

Expanded 64-page Collector's Issue

OCTOBER 2006

# ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

Once Upon  
a Day  
in Arizona

50 Writers &  
Photographers

Hike,  
Fly, Fish,  
Chopper,  
Climb, Drive,  
Ride, Run,  
Ramble,  
Balloon,  
Bugle,  
Parade, Paddle,  
Slip, Slide  
and Scurry

to Every Corner  
of the State

**online** arizonahighways.com

What does a day look like in Arizona? On October 1, 2005, *Arizona Highways* photographers traveled to all corners of Arizona to capture the essence of life in our beautiful state. To see more of their work, go to arizonahighways.com and click on the "October Trip Planner" for:

- A "Once Upon a Day in Arizona" slide show
- A look at Prescott's Sharlot Hall Museum Folk Festival

**HUMOR** Our writer shares a senior moment.

**ONLINE EXTRA** Take a trek along the Barnhardt Trail.

**WEEKEND GETAWAY** Step back in time at the historic La Posada Hotel in Winslow.

**EXPERIENCE ARIZONA** Plan a trip with our calendar of events.

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# Once Upon a Day in Arizona

Fifty writers and photographers scattered throughout Arizona on October 1, 2005, to capture the quirky, inspiring, surprising diversity of the state. Here's what happened to them, all on one perfect day in the West. And when you're done here, savor more with a slide show on our Web site at arizonahighways.com depicting one day in the life of Arizona.



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**YOUNG HARVEST**

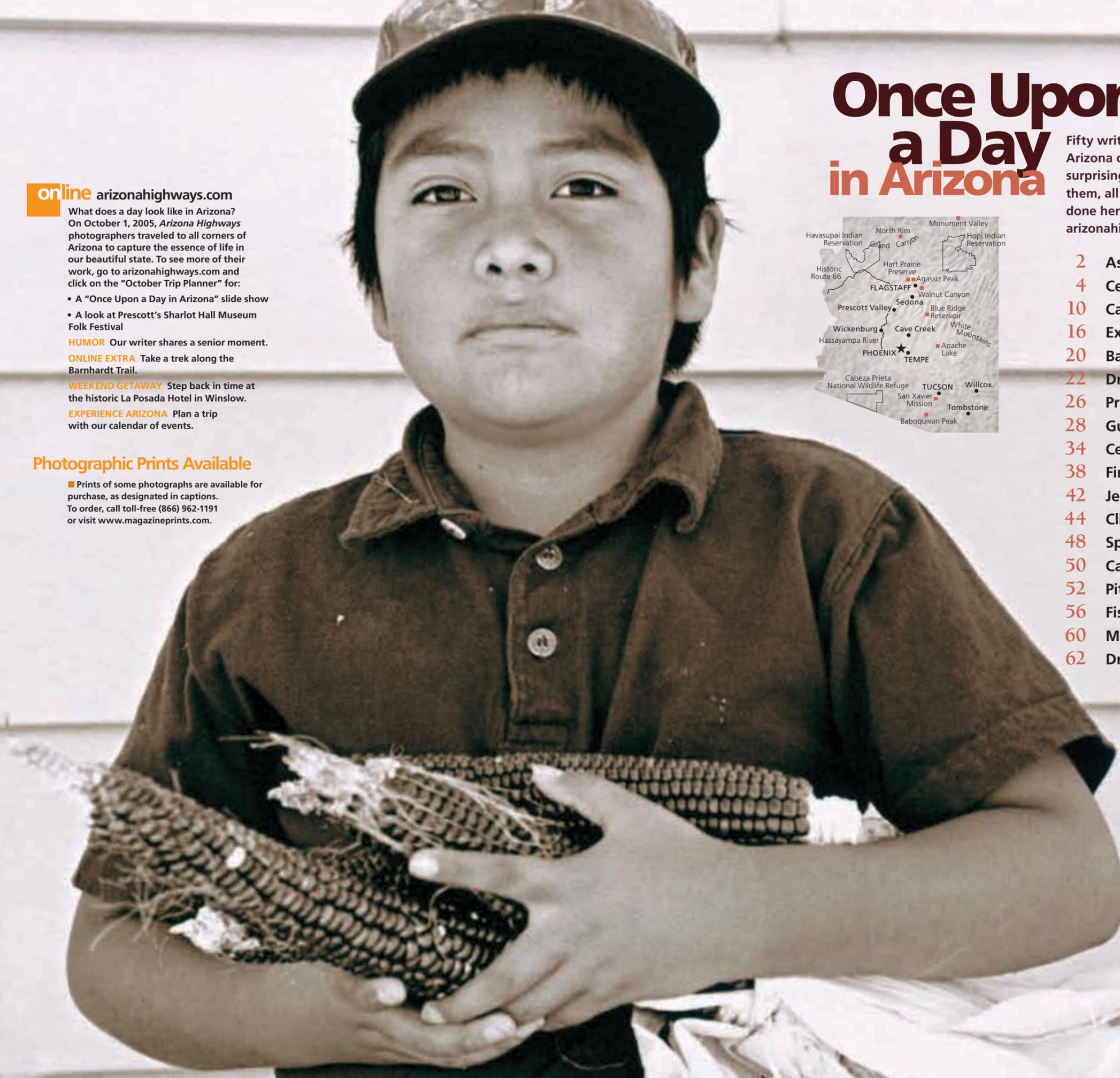
Wuphaya Marinao, a resident of Kykotsmovi, a Third Mesa village on the Hopi Indian Reservation, holds fast to his ears of corn. See story, page 16. DAWN KISH

**FRONT COVER** A sunny October 1, 2005, finds author Tom Carpenter and his canoe gliding past golden aspens on the shore of Blue Ridge Reservoir, a canyon lake southeast of Flagstaff. See story, page 10. NICK BEREZENKO

■ To order a print of this photograph, see information on opposite page.

**BACK COVER** In the Coconino National Forest on October 1, an early morning moon glimmers above a gnarled snag. FRANK ZULLO

■ To order a print of this photograph, see information on opposite page.



## Looking for the Real Arizona at 11,500 Feet

THIS ISSUE OF *Arizona Highways* began as a labor of hope and discovery. We hoped to discover the real Arizona by sending a legion of photographers and writers across our state to capture not just a slice of Arizona, but the whole enchilada—all on Saturday, October 1, 2005.

While coordinating our photography coverage for this day of days, I had plucked a plum assignment for myself. With the still-summery desert in my rearview mirror, I make the three-hour drive north to the cool, thin air of the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff. Arizona's highest of the high country. Employing Arizona Snowbowl's Scenic Skyride as my conveyance, I sit back and let the chairlift transport me up Agassiz Peak.

The effortless ride up allows plenty of time to savor hundred-mile views from this Alpine landscape. With feet dangling in the open air just above the treetops of a golden aspen forest, it's

impossible not to notice the temperature drop. At timberline it bottoms out at a crisp 45 degrees.

I hop off the chairlift at its upper terminus surrounded by tundra. Turning toward the western horizon, my bird's-eye view of the mountain suddenly changes to a panorama of northern Arizona from the heavens. In the calm at the mountaintop, a crystal-clear melody wafts up from the guitarist performing on the deck of the ski lodge nestled in the glade 2,000 feet below.

Hiking up a short cinder trail delivers me to John Westerlund, a National Park Service interpreter explaining how this great mountain was once a boiling volcanic cauldron. From our lofty perch, he identifies distant landmarks. Kendrick Peak, Bill Williams Mountain and the Grand Canyon seem to float on a sea of gauzy haze.

At 11,500 feet above sea level, the sun's warmth is a welcome presence. But a cold north wind reminds me that the seasons are changing. I probe the pockets of my jacket hoping to find

a pair of gloves inside. No such luck. I settle for blowing into cupped hands to warm my cold fingers.

Just then, my cell phone rings. It's Richard Webb, one of the 29 photographers working assignments this day. He's calling from 1,000 feet above sea level to tell me he's sweltering in 105-degree temperatures on his assignment, hiking with writer Bill Broyles into a desert canyon in Arizona's borderlands (see story, page 38). In dire need of shade and a cold drink, they're calling it a day.

The timing of Richard's call emphatically brings home the point we hope to make with this issue's ambitious undertaking: On any given day, Arizona is capable of a thousand different stories in a thousand different places. At this moment, Richard and I are worlds apart, separated by 300 miles of land, 10,000 feet in elevation and 60 degrees in temperature.

Our individual experiences could not be more different, but our collective experience points to one conclusion. The *real* Arizona runs both hot and cold. ■

**SCENIC SKYRIDE**  
Arizona Snowbowl's Scenic Skyride turns the ski lift into off-season transportation up the San Francisco Peaks near Flagstaff. On October 1, riders skim the treetops to an observation point 11,500 feet in elevation.  
PETER ENSEBERGER  
To order a print of this photograph, see inside front cover.

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7:05 AM

# The First Photons of October 1st

Sunlight's supplicants await dawn on the South Rim



"Of course," she replies. "Sunrise."

Of course. Sunrise.  
Long ago, I read that Geronimo and his buddies woke every day before dawn so they could face east and pray, an offering of gratitude for the day, the dawn and the light that makes all things possible.

I have yearned to know that prayer, but I am a rootless child of suburbia. So I have made up my own prayers, haphazard and solitary—which is why I find the idea of a sunrise shuttle obscurely encouraging.

I run through the lightening darkness, dangling camera gear. I arrive breathless, afraid I've missed my bus. But it arrives 10 minutes later, packed with bundled-up tourists, familiar strangers. The bus heads on down the darkened road. A few miles later, the doors sigh open and we stumble out into the chilly October air.

I wander the paved, railed viewpoint as the crowd grows, savoring the babble of languages. Japanese. German. Spanish. French. Italian. Arabic. Three teenaged girls giggle and huddle, cute as chipmunks. A gaunt, handsome man with a scarred cheek sits apart, so intent that he does not deign to shiver despite his shorts and T-shirt. A man with the pleasantly bemused face of a sitcom dad puts his arm around the shoulders of his shivering 12-year-old daughter and drizzles Grand Canyon geology factoids over her baffled forehead. A boy and a girl twine like cottonwood roots, lost in their own world.

