is a tiny piece of Halley's Comet burning up in our atmosphere. Pretty amazing, right? The shower can produce about 10 to 20 fast meteors per hour, though a bright Moon will hide some of the fainter ones this year. Your best bet is the dark stretch before dawn, after the Moon has set. Bundle up, settle into a reclining chair and give your eyes time to adjust. NASA Science

October 25 | Hunter's Moon

October's full Hunter's Moon peaks at 9:11 p.m. Arizona time. Catch it rising in the east as evening settles over the pines. It's a good night to set the telescope aside and simply enjoy the view. Time and Date

October 27–28 | Moon Meets the 7 Sisters

Look east in the evening to find the Moon keeping company with the Pleiades, the little star cluster also known as the Seven Sisters. You'll spot the cluster easily with your eyes alone, but pick up your binoculars and watch dozens more stars appear. NASA Science

November 4–5 | Watch for Taurid Fireballs

This one could be a real treat. The Southern Taurids peak under favorable skies, and while they don't deliver big numbers, they're famous for slow, unusually bright fireballs that can stop you in your tracks. Keep watching overhead through the evening and around midnight. One good fireball makes the whole night worth it. American Meteor Society

All October Saturn Is Still Showing Off

Saturn reached opposition on October 4, so it's at its best for evening viewing all issue long. Look east around sunset for the bright, steady planet. You can spot it with your eyes alone, and even a small telescope will reveal the rings, which are beginning to tilt open again after their nearly edge-on look in 2025. If you have friends or family who've never seen Saturn's rings for themselves, this is the month to show them.

Clear skies, Munds Park. We'll see you under the stars.



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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PINEWOOD NEWS

MUNDS PARK'S GUIDE TO THE GOOD LIFE, COMMUNITY & MOUNTAIN LIVING SINCE 1993

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

AA Meetings - Feel Better!

Munds Park Community Church
Every Monday, 6 p.m.
17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Munds Park Community Church Services

Services Sunday • 10:45 a.m.
17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Munds Park Town Hall

All residents are encouraged to attend.
Stay informed. Your presence and participation is essential!
Thursday, June 17, 2027
6:30 p.m. • The Fire House

Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary Meeting

The Community is Welcome!
Tuesday, November 3
6:30 p.m. • 17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Pinewood Fire District Board Meeting

Public Welcome
Tuesday, October 20
3 p.m. • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

Pinewood Sanitary District Board Meeting

Public Welcome
Thursday, November 12
3 p.m. • 18075 Fairway Dr



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We'll send the new issue to your in-box before it hits the racks.

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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS 7A

This one, you do not want to skip!

FROM THE EDITOR 21A

What if many of our community's toughest problems got easier with one old idea? The editor revisits a New Year's resolution worth keeping.

GARDENS IN THE PARK 22A

Free pumpkin patch, a hay maze, a carving contest with a \$100 prize and a Fall Festival on October 17. Plus what to plant now for a colorful spring.

PINEWOOD NEWS INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION TAKES A NEW CASE 23A

The Woody's wig is back in the box, and a new, bigger one is on. Dolly would approve. So begins The Still There Investigation.

THINGS TO DO & SEE 2B

Local events, good outings, and perfectly valid reasons to ignore the laundry.

NEW LEADERSHIP FOR THE PPOA 4B

Meet the PPOA's new officers and their ambitious vision for 2027, from a refreshed Munds Park entrance to a basketball court for local youth.

SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD 5B

Toasted spices, fresh ginger and two days of patience. A local happy hour favorite shares the recipe her friends can't get enough of.

WINGS OVER ARIZONA 9B

How closely were you paying attention this year? Margaret Dyekman has a bird quiz for you, "butter butt" included.

LOCAL INK 11B

He was huge, hilarious, intimidating and unforgettable, and one fifth-grader never stopped learning from him.



"I miss living in the city. Can you give me a dirty look just for old time sake?"



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NEED TO KNOW: Munds Park Town Hall Recap



Photo by Mike Shrake

More than 70 community members came together at the Pinewood Fire House for the September Munds Park Town Hall, and it was good to see the room full.

We are grateful to everyone who came, asked questions, listened and took part. We are equally thankful to Fire Chief Josh Tope and his team for welcoming the community into the Fire House, and to all of our speakers for giving their time and sharing information with us.

Here is what we learned.

Very Strong El Niño Likely This Winter: The Time Is NOW to Prepare

Northern Arizona could be heading into a wetter, snowier winter, but the strongest message from the National Weather Service at the Munds Park Town Hall was not a prediction of exactly how much snow will fall. It was to prepare for the possibility of a winter with more precipitation, more frequent storms, and an increased risk of flooding.

Megan Taylor, Warning Coordination Meteorologist with the NOAA/National Weather Service in Flagstaff, told residents that El Niño is strengthening and is expected to continue through the winter and into early spring. She put the probability of a very strong El Niño at 90 percent and said there was a 75 percent chance it could become historically strong.

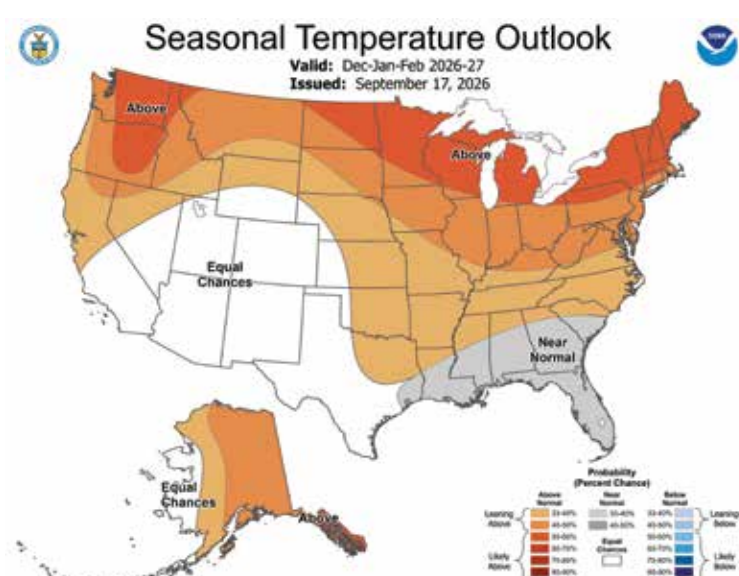
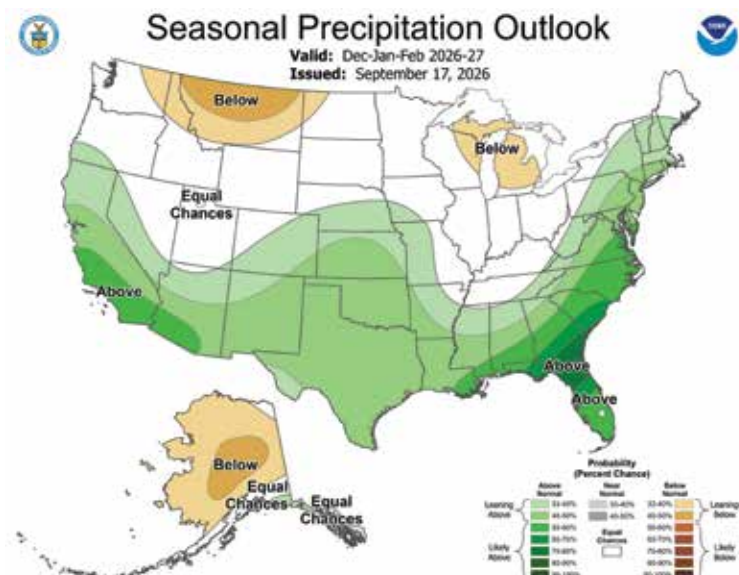
The historical comparison is worth some attention. Records used to classify these El Niño events go back to about the 1950s, and only four have reached the “very strong” category during that period. During those four winters, Flagstaff averaged about 129 inches of snow, roughly 39 inches above normal. The 1982–83 El Niño brought about 143 inches of snow to Flagstaff.

That does not mean 129 inches, or anything close to it, is being forecast for this winter. El Niño changes the odds, not the outcome. Of the four very strong events Taylor discussed, three produced above-normal snowfall in Flagstaff while one produced below-normal snowfall. The most recent very strong El Niño, in 2015–16, was the below-normal year.

What may be different this winter is the frequency of winter weather. Strong and very strong El Niño patterns have averaged at least three or four more events than usual, and those storms do not always arrive as cold, dry snow. Some can carry warmer Pacific moisture, bringing heavy wet snow, rain or rain falling on an existing snowpack.

That combination could become particularly important later in the season. A deep snowpack followed by warmer storms can increase the potential for rain-on-snow flooding, another reason residents should think about winter preparation now rather than waiting for the first big storm.

As for when that first snow will arrive, there is no date to circle. The average first one-inch snowfall in Flagstaff is November 20. It has occurred as early as September 19 and as late as March 10. For an individual storm, forecasters generally have confidence only about seven days out.



...Local Highlights continued on page 9A



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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

...Continued from page 7A

Taylor also pushed back on the term “super El Niño,” which has appeared in media reports. The National Weather Service terminology is very strong El Niño, and even a very strong event does not guarantee an extreme winter.

What it does provide is enough reason to get ready.

“If there’s a year for us to prepare for a lot of precipitation, potential flooding, more snow than usual, this is certainly the year to prepare for that,” Taylor told the crowd.

SIGN UP FOR
EMERGENCY ALERTS

When weather turns dangerous in Munds Park, emergency officials need a way to reach you. Fire Chief Josh Tope and Aaron Graeser, Deputy Director of Coconino County Emergency Management, urged residents to register for the county’s emergency notification system and keep their information up to date.

Registration is opt-in. As Graeser pointed out, residents are not automatically enrolled simply because they live here, so the most important step is to sign up before an emergency starts.

The county’s emergency notification system runs through Smart911, so the easiest way to sign up is directly at www.smart911.com. If you’re not comfortable signing up online, call Coconino County at (928) 679-7120 or ask a trusted friend or family member to help.

The system is used year-round, not just during wildfire season. Residents will receive alerts about fires, monsoon storms, flooding, winter weather, hazardous road conditions and other emergencies.

This is especially useful in a community with so many second homes. Homeowners can register their Munds Park address along with another residence and still receive alerts affecting the Park while they are away. Entire households should be registered, and information should be checked and updated before each season.



