# PINEWOOD NEWS

FOR 31 YEARS, WE'VE BEEN THE HEARTBEAT OF MUNDS PARK—YOUR STORIES, OUR HISTORY



# The place where the pefs like their vefs!





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The Pinewood News is always interested in feedback and/or story tips from our community and welcome comments on any subject or article published.

The Pinewood News will attempt to publish letters received, except for those that are an invasion of privacy or libelous. Letters must be signed and include an address and phone number. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

Letters: PO Box 18977, Munds Park, AZ 86017 email: Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com

# PINEWOOD NEWS

THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER OF MUNDS PARK, ARIZONA SINCE 1993

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Genna & Sandee Caviness, Editors & Publishers 928.286.9827 • Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Friday, 9 am - 4 pm 18 W Pinewood Blvd, Munds Park, AZ 86017 PO Box 18977, Munds Park, AZ 86017 www.ThePinewoodNews.com

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Mountain Dreams Realty (928)286-9335





# COMMUNITY

### **CALENDAR**

### MUNDS PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday, 10:45 am • 17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

### AA MEETINGS - FEEL BETTER!

Hosted at Munds Park Community Church Every Monday, 6 pm • 17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

### SPREAD THE BREAD

FREE bread from Wildflower. Get some for your neighbors too!

> Every Thursday, 10 am 17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

### PINEWOOD SANITARY DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Public Welcome Thursday, January 11 3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr

### PINEWOOD FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Public Welcome Tuesady, January 16 3 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

### PINEWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY MEETING

The Community is Welcome! Tuesday, February 6 6:30 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

### THINGS TO DO!

For events in Munds Park and surrounding areas visit the Pinewood News 'Things to Do Page' at

ThePinewoodNews.com

# INTRODUCING EMILIA MAILE ANDERSON!



At six months old, Little Emilia is a bundle of joy whose smile could outshine the brightest star! On her visits to the Pinewood Restaurant, where her mother Mikayla works, she sees familiar faces and spends time with Abuela Ludy. It lights up our days. We're so grateful to the Munds Park community, whose warm welcome has been a constant since our gender reveal celebration. Their kindness, expressed through handmade quilts and blankets for Emilia, moves us to tears - it's a testament to the love and care she'll always be surrounded by here in the Park.

Emilia loves music, petting dogs, and walks in the forest; however, she gets particularly excited when we visit Dad while he's on the job for Arizona North Tree Service. It's a pleasant surprise for everyone.

Her name, Emilia, is a tribute to her fraternal grandmother, Emily (affectionately known as Lola), while her middle name, Maile, reflects 'calm' in Hawaiian, nodding to John's birthplace. Born amidst a whirlwind of chaos, Emilia emerged with a tranquil essence.

Welcome Emilia! We are so glad you are here!

### **GET OUTDOORS WITH MUTS!**

The Munds Park Trail Stewards held the final scheduled 2023 Volunteer Event on October 14, featuring the annual Forest Road and dispersed campsites litter clean-up. Believe it or not, the forest was cleaner this year than in previous years.

MUTS would like to express gratitude to all of you who supported us in 2023; we would not have been successful without your support.

MUTS Volunteer Events are held once a month, from April through October. Our event dates are planned in coordination with the Coconino National Forest Service. We commence our event at 8:15 a.m. with a safety and planning meeting. After the meeting, we gather trail tools and head to the worksite. Around noon, crews finish their tasks and head to a complimentary lunch.

Keep an eye out for our 2024 event schedule in the upcoming Pinewood News or on the MUTS website at mundsparktrailstewards.com. Remember, you are never too young or too old to volunteer. — Happy Holidays!



### **CELEBRATING 20 YEARS IN BUSINESS!**

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- Toilet Repair
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# LOCAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

### \$24M FEDERAL GRANT FOR I-17 WILDLIFE OVERPASS IN ARIZONA

Arizona has received a \$24 million federal grant from the FHWA for a wildlife overpass and improvements along a section of Interstate 17 (I-17) near Flagstaff, aimed at reducing wildlife-related crashes and enhancing habitat connectivity. This project is one of 19 nationwide to secure funding from the initial \$110 million grant pool.

The project, spanning 8.4 miles of I-17 from the Munds Park interchange to the Kelly Canyon interchange, will feature a wildlife overpass at milepost 327.4 in the Willard Springs area. It will also incorporate 8-foot-tall wildlife fencing, escape ramps, and double cattle guards at interchanges. This initiative aligns with AZGFD's effort to retrofit wildlife fencing along 6 miles of I-17 south from Munds Park.

Between 2018 and 2022, this 31.7-mile stretch accounted for 58% of wildlife-related crashes, primarily involving elk. To mitigate such incidents, this region is identified as one of three priority areas for wildlife overpasses. The others include I-17 near the Kachina Boulevard interchange and Interstate 40 west of Parks.

The 100-foot-wide wildlife overpass will accommodate various species, including elk, deer, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, black bears, mountain lions, and smaller animals. The project's timeline will be determined in the coming months, involving final design, environmental review, and project programming.

Other notable wildlife safety enhancements include:

- Reconstruction of 17 miles of US 93 in northwestern Arizona features
  three wildlife overpasses and two bridged underpasses in desert bighorn
  sheep habitat. This is complemented by three underpasses on State
  Route 68 between Bullhead City and Golden Valley.
- A system of crossing and fencing on SR 260 east of Payson designed to reduce crashes involving elk and deer.
- A 6-mile reconstruction of SR 77 (Oracle Road) north of Tucson included an overpass and underpass connecting wildlife habitats in the Santa Catalina and Tortolita mountains.
- Two wildlife underpasses and 6 miles of fencing were added to SR 86 between Tucson and Sells.

### FLAGSTAFF'S MINIMUM WAGE RISES, MARKING SIGNIFICANT INCREASE FOR LOCAL WORKERS

In a significant economic development for Flagstaff, Arizona, the minimum wage is set to increase January 1, 2024. The new rate will be \$17.40 per hour, marking a 60-cent rise from the current \$16.80 hourly wage. Additionally, the tipped minimum wage will also see an increase, going up by \$1.10 to reach \$15.90 per hour, up from the existing \$14.80.

This wage adjustment is the result of an ordinance passed by Flagstaff voters in November 2016 and subsequently amended by the city council in 2017. The ordinance applies to all employees in the city who work, or are expected to work, at least 25 hours per week over the course of a year.

The decision to increase the wage rates is aligned with changes in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which showed a 3.7% increase in August 2023 compared to August 2022. This index is a standard measure used to evaluate changes in the cost of living over time.

For those seeking further details on the Minimum Wage Ordinance in Flagstaff, information is available on the city's website at flagstaff.az.gov/minwage.

### ATTENTION COCONINO COUNTY REGISTERED DEMOCRATS & REPUBLICANS

The PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE ELECTION will be held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024

What is the difference between a presidential preference election and a primary in Arizona?

In Arizona, the Presidential Preference Election has been a significant aspect of the electoral process for over thirty years. Established in 1992, this procedure was Arizona's way of joining the Super Tuesday states, indicating which presidential candidate might be gaining momentum early.

Initially intended for the 1992 elections, it was officially named the "Presidential Preference Election" in 1995, in time for the next presidential cycle. This title was chosen to reflect its purpose: to gauge the voters' preference for president.

The key difference between the Presidential Preference Election and a regular primary is that the winner of this event may not necessarily be the candidate on the ballot for the fall general election. This is because party delegates are responsible for choosing the presidential nominees at their conventions. However, Arizona law encourages these delegates to consider the voters' preference from this election.

Arizona also holds a standard primary election for all parties, but this doesn't include selecting the presidential nominee. In the Presidential Preference Election, only registered Democrats and Republicans are eligible to vote, while Independents and non-affiliated voters can make their presidential choice known only in the General Election.

Voting locations for the PPE must adhere to the formulas outlined in the Arizona Revised Statue based on the number of registered voters with the participating parties in each precinct. The Pinewood precinct, which includes Munds Park, will hold the PPE vote by mail. Mundsies choosing to vote in person on Election Day may do so at the Highlands Fire Department or any of the vote centers across the county (Coconino.az.gov/elections). There will be a polling place in Munds Park in August and November.

As for why Mundsies residents vote at Highlands Fire Department for their presidential pick, it's a matter of numbers. The combined registered Democrats and Republicans in the Park don't meet the threshold for a separate polling place. But, with Independents and non-affiliated voters included, there are enough people to hold both primary and general elections at the Pinewood Fire Department.

### **Presidential Preference Election**

Early Ballot

The last day to request an early ballot is Friday, March 8 at 5 p.m. You can request early ballots online at www.coconino.az.gov/elections

**In-Person Voting** 

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

6 am - 7 pm

The Highlands Fire Department

3350 Old Munds Hwy

Flagstaff, AZ 86005

For More Information and Additional Questions, Contact us at:

Phone: (928) 679-7896

elections@coconino.az.gov

www.coconino.az.gov/elections

Continued on page 30











### **405 E OAK DRIVE**

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

### **CALL DEBI BRIGHT**



### 110 E OAK DRIVE

Impeccably maintained. Tons of parking on this oversized lot. Two large sheds both sitting on concrete pads, one with power. This 16 foot wide single wide mobile sits on a full mason foundation with piers (not jacks). This unit is not moving anywhere. New double pane windows thru out, lots of storage, electric fireplace in the living room and most furniture will convey with the sale of this property. Large circular graveled driveway, new roof and plenty of room for all your toys.

### **CALL DEBI BRIGHT**



### 17100 S ELK PLACE

Newer 2019 Cavco doublewide that shows like new. Located at the end of a quiet cul de sac. Heavily treed lot with plenty of available parking.

Taxes for land only.

1404 square foot livable, 3 bedroom, 2 bath. Open floor plan, Large covered trex deck. Come take a look. Easy to show.

### **CALL DEBI BRIGHT**

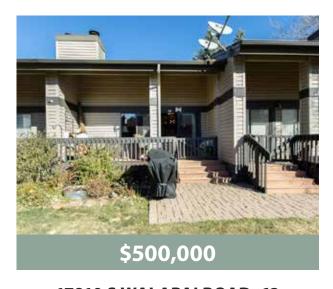


\$710,000

### **1265 E BOBCAT DRIVE**

Spacious chalet nestled on a wooded lot. 3 large bedrooms, loft, and 2 baths. New flooring, kitchen with corona countertops, trex decking, concrete driveway, electric car plug, new appliances, fresh paint. Alarm system, Ring doorbell, Nest thermostat. French doors open to covered side deck. Seller-owned propane tanks, newer roof. Storage at the back, fenced yard. Central propane heat on main level, electric wall heater upstairs. Private showings confirmed through Showingtime.

