

PINEWOOD NEWS

THE GOOD LIFE, COMMUNITY & MOUNTAIN LIVING SINCE '93

VOL. 31 NO. 16 OCTOBER 4, 2024

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PAGE 23

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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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COLDWELL BANKER NORTHLAND



\$400,000

95 E FOXBORO ROAD, 11

In serene Coconino National Forest, this 1.73-acre lot in Foxboro Ranch Estates offers a blend of tranquility and luxury with exclusive clubhouse access and all utilities ready.



\$375,000

259 E FOXBORO ROAD, 7

Nestled in Coconino National Forest, this 2.24-acre lot in Foxboro Ranch Estates offers luxury with no build time, exclusive clubhouse access, and proximity to Sedona.



\$350,000

307 E Foxboro Road, 4

Experience luxury at Foxboro Ranch Estates! 1.99 acre lot in Northern AZ with access to catch-and-release lakes, trails, and a log clubhouse near Schnebly Hill and Pinewood Golf Course..



\$349,900

18005 S DIXIE LANE, 48

Magnificent 1.8-acre lot in Foxboro Ranch Estates blends luxury with nature, offering access to private lakes, a clubhouse, and trails. Near Flagstaff and Sedona, utilities ready.



\$445,500

17305 BIG SKY DR

Turn-key 3-bed, 2-bath manufactured home in Munds Park. Fenced yard, carport, pellet stove, A/C, shed, apple trees, perennial flowers, and flagstone patio. All appliances included.



SALE PENDING!

\$1,249,500

17810 S HIGHLAND PLACE

Custom-built log home on Highland Place with mountain views, gourmet kitchen, two decks, oak floors, stone fireplace, and unique lighting. Most furnishings convey.



SOLD

\$425,000

17295 S ZIA PLACE

Remodeled, metal roof, paver driveway, and 2 sheds. Split floor plan: primary bedroom suite, new kitchen, family room, laundry, and 2 beds. New bathrooms, flooring, windows, & paint.



\$299,500

125 E OAK DR

Updated home with new flooring, granite countertops, wood-burning stove, vaulted ceiling, split bedrooms, covered deck, storage shed, carport, and more..



SALE PENDING!

\$391,900

17220 MESCALERO DR

Updated 2-bedroom, 2-bath home, fully furnished with modern appliances, jacuzzi, RV parking, UTV storage, deck, and automatic drip system.



\$569,000

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.



REDUCED!

\$695,000

635 E OAK DR

2017 Cavco home with 2,234 sq ft, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, and 4-car garage. Situated on 2 lots, a redwood deck, and a natural stream, this move-in ready home offers privacy and outdoor space.



SOLD

733,500

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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NMLS #167729



AA MEETINGS - FEEL BETTER!

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

MUNDS PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH SERVICES

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

PINEWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT AUXILIARY MEETING

The Community is Welcome!
Tuesday, November 12
6:30 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

PINEWOOD FIRE DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Public Welcome
Tuesday, November 19
3 pm • 475 E Pinewood Blvd

PINEWOOD SANITARY DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Public Welcome
Thursday, November 8
3 pm • 18075 Fairway Dr

MUNDS PARK TOWN HALL

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

Next Meeting May 15, 2025
Pinewood Country Club



WHY THE PINEWOOD NEWS BACKS TAMMY ONTIVEROS FOR DISTRICT 3 SUPERVISOR

We try to keep politics at arm's length—just as our readers prefer. But let's be real: local politics is where things actually get done. And yet, it's often overshadowed by the national stage. For unincorporated areas like Munds Park, local government is the backbone of our community. Our voice in all this? The District 3 Supervisor.

Now, we have two candidates to consider: Adam Hess and Tammy Ontiveros. Here's the rub—Adam Hess has fallen short in some critical ways. Despite promising to clear up concerns about the Floodplain Maps, he hasn't followed through with community members, leaving concerns unanswered. And those town halls he promised to attend... a no show.

Let's be clear: A candidate who doesn't communicate with the people they serve or keep their promises—an elementary job responsibility for us all—isn't worthy of our vote.

Tammy Ontiveros, however, is different. She's taking the time to show up, listen, and learn who we are and what we need. Whether it's attending town halls or engaging in lengthy conversations with the community, she's doing the groundwork to understand Munds Park. And that's the kind of commitment we need.

That's why Pinewood News is officially endorsing Tammy Ontiveros for District 3 Supervisor. She's learning, she's listening, and with her background, we believe she's well-equipped to serve Coconino County and Munds Park. We hope you'll join us in supporting her.

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THINGS TO DO

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

WITCHES RIDE OF MUNDS PARK



It's time to dust off those brooms witches and participate in the First Annual Witches Ride of Munds Park!

When: Saturday, October 12, 2024 -Meet at the Club parking lot at 3 pm to check in and line up your Cart or Razor. We ride from 4 to 5 pm.

Why: To benefit a chosen charity- Northland Family Center in Flagstaff -www.northlandfamily.org.

Get Creative: Dress in your witch garb and decorate your cart/razor

The Ride: We will all follow the pre-designed route starting at 4 pm.

Happy Hour: Following the Ride -join us for Happy Hour at the Club (nonclub members will be our club guests for the Happy Hour and may pay for their drinks with cash or credit card. We will dance a little and do the Witches Dance, which you can learn by watching the YouTube demo Video: <https://youtu.be/wpQlyOMKyCA?si=ISL9evTIRdwworom> 5 basic steps.

How to participate: It is simple, log onto: www.northlandfamily.org look for the purple bar, select "Donate" then donate at least \$20 and it will register you for the ride. Each participant must register. We have generous donors who have offered to match your donation of \$125.00 or more!

NOT Affiliated With Witchcraft! It's all about Charity and Fun.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

JOIN THE MUTS ANNUAL FOREST CLEAN-UP!



Mark your calendars for October 12th and help us make a big impact in keeping our forest beautiful at the Munds Park Trail Stewards (MUTS) Annual Forest Road Trash Clean-up! This is our final event of the 2024 season, so don't miss your chance to join in.

What You'll Need:

- Sturdy walking shoes
- Sunblock
- Weather-appropriate clothing
- A good sense of humor!

(Don't worry, water and trash bags are on us.)

We'll wrap up by noon, followed by a complimentary lunch to thank you for your hard work!

Registration Required: Please RSVP via email as soon as possible: mundstrailstewards@hotmail.com

Stay updated on any changes by checking the MUTS website at mundsparktrailstewards.com

Let's take care of our forest together!

8:14 a.m. at Pinewood (240) Trailhead, just 1/5 mile past the Pinewood Blvd cattle guard.



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Every Saturday through October!

OCTOBER 14 - 17

PUMPKIN FEST & CORN MAZE



The Festival That Made Us Famous!
Join us this fall for Pumpkin Fest & Corn Maze – the grandest, most exciting, and incredibly fun event of the entire year. The Mortimer Farms Pumpkin Fest & Corn Maze is a celebration for all ages, offering a delightful array of activities that promise unforgettable memories.

Mortimer Farms
12907 E St Rt 169, Dewey, AZ 86327

NOW THROUGH OCTOBER 26

FRIGHT NIGHT AZ



Welcome to the only haunted house in Northern Arizona: Fright Night. What sets this haunted house apart from others? It's inside a phantom train that is permanently derailed on abandoned tracks at Verde Canyon Railroad's depot in Clarkdale, Arizona. For those brave enough to enter ... for those who love the entire month of Halloween and the opportunity to be terrified.

Verde Canyon Railroad
300 N Broadway, Clarkdale, AZ
www.frightnightaz.com



HALLOWEEN Trunk or Treat

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

BRING THE KIDS AND ENJOY A SPOOKTACULAR TRUNK OR TREAT!

The Pinewood Fire Department Auxiliary invites you and your little ghosts and goblins to join us for a fun-filled Halloween Trunk or Treat! This is your chance to enjoy a safe, family-friendly event with candy, games, crafts, and more.

When: Saturday, October 26th, 1 – 3 p.m.

Where: Pinewood Country Club

Dress up, bring the kids, and celebrate the Halloween spirit with neighbors and friends. We've got the treats, games, and spooky surprises ready—now we just need you! It's sure to be a fang-tastic time for the whole family.

Let's make this Halloween one to remember!

Event may be postponed or canceled due to inclement weather.



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

SANTA IS COMING!

Get ready for some holiday cheer! Santa and Mrs. Claus will be making their grand arrival at the Pinewood Fire Dept. on December 7, 2024, at 9:45 AM and staying until noon.

Snap a picture with Santa and his reindeer, and receive a stocking full of holiday goodies!

Don't miss out—sign up today!

Contact: Linda Burnett: Phone or text 619-954-6901

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LOCAL HIGHLIGHTS

SUMMARY OF THE MUNDS PARK TOWN HALL

September 19, 2024

The latest Munds Park Town Hall offered several important updates for the community. Here are the key takeaways:

Pinewood Fire Department Updates

The Pinewood Fire Department has sent Engine 41 out for a full refurbishment, which is expected to take about three months. This proactive move will save the department both time and money, ensuring the truck remains in optimal condition for years to come.

Meanwhile, progress on the new firehouse is moving ahead of schedule. The design process is about 90% complete, and the old firehouse is scheduled for demolition March 2025.

Law Enforcement Report

Lt. John Jamison of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office provided an update on emergency calls in Munds Park between June 16 and September 16, 2024. Here are the statistics:

Accident - Injury: 11	Loitering/Vagrancy: 1
Accident - Non-Injury: 2	Medical Assist Calls: 87
Alarm False (No Fire): 12	Motorist Assist: 4
Animal Control: 5	Parking Problem: 2
Area Patrol: 99	Public Assist: 15
Arrest Warrant Service: 1	Special Duty: 12
Attempt to Locate: 2	Still Assignment Fire: 9
Business Check: 18	Structure Fire: 11
Civil Matter: 12	Suicide Calls: 2
Close Patrol: 1	Suspicious Activity: 1
Community Policing: 1	Threatening/Intimidating: 3
Criminal Damage: 5	Traffic Complaint: 5
Disturbing the Peace: 23	Wildland/Brush Fire: 2
Domestic Violence: 1	Abandoned Vehicle: 1
Driving Under the Influence: 2	
Field Interview Contact: 3	
Follow-Up Report: 4	
Forest Patrol: 12	

This totals 369 calls during that three-month period, excluding 25 911-hang-up calls. The number of emergency calls appears to be higher than usual, coinciding with a rise in reported deaths around Flagstaff and nearby areas. Chief Deputy Bret Axlund of the Coconino County Sheriff's Office is investigating this trend, and further details will be shared in the November issue.

