

PINEWOOD NEWS

THE GOOD LIFE, COMMUNITY & MOUNTAIN LIVING SINCE '93

VOL. 31 NO. 8 JUNE 7, 2024

FREE!



UNVEILING A LEGACY

ONE MAN'S WISH TO
REBUILD COMMUNITY SPIRIT

PG 12

COVER by Midjourney & Sandee Caviness

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR & STORY TIPS!

The Pinewood News is always interested in feedback and/or story tips from our readers 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

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THE PINEWOOD NEWS

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18005 S DIXIE LANE, 48

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17745 S MAVERICK CIR

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1110 E LAKE MEADOW CIR

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17295 S ZIA PLACE

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17430 S MESCALERO DR

Spacious chalet on a large lot, 600 sq ft deck, vaulted ceilings, stone fireplace, renovated kitchen and baths. 50-year roof (2018), 3 bedrooms, loft, workshop. Don't miss out!



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260 SANDIA CIR

Enchanting cabin nestled among pines, fully furnished with new TV, light fixtures, Trex deck, Ring cameras, and WiFi locks. Enjoy al fresco dining under the stars. A cozy, modern retreat.



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17385 E MOUNTAINSIDE PL

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1120 E LAKE MEADOW CIR

Nestled among ponderosa pines, this renovated home offers a fireplace, forest views, and access to Pinewood Country Club and O'Dell Lake. Ideal for outdoor enthusiasts.



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AA MEETINGS - FEEL BETTER!

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

MUNDS PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

Services Sunday, 9 am & 10:45 am
17670 S Munds Ranch Rd

PINEWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY MEETING

The Community is Welcome!
Tuesday, July 2
6:30 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

PINEWOOD FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Public Welcome
Tuesday, June 18
3 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

PINEWOOD SANITARY DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Public Welcome
Thursday, June 14
3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr

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MUNDS PARK TOWN HALL

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Thursday, July 18, 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

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MAY 16 COMMUNITY WATCH MEETING

New Fire House Plans Proceed Despite Rising Costs

The Fire House project, initially approved with a set budget, has faced a 41% increase in material costs over the past 18 months. This increase, while significant, will not compromise the project's completion. To address this, Fire Chief Tope secured additional financial support. Despite the higher costs, the new firehouse will feature advanced safety systems and faster response capabilities, ensuring the safety of our firefighters and our community.

Permitting is scheduled to begin in September, with materials ordered in the winter to navigate ongoing supply chain issues. Demolition is planned for March or April next year. Chief Tope is also negotiating temporary housing for firefighters during construction and has several options available.

Bear Jaw Reports Success in Green Waste Collection Effort

The community excelled again this year in green waste collection, with significant contributions from the Bear Jaw Team. The team is known for their extensive training and unwavering wildfire readiness commitments, and has a limited window for green waste pickup. They serve Munds Park, Mountainaire, and Kachina Village, which is why only 15 bags per household can be collected. Residents exceeding this limit needed to manage the excess themselves.

Residents are reminded to log their green waste collection hours on the Pinewood Fire Department's website. This is essential for maintaining Fire Wise status and helps Munds Park residents retain their homeowner's insurance.

First-of-Its-Kind Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Munds Park has received a FEMA grant to provide fire mitigation services on private property, making it the first community in the U.S. to receive such support. Chief Tope and the County have identified 33 parcels in Munds Park that need tree thinning to reduce fire risk. Property owners who have agreed to this free service will see work begin soon.

Forest Service Updates on Prescribed Burns

Mark Nabel, a Forestry Specialist with the Coconino National Forest, provided an update on the ongoing prescribed burns and thinning efforts designed to reduce wildfire risks. These fire mitigation tasks are continuous, and there are no new developments to report at this time.

A significant aspect of prescribed burns involves "Protected Activity Centers" (PACs). These are designated areas where the endangered Mexican spotted owls nest, roost, and forage. Special care is taken in these areas to ensure the owls' protection during fire mitigation activities.

During the meeting, a community member whose forest-facing property was recently thinned by the Forest Service raised a question about the removal of smaller healthy trees while tall dead trees were left standing. Nabel explained that the loggers, who pay the Forest Service for the live trees they remove during thinning, do not find financial value in the dead trees. Consequently, the dead trees are left behind. The income from the loggers is used by the Forest Service to return for dead tree removal if necessary, repair any tire ruts made by the loggers, and perform other necessary cleanups. Nabel also highlighted that dead trees serve as valuable habitats for many animals and are essential to the forest ecosystem.

Coconino County Sheriff's Office Shares Crime Stats and Safety Initiatives

Chief Deputy Bret Axlund from the Coconino County Sheriff's Office shared some concerning updates but assures us they are on top of it!

Crime Stats

From January 1 to May 15, the park saw:

- 2 Assaults
- 1 Auto Burglary
- 1 Civil Matter
- 2 DUIs
- 1 Family Trouble
- 1 Hit and Run
- 1 Mental Health Case
- 3 Disorderly Conducts
- 2 Suicidal Incidents
- 1 ID Theft
- 3 Thefts
- 2 Trespassing Incidents

OHV and Traffic Safety

Before Memorial Day, checkpoints will be set up to monitor speeding, DUIs, and underage OHV riders and ensure compliance with OHV regulations. Violators will face tickets, and some vehicles may be impounded for 20 days. No warnings will be given! Law enforcement will also educate campers on fire and OHV safety, with marked and unmarked vehicles patrolling the roads, especially during busy weekends.

Continued on page 7



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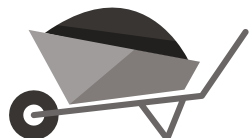
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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

Continued from page 5

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE COMMUNITY WATCH MEETING *Continued*

Short Term Rentals

The Sheriff's Department is issuing tickets for disorderly conduct at short-term rentals (STRs). These incidents are reported to the Community Development Department, which will review and potentially revoke or not renew STR permits.

Mental Health & Cartel Activity

Mental health issues, gun violence, and theft are increasing with no signs of slowing down. Fentanyl is a huge problem in Flagstaff as they are a central hub for Cartel trafficking of drugs and theft. The cartels also target trains, stealing electronics worth millions of dollars. The Cartels are well-organized and know exactly which rail cars to target, making \$30-50 million per robbery. The Sheriff's Office is intensifying efforts to combat drug dealers and curb cartel activities.

Join the Sheriff's Department

Our community needs heroes. Brett says staffing has improved, but they need more brave individuals. If you have the courage and commitment to make a real difference, join the Sheriff's Department. Protect, serve, and become a part of something bigger.

FEMA Updates Munds Park Flood Map Timeline

FEMA aims to finalize new flood maps for Munds Park by January 2025. Responses to appeals will be sent by August, with a 30-day window for further appeals. The county advises residents constructing or improving properties to use the upcoming maps to avoid higher flood insurance costs.

County Schedules Road Repairs Around Sanitary District Projects

The county will delay pothole repairs in areas where the Pinewood Sanitary District has scheduled work. However, they will proceed with fixing potholes in other areas this season. Residents had raised concerns about the need for road repairs, leading to this update.

THE NEXT COMMUNITY WATCH MEETING

All residents are encouraged to attend. Stay informed about what's happening in our community—your presence and participation are essential!

Thursday, July 18, 6:30 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

ASTRONAUTS TRAIN IN FLAGSTAFF!

Over 50 years have passed since the last U.S. astronaut set foot on the moon, and now the next generation is preparing for their lunar journey in Flagstaff. Historically, Flagstaff's unique volcanic landscape served as a training ground for NASA's Apollo team in the 1970s. Today, the Artemis team returns to this region to hone their skills.

Flagstaff offers a terrain that closely mimics the moon's surface, making it ideal for astronaut training. The Artemis team, led by Planetary Geologist Trevor Graff, is following in the footsteps of the Apollo astronauts, utilizing Flagstaff's rocky landscape for their preparations. The team is being trained from basic geology to advanced crew operations, similar to the Apollo missions.

Test Manager Dave Coan highlighted that the astronauts use training suits and the volcanic fields to simulate moonwalks, maintaining constant communication with Mission Control. This comprehensive setup, combining astronaut training and mission control exercises, is unique to Flagstaff.

Recently, astronauts Kate Rubins and Andre Douglas trained in the region, marking significant milestones as Rubins is set to be the first woman, and Douglas the first person of color, to walk on the moon. Their training in Flagstaff is a crucial step in their mission, aiming to inspire future generations to pursue their dreams in space exploration.

While the exact date of the Artemis team's moon mission is not yet determined, the team will continue their rigorous training in Flagstaff in preparation for their historic journey.

This article incorporates reporting from Mason Carroll's piece in Arizona Family.



Continued on page 9

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Kota's Coffee House

17680 S Munds Ranch Rd, Munds Park, AZ 86017

Happy Hour style charcuterie platters, cookies, coffee, and tea will be served.

LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

Continued from page 7

ELECTRONIC WASTE DROP-OFF EVENT FOR MUNDS PARK AND SURROUNDING AREAS



Coconino County and City of Sedona are offering a Drop-Off Event open to Munds Park, Mountainaire, Kachina Village, Pine Del, Mountain Dell, and City of Sedona residents

Acceptable items: Electronic waste (computers, mobile phones, printers, hard drives, CDs/DVDs, etc.), medical waste (sharpes, prescription drugs, over-the-counter medication, expired vitamins), fluorescent bulbs, aerosol cans (do not need to be empty), documents for shredding, CRT (cathode ray tube) TVs (we will only accept up to 20: first come, first served!)

No commercial waste, paint, pesticides, or other liquid waste. No furniture, tires, or large appliances.

Where & when:
Saturday, June 15th: 9 am to 1 pm
17768 Fairway Dr. Munds Park, AZ 86017

For more information, check out our webpage:
www.coconino.az.gov/2955/events

VERDE VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY NEEDS YOU! BECOME A DOG WALKER TODAY!



Imagine a world where every dog gets the love, exercise, and socialization they deserve. At the Verde Valley Humane Society, we believe in this vision, but we need your help to make it a reality. With around 50 dogs in our shelter, 40 of them need daily walks to stay healthy and happy. Right now, we only have two volunteers available each day during the week, which means each volunteer walks about 20 dogs.

Volunteering is not just about giving back; it's about staying active, making new friends, and feeling the unconditional love of a grateful dog. Walking dogs daily is crucial to prevent the negative effects of kennel life, keeping these dogs vibrant and full of life.

Our volunteers typically walk 8 to 10 miles each day, depending on the number of helpers present. But the joy of volunteering doesn't stop at walking. You'll also oversee playtime in the courtyard and even read to our furry friends, enriching their lives in so many ways.

Join us in making a difference. For more information, visit verdevalleyhumane.org/volunteer or email volunteerprogram@verdevalleyhumanesociety.org. Your kindness and time can transform a dog's life—and yours too.

This article incorporates on reporting from Alyssa Smith's piece in Journal AZ.

COUNTY RECORDER'S OFFICE OFFERS RECORDING NOTIFICATION ALERTS

Coconino County Recorder's office is offering a new service called Recording Notification Alerts. Recording Notification Alerts is a free service for the benefit of all who own property or businesses in Coconino County. It monitors documents recorded with the County Recorder's office and alerts subscribers. This program will notify participating subscribers by email when a document is recorded with a name and/or business that matches the subscriber. This service applies only to documents recorded after signing up. Users will also be able to unsubscribe or make updates to this service at any time.

