

BEST RESTAURANTS 2011

# ARIZONA

HIGHWAYS

ESCAPE · EXPLORE · EXPERIENCE

APRIL 2011

25 OF OUR  
FAVORITE  
PLACES TO EAT  
IN ARIZONA

BY NIKKI BUCHANAN

plus

Fry Bread = mmm ...  
Baby Pictures of Wildlife  
Treasure of the Sierra Ancha



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18 BEST RESTAURANTS 2011

In places like Phoenix and Tucson, it's pretty easy to find a good restaurant. But where do you go when you're in Wikieup or Snowflake or Camp Verde? You could pack a lunch or eat fast food, but there are so many other options, including the 25 locally owned eateries in our fourth-annual "best restaurants" issue.

BY NIKKI BUCHANAN  
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Landscape photography plays a big role in this magazine. That said, very few photographs generate more response than images of baby mountain lions, bunnies and bears. "Oh, they're so adorable ... and so cute." That's what most people write. In this month's portfolio, you'll see why.

A PORTFOLIO EDITED BY JEFF KIDA

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Trekking into the wilderness isn't for everyone. It takes a certain breed — the kind of person who would be played by someone like Humphrey Bogart. The numbers are few, but for those unflinching adventurers, the rewards are many. Gold, silver ... or in the case of the Sierra Ancha, an archaeological treasure.

BY NICK BEREZENKO

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Indian fry bread is a mainstay at street fairs, festivals and powwows. To the general public, it's sweet and delicious, but to the Navajos, it's a reminder of the pain and suffering their ancestors once endured.

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• A wild geranium holds on to a raindrop following a monsoon thunderstorm in the Sierra Ancha of Central Arizona. | NICK BEREZENKO

FRONT COVER Liberty Market is the latest in a trio of Gilbert dining establishments locally owned by Joe Johnston. | PAUL MARKOW

BACK COVER A pile of Entrada Sandstone formations on the Hopi Indian Reservation gets its color from oxidized iron and nonoxidized iron fractures. | GEORGE STOCKING

Photographic Prints Available

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## Hash Browns, Javelinas and Hard-Core Adventure

**m**att's Big Breakfast. If I had all the time in the world and the metabolic rate of a broad-tailed hummingbird, I'd begin every day at Matt's Big Breakfast. The food, the atmosphere, the service ... it doesn't get any better than Matt's. That's why people line up for hours, even during the triple-digit infernos of summer, for the Salami Scramble, the Griddlecakes and the crispy hash browns. Especially the crispy hash browns, which are moistened with olive oil and heaped on the plate — there's enough there to fill up a linebacker. Like everything on the menu at Matt's, the hash browns are delectable and the portions are massive. The restaurant itself is a different story.

At most, the place holds about 25 people. It's always wall-to-wall, and ever since Guy Fieri featured Matt's on *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*, it's even more crowded. Don't let that deter you, though. As Nikki Buchanan writes in *Best Restaurants 2011*, "the food is better than Mom's," and she's right. "Mmm ..." doesn't even begin to describe it. Another great thing about Matt's is that owner Matt Pool uses local ingredients: bacon from The Pork Shop, bread from MJ, jams from Cotton Country and coffee from C4. To paraphrase Ms. Buchanan: It proves that eating local leaves a good taste in your mouth.

If you haven't been to Matt's, plug it into your GPS. The same goes for the other 24 restaurants in this month's cover story, including Criollo Latin Kitchen in Flagstaff, Screaming Banshee Pizza in Bisbee and Simon's Hot Dogs in Sedona. As always, the 25 places on our list are there for various reasons: charming décor, delicious food, friendly service. Not every restaurant excels in every category, but according to Nikki, the state's most-respected food critic, they're all worth a visit. She's done the field-work; all you have to do is hit the road. And when you do, watch out for wildlife.

Arizona ranks third in the U.S. in terms of biodiversity, behind only California and Texas. That means Mother Nature spends a lot of time in our state, showering it with a wide range of plants and animals, many of which are featured in this magazine on a regular basis. Although landscape photography is the soup du jour in most issues,

## ARIZONA HIGHWAYS TELEVISION



ARIZONA HIGHWAYS TV

If you like what you see in this magazine every month, check out *Arizona Highways Television*, an Emmy Award-winning program hosted by former news anchor Robin Sewell. For broadcast times, visit our website, [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com), and click the *Arizona Highways Television* link on our home page.



PAUL MARKOW

it's the wildlife images that generate the biggest response. In fact, it was an e-mail from a biology student at Oregon State that prompted this month's portfolio. She was responding to an image of a mountain lion and her cub in our June 2009 issue. "Incredible photograph," she wrote. "I'd love to see more of that kind of stuff. More wildlife."

Thanks for the great suggestion, Libbie. In *Oh, Babies!*, we do just that. It's not just wildlife, though. It's wildlife in its infancy. Kits, fawns, lambs ... babies. The young skunk and the baby bighorn sheep will generate the most *oohs* and *ahhs*, but even the newborn javelina will make you think, *aw, that's so cute*. We're pretty sure this is what Libbie was looking for, but the best way to see wildlife is out in the wild, in a place like the Sierra Ancha.

There are no guarantees, of course, but the Sierra Ancha, which is remote and rugged, offers as good a chance as any of seeing mule deer and mountain lions. Among others. It also offers a Ph.D. in archaeology, but very few have ever earned it. Nick Berezenko is one of the few.

Recently, Nick and two other photographers headed into the mountains. They were on a mission to find Pueblo Canyon and the ancient dwellings of the Salado people, who occupied the area from 1278 to 1324. "We stumble into a giant alcove that shelters the main compound," Berezenko writes in the present tense. "Ochre walls of plastered mud and stone stand silent in the hollowness. Ten? Twenty? Thirty-five rooms in here? Hard to tell. Many of the second-story walls have fallen, and now lie in blocks at the base of the ruin."

In *Treasure of the Sierra Ancha*, you'll read about their adventure, and by the time you're finished, you might be inspired to follow in their footsteps. The urge is understandable, but keep in mind that trekking into the Sierra Ancha isn't for everyone. It takes a great deal of training and a great deal of endurance. The rewards are worth it, though. Kind of like waiting in line at Matt's Big Breakfast. The obvious difference? There aren't any good hash browns in Pueblo Canyon. Not as good as Matt's, anyway.

ROBERT STIEVE, editor

Follow me on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/azhighways](http://www.twitter.com/azhighways).



TIM FITZHARRIS

June 2009

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PRODUCED IN THE USA

### JACKI MIELER

For most people, tackling a writing assignment at an ice cream parlor is a welcome treat. For Jacki Mieler, writing this month's story about Chaparral Homemade Ice Cream in Wickenburg (page 14) was doubly exciting. "I was about six months' pregnant when I did my research. I was at that stage where I couldn't decide between salty food and sweet food," she says. "This assignment was a pregnant woman's dream come true, and I gladly hopped back and forth between sampling the sandwiches and the ice cream." Mieler, who lives in Flagstaff and is a regular contributor to *Arizona Highways*, is now learning the ropes as a new mom and says she's looking forward to introducing her child to Arizona's many wonders.



### PAUL MARKOW

Photographer Paul Markow ate his heart out, figuratively, during the photo shoot for this month's cover story (see *Best Restaurants 2011*, page 18). "Hamburgers, hot dogs and pizza — oh, boy!" says the frequent contributor to *Arizona Highways*. "The assignment was a

road trip down memory lane for me, in particular with those cow-shaped burgers at Rod's Steak House in Williams. I remember my parents taking me there when I was 6. Also, not waiting in line at Matt's Big Breakfast in Phoenix made me feel like a rock star, and a slice from Screaming Banshee Pizza in Bisbee made the long trip home a little easier."

### NICK BEREZENKO

More than flowers bloomed in Pueblo Canyon when photographer Nick Berezenko decided to write about, rather than photograph, his trek into the Sierra Ancha.

Fellow photographers Jeff Snyder and Richard Embery documented the journey with their cameras, and Su von Mazo, a woman Berezenko knew from his hometown of Pine, was along for the ride. "Pueblo Canyon is a pretty mystical place," says Berezenko, who has a degree in cultural anthropology from Arizona State University. "No other place communicates so strongly what the life of the Ancestral Puebloans was all about." In addition to cultural ruins, Berezenko discovered something else during the trip: how much he and von Mazo have in common. They've been a couple ever since. Berezenko is a frequent contributor to *Arizona Highways*.





January 2011

#### THE HOEL PICTURE

We were surprised and delighted to see the photo of Don Hoel's Cabins in the January 2011 issue [page 11]. In the photo is my grandmother, Nita Hoel, and Mr. and Mrs. Basket of Peoria, Arizona — we don't know the names of the children. I believe the Baskets were cotton farmers, and they came to stay at Don Hoel's Cabins every year for many years. Our family has been blessed to be a part of the rich history of Northern Arizona, and we appreciate your mentioning Hoel's Indian Shop. We're still here carrying on the tradition my grandfather, Don Hoel, started in 1945.

DAVID WATTERS, SEDONA

#### IT'S A BUTTE

A breathtaking scene, a great vantage point and wonderful light can yield an outstanding photographic image. Add a small group of friends and a lovely spring evening and you have the stuff of lifelong memories. I was



January 2011

fortunate enough to be with Gary Ladd and a group of friends when Gary made the beautiful image of Gunsight Butte printed on page 22 of the January 2011 issue. It's an experience I've logged away in my memory bank.

DAVE DONAHUE, BELVIDERE, ILLINOIS

#### RUBE THE WRONG WAY

I love your magazine and have long been a fan of Craig Childs, but did he seriously just refer to ancestral Hopi peoples as "dawdling rubes waving their sticks in the air" [*Shedding Some Light*, January 2011]? The same insult was apparently leveled at a dedicated site steward, as well.

WILL RUSSELL, SCHOOL OF HUMAN EVOLUTION & SOCIAL CHANGE, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY



January 2011

EDITOR'S NOTE: When I asked Craig about that particular phrase, this is what he had to say: "I meant no offense in these words. I used them to express the appearance one might have of an older, eccentric man grinning as he walks up to an archaeological site, especially a man who has already proved his merit by being steward of that very site. It was my way of saying this is no stiff, self-adoring character, but one who could happily be seen as a gnome or a dawdling rube, even a country bumpkin. Being sort of a country bumpkin myself in a crazily technological metropolitan world, I would take it as a compliment."

#### HI NOTE

I just read the article *Hump Days* in the January 2011 issue. Did you know that Hi Jolly was personified in a song by the same title, sung by the New Christy Minstrels?

ED GRIMES, EDGEWOOD, KENTUCKY

#### THE ISSUES AT HAND

I first became interested in Arizona in 1958. In 1963, whilst serving with the Royal Navy in Singapore, I sent a speculative letter to Phoenix, probably addressed to "The Tourist Office," asking for historical information about the state. By return, quite unexpectedly, I received two books from the University of Arizona Press in Tucson. They were 1960 editions of *Arizona Place Names* and *Arizona:*

*Its People and Resources*. Although many things have changed, I still enjoy reading both of them. It was in the 1990s that I came across a 1966 copy of *Arizona Highways* in a local second-hand bookshop. It's headed "A treasury of Arizona's fairest color" and consists of 80 pages of full-colour photographs taken throughout the state. Having been looking through it a few months ago, I thought I may as well subscribe to your magazine. Having received some of your recent issues, I can only say that nothing has changed regarding photography and content. Excellent pictures, excellent read! Thank you.

DUNCAN JACKSON, NAILSEA, ENGLAND

#### STATING AN OPINION

Thanks for the great December 2010 issue. Each and every month I can't wait to check the mail for my next issue of *Arizona Highways*. I love the stories of life in Arizona and all of the great photos. Nevada is the state that I call home. I only wish it had a tenth of the beauty and adventures that Arizona has.

BILL WALDRON, LAS VEGAS



December 2010

#### SEEING THINGS

Did others see the dog (or coyote, or wolf) in the sky on page 43 of the December 2010 issue? The photo brought back memories of my youth of looking for "things" in the sky!

ANNE GILLESPIE, STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO ■



LARRY LINDAHL

### Splash Down

For decades, this neon beauty drew visitors to Mesa's Starlite Motel with a form that even Esther Williams would envy. As photographer Larry Lindahl notes, "She would first appear gracefully folded at the waist, then she'd blink out, light up again straight as an arrow, blink out and reappear splashing into neon water with perfectly pointed fingertips." Sadly, she took her last dive late last year, when a windstorm knocked her to the ground. To read Lindahl's essay about the "diving girl," visit our blog at <http://arizonahighways.wordpress.com>.

#### contact us

If you have thoughts or comments about anything in *Arizona Highways*, we'd love to hear from you. We can be reached at [editor@arizonahighways.com](mailto:editor@arizonahighways.com), or by mail at 2039 W. Lewis Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85009. For more information, visit [www.arizonahighways.com](http://www.arizonahighways.com).



JEFF KIDA

## Raising the Bar

Fifty-seven years ago, Russ Kapp built a cherry-stained mahogany bar for the grand reopening of the Stockyards Restaurant and 1889 Saloon in Phoenix. Today, the 91-year-old craftsman still bellies up to his masterpiece every chance he gets.

By JODI CISMAN

STROLL INTO THE Stockyards Restaurant in Phoenix, pull up a stool at the bar in the 1889 Saloon, and don't be surprised if you feel as if you've stepped back in time — about 100 years back in time.

### PHOENIX

The back wall of the magnificent bar is lined with six wooden arches, beautifully carved out of cherry-stained Honduras mahogany and aglow with light from the large custom-made crystal chandelier that hangs front and center. The bar, with its perfectly symmetrical engravings, is the handiwork of 91-year-old Russ Kapp, who still frequents the saloon bar every chance he gets.

"We drew up the bar from an old photograph," Kapp says in a deep, husky voice.

