

A Stunning Look at the Mingling of America's Four Deserts

ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

JANUARY 2006

winter wonders

The Ski School
of Life

The Magic of
a Cozy Yurt

Pound Dog
Turns
Sled Dog



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FRONT COVER A skier makes the most of deep powder at the Snowbowl Ski Resort on Humphreys Peak. See page 20. MARC MUENCH

BACK COVER Silhouetted against a setting sun in Saguaro National Monument near Tucson's west side, these saguaros are the signature plants of the Sonoran Desert, one of the four deserts in Arizona that inspired writer Charles Bowden in his attempt to define desert borders. See story, page 24.

JACK DYKINGA

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Snowplowing Past Sibling Rivalry to Seek the Meaning of Life

PERCHED UNSTEADILY ON the chairlift beside my semiobsessive big brother, I try to decide whether each throb in my right foot corresponds to its own bone in the iron-maiden confines of my ski boot.

I reach 43 throbs/bones before a 30-mph gust of air jet-streamed from the Arctic rattles the chairlift. Fortunately, I have very cleverly frozen myself to the seat and so cannot fall.

I goggle a look at my beloved brother, a lawyer whose taxes way exceed my annual salary. Dave has the self-discipline of a Navy SEAL synchronized swim team. He once pedaled his 10-speed bike 300 miles on one good leg after taking a fall, stoically ignoring my panted pleas

to call mom to come pick us up. Now he has a ski condo, and snowboards gracefully in 15 feet of fresh powder. Most days he sleeps four hours and runs 8 miles.

I have to nap if I so much as skim his day planner.

Not that I've got any, like, sibling rivalry issues.

I mean, here I am—strapped to skis for the first time since college. I even brought my two teenage sons so Dave

world. Even fundamental laws of ski physics have changed. To wit:

Gravitational constant has changed: I accelerated faster and fell harder ($x + x + 2b^2$). This change apparently does not affect teenagers (2(cool)).

Moguls have magnetic cores: The humps of snow on steep runs that used to merely amuse me now irresistibly attract ski tips so that even when I try to detour a mogul, I plow into the invisible crosshair on the center of the bump.

Ski tips have mini black holes: Someone put itty-bitty black holes in the front of my skis, no doubt intending to keep me from flying off into space. Except now the tips attract each other, which no doubt explains the snowplow ruination of my Stem Christy intentions.

The coolness polarity of skis has flipped: I used to look really, really spiffy on skis (James Bondish). Heck, I used to look good in tight ski pants. Now I look odd, especially in Dave's Russian ski patrol hat with the earflaps. Turns out, only people on snowboards (like my brother and sons) look impressive (Vin Dieselish). I think this is because the Earth's magnetic poles are currently in the process of flipping.

I could go on. Suffice to say that by the end of the day, I have clinched my status as a wobbly dork and my sons are jumping moguls and saying things like "Dave is really cool."

Even so, I feel a swollen, throbbing survivor's pride as I sit safe by the fire that night as a snowstorm tests the double-pane windows.

Then Dave exclaims, "Let's cross-country ski the meadow!"

"Now?" say I, too tired to interject the necessary incredulity.

"Great idea," chorus my boys.

Unaccountably, I soon find myself bundled up, strapped to skis and coasting across the dark meadow. Dave leads us through the fresh snow with my boys in line and me at the rear, all of us moving in perfect harmony. My breath makes a cloud of crystals, and the snow crunches like a lover's whisper. Suddenly, my feet don't hurt, my ego doesn't throb and I feel a strange surge of brotherly bonding. Staring up at the slow motion fall of the enormous flakes, I cannot tell whether they are falling or I am floating upward. Life makes perfect sense. My soul swells up.

And for that moment in the pitch dark, I look just as cool as my big brother.



editor@arizonahighways.com

Celebrating Local Mythologies

I note that normally your December issue is the least informative and the most uninteresting one due to its heavy emphasis upon a local mythology. Please realize that a large number of your readers have no interest in this local religion, and especially in the blend of mythologies arising from a clash of native beliefs and this local religion. Your magazine is affiliated with state government, and your emphasis upon particular religious matters implies state support of this religion. Please return to the magazine's mission: travel in the physical rather than the mythical.

Michael, Tempe

"Local mythologies?" Is that like Christmas? You have a point: We do love the holidays—but then so do a lot of our readers. Besides, I'm a fan of that whole gift subscription thing. And I have a confession: I often travel for reasons more spiritual than physical.

The Creator's Design

Thank you for your "All Who Wander" column (September '05), "For Want of a Fungus the Squirrel Is Lost—As Are We All." This is a beautiful example of the incredible intelligence behind the design of this world. It's not the wisdom of the creation (the fungus), it's the wisdom of our fantastic Creator!

Dale Johnson, Tucson

I bet you and Michael could have a spirited conversation. Personally, I'm in awe of both DNA and the design of the cosmos. For instance, because water is one of the few liquids that expands when it freezes, icebergs float, the seas don't freeze and the planet remains warm enough to allow for the evolution of magazine editors who feel divinely inspired by sunsets and root fungi.

Do Photographs Lie?

Thanks for Director of Photography Peter Ensenbarger's column "Viewfinder: Digitally Manipulated Photographs Don't Portray the Truth" (September '05) in which he said transparencies prove that "last light really does set sandstone on fire and turn the sky indigo blue before night falls." I am a photographer and know that just exposing the film enhances the scene, and film manufacturers use focus groups to see how much saturation people prefer. How often have we seen pictures of Antelope Canyon in which the bright and slightly overexposed areas show up fiery?

Underexposure can also produce increased saturation, and a polarizer takes enhancement to another level. I'm as seduced by saturated and contrasty images as any other landscape photographer. I just wonder how much the viewing public is aware of this. Maybe we should keep it as our little secret among photographers.

Marty Hulsebos

Excellent points. That's why Arizona Highways photographers prefer to nap and eat gorp in the middle of the day, saving their mania for sunrise or sunset. So setting the digital debate aside, do photographs tell the truth? Personally, I think they convey the emotional truth of beautiful places by manipulating the light.

Abandon the Digital Jihad

Ensenbarger's column about digital photography has pushed me over the top. As a 40-year subscriber, I have serious problems with his thought processes as director of photography. So the distracting white tree has been digitally removed: big deal! If I found the tree had been felled by a lightning strike, could I sue for misrepresentation? What is "reality?" If Vishnu Temple in the Grand Canyon were [digitally] moved to the Salt River, whoa! But by removing the distracting tree, the "reality" is not essentially changed. You're just wrong in this jihad. No fear, no subscriptions canceled over this, just wanted to go on record that you're dead wrong.

Richard Fee, Mesa

Well, I agree on one point—Pete (the other Pete) has some pretty weird ideas. But in this case, I agree with him. It's a credibility issue. Velvia film and warming filters don't cross the line, but cutting out trees does. We have enough trouble convincing people Arizona's landscapes are real without any questions about computer manipulation of photographs.

A Vengeful Elevator

In the crackling, dry days of an Arizona spring, the air is alive with static. While down in Bisbee as you glide across the antique wool carpets of the Copper Queen Hotel, stop and consider the venerable elevator. It's better grounded than anything in town, and they say it's haunted. One evening I watched a waiter making room-service deliveries. Each time he punched the call button, he got a painful static jolt.

On his third trip, balancing his tray aloft on one hand, he lashed out at the elevator. Standing on one foot, he slammed the call button with the other hard enough to make me wince for the poor elevator. Snickering in triumph at having avoided a static discharge, he entered the polished metal car and reached out to select a floor. There was an evil flash of lightning as his hand neared the shining brass panel of the best ground in town. The closing door muffled his scream. The elevator rose, making that huffing, chuckling noise it does at times.

Douglas W. Hocking, Sierra Vista

That's the best Bisbee ghost story I've heard since the one about Ruby and the jilted husband who murdered the rooming house full of boarders.

Shared Connection to the Land Helps Bridge the Miles

A CHANCE MEETING THAT keeps repeating sounds like a Hollywood movie plot. For photographer Jack Dykinga, recurring encounters with a German hiker on the Colorado Plateau ceased being coincidental long ago.

Dykinga has always felt a strong connection to the red sandstone formations of the vast plateau. But a series of unplanned rendezvous in this windswept wilderness convinced him of the power the rocks hold over others as well.

"I visit the same places over and over again, hiking off in new directions of both discovery and self-discovery," he says. "It's where my ashes will rest, mingling with the coral pink sands when I'm gone."

For now, the tread on Dykinga's hiking boots is the only thing mingling with the sands, but his footprints aren't the only ones tracking through this remote stretch of desert. He shares his passion for this place with a

kindred spirit who lives half a world away, and their pilgrimages intersect here again and again.

I count Jack Dykinga among the best landscape photographers today. He developed a style and standard of excellence that raise his work to the level of art. Through his imagery we grasp his reverence for the land. Creativity and land ethic feed off each other.

Photography led Dykinga in two different directions during his 42-year career. From 1964 to 1981, he worked as a newspaper photojournalist. His photographic exposé of the deplorable conditions at the Lincoln and Dixon state schools in Illinois won him a Pulitzer Prize for feature photography in 1971, and brought much-needed attention to the practice of "warehousing" the mentally ill.

After moving to Arizona, he rediscovered the outdoors and turned his focus to the landscape. A 4x5 view camera has replaced 35 mm as his primary image-making tool for the past 25 years, but his landscape style today draws liberally from his photojournalist past.

"It's a style that's based on combining photojournalism with contemporary landscape photography," he explains. "I have progressed to a style that's very tightly composed with strong angular lines, creating bold patterns to move the viewer's eye into compositions."

In this issue you'll find many examples of Dykinga's

landscape photography. His portfolio begins on page 24, featuring the four deserts of Arizona.

"Four deserts in Arizona?" you say. A desert is a desert, right?

Desert climates vary significantly with changes in elevation and latitude, and the plants and animals adapted to one desert won't necessarily thrive in another.

Dykinga, an adapted desert-dweller from Chicago, has helped us interpret the deserts residing in Arizona: the Sonoran, Chihuahuan, Mohave and Great Basin.

It was during an autumn 1997 trip to photograph the Great Basin that Dykinga first crossed paths with a young German named Holger Lorenz. They chanced to meet while hiking the rocky ravines of the Colorado Plateau and immediately hit it off.

"We spoke of the importance of this canyon country's landscape on the soul," Dykinga says. "I noted his appearance, that of someone camping out of his car for five weeks, and suggested that if he were passing through Tucson and needed a hot shower, to give me a call."

That's exactly what Lorenz did. He got his hot shower and a hot meal before they parted company, thinking it was the last they'd see of each other.

Jump ahead to the year 2000.

"I'm standing in a hallway in Cologne, Germany, at the Photokina exhibition after giving a lecture on environmental photography when I hear a cheerful, 'Hello Jack! It's Holger,'" Dykinga says.

The story gets better. In October 2002, Dykinga is rumbling down the primitive road to remote Hole in the Rock in southern Utah, and comes upon a couple of guys photographing a rattlesnake. It's Lorenz again.

Now, fast forward to June 2005.

"I'm camped in the middle of the Colorado Plateau in northern Arizona," as Dykinga tells it. "I was avoiding the heat, enjoying a midday siesta, when I hear an SUV approach and stop. Now, I'm 20 miles down a gravel and mud road, 15 miles beyond that over a very rough, sandy, deeply eroded trail, and about as far as you can be from humanity and still be in a truck."

And outside his camper he hears a vaguely familiar voice. "When I open the door, there is Holger, and we both burst into laughter."

In the years since their first chance encounter, Holger Lorenz has become an accomplished photographer in his own right. And although he lives thousands of miles away, like Dykinga his soul is embedded in the sandstone of the Colorado Plateau. When will the rocks bring them together again?

"To some, these are simply rocks," says Dykinga. "But I've seen the power of these stones."

Peter Ensenberger can be reached at photodirector@arizonahighways.com

A Violent Advocate of Peanut Butter

Barry Goldwater was born in Phoenix in 1909, and served as Arizona's senator for more than three decades. While not everyone agreed with his politics, you could hardly fault his culinary preferences—specifically in the matter of that all-American favorite—peanut butter.

Speaking at a fund-raising breakfast in Raleigh, North Carolina, near the end of his unsuccessful 1964 bid for president, Goldwater denied that he was an enemy of Southern peanut farmers, saying "I'm probably the most violent advocate of peanut butter in history."



"On a dare from one of my sons, I actually shaved with peanut butter and it wasn't bad, but it smells," Goldwater was later quoted, correctly or not, as saying, "If you don't mind smelling like peanut butter for two or three days, peanut butter is a damn good shaving cream."

While a recipe for "Senator Barry Goldwater's Arizona Chili" recently turned up in a book devoted to slow-cooking favorites, he left no peanut butter recipes.

By contrast, Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, another unsuccessful presidential candidate, once confessed, "My favorite sandwich is peanut butter, baloney, cheddar cheese, lettuce and mayonnaise on toasted bread with catsup on the side."



Walkin' With the Big Cats

You're hiking in the mountains of Arizona and you spot a crouching mountain lion eyeing you like an entry on the wildlife buffet. Then what?

The Arizona Game and Fish Department has produced a free brochure, "Lion Country Tips," that may help answer that question and others about coexisting with these magnificent four-legged natives.

A human encounter with one of Arizona's roughly 3,000 mountain lions can spur headlines and headaches. The brochure

gives the do's and don'ts of such encounters, moving from the most obvious—don't feed—to the most drastic—if attacked, fight back. Since mountain lions roam from Canada to South America, the advice can prove as useful in British Columbia as in southern Arizona.

You can pick up a copy at one the seven offices of Game and Fish or download the information by entering "mountain lion" in the search section of its Web site, azgfd.com.

