

PINEWOOD NEWS

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

VOL. 33 NO. 8 JUNE 5, 2026

COMPLIMENTARY



COVER by Sandee Caviness with Midjourney

CELESTIAL EVENTS

JUNE SKIES BRING DARK NIGHTS & BRIGHT PLANETS

June is a fine month to look up in Northern Arizona. The air is often dry, the nights are still cool, and our high elevation gives stargazers a good seat for the show, provided we do our part and keep the lights low.

This month brings a Grand Canyon star party, a close pairing of the two brightest planets, a dark New Moon window, Mercury's best evening appearance, and a full Strawberry Moon to close out the month.

Grand Canyon Star Party: June 6 through 13

The 36th annual Grand Canyon Star Party returns June 6 through 13 on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park. The North Rim event has been canceled for 2026 because of previous fire impacts, but the South Rim program will continue.

The event is free and open to the public, with regular park entrance fees applying. Evening programs begin around 8 p.m., followed by constellation tours and telescope viewing. The best viewing usually starts after 9 p.m., once the sky is fully dark.

Volunteer astronomers will help visitors spot planets, star clusters, nebulae, double stars, and distant galaxies through telescopes. Under the Grand Canyon's dark skies, even familiar constellations can feel brand new.

Venus & Jupiter Conjunction: June 8 & 9

Look low in the west-northwest after sunset on June 8 and 9, and you may spot two brilliant lights close together. That is Venus and Jupiter, the two brightest planets in our night sky, appearing only about a degree and a half apart.

You do not need a telescope to enjoy this one. Your eyes will do just fine. Binoculars may make the view even better, especially if you have a clear horizon and wait until 30 to 60 minutes after sunset.

Mercury will also be nearby, lower in the sky and harder to catch. It is bright, but it sits close to the horizon, so buildings, trees, and mountains can hide it quickly. Find a safe open view to the west and give your eyes a few minutes to adjust.

New Moon & Dark Sky Window: June 15

The New Moon arrives June 15, bringing some of the darkest skies of the month. The nights around June 14 through 16 are excellent for spotting the Milky Way, summer constellations, star clusters, and nebulae, especially if you can get away from porch lights and town glow.

With no bright Moon overhead, faint stars and deep-sky objects have a better chance to appear. It is also a good reminder to protect what we have. Shield outdoor lights downward, use warm bulbs, and turn off what you do not need. The darker the sky, the more the universe gives back.

Mercury's Best Evening Appearance: June 15

Mercury reaches its greatest eastern elongation on June 15, making this one of the better evenings to spot the little planet after sunset.

Look low in the west about 45 to 90 minutes after sunset. Mercury will appear like a bright star near the horizon, so you will need a clear view. It never stays up long, which is part of the fun. Blink, and the shy little planet may be gone.

Full Strawberry Moon: June 29

June's Full Moon arrives on June 29. Traditionally called the Strawberry Moon, its name comes from the season when strawberries ripen, not from the Moon turning pink or red.

This year's Strawberry Moon is also a Micro Moon, meaning it is a little farther from Earth and may appear slightly smaller than usual. Most people will not notice the difference, but it is a fun skywatching detail.

The full Moon rises near sunset and will brighten the night sky, making faint galaxies and nebulae harder to see. Still, it is a beautiful night for moon watching. Binoculars can reveal craters, shadows, and the rugged edge of the lunar surface.

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, June 19**





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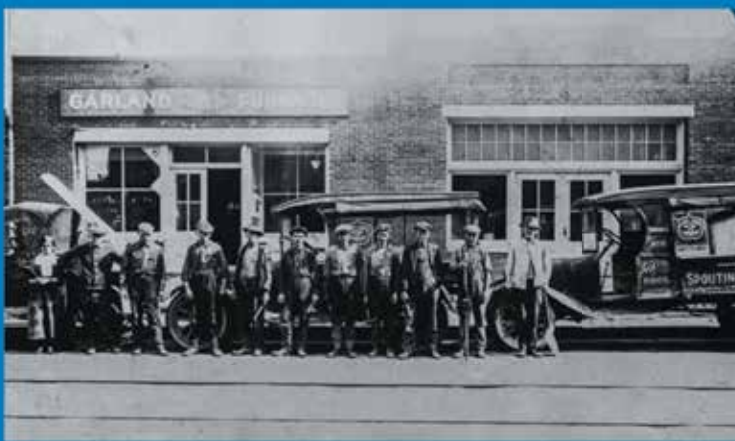
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PINEWOOD

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

Pilates

Senior-friendly Pilates classes are held weekly

Mondays: 10 to 11 a.m.

Wednesdays: 11 a.m. to noon

Munds Park Community Church

17670 S. Munds Ranch Rd

For details, contact Chris Woolley at:
760-688-6452 or ChrisWoolley06@gmail.com

Munds Park Community Church Services

Services Sunday, 10:45 am

17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Munds Park Town Hall

All residents are encouraged to attend.

Stay informed. Your presence and participation is essential!

Thursday, September 17, 2026

6:30 pm • The New Fire House

Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary meeting

The Community is Welcome!

Tuesday, July 7

6:30 pm • 17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

Pinewood Fire District Board Meeting

Public Welcome

Tuesday, June 16

3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr

Pinewood Sanitary District Board Meeting

Public Welcome

Thursday, June 11

3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr



LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS 7A

This is where locals come for verified updates, thoughtful community news, and information they can trust.

THINGS TO DO & SEE 12A

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

ACCORDING TO EMILY POST 14A

A new column on manners, neighbors, and common courtesy in Munds Park.

SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD 21A

A bright brunch cocktail with gin, citrus, strawberries, Crystal Ice, and a little porch-side neighborly charm.

TRAVEL 22A

A cliffside trail through northern Spain offers tunnels, towering limestone walls, and views worth every careful step.

HOMEMADE & WONDERFUL 23A

Fresh asparagus, spinach, and feta make this simple quiche an easy answer for porch brunch, lunch, or dinner.

FROM THE PORCH 3B

A thoughtful reminder that life is still happening right beside us, and sometimes the kindest thing we can do is put the phone down.

HEALTH & WELLNESS 5B

Five simple exercises can help protect strength, balance, mobility, and independence as we age.

GARDENS IN THE PARK 7B

Simple waterwise and firewise choices can help protect gardens, homes, and our forest community.

COMMUNITY THEATER 9B

Pinewood Players has Seussical Jr. on stage, line dancing on the calendar, and scholarships ready for applicants.

WINGS OVER ARIZONA 11B

Three familiar neighborhood birds show how wildlife adapts, sings, nests, and makes itself at home around us.

MUNDS PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH 18B

Pastor Jeremy begins his first lead pastor role with humility, gratitude, and a desire to love Munds Park well.



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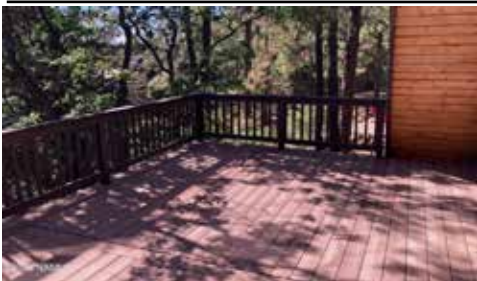
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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

FLAGSTAFF TAKES A LOOK AT FUTURE DATA CENTERS



Flagstaff is taking a hard look at whether data centers belong inside city limits, and the question is bigger than technology. It is about water, power, land, noise, and whether large industrial uses fit the future Northern Arizona wants for itself.

No data center application is currently before the city. Flagstaff is trying to answer the land-use question before a proposal arrives. That matters because data centers are not ordinary buildings. They can require major electrical capacity, cooling systems, power lines and substations, and in some cases, significant water use. Flagstaff says the purpose of the proposed zoning amendment is to help safeguard the community from possible negative impacts.

The water question is serious. Arizona is a desert state that has been in some stage of drought since 1994, and the Colorado River system has been under drought conditions for more than two decades. State water officials say long-term drought has expanded across Arizona, and the Colorado River remains under shortage planning and conservation measures. In that setting, “where will the water come from?” is not a minor detail. It is the first question.

The pocketbook issue is also already on the kitchen table. The Arizona Corporation Commission held a workshop in April on large-load users, including data centers, and the importance of adding them to the electric grid without increasing costs for other ratepayers. APS has also said it is working on rate structures for data centers and other extra-large energy users to protect reliability and affordability for residential customers.

Flagstaff appears to be treating the issue seriously. Options discussed publicly have included conditional-use permits, noise limits, restrictions on water-based cooling systems, decommissioning requirements, and a possible ban on data centers as a primary land use within city limits. The city is weighing whether these projects can be limited through regulation, or whether their demands on water, power, land, and infrastructure make them a poor fit for Flagstaff’s future.

For Flagstaff and nearby mountain and rural communities, the larger question is worth watching. Some projects bring demands that reach far beyond one parcel of land, especially mammoth buildings filled with machinery that is both power-hungry and water-thirsty. “Data” may sound clean and weightless, but the facilities that store it are

anything but. They need big land, major power, cooling systems, water planning, and infrastructure.

At its heart, the question is simple: how much growth is useful, how much water can this region realistically spare, and how much city life do we want to drag up the mountain?

Residents who want to weigh in on Flagstaff’s data center zoning discussion may contact the Flagstaff City Council at Council@flagstaffaz.gov or watch for future Planning and Zoning Commission

and City Council agendas. Those concerned about broader regional impacts, including water, infrastructure, county land use, and future development outside city limits, may also contact Coconino County District 3 Supervisor Tammy Ontiveros. Those concerned about utility rates and large-load users may contact the Arizona Corporation Commission and reference Docket No. E-00000A-25-0069.