### **CALL DEBI BRIGHT**



### **17810 S WALAPAI ROAD, 62**

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

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### **17745 S MAVERICK CIR**

This home offers the PERFECT BLEND of MOUNTAIN CHARM & MODERN COMFORT. VAULTED tongue & groove WOOD CEILINGS AND FLOOR-to-CEILING STONE FIREPLACE, & WOOD TRIM throughout! 1 BEDROOM on the main floor & 3 BEDROOMS on the 2nd floor. The huge LOFT is complete with a WET BAR! EMBRACE the OUTDOORS on one of the 3 COVERED DECKS. Enjoy your morning coffee on the FRONT PORCH, or host gatherings on the COVERED DECK off the kitchen. A 2-car GARAGE with EXTRA STORAGE.

### **CALL SONIA DRAPER**

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# WELCOMING THE NEW YEAR

### Prioritzing Time, The Most Important Consideration for 2024

### By Sandee Caviness

In the sweeping currents of time, where every tick of the clock reverberates with the pulse of history, stands a figure both mysterious and familiar: Father Time. This storied character, a personification of time itself, has traveled through centuries of art, literature, and culture, evolving from ancient mythologies to modern depictions. His journey is not just a tale of artistic representation but a reflection of humanity's perpetual dance with the relentless march of time.

The story begins in ancient Greece, where the concept of time ('chronos') was personified in the Greek god of time. He was often depicted in ancient art and lore, representing time's continuous flow and cyclical nature. The Romans, inheriting this legacy, merged their god Saturn—a figure symbolizing time, wealth, and renewal—with the Greek Cronus. This led to a fusion of these figures in later interpretations. Saturn was frequently portrayed as an old man leaning on a crutch, further cementing the imagery of time as an elderly, wise figure.

Fast forward to the Renaissance, a period where art and thought blossomed. It was during this time that Father Time acquired his familiar characteristics—an old man cloaked in darkness, clutching a scythe and an hourglass. Rich in meaning, these symbols depicted time as everticking away, steadily carving its path through history, marking every moment with the passage of time.

But Father Time is not a solitary character in the story. He often appears alongside other personifications: the vibrant Mother Nature, the youthful Baby New Year, and his grim counterpart, the Reaper. Together, they embody the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth, a cycle as old as time itself.

In the modern era his essence remains unchanged. He stands as a testament to the passing years and a poignant reminder that time is fleeting. Across cultures and continents, from the halls of European art galleries to the streets of America, his figure symbolizes both a guardian of history and a beacon of hope for the future.

Father Time is a perfect reminder in the new year to reflect on the year past and make plans and dreams for the new year to come—to become a better version of ourselves. Some people set goals, others make resolutions, and some pay no attention at all. Regardless of our approach, time, the most precious commodity of all, inevitably runs out for everyone.

I don't mention this to be depressing; rather, it's to share a life lesson I learned while working for Hospice of the Valley. I dedicated 25 years of my life to end-of-life care, spending two of those years in the field providing personal care to the dying. Driven by curiosity, I often asked my patients, "Is there anything you would do differently?" Without exception, every single one replied, "I wish I had spent less time at work and more time with family and friends," or "I wish I had spent less time at work and more time doing the things I love."

Millennial's often face criticism for their perceived poor work ethic and alleged laziness. While some may fit this description, the core message, if one listens closely, is their desire for work-life balance. They have observed and learned what many only realized when it was too late: nothing is more valuable in our lives than time.

Our youngest child, a Millennial, is adamant about not spending her life on the hamster wheel. She understands that fewer working hours might mean a more modest lifestyle, but it's a trade-off for peace, less stress and anxiety, and a richer life filled with friends and

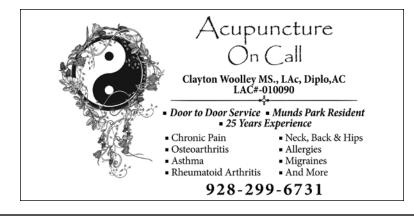
family—a noble goal, in my opinion.

So when mapping out your new year, consider time deeply and thoughtfully—it's the most essential ingredient when planning your new year.

I hope 2024 is filled with health and time spent with friends and family and everything you love to do.

Happy New Year!

Sandee





# **HOMEMADE & WONDERFUL**

### 4 SOUPS TO WARM YOU ON A COLD WINTERS DAY

### By Sara Bowyer

Well, we made it another year around the sun and through another holiday! Happy 2024 everyone! January, for me, is a time to rest and relax. After the hustle and bustle of Christmas and New Years, our schedule really slows down and we can take breath! It's also typically the time that winter starts in full force. And winter calls for soup!

One of my favorite annual traditions we do at the church is our Community Soup'er Bowl. It's held the Saturday before the Super Bowl in February and it is a soup competition. You get the play on words, right? This will be our 6th year to host this event and I look forward to it every year!! Everyone in the community is invited to attend and it is a great way to warm up on a cold Saturday and fellowship with new and old friends. It's also a great way to taste some really amazing soups! Anyone can enter a soup into the contest and everyone who attends gets to taste and vote. There are lots of prizes to win. Best over-all soup, Spiciest soup, healthiest soup, just to name a few. We have had some wonderful soups in the past and I'm sure

there will be even tastier ones this year. So be sure to mark it down on your calendar and come bring a soup or just come to taste. Either way, it will be a very fun and delicious event that you don't want to miss!

So, with that in mind, I am going to share some of my favorite soup recipes. I've always been a fan of a good soup and a nice piece of bread. On a cold winter day, there is not much better than having a hearty soup bubbling on the stove making your home smell warm and inviting. Soups are not only delicious, but I tend to make a lot. It's hard to make a small amount of soup! This is why it is one of my favorites. It always gives me extra to put in the freezer or can. When I am crunched for time, or a friend is in need of a meal, or the power goes out, I have a quick and easy soup already prepared.

So here are a few of my favorites. I hope you have time to try them this winter. And maybe you'll love one enough to enter it in to the Soup'er Bowl!



### ROASTED TOMATO BASIL SOUP

This soup requires minimal ingredients but yields such amazing results! When you combine several pounds of fresh tomatoes, several cups of fresh basil and a fair amount of garlic you know it's got to be good!

### **Ingredients**

- 2 ¼ lbs roma tomatoes, halved lengthwise
- 1 ½ lbs grape tomatoes or cherry tomatoes
- 4 ½ Tbsp olive oil, divided
- Salt and black pepper
- 8 cloves garlic, peeled and left whole
- 2 small yellow onions, sliced just under ½ inch thick
- 1 ½ cups lightly packed fresh basil, divided
- 5 cups vegetable broth

### Instructions

- 1. Preheat oven to 425. Place tomatoes, onion and garlic on a rimmed baking sheet and toss with olive oil then season with salt and pepper. Place roma halves cut side up.
- 2. Place baking sheet in oven and roast 30-40 minutes.
- 3. Pour ingredients into a large pot. Add vegetable broth and about ¾ of the basil. Season with salt and pepper to taste
- 4. Bring to a boil, cover, then reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes.
- 5. Blend soup with an immersion blender. Serve warm topped with remaining basil (chopped)





### AUTUMN MINESTRONE SOUP

A hearty healthy soup packed with seasonal autumn vegetables! Perfect comforting recipe on a chilly day.

### **Ingredients**

- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
- 2 1/2 cups 3/4-inch diced Yukon gold potatoes
- 2 1/2 cups 3/4-inch diced butternut squash
- 1 medium zucchini, ends trimmed, sliced into half moons or quarters
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 2 1/2 tsp finely minced fresh rosemary or oregano (or 1 tsp dried)
- 2 1/2 tsp minced fresh thyme (or 1 tsp dried)
- 2 bay leaves
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2/3 cup dry ditalini pasta (optional)
- 2 cups packed chopped kale (ribs removed)
- 1 (14.5 oz) can red or white kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- Shredded Parmesan cheese (optional)

### **Instructions**

- 1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onions, carrots and saute 3 minutes then add garlic and saute 1 minute longer.
- 2. Stir in vegetable broth, potatoes, squash, zucchini, tomatoes, rosemary, thyme, bay leaves and season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 3. Bring to a boil then and stir in pasta if using. Cover, reduce heat to medium low and and simmer until veggies are nearly tender, about 15 minutes.
- 4. Stir in kale and kidney beans and cook until kale is tender, about 5 minutes longer. Remove bay leaves, serve warm with parmesan cheese.



### CHICKEN WILD RICE SOUP

This Chicken Wild Rice Soup is a hearty creamy soup made with cooked chicken, nutty wild rice, and mushrooms. It is a bowl of comfort any time of the year.

### **Ingredients**

- 1 cup wild rice (170g)
- ½ cup vegetable oil (60ml)
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 2 medium carrots (peeled and chopped)
- 2 stalks celery (chopped)
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup all-purpose flour (115g)
- 8 cups chicken stock (1.9 liters)
- 2 cups cooked chicken (cubed) (300g)
- 8 oz mushrooms (stems removed and sliced)
   (225g)
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup half-and-half (240 ml)
- ½ cup chopped parsley (25g)

### Instructions

- 1. Cook wild rice in 4 cups (960ml) of water for 45 minutes or until it fluffs up. Drain any remaining liquid left in the pot. Set aside.
- 2. In a large pot, add vegetable oil. Sauté onions, carrots, and celery until soften, about 3 minutes. Add dried thyme and all-purpose flour. Cook and stir for another 2 to 3 minutes.
- 3. Pour in chicken stock. Bring to a boil.
- 4. Add cooked chicken, mushrooms, salt, and pepper. Reduce heat and allow soup to simmer for 10 minutes.
- 5. Add cooked wild rice and pour in half-andhalf. Bring soup back up to a boil and allow it to heat through, about 5 minutes.
- 6. Turn off heat. Stir in chopped parsley.



### **TORTILLA SOUP**

Love this one!