Information: (602) 942-3000.

EVENTS

1/06

Everyone has heard of the sciences of archaeology and astronomy, but what about archaeoastronomy? If you don't know what the term means, head to **Flagstaff's Museum of Northern Arizona** for the exhibit "Rock Art of Northern Arizona and the Four Corner Region." Information: (928) 774-5213; www.musnaz.org.

Float serenely through **Tucson Botanical Garden** with hundreds of the world's most exotic and colorful butterflies during "Butterfly Magic at the Gardens." Get up close and personal with blue morphos and play hide and seek with camouflaged owl butterflies in the garden's Tropical Greenhouse. Event continues through February. Information: (520) 326-9686; www.tucsonbotanical.org/html/special_events.html.

For many **more events**, go to arizonahighways.com and click on **Experience Arizona**.



Red sandstone formations on the Colorado Plateau are the main attraction for the recurring encounters of two world travelers. JACK DYKINGA

online
Learn how to capture the innocence and joy of children in your photographs at arizonahighways.com (Click on "Photography")

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: © IMAGERY; GEORGE ANDREINO; OSCAR GUTIERREZ



Calling All the World's Thinkers

"...It is safe to assume that within the coming decade the number of visitors to the Grand Canyon will be twenty thousand a year.

"The writers, and painters, and preachers, and leaders of thought in the land will visit the place in larger numbers than will persons from the materialistic walks of life. For these thoughtful people are the givers of impressions to the multitude — they are veritable clearinghouses of the country's ideas and ideals.

"Through the world's thinkers the Canyon must speak to the world."

—William Allen White, 1903



Diggers Get a Mammoth Surprise

A construction worker received a mammoth surprise while laboring in Gilbert during the summer of 2005.

Really, a mammoth. A Columbian mammoth vertebra to be exact.

Paleontologists from the Mesa Southwest Museum excavated the site. According to Gilbert officials, "Bone and tusk from at least two [Columbian] mammoths, two or more turtles, one of which represents a distant relative of today's desert tortoise, and the remains of several horses" were also found at the site. Paleontologists believe the animals lived between

1.5 million and 10,000 years ago. Columbian mammoths died out about 10,000 years ago, and just a few remains have surfaced in Maricopa County. The animals weighed 8 to 10 tons and consumed 700 pounds of vegetation per day.

The town of Gilbert will display replicas cast from the actual mammoth bones in its forthcoming riparian education center, while the Mesa Southwest Museum plans to display the actual bones sometime this year.

Information: Gilbert Riparian Institute, (480) 503-6744; Mesa Southwest Museum, (480) 644-2230.

Owls Hunker Down in College

The Kingman Campus of Mohave Community College is a wildlife-friendly environment. In the desert garden near the student center, quail scurry around like first-year students late for class, rabbits rest in shrubby shade like professors dreading office hours, and hummingbirds flit among ocotillo stems like ideas in search of an intellect.

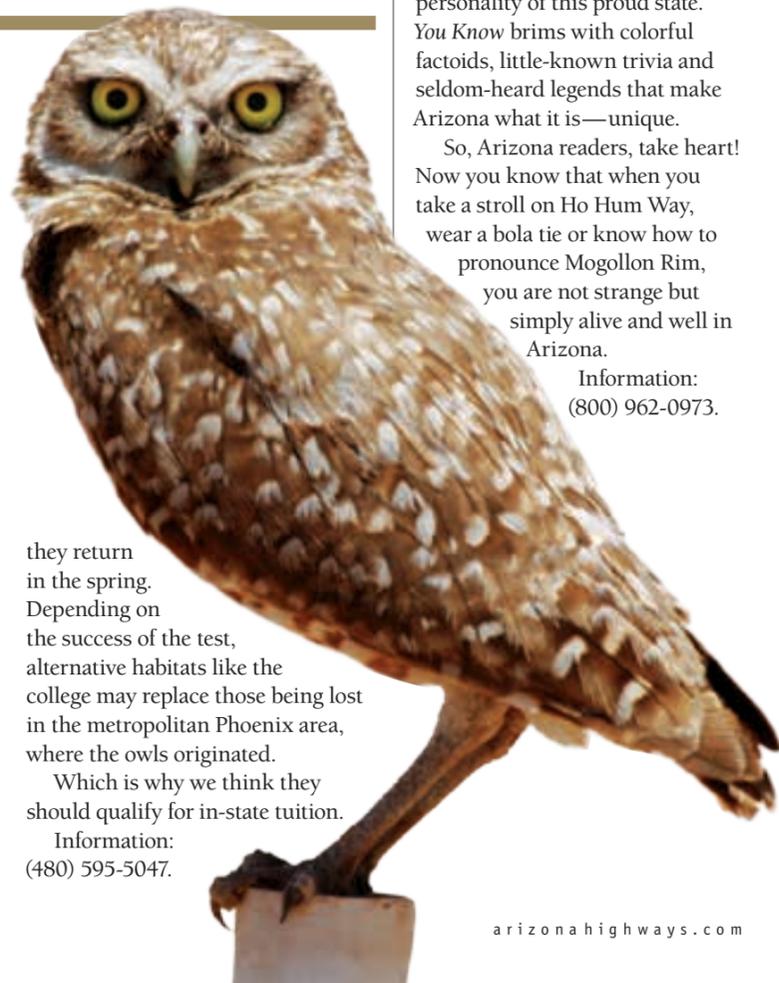
Six burrowing owls, *Athene cunicularia*, arrived on campus in March 2005 as part of a project to determine whether they can adapt to a high-desert, grassland habitat. The owls live in underground nest boxes and abandoned rodent burrows at the north end of campus.

Wild at Heart, a nonprofit organization in Cave Creek devoted to protecting Arizona's wildlife heritage, is coordinating the effort. The owls have bred on campus and researchers are watching to see if

they return in the spring. Depending on the success of the test, alternative habitats like the college may replace those being lost in the metropolitan Phoenix area, where the owls originated.

Which is why we think they should qualify for in-state tuition.

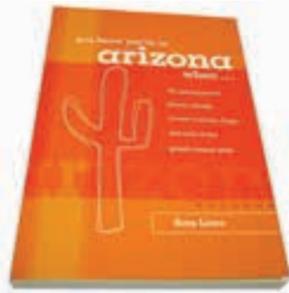
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You Know You're in Arizona When . . .

When you decorate tumbleweeds and chollas for Christmas, when you hobnob with a haboob and when daylight-saving time is for sissies, you know you're in Arizona.

At least that's what "nearly native" Arizona author Sam Lowe announces in his book, *You Know*



You're in Arizona When . . .

Lowe champions the offbeat places, unique customs and peculiar lingo that define the personality of this proud state. *You Know* brims with colorful factoids, little-known trivia and seldom-heard legends that make Arizona what it is—unique.

So, Arizona readers, take heart! Now you know that when you take a stroll on Ho Hum Way, wear a bola tie or know how to pronounce Mogollon Rim, you are not strange but simply alive and well in Arizona.

Information: (800) 962-0973.



The Human Kickstand?

Evolution has its downside. For humans, it's the falling down side. While surpassing life on all fours gives us an edge, it also limits our ability to not teeter, tilt or tumble over one.

Whether you're wading in streams, negotiating loose rocks on a steep trail or just navigating the straight and narrow, a loss of balance can result in more than broken bones and bruised egos. It can also result in a costly loss of precious equipment and fragile gear, say the makers of GhillieStix, who founded their business on personal experience in the 1980s.

Employing opposable thumbs, power tools and other top-of-the-food-chain phenomena, the company's artisans and engineers have since been helping mankind find balance in nature with their custom-crafted hiking, walking and wading sticks. Made from northern white ash wood, the ergonomically correct pillars of strength come in a variety of colors and offer elegant but earthly equilibrium.

Information: (610) 398-5650; www.ghilliestix.com.

Honoring a Heroic Apache Chief

In a small family cemetery north of Whiteriver, an American hero is buried beneath a piñon tree. For many years after his death in 1928, the grave of William Alchesay, the last hereditary chief of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, was marked only by a sandstone rock. On it was scratched "A-1," his military "tag" number.

The grave now has a granite headstone engraved in gold designating Alchesay as a Medal of Honor recipient. The belated honor is the result of an effort by local posts of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. The marker was dedicated July 30, 2005.

Alchesay was awarded the nation's highest military honor for "gallant conduct during campaigns and engagements with Apaches" in Gen. George Crook's



winter campaign against the Tonto Apaches 1871-73.

Of the 20 Medal of Honor recipients in Arizona, 11 were Indian scouts.



Question of the Month

What is a mountain plover?

While it sounds like a relative to the five-leaf clover that grows in high-altitude meadows, a mountain plover is actually a small, brown bird. During mating season, the male makes a nest scrape — a small clearing on the ground — and tries to attract a female.

LIFE IN ARIZONA TERRITORIAL DAYS

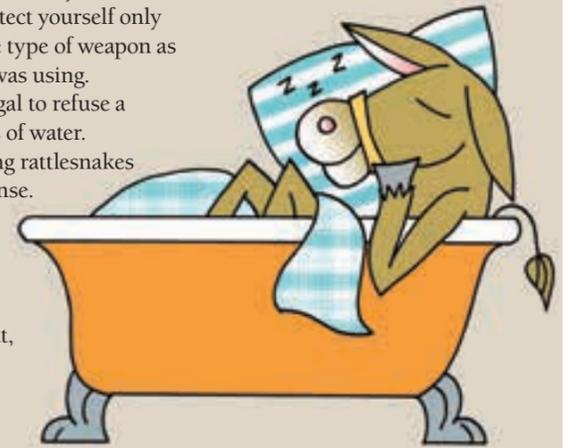
STRANGE LAWS

Although some of these Territorial Arizona laws have been taken off the books, they were actually enforced at one time. Better check to see if you are in violation.

- No hunting camels.
- Any crime committed while wearing a red mask was a felony.
- Donkeys could not sleep in bathtubs.
- When attacked by a criminal, you could protect yourself only with the same type of weapon as the criminal was using.
- It was illegal to refuse a person a glass of water.
- No hunting rattlesnakes without a license.
- No suspenders, in some small towns.
- In Prescott, you were not allowed to ride horses

up the county courthouse stairs.

- In Tombstone, it was illegal for adults to smile with more than one missing tooth visible.
- In Mohave County, anyone caught stealing soap had to wash with it until it was all used up.
- In Glendale, cars could not be driven in reverse.
- In Globe, no card-playing in the street with a Native American.



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- KATHLEEN WALKER

winter wonders

- **The Ski School of Life**
- **The Magic of a Cozy Yurt**
- **Pound Dog Turns Sled Dog**
- **Arizona's Ski Destinations**

Dogsled races, ski-school breakthrough, snug snow yurts, Eiffel Tower ice sculptures, cross-country skiing—Arizona has it all when the snow gods serve up a wet winter. This year, we're hoping for snow and bundling up for a chairlift ride to winter adventures from the slopes of Humphreys Peak to the forests of the White Mountains.

Time to Rime

Formed when supercooled fog or cloud droplets build up on the windward side of below-freezing objects, rime crystals enshrouding pine trees along a ridge at the Arizona Snowbowl north of Flagstaff create looming obstacles for a telemark skier. DUGALD BREMNER



a stillness of the winter woods

Snow Sports Reign Supreme Around Flagstaff

By Rose Houk Photographs by Kate Thompson

Nighttime in the woods is always mysterious. Senses other than sight take over, you feel your way through your feet, listen intently to every rustling sound and startle at the long shadows. That hyper-awareness is honed to an even finer edge in the supreme stillness of the woods at night in winter.

It can be spooky, this nocturnal travel across unfamiliar terrain at a time when most folks are snug in their beds at home. But the Flagstaff Nordic Center's Friday Night Ski made the adventure a little easier. Small, temporary lights lined the snow-packed, groomed trail. A crackling fire in an outdoor fireplace sent firefly sparks leaping into the air. Headlamps aglow, cross-country skiers glided out of the darkness to warm their hands. Suddenly, winter was transformed from a season of cold and deprivation to a cozy intimate place wrapped in ermine white.

The man who brought back the tradition of the night ski at the Nordic Center is Wendell Johnson. An engineer by training and an Idahoan by birth, he and his wife pay for a Forest Service lease in hopes of a deep, white winter like the 2004-2005 season, when the center stayed open until Easter.

Dressed in blue jeans and canvas coat, Wendell seemed to be everywhere at once: in the lodge, on the trails, visiting with friends. Snow lovers have flocked in from across the Southwest. "I want them to get the feel of the kick and glide, that they're doing more than shuffling along. That's what they'll remember," said Johnson.

Moonscape A full moon illuminates the snow-dusted San Francisco Peaks north of Flagstaff.

At the start of the trail, the beginners fumbled with bindings, determinedly dug poles into the snow and wobbled down the trail. Others swooshed past, graceful as gazelles.

For some, savoring the backcountry snow on cross-country skis or snowshoes beats lift lines, après-ski attire and bright lights. Fortunately, the Nordic Center offers both snowshoe and cross-country ski tours into the pines and aspens surrounding the San Francisco Peaks.

Two Phoenix families—the Durans and Michels—gathered outside the center's small wooden lodge for the Saturday snowshoe outing. All were first-timers, which didn't for a moment faze guide Molly McCormick. She was too happy with the ball cap-and-sunscreen afternoon, complete with azure sky and pure, clean snow. A lone Stellar's jay bounced along the ground, snagging luncheon leftovers on the lodge deck. The inexperienced group puzzled over the lined-up row of snowshoes until one of the Duran girls preciently inquired if there was a right and a left foot. Mercifully, when it comes to snowshoes, they're interchangeable.