Sources: City of Flagstaff, Arizona Corporation Commission, and APS rate case materials.

...Local Highlights continued on page 9A



ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT WILDFIRES!

Fire restrictions vary by area and can change fast. Scan below for today’s rules.

Thanks for helping protect our forests!





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... Continued from page 7A

TOWN HALL RECAP

I have to start this recap with a confession. I attended the Town Hall on Thursday, May 21, at Pinewood Country Club, fully intending to record the meeting and write from my notes.

Then I forgot to turn on the recorder.

So this is not a word-for-word report. It is a brief summary from memory, with the main points that stood out, along with the Sheriff's Office report provided at the meeting.

Fire Chief Josh Tope gave an update on Bear Jaw and confirmed that the long-running event has ended in its current form. The fire district is already looking at possible solutions for the future.

Chief Tope also shared good news about the new firehouse. The district expects to receive the keys in June, and the community can look forward to an open house with a tentative date of June 12.

Sheriff Bret Axlund reviewed the Sheriff's Office report for Munds Park, covering May 1, 2025 through April 30, 2026. According to the report, the largest category was community policing and area patrol, with 573 calls or contacts. Medical assist calls were also high, with 235 listed for the year.

Other notable categories included 61 business checks, 38 disturbing the peace calls, 36 public assist calls, 31 traffic stops, 28 forest patrol calls, 26 suspicious activity calls, 19 domestic violence calls, 19 attempt-to-locate calls, 14 civil matters, 1 accident fatality, 13 injury accidents, 11 non-injury accidents, 11 suicidal subject calls, 11 wildland or brush fire calls, and 10 trespassing calls.

Some of those numbers are routine. Some are troubling.

The suicidal subject calls, in particular, are hard to read. Eleven calls in one year is not just a statistic. It is a reminder that some in our community are struggling. Keep a tab on your neighbors and genuinely see how they are doing. You have no idea what a simple gesture can do for someone.

The report also included incidents involving burglary, theft, fraud, criminal damage, DUI, harassment, weapons violations, threatening or intimidating behavior, and sex offenses. While many categories had few contacts, the report gives the Sheriff's Office a documented picture of what is being reported in Munds Park.

And that is the keyword: reported.

Facebook is not the same thing as calling the sheriff's office. Posting about loose dogs, speeding vehicles, suspicious behavior, trespassing, dumping, noise, or other concerns may alert neighbors, but it does not create an official call for service. If residents do not call, the sheriff's office cannot track the issue, assign resources to it, or show that Munds Park needs more enforcement in a certain area.

Sheriff Axlund also told attendees that the department is now staffed at the level it should be for the first time in years. That is no small thing for a community that depends on county law enforcement coverage.

District 3 Supervisor Tammy Ontiveros, along with Scott Ogden of J.E. Fuller Hydrology, discussed the ongoing flood concerns in Munds Park. The county has funding for preliminary engineering and planning work, and that work has already begun.

One possible solution being studied involves flood-retarding structures in the forested watershed area. In plain English, these are engineered structures designed to slow and hold back stormwater during heavy rain, instead of letting it rush all at once toward homes, roads, and critical infrastructure.

Coconino County has identified the Munds Park Flood Reduction Project as one of its major flood mitigation priorities. The county's floodplain remapping work has also shown why this issue matters, especially for properties now affected by updated FEMA flood hazard maps.

Representatives from Coconino County Emergency Management, Public Works, and the Coconino National Forest also spoke about wildfire preparedness, mitigation work, and the importance of staying alert during a dry season. Their message was familiar, but important: sign up for Coconino County Emergency Notifications, know your evacuation zone, and do not wait until smoke is in the air to make a plan.

Those are the Cliff Notes. The larger message from the evening was clear: Munds Park has serious issues to keep watching, including fire risk, flood planning, and emergency readiness. The good news is that these conversations are happening, county officials are showing up, and residents are paying attention.

The next Town Hall will be held Thursday, September 17, at the new firehouse.

If you have ideas for improving future Town Halls, or if there is information you think we may be missing, we are listening. Send your thoughts to Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com.

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- Andrea Z.

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- Gabriel C.

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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

... Continued from page 9A

**PINEWOOD SANITARY DISTRICT
SEWER UPGRADE MOVES TO PHASE 2**

The Pinewood Sanitary District (PSD) has reached an important milestone in its ongoing infrastructure improvement efforts, officially entering Phase 2 of its multi-phase sewer system upgrade project. This progress marks a continued commitment by the District to modernize its facilities, improve reliability, and meet regulatory requirements outlined under the Consent Judgment.

As part of this next phase, PSD is preparing to move forward with the competitive bidding process. Bidding is expected to begin within the next month, allowing qualified contractors the opportunity to participate in the construction work that will further advance the District's collection system improvements. This process ensures transparency and helps secure the most effective and cost-efficient solutions for the community.

To support these large-scale upgrades, PSD has secured financing through the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona (WIFA). This funding plays a vital role in enabling the District to complete the necessary improvements while managing costs responsibly over time.

In connection with this financing, customers began seeing a new WIFA fee on their monthly bills starting April 1, 2026. This fee directly supports repayment of the loan used to fund the critical sewer system upgrades. The District has implemented this funding structure to ensure that improvements can move forward without placing a significant one-time financial burden on ratepayers.

Customers should be aware that the WIFA fee will increase as project funds are drawn and construction progresses. As a result, fluctuations in future bills are expected. This phased approach allows costs to be distributed over time, helping maintain affordability while still accomplishing essential infrastructure upgrades.

To make managing payments easier, PSD continues to offer its free SurePay Program. This convenient option enables automatic monthly payments, helping customers avoid missed due dates and simplifying bill management. Residents interested in enrolling can call 928-286-9166 or visit www.PinewoodSanitary.com to download the enrollment application.

PSD remains dedicated to completing all required improvements and maintaining a safe, reliable wastewater system for its customers. Community members are encouraged to stay informed and follow project updates as the District continues moving through the remaining phases of this essential infrastructure update.

**COUNTY SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON
SAFER LOCAL ROADS**

Munds Park residents will have a chance to speak up about local roadway safety concerns at Coconino County's Roadway Safety Summit meeting on Thursday, June 18, at Pinewood Fire Station.

The meeting is part of the county's Roadway Safety Action Plan, a planning effort focused on reducing serious crashes, identifying safety challenges, and guiding future roadway investments on County-maintained roads.

Residents are encouraged to bring specific examples, including rough roads, dangerous curves, poor visibility, speed concerns, or problem intersections.

Thursday, June 18
6 to 7:30 p.m.

Pinewood Fire Station | 475 E. Pinewood Boulevard

For more information, visit coconino.az.gov/RoadwaySafety.

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KARAOKE AT PINWOOD BAR & GRILL

Nothing says small-town Saturday night quite like friends, a good song, and someone brave enough to take the mic. Join DJ Ruben for

karaoke every Saturday at Pinewood Bar & Grill.

Time: 8 p.m.

Location: 65 Pinewood Blvd



EVERY MONDAY!

BINGO AT THE COUNTRY CLUB

Bingo at the Pinewood Country Club! This event is open to everyone—no membership required. Come enjoy a fun night with neighbors!

Time: 6 p.m., every Monday

Location: Pinewood Country Club

THROUGH THE SUMMER SEASON



YOGA IN THE PARK

Join Christy Shaft, PT and Certified Yoga Instructor, for accessible yoga classes designed to support strength, balance, flexibility, and ease.

Yoga in the Park offers weekly Chair Yoga and |Mat Flow Yoga classes.

Fridays: Chair Yoga, 9-9:45 a.m.; Mat Flow Yoga, 10-11 a.m.

Saturdays: Mat Flow Yoga, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Mondays: Chair Yoga, 9-9:45 a.m.; Mat Flow Yoga, 10-11 a.m.

All classes are open to community and visitors.

Location: Munds Park RV Resort

Admission: \$15 per class

Details: Facebook: Yoga in the Park

THURSDAY, JUNE 11 & 25



BINGO AT WINE TASTING AND MORE

Grab your friends and head to Wine Tasting and More for a relaxed night of bingo, wine and hometown fun. This cozy Munds Park spot serves wine, charcuterie

pairings, specialty drinks, and plenty of good company.

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Wine Tasting and More,
17730 S. Munds Ranch Rd., Munds Park

Details: www.winetastingandmore.com

SATURDAY, JUNE 13TH



MUTS NEEDS BOOTS ON THE TRAIL

Join Munds Park Trail Stewards to help maintain the non-motorized Brad and Mud Tank trails, then stay

for a free lunch after. Please RSVP.

Time: 8:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Meet at the Iron Springs Trailhead at 8:15 a.m.

Details: RSVP to mundstrailstewards@hotmail.com

Bring long pants, sturdy shoes, dress for the weather, and a smile. Water and trail tools will be provided. Check for updates at www.mundsparktrailstewards.com, as the event may change or be postponed.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18



PAINT & SIP AT WINE TASTING & MORE VAL'S PAINT PARTIES

Enjoy a creative evening at Wine Tasting and More's Paint & Sip event. Bring your inner artist!

Time: 5 p.m.

Location: Wine Tasting and More,
17730 S. Munds Ranch Rd., Munds Park

Details: www.winetastingandmore.com

FRIDAY, JUNE 19

COMMUNITY LUAU



Munds Park Community Church is hosting a free community luau with pulled pork BBQ sandwiches, neighborly conversation, kids' games, and cornhole. Come hungry, and bring the family!

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Munds Park Community Church

Admission: FREE

SATURDAY, JUNE 27



COMMUNITY SAFETY DAY

Pinewood Fire Department is hosting Community Safety Day to help neighbors feel a little more prepared and a lot more connected.