**SUNRISE SPLENDOR**  
Visitors gather on October 1, 2005, at the South Rim to greet the rising sun as it reveals the gorge layer by layer. PETER ALESHIRE

Nearby, a couple with perhaps 40 anniversaries to their credit stand in comfortable contact. She half-shivers; he casually slips his coat across her shoulders with such a fond smile that it makes me tear up.

They all watch the eastern horizon with growing anticipation, playoff fans in line for tickets. Down below, the Canyon begins to emerge from the darkness, the ghosts of towers, buttes and ridges forming in the mist of distance.

I move away from the sunrise supplicants along a layer of 250 million-year-old limestone, hoping to get a slab of rock in my camera's foreground. I set up my tripod and wait, looking back and forth from the horizon to the people who have come here to learn the prayer I have mumbled all my life.

The Earth spins, a rush of light immolates a string of clouds at the horizon. I hear an audible "ooooohhhh" from the congregation.

I think of those writers and photographers, each turning to capture these first photons, all at once, across the state.

And in that moment, I love these tourists, so patient and hopeful. I love their exclamations and their misinformation, the journey halfway around the world to be here. I love the sound of Arabic. I love the expressions on their faces, the way they reach out for one another, their hunger to know about the geology and their need to watch the Earth spin another day into existence.

I may not know the words of the prayer, but still I am grateful—for the day, for the dawn and for the light that makes all things possible.

*Peter Aleshire*  
editor@arizonahighways.com

I WAIT, IRRESOLUTE, IN THE PREDAWN DARK in front of the Grand Canyon's Maswick Lodge, watching the unnervingly alert Japanese tourists pile into the tour bus.

I hope I don't blow this. It's October 1, 2005, and all over the state, *Arizona Highways* writers and photographers are tromping about in the darkness to implement a potentially foolish idea: Capture a single day in the life of Arizona.

Months earlier around the conference table, it seemed clever: Dispatch great writers and photographers to ride through Monument Valley, scale Baboquivari Peak, call White Mountain elk, climb the San Francisco Peaks, watch Tombstone gunfighters, photograph a Willcox parade, canoe a Rim Country lake. What can go wrong?

But as I wonder how I'll get to the South Rim before sunrise and think of that brave scattering of writers and photographers, the idea strikes me as, well, foolish.

What if it rains?  
Can landscape photographers make great photographs on the fly?

Should I have signed up for the sunset tour bus?  
Mercifully, the tour guide notes my indecision and suggests I hoof it to the Rim for the free shuttle.  
"A free shuttle at 5 A.M.?" I ask.

**DRAMATIC DROP**  
Sheer cliffs tower 3,000 feet above the Colorado River at the remote Toroweap Overlook along the Grand Canyon's North Rim, photographed on October 1, 2005. TOM DANIELSEN  
■ To order a print of this photograph, see inside front cover.



Hopi hands, DAWN KISH



Left to right: Andrés and Rosa García, ERROL ZIMMERMAN; Standin' on the Corner Park in Winslow, Arizona, PETER SCHWEPKER; Willcox High School Marching Band, RICHARD MAACK

# Once Upon a Day

## IN ARIZONA

**10.01.05** You can do everything in Arizona—all at once. To prove it, on October 1, 2005, we assembled 50 writers and photographers and told them to run, hike, climb, paddle, ride, drive, float and fly to every crannied nook of the state. So they helicoptered into Havasupai, rappelled off Baboquivari, tottered atop the San Francisco Peaks, paraded through Willcox, bugled up elk, confronted gunfighters in Tombstone, pitted runners against riders in Prescott, ballooned over Sedona and savored dozens of other pleasures of the day. Here's what happened to them upon a single perfect day in Arizona.

6:22 A.M.

**First Light** A golden dawn breaks over the Rincon Mountains and the skyline of downtown Tucson on October 1, 2005. RANDY PRENTICE  
To order a print of this photograph, see inside front cover.

online View the "Once Upon a Day in Arizona" slide show at [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com) (Click on "October Trip Planner").

10.01.05  
flagstaff

**Perfect Pumpkin** At midday in Flagstaff on October 1, photographer Geoff Gourley stopped at Allen's pumpkin lot and observed Hayley Trueman, 5, and her mother, Joanne, of Phoenix, hunting for the perfect pumpkin. Gourley captured Hayley's jubilation as she hefted her trophy catch for mom's approval. GEOFF GOURLEY



2:24 PM

10.01.05  
blue ridge reservoir



## The Zen of the Paddle

A red canoe and a Rim Country lake make the day a work of art

**I**magine a Zen painting in progress. Instead of a paintbrush, the artist holds a wooden paddle. The inkwell is a reservoir filled with water. The pigment is sunlight. The idea is a red canoe. The hands that hold the paddle dip it into the reservoir and pull the red canoe across the water like a line drawn on parchment. With each stroke, glistening balls of light fall from the hickory blade. Another line

by Tom Carpenter photograph by Nick Berezenko

8:14 AM

In Nature's Lap Author Tom Carpenter glides along in his prized red canoe on a languid Blue Ridge Reservoir on October 1.  
To order a print of this photograph, see inside front cover.



# 10.01.05 blue ridge reservoir

, and another, slowly, rhythmically, as the red canoe glides away from the boat ramp on the C.C. Cragin Reservoir, headed east toward the dam.

A canoe is the best craft for such waters. Although boats with motors or engines less than 8 horsepower are permitted, the rattle and roar of such devices draw faster, wider lines, more graffiti than Zen brushstrokes. For those who prefer to wear their vessel like a girdle, kayaks suffice, but there is little dignity in donning one.

Half an hour passes and the red canoe slides past the dam. The Phelps Dodge Corp. built the concrete arch dam on East Clear Creek in 1963. Standing 160 feet high and 14 feet thick at its base, the dam created a 15,000-acre-foot reservoir that provides water the mining company pumps into the East Verde River to compensate for water it draws from the Black River for its Morenci copper mine. The Salt River Project took control of the reservoir in 2005 and changed the name from the Blue Ridge Reservoir to the C.C. Cragin Reservoir, after an SRP engineer.

But now, there is more paddling to do, picking through the logs and smaller driftwood that have accumulated near the dam. The red canoe nudges through the clutter of logs on which plants have taken root to bloom as if their roots clutched loam in a flowerpot.

The reservoir is a wishbone with both forks pointed west, with the dam where a child would hold it while making a wish

for a red canoe. The width varies as the red canoe swings south. Where it widens, the wind abides and soaring birds look for fish. A single paddler must store gear forward to keep the bow trimmed and avoid the labor of keeping a high bow into wind. The wind stays in the treetops once the spruce- and pine-covered walls of the canyon close in.

Now the Zen painting takes shape. The brushstrokes have steadied. The idea, the red canoe, aims for a clump of small aspens ahead. A million minnows meander. Is that an osprey overhead? There is no point in hurrying. A steady, patient stroke propels a red canoe about 1.5 miles per hour, which means an hour of steady paddling to the first good campsite. A stand of young aspens marks the spot.

The beach is comprised of granite slabs and gravel. A red canoe does well here. The scraping of the hull on gravel adds character to a red canoe. One of those beautifully crafted woodstrip canoes, replete with inlays and clear laminate, would meet a fate similar to that of a Number 2 pencil in the jaws of seventh grade boy flunking a math quiz. There are three good spots to pitch a tent here. And there is a hole off the point where a bait fisherman can grow bored catching trout off the bottom. So, this place is usually occupied.

The next good spot requires another 45 minutes of paddling, just past a 15-foot-high granite wall on the right side of the reservoir. This is a good spot, with room for several tents and wide rocks at the water's edge perfect for fly-fishing. The water is deep, so most of what the trout eat falls onto the water, rather

than rising up from the bottom. They eat in slow time, rising to swallow a cicada affixed to the surface by wet wings and bad luck, like they are nibbling grapes.

Camp here. Drink some water. Set up the tent. Maybe take a nap. Two hours of steady paddling have earned one. That is the wind in the trees, not traffic on the interstate. Yes, that was a trout jumping through the unconditioned air. The scent of dirt and pine are inseparable and sweet. Stars will spill from the night sky and eastbound airliners will wink well ahead of the low growl they drag behind them at 30,000 feet.

Beyond this particular day, it will be wonderful to recollect the pull of a paddle and the reflection of a red canoe drawn upon a reservoir. **■**

*Tom Carpenter lives in Flagstaff and dreams of red canoes.*

*Nick Berezenko remembers many happy hours spent fishing with his father in the steep-walled Blue Ridge Reservoir. He lives in Pine.*

### when you go

**Location:** 65 miles south of Flagstaff in the Coconino National Forest.

**Getting There:** From Phoenix, travel north on Interstate 17 for 130 miles to Exit 339. Travel south on Lake Mary Road (Forest Service Road 3) for 55 miles to Clint's Well. Turn left (northeast) onto State Route 87 and travel 4 miles to Forest Service Road 751 and turn right (south) driving 6 miles to the reservoir.

**Travel Advisory:** During the winter, FR 751 is closed and the reservoir is not accessible. All roads are paved except 751, which is gravel and suitable for passenger cars. The boat ramp is narrow, long and steep.

**Additional Information:** Happy Jack Information Center, (928) 477-2172; or Mogollon Rim Ranger District, (928) 477-2255, [www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/recreation/mog\\_rim/rec\\_mogollon.shtml](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/coconino/recreation/mog_rim/rec_mogollon.shtml).

# 10.01.05 flagstaff

**Ready to Launch** During the Flagstaff Festival of Science, Robert Bohlin inflates a weather balloon for an October 1 presentation by the National Weather Service station in Bellemont. GEOFF GOURLEY

# 4:05 P.M.





10.01.05  
flagstaff

**Lush Canvas**

A snowcapped Agassiz Peak forms a backdrop for golden aspens and green conifers on a calm October 1 morning. Hikers enjoy this rich mantle as they amble along the moderate 5-mile Kachina Trail in Coconino National Forest.

ELIAS BUTLER

■ To order a print of this photograph, see inside front cover.