### **Ingredients**

- 16 ounce can tomatoes
- 1 med onion, cut up
- 2 clove garlic
- 4 Tbsp snipped cilantro (I double this naturally)
- ½ tsp sugar
- 8 cups chicken broth
- 1 ½ lbs chicken breast cut up (shredded is best). I have also used leftover port and it's amazing
- 2 or 3 chipotle peppers and little adobo sauce (or less if you don't like spicy) I actually used powdered chipotle
- Shredded Monterey jack cheese or white Mexican queso
- Avocados cut up
- Tortilla chips
- Sour cream

### **Instructions**

In blender combine undrained tomatoes, onion, garlic, cilantro and sugar. Cover and blend till nearly smooth. Put mixture into a large pot with chicken broth, chicken and chipotle peppers. Bring to boiling, cover and simmer 20 minutes. Put crunched tortilla chips in a bowl with cheese, avocados and sour cream. Ladle soup over and serve immediately!

"You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces - just good food from fresh ingredients."

— Julia Child

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# **TRAVEL**

### RECALIBRATE IN 2024 WITH THESE 7 TRAVEL EXPERIENCES



Eat mudbugs at a Louisiana festival UNSTOPPABLE Stacey photo



Camel caravan across the Sahara could be in your future for 2024l



Glamping at Village Camp resort outside Flagstaff



Escape to Greek island beaches George Vergados photo



Verde Canyon Railway is close but takes you far away UNSTOPPABLE Stacey photo

### By "Unstoppable Stacey" Wittig

Hello to a new year! It's that time when we look forward to things new and unknown. We make resolutions and set goals, perhaps to wrangle the unexpected into something tangible and doable. When traveling, I tend to leave space open for the yet-to-be-discovered. But if you're like me, you also appreciate the travel ideas that abound as we head into the New Year.

Trends for 2024 point to the outdoors and transformational travel. Let me know if any of these experiences make it on your 2024 travel bucket list:

### 1. Urban Kayaking

Escaping the urban frenzy is my kind of travel adventure—and urban kayaking? It's the perfect blend of city charm and natural tranquility. Just imagine: you slide your kayak into water within the city limits, and in moments, you're whisked away into the serene world of a river ecosystem, paddling right through the urban landscape.

Take Eau Claire, WI, for example—it's a hidden gem for this transformative travel experience! Picture this: gliding along the water, we encountered deer gracefully along the banks, fish leaping high—possibly sturgeon—and the delightful sight of Belted Kingfishers. The highlight? A majestic golden eagle, curious and bold, swept down close to our little aquatic adventure. It's moments like these that transform a simple kayak journey into an unforgettable escape to the wonders of the outdoors.

### 2. Eat Crawfish at Lafayette, Louisiana Music Fests

Put some South in your mouth, y'all! Eating crawfish might be messy, but it's fun and one of the essential things to do in Lafayette, LA. And eating crawfish—also known as mudbugs—at one of the many music fests throughout the year, you're in for a double delight!

The local delicacy is served at music fests and crawfish restaurants in the heart of Louisiana's Cajun and Creole Country. These little crustaceans are more than a snack—they're a culinary celebration! But you won't miss out if you're not in town during a festival!

Over 70 restaurants featured on the Crawfish Passport, you've got a golden ticket to whirlwind tours of the tastiest spots in Cajun Country. This nifty guide isn't just practical. It's your treasure map to the yummiest hideouts where crawfish reign supreme! Get ready to pinch, peel, eat, and repeat!

Experiencing a new culture especially by eating food you wouldn't normally sample is part of the journey that is transformative travel. Check the festival calendar at www.lafayettetravel.com.

### 3. Camel Riding and Desert Camping in the Sahara

Riding a camel caravan through the immense dunes of the Sahara Desert to our overnight camp was, by far, one of my life-changing experiences in Morocco. Make your own memories with a similar expedition from Marrakesh. Watching the sun set and rise over the Sahara Desert will be worth the splurge. And then that blanket of stars during the night was simply mesmerizing!

If you're wondering, "Is Morocco an expensive place to visit?" check out my website at UnstoppableStaceyTravel.com.

### 4. Call of the Wild: Grand Canyon Glamping

You're keen on camping, but your significant other shies away from "roughing it." Well, a relatively new phenomenon called "glamping" combines exploring the Great Outdoors with glamourous amenities once found only in resort hotels. The craze has hit the Grand Canyon with chefprepared meals at Backland Glamping or a resort-style swimming pool and spa at Village Camp. Whichever you choose, glamping is sure to be a glam adventure that you'll tell the kids about for years to come!

### 5. Bask on Greek Island Beaches

Stick your toes into the sun-kissed sands of Greek island beaches. There are so many to choose from that you can find an uncrowded paradise waiting for you. Planning your perfect Greek beach getaway, complete with stone villages and affordable food and lodging, is manageable with my website's Best Beaches in the Peloponnese guide.

### 6. Walk in the Steps of Saint Francis in Assisi, Italy

For those seeking a tranquil and soulful journey, the Way of St. Francis in Umbria, Italy, offers a serene path less trodden. Imagine gently walking through lush landscapes of olive groves and vineyards, where each step is a peaceful embrace of nature. Come nightfall, the charm of local wayside hotels welcomes you, offering a taste of the region's wine and cuisine.

This path, less bustling than the famed Camino de Santiago in Spain, is a haven for spiritual adventurers yearning for a soothing and reflective experience.

### 7. Closer to Home: Ride the Verde Canyon RR

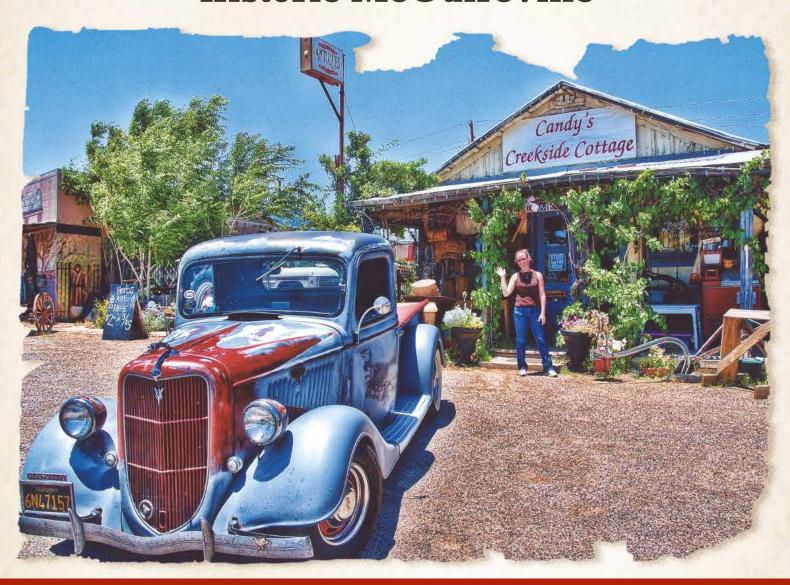
For something closer to home, put the Verde Canyon Railroad on your 2024 travel bucket list. The Verde Canyon Railroad is consistently listed as one of the state's top attractions and carries about 100,000 passengers annually. As a Northern Arizona resident for almost 30 years, I'm always excited when people visit so I can ride the relaxing rails again and again.

Sometimes, I don't even wait for out-of-state houseguests and escape the confines of modern life by riding the historic railway. Like my hubby and I did recently. There's nothing like rocking on the rails that relaxes me more.

That's not to say that the Verde Canyon Railroad isn't exciting. The toottoot telling us the engine is pulling away from the Clarkdale station always brings a zing to my heart! The same happens when I see a soaring bald eagle gliding in the Verde Canyon below. In 2024, you can book a Chocolate Lovers' Special for February, Uncorked Wine Tastings on the patio in May and Moonlight Excursions in the summer. You can even go to my website and download a list of Verde Valley Railway sites along the way.



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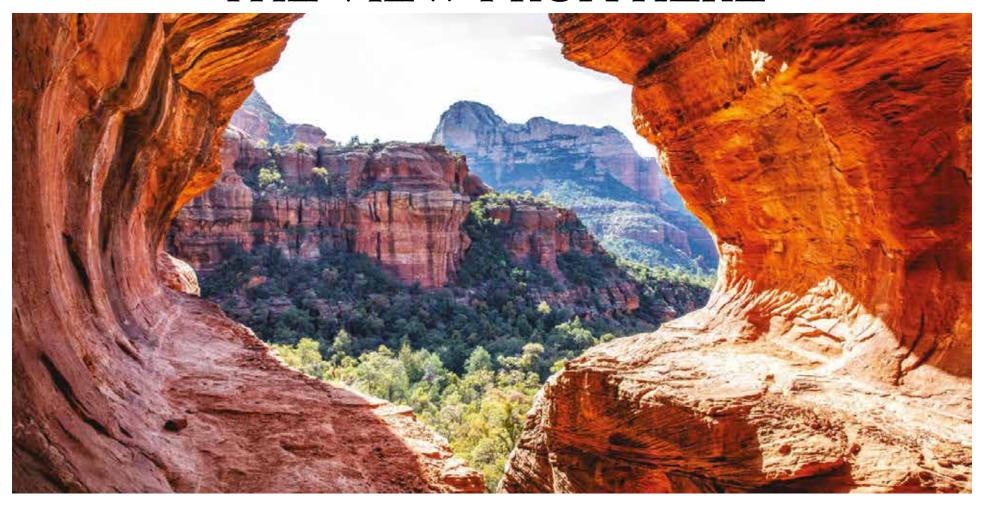
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# THE VIEW FROM HERE



### EXPLORE BOYNTON CANYON

Photo by Earth Trekkers

By William L. Cowan

Winter has made its entrance, though as of this writing it has chosen a more subdued introduction, withholding the magical descent of the white snow blanket and the intricate crystalline formations that usually adorn our surroundings. However, the weather may yet unfold its surprises prompting ones desire for a taste of warmth in lower elevations.

For those seeking a harmonious embrace of the contrasting facets of seasonal change, Boynton Canyon in Red Rock Country stands as an exceptional destination. In this remarkable location a vividly colored rift in the layer cake of the Colorado Plateau creates a captivating environment inviting exploration and offering a rich tapestry for students of geology, ecology, natural history or spirituality. It's a place where the yin and yang of the seasons coalesce, providing a unique perspective on the ever-shifting beauty of the world around us.

There's a trail which penetrates the isolation of the Red Rock - Secret Mountain Wilderness amidst sheer canyon walls dotted with southern Sinagua cliff dwellings. The trail winds its way into the spectacular cleft transitioning from open views of the Black Hills and House Mountain to the cloistered privacy of the deep abyss. As you hike up the trail the environment changes from balmy Pinon Juniper grassland near the mouth to shady Ponderosa pine and Gamble Oak woodland.