"We are pleased to offer this new service to people that record documents with our office. People who are concerned about potential deception through fraudulent recordings in Coconino County should sign up for this program," said County Recorder Patty Hansen.

To sign up for the new service go to: <https://coconino.az.gov/3318/Recording-Notification-Alerts>



Send story tips to [Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com](mailto>Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com). We're listening!



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WHY THE COCONINO COUNTY SUPERVISOR ELECTION MATTERS TO YOU

By Sandee Caviness

During the gubernatorial race, we featured interviews with most of the candidates, prompting feedback from many readers who preferred that Pinewood News remain a charming, local publication rather than a political outlet. Our community valued the hometown feel of our paper, and we have respected that sentiment.

However, as Munds Park is an unincorporated area, our primary representation comes from our County Supervisors. With Matt Ryan's seat available in the upcoming election, we believe it's crucial to provide coverage on this event for Munds Park residents.

The Pinewood News is committed to maintaining a non-partisan stance and reporting objectively. We have scheduled interviews with two of the three candidates, Tammy Ontiveros and Sean Golliher. Adam Hess, who currently occupies Matt's seat, has yet to respond to our invitation for an interview. Should he choose to join, we will include his perspectives.

Their interviews will be published in the July 4th issue. If you have questions for the candidates, please send them to [Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com](mailto>Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com)

Below, you'll find an overview of what County Supervisors do, offering valuable insights into the significance of their roles. This is a great opportunity to refresh your understanding of why this position is so essential for our community.

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF A DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE IN COCONINO COUNTY

When casting a vote for a district representative in Coconino County, it's crucial to understand the impact these officials have on local governance. District Representatives, often referred to as County Supervisors, wield significant influence over the county's administrative and fiscal responsibilities.

Key Responsibilities

A district representative's primary role is to set administrative policies and oversee the county's budget. This involves ensuring that taxpayer money is spent wisely and within established guidelines. The Board of Supervisors, composed of five members elected from different districts, handles these tasks collectively. They oversee various aspects of county operations, from public health and safety to land use and county infrastructure maintenance.

Additionally, these representatives are responsible for interacting with constituents, addressing their concerns, and representing their interests at the county level. This direct connection with the community is vital as it ensures that residents' voices are heard in decisions that affect their daily lives.

Community Involvement

District representatives are actively involved in community events and initiatives, a critical aspect of their role that demonstrates their commitment to enhancing the quality of life in their districts. This engagement is not only about presence; it is a vital opportunity for them to listen directly to their constituents. By participating in events like the Munds Park Community Watch meetings, representatives can gather insights and feedback, which are essential for addressing the community's needs effectively.

Budgetary Oversight

One of the most significant powers of the Board of Supervisors is budgetary oversight. The board ensures that all county departments operate within the fiscal constraints set forth by the budget, allowing for efficient and effective resource use. This oversight extends to all aspects of county operations, including emergency services, public health, and educational programs.

Why It Matters

Voters should understand that the influence and responsibilities of a district representative are crucial to making informed decisions at the polls. These officials are pivotal in shaping the community's future, from emergency preparedness to educational enhancements and public health initiatives. Their decisions can have lasting impacts on community well-being, making it essential for voters to choose candidates who align with their views and values.

In summary, when voting for a district representative in Coconino County, you are choosing an advocate for your community. These officials are not just policymakers; they are a bridge between the government and the community, ensuring your voice is heard in the corridors of power. Make your vote count by understanding the roles and responsibilities of your district representatives.



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ROSES IN THE PARK

Bob Timberman’s Blossoming Legacy of Service

By Sandee Caviness

In the heart of Munds Park, where the echoes of the past stand in stark contrast to the realities of the future, resides one of its revered citizens, Bob Timberman. Since moving here in the early ‘80s, Bob, a Vietnam era veteran, has spent countless hours serving our community. Through decades of dedicated volunteerism, he has helped shape the values and visions of Munds Park. Now, as he faces the twilight of his journey, Bob reflects on his profound connection with the place he calls home, offering wisdom and guidance to the generations that will follow. His story is a poignant reminder of the community’s evolving dynamics. It inspires all who believe in the power of legacy and the strength of community ties.

SERVING HIS COUNTRY

Bob and Barbara Timberman’s marriage, now nearing six decades, began under the shadow of the Vietnam War. On their very first Valentine’s Day, a romantic card from Barbara was accompanied by a life-altering letter—Bob was drafted. Since that day, the couple has never celebrated Valentine’s Day.

Choosing to take control of his fate rather than succumb to uncertainty, Bob enlisted. His hope was to avoid being a frontline infantryman, instead gaining skills in a specialized area. His military journey took him to Germany, not Vietnam, where he trained with Hawk Missiles and as a sniper, although he mostly found himself behind the wheel of military trucks. Bob’s service involved playing war games and patrolling the Czechoslovakian borders—armed, yet restrained and not allowed to use his weapon. Bob said it was much like today on the border. Our Border Patrol is charged with protecting our borders but cannot use their weapons if needed.

Every month brought a stark reminder of war’s reality: a list naming comrades sent to fight and those who had fallen. Bob counts himself fortunate to be among the 13 in his troop who never saw the Vietnamese front.

Life abroad with Barbara was quaint and adventurous. Residing in a modest one-room apartment without an icebox meant daily shopping trips and an unexpectedly romantic lifestyle. They traveled through Austria, Switzerland, France, and Bavaria, enjoying a freedom distant from the turmoil back in the States. Bob said the military shielded them from the era’s contentious protests and social upheaval. They had no idea what was going on.

One memory that profoundly touched Bob was his visit to the Dachau Concentration Camp. It was a heartbreaking memory that he will never forget. Barbara visited on her own and was so deeply moved that she cried through the entire tour. Bob expresses a poignant wish for today’s youth, suggesting that world travel and exposure to such historic sites could greatly enhance their education and appreciation of American values. It would do more than any college education; judging from what’s happening today at our universities, they would learn more.

However, Bob’s military service also exposed him to domestic conflicts. Shortly after returning to the U.S., he found himself on red alert during



Photo of Bob and his family after the Pinning Ceremony. From left to right: Bob’s brother Phil, his sister Karla, wife Barbara, son’s Bruce and Devin, niece Brittanie.

Photo by Barbara Sherman Photography

the 1967 Detroit Riots. The U.S. Government was sending snipers to take out agitators during the riots. Armed and in full gear, he was prepared for a confrontation he hoped to avoid. Bob remained firm, he was not and would not take American lives, regardless of the circumstances. His principled stance and the lesser-known role of snipers during the riots reflect a complex period of service.

Despite the harsh reception Vietnam veterans faced upon their return, Bob remains unregretful and proud of his service. His dedication to his country is unwavering, and he proudly declares his veteran status.

Recently, as Bob entered palliative care provided by Northern Arizona Hospice, his service was honored through a poignant Veteran Pinning Ceremony. These ceremonies are a heartfelt acknowledgment of the sacrifices made by veterans like Bob. They offer a profound expression of gratitude, providing veterans and their families a moment of recognition and closure, affirming the significance of their service at life’s end.

Bob took great pride in the Pinning Ceremony, enthusiastically showing me the pins he received. It was touching to see his joy and pride in the recognition of his service.

Bob Timberman didn’t hang up his sense of duty with his uniform. In Munds Park, he found a new field of service, driven not by obligation but by a genuine desire to contribute. This inherent drive was a natural part of Bob’s character, from which Munds Park greatly benefited. Alongside Barbara, Bob’s hands, once trained for war, were now instruments of nurturing the place they call home.

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

Bob Timberman’s commitment to community service has flourished as magnificently as the roses in the Memorial Rose Garden, which he meticulously cultivated beside the firehouse. Driven by a civic spirit familiar to his generation, Bob gave his time to local organizations. He served on the board of the Pinewood Sanitary District, worked with the

Munds Park Trail Stewards, participated in the CERT Program, took part in Neighborhood Watch, and worked the 4th of July Parade.

Yet, it was the garden that captured his heart. Back when he and Barbara lived in Paradise Valley, Bob nurtured 225 rose bushes, mastering the art of rose gardening with every possible variety. This passion caught the eye of John Welsch, the fire chief at the time, who entrusted Bob with transforming a neglected patch of land by the firehouse into a thriving splash of color and life.

Initiated around 1994, the Memorial Rose Garden became more than just a project; it was a canvas where Bob painted his love for the community. Though he had a few helping hands over the years, it was primarily Bob and his son, Devin, who were the caretakers of this living tribute. This garden was not just about beautification but a place of connection. Bob cherishes his time there, engaging with passersby, enjoying the weather, and playing in the dirt, where he finds peace and purpose.

I asked Bob about his favorite rose varieties, hoping to tap into his knowledge for my own rose garden! He shared the following list:

- The Henry Fonda Hybrid Tea Rose, a bloom as bold and assertive as its namesake.
- The Kentucky Derby Hybrid Tea Rose, which carries the spirit of celebration and competition.
- The Midas Touch, known for its golden hues that seem to light up any garden.
- The Oklahoma Rose Hybrid Tea, deep and resonant like the heartland of America.
- The Firefighter Hybrid Tea, a fierce red tribute to courage.
- Mr. Lincoln, profoundly red and stately, a fitting homage to an American icon.

The Memorial Garden is more than just a collection of roses; it is a testament to his dedication to beauty and community service. Each rose planted by Bob tells a story of care, community, and the ongoing legacy of a man who gave as much as he grew.

HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED

Bob and Barbara first discovered Munds Park through friends who had a cabin here. Like everyone else who has wandered through these parts, they were quickly captivated. In 1987, they found their summer sanctuary, and by 1999, what was once a seasonal retreat became their forever home. The pristine landscapes were a draw, but it was the warmth of community life that truly made them stay.

Over the years, I’ve asked long-standing residents like the Timbermans how Munds Park has evolved. Both Bob and Barbara agree, “It has changed drastically.” Their realtor mentioned that the community typically sees new faces every five years—a cycle they found hard to believe but soon saw as true.

The landscape of ownership has shifted significantly since then. Today, the cabins and homes are increasingly purchased not by families seeking a seasonal getaway but by investors and short-term rental operators. This new wave of ownership doesn’t seek to immerse in the community but rather to capitalize on it. People are here to escape, have a good time, tear the place up, and then retreat back to the concrete jungle. Bob explained that this is a devastating loss and breaks the commitment and connection that once thrived among seasonal and full-time residents alike.

The sense of community that was supported by locals who dedicated their time to volunteer is waning. The aging pioneers of the Park can no longer shoulder the community activities they once spearheaded, and fewer

are stepping up to fill their roles. Furthermore, the Country Club was initially created to serve the community and historically served as a hub for gatherings, such as the annual Fourth of July fireworks—symbolizing unity and celebration—have transformed. Previously a welcoming and affordable space for all residents, the Country Club has now become a private establishment distanced from the day-to-day life of most Munds Park residents, fostering a feeling of “them and us” atmosphere.

Even our Dark Sky status is under threat, with streets that once invited stargazers are now “lit up like airstrips,” Barbara says. And where quiet golf carts once peacefully roamed, now thunderous, off-road vehicles tear through, shattering the peace.