8:30 AM



## Hopi Balancing Act

Ancient villages perch on a ridge between past and future

by Kathleen Bryant photographs by Dawn Kish

October 1, 2005, in northern Arizona brings a glory of piercing blue sky and roadside yellows, from lemon-bright snakeweed to the warm beige of saltbush heavy with winged seeds. As my friend Sydney and I head north for the Hopi Mesas, mild breezes scented with the autumn tang of dried grasses enter the truck's open windows.

With every mile, the lavenders and blues of the San Francisco Peaks shift. The Hopi people call the peaks Nuvatukyaovi, or the Place of Snow on the Very Top. Nuvatukyaovi is the seasonal home of the Katsinam, currently in residence, though the generous spirit beings have finished bringing their gifts of rain to the cornfields scattered below the mesas.

Sprawling Black Mesa comes into view, its fingered edges of golden sandstone marking the Hopi Mesas. After passing through the Third Mesa village of Kykotsmovi, we stop briefly on Second Mesa at Tsakurshovi trading post to learn about current events. We then wind up the road to First Mesa, stopping at Ponsi Hall in Sichomovi. The villages atop First Mesa—Hano, Sichomovi and Walpi—meld together seamlessly, each

**Sun and Soil** As if supplicating the sun, Grant Namoki shows his hands and face, dirty from playing in his mother's beanfield.

with its own kivas and plaza, where the village heart throbs with color and sound during ceremonies. Today, Sichomovi's plaza and streets echo with the laughter of children playing ball before a gallery of dogs.

Though the game is interrupted each time a car or truck inches by, it's easy to picture the same setting of closely set pueblos centuries ago. Hopis say their ancestors climbed up to this world on a reed where the god Masaaw told them to leave their footprints as they journeyed in search of the Center Place. Many centuries ago, people came from Homolovi, Chavez Pass, and other scattered villages to that center place and settled around the mesas.

It is said that each group contributed a duty or a ceremony, uniting a dozen clans, which became Hopituh Shinumo, the peaceful people. Later, during the Pueblo Revolt and Spain's reconquest, more people from the Rio Grande villages sought safe haven among the Hopis. Thus, the Hopi villages are a melting pot of the region's earliest peoples, a microcosm reflecting the macrocosm of the world outside.

Since the turn of the last century, First Mesa has been known for pottery. Inspired by ancient potsherds, a Hano woman named Nampayo revitalized this Hopi tradition. She began a family artistic dynasty that continues today. Several homes along the road from Polacca to Sichomovi dis-

play signs noting "Potteries for sale."

Outside Ponsi Hall, potter Esther Jackson shows us her pottery, along with kachinas and drawings made by family members. Throughout the Hopi villages people weave baskets, plaques or cotton shawls; carve cottonwood root into figures representing Katsinam; gather herbs for medicines and teas; and continue the ceremonies that once bound the different clans into a greater community.

The oldest inhabited Hopi villages are Oraibi on Third Mesa and First Mesa's Walpi, which perches on the tip of the fingerlike mesa. Only a few residents stay here year-round, though the 900-year-old village continues to host ceremonies. Recent restorations to Walpi's stone-and-plaster walls make the village appear untouched by time. Cars are not allowed past the Gap, a narrow causeway of stone linking Walpi to the rest of First Mesa, though visitors can tour on foot with a guide.

Guide Peralta Antone introduces us to Hopi history, teaches a few Hopi words, and lets us hold different colored ears of corn—blue, white, red and yellow—explaining the significance of each. Our small group follows her past small stone piki houses, where women cook paper-thin layers of blue corn batter over hot stones and roll them into the delicate, cylinder-shaped piki.

A dizzying distance below, stone out-



Grasping the Essentials Liz Chamena carries her son, 2-year-old Lyle Poseyesva, who clutches the corn that is basic to Hopi life.

lines mark old sheep pens. Farther below still, a band of green marks one of several springs that account for the existence of these ancient settlements. Water is life. This has not changed in the intervening centuries.

Also unchanging is the jagged eastern horizon of stone buttes, marking a time when humans lived in closer connection to nature's cycles and rhythms. The precise position of the rising sun in relation to the rocky buttes once heralded ceremonies, although such events now often happen on weekends to accommodate people working off-reservation. Thus the pace of modern life reaches even here, though today the reservation seems an island of peace and tradition. Those who look closely will see messages from the past: the pigmented handprint on the beam of a log-and-brush ceiling, the grinding slicks worn into bedrock at edge of a cliff, the glimpse of a basalt mano mixed in with limestone masonry. No matter if you hail from Michigan or Mishongnovi, we who have adopted this harsh land as our home can treasure these messages.

As we head back across the narrow Gap and gaze at the patches of green far below, I think how delicately we are balanced between past and future on this single day in time. ■■■

*Kathleen Bryant of Sedona says her most enduring Arizona memories are the back-road journeys she made with her parents many decades ago.*

*Dawn Kish of Flagstaff says the Hopi Indian Reservation keeps calling her back. She finds it one of the hardest places to photograph.*

#### when you go

**Location:** The Hopi Reservation is 250 miles northeast of Phoenix and about 120 miles northeast of Flagstaff.

**Getting There:** From Flagstaff, drive east 60 miles on Interstate 40 to Winslow. Take State Route 87 north for 60 miles to Second Mesa.

**Travel Advisory:** The Hopi Cultural Center and most galleries are open year-round. The Cultural Center on Second Mesa has an inn and restaurant. Room reservations are strongly recommended. Camping is available nearby. Guided walking tours of the First Mesa village of Walpi are offered daily at Ponsi Hall. Galleries dot the mesas, and many artists sell work from their homes. Observe the visitor rules posted by each village. Photography, recording and sketching are prohibited. It is a privilege to be a guest at a ceremony, and good behavior affects the ceremony. Dress modestly and neatly and maintain a respectful attitude.

**Additional Information:** Hopi Indian Reservation, (928) 734-3283; [www.hopi.nsn.us](http://www.hopi.nsn.us).

## Falling to Earth

Wicker wafting through Sedona skies

by Roger Naylor photograph by Larry Lindahl

**W**We're descending at a rate of 1,000 feet per minute when it occurs to me that the balloon basket holding us is constructed entirely of wicker. Great. We're falling to earth in something that may have been purchased at Pier 1.

Of course, much of the appeal of a hot air balloon ride lies in that heady mix of low tech and high science. Also, there's booze. But let me back up.

We stumble out of the Red Rock Balloon Adventures van into a heavy-lidded predawn in a groggy knot, weighing the urge for coffee against the lack of creature comforts aboard a balloon. At this unholy hour, the sky sags gloomy and dim as if we're peering through pudding skin. For people about to shake off earthly bonds and take flight, we yawn. A lot.

Our pilot, Mark Stewart, and his crew prove more animated. Despite their repeated assurances that they have no idea what they're doing, they sling ropes and unfurl an acre of nylon with practiced ease. They lash the basket to the bumper of the van as a giant fan blasts air into the bulb-shaped envelope.

Suddenly, the soft beast flutters to life, an eye-popping sight. Then, they crank up the flamethrower.

This is the crux of ballooning, a single principle we learned in sixth-grade science class—warmer air rises in cooler air.

Fed by a roaring geyser of flame, the envelope lurches upright, grows full and impossibly large. Ten minutes after the inflation process began we're climbing into the basket. The ground crew unhitches the ropes, and now nobody needs coffee to snap awake because we're soaring into the sky. The darned thing really works!

We snag a thermal and follow it along the Dry Creek drainage into open country. Low-contour flying, Stewart calls it, giving us a chance to scan for wildlife.

We're cruising at 100 feet. A family of mule deer and a couple of jackrabbits later, we start to climb.

The stillness startles me. I expected a turbulence-swatted ride, the basket swinging like a graveyard gate. Yet we feel oddly motionless. Stewart guides us on a wafting, dreamy ascent.

The controls Stewart uses to pilot the balloon are pretty straightforward. To lift the balloon, he opens a propane valve on the burner. A dragon's belch of flame heats the air and makes the balloon rise. To descend, he tugs the cord attached to the parachute valve to release hot air.

The balloon has no rudder or steering wheel. To move horizontally, Stewart moves vertically. Wind blows in different directions at different altitudes so he negotiates a layer cake of atmosphere, rising and dropping to catch properly aimed wind flows.

It is an inexact but endearingly graceful mode of transport. Minutes into the trip, I vow to travel exclusively by balloon from now on. It will add a much needed dash of drama to grocery shopping.

Gaining altitude and clearing a mesa top, we ambush the sunrise as a piñata of light bursts in the canyons. "This is one of the perks of the job," says Stewart. "I get to see this every morning."

He has been flying for 16 years. "I took a balloon ride on a whim and the next day started training to be a pilot. I was completely hooked."

We rise to 3,000 feet, searching for a whiff of wind to propel us closer to prominent landmarks like Doe Mountain and the Cockscomb, but a dead calm sky holds us. We hang suspended, like a giant ornament as Stewart slowly pirouettes the balloon to provide a snapshot of the wraparound vistas. A dense layer of smoke from a controlled burn obscures

the town of Sedona and we're not as up close and personal with the formations as we had hoped, yet the view is soul-nudging. And the best was yet to come.

Even though the crew vowed to hit the sack as soon as we were airborne, they monitor our whereabouts via radio. As we descend, they caravan toward our likely landing spot. Stewart displays a deft touch at the controls as he drops into ravines and then pops out over each crest, brushing the tops of piñon pines with the basket. It feels like a roller coaster for heart patients. No white knuckles, just a sweet thrill.

We gently one-hop in a field. The basket—wisely made out of flexible wicker—absorbs the impact. The crew deflates and packs everything that requires deflating then transports us to a sprawling breakfast feast of fresh fruit, muffins the size of a coyote's head and the traditional flutes of champagne.

Although for some reason it's considered bad form to toast a balloon crew with a hearty, "Bottoms up!" **▲▲**

*An avid hiker living in Cottonwood, Roger Naylor spends a lot of time with boots firmly on a trail.*

*While floating in the hot air balloon, Larry Lindahl felt the freedom of soaring like a hawk. He lives in Sedona and is the author of Secret Sedona: Sacred Moments in the Landscape, published by Arizona Highways.*

### when you go

**Location:** Sedona.

**Getting There:** From Interstate 17 turn north onto State Route 179 and drive for 7.5 miles, then turn right onto Canyon Diablo Road.