Chief Tope explained that the system also allows residents to include functional or access needs. Someone who is elderly, has a disability, or may not be able to evacuate without assistance can add that information to their profile. In an evacuation, that gives first responders important information about residents who may need additional help.

Short-term rental owners should be responsible for signing up for emergency alerts so they can let guests know immediately when a warning is issued or action is needed. During fire, monsoon and winter weather seasons, guests may have little knowledge of Munds Park or local emergency procedures, so owners should also make sure guests have important emergency information when they arrive.

During flooding events, residents may be instructed to shelter in place rather than leave home and add traffic to already difficult conditions. Emergency notifications will tell residents what to do based on the specific threat, including whether to stay home, evacuate or go to a designated location.

If residents need a warming shelter during an emergency, Munds Park Community Church is the designated location. Emergency notifications will let residents know when the church is open. The church sometimes opens earlier, before alerts go out, when the power has been out for a long time and people may be getting cold. To find out whether it is open, call the church at (928) 286-2022, check its Facebook page, or reach out to the *Pinewood News* at (928) 286-9827 and we will help. The church provides a warm place to stay temporarily and a place to charge phones during power outages.

Prepare Now

Chief Tope also urged residents to use the fall to get homes and vehicles ready before winter weather arrives. Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors should be checked, furnaces and heating

... Local Highlights continued on page 11A

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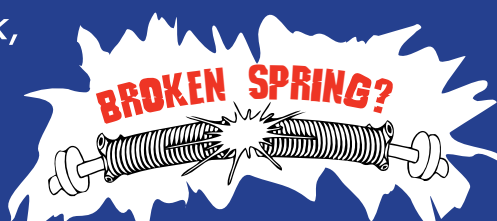
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...Continued from page 9A

Preparing also means having enough supplies at home to stay there safely if roads become difficult or dangerous. Residents should stock food, drinking water, needed medications, pet food, flashlights, batteries and other household necessities before winter weather arrives. The American Red Cross recommends keeping at least a two-week supply of food and water for emergencies at home, along with needed medications and medical supplies.

Residents who may need emergency access to their homes should consider a Knox Box. A Knox Box is a secure exterior box that holds a house key and allows authorized emergency responders to enter without forcing a door or window. Information about obtaining one is available through the firehouse at (928) 286-9885.

Heavy snow can also create problems long after the storm ends. Tope recalled about 118 full or partial roof collapses during the heavy snow year of 2010, when snow remained on roofs and was followed by wet snow and rain. As snow settles, it may appear that there is less of it, but the weight remains. If the fire district has concerns about a home's roof snow load this winter, it will leave a notice on the door.

Residents should also check the drainage around their property before winter and keep driveway culverts clear of pine needles, leaves and other debris. Rain falling on a deep snowpack can create flooding problems quickly, and a blocked culvert can make matters worse. Driveway culverts are the property owner's responsibility; Coconino County Public Works handles County-maintained roadside drainage structures.

Winter in Munds Park is much easier to handle when the work is done ahead of time. Register your household for emergency alerts, update your information before each season, and use the fall to get your home, vehicles and supplies ready. A little preparation now can keep you, your family and your neighbors safer when the snow arrives.

The conversation about winter preparedness didn't end with the Town Hall.

Their plans are already taking shape. Read the full story, “Munds Park Prepares to Help Its Own,” on page 20A.

Part of living in Munds Park is what happens after the sun goes down. The stars come out. The forest gets dark. Porch lights stay on the porch instead of shining through a neighbor's bedroom window, and we get something that is harder and harder to find in cities: a truly dark night and an abundance of stars.

That darkness is more than pretty. Artificial light at night can interfere with sleep, disrupt wildlife and wash out the stars we came to the mountains to see. It can also create glare and spill onto neighboring properties, so one person's outdoor lighting becomes everyone else's problem.

That is why outdoor lighting drew so many questions at the Munds Park Town Hall, and why protecting the night sky matters to so many people here.

Mark Stento, Coconino County Compliance Manager, cleared up one of the biggest points of confusion: Munds Park is not an officially designated DarkSky International community. DarkSky International is a separate certification organization. Coconino County has its own lighting code contained within its Zoning Ordinance, and Stento said the county's standards are more comprehensive than DarkSky International standards.

So while Munds Park does not carry the official DarkSky International designation, outdoor lighting here is not a free-for-all.

For residential properties, the county primarily regulates shielding, total light output and light trespass. Shielding means directing light downward instead of allowing the bulb to shine outward or upward. Light trespass is light that leaves one property and spills onto another. The current limit is 5,000 lumens of exterior lighting for the property, with an additional 2,000 lumens allowed for fully shielded motion-sensitive fixtures.

... Local Highlights continued on page 13A

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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

...Continued from page 11A

What About String Lights?

String lights are one of the biggest problems inspectors see in Munds Park.

Robert Faus, Dark Sky Specialist for the City of Flagstaff and Coconino County, said unshielded string lights and bright wall-mounted lights that shine outward are common concerns. In many cases, the fix does not require removing the lights. Small shields can be added to string-light bulbs, and shields can be installed on wall lights to direct the light downward.

The goal is not to make Munds Park dark to the point that no one can see where they are walking. It is to put light where it is needed instead of sending it into a neighbor’s window, across the street or up into the sky, dimming our stars.

Do Porch Lights Have a Curfew?

No. There is no residential shutoff time under the county lighting code.

Instead, the county addresses lighting through shielding, total illumination and light trespass. A light may remain on through the night and still comply if it meets the applicable standards.

Residential lights also do not have to be amber, though use of amber bulbs is encouraged. Color and color temperature are not regulated for residential properties. Amber-light requirements apply to certain commercial, industrial and multifamily development, not ordinary homes.

Holiday lights have their own exemption from Nov. 15 through Jan. 15. However, the large decorative string bulbs commonly used on patios and decks are not automatically considered holiday lights simply because they are hanging on the house.

Flagpole lighting is also subject to the county’s lighting requirements. Stento noted that fixtures are available that mount near the top of a flagpole and direct light downward onto the flag rather than upward into the sky.

Are Old Lights Grandfathered In?

This is where things become complicated.

Coconino County substantially updated its lighting code in January 2024. New construction, replacement lighting and some remodeling projects are subject to the current standards. Older lighting can take longer to investigate because the county may need to determine when the lights were installed and what rules applied at that time.

That means a light that appears to violate today’s standards is not automatically an easy enforcement case if it has been in place for years.

Talk First, When You Can

If you have a good relationship with your neighbor, a simple conversation may be the best place to start. Many people may not realize their lights are causing a problem or that inexpensive shielding can make a large difference.

If the relationship is strained, you are unsure how the person may respond, or you simply are not comfortable approaching them, contact Coconino County instead. The county can inspect the property and, when appropriate, send the property owner a courtesy letter explaining



*He doesn’t know a thing about lighting ordinances.
He just knows the stars are out.*

the concern and what the current lighting rules require. Formal enforcement comes later only if the issue cannot be resolved voluntarily. Stento said the county prefers to solve lighting problems through education and cooperation when possible. Complaints may involve daytime and nighttime inspections, and a first action such as a letter, notice or contact with the property owner can take roughly two to four weeks depending on the circumstances.

Dark Sky Compliance

Code Violation Report: Concerned about possible noncompliant lighting? File a report at www.coconino.az.gov/1940/Code-Violations-and-Enforcement.

Fixture Review: Not sure if a light or your property complies with County Lighting Standards? Send photos to Mark for review at mstento@coconino.az.gov.

Still Have Questions? Email or call Mark Stento, Code Enforcement Compliance Manager, at (928) 679-8856 or mstento@coconino.az.gov.

The larger point is simple: protecting Munds Park’s night sky does not require everyone to sit in the dark. It requires thoughtful lighting, directing it where

it belongs and considering what happens to that light after it leaves the fixture.

A porch light should help you find the porch. It does not need to light the ponderosas three lots over.

... Local Highlights continued on page 15A



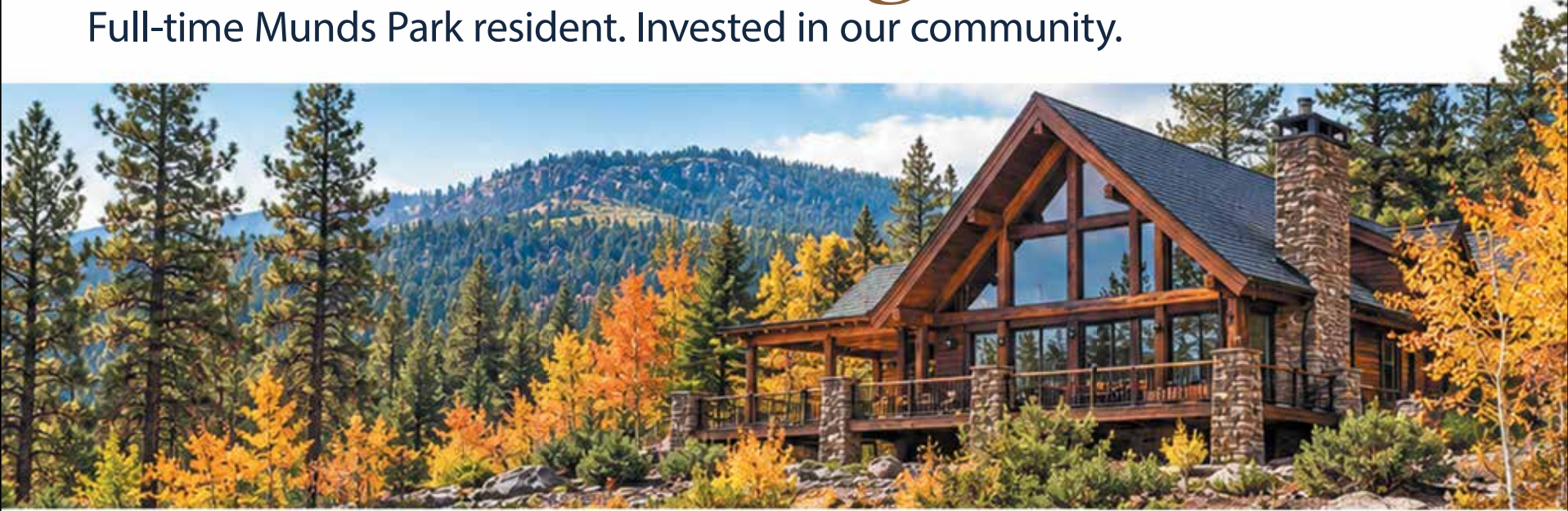
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Coconino County Pushes for Local Control Over Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rentals remain a hot topic in communities across Arizona, and Munds Park is no exception. At the Town Hall, Coconino County District 3 Supervisor Tammy Ontiveros explained where the county stands today and what it is asking the state to change.