Bob reminisces about a time when Munds Park was a whispered secret, a treasure kept under wraps to protect its quaint charm. But social media and the rise of vacation rentals have lifted the veil, exposing this hidden gem to the masses. “They say these rentals boost our community financially,” Bob says, skepticism clear in his tone, “but at what cost?”

BOB URGES NEW GENERATION TO STEP UP

At 78, Bob reflects on a life filled with purpose and service as he navigates the autumn of his years under palliative care. His days are marked by deep reflections on the past and heartfelt hopes for the future of Munds Park, the community he has loved for decades.

When asked about the wisdom he wishes to impart, Bob’s response is impassioned: “Take our community back before we end up like Flagstaff or Sedona. Take pride in our community and fight for it.” He advocates for a revival of the times when neighbors actively supported one another. For Bob, this isn’t just nostalgia—it’s the essence of a thriving, resilient community.

“There are still wonderful people here, but they are aging and moving on. I want the newer generation to step up—neighbors helping neighbors, volunteering, and being involved,” Bob urges, his voice heavy with worry.

Bob also encourages the younger generation to broaden their horizons through service and exploration: “I wish the younger generation would serve their country, travel the world, and learn why America is so great,” he states, reflecting on how his own experiences abroad enriched his understanding and appreciation of his homeland.

As he talks about his love for his country and the importance of respecting neighbors, Bob becomes emotional. “It breaks my heart to see what’s happening today,” he confesses. Tears begin to well, signaling the depth of his concern and his deep hope for a resurgence of community values.

Despite the rapid changes affecting Munds Park and the broader nation, Bob relishes the memories of a more united community. He remains hopeful that the foundational values of mutual support and engagement can inspire new residents to foster a renewed community spirit.

Bob’s reflections serve as more than a nostalgic look back—they call for a return to the principles that made Munds Park the Mayberry of neighborly love and collective pride.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Bob for his unwavering love of country and his dedicated service to the nation and the Munds Park community. His commitment has enriched the lives of many and set a profound example of civic duty and community spirit. Thank you, Bob, for inspiring us all to cherish and engage more deeply with the places we call home.





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FROM THE GARDEN TO THE TABLE

Southern Tomato, Cheddar, & Bacon Pie

By Margaret Ivey

In the heart of Southern cuisine, there's a pie as comforting as a slow summer evening and as satisfying as a long chat on the front porch. This pie, originally created to celebrate summer's bounty, comes from deep roots in the South. Back in the day, Southern families would gather for Sunday dinners, a sacred tradition where recipes and stories were shared. This tradition could use a modern-day revival. Nothing like good food and conversation with your tribe to make you feel whole.

And, nothing like a sun-soaked garden in full bloom, with tomatoes ripening under a sunny sky. These plump, juicy fruits, harvested at their peak, are a cornerstone of Southern gardens. In the South, tomatoes are as much a part of life as sweet tea, and their natural sweetness is a hallmark of summer's abundance.

Though its origins lie across the ocean, the sharp, tangy bite of Cheddar cheese found a loving home in American kitchens. It pairs perfectly with the sweetness of tomatoes, creating a harmonious blend of flavors. And when it melts into the pie, it turns into pure, creamy perfection.

No Southern recipe would be complete without a touch of bacon. Smoky, salty, and downright irresistible, bacon adds that savory note that ties everything together. The bacon balances the tomatoes' acidity and the cheese's richness, creating a flavor symphony that hits all the right notes.

And then there's the crust – oh, the crust. Flaky, buttery, and golden yumminess that holds this masterpiece together. In the South, pies are a staple, a way of life. Whether sweet or savory, a pie's crust is its foundation, providing that perfect, comforting bite that makes you feel like everything's gonna be alright.

This fabulous Tomato, Cheddar, and Bacon Pie likely came about to celebrate summer's bounty and make the most of what's fresh and abundant. Over time, it's become more than just a recipe – it's a tradition, a way to bring a taste of the South to wherever you are. Whether you're enjoying it on a sunny porch in Georgia or in Munds Park, this pie connects you to a rich heritage of good food and good times.

So, the next time you're craving something that's both familiar and a little bit special, whip up this pie. It's a reminder that comfort can be found in the simplest of ingredients and the warmest of traditions.

Ingredients:

Crust:

- 2 ¼ cups self-rising soft-wheat flour (such as White Lily)
- 1 cup cold butter, cut up
- 8 cooked bacon slices, chopped
- ¾ cup sour cream

Filling:

- 2 ¾ pounds assorted large tomatoes, divided
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1 ½ cups (6 oz.) freshly shredded extra-sharp Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup freshly shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons fresh dill sprigs
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh chives

Continued on page 19

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THE COCKTAIL CONNOISSEUR'S CORNER

REFRESHING SOUTHERN BOURBON SWEET TEA

By Dick Trudeau

Bourbon sweet tea is more than just a drink; it's a liquid narrative of the American South, where two cultural icons collide in a glass. Let's talk about sweet tea first. This isn't just a beverage—it's a way of life, particularly in the southeastern United States. Tea plants arrive on American soil, and by the time the 1904 World's Fair rolls around in St. Louis, iced tea is the star, offering a cool, sweet escape from the heat. By the 1920s, sweet tea is a Southern staple. Brew black tea, stir in a scandalous amount of sugar while it's hot to ensure it melts completely, then chill it down and pour it over ice. The result? A refreshment that defines a region.

Now, bourbon. Born in the late 18th century and rooted in Kentucky, bourbon whiskey is America's contribution to the world of spirits. To wear the bourbon name, it has to be made in the USA, with a grain mixture that's at least 51% corn, aged in new, charred oak barrels. Its smooth, rich flavor has won fans far and wide.

So how did these two Southern giants meet? It's likely that bourbon sweet tea emerged in the latter half of the 20th century, as people started experimenting with cocktails. Mixologists and home bartenders alike began blending the best of Southern traditions into something new and irresistible.

Today, bourbon sweet tea is a summer staple in the South. It's a testament to the region's knack for hospitality and love of bold flavors. Combining the cooling sweetness of iced tea with the warm kick of bourbon, this drink is perfect for a hot afternoon or a lively gathering. It's a little sweet, a little strong, and altogether refreshing—capturing the essence of Southern living in every sip.

A Glimpse into the Ingredients:

Black Tea: Black tea forms the foundation of this sweet tea. While any black tea will work, Earl Grey adds a particularly nice touch. If you have loose leaf tea, it's even better.

White Sugar, Ginger, and Lemon Juice: These simmer together to create a delightful flavored simple syrup.

Bourbon: This Southern-inspired cocktail shines with bourbon, but feel free to experiment with a good local gin for a different twist.

Bitters: Bitters are the unsung heroes of the cocktail world, adding depth and complexity. Don't skip them, and adjust to your taste.



Continued on page 19



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HOMEMADE & WONDERFUL

Continued from page 15

- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 green onion, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 ½ tablespoons plain yellow cornmeal

Directions:

Prepare Crust:

- Place flour in the bowl of a heavy-duty electric stand mixer; cut in cold butter with a pastry blender or fork until the mixture resembles small peas. Chill for 10 minutes.
- Add chopped bacon to the flour mixture; beat at low speed just until combined. Gradually add sour cream, ¼ cup at a time, beating just until blended after each addition.
- Spoon mixture onto a heavily floured surface; sprinkle lightly with flour, and knead 3 or 4 times, adding more flour as needed. Roll to a 13-inch round. Gently place dough in a 9-inch fluted tart pan with 2-inch sides and a removable bottom. Press dough into pan; trim off excess dough along edges. Chill for 30 minutes.

Prepare Filling:

- Cut 2 pounds tomatoes into ¼-inch-thick slices, and remove seeds. Place tomatoes in a single layer on paper towels; sprinkle with 1 tsp. salt. Let stand for 30 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 425°F. Stir together Cheddar cheese, Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, mayonnaise, egg, herbs, apple cider vinegar, green onion, sugar, remaining salt, and black pepper in a large bowl until combined.
- Pat tomato slices dry with a paper towel. Sprinkle cornmeal over the bottom of the crust. Lightly spread ½ cup cheese mixture onto crust; layer with half of the tomato slices in slightly overlapping rows. Spread with another ½ cup cheese mixture. Repeat layers, using remaining tomato slices and cheese mixture. Cut remaining ¾ pound tomatoes into ¼-inch-thick slices, and arrange on top of pie.
- Bake at 425°F for 40 to 45 minutes, shielding edges with foil during the last 20 minutes to prevent excessive browning. Let stand 1 to 2 hours before serving.

SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD

Continued from page 17

Ingredients:

For the Tea:

- 7 cups Water, divided
- 6 bags Black Tea (Earl Grey is recommended)
- 1 cup White Sugar
- 1 inch Ginger, peeled (optional)
- ½ cup Lemon Juice
- 6 ounces (¾ cup) Bourbon
- 12 dashes Bitters

For Serving/Garnish:

- Ice
- Lemon Slices or Peel
- Fresh Mint

Instructions:

- Bring 6 cups of water to a boil. Add tea bags and brew according to package directions, usually 3 to 4 minutes.
- Strain the tea bags without squeezing them to avoid bitterness.
- While the tea brews, combine 1 cup of water, sugar, ginger, and lemon juice in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer and heat until the sugar is fully dissolved. Strain the syrup through a fine strainer to remove any ginger pieces or lemon pulp.
- Mix the brewed tea with the simple syrup. Taste and adjust the sweetness by reducing the amount of simple syrup if you prefer it less sweet.
- Stir in the bourbon and bitters.
- The tea can be refrigerated for up to a week.
- To serve, pour the tea over ice and garnish with lemon slices and fresh mint.

This Bourbon Sweet Tea cocktail is more than just a drink—it's a tradition in a glass, capturing the essence of Southern hospitality and the leisurely pace of summer. Whether enjoyed on a sunny porch or shared with friends at a barbecue, it's a taste of the South that refreshes and delights. So, next time you're looking to cool down and savor the moment, mix up a batch of this sweet tea, sit back, and let the summer unfold.



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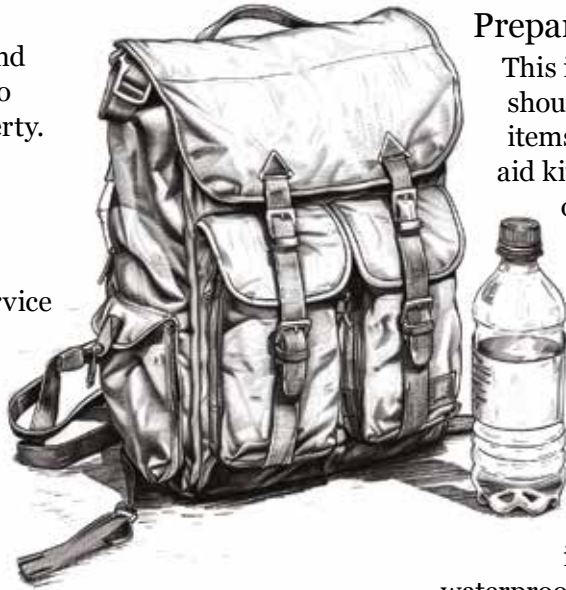
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This is not just any bag—it's a vital part of your survival kit. It should be packed with essentials but remain lightweight. Include items like long cotton clothing, water, non-perishable food, a first aid kit, and basic toiletries. Remember to cater to the specific needs of infants, the elderly, or disabled family members. Also, keep some cash and credit cards ready.