**Travel Advisory:** Red Rock Balloons offers only sunrise flights, including pickup from a local hotel and breakfast. Flights last 60 to 90 minutes. Sky High Balloon Adventures gives Sedona tours in the Verde Valley.

**Additional Information:** Red Rock Balloons, toll-free (800) 258-3754; [www.redrockballoons.com](http://www.redrockballoons.com); Sky High Balloon Adventures, toll-free (800) 551-7597. Sedona Chamber of Commerce, toll-free (800) 288-7336, (928) 282-7722; [www.sedonachamber.com](http://www.sedonachamber.com).

**Wind Traveler** Piloted by Mark Stewart this October 1 morning, the bright hot air balloon drifts gracefully over the Coconino National Forest near Sedona.

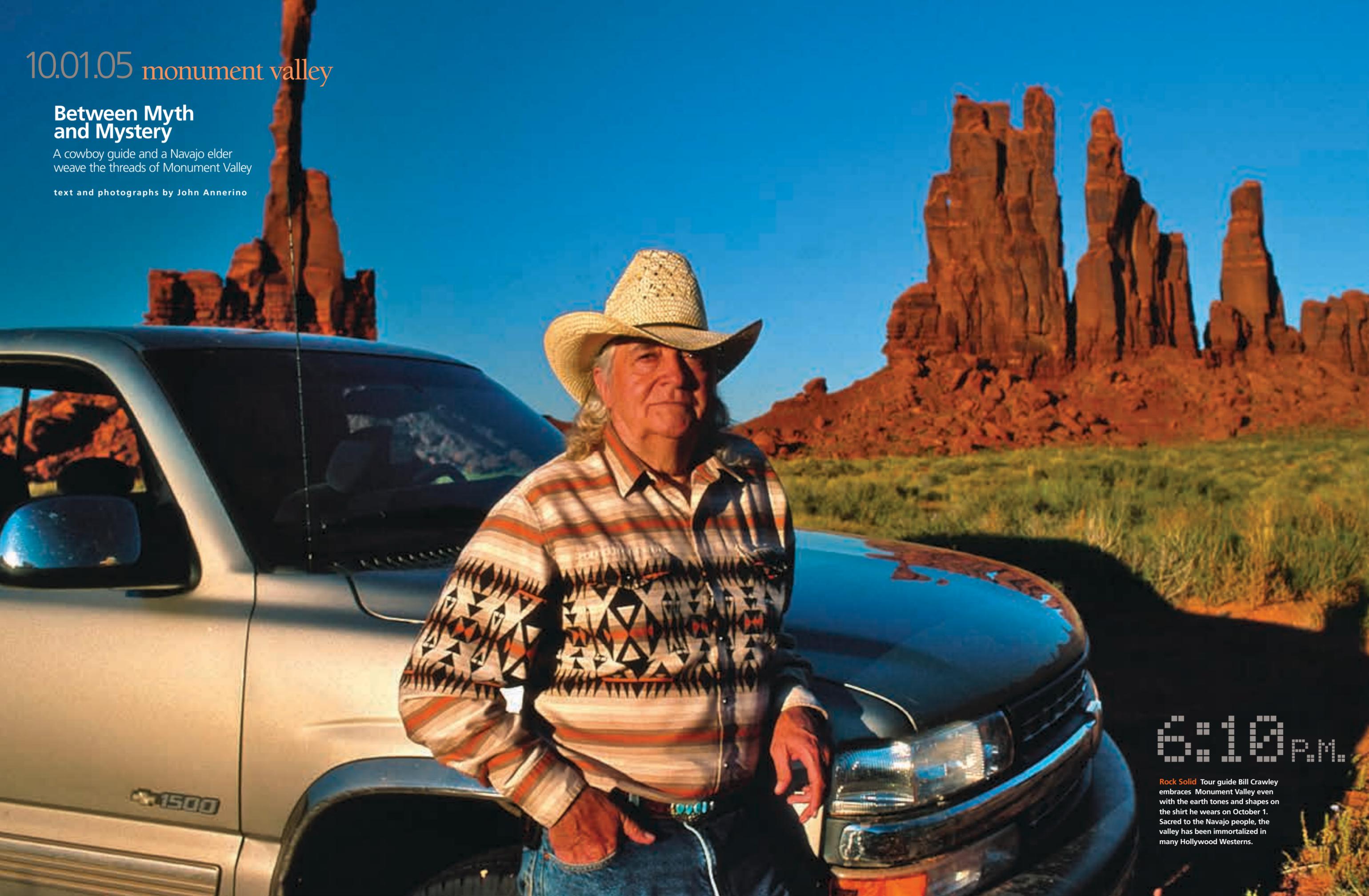


10.01.05 monument valley

## Between Myth and Mystery

A cowboy guide and a Navajo elder  
weave the threads of Monument Valley

text and photographs by John Annerino



6:10 PM

**Rock Solid** Tour guide Bill Crawley embraces Monument Valley even with the earth tones and shapes on the shirt he wears on October 1. Sacred to the Navajo people, the valley has been immortalized in many Hollywood Westerns.



The dark wind cuts like a flint knife, as the silver pickup barrels toward dawn in the early morning darkness. His blue eyes glint in the white hue of the dashboard. Tassels of long gray hair dangle from his sweat-stained cowboy hat. The high-heeled boot kisses the brake pedal, and thick hands caress the steering wheel into a turn. We roll to a stop, trailing a red cloud of dust that falls like a phantom over the edge of the rimrock. Through the windshield, two black paws claw out of the landscape and clutch at the sliver of a silver moon. They are 'Álá Tsoh, or Big Hands. We have come to the Big Hogan to greet whispers of dawn in the sacred valley of Tsé Bii Ndzisgaii, or Clearing Among the Rocks.

I slide out of the warm saddle of the pickup and walk across the black stones to the edge of the mesa. The world falls away into an abyss, but in the rattle of a horned snake's tail, the delicate brushstrokes of first light blush the skyline pink. I set up the cold metal tripod, take a seat on the hard ground and await the first hint of sunlight that will shroud Tsé Biyi, or Rock Canyon, with long shadows that will herald this new day.

In a land where the night chants of the Yé'is still echo off the walls and stones, the voice of a country and Western singer drifts from the open window of the pickup: *Cowboys don't cry-aaay, and heroes don't die-aaay*. He is my guide. A mixed-blood Arizona native and Oklahoma Osage, Bill Crawley has been a good hand in this rough, beautiful and weather-beaten land for 55 years. His lifelong love affair with Monument Valley and its people began when his daddy first trucked a load of supplies from Flagstaff to the outpost of

Kayenta in the heartland of Diné'tah, the Navajos' traditional land. Age may have slowed Bill Crawley, but having his chest cracked open by surgeons has not stopped him. He is taking me on a personal journey through "the land where time stands still," as he calls it. He is right about that. I watch amber light dapple the horizon, as songs from his memories sew dreams of a new day: *Life is a sweet dream that always comes true. If life were the moo-vies, I'd never be blue.*

I peer through my viewfinder at a yellow prism of light winking over one of the most famous landscapes on Earth. Revered by Navajo medicine men in holy chantways, sacred offerings of corn pollen and ceremonial sand paintings of horned toads and holy people, Monument Valley was discovered by Hollywood at the height of the Great Depression. That's when trading post owner Harry Goulding camped on director John Ford's doorstep at United Artists with a trove of photographs depicting what would soon epitomize the West.

After medicine man Hosteen Tso finished shape-shifting the weather for Ford's classic John Wayne movie *Stagecoach* in 1939, movie producers, television directors and advertising agencies from around the globe queued up to use the Navajos' mythic ancestral ground as their cinematic Western canvas. Bill Crawley guided many through the stunning locations that remain sacred for the Diné.

I climb back in the truck, and we whirl through the red sand, piñon and rabbit bush along a narrow track beneath the sandstone monoliths of Rain God Mesa. We stop in front of a mud-covered hogan, and the warm smile of 92-year-old Suzie Yazzie greets us.

She has been weaving the dreams of her ancestors with handspun wool as far back as anyone can remember. Her hands are knotted with age, but her long fingers glisten with silver and turquoise as she weaves through my book of ceremonial images I have brought to share with her. She stops at the color photograph of Tarahumaras dancing in breechcloths deep in Mexico's Sierra Madre, and says to our interpreter, "That's how the Navajo used to be."

She closes the blue book. I peer through the viewfinder and study a regal woman whose gray hair and delicate composure reminds me of something a friend once told me when he introduced me to the Seri Indians on the Mexican

coast of Sonora: "Think about it. . . . Think about the knowledge that is lost every time an elder dies."

We roll away from Suzie Yazzie's. The silver pickup grinds through the red sand beneath the cinnamon-brown walls of Spearhead Mesa toward Yei Bichei spires, each sacred to the Navajo and each a cinematic milepost for Bill Crawley. We stop at the foot of a slender finger of towering red stone known as Tsé Ts'óózi, or Slim Rock. I slide out of the pickup. Bill saunters through the deep sand, snake bush and sweet-smelling Irish lavender, his legs bowed from riding herd on a remuda of 20 horses where the Coyote trickster still prowls. I hear the jangle of his spurs. I see a black pot of cowboy coffee boiling on a campfire spitting molten pellets of piñon gum. He looks up at the swaying pedestal of stone, and recalls an afternoon spent with the actress Julie Andrews atop what became famous in Clint Eastwood's alpine thriller *The Eiger Sanction* as the Totem Pole.