The short version is this: Coconino County wants more authority to make decisions at the local level.

Ontiveros said Coconino County once had its own short-term rental ordinance, but that changed after Arizona lawmakers enacted SB 1350 in 2016. The law significantly limited how counties, cities and towns could regulate short-term rentals, shifting much of that control to the state.

The county is now working with other counties to push for changes. Ontiveros said Coconino County planned to bring a proposal to the County Supervisors Association legislative summit, with Yavapai and Pima counties also supporting the effort. She said a similar proposal received near-unanimous support from the association last year but made little progress at the Legislature.

The goal, she said, is not to eliminate short-term rentals. It is to give local governments more ability to decide how they should be regulated in their own communities.

That matters in a place like Munds Park because the impacts can be different from those in Phoenix, Flagstaff or other parts of the state. Residents raised questions about wastewater capacity, public services and how many homes in a community should be able to operate as

short-term rentals. Ontiveros said those are exactly the kinds of local concerns that are difficult to address under a statewide, one-size-fits-all system.

Another part of the county’s proposal would change how some short-term rental properties are classified for property-tax purposes.

Commercial Classification: Residential properties rented for fewer than 30 consecutive days and operated as short-term rentals for more than 120 days during a calendar year should be classified and assessed as commercial lodging properties.

Residential Classification: Residential properties occupied by the owner for at least 60 days annually and rented as short-term rentals for fewer than 120 days during a calendar year should retain their residential property classification.

This distinction would better align property tax treatment with the actual use of the property while promoting greater equity among residential homeowners, commercial lodging businesses and investment properties.

The idea is to distinguish between a homeowner who occasionally rents

a second home and a property that is being operated primarily as a lodging business.

That distinction could affect property taxes. Ontiveros said commercial property is taxed differently from residential property, so properties reclassified as commercial lodging would be taxed at a higher rate once the reclassification takes effect. She said the change would take some time, but did not explain the timing in detail.

Ontiveros acknowledged differing views and repeatedly returned to the same point: Coconino County is not asking the state to prohibit short-term rentals. It is asking for more local authority so communities can have a greater say in how they are managed.

... Local Highlights continued on page 16A



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...Continued from page 15A

The Forest Next Door: Encampments, Abandoned RVs & No Easy Answers

Concerns about long-term camping, abandoned RVs and growing encampments in the forest surrounding Munds Park brought some of the strongest reactions of the evening at the Town Hall.

But this is not simply a Munds Park problem, and it is not only an enforcement problem.

Coconino County District 3 Supervisor Tammy Ontiveros shared a Forest Service report on dispersed camping, people living long-term on forest land and the abandoned property left behind. She said the same pattern is occurring beyond Munds Park, including on the Kaibab National Forest and across much of the forest land in the region.

What emerged was a much larger social and economic problem involving housing costs, poverty, mental illness, addiction, aging and people who simply have nowhere else to go.

Some are seasonal campers in expensive RVs from the Valley. They use them as weekend homes, something the Forest Service says is seen particularly around the Munds Park and Blue Ridge areas. Others are people working in the region who cannot afford housing and commute to their jobs from camps in the forest. And some, the report says, are people barely hanging on, including people struggling with mental illness or addiction and sick or elderly people who cannot afford to live anywhere else.

The issue is therefore both practical and humane. Communities are dealing with fire risk, sanitation, abandoned property and safety concerns, while the people living in these camps may be facing poverty, illness, addiction or a lack of affordable housing.

Dispersed camping is allowed in many areas of the Coconino National Forest, but it is generally limited to 14 days within any consecutive 30-day period, a rule intended to prevent people from establishing permanent residences on National Forest land. Despite that limit, long-term camping continues.

Enforcement is difficult. The Coconino National Forest covers more than 1.8 million acres across three large ranger districts, and the Forest Service currently has three law-enforcement officers to patrol all of it, roughly one per district. The Flagstaff Ranger District alone covers approximately 850,000 acres, stretching from the Rim north to Babbitt Ranch and from Bellemont east toward Twin Arrows. Forest Service law enforcement and the Coconino County Sheriff's Office work together, particularly when criminal activity is involved.

Wildfire is also a serious concern, especially when people continue to use cooking fires during periods of high or extreme fire danger. The report says wildfire prevention is a primary Forest Service concern in these situations.

The Cost of What Gets Left Behind

The breadth of the problem, and the cost of dealing with it, appeared to take Ontiveros by surprise as well.

She told the audience that the report had been eye-opening. Stolen vehicles, junked RVs and even five-gallon buckets of human waste can be left in the forest after people move on, and removing them is expensive.

A junk vehicle that can be removed by a tow truck may cost about \$500. An RV requiring a flatbed can cost more than \$1,000. Containers of human waste are considered hazardous materials and can cost several thousand dollars to handle and remove properly.

We won't embarrass the government by mentioning that our own Munds Park Trail Stewards remove human waste, when reasonably possible, for free. They're volunteers. Total studs.

According to the report, the Forest Service had a list of 14 abandoned cars and RVs for which it was seeking funding for removal. The agency also said it is interested in creative partnerships with people who have equipment and may be willing to help with removal at their own expense.

That raised an important question from residents: How does a volunteer know when an RV, camper or vehicle is legally abandoned and can actually be removed?

The *Pinewood News* asked, and the Forest Service explained that removal follows a specific process, and it runs through its law-enforcement officers.



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First, an officer must determine whether a vehicle, RV or trailer is actually abandoned. That means documenting how long it has been in the same location and trying to track down the owner, which can take considerable time and is not always possible. If the owner is found, they are given five days to remove it. If no owner can be found, the officer tags the vehicle and starts the towing process.

Then comes the money. The Forest Service has no funds set aside specifically for removing abandoned vehicles, RVs or trailers, so it must pull from other program dollars when a problem arises. Removal can cost thousands of dollars, and the agency cannot always pay what removal companies quote. Only after every step is complete, funding is identified and a reasonable price is agreed upon can an RV actually be hauled away.

“It is not a short process,” the Forest Service said, noting that it is just one of many challenges competing for the time of three officers.

The bottom line for residents: do not remove an RV, trailer or vehicle on your own, even if it appears to have been abandoned for a long time. If you have equipment and would like to help, contact the Forest Service directly rather than acting on your own.

Concern Near Mormon Mountain

One resident also raised a specific concern about an encampment near Mormon Mountain that she said began approximately two years ago with one tent and has since grown to several tents and additional structures. She said a vehicle regularly brings supplies and removes some trash, and her concerns include safety, wildfire and the encampment’s proximity to nearby homes.

That concern led to one of the central questions of the evening: If dispersed camping is limited to 14 days, how can an established encampment reportedly remain in place for two years?

Part of the answer may be staffing. All three of the forest’s current law-enforcement officers are new to the area within the past year, after the previous officers moved on. The Forest Service said they may not yet be

familiar with specific issues in their areas, including situations like the one near Mormon Mountain.

That makes reporting more important than ever. When residents call in concerns, they help new officers learn where the problems are. But honestly, two years is simply too long for an encampment that has been reported again and again, even with limited staff and such a large territory to cover. The *Pinewood News* will continue to follow up on the Mormon Mountain encampment and share what we learn.

The forest issues surrounding Munds Park are real, and so are the people at the center of them. The challenge is protecting the forest and nearby communities while also recognizing that many of the people living out there are there because something much larger has gone wrong.

What You Can Do

Report illegal or long-term camping and abandoned vehicles: Call the Coconino National Forest Dispatch Center at (928) 527-3552. With new officers covering huge territories, your reports help them know where to look.

Stay safe: Do not approach encampments, and do not remove abandoned vehicles, RVs or property on your own. Removal must go through Forest Service law enforcement.

To help people in need: Call 2-1-1 or visit 211arizona.org to connect with housing, health and support services across Arizona.

Munds Park Business Alliance Returns With New Energy

The Town Hall also brought good news.

The Munds Park Business Alliance has been part of the community for many years and is entering a new chapter, with a new president, community projects already underway and plans to make a bigger impact in Munds Park.

... Local Highlights continued on page 18A



The forest is becoming an RV graveyard.



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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

...Continued from page 17A

Mike Shrake, the Alliance’s new president, described the group as local business owners working together not only to support one another, but also to help the community. This year, the Alliance has sponsored two miles of highway through the Adopt-A-Highway program and completed four cleanups, collecting more than 50 bags of trash from the highway, ramps and surrounding areas.

Alliance members also helped with the Protective Mother’s Justice fundraiser, including the car wash, concert and barbecue, which raised more than \$1,500 in one day.

Shrake said one of the group’s main goals moving forward is to help keep Munds Park clean, safe and cared for. Because Munds Park is not an incorporated town, there is no municipal crew assigned to handle every cleanup or small community project. The Alliance has stepped in where it can, including clearing leftover winter cinders from sidewalks to create safer walking paths.

The group also announced plans to repair potholes, resurface the asphalt and repaint the parking lines at the Outpost parking lot.

Heart of the Park

That work is also where Heart of the Park comes in.

Heart of the Park, the brainchild of the Business Alliance, is a volunteer network created to give local groups a central pool of people they can call on when a project needs extra hands. The Alliance, Fire Auxiliary and other community organizations can use the network when volunteers are needed.

Signing up does not mean committing to every project. Volunteers provide their contact information and receive notices when



opportunities come up, then choose the projects that fit their schedules and interests. Shrake said the goal is to build a large group of residents willing to help when the right project comes along.

The Town Hall gave Heart of the Park a nice boost, with a line of residents signing up to receive volunteer notices.

The Alliance has also created a little incentive: volunteers who participate in an event can receive a card offering discounts at participating Munds Park Business Alliance businesses. Give back to the community, and local businesses will give a little something back too.