Near the head of the canyon the rocks transition from the brightly hued Schnebly Hill Formation into the lighter, oblique angled facets of Toroweep and Coconino sandstones. As you climb further into the gorge the many tourists and cars in the parking lot near the bottom thin out. Just like most things in life the further you go, the fewer the number with the personal fortitude to continue. The canyon becomes more private, more secret, more special.

Boynton Canyon holds a special place in the reverence of Native Americans, particularly among the Yavapai People. They believe that Komwidapakwia, first girl, survived a flood similar to the story of Noah's Ark by floating in a log. The log came to rest on a nearby mountaintop. First girl was then

led into the canyon by a magical Woodpecker. Here she conceived the forbearers of the Yavapai People through being inseminated by glistening sunshine and pure spring water. The Yavapais still honor the special nature of Boynton Canyon.

For you less dedicated to your studies of the environment or local culture there is also a very private resort called Enchantment at the mouth of the canyon. Enchantment is well known for its excellent if pricey cuisine. You can work up a substantial appetite with a hike into Boynton Canyon and then sit down to an exquisite repast on the patio amidst spectacular canyon vistas. The last time we visited we had at \$14 a pop - the most spectacular Bloody Marys ever, which were nearly a meal in themselves.

A Red Rock Pass or Golden Eagle Passport is required to use any of the trails in and around Sedona. I also suggest that you visit during the week as finding a parking place on the weekend or during a holiday season can be a real challenge.

As we face the rush of the coming year I hope you can make the time to enjoy the special wonders of Boynton Canyon. Please treat our spectacular homeland as the special environment that it is, leave the area cleaner than you found it and better for your presence.

Enjoy Northern Arizona

Boynton Canyon Trail -7.2 Miles out and back. Strenuous at the end with an elevation gain of just under 1,000 feet.



### WORD SCRAMBLE

Solution pg. 36

1. OEPACDLKSIEO
2. MONRASUHOI
3. TKCERO
4. ENYRJOU
5. TVAERSH
6. APSSMCO
7. NMPPKUI
8. LPRNISKE
9. ZDBLIAZR
10. RCLAUSEO
11. FEYFIRL
12. HONOIRZ
13. LERNNAT
14. IYMHNCE
15. KKANASPC
16. ORIEFBN
17. AODLNMS
18. MALEATO



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# A RANCHER'S GUIDE TO THRIVING IN THE FROSTY FRONTIER

Howdy, y'all! As the frost's startin' to give our boot heels a chilly hug, it's as clear as the noonday sun that Old Man Winter's struttin' in for his yearly hootenanny. Let's jaw for a spell 'bout keepin' our hides safe in this here nippy time.

### Map it Out, Pardner

Now, when you're fixin' to venture up yonder in the winter, remember: no need to race like a jackrabbit in a pepper patch. Mosey along at your own pace, keep them eyes wider than a barn door, and don't be in no hurry. It's like herdin' cattle - slow and steady's the way. And don't forget, leave a good stretch of open prairie 'tween your wagon and the next – ain't nothin' safer than a good patch of empty land.

### The Three Limb Shuffle

Here's a tidbit 'bout dismountin' your carriage — most folks end up kissin' the ground not 'cause of ice or a slippery path, but from plain ol' klutziness. Heard of the "Three Limb Shuffle"? Just keep three parts of you touchin' your ride — could be two hands and a foot, or the other way 'round. Better to cling like a raccoon on a corn crib than to be dancin' a jig on the ice.

# an ike And crairie thin'

### Dress Like You're Meetin' a Blizzard

Get dolled up like you're headin' to a powwow with Jack Frost himself – warm duds and sturdy boots. Load your wagon with all sorts of fixin's: kitty litter (it ain't just for critters), a shovel, and chains for them wheels. Don't forget water to wet your whistle and extra blankets and winter gear.

### Wagon Preppin'

Before hittin' the trail, don't be like that lazy painter who skipped the undercoat. Prep your wagon from top to bottom! Scrape off the snow and ice from the roof, windows, and lanterns. Gotta see and be seen, else you're just playin' pin the tail on the donkey on the open road.

### Penguin Walkin'

When hoofin' it, waddle like a penguin. Bend them knees, shuffle your boots, and keep your mitts out of your pockets. Carry your gear at your side, like a gentleman totin' his travelin' case.

And for Pete's sake, if you're jawin' on your newfangled phone gadget, stand still. Don't be tryin' to be a walkin', talkin' snowman.

### Stick to the Beaten Path

Always stick to the well-trodden trail. Sidewalks and cleared paths are your best pals in the winter. Venture off the path, and you might as well be walkin' the plank at sea.

### Black Ice: The Sneaky Critter

Watch for black ice, the trickiest varmint this side of the Mississippi. It's as sly as a fox in a hen house, hidin' and waitin' to trip you up when the cold air meets the warm ground. It's a hazard playin' hide and seek with your safety, so keep them peepers open and your wits sharper than a barber's blade.

And lastly, always keep a shovel in your wagon. Snow's as fickle as a summer breeze – never know when you'll need to dig out of an unexpected blizzard.

So that's the long and short of it, folks. Keep these pearls of wisdom in mind, and you'll sail through winter smoother than a riverboat on calm waters. Stay safe, stay snug as a bug, and don't forget to keep laughin', even when the snow's a-fallin'!

# **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

### A SIP THROUGH TIME FOR NATURAL WELL-BEING WITH TEA

### By Gill Wong

As we step into the New Year, leaving behind the whirlwind of joyous holiday soirées, it's the perfect moment to embrace a return to natural wellness. We're choosing to nurture our bodies, giving them a muchneeded respite. This time, our focus shifts to the healing embrace of tea, a beverage that's more than just a drink - it's a journey into wellness and history. We're particularly enchanted by the origins of tea in China, where ancient lore weaves with tradition, offering a sip of tranquility and a legacy of health. Let's explore how this simple leaf has captured hearts and healed bodies through centuries, embodying the essence of natural healing and holistic well-being.

THE DISCOVERY OF TEA BY EMPEROR SHEN NONG

In the annals of tea's rich history, story from ancient China over 4,000 years ago stands prominent, featuring the legendary Emperor Shen Nong, a figure celebrated for his advancements in agriculture and medicine. The lore tells of Shen Nong, sitting under a wild tea tree, engaging in his habitual practice of purifying water by boiling. On a fateful day, as he rested, a breeze whisked leaves from the overhead Camellia sinensis tree into his pot. The resulting infusion, with its inviting aroma, piqued Shen Nong's curiosity. Upon tasting it, he found the brew refreshing and revitalizing, marking the serendipitous discovery of tea.

Shen Nong's contributions extend beyond this fortuitous event. He is also recognized for his pioneering work in identifying the healing properties of plants and herbs, integral to traditional Chinese medicine. The discovery of tea and its energizing qualities is often viewed as a crucial part of his broader contributions to herbal healing and wellness.

This narrative, while widely regarded as a legend, underscores the historical and cultural significance of tea in Chinese history, blending the discovery of tea with the themes of natural wellness and ancient wisdom.

### THE SPREAD OF TEA CULTURE

Tea was revered as a medicinal elixir in its humble beginnings, gradually blossoming into a favored recreational beverage. Its journey is intertwined with the mindful practices of Buddhist monks, who cherished tea for its unique ability to kindle a state of serene

alertness. These ancient practitioners harnessed the gentle power of tea to enhance their meditation, finding in its leaves a natural ally for mindfulness and spiritual clarity.

In the heart of Japan, the tea ceremony - Chanoyu or Sado - evolved into a soulful ritual, transcending the mere act of brewing tea. This ceremonial practice became a celebration of life's fleeting beauty, an art form that honors balance, harmony, and the preciousness of the present moment. It's a ritual that invites us to pause, breathe, and connect with the deeper aspects of our being.

Continued on page 23



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## **CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

Created by Paul Mason • Solution pg. 34

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65					66					67				
68					69					70				
71					72					73				

### Across

- 1. Loose talk?
- 6. On \_\_ (without a contract)
- 10. Spirit
- 14. Inmate who's never getting out
- 15. Eugene of "American
- Pie" movies
- 16. Metrical foot
- 17. Cremona artisan
- 18. Gulf of \_\_\_\_, off the
- coast of Yemen 19. Prepares fish for
- cooking
- 20. Trattoria treat
- 22. Sky color
- 23. Fluffy mass
- 24. Bar "where everybody knows your name"
- 26. \_\_\_\_ Scotia
- 30. Asian nurse
- 32. Chilean range
- 33. Assumed name
- 35. Formal dance
- 37. What Jan. 1 ushers in
- 39. Fossil discovery of 1891
- 44. "Immediately!"
- 46. Pasadena New's Year
- Day Event
- 47. Music for two 51. "That's a \_\_\_
- 53. Think, old-style
- 54. You might get one
- before a party
- 56. "... happily \_\_\_
- 58. Gardener's spring
- purchase
- 59. Save-the-date card follow-up

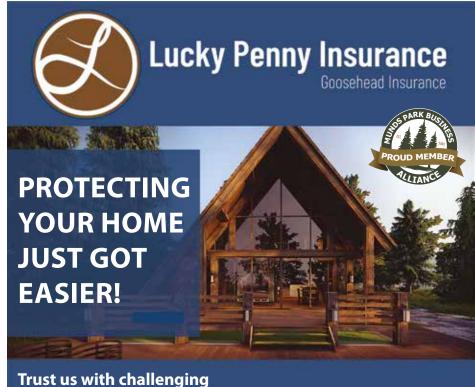
- 65. Cutting remark
- 66. Kaput
- 67. Dreary sound
- 68. \_\_\_\_ Spumante
- 69. Axis of
- 70. Mideast bigwigs
- 71. Catch one's breath
- 72. Bank (on)
- 73. Put back to zero

### Down

- 1. Bed board
- 2. Airport pickup
- 3. Way, way off
- 4. Bottom line, in the U.K.
- 5. "Good \_\_\_\_!"
- 6. Winter Olympics event
- 7. Three-wheeled vehicle
- 8. All square
- 9. Doubting Thomas
- 10. Westminster Palace's clock
- 11. Fulminated
- 12. Tarnished
- 13. Preoccupy
- 21. Andean animals
- 25. Sesame seed and
- honey confection
- 26. Masefield play "The
- Tragedy of \_\_\_
- 27. "\_\_\_ moment"
- 28. "I do," for one
- 29. "\_\_\_ luck?"
- 31. "The \_\_\_\_" (Uris novel)
- 34. Dough-rising
- ingredient
- 36. Decorative fold on a
- garment
- 38. Crude

- 40. Craft
- 41. Blemish
  - 42. "Much \_\_\_ About
  - Nothing"
  - 43. "What's ?"
  - 5. Come out on top
  - 47. Expel from law practice
  - 48. Apprehension
  - 49. Turns inside out
  - 50. Morsel
  - 52. With gusto
  - 55. Downy duck 57.
  - "M\*A\*S\*H" role
  - 60. "Scream" star Campbell
  - 61. Debut of March 3, 1923
  - 62. Camera diaphragm
  - 63. Shrek, for one
  - 64. Home, informally





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### **NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS FOR BRIGHT FUTURES!**

By George Dee

The start of a new year has been a time for positive changes for ages. In Ancient Rome, people made promises to the gods to return borrowed items and pay debts. Most promises were to Janus, the namesake of January. Whether these promises lasted beyond February, we don't know!