Assuming pretzel-like postures, everyone managed to lace the tennis-racquet-shaped footwear onto their boots, relying on the wicked metal spikes on the bottom of the snowshoes to provide traction. Then the group trailed Molly like ducklings, feet splayed in an awkward waddle. Gilbert Duran actually quacked. He also informed his teenage daughter that it was time to put aside the CD

player, cell phone and boyfriend distractions and enjoy her surroundings. In moments, she was hurling snowballs at the parents, who promptly returned fire—a wildly good-natured release of intergenerational aggression.

At Molly's behest, the trekkers left the groomed ski trail to blaze their own path, the snow crunching with each step. Immediately, Jamie Michels noted she was "feeling it in her legs," as each step sank 6 inches into the 3-foot snow base. A few soft tumbles and disengaged snowshoes caused only minor delays.

They stopped often as they huffed up the hill. Kathy Duran noted that snowshoeing burns up to 800 calories an hour, justifying that extra granola bar.

Molly stopped repeatedly to point out the crystal-line details: long silky ponderosa pine needles, rabbit tracks impressed in glittering snow. Overhead a rainbow ringed the sun—a "sundog" someone said, warning of a change in the weather.

Molly pointed out scrimshaw scrapes on several white aspen trunks—scratches made by elk or



A Mountain Perspective Humphreys Peak looms over the figure of a cross-country skier making tracks at Kendrick Park.



Snowshoe Leader Radiating athletic fitness, snowshoe guide Molly McCormick, left, also leads Grand Canyon hikes during the summer months.

Shaking the Chill

Showering mini fireworks in a snowy clearing far from fire danger, above, a bonfire warms night skiers out on the trail near the Nordic Center.

bears, she guessed. Animals have come up with all sorts of ingenious ways to weather the winter. Elk and deer and most birds leave the high elevations to look for food in lower or more southerly climes. Black bears slow their metabolism and den up in rock crevices. Smaller mammals tunnel under the insulative blanket of snow. Bats, insects and the mourning cloak butterfly all hibernate under the thick plates of ponderosa pine bark.

As the afternoon waned, some folks headed for a Nordic Center yurt, each a circular hut with tan canvas walls, wood-lattice framing and Plexiglas skylight. Yurts are fashioned after the traditional portable dwellings of wood and wool felt used by nomadic herders in Russia and Mongolia even before Genghis Khan conquered the world.

Inside, golden sunlight streamed through the west-facing door. Furnishings were spare—two futon couches that doubled as beds, two small round tables, four upholstered chairs, a cast-iron wood stove and a propane lantern. Even without electricity and running water, the yurt made for luxurious winter accommodation. Nordic Center staff had already delivered personal gear—sleeping bags, food, backpack stove and dry clothes. They also stacked up firewood and supplied a container of drinking water.

At sunset, a ruff of clouds shrouded Kendrick Mountain. The cold blue dusk settled in, the velveteen sky darkened and an infinity of glittering stars sprinkled the heavens. Coyote songs serenaded dreams throughout the long night. Winter embraced the woods, and the mystery of night reclaimed her kingdom, in the stillness and the silence and the telltale rustle. ❄️

Rose Houk is happiest when she can strap on her cross-country skis and head out her back door during winters in Flagstaff.

Kate Thompson lived in Flagstaff for 11 years before moving to Dolores, Colorado, to be closer to the San Juan Mountains. Her love for nordic and backcountry skiing takes her all over northern Arizona and southern Colorado.

Get Out and Savor Flagstaff's Winter Wonderland

○ Snowshoeing, Cross-country Skiing

The Flagstaff Nordic Center, 16 miles northwest of Flagstaff on U.S. Route 180 (Milepost 232), is open Thursday through Sunday and holidays, 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. The Friday Night Ski is offered in the winter months, 6 to 9 P.M.; guided snowshoe tours are Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 2:30 P.M. The center maintains 25 miles of groomed trails—easy, intermediate and advanced—over an area of about 3 square miles at the foot of the San Francisco Peaks. Average elevation is 8,200 feet. Ski and snowshoe rentals are available, lodging by reservation. **Information:** (928) 220-0550 or www.FlagstaffNordicCenter.com.

Wing Mountain Cross-country Ski Trails, 9 miles north of Flagstaff on U.S. 180, offers 17 miles of marked trails.

Information: (928) 526-0866 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/recreation/peaks/wing-mtn-ski-area.

Mormon Lake Ski Touring Center, 28 miles southeast of Flagstaff, on Forest Service Road 90 near Lake Mary Road, has groomed trails and is open when conditions are suitable.

Information: (928) 774-0462 or www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/recreation/mormon_lake/mormon-winter.

○ Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding

Arizona Snowbowl, 10 miles north of Flagstaff off U.S. 180 and Snowbowl Road (Forest Service Road 516), offers four chairlifts

and 32 trails. Food and lodging are also available. Parking is not allowed anywhere along Snowbowl Road.

Information: (928) 779-1951 or www.arizonasnowbowl.com.

○ Sledding

Crowley Pit, about a mile north of the Nordic Center (Milepost 233), offers a cinder cone.

○ Winterfest Events February

Throughout February, Flagstaff celebrates Winterfest, which includes skiing, athletic games, food, art, music, theater, lectures, 60-band jazz festival and teddy bear picnic.

Information: Flagstaff Chamber of Commerce, (928) 774-4505 or www.flagstaffchamber.com.



TRAVEL ADVISORY All these activities take place within the Coconino National Forest. For information on snowplay sites, activities, parking, permits, snow and road conditions, check www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino, and click on "current conditions." The forest also contains many miles of backcountry roads suitable for cross-country skiing, although parking is limited, and some roads are unplowed and not suitable for driving. For any winter-season activities in the northland, be prepared for winter driving conditions and carry extra food, water and blankets.



arizona's own call of the wild

Romeo's Love Story Starts in a Canine Shelter, But Leads to a Snowy Triumph

First-time dogsled racer Ryan Clark nervously eyed his watch as delicate snowflakes landed on his wool cap, parka and mittens.

The 31-year-old high school English teacher's watch read 9 A.M., just a half hour until nearly a dozen mushers, powered by their churning dog teams, would explode at one-minute intervals out of the starting chute at The White Mountain Winter Games, Arizona's version of the Alaskan Iditarod dogsled race.

On this 28-degree January morning at Sunrise Park Resort, a ski facility in eastern Arizona's White Mountains, towering Sunrise and Apache peaks loomed like abominable snowmen in a starkly white landscape. Smack-dab in the middle of a pristine ponderosa pine forest riddled with frozen lakes, boughs drooped with the weight of freshly fallen snow, and the ground glistened like crushed crystals.

Clark leaned over and ruffled the thick fur of



Friends in the Snow

Siberian husky Romeo and his owner and rescuer, novice dogsled racer Ryan Clark, share an affectionate moment.

Finish Line! Four weary dogs slow to a trot as they pull their sled beyond the finish line at the White Mountain Winter Games.

By Lori K. Baker Photographs by Kerrick James

his lead dog, blue-eyed Romeo, a pure white wolflike Siberian husky with steely muscles and a warm heart. Romeo returned the affection with a wet face lick, as if in gratitude. Just two weeks before, Clark had liberated Romeo from homelessness at the Arizona Humane Society.

Clark had been on a last-minute lookout for a lead dog—smart, fast and tough enough to position at the head of his team. In a quirky twist of fate, Clark's friend and fellow musher Ron Miller had dropped by the Humane Society to pick up dog tags and spotted Romeo in a holding pen. Hungry and badly dehydrated, the stately Siberian had been lost and on the run for about a week when the shelter rescued him. More than a foot of gnarled chain still dangled from his neck.

After Miller gave Clark and his wife, Linda, a call, the kind-hearted couple went to the shelter to meet Romeo. There was an instant bond: Romeo snuggled next to the couple, licking their hands and faces. "He was such a lover," Clark said later. "He wanted to be as close to us as possible." It only took five minutes of Romeo's charms to win over Linda, who clinched the deal: "Let's sign the adoption papers."

Clearly Romeo was a lover, but Clark had no idea whether he could count on him to lead his team successfully in the White Mountain Winter Games.

Until the next day, anyway.

Clark took Romeo along for a test drive at Sunrise Park. He strapped him in with his other dogs—Timber and Ophelia, both malamutes, and Konan, a Siberian husky and malamute mix—to a gangline attached to his wooden sled. To Clark's surprise, Romeo was a natural, even if he didn't know the commands yet. "Hike!" gets a dogsled team going, "Gee!" turns them right, "Haw!" left, and "Whoa!" makes them stop. Clark discovered that Romeo could make all the right moves when he was paired next to well-trained Konan, who knew the lingo.

Romeo instinctively knew to veer away from thin patches of snow and displayed pure drive and verve. Best of all, "He was just so fast," Clark said, beaming with parental pride. He trusted Romeo completely. Then . . .

As Clark fretted about the race, fellow members of the Arizona Mountain Mushers readied their dogsled teams. This odd assortment of racers ranges in age from 31 to 69. Some live in Arizona's high-altitude snow country, Flagstaff or Pinetop, while others dwell in desert areas. Mushers make an amusing sight in the desert. They man three-wheeled carts made of 1-inch welded pipe and barrel past rocky cactus-studded terrain in the cool morning and evening hours (except in the hot summer months) to escape the heat. It can be a

jarring ride, as Tucson musher Don Uhler, who's had hip-replacement surgery, can attest. The engineer's solution? Shock absorbers, of course.

Like the famed Olympic Jamaican bobsled team depicted in the comedy hit *Cool Runnings*, not even a lack of snow can deter the Arizona Mountain Mushers from passionately pursuing their sport. Every year, they gather on the White Mountain Apache Reservation for some fun-loving competition.

Bundled like Alaskan Inuit native people in heavy parkas, wool caps and mittens, nearly a dozen mushers, both men and women, hustled their antsy Siberian and Alaskan huskies and malamutes from their trucks. Excitement hung in the air like the mushers' clouds of breath. As wired as preschoolers at Disneyland, the dogs yipped, yelped, whined and clanked their chains.

Feathery snowflakes dusted the mushers' wool caps as they unloaded lightweight dogsleds made of ash, birch or oak. Just the sight of the sleds heightened the frenzy for the wolflike dogs—thick-shouldered, barrel-chested malamutes; perky-eared, medium-sized Siberians; and their leaner, long-legged and more high-strung counterparts, Alaskan huskies. These churning dynamos were born—and bred—to



Weight a Minute
Weight-pulling dogs such as Frank Brown's Cirra must drag a sled loaded with as much as 30 to 40 times their body weight 25 feet in less than a minute.



Off We Go Wearing their game faces, Barb Mays and her three-dog team surge from the starting chute.



Old School The rising sun casts long shadows over handcrafted dogsleds. More modern aluminum sleds use advanced technology, such as spherical bearing joints and stainless-steel brakes.

run. "I know the minute I show my team the harness they'll just go ballistic," said Clark.

For Clark, the games weren't so much a race as an opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream. He'd grown up reading *Call of the Wild*, American novelist Jack London's vivid saga about Buck, a "super-dog" shanghaied into servitude in the Yukon during the Alaska Gold Rush. Years later, Gary Paulsen's *Winterdance* captured Clark's imagination. This man-against-nature adventure vividly portrays the blinding wind, snowstorms, moose attacks, frostbite and sleeplessness the author suffered during the Iditarod, a punishing 1,150-mile race through the Alaskan wilderness.

The history of the Iditarod, called the Last Great Race on Earth, features the tale of Balto, a Scandinavian immigrant's dog that gained international renown on the storied "serum race to Nome" in 1925. That winter the snowbound city was struck by a disastrous diphtheria epidemic, and Balto's owner, Leonhard Seppala, was selected to drive south from Nome by sled toward Nulato to obtain a life-saving supply of antitoxin. While Seppala hooked up his best lead dog, Togo, for most of the mission, it was Balto, mushed by Gunnar Kaasen, who braved the final miles through a storm to Nome and became the most celebrated lead dog of all—as a statue in his honor in New York City's Central Park can attest.

Little did Clark know that on this Saturday, January 29, his 31st birthday, he'd become a lead character in another dogsled drama. You could call it "Arizona's White Fang."

Clark faced four more-experienced racers in the three-dog race. His competitors included Frank Engelhardt, a musher with 18 years

behind the sled. A Flagstaff resident, Engelhardt and his wife, Cheri, an Arizona Mountain Mushers founder, compete throughout the Southwest. Another competitor, Reignie Farley from Sedona, had nabbed second place a year earlier. Clark also faced Barb Mays, a dedicated musher from Vernon who parents 19 dogs and hand-crafted her own sled. His other challenger, Bill Coan, a 69-year-old welding shop owner, jokes he's from "The Dogsled Capital of America." That's Phoenix, by the way.

Bundled-up onlookers, holding steaming cups of hot chocolate, waddled about, boots sinking deep in crunchy snow, until they claimed their spots on stadium seating near a red-and-white-striped carnival tent. Under the tent, longtime rodeo announcer Floyd Massey, a White Mountain Apache new to the sport of dogsledding, entertained the gathering crowd. "I work for the BIA. You know what that means, don't you?" he asked. "Bossing Indians Around."

At last, it was time for the competitors in the race to hustle their dogs into their harnesses. The yipping, yelping and barking hit a crescendo as the huskies leaped and lunged, almost mad with eagerness. The mushers then lined their teams up in the red starting chute, where the dogs nearly dragged their handlers off their feet.

Gut-wrenching anxiety gripped Clark as he looked down at his team and realized this was it. "I was breathing hard, and I kept reassuring Romeo, 'It's okay, Romeo, it's okay.'" It was really only Clark who needed the reassurance. Looking back at Clark with serene sky-blue eyes, Romeo was purely in his element.