For a community that runs on people showing up and pitching in, the return of the Business Alliance and the growth of Heart of the Park are a big deal. The applause at the Town Hall made it clear that residents appreciate the work already being done and are ready to support what comes next.

How to Get Involved

Volunteer with Heart of the Park: Contact Mike Shrake at mike@itsamundstthing.com

Join the Munds Park Business Alliance: Contact Mike Shrake at mike@itsamundstthing.com or (928) 224-9490 or visit MundsParkBusinessAlliance.org.

... Local Highlights continued on page 20A

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Mike believes great opportunities start with great relationships. Through community involvement and "It's a Munds Thing," he is committed to helping families buy, sell, and enjoy cabin life in Munds Park and throughout Northern Arizona.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

...Continued from page 19A

Munds Park Prepares to Help Its Own

Munds Park has always taken care of its own. This winter, several community leaders are working to continue that tradition and sharpen plans for helping residents when winter weather makes everyday needs harder to meet.

Fire Chief Josh Tope, Pastor Jeremy, Kim Agee and Mike Shrake came together to answer one question: If a major winter storm hits, how do we make sure people who need help get it?

They are planning for extended power outages, warm meals, firewood and medication needs, safe options for pets, and residents who may simply need someone to check on them or lend a hand.

The goal is not to replace emergency services. Quite the opposite. The idea is to build a network of neighbors and volunteers who can handle the everyday needs that arise during a storm, leaving firefighters and other emergency responders available for the emergencies only they can handle.

A Warm Place to Go

Munds Park Community Church is officially designated as a warming shelter. Pastor Jeremy is working with Mike Miller of the American Red Cross to explore what additional services the church may be able to offer. Red Cross representatives are expected to come to Munds Park to review the church's setup and train volunteers.

During a prolonged power outage, residents can expect a warm place to go, food, and a way to charge phones and medical devices. The church has generator backup, cots and supplies.

If the church expands its services, details will be shared through the Pinewood News, Munds Park Community Church and the Pinewood Fire Department.

Food Before the Storm

The church plans to have emergency food ready before a major storm hits rather than depend on last-minute donations.

Pastor Jeremy will assign a volunteer to oversee the church's emergency food supply. Once Red Cross requirements are confirmed, the church will develop a specific list of what to keep on hand.

Volunteers may also prepare soups and other meals ahead of a storm and freeze them, with the freezer running on the church's generator during an outage. Kota's Coffee House has already donated a large soup warmer to help serve them.

Residents who want to contribute should hold off on donating food until the list is shared through the Pinewood News, Munds Park Community Church and the Pinewood Fire Department. That way, the church receives items it can safely store and use.

What About Our Pets?

Pets are part of the winter emergency plan because they are family. Planners also know that residents may be reluctant to leave home if they can't bring their animals.

Pets cannot stay with residents at the church, though service animals are welcome. Instead, the community has a separate animal sheltering option at Pinewood Sanitary District.

The PPOA has purchased kennels to support emergency animal sheltering at the Pinewood Sanitary District. Pet owners can prepare now by keeping a carrier or leash, food, medications, and vaccination records together in one place, ready to grab.

... Local Highlights continued on page 21A



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Sometimes Help Means Bringing
in the Firewood

For neighbors who are older or living with a disability, a winter storm can turn everyday tasks into real obstacles. The woodpile may be full but out of reach through deep snow. Groceries or a prescription may be waiting in Flagstaff. Or someone living alone may just need a friendly knock on the door to make sure they're OK.

That's where Heart of the Park, our community's volunteer network, comes in. For those who need it most, volunteers can stop by regularly, even bringing in wood every 10 or 12 hours to keep the fire going.

It's the kind of help that doesn't require an ambulance or fire engine, and it keeps Pinewood Fire District crews free for true emergencies. For medical emergencies, fires or any situation where someone is in danger, always call 911.

TO ASK FOR HELP, OR TO OFFER IT, contact Mike Shrake at mike@itsamundsthing.com or (928) 224-9490.

Residents are encouraged to know their neighbors, exchange phone numbers and check on one another during storms, especially older residents or those who may need extra help.

For now, the message is simple: Know your neighbors. Check on one another. And if you need help, ask.



That was rude. My neighbor acted like she didn't even know me.

FROM THE EDITOR
Love Thy Neighbor, Revisited

At the beginning of this year, I asked our readers to consider a different kind of New Year's resolution. Not to lose weight, save more money, organize the garage, or finally use the treadmill. I asked something harder of us all: Love thy neighbor.

As I listened to the frustration over the forest encampments, I couldn't help but feel the heartbreak behind them: people who are struggling and can't find affordable housing or the care they need. And as I wrote the Town Hall summary on dark skies, winter storms, emergency preparedness, short-term rentals, I kept coming back to one thought. If we truly practiced loving our neighbor consistently, I suspect a surprising number of these problems would be easier to solve, and some might even go away.

So much of what we talked about changes when we remember that our choices affect other people.

Loving your neighbor can be as simple as making sure your outdoor lights aren't shining into someone else's windows or washing out the night sky for the stargazers around you. It can mean checking on the older couple down the street after a heavy snow, or seeing that the neighbor who lives alone has heat and maybe a little friendly conversation, so they know they're not alone.

It can mean remembering that a home isn't just an investment. It's part of the fabric of our community, and the way we use our property can affect housing availability and affordability for families and workers, like teachers, first responders, and the person who makes our favorite coffee.

It can mean looking at what is happening in our forests and remembering that the people living there are still people. Some need accountability. Some need help. Some need both. Dumping trash, abandoning vehicles, and treating public land as a permanent campsite cannot simply be ignored, but neither should the human beings involved become invisible, or tossed aside.

And perhaps most importantly, loving our neighbor means remembering that not every problem begins or ends with government.

Government has a role. So do law enforcement, fire departments, county agencies, nonprofits, and community organizations. But a healthy community cannot outsource all of its compassion, responsibility, and common sense.

We live here together.

That means noticing when something is wrong. It means helping when we can. It means not leaving our trash on the trail or along the road for someone else to clean up. It means thinking beyond our own property line, our own convenience, and our own plans. It means understanding that the choices we make can make life easier or harder for someone else.

The good news is that if you read the Town Hall summary carefully, you'll see that many people are already caring for those around them. These people are a blessing, and their example is one we can all follow. You don't need a lot of time. Pick one neighbor to check on this winter, one cause to give an afternoon to, or one organization to call and ask, "How can I help?" That's how a community gets stronger, one neighbor at a time.

When it comes to buying or selling in Munds Park,
there's comfort in working with someone
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You can also try your hand at a bunch of fun games for free as well, including cornhole, bowling, tic-tac-toe, and more.

We've even got a pumpkin decorating station: just purchase your pumpkin, then use our paints, stickers, and markers to make it your own.

Plus we're holding a Pumpkin Carving Contest! Just buy a pumpkin from Warner's, create a wonderful jack o' lantern, and email us a photo of your pumpkin along with your purchase receipt to info@warnercompanies.com by October 28th to be entered to win a \$100 Warner's gift card.

Fall Festival on October 17

Mark your calendar for this big day of family fun from 11 am to 2 pm on Saturday, October 17th! In addition to our hay maze and pumpkin patch, our Fall Festival will feature our annual Halloween costume contest, plus lots of activities including: balloon twisters, face painters, a petting zoo, crafts for kids and games.

There also will be a hot dog cart to purchase snacks and drinks.

Check out our calendar at warnersnursery.com for more fun fall events, including Paint & Sip evenings, houseplant swaps, and more.

Still Time to Plant

Fall isn't the end of your gardening season. Here are some of our favorites to plant during the season: Autumn Blaze Maple & Sugar Maple trees, Amur Maple trees, Flowering Crabapple and Flowering Pear trees, and Honey Locusts.

For shrubs and grasses, look to Aronia (Chokeberry), Burning Bush, and Karl Foerster Grass. Perennials to plant include mums, asters and pansies, which are making a return since this spring. And, of course, now is the time to plant your bulbs so you can enjoy spring-blooming bulbs like tulips, crocus, daffodils, and irises.

We look forward to seeing you this fall at Warner's!

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PINEWOOD NEWS

INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION

TAKES A NEW CASE

For years, Munds Park residents have reported abandoned vehicles, long-term encampments and other problems in the national forest around us. For years, some of those problems have stayed exactly where they were. Say what you want about abandoned RVs, but they are reliable.

So is the explanation: not enough officers, not enough staff, not enough resources.

We get it. But “we’re understaffed” explains why something takes longer. It does not explain why the staffing problem itself has been allowed to become an expectable reason.

First, though, a word about the people who started all this. The Forest Service did not abandon an RV in the woods. It did not dump trash, overstay a campsite or leave five-gallon buckets of human crap behind for somebody else to clean up.

We wish that last part were a figure of speech. It is not. Slobs did that, and taxpayers are left paying for it.

But once that mess is on Forest Service land and has been reported, dealing with it belongs to the Forest Service. Long-term camping violations and abandoned property on Forest Service land are Forest Service responsibilities, and residents are directed to report both through Coconino National Forest Dispatch.

Great. Everyone knows whose job it is. The phone number works.

So our investigation begins with a simple question: a problem was reported. What happened next?

One Munds Park resident tells *Pinewood News* she has reported the same long-term camp for approximately two years. It is still there. She has called so many times that Dispatch may want to put her on the holiday card list.

The Forest Service has told us that just one law enforcement officer covers the 850,000-acre Flagstaff Ranger District.

One.

If that officer checked one acre every minute, eight hours a day, every day of the year, it would take almost five years to get through the district once. Then they could start over.

That helps explain why enforcement is difficult. It does not explain what happened to two years of reports.

Meanwhile, residents who spend time in the forest have told us about encountering roughly 12 to 15 Forest Service personnel collecting pinecones for future planting, about four looking for historical land markers and, on another occasion, Forest Service personnel counting grasshoppers.

Yes. Grasshoppers.

For those keeping score at home:

Pinecone collectors: 12 to 15.

Historical marker hunters: about 4.

Grasshopper counters: enough to count grasshoppers.

Law enforcement officers: 1. For 850,000 acres.

Before anyone at the Forest Service drops a clipboard, we understand these may all be perfectly legitimate jobs, in different programs, with

different training and funding that cannot simply be moved to law enforcement. Nobody is suggesting the grasshopper crew tow an RV.