Stop by to meet the department, learn helpful safety tips, ask questions, and gather information for keeping your home, family, and community safer this season.

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Pinewood Fire Department



PINEWOOD PLAYERS

From Four Old Broads on the High Seas to adult acting and improv classes, Pinewood Players is bringing plenty of laughter, learning, and local talent to the stage this season. See the full

Pinewood Players feature in this issue for show dates and class information see page 9B.

SATURDAY, JULY 4

FAIRLANE PALOOZA

Celebrate the July 4th weekend with Fairlane Palooza, featuring feel-good music from Comin' Home, plus games, prizes, and free music under the stars. Bring your own chair, your own beverages, and settle in for an easy outdoor evening with neighbors.

Time: 6:30-9:30 p.m.

Location: 245 Fairlane Rd., Munds Park

Admission: FREE

Details: BYOB and chair encouraged

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5



PINEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB CRAFT FAIR

Pinewood Country Club is hosting a Labor Day Craft Fair and inviting local vendors to show off their handmade goods to the community. All are welcome, and

vendor spaces are available.

Time: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Location: Pinewood Country Club

Contact: Daniella Zamora, 928-233-8271,
dzamora@pinewoodcountryclubaz.com

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27



PINEWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary Golf Tournament returns

to Pinewood Country Club for a 4-person scramble open to members and non-members. All money raised supports the Pinewood Fire Department and the citizens of Munds Park.

Location: Pinewood Country Club

Admission: \$185 per player

Deadline to Enter: September 21, 2026

Contact: Cheri Schultz, 310-686-5168,
PFDA.pres@gmail.com

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EVERY FRIDAY!



BARN DANCE

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Time: 6– 10 p.m.

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

Details: mortimerfarmsaz.com

Admission: See website for dinner and ticket details

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 13-14

FLAGSTAFF FOLK FESTIVAL



A full weekend of folk and acoustic music, workshops, jamming, and more than 100 acts on multiple stages, all built around community and good listening. Bring your curiosity and your comfiest shoes.

Time: Sat. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Location: Coconino Center for the Arts and the Pioneer Museum, 2300 N. Fort Valley Rd., Flagstaff

Details: flagfolkfest.org

Admission: See website for details

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, JUNE 20-21

PRESCOTT BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL



Bring a chair or blanket and settle in for a free weekend of bluegrass in downtown Prescott. Enjoy live bands, an evening concert Saturday night, jamming around the plaza,

food tents, vendors, and raffles. **Time:** Sat. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Sun. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Goodwin Street, Downtown Prescott

Details: prescott.org

Admission: FREE

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 27-28



JEROME MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL

Spend the weekend in Jerome with live music, art, food trucks, raffles, a pop-up market, kids' activities, shops, restaurants, and plenty to

explore around town. Live performances will be held at several venues throughout Jerome.

Time: See website for details

Location: Main Street and venues throughout Jerome

Details: jeromechamber.com

Admission: FREE

MONDAY-SUNDAY, JUNE 29-JULY 5



WORLD'S OLDEST RODEO

Prescott's signature summer traditions returns for a full week of rodeo action, western spirit, and holiday-week crowds. Gates open

two hours before each performance, so there is time to grab food, shop, and settle in before the fun starts.

Time: Check website for times.

Location: Prescott Rodeo Grounds
840 Rodeo Dr., Prescott

Details: worldsoldestrodeo.com

Admission: See website for details.

FRIDAY-MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4-7



COCONINO COUNTY FAIR

The Coconino County Fair returns to Fort Tuthill County Park over Labor Day weekend with exhibits, entertainment, carnival fun, food,

animals, and plenty of fair favorites for the whole family.

Time: See website for details

Location: Fort Tuthill County Park, Flagstaff

Details: coconinocountyfair.com

Admission: See website for details



FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO READ

Bookmobile Stop at Pinewood Country Club Clubhouse

Date: Wed, June 10, 2026 from 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Location: Pinewood Country Club Clubhouse



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THE COMEBACK OF COMMON COURTESY

Because Rude Got Too Comfortable

BY SANDEE CAVINESS



Emily Post

Between reader emails and the occasional painful scroll through Facebook, one thing became clear. A lot of the problems people are fed up with in our little town have the same root: manners. Or more accurately, the lack of them.

Again and again, the complaint underneath the complaint seems to be this: we have forgotten that we share this world with others.

So, I bought a copy of Emily Post's *Etiquette*, printed in 1957, and decided we might have a little fun with it.

Now, full confession before we go any further: I am not the person you would pick to write about proper etiquette. I'm a jeans-and-T-shirt gal all the way. I've been known to swear like a sailor, and my mother's dream of raising a proper lady mostly resulted in me being, well, me.

But the older I get, the more I realize she was trying to teach me something deeper than sitting up straight with my shoulders back. Manners, of course, can include the elegant rituals: knowing what to do with a finger bowl or which of the five silver forks to wield. But at their heart, they are simpler and more profound. They are the practice of remembering that other people exist, and that their day matters, too.

That is where Emily Post surprised me.

I expected her book to be a museum of social rules. I expected place cards, dinner jackets, tea cups, calling cards, and stern little instructions about which glass to use while silently judging everyone else at the table. Some of that is in there, of course. The woman did not write a pamphlet. She wrote a whole social operating system.

But then I came across the chapter "The True Meaning of Etiquette," and it was not what I expected. It was not mainly about being "correct," which is the word most of us probably associate with etiquette. Correct posture. Correct fork. Correct behavior. Correct enough to make everyone nervous before the salad arrives.

Emily Post was after something more useful and, as it turns out, more important.

She wrote that people tend to think etiquette belongs to brides, diplomats, or newly elected officials. In other words, the folks expected to know how to stand in receiving lines, avoid spilling champagne on important shoes, and smile as if they are delighted to meet one more person named Harold III. But she argued that etiquette touches nearly everything we do, say, choose, use, and even think about the people around us.

That is when the classic became more than a rulebook. It became a mirror.

Because if etiquette is only about formal occasions, most of us are safe. We can simply avoid royal dinners and move on with our lives. But if etiquette is about the daily ways our lives touch other lives,

then suddenly it applies everywhere, to everyone. It applies when we greet someone as we walk through the neighborhood. It applies when we keep an eye on our children in public places, use our phones with courtesy while waiting in line, give the person at the counter a little grace, or decide whether our Facebook fingers really need to repeat what our brain just thought.

Emily Post did not think manners were decoration. She thought they were practical. She said no one, unless he is a hermit, can fail to benefit from a courteous and likable approach, or fail to be hurt by an offensive and resentful one. Put plainly, good manners make life easier. Bad manners make everyone tired, including the person using them.

That may be one reason we are all so worn out.

It is not just the big things that drain a community. It is the small, repeated friction. The careless comment. The

speeding truck. The dog left off-leash because "he's friendly," which is somehow always said by the owner and never by the person being lunged at. The trash that becomes someone else's problem. The party that goes from "having fun" to "the whole street is now awake and learning your playlist." None of these things, by themselves, may seem like the downfall of civilization. But stack enough of them together, and a sweet little mountain town can begin to lose the gentleness that made people love it in the first place.

Post was not interested in scolding people into behaving. That is what surprised me most. She actually pushed back on the idea that etiquette is about precise obedience to every rule. In fact, she suggested that we would be better off pulling out the word "correct" and replacing it with "common sense."

Common sense. There it is. The phrase that makes etiquette feel less like a lace doily and more like something your mother would say while handing you a broom.

Post believed a rule should serve a purpose. Does it make life more pleasant? Does it help things run more smoothly? Does it add beauty? Does it support good taste or ethics? If so, it may be worth keeping. If not, she said, maybe we should not take it too seriously.

That is a remarkably freeing idea. It means etiquette is not about defending rules simply because they exist. It is about asking what those rules were trying to protect: peace, order, kindness, dignity, beauty, trust, and the ability to live near other human beings without making life harder than it needs to be.

This is where etiquette becomes interesting for modern mountain life. We do not need to bring back every custom from 1957, nor do we need to know the exact procedure for entering a drawing room. Most of us

...Continued on page 17A

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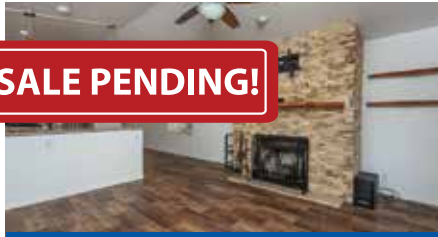


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ACCORDING TO EMILY POST

...Continued from page 14A

do not even have a drawing room. Honestly, I don't even know what a drawing room is. But we do need to remember why manners matter, and why they are worth protecting.

A leash rule is not really about the leash. It is about the child walking by, the elderly neighbor who cannot move quickly, the person whose dog is not friendly, and the wildlife that does not need one more domestic drama in its day. A dark sky rule is not really about a light bulb. It is about remembering that your porch light travels farther than your porch. A trash rule is not really about the can. It is about not turning your mess into your neighbor's morning chore. A speed limit is not just a number on a sign. It is a small public agreement that there may be a kid, a walker, a dog, a deer, or a golf cart around the next bend, and none of them signed up to be part of your hurry.

That is the part we forget. Most rules worth keeping are not about control. They are there to make life kinder.

Post also made another point that feels especially worth paying attention to. She warned against assuming that a rich man is, by necessity, a gentleman. That idea, she argued, could not be further from the truth. A person is judged by what he is and what he does, not by what he has.

That line may be old-fashioned in wording, but the truth underneath it has not aged a day.