Community Concerns and Officer Availability

Munds Park residents have voiced concerns about a need for increased law enforcement presence, especially on weekends, holidays, and in forested camping areas. The response from the Sheriff's Office remains consistent: while more support is desired, staffing shortages are a significant challenge. Coconino County, the second-largest county in the U.S., faces the same difficulties as many law enforcement agencies in finding and training officers. Despite these hurdles, local law enforcement is doing all they can to keep the area safe. Residents are encouraged to stay alert, report incidents, and work together to maintain community safety.

Emergency 911 Notification System

Kelsey Nielsen, the Emergency Management Program Coordinator for Coconino County, emphasized the importance of signing up for the Emergency 911 notification system. With Munds Park located in mountain country, rapidly changing weather and wildfire risks make timely alerts essential. Nielsen advised residents to not only sign up for the system but also to review their accounts every six months to ensure they receive critical notifications. Staying informed is a key responsibility for keeping you and your family safe in emergency situations.

Sign up or check your account today at:

www.coconino.az.gov/2612/Emergency-Notification-System

Next Munds Park Town Hall: May 15, 2025

Location: Pinewood Country Club



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265 E FAIRLANE ROAD

Charming 3-bed, 2-bath 1991 Cavco home on two lots. Upgrades include a renovated kitchen with new cabinets, countertops, and appliances, along with upgraded baths, new windows, and fresh paint. Exterior features a pergola, fenced yard, sheds, and covered porches on both sides. The yard is beautifully landscaped with artificial grass, trees, and pavers. Additional improvements include a new hot water heater, updated plumbing, and an A/C unit in one shed. Ready to move in!

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\$229,000

405 E OAK DRIVE

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

CALL DEBI BRIGHT



\$440,000

17060 S PENGUIN

Meticulously cared for 3-bedroom, 2-bath home with a large front porch, extended by 3 feet, and a walkway porch leading to a covered back porch. Features include a large shed, fenced backyard, new flooring in the kitchen, hall, dining, and living rooms, and an extra-large lot. The airy primary bedroom has two closets, and the spacious bath offers dual sinks, a soaking tub, and a separate shower. Plenty of space for additional sheds or a garage.

CALL DEBI BRIGHT



\$615,000

475 E HILLSIDE DRIVE

Beautiful flat corner lot over 10,000 sq. ft. with a gazebo and concrete circular driveway. This cozy cottage-style cabin features a white tongue and groove ceiling and a large covered front porch. The main floor includes a welcoming living room with a fireplace, dining area, open kitchen, bath with new shower, and a primary bedroom. A large utility room leads to a 2-car garage. Upstairs, two spacious bedrooms. Central propane heat and portable A/C complete the home.

CALL DEBI BRIGHT



\$674,900

190 BISON DRIVE

Under contract in less than 24 hours. Sold for full price. Contract to close in just 18 days. I can sell yours too.

CALL ELIZABETH HAUSMAN



\$699,900

1385 BIG BEAR TRAIL

Fully furnished and tastefully decorated, this turn-key chalet in the desirable "Animal Hill" area offers 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and a large bonus room. The cozy living space features a stone fireplace, rustic wood banisters, and knotty pine doors, adding mountain charm. The kitchen boasts wood cabinets, stainless appliances, and ample space for cooking. The large upstairs bonus room is perfect for a bunk room, office, or game room. Just bring your essentials and enjoy your mountain retreat!

CALL ELIZABETH HAUSMAN



\$199,900

17149 IRON SPRINGS RD

Under contract for full price, first day on the market, contract to close in just 9 days. I can sell yours too!

CALL ELIZABETH HAUSMAN



\$769,000

1325 E JAGUAR LANE

Large concrete drive leads to an oversized single-car garage. Sit on the covered deck and enjoy the grass. Open the front door to a huge living room, dining room, and kitchen. Woodburning stove. Kitchen is all electric with an extra-large island. Back door leads to the shed. Down the hall to the primary bedroom with its own bath. Another primary bedroom with its own bath and a bedroom with walk-in closet. Upstairs addition with its own balcony. Family room is large enough for a pool table and seating. Up two steps to the sleeping area and a half bath. Plenty of parking. Oversized lot with trees.

CALL DEBI BRIGHT

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PLEASE RESPECT YOUR NEIGHBOR

By Brit Elders

We are a relatively small community in here Munds Park. Most of us tend to mind our own business yet be there when needed by our neighbors and friends. We watch out for each other and step up when someone has a problem. We have neighborhood watch but even if you're not a member, most of us keep silent sentry over our neighbor's property. It's just one of the many neighborly things we do.

Based on the number of flags majestically flying from houses around here, I'd say we are a patriotic community, too. And it's political season. People are expressing their first amendment right to free speech by placing placards and signs on their property for candidates they support. They have a legal right to that expression and to the placement of signs, no matter on which side of the aisle they stand.

Recently we have had a few individuals who have not lived up to our community's simple live and let live standards. Unfortunately, there are people that feel it is their right to remove those signs in an attempt to prevent their neighbors from expressing themselves.

People have been captured on camera under the cover of nightfall, physically removing and taking property that they know does not belong to them. This can be described in a very simple term: theft.

If it doesn't belong to you, don't take it. Have respect for the members of the community that want to express their first amendment right to free speech. If you are responsible for removing a political sign from your neighbor's yard, take a second and ask yourself how you would feel if someone silenced you or took something from your property just because they held a differing opinion.

We Munds Park residents and visitors may not agree on all things—including political candidates. But we are a community that should have respect for each other, including respect for opposing points



This guy thinks stealing signs is activism. We call it a crime. Don't be this guy!

of view. Stealing a sign is not going to change anyone's perspective. It's not only immature, but it's an irritant to realize that someone in the community has censored their neighbor's voice.

One of the things that makes our country so great also makes our community a wonderful place to live. I am referring to our ability to be respectful of each other despite any differences and divergent opinions. Fortunately, each of us is unique with independent thought. Attached to those two significant aspects of individuality, we also assume the personal responsibility to be respectful of people's property, of each other, and of ourselves.

Let's live up to that responsibility.

Brit Elders has been a full-time resident of Munds Park since 1984. An author and documentary filmmaker, she has traveled the world exploring a variety of non-fiction subjects.



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REDUCED



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320 E San Felipe Pl
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 Call Pat Moore
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REDUCED



370 E Navajo Rd - \$2,650,000

This extremely well built ICF Energy Efficient Custom Home backs the Pinewood Golf Course and has 2,486 sqft of Covered Decks surrounding the home providing Spectacular Golf Course & Panoramic Views. The 2,948 sqft drive-through 6+ car Garage is amazing with a Spa & Sauna and a Elevator that take you to the 2,948 SqFt main living quarters with 3 Bd, 3.5 Ba, Vaulted Ceilings and Fireplace. The .87 acre lot has RV Parking with Electric & Dump Station. Call Pat Moore - (928)853-4529

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HOMEMADE & WONDERFUL

FIRESIDE TREATS FOR A FRIGHTFULLY FUN NIGHT OF HALLOWEEN STORIES!

The fire's crackling, shadows are dancing, and a cool Halloween breeze whispers through the night. Perfect for gathering around with friends and family, this edition is packed with spooky stories for all ages—just the thing to send a few shivers down your spine. But don't worry, we've got three wickedly fun treats to keep the scares balanced with some sweetness.

Whether you're daring the grown-ups with ghostly legends or giving the kids a good-natured fright, our Caramel Apple Nachos, Pumpkin Spice Popcorn, and Ghostly Campfire Cones are sure to keep the spirits high. They're easy to make and perfect for sharing by the fire while you get lost in a night of chills, thrills, and tasty bites.

So, grab your marshmallow roasters, settle in, and enjoy a night of spooky stories and hauntingly good snacks!

GHOSTLY CAMPFIRE CONES

If you think classic s'mores are irresistible, get ready for a spooky twist with these Ghostly Campfire Cones. They're just as ooey-goey as you love, but even easier to make (and eat)! Perfect for enjoying while the fire flickers and the ghost stories begin, these cones are packed with all the sweet, melty goodness you crave.



Ingredients

- 1 bag Marshmallows – Mini or regular, it's up to you!
- 12 sugar or waffle cones
- 12 oz bag Milk Chocolate Chips – Or get creative with dark chocolate, white chocolate, butterscotch, or peanut butter chips!

- Chopped Nuts – Throw in some peanuts, pecans, or almonds for extra crunch.
- Syrup Drizzle – Add a spooky drizzle of caramel or chocolate sauce for an extra layer of sweetness.
- Candy – Want to get wickedly fun? Add mini Reese's, Rolos, or chopped Hershey's bars for a devilish twist.

Campfire Instructions

1. Stuff Your Cone – Fill each cone with marshmallows and chocolate chips (get the kids in on the fun here!).
2. Wrap It Up – Wrap each cone tightly in foil and place it on the grill grates for a few minutes.
3. Unwrap Carefully – Beware! The cones will be steaming hot when you remove the foil, so handle with care as you unearth your gooey treasure.

Oven Method

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Fill & Wrap – Just like with the campfire version, fill each cone, wrap it in foil, and pop it in the oven for 7-10 minutes.
3. Unwrap Carefully – Once again, watch out for the hot steam when unwrapping.

Pro Tips

- Heavy-Duty Foil – Use heavy-duty aluminum foil to keep your cones sturdy, whether grilling or baking.
- Set up a spooky topping bar with leftover candy and let everyone build their own Ghostly Campfire Cone. It's a fun, sweet way to add a little extra magic to your Halloween night.