But if they can count grasshoppers, we remain confident they can count RVs. They don’t even jump.

From the outside, though, residents see plenty of government activity in the forest while reported camps and abandoned vehicles stay put, sometimes for years. Some RVs have been out there long enough to qualify as historical landmarks. The marker crew may want to swing by. They’re already in the area.

The Forest Service also tells us it keeps a list of abandoned vehicles awaiting removal, and that lack of funding is part of the problem. So there is a list. Which is nice. Some of the vehicles on it have waited longer than anyone at the DMV.

So “not enough resources” may be a legitimate explanation. But it is a reason, not a plan. And for years, it’s been treated like both.

Somebody decides how many officers cover 850,000 acres. Somebody decides that one sounds about right. Somebody decides how much money is available to remove abandoned

property and where limited resources go. *Pinewood News* intends to find those somebodies.

In other words, we are going to follow the pointing fingers until one of them ends up holding the buck.

A New Case

Regular readers know the *Pinewood News* Investigative Division (headquarters: a table at the Pinewood Restaurant & Bar) has retired the Woody’s investigation. That wig has been put back in the box.

We have grabbed a new one. Dolly would approve. It’s big, it’s bold and it’s not going anywhere. Much like the RVs.

Introducing The Still There Investigation

Beginning with this issue, *Pinewood News* will follow abandoned vehicles, long-term camps and other unresolved problems in the forest around Munds Park. We will publish photos, find out when they were reported, ask what happened next and check back.

If they are still there, we will tell you. And if they are still there next time, we will tell you again. And the time after that.

Pinewood News publishes 18 issues a year. We have ink, a calendar and the stubbornness of a small-town newspaper. We do not have a surveillance van or a budget. What we do have is an investigative division staffed by locals who aren’t going anywhere either.

This is not a campaign against the people on the ground being asked to clean up somebody else’s shit with too few people and too little money. To them: you have our sympathy. And our respect. Mostly our sympathy.

It is a campaign to find out why they have too few people and too little money, who has the authority to change that and what those people intend to do about it. Once we find them, we will publish their names, offices and public contact information so Munds Park residents can call and email. Repeatedly. Until somebody gets as tired of us as we are of the excuses.

Join the Division

See something still there? When you report it to the Forest Service, tell us too: location, report date and any response.

No experience required. No pay offered. Clipboards optional.

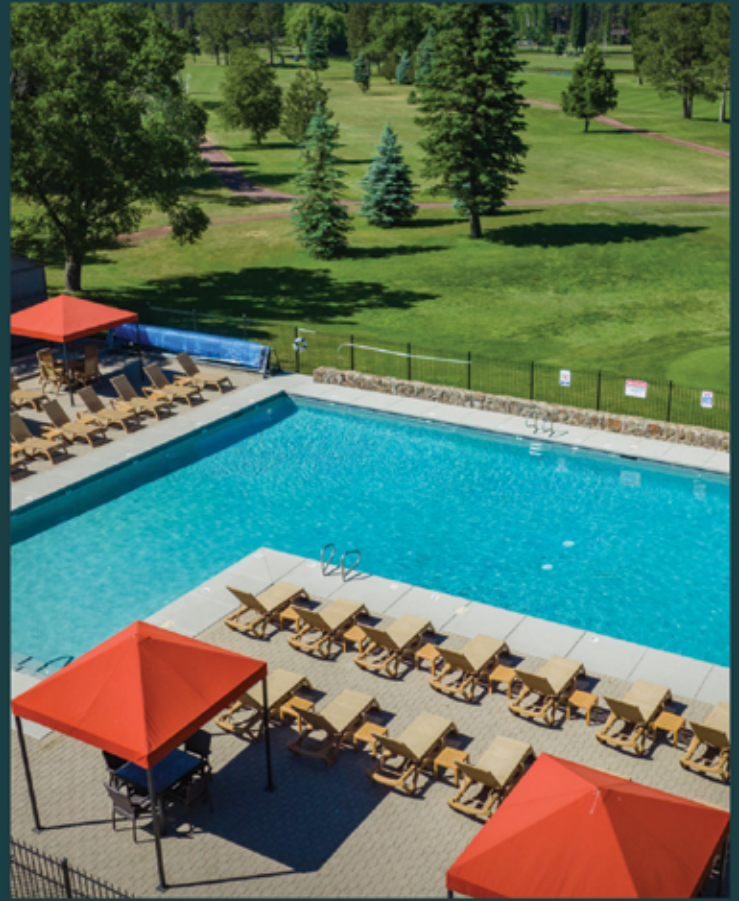
The Investigative Division will take it from there.



Guerrilla real estate. Forest advocates lists another abandoned RV with the Forest Service’s phone number. Somewhere, a ranger is very confused.

MUNDS PARK CHARM

MINUTES FROM FLAGSTAFF



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OUR COMMUNITY WORKS WHEN WE LEND A HAND.

Roll up your sleeves, pitch in
where you can, or simply show
up ready to help. Munds Park
is better when neighbors take
care of neighbors.

Find ways to volunteer
on page 7B.

GOT SOMETHING HAPPENING?

If your club, neighborhood group
or organization has an event our
community should know about,
send it our way.

Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com

MUNDS PARK

**EVERY
SAT**



KARAOKE AT PINEWOOD RESTAURANT & BAR

Nothing says small-town Saturday night quite like good friends, a great song,
and someone brave enough to grab the mic and own it. Come join DJ Ruben for
karaoke every Saturday night!.

Time: 8 p.m.

Location: Pinewood Restaurant & Bar • 65 Pinewood Blvd

**EVERY
THUR**



SPREAD THE BREAD

Start Thursday with a simple act of neighborly sharing. Volunteers bring fresh
bread from Wildflower in Flagstaff so the Munds Park community can enjoy
something good together. It is not need-based, just bread shared with kindness.

Time: 10 am until the bread runs out. Arrive early for the best selection!

Location: Munds Park Community Church, 17670 S. Munds Ranch Rd

**SAT
OCT
31**



KIDS HALLOWEEN TRICK OR TREAT PARTY!

Bring the little ghosts and goblins for a Halloween party made just for kids. This
indoor event at the fire station happens rain or shine, with decorations, games,
treats, and plenty of small-town Halloween fun for Munds Park families.

Time: 11 am-1 pm

Location: Pinewood Fire Station

**SAT
NOV
28**



5TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LIGHTING FESTIVAL

Munds Park kicks off Christmas with music, food, fire pits, kids crafts, cookies,
popcorn, hot cocoa, coffee, singing, and the annual lighting ceremony. Gather
with neighbors, dress warm, bring a lawn chair, and stay afterward to enjoy light
displays along Pinewood Boulevard.

Time: Festivities begin at 4:30 pm; welcome and message at 6 pm

Location: Munds Park Community Church, 17670 S. Munds Ranch Rd

Details: Presented by Munds Park Business Alliance. Dress warm & bring a lawn chair.

Admission: FREE

BEYOND THE PARK

**EVERY
DAY
OPEN**



WARNER'S PUMPKIN PATCH & HAY MAZE

Warner's fall pumpkin patch and hay maze are free to visit, with pumpkins and
gourds available for purchase. Families can take photos, play free games, and
decorate a purchased pumpkin with provided paints, stickers, and markers.

Time: See website for nursery hours

Location: Warner's Nursery, 1101 E. Butler Avenue, Flagstaff

Details: Pumpkin Carving Contest entries are due by October 28. Email photo and
receipt to info@warnercompanies.com.

Admission: Pumpkin patch, hay maze and games are free. Pumpkins available
for purchase.

**DAILY
NOW -
10/31**



GRAND CANYON DEER FARM PUMPKIN PATCH

Grand Canyon Deer Farm adds fall fun with a pumpkin patch, photo spots,
pumpkins for sale, pumpkins to feed the deer and a free hay maze. Families can
make it a Williams day with animals, pumpkins and Halloween-season photos.

Time: Daily 9 am-6 pm through Oct. 31; 10 am-5 pm starting Oct. 16

Location: Grand Canyon Deer Farm, 6769 E. Deer Farm Road, Williams

Admission: Admission required. Pumpkins and animal feed available for purchase.
See deerfarm.com for pricing.

**DAILY
NOW -
10/31**



MORTIMER FARMS PUMPKIN FEST & CORN MAZE

Come spend a full fall farm day with a pumpkin patch, corn maze, animal
encounters, farm-inspired rides, games, food, and weekend entertainment.
A good family outing for anyone ready for pumpkins, fresh air, and a little dirt on
their shoes.

Time: Hours vary by day

Location: Mortimer Farms, 12907 E. State Route 169, Dewey

Details: Schedule and tickets at mortimerfarmsaz.com/PumpkinFestival

DAILY

NOW -
10/18



LAST DAYS OF FALL AT SNOWBOWL

Catch the last stretch of fall color at Snowbowl, with scenic gondola rides and open-air scenic chairlift rides running through October 18. It is a short-season chance to see the aspens from above before the leaves call it quits.

Time: See website for current lift hours

Location: Arizona Snowbowl, 9300 N. Snowbowl Road, Flagstaff

Details: Scenic ride tickets and operating updates at snowbowl.ski

Admission: Tickets required. See website for details.

FRI

OCT
16



LITTLE AMERICA AFTER DARK

Little America turns a fall evening into an adults-only night among the pines with Halloween cocktails, dining, shopping, s'mores, and complimentary stargazing. "Stories in the Stars" with an astronomer begins at 6:30 pm. Ages 21 and older.

Time: 4-8 pm

Location: Little America Hotel, 2515 E. Butler Avenue, Flagstaff

Details & Admission: Visit flagstaff.littleamerica.com/events. Food, drinks, and s'more kits available for purchase.

FRI-SUN

OCT
9-11



WARNER'S FALL FOLIAGE FESTIVAL

Warner's Fall Festival adds a big family day to the nursery's autumn fun. Enjoy the pumpkin patch, hay maze, costume contest, balloon twisters, face painters, petting zoo, crafts, games, and a hot dog cart with snacks and drinks for purchase.

Time: 11 am-2 pm

Location: Warner's Nursery, 1101 E. Butler Avenue, Flagstaff

Details: Check warnernursery.com for updates

SAT

OCT
17



FEST OF FALL

Sedona's Fest of Fall brings food trucks, vendors, music, games, a Kid's Zone, tournaments, and family fun to Posse Grounds Park. It is a good fall outing for families looking for an easy October day in Sedona.