Money does not make a person decent. A title does not make a person kind. A bigger cabin, a nicer truck, a club membership, a successful business, or a well-pressed shirt cannot cover for treating people poorly. Good manners are not a class marker. They are a character marker.



The original influencer of polite society just arrived.

They show up in the ordinary places: how you speak to the server, whether you return what you borrow, whether you tell the truth, whether you consider the people affected by your choices, and whether you give as much thought to your obligations as you do to your opinions.

Post ties etiquette to decency, integrity, self-respect, and loyalty. Those are not small words. In her view, decency is not just polite speech. It is honesty and trustworthiness. Integrity is not only telling the truth, but being fair in how we judge the motives of others. Self-respect means not accepting obligations we have no intention of returning. Loyalty means faithfulness not only to friends, but to principles.

That is a long way from "which fork do I use?" And honestly, it is a little uncomfortable in a good way. The kind of uncomfortable that makes you sit still for a minute. It did me.

Because if etiquette is about character, then it is not something we can perform once in public and ignore in private. It is not something we can demand from everyone else while excusing ourselves because we are busy, tired, annoyed, important, or absolutely certain we are right.

It is easier to complain about rude people than to notice the small ways we may have become one of them. I say this as someone who has muttered things that would not make Emily Post proud, would not make my mother proud, and has caused my kid to call me out more than once.

But maybe that is why this book is useful. It is filled with old rituals, yes, but also with timeless insight. It asks an important question: what kind of person are you training yourself to become in the small moments?

...Continued on page 19A

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ACCORDING TO EMILY POST

...Continued from page 17A

That is where Post's idea of charm comes in. She connects charm to good manners, and good manners to kind impulses practiced over time. I love that. Charm, in this sense, is not glamour. It is not smooth talk. Charm is kindness with muscle memory. It is consideration practiced so often that it begins to look natural.

We have all known people like that. They are not always fancy. They are not always soft-spoken. Some of them may wear work boots, drive dusty trucks, laugh too loudly, or say exactly what they think. But they make life easier for the people around them. They notice when someone needs help. They clean up after themselves. They return the grocery cart. They do not humiliate people for honest mistakes. They can disagree without making it a blood sport. They understand that being right is not the same as being decent.

That kind of person is worth more to a town than a hundred signs telling everyone what not to do.

So, that is where this new column begins: with the idea that manners are not dead. They may simply be out of practice.

In the coming issues, we will take Emily Post's old-fashioned wisdom and hold it up against modern mountain life. What would Emily say about loose dogs, loud guests, trash cans, speeding, dark sky manners, restaurant behavior, social media snipping, and neighbors who forget they have neighbors? When her book has something useful to offer, we will use it. When it does not, we will apply a little common sense.

This is not about being perfect. Thank goodness, because that would disqualify me before the first paragraph. It is about thinking again. It is about remembering that every town has a thousand little ways of either wearing people down or lifting some of the weight. It is about asking whether our habits make life more pleasant, more peaceful, more decent, and maybe even a little more beautiful for the people around us.

Emily Post may have written in another era, but the heart of the idea is timeless. Etiquette is not really about tea cups, money, polish, or social rank. It is about the discipline of living as if other people matter.

And around here, it may be time to talk about etiquette again. At the bare minimum, we will learn about a fascinating woman. Personally, I cannot wait to find out what Emily Post still has to say to us.

Have a manners question, neighborhood irritation, or modern mountain-living topic you want us to tackle? Send it our way to Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com. We would love to hear from you.

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SUNRISE IN THE PARK

There are mornings when you know the day is going to be good. The coffee has been poured, the porch chairs have been dusted, and the pines are doing their quiet work of dancing in the breeze and setting the mountain mood.

That is how Sunrise came to be, at least the way I like to tell it.

We were sitting on the porch one late June morning, talking about nothing of great importance—which is often when the best conversations happen. Across the fence, our neighbor called out asking what smelled so good. Bacon, of course. Bacon has done more for neighborhood diplomacy than most town committees ever will.

One thing led to another. The gate opened. A second chair became four. Someone brought a small plate of biscuits, someone else brought strawberries, and before long nobody was passing through anymore. They had all quietly agreed to stay.

The drink came together the same easy way the morning did. A slow, natural roll. Just a bright mid-morning cocktail, shaken cold with ice and served in a chilled double old-fashioned glass—the kind that feels right in your hand and gives the fruit room to show itself properly.

Sunrise is crisp, citrusy, and lightly sweet, with Breckenridge Gin giving it that clean mountain edge. The strawberries soften things just enough, making it perfect for brunch and good company.

Serve it on the porch with neighbors, something simple to eat, and no particular hurry to be anywhere else.



Sunrise in the Park

50 ml Breckenridge Gin

2 oz cold water

1 packet raw sugar

A squeeze of a fresh lemon

1 sliced lime

3 sliced strawberries

Ice

The Method

Add the gin, cold water, raw sugar, lemon juice, sliced lime, and strawberries to a shaker with ice. Shake until well chilled. Pour into a chilled double old-fashioned glass over fresh ice. Garnish with the strawberries and lime from the shaker.

Until next time, sip responsibly and enjoy the quiet mornings while they last.



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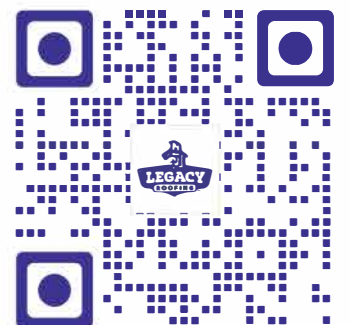
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TRAVEL

RUTA DEL CARES

A Narrow Path Through Spain's Wildest Mountains

BY "UNSTOPPABLE STACEY" WITTIG

Gaze into the depths of the gorge aptly named Garganta Divina, or Divine Gorge, and you're pretty much overwhelmed by its dizzying heights and dramatic natural splendor. The narrow limestone gorge is accessed only via the Ruta del Cares, a trail that winds through Picos de Europa National Park in northern Spain.

Ruta del Cares, a series of tunnels and ledges carved into vertical walls, is remote but oh-so-worth the journey. The under-visited national park was recently listed on National Geographic's best trips to take in 2020, so you need to get to Picos de Europa now before the floodwaters of Nat Geo readers are unleashed.

As you walk out of one of the many tunnels (said to be 71, but we lost count), the trail looks as if it drops off in front of you. Still, you can't help but tilt your head upwards, straining to see the jagged peaks of the Picos far above. Only the brave, or foolhardy, can see the Rio Cares flowing through the chasm below. Exposure to the impressive vertical views, both overhead and below, triggers exhilaration and a sense of breathlessness. Yet the gravel trail is wide and level, so the only chances of falling are from tripping in inappropriate footwear or not paying attention while shooting videos or taking selfies.

The elevated track was blasted out of the sheer cliffs with dynamite and handpicks for part of a canal system in the early 1900s. Along the way, you still see portions of the active canal, which diverts water from the small dam in Caín de Valdeón to feed the Camarmeña-Poncebos hydroelectric power station 12 km away. The construction project, an engineering marvel of its time, lasted from 1916 to 1921. Eleven workers lost their lives building the canal that sometimes parallels the track and then disappears into tunnels eked into limestone walls.

The trail, now wholly within Picos de Europa National Park, traverses the Asturias-León border, connecting the hamlets of Caín de Valdeón in the province of León and Poncebos in Asturias. If you do like most, you'll start at Poncebos.

Follow Rio Cares, and after a short walk, you begin your ascent up Ruta del Cares, also called Senda del Cares (Cares Path). The climb is steep and on loose rock, but fortunately, this is the most difficult part of the hike and lasts for only 2 km. The remainder of the trek is rated 'easy'

for experienced hikers, as the trail is relatively level from here.

What to Expect: Ruta del Cares is 12 km one-way or 24 km round-trip. Plan for three to four hours each way. Seasoned hikers can complete the out-and-back trek in one day. However, those with a slower pace could choose to make it a two-day expedition by spending the night at one of the trail's termini and then returning to their starting point the following day. The charming mountain albergues and hostels that bookend the trail make the overnight venture tempting even for the fast-paced.

A third option is to hire shuttle services in Arenas de Cabrales that pick you up at your hotel and drop you at the Poncebos trailhead. Later, they gather you at the end of your hike in Cain. A 4x4 excursion is included for the scenic mountain drive back to Arenas.

Avoid Easter, August and summer weekends when the trail is crowded.

Getting there: To start the hike from Poncebos, Asturias: drive or take the ALSA bus from Oviedo to Las Arenas de Cabrales. Las Arenas de Cabrales is a 1.5-hour drive by car east of Oviedo, or a 1 hour and 40 minutes drive from the Asturias-Oviedo (OVD) airport. Once in Arenas de Cabrales, take a cab or drive 5 km south on AS-264 to Poncebos.

To begin hiking from Caín de Valdeón, León: drive from León Airport to Riaño, then to Posada de Valdeón, and from there take the narrow road to Caín de Valdeón, for a total of 2.5 hours. ALSA buses go to Riaño, but you'll need to take a taxi for the last 41 km to Caín de Valdeón.

Safety: Watch where you place your feet because, in some spots, the cliffs drop from the trail's edge hundreds of meters straight down. Bring plenty of water and snacks, but not your bike. Bicycles are not allowed. Ruta del Cares, not accessible in winter, is not recommended for young children.

Avoid Easter, August and summer weekends as the trail gets overcrowded.

Just trying to take it all in makes for a powerful experience. Seldom experienced by novice hikers. Otherworldly

This story first appeared in Love2Fly, Iberia airline's online travel magazine. Follow UNSTOPPABLE Stacey's travel adventures at UnstoppableStaceyTravel.com.