Recipe adapted from Carrie Barnard, Eating On A Dime

Continued on page 13



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WORD SEARCH

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| Carve | Hayride | Skull | Witch |
| Cloak | Howl | Specter | Wizard |
| Coffin | Mask | Spider | Zombie |
| Crypt | Midnight | Spirit | |
| Dracula | Moon | Spooky | |
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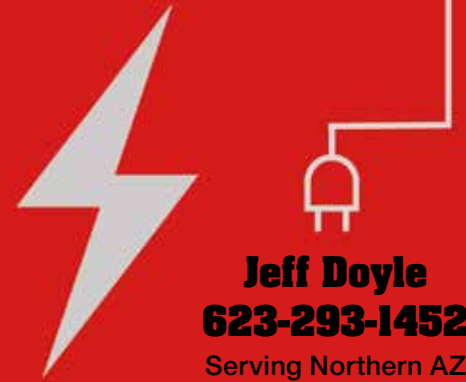
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HOMEMADE & WONDERFUL

Continued from page 11

CARAMEL APPLE NACHOS

Looking for a snack that's just as fun to make as it is to eat? Try these Caramel Apple Nachos—the perfect combo of crisp apple slices, sweet caramel, and crunchy toppings. It's a wickedly delicious treat for your Halloween night, whether you're gathered around the campfire or keeping cozy inside.



Ingredients

- 4 apples – Granny Smiths work great for that spooky tart flavor!
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1/8 cup caramel sauce. I always add more :)
- 1/8 cup chopped peanuts (or any nuts you prefer)
- 1/8 cup mini milk chocolate chips

Directions

1. Prep the Apples – Core your apples and slice them into 1/4" pieces.
2. Add Lemon Juice – Toss the apple slices with lemon juice, being gentle so you don't bruise them.
3. Assemble the Nachos – Arrange the apple slices on a plate, drizzle with caramel sauce, and sprinkle with mini chocolate chips and nuts.
4. Serve & Enjoy – Serve this fun and frightfully good snack right away!

Recipe adapted from Carrie Barnard, Eating On A Dime

PUMPKIN SPICE POPCORN

Looking for a bewitching snack to enjoy while telling spooky tales around the fire? This Pumpkin Spice Popcorn will have everyone reaching for more with its sweet, spiced flavor and a dash of fall magic. It's perfect for sharing, whether you're watching Halloween movies or sitting around the campfire under the stars.



Ingredients

- Prepared popcorn – Make it however you like, but Jiffy Pop adds a fun twist for the kids!
- Unsalted butter – Melted to perfection for that deliciously rich coating.
- Light brown sugar – Just a touch of sweetness to bring it all together.
- Pumpkin pie spice – The spooky star of the show!
- Salt – To balance out all that sweetness.

Directions

1. Pop the Corn – Start by popping your popcorn and placing it in a large bowl.
2. Mix the Magic – In a separate bowl, combine the melted butter, pumpkin pie spice, salt, and light brown sugar.
3. Drizzle & Toss – Pour the buttery mixture over the popcorn and toss gently until it's all coated in that sweet, spicy goodness.

Tip! Make your own Pumpkin Spice. It's easy! Combine 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon with 1/4 teaspoon each of nutmeg, ginger, and cloves.

Recipe adapted from Dorothy Kern, Crazy for Crust

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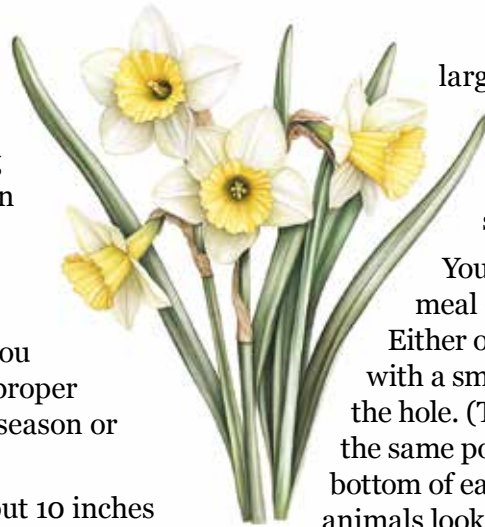
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GARDENS IN THE PARK

PLANTING SPRING-BLOOMING BULBS

How to Give Yourself 100 Days of Spring Beauty



Brought to you by Warner's Nursery

Spring bulbs are a delight for any gardener, but they do require some planning and preparation. Arranging your bulbs so they bloom throughout the spring season is the key to having a colorful and fragrant garden.

There are early-season bulbs that will often bloom before trees and shrubs start to leaf out in the spring, which is a great way to beat the winter blues! Plus, if you combine a variety of bulbs into one garden bed (with proper spacing), you'll have constant blooms throughout the season or about 100 days of spring beauty.

Early season blooms are hyacinth (which grows to about 10 inches high) and crocus (which reach about 4 inches). Mid-season blooms include muscari (12 inches), tulips (24 inches), and narcissus (16 inches). You can stretch out the season with late-blooming bulbs such as allium and bearded iris (both about 36 inches high) and Dutch iris (a little shorter at 20 inches).

Daffodils are the wild card of the bulb world. They can range in height from 6 to 30 inches and can bloom at any time during the spring, depending on the variety you plant.

But all of these bulbs have one thing in common - if you want to see them next spring, you need to plant them now. Spring-blooming bulbs require a long period of cool temperatures to spark the biochemical process that causes them to flower. Once they do, they are not bothered by frost or even late snow.

Bulbs are also an affordable option for budget-conscious gardeners; for less than a dollar, you can purchase bulbs that will yield larger plants with more blooms in future years.

Spring blooming bulbs need well-draining soil and at least partial sun. Amend your soil (we recommend Warner's Supreme Planting Mix) to a depth of 12 inches to create a loose, well-drained soil texture.

When planting, place the bulb facing upward in a hole about three times as deep as the bulb is tall. This means that

large bulbs like tulips will be planted about 8 inches deep while smaller bulbs will be planted about 4 inches deep, measured from the bottom of the bulb. The top of the bulb is the pointed side, called the nose, and the flat side is the bottom, referred to as the root plate.

Your bulbs will need to be fertilized when planted with bone meal or Dutch bulb food, products that are high in phosphorus. Either one can be added to the bottom of the hole and mixed with a small scoop of mulch before placing the bulb and filling up the hole. (Top dressing with fertilizer after planting will not have the same positive effects.) Sprinkle a tiny bit of Blood Meal in the bottom of each hole and around the finished top area to ward off pesky animals looking to make a treat out of freshly planted bulbs.

Give your newly planted bulbs a good soaking right after planting. If we receive at least two inches of snow every ten days, your bulbs won't need additional watering through the winter. If it's a dry winter without much snow, you should water your bulbs once a month. In the spring, when shoots appear, start watering bulbs about once a week, providing a deep soaking rather than shallow sprinkling. Take care not to overwater as this promotes bulb rot.

After your bulbs flower, you are left with the leaves which many consider messy and unattractive. These should not be cut off; they are necessary for the plant to photosynthesize and produce energy that will be stored in the bulb for the next year's flower show.

One easy solution to hiding the mess is to layer planting beds so that the remaining bulb foliage is hidden by emerging spring perennials. Another solution is to trim back the flower stems and leave the foliage as a green accent. Once that foliage has turned yellow or brown and died back, it can be removed.

In early fall, our days are still warm and it's still a great time to be outside. Enjoy the weather and add a beautiful spring accent to your garden by planting bulbs such as tulips, daffodils, crocus, and iris. You'll be glad you did next spring when you are able to enjoy your amazing display of spring color! —Happy Gardening from Warner's Nursery!



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SHAKEN & STIRRED IN PINEWOOD

The Cocktail Connoisseur's Corner

MULLED WINE SANGRIA Savoring the Season's Simple Gift

By Dick Trudeau

It's fall, the air's got that bite, and the sun doesn't hang around as long as it used to. People start reaching for the heavy sweaters and looking for something warm to drink. The time is perfect for a Mulled Wine Sangria. It's not fancy, it's not complicated, but it's everything you want on a cool October night. Let me tell you why.

Mulled wine goes way back. The Romans were the ones who first thought, "Hey, it's cold. Let's warm up the wine and throw in some spices." They weren't trying to be trendy; they were trying to keep warm. It spread across Europe, where it became a staple for anyone who had to deal with winters that made your bones ache.

It wasn't just for the rich either—this was something everyone did, no matter what they had. You used what was around—local spices, fruits, whatever—and made it work.

Let's bring in the sangria, the Spanish answer to "Let's make this fun." It's wine, sure, but throw in some fruit, maybe a little brandy, and you've got yourself something worth drinking when you're ready to unwind. The name? It's from "sangre," meaning blood, because of its deep red color. Sangria's all about celebrations, gathering around a table with friends, and enjoying what the land's giving you.

So, what happens when you mix the two? You get Mulled Wine Sangria, and it's everything you want in a fall drink. It's warm, it's spiced, it's got that deep fruitiness from the sangria, but it's got the kind of backbone that'll keep you warm on a cool night. It's the best of both worlds—comforting, but with a little bit of a party hidden in there.

This isn't a drink you rush through. It's the kind of thing you sip slowly, around a fire maybe, with a couple of good friends. You take in the smell



of cinnamon and cloves, the deep red of the wine, and the sweetness of the fruit, and you remind yourself that sometimes, the simple things really are the best.

Look, life's complicated enough. But Mulled Wine Sangria? That's not complicated. It's a drink for people who know how to appreciate what's in front of them. It's for those who understand that fall isn't about pumpkin spice and Instagram shots. It's about taking the season as it comes, using what's available, and making something that works. So pour yourself a glass, take a breath, and savor the moment. After all, that's what this season is really about.