Pack Smart Tools

Include gadgets that could save your life, such as a multitool, a backup light, a radio, and a charger. These items can significantly aid your survival in an emergency.

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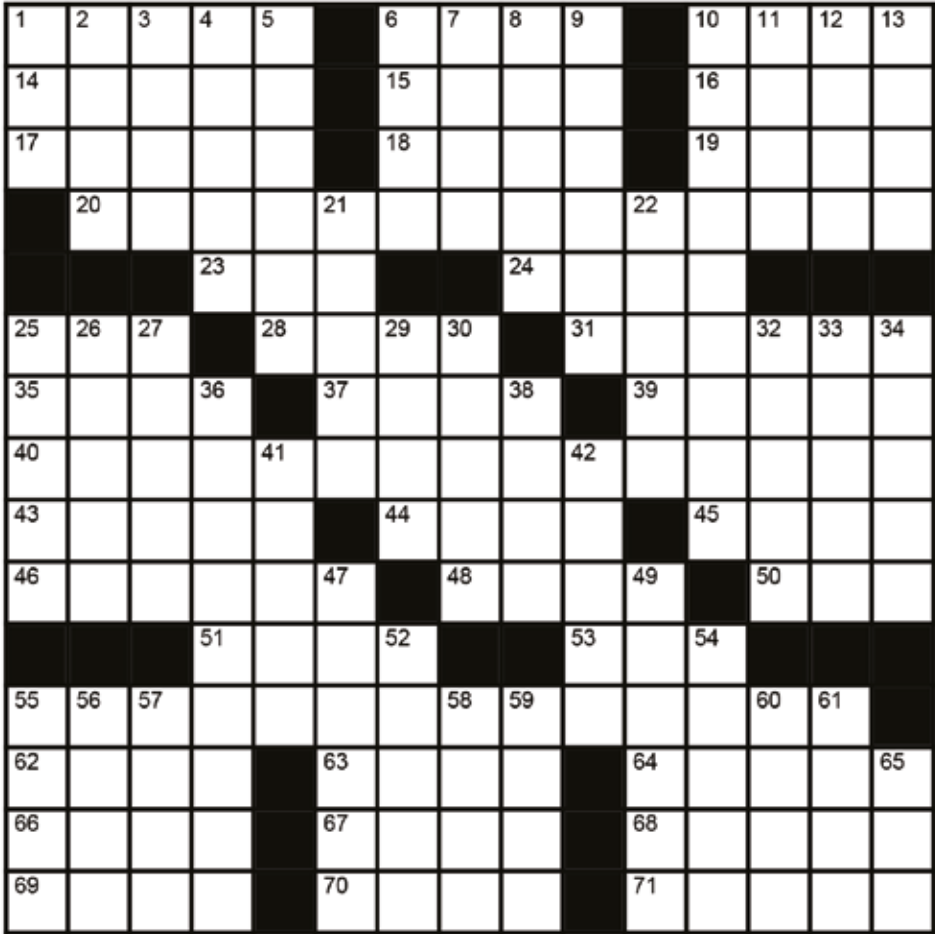


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- 15. Tear to pieces
- 16. "Wild blue yonder" org.
- 17. Brine-cured cheeses
- 18. Black-and-white cookie
- 19. Bringing up the rear
- 20. T-Bone Walker's genre
- 23. Caribbean, e.g.
- 24. Delhi dress
- 25. Away from the bow
- 28. In ____ straits
- 31. Put back in the suitcase
- 35. Class of ferry/cargo ship
- 37. Color quality
- 39. Empty spaces
- 40. One way to kick a bad habit
- 43. Kind of nut
- 44. Buggy terrain
- 45. Length x width, for a rectangle
- 46. Walk nonchalantly
- 48. Metrical foot
- 50. Family
- 51. Baseball stats
- 53. Chair part
- 55. A machine for playing and recording audiocassettes.
- 62. "____ that special?!"
- 63. Spanish appetizer
- 64. Fountain drinks
- 66. Reverse, e.g.
- 67. "... happily ____ after"
- 68. Flat replacement
- 69. Epic
- 70. Need a bath badly
- 71. Aden's land

DOWN

- 1. Battle of Britain grp.
- 2. Decorative pitcher
- 3. Course
- 4. Approves
- 5. Tried out
- 6. Gift tag word
- 7. 100 kurus
- 8. Makes level
- 9. Fragrant Himalayan tree
- 10. A woman (or female animal) that has never given birth.
- 11. Biblical twin
- 12. Flower holder
- 13. Small amphibians
- 21. Port-au-Prince is its capital
- 22. Symbol over a vowel
- 25. Bedouin
- 26. Where vision is most acute
- 27. Ashes, e.g.
- 29. Large crucifix
- 30. Boredom
- 32. Mites, e.g.
- 33. Assayer's vessel
- 34. Whitewater vessel
- 36. The Boston Pops, for one
- 38. 11,000-foot Italian peak
- 41. Portion
- 42. Pertaining to blood
- 47. Noisy talk
- 49. Shamelessly bold
- 52. Barrel part
- 54. Mr. Magoo, for one
- 55. Smokes
- 56. Away from port
- 57. Catch
- 58. Fencer's blade
- 59. Yellowstone or Yosemite
- 60. ____ cheese
- 61. Endangered
- 65. D.C. bigwig



SLOW YOUR ROLL

THE SECRET TO SAVORING MOUNTAIN TOWN MAGIC

By Venita Dee

Mountain towns, such as Munds Park, with their serene landscapes, tranquil ambiance, and slower pace of life, offer a unique escape from the hustle and bustle of urban environments. Visitors flock to these rural settings to enjoy the natural beauty, fresh air, and a sense of peace often absent in their daily lives. But here's the thing: your presence can significantly impact the local environment and community. Respecting the peace, the slow roll, the land, and the quiet isn't just courteous; it's essential for preserving the very essence of what makes these places special.

RESPECTING THE PEACE

Mountain towns are cherished for their peaceful atmosphere. Residents and fellow visitors alike come to these places to experience a break from noise and chaos. When you roll into town with loud parties or excessive noise, you disrupt this tranquility. Respecting the peace means keeping noise levels to a minimum, especially during late hours. It involves being considerate of neighbors, both human and wildlife, and understanding that the serene environment is a shared resource.

EMBRACING THE SLOW ROLL

One of the most appealing aspects of mountain towns is their slower pace of life. Unlike the fast-paced rhythm of cities, these towns offer a chance to slow down, unwind, and truly savor each moment. Instead of trying to impose a hurried lifestyle on the environment, embrace the slow roll. This includes driving carefully and respecting speed limits, which are often lower in these areas to protect both wildlife and pedestrians. It also means being patient and understanding that services might take a little longer. By adopting the slow roll, you can better appreciate the unique charm and rhythm of mountain living.

RESPECTING THE LAND

The natural landscapes of mountain towns are their most precious assets. Pristine forests, crystal-clear lakes, and towering peaks create the breathtaking scenery that draws visitors. But these environments are

also fragile and easily damaged by careless behavior. Respecting the land involves practicing Leave No Trace principles: packing out all trash, staying on designated trails, and avoiding activities that could harm the ecosystem. Off-road vehicles, for instance, can cause significant erosion and damage to plant life if not used responsibly. By treading lightly and being mindful of your impact, you can help preserve the natural beauty of these areas.

VALUING THE QUIET

Quietness is a rare commodity in today's world, and mountain towns offer a sanctuary of silence that many crave. The quiet allows for introspection, connection with nature, and a break from constant stimulation. Cherish and protect this quietude by avoiding loud conversations, music, or other disturbances, especially in public or shared spaces. Understanding that silence is part of the local culture and the natural environment helps you fit in harmoniously and shows respect for the reasons why others, including locals, treasure these places.

MINDFUL ENJOYMENT

While a vacation is a time to relax and have fun, it's important to balance enjoyment with mindfulness. Cutting loose shouldn't come at the expense of the local community and environment. Engaging in respectful activities that align with the spirit of the place—such as hiking, bird-watching, or simply sitting quietly and taking in the view—can be deeply fulfilling and memorable experiences. These activities not only provide enjoyment but also enhance the sense of connection to the land and its inhabitants.

Mountain towns offer a rare and precious refuge from the frenetic pace of modern life. Visitors are drawn to these places for their peace, slow roll, stunning landscapes, and quietude. By respecting these aspects, you can ensure that your presence contributes positively to the environment and community, rather than detracting from it. Loud parties, reckless driving, and careless behavior can all undermine the very reasons why these towns are so loved. By embracing respect and mindfulness, you can help preserve the magic of mountain towns, ensuring they remain a sanctuary for all who seek their beauty and tranquility.



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THE GREAT OUTDOORS

THE ENIGMATIC RINGTAIL NORTHERN ARIZONA'S ELUSIVE NIGHTTIME ACROBAT

By Kenneth Paul

A small yet remarkable creature flits silently through the night in the shadowy depths of Northern Arizona's rugged landscapes. Meet the ringtail cat, or simply the ringtail—Arizona's state mammal and one of the region's best-kept wildlife secrets.

An Elusive Presence

Often mistaken for a cat due to its name and graceful movements, the ringtail (*Bassariscus astutus*) is actually a member of the raccoon family. These nocturnal omnivores are masters of stealth, rarely seen by even the most seasoned outdoor enthusiasts. They inhabit a range of environments, from the rocky canyons of the Grand Canyon to the dense forests around Munds Park, thriving in areas with ample cover and abundant food sources.

A Gymnast of the Night

What sets the ringtail apart is its extraordinary agility. Equipped with semi-retractable claws and hind feet that can rotate 180 degrees, ringtails can effortlessly navigate vertical surfaces. Their long, bushy tails, adorned with striking black and white rings, serve as perfect balancing rods as they leap and bound across rocky outcrops and tree branches.

By day, ringtails retreat to secluded dens—rock crevices, hollow trees, and sometimes even abandoned buildings—emerging only under the cover of darkness to forage for food. Their diet is eclectic, including small mammals, birds, insects, and fruit. This adaptability in diet helps them thrive in the varied ecosystems of Northern Arizona.

Guardians of the Ecosystem

Ringtails play a vital role in maintaining the balance of their environment. As both predators and scavengers, they help



Ringtail Cat
Photo by Gudkov

control populations of small rodents and insects, contributing to the overall health of their habitat. Their presence is a testament to the intricate web of life that characterizes Northern Arizona's diverse ecosystems.

Spotting a Ringtail

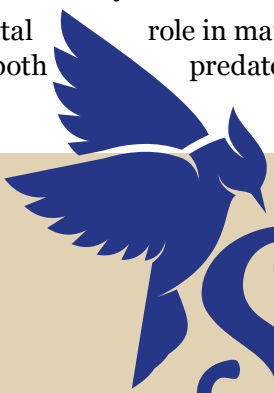
For those eager to catch a glimpse of this elusive creature, patience and a bit of luck are essential. The best chance to see a ringtail is during the quiet hours of the night, in areas with rocky terrain and nearby water sources. Keep an eye out for their telltale tail markings and listen for their unique vocalizations, which include barks, screams, and chirps.