"That's how we got the scale."

Kapp Cabinets — the company that Kapp owned and operated for more than 30 years with his brother Charlie — built the bar in 1954. Since then, the centerpiece of the saloon hasn't changed much, other than the three broken bar stools and the addition of a marble slab on the counter.

"We do very little upkeep on the bar," says Gary Lasko, who owns the restaurant and saloon, which are located near 48th Street and Washington in Phoenix. "Because it's so well-made, we don't have to."

It's a typical report on most things manufactured by Kapp Cabinets, whose employees prided themselves on producing top-quality work for their customers. "We

built almost every bar in Phoenix at one time," Kapp says. In addition, his company also created the fixtures for Ryan-Evans Drug Stores. Kapp's work was prominent around the Phoenix area, and that exposure eventually caught the eye of Helen Tovrea. Her husband, Edward Tovrea, owned an extensive stockyard near the site of the present-day restaurant.

Tovrea — or, as fellow cattle businessmen called him, the "Cattle Baron" — opened the Tovrea Stockyards in 1919 on 175 acres of land near what is now 48th Street and Van Buren. At the height of its existence, the feedlot held as many as 300,000 head of cattle. It was so busy that in 1947, the Tovreas opened The Stockyards Restaurant and 1889 Saloon, which became a popular watering hole for cattlemen, bankers and local politicians. Six years later, however, a fire destroyed

The Stockyards Restaurant and 1889 Saloon is located at 5009 E. Washington Street in Phoenix. For more information, call 602-273-7378 or visit [www.stockyardssteakhouse.com](http://www.stockyardssteakhouse.com).

both the restaurant and the saloon.

With a grand reopening date set for June 26, 1954, Helen Tovrea commissioned Kapp's team of carpenters to give the saloon an authentic Western ambience. It took the company about three months to build the bar and stools, for which Tovrea paid \$15,000. Today, the bar is worth an estimated \$150,000.

GROWING UP IN FLINT, Michigan, Kapp spent hours reading *Talespin Tommy* comic strips and building 99-cent wind-up rubber-band airplanes. He dreamed about flying a real airplane, and that dream came true during World War II, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt made a call for pilots.

At the time, Kapp was working for Fisher Body Corporation, an aeronautical engineering company. After passing the military's flight program exam and officially becoming an Air Force cadet, Kapp had to break the "good news" to his wife, who had no idea he'd applied. "When I got home and told her that I'd passed, she said, 'I've always known you had two loves in your life, and I'm the second,'" he remembers.

Over the next four years, Kapp logged 268 combat hours at the sticks of various B-24 airplanes with the 8th Air Force. He

survived during a time when only "one in four crews made it out alive."

In 1951, Kapp and his wife moved to Tucson so that he could attend the University of Arizona. His interest in airplanes remained strong while he dabbled in other areas, such as engineering, industrial arts and even politics, which climaxed in 1960, when he ran for mayor of Phoenix against Samuel Mardian. "Thank god he beat me," Kapp chuckles. "I would have made a lousy mayor. I would have made a good dictator, but a lousy politician."

Despite his love for flying, he landed in a more grounded line of work because of his commitment to family. Kapp's brother, Stanley, was dying of leukemia, and during a deathbed conversation, he asked Kapp to move to Phoenix and help their brother, Charlie, run the Kapp Cabinet Co.

Although the company went out of business in 1992, Kapp says he has no regrets. "It's been interesting and not as lucrative sometimes as I would have liked, but on the other hand, I'm still getting three square meals a day, so that's all I can hope for."

More importantly, he's surrounded by his friends and family and the fruits of his labor. He lives each day with a sense of humor that keeps him sharp, yet soft, and he constantly reminds himself to live each day as if it's his last. "One day, you'll get it right," he says.

Russ Kapp and Kapp Cabinet Co. constructed the bar at the Stockyards Restaurant and 1889 Saloon for \$15,000 in 1954 (below). Today, the bar is worth an estimated \$150,000. | COURTESY OF THE STOCKYARDS



### P R A T T ' S

## Q & A



### Danica Patrick Race-Car Driver

Your day job includes racing a 3,400-pound race car at speeds averaging 140 mph. When you're home in Arizona, where do you go for excitement?

Specific to Arizona, I think hiking is the biggest thing. There's such great hiking around the Valley of the Sun. Anyone who lives here should hike Camelback Mountain at least once, just to have done it and to have seen the sights. There are plenty of amazing views from the mountains around here.

Competing has allowed you to travel around the world, including to Japan for the Indy Japan 300, where you became the first woman to win an IndyCar race. Have you had any time to explore Arizona?

I've been up to Sedona and thought the red rocks were beautiful. I've hiked up to the top of Humphreys Peak in Flagstaff, which gets pretty windy near the end of the trail, but it's a beautiful sight. I've also driven down to Mexico and have been able to see Ajo and all those little towns along the way. I even had a chance to travel to Kingman for an article for *Car and Driver*.

What's next on your list of adventures? I haven't been to any Arizona lakes, and that's something I need to do. I haven't even been to the Grand Canyon. How sad is that? My husband hiked the Grand Canyon rim to rim. I would love to hike down there.

— Dave Pratt is the author of *Behind the Mic: 30 Years in Radio*



MARK LIPCZYNSKI

## Around the Corners

There are any number of places to stay near the Four Corners, but none quite like Sage Hill Bed and Breakfast, which offers guests an authentic journey through time and Navajo culture.

By KATHY MONTGOMERY

SAGE HILL IS NOT located in the typical Navajo Indian tourist spot. It feels more like a home than a bed and breakfast. And its hosts, Timothy and Karen Benally, seem more like friends. And that's exactly why it's worth the trip.

The house is large by reservation standards, the result of multiple additions since Timothy first built it in 1960. Sunny and lived-in, the house features plaster walls, built-in niches and overflowing bookcases. The solitary guest suite includes a private bath, queen bed, satellite TV and spacious sun porch with an additional single bed. A smaller bedroom across the hall can be added but not rented separately.

Timothy was born to one of the three largest clans in the area. A former uranium miner, he served on the Navajo Tribal Council and earned degrees in writing and cultures. He met his wife, Karen, while looking for someone to record his 100-year-old grandmother's stories.

As a graduate student, Karen spent three seasons recording family members' oral histories, changing her major to anthropology and marrying Timothy in the process.

Yet after more than 20 years of marriage, the Benallys still navigate their cultural differences. Timothy shakes his head at the fence Karen insisted on building to protect the garden. "She needs to define her space," Timothy says, laughing. "Navajos don't do that."

And Karen admits she sometimes misses the social life off the reservation. "Timothy said we did this because I'm lonely," Karen says of the B&B. "I need other white people to talk to."

Whatever the reason, the Benallys like to be a part of their guests' experience. They serve as

cultural guides, sharing their rich and layered knowledge of the Navajos. On request, at added expense, they will hire local artists to teach Navajo weaving, prepare traditional Navajo foods or lead guests on photographic tours of the area. The surrounding area is not only scenic, but rich with archaeological sites, which can be explored only with an employee of the Navajo Nation or a local resident.

If that's not reason enough to visit, the drive to Red Valley winds through some of the prettiest land on the Navajo Reservation. The highlight includes a jaw-dropping trek over Buffalo Pass at the intersection of the Chuska and Lukachukai mountains (open from April through November). The red sandstone and piñon pines at the lower elevations recall Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon. Then the road winds steeply through ponderosa pine and aspen stands, culminating with a stunning view of Shiprock and Mitten Rock before descending into Red Valley, all unmarred by tourists, traffic or tchotchkes.

Sage Hill Bed and Breakfast is located on Navajo Route 33 in Red Valley. For more information, call 928-653-5757 or visit [www.free-webs.com/sagehill-bb/](http://www.free-webs.com/sagehill-bb/).

## The Wild West

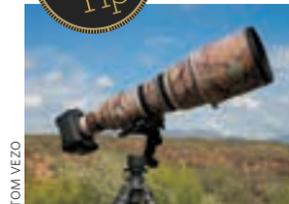
With more than 30 years of field experience, wildlife photographer Paul Berquist is an expert at navigating Arizona's backcountry in search of mule deer, mountain lions and other wild animals.

By JEFF KIDA, photo editor



Mule deer, Saguaro National Park. | PAUL AND JOYCE BERQUIST

HAVING BEEN A HUNTER for most of his life, Paul Berquist enjoys the pleasure of the chase and the ability to track beautiful things in the wild. Many mornings before dawn, he arms himself with a camera and a couple of long lenses — usually a 300 mm and a 500 mm — and drives slowly through Saguaro National Park in search of animals to photograph. To make this photo of a mule deer, Berquist positioned his car to allow a comfortable shooting angle, attached mounts for his lenses on both of the front windows, and turned off the car to eliminate vibration. Then, he waited. Berquist often hauls a heavy pack full of photo gear across the Arizona countryside for the love of the chase, but in this case, staying behind the wheel worked just fine.



TOM VEZO

### ANIMAL INSTINCTS

If you think you'd like to photograph wildlife, start with a few trips to your local zoo. Keep your photography gear simple: one camera body, a long telephoto lens (300 mm or longer) and a tripod or monopod. Work on your timing and learn to be patient. In the wild kingdom, you'll soon find that everything happens on the animals' schedules, not yours.



ADDITIONAL READING: Look for our book *Arizona Highways Photography Guide*, available at bookstores and [www.arizona-highways.com/books](http://www.arizona-highways.com/books).

### ONLINE

For more photography tips, visit [www.arizona-highways.com/photography.asp](http://www.arizona-highways.com/photography.asp).

## Arizona: 1922-1931

Water rights, radio waves and the discovery of a new planet were among the biggest events in Arizona's second decade of statehood.

By JANA BOMMERSBACH

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In February 2012, Arizona will celebrate 100 years of statehood, and *Arizona Highways* will publish a special Centennial issue. Leading up to that milestone, we're presenting a 10-part history of the state. This is Part 2.

IT TOOK ARIZONA JUST 18 years after statehood to show off in an astronomical way. That's when 23-year-old Clyde W. Tombaugh, a stargazer at Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, spotted the only planet ever discovered by someone in the United States.

Percival Lowell, who built the observatory in 1894, had long believed there was another planet beyond Neptune in our solar system, but he wasn't able to prove it before his death in 1916. Tombaugh finished what Lowell started on February 18, 1930. "Planet X" would eventually be named Pluto, and although it was eventually declassified as a planet, the discovery was a major feather in Arizona's proverbial cap.

Back on terra firma, prosperity ruled for most of the 1920s, with Arizona families embracing automobiles, radios, movies and newly created electric appliances. Phoenix claimed the state's first licensed commercial radio station, KFAD, in 1922. Although many families didn't own radio sets, they gathered at public listening areas instead, where loud speakers broadcast the various programs.

On air, water would have been one of the main topics of discussion. Who owned it, where it went and how it was used became political drumbeats in the

1920s, and they continued to be for decades. Citizens in the Casa Grande Valley worked for nearly a decade to get the much-needed San Carlos Dam built on the Gila River. The campaign for the dam, which would provide irrigation water, was led by some powerful Arizonans, including future Governor, U.S. Senator and Chief Justice Ernest W. McFarland, and Angela Hutchinson Hammer, Arizona's pioneer newspaperwoman. In 1928, President Calvin Coolidge personally dedicated the dam that was renamed in his honor.

Meanwhile, on the western boundary of the state, concerns about the mighty Colorado River — the lifeblood of the West — led to the first attempt at compromise. In 1922, the seven states of the Colorado Basin signed the Colorado River Compact, but Arizona later decided it didn't provide enough water for expansion and refused to ratify it.

Other major events included the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression. Because so few Arizonans were invested in the stock market, the crash didn't have a direct impact on state residents; however, the Depression did. But, as one local observer put it, "Everybody has 'shortened sail' in good nautical fashion to meet the gale, and as it lessens it won't hurt us to find ourselves wasting less, expecting less, needing less."

On the fashion front, Arizona had a chance to show off at the 1925 inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson. Sharlot Hall, Arizona's Territorial historian, journalist and poet, wore a gown of copper mesh, spotlighting the state's leading role in copper production. In addition, she wore a hat decorated like a cactus.

By the end of the decade, refrigerated air conditioning — perhaps the single most important invention for residents of Arizona — was making its first appearance in department stores and theaters. Arizona's intolerable summer heat was on notice that it wouldn't rule forever.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- In 1926 it cost just 1 cent to send a first-class postcard.
- During this decade, the price per gallon of gasoline never exceeded 10 cents.
- Dance crazes during the era included the Charleston and the Shimmy.
- Classified advertising in *The Arizona Republican* cost 1 cent per word in the 1920s.
- Among the most popular songs during this decade were sentimental ballads, including *I'll Be With You in Apple Blossom Time* and *I'm Just Wild About Harry*.



ARIZONA STATE ARCHIVES



GARY LADD

## ARIZONA: THEN & NOW

WHEN MORMON PIONEERS MOVED into Arizona from Utah in the 1870s, deep Colorado River canyons stood in their way. By 1929, however, Navajo Bridge — first known as the Grand Canyon Bridge (top photograph) — had opened at Marble Canyon, 5 miles downstream from Lees Ferry. The original bridge carried travelers across the wide Canyon for 66 years, but as cars and trucks grew heavier and wider, the need emerged for a newer, stronger bridge (bottom photograph, left). It was dedicated on September 14, 1995.



Governor George W.P. Hunt and anthropologist Frank Russell survey Mission San Xavier del Bac in 1927. | ARIZONA STATE ARCHIVES

## IN THE NEWS

Headlines from *The Arizona Republican*  
1922 - 1931

February 12, 1922

"Italian Cross of War is Awarded Frank Luke Jr."