The red sun plummets like a blazing comet behind Thunderbird Mesa, igniting Yei Bichei spires. I hear the night chants of black-masked Yé'is dancing around the flames of the yellow fire. I see the fingers of Suzie Yazzie weaving wisps of white clouds across the fading turquoise sky. I hear the voice of a singer crooning from the worn saddle leather, as I watch his phantom ride through the land where time stands still: *Here in the real world . . . And tonight on that silver screen, it'll end like it should.*

I walk back to the silver pickup and stare at a legend that still walks the red earth. His eyes glint with a smile. And I know, here in the real world, our journey together has ended the way it should. ■

*John Annerino's new book, Indian Country: Sacred Ground, Native People, will be published by W.W. Norton in 2007. He lives in Tucson.*

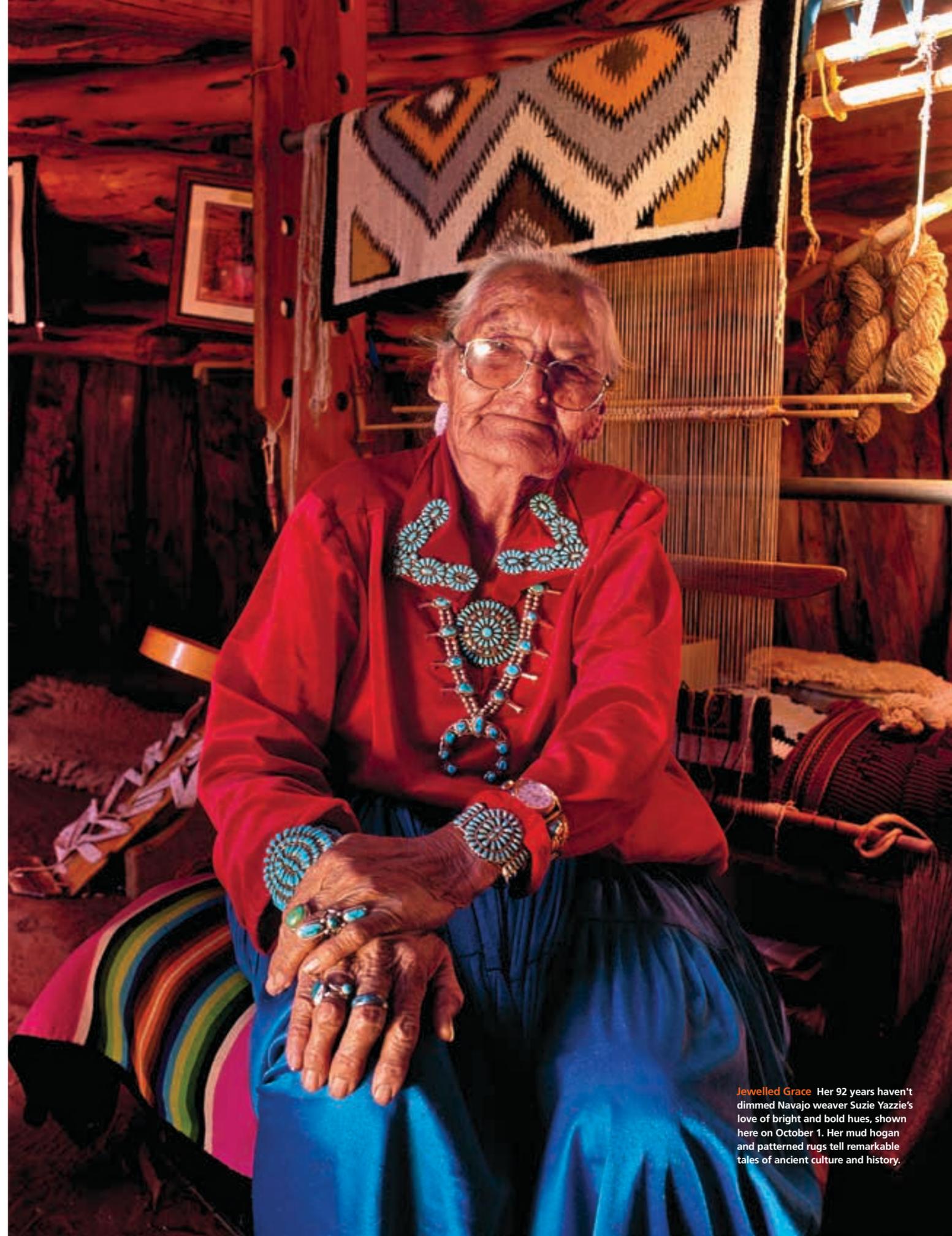
#### when you go

**Location:** On the Arizona/Utah border between Kayenta and Mexican Hat.

**Getting There:** From Flagstaff, take U.S. Route 89 north 60 miles to U.S. Route 160 and turn north (left). Take U.S. 160 85 miles to U.S. Route 163 and turn north (left) to Kayenta. From Kayenta, continue on U.S. 163 for 24 miles to the Monument Valley Road. Turn east (right) onto Indian Route 42 and drive 4 miles to the Navajo Tribal Park Visitors Center.

**Travel Advisory:** You can drive the 14-mile self-guiding road through Monument Valley for a \$5 entrance fee, or hire a guide.

**Additional Information:** (435) 727-5874/5870 or (435) 727-5875; [www.navajonationparks.org/html/monumentvalley.htm](http://www.navajonationparks.org/html/monumentvalley.htm).



**Jewelled Grace** Her 92 years haven't dimmed Navajo weaver Suzie Yazzie's love of bright and bold hues, shown here on October 1. Her mud hogan and patterned rugs tell remarkable tales of ancient culture and history.

## Prayers and Light Nothing, everything, happens at San Xavier

by Kathleen Walker photographs by Errol Zimmerman

**E**VEN THE CLOUDS ARE BEAUTIFUL at Mission San Xavier del Bac south of Tucson. On this day, they cover the sky, full and charcoal gray. They carry the promise of rain somewhere in southern Arizona, but they don't stop the tourists.

The visitors fill the parking lot with their vehicles and the small church with their awe for this place suspended in time. The art and architecture of the Spanish New World empire still reign here. The devotion of a free Mexico permeates the walls like the scent of all the candles ever placed on the altars. The dust of the Arizona Territory lingers.

A Jesuit priest and explorer, Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, founded a mission on this site in 1692. A century later, the priests of the Franciscan order and the people of the surrounding land raised the walls of this church. Their descendants live here still. They are the Tohono O'odham, the Desert People.

The faithful have come today as they always have, saying prayers, kneeling among the statues of saints and the carvings of angels. They pay special homage to the statue of San Francisco de Assisi, who founded of the Order of the Friars Minor, the Franciscans.

The statue, draped in red, has been readied for the annual Feast of St. Francis on October 4. The noble wooden face of the statue has been worn smooth by the touch of thousands of hands.

Now, as dusk approaches, Father Edgar Magaña prepares for the evening service. He pulls the green *chasuble*, a poncho like vestment, over the brown robe of his order. "We have people from all over the world," he says. "They're welcome."

Diego Bernal, the altar boy, waits in his robe of red. He will lead the procession, a small one, like the boy himself.

Outside a breeze blows cool. In the west, the clouds have broken, revealing a thin white-gold band of clear sky above a hill. That rise will obscure a full view of the sunset, cutting off the rich range of pinks and blues.

People are arriving in family groups, in couples or alone. Signs of the cross are made, cowboy hats and baseball caps are removed at the doorway. The Malone family, just in from Boston, has made the trip.

"We're just looking for a place to come to Mass," Kate Malone says.

Pigeons that held their daily court on the east tower now fly down to the façade of the church to roost among the curlicues cut into the adobe.

"Welcome once again, to holy ground," the priest's voice carries down the aisles and out to those who linger at the arched doorway.

A woman plays a guitar and sings. The congregation, surrounded by the brilliantly painted walls and ceilings of another century, raises its voice as well.

Outside, the sunset has created a golden glow along the small strip of horizon, but a powerful light nonetheless. To the southeast, the Santa Rita Mountains have grabbed their share of the light, like a

movie star would, turning the face of that range pink lit and crystal clear.

The normally nondescript hill east of the church now absorbs the last moments of sun, transformed from desert brown hill to brilliant coral red. The white cross atop gleams like a beacon in a Tolkien tale of power and faith.

"Mira," says one man to his family. "Look. *Tan bonita*. Very pretty."

Across the plaza, the lights of another gathering place have come on, the patio of the Arts and Crafts Center where a party will raise scholarship money. A band begins. The music of northern Mexico reaches out, drumbeats reverberating off the adobe walls.

Within the church, the light remains soft, warm, muted with age. The faithful stand straight and strong, as though they alone can hold up the domes, the ceilings, the walls of a church made of nothing but stones and dirt. They raise their arms in prayer.

"Beautiful," says Kate Malone as her family joins the quiet parade.

Beautiful, yes, they often say that here.

Nothing really unusual happened at Mission San Xavier today. People came to look and pray as they have for more than two hundred years. The small church did nothing more than grow large enough to hold them all and tall enough to touch the heavens. ■■

**New Beginnings** October 1 wedding vows completed, Rosa Encinas Garcia talks on her cell phone as she awaits a limousine outside Mission San Xavier del Bac, south of Tucson.



Tucson author Kathleen Walker often makes her own pilgrimages to the beauty and peace of San Xavier.

Errol Zimmerman of Phoenix photographed sunrise at Mission San Xavier del Bac on October 1, then returned in midafternoon to find the wedding of Andrés Garcia and Rosa Encinas in progress.

### when you go

**Location:** 1950 W. San Xavier Road, Tucson.

**Getting There:** Take Interstate 19 about 9 miles south of Tucson to San Xavier Road, Exit 92, turn right (west) and follow signs.

**Travel Advisory:** The mission, museum and gift shop are open daily for visitors from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Visitors are welcome to photograph inside the mission except during religious services.

**Additional Information:** (520) 294-2624; [www.sanxaviermission.org](http://www.sanxaviermission.org).



**Later Beginnings** Her red dress befits Jasmine Encinas' joy as she clutches the arm of a stoic Jonathan Galindo outside the mission on October 1.



## A Twinkle in the Devil's Black Eyes

Fun things to do in Tombstone when you're dead

by Leo W. Banks  
photograph by David Zickl

Joe Muñoz has the devil's black eyes. His mustache is a sinister bit of embroidery that curls like a snake below the corners of his mouth. In conversation, he can chill your soul with matter-of-fact observations about his favorite Wild West character, Filemeno Orante.