Time: 11 am-5 pm

Location: Posse Grounds Park, 525 Posse Grounds Road, Sedona

Details: sedonaaz.gov

SAT

OCT
24



PUMPKIN WALK AT THE ARBORETUM

Halloween glows in the ponderosa forest as The Arboretum fills with hundreds of illuminated pumpkins. Families can enjoy music, food trucks, kids activities, and fall fun, with beer available for adults. Bring a flashlight, lantern, or headlamp.

Time: 3:30-7:30 pm

Location: The Arboretum at Flagstaff, 4001 S. Woody Mountain Road, Flagstaff

Details: Event is held rain or shine. Tickets and updates at thearb.org.

SAT-SUN

OCT
24-15



CELEBRACIONES DE LA GENTE

The Museum of Northern Arizona's 23rd annual Día de los Muertos celebration honors Mexican heritage with ofrendas, mariachi music, Ballet Folklórico, cultural presentations, food, face painting, and family activities. Tickets include museum admission for the weekend.

Time: Saturday, 10 am-7:30 pm; Sunday, 10 am-4 pm

Location: Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N. Fort Valley Road, Flagstaff

Details: Sugar skull decorating is a separate ticketed workshop. Schedule and tickets at musnaz.org.

NIGHTLY

NOV-DEC
6-30



THE POLAR EXPRESS

The Grand Canyon Railway's Polar Express brings the classic holiday story to life with a nighttime train ride from Williams to the "North Pole." Families can enjoy the story, hot chocolate, cookies, and a visit from Santa aboard the train.

Time: Departure times vary by date

Location: Grand Canyon Railway Depot, Williams

Details: Schedule, tickets, and arrival instructions at thetrain.com

Admission: Tickets required. See website for details.



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NEW LEADERSHIP AT PPOA

The Pinewood Property Owners Association has wrapped up its 2026 season and will return next spring under new leadership, with an ambitious agenda for the years ahead.

Bill Spain has been elected president, with Gail VanDeurzen as vice president, Linda Burnett as treasurer and Robert Moore as secretary.

One of Spain's first priorities is rebuilding and strengthening collaboration among Munds Park organizations, businesses and community groups, with the PPOA serving as a partner on projects that benefit the whole community. He hopes to continue the PPOA's long tradition of completing such projects while building strong working relationships on the board and throughout the community.

Big ideas are already on the table. Projects Spain hopes to pursue include improving the Munds Park entrance, working with Pinewood Country Club and local businesses to improve the look of Pinewood Boulevard, finding a location for a basketball court and youth engagement area, and continuing the traditional events and activities residents have long associated with the PPOA.

This fall, Spain plans to meet with the new officers and interested board members to set the organization's goals and priorities for 2027.

Perhaps most encouraging is the emphasis on partnership. Rather than having organizations work separately, Spain sees the PPOA bringing groups together, combining ideas, volunteers and resources to accomplish projects that might be hard for any one organization to tackle alone. That kind of cooperation could open the door to exciting possibilities for Munds Park.

The Pinewood News will follow these plans as they develop. For now, the PPOA appears to be heading into 2027 with substantial goals and a strong emphasis on working together to get things done.

Your 2027 PPOA Board

Officers

Bill Spain, President
Gail Van Deurzen, Vice President
Linda Burnett, Treasurer
Robert Moore, Secretary

Board Members

Kim Agee
Lisa Aaroe
Lamont Boyd
Jamie Carter
Laurie Henke
Bob Membery
Larry Metzler
Barb Timberman
Karen Zintak

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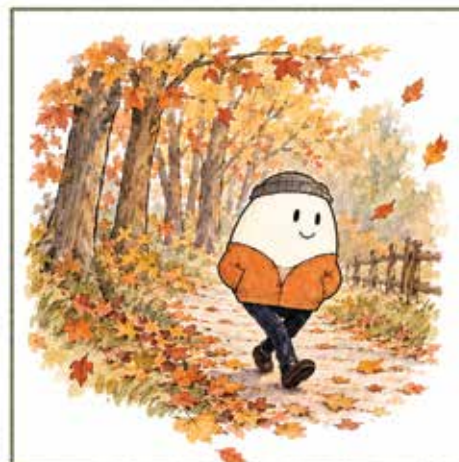
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Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

A TOAST TO TERRY & HER SPICED BOURBON

Munds Park's favorite happy hour guest shares her October specialty.



Terry & Mark Giebelhaus
Product testing :)

In Munds Park, happy hour doesn't wait for an invitation. All it takes is a porch, a few good friends, a bowl of something salty, and the kind of conversation that makes the sun set faster than anyone planned. Now that the leaves are turning and the evenings call for a jacket, those porch gatherings have a new essential: something warm in the glass.

That's where Terry Giebelhaus comes in. She's a familiar and welcome face at these gatherings, and she's earned a reputation for one thing in particular: her homemade shots. Word travels fast in the pines, and so does a good recipe.

Lucky for us, Terry agreed to share her Spiced Bourbon recipe with the *Pinewood News* this month, and the timing couldn't be better.

It's basically October in a glass. She starts by toasting clove, allspice, white pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg until the whole kitchen smells like fall. Then the spices settle in with fresh ginger and Woodford Reserve bourbon to steep for two full days. For the finale, those same spices make an encore in a homemade syrup that rounds out the batch.

It isn't complicated, but it's not something you can grab off a liquor-store shelf on your way to the party, either. It takes a little love and a lot of patience. Two days is a long time to wait when there's bourbon involved.

There's one more reason Terry deserves the spotlight: October is her birthday month. So consider this column a raised glass to the woman who has kept Munds Park's happy hours lively, one homemade batch at a time.

Happy birthday, Terry! Keep the shots coming. Your friends have made it clear they're more than willing to shoulder the burden of drinking them.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp whole clove
- 1 tsp whole allspice
- 3/4 tsp white pepper
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 1 whole nutmeg
- 1 two-inch piece ginger, thinly sliced
- 2 1/2 cups bourbon
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup water



Terry uses Woodford Bourbon.

The Method

In a small skillet, toast the clove, allspice, white pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg over medium heat until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a sealable quart jar with the ginger and bourbon. Seal and steep for 2 days, shaking the jar every 12 hours.

After 2 days, strain out the solids and transfer them to a small saucepan with the sugar and water. Bring to a simmer and cook until the sugar dissolves, about 2 minutes. Let cool completely.

Strain the syrup into the jar with the infused bourbon and shake to combine.

Cheers!



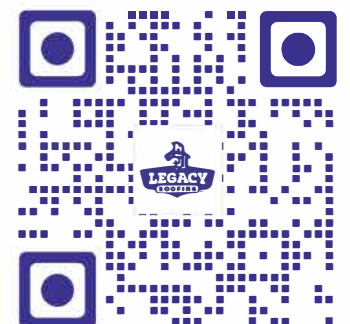
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AT THE CLUB

A SEASON OF CHAMPIONS

News from Lady Niners

BY MISSY LAGOMARSINO

And just like that, another ladies golf season is in the books. From sunny mornings on the course to plenty of good-natured competition, the women of Pinewood Country Club have enjoyed another wonderful season together.

As we start to pack up our clubs for the winter season, we tip our hats to the winners of three tournaments and to everyone who made this year such a fun one, both on and off the course.



Char Lewis
Two-Time President's Cup Champion
2025 & 2026



Michele Howell
Lady Putters Champion 2026



Julie Black
Lady Niners Club Champion 2026

Ekbom Makes History as Pinewood Crowns Its Champions

BY BILL GIBSON

Pinewood Country Club wrapped up its 2026 men's golf season with a full slate of champions, including a history-making win by Kyle Ekbom.

At just 24 years old, Ekbom captured the 2026 Men's Golf Association Club Championship, becoming the youngest player to win the title in Pinewood Country Club history.

Jim DiCello continued his own impressive run, winning the Legends Flight for the second consecutive year.

Gary Dion claimed the Senior Men's Championship, while Lowell Peterson won the Elk Tee Division of the season-long Individual Match Play Tournament. Pete Yannitelli took the Pine Cone/Coyote Tee Division title.

The Red Ball Tournament, held Aug. 29, was won by the team of Rick Schmidgall, Dave Ekbom, Bill Kuemper and Ron Goldstein.

With another season in the books, Pinewood's men's golf program closes out 2026 with both familiar names returning to the winner's circle and a new piece of club history.

At age 24 Kyle is the youngest winner of this event in Pinewood Country Clubs history!



Kyle Ekbom
2026 Men's Golf Association Club Champion



Jim DiCello
2026 Legends Flight Champion

Pinewood Pickleball Crowns Its Summer Champions

BY MISSY LAGOMARSINO

Formal pickleball programming has wrapped up for the summer at PCC, with the season culminating in club tournaments and a glow-in-the-dark pickleball party for all.

The winners of this year's tournaments are:

Mary Zumoff and Julie Black, 2.5 mixed
Gary Dion and Tamara Austin, 55+ 3.0 mixed
Brian Hinshaw and Candie Allison, 3.0 mixed
Brian Bieler and Erin Schmitt, 3.5 mixed
Ben Dickman and Sami Allison, 4.0 mixed
Barb Goldberg and Becki Raschke, 3.0 women
Erin Leonard and Sami Allison, 3.5 women
Blake Dickman and Darren Desmond, 3.0 men
Pat Moeschler and Mike Youngberg, 3.5 men
Sean Flanagan and Luke Leonard, 4.0 men

Congratulations to all of our strong competitors! Even though most of the summer programming has concluded, the courts remain open and busy with open play daily as well as Monday "chickleball" and Friday "dinks & drinks."

If you are interested in learning more about the pickleball club at Pinewood Country Club, please contact new member coordinator Missy Lagomarsino at missylago@gmail.com.

Patty Frey
2026 Women's Golf
Association Club
Championship



Patty Frey Wins Women's Golf Club Championship

BY MARGARET DYEKMAN

Patty Frey won the Pinewood Country Club's Women's Golf Association Club Championship, shooting an impressive 164 over two days to take home the trophy. Flight winners were Robin Alvarez (1st flight), Yvonne Brooks (2nd flight), and Becky Palumbo (3rd flight).