November 14, 1922

"Phoenix Wins Cup in Inter-City Milk Contest at Fair"

November 24, 1922

"Colorado River Pact Protects Arizona"

March 22, 1923

"Ku Klux Klan Bill Is Law; Governor Does Not Sign It"

September 24, 1927

"State Pays Homage to Lindbergh: Nearly 20,000 Persons Throng Tucson Athletic Field to Greet Famed Flyer"

February 22, 1930

"Brief Funeral Rites for Eva Dugan Attended Only by Prison Heads; Executed Woman Buried in Beaded Shroud of Own Making"

March 14, 1930

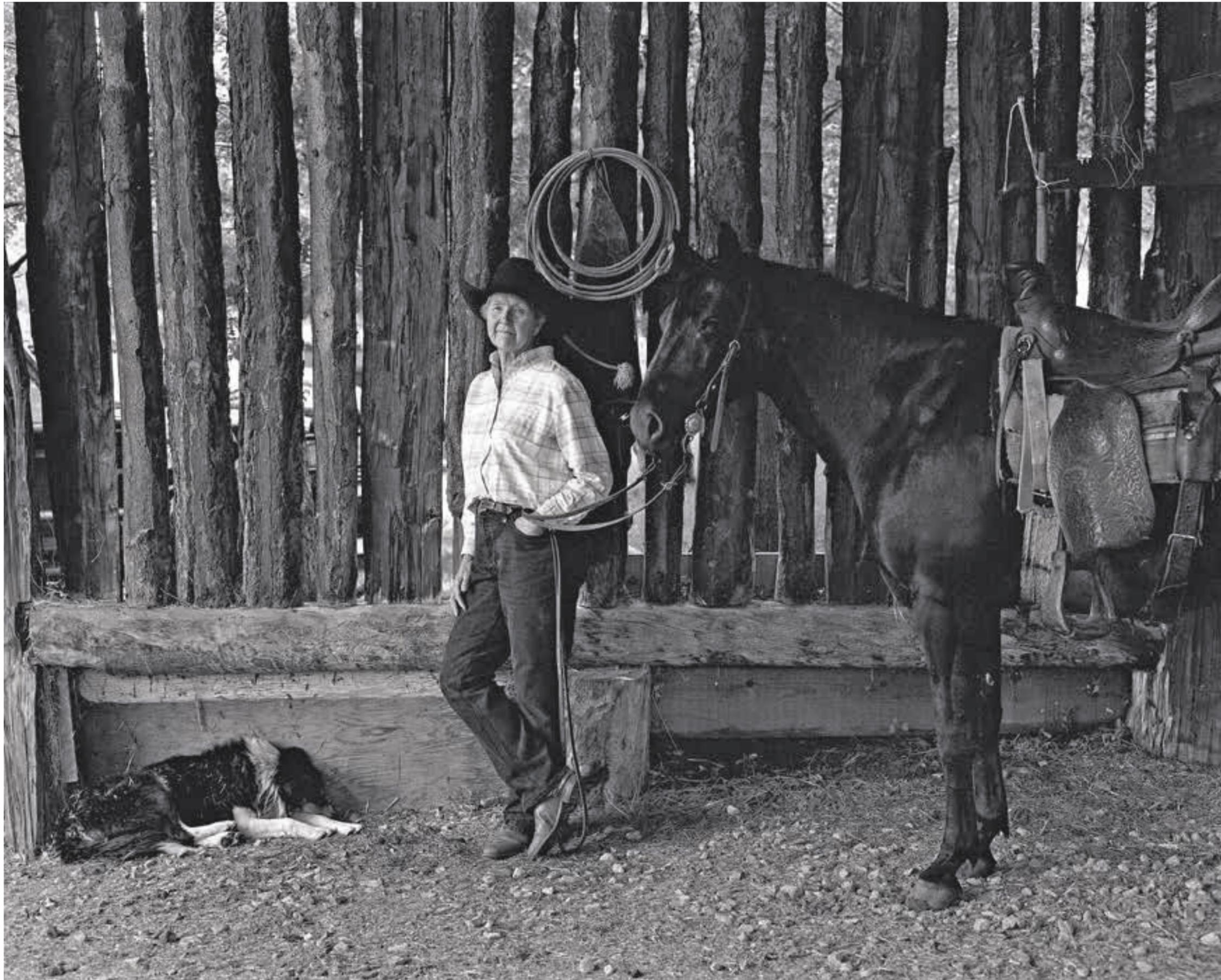
"Desert Beer Resort Raided by Dry Agents"

July 23, 1931

"Bridge to Open at Tempe; Structure to Be Put Into Service Today Without Ceremonies"

August 9, 1931

"Phoenix Women Sponsor Progressive Club Movement"



### THE X-DIAMOND RANCH, EST. 1893

*Greer, Arizona*

BY KELLY KRAMER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT BAXTER

Mollie Butler was an Arizona legend. A fixture in the White Mountains, she hosted countless guests at her namesake lodge, while her husband, John, led guided tours into the wilderness for such guests as Zane Grey and President Theodore Roosevelt. Today, Butler's granddaughter, Wink Crigler, carries on the family tradition, maintaining horses and cattle on the X-Diamond Ranch and hosting fly-fishing aficionados on a portion of the Little Colorado River that she restored on the property. Scott Baxter photographed Crigler in the John & Molly Butler Hay Barn with her horse, Amigo, and her border collie, Wesley.



EDITOR'S NOTE: "100 Years, 100 Ranchers" has been designated an official Centennial Legacy Project. Every month, we'll be featuring one of the ranchers. It's part of our own Centennial coverage, which will continue through February 2012. For more information about "100 Years, 100 Ranchers," visit [www.100years100ranchers.com](http://www.100years100ranchers.com).



BRENDAN MOORE

## Room for Dessert

Although sandwiches are on the menu at Chaparral Homemade Ice Cream, this Wickenburg hot spot is focused on satisfying the sweet tooth. The sign says it all: “No Dinner Until You Eat All Your Ice Cream.”

By JACKI MIELER

WHICH CAME FIRST: THE sandwich or the ice cream? At Chaparral Homemade Ice Cream in Wickenburg, both sides of the argument are equally tempting, and the best way to make an educated decision is to indulge in both.

**WICKENBURG** Until late 2009, the only people fortunate enough to sample Tony and Pam Rovidas’ culinary experiments were their family and church friends. Fortunately for everyone else, their sense of adventure and a bit of fate led them east from California to Arizona, where they became the proud owners of the 30-year-old Chaparral Homemade Ice Cream.

The Rovidases set their sights on bringing their experiments out of the home kitchen and into their new business. First up was the star of the show: ice cream. They tweaked the recipe until it was just right, and started experimenting with new flavors. Their attention to detail shines through in the Chocolate Brownie Chunk, which contains bits of homemade frosted brownies. The Hassayampa Mud is a rich combination of chocolate and coffee, and is named for the often-dry river that runs through Wickenburg. And the bright-yellow Lemon and Purple Boysenberry is a tribute to the colors of the Wickenburg High School Wranglers.

The ice cream is deliciously decadent on its own, but add one of Chaparral’s signature homemade sauces and you have an unforgettable sundae. The caramel sauce provides a sweet accent to the Maple Walnut, and the spicy cocoa sauce gives a tasty kick to any flavor.

While the sweet side of Chaparral is a must-do, the savory side of the business, known as the

Jail Tree Sandwich Co., deserves equal billing. The actual Jail Tree sandwich is named for the neighboring 200-year-old mesquite tree where town criminals were once chained up. Today, you won’t mind being locked up with this hot-beef sandwich, which is smothered in a tangy, homemade blue-cheese sauce. The Brawty Sandwich, inspired by the classic sausage and syrup breakfast combination, features a bratwurst topped with caramelized boysenberry onions.

On the side, who needs french fries when you can have Pam’s famous cheese ball? Each sandwich is accompanied by a scoop of this treat, which pairs cream cheese and pineapple — it’s an unexpected but wonderful combo. Whatever you order, you’ll want to wash it all down with Chaparral’s hand-muddled lemonade, which makes a perfect complement to any meal.

If you have any questions, take note of the sign above Chaparral’s counter: “No Dinner Until You Eat All Your Ice Cream.” It’s sage advice from an establishment that does sweet and savory in mouth-watering fashion.

Chapparal Homemade Ice Cream is located at 45 N. Tegner Street in Wickenburg. For more information, call 928-684-3252 or visit [www.chapparal-icecream.com](http://www.chapparal-icecream.com).

**Tall Tails** With a tail that stretches up to 14 inches, the ringtail is easily identified in the great outdoors. It’s the name that gets confusing. Although they’re mistakenly referred to as ringtail cats, ringtails actually have more in common with raccoons than felines. By JODI CISMAN

If you ask most Arizonans, they can usually identify the state flower (saguaro blossom), the state flag and maybe even the state motto (“God Enriches”), but when it comes to the state mammal, they’re usually stumped. Bear? Bobcat? Beaver? Nope. The wily ringtail is Arizona’s warm-blooded vertebrate of choice. It’s a distinction it’s held since 1986, and it’s certainly worthy.

Ringtails played an important role in the taming of Arizona and the American West. Sort of. When pioneers began making their way out West during the Gold Rush, they noticed a small, agile creature with a vibrant tail that nested in rocky dwellings and dead tree trunks.

Ringtails, which are easily domesticated, were often kept as pets by miners because they were affectionate and exceptionally good at ridding cabins and mines of disease-

spreading rodents and insects.

Although ringtails are known by many names — ringtail cats, miner’s cats, civet cats and coon cats — they’re more closely related to raccoons than felines. They acquire their catty nicknames because of their feline behaviors: They only come out at night to hunt and mate, and they tend to be timid and reclusive creatures.

Their most noticeable features are their namesake tails, which are large and fluffy, and stretch 14 inches with 14 to 16 contrasting black-and-white rings from base to tip. They’re handsome-looking tails, but more importantly, they aid in agility by helping the

ringtails maintain their balance — ringtails can rotate 180 degrees and have been seen doing cartwheels and ricocheting between stone walls.

When they’re not doing acrobatics, ringtails have a fluctuating diet, depending on the season. In the summer, they feed on mostly spiders, crickets, scorpions and grasshoppers, while in the fall their diet shifts primarily to plants. As the months roll on, the winter chill provides a hefty bounty of rodents, rabbits, squirrels and small birds, which sustain them until spring, when the ringtails enjoy the occasional hackberry, persimmon or mistletoe snack.

On the other side of the food-chain equation, bobcats, foxes and large owls often make meals out of ringtails. Which goes to show, even the state mammal is subject to the cycle of life.

## nature factoid



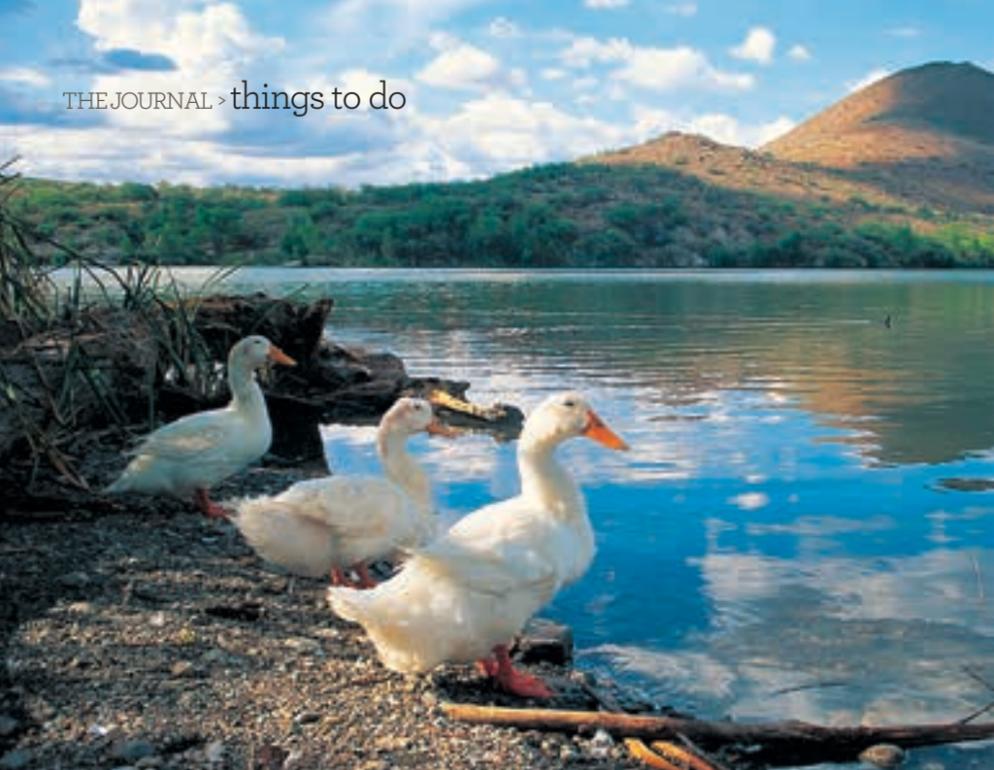
BRUCE D. TAUBERT

### A Nose for Survival

With an ability to camouflage itself in the wild, the snout butterfly is nearly invisible to predators. Much of its disguise can be attributed to an elongated mouthpart or “snout,” which gives the appearance of a dead leaf. Its wings are black-brown with an array of orange markings, and even though it prefers to go incognito, the snout butterfly’s distinctive coloring is what makes it stand out during its northward migration — the butterflies, when flying en masse, seem to darken the sky.