New Year's resolutions have become more popular over time. In the early 20th Century, about a quarter of people made resolutions. Now, nearly 40% do!

Many think New Year's resolutions are just for adults, but kids can set goals too. Here are some ideas:

### **READ MORE**

Become a star reader! Yes, you heard that right. Whether you're just starting out or already a bookworm, there's always room to grow and more exciting stories to discover.

Here's our reading adventure challenge: Pledge to read for at least 30 minutes every night. Imagine wandering into magical worlds,

meeting fascinating characters, and going on thrilling adventures. And guess what? You can make this even more special by sharing the joy of reading. How? By reading a story to a younger sibling or friend.

And don't forget to find an author who makes your heart race with excitement. Once you find stories that you love, reading becomes an adventure you can't wait to return to. Plus, make sure to catch up with the Kids Pinewood News for fun reads.

Remember, each book you read is like a ticket to a new world. You can travel to distant lands, explore mind-boggling ideas, and learn absolutely anything your heart desires. So, are you ready to make reading your superpower this year? Let's turn those pages and let our imaginations soar.

### **WATCH LESS**

How about promising to spend less time with our TVs and phones and more time exploring the wonders of nature? This is especially true if you live in or visit Munds Park! The great outdoors is in your backyard!

Imagine turning your usual screen time into 'green time.' Instead of watching other people's adventures, you can have your own! Think about hiking

through the forest, playing hide and seek with the squirrels, or even finding a secret spot that only you know about. Every step outside is a chance to find something amazing that no video game or TV show can match.

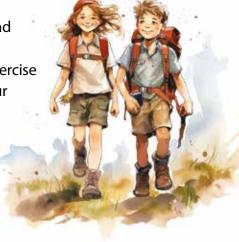
So, here's our New Year's challenge: Cut down on watching TV and scrolling on your phone—Promise to step outside and have real-world adventures. You could become a nature explorer, a wildlife detective, or even an outdoor artist!

Remember, every outdoor adventure makes you stronger, smarter, and happier. Plus, you'll have the coolest stories to tell your friends. So, are you ready to make this the year of outdoor fun and discovery?

### **MOVE YOUR BODY**

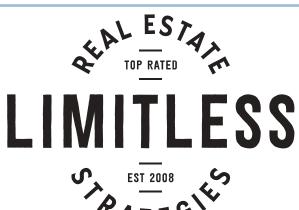
This year, let's make a really fun and energetic resolution: How about promising to get 30 minutes of exercise every single day? It's like giving our bodies a daily dose of happiness and health!

Think of it as your daily miniadventure. You could dance to your favorite tunes in your room, Continued on page 20





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### **NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS**

Continued from page 19

play tag, hike in the forest, ride a bike, do some cool yoga stretches, or even help around the house (yes, that counts too!). The best part? You can try something different each day. Monday could be your dance party day, Tuesday could be a hike through the forest, Wednesday could be a bike-riding adventure... you get the idea!

Remember, moving and grooving for just 30 minutes a day can make you feel more energetic, help you sleep better at night, and even make you feel happier. So, are you ready to take on this super fun challenge? Let's make this year the most active and adventurous yet! Let's move, groove, and improve!

### **BE THANKFUL**

How about setting a special and heartwarming resolution? Consider a pledge to be more grateful and show more appreciation to the amazing people in your life. It can make both you and others feel fantastic!

Being thankful is like having a magic wand that spreads happiness. It's about

noticing and cherishing all the good things and kind people around you. Imagine saying a big 'thank you' to Mom or Dad for their delicious cooking, their hugs, or just for being there. Or how about creating a special card or drawing for a friend or teacher to show how much you appreciate them?

This year, make a promise to see the blessings in your daily life. Every time you say thank you, give a compliment, or do a kind deed, you're not just making someone else smile – you're filling your heart with joy!

### **ALWAYS DO YOUR BEST**

Consider setting an empowering and positive resolution—promise to always do your best in everything you do.

Think of it as your personal adventure. Whether it's in school, playing a sport, helping out at home, or learning a new hobby, doing your best means trying hard, having fun, and not giving up, even if things get a little tricky. It's not about getting every answer right or being the best in everything – it's about putting in your best effort and being proud of what you achieve.

This year, celebrate every effort, every try, and every little step forward. Remember, every time you do your best, you're learning, improving, and becoming an even more awesome version of yourself. And guess what? Sometimes, things might not turn out perfect, and that's totally okay! What matters is that you gave it your best shot.

### **EAT BETTER FOOD**

Consider a pledge to eat healthier, munch on more fruits and veggies, and cut down on junk food.

Imagine your plate as a colorful canvas, filled with bright fruits and crunchy vegetables. Each color is not just fun



to look at but also packed with different vitamins to keep you strong and energetic. How about trying a new fruit or vegetable each week? You might just discover a new favorite!

This year, snack-smart. Instead of reaching for chips or candy, why not grab a juicy apple, a bunch of grapes, or some carrot sticks with yummy dip? These snacks are not only tasty but also help you stay active and focused, whether you're studying or playing.

And remember, it's okay to have a treat once in a while. The secret is balance – enjoying treats in moderation while loving those fruits and veggies.

### TRY SOMETHING NEW

Consider making a thrilling and brave resolutionpledge to try something new! It's like opening the door to a world of exciting possibilities and discovering talents you never knew you had.

Have you ever thought about strumming a guitar, playing a piano, or drumming to your own beat? Or maybe you've eyed the soccer field, the basketball court, or considered joining a club at school? This is your year to jump in and give it a try!

And how about making new friends? Every person you meet has a story to share and something new to teach you. Plus, you can share your own cool stories with them. It's like adding more colors to your world.

Trying new things isn't just fun – it's also a great way to learn about yourself. You'll discover what you love, what excites you, and even what challenges you. And remember, it's not about being perfect from the start. It's about having the courage to take that first step and enjoy the journey.

So, are you ready to embrace new experiences? Whether it's learning an instrument, joining a team, participating in a club, or making new friends, make this the year of new adventures and discoveries.

And there you have it, young dreamers and doers! These suggestions are just the beginning, little sparks to ignite your imagination. Remember, if you turn these resolutions into lifelong habits, they're not just for this year – they're gifts that keep giving, bringing joy today and for all the days to come.

Now, take a moment to dream big. Think about what you really want to achieve this new year. Maybe it's one of these resolutions, or perhaps it's something entirely different and uniquely yours. Whatever it is, embrace it with all your heart and work towards making it a reality.

Your dreams are like seeds. Water them with effort, care, and persistence, and watch them grow into beautiful realities. You have the power to make this year truly remarkable. So go ahead, set your goals, chase your dreams, and make this a year to remember!

Like a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly, every new adventure helps you grow and spread your wings!



20 | JANUARY 5, 2024

# HIDDEN PICTURES! Solutions on page 27!





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### **NEW YEARS WORD SEARCH**

Search up, down, forward, backward, diagonal to find the hidden words. Answers page 34.

**Stars** 

Adventure	Grateful
Books	Нарру
Dance	Healthy
Discover	January
Dreams	Journey
Exercise	Magic
Forest	Nature
Friends	NewYear



JANUARY 5, 2024 | 21 PINEWOOD NEWS KIDS!



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# EMBRACE THE PAST, VISUALIZE THE FUTURE: A UNIQUE GEM IN MUNDS PARK





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

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

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

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





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

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

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

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

### FEATURED PROPERTIES



\$849,900 725 Meadow

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



\$290,000 545 Cedarwood

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



\$300,000 17445 Sequoia

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

### **HEALTH & WELLNESS**

Continued from page 17

Across the sea in China, tea's significance blossomed in royal courts. Here, the finest teas were cultivated as offerings to the emperor, symbols of respect and reverence. This tradition not only elevated tea to an art form but also led to innovative cultivation and processing techniques, forever changing the landscape of tea culture.

### **QUALITY & FLAVOR**

Leaf size and quality play a crucial role in the flavor profile of tea. Loose leaf tea, generally made from whole or large pieces of leaves, preserves the tea's natural flavor and essential oils. This typically results in a more nuanced, complex, and richer flavor profile, as the larger leaves retain more of their original characteristics. In contrast, tea bags often contain smaller pieces of leaves, known as "fannings" and "dust." These smaller particles tend to release tannins more quickly, which can lead to a more astringent or bitter taste. Consequently, the flavor of tea from tea bags is usually more straightforward and less nuanced compared to loose-leaf tea.

Regarding freshness, loose-leaf tea maintains its freshness longer because it is less processed and has a larger surface area, beneficial for retaining its natural oils and aroma. On the other hand, the smaller size of tea particles in tea bags can result in a faster loss of flavor and aroma over time. This difference in freshness is another factor contributing to the distinct taste experiences between loose-leaf tea and tea from tea bags.

From an environmental standpoint, loose-leaf tea produces less waste as it doesn't require individual packaging, and used leaves can be composted. Conversely, some tea bags are made with or contain plastics, which aren't biodegradable and not great for the palette.

Loose-leaf tea demands more effort and time, including steeping and cleaning up, but relaxing and preparing your tea can add to the experience, making it calming and enjoyable.

Finally, regarding cost, loose-leaf tea might be more expensive initially but can be more economical over time, as the leaves can often be steeped multiple times. Tea bags are generally cheaper per serving but are typically used only once.