Pinewood Golfers Claim September Championships

BY BILL GIBSON

September brought a pair of championship events to Pinewood Country Club, with local golfers battling for bragging rights on back-to-back days.

On September 19, the Pinewood Men's Golf Association held its Four-Man Best Ball Event, where Cleve Lynch, Rich Greene, Sid Stevens and John Prescott combined their efforts to take the top spot and claim the win.

The competition continued September 20 with the Pinewood Country Club Mixed Couple Championship. When the final putt dropped, Kevin Garrison and Lucky Promkan had earned the championship title.

Congratulations to both winning teams on two strong days of golf at Pinewood Country Club.



The winning couple was: Kevin Garrison and Lucky Promkan



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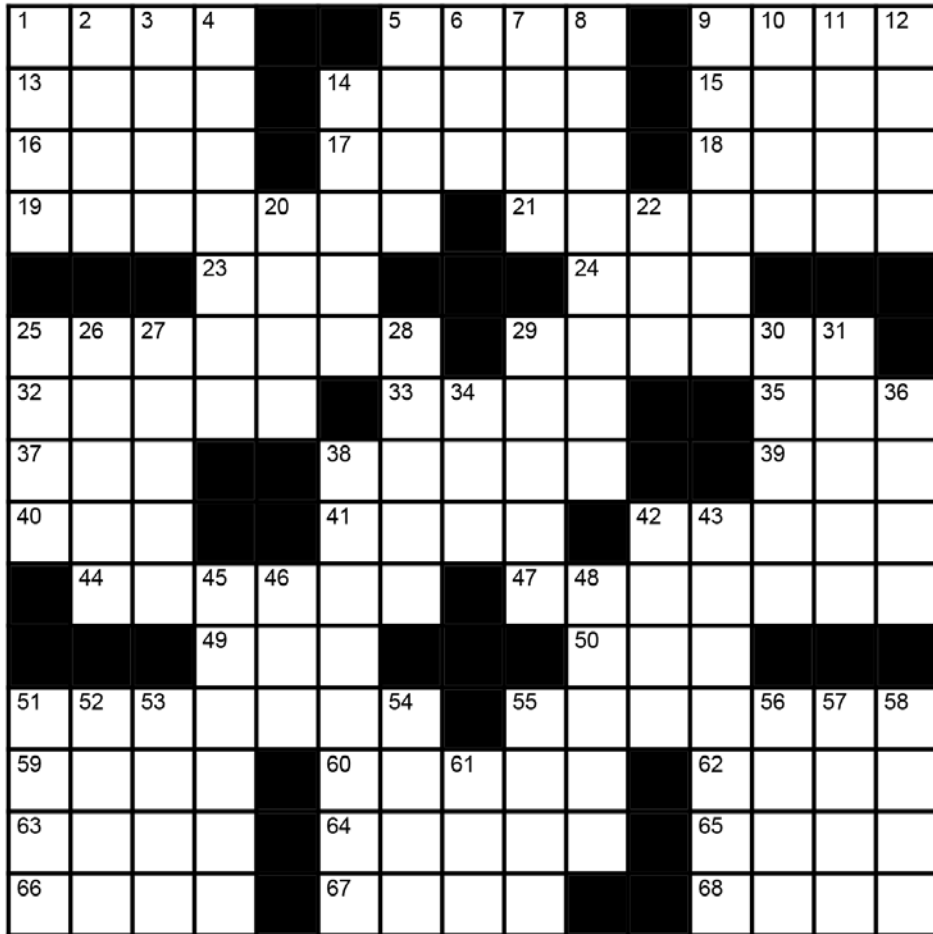
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CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

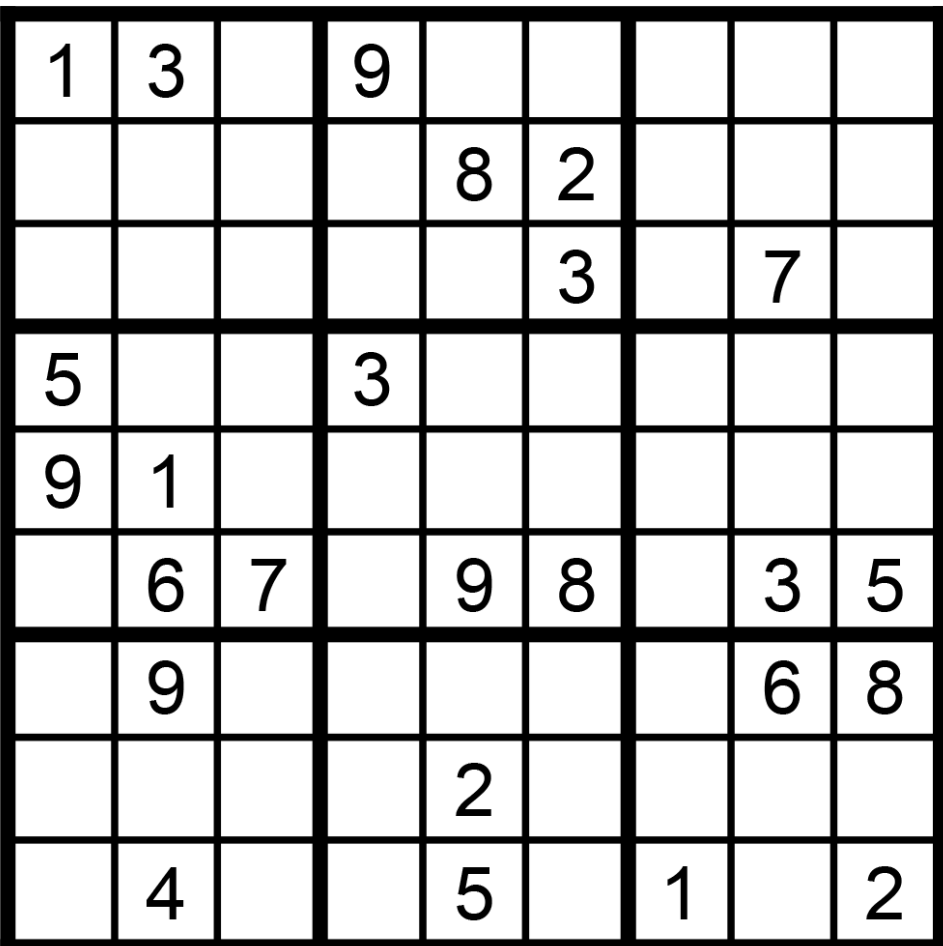
1. -- Ness monster
5. Abates, as a tide
9. Bamako is its capital
13. ____ vera
14. Count Chocula wear
15. "Craft" beverages
16. "After dinner" candy
17. "...mountain out of ____ hill"
18. "... sure plays a ____ pinball" (The Who)
19. Beyond arid
23. Accelerate
24. "Big Band" period
25. Big month for beer festivals
29. "I can't ____ this enough..."
32. 10/31 costume
33. "... and ____ the next!"
35. Dove's sound
37. "As you sew, so shall you also ____"
38. Bed by night, couch by day
39. "Gangsta" genre
40. 112.5 degrees away from S
41. "Arabian Nights" bigwig
42. Hunger for
44. "A Clockwork ____"
47. Having a crossbar
49. "And the cow goes..."
50. -- laude
51. A boat race, or a series of such races
55. It's carved for Halloween
59. "Hear ye!"
60. "Odyssey" predecessor
62. "Blood Canticle" author Rice
63. "... ____, the yellow leaf": Shak.
64. Barre!ful at a hardware store
65. It may be due on a duplex
66. Kind of dealer
67. Bad, as a prognosis
68. "Mmm Mmm Mmm Mmm" band
Crash ____ Dummies

DOWN

1. "...and took a ____ out of the flock" (1Sam. 17:34)
2. "This and that" mixture
3. Boxer Billy
4. Most sexual partners, slangily
5. Abounding in shade trees
6. "Didn't say ____"
7. "Batman Begins" star Christian
8. "Bony" Halloween costume
9. The milk-secreting organ of female mammals
10. "Hard ____!" (nautical command)
11. "... his wife could eat no ____"
12. "... and who ____?"
14. Craft a totem pole, e.g.
20. "Outstanding" obligation
22. "To ____ is human ..."
25. Shrek, for one
26. Material for uniforms
27. AA candidate
28. "Moulin ____"
29. Animal that turns white in the winter
30. Get rid of
31. Alternative to pinot grigio
34. "Ultimate" degree
36. "Here's what I think" page
38. Decorative needlework
42. Buddy
43. "You can take the stairs or the ____, ____"
45. Astonishes
46. "--- a problem"
48. Cold War missiles on mobile launchers
51. "Brooklyn Nine-Nine" badass ____ Diaz
52. Admirer at a distance
53. A disinfectant kills it
54. '80s pesticide
55. A fortune-teller reads it
56. "... ____ bone's connected to the
61. "Beverly Hills Cop ____" thigh..."
57. B & B relatives
58. Bottom line, in the U.K.

SUDOKU

CREATED BY PAUL MASON • SOLUTION PAGE 18B



On Vacation with The Pinewood News

Scott and Barb Nicholl took the Pinewood News along for a spectacular September adventure through the Scottish Highlands. Here they are on the banks of the River Ness in Inverness, known as the capital of the Highlands and a gateway to some of Scotland's most famous scenery. The Nicholls spent the first two weeks of September exploring the Highlands, with their hometown paper along for the journey.



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WINGS OVER ARIZONA

2026 BIRDING QUIZ

BY MARGARET DYEKMAN

To recap 2026, here's a short quiz for all our readers. Answers can be found on page 18B.

- Residents and visitors can find great places to bird using the following source:
 - Dyekman's birding tips on the back of a paper napkin
 - Arizona Birding Trail (www.arizonabirdingtrail.com)
 - The Great Horned Owl's words of wisdom Facebook page
- Which of the following yellow warblers is referred to as a "butter butt"?
 - Common Yellowthroat
 - Northern Yellow Warbler
 - Yellow-rumped Warbler
- What identification mark is indicative of a Band-tailed Pigeon (besides its banded tail)?
 - Thin white band on its nape
 - Yellow eyes
 - Small size – only 5 inches long
- Which "house" species does not nest in a cavity or nest box?
 - House Wren
 - House Finch
 - House Sparrow
- Greater Roadrunners are never found in Coconino County, true or false?
 - True
 - False
- Which US President established the National Forest Service, five national parks, and 51 bird preserves?
 - John Adams
 - Theodore Roosevelt
 - Lyndon Johnson
- Only the female Mallard vocalizes the distinctive "Quack", true or false?
 - True
 - False
- What can you do to keep birds from dying?
 - Collision-proof your windows to stop birds flying into the glass reflection
 - Keep cats indoors
 - Stop using rodenticides as a solution to deal with rat or mice problems
 - All of the above

You can reach me at margaretdyekman@cox.net or by text at 602-620-3210. You can read all about Backyard Birding in Northern Arizona at www.backyardbirdingaz.com and order the book online or get one directly from me.