BRUCE D. TAUBERT





### Trails Day Celebration

APRIL 23 PATAGONIA

Inspired by Earth Day, this event pays tribute to local trails and features mountain-biking, guided hikes, a plant sale, photography contests, a used-book sale, and plenty of interactive displays provided by Friends of Sonoita Creek and the Tucson Audubon Society. *Information:* [www.patagoniaaz.com](http://www.patagoniaaz.com)

### Arizona History Adventure

APRIL 9 PRESCOTT

Living-history interpreters bring Arizona's Territorial history to life during this event, which takes place at Sharlot Hall Museum. This month, the interpreters reveal just how difficult it was to keep a Territorial home clean via their take on "Friday Is Cleaning Day: Sprucing Up the Home." The event takes place between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and is included with admission to the museum. *Information:* 928-445-3122 or [www.sharlot.org](http://www.sharlot.org)



JEFF KIDA

### Tucson International Mariachi Conference

APRIL 26-30 TUCSON

Rooted in Jalisco, Mexico, mariachi music has long been a staple of the Latino community in Arizona. Celebrate it through a participant showcase, the *Serenata y Cena* and *Espectacular* concerts, a Mariachi Mass and La Fiesta de Garibaldi during this four-day Tucson event.

Proceeds benefit La Frontera Center, a nonprofit behavioral health agency that serves children, families and adults, and fosters the traditional values of mariachi music and *baile folklórico* through activities that increase knowledge and artistic experience. *Information:* 520-838-3908 or [www.tucsonmariachi.org](http://www.tucsonmariachi.org)



SCOTTSDALE CULINARY FESTIVAL

### Scottsdale Culinary Festival

APRIL 5-10 SCOTTSDALE

Billed as "Six Fun Days of Food, Wine and Music," the Scottsdale Culinary Festival celebrates its 33rd anniversary this month. From casual feasting to chic wine-tastings and luxurious dinners, the festival features the Great Arizona Picnic and the Chocolate and Wine Experience, among others. *Information:* 480-945-7193 or [www.scottsdaleculinaryfestival.org](http://www.scottsdaleculinaryfestival.org)

### Country Thunder

APRIL 7-10 FLORENCE

For four days this month, Florence will be transformed into a country-music mecca as Jason Aldean, Sawyer Brown, Toby Keith and

Martina McBride headline Country Thunder. Campsites are available near the festival, including the new "Big Rig" site, a 25-foot-by-45-foot parcel that comes equipped with water and electricity. *Information:* 866-802-6418 or [www.countrythunder.com](http://www.countrythunder.com)



DEREK VON BRIESEN

### Photo Workshop

MAY 21-25 NAVAJO RESERVATION

This workshop, hosted by photographer Derek von Briesen, explores Hunt's Mesa and Monument Valley. During the four-day experience, participants will photograph Cameron Trading Post, Goulding's Lodge and, of course, some of Monument Valley's most iconic rock formations. What's more, you'll experience private tours of Hunt's Mesa, traditional campfire dinners and sunrise photo shoots. *Information:* 888-790-7042 or [www.friendsofhighways.com](http://www.friendsofhighways.com)



## Everything You Need to Know About Travel in Arizona

3RD ANNUAL

# ARIZONA HIGHWAYS TRAVEL SHOW

The 3rd Annual *Arizona Highways* Travel Show features the latest information on Arizona destinations, including Tucson, Sedona, Grand Canyon and Lake Powell, as well as photography demonstrations and hiking workshops. Get the lowdown on lodging, dining, scenic attractions and more.

### Phoenix Convention Center Hall F

Saturday, May 14, 10 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Sunday, May 15, 10 A.M. – 4 P.M.

Admission: \$5 at box office, day of event

For more information: [www.arizonahighwaystravelshow.com](http://www.arizonahighwaystravelshow.com), [rich@azinco.com](mailto:rich@azinco.com) or call 480-838-9123.

Ride light rail to the Phoenix Convention Center



# Matt's BIG BREAKFAST



## BEST RESTAURANTS 2011

In places like Phoenix and Tucson, it's pretty easy to find a good restaurant. But where do you go when you're in Wikieup or Snowflake or Camp Verde? You could pack a lunch or eat fast food, but there are so many other options, including the 25 locally owned eateries in our fourth-annual "best restaurants" issue. There are plenty of others, of course, but this should fill you up for a while.

By NIKKI BUCHANAN  
Photographs by Paul Markow

*We hope you're hungry,* and we hope you have plenty of gas in the car, because after you've read our fourth-annual "best restaurants" issue (a roundup of 25 great places to relax over breakfast, grab a snack, have a frilly girls' lunch, enjoy a fancy dinner or just wolf down a hot dog), you're going to want to hop in your buggy and eat your way around the state. Just like Arizona, our list is diverse, offering a bit of history here, a dash of family friendliness there, all served up in one delicious melting pot. Dig in, and drive carefully.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

#### **Casa Antigua** *Camp Verde*

Locals love this colorful mom-and-pop for lots of reasons, but the fresh-tasting, home-style Mexican food is chief among them. Owners José and Flor Rivas cater to their small community by sticking to basics, such as carne asada and Baja-style fish tacos, steak ranchero and shrimp enchiladas, all handled so expertly you'd never know the couple's roots lead back to Guatemala, not Mexico. Of course, it doesn't hurt that José, who runs the front of the house while Flor cooks, treats everyone like family — or that the margaritas go down so smoothly.

522 W. Finnie Flat Road, 928-567-6300

#### **Casa Vicente** *Tucson*

There's never a dull moment at this family owned Spanish restaurant, where Spanish wine-tastings, Spanish guitarists or stomping flamenco dancers are scheduled nearly every night of the week. Although lunch fare is limited to tapas samplers and *bocadillos* (French bread sandwiches filled with, say, Spanish chorizo and olives), the evening tapas and dinner menus extend beyond familiar classics such as tortilla Española, gazpacho and paella. Sangria, Spanish sherry and Cava (Spanish sparkling wine) keep the natives stirred

up, so head for the patio when you crave some peace and quiet. 375 S. Stone Avenue, 520-884-5253, [www.casavicente.com](http://www.casavicente.com)

#### **Celebrations of Generations** *Snowflake*

What began as a lacy, ultra-feminine tearoom has morphed into a nostalgic, shabby-chic-meets-farmhouse café, offering fancy breakfasts, salads, sandwiches, homemade soups and desserts to hungry folks of either gender. High tea requires 24 hours' notice, but daily-changing quiches and scones (both restaurant signatures) are available all the time and are so popular that a sign reading "Everybody must get sconed" seems to be accurate. Once a month, the restaurant hosts a Celebrations of Generations dinner, celebrating the food, dress and music of a designated decade.

432 S. Main Street, 928-457-0198, [www.celebrationsofgenerations.com](http://www.celebrationsofgenerations.com)

#### **Crema Coffee and Creamery** *Cottonwood*

It's hard to say what Crema cultists like best about this charming, clean-lined cafe in Old Town, but it probably starts with the letter "c." Some would vote for the excellent coffee, others for the dreamy

chocolate chip-walnut cookies, still others for the chicken-walnut salad or the house-made waffle cones. The "creamery" in the operation's name refers to the small-batch, artisan gelato, made with local ingredients, the flavors rotated seasonally and according to whim. What would you say about chocolate milk, caramelized pear or butter salt caramel gelato? "Criminal" (another c-word) comes to mind.

917 N. Main Street, 928-649-5785, [www.cremacoffeeandcreamery.com](http://www.cremacoffeeandcreamery.com)



At Matt's Big Breakfast in Phoenix (preceding panel), diners are rewarded after a typical wait in line. Thus the advice: Get there early! Chloe Grenough (right) enjoys her gelato at Crema Coffee and Creamery (below) in Cottonwood.



*"Food is our common ground, a universal experience."* — JAMES BEARD

### Criollo Latin Kitchen Flagstaff

Paul and Laura Moir — the talented couple behind the brilliant Brix — have opened one of Flagstaff's loveliest and best new restaurants, a wood-floored, art-filled space devoted to all things Latin American. Executive chef David Smith likes to shake things up on his lunch, brunch and dinner menus, offering classic ceviche, *ropa vieja* and *huevos Motuleño* alongside his own creative riffs such as quinoa fritters, pork belly tacos and wild mushroom burritos. Meanwhile, bar wizard Anthony Alvarez complements the food with Latin American wines, local microbrews and premium tequilas, mescals, rums and ports. The bar, by the way, is made of wood that was salvaged from the devastating Rodeo-Chediski Fire of 2002.

16 N. San Francisco Street, 928-774-0541, [www.criollolatinkitchen.com](http://www.criollolatinkitchen.com)



5 6 7 8

### Darbi's Café Lakeside

Better rise and shine to hit this family friendly, three-squares spot before the crowds show up. Otherwise you'll be staring hungrily (and maybe drooling slightly) as belly-filling portions of eggs Benedict, biscuits and gravy, and the epic pancake sandwich are delivered to the early birds who got there ahead of you. Originally a breakfast-and-lunch operation, Darbi's has become so popular it's now open for dinner Wednesdays through Sundays, offering up thick-as-a-brick homemade meatloaf, chicken and dumplings, and a rockin' Friday-night fish fry.

235 E. White Mountain Boulevard, 928-367-6556

### Dinner Bell Café Prescott

Open for breakfast and lunch only, this friendly, funky diner never actually rings the dinner bell, but locals and tourists arrive in droves for breakfast, consistently raving about specialty coffee drinks, buckwheat waffles with mango and walnuts, dreamy homemade cinnamon rolls and chicken-fried steak. Choose between two ambience options: a classic, well-worn diner overlooking the street, or an airy, arty café and patio overlooking the creek (dubbed Creekside). Either way, you can expect the same great food and the same policy: cash only, no plastic accepted.

321 W. Gurley Street, 928-445-9888

### El Charro Café Tucson

Established in 1922, the original Court Avenue location is said to be the oldest Mexican restaurant in continuous operation by the same family in the

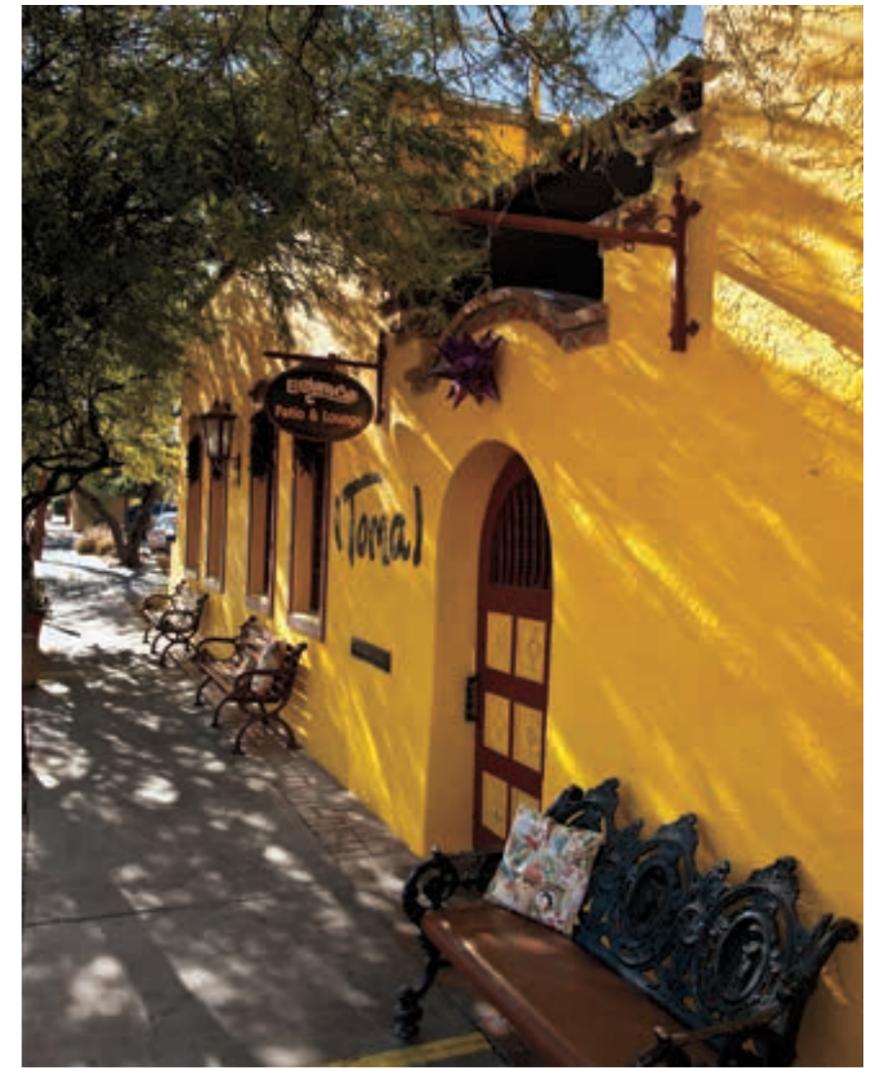
Criollo Latin Kitchen is one of Flagstaff's best new restaurants, offering many creative selections such as Arizona Legacy Beef Ribeye (opposite page). Tucson's El Charro Café (above and right) has kept satisfied diners coming back since 1922.

entire country. When you see the thick adobe walls, creaking wood floors and vintage calendars splashed with dashing vaqueros and voluptuous señoritas, you'll be convinced. To satisfy modern tastes, the

menu has been expanded to include gluten-free dishes and vaguely Southwestern specialties (think grilled chicken with mango-balsamic dressing, dried cranberry and pepitas), but stick to tradition and try

the signature *carne seca*: marinated and shredded beef, air-dried on the restaurant's roof. Caramelized and wispy, it's meaty cotton candy.

311 N. Court Avenue, 520-622-1922, [www.elcharrocafe.com](http://www.elcharrocafe.com)





**Flavors of Louisiana** *Avondale*

Decorated with Mardi Gras beads and color photos of the Big Easy, this tidy quick-serve, housed at the lone end of a giant strip mall, doesn't conjure our Hollywood-fed notion of Cajun Country. But with the help of her grown daughters, owner Jennifer Goff, a Cajun born and bred, surely does capture its flavors, offering up the rich gumbos, jambalaya and boudin balls that are Cajun standbys. Her crunchy fried oyster po'boy and Dunkin' Catfish, fried crisp and smothered in crawfish étouffée, are well worth the schlep to Avondale for her scrumptious answer to the question, "How's bayou?"