"I like him because he could finish you with a knife or a gun, and not give it a second thought," says Muñoz. "He was a true killer. He had no remorse."

Now, most employers would bolt the door and punch in 9-1-1 if they saw Muñoz coming. But for a gunfight re-enactor in Tombstone, Arizona's capital of make-believe, looking like a cold killer beats a Harvard MBA every day of the week.

Muñoz has held that surprisingly difficult job for 10 years, which must be some kind of record in the fast-to-burn-out world of Western shoot-'em-up.

What keeps him going? Well, it might just be his belief in reincarnation. But more on that later.

At the moment, Muñoz is dragging

**Always a Good Day to Die** Joe Muñoz, a gunfight re-enactor in Tombstone, poses on October 1 as gritty Filemeno Orante, his favorite Wild West villain. Muñoz has been getting "gunned down" for 10 years—which is just the way he likes it.





himself out of the dirt at Six Gun City, a Western set at 5th and Toughnut streets. It's a beautiful October 1 afternoon and Muñoz has just completed several minutes of shouting out his lines in his booming, Spanish-accented voice, then squeezing off several cannonlike gunshots.

To no avail. He's been shot dead again, and like every other time, he collapses onto the hard ground—convincingly deceased. The tough part, at age 57, is coming back to life.

"It's getting harder and harder to get back up," says Muñoz, breathing fast after his work. "I'm sweating under these heavy clothes, I'm dirty, and I smell like eggs from the gunpowder. But that's okay. I'm living the way I always wanted to live."

Muñoz grew up in Caguas, Puerto Rico, 25 minutes from the capital of San Juan. Even as a boy, he loved the American West, and got a taste of it at age 8, when his grandfather, a cattle rancher, gave him a horse as a birthday gift.

But with a condition: If the horse threw him and he cried, he couldn't keep his present. If little Joe didn't cry and got right back into the saddle, the horse was his. "My grandfather was pretty old-school, but it worked," says Muñoz. "I learned to ride like nobody else."

As a teenager in the late 1960s, he joined other adventurous youngsters from his neighborhood and emigrated to New York City. Muñoz rented an apartment in Greenwich Village and enrolled in high school, spending nights working odd jobs, even studying acting for a year.

He thoroughly enjoyed his "hippie days," but after graduation he heeded his dad's advice and became an accomplished airplane mechanic based in San Diego.

Still, he never lost his abiding love for the Wild West, fed by favorite movies like Clint Eastwood's *The Outlaw Josey Wales*. So he helped start the Alpine Outlaws, a gunfight re-enactment group in San Diego. In 1996, he came with them to perform in Tombstone and decided to stay. "My friends thought I was crazy, moving here with no job at 47," he says. "They asked what I was going to do. I told them I'd figure that out later."

His look of sun-baked evil made gunfight work inevitable, and although he plays several roles, his fascination with outlaws drew him to Filemeno Orante. With the help of his wife Joanne and Tombstone historian Ben Traywick, he wrote scripts that centered on Orante.

This real-life villain stumbled into the Capital Saloon in Tombstone at 7 A.M. on July 8, 1882, looking for trouble. A short time later, he became one of the fabled men that Tombstone had for breakfast every morning.

Deputy Marshal Kiv Phillips shot him in the groin, while himself taking a round from Orante's pistol and dying within 20 seconds. The ornery Orante took four agonizing days to pass this realm, and when Dr. George Goodfellow examined his corpse, he found four previous bullet wounds dotting the gunman's chest.

"What impresses me about Joe is the amount of research he did," says Traywick. "He went through my files to get background on Orante and came back several times to ask questions. He gets this man right. I tell Joe he was born to be a Mexican bad man."

Muñoz hangs much of his desire for authenticity on appearance. He keeps his holster buckle, for instance, against his back, while in most movies the actors keep the buckle in front. But that would slow access to the bullet loops, making reloading cumbersome. No 19th-century gunmen would do that.

"I study the pictures and see these men in my imagination, and I know how they should look," says Muñoz.

This devotion to accuracy presents an interesting problem at home. "The only thing we fight over is mirror time," says Joanne with a laugh. "He gets an hour and a half and I get 10 minutes. When he's getting ready for a competition, everything has to be perfect."

Muñoz's pistol of choice is a .45 caliber Ruger Vaquero. The blanks that Muñoz and other Six Gun City actors use consist of real brass shells filled with 18 grains of gunpowder, packed beneath Styrofoam wads. A primer in the bottom of the shell ignites the gunpowder when the hammer falls.

With no bullets, it sounds safe, but the blast still propels the gunpowder out of the barrel. An actor once broke a cardinal rule and aimed his gun too close to Muñoz and fired, embedding gunpowder grains in his face.

Another time Muñoz fired on an opponent just as a wind gust blew the skirt of his duster into the powder's path. The duster caught fire. The man Muñoz supposedly killed looked up from the ground and whispered, "You're on fire, Joe!" Keeping to the script, Muñoz held his position until the narrator finished, then strolled off the set with his duster still smoking.

Those loud gunshots have taken their toll, too. Muñoz came to Tombstone with significant hearing loss already from years spent too close to roaring jet engines. Ten years of booming pistols have only made the problem worse.

He also suffered damage to his eyes when jet fuel splashed into them, and now he can no longer produce tears. But isn't that perfect for the remorseless Orante?

In fact, everything about Muñoz's second career has been perfect, including the acting roles his abilities have won. He played a Mexican informant in the 1997 TV movie *Buffalo Soldiers* with Danny Glover, and he did stunt horseback riding in the currently running cable show, *Wild West Tech*, hosted by David Carradine.

In spite of its physical demands, and as he begins cutting back on his gunfight schedule, Muñoz says he couldn't be happier. "I've lived a kid's dream in one of the West's last frontier towns," he says.

But it goes a bit deeper than that. You see, Muñoz believes he's done this very same thing before. In Tombstone. Back in the 1800s. Reincarnation.

"That first time I came to Tombstone, when I walked down Allen Street, I had the feeling I was here before," Muñoz says. "It was powerful. I'd never thought about reincarnation. But I knew right then that this was the place I wanted to spend the rest of my life." ■■■

*Tucson-based Leo W. Banks covers stories in Tombstone whenever the opportunity arises.*

*David Zickl of Flagstaff claims he was fearless as he stared down the legendary gunfighters of Tombstone. Then he pulled his camera and shot them.*

**when you go**

**Location:** About 75 miles southeast of Tucson.  
**Getting There:** From Tucson, drive 45 miles southeast on Interstate 10 to Benson. Take Exit 303 onto State Route 80 toward Bisbee and Douglas. After 2.3 miles, take the right fork on State Route 80 and go 23 miles to Tombstone.  
**Additional Information:** Six Gun City, (520) 457-3827; www.sixguncity.us/index.html; Tombstone Chamber of Commerce, toll free (888) 457-3929, (520) 457-3929; www.tombstone.org.



**COOAM**



**Morning Brew** Andy Hutchinson (above) of Colorado savors his morning coffee on October 1 on the Marble Platform of the Grand Canyon's North Rim, with the Vermilion Cliffs picking up the sun's rays in the background.

**Holy Ground** Bride Christa Reiter and groom Greg Aitkenhead (left) celebrate marriage at the edge of the Grand Canyon on Toroweap Overlook. Benn Pikyavit, a Southern Paiute holy man and national park ranger at Pipe Springs National Monument, performs the ceremony. **BOTH BY KATE THOMPSON**

2:15 P.M.

10.01.05

## cave creek

**R-E-S-P-E-C-T** A cloud of dust envelops Tuff, a young stud horse at Diamond Tree Ranch in Cave Creek, and trainer Dallas Wedel as he establishes the horse's respect during a late afternoon October 1 groundwork session. Photographer Scott Baxter, whose daughter takes reining lessons from Wedel, says, "I photograph Dallas a lot when he's working with my daughter. You get a lot of atmosphere with the dust kicking up." SCOTT BAXTER



5:10 PM

## Rex Lives!

Willcox celebrates its favorite son with small-town flair

by Sally Benford photographs by Richard Maack

SEEKING THE PERFECT ARIZONA DAY, I decided to think small. Oh, I know Arizona harbors the world's largest stand of ponderosa pines, tallest fountain and grandest canyon, but sometimes thinking small can pay off big, so I headed for Willcox—population, 4,000—for the 54th annual Rex Allen Days, honoring this southeast Arizona town's favorite native son.

From the time he started playing guitar alongside his father at local Willcox dances, Rex Allen was destined for stardom. At 25, he was singing professionally, which led to a movie career that included 20 films, a television series and narration for more than 100 Walt Disney productions. "The Arizona Cowboy" died in 1999, but in Willcox his memory lives on.

There's nothing like a small-town parade to warm the heart. In the bright

**Rodeo Royalty** Representing the Sonoita Rodeo at the October 1 festivities, Pee Wee Princess Savannah Skiver displays a shy smile.



early morning light of this first day of October, fresh-faced teens from the Willcox High and Junior High School marching band warm up their tubas, drums and clarinets. Rex Allen Days Rodeo Queen Stacy Mott sits astride her horse and local celebrities perch atop truck beds and convertibles. Rex Allen Jr., actor Pedro Gonzales Gonzales and Speedy Haworth, Rex Allen Sr.'s guitarist, take their places in the lineup. Each October, Rex Allen Jr. shows his affection for the people of Willcox by attending the festivities.

"I love this event and wouldn't miss it. This is my dad's hometown, and I consider it an honor to join in this celebration," he says.

Spectators line the route as the procession winds down Railroad Avenue past the Rex Allen Museum, the Cowboy Hall of Fame, Railroad Park and the historic Willcox Railway Depot. Parade clowns lope along, greeting minicowboys and cowgirls with hard candies; Shriners in silly hats and miniature cars race in circles; and farmers rev engines of prized antique tractors that sport signs like, "Will plow for paint" and "It's not how you look, but how you hook." The parade lasts a full two hours. As soon as the last vehicle turns the corner, folks get down to some serious celebrating.