A SPRING QUICHE FOR THE MOUNTAIN TABLE

MARIA LICHTY OF TWO PEAS & THEIR POD



Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a 9-inch pie plate with pie dough and place it in the freezer while you prepare the remaining ingredients.
2. In a large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the asparagus and spinach. Cook until the asparagus is slightly tender and the spinach is wilted. Transfer the spinach to a colander and press firmly with the back of a spoon to remove as much liquid as possible. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs and milk. Stir in the feta and mozzarella cheese. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Remove the pie crust from the freezer. Place the asparagus pieces, spinach, and green onions in the bottom of the crust. Pour the egg and cheese mixture over the vegetables.
5. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the quiche is set and slightly golden brown. Let stand for 15 minutes before serving.

Until next time, keep something good in the oven and something homemade on the table.



I asked Aunt Elenor about her recipe. She said a dash is bigger than a smidgin but less than a pinch.

Summer in mountain country calls for food that can hold its own from brunch clear through dinner. This quiche does exactly that. The asparagus, spinach, and feta bring the season to the table in a way that feels fresh, practical, and worth making again. It's the kind of dish you can serve to friends on the porch, pull from the refrigerator for an easy lunch, or set out for dinner with a salad and call it done.

Best of all, it looks like you tried harder than you did, and that is always a respectable quality in a summer recipe.

- Serves 6
- Prep time: 20 minutes
- Cook time: 45 minutes
- Total time: 1 hour 5 minutes

Ingredients

- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 8 asparagus spears, ends removed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 cups fresh baby spinach
- 5 large eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1 9-inch pie crust

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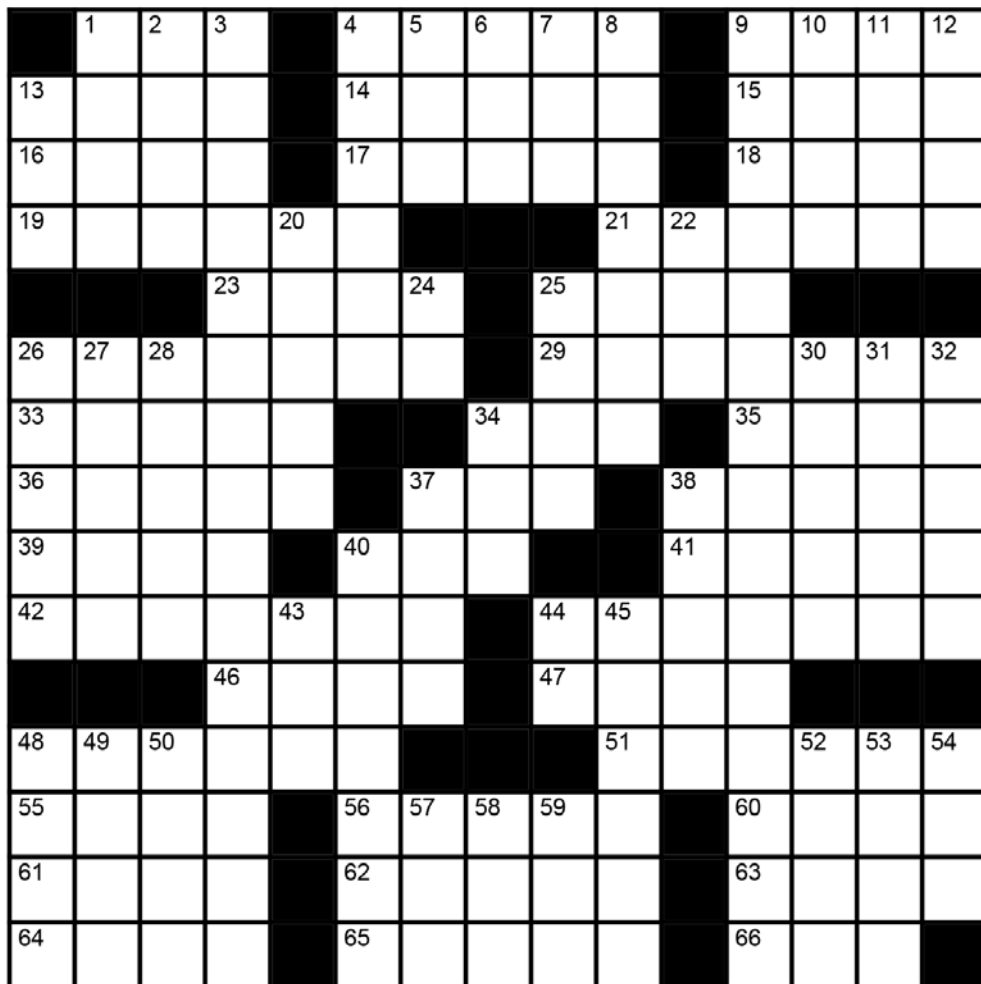


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CROSSWORD

CREATED BY PAUL MASON • SOLUTION PAGE 13B



ACROSS

1. Everyday article
4. Assembly line products
9. Extol
13. Kite part
14. Money in Geneva
15. "The Sun ___ Rises"
16. Clearasil target
17. Church leader
18. Absorbs, with "up"
19. "Ha! You fell for it!"
21. College Board exam, briefly
23. School session
25. Q-Tip
26. Brezhnev, to Khrushchev
29. Ammo for Don Rickles
33. Like rugby balls
34. Paper towel layer
35. Adolescent
36. Plea before sentencing
37. Do-it-yourselfer's purchase
38. Animal catcher
39. ___ Spring (series of early 2010s protests)
40. Aardvark's morsel
41. Sheriff's group
42. Christian ascetic who lives on a pillar
44. Family member
46. Advil target
47. ___ of Sandwich
48. Oil-rich sultanate

51. Dealer's contact
55. Like young Abe Lincoln
56. Jewish teacher
60. Blue-ribbon
61. Capitol Hill worker
62. Prompt a roommate to buy earplugs, perhaps
63. ___ milk
64. Smudge
65. Proofers' catches
66. Lasso on a streaming show

DOWN

1. ___ Bell
2. Clue
3. Plugged-in bedding
4. Frightened, to Huck Finn
5. Dot-com's address
6. Little bit
7. "The loneliest number"
8. Thin and bony
9. Words often said before a final honoree is announced
10. ___ vera
11. Carrier's employer, for short
12. "___ thou mock me?": Othello
13. Children's game 20. Intoxicating
22. Faux ___
24. ___, myself, and I
25. Beach deposit
26. Altered states of consciousness
27. Above-board
28. Biting eel
30. A dog may pull on one during a walk
31. As in a nutshell
32. "That'll teach you!" look
34. "The Money ___" (Hanks/Long classic)
37. "... ___ bone's connected to the thigh..."
38. Allergen from mold
40. "___ for knowledge"
43. "Fire and ___" (Frost poem)
44. 'Let It ___'
45. Animal-bite worry
48. Act the gossipmonger
49. "The ___-splitter" (Lincoln nickname)
50. "Back up" PC command
52. "Don't ___ the bear"
53. Oklahoma city, and a woman's name
54. "(Don't Go Back To) Rockville" band
57. "___ Day Now" (Bob Dylan hit)
58. "Be-___-a-Lula" (Gene Vincent song)
59. "Sup, ___?"

THE WORLD IS SINGING, & YOU ARE READING THE PROGRAM INSTEAD



Your body has begun to ask questions

A phone has a way of making a person smaller. The head tips down, the shoulders creep up, and the back begins to curl. After a while, the body starts to grumble.

If your neck feels stiff, your shoulders ache, or your back complains after too much scrolling, your body is asking for a little mercy.

That is your cue to put the phone down, stretch a little, look up, and let your body remember it was never meant to be shaped like a question mark.

You are missing the people right beside you

There is a small, quiet sadness in sitting beside someone who is not quite there.

They are in the same space. Maybe they are even holding your hand. But their eyes keep drifting away to the little box. A dinner conversation pauses while they “just check one thing.” A story is interrupted mid-sentence. A peaceful moment together slowly slips away, replaced by the soft glow of something far less important.

It’s like someone who meant to stay for tea, but wandered off and forgot to come back.

Your phone may be taking up space that belongs to someone else... the person sitting next to you.

Often, the kindest gift you can give is the simplest one, your full attention, warm and undivided.

...Continued on page 4B

There is so much going on around us, most of it small and lovely, and still we often miss it with our heads tipped toward a screen.

There is a funny thing about a phone. Even when it is not in your hand, it can still tug at your thoughts, making you wonder what you might be missing. And when it is in your hand, while you are scrolling through the digital world, it may bring you alarming images, sharp words, and worries you never went looking for.

Perhaps that is when we should begin to notice that the world has been waiting patiently beside us, with its birds, its porch chairs, its people, and its quiet.

Here are a few signs it may be time to put the little box down.

The night has grown shorter somehow

At bedtime, a phone nudges quietly, pretending to be one small look. Then comes the bright blue light, followed by busy thoughts, and little worries that have no business climbing into bed with you.

So if you scroll in bed and begin to feel alert when you should be winding down, your phone is interrupting that peaceful little drift into sleep. And if you wake in the night and reach for alerts instead of rolling over and slipping back into dreams, it’s worth leaving your phone in a drawer.

Nothing makes the next day better than a good, uninterrupted night’s sleep.



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FROM THE PORCH

... Continued from page 3B

Your thoughts no longer stay for coffee

If you sit down to read, work, pray, write, or watch a movie and find you can't focus, your attention may be getting used to being interrupted. It is not that your mind is broken. It may simply have grown too fond of little surprises.

A buzz. A message. A headline. A new thing. Another new thing. The phone keeps saying, "Look here," and the poor mind follows along, even when it was perfectly happy where it was.