13025 W. Rancho Santa Fe Boulevard, Suite B103, 623-935-2357

**Fork in the Road American Bistro** *Sedona*

The word "bistro" has become meaningless through overuse, but Fork in the Road perfectly illustrates what such a place ought to be, matching its contemporary good looks to an appealing menu that displays

panache while dispensing comfort. Here, you'll find an Irish onion soup, laced with Guinness and cheddar, as well as prawn pakoras, duck cassoulet and spicy shrimp remoulade served with fried green tomatoes. If you've been looking for a Sedona restaurant that combines white-tablecloth elegance with melting-pot accessibility, put a fork in it.

7000 State Route 179, Suite C106, 928-274-8066, www.forkintheroadbistro.com

**Fratelli Pizza** *Flagstaff*

Voted "Best of Flagstaff" by the *Arizona Daily Sun* seven years in a row, these two easy-on-the-wallet pizza joints bake their praiseworthy pies in stone deck ovens, which requires the kind of skill you'll never find at a corporate pizza place. Better still, the Fratelli fellows sell their pizza by the monstrous slice, offer loads of meal deals to cash-strapped NAU Lumberjacks and make deliveries (sometimes by bicycle) to downtown bars. You can imagine the kind of goodwill that creates. Eat in at the East

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Side location; take out from the store downtown.

119 W. Phoenix Street, 928-774-9200; 2120 N. Fourth Street, 928-714-9700; www.fratellipizza.net

**The German Café** *Sierra Vista*

How appropriate that the owner of this small, cozy Gasthaus is originally from Essen — a German city and the German word for "eat." Deutschophiles admit they can't get enough of the schnitzel, smoked pork chop, potato dumplings, potato pancakes, red cabbage, sauerkraut and warm potato salad, all so authentically prepared that a little piece of *der vaterland* seems to have been plunked down in Sierra Vista. Start with a good German beer; end with German coffee and *apfelkuchen*. *Einfach himmlisch!* 1805 Paseo San Luis, 520-456-1705

**Irene's Real Mexican Food** *Globe*

Now that so-called "Mexican street food" has been co-opted and hyped to the hilt by number crunchers in business suits, an old-school place like 31-year-old Irene's seems especially sweet. You won't find much in the way of sizzling décor here — just comfy booths; a straightforward selection of tacos, enchiladas, chimis and burros (don't miss the signature Gollo, made with green chile and whole beans); and house-made salsa that's positively addictive.

1601 E. Ash Street, 928-425-7904

**Leff-T's Steak House & Grill**

*Dewey*

Ditherer alert: If you're one of those people who approaches every meal as if it might be your last, you're in for a melt-

down at Leff-T's, a rustic, Western-themed hangout with a novella-length menu. Will it be creamy chicken and wild rice soup, mesquite-smoked ribs or chicken, walleye, freshly ground burgers (fixed a half-dozen different ways), liver and onions, a chicken-fried steak, fettuccine Alfredo, a turkey relleno sandwich (a Southwestern take on the Monte Cristo) or just a big juicy ribeye? Relax. This is probably not your last supper ... or lunch. Visit on your birthday and a hot fudge sundae brownie is complimentary.

150 S. State Route 69, 928-632-1388, www.steaksaz.com

**Liberty Market** *Gilbert*

Homeboy Joe Johnston has the restaurant world sewn up in Gilbert, offering his hordes of hungry disciples three great dining venues: Joe's Real Barbecue, Joe's Farm Grill and, most recently, Liberty Market. Housed in what was once Gilbert's only grocery store (circa 1935), the baby of the bunch is Joe's most winsome resto to date, serving up breakfast, wood-fired pizzas, freshly tossed salads, inspired sandwiches, made-from-scratch sweets, wine, craft beer, and terrific coffee and espresso, the latter whipped up in a vintage machine from Italy. Locals drop in for free Wi-Fi and neighborly gabbing, proving that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

230 N. Gilbert Road, 480-892-1900, www.libertymarket.com

Flavors of Louisiana in Avondale will surprise you with an authentic bowl of gumbo (above, left). Wood-fired pizza (right) is one of the specialties at Liberty Market in Gilbert.



"I am not a glutton — I am an explorer of food."

— ERMA BOMBECK



**Lo-Lo's Chicken & Waffles**  
*Phoenix/Scottsdale*

Clearly, Larry "Lo-Lo" White inherited the fried-chicken gene. As the grandson of Mrs. White, owner of Mrs. White's Golden Rule Café (the center of Phoenix's soul food universe), he learned all there is to know about catfish, cornbread and collard greens (and, of course, that gloriously crunchy fried chicken) at his grandmother's knee. Lo-Lo began making late-night chicken and waffles at Mrs. White's in the '90s, a venture so successful that in

2002, he bought his own restaurant, which is ensconced in a cramped and quirky South Phoenix house. He's been cranking out epically good food ever since, opening a second location in Scottsdale nearly two years ago. The math is simple: chicken + waffles = Lo-Lo.

10 W. Yuma Street, Phoenix, 602-340-1304; 2765 N. Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, 480-945-1920; [www.loloschickenandwaffles.com](http://www.loloschickenandwaffles.com)

**Luchia's Restaurant & Gifts**  
*Wikieup*

Loads of road-weary travelers

blow right through Wikieup (population 300 plus change) on their way to Vegas, and that's a shame. What they miss is Luchia's, a restaurant/gift shop combo that smacks of kitsch but actually brims with timeless Southwestern charm, thanks in large part to the patio out back. Furnished with hand-tooled leather tables and chairs (made in Mexico and called Equipale), the place is a soothing desert sanctuary replete with flowers, cactuses, a koi pond and roaming peacocks. It's a great place to relax over reasonably priced break-

fasts, burgers and Mexican food, saving room (if you're smart) for homemade black walnut cream pie.

15797 S. Highway 93, 928-765-2229

**Matt's Big Breakfast** *Phoenix*

Now that Guy Fieri has featured this tiny downtown breakfast-and-lunch spot on *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*, it's more crowded than ever. Get there at the crack of dawn — particularly on weekend mornings — or expect to wait in line for like-Mom's-only-better omelets, pancakes, rosemary-

flecked home fries and crispy hash browns, which are easily the best in town. Owner Matt Pool sources great Arizona ingredients: bacon from The Pork Shop, bread from MJ, jams from Cotton Country and coffee from C4, deliciously proving morning after morning that eating local leaves a good taste in your mouth.

801 N. First Street, 602-254-1074, [www.mattsbigbreakfast.com](http://www.mattsbigbreakfast.com)

**Noca** *Phoenix*

There's no grass growing under the feet of owner Eliot Wexler

or executive chef Chris Curtiss, who create dozens of delicious reasons to visit this comfy but classy neighborhood restaurant on a weekly — if not daily — basis. Besides their drool-inducing, California-inspired regular menu (seasonal and constantly tweaked), this creative pair offers three-course Sunday Simple Suppers, daily specials such as Wednesday's legendary lobster roll and exciting collaborative dinners with other high-profile chefs and restaurateurs. Factor in imaginative cocktails, complementary cotton candy and

Wexler's charming ministrations, and it's easy to see why the direction to head is invariably Noca — shorthand for "north of Camelback."

3118 E. Camelback Road, 602-956-6622, [www.restaurantnoca.com](http://www.restaurantnoca.com)

**River City Grill** *Yuma*

It's been said that this hip but tiny restaurant, housed in a 90-year-old building and featured in *Architectural Digest*, puts the yum in Yuma. Well said. The menu, which manages some serious globe-hopping, offers everything from Viet-

Inspiring, mouthwatering dishes like Heirloom Beet Tartare (above, right) are on the creative menu at Noca (above, left) in Phoenix. The name is short for "north of Camelback."

namese spring rolls and Jamaican jerked chicken to seafood gumbo and wild salmon with raspberry chipotle sauce. "Low in fat, rich in flavor," that's the mantra here, where regulars who prefer more breathing room head for one of two spacious, maturely landscaped patios.

600 W. Third Street, 928-782-7988, [www.rivercitygrillyuma.com](http://www.rivercitygrillyuma.com)

“The only time to eat diet food is while  
you’re waiting for the steak to cook.”

—JULIA CHILD



21

22

**Rod's Steak House** Williams

The iconic neon sign and steer-shaped menu have been integral parts of the Rod's experience since Rodney and Helen Graves opened this Historic Route 66 fixture back in 1946. Nearly 40 years later, Graves sold the place to long-time employee Lawrence Sanchez, who'd been everything from busboy and dishwasher to head chef and manager in his 25-year tenure there. When Sanchez and his wife, Stella, took over, they had the good sense to stick with a winning formula, offering the same dandy steaks, prime rib, beef liver and fried chicken that have kept locals and Grand Canyon tourists well-fed for more than 50 years.

301 E. Route 66, 928-635-2671, [www.rodsteakhouse.com](http://www.rodsteakhouse.com)

**Rooster's Café & Coffee** Prescott

With its wraparound porch, cheery yellow walls and bright-red accents, this immaculately kept café, housed in a historic cottage, is the sort of place morning lovers tend to crowd about — as much for its eye-opening cappuccino and al fresco dining as for its full-blown breakfasts. If you've polished off house-made corned beef hash or the best biscuits and gravy in Prescott, you may not have room for apple-cream cheese bars, cranberry scones or chocolate-almond cake (made by the restaurant's pastry chef or the Italian proprietress herself), but you'd be a cluck to miss them. So come back for lunch, a bowl of fire-roasted red-pepper-and-tomato soup and then the goodies.

333 S. Montezuma Street, 928-778-1440



Like the sign (opposite page) and the plate of hot steak and potato (above) imply, Rod's Steak House in Williams is all about the beef that has tantalized customers since 1946.



23 24 25

**Screaming Banshee Pizza** *Bisbee*

Screaming for ice cream is so last millennium. These days, Bisbee locals and visitors clamor for thin-crust, wood-fired pizza, dished up by the passionate proprietors at Screaming Banshee. Housed in a converted gas station, this funky, color-drenched parlor oozes indie cool, thanks to local art, found art, local organic ingredients, local brews, fruity Sangria and background music that's eclectic to say the least. Never mind that cheese, bread and anti-pasto plates are both generous enough and good enough to make a light meal. No one forgets the pizza.

200 Tombstone Canyon Road, 520-432-1300, [www.screamingbansheepizza.com](http://www.screamingbansheepizza.com)

**Simon's Hot Dogs** *Sedona*

Hot dogs are the next big thing, a trend wiener-wizard Felipe Roldan sniffed out months ago. From his tiny stand inside Oak Creek Brewery Co., he turns out a handful of oddball but effective combos that go spectacularly well with OCB's craft beer. Simon's tucks all-beef dogs (brats and veggie versions are also available) inside freshly baked buns, then loads them up with ingredients such as pineapple, crushed potato chips and mozzarella (named the Colombian) or grilled onion, wasabi mayo and toasted sushi nori (dubbed Tokyo Madness). All of them seem to taste even better on the shady patio.

2050 Yavapai Drive, 928-496-0266, [www.simon-hot-dogs.com](http://www.simon-hot-dogs.com)



Diners will experience something unique at Screaming Banshee Pizza (opposite page) in Bisbee. At Simon's Hot Dogs in Sedona, Felipe Roldan (above) serves up signature hot dogs and sides.

**Tavolino Ristorante** *Tucson*

When it moved to roomier digs last spring, this neighborhood trattoria took on a more elegant vibe, boasting dark wood floors, high-backed booths, a private dining room and a chef's table near the kitchen. Lucky for Tavolino's legions of fans, chef-owner Massimo Tenino offers the same salumi, wood-fired pizzas, house-made pastas, Tuscan-style rotisserie meats and boutique wines that made a bigger location neces-

sary in the first place. You get a bang for your buck here, especially at lunch, when inspired \$7 paninis blow similarly

priced fast-food options right out of the water.

2890 E. Skyline Drive, 520-531-1913, [www.tavolineristorante.com](http://www.tavolineristorante.com)

*The Best of Before*

For the past three years, we've been telling you about some of our favorite restaurants around the state. Now, in our fourth-annual "best restaurants" issue, we offer 25 more. Because our mission is to spotlight as many great places as possible, we don't repeat restaurants from year to year. To learn more about some of our other favorite restaurants in Arizona, scan this QR code with your smart phone or visit [www.arizonahighways.com/travel/dining.asp](http://www.arizonahighways.com/travel/dining.asp).



*Photograph by Bruce D. Taubert*

Travelers in Arizona can see American bison at two wildlife areas managed by the Arizona Game and Fish Department — Raymond Ranch near Flagstaff and House Rock Buffalo Ranch on the Grand Canyon's North Rim. Calves are reddish-tan at birth, changing to brown or black, and adults can sprint up to 35 mph and jump 6-foot fences. They're the largest members of the cow family.

A PORTFOLIO EDITED BY JEFF KIDA

# *Oh, Babies!*

Landscape photography plays a big role in this magazine. It gets a lot of attention, and the attention is warranted — if we do say so ourselves. That said, very few photographs generate more response than images of baby lions, bunnies and bears. “Oh, they’re so adorable ... and so cute.” That’s what most people write. In this month’s portfolio, you’ll see why.



**ABOVE:**  
*Photograph by Paul & Joyce Berquist*

Javelina babies weigh about 1 pound at birth, but adults can range from 35 to 60 pounds. The animals, also known as collared peccaries, evolved in South America and migrated north — they're found throughout Arizona, but mostly south of the Mogollon Rim. Mothers are capable of having two litters per year, giving them the highest reproductive potential of big game in North America, according to the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

**RIGHT:**  
*Photograph by C.K. Lorenz*

Harris antelope squirrels live in ground burrows, and are often seen scampering among rocks in the Southwest. They're loners, for the most part, coming together mainly to mate, and they favor desert or dry scrub areas, where they use a special adaptation to withstand high temperatures.