Ingredients

- 1 bottle red wine – Rioja, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon or Pino Noir
- ¼ cup brandy
- 1 cup apple cider
- 2 green apples – 1 for mulled wine, 1 for fresh garnish
- 2 lemons – 1 for mulled wine, 1 for fresh garnish
- 2 limes – 1 for mulled wine, 1 for fresh garnish
- 1 orange
- 1 cup blackberries – ½ cup for mulled wine and the rest for fresh garnish
- 1 cup cranberries – ½ cup for mulled wine and ½ cup for fresh garnish

Continued on page 18



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SHAKEN & STIRRED

Continued from page 17

- 1/2 cup pomegranate seeds
- 1/4 cup honey
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 1 tsp. cloves
- star anise – optional for garnish
- thyme – optional for garnish

The Method

- In a pot, pour 1 bottle of red wine, 1 cup apple cider and 1/4 cup of honey. Add 3 cinnamon sticks and 1 tsp. of cloves in a tea egg (or wrapped in cheese cloth and tied with baker's string). Place a lid on top and simmer on very low heat for 20 minutes. Never allow it to boil.
- While the wine simmers with the cider, spices and honey, slice 1 green apple, 1 orange, 1 lemon and 1 lime.
- When finished, pour mulled wine into a jug or container with sliced fruit, 1/2 cup of blackberries and 1/2 cup cranberries. Add 1/4 cup of brandy, stir gently and refrigerate for 2-3 hours until cold.
- For garnish, thinly slice 1 lemon, 1 lime, and 1 green apple. Add ice to glasses and pour sangria, adding some of the drunken fruit, and leaving some room for fresh fruit. Add blackberries, pomegranate seeds, cranberries, and sliced fruit with optional star anise/herbal garnish.



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MARCHING WITH THE DEAD: MAZATLÁN'S DIA DE LOS MUERTOS PARADE



By “UNSTOPPABLE Stacey” Wittig

I was so excited that my October visit to Mazatlán—hosted by Fiesta Amigos, a conference of travel professionals—would coincide with Dia de Los Muertos or Day of the Dead. I'd never attended Day of the Dead celebrations in Mexico, and I was intrigued to learn more.

My favorite experience was the Day of the Dead processional, the callejoneada, or alley stroll. And what's so cool is that you don't have to wait until next year for a similar experience. Mazatlán's carnival is coming up February 27-March 4, 2025, and you'll find the same awe and appreciation of different cultures that I found during my October visit.

Dia de los Muertos Processional

We stood in the heart of the historic district, Plazuela Machado, waiting for whatever happened next. I wore a headband with colorful flowers, typical of the holiday. The balmy night was filled with anticipation, and when I looked at the children's faces, I was reminded of my own youthful hopefulness on the night before Christmas. The square was filled with families and us, the delegates from the Fiesta Amigos conference, waiting for the Dia de Los Muertos callejoneada to start.

There's something beautiful about the unfolding of unknown rituals. I felt a sense of childlike wonder take over, and I let go of the need to control or understand what would happen next. On the other hand, the Americans who surrounded me needed to know what was next, and since they didn't, they wanted to make it—whatever it was—happen on their own. There was a sort of culture clash going on.

“What are we doing just standing here?” pouted one of the American party girls.

“Just standing here,” I thought to myself. “It's OK to simply stand and breathe in the present moment of anticipation and excitement.”

“Let's just go! Let's just start walking,” she demanded, pushing ahead. The treasonists in our group moved slightly forward while others held back. I imagined that—from above—we looked somewhat like an amoeba changing shape as we pushed against

the crowd, and the crowd pressed against us. I was happy to stand my ground and wait for whatever was going to happen next.

In time, three young Mexican public relations professionals arrived holding placards on long sticks that read, ‘Fiesta Amigos.’ They positioned themselves at the front and back of our group of about 150 people. The association had asked us to dress in white for this occasion, so we stood out of the crowd as a seemingly amalgam group between the handheld signs.

Finally, fireworks and bottle rockets signaled the beginning of the promenade, and our giant white amoeba started moving forward around the square. I expected our group to move with the masses of others that had gathered in Plazuela Machado. But I was astonished to see that those not dressed in white parted to let us through. Parted to let us through?

Families with baby carts, grandmothers, ninos and ninas stood on the curb or sat on walls, smiling and sometimes waving as they watched us walk by. Waving at us?

Continued on page 29

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GHOSTLY TALES TO SHARE AROUND THE FIRE THIS HALLOWEEN By Vanita Dee

GHOSTS OF CLEOPATRA HILL *The Unsettled Spirits of Jerome Grand Hotel*

In the heart of Arizona's high desert, Jerome clings to the rugged slopes of Cleopatra Hill like a spectral remnant of its former self. Once a booming mining metropolis, now a tourist town, its streets curve and twist, holding secrets as old as the mines themselves. The Jerome Grand Hotel, a towering structure of brick and memories, casts a long shadow over these tales of yore, its windows peering out like hollow eyes into the endless desert expanse.

Built in 1926, this monolithic structure originally served as the United Verde Hospital, a sanctuary for the broken bodies and spirits of miners who delved too greedily into the copper-rich bowels of the earth. The hospital's halls were alive with the echoes of pain and hope, where men came broken and either walked out whole or didn't walk out at all.

Among those who walked these halls was Claude Harvey, the dedicated maintenance man who knew every creak and whisper of the building's old elevator. On a grim day in April 1935, a terrible incident echoed through the hospital corridors: Claude was found gruesomely pinned beneath the elevator he had so faithfully tended. The case was quickly closed, officially deemed an 'accident,' but lingering doubts about the hurried investigation fueled rumors that justice had not been served. These rumors say that Claude's spirit, discontent with the unresolved questions surrounding his death, continues to haunt the elevator shafts, eternally echoing his final, agonizing moments.

Then there's Manoah Hoffpauir, the caretaker whose solitude in the then-abandoned hospital ended in 1982 with a rope and a choice that no one could understand. In the room where he died, guests report a heaviness, a sorrow so palpable that even the skeptics start to wonder if the past is truly dead.

The hospital closed its doors in the 1950s, as the mines dwindled and Jerome's heartbeat slowed to a near stop. But the building would breathe again as the Jerome Grand Hotel in 1996, revamped yet reverent to its storied past. The renovation stirred more than just dust; it roused the spirits that had lain dormant, trapped within the walls they once knew as their last haven.

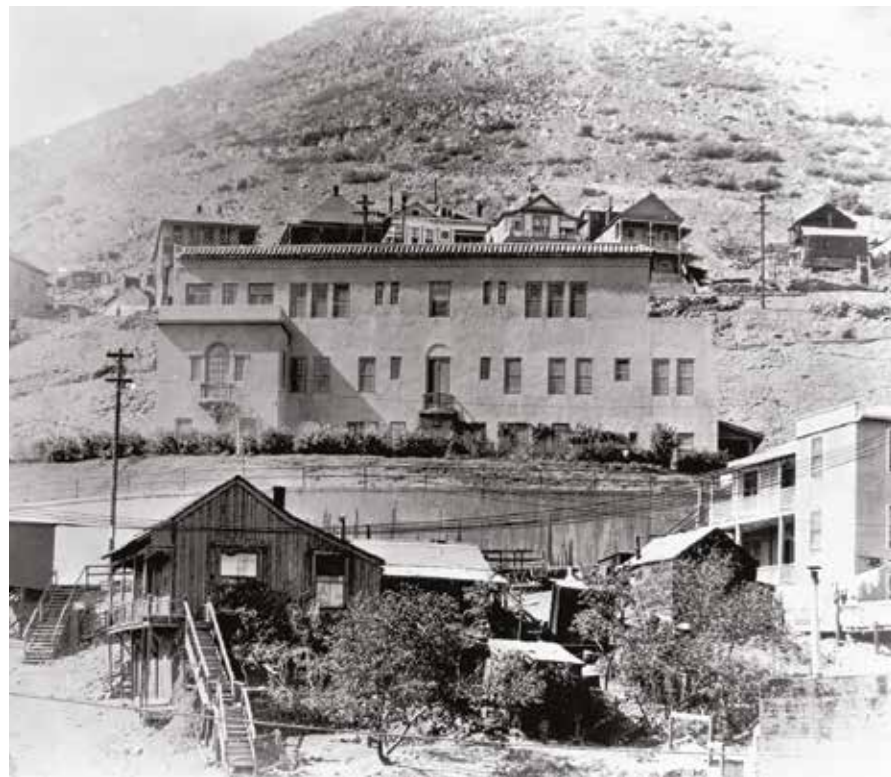
Now, the hotel is a curious blend of hospitality and horror. Guests might hear the faint sound of a miner's cough from empty rooms, or the sudden chill of unseen presences passing by. Lights flicker erratically in rhythms that almost seem like morse code—a desperate signal from the beyond. The old hospital's elevator, with its original mechanisms still intact, often ascends to floors not selected, driven by Claude's unseen hand.

Staff and visitors alike tell tales of spectral sightings: nurses in vintage attire seen in the periphery, vanishing when confronted; the distant cries of infants in the maternity ward that once was; laughter of children echoing down corridors that should be silent.

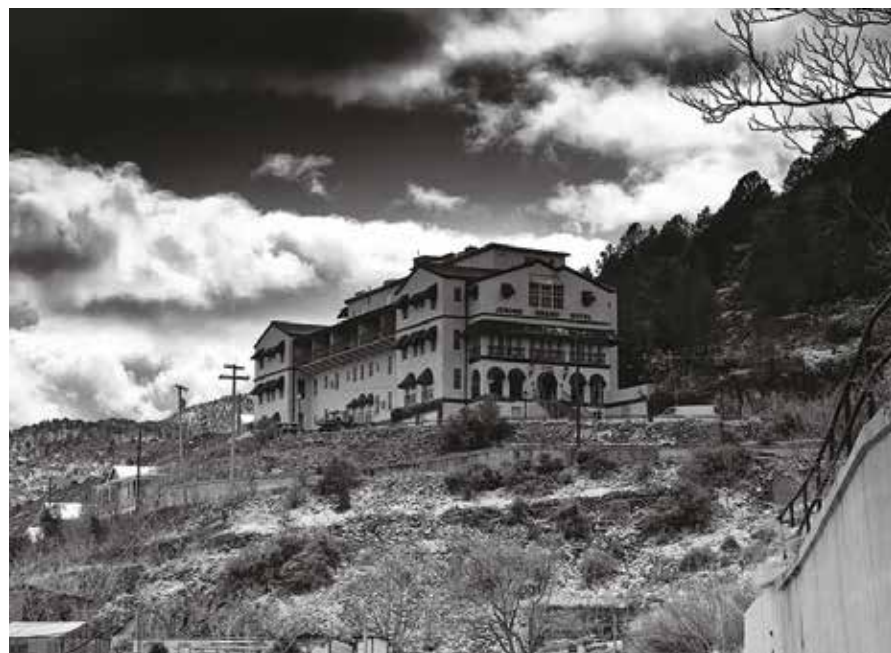
In the Jerome Grand Hotel, the past is alive and tangible, written into the very fabric of the building. Each creak and groan of the old structure is a verse in a ghostly hymn, sung by those who left their stories etched in tragedy. Here, on Cleopatra Hill, the boundary between life and afterlife is as thin as the whispering desert wind. As night descends, the guests at the hotel are left to wonder: Are they truly alone, or is the hotel a gateway to something both eternal and ephemeral?