That may be your cue to put the phone down for a while and let one thought stay long enough to become something.

People have to say things twice

You are sitting there in the room, listening as someone tells you a story. Then a little buzz hums and your mind tiptoes away, just for a second, to see what the phone wants. You may still be nodding politely. You might even offer a soft "Mm-hmm" at what seems like the right moment. But the person talking can feel that you have slipped away.

They pause. They wait. And then they say the same thing again, a little less enthusiastically.

Attention is one of the kindest gifts we can give. A small phone-check may not seem like much, but when it happens while someone is talking, it sends a quiet message that what is in your hand matters more.

You can no longer be bored

There was a time when standing in line, waiting for coffee, or sitting on the porch gave the mind a little room to wander about. It could notice the clouds, remember something funny, think a thought all the way through, or simply hum along quietly to itself.

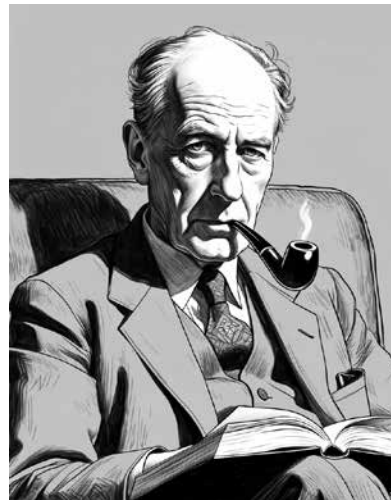
Now the phone rushes in at the first small silence, as if boredom were a terrible thing.

Sometimes boredom is where thoughts take off their shoes and stay awhile. If every quiet moment is filled with a screen, your mind may be missing the small, useful gift of thinking to oneself.

The ones who love you are leaving hints

Sometimes the people around us notice a thing before we do. A spouse may sigh. A child may say, "You're always on your phone." A friend may pause in the middle of a story because your eyes have gone elsewhere... again.

It may feel annoying to hear, especially if you were only checking the screen for just a moment. But if more than one person has mentioned it, there may be something worth noticing. Sometimes it is simply their way of saying, "I miss you when you disappear into that screen."



"To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself a refuge from almost all the miseries of life."

— W. Somerset Maugham

AGING HAPPENS. FRAILTY DOESN'T HAVE TO.

BY CHRISTY SHAFT, PT & CERTIFIED YOGA INSTRUCTOR, ACTIVIDA, LLC



"We're just trying to build enough strength to open our pill bottles."

The sooner you start, the better.

A few key points before you begin:

1. Avoid working through pain and honor any medical limitations or contraindications.
2. Start slowly and gradually increase intensity.
3. Consistency is key to long-term results.

1. Sit-to-Stands (Squats)

This movement strengthens the legs and hips while improving one of the most important daily functions: getting up from a chair independently.

Stand in front of a chair. Slowly lower yourself into the chair, using the armrests as needed for support. Then stand back up. Repeat for 10–12 repetitions.

Make it harder:

- Increase to 3 sets of 10 repetitions.
- Slow the movement down and briefly hover above the chair before sitting.
- Hold light hand weights or books for added resistance.

2. Alternating Rows (Arms, Back, and Posture)

This movement strengthens the upper back and helps improve posture, which often declines with age. Think of this as training “pulling” movements.

Using a resistance band secured around a doorknob at waist height, pull one elbow back while rotating your head and body toward that side. Imagine elbowing someone behind you. Repeat on the other side for 10–12 repetitions each.

Make it harder:

- Increase repetitions.
- Use a stronger resistance band.

... Continued on page 12B

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BEING A WATERWISE, & FIREWISE, GARDENER

BY MISTI WARNER-ANDERSEN, CO-OWNER, WARNER'S NURSERY & LANDSCAPE CO.



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March 19th in Flagstaff was a day for the record books — and not in a good way. The daytime temperature reached 84 degrees, shattering the previous March record by a whopping 11 degrees. The news even made CNN, which noted that yes, this was due to climate change.

It's also been a particularly dry year in northern Arizona, with only about 27 inches of snow — less than half of the 89 inches our region averages each year. In fact, this past winter was one of the driest on record.

And while we are heading into what promises to be a wetter-than-average monsoon season, thanks to a “super El Niño” weather pattern, gardeners can't rely on those brief, often intense rains to make up for years of drought.

What does that mean for gardeners? That it is more important than ever to practice waterwise and firewise gardening.

Being Waterwise

Being waterwise has many facets. It can include using drip irrigation, which maximizes water efficiency by delivering water directly to a plant's root zone and reduces water waste by about 50% compared to sprinklers.

It can also mean taking advantage of those monsoon rains by installing a water harvesting system on your property to capture rainwater. Collecting free water from Mother Nature for future use not only helps the environment - it will also reduce your water bills.

Finally, consider populating your garden with native plants, which is essential for creating sustainable gardens that thrive in our high desert region. These plants are adapted to limited water, intense sunlight, extreme temperatures, and the poor soils that are unfortunately so common in northern Arizona. Check out the list of recommended waterwise native plants well-suited to our region.

Being Firewise

Water isn't the only thing on a smart gardener's mind these days. With persistent drought conditions year after year, wildfire is an ever-present reality for those of us who call our mountain town home.

The good news is that the same thoughtful approach you bring to waterwise gardening applies here too, and many of the plants that thrive on little water are also among the most fire-resistant.

The idea behind being firewise is simple: reduce the likelihood of your home igniting from wind-driven embers or creeping ground flames. You do this by selecting fire-resistant plants, spacing them wisely, and eliminating “ladder fuels” - those flammable layers that help fire climb from ground to treetop. Creating a defensible, survivable space around your home through smart landscaping can make all the difference when fire threatens.

A plant's moisture content is the most important factor in choosing a firewise plant, but you should also consider resin content and other factors that make plants more flammable even when well-watered. Conifers such as pine, fir, spruce, juniper, and cypress, for example, tend to be more flammable due to their oil and pitch content. Deciduous plants, on the other hand, tend to be more fire-resistant because their leaves have higher moisture content. Drought-adapted plants and plants with smaller leaves are also good choices.

In general, fire-resistant plants grow without accumulating large amounts of combustible dead branches, needles, or leaves; have open branching, low resin content, and high moisture content; grow slowly and require little pruning; and tend to grow close to the ground.

When laying out your garden, make sure the plants nearest your home are smaller and widely spaced. Plant in small, irregular clusters rather than large masses. You can break up plant groupings with decorative rock, gravel, and stepping stones, which will slow the spread of fire across your property. Finally, consider using a variety of plant species to support a mixed, healthy landscape. Diversity results in less disease and insect infestation, and better fire resistance overall. For a full list of fire-resistant plants well-suited to our region, see the sidebar.

By being smart in dealing with the impact of climate change, we can have a safer, stronger, more waterwise and fire-resilient community — without giving up the beauty of our forest home.

Happy Gardening,

Misti Warner-Andersen

Waterwise Native Plants for Northern Arizona

Evergreen Trees

Ponderosa Pine, Piñon Pine, One-Seed Juniper, Austrian Pine, Rocky Mountain Juniper

Deciduous Trees

Rocky Mountain Maple, Big Tooth Maple, Quaking Aspen, New Mexican Locust, Gambel Oak

Shrubs

Utah Serviceberry, Prairie Sage, Big Basin Sage, Mountain Mahogany, Fernbush, Sumac varieties, Alpine Currant, Golden Currant, Woods Rose, Snowberry, Rabbitbrush, Apache Plume, Yucca

Perennials & Grasses

Western Yarrow, Agastache, Pussytoes, Columbine, Gaillardia, Penstemon, Blue Flax, Desert Marigold, Blue Grama, Sideoats Grama, Crested Wheatgrass, Buffalo Grass, Arizona Fescue, Deergrass, Switchgrass, Little Bluestem

Firewise Plants for Northern Arizona

Grasses

Buffalograss, Blue Grama, Arizona Fescue, Deergrass, Spiky Muhly, Indian Ricegrass

Shrubs

Agave, Serviceberry, Saltbrush, Barberry varieties, Mountain Mahogany, Rabbitbrush, Redtwig Dogwood, Apache Plume, Honeysuckle, Prickly Pear Cactus, Ninebark, Golden Currant, Wood's Rose, Snowberry, Lilac, Yucca varieties, Forsythia

Trees

Maple varieties, Birch, Smokebush, Ash varieties, Honeylocust, Cottonwood, Aspen, Crabapple, Chokecherry

Most bedding plants (annuals, biennials, and perennials) have fire-resistant characteristics.

SUDOKU

CREATED BY PAUL MASON • SOLUTION PAGE 12B

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				9				



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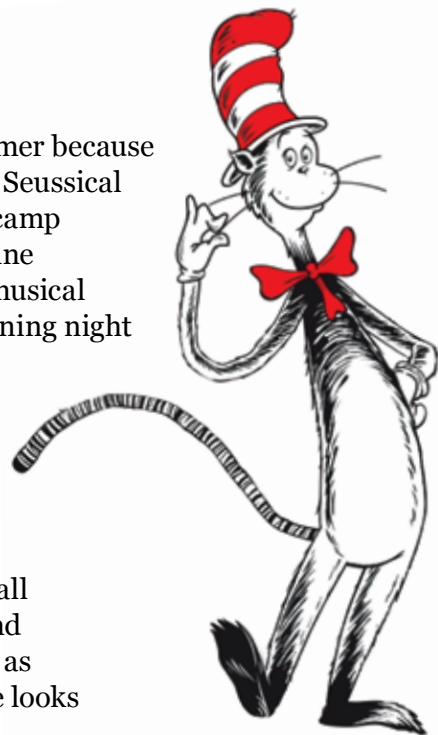
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SUMMER FUN AT PINEWOOD PLAYHOUSE



Seussical Jr. Opens July 9

Get ready for some serious fun this summer because Pinewood Players is excited to bring you Seussical Jr! Our amazing kids' camp and drama camp participants will begin working to combine their talents and create a truly magical musical experience. Mark your calendars for opening night on July 9, 2026.