“ALL OF THE ANIMALS EXCEPT FOR MAN KNOW THAT THE PRINCIPAL BUSINESS OF LIFE IS TO ENJOY IT.” — *Samuel Butler*



“THOSE WHO WISH TO PET AND BABY WILD ANIMALS ‘LOVE’ THEM. BUT THOSE WHO RESPECT THEIR NATURES AND WISH TO LET THEM LIVE NORMAL LIVES, LOVE THEM MORE.” – *Edwin Way Teale*



**ABOVE:**  
*Photograph by Bruce D. Taubert*

This kit fox pup was caught by the camera’s flash at night (they’re almost exclusively nocturnal) near Apache Junction. The animals love sandy areas and spend most of the daytime underground. Adults generally weigh less than 4.5 pounds.

**RIGHT:**  
*Photograph by Tim Fitzharris*

The striped skunk is the largest and most common of Arizona’s skunk species. Their musky secretions are an effective defense mechanism. They feed mostly at night, are highly susceptible to rabies and frequently suffer a fate of roadkill on Arizona highways.



To order a print of this photograph (right), call 866-962-1191 or visit [www.arizonahighwaysprints.com](http://www.arizonahighwaysprints.com).



“WE ARE THE VOICE OF WILDLIFE. THEY CAN’T SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.” – *Bruce McCloskey*



**LEFT:**  
*Photograph by C.K. Lorenz*

Both male and female desert bighorn sheep grow the horns for which they're famous (thus, their name), although the females' are much smaller. Desert bighorns and Rocky Mountain bighorns number around 6,000 in Arizona. Newborns weigh about 8 to 10 pounds and are active just minutes after birth. A large desert bighorn male can weigh as much as 225 pounds; females average 110 pounds.

**ABOVE:**  
*Photograph by C.K. Lorenz*

Baby Gambel's quails are often seen in the spring, scurrying in step behind adult quails. Gambel's are one of five quail species found in Arizona.



**LEFT:**  
*Photograph by C.K. Lorenz*

Arizona's grasslands were once the home of black-tailed prairie dogs like these, but they haven't been seen in the Arizona wild since 1960, according to the Arizona Game and Fish Department. They do range from Canada to Mexico, although numbers are drastically declining. This pair, and others, can be seen at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum near Tucson.

**RIGHT:**  
*Photograph by Suzanne Mathia*

Mule deer are the most numerous and widespread of Arizona's big-game animals. Deriving their name from their large ears, the babies are often born as twins. Deer in the wild have a lifespan of about 10 years. Coyotes, bobcats and mountain lions are their most common predators, along with human hunters. ■



To order a print of this photograph (left), call 866-962-1191 or visit [www.arizonahighwaysprints.com](http://www.arizonahighwaysprints.com).

The Salado Indians found beauty — and tried to find defense from enemies — in the mist-shrouded cliff dwellings of Pueblo Canyon. | RICHARD EMBERY

# Treasure of the Sierra Ancha

TREKKING INTO THE WILDERNESS ISN'T FOR EVERYONE. IT TAKES A CERTAIN BREED — THE KIND OF PERSON WHO WOULD BE PLAYED BY SOMEONE LIKE HUMPHREY BOGART. THE NUMBERS ARE FEW, BUT FOR THOSE UNFLINCHING ADVENTURERS, THE REWARDS ARE MANY. GOLD, SILVER ... OR IN THE CASE OF THE SIERRA ANCHA, AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TREASURE.

*By Nick Berzenko*

It's the fifth year of drought in Rim Country. It's spring, and it's already getting hot. Longing for the cool respite of a green forest, four of us decide on a trip to Pueblo Canyon, which sits in the southeast flank of the Sierra Ancha, a rugged mountain range about 100 miles northeast of Phoenix. The week before we head out, a soft rain begins. It continues on and off for the entire week, and by the time we're rolling down the highway, it's turned into a deluge. Because of flash-flooding, there's no way we'll be able to navigate the dirt roads that round the southern horn of the mountains. We decide to abort the trip.

When the weather eventually clears, it's the second week in April. The roads, although slippery in spots, are passable. It's only when we

start ascending the high bank above Cherry Creek that they become problematic. The rains have brought down boulders that we have to clear out of the way, and at almost every side drainage, washouts have taken out huge chunks of the road. Our four-wheel-drives tip sideways as we hold our breath and gingerly drop our downhill tires into the holes. For a few nerve-wracking moments, we wonder whether we'll find ourselves rolling 600 feet down to the creek. But all three of our vehicles make it through, and we finally reach the small landing where the hike begins.

The staunch eastern face of the Sierra Ancha stands unfurled before us. Soaring immutably skyward, cliffs stacked on cliffs, cut and reticulated, first by the three major side canyons, and then by myriad smaller protrusions and seclusions. The lower slopes are covered with manzanita. Higher up, it's stands of ponderosa pines. The side canyons are chock-full of deciduous growth, and as we'd hoped, they're green — umpteen shades of green, as vibrant as the greens of Ireland.

Armadas of puffy clouds scud across a sky of pristine azure blue. The weather is perfect as we hit the trail. We're three men and one woman, hauling heavy packs up a steep slope on a mission to find ruins that will tell us how people of another time lived, struggled and died.

We come by choice, but the Salado Indians who briefly inhabited these rough canyons seven centuries ago probably came out of necessity. For more than 200 years they lived on the other side of the mountain, where the dependable waters of the Salt River and Tonto Creek allowed them to practice irrigation agriculture and build a thriving community of about 10,000 people.

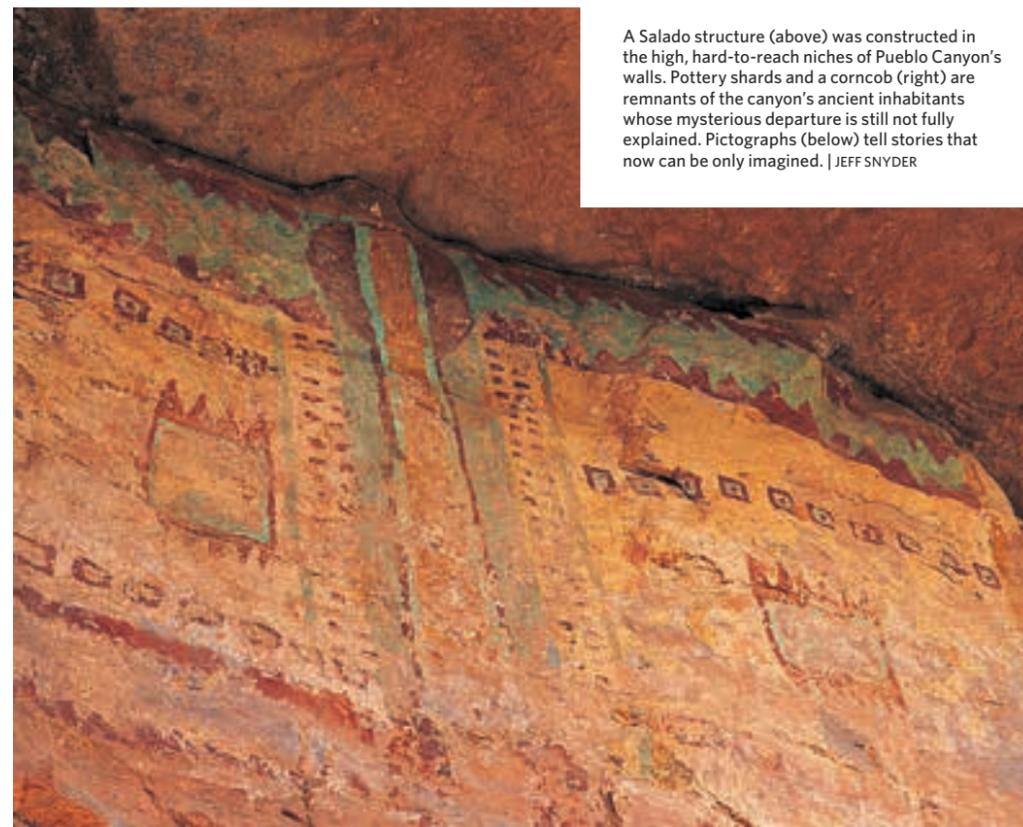
According to information gleaned from recent excavations in Tonto Basin prior to the raising of Theodore Roosevelt Dam, archaeologists believe the Salado people, who were known for their exquisite painted pottery, formed a highly organized hierarchical society centered on platform mounds where the leaders lived. Then, in the late 1200s, things began to disintegrate.

The first mile of trail follows an old mining road straight up the ridge that separates Cold Springs Canyon and Pueblo Canyon. We'll walk 3 miles today and climb almost 2,000 feet, with most of the elevation gain on this initial spurt. As we begin climbing the hill, we're immediately greeted by wildflowers, something we haven't experienced much because of the drought. At first we see delicate desert onions peppering the scrub grass. Then the showy mariposa lily waves its white, purple and green flag for our attention. Starweed, bedstraw, yellow groundsels, red *Penstemon barbatus* (known as scarlet buglers), milkvetches and, towering above all, a head-high bull thistle, its lavender tufts as large as pompoms. Distracted by this unexpected bounty, we suddenly realize we've made the climb onto the high bench that marks the turn toward Pueblo Canyon.

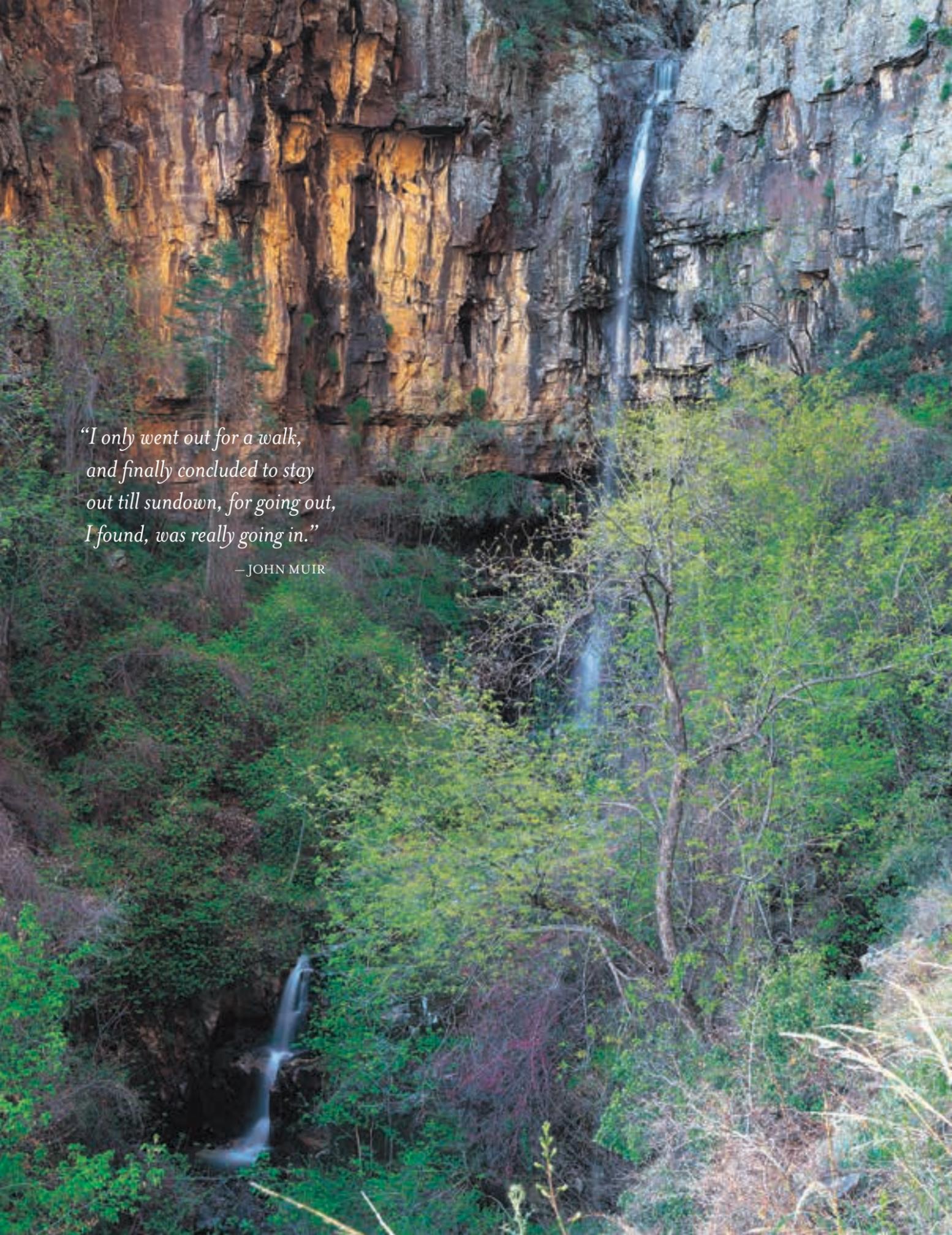
*Whether the reasons were environmental (the Great Drought of 1276-1300 may have been the start of it, or maybe the Salado people simply exceeded the capacity of the environment by overusing and depleting the soil, causing a fight over resources) or external (some evidence points to foreign invaders), the Tonto Basin erupted with violence in the late 1200s. Platform mound complexes were ransacked and destroyed. Trophy hands and feet were displayed on the walls of the conquered compounds by the victors. As a result, some of the Salados began moving up into the surrounding mountains, walling themselves off in hard-to-reach cliff dwellings.*

Our trek across the bench toward Pueblo Canyon, though mostly flat, turns perverse. The trail burrows through a sea of manzanita forest that towers over our heads and engulfs us. Our packs and clothes catch on the jagged, tough maroon branches. Frequently we're forced to get down on hands and knees to climb through. But the flower show continues. The manzanita is bedecked with tiny pearls of pink bells. Cliff fendlerbush wheels its white-crossed stars. Silktassel bush wears earrings of long-hanging drupes. And then, to top it all off, we catch a whiff of the most delightful of scents: ceanothus. Sweet, subtle, slightly almondy, the smell of the white-blossom shrub is the rapture of spring.