For those who dare to stay, the Jerome Grand Hotel offers more than just a night's rest; it offers an encounter with history, a dance with the spectral remnants of a bygone era. And as the sun dips below the horizon, painting the desert in hues of blood and fire, one can't help but feel that in Jerome, the dead are just as much a part of the town as the living.

In the echoing halls of the Jerome Grand Hotel, the line between fact and folklore is as thin as the veil between night and day. Believe what you will—either way, the shadows are waiting for you.



The third United Verde Hospital. This photo was taken after the wing was removed due to earth movement. Photo courtesy of the Jerome Historical Society.



The Grand Dame still looming over the valley. Photo by The Jerome Grand Hotel

WHISPERS BEHIND THE DOOR *The Haunting of the Monte Vista Hotel*

In the chill of night in Flagstaff, where the winds howl down from the snow-capped San Francisco Peaks, the Hotel Monte Vista stands like a sentinel from another age. Built in 1927, among the roar of progress and the wild heart of the railroad era, it was a palace of dreams, drawing in the weary, the hopeful, and the damned.

From its grand opening, the Monte Vista was never just a hotel. It was a crossroads of fates, a place where Hollywood stars and hardscrabble drifters alike could vanish into the embrace of its luxurious anonymity. But as the glitter faded and the nights grew long, the hotel began to gather stories—Not just tales of the past, but whispers of the unquiet dead, refusing to be forgotten.

The basement of the Monte Vista, a place shrouded in perpetual gloom, became the heart of its ghostly lore. Here, the air is thick with the cries of a child whose life was snuffed out too soon—a baby born to a despairing mother, her life a tangle of shadows and shame. She ended her infant's suffering, or so the story goes, in the darkest corner of this underground world. To this day, guests speak of hearing the heart-wrenching sobs of a woman and the piercing cries of her child, echoing through the corridors as if the tragedy were fresh.

Not far from this morbid nursery prowls the Shadow Man, a specter whose story is stitched into the violent history of the speakeasy days. He was a man who knew too much and met his end in a whisper of betrayal and a flash of steel. His towering form is now but a flicker in the peripheral vision of those who wander the hotel's lower depths, his presence heralded by a drop in temperature and the oppressive sense of despair.

Above, the hotel's Room 220 harbors its own phantoms. Here, the electronics buzz and crackle with a life of their own, televisions blare static-filled screens into the darkness, and lights dim as though breathing with the pulse of the unseen. Guests recount tales of icy touches and unseen hands that press down upon them in the dead of night, as if the spirits themselves yearn for the warmth of the living.

In the old cocktail lounge, where the clink of hidden liquor once mingled with laughter, now lingers the soft, mournful strains of an eternal waltz. A couple appears without warning, locked forever in their 1920s elegance, gliding across the worn wooden floor as though time itself forgot them. Their movements are graceful, almost perfect, they've danced this same step for decades—trapped in a loop, neither alive nor dead. Their eyes, dark and hollow, fixed on some faraway point, their expressions blank, yet filled with a desperation that's hard to place.

There's a story whispered among the hotel staff—how the couple met here, a clandestine affair when their lives were anything but simple. Some say they died together, an accident or something worse, but no one really knows. Maybe that's why they linger. There's an

ache in their dance, the way the woman grips her partner's shoulder, fingers clutching too tightly, as if she fears losing him again. The man's hand at her waist is steady, but there's a stiffness to it, like he's leading them somewhere but knows they'll never arrive.

Guests unlucky enough to see them rarely speak of it. They say the room feels thick, like the very air has turned to fog. You watch them dance, and for a moment it's mesmerizing—beautiful, even. But then something twists in your gut. Their feet never make a sound, but the rustle of her dress, and the sound of long ago music—it's too real. Too close. And that's when you realize—they're not just dancing. They're looking for someone to join them. A chill crawls up your spine, and it's all you can do to turn away before you get caught in their rhythm, before the music reaches out and pulls you into the dance. Because once you're in, you don't leave.

The corridors of the Monte Vista are haunted by the phantom bellboy, whose knock comes softly in the dead of night, a sound almost too polite to be sinister. He doesn't pound, doesn't bang. No, his knuckles rap gently against the door and whispers "room service" through the wood. When the guest opens the door, they are met with nothing but a hallway of shadows, the air filled with the scent of



Built in 1926 with funds from locals and novelist Zane Grey, the Hotel Monte Vista opened its doors in 1927. But behind its historic charm lurk ghostly tales that continue to haunt its halls to this day.



Guests of the Hotel Monte Vista have reported eerie encounters with the phantom bell boy, who knocks on doors late at night—only to vanish when they open. His footsteps still echo through these haunted halls.



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THE WITCHES OF MUNDS PARK

By George Dee

Munds Park is a peaceful place. The tall pine trees sway in the breeze, and the quiet, winding roads make the small town feel at one with nature.

Lily had lived in Munds Park her entire life. She loved the woods and the cozy community where everyone felt like family. But there was one place she'd always avoided: the abandoned cabin on Pinewood Boulevard just opposite the country club. It had been abandoned for years, and the local kids told stories about it. They said witches live there and that strange things happen around the cabin at night—especially in the autumn when the wind howls and the nights grow longer and colder.

On Halloween night, Lily's friends dared her to go to the abandon cabin.

"Come on, Lily. It's just an old house," Maggie teased, her eyes sparkling with excitement. "What's the worst that could happen? You'll see some cobwebs and a spider?"

Lily, not wanting to seem like a coward in front of her friends, reluctantly gave in. "Fine," she said, trying to sound more confident than she felt, "but you guys have to come with me."

"Deal," Maggie grinned, nudging Chris and Jordan. "We'll all go."

The four of them set off down the rocky path, the only light coming from the full moon and the glow of their flashlights. The trees towered over them, casting long shadows that danced across the ground. The further they walked, the quieter it became. Even the usual nighttime sounds of crickets and rustling leaves disappeared as they approached the cabin.

Lily could feel her heart pounding as the dark shape of the old cabin



came into view. It was even creepier up close. The windows were broken, and the wooden walls looked like they were about to collapse at any moment. Ivy and thick vines had overtaken most of the structure, giving it a twisted, almost alive appearance.

"Are you sure about this?" Jordan asked, his voice low as they stood, staring at the darkened house.

"We're just going to look inside," Lily said, her voice tight. "That's it."

Maggie took the lead, stepping carefully across the overgrown yard. The others followed, their flashlights sweeping across the ground as they moved closer to the cabin. As they reached the porch, the wooden steps creaked under their weight.

Lily hesitated at the front door. It looked fragile, like it might fall apart if she touched it. But when she pressed her hand against it, the door swung open easily, revealing a dark, musty interior. The atmosphere was thick—a blend of decay, nature reclaiming the space, and time standing still. The air inside was chilly, and dust particles floated in the beams of their flashlights. The room was mostly empty, except for an old rocking chair in the corner, which swayed slightly as they entered.

"See? Nothing here," Chris said, though his voice didn't sound as confident as usual.

Just as they were about to leave, something darted across the floor—a black cat, its yellow eyes gleaming in the dark. It hissed at them, its back arched and its tail tall and sharp, before disappearing into the shadows.

Maggie laughed nervously. "Just a cat, guys."

Continued on page 24

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THE WITCHES OF MUNDS PARK

Continued from page 23

But Lily's stomach was doing flips. There was something about that cat and the cabin, something that didn't feel right. "Let's just get out of here," she said, her voice shaking a little.

As if on cue, the door slammed shut behind them with a loud bang. The temperature in the room dropped instantly, and a low, eerie humming sound filled the air. Lily's heart raced as she turned toward the door, but it wouldn't budge. It was like something—or someone—was holding it shut.

"Did you hear that?" Maggie whispered, with fear in her voice.

The humming grew louder, and then they saw it: carved into the floorboards beneath their feet was a strange symbol glowing in the darkness. The cat reappeared, slowly circling the symbol on the floor, its eyes locked on the group.

Lily froze, her eyes wide open, as the room came alive around them. The rocking chair in the corner began to move, creaking back and forth faster and faster, as if someone were sitting in it. The humming turned into whispering voices, soft but growing louder, filling the cabin with strange, unintelligible words.

Suddenly, the lights from their flashlights flickered and went out, plunging the room into darkness.

"Seriously? Now?" Jordan muttered, fumbling with his flashlight. He smacked it a few times, trying to get it to work. The cat let out a loud hiss, and then, as if things couldn't get more scary, the floor beneath them began to vibrate.

"What... is... happening?" Chris said, his voice trembling. The floorboards shifted under their feet, making them feel like they were on a boat rocking on rough seas.

Then it started—the giggling. Not just any giggling. No, this was that creepy, echoing kind of laugh you hear in nightmares. The kind that makes your skin crawl.

"Who's laughing?" Maggie asked, her voice wavering.

Just as the words left her mouth, the giggling intensified, bouncing around the room like it was coming from every direction. Then, out of nowhere, one of the witches popped up behind Jordan.

"Marco!" she screeched, grinning from ear to ear.

Jordan froze as if trying to process what was happening. Before he could move, another witch appeared on the opposite side of the room, her long nose wrinkled in glee.