A Talented Team Behind the Curtain

We're thrilled to have Jennifer Adams back in the director's chair, guiding our young stars. Isabel Catalano is bringing all the fantastic moves as choreographer, and Elizabeth Peterson is working her magic as costume designer, making sure everyone looks absolutely whimsical!

Welcome to the World of Dr. Seuss

Prepare to be transported into the fantastical world of Dr. Seuss as our campers bring beloved characters to life right before your eyes. You'll revisit old friends like the mischievous Cat in the Hat, the ever-so-kind Horton the Elephant, Gertrude McFuzz, lazy Mayzie, and little Jojo. The Cat in the Hat will lead us on a journey into the Jungle of Nool, where Horton discovers a tiny speck of dust that holds an entire world: Whoville!

Music, Friendship, and Imagination

The music is an absolute blast, a real "Seussian gumbo" blending everything from Latin beats to pop, swing to gospel, and R&B to funk. It's a perfect show for the whole family, weaving a beautiful tale of friendship, loyalty, and love. You'll see Horton and Gertrude overcome big challenges to save Whoville and bring peace back to Nool. Get ready to let your imagination run wild, because "Oh, the things you can think, when you think about Seuss!"

Line Dancing Comes to Pinewood Playhouse

And for something completely different and guaranteed to be a hoot, grab your boots because Line Dancing is coming to Pinewood Playhouse! The talented Megan Belmarez will be teaching all the steps. We're planning two sessions, with the first one on June 16 at 7 p.m. Come for an evening packed with rhythm, lots of laughs, and great company. We're asking for a small \$10 contribution to help cover costs, so round up your friends and let's dance the night away together!

Scholarship Deadline is June 30

Heads up, future leaders! The deadline for our 2026 scholarship applications is fast approaching: June 30, 2026. If you're a high school graduate with connections to the Munds Park community, Pinewood Players, or Pinewood Country Club, you might be eligible. Don't miss out on this opportunity!

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Lyrics by
Lynn Ahrens

Based on the works of Dr. Seuss. Conceived by Lynn Ahrens, Stephen Flaherty and Eric Idle. SeussicalTM was originally produced on Broadway by SFX Theatrical Group, Barry & Fran Weisler and Universal Studios. Through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials also supplied through MTI.

WORD SEARCH

SOLUTION PAGE 13B

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

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| Barbecue | Forest | Pickleball |
| Bluejays | Golf | Pinewood |
| Books | Hammock | Ponderosa |
| Cabin | Hiking | Porch |
| Campfire | Kayak | Raven |
| Cool Breeze | Lake Mary | Squirrel |
| Elk | Lemonade | Stargazing |
| Firepit | Monsoon | Sunset |
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| Fishing | Parade | Wildflower |



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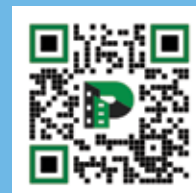
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HOUSE BIRDS

BY MARGARET DYEKMAN



House Finches courtesy of Margaret Dyekman

the 1800s. Stocky, adaptable, and highly social, House Sparrows thrive in close association with people. Males are easily recognized by their gray crowns and black bibs, while females and juveniles are warm brown with subtle streaking. Their success is tied to their flexibility—they nest in crevices, signs, eaves, and birdhouses, and they eat everything from seeds to crumbs. They are considered aggressive toward native species, and people who place martin and bluebird nest boxes will actively manage them out of the houses to ensure the native birds can thrive.

Three small birds, the House Finch, House Wren, and House Sparrow, have become some of the most recognizable residents of our neighborhoods. Though they often share the same yards, feeders, and fence lines, each species brings its own personality, behaviors, and ecological story to the places we live.

The House Finch is the most colorful and melodious of the trio. Males display bright red, orange, or even yellow hues on their heads and chests, depending on diet, while females wear subtle streaked browns. Originally native to the western United States and Mexico, House Finches expanded eastward in the 20th century and now thrive across the continent. They are highly social, gentle birds that gather in flocks and readily visit feeders stocked with sunflower or safflower seeds. This season I have more House Finches visiting my feeders than I have in the 25+ years we've been "up north".

The House Wren is tiny, brown, and endlessly energetic. What it lacks in size, it makes up for in attitude. House Wrens are known for their bold, bubbling songs and their fierce territorial behavior during nesting season. They readily occupy nest boxes, natural cavities, and even unexpected nooks around homes, such as an unused dog bowl on a carport shelf. A male will take over several nest boxes meant for bluebirds, stuffing them to the top of the box with sticks until the box is unusable. Each year we have one of the boxes on the nest box trail at Pinewood Country Club occupied by a House Wren pair. Despite their small stature, they are voracious insect hunters, flitting through shrubs and gardens in constant motion. Their presence is a natural form of pest control, making them a welcome ally for gardeners.

House Sparrows are not native to North America and are not protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, but they have become deeply woven into the urban and suburban landscape since their introduction in

Together, these three birds illustrate how wildlife adapts to human environments. Whether through song, color, or sheer tenacity, the House Finch, House Wren, and House Sparrow continue to bring life and movement to the places we call home.

Reach me at margaretdyekman@cox.net or by text at 602-620-3210. Learn more about *Backyard Birding in Northern Arizona* at www.backyardbirdingaz.com, where you can order the book online, or contact me directly for a copy. I welcome your questions, bird sightings, and ideas for future articles.



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... Continued from page 5B

3. Counter Push-Ups

Push-ups strengthen the chest, shoulders, arms, and core while improving your ability to safely push yourself up. Think of this as training “pushing” movements.

Stand facing a counter with your feet hip-width apart. Step back and place your hands shoulder-width apart on the counter. Slowly bend your elbows, lowering your chest toward the counter, then press back up. Repeat for 10–12 repetitions.

Make it harder:

- Use a lower surface, such as a sturdy chair.
- Progress to floor push-ups on your knees.
- Advance to full push-ups.

4. Single-Leg Balance

Balance is one of the most important skills to maintain as we age, helping reduce the risk of falls and injuries.

Stand next to a counter for safety. Lift one foot off the floor and stand tall, tightening the thigh muscles and maintaining upright posture. Lightly float your fingers off the counter as tolerated. Hold for 20–30 seconds.

Make it harder:

- Turn your head side to side or look up and down while standing on one leg.
- Stand on one leg while brushing your teeth or performing another daily activity.

These added movements challenge your inner ear and visual system, forcing your brain and body to adapt and further improve balance.

5. Toe Raises to Heel Raises

This movement strengthens the calves, ankles, and the muscles that support balance and walking stability.

Stand with your feet apart. Slowly rise onto your toes and pause. Then rock back onto your heels, lifting your toes off the floor. Hold onto a counter for safety as needed. Repeat for 10–20 repetitions.

Make it harder:

- Progress the movement to one foot at a time.
- Perform the exercise without holding on for an added balance challenge.

These exercises may seem simple, but they target the exact movements we rely on every single day to stay active, capable, and independent. Strength, balance, and mobility are skills that can be trained at any age, and small daily efforts add up over time.

A longer life is valuable, but maintaining the ability to move confidently, stay strong, and continue doing the things you love is what truly improves the quality of those years.

Let’s not become victims of aging. Let’s be active participants in the process — not only living longer, but living stronger.

SUDOKU

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

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LADY NINERS IS GROWING!

BY MISSY LAGOMARSINO



From left to right: Lisa Rishling, Debi Fayne-Gibson, Judy Flourine, Marti Hansen, Joyce Robertson, Judy Harris, Vy Armour, Sandi Lough, Michele Howell, Deb Webster, Donna Langston, Char Lewis

The Pinewood Country Club Lady Niners appear to be the hottest thing happening at the club this season. In addition to the returning membership, 14 new golfers have joined the Niners already this summer.

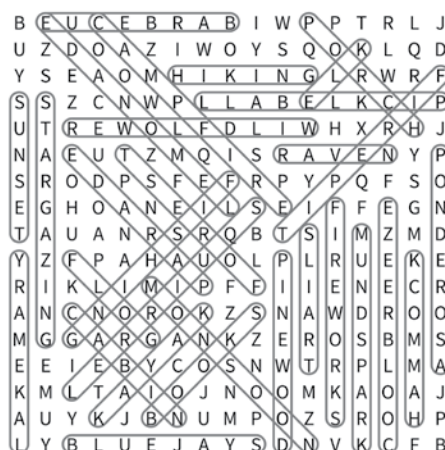
New to the roster are: Debbi Lannon-Smith, Barbara Rechlin, Lorraine Murrietta, Lori Schuller, Diann Erath, Shelley Seeger, Susie Zanga, Sarah Brandt, Michelle Hammer, Kelly Felton, Katie Singleton-Stooks, Kathy Butts, Joy Whitfield and Jan Fireng.

The Lady Niners is one of the three originally sanctioned golf groups at Pinewood Country Club. The group has been in existence since 1979. The organization provides members a chance to play nine holes of golf each week in a friendly, social setting. Women of all golfing abilities are invited to join, and anyone interested should contact Kris Bonar at bonarkl@cox.net.



"It's not hard to keep your ball in the fairway... as long as you're not picky about which fairway."

WORD SEARCH



CROSSWORD



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The parade will take place on Saturday, July 4, at 10 a.m.
 Parade participants may begin lining up at 8 a.m.