Before the rodeo starts at 2 o'clock, everyone checks out the mutton-bustin' contest, turtle races, antique tractor pull and the Western music, cowboy poetry and Rex Allen Film Festival at Windmill Park.

Ken and Carol Bertelson from Albert Lea, Minnesota, head straight for the film festival. Cornered by local officials the day before, the Bertelsons had been "arrested and detained" as Willcox's "weekend mystery guests." They didn't mind the false arrest, being longtime Rex Allen fans.

"When I watch a Rex Allen movie,



**True Red, White and Blue** Las Vaqueras de Tucson begin their patriotically themed entrance to the Rex Allen Days Rodeo.

I'm 12 again," Ken says, recalling when it cost 12 cents to see his favorite singing cowboy on the silver screen. "It just happened to be what my grandmother paid me to shine her shoes."

Lecturing on local lore, Ken points out the building on the corner of Railroad and Stewart avenues, where Allen earned nickels serenading barbershop patrons. He shows me Railroad Park, across the street, where Rex Allen's beloved horse Koko is buried.

And of course, he brags on his favorite spot, the Rex Allen Theater, where folks

enjoyed a Rex Allen movie marathon.

Next I head for the rodeo arena. Here, the hootin' and hollerin' in the stands starts as soon as riders enter the ring. Quicker than you can say "yippeekeyay," a cowboy on horseback chases a calf into the arena, ropes and flanks it before tying together three legs and throwing his hands into the air to signal the rodeo judge. Along with calf ropers come bronc busters, bull riders, barrel racers, steer wrestlers and a trick-riding rodeo clown.

As the dust settles and evening approaches, folks head for the auditorium at Willcox High School, where Rex Allen Jr. and friends perform for the hometown crowd. Allen serenades Willcox with his dad's favorite songs and ballads—a fitting way to end a day celebrating Arizona's singing cowboy.

As the strains of Rex Allen's popular hit "Crying in the Chapel" settle on the desert night air, I savor a perfect October day and the big payoff for thinking small. ■

*Sally Benford enjoys visiting Arizona's small towns, especially during special celebrations. She is Arizona Highways' Research/Web editor.*

*Rex Allen Days, a true slice of small-town Western Americana, generates infectious enthusiasm, providing opportunities for Arizona Highways Photography Editor Richard Maack and his camera.*

### when you go

**Location:** 75 miles east of Tucson.  
**Getting There:** From Tucson, take Interstate 10 east for 75 miles to Willcox.  
**Travel Advisory:** The 2006 Rex Allen Days celebration takes place October 5-8.  
**Additional Information:** (520) 384-2272; www.willcoxchamber.com.

online For another fun October festival go to [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com) (Click on "October Trip Planner").

10.01.05

## tucson

**Halloween Hijinks** The Halloween spirit struck early on October 1 as thousands of thrill-seekers flooded Old Tucson for the opening night of "Nightfall: Resurrection." The event included stunts, walk-through encounters and a trick-or-treat trail.  
ERROL ZIMMERMAN



8:34 P.M.



## What's It Good For? Canyon in Cabeza Prieta hides the deep answer to the right question

by Bill Broyles photograph by Richard Webb

Out west, in the desert far beyond houses and curbs, a modest canyon bends and beckons to the crest of a sawback mountain. You haven't been there, but you know it and you'd feel safe in that desert of stark quiet nights under silk moons.

In autumn, when the sun no longer bakes the ground and light softens the stark rock, Richard Webb and I camp several miles from the canyon and watch the sun settle. A lone mourning dove lands on the truck's windowsill and looks at itself in the side-mirror, maybe wondering why it didn't fly south

to winter with the rest of the flock. The sun slips behind ridges of clouds and obscures the cleavage of the canyons in the long jagged range farther to the west. Then, just when we think darkness is imminent, the sun roars back into view below the clouds, red and bursting and radiant with one last defiance of the coming night. An ironwood tree near camp appears to burst into flame as the sun blazes directly behind it. We gawk at six tiers of vivid clouds. Slowly, and in turn, each fades as if the homeward-bound watchman were turning off the lights of

each floor as he walks down the stairs.

The stars dazzle in contrast to the black nothingness—or everythingness—of the infinite sky beyond them, and I lie on my bedroll, trying to count shooting stars. The Milky Way looks like a snow bank and I yearn to touch the star flakes one by one. Poet Robert Browning must have been lying on his cot when he thought to write “a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?” Sometime after midnight I fall asleep.

Long before sunrise on October 1, we leave camp and head toward the canyon, guided by the ripening glow that precedes dawn. I'm awestruck, marveling how researchers unravel the intricate details of the cosmos. Sunrises become wavelengths and refractions; the explo-

sive motion of a startled jackrabbit is revealed as the mechanics of efficient levers, and love is explained as pheromones and hormones. But as the black of night gives way to deep purple and the darkened canyon walls begin to glow with salmon and gold, I'm overwhelmed with wonder, beauty and hope.

In the pass I sprawl on a gravelly clearing used by resting coyotes and nap. At every little gap in these mountains, a coyote trail crosses from one valley to the next. Nothing escapes the eye or nose of wily coyote, who may cover 35 miles a day in search of food. I hope it won't mind me lounging in its lookout.

Some 50 years ago, this canyon earned a name when a friend of mine—a white-haired wildlife biologist named Gale Monson—rode over this same little pass. Gale's name is on the cover of eminent books about bighorns and birds, but he was happiest when he could count horned larks on the bare ground between creosotes, sit mannequin-still for hours awaiting a bighorn ewe and her spindly legged lamb to come to water, or tromp to places coaxed from ancient maps. He'd rather camp beside an ironwood tree than breathe.

Gale and Jim Johnson were horseback, searching for hidden waters, and out of curiosity headed up the narrows. It didn't look like much, more of a dead-end than a passage. Instead, clean granite sand glittered underfoot, blooming ocotillos waved, saguaros stood guard and Gambel's quail scurried through the bursage. For men who have surrendered themselves to the desert's charms, life couldn't get much better. They remembered the lusty flowers of the past spring and scanned the steep slopes for fat desert sheep.

This canyon was their secret passage-way into an enchanted world. They rode to the notch and when they surveyed the magnificent vista before them and the cryptic cleft behind them, they looked at each other and grinned. One said to the other in mock bewilderment, “What's this canyon good fo'?” That name, What Fo, is now on the maps, minus the apostrophe that cartographers snip like a dangling thread.

So what is a canyon for? To provide soil for giant cacti? To funnel sporadic rains to huge ironwood trees along sandy arroyos? To carry our imaginations to the far end of the universe? In loving one

small place, maybe I can better love the world. In thinking of one small canyon, maybe I can begin to unwrap a more urgent question, “What am I for?” Gale knew the worth of a canyon, but lured us to look for ourselves.

The day grows warm, even for the first day of October. The light becomes glare and colors blanche. Though we have energy bars and boxed raisins in the truck, our stomachs growl for something more. We are more like the restless, prowling coyote than we admit.

So we return to town for a warm meal and cold drink. In Wellton, Geronimo's Restaurant is open and inviting, a harbor from the sun. Placards on the door announce a VFW meeting, a benefit car wash, the local high school's football schedule, and “help wanted.” Sombreros, colorful serapes and Diego Rivera prints decorate the walls. Rudy Geronimo runs the place and the family helps out. His mother Irma Ramirez owns the dress shop next door. Fresh from a day at school, three first-grade girls sit at one table, giggling.

Richard and I plow into plates of food and try to divine the purpose of it all. What is a canyon for? All answers lead up twisting canyons. Like lasting love, cool water or sweet music, they require no justification. Canyons exist. Cacti bloom. Coyotes lie down to rest, bighorns walk confidently along cliffs and we reach for stars. And on this warm, mellow day, we bask under a shining sky and smile.

If you find yourself there—even in your dreams—you too will know what fo'. ■■■

*Bill Broyles, who loves visiting with Arizona's old-timers like Gale Monson, is fascinated by map names and recently co-authored a chapter on southwestern Arizona place-names in Dry Borders: Great Natural Reserves of the Sonoran Desert. He lives in Tucson.*

*After photographing in 100-plus degree temperatures and wandering into a swarm of killer bees, Richard Webb of Mesa was a little jealous of the writers and photographers working in the cooler parts of the state.*

### when you go

**Location:** Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge. **Getting There:** From Phoenix, take Interstate 10 south to Interstate 8 west. Take the Tacna exit, then drive south to the wildlife refuge. **Travel Advisory:** The hike is 4 to 5 miles round-trip. Refuge visitors must obtain a free permit. A four-wheel-drive vehicle is required. Weather may be hot even in October, so take plenty of water. Visitor services are available in Wellton and Tacna. **Additional Information:** (520) 387-6483; www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/arizona/cabeza.html.





10.01.05  
north rim

**Panoramic Palette** Vista Encantada, on the Walhalla Plateau, offers a variety of visual treats—the Painted Desert to the east, Brady Peak and the upper drainage of Nankoweap Creek. In this photograph made on October 1, the North Rim of the Grand Canyon unfolds in sweeping scenes to the northeast of Encantada. **CHUCK LAWSEN**

■ To order a print of this photograph, see inside front cover.

7:33 AM



# 10.01.05 wickenburg

4:43 P.M.

**Jeepster Jeans** Heading into Box Canyon of the Hassayampa River, four-wheeling explorers see up close the water source that attracted early 19th-century settlers.

We leave from downtown Wickenburg, where in 1863 adventurous souls came seeking gold at the nearby Vulture Mine, as well as the ranching and farming bounties made possible by the Hassayampa's precious water.

Now, fun-seekers head upriver to hike or picnic in the high-walled canyon and the area's washes, rocky ridgelines, mountain valleys and wide-open desert country.

BC Tours offers 14 widely varying Jeep excursions all around Wickenburg, which likes to call itself the "Dude Ranch Capital of Arizona" and the very place where Vic Cedarstaff invented the bola tie in 1949.

We first pass an abandoned manganese mine and its black tailings, then wind through thickets of ironwood, tamarisk, mesquite and willow trees before grinding and bumping over the riverbed's fine "sugar sand," where the Jeep gears groan to avoid bogging down.