Tea enthusiasts often prefer loose-leaf tea for its superior quality, flavor complexity, and brewing ritual. The best way to find your preferred tea is to try different types and brands. Specialty tea shops or online retailers focusing on high-quality teas can offer a range of options to explore. We have a couple of tea shops in Flagstaff you can visit.

Old Barrel Tea Company Flagstaff 21 N San Francisco St, Flagstaff

> Steep Leaf Lounge 1 E Aspen Ave, Flagstaff

When looking for the best tea, consider these factors:

- Origin: Different regions produce teas with distinct flavors.
- Harvest Time: The first flush (early harvest) usually yields the highest quality.
- Processing: Handpicked and minimally processed teas are often of higher quality.
- Organic Certification: Some prefer organic teas for their natural cultivation methods.

# DISCOVER THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF GREEN TEA

Green tea, originating in China and widely consumed throughout Asia, has been appreciated for its taste and health benefits for centuries. It's known for its antioxidants, particularly catechins, which have been studied for their potential to reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer. Green tea is

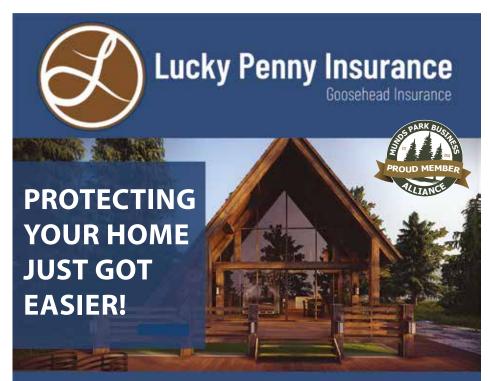
also associated with lower cholesterol levels, improved brain function, and a boost in metabolism.

Determining the "best" green tea can be subjective, as it depends on individual taste preferences and what qualities you value most in tea. However, there are several high-quality green teas that are renowned for their exceptional flavor, aroma, and health benefits. Here are a few types of premium green teas that are often highly regarded:

- Matcha: A famous Japanese green tea, matcha is a finely ground powder made from specially grown and processed green tea leaves. It's known for its vibrant green color, rich umami flavor, and high antioxidant content. Ceremonial-grade matcha is considered the highest quality.
- Dragon Well (Longjing): A celebrated Chinese green tea, Dragon Well is known for its gentle, sweet flavor, and its flat, spear-like tea leaves. It is often considered the epitome of Chinese green tea and is highly prized.
- Gyokuro: Another premium Japanese green tea, Gyokuro is shaded for about three weeks before harvesting to boost its chlorophyll content.
   This results in a sweeter flavor and a bright green infusion.
- Sencha: The most popular tea in Japan, Sencha varies widely in quality, but the best grades offer a delicate balance of sweetness, bitterness, and umami, with a bright, grassy aroma.
- Silver Needle (Bai Hao Yin Zhen): While technically a white tea, it's often appreciated by green tea lovers for its delicate and slightly sweet flavor. It consists of only the top unopened buds of the tea plant.

As we conclude our exploration of tea, from its deep-rooted beginnings to its present-day charm, we hope you feel encouraged to enjoy the diverse world of teas. This journey has taken us through tea's rich history and its multitude of health benefits, reminding us that each cup is not just a drink, but a connection to a legacy of well-being and a reflection of nature's simplicity.

Here's to a happy and healthy New Year, where each sip of tea brings you closer to a state of wellness and every moment is as cherished as the delicate flavors of the finest tea leaves—cheers to new beginnings and the ongoing journey of discovery, one cup at a time.



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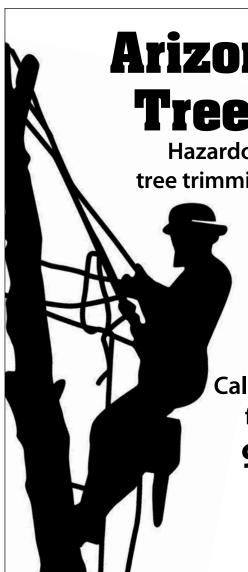


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# **SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD**

### THE CLASSIC HOT TODDY

By Dick Trudeau

In the archives of cocktail history, few drinks boast a lineage as storied and geographically rooted as the Hot Toddy. Originating in the 18th-century Scottish highlands, a region where whisky flows as freely as the cold can cut through bone, this brew provided warmth and a sense of hearth and home.

In Scotland, particularly near Edinburgh's Todian Spring, the Hot Toddy emerged as a pragmatic response to the merciless winters. It was a drink of necessity, combining the local bounty of whisky with hot water, honey, and lemon. The Toddy's essence lay in its simplicity, a characteristic that allowed it to move through borders effortlessly.

Upon reaching Ireland, the drink assumed a new name, "hot whiskey," reflecting not just a geographical shift but a subtle cultural adaptation. Across the Irish Sea, it became a staple, especially during the long, damp winters, embodying the Irish penchant for hospitality and warmth.

The drink's maritime journey aboard British ships led to the creation of "grog," a nautical variation with rum at its core, underlining the adaptability of this beverage to the resources at hand.

As a medicinal remedy, the Hot Toddy held a valued place. Long before the advent of modern pharmacology, it was embraced as a folk remedy for the common cold, a belief that persists in some circles to this day, despite contemporary understanding that attributes of the hot honey and lemon rather than the spirits it contains—however, the spirits do relax a person!

With the passage of time, the Hot Toddy has evolved, yet it retains an elemental purity. Modern mixologists may experiment with various spirits, spices, and sweeteners, but the essence of the Hot Toddy—its directness and lack of pretense—remains untouched.

Today, the Hot Toddy is much more than a mere alcoholic beverage. It is a cultural artifact, a bridge between past and present, a reminder of the times when what we drank was dictated not by trend or fancy but by necessity and the raw materials at our disposal. In the Hot Toddy, we find not just a drink but a story of human ingenuity and adaptation—a drink best savored slowly on a cold winter's night.

### GO BEYOND THE BASICS

For a refreshing take on the traditional Hot Toddy, consider experimenting with different spirits like bourbon, rye, brandy, or dark rum, each offering a distinct flavor profile, from subtle to rich. Sweeteners, too, can vary; swap honey for agave nectar or maple syrup for a unique sweetness, or mix brown sugar with lemon juice for a caramel twist while remembering honey's classic comforting and holistic touch. Enhance the warmth and complexity of your drink with spices like cinnamon, cloves, star anise, nutmeg, or ginger, and consider adding apple cider or other cozy winter ingredients. To elevate the entire experience, focus on garnishes. A classic lemon slice, cinnamon stick, and star anise can be augmented with lemon twists, cloves, and cranberries, adding a unique and visually appealing dimension to your Hot Toddy.

### HOW TO MAKE A CLASSIC HOT TODDY

Start by warming your mug. Fill it with hot water and let it sit for about five minutes, ensuring your drink stays warm and inviting. Finally, adjust the recipe to suit your taste. Whether you prefer it sweeter, with more honey, or stronger, with an extra shot of bourbon, the Hot Toddy is a versatile drink that can be personalized to your liking.

### **INGREDIENTS**

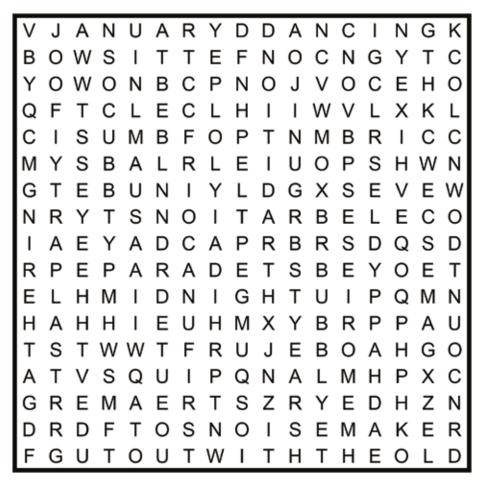
- 1 medium lemon
- 1 1/2 ounces (3 tablespoons) bourbon or other dark spirit, such as brandy, whiskey, or dark rum
  - 1 tablespoon honey
  - 3/4 cup water
  - Optional garnishes: cinnamon stick, star anise pod

In the quiet of the woods, where the only sound is the gentle rustle of leaves far from city lights, this simple drink feels just right. It's a small, warm tradition connecting us to a faraway past yet perfectly fitting into this peaceful woodland life. Here's to the simple pleasure enjoyed by the fireside.



### **WORD SEARCH**

Created by Paul Mason • Solution pg. 34



eve	January	streamer
first	kiss	time
flute	last	toast
games	memories	tradition
gathering	midnight	tuxedo
goblet	music	vow
gown	new	year
happy	noisemaker	
hat	out with the old	
horns	parade	
invite	party	
	first flute games gathering goblet gown happy hat horns	first kiss flute last games memories gathering midnight goblet music gown new happy noisemaker hat out with the old horns parade

### WORD SCRABBLE

### **Solutions**

- 1. OEPACDLKSIEO Kaleidoscope
- 2. MONRASUHOI Harmonious
- 3. TKCERO Rocket
- 4. ENYRJOU Journey
- 5. TVAERSH Harvest
- 6. APSSMCO Compass
- 7. NMPPKUI Pumpkin
- O L DDNIIGKE C . . . . .
- 8. LPRNISKE Sprinkle
- 9. ZDBLIAZR Blizzard
- 10. RCLAUSEO Carousel

- 11. FEYFIRL Firefly
- 12. HONOIRZ Horizon
- 13. LERNNAT Lantern
- 14. IYMHNCE Chimney
- 15. KKANASPC Knapsack
- 16. ORIEFBN Bonfire
- 17. AODLNMS Almonds
- 18. MALEATO Oatmeal



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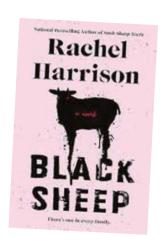
# **BOOK REVIEW**

### **BLACK SHEEP**

By Sandy Wright

The Herbalist's Secret is a dual timeline. Nobody has a "normal" family, but Vesper Wright's is truly...something else. Vesper left home at eighteen and never looked back—mostly because she was told that leaving the staunchly religious community, she grew up in meant she couldn't return. But then an envelope arrives on her doorstep.

Inside is an invitation to the wedding of Vesper's beloved cousin Rosie to her ex high school sweetheart. It's to be hosted at the family farm by a Satanic cult group called Hell's Gate.