"Polo!" she cackled, her voice shrill, echoing off the cabin walls.

The kids looked at each other, confused. Was this some sort of trick? Before they could figure it out, the witches were playing full-blown Marco Polo—darting in and out of shadows, calling out "Marco!" and "Polo!" in voices that alternated between screeches and giggles.

Maggie stood rooted in place, blinking rapidly. "Are they... are they playing games with us?"

Lily swallowed hard, not sure if she should laugh or scream. "I—I think so?"

Suddenly, one of the witches, her long black robe swirling behind her, snuck up behind Chris and leaned in close. With a sloppy wet lick of her tongue and a quick swipe of her hand, she gave him the world's most unexpected wet willy—jamming her long witchy finger into his ear.

"Ahhhh!" Chris yelled, jumping a foot in the air and slapping at his ear like a bee had stung him. "What the heck? Did you just... did you just give me a wet willy?"

The witch cackled loudly, twirling around in a circle. "Just a bit of fun!" she sang.

Then she added in a deep, ominous voice, "Or is it a... witch willy?"

She winked and cackled again.

Jordan, trying to process what was happening, turned to the others.

"Is this real life?"

Before anyone could answer, another witch swooped in with a

maniacal grin and, with a lightning-fast tug, gave Maggie the most epic wedgie of all time. Maggie let out a screech, hopping up and down in a mix of confusion and discomfort.

"Why?!" Maggie wailed, pulling at her twisted underwear while the witch happily danced around laughing at Maggie.

Lily couldn't stop herself—she burst out laughing. Not the nervous, scared kind of laugh, but real, deep belly laughs. The kind that make your stomach hurt. "This is ridiculous!" she gasped between giggles.

But the witches weren't done. One of them snuck up behind Jordan and whispered in his ear, "Why did the witch break up with her boyfriend?"

Jordan, filled with confusion, stammered, "Wh—why?"

The witch paused dramatically, then hissed, "Because he couldn't spell!" She burst into hysterical laughter, practically rolling on the floor as she cackled at her own joke.

Jordan stood there, mouth open, utterly bewildered. "What... what is even happening?"

As if on cue, the witches all stopped their antics and gathered in a circle, holding hands. They began to chant in playful voices, skipping around the kids like they were playing a twisted version of Ring Around the Rosie.

"Laugh with us! Play with us! We're not here to spook you!"

They skipped and twirled, occasionally flicking the kids on the nose or ruffling their hair. Chris tried not to laugh, still rubbing his ear from the wet willy. Jordan was recovering from the terrible joke while Maggie desperately attempted to fix her wedgie.

Then, without warning, the witches stopped dancing. The giggling faded, replaced by a silence. They all stared at the kids, their eyes glowing eerily in the darkness.

Continued on page 27





L R D E T A J W K J T V T S O H G
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HALLOWEEN WORD SEARCH

Search up, down, forward, backward, diagonal to find the hidden words.
 Answers page 38.

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| Witch | Mummy |
| Pumpkin | Mask |
| Ghost | Vampire |
| Spider | Trick |
| Broomstick | Treat |
| Skeleton | Monster |
| Bat | Cauldron |
| Haunted | Lantern |
| Moon | Zombie |
| Candy | Cobweb |



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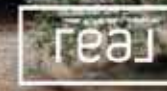
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THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

In business, relationships are everything. Whether you're a small startup or a well-established company, the partnerships you cultivate with your vendors can significantly impact your success. At Valentine Group and Wende's company, Boss Lady Red, we understand the value of strong vendor relationships and how they can contribute to your business's growth and sustainability.

Vendor relationships go beyond mere transactions; they are strategic partnerships that can provide your business with a competitive edge. Here's why fostering strong vendor relationships is crucial:

1. **Reliability and Consistency** - A solid relationship with your vendors ensures they deliver quality products and services consistently. This reliability helps your business operations run smoothly, reducing the risk of disruptions and delays that can affect your bottom line.
2. **Better Pricing and Terms** - Strong vendor relationships often lead to better pricing and more favorable terms. Vendors are more likely to offer discounts, flexible payment options, and other incentives to businesses they trust. This can result in significant cost savings and improved cash flow for your business.
3. **Access to Innovation** - Vendors who see you as a valued partner are more likely to share new products, services, and technologies with you before they become widely available. This early access can give your business a competitive advantage and help you stay ahead of industry trends.
4. **Enhanced Support and Service** - A strong vendor relationship means you can expect exceptional customer service and support. Vendors who value your partnership will go the extra mile to address your needs and provide personalized solutions.

5. **Collaborative Problem Solving** - When challenges arise, having a trusted vendor partner makes a difference. Strong relationships foster open communication and collaboration, allowing you to work together to find effective solutions.

At Valentine Group & BLR, we prioritize building and maintaining strong relationships with our vendors. We believe these partnerships are essential to delivering the best possible service to our clients and achieving long-term success. Here are a few tips for cultivating strong vendor relationships:

- **Communicate Regularly:** Keep the lines of communication open with your vendors. Regular check-ins help build trust and ensure both parties are aligned on expectations and goals.
- **Be Transparent:** Honesty and transparency are key to any successful partnership. Share your business needs, challenges, and feedback openly with your vendors.
- **Show Appreciation:** Recognize and appreciate your vendors' efforts. A simple thank you or acknowledgment can go a long way in strengthening your relationship.
- **Pay on Time:** Timely payments demonstrate your reliability and respect for your vendors' business, setting the foundation for negotiating better terms in the future.

By prioritizing strong vendor relationships, your business can enjoy the benefits of reliability, cost savings, innovation, and exceptional support. For reliable vendor recommendations, visit our website at www.valentingroupaz.com/vendors. Let's work together to create a thriving business community built on trust and collaboration.

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THE WITCHES OF MUNDS PARK

Continued from page 24

The tallest witch stepped forward, her grin stretching unnaturally wide. "Now, children," she said, her voice suddenly low and menacing, "it's time for the real fun."

The kids froze. All the playfulness from moments ago vanished, replaced by a thick tension that filled the cabin.

The witch leaned in closer, her bony finger pointed right at Lily. "Do you know what we like to do after our games?" she asked, her voice dripping with malice.

Lily, swallowing hard, shook her head. "N-no..."

The witch's smile faded entirely. The silence was unbearable. And then, in a flash, her grin returned, wider than ever.

"We take a nap!" she screeched, throwing her hands in the air as the other witches laughed.

Before anyone could react, the witches yawned dramatically and, collapsed in a heap of black robes, and began snoring loudly.

The kids stood there, utterly puzzled. The witches—who moments ago had been giving them wedgies and playing creepy games—were now passed out snoring.

"What... just... happened?" Chris asked. "I have no idea," Lily said, barely holding back a giggle.

"Can we leave now?" Maggie asked, tugging at her underwear, feeling confused.

Without another word, the kids bolted for the door, stumbling over each other in their rush to get out. As they fled down the path, they could still hear the faint sound of snoring coming from the cabin.

They didn't stop running until they reached the street, their hearts pounding and their legs aching. When they turned back to look at the cabin, it was silent, still, and dark.

Lily glanced at her friends. They were a mess—hair ruffled, clothes disheveled, and all looked like they'd

just been through the strangest nightmare ever. But then, one by one, they all started to laugh. Real, genuine laughter. Because how could they not? They'd just been tormented by witches who played Marco Polo and told terrible jokes.

"Are we... are we actually laughing right now?" Maggie asked, still holding her stomach from laughing so hard.

"Yeah," Chris said, wiping tears from his eyes. "I mean, who gets a wet willy from a witch?"

As they laughed about the ridiculousness of it all, Lily knew one thing: she would never forget this Halloween!

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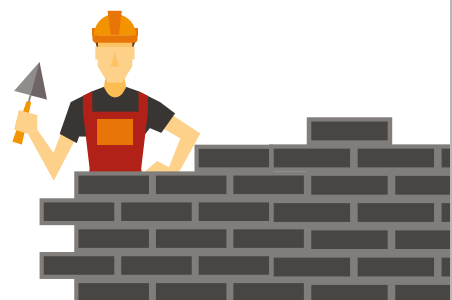
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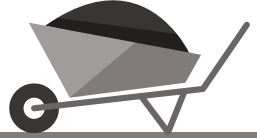
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TRAVEL

Continued from page 19

I thought we had come to promenade with the locals, but instead, WE were the promenade, and the locals were watching US! I learned later that the Fiesta Amigos had been processing in the Day of the Dead parade for years.

Locals reached out to touch my arm and then pointed to the flowers in my hair. “Que bonita,” I heard several times. Some of those standing curbside were dressed in Muertos attire, and I stopped to ask if I could take their picture. They would nod solemnly, and I would snap the photo.

We walked for blocks, snaking through the alleyways of historic Mazatlán, until we reached the Malecon, one of the longest boardwalks in the world. It was an incredible experience, and I am sure to tell stories about it for years to come.

Make your own stories in Mazatlán during Dia de los Muertos commemorations from October 31-November 2 or carnival in March 2025. <http://mazatlanvisit.com/mazatlan-carnival.html>.

“UNSTOPPABLE Stacey” Wittig invites you to visit her website, where this article is archived, along with another story, What is the Difference Between Day of the Dead and Halloween? She encourages questions and comments at UnstoppableStaceyTravel.com/contact.

GHOSTLY TALES

Continued from page 21

old tobacco and cheap aftershave. Some claim to hear footsteps fading down the hall, but no matter how quickly they move to catch him, there’s no one there.

It’s after the door closes that the real unease begins to crawl in. Long after you’ve shut the door, the silence feels heavier. You sit, staring at the wood, certain you’ll hear it again. Your breath comes faster, your heart pounds, and you swear, you swear, there’s someone still out there, just waiting. The next knock never comes, but the feeling stays. Long after you’ve left the hotel, you can still smell the faint trace of tobacco, and in your dreams, you’ll hear that quiet knock, fearing the bellboy has followed you home.