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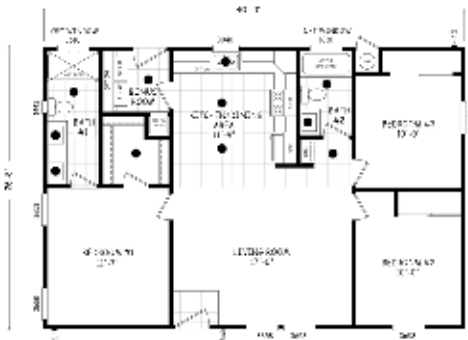


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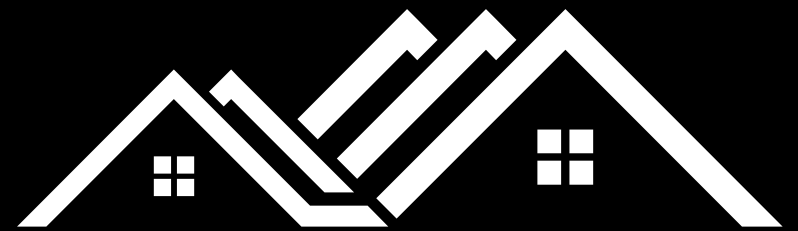
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LED BY THE BIBLE, CALLED TO LOVE

New Pastor Comes to Munds Park With a Servant's Heart



Pastor Jeremy's family from left to right: Bryson, Brionah, Linda, Jeremy, Riley, Hayden

Pastor Jeremy did not grow up in church.

He grew up in Phoenix, played softball, hunted and fished, and came north when the Valley heat got too intense. Faith was not the story he was handed as a child. It found him later, in one of those ordinary places where the Lord often does quiet work.

Like a softball field.

Jeremy played on a team with a friend whose family was connected to a church. While the men played, his wife, Linda, sat with the women, and their conversations turned to Jesus between swings. Linda was moved by what she was learning and began asking Jeremy if he wanted to go to church.

For a while, he said no. Until one day, he said yes.

When Jeremy and Linda walked through the church doors, they felt welcomed in a way that was honest and genuine. The people there made room for them, not just in the pews, but in the life of the church. That kind of love has a way of opening a heart, and it stayed with Jeremy long before he fully understood where the Lord was leading.

Soon after, Jeremy and Linda invited the pastor and his wife to their home on a Sunday afternoon. Somewhere in that season, Jeremy and Linda accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Their two older children followed, and in 2008, all four of them were baptized on the same day.

Jeremy knows what it means to be loved toward faith. He knows a life can change through a patient wife, faithful church members, and people willing to show the love of Jesus without knowing how far their kindness may reach.

His ministry began quietly. In 2010, he started serving in the children's ministry. A few years later, he was asked to consider becoming a youth pastor. Around that same time, he could feel the Lord leading him back to school. In 2015, he followed that call and enrolled at Arizona Christian University, where he earned a degree in Christian ministries.

From there, he served in several roles: youth pastor, young adult pastor, connections pastor, associate pastor, and, for a time, interim lead pastor while his lead pastor was on sabbatical. Each role gave him another place to

learn people, serve the church, and grow into the work God was calling him to do.

After graduating in 2019, Jeremy began looking at ministry openings. There were plenty of them. Some days he would see five to ten new postings. His résumé was ready and waiting, but he never felt released to send it.

Then, he saw the opening at Munds Park Community Church. This one felt different. After years of waiting, this was the door that gave him peace, the one he believed the Lord was asking him to open.

Munds Park was not entirely unfamiliar. Jeremy had been coming to Northern Arizona since he was a boy. He camped, hunted and fished here. He remembers archery shoots near Mormon Lake and the relief of leaving the desert heat for the cooler air of the high country.

It was nice to be called to a place he already loved.

...Continued on page 19B

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And the timing? Lean in for a moment, and you may see what I see.

Before Jeremy knew the position would become his, he preached from the Munds Park pulpit for the first time. That same morning, after a year of healing and uncertainty, Pastor Steve returned to the church to baptize two more, one more time in the church he had served so faithfully.

One pastor came back by God’s grace to complete a sacred moment. Another pastor, beginning his first lead pastor role, stepped into the pulpit.

The past and the future of the church stood together in the same room, on the same morning, under the quiet care of the same God. For those who walk by faith, moments like these do not feel like coincidence. They feel tenderly arranged.

Further, Jeremy’s first official day at Munds Park Community Church fell on Memorial Day weekend, the same weekend, 10 years earlier, that marked the beginning of Pastor Steve’s ministry here.

No one can explain every movement of God’s hand. Most of the time, we see only pieces. A door opening. A delay that later makes sense. A man returning to the church he served, and a new pastor standing in the pulpit for the first time. Water stirred for baptism, and a congregation watching one chapter softly close while another begins.

Sometimes, those pieces come together just long enough for us to understand that the Lord is always present.

Jeremy spoke about that kind of timing with humility. He said there are moments when you look back and know only God could have written the story. Not through our planning or our effort to force the pieces into place, but through His quiet and perfect way of bringing the right people to the right place at the right time.

When asked what kind of pastor he hopes to be, Jeremy did not begin with programs or quick changes. He began with people. He wants to know the church, listen to the community, and honor what has already been built. In that way, his heart seems to follow the same steady path Pastor Steve walked before him: let the Bible lead, let the Holy Spirit guide, and do not change what God has not asked you to change.

He made it clear that you probably will not find him behind a desk very often. He sees the work of a pastor as shepherding, teaching, and leading. Shepherding, to him, means being with people. It means listening to their stories, showing up in the community, sitting down for coffee, attending local meetings, playing golf with people he does not yet know, and slowly learning the life of the place he has been called to serve.

Love has to be more than something spoken from a pulpit. It has to sit with people, listen without rushing, remember names, return calls, pray in the moment, and stay steady long enough for people to trust that it is real.

This is the kind of pastor that Jeremy wants to be. He said it plainly in the final words of his first sermon: “I want to love you well.”

Jeremy also knows what will guide him. He has served in both Baptist and non-denominational churches, but labels are not where he places the weight. His focus is the gospel, Jesus, loving people, and teaching from the Bible. He wants God’s Word to shape what he believes, what he thinks, and what he shares. In a world full of noise, that kind of steadiness matters. Churches can be pulled by trends, opinions, personalities, and pressure, but Jeremy’s answer is simple and firm: teach the Bible, love people, and let the Lord lead.

He is not coming to Munds Park in a hurry to change what has already been built. He spoke with respect for the work Pastor Steve and Sara poured into the church and the community, and for the leadership that has carried that work forward. He wants to understand the church and learn the people first, allowing the Holy Spirit to guide what comes next.

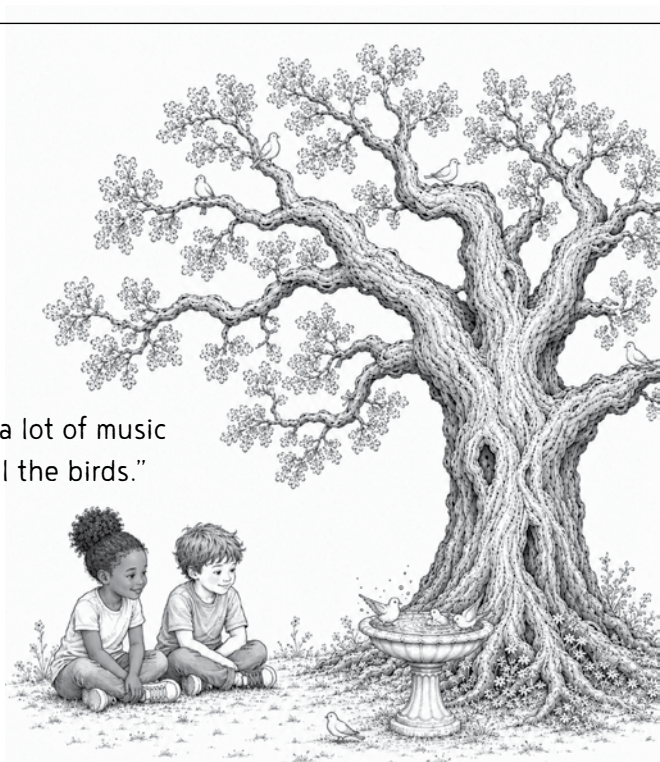
There may be new things in time. Youth ministry is close to Jeremy’s heart, and he would like to see ways for young people in the community to connect with the church, especially during the summer months when more families are here. For now, he seems content to listen first and let the Lord lead.

Near the end of our conversation, Jeremy returned to the clearest message he wants Munds Park to hear. He and Linda are grateful to be here. They are looking forward to meeting people, becoming part of the community, and serving wherever the Lord leads. They are not coming here to be served. They are coming here to serve.

That is a good beginning for any pastor. It is also a good reminder for a church, and maybe for all of us. The strongest communities are built by people who notice one another, carry one another, and leave enough room at the table for someone who may not yet know they belong. Sometimes, the Lord asks us to make room not only for the stranger, but for the familiar face we have quietly stopped reaching for.

Pastor Jeremy begins this new chapter with humility, gratitude, and a Bible in his hands. He wants to love Munds Park well. He wants to serve this community faithfully. He wants to point people to Jesus, the same Jesus who changed his own life.

Welcome Pastor Jeremy, we look forward to seeing where God leads you and Munds Park Community Church!



“I think Jesus wrote a lot of music and taught it to all the birds.”

Where to Find County Numbers

To make room for our article on Pastor Jeremy, we removed *Who Handles What in Coconino County* from this issue. We wanted his introduction to appear where Munds Park Community Church readers traditionally look for church news.

Need a county phone number? Scan the QR code below. We have the full list available online for easy access.

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