At one-minute intervals, the starter yelled "Go!" and each dogsled team barreled out of the starting chute. The starter kept Clark apprised of the time . . . 30 seconds . . . 15 seconds . . . then he started the final countdown.

"Five . . . Four . . . Three . . . Two . . . One . . . Go!"

With Romeo in the lead followed by Konan and Timber, the dogs lunged, snapped loose from the restraining handlers and launched like rockets. "It was a surge of incredible power," Clark said. "They're so strong and so fast, you just don't want to let go."

The dogs blazed across the snow, headed up a steep hill and ran past a towering stand of ponderosa pines and into a wide-open field blanketed with sparkling snow. Here, the competition heated up. The dogs shifted into overdrive when they spotted teams ahead. After more than 3 miles, Clark crossed the finish line in 21.16 minutes, coming in fourth behind Engelhardt, who led the race with a 16.37-minute time, and Farley and Mays. Clark wasn't disappointed with his fourth-place finish. "At that point, I was as high as a kite," he said. "The dogs had done well, and I hadn't totally embarrassed myself."

But the race was far from over. The winner would be decided by combined race times on Saturday and Sunday.

On Sunday, the dogsled teams again shot out of the starting chutes in one-minute intervals: first Engelhardt, then Farley, Mays and Clark. As Clark's team stampeded across the snow, he shouted "Woo-hoo!" in pure delight. The words were magical. "The dogs surged," Clark said. "Suddenly I was running on more ounces of dog power."

"Woo-hoo! Woo-hoo!" Clark yelled, with the dogs running faster and faster, eventually passing Farley, who was second out of the starting chute. As Romeo, Konan and Timber triumphantly crossed the finish line solidly in second place, they looked like they were grin-

ning—even though they were only panting—as the crowd cheered. Clark's team's remarkable time that day—a full two minutes ahead of the third-place finisher—bumped him up to second place with Engelhardt holding on to first.

"I'm so proud of you!" Clark told Romeo, who wagged his tail excitedly before planting his heavy paws on Clark's chest and licking his face.

Mushers say there's no other man-and-animal relationship in the world more adventuresome, more emotional or perhaps more mystical than that of a racer and his sled dogs.

Clark and Romeo would agree.

Their bond made a lifelong dream come true and turned a hopeless pup into a champion. **AH**

Lori K. Baker's favorite experience while reporting this story was piloting a dogsled herself. That is, until she yelled "Hike!" The dogs realized she wasn't their owner, stopped dead in their tracks and refused to budge an inch. She lives in Mesa.

Kerrick James of Mesa says he had never seen so much strength and stamina in such small packages as the sled dogs that can pull hundreds of pounds uphill, in biting cold.

White Mountain Festivities

🔴 Sleigh Bells Ring

For a Currier and Ives moment, book an old-fashioned horse-drawn sleigh ride at Blue Sky Stables, just inside the turnoff to the ski area at Sunrise Park Resort. You can pick everything from a cozy ride for two, including the romantic full-moon evening ride, to a jaunt with up to 14 of your best buddies.

Information: (928) 735-7454.

🟡 Dogged Determination

It's the canine equivalent of a tractor pull. At one end stands a snow dog ripped with muscles like a Mr. Olympia. At the other end, a four-wheeled cart stacked with cinder blocks that can weigh more than 1,000 pounds. The dog's owner stands at the opposite end of a carpet runway and coaxes the dog to "Pull!" The dog that can pull the heaviest weight wins the Snow Dog Weight Pull Competition, to be held on February 4, on Hon-Dah Resort-Casino's festival grounds, located 3 miles south of Pinetop-Lakeside at the junction of State Routes 260 and 73.

Information: (800) 929-8744.

🔴 The Icemen Cometh

Chefs wielding chainsaws transform large blocks of ice into works of art during the Ice Sculpture Contest, to be held on February 4, at the Hon-Dah Resort-Casino's festival grounds. Last year's top three prize-winning contestants created a bellowing bull elk, tropical fish and the Eiffel Tower.

Information: (800) 929-8744.

🟡 It's Getting a Little Chili

In a Chili Cook-off on February 4, on festival grounds, local amateur chefs vie for first place with everything from beefy Texas-style recipes to leaner vegetarian versions. The real winners are the taste-testing festivalgoers, who try to coax secret ingredients from the proud chefs.

Information: (800) 929-8744.



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By Lori K. Baker Photograph by Kerrick James

ski-bound
duffer braves
'killer rabbit
mountain'Ski School Offers
Ego Conditioning,
Life Lessons

Brave-heart Writer

Author Lori K. Baker faces the daunting
precipice of "Killer Rabbit Mountain."

My clammy hands formed a death grip on the chairlift that slowly ratcheted me up to the glistening white lower flanks of Sunrise Peak, dubbed "Killer Rabbit Mountain" by my ski instructor, Bill Elliott. Cocky, experienced skiers—downplaying the perils I feared lay ahead—call it the "Bunny Hill."

"What am I doing here? I'm terrified of heights," whined my classmate, a 16-year-old girl who was one of five brave souls who dared to sign up for a Level 1 skiing class (a polite euphemism for never-evens, or nearly dangerously out of control) at Sunrise Park Resort in central eastern Arizona's White Mountains.

Sure, I would have liked to say something soothing. But I was almost too nervous to breathe—let alone speak—as the chairlift slowly inched upward—*chinka chinka chink*—like a spine-chilling roller coaster just seconds before it plunges down into a teeth-rattling drop.

For some odd, now totally forgotten reason, I'd decided to learn to ski as a forty-something working mother. I'd followed my 14-year-old son, Aaron, onto roller coasters, water slides and go-carts. Motherhood for me has featured plenty of high-speed conveyances—from skateboards to Rollerblades.

On one "fun" family outing to a local park, I decided to test-drive my brand-new Rollerblades. Before I mastered stopping, I began gaining rocket speed on the steep downward slope of the sidewalk. The only thing that stopped me—ouch!—was a metal fence. One arthroscopic knee surgery and two dozen grueling physical therapy sessions later, I had bagged my Walter Mittyish mogul-jumping dreams.

Then I watched a television program showing certified ski instructors teaching amputees, the learning disabled and the blind how to ski. What excuse did I have now?

So on a January weekend my family headed to Sunrise Park Resort, Arizona's largest ski resort with 65 ski runs that's owned and operated by the White Mountain Apache Tribe. With ski slopes running down three mountains—Sunrise Peak (10,700 feet), Apache Peak (11,300 feet) and Cyclone Circle (10,700 feet)—most of the resort is geared for beginner and intermediate skiers, with 12 more difficult, black-diamond runs.

I thought I'd come here to learn how to sidestep up the slope, parallel ski and make smooth, graceful turns. Instead, while earning frequent-faller miles, I learned an unforgettable lesson about life itself: how doubts and fears rob us of experiencing life at its best, full of joy and exhilaration. It's what Zen masters call "being in the Now."

But Buddha never said enlightenment came easily.

First I had to confront my fear. The book *Inner Skiing* by W. Timothy Gallwey and Robert Kriegel quotes Don Juan, a Yaqui sorcerer: Fear is "the first of man's natural enemies . . . a terrible enemy, treacherous and difficult to overcome. . . . If the man terrified in its presence runs away, his enemy will have put an end

to his quest . . . he will never learn." Man "must not run away, he must defy his fear . . . and take the next step in learning . . . and a moment will come when this enemy will retreat."

My first enemy was fear of the unfamiliar. My ski class included three Phoenix desert dwellers and a married couple from Florida. For us, walking on snow was as foreign as walking on the moon. Swaying and shuffling in heavy boots strapped to awkward long planks, we looked like we were auditioning for a Boris Karloff-type role in a grade B horror flick. No wonder Elliott called us all "flatlanders."

Our instructor wasted little time on theory, but focused on getting us used to the skis and to sidestepping up the slope. Then as we reeled down the slope like circus bears, we learned how to use turns to glide to a stop (well, that was the theory anyway). Once we could more or less stop, Elliott sent us to the chairlift for our nerve-racking ascent up Killer Rabbit Mountain.

That's when my timid imagination joined forces with the Dark Side. Looking down the gentle slope, I conjured sheer precipices, broken legs, long hospitalizations and unemployment. Atop the so-called Bunny Hill, my ski stance froze into petrified wood as I watched the students careen down the hill. "I love you," the Florida wife wistfully called to her husband like a last goodbye.

Suddenly, we were officially moving downhill on skis. You might even call it skiing. But before we could feel triumphant, pint-sized 6-year-old skiers went shooting past down the beginners' slope, weaving their merry way through us like a conga line. They were so balanced, so fearless, so fun-loving, so . . . annoying. As I stiffly snowplowed down the slope, I noted a couple of them on their second run past me.

The kids just seemed to know how to ski fearlessly, without silly notions about the right or wrong way of doing it. With a tinge of jealousy, I realized then I was trying desperately to follow the rules, judging myself on how close I was to the "right way." And it wasn't working.

Call it a beginning skier's epiphany: For one glorious run, I abandoned my usual mental struggle to do everything right without falling or failing. Suddenly, I was gliding effortlessly down the gentle slope, turn after turn. My mind felt as clear as the cold air tingling against my wind-chapped face. My heart felt as warm as the sun sparkling off crystals of freshly fallen snow. I merged into exhilarating joy of the moment.

Some call this ecstatic moment "skiing out of your mind."

By the time I reached the bottom, I actually felt like a skier. Smiling, I spotted my husband and son near the chairlift. "Ready for another run?" I asked. "Let's go!" ■■

**Suddenly,
we were
officially
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downhill
on skis.
You might
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skiing.**

ARIZONA'S SKI DESTINATIONS

● Sunrise Park Resort

Arizona's largest ski area, owned and operated by the White Mountain Apache Tribe, features 65 ski trails with 20 percent rated as advanced, 40 percent intermediate and 40 percent beginner. Sunrise also offers a snowboard park with half and quarter pipes, implanted wood and metal rails and jumps ranging from beginner to advanced.

Located in the heart of the White Mountains, the resort is about 215 miles northeast of Phoenix.

Directions: From Phoenix, take State Route 87 north to Payson. From Payson, take State Route 260 east following the Mogollon Rim to Pinetop-Lakeside and McNary and then to State Route 273. Turn right onto State 273 and follow the signs to the resort.

Information: (928) 735-7669; www.sunriseskipark.com.

○ Arizona Snowbowl

Located in the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff, the ski resort's chairlift offers views of the Grand Canyon's North Rim. Its 32 scenic alpine trails, geared for both skiers and snowboarders, are rated beginner through advanced. Newbies can sharpen their skills on more than 50 acres in the Hart Prairie area.

Directions: From Flagstaff, drive northwest on U.S. Route 180 to Snowbowl Road. Turn right and continue 7 miles to the resort.

Information: (928) 779-1951; www.arizonasnowbowl.com.

● Mount Lemmon Ski Valley

This southernmost ski area in the United States perches on 9,157-foot Mount Lemmon near Tucson, with 18 runs on 70 skiable acres plus ski equipment rentals, instruction and a

restaurant. When there is enough snow, Mount Lemmon sets up a terrain park for snowboarders.

Directions: From Tucson, take the Catalina Highway 30 miles to the Ski Valley turnoff.

Information: (520) 576-1400.

○ Elk Ridge Ski and Outdoor Recreation Area

Elk Ridge features 30 skiable acres for novices and families on 9,256-foot Bill Williams Mountain. It offers a 2,000-foot lift, nearby cross-country trails and tubing rentals.

Directions: From Flagstaff, drive west on Interstate 40 about 30 miles to Williams. Turn south on 4th Street 1.5 miles from town. At the ski sign, turn right and drive 1.5 miles.

Information: (928) 234-6587 or toll-free (877) 635-9434; www.elkridgeski.com.

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MEMORIES OF AMERICA'S FIRST PUBLIC ENEMY NO. 1 MAKE ONE EXCITING DAY

DILLINGER DAYS

JANUARY 21, 2006
TUCSON, ARIZONA

BY JANET WEBB FARNSWORTH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY EDWARD McCAIN

Smoke billows from the upstairs windows of Hotel Congress in downtown Tucson as frantic firemen rescue trapped guests. No fear. No fire. It's just Action Unlimited Entertainment's version of the "Tucson Incident" — a.k.a. the 1934 capture of the Dillinger Gang. Although Tucson police managed the arrests without firing a shot, the actors throw in a bank robbery complete with shotgun blasts and a police chase for excitement. The crowd loves it.

Tucson's Dillinger Days marks the capture of America's first Public Enemy No. One—the notorious gangster, bank robber and prison escapee. John Dillinger and his gang robbed banks and evaded the law throughout the Midwest until apprehended by what they called Tucson's "hick town cops."

Tucson, then covering 7 square miles, employed only 35 policemen when Dillinger and his infamous gang were finally captured

through a series of chance events. A true media circus, Dillinger's arrest focused the spotlight on Tucson and embarrassed J. Edgar Hoover's vaunted Bureau of Investigation, as it was known then.

Sixty-one years later, a January temperature of 74 degrees helps draw a crowd to enjoy Dillinger Days. Congress Street is blocked off so kids doing trick-roping, a bluegrass band and roaming puppeteers can mingle with the crowd. Experts give lectures on subjects from the sequence of the Tucson Incident to Humphrey Bogart's movie portrayal of Dillinger. Some of the gang's guns are displayed, including the well-guarded Thompson submachine gun, worth more than \$1 million. Walking tours help visitors visualize the times, and the Hotel Congress celebrates with music and menu items like Killer Apple Pie and Hit Man Omelette. Cars from the 1930s era line the street.