Despite their secretive nature, ringtails occasionally venture into human-inhabited areas, drawn by the prospect of easy meals. In places like the Grand Canyon, they are known to frequent historic buildings, adding a touch of wildlife magic to the park's storied structures.

Conservation and Respect

While ringtails are not currently endangered, their well-being depends on the health of their habitats. Conservation efforts focused on preserving the natural landscapes of Northern Arizona are crucial to ensuring that these agile acrobats continue to thrive. Respecting wildlife and maintaining clean, undisturbed environments will help protect these fascinating creatures for generations to come.

As you explore the great outdoors this summer, take a moment to appreciate the hidden wonders of Northern Arizona. Whether you spot a ringtail or simply marvel at the possibility, remember that the forest holds countless secrets, each one a reminder of the beauty and complexity of our natural world.



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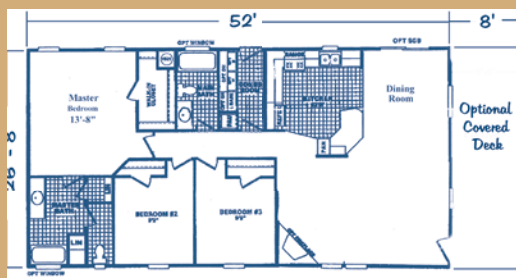
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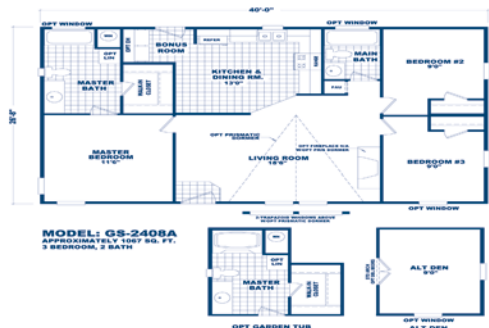


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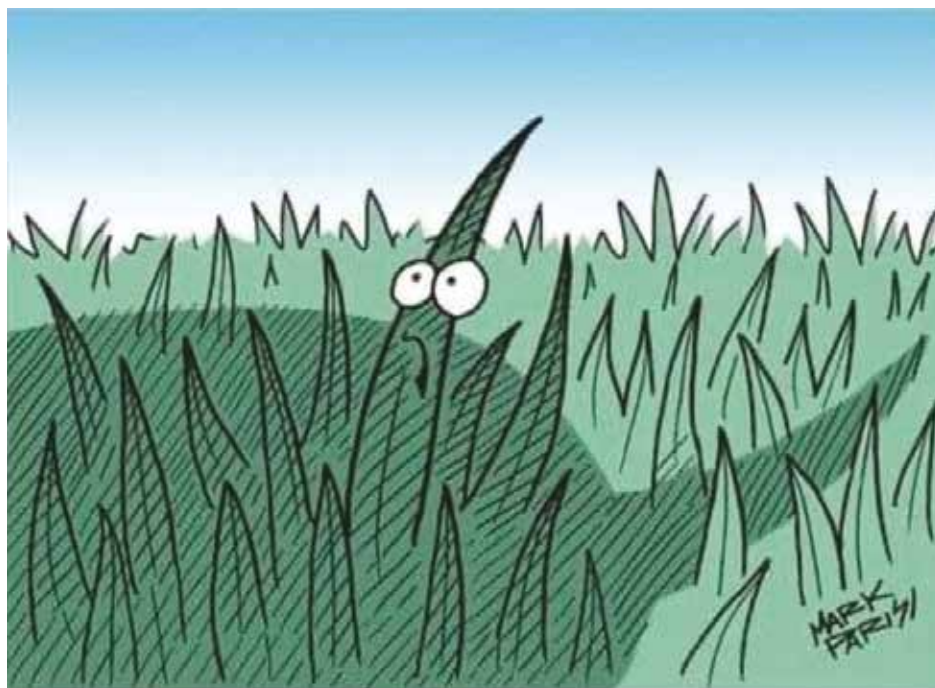
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DENISE, WHO NEVER PICKED
UP AFTER HER DOG, GETS
REINCARNATED

WHAT? COMMUNITY THEATER?

By Fred Lloyd

I had never thought about acting or community theater before. I'm a computer programmer by profession and dabble in mechanics and electrical technology. My hobbies are diverse—I do laser engraving on wood, play the guitar, and ride my side-by-side through the woods. I'm also a ham radio operator and hold a multi-engine pilot's license. With all these technical and outdoor interests, stepping into the artistic world of theater never crossed my mind.

My wife, Robin, and I became summer residents of Munds Park in 2018. By 2022, we realized that despite enjoying the area, our social interactions were limited—we hardly knew anyone well. That changed when Robin spotted an advertisement in the Pinewood News for auditions held by the Pinewood Players for their upcoming plays. She was eager to try out, while I dismissed the idea, thinking it wasn't something meant for people like us. However, I decided to accompany her to the auditions out of sheer curiosity about the theatrical process.

Upon our arrival, I was mistaken for an auditionee. Despite my protests that I was just there as a chauffeur, I was handed a script and asked to read for a character named "Bob." Somewhat reluctantly, I participated. To our surprise, both Robin and I were cast in the production titled "Four Old Broads." This unplanned foray into acting turned out to be a transformative experience for us.

Reflecting on the past year, I can genuinely say that joining the Pinewood Players was the best decision for enhancing our social life in Munds Park. We have made numerous new friends, some of whom have become like family to us. Now, our visits to the clubhouse are filled with familiar faces and warm greetings. The connections we've made have significantly enriched our lives, expanding our social circle far beyond what we had imagined.

Many friends and acquaintances are curious about what it's like to act. I tell them it's a mix of challenge, fulfillment, and sheer fun. Learning and memorizing lines, understanding a character, and then delivering those lines convincingly on stage can be demanding. Yet, the fulfillment that comes from a performance well-received by an audience is unparalleled. The adrenaline rush of performing live—whether it's from stage fright, a missed cue, or the spontaneous recovery from a stumble—adds to the thrill.

The exhilaration of hearing the audience's applause and realizing they are appreciating your performance is invigorating. It breaks the misconception that one needs innate talent to act. More than anything, acting requires


belief in oneself and a commitment to putting in the effort. The phrase "I'd like to, but I have no talent," undermines the potential within. If you are willing to apply yourself, you can excel in theater.

Acting, as Shakespeare famously said, mirrors life: "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." We all perform roles daily, adapting our behavior to different contexts and audiences. In a way, acting on stage extends this natural inclination by requiring us to adopt and portray lives not our own convincingly.

Nevertheless, acting isn't inherently easy. It demands dedication—to study, rehearse, and accept continual feedback. Directors often take a firm stance, guiding performances with a strict hand, and aspects like costume comfort and privacy in dressing areas are secondary to the overarching goal: ensuring the show's success. The common adage in theater is "The show must go on," a principle that every cast member adheres to, fostering a professional environment even among amateurs.


Now at the age of 70, I prioritize fun in my activities, and my engagement with the Pinewood Players ranks as one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling aspects of my recent years. It has allowed me to break out of my shell, forming new friendships and expanding my social network. Acting has not only been an exciting adventure but also a deeply rewarding one.


If you're considering a new hobby or looking to enrich your social life, I wholeheartedly recommend joining the Pinewood Players. It's an opportunity to meet diverse people, develop new skills, and, most importantly, have a lot of fun. Who knows? You might just surprise yourself as I did.




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STRANGE BUT TRUE

THE VANISHING OF MORMON LAKE



Photo from www.goodfreephotos.com

By Kenneth Paul

Mormon Lake, nestled in Northern Arizona, holds the title of the largest natural lake in the state. However, its claim to fame isn't merely its size, but rather its mystifying ability to vanish entirely. This peculiar characteristic has intrigued both locals and scientists for decades, turning Mormon Lake into a subject of fascination and speculation.

Nature's Chameleon

Mormon Lake earns its nickname as a "disappearing lake" due to its dramatic size fluctuations, which hinge entirely on the region's precipitation levels. During years of abundant rainfall and snowmelt, the lake swells, transforming into a vibrant oasis teeming with wildlife and offering ample recreational opportunities for visitors. Birds flock to its waters and the surrounding area buzzes with outdoor enthusiasts. Conversely, in periods of drought or extended dry spells, the lake can recede drastically, sometimes vanishing altogether and leaving behind an expansive, parched lakebed. This stark transformation from a bustling aquatic habitat to a barren expanse is nothing short of mesmerizing.

The Science Behind the Spectacle

The secret to Mormon Lake's vanishing act lies in its unique hydrology. Positioned within a shallow basin, the lake is primarily fed by rain and snowmelt from the nearby San Francisco Peaks and other surrounding mountains. When precipitation is plentiful, the lake fills; when it's scarce, the water level drops, sometimes to the point of complete desiccation. This cyclical pattern is a natural response to the region's variable climate, yet it feels almost magical to those who witness it. The lake serves as a living illustration of the delicate balance within nature's systems.

Legends and Lore

Over the years, Mormon Lake's mysterious disappearances have spawned numerous local legends. Some tales suggest that the receding waters reveal ancient artifacts and fossils, offering glimpses into the region's prehistoric past. These stories fuel the imagination, as treasure hunters and history buffs scour the dry lakebed in hopes of unearthing hidden relics.

Adding to the mystique, there are accounts of ghostly apparitions seen wandering the desolate expanse when the lake vanishes. These spectral sightings are believed to be the spirits of long-gone inhabitants, their restless souls crossing the lakebed as they once did in life.

A Symbol of Nature's Unpredictability

Despite the scientific explanations for its fluctuations, Mormon Lake's vanishing act continues to captivate and mystify. It stands as a powerful reminder of nature's unpredictability and the ever-changing dynamics of our environment. For residents and visitors of Northern Arizona, Mormon Lake is more than just a body of water—it's a symbol of nature's wonder and an invitation to ponder the mysteries of the natural world. Whether full to the brim or dried to a crust, Mormon Lake's enigmatic presence leaves a lasting impression on all who encounter it, making it one of Northern Arizona's most intriguing natural wonders.

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LOCAL LORE

A MISNOMER IN THE CLIFFS THE SINAGUA LEGACY OF MONTEZUMA CASTLE



Photo by Donald Tee

By Kenneth Paul

Perched precariously against the stark cliffs of Arizona's Verde Valley, the so-called Montezuma Castle looms as a grand misnomer steeped in historical intrigue. Named not for any royal inhabitant nor constructed by the storied Aztecs, this structure's origins trace back to a civilization much lesser known yet equally fascinating: the Sinagua.

The Sinagua, whose name paradoxically means 'without water' in Spanish despite their access to ample water resources, built this architectural marvel around 1050 CE. In the 19th century, European-Americans mistakenly linked the site to the Aztec emperor Montezuma, highlighting the fascination ancient Native American structures held for newly arrived settlers.

Unlike the castles of Europe, Montezuma Castle was never home to royals but was more akin to a modern apartment complex, bustling with the daily lives of multiple families. Built into the naturally occurring

alcoves of the limestone cliffs, these high-rise dwellings offered both protection and a strategic vantage point over the lush Beaver Creek, which swelled each year with seasonal floods.