*Some of the Salados moved to the hills around the Tonto Basin. Some sought refuge on this side of the mountain. Tree-ring dating of the timbers within the Sierra Ancha dwellings tells us that Cold Springs was occupied from 1278 through 1312 and Devils Chasm from 1310 to 1330. Both dwellings are small, highly defensible sites of about six rooms each. Pueblo, which was occupied from 1278 through 1324, had the largest aggregation of rooms in the area, with 60 to 75 rooms clustered in three groups along the base of a cliff.*

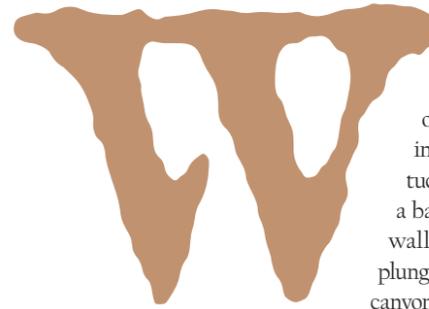


A Salado structure (above) was constructed in the high, hard-to-reach niches of Pueblo Canyon's walls. Pottery shards and a corncob (right) are remnants of the canyon's ancient inhabitants whose mysterious departure is still not fully explained. Pictographs (below) tell stories that now can be only imagined. | JEFF SNYDER



*“I only went out for a walk,  
and finally concluded to stay  
out till sundown, for going out,  
I found, was really going in.”*

—JOHN MUIR



e’ve reached the lip of the canyon and can now clearly make out the jumble of masonry buildings on the other side of the chasm, tucked into alcoves at the bottom of a bare 300-foot-high vertical rock wall. The vegetation-covered slope plunges another 300 feet down to the canyon below. There’s no way to get up

or down to them. Here’s where we see the beauty of the Salado’s plan to build here. The only way to reach the dwellings is to hike another half-mile up into the canyon, then hike back along the base of the cliff. Because the slope below us is as sheer on this side, attackers could have been easily repelled at any of several critical spots along the trail.

Marching into the shade of the canyon, we’re struck by how lush and verdant the vegetation has become. If we thought we were in cool green before, here’s an even cooler green.

We’re moving through a dense forest of Douglas firs, canyon live oaks, New Mexico raspberries, Gambel oaks, honeysuckle, bracken ferns, lip ferns, Oregon grapes, corn lilies, hemlock and thickets of bigtooth maples. The thick tangle seems a mix of tropical jungle and riparian canopy, but, because we’re at an elevation of 5,500 feet, it feels like alpine. The flowers now are high-country species: mountain violets, pennycress, white geraniums and fat-leaved phacelia — a delicate plant with tiny purple-blue blooms that scroll against the green of its large leaves.

We see occasional seeps and springs on the walls, bedecked with archipelagos of moss, and fields of miner’s lettuce inviting us to crunch on its mustardy leaves. At one side drainage, we’re amazed by a grove of round-leaved trees covered in magnificent red blooms. The trees look like redbud, but in Arizona, they’re only found above the Grand Canyon. Later we learn that the trees are an exotic Canadian redbud, probably brought in by the miners who worked a nearby uranium mine in the 1950s.

As we near the head of the canyon, we hear a low, shimmering roar that can only mean falling water. But before we can get to it, there’s a tricky traverse in front of us. It’s the dreaded mudslide that we’ve been warned about. Although the opposite side is only 100 feet away, the canyon is deep, and a fall into it would mean a broken neck. Numerous seeps issuing just above the trail have turned it into a slope of mud. Gingerly, slowly, carefully maintaining the balance of our packs and holding on to exposed tree roots, we manage to cross the slippery slope.

What greets us is a giant, gossamer waterfall. Towering at least 100 feet, it spills down from a rocknest above our heads. Not a thunder of water, but a 4-foot-wide frothy straight thread, almost ephemeral, almost evanescent. There’s no way to get to the other side of the canyon without crossing beneath the water. It’s a wonderful experience. We each stop in its soft spray and can’t help looking up into it.

We pop out into the sun again, walking the last half-mile on the northern side of the canyon. On the 2 to 4 feet of flat ground at the juncture of cliff and slope, the flower parade continues with sun-loving species: the nodding heads of periwinkle-blue desert hyacinth, the brilliant red splash of Indian paintbrush, the yellow racemes of western wallflower and the pink stemless primrose, their rounded

mounds of pristine petals looking as if they’d been arranged by a florist.

We come to a small structure blocking the trail. For the delphinium growing around it, we designate the ruins the Larkspur House. Minutes later, we stumble into a giant alcove that shelters the main compound. Ochre walls of plastered mud and stone stand silent in the hollowness. Ten? Twenty? Thirty-five rooms in here? Hard to tell. Many of the second-story walls have fallen, and now lie in blocks at the base of the ruin. Exposed roof beams of ponderosa trunks span empty gaps and are charred black from fire. Some of the walls look beautifully intact, meticulously chinked with small spalls of flat rock. Others seem crudely built and mortared, as if they’d been hasty add-ons.

The arching alcove has a great feel to it. A sense of beauty and refuge. A sense of home. Drips of water fall from the ceiling, making a syncopated clinking and drumming among the isolated globemallow and columbine growing in their spray below. For this, we name it Music Temple.

We’ll camp nearby, being careful not to disturb the ruins, and tonight we’ll watch the stars wheel across the top of the opposite canyon wall as they have for centuries. Tomorrow, we’ll spend an indolent day exploring the second and third sets of ruins farther along the wall. Then we’ll sit, read, photograph, sketch and wonder.

In the process, we’ll intersect with another dimension, another time. Feel the bustle of activity that went on here. Hear the garrulous talk of women grinding corn, the laughter of children. Sounds of men chipping and flaking arrowheads out of stone.

For 50 years they lived here, and then they were gone. As a culture, they disappeared entirely. Vanished into the mists of history.

Some believe the modern-day Pima Indians are their descendants, and the Pimas themselves agree: “Our old manner of life was ended by three bands of foreigners from the east, who destroyed our pueblos, devastated our fields and killed or enslaved many of our people.”

My hunch is the same. First the Salado people were harassed, attacked and driven out of the Tonto Basin. Then they sought refuge in these nearly inaccessible cliff dwellings on this side of the Sierra Ancha. But even here the enemy got them. They thought they were safe, but they were wrong.

As we walk out of the canyon on the third day, I stop just past the waterfall. Looking back, I try to imagine the last Salado leaving Pueblo. In my mind, he’s either the sole survivor of the final battle or the last to flee an anticipated attack. What would he have felt as he stood in this same place?

Ours has been a beautiful walk, and we’re reluctant to leave. For him, the loss would have been much more extreme. This place was his home.

As I watch a drift of water twist in the wind, a line from W.H. Auden comes to mind: “Whose white waterfall could bless travelers in their last distress.”

Go in peace, Salado.

Go in peace.

**DIRECTIONS:** Pueblo Canyon is located in the Sierra Ancha Wilderness Area northeast of Phoenix. For specific directions to the site, contact the Tonto National Forest.

**TRAVEL ADVISORY:** A four-wheel-drive, high-clearance vehicle is required. Archaeological sites are protected by law and must not be touched or disturbed in any way.

**INFORMATION:** Tonto National Forest, Pleasant Valley Ranger District, 928-462-4300 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto) ■

A series of waterfalls tumbles down a near-vertical cliff in Pueblo Canyon. | JEFF SNYDER



Columbine in Pueblo Canyon. | RICHARD EMBERY



INDIAN FRY BREAD IS A MAINSTAY AT STREET FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND POWWOWS. TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, IT'S SWEET AND DELICIOUS,

## out of the frying pan

BUT TO THE NAVAJOS, IT'S A REMINDER OF THE PAIN AND SUFFERING THEIR ANCESTORS ONCE ENDURED.

by jennifer nalewicki

Plumes of smoke curl into the early morning sky as the sun glistens from behind a curtain of billowy clouds, causing shadows to dance across the whitewashed walls of Mission San Xavier del Bac. Nearby, in an adjacent dirt lot, a half-dozen Tohono O'odham families prepare Indian fry

bread in oversized cast-iron skillets over open flames. They're using the same recipe their ancestors handed down to them generations ago. The process remains largely unchanged.

Few visitors to the Spanish-Catholic mission, which is located on the Tohono O'odham Reservation about 10 miles south of Tucson, understand the role that Indian fry bread plays in Native American history. The only thing the masses know about the deep-fried delicacy is how they like it prepared: either as a savory snack topped with chili, beans and cheese, or as a dessert dusted with powdered sugar and a dollop of honey.

**PRECEDING PANEL:** A fresh, golden round of sizzling-hot fry bread is lifted from a pot of hot oil. | P.K. WEIS

**BELOW:** Honey and powdered sugar, common toppings for fry bread, sometimes give way to a few drizzles of warm chocolate. | PAUL MARKOW



On a deeper level, eating fry bread is a valued tradition for Native Americans of the Southwest. It's something they cook in their homes, and it's a featured dish during family celebrations. However, for one group of Native Americans in particular, it's even more significant: Fry bread, which was developed by the Navajos nearly 150 years ago, serves as a reminder of the pain and suffering their ancestors once endured.

For centuries, the Navajos lived peacefully in what is now the Four Corners region of the United States, an area bounded by Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Utah. The land is considered sacred to the tribe.

"These mountains were placed here for us," says Dr. Wilson Aronlith Jr., author of *Foundation of Navajo Culture*. "We think of them as our home, as the foundation of our hogan and our life. These mountains keep us healthy and strong. They gave us water to drink and food to eat. They gave us a home."

By the late 16th century, that home was being pressured by the Spaniards, who began settling in the area. The Navajos traded wool and other commodities for the Spaniards' horses, which were then used to raid the newcomers. To protect their settlements, the Spaniards organized a militia near the tribe's homeland and retaliated by attacking the Navajos.

A similar dynamic occurred as English settlers migrated to the area in the mid-1800s, and by 1864, tensions were so high that the Navajos were forcibly moved to a reservation located in what is now New Mexico. Major General James Henry Carleton, commander of the New Mexico Territory, led the roundup, saying that something had to be done about the "Navajo problem" once and for all.

And so began the infamous "Long Walks" — 300-mile, 18-day treks that took the Navajos from their homeland to Bosque Redondo Reservation (now Fort Sumner), a 40-square-mile, wind-swept swath of desert in eastern New Mexico. Once there, U.S. soldiers forced the Navajos to live in internment camps alongside the Mescalero Apaches — their sworn enemies — and taught them to be "civilized" by becoming farmers and practicing Christianity. Conditions were poor at best, and fighting often broke out between the two tribes.

Meanwhile, outlying civilians raided the Navajos of what little commodities they had, and the only available water was the Pecos River, which was brackish and undrinkable. Without potable water, crops failed, making food scarce. To supplement the Navajo's diet, the government supplied rations that included flour, salt, lard and baking powder, the key ingredients for making fry bread.

"Indian fry bread is a relatively contemporary food," says Clarendia Begay, curator of the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock. "A lot of people think the Navajos have been making it forever, but it wasn't until the Long Walks. Before that, they were using mainly corn to make bread."

Four years after it forced the Navajos to Bosque Redondo, the U.S. government allowed them to return to their native land. Starving and impoverished, they made the long trek back to the Four Corners, taking with them the recipe for Indian fry bread.

Dinah Dahozy Wauneka has been making Indian fry bread since she was just a few years old. Now 60, the Navajo woman remembers her grandmother, hunched over an open flame, teaching her how to drop flattened balls of dough into a piping-hot skillet that spit oil like fireworks. Since then, she's perfected the craft of making fry bread and passed it on to her own daughter.

Winifred Bessie Jumbo also learned to make fry bread from her late grandmother, explaining that everything from the amount of baking powder to the size of the balls of dough is measured in the palm of your hand.

"You use your best judgment," says Jumbo, winner of the Miss Navajo competition for 2010-2011. "The recipe varies from family to family and tribe to tribe. Navajo fry bread is thicker than Tohono O'odham bread, which is crisper."

According to Jumbo, the process for making fry bread starts by mixing approximately 4 cups of flour, a half-cup of baking powder, a pinch of salt and 1.5 cups of water. After that, the mixture needs to sit, she says. Some recipes also call for powdered milk, but that's not the way Jumbo makes it.

Either way, make sure the mixture is warm, Jumbo says. "It makes the dough stickier."

The next step includes pulling off 2-inch pieces of the dough mixture and rolling it between your hands to make a flattened sphere. "It doesn't have to be a perfect circle," Jumbo says. "Beginners will often use rolling pins."

At this point, the cooking fire should be burning. Historically, most Navajos learned to make fry bread over an open flame — the wood was usually oak because of its availability on the Navajo Reservation and its general lack of smoke when burned. Today, however, many cooks make fry bread in an oiled cast-iron skillet on a stovetop. Each time the skillet is used, more residue is left behind. It's another story told. Another memory made.

Campfire or cook stove, the most important thing about making fry bread is ensuring that the oil is hot enough. Otherwise, Jumbo says, the dough won't bubble properly — if the temperature is right, it should bubble in a minute or two. To

make the dish a little less fattening, Jumbo uses vegetable oil instead of the more traditional lard. It's a variation she learned from her mother.