WORD SEARCH

CREATED BY PAUL MASON • SOLUTION PAGE 18B

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

Brother Columban Michael was a skyscraper among children. He was a warm, gifted teacher with a baritone voice that expressed imaginative, insightful, and concise wisdom to a fifth-grader. He was a Merlin with vocabulary. At six-four and 350 lbs., handsome, with black hair and glasses, his bearing assumed respect. He wore a long black cassock with a white cardboard collar shaped like Ten Commandments stones. Brother Mike had a ready smile and laughed at things I blurted, but could instantly twitch into a threat at infractions. He was strong, and once hit a softball so high that it caught the flight to LA.

He had a Supreme Court sense of justice. A bakery was across from Sacred Heart School, where we drooled from the warm scent of fresh bread and donuts. William Frawley and two others brought "Apple Blossom" perfume into the store. It was a novelty purchased at Rye Beach Amusement Park, where the Brothers took us each June. They slung the liquid on the floor and counter and fled. So did all the customers. It had the stench of hot, concentrated diarrhea. The pleasurable smells instantly reeked as if every toilet in the Bronx had been flushed into the store. The owner notified Brother Michael.

Class began. He commanded the three boys to the front. Frawley was first to bend over the desk for three swats of the wood. I nodded with approval at their punishment, wanting Apple Blossom splashed on their butts.

While the Brother was working an aged film projector, it smoked. He lifted frayed wires to investigate. In the dark classroom, showers of sparks jumped from his fists and lit his furrowed eyebrows and concentrated face. A spray of stars bounced off his chest and arms. He untwisted wires in the blinking, buzzing pulses of blue-white light. The drama ended, and he wordlessly began the movie. I stared in wonder at that bravery.

He once banged on an apartment door. An alcoholic father opened it. With hardened eyes, Brother Michael stiffened to full height. "If you lay a hand on your son one more time, you'll answer to me." To my classmate's gratitude, his father never did again.

Brother Mike read my compositions as an example for the class. I wanted to improve for him. It gave me an appetite for writing. I joined as a reporter for Sacred Heart's newsletter, Crusader. Mom once asked where I copied my story, believing it was too good to be mine. She always remembered that story. I wrote about the journey a penny took from the Civil War to my nine-year-old present. I wish I had kept it.

I worshipped Brother Michael. Over the years, I kept in touch. In high school, he took me on the Circle Line, a vessel that circumnavigated Manhattan. I worked with him as an adult in 1974 at a boys' institution, Lincoln Hall, where he was a legend to all of us prefects. The courts of New York City sentenced the youngsters to us for 18 months. I once got a call at my cottage from him. "You'd better get over here and get Andre Smith before there is no Andre." I dashed over to where Andre sat on a bench, grateful to be alive. "Let's go." We returned to our Oak Cottage. He confessed his misbehavior. I only shook my head. It was unnecessary to comment. I can't remember what he did, but it wasn't nearly as bad as what another inmate did the following week.

A nun made a presentation to a class, and a boy called, "Hey, bitch! You lay?"

I asked Brother Michael what he did. He growled, "I tested the walls with him."

In 1984, I combined my inspired fondness for writing with my devotion to my two-year-old daughter. I created a newsletter, the Life of Jamie Times, my version of the Crusader.

I kept in touch over the years, sending him my newsletter. I visited him in New Jersey a few times, the last in 2007. I phoned Brother Michael weekly after hearing he had cancer. I value those "no negative vibes" conversations. He still had my undiminished admiration. Jamie was a first-year teacher and called Brother Michael occasionally for advice. Wow! She spoke to the person who sparked my classroom career. He gave deep insights that I used as a veteran teacher. To his delight that Spring, we all agreed to meet at Christmastime in New York. There, I called him for the rendezvous. His niece answered. "He can't see anyone. He's on his death bed."

The cancer killed him weeks later. I was greatly disappointed that he never met Jamie.

With his stature, I only have one thing in common with Brother Michael. I'll also be a teacher to the last.



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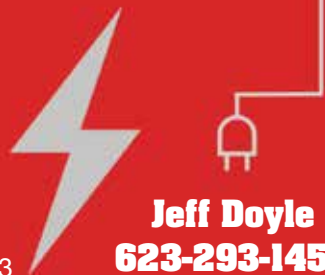
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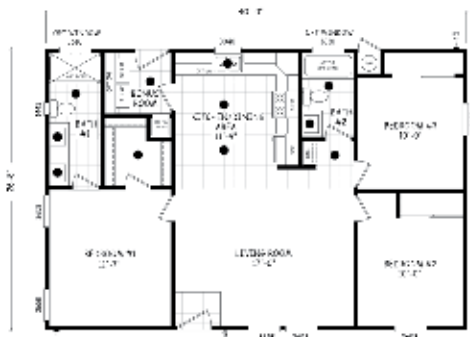


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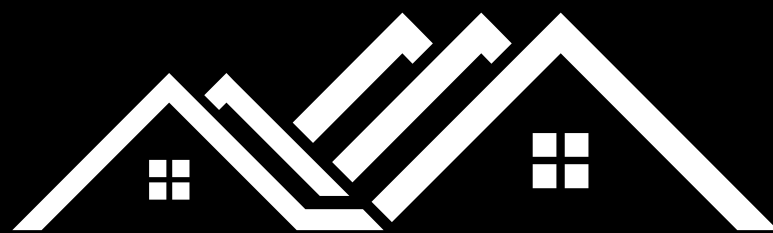
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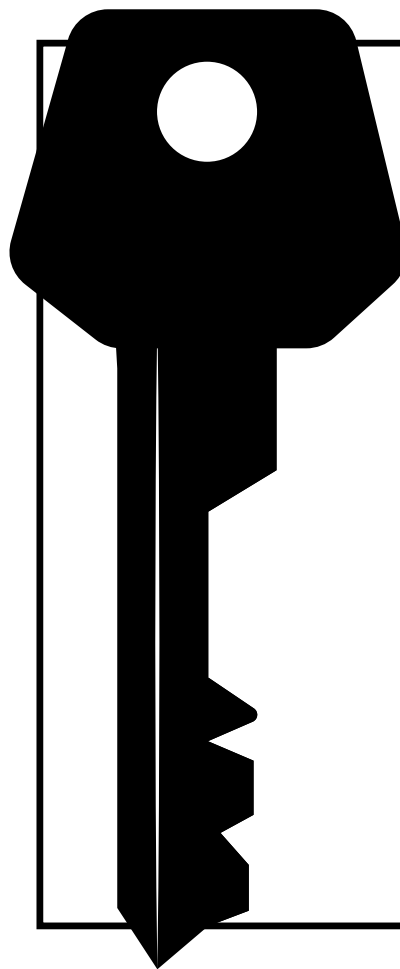
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WHY WE ALL NEED GRACE

BY PASTOR JEREMY

Grace, biblically, is God giving us what we don't deserve. The grace we receive from God is a gift we could never earn, yet He gives it freely. Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast." Grace is the kindness God shows toward us, not a reward for good behavior. In a small town, we either work hard for what we have or we've worked hard to get where we are. Grace is different because we don't work for it, God gives it because He loves us, not because we deserve it. Grace matters because, as Romans 3:23 says, we all fall short. Every person, no matter how respected or put-together they seem, has flaws and failures. In this world, it's easy to label someone as "too broken" or "too guilty," but grace levels the playing field and proves that wrong. In Munds Park, where everyone knows everyone, grace helps us see each other with compassion instead of judgment.

Grace also changes how we treat one another. It's amazing that we can all receive grace so freely, yet it can be hard to extend it. But when we remember that God has shown grace to us first, it becomes easier to show grace to others. Grace softens our words, slows our tempers, and makes forgiveness more possible. A community thrives when people choose understanding over criticism.

If you're looking for hope, you'll find it in the grace God gives. Grace gives us hope beyond our circumstances. When we understand the grace extended to us, we realize that our past no longer defines us, and it no longer determines our future. God's gift gives us the strength we need to face today. In a world full of stress and division, grace reminds us that we are not alone and that no one is beyond God's reach.

*"So, Munds Park, here is my challenge to you.
Let's become a community known for grace.
Let's not just talk about it, let's live it out."*

Grace also points us back to God, not ourselves. Ephesians 2:8-9 makes it clear that salvation is God's work, not ours. Grace keeps us humble, grateful, and dependent on Him. Everyone in Munds Park is invited to receive that same gift, the grace God freely offers to every person, no matter their background. Ephesians 2:8-9 challenges all of us. If God has given us grace we did not earn, then it's time for us to give grace we don't think others deserve. In a small town, it's easy to divide into groups and hold onto our own agendas. Grace calls us to mend fences and choose unity even when it's uncomfortable. Grace asks us to treat others the way we want to be treated and to forgive faster than we feel like forgiving.

So, Munds Park, here is my challenge to you. Let's become a community known for grace. Let's not just talk about it, let's live it out. God has freely given us grace, and because of that, we have no excuse to withhold grace from others.

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Wings Over Arizona Quiz Solutions: Answers: 1b, 2c, 3a, 4b, 5b, 6b, 7a, 8d.

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Do not approach if the animal appears aggressive. If safe, confine the animal and call Animal Management for pickup or next steps.

The Pinewood Fire Department has microchip scanners. You can bring the animal to the firehouse or call (928) 286-9885

High Country Humane (928) 526-0742

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

Injured or Dangerous Wildlife

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,

Mark Stento (928) 679-8856.

Know Your Rights: Short-term rental owners must register their contact information with Coconino County and provide it in writing to adjacent neighbors. If you never received it, contact the County STR Compliance Officer to verify the rental's registration. Report unresponsive owners, repeated disturbances, or suspected unregistered rentals to the County or Sheriff's Office.

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