These cliff dwellings, crafted from local materials like wood, stone, and mud mortar, and accessed by ladders that could be withdrawn if needed, represent a pinnacle of Sinagua engineering. The southern exposure of the cliff face provided natural climate control, keeping the dwellings warm in winter and cool in the summer—an ancient solution to a perennial challenge.

Why the Sinagua chose to leave their cliff-side homes around 1400 CE remains a subject of speculation among archaeologists. Theories range from environmental shifts to social upheavals or even spiritual motives, with each hypothesis adding layers to the enduring mystery of the Sinagua's departure.

Today, Montezuma Castle stands as a poignant symbol of the ingenuity and adaptability of the Sinagua, offering a window into the past for thousands of visitors each year. It serves not only as a monument to those who once thrived in the Verde Valley but also as a reminder of the transient nature of civilizations—a place where history's whispers echo against stone.



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THE TAINTED CUP

- By Robert Jackson Bennett
- Del Rey Publishing, 2024
- 432 pages

By Sandy Wright

The Tainted Cup is a Sherlock Holmes-style murder mystery by fantasy author Robert Jackson Bennett, set in a dystopian fantasy world. In the Empire, all civilians live under the shadow of the Leviathans, great sea creatures that seasonally attack the walls and try to come ashore and wreak havoc. Rather than using electricity or metal, the majority of technological advances in this world have been made with plants, whose growth and properties have been altered by the blood of the Leviathans.

After an Imperial officer is killed in a most unusual way — a tree violently sprouting from within his body — Ana Dolabra, a quirky detective with rather unorthodox methods, is assigned to investigate the case. She brings with her Dinios Kol (Din), her new apprentice who is studying to be an investigator.

Ana is a sort of Nero Wolfe -- a recluse who seldom gets her hands dirty with actual in-the-field investigation. She leaves that to Din, who has been biotechnologically enhanced to have perfect recall. (In the Khanum Empire, such people are known as engravers).

Told from Din's perspective, the reader is quickly immersed in a what he suspects may be a conspiracy as he is sent to the very edges of the Empire. He is completely unprepared for this case initially, but he does his best to relate the facts he has witnessed to his boss, even though he is, I believe, dyslexic. (The word "dyslexic" appears nowhere in *The Tainted Cup*, but Din's descriptions of his difficulties reading fits the definition.) He encodes memories, recalling them with a smell assigned to each one. This means he can recall with exact precision the way something looks, feels, tastes, and smells, which he then relates to Ana (Think Sherlock and Watson with a much-enhanced Watson).

Ana has her own issues. She is an immensely gifted genius who insists on living mostly blindfolded though she's not blind. She has a hilariously abrasive personality and avoids meetings if possible. If forced to meet others, she orders them to her home, where she catches and interrogates them like a spider toying with a bug in her web, only releasing them grudgingly.

Din is scandalized, puzzled, and sometimes infuriated by his new superior. But as the increasingly complex case unfolds, he watches Ana's mind leap from one startling deduction to the next. In turn, he wonders how long he'll be able to keep his own secrets safe from her searing intellect.

This book took me by surprise. Robert Jackson Bennett is a new to me author who has made me realize that fantasy/science fiction blended with mystery may become my new favorite thing.

The worldbuilding in *The Tainted Cup* was fantastic. In fact, author Bennett ingeniously uses Ana and Kol's investigation as the primary vehicle through which he develops his world. It's a unique approach that melds the fantasy and mystery genres together in a way I haven't quite seen before.

But the best news is that *The Tainted Cup* is the first novel in a planned trilogy, the *Shadow of the Leviathan* series, so hopefully we'll be seeing more investigations by Din and Ana soon. I'd love to read more and can't wait to see what comes next.



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GUIDELINES FOR HONORING THE AMERICAN FLAG



The American flag symbolizes unity, resilience, and pride. Proper flag etiquette rekindles collective spirit and optimism, showing reverence for the Stars and Stripes. As Lane expressed, the flag embodies our dreams and labors, shining with courage and faith. It represents our nation's story, with each of us playing a vital role.

While not mandatory, these guidelines uplift our hearts and celebrate our country's spirit. By honoring the flag, we honor ourselves and the unity, resilience, and pride it represents. Let us display it with reverence, for we are its makers, and its symbolism shines through our collective efforts. Displaying the American Flag

How to display the American flag with utmost respect and pride:

Orientation

- When hanging the flag vertically on a wall, window, or door, make sure the blue Union is on the left side as you face it.
- For horizontal or vertical display against a wall, remember to position the Union on the left.
- During a procession, let the American flag take the honored position on the right, whether it's the only flag or leading a line of flags.

Placement

- If you're using a staff to display the flag from a building, raise it to the peak with the Union at the top.
- When the flag is not on a staff, you can either lay it flat or suspend it in a way that allows it to gracefully fall, giving the impression of being staffed.
- On a street, if you're suspending the flag vertically, let the Union be to the north on east-west streets or to the east on north-south streets.
- For special events or speaking engagements, position the flag above and behind the speaker, ensuring the Union is uppermost and to the left as you face it.
- In churches or auditoriums, where the flag is displayed with a staff, place it at the speaker's right, signifying its position of honor.

Hoisting & Lowering

- When raising the flag, do it with purpose, hoisting it briskly to full mast.
- Lowering the flag should be done with solemnity and grace, honoring its significance.
- If you're displaying the flag at half-staff, first raise it to the peak for a brief moment, then lower it to halfway. Before the day ends, raise it to the peak once more and then lower it. Half-staff is a position midway between the top and bottom of the staff and is reserved for specific occasions, such as honoring fallen heroes.

Finally

- Never fly the flag if it is weathered or torn.
- Always have a light on the flag from sunset to sunrise.
- Do not fly the flag in rain, snow or heavy winds.

Embracing the Flag's Spirit

The American flag symbolizes our shared values, resilience, and hope. Let's ensure we treat it with the utmost care and respect, showcasing its splendor and inviting a sense of unity. By embodying the flag's spirit, we can ignite a renewed sense of pride and togetherness in our great nation.

Proper Disposal of the American Flag

When the time comes to retire a worn or tattered flag, let us do so with dignity and reverence. Consider reaching out to local American Legion posts, who often hold annual ceremonies for flag retirement, honoring its symbolism and the principles it represents.

BIRDS OF MUNDS PARK

GRACE'S WARBLER — WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Margaret Dyekman

Our home has been surrounded by singing Grace's Warblers during mating season. I have to admit, though, I haven't seen one, just have been hearing these warblers. And there is a good reason for that: this species of warbler is one of our smallest and is very difficult to see, as it stays high in the canopies of the Ponderosa Pines, flitting and hopping from small twig to twig in search of spiders and other insects. Because of its distribution and habitats, it is one of the least studied warbler species in the United States. Grace's Warblers, with gray and black backs and yellow underparts, are found primarily in coniferous forests of southern Utah and Colorado and in the high elevations of Arizona and New Mexico. The U.S. population migrates to Mexico and Central America.



Grace's Warbler, courtesy of Gordon Karre

The reason I know Grace's Warblers are singing, since I haven't been able to see the bird, is that I often use the Merlin app on my phone to identify bird vocalizations. If you are a field-trip type of birder or a stay-at-home birdwatcher, I recommend that you get this app and try it – it is informative, fun, and free to download courtesy of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, no strings attached.

Now for a little story about how this bird got its name and what is in its future. Many western birds in the U.S. and across the globe were "discovered" by expeditioners in indigenous peoples' areas previously not explored by white naturalists, especially in the 1800's. As a result, birds were often named after the explorer who brought back specimens, fellow scientists, people who contributed money to the expeditions, or even family members. That is why we have Steller's Jays, Gamble's Quail, and Ross's Goose, to name just a few. Grace's Warbler was named by Spencer Fullerton Baird, at the request of Elliot Coues, in honor of Coues's sister, Grace Darlington Cooper. Elliot Coues was the naturalist who documented the bird in the Rocky Mountains, and Grace was only 18 years old at the time. In fact, Grace may have never even seen this species, and if she did, it was probably the dead specimen.

What's the future for Grace's Warbler? The American Ornithological Society, which determines the official English and scientific bird names, will soon be renaming 152 North American birds that are named after people and instead will give those birds names that fit the birds. The process is beginning this year, and input will be provided by both the public and scientists in a collaborative effort. I am in favor of this change, even though it will mean major changes for field guides, birding books, and online resources. I don't know what new name will be given to Grace's Warbler, but I look forward to one that better connects with the uniqueness of the species itself.

You can reach me at margaretdyekman@cox.net or by text at 602-620-3210. You can read all about Backyard Birding in Northern Arizona at www.backyardbirdingaz.com and order the book online or get one directly from me. I welcome your questions, reports of sightings, and your suggestions for future articles.



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ANIMAL SUPERPOWERS OF COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST

By George Dee

Hey, Pinewood Explorers! Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have superpowers? Guess what? You don't need to look in comic books to find amazing abilities. Right here in the Coconino National Forest near Munds Park, animals have superpowers that would make any superhero jealous. From incredible vision to mind-blowing agility, these creatures have it all. Let's ride into the forest and meet four incredible animals with superpowers that will amaze you!

THE RED-TAILED HAWK

First up is the Red-Tailed Hawk, a magnificent bird with eyesight that's out of this world. Imagine being able to spot a tiny mouse from two miles away! That's right, these hawks have vision that's eight times sharper than a human's. This super sight helps them soar high above the forest, scanning the ground for their next meal. With their keen eyes, they can dive at speeds over 120 miles per hour, snatching up prey with pinpoint accuracy. Talk about a flying superhero! Did You Know? Red-Tailed Hawks use their powerful talons to grip and carry prey that can weigh up to twice their own body weight. That's like you carrying a whole mountain of snacks!



WESTERN FENCE LIZARD

Meet the Western Fence Lizard, a master of disguise. These small lizards have the ability to blend into their surroundings, making them nearly invisible to predators. Their scaly skin can change shades to match the environment, providing excellent camouflage among rocks, leaves, and branches. This superpower allows them to escape danger and sneak up on insects for a tasty meal.

Fun Fact: Western Fence Lizards are also known as "blue bellies" because of the bright blue patches on their undersides, which they show off during mating displays.



TARANTULA HAWK WASP

Don't let its size fool you—the Tarantula Hawk Wasp is one of the most formidable insects in the forest. This wasp has a sting that can paralyze a tarantula, which is much larger than itself. Once the tarantula is immobilized, the wasp lays an egg on it. When the egg hatches, the larva has a fresh meal. Talk about using superpowers to overcome giants!



Amazing Fact: The sting of a Tarantula Hawk Wasp is incredibly painful, but luckily, these wasps are not aggressive towards humans and will only sting if provoked.

ABERT'S SQUIRREL

Finally, let's meet the Abert's Squirrel, an acrobat of the treetops. With their long, tufted ears and bushy tails, these squirrels are not just cute—they're incredibly agile. Abert's Squirrels can leap great distances between trees and navigate the forest canopy with ease. Their strong hind legs and sharp claws help them climb and jump with precision, making them the parkour experts of the forest.