Have they made an exception to the rule? It wouldn't be the first time Vesper's been given special treatment. Is the invite a sweet gesture? An olive branch? A trap? Doesn't matter. Something inside her insists she go to the wedding. Even if it means returning to toxic, controlling environment she escaped. Even if it means reuniting with her mother, Constance, a former scream queen film star and eternal ice queen. Even if it means she finally learns her father's true identity.

When she gets back home, a lot is the same but even more has changed in ways that make her realize the adage "you can't go home again."

The plot of Black Sheep unfolds delicately, revealing tiny tidbits as we go, leaving us wondering if they fit into the big picture, or it they're just distractions to lull you into reading blindly on, until the big reveal happens that makes you cringe.

Black Sheep is dark and disturbing in a fun way. Part family drama and part cozy horror. You'll be glad you don't call it home, but you will enjoy reading it. And you'll never listen to Sweet Child of Mine with the same fondness again!

- Rachel Harrison
- 304 pages
- Berkley, September 2023

## HIDDEN PICTURES Solutions



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# **GARDENS IN THE PARK**

### HANGING WITH HOUSEPLANTS

Sponsored by Warner's Nursery

Everything old is new again, and that's true in the world of houseplants, where one trend that first appeared half a century ago is making a strong comeback.

Hanging plants first became a hot houseplant trend back in the 1970s, in part because macrame was a popular hobby during that time. Counterculture kids of the 60s were now buying their own houses and wanted something that was more personalized and hip than their parents' homes.

Endless kits with rope, beads, and knot-tying instructions were sold during that decade, and enthusiasts created macrame wall hangings, room dividers, and plant holders with gusto. The favorite plant to pair with your macrame masterpiece at that time was the easy-to-grow spider plant, with its long-trailing stems that ended in small plantlets that resembled spiders.

Hanging plants have made a resurgence in recent years, but now the reason has more to do with limited space, as more and more people congregate in cities. By 2050, it is estimated that

almost 9 out of 10 people in the U.S. will reside in urban areas, where space is at a premium.

Hanging plants offer a clever solution to shrinking living quarters. Using vertical space, they maximize your leafy green decor without sacrificing floor area. Strategically placed, they can even create a visual separation being living areas.

And you are no longer limited to just spider plants! There is a dizzying array of choices readily available at your local garden center like Warner's Nursery.

Cascading pothos and philodendrons, trailing air plants, and vibrant string of pearls will create visual interest in any room. Succulents like echeveria, jade, and donkey's tail offer unique shapes and textures. Indoor ivy and Chinese money plants can be trained to climb up or cascade down, depending on your preference.



Your hanging plant is part of your room design. A cluster of greenery - mixing hanging, windowsill and floor plants - can give you a mini jungle retreat indoors. Hanging plants can also soften corners, frame windows, and create a privacy "screen" within your home.

Adding plants of any type have proven benefits to your body and emotions. Studies have shown that spending time around greenery lowers stress levels and improves your mood. The act of nurturing plants can be calming and therapeutic (besides getting you away from all the digital screens in your life!) There are even indications that being around plants can boost your creativity and enhance problem-solving skills.

Caring for your hanging houseplant will depend on the species you use, as each has its own particular needs, so make sure to check the care label on any plant you purchase.

But there are some general tips that apply to most hanging houseplants.

- Always use a quality potting soil mix that is suitable for your plant.
- If you are mixing plants in the same hanging basket, try to group plants with similar care needs together.
- Keep in mind that air in your home tends to get warmer and drier as it
  rises towards the ceiling, so your hanging plants might dry out a little
  faster than ones you have on counters, window sills, or on the floor.
- If you are hanging from the ceiling, make sure to use a strong hook.
- Hang your plants in low-traffic areas. The last thing you want is for your plant tendrils to grab people as they walk by.

If you are looking for a fresh take on houseplants for the new year, why not give hanging plants a try? They're a budget-friendly way to add life and personality to your home, and their benefits extend far beyond high-flying good looks.



### SUDOKU

Created by Paul Mason • Solution pg. 34

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### LOCAL NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Continued from page 7

# WHEN TO AVOID TRAVEL ON I-17 LANE CLOSURES & BLASTING SCHEDULE

The interstate frequently shuts down in both directions south of Sunset Point from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. to allow crews to blast and clear away rock. If possible, motorists should avoid traveling during these times. Crews must begin narrowing the roadway to one lane in both directions at 7 p.m.

While ADOT aims to limit closures to one hour, the department warns that blasting could occur between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. The work also necessitates frequent lane restrictions, which can result in traffic backups, affecting both northbound and southbound lanes.

ADOT sends weekly emails to assist those who wish to plan trips around these restrictions and posts the closures online. People can subscribe to updates and track closures and restrictions at www.improvingi17.com.

Annette Riley, Interstate 17 Improvement Project manager for ADOT, expects the blasting to continue into mid-2024.

Approximately 40,000 cars travel in both directions from Anthem to Cordes Junction daily, with weekend numbers reaching 55,000 to 60,000. Holiday weekends bring even more drivers, leading to increased traffic, crashes, and delays.

Previously, ADOT officials have noted that most troublesome crashes occur on the southbound lanes between Sunset Point and Anthem.



# JANUARY HOROSCOPE BY CAKE!

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



### ARIES, FIRE SIGN, MARCH 21 - APRIL 20

This month, embrace a new beginning with emerging connections guiding you in uncharted territories. For Aries, 2024 brings unstoppable energy and determination. Career-wise, your bold ideas will gain attention, propelling you forward. In love, whether single

or committed, balance charm with patience and communication. Remember to recharge and indulge in hobbies to avoid burnout. This year, let your horoscope guide you through challenges, as you shine brightly, balancing ambition with self-care and embracing the journey ahead with enthusiasm and resilience.



### TAURUS, EARTH SIGN, APRIL 21 - MAY 20

As the new year unfolds, harness that fresh, first-day-of-school energy to view the world anew and propel your goals with youthful vigor. This mindset aligns with your vibrant evolution.

2024 for Taurus promises growth and stability, with patience yielding

great rewards. Career-wise, expect gradual progress, fueled by your practical approach and strong work ethic. In love, singles may find enchanting connections, while those in relationships deepen their bonds. Embrace opportunities for travel and exploration, breaking free from routine. This year, guided by change, celebrates your strength and opens doors to new possibilities.



### GEMINI, AIR SIGN, MAY 21 - JUNE 21

This month, dynamic tension beneath a calm surface signals a time for Geminis to confront loss, heal, and embrace self-love, strengthening your future foundation. The year ahead brings excitement and growth, with your communication skills enhancing

professional and social interactions. Step out of your comfort zone, explore new places, and gain fresh perspectives. Balance adventure with introspection and mindfulness. Relationships, both new and existing, will deepen. Financially, watch for opportunities but assess risks. Trust your instincts and seek advice, navigating a transformative year with confidence and growth.



### CANCER, WATER SIGN, JUNE 22 - JULY 22

This month, adopt a taskmaster approach in relationships, addressing issues directly to foster closeness and prevent stagnation. Proactively deepen bonds by facing challenges together. The year ahead brings intriguing cosmic twists, with your intuition guiding

exciting opportunities, especially in relationships. Embrace vulnerability to strengthen your support network. Creatively, let your ideas flourish, taking calculated risks. Home and family are focal points, with potential revamping of living spaces. Financially, balance mindful spending with innovative ways to expand income, using practicality and creativity to navigate a transformative year.



### LEO, FIRE SIGN, JULY 23 - AUGUST 22

January encourages decluttering, both in your surroundings and within, prompting you to streamline responsibilities and adapt to changes in relationships. Organize chaos for transformative shifts, finding clarity and depth in yourself and connections.

In 2024, your passion and creativity will fuel your ambitions. Seize career opportunities for leadership and collaboration, while your charm enhances relationships, attracting admirers and deepening bonds. Amidst your achievements, prioritize solitude to recharge, maintaining a balance between success and self-care. Embrace this blend of dynamism and introspection for a truly remarkable year.



### VIRGO, EARTH SIGN, AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22

Start the year with vibrant energy, adding play and pleasure to your life. Use creativity as a burnout antidote and for joy, fostering well-being and fulfillment. For Virgos, 2024 focuses on fine-tuning life with attention to detail, particularly in career, using analytical

skills for success. Rest and recharge, enhance relationships through communication, and be open to unexpected love. Prioritize holistic health, combining mindfulness with physical activities. Your detailed approach supports personal growth, so explore new hobbies and skills. Balance mind, body, and soul, embracing life's surprises and opportunities for growth



### LIBRA, AIR SIGN, SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22

This period is perfect for home-centric activities: revamping your space, strengthening family bonds, and honoring ancestry. Aim for tangible and emotional enhancements to foster a harmonious environment. For Libras, 2024 is a year where charm and

diplomacy will make you a standout mediator and organizer. In your career, embrace creativity and step beyond comfort zones. Love-wise, expect fluttering encounters for singles and deepening ties for couples, with communication crucial. Prioritize self-care through relaxation and meditation for balance. Embrace the year with your unique flair, captivating the world with your energy.



### SCORPIO, WATER SIGN, OCT 23 - NOV 22

Reconnect with your community and old friends, revisiting childhood spots to bring joy into everyday life. For Scorpios, 2024 promises transformation and intensity, particularly in career, where determination leads to achievements.

In love, deep emotional connections await, regardless of relationship status. Rely on your intuition for complex decisions. This year, uncover hidden passions and talents, balancing your intense path with selfcare and reflection. Embrace this balance to tap into your strength and resilience, making 2024 a year of personal growth and profound experiences.



### SAGITTARIUS, FIRE SIGN, NOV 23 - DEC 21

Boost your financial literacy to master your finances, diving into new areas of money management and considering professional advice for confident decisions. This is key to a secure future. For Sagittarius, 2024 brings a whirlwind of opportunities, with

optimism fueling career and love prospects. Embrace challenges and heart-fluttering romantic moments. The year also promises travel adventures, exploring new cultures and landscapes. Among these opportunities, stay mindful and balanced to navigate a year filled with growth, meaningful connections, and exploration, making the most of every experience.



### CAPRICORN, EARTH SIGN, DEC 22 - JAN 20

Reconnect with yourself in 2024 by transforming past hurdles into stepping stones and engaging in soulnourishing activities like movement, arts, and meditation to converse with your inner self. Reflect, release past weights, and use hope to propel

forward. This year, sculpt your dream life from cosmic clay with career success fueled by hard work, discipline, and innovation. In love, embrace vulnerability to deepen connections, whether single or committed. Broaden your horizons through travel and learning, balancing success with well-being and connections with loved ones, patiently building a solid future foundation.