Room 306 doesn’t cradle sorrow—it seethes with the vengeful spirits of two murdered women. Men who stay there often describe an unexpected warmth in the air, something unsettlingly inviting, like an old lover pulling them close. It’s subtle at first, slipping in as they drift between sleep and wakefulness. They feel the sheets shift, soft fingers brushing along their skin, teasing—just a hint of presence, like someone settling in beside them. There’s a sigh, barely audible, and warm breath along their neck, almost seductive, luring them deeper into the haze of sleep.

But then, slowly, the warmth fades. What once felt inviting turns cold, so cold it burrows deep into their bones, and those light, teasing touches? They change. They become firm, almost possessive, lingering far too long. The sense of being watched grows heavier by the second. The playful sensation curdles into something darker, more threatening. It’s not just a haunting now—it’s a warning.

They wake up soaked in sweat, hearts racing, every shadow in the room feeling too alive, too close. Whatever presence shared the bed with them doesn’t vanish when the lights come on. It’s a bitter mix of desire and dread, following them long after they leave, a shadow they can’t escape.

In the dim corridors and echoing rooms of the Hotel Monte Vista, the line between reality and legend is as thin as a shadow in the dark. Believe what you will—fact, fiction, or something in between—but once the night falls, the past has a way of creeping in, uninvited. Whether you hear the knock at your door or feel the whisper of fingers trailing across your skin, one thing is certain: the spirits of Monte Vista are waiting, and they don’t care whether you believe or not.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Created by Paul Mason • Solution Page 38

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13	
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65					66						67				

ACROSS

- 1. Wolf's sound
- 5. Vast chasm
- 10. Tramp
- 14. Iris holder
- 15. 747, e.g.
- 16. Word-of-mouth
- 17. Brewer's yeast
- 18. Talk at length
- 19. No longer working: Abbr.
- 20. A warm lined padded bag to sleep in, especially when camping.
- 23. Ransack
- 24. Halloween bagful
- 28. Beautician, at times
- 31. Waikiki wear
- 32. "We ___ People ..."
- 33. The belief that the universe and the various forms of life were created by God out of nothing
- 36. Material for a whitesmith
- 37. Icy coating
- 38. ___ few rounds
- 39. Plane-jumping G.I.
- 40. Mimic
- 41. Picasso or Rembrandt
- 45. Starter's need
- 46. Top gun
- 47. "Jane Eyre" author
- 48. Ghost
- 50. Fedora feature
- 51. Not able to be pacified, placated, or satisfied.
- 57. Archaeological find
- 60. There's one right and left of center
- 61. Steel ingredient

DOWN

- 1. Major airports, e.g.
- 2. Track shape
- 3. "As you ___"
- 4. Gill parts
- 5. Deductive
- 6. Needing sharpening
- 7. Yin's opposite
- 8. Nose-in-the-air type
- 9. U. S. Vice Presidents are their presidents.
- 10. Trigger, for one
- 11. You can dig it
- 12. Dracula, at times
- 13. Vintage
- 21. Yeats or Keats
- 22. Hardly rosy
- 25. Reach
- 26. Craving
- 27. It has 100 seats
- 28. Rawboned animals
- 29. Foil
- 30. Dweller on the Red Sea
- 31. Pinocchio, at times
- 34. Shrek, e.g.
- 35. " ___ so fast!"
- 39. Compound once thought to cause food poisoning
- 41. Hurt
- 42. Stop-sign shape
- 43. Rubs the wrong way
- 44. Flower with a bulb

- 49. Moscow money
- 50. Swiss capital
- 52. Insect stage
- 53. Au ___
- 54. Petting zoo sound
- 55. Handed-down history
- 56. Concludes
- 57. "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" character
- 58. Egg cells
- 59. "Thanks a ___!"

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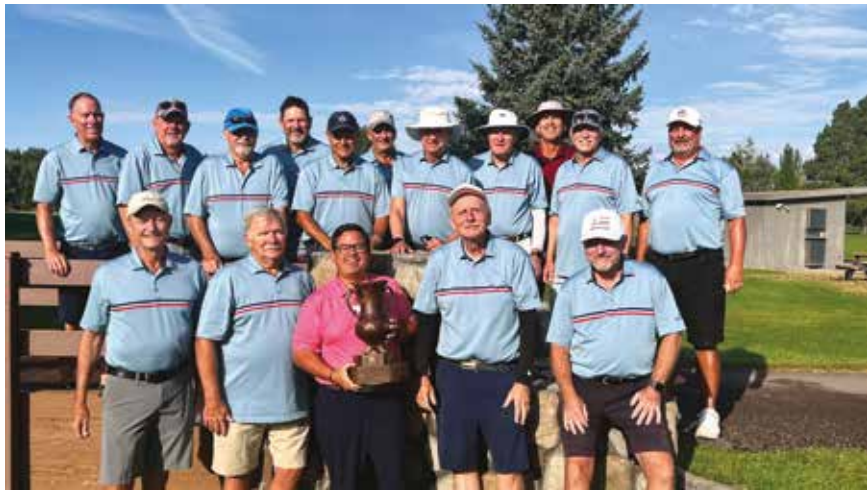
1: American Robin; 2: American Goldfinch; 3: Black Phoebe; 4: High elevations in Arizona and New Mexico; 5: Monitoring program; 6: Osprey; 7: Dark-eyed Junco; American Kestrel; 9: 13; 10: Blue Nuthatch

HIDDEN PICTURES

Solutions



CLUB LIFE



The team representing the Pinewood Men's Golf Association was the Champion in the season long Rim Cup Matches. Pictured is Head Golf Professional Brian Obillo and many of the members who participated in the matches versus other Northern Arizona clubs.



Jim Peterson defended his title as The Men's Club Champion. Congratulations to Jim for another outstanding performance.

Women's Golf Association 2024 Club Championship Results: Anita Britton – OVERALL CLUB CHAMPION!



Flight #1: Megan Reeves, 1st place; Patty Frey, 2nd place; Robin Alvarez, 3rd place

Flight #2: Norma Dokken, 1st place; Maggie Edwards, 2nd place; Andy Harper, 3rd place

Flight #3: Margaret Dyekman, 1st place; Pat Cole, 2nd place; Vicki Day, 3rd place

Flight #4: Deb Webster, 1st place; Kara Reddell, 2nd place; Afton Trail, 3rd place

The winner of the Pinewood Mens Golf Association Individual odd/even event held on August 24th was Rick Schmidgall.

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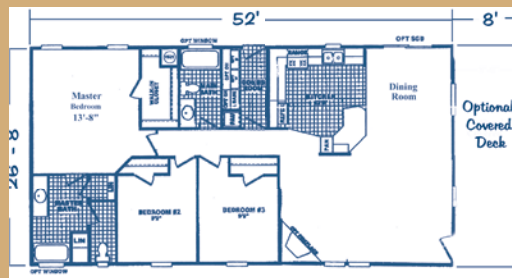
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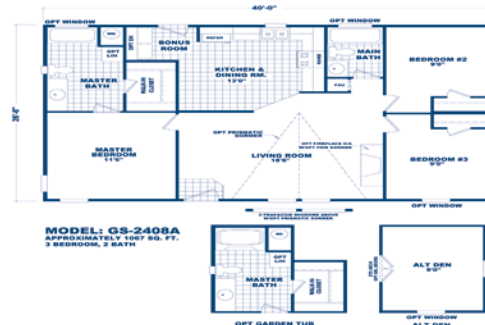


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DEAR PINEWOOD

Real Talk, Real Advice for Mountain Living

Dear Pinewood,

I've lived in Munds Park full-time for a while now, and I really cherish the peace and quiet, especially in the off-season when things calm down. But there's this constant tension between those of us who are here year-round and the part-timers, especially the ones who come up on weekends to party. They bring a lot of noise and often leave a mess behind, and it sometimes feels like they don't respect the fact that people actually live here. How can we bridge this divide and maintain a sense of community when so many treat Munds Park like their personal getaway, without considering those of us who call it home?

—Divided in the Pines

Dear Divided in the Pines,

Ah, the age-old story—full-timers and part-timers living side by side in the forest. The clash? Inevitable. But here's something I've learned from my years roaming these woods: fighting it won't help, and complaining on Facebook? Well, that does nothing but bring your fellow neighbors down with negativity. It spreads like wildfire, and before you know it, the peace you're craving is even further away.

Now, you want to keep your calm, right? Try meeting them halfway. We're all here because we love these mountains—whether it's for the

quiet solitude or a bit of weekend fun. Find that common ground. A friendly chat, maybe over a drink by the fire, can work wonders. Most folks don't even realize they're being disruptive. And when they do? They tend to dial it down—after all, they came here to relax too, not stir up tension.

But here's the thing: expecting them to treat Munds Park like a meditation retreat is asking for trouble. Balance, my friend. Sometimes it's about recognizing that peace means different things to different people. And if all else fails, those noise-canceling gadgets? Trust me, they're as useful as a strong pair of antlers during rutting season.

So, seek that balance, stand your ground with kindness, and remember—weekends come and go, but that first cup of coffee on a Monday morning, when the forest is quiet once more? That's Munds Park magic.

— Pinewood

Got a problem that needs solving?

Whether it's a neighborly dilemma or general advice, Pinewood is here to help. Send your queries to Hello@ThePinewoodNews.com, and you just might find the answer in our next issue—don't worry, all identities will remain anonymous.

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OCTOBER HOROSCOPE BY CAKE

Astrology has been a part of human history for millennia. Ancient Babylonians first mapped the stars to predict seasonal changes and celestial events. Egyptians aligned their pyramids with the stars, seeing them as gateways to the divine. The Greeks, including philosophers like Plato and Ptolemy, further developed astrological theories, integrating them into their understanding of the universe. During the Middle Ages, astrology thrived in Europe, influencing everything from medicine to politics. Today, astrology continues to be a tool for self-reflection, connecting us to the ancient wisdom of the stars and the cycles of life.



ARIES, MARCH 21 - APRIL 20

October will challenge your natural drive for action, Aries. You'll need to rely heavily on your instincts this month. Whether it's in your career, personal life, or financial choices, that initial gut feeling is the one to follow.

If something feels off, don't doubt it. Your ability to sense what's right will keep you on course. Trust your internal compass, and let it guide you confidently through the choices you face. This is a time to act on what you already know deep down.