Cool Fact: Abert's Squirrels rely on the ponderosa pine for food and shelter. They eat the inner bark of the tree and the seeds from its cones, and they even build their nests high in the branches.

GET OUT & EXPLORE!

The Coconino National Forest is home to these superpowered animals and many more. So next time you're out in the forest, keep your eyes peeled—you might just spot one of these amazing creatures showing off their incredible abilities. Remember, respecting wildlife and observing from a distance helps keep both you and the animals safe.



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ADVENTURE AWAITS AT CAMP VERDE COMMUNITY LIBRARY'S SUMMER READING PROGRAM!



Get ready for an exciting summer at Camp Verde Community Library! The Summer Reading Program theme is "Adventure Begins at Your Library," and both the Children's Library and Teen Library have planned six weeks of fun activities to keep you reading, learning, and exploring.

- Learn the basics of disc golf with Zack at Rezzonico Family Park. Each week, build on new skills and end with a 9-hole round at the new Camp Verde Disc Golf Course. Register online.
- Books & Lemonade: Saturdays at 1 PM starting June 8th. Cool off with some lemonade while exploring the latest reads and timeless favorites. Runs through July 13th.

VISIT US

Camp Verde Community Library is located at 130 N Black Bridge Road in Camp Verde, just off Montezuma Castle Highway. Our hours are Monday-Thursday, 8 AM-7 PM, and Friday-Saturday, 9 AM-5 PM. For more information, visit our website or call 554-8380.

Get ready for a summer of adventure and fun!

FOR KIDS (AGES 0-11)

Adventure Awaits! Ms. Letty, our friendly Children's Librarian, has filled the shelves with new books just for you. Don't worry about late fees—you can return books anytime at the drive-by Book Return.

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

- ZUMBA Kids: Mondays and Wednesdays
 - Ages 4-7: 10:30-11 AM
 - Ages 8-11: 11-11:30 AM
- Outdoor Hour with Ms. Letty: Mondays, 5:45-6:45 PM at Rezzonico Park
- Story Time with Ms. Letty and Friends: Thursdays, 11 AM
- Family Yoga: Thursdays, 11:30 AM
- Window Art: Thursdays, 2-4 PM
- Summer Movie Saturdays: Saturdays, 1 PM

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Foam Party: June 27th at Community Field
- Desert Safety Presentation: June 29th at Camp Verde Community Library
- Outdoor Movie Premiere: July 13th at Community Field

Visit the Children's Library to sign up in person starting June 1st.

PROGRAMS JUST FOR TEENS (AGES 11-17)

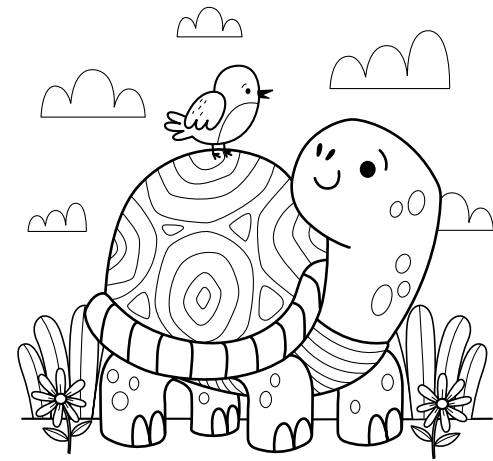
Join the Fun! Zack Garcia, our awesome Teen Librarian, has lined up some great activities for you this summer.

- Minecraft Book Club: Fridays at 1:00 PM starting May 17th
- Ages 9-12: Dive into "Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief" and bring the story to life in Minecraft. Ends June 21st.
- Teen Crafts: Mondays at 11 AM starting June 3rd
- Team up with Zack and the Verde Youth Action Alliance for creative afternoons. Try tie-dye, watercolors, crochet, and more! Runs through July 8th.
- Disc Golf Basics: Tuesdays at 8 AM starting June 4th

Hey Kids!

We'd love to see your amazing coloring pages and art! Send your colorful creations to us at Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com for a chance to be featured in the next issue of Pinewood News. Show us your best work and let your creativity shine!

Happy coloring!



HIDDEN PICTURES!



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 Q O H R M V E T A Z B E E M O B B
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 B M A E R C E C I B Q N A C R P K
 Q I J W Y I E P W J X E X O B H T

SUMMER WORD SEARCH

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

Answers page 22B.

Barbecue
 Beach
 Bonfire
 Camping
 Fireworks
 Flip-flops
 Frisbee
 Hammock
 Ice cream
 Lifeguard

Picnic
 Pool
 Popsicle
 Sandcastle
 Seashell
 Sunglasses
 Sunshine
 Swim
 Vacation
 Watermelon





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UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL OF CREATIVE FINANCING IN MUNDS PARK REAL ESTATE

Nestled in the heart of Arizona, Munds Park is a gem for real estate enthusiasts and investors alike. While the picturesque landscapes and serene environment make it a desirable location, navigating the real estate market here can be a challenge. One area of expertise that can significantly benefit both buyers and sellers is creative financing.

Creative financing is a powerful tool that allows for flexibility and innovation in property transactions. Unlike traditional financing methods, creative financing can include options such as seller carry-backs, lease options, and subject-to deals. These methods can be particularly advantageous in a market like Munds Park, where unique properties and individual circumstances often require tailored solutions.

For instance, a seller carry-back allows the seller to act as the lender, providing a loan to the buyer for a portion of the purchase price. This can be a win-win situation, offering the buyer a chance to secure a property without the stringent requirements of conventional loans, while the seller benefits from a steady income stream through interest payments. This is actually how my partner and I purchased our first home, here, in Munds.

Lease options, another creative financing strategy, give potential buyers the opportunity to lease a property with the option to purchase it at a later date. This can be an excellent way for buyers to “test drive” a home and build equity before committing to a full purchase.

Subject-to deals, or Seller Wraps, involve the buyer taking over the seller's existing mortgage payments, which can be a lifesaver for sellers looking to move quickly and buyers seeking favorable loan terms.

We've seen firsthand how these strategies can transform real estate transactions. Take the case of past clients, Seena and Kacia, who utilized creative financing to secure their first rental property in Phoenix. By thinking outside the box, they were able to build significant equity and expand their investment portfolio.

In a community like Munds Park, where every property has its own story, creative financing can be the key to unlocking hidden potential. Whether you're a buyer looking for your dream home or a seller aiming to maximize your return, exploring these innovative financing options can make all the difference.

For more insights and personalized guidance on creative financing, visit us at Valentine Group. Our team of experts is here to help you navigate the Munds Park real estate market with confidence and creativity.

Remember, if you're looking for more information or need assistance with your real estate needs, our agents are standing by to help. Visit us at <https://valentinegroupaz.com> to learn more and get started on your real estate journey today.

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MENS GOLF ASSOCIATION EVENTS

Blind Nine Individual Event - May 11th

- 1st Place Elk Flight (tie): Steve Glavin and Todd Holtrop
- 1st Place Pine Cone Flight: Howard Weiner
- 1st Place Coyote Flight: Ronald Jacobs

Ryder Cup Team Event - May 18th and 19th

Team America Captained by Brian Obillo defeated Team Canada 30 to 26.

WOMEN'S GOLF ASSOCIATION

Double Your Pleasure game - May 24th

Five players tied for first place: Yvonne Brooks, Sandie Hoffman, Kim McIllece, Afton Trail, and Kathleen Vogt

Other winners in order of best scores: Rhonda Hoge, Andy Harper, Patty Frey, Teri Billington, Carol Alyward, Margaret Dyekman, Robin Alvarez, and Kim Krueger




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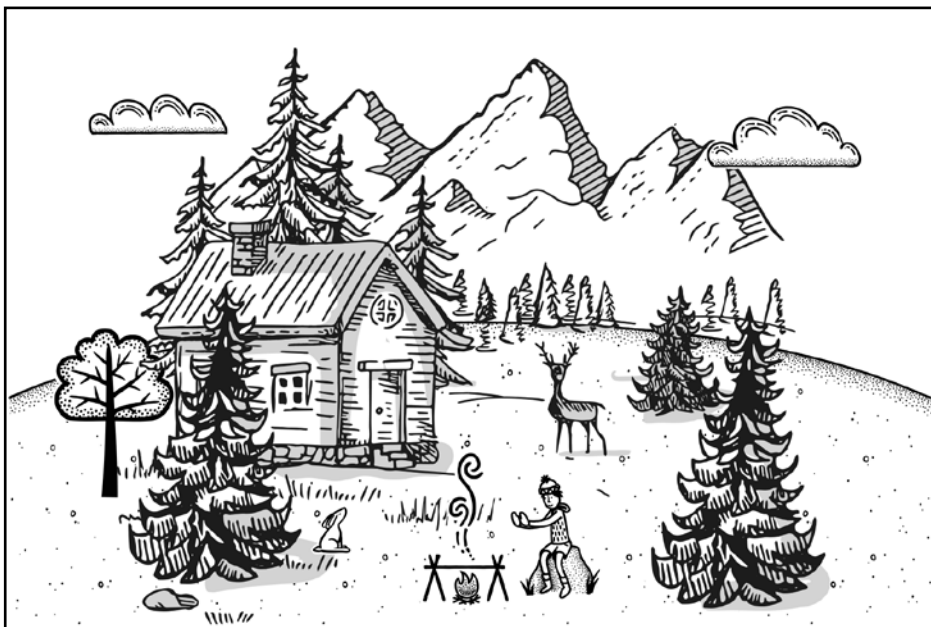
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WORD SEARCH

Created by Paul Mason • Solution pg. 22B



Agees	Dynamic	Lodge	Raintree
Alder	Elk	Munds Park	RV Park
Antelope	Farmers Market	Navajo	Sabrina
Apache	Fooses	Oak	Sedona
ATV	Forest	Odell	Sequoia
Big Sky	Fox	Orchard	Shadow Rock
Bobcat	Hike	Ox Bow	Shell
Caribou	Janice	Peyote	Summit
Condor	Joy place	Pinon	Teal
Cougar	Kotas	Poco	Thunderbird
Cows	Lake	Puma	Wildcat
Coyote	Lobo	Quail	Zuni



QUICK FACT

Word searches were invented by Norman E. Gibat in 1968. He published the first word search in the Selenby Digest, a small local newspaper in Norman, Oklahoma. Gibat's creation quickly gained popularity, and word searches spread to newspapers and puzzle books across the United States, becoming a fun pastime for many.



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Providing you safe, reliable energy is our top priority. That's why we work year-round to prepare for wildfires. During elevated fire conditions, power outages may be extended until crews can perform visual inspections of lines and remove any potential hazards that could pose a fire risk. In the event of a wildfire or extreme wildfire risk, power lines may be temporarily taken out of service to protect your community and firefighters. Working together, we can be prepared. Here are some things you can do to be ready for wildfire season.

- Keep grass, weeds, trees and shrubs trimmed. Dispose of trimmings and trash properly.
- Get emergency alerts through local resources and visit ein.az.gov to create an emergency preparedness plan. Visit your county's website to get important information for your area.
- We care about your safety and want to keep you informed with alerts if there's an outage in your area. You can help us by making sure your contact information is up to date. Learn more about managing your alert preferences at aps.com/alerts.
- Have flashlights, batteries, a portable cell phone charger and water handy.