The onlookers enter into the spirit. Jim Beebe of Tucson, dressed to kill in

a fancy suit and waving a fake machine gun, shows off his two-toned brown 1931 Model A Ford Town Sedan. A restored yellow taxi shines among the more subtly colored cars. Molls in flapper dresses and long necklaces hang on to the arms of gangster-looking characters. Even 8-year-old Marten Kooi sports a gray felt hat and a fake mustache.

The Dillinger Gang, hiding from their recent Chicago bank robbery, might have enjoyed Tucson weather longer if a grease fire hadn't started in the basement of the Hotel Congress. Flames roared up the elevator shaft, engulfing the third floor. Hotel residents quickly evacuated, but gang members delayed trying to collect their bags. With the hall blocked by fire and smoke, they retreated to the window where the Tucson Fire Department rescued them with an aerial ladder. As soon as he was rescued, gang member Charles Mackley tipped firemen William Benedict and Kenneth Pender \$12 to climb back up

and retrieve his bags. That baggage would be the downfall of the Dillinger Gang.

Today, the actual 1928 LaFrance fire truck that rescued the gangsters is on display. When James Timney of Flagstaff looked at an old photograph of the Hotel Congress fire, he realized the dilapidated fire truck in his back yard was the one in the photo. He donated the truck to the City of Tucson, which is now trying to raise funds to restore it.

After the 1934 blaze, firemen Benedict and Pender were thumbing through a copy of *True Detective* magazine and noticed two of the "wanted men" were the same ones eager to have their luggage rescued. Suspecting they had some big-time criminals there, stakeouts were set. Their work paid off. Charles Mackley was captured at Grabe Electric Co. where he was looking for a radio that monitored police calls. The local lady with him was released and cautioned to "pick her friends more carefully."

Next to be drawn into the police net



EXTRA DRAMA

Members of Action Unlimited Entertainment's troupe, above, present their not-entirely-accurate version of the Dillinger gang's antics in front of the Hotel Congress.



RUNNING-BOARD SHOOT-OUT

Shooting it out with police, John Dillinger—played by actor Jonathan Mincks, above—pulls off a 1934 bank heist and escapes to the Hotel Congress during Tucson's Dillinger Days.



JUST KIDDING

While his father listens to a lecture on merchandising the Dillinger Gang, 8-year-old Marten Kooi, left, looks quite Dillingeresque.

were Russell "Art" Clark and his girlfriend Opal Long, arrested at a rented house at 327 N. Second Ave. Clark and Long put up a fight until a knock on the head convinced Clark to cooperate.

Gang member Harry Pierpont and his girlfriend Mary Kinder actually drove to the police station, not knowing they were turning themselves in. The police had spotted Pierpont's car leaving a motor court, and, thinking fast, stopped him. Ad-libbing, they politely explained that since he had out-of-state license plates he must stop by the police station and pick up a "visitor sticker." Pierpont agreed and one of the policemen rode with him to show him the way, pretending not to notice the machine guns under the back seat. Inside the police station, Pierpont realized he'd been duped when he spotted some of the vests and guns taken from other gang members. He reached for his gun, but policemen stopped him.

That left John Dillinger, the flamboyant

gang leader, and his girlfriend Evelyn "Billie" Frechette. Again police staked out the house on Second Avenue and surprised Dillinger as he arrived at the house. Dumbfounded that the hick town cops had caught him, he surrendered.

John Dillinger and his gang resided in Tucson for only 10 days from the time they arrived until they were extradited to Indiana, but Tucson still celebrates the capture with Dillinger Days. ■

Janet Farnsworth of Snowflake found it so easy to get into the '30s atmosphere that she wished she owned a flapper dress. She also wanted to take home one of the shiny Model A Fords.

Edward McCain of Tucson enjoyed learning about the notorious Dillinger Gang's fateful visit to the Old Pueblo and their eventual capture by the Tucson Police Department.

LOCATION: Tucson.
DATE: January 21.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Dillinger Days activities take place at various locations in downtown Tucson. Hotel Congress, (520) 622-8848; www.hotelcongress.com.

DILLINGER PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF STAN BENJAMIN

THE ZEN GARDEN OF FOUR DESERTS

SIGHS AND BLEEDS
AND BLOOMS

North America's four deserts meet, merge and illuminate

By CHARLES BOWDEN Photographs by JACK DYKINGA

Jack Dykinga: "After scanning weather forecasts for weeks, I identified a monsoon storm heading for the Grand Wash Cliffs. In the photograph I visualized, I imagined a colorful bank of storm clouds roiling behind the strangely shaped Joshua trees below the cliffs.

"Racing almost the entire length of the state from my Tucson home, I tracked the gathering clouds. As I neared Kingman, the setting sun began to color the sky. Turning east, I found my location along the road to Peach Springs. Strapping on my backpack, I raced from my truck as powerful winds kicked up clouds of dust. It looked like my many days of planning and miles of driving would result in just a scant few minutes of ephemeral light. I exposed only a few sheets of film before the sun vanished behind the lowering clouds and a wall of dust." *Arca-Swiss F-line 4x5 Field Camera, 180 mm Schneider APO Symmar lens, Fujichrome Velvia 50 film, f32 at three seconds.*

(The same camera and film were used for all photographs in this portfolio.)

storm light

Grand Wash Cliffs and Joshua trees during a summer storm, Mohave Desert. ■ To order a print of this photograph, see page 1.



like no place
else on earth

[left to right] Saguaro cacti, Sonoran Desert; brittlebush near Diamond Creek, Mohave Desert; Lower Antelope Canyon, Colorado Plateau, Great Basin Desert; morning glory and fetid-marigold, Dragoon Mountains, Chihuahuan Desert.

THE SUN HUNTS THROUGH

GAPS

in the clouds as wind whips through the creosote, the tiny leaves whooshing like some mutant forest before the approaching storm. Nearby, the coarse woven fibers of a dead yucca form a small log on the earth. Grass grows just outside the creosote colony, but here the ground seems barren except for the small shrubs with waxy leaves of an almost obscene green, leaves that when crushed spike the nose with memories of turpentine. The gray smooth limbs host bands of black and hold the leaf clusters like parasols oriented toward the sun. Creosote is the plant almost no one photographs, save by accident, the life-form humans march through on their way to something else.

Largely inedible, dominant through a kind of toxic effect on the soil that inhibits the seeds of other plants from germinating, creosote lives in regal splendor. I once walked a creosote flat that was 33 miles long and the calm of that march still floats within me. These huge colonies of creosote create the Zen gardens of the Southwest, the place where everything falls away and nothing remains but the peace we cannot name without strong drink or prayer. Some claim it is the oldest life form on Earth (one clonal colony in the desert of Southern California seems to be 11,000 years old). I am a fool for this creosote.

I sit on the lip of a bajada just inside the eastern line of Arizona and stare at the Chiricahua Mountains and a stone formation called Cochise Head after the dead leader of the Apaches. I'm certain he

never heard this designation in his lifetime and would not care for it now. As the great man of his nation, he lies in an anonymous grave—a decision made by his people lest he ever be disturbed. I sip coffee on what some think is the western flank of the Chihuahuan Desert, a relatively cold arid zone that sweeps behind me across New Mexico and into Texas and plunges deep into Mexico. Here's the rub: Arizona is the only place in the union that hosts the four major deserts of North America.

These human-conceived units all have their quirks. In winter, the Chihuahuan Desert is cold, characterized by landlocked basins, and lacks large columnar cactus. It seems a blur at first to the eye and then becomes something bewitching, an endless sweep of plants, soil, mountains and plains. The Sonoran Desert is warmer, more lush to the eye and anchored in our dreams by the saguaro, the giant barbed plant of the region. The Mohave Desert is a transitional desert, cooler and festooned with Joshua trees and wind. Finally, the Great Basin Desert caresses the eye and nose with sagebrush. These deserts thrive within the two geological enormities: the basin and range formation of mountains and valleys and the vast canyons and flats of the Colorado Plateau, which in Arizona hosts the giant hole called the Grand Canyon. Hole may sound a little plain but anyone who descends into the Canyon discovers the everyday world vanishes and the sky becomes something brilliant as if seen from the bottom of a well.

Three things should be noted about the curious fact that the four major deserts of North America meet only in one state: It may not be true (some botanists insist eastern Arizona hosts an

intermediate savannah that is not really the Chihuahuan Desert). It doesn't really matter to me—regardless of the number of deserts in Arizona, I love them all.

So I wander almost aimlessly and visit the places of my heart and they are not dry and they are not barren and, whatever their names, they are essential.

They live beneath our names and do not believe a word we say. Arizona's four deserts will not answer to the names we paste on them. Nor will they accept our word "desert." Nothing in these huge expanses of low rainfall senses it is short of water. What we see as bones the deserts feel as flesh. The earth is coated with life that grabs solar energy and has a kind of consciousness we cannot grasp as it struggles to eat the fury of the rays cascading down from space. We chop up this symphony of forms, assign seating at some grand banquet table in our minds. But when you walk into the mass of green, it is always the same whether swamp or desert—it is life humming a song we cannot quite sing and it always has just what it needs, whether in a bog or a burning flat of creosote.

So names are assigned (Chihuahuan, Sonoran, Mohave, Great Basin), definitions made, lines drawn. Beneath this apparent order, the land sighs and bleeds, blooms and goes to seed. And persists. The deserts are never the lack of something, never the end of something. The deserts are always beginning, the place where a voice comes from a burning bush, a book comes to a wanderer in the sands and finally the paintings are as bold as the tubes of oil paint.





1 sonoran desert

I HAVE LIVED IN THE SONORAN DESERT

almost all of my life and take it for granted. I assume a desert is rife with trees (paloverde, mesquite, ironwood). I assume rivers are almost always dry and then in summer briefly become raging torrents. And I never question that when I scan the dawn I will see the towers of saguaros. The Sonoran Desert, most of which exists below the border in Mexico, looks too lush to be a desert and yet is too dry to be anything else. And because of this rich botany, it has become the template for all deserts, with the saguaros popping up in advertisements as symbols for parts of the West far from this desert.

spiky giant
Cottontop cactus,
Cabeza-Prieta National
Wildlife Refuge, Tinajas Altas
Mountains, Sonoran Desert.
■ To order a print of this
photograph, see page 1.

Dykinga: "In all my travels in the Southwestern deserts, I have never seen a cottontop cactus as big as this one. Nearly 8 feet in diameter and 4 feet high, this cactus is a monster. I spent several days camped nearby and often photographed its reddish spines in dawn's early light." 80 mm Schneider Super-Symmar lens, slight warming filter, f45 at eight seconds.



timeless
image

Sunset over Silverbell Mountains, Saguaro cacti,
Saguaro National Park, Sonoran Desert.

■ To order a print of this photograph, see page 1.

Dykinga: "I've photographed a lot of sunsets, but this one may be the best I've ever seen." *110 mm Schneider Super-Symmar, no filtration, f32 at three seconds.*

2 mohave desert

I MOVE WEST TOWARD

YUMA, then north to the Bill Williams River, where saguaros stare down from the hillsides on a stream populated by beavers. A few miles north, Joshua trees begin and the Mohave fingers into Arizona. It is that simple and that false, these lines. Thirty or 40 miles to the east, north of Wikieup, a stand of saguaros seems to define the Sonoran Desert—woven into the Mohave Desert. The Mohave is a desert of cold winters and of wind, a vista where geology is barely cloaked by plants. The saguaros of the Sonoran Desert cannot endure a temperature of 32 degrees for more than 36 consecutive hours and so their presence this far north announces a dab of warmth in the kingdom of another desert.

Dykinga: "After seeing an explosion of beargrass flower heads on a return trip from California, I vowed to return to photograph them. After a quick stop at home in Tucson, I drove the 200 miles back in the evening, hoping that the normally tranquil conditions at dawn would produce calm conditions for photography the next morning. Thankfully, as planned, the gusty winds died down, leaving me free to photograph the delicate beargrass flowers with the first light of dawn. However, a 5-foot rattlesnake at my feet let me know he had found the location first!" 80 mm Schneider Super-Symmar lens, f32 at four seconds.

desert tracery Flowering beargrass in a granite boulder field near the Santa Maria Drainage, Mohave Desert. ■ To order a print of this photograph, see page 1.



seasonal flourish

Joshua tree in blossom, Joshua Forest Parkway, Mohave Desert.

■ To order a print of this photograph, see page 1.



3

great basin desert

I AM NORTH OF THE GRAND CANYON in the lost section of the state called the Arizona Strip, a high cold desert of sagebrush—the leaves crushed between my fingers flood my senses. This portion of the state lives in isolation, thanks to the Canyon barrier of the Colorado River. It might as well be some American Tibet. Behind me loom the mountains and forests that embrace this section of the North Rim, but before me is a flat plain of the Great Basin Desert. There is one thing to always remember about this desert: You are not driving to a viewpoint, you are brushing against some sense of infinity. Park the car, get out, walk 200 yards, sit still for 10 minutes, think of nothing and then everything will begin to whisper in your ears. A photograph will look the same no matter which direction you point the camera.

Here is the choice: You can fidget and feel bored to death, or you can relax and fall into a state of grace.

mirror or window?

Transient pools of rainwater in sandstone formations, Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Great Basin Desert.