TAURUS, APRIL 21 - MAY 20

This October, Taurus, it's time to disconnect from the endless loop of media. You thrive in peaceful, grounded spaces, but the constant buzz from the news and social media is pulling you away from your natural balance. Pull

back from the distractions, find your calm, and reconnect with what truly matters. Whether it's spending time in nature or simply enjoying a quiet moment, clearing your head will give you the mental clarity you've been missing. Peace returns when you unplug.



GEMINI, MAY 21 - JUNE 21

October invites you, Gemini, to question everything around you. Times are tricky right now, and not everything is as it seems. Your natural curiosity is your best tool to figure out what's real and what's not. Whether it's in conversations

with friends, at work, or in the news, be discerning and ask the tough questions. You'll find that what's presented to you may not always match the truth, and your ability to dig deeper will help you navigate through confusion this month.



CANCER, JUNE 22 - JULY 22

Emotional security is what you value most, Cancer, but this October, you may need to make some tough choices to protect it. Don't shy away from making those hard decisions, even if they

feel daunting. You know what's best for you and your loved ones, so don't let fear hold you back. Whether in relationships or work, making these decisions now will build a stronger foundation for your future. Trust your ability to handle what comes your way.



LEO, JULY 23 - AUGUST 22

October asks you to do something out of character, Leo: shut off the noise and step back from the constant attention. Your love for being in the spotlight may be dimmed by the media overload that's been draining your energy.

Kill the TV, step away from social media, and focus on what truly makes you happy. By pulling away from distractions, you'll reconnect with your creative fire and find joy in things that bring you genuine fulfillment.



VIRGO, AUGUST 23 - SEPTEMBER 22

Virgo, you're naturally analytical, but this October, instead of trying to absorb everything all at once, focus on micro-learning. Whether it's a new skill for work or a personal hobby, narrow your attention to small, intentional

bits of knowledge rather than overwhelming yourself with information. This approach will give you more satisfaction than endless scrolling. Focus on growth in manageable chunks—you'll feel more accomplished when you direct your energy purposefully.



LIBRA, SEPTEMBER 23 - OCTOBER 22

Libra, your search for balance and harmony is under siege by the constant stream of media this October. It's time to step away from the noise and find your peace elsewhere. Turn off the news and get outside—whether in nature or

in a quiet place that calms your mind. This month, the answers you seek aren't on a screen; they're in the stillness of the world around you. By clearing your head, you'll find the balance that's been missing. soul, and let go of the external noise. Your intuition will lead you to the balance you crave.



SCORPIO, OCT 23 - NOV 22

You're sharp, Scorpio, and this October, your natural ability to detect when something isn't right will be put to the test. If someone's words or actions don't match their intentions, trust your gut—your instincts are spot-on. Whether

in relationships or at work, don't be afraid to follow that feeling if you sense dishonesty. You have an innate ability to uncover the truth, so don't second-guess yourself this month. If something seems off, it probably is.



SAGITTARIUS, NOV 23 - DEC 21

Sagittarius, October will present you with choices that might not be the easiest or most popular, but that's okay. Don't fear taking the less-traveled route—it's where you'll find the most growth.

Whether it's in your career or personal life, choosing the path that feels right to you, even if others don't understand it, will lead to greater fulfillment. You've never been one to follow the crowd, and this month will remind you that your own way is the best way. to you.



CAPRICORN, DEC 22 - JAN 20

Capricorn, October is a time to protect your focus. The world is loud with opinions and endless advice, but don't let people or media tell you how to think.

You've built your success through careful planning and hard work—stick to that. Trust your own judgment and don't be swayed by the noise around you. This month, you'll find greater success when you block out the external distractions and rely on your own sense of direction.



AQUARIUS, JAN 21 - FEB 18

Aquarius, you pride yourself on being independent and original, but this October, you may feel pressure to conform. Resist the urge to follow the crowd and stick to what makes you unique. Don't be a sheep this month. Whether

in your career, social circles, or personal life, you're at your best when you're blazing your own trail. Trust your own ideas, even if they go against the grain. Being true to yourself will bring the most satisfaction.



PISCES, FEB 19 - MARCH 20

Pisces, you're naturally sensitive and intuitive, but this October is the time to tap into your courage. Have no fear in pursuing what feels right for you, even if the path ahead looks uncertain. Trust that your instincts will guide you

through any challenges. Whether in relationships or work, stepping forward with confidence will reveal opportunities that weren't visible before. Don't let doubts or fears hold you back—you're more than capable of navigating whatever comes your way.



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IT IS THE REAL DEAL

By Steve Bowyer

By now most all of you have heard I was given a tough diagnosis last week. I spent two weeks in Mayo Hospital waiting for a diagnosis then beginning treatment. I will not even try to write it out. I still cannot pronounce it. Just suffice to say, when the doctor looks you in the eye and says, "You have a rare, incurable kidney disease." It will knock the wind out of your sails.

I do not know what my new normal will be. I have always been active. And I think I will be able to get back to my Peloton bike in a few weeks and back on the golf course next summer. The biggest adjustments I must make is my new diet and since they suppressed my immune system and cannot shake hands with anyone anymore nor hug anyone. Do you know how hard that will be for me?

And speaking of hard things, my diet is incredibly restrictive. No more bacon double cheeseburgers. No more French fries. Several fruits and vegetables that we have all been taught are good for us have things in them I cannot eat. I got to go to "In-N-Out" once. The holidays will be a challenge. There is nothing on our Thanksgiving menu I can have. Well, the doctor said I can have one bite of everything. Smoked turkey, green bean casserole, yams, buttery mashed potatoes and gravy, yeast rolls and pie. And, to top everything off, I can only have 1.5 liter of liquid of any kind per day.

Many have asked me how I feel about all this. The truth is, it is sobering. But if I want to put off dialysis as long as possible, even forever, then I must discipline myself to stick to the regimen. One of the memes that came across my Facebook when I was in Mayo said, "There is pain in discipline and pain in regret. But the pain of regret is 100 times worse."

When my friends have gone through something like this, when appropriate, I tell them they have a choice to make. You can live a life of regret for everything you cannot have now. Or you can live a life being grateful for everything you do have.

Sara has worked very hard to learn how to prepare my meals now. Two of my kids came to visit and helped with research reading nutrition labels and creating a spreadsheet of all the foods I can have and what is in them so we can keep track. I could not do this without Sara or my kids helping. I am extremely grateful for them.

Even more than my family, what I have because of my faith in Jesus buoys me every single day. I have peace and hope that are real, they are not mind tricks nor simply the power of positive thinking. Because I have faith in Jesus, He has given me these two characteristics in an amount that is more than enough to overcome whatever emotions I may feel that could take me down.

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

A friend asked me if I was afraid. No, I am not. And I do not even need to stop and think about it. I am not afraid of what the future holds. I am not afraid of what might happen. Because I know that whatever does happen Jesus will do all the heavy lifting that needs to be done. My heart, my mind, my body do not need to try to manage any load that any situation lays on me.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

When we walk with Jesus, He promises to take up what we have been burdened to carry and give us his load. The difference in weight is significant. Here is another choice we must make. Do we think we are strong enough to carry the load? If we do, then we sorely mistake how strong we think we are. Our emotions, mental state, body would collapse under loads like this. But Jesus is ready and willing to take everything we will give Him to carry for us.

The basis for all this is faith. Yes, I have faith in Jesus to save me after I die. But eternal life begins the moment we come to faith and choose to surrender our lives to Jesus. This faith always provides hope for whatever situations we find ourselves in.

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." (Hebrews 11:1)

I am extremely confident that God is at work doing good things in my life around me that I cannot see. Just because I cannot sense it, see it, feel it, hear it, does not mean it is not happening. God is always and only good. What I feel may not be good. But that does not mean God is not doing something good that I will realize in time.

Hope means whatever comes my way will not overwhelm me, but I will be okay. The worst that can happen is someday my life on earth will end. But the next life is even better. In the meantime, whatever I go through, restrictive diets, regular infusion treatments, even the possibility of dialysis; Jesus will carry the burden and I will still be able to praise God and have joy in my heart.

It is real. I do not have to make it up or muster it up from within me. Neither do you. Faith in Jesus is the key to unlock all the potential Jesus offers so that no matter the situation we can always have peace, rest, joy, and hope.

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American Robin, courtesy of Muriel Neddermeyer

By Margaret Dyekman

I thought I'd end this year with a little quiz for all backyard birders. Here are some questions that cover 2024's columns. Have a great winter and do email or text me over the next months if you have sightings you would like to share.

1. Which species of bird is not a cavity nester? Western Bluebird, Mountain Chickadee, American Robin, or White-breasted Nuthatch
2. What species of finch is not commonly found in northern Arizona? American Goldfinch, House Finch, or Lesser Goldfinch
3. Which phoebe is usually found around bodies of fresh water? Black Phoebe or Say's Phoebe
4. What is the U.S. range for the Red-faced Warbler? Entire west from Arizona to Idaho, or high elevations in Arizona and New Mexico
5. What is NestWatch? A cartoon TV series of storks delivering human babies, a monitoring program for tracking bird reproductive activity, or the name of the new 2025 Apple Watch
6. What species of bird has a wingspan of up to 72 inches, eats only fish, and is found on every continent of the world except Antarctica? Bald Eagle, Common Raven, Belted Kingfisher, or Osprey
7. If you find a bird's nest in your planter or house wreath, what species of bird might it belong to? American Crow, Band-tailed Pigeon, or Dark-eyed Junco.
8. What species of bird was formerly called the Sparrow Hawk? Peregrine Falcon, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, or Loggerhead Shrike
9. How many baby bluebirds fledged from nest boxes at Pinewood Country Club this summer? 10, 13, 15, or 18
10. Which nuthatch species does not occur in northern Arizona? Blue Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, or Pygmy Nuthatch

Solutions on page 30.

Contact me at margaretdyekman@cox.net or via text at 602-620-3210. Explore Backyard Birding in Northern Arizona at www.backyardbirdingaz.com. Order your book online or directly from me. I look forward to your questions, sightings reports, and article suggestions.

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