Once the dough turns a golden brown, it's carefully flipped over with a fork and eventually served. There's no denying that fry bread is a mouthwatering treat. It's delicious, but because diabetes is high among Native Americans — about two times higher than in non-Hispanic whites, according to the American Diabetes Association — most Navajos limit fry bread to birthdays or tribal celebrations.

"I have a few friends whose mothers and grandmothers make it every day, serving it with mutton or stew for dinner, or as a dessert," Jumbo says. Her own family is more judicious.

Because of fry bread's historical significance, the Jumbos make it only for special occasions. It's their way of remembering there was a time when Navajos ate fry bread not in celebration, but for survival. ■

EACH TIME  
THE SKILLET  
IS USED,  
MORE RESIDUE  
IS LEFT  
BEHIND. IT'S  
ANOTHER STORY  
TOLD. ANOTHER  
MEMORY MADE.



## REDINGTON ROAD Recreation, ranching and history are among the highlights of this route, which winds from Tucson to the San Pedro River Valley.

BY KATHY MONTGOMERY  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
RANDY PRENTICE

With an afternoon to kill during a recent visit to Tucson, my husband and I decided to explore Redington Road (Forest Road 371). A popular destination for hikers and off-highway-vehicle enthusiasts, the former military supply route makes a beautiful, half-day drive that offers recreation, ranching and history. The graded dirt road winds its way up from the desert east of Tucson between the Santa Catalina and Rincon mountains and through oak- and juniper-dotted grasslands before topping out over Redington Pass and descending into the San Pedro River Valley and the farming and ranching community of Redington.

**BELOW:** Rain or snowmelt will keep Tanque Verde Creek flowing, but beware, flash floods can also occur.

**RIGHT:** Tanque Verde Creek, shown here below Tanque Verde Falls near Redington Road, is a big draw for hikers and other explorers.



We began on Tanque Verde Road, which becomes Redington Road at its intersection with the Catalina Highway. After about 8 miles, the speed limit drops from 45 mph to 5 mph and cuts through steep switchbacks with sweeping views of Tucson, eventually giving way to a gravel road that is sometimes jarring but manageable in a passenger car.

On a warm Saturday, the first few miles hummed with cars, trucks, dirt bikes and ATVs. Just past the pavement's end, parking lots for the Upper and Lower Tanque Verde Canyon hiking trails were full. The Lower Canyon Trail leads to a series of pools and waterfalls along Tanque Verde Creek. The Upper Canyon Trail is a quick, 10-minute hike to a swimming spot sometimes used by nude sunbathers.

Shooting is permitted at Mile 6, and groups of people fired at targets set up on both sides of the road. We passed a large ATV staging area with loading ramps and restrooms at Mile 10. Beyond that, traffic thinned, and cars became scarce as prickly pear and ocotillo gave way to a rocky landscape covered with straw-colored grasses and dotted

with juniper, soap tree yuccas and the occasional corral.

The turnoff to the Bellota Ranch headquarters lies a short distance past the ATV staging area. Pronounced Bay-OH-tah, the historic ranch dates to 1890 and was settled by Henry and Lem Redfield, two brothers from New York who are credited with settling the Redington area in 1875. The Redfields' original adobe house remains on the ranch, as does evidence of even earlier settlers: a pueblo believed to have been built by the Salado people as early as A.D. 1250. Bellota Ranch is now owned by Tanque Verde Ranch Resort. It operated as a guest ranch for a time, but is now strictly a cattle ranch.

At around Mile 15, we crested Redington Pass and began our descent into the San Pedro River Valley. As the high-desert grasslands yielded to saguaros, the broad, flat agricultural valley came into view.

We turned right at Mile 24, where a sign told us we were 19 miles from San Manuel, and found ourselves on Redfield Canyon Road, where we were surprised by the unexpected sight of a pay phone at the side of the road. We also found the cottonwood-shaded pastures of the Carlink Ranch, which is about all that's left of a community that once included a general store, post office and one-room schoolhouse. Established in 1884, Carlink is home to the sixth generation of the Smallhouse family, who ask visitors to drive with care.

We returned to Redington Road via San Pedro River Road, crossing the dry riverbed over a paved bridge, and got back to town just as groups of off-roaders were packing up. After a pleasant three-hour drive we, too, felt ready to call it a day.



**ADDITIONAL READING:** For more scenic drives, pick up a copy of our book *The Back Roads*. Now in its fifth edition, the book (\$19.95) features 40 of the state's most scenic drives. To order a copy, visit [www.arizonahighways.com/books](http://www.arizonahighways.com/books).



KEVIN KIBSEY

## tour guide

Note: Mileages are approximate.

**LENGTH:** 66 miles round-trip

**DIRECTIONS:** In Tucson, drive east on Tanque Verde Road, which becomes Redington Road, for about 31 miles to the ranching community of Redington. Near Mile 24, turn right at a sign that reads "San Manuel 19." From there, drive approximately one-half mile past the Carlink Ranch to San Pedro River Road, turn left onto San Pedro River Road and cross the river over a short, paved bridge. Turn left again at Redington Road to return to Tucson.

**VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** None

**WARNING:** Back-road travel can be hazardous, so be aware of weather and road conditions. Carry plenty of water. Don't travel alone and let someone know where you are going and when you plan to return.

**INFORMATION:** Santa Catalina Ranger District, Coronado National Forest, 520-749-8700 or [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coronado)

**511** Travelers in Arizona can visit [www.az511.gov](http://www.az511.gov) or dial 511 to get information on road closures, construction, delays, weather and more. ■



## ECHO CANYON LOOP

If you'd like to hike in the Chiricahuas, this trail offers a great introduction.

BY ROBERT STIEVE

Walking in circles is usually discouraged, but not when it comes to hikes. Loop hikes are great because they're typically easy to follow and you never have to retrace your steps. Echo Canyon Loop is no exception. Like most loops, there's no right or wrong approach to this trail. That said, most hikers opt for the counterclockwise route because it's a little easier. But really, there's nothing difficult about this trail, other than the challenge of coming up with enough adjectives to describe what is surely one of the most geologically unique trails in Arizona.

Whichever way you go, clockwise or counterclockwise, you'll have to navigate four trail junctions along the way. Although this is a loop, it's connected to most of the other trails in the Chiricahua National Monument, and as you'll see,

**BELOW AND RIGHT:** The Echo Canyon Loop passes through grottoes, where dangerous drop-offs should be avoided, and features a good view of Cochise Head.



MOREY K. MILBRADT

it's easy to get distracted in this wonderland of lichen-covered hoodoos.

From the trailhead, the counterclockwise route hits its first junction almost immediately. You'll see a sign that points toward the "Grottoes." Head that direction, but before you split, turn around and take a gander at the enormous rock formation in the distance, known as Cochise Head. If you use your imagination, it looks as if the renowned Apache chief is lying on his back and looking up toward the sky.

Heading downhill, you'll arrive at the grottoes in a matter of minutes. Although these passageways invite exploration, it's important that you stay on the trail, not only because of the Leave-No-Trace Principles, but also because there are several dangerous drop-offs within the grottoes. It's even more dangerous when it's wet, which is often the case in the spring.

Just beyond the grottoes is Echo Park, a lush cove dominated by Apache pines, Douglas firs and Arizona cypress. You shouldn't be tired at this point, but if the breathtaking beauty is taking a toll, this is a great place to kick back and take a break. In addition to the trees and the other greenery, there's an unexpected stream that runs through this little Eden in the winter and spring. There are even a few waterfalls that'll trick you into thinking you're somewhere else. Perhaps somewhere in North Carolina.

The next segment of the loop heads into Rhyolite Canyon along the Hailstone Trail. It's drier and hotter along this stretch, which skirts the south-facing wall of the canyon for just under a mile. After a mile, a third junction connects the Hailstone Trail to the Ed Riggs Trail. This is where the only workout on the route begins. This hike is rated as Moderate, and could almost earn an Easy rating, but along Ed Riggs there's an uphill climb that'll get your attention. It's nothing like the switches on the North Kaibab Trail, but it's uphill all the way back to the trailhead. That, of course, completes the loop; however, if you have the time, you might want to make a detour at the loop's fourth intersection, which shows up about an hour and a half into the hike.

The side trip leads to Massai Point, where the CCC built a wonderful lookout tower that offers long views of most of the monument and beyond. Although the trek to Massai Point adds about a half-mile total to the Echo Canyon Loop, the views from the top are well worth the extra steps. Besides, on a trail where walking in circles is OK, there's certainly nothing wrong with getting sidetracked, as well.



LES DAVID MANEVITZ



**ADDITIONAL READING:** For more hikes, pick up a copy of our newest book, *Arizona Highways Hiking Guide*, which features 52 of the state's best trails — one for each weekend of the year, sorted by seasons. To order a copy, visit [www.arizonahighways.com/books](http://www.arizonahighways.com/books).



KEVIN KIBSEY

### trail guide

- LENGTH:** 3.5 miles round-trip
- DIFFICULTY:** Moderate
- ELEVATION:** 6,784 to 6,330 feet
- DIRECTIONS:** The trailhead is located at the Echo Canyon Trail Parking Area, 5.5 miles past the Chiricahua National Monument visitors center on Bonita Canyon Drive.
- VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS:** None
- DOGS ALLOWED:** No
- USGS MAP:** Cochise Head
- INFORMATION:** Chiricahua National Monument, 520-824-3560 or [www.nps.gov/chir](http://www.nps.gov/chir)
- LEAVE-NO-TRACE PRINCIPLES:**
  - Plan ahead and be prepared.
  - Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
  - Dispose of waste properly and pack out your trash.
  - Leave what you find.
  - Respect wildlife and minimize impact.
  - Be considerate of others. ■

where  
is this?

## Bridge to Somewhere

BY KELLY KRAMER  
PHOTOGRAPH BY  
NICK BEREZENKO

When it comes to covered bridges, Arizona is a far cry from Madison County, Iowa. In fact, this is the only one in the state that's accessible by car. Named for Mauretta B. Thomas, who prompted the covering of the bridge in time for the nation's bicentennial celebration in 1976, the bridge is located in a place that was first known as Mortenson. The unincorporated town is home to only 300 residents, many of whom are descendants of original settlers.

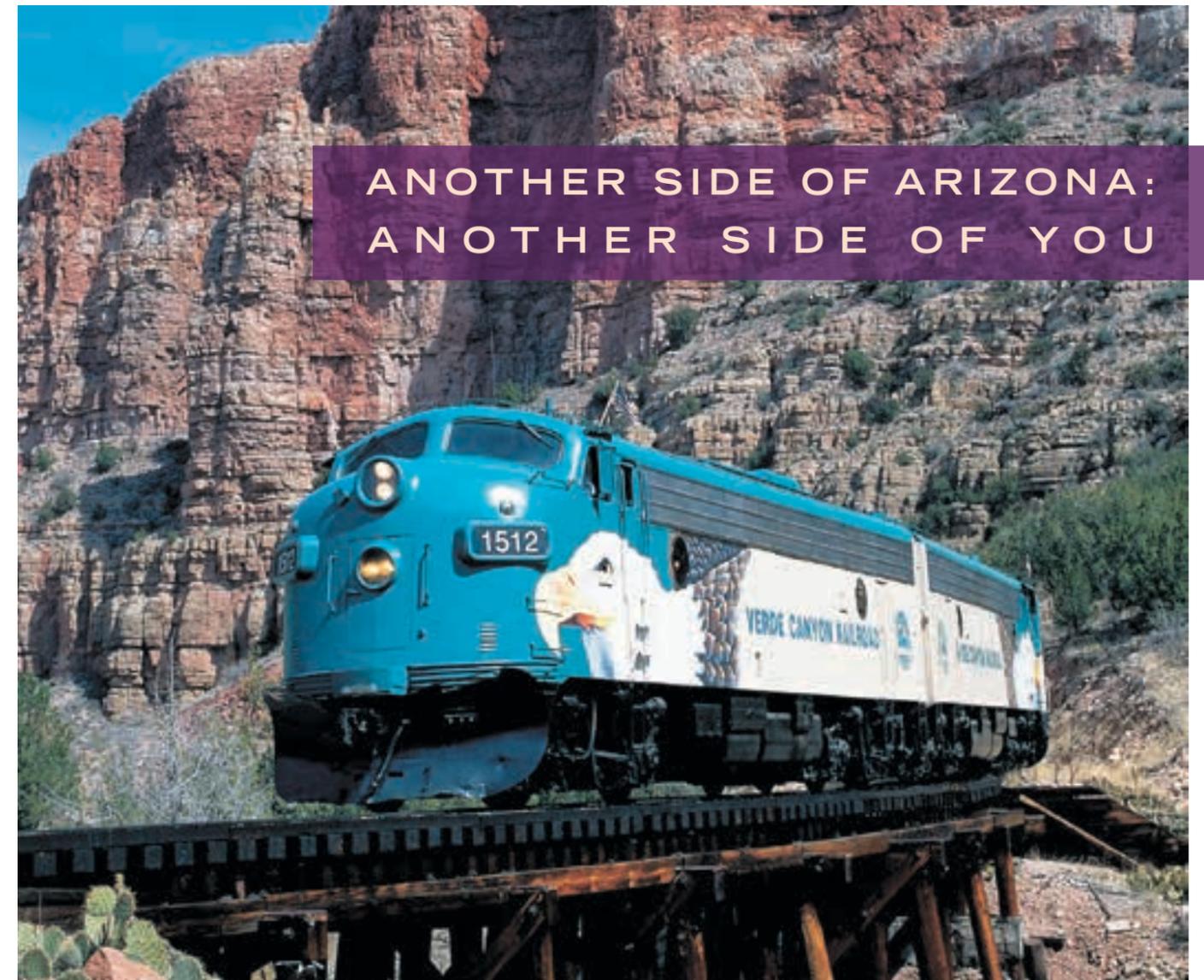


February 2011  
Answer: Salome.  
Congratulations to  
our winner, RoseAnn  
Lucke of Queen Creek,  
Arizona.



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