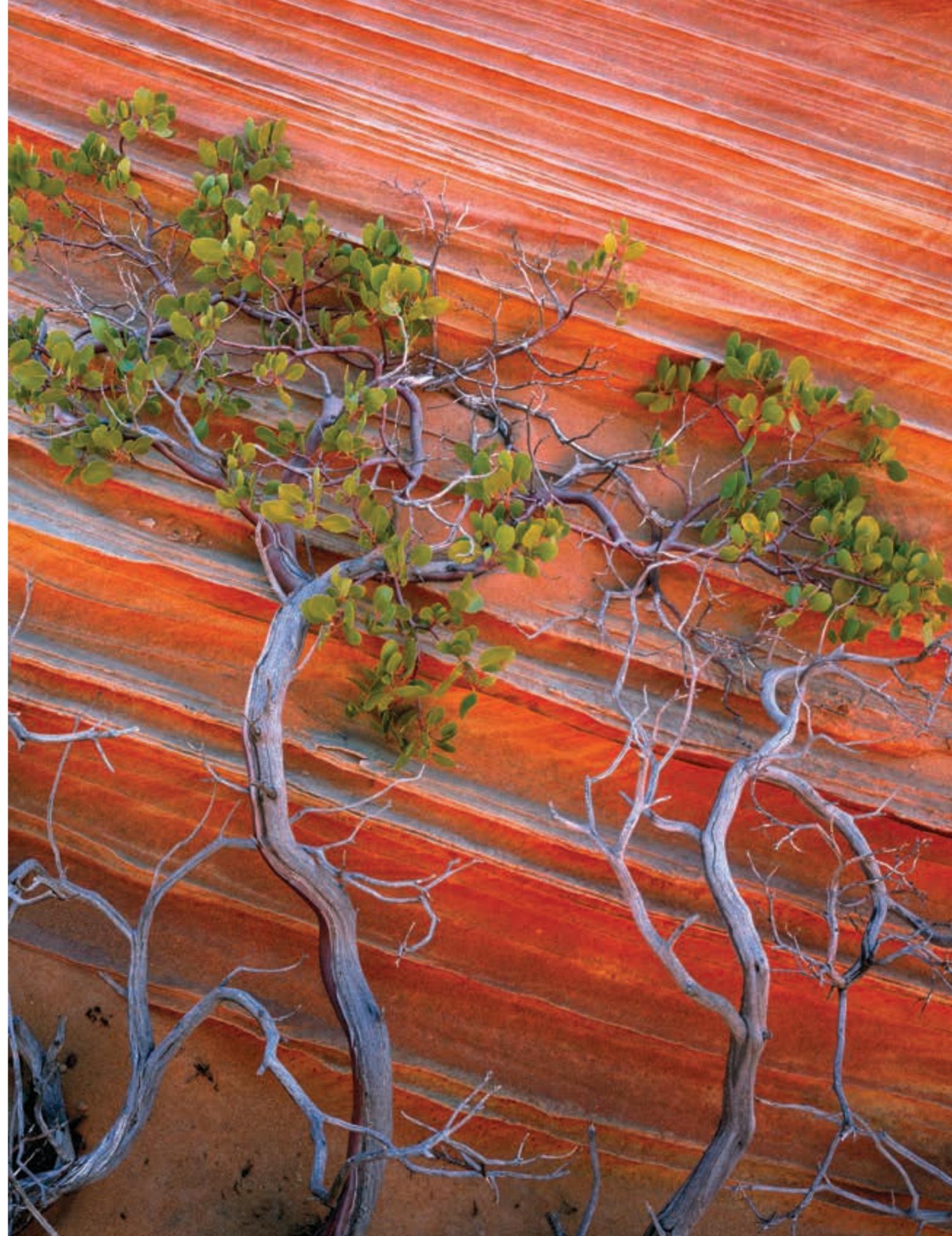
■ To order a print of this photograph, see page 1.

frozen in time

Pointleaf manzanitas and banded petrified dune sands, Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, Great Basin Desert.

Dykinga: "Hiking the slickrock country of northern Arizona is my way of recharging my batteries. Each time I go, I am amazed to find that serendipity has intervened to hand me a visual gift. Trudging through a narrow defile, a beautifully designed composition of bluish manzanita and warm striated sandstone leaps forward to be photographed.

This is why I truly love my profession."
110 mm Schneider Super-Symmar lens, f32.5
at 10 seconds.



4 chihuahuan desert

I MOVE TO THE EAST.

INTO NAVAJO LANDS, and cut south along the flank of the White Mountains, spill off the Mogollon Rim, and reach the Gila River where I began, in that eastern slab of Arizona that may or may not be true Chihuahuan Desert, a debate best left to scientists. For the rest of us, it looks remarkably like the real thing.

The rains have come, a beast rolling out of Mexico and this storm blankets everything. I've been rolling under a gray sky across the Colorado Plateau, that mass of eroding sedimentary rock that defines Hollywood Westerns in Monument Valley. Today, all the deserts drink as the freak storm washes across the Southwest. The air goes raw, the dust is flattened and scent washes my body. Up in the mountains above the desert floor, snow is falling. Here in the desert rain slathers the earth and the arroyos rumble with torrents.

I stop at a ranch. The arroyos are coming up and I hear the rumble as a flash flood careens down a drainage just behind the ranch house. This is the first heavy rain of summer. At dusk as we sit on the porch, a clatter of voices suddenly comes out of the earth on all sides. The Colorado River toad (*Bufo alvarius*), an amphibian the size of a grapefruit, emerges from almost a year of sleep in the dry ground. The croaks ripping the desert night are mating calls. The toads have a few short weeks to meet, mate and then return to their slumbers. They are noted for secreting a poison through their skin, the bane of dogs ignorant of the region.

But the toads' range also covers three of Arizona's four deserts—depending on whose map of the deserts one prefers. Their voices now have become a din, a cry for life and sex and the future that bangs against the heavy clouds, blanketing the night with rain. For a moment I am in all the deserts of the world, that kind of ground we sometimes call wastelands and then in rare moments of lucidity recognize as the very tissue of life itself.

A while back, I read a letter written a century ago by the American poet Wallace Stevens:

I thought, on the train, how utterly we have forsaken the Earth, in the sense of excluding it from our thoughts. There are but few who consider its physical hugeness, its rough enormity. It is still a disparate monstrosity, full of solitudes & barrens & wilds. It still dwarfs & terrifies & crushes. The rivers still roar, the mountains still crash, the winds still shatter. Man is an affair of cities. His gardens & orchards & fields are mere scrapings. Somehow, however, he has managed to shut out the face of the giant from his windows. But the giant is there, nevertheless.

As the toads shout life, I have left that train.

There are two phases to any journey into Arizona's four deserts. First, you will confront some sense of emptiness, a place that seems shorn of what you consider life. Then, you will suddenly feel an unexpected sensation. You will know in your bones you have come home.

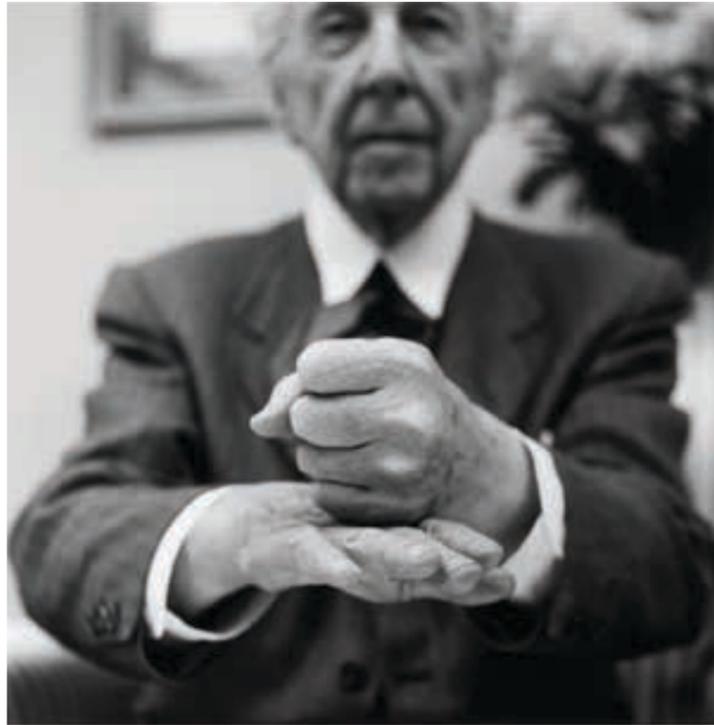
The toads sing into the night and I know where I am. ■■■

Charles Bowden lives in Tucson, and has never successfully left the Sonoran Desert. He's stopped trying. His latest book, A Shadow in the City, was published in July by Harcourt.

A confirmed desert rat for 30 years, Jack Dykinga of Tucson has found paradise where all four North American deserts bump into each other. His latest book, Jack Dykinga's ARIZONA, was published in 2004.

power of place
Yuccas, Cochise Stronghold,
Dragoon Mountains,
Chihuahuan Desert.
■ To order a print of this
photograph, see page 1.
110 mm Super-Symmar
lens, 812 warming filter,
f45 at six seconds.





THE ACOLYTE OF FAME

Photographer Pedro Guerrero Documented the Quirks of Frank Lloyd Wright and Other 'Gods and Goddesses'

"I HAVE A GLORIOUS LIFE," says 88-year-old Mesa native Pedro E. Guerrero, erstwhile friend and photographer of architect Frank Lloyd Wright and two famed artists, Alexander Calder and Louise Nevelson. His "gods and goddesses," as he called these subjects, would impact his life immeasurably, but there was nothing in Guerrero's background that could have predicted relationships with some of the leading visionaries of his century.

"I never could have imagined that these great people would be my friends," he says today, decades later. "And that I would have drinks in the Oak Bar with Frank Lloyd Wright or play pool with Alexander Calder in Sache. Or that I would go down to Little Italy and have a cappuccino with Louise Nevelson."

It was a fluke that Guerrero even met Wright, the mentor who paved the way for his illustrious career. It was a stroke of luck also that he enjoyed a partnership with Wright, rather than the indentured servitude felt by many who apprenticed for the great architect. Guerrero was no sycophant, and his success owes as much to his independent nature as to his talent.

It's a subject Guerrero has pondered during the last several decades. In addition to participating in myriad Wright-inspired events, he's written a book on the master titled *Picturing Wright: An Album from Frank Lloyd Wright's Photographer*, Pomgranate Artbooks, 1994.

THE GLORY OF GUERRERO'S ARTISTIC LIFE began in earnest in 1939, when he first met Wright, the most famous American architect of the 20th century. With an ego to match his towering talent, Wright's insistence on fitting buildings to their environment, use of

HANDS OF A MASTER Pedro Guerrero's low camera angle confers an almost reverential quality to this series of photographs of Frank Lloyd Wright's hands as he demonstrates the differences between conventional building construction and his more organic methods. Although something of a showman, Wright would often stiffen up before the camera. When photographed for this series of images, the great architect believed only his hands were being shown. Guerrero's gentle ruse and dramatic composition helped produce photographs of a relaxed and open Wright, at ease with the camera and his friend Pedro Guerrero.

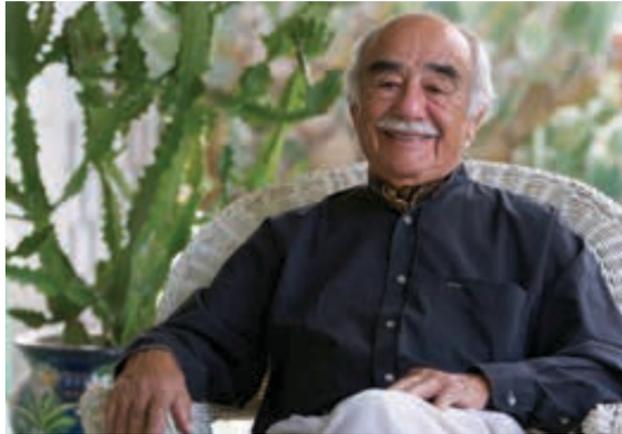
BY LEIGH FLAYTON

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PEDRO GUERRERO

GUIDED BY TALENT Guerrero, below, reflects upon an extraordinary life in photography from the veranda of his territorial adobe home in Florence. RICHARD MAACK

SIMPLY STATED Wright wanted this portrait, right, made at the original Taliesin in Spring Green, Wisconsin, to say, "I am an architect—what'll you have?"

AN AMERICAN ICON Guerrero's favorite portrait of the architect, below right, doesn't even show his face. Wright is immediately identifiable by his porkpie hat, stiff white collar and cane.



natural materials and psychologically complex spaces transformed architectural forms and created a distinctive and original American style. Wright drew an almost cultlike following of young architects and artists to his alternative lifestyle compounds in Arizona and Wisconsin.

Guerrero was 22 and fresh out of art school when his father, who had painted a sign for Wright, told him to go out to Taliesin West in present-day Scottsdale and ask Wright for a job. It was during the Depression, and Guerrero had no prospects or money, but the budding photographer had something else in mind.

"I was going to try to do a Matthew Brady kind of thing," he recalls. "I was going to get a darkroom, mount it on a truck and take photographs of people in Pine and Payson and places like that. Those were wonderful towns in those days. They were isolated and weren't on the way to someplace."

But Guerrero, a dutiful son, heeded his father's advice, which resulted in his first photography job. It's something that continues to amaze Guerrero nearly 70 years later.

"I wonder what would have happened to me if I had driven out the day before or the day after. It might not have happened," he says. "I drove into the desert; there was nothing there. Then I saw Taliesin West in the distance, and I aimed at it. I worked my way up there and changed my life forever."

The memory of his first encounter with Wright still makes Guerrero laugh. "What I realized only later was why he hired me so quickly. My samples didn't show any skill with architecture—I had two or three nudes. If I had known the kind of a guy he was, I might not have shown him any samples. I might not even have shown up." Guerrero still owns the nudes he showed Wright in 1939. They hang in his current home in Florence about 75 miles from Taliesin West.

Wright, however, hired him on the spot. Guerrero suspects Wright just wanted someone who could operate a camera—it was as simple as that.



"He needed a photographer," Guerrero says, "and I think he could see that I could handle the camera. I knew enough about photography. He just kicked the door open and said do whatever you want."