Please visit aps.com/wildfiresafety for more information.



JUNE 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, Aries, your social charisma is high, making it perfect for networking and new opportunities. This period is urging you to balance home life with professional ambitions. It's a time for balancing personal and professional

spheres, with insights into your home life and emotional foundations. Your assertive nature shines, allowing for clear communication and goal-setting. Embrace relaxation amidst progress and expect positive developments in your career path. Take moments for reflection on your spiritual journey, as newfound insights may guide your path forward.



LEO, FIRE SIGN, JULY 23 - AUGUST 22

June brings a vibrant social scene, with opportunities for networking and collaboration galore. This period sparks inspiration for new connections and exciting projects. Mid-month, a shift towards introspection invites you to recharge and prioritize self-care.

Pay attention to your well-being, and give new life to your daily routines. Set intentions for the kind of relationships you desire, and say yes to opportunities that arise, especially those that advance your career or creative pursuits. Stay grounded amidst emotional shifts, and explore opportunities for personal and professional growth with confidence.



SAGITTARIUS, FIRE SIGN, NOV 23 - DEC 21

Sagittarius, June places a spotlight on your commitments and relationships. This month offers a fresh start, allowing you to clarify intentions and set boundaries. Planetary energies will present opportunities for meaningful conversations and relationship

development. Confront your fears for personal growth. Embrace self-care amidst changing dynamics, and celebrate potential gains in both your personal and professional life. Trust the process of growth and evolution, knowing that each challenge brings opportunities for greater connection and understanding.



TAURUS, EARTH SIGN, APRIL 21 - MAY 20

This month heralds a time of expansion and growth, Taurus. Embrace new connections and share your innovative ideas with others, as opportunities for both personal and professional advancement abound. With energetic influences from the planets, you'll

feel a surge of determination and resilience. Trust your intuition this month, fostering emotional awareness and nurturing your inner fulfillment. While reflecting on outdated beliefs, seize the chance for success in your financial endeavors, and indulge in life's luxuries. Embrace change with grace as you navigate both internal and external transformations, leading you toward a brighter future.



VIRGO, EARTH SIGN, AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22

Virgo, June marks your time to shine as you step into the spotlight with confidence and determination. June's energy sparks inspiration and fresh perspectives, urging you to jot down your innovative ideas. You may be pushed out of your comfort zone,

motivating you to pursue new challenges with passion. Focus on nurturing connections with loved ones in your community. Embrace the professional opportunities unfolding and indulge in social gatherings with friends to unwind and celebrate your successes. As June unfolds, prioritize self-care and introspection amidst the energetic shifts, ensuring your relationships align with your happiness and growth.



CAPRICORN, EARTH SIGN, DEC 22 - JAN 20

June brings a focus on organization and self-care. This month offers fresh starts in health and work routines, urging you to consider new perspectives. Planetary energy ignites creativity and self-expression, encouraging you to assert your

authenticity. Embrace emotional release and reflection, as June prompts boundary-setting for your well-being. This month encourages balance between work and personal growth, paving the way for positive transformations ahead. Take this opportunity to nurture your emotional connections and prioritize self-expression, allowing space for personal growth and fulfillment amidst the busy energies of June.



GEMINI, AIR SIGN, MAY 21 - JUNE 21

Gemini, it's your time to shine as your season unfolds, supported by the cosmic alignment of the sun, Mercury, Venus, and Jupiter in your sign. Express yourself freely and pursue your passions with confidence. Take time to prioritize self-care and emotional

well-being, guided by your intuition. This period offers a chance to release power struggles hindering your growth. Embrace change and personal evolution in June, aligning your outward image with inner desires. Trust the process of growth and transformation unfolding this month. This month presents opportunities for you to embrace your authenticity and chart a course towards fulfillment in both your personal and professional endeavors.



LIBRA, AIR SIGN, SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22

Libra, June invites personal expansion and exploration of new horizons. With Gemini season encouraging you to broaden your horizons, embrace opportunities for growth and take a leap of faith. This period invites reflection on long-term goals and

strategies. Focus on intuitive awareness and emotional depth in professional endeavors. Connect with mentors and loved ones for support. Try to release anxieties holding you back, as success manifests through career developments and personal fulfillment. Embrace the potential for greatness this June, Libra, and prioritize self-care amidst the energetic shifts.



AQUARIUS, AIR SIGN, JAN 21 - FEB 18

June highlights your vibrant mind, Aquarius, urging you to embrace self-expression and joyful experiences. With planetary energy giving you creative inspiration, inviting you to explore new talents or hobbies. You'll feel motivated to create a stable and

secure living environment. Later in the month, focus shifts to self-care, this time is prompting you to prioritize your mental well-being. This period also prompts introspection, encouraging you to review personal boundaries and prioritize your mental well-being. It's a month of romance, creativity, and deep reflection, offering opportunities for growth and renewal.



CANCER, WATER SIGN, JUNE 22 - JULY 22

Cancer, the cosmos calls for letting go of what no longer serves you to embrace a fresh start. Shift your focus on long-term goals and community connections with determination and practicality. The full moon brings emotions to the surface in your relationships, urging

balance and consideration of mutual needs. Embrace the opportunity for self-discovery and personal growth as you navigate the subtle shifts and cosmic energies guiding you towards greater fulfillment. This month encourages self-care and quiet reflection, paving the way for joyful celebrations as Cancer season begins.



SCORPIO, WATER SIGN, OCT 23 - NOV 22

June directs your focus towards intimate connections and financial matters. This period prompts reflection on give-and-take dynamics and effective communication in relationships. You're empowered to assert yourself in one-on-one

interactions. This month presents opportunities for deep exploration of desire and transformation, encouraging you to embrace passion and face your fears head-on. Set intentions for passionate pursuits and embrace change with confidence. Stay mindful of relationship dynamics and prioritize self-care amidst potential intensity throughout the month.



PISCES, WATER SIGN, FEB 19 - MARCH 20

In June, the spotlight shines on your personal life, Pisces. Your living space may become a center of vibrant energy, urging you to cherish moments with your loved ones. Embrace the opportunity to declutter and create harmony in your living space, allowing

for a sense of peace and tranquility to permeate your home. Later in the month, attention shifts to your passions and heart's desires, possibly sparking romantic connections. This period also prompts reflection on long-term goals, especially encouraging accountability and reflection. Try to find comfort in your surroundings, engage in creative pursuits, and prioritize self-care, leading to potential career advancements and personal growth.

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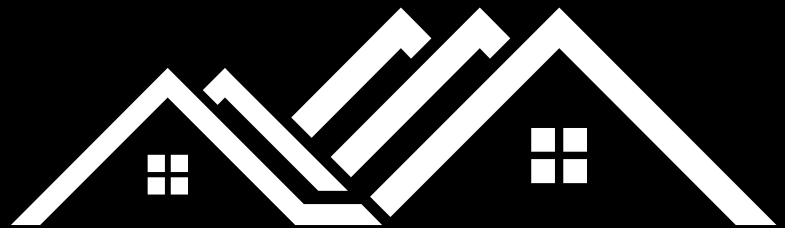
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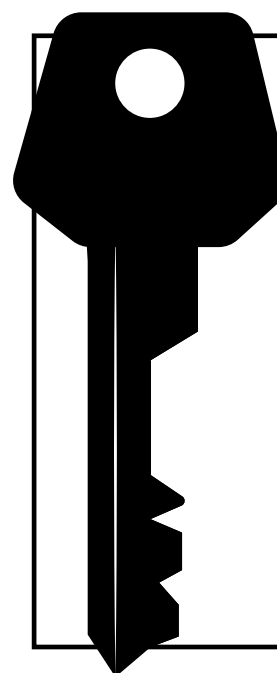
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TAKE THE FORK!

By Steve Bowyer

Yogi Berra once famously said, "If you come to a fork in the road, take it." Many times, we see people facing a decision that presents an opportunity and they choose not to take it. Sometimes it works out. Other times, not so much.

Will Smith, Brad Pitt, and Sandra Bullock all turned down the role of Neo in "The Matrix" movies. Keanu Reeves was made famous in them.

Sandra Bullock was cast opposite Keanu Reeves in the movie "Speed." Halle Berry and Annie Porter turned down that role. They made a sequel of this one, too.

Claire Danes turned down the role of Rose in Titanic. Kate Winslet accepted the role and won an Oscar.

John Travolta turned down Forest Gump. Tom Hanks took that role and won an Oscar, too.

Jerry VanDyke turned down Gilligan. He said it was too silly of a concept to succeed. Bob Denver is forever known for that role. For years Gilligan's Island was the #1 syndicated show on TV.

There is a great story in the NFL about Brock Purdy. A kid from Phoenix who did not get much attention from major college programs coming out of high school. Nick Saban, former coach at Alabama, no slouch in evaluating talent, said this about Brock, "You're below average in height. Your arm strength is whatever. Your accuracy is average."

Brock accepted the only D-1 scholarship offer he received to Iowa State. He was drafted into the NFL by the San Francisco 49ers as the 262nd college player taken, dead last. Their first two quarterbacks got hurt within a few weeks of each other. Brock got his chance and the team won every game he played in until the last one, a playoff game. The 49ers were one game away from going to the Super Bowl.

All Brock Purdy needed was a chance, an opportunity. Same as Keanu Reeves, Sandra Bullock, Kate Winslet, Tom Hanks, and Bob Denver.

When you come to a fork in the road, the opportunity of a lifetime, take it.

Jesus has offered us the opportunity of an eternal lifetime. It will not make us famous or rich, until we leave this life. Humility and anonymity are almost guaranteed. But technically, we will never die.

Since He has offered the opportunity, when you come to this fork, you should probably take it.

As an adult, Jesus went back to the synagogue in Nazareth where He grew up. This was his parents' synagogue. And they knew Jesus well. Maybe they knew Him too well for their own good.

He was recognized as a leader and a powerful teacher. So, He was given the opportunity stand and teach that morning. He chose the passage Himself. He opened the scroll to Isaiah 61. And He read this:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he had anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." (Isaiah 61:1-2 and Luke 4:18-19)

Then, He said this:

"Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 4:21)

There was no doubt in the room about what Jesus was saying. The Isaiah passage was a prediction of what was going to happen when the Messiah, their Savior showed up. Jesus claimed that He is that guy that God sent to save people.

The people in Nazareth knew Him as Joseph and Mary's boy. They were dirt poor. He could not afford an education. As an adult, He hung out with a group of losers and outcasts. Here he claimed He is the One who would lead their revolution and change the world.

The fork in the road looked to be cheap, used, and plastic to the Nazarenes. Their response to the opportunity Jesus presented them was to kick him out and even threaten to throw Him off the cliff.

They blew it. They wasted their opportunity. They came off worse than Nick Saban, Will Smith, Brad Pitt, Halle Berry, Claire Dane, John Travolta, and Jerry VanDyke. Please do not blow your opportunity like these people did.

Jesus has offered us the opportunity of an eternal lifetime. It will not make us famous or rich. Humility and anonymity are almost guaranteed. But technically, we will never die if we pick it up.

Yogi Berra might have been the wisest man ever, giving the best advice ever, when it came to opportunities and forks even though he wore the catcher's gear for the New York Yankees. Please, pick what Jesus is laying down.

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