### AQUARIUS, AIR SIGN, JAN 21 - FEB 18

Confront past shadows this month, welcoming discomfort as a threshold to healing; let your wounds breathe, understanding they don't define you. The year starts with exhilarating energy, offering second chances and encouraging self-acceptance to dive

courageously into the unknown, trusting in your evolution. 2024 is a cosmic joyride for Aquarius, with innovative ideas shining center stage, Saturn urging career growth, Jupiter enlivening your social life, and Uranus electrifying your love life. Listen to your intuition, remember to indulge in self-care, and embrace change. This is your year to color the world with your unique spirit, balancing ambition with well-being.



### PISCES, WATER SIGN, FEB 19 - MARCH 20

Invest time in healing to reshape your hopes and dreams, paving the way for new beginnings and authentic aspirations. This transformation rewrites your story, using your past as a foundation for a bright future. In 2024, embrace a transformative journey

filled with creative opportunities. The planets highlight your artistic talents, sparking ingenious ideas. Welcome change as Uranus disrupts your comfort zone, and remain open to surprises. Let intuition guide you, and Jupiter enhance your social and romantic connections. Among this excitement, prioritize self-care to maintain your empathetic and creative spirit.



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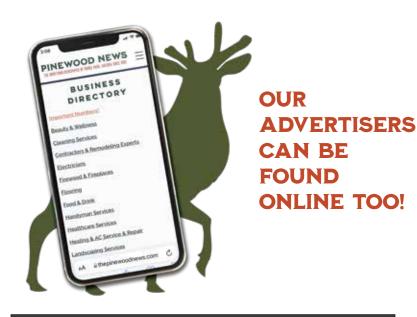
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# **MUNDS PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH**

### HE MAY NOT BE WHAT YOU EXPECT

By Pastor Steve Bowyer

A friend of mine was with a company headquartered in the South Bend, IN area. They were planning their big annual sales conference and they always brought in a big-name speaker. My friend was tasked with being the chauffer and tour guide for the speaker. He was to pick him up at the airport, drive him to the conference site, back to his hotel, and anywhere he wanted to go for the entire weekend. My friend was not looking forward to this because of his admitted preconceived opinion of this individual. The guy they were bringing in was Jerry Jones, owner of the Dallas Cowboys.

It was not just that my friend, like so many others in the area, were either Chicago Bears fans or Indianapolis Colts fans and they abhorred the Dallas Cowboys. It was also what they read in the media about Jerry Jones.

Jones bought the Cowboys in the late 80s and very unceremoniously fired the only coach the Cowboys had ever had. Tom Landry was an icon in Dallas. He was also on the board of Trustees of the seminary I attended. A beloved figure around town who was dismissed and disrespected by what appeared to be an ego the size of Texas.

The sports and entertainment media were not kind to Jerry Jones. You did not have to be a sports fan to have an opinion of him. And, mostly, the opinions of the people were strongly negative.

My friend prepared himself, steeled himself, to be confronted with a self-centered, aloof, egomaniac that would spend the entire time in the backseat of his car on his phone, ignoring him and everything else around him. The impression he had was of a man who believed the world revolved around him and his billion-dollar franchise. It turned out, this could not be farther from the truth.

Jerry Jones took a personal interest in my friend from the moment he settled into his car at the airport. He was curious about his wife and kids. He asked many good questions about his life, career, and even faith. Jerry never got on his phone once. He observed the neighborhoods and wanted to know more about the influence of the University of Notre Dame in the community.

Jerry Jones did not turn out to be what my friend expected by a long shot. Some of you reading this article may have preconceived ideas about what Jesus is like. And you may be as wrong about Him as my friend was about Jerry Jones.

The media portrayal of Jesus and his followers has not been kind. Madison Avenue, New York, Hollywood have all given the impression that Jesusfollowers and the church are like Jesus; judgmental, narrow-minded, and un-

accepting of people who are not exactly like us. While it may be true of some of us, the example Jesus has set is one of grace and acceptance of all people.

Jesus made His first splash on the scene when He, His mother, and a few friends attended a wedding of a family friend. Maybe the host family miscalculated the number of people who would attend. But they woefully underestimated how much wine they needed for the reception. They ran out.

Mary, Jesus' mother, made the situation known to Jesus without asking Him to do anything. She then told the servants to do whatever He asked them to do. And do nothing was definitely an option. What would Jesus do?

"Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so, they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet. They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine." (John 2:6-9)

What would you expect Jesus to do? Let the unprepared host family face the embarrassment for poor planning? Lecture the crowd on the evils of alcohol consumption? Maybe make a public display of his power and ability to impress the masses. He did none of these.

Jesus graciously and privately performed the first miracle written about in the bible. He messed with the narrow-minded, judgmental religious people by turning the water in those special pots into wine. Six jars holding up to 30 gallons each was no small amount. Party on!

Jesus was certainly not condoning drunken behavior. The wine He created was different than what we pour from our bottles and boxes today. But He did not do what many would have expected Him to do. Only the servants knew what happened.

I am not big on New Year's resolutions. But maybe this is the perfect time to give Jesus a chance. Reject the media's portrayal. Do not get too caught up with the attitudes and actions of many of His followers. Get past the artificial façade and introduce yourself to Him, personally.

Like my friend's opinion of Jerry Jones, Jesus may not be what you expect Him to be either when you get to know Him personally. I would encourage you to find out.

For more information about our church go to our website, mpcc.church.

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## **GET OUTDOORS!**

### GAME & FISH HAS GREAT IDEAS FOR 2024



By Arizona Game & Fish

It's just about time to say goodbye to 2023. As we reflect on the changes that we want — or need — to make in the new year, how about adding an outdoors resolution to your list?

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) offers some simple resolutions, any one of which should be easy for an outdoors enthusiast to stick to:

### FISH LOCAL

Make it a point to wet a line this year at one (or more) of the state's 50-plus waters in the Community Fishing Program that are seasonally stocked with channel catfish, bluegill and rainbow trout. This is a great way to introduce a youngster to a fun, lifelong sport. Your reward? Hearing that youngster squeal with delight while pulling in his or her first fish. Buy a general fishing license, or combination hunt and fish license, online at www.azgfd. com/license/ (youth under age 10 do not need a license).

### SUPPORT WILDLIFE

Wildlife lovers can put their money where their heart is by joining our Conservation Membership program. Your annual dues provide much-needed funding to sustain important wildlife and habitat conservation projects. Help to ensure a wildlife legacy for the future.

### TAKE A YOUNGSTER OUTDOORS

Look for animal tracks together and identify the critter that made them. Armed with only a bird identification guide, embark on a "hunting" expedition and see how many species you can find. A day in the field will create memories that last a lifetime — for both of you.

### PICK IT UP

Vow to clean up not only after yourself, but those who aren't as considerate. Take an extra trash bag along on your next outing, and spend a few minutes

picking up those empty cans, cigarette butts or campsite trash. After all, respected access is open access.

### BE A WILDLIFE VIEWER

Arizona provides some of the best wildlife-viewing opportunities in the nation, with more than 800 species of native wildlife. It's a fun, inexpensive activity that the entire family can enjoy.

### **INVEST IN GOOD OPTICS**

Most hunters know that success in the field begins with a quality pair of binoculars or spotting scope. Don't skimp. Better to buy the best you can afford that fits your needs than settle for a middle-of-the-road piece of equipment and be forced to upgrade later.

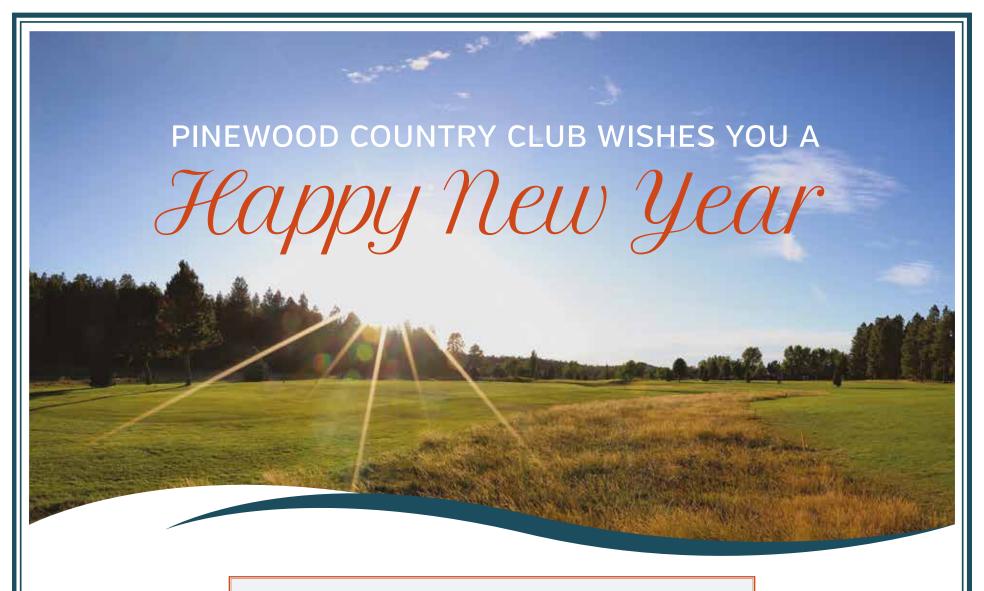
### BE A CONSERVATIONIST

It's difficult to imagine what our wildlife populations might be like today without the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

### GET HUNTING

Don't let the odds of being selected in the random draw keep you from applying for what could be the hunt of a lifetime. If you've always dreamed of hunting bison, pronghorn or bull elk, then get in the game and fill out an application. Also, don't overlook small game or other species that can be hunted year-round. Buy a license online today at www.azgfd.com/license/.

Enter AZGFD's portal. The portal lets you create a secure account where you can view and manage your licenses, draw results, bonus points and memberships in your own personal "My AZGFD Dashboard" section. Just click on the "Account Login" button at the bottom of the www.azgfd.gov home page, then select the "Register" option in the upper right-hand corner.



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Applications can be found on the Pinewood Country Club website, under Contact Us / Employment or contact Gary Pearce at 928.286.9031 or gpearce@pinewoodcountryclubaz.com.