Guerrero did much of what he wanted during the next 20 years. "Mr. Wright was very generous. After a month or so, he saw something of mine he liked, and he said I ought to stay for tea." Guerrero usually left before 4, but he stayed and listened as Wright told the Taliesin West fellowship of students that Guerrero had talent. "I became convinced I was a good photographer when Wright liked my work. As I got to know him better, I realized this guy was a giant and that I was very lucky."

Guerrero was hired by Wright to document the creation of Taliesin West, and he was told the pay wasn't much, but he could eat and live there. But there really was no salary. When the fellowship started making plans to go to Wisconsin in spring 1940, Guerrero asked to become a member of the fellowship. Wright agreed to waive the tuition, and said they would simply exchange services—Guerrero's photography for the tuition.

Guerrero left the fellowship in May 1941 to enlist in the military during World War II. After the war, he agreed to become Wright's on-call photographer.

'You would think that I told God to shine a light on him. I didn't; it just happened to be there . . . Mr. Wright was writing the music and I was playing the score.'

Guerrero says it was easy to photograph Wright. "You would think that I told God to shine a light on him. I didn't; it just happened to be there . . . Mr. Wright was writing the music and I was playing the score."

The friendship flowered. "I wasn't there adoring him. I would never compete with him as an architect the way the students would. I was no threat. . . . I wasn't a bowing and scraping sycophant."

Still, Wright wanted Guerrero to adhere to his wishes, and Guerrero recalls the time Wright insisted the photographer use an antiquated camera lacking even a shutter. Guerrero used it to please Wright,

but he went back to his own equipment after he figured out how to get out of trouble if Wright discovered his ruse.

"When someone asked him what kind of pencils he used, Wright said, 'It isn't the pencil, it's the man,'" Guerrero recalls. "So when he saw me using my camera and he asked why I wasn't using his camera, I said, 'Because it isn't the camera, Mr. Wright. It's the man.' He never bothered me again."

When Guerrero left Taliesin West to join the Army, the pacifist Wright disapproved. Guerrero recalls apologizing and feeling as though he was running away from home, but his own father had told him to stand up for his country. Ever dutiful, Guerrero did as he was told and fought in Italy. Fortunately, his decision to serve did not affect his relationship with Wright.

After the war, Guerrero moved to New York City. He was soon photographing for *House & Garden*, *Harper's Bazaar* and a spate of women's and shelter magazines. In 1951, he moved his growing family to New Canaan, Connecticut, although he still flew off at a moment's notice to work with Wright. Guerrero regrets, however, "dropping the ball" on the Guggenheim Museum, a Wright masterpiece.

Before construction began, Guerrero showed up every day at an exhibition Wright presented.

"I didn't care if anyone needed me anywhere else," he recalls. "I was there to greet Mr. Wright and get him

VIEWS TO CHALLENGE THE EYE

Guerrero's muscular composition and angular approach reveals the rough-hewn visual complexity of a small corner of Taliesin West.

off his cab—usually I had to pay for it—but when it came time to build, I never went up there. I have no idea why." Equally strange, Wright never asked Guerrero to document the job. "He would call me to go to Florida, or Dallas to photograph a building, or to have breakfast with him in New York, but he never said, 'I don't see you at the building.'"

Guerrero recalls going out in public with Wright. "He had this great presence. It wasn't the cane, the cape and the hat that made Frank Lloyd Wright. It was Frank Lloyd Wright that made the cane, the cape and the hat. He glided. He was like Superman. He knew exactly what kind of presence he projected, and he went for it 100 percent. He knew exactly who he was, what he was and what he could do."

In 1959, Wright died, just months after completing the Guggenheim. Guerrero still doesn't know why he never photographed the famed museum. "I've been trying to figure it out ever since," he says.

In the decades following Wright's death, Guerrero continued working, befriending and photographing Marcel Breuer, Philip Johnson, Edward Durell Stone and other modern architects and designers. Over the years, he also forged relationships with Calder and Nevelson, who would become prized subjects and friends. After Nevelson died in 1988, however, Guerrero hung up his camera.

"I got tired of having my gods and goddesses die on me," he says. "Wright died and I felt myself floating in space. I thought of ending my career . . . then I ran into Calder and that spurred it on again. And then Calder died, and there I was. When Louise died, I decided I wasn't going to do another one, and I didn't try."

Guerrero returned to photography in the mid-1990s, occasionally shooting for magazines or Wright homeowners.

"I've been taken out of retirement a few times," he says. "I try to make it as hard as possible for people to get me back to work, but sometimes I let them."

Guerrero realizes he always had something unusual in common with his unlikely architect friend.

"He didn't think he was ever going to die," Guerrero says. "I'm sure of that. And I didn't think he would either." ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: For information on visiting Taliesin West, see story on page 42.

Leigh Flayton of Phoenix recently wrote about Taliesin West for The New York Times.



Visiting Taliesin

BY RANDY SUMMERLIN

TALIESIN WEST, FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S DESERT "CAMP" and winter home in north Scottsdale, was a remote and unlikely backdrop in 1939 for Pedro Guerrero's fortuitous introduction to the style-setting architect.

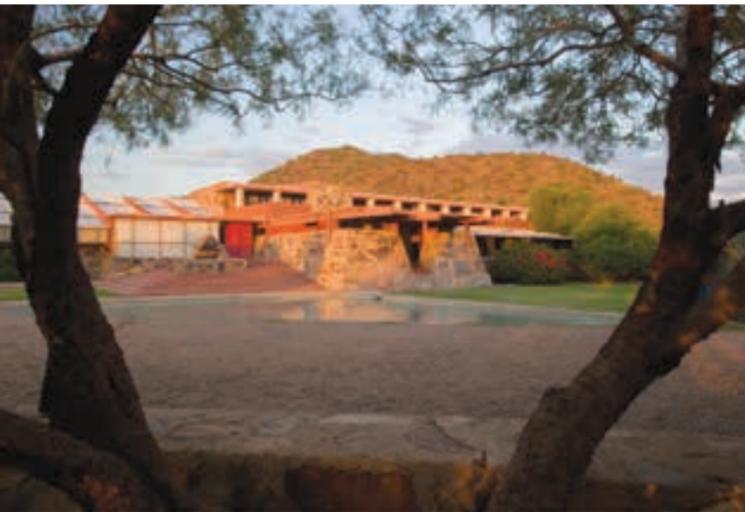
Wright and his apprentices were just two years into the Taliesin West-building project, collecting rocks and sand for construction of what the American Institute of Architects later selected as a notable example of the master designer's contributions to architecture.

The 600-acre complex today includes lecture halls and performance theaters; an architectural studio; residential spaces where up to 70 people live, work and study; bathrooms that were innovative for the time; and a bookstore noted for its extensive selection of books and prints about Wright.

Visitors to Taliesin—which means "shining brow" in

REST LIGHTLY UPON THE LAND

Framed by the spreading limbs of a mesquite tree, Taliesin West, below, glows in the last warm rays of the setting sun.



when you go **LOCATION:** 12621 N. Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd., Scottsdale, about 27 miles northeast of downtown Phoenix.
GETTING THERE: From downtown Phoenix, drive east on Interstate 10 and merge onto State Route 202. Merge again onto State Route 101 and drive north about 9.5 miles to Shea Boulevard. Exit and turn right onto Shea Boulevard and drive about 3 miles to Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard. Turn left (north) and after about a mile watch for signs at the intersection with East Cactus Road directing visitors to the right (northeast) and a short driveway to Taliesin West.
HOURS, DATES: September 1 through June 30, daily, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.; July 1 through August 31, Thursdays to Mondays, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.; closed Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.
FEES: Various tours range from \$16 to \$45. Call (480) 860-8810 for recorded information.
WEATHER: Some tours may be canceled during heavy rain.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: (480) 860-2700; www.franklloydwright.org.

online

Learn more about Frank Lloyd Wright and Taliesin West at arizonahighways.com (Click on "Winter Recreation Guide")

Welsh—will discover a community of students and architects amid thick, slanting walls of rocks bound with concrete, surprisingly low doorways that dictate a careful duck, rooftops that resemble the original canvas ones, and inviting massive fireplaces that helped warm the structures, which had no modern heating or cooling until later years.

Wright's sleeping quarters, recently restored and now included on some of the public tours, demonstrate the austere-but-artistic angular nature of the buildings and furniture, much of which also was designed by the visionary trend-setter.

Tour Taliesin West's oddly shaped, low-ceilinged rooms and intriguingly placed passages and walkways and you see why Pedro Guerrero fell so happily into his association with the place and its creator—and launched his dynamic photography career. **AH**

Randy Summerlin is Arizona Highways' managing editor.



AN AIRY ENCLAVE Spacious and well-lit by natural light, the living room, top, still functions as a casual gathering place for Taliesin West's community of architects.

SPARTAN ELEGANCE Newly opened for public tours, Wright's private quarters, above, reflect the style and simplicity of the artist's vision.
 ALL BY RICHARD MAACK

The Miracle of Recess: Eagles, Monsters and the Cavalry to the Rescue

WHEN I WAS IN THE THIRD and fourth grades in Pearce, on the eastern flanks of the Dragoon Mountains of southeastern Arizona, school was the most boring thing I had ever experienced. In fact, all the years since haven't produced anything as dull as those two long, miserable years. I guess I did about as well as the rest of the inmates of Pearce Grammar School, but it wasn't any fun.

Not even recess. Oh, once in a while something good would happen—like the day an eagle with an injured wing made a forced landing just west of the schoolhouse. The old bird reared back and flapped his good wing and hissed at us, but he couldn't do much more than that. We were ringed around him seeing who dared get the closest when our ever-vigilant teacher rushed out and herded us back inside lest someone should be injured by the angry bird.

Then one noon hour, Henry Gibbons rode up on his big, black horse. Henry was an old cowpuncher, one of a vanishing breed who lived at the eastern edge of Kansas Settlement. What made this visit memorable was the live Gila monster lashed to the back of his saddle.

Henry gingerly removed the big lizard from the saddle and exhibited him to a most appreciative audience. He had a cord around the angry reptile's neck, so we all felt safe inspecting the creature at close range. Even the teacher took an interest in Henry and his rare exhibit. Henry warned us to be careful—explaining that Gila monsters were poisonous and that they could bite.

Long after Henry had departed, we continued to discuss the Gila monster. One lad claimed that if one got hold of you, you would have to cut off his head and pry apart the lifeless jaws to get loose. Another older boy insisted that just the foul breath of a Gila monster would rot the flesh off your bones. Nobody really believed this, but we still wondered.

But the best day was the time the U.S. Cavalry came to Pearce. It was during afternoon recess that we saw them approaching from the west. They came at a trot in columns of two, their guidons snapping in the spring breeze and their burnished brass and polished leather shining in the afternoon sun. The horses were well fed and well groomed, and the uniformed troopers in their cavalry hats looked really sharp, at least to a country boy.

They came from Fort Huachuca on spring maneuvers. At that time, the fort depended on creek and spring water, and during the dry season the troops roamed the country on

maneuvers until the rains came and livened up the creeks again.

The troops halted and grouped just south of the school, and our teacher committed one of the few kind acts of her long career. She didn't call us in from recess, but let us stay out and watch the troops pitch camp. They unloaded the supply wagons and put up several large tents. Some watered the horses, while others put up picket lines and pitched their pup tents in neat rows.



Everything seemed to go so orderly and so quickly, and it was all so exciting. Then the bus driver was honking his horn and shouting that it was time for us to go home. On the slow bus ride home, I felt my future was assured. I would be a horse cavalryman. I could think of no higher calling.

The next morning the cavalry was gone. We inspected the campsite, but there was nothing there. The troopers had policed the area well and left only horse manure.

Well, life is like that. The great day comes and is quickly gone and there is nothing left but memories—and, sometimes, horse manure. **AH**

Roundabout Road to Tuzigoot Touches Ancient Sinagua Homeland

IN MANY CULTURES, people believe that all objects contain a certain spirit. If that is true, then the spirits that inhabit a back road to Tuzigoot National Monument are mischievous but benevolent—mocking the hapless but rewarding the persistent with breathtaking views.

Of course, I did not know this when I foolishly set off in a dusty cloud of worry with no one riding shotgun and no spare tire on the route along the seams of the Verde Valley, which harbored civilizations stretching back to stone-age mammoth hunters, all of whom knew far more about the place than I ever will.

I found the road easily enough—Forest Service Road 761 that heads north from a point about 3 miles northeast of Cottonwood. But as soon as I started up the dusty road, the natural speed-bumping of erosion-caused washboarding made my truck rattle as though I'd blown a tire.

I can handle this, I reasoned.



Banana yuccas (*Yucca baccata*) set their fruit. The fruit provided an abundant source of food and fiber for the Sinagua Indians, who harvested the plants along with their crops of beans, corn and squash.

So I continued my rattle-trap journey, hoping the view would repay the pounding.

In that hopeful frame of mind, I scanned the horizon: nothing but shrubs, dust and a faded butte. I felt faintly like Coronado upon learning that the cities of gold were made of mud thatched with straw.

Now, it may have been the rattling of my brain against the inside of my skull, but it seemed to me as I bounced along that the yuccas along the road were laughing at me. Lined up every few feet, they were doing the yucca equivalent of holding their sides as they shook in the wind.

Very strange.

Mind you, the Indians who built the sandstone village I was seeking had made friends with the yucca. The Sinagua people who lived in this valley 1,000 years ago made baskets, sandals, belts, ropes, dolls and who knows what else from the yucca. They even braided root fibers into their baskets when they needed red highlights. They ate the flowers and fruits—both

Morning sunlight shimmers on the water of the Verde River.



Cumulus clouds drift over the terraced mine tailings below the ruins at Tuzigoot National Monument near Cottonwood. In the distance, Jerome sits atop Cleopatra Hill, overlooking the Verde Valley.

dried and fresh. They even made yucca soap.

But we moderns don't have much use for yuccas—although certain nameless corporations harvest yuccas for livestock deodorant, believe it or not.

Maybe that's why the yuccas were laughing at me.

Still, I figured I'd press on in search of fresh insight into those great confidants of the yucca, the Sinagua, who built sophisticated irrigation works throughout the Verde Valley before abruptly abandoning all they had built sometime after A.D. 1400. Some combination of drought, overpopulation, internal strife and the arrival of new groups apparently drove them out, although the experts still debate the exact cause.

Personally, I blame the yuccas. A man can stand only so many yucca yucks before he departs with his dignity.

Hunching over the steering wheel, I maturely applied the gas pedal, leaving the yuccas behind. I climbed a series of hills before leveling out to receive my first surprise of the day just 3 miles into my journey. Almost straight ahead in the distance, I received my first clear views of Anderson and Loy buttes, a towering maroon wall emanating tranquility and spirituality. After



The Verde River reflects storm clouds illuminated by the setting sun.

about 3 more miles, the red rock cliffs of faraway Sedona appeared on my right.

The road grew smooth and sandy as soothing wild grasses replaced the washboarded desert. Just over 6 miles into my adventure, I saw the sign for Forest Service Road 258, which bends west and south toward Tuzigoot. So I hung a left.

Slowly ascending the narrow road, I noticed a small gorge to my left, its sides dotted by junipers. Suddenly, a huge owl left its hiding place among the trees and flew a few yards from my truck before darting back into the cover. I've heard it said that owls are harbingers of doom and death. Was this a warning or a coincidence? On the other hand, perhaps the owl community had grown tired of its bad reputation and resolved to haunt only safe trips. Now that I think of it, that owl did look awkwardly encouraging, even repentant. Therefore, I decided to remain optimistic. Almost a mile later, I encountered a quick succession of road junctions. So I first bore right, then left at the second junction.

The road began a descent, offering stirring views of the Verde River Valley.

About 13 miles into the trip, I came to a T-junction with Forest Service Road 131. Becoming impatient, I sped up and after another mile found myself face to face with the Verde River. On its banks, pale reeds formed small coterries, seemingly standing in awe of the tall trees on each side of the river, with leaves ranging from bright green to a fiery red.

Clearly, the spirits would not have let me witness such a sight without first insisting I pass the test of the dust and the washboarding. Thanking the spirits (even the yuccas), I continued and finally came to a junction with a paved road.

Now close to Tuzigoot National Monument, I decided to tour the ruins. Turning left onto the paved road, I followed the signs to the ruins. Set on a hill overlooking an abandoned meander of the Verde River, the Sinagua people built two- and three-story pueblos with 110 rooms,

starting in about A.D. 1000. Their thriving settlement covered 42 acres and overlooks a bird-rich marsh, fed by a year-round spring.

The restored Tavasci Marsh is now a refuge for birds, beavers, river otters, muskrats, deer and javelinas. Despite the rich resources of the marsh and the river, the Sinagua left the area's bounty behind. Hopi traditions say that some of the clans from this area moved to the high, windy, nearly waterless Hopi mesas.

Walking among the ancient homes, I thought I understood what they must have known. The desert extracts its toll, but saves its rich rewards for those with the patience to brave the journey. Just don't let the yuccas get to you. **AH**



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

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Tuzigoot National Monument, (928) 634-5564; www.nps.gov/tuzi.



An ancient Sinagua ruin is built on the top of a ridge at Tuzigoot. From this vantage point, the Sinagua people watched for the arrival of traders from faraway lands. At one time this ancient pueblo had 110 rooms, some with two or three stories.

route finder

Note: Mileages, GPS coordinates and elevations are approximate.

- > **Begin at the junction of State routes 89A and 260 in Cottonwood.** Go about 3 miles northeast on State 89A and turn left (west) onto Bill Gray Road (Forest Service Road 761), and drive a quarter-mile to the sign for All Souls Cemetery. (34°44.75' N; 111°58.17' W)
- > **Turn right (north) onto the dirt FR 761 at the cemetery sign** and go about 6.4 miles to Forest Service Road 258 (signed as "Buckboard Road.") (34°50.05' N; 111°58.12' W)
- > **Turn left (west) on 258.** Go about .7 mile to a junction with Forest Service Road 9536.
- > **Continue west on 258 past FR 9536** and go 1.1 miles to another junction with an unsigned road on the right. (34°50.53' N; 111°59.56' W)
- > **Continue west on 258 past the unsigned road** for 5.2 miles to a T-junction with unsigned Forest Service Road 131. (34°49.34' N; 112°02.29' W)
- > **Turn left (south) on FR 131.** After about 3 miles, the Verde River appears on the right.
- > **Continue south on 131** for about 5.9 miles to a T-junction with a paved road.
- > **Turn left (east) and go .8 mile to Tuzigoot National Monument.** (34°46.25' N; 112°01.56' W)

Brooding Vultures and Vermilion Flutters Enliven Wildlife Refuge Hike

The vermilion flycatcher, below, joins more than 280 other documented birds at San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge in southeast Arizona. Endangered fish, including the Yaqui chub and Yaqui topminnow, swim in the Slaughter Ranch pond, opposite page, near the start of the Black Draw Trail.



“SEE THAT?” asks photographer Marty Cordano. I glimpse a streak of vivid red darting from a mesquite tree. “That’s a vermilion flycatcher.”

Like the flycatcher, we’re visiting San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Arizona in spring. Blessed by reliable surface water on a songbird migration route that connects the tropics with all of North America, the area draws a wildlife bounty. The Black Draw Trail offers a saunter along dirt roads and passes artesian ponds and open cienegas.

At the Slaughter Ranch, near Douglas, we pay \$5 each, leave our vehicles, grab a map and start the 2.5-mile stroll in the adjoining refuge. Spotting a great blue heron and a western kingbird, we know we’ve picked a good day to sample the refuge’s 280 bird species.

Thick desert vegetation walls us in until suddenly the trail opens into a cienega and Double PhD Pond. A desert anomaly with artesian wells and ponds, this region comprises the headwaters of the Rio Yaqui Basin. Willows, Fremont cottonwoods and cattails

furnish nesting areas for birds.

Wetlands covered the area when the famous Western lawman and rancher John Slaughter arrived in 1884. His wife, Viola, wrote, “As we came out of the Sulphur Springs Valley and came into a pass in the Silver Creek range, we looked east and south to the Guadalupe in New Mexico and into the distant blue of Old Mexico. Two streams watered the valley. It was beautiful and it was ours.”

Farming, ranching, drought and an 1887 earthquake all altered the water tables, leaving only occasional springs. The trail reaches the barbed-wire boundary fence between Mexico and Arizona where a 12-foot-high monument explains that 1882 and 1889 treaties fixed the current border.

Following the fence east, we drop into Robertson Cienega, where a fenced enclosure protects threatened Chiricahua and lowland leopard frogs. Clumps of sacaton grass are reminders of when Viola

Slaughter described the San Bernardino Valley as a “luxuriant meadow some eight or ten miles long and a mile wide.”

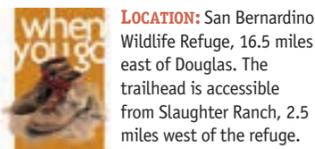
Tree-lined Black Draw holds a small pool. Bullfrogs croak at our intrusion, but the fragrant Texas mulberry blossoms are welcoming.

Gila woodpeckers appear as we follow Black Draw north then re-cross the draw at the first trail on the left. The black-and-white striped woodpecker with his jaunty red cap is one of the most important desert birds, since their nest cavities shelter deadbeat renters like kestrels, elf owls, screech owls, flycatchers, cactus wrens and warblers. They live mostly on insects, with the occasional delicacy of saguaro fruit or even mistletoe berries, which are poisonous to many other species. Great, ugly, migratory turkey vultures soar overhead on their 6-foot wingspans at heights up to 5,000 feet. They can digest the most putrid of dead critters, and remain the bane of bird biologists due to their tendency to throw up on anything they perceive as a threat.

At Twin Pond, 4-inch heron tracks resemble miniature dinosaur tracks in the mud, grumpy coots squawk from the cattails and a pair of Mexican mallard ducks spatters across the surface. Endangered Yaqui chubs, Yaqui catfish, beautiful shiners and Yaqui topminnows live in the pond.

Our trail loops back through desert vegetation to Double PhD Pond and the Slaughter Ranch. Suddenly, Cordano excitedly points. “Look at that white-faced ibis.” Nearly exterminated by the effects of pesticides, the ibis with its curved bill has a narrow border of feathers around a solemn, wizened, featherless face. A bird that can set the heart of a birder going pitter-patter, the ibis makes a fitting end for our springtime walk along the Black Draw Trail.

And it’s way more fun than a vomiting vulture. ■■■



LOCATION: San Bernardino Wildlife Refuge, 16.5 miles east of Douglas. The trailhead is accessible from Slaughter Ranch, 2.5 miles west of the refuge.

GETTING THERE: From Douglas, drive east on 15th Street, which turns into Geronimo Trail. Go 15 miles, then follow Slaughter Ranch Road to the right. You will see the gate with a large “Z” (Slaughter’s brand) on the front. The Black Draw Trail starts at the Slaughter Ranch parking area and goes into San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge. To reach refuge headquarters from Douglas, follow U.S. Route 191 north to .33 mile past Marker 11, then turn left (west) for 1 mile to refuge office.

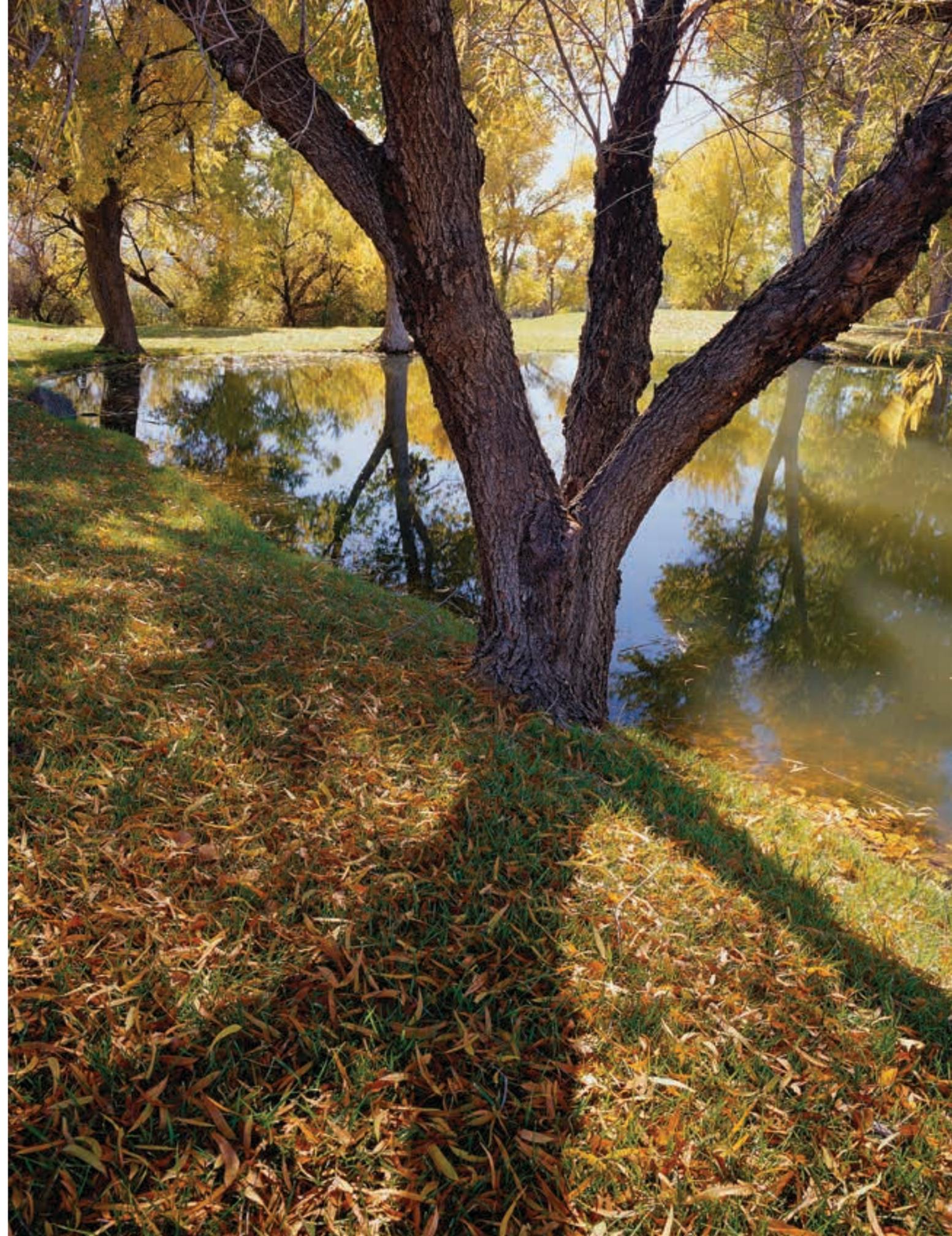
HOURS: Slaughter Ranch, Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.; refuge open daily during daylight hours.

FEES: Slaughter Ranch, \$5 adults; free, children 14 and under; refuge entrance is free.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Slaughter Ranch Museum, (520) 558-2474; San Bernardino Wildlife Refuge, (520) 364-2104 or www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/arizona/sanb.html.



KEVIN KIBBEY



online Before you go on this hike, visit arizonahighways.com for other things to do and places to see in this area. You’ll also find more hikes in our archive.