After about a half-hour, we come to a narrow side canyon that enters the main gorge from the west, guarded by the foundations of a cabin claimed long ago by the floods. We explore the narrow, slot-like passageway, half hidden by a shady forest of tamarisk trees.

After driving several miles into the main canyon, we backtrack and cut westward up a steep trail to the rim overlooking the river, all while listening to Cumming's expert commentary on every plant and geologic formation in sight.

"We love this desert," says Cummings, who helps lead the tours that last up to 13 hours. "We take people out here just for the pleasure and fun of showing off the natural beauty, and we want folks to learn to protect it and keep it clean."

Deep into the desert, we encounter our first surprise, a giant multiarmed saguaro cactus dubbed by the tour guides as "The Arizona Highways Saguaro," which they guess to be more than 200 years old. This colossal specimen has so many arms we can't count them all—more than five is an estimated benchmark for perhaps two centuries of growth.

"We use that name for our guests just

because of its immense size, magnificent arms and the fact that it's sort of a desert emblem made famous by the magazine," says Mike Billingsley.

Even more impressive to me just a few hundred yards farther up the rocky road is our second surprise, the most awesomely tall saguaro I've ever laid eyes on.

"We show everybody this thing," says Cummings, pushing gently against the cactus' base and pointing to the sway at the top. Very slow growers, saguaros can reach up to 50 feet. This one is, well, really big.

Satisfied by our unusual discoveries, we linger on the high ridgeline in the orange glow of sunset, then reluctantly tear ourselves loose to bump southward through the broad expanse of the Hassayampa's rivulets wending toward Wickenburg.

Our grumbling stomachs make us regret that our 12-mile, 2.5-hour tour hasn't included the campfire feast of hamburgers and steaks (accompanied by howling coyotes) featured on the deluxe back-road Jeep tours.

The cool evening air settling into the Hassayampa valley envelops us as we journey slowly in near-darkness back to tour headquarters in town. It's a fitting end to a leisurely jaunt upriver from Wickenburg that has demonstrated how those ranchers, farmers and gold-seekers found their own priceless surprises after planting themselves permanently in this desert oasis. ■■

*Arizona Highways Managing Editor Randy Summerlin has driven his own Jeep over countless back roads throughout Arizona, but on this trip found it quite a pleasure to be just a passenger.*

*Ken Ross of Scottsdale enjoyed the surprises along the route.*

### when you go

**Location:** Box Canyon of the Hassayampa River, north of Wickenburg.

**Getting There:** From Phoenix, drive north on Interstate 17 to State Route 74. Turn left (west) at Exit 223, and drive about 47 miles to Wickenburg. BC Jeep Tours headquarters is located in downtown Wickenburg. Call for an appointment.

**Additional Information:** BC Jeep Tours, (928) 684-7901 or (928) 684-4982; www.bcjeeptours.com.

## Sunset Jeep Tour

Take a bumpy, open-air ride to see cactus country

by Randy Summerlin  
photograph by Ken Ross

It's a cool October 1 afternoon when my son Leyton and I hop in the back of a Jeep to venture up the Hassayampa River's intermittently wet sandy bottom—a route that eventually takes us to a pair of unexpected desert surprises.

We're here to explore Box Canyon north of Wickenburg, where the Hassayampa usually just trickles lazily along, and where sudden heavy downpours often produce flash floods.

Today, we're passengers in the high-mounted back seats of a topless Jeep with Wickenburg native Glenn Cummings at the wheel, while photographer Ken Ross rides along with Cathy and Mike Billingsley in their old-but-reliable restored Jeep as we four-wheel north up the riverbed.

We're on just one of many desert explorations sponsored by BC Jeep Tours, owned and operated by the Billingsleys, with the help of Cummings.

# 10.01.05 tempe



**Where There's Smoke**  
The Arizona State University Sun Devils were fired up on October 1, 2005, when they stunned the University of Southern California Trojans for the first half before USC came back to win and go on to the Rose Bowl.  
DON B. STEVENSON

12:38 P.M.

# 10.01.05 baboquivari peak

## What Am I Doing Here?

A grandfather on the edge clings to the cliffs of Baboquivari

by Bob Kerry  
photograph by Peter Noebels

CLINGING TO A TINY HANDHOLD ON the precipitous Southeast Arête of Baboquivari Peak, I know I will fall. The climb is not hard for a good rock climber; but I am not a good rock climber anymore. I am a 61-year-old grandfather, rusty as a result of a motorcycle wreck and back surgery. How did I end up in this predicament?

The answer is euphoric recall; remember the good, forget the bad. When photographer Peter Noebels invited me on this October 1 climb, I remembered great times climbing Babo but forgot the grinding hike and the honed skills.

Sixty miles southwest of Tucson, Baboquivari Peak rises just west of vast Altar Valley and harbors the 2,065-acre Baboquivari Peak Wilderness. Just north of Mexico, it marks the east boundary of

the Tohono O'odham Nation. Baboquivari Peak is their sacred home of the Creator—I'toi.

"Babo" looks impossibly difficult to climb. It is a tough, technical climb, but the easier Forbes Route and the dramatic Southeast Arête draw the most climbers. The Forbes Route is named for Dr. Robert H. Forbes, who failed in several attempts until he brought along Jesus Montoya and grappling hooks in July 1898. They built such a triumphant fire on the peak that night that residents of Altar, Mexico, thought the peak had erupted. Forbes climbed the peak six more times, the last on his 82nd birthday, although it's a remote and dangerous route.

Our six-person climbing party set out on the distinctive Southeast Arête route. In mountaineering a sharp ridge is called an arête. French is the language of mountaineering, with words like belay, rappel, carabiner.

The Southeast Arête rates an "easy" 5.6 on the Yosemite scale of difficulty, so it seemed like a perfect climb for me.

We approach Baboquivari through Thomas Canyon with the peak's dramatic east face in full view. Several years ago, a rancher's dogs treed a rare jaguar in these mountains. Photographs were taken and the jaguar went free. We do not expect to see a jaguar, but could see anything from mountain lions to coatmundi, social creatures that look like a cross between a monkey and a raccoon and travel in bands of up to 20. Even on the highway at dawn, we glimpsed several bobcats sniffing after the huge jackrabbits that float out of the predawn dusk, ghostly white in the headlights.

We park near the Humphrey Ranch headquarters where The Nature Conservancy maintains a trail access. We immediately run into problems. On the good side, the canyon is cloaked in brilliant yellow flowers. On the bad side, the chest-high flowers hide both the trail and the barbed branches of fairy dusters and catclaw, which tear at our bare legs. Soon the trail eludes us in the thick brush. I keep thinking, *This is going to be impossible if we come out in the dark.*

Finally, we shift to the creek bottom, with its bad footing but fewer thorns before leading on to an open hillside.

Soon we reach the dramatic Lion's Ledge, which runs across the vertical east face of Baboquivari Peak. A permanent spring, rare in the desert, runs along the



**Rock On** The October 1 climbing team pauses half-way up Baboquivari Peak, sacred mountain of the Tohono O'odham.

3:45 P.M.

middle of the ledge. My 1997 guidebook observes: "Once on Lion's Ledge you will weave in and out of heavy brush close to the rock. If you can stand the exposure it is easier to traverse the tops of the slabs, out of reach of the brush. Just be careful you do not slip to your death doing this."

We chose the safe route through the brush.

At the end of Lion's Ledge, we rope up and start climbing. We conquer easy slabs at first and then get to a steeper section. Finally we get to a place where I cling to a big, rounded edge and try to pull myself up to the next ledge. Tied in above and below me are two other climbers, both much younger and fitter. We are climbing two and three on a rope to save time and avoid that hike out in the dark. Three on a rope is risky, but we are

"belayed" from above by Noebels, the best climber among us.

This section challenges my climbing skills. The rock above me looks featureless. Reaching around the buttress, my fingers latch onto a tiny hold, but I am off-balance and puffing like a freight train. At last I give out a labored noise and heave myself up to grab a handhold above the blank section, relieved I didn't fall and pull everyone off the cliff.

After scrambling into a huge notch, we face the "crux" or hardest part of the route—a short, steep section of exposed cliff. Climbs up the overhanging east face rank as extremely difficult and require days of foot-by-foot progress. Climbers sleep in hammocks slung on the wall.

We are not climbing one of those heroic routes, but we could fall just as far.

It is 1,000 or more feet to Lion's Ledge. Ignoring the exposure, Noebels makes quick work of leading the short but difficult section. We follow in quick order and find ourselves scrambling on easy ground to the summit, where prayer flags flutter from poles placed in the rock cairn on the high point. Climbers have tied small, spiritual gifts to the poles and tucked them into the rocks. They vary from written prayers to plastic toy cars. We look around excitedly, read the summit register and take pictures. As we eat lunch, a slow silence settles us. The wind caresses us into a dreamlike state enfolded in the vast solitude.

Eventually, we rouse ourselves for the return. We get lucky on the way out and stay on the trail most of the way. We all breathe a sigh of relief when the truck

comes into sight with a smidgen of daylight left. ■■

*Bob Kerry lives in Tucson where he practiced law for 30 years in between hiking and climbing all over the state. Now he's moving into river-rafting.*

*Peter Noebels of Portland, Oregon, says he's in awe of Baboquivari: "After climbing the mountain at least six times, my respect for it never ceases."*

### when you go

**Location:** 60 miles southwest of Tucson.  
**Getting There:** From Tucson drive west on State Route 86 to Robles Junction. Turn left (south) onto State Route 286 and continue for 30 miles; after Milepost 16 take the first right and go 2.7 miles, turn right and drive until you see a gate with a sign directing you to the trail.  
**Travel Advisory:** High-clearance vehicle recommended. Please respect the property rights of the owners and do not cross or use these lands without their permission.  
**Additional Information:** U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Baboquivari Peak Wilderness, (520) 258-7200; [www.blm.gov/az/rec/baboquiv.htm](http://www.blm.gov/az/rec/baboquiv.htm).

10.01.05

tucson

**Burning Sky** The setting  
October 1 sun fires an  
expansive sky over the  
saguaro forests of the Tucson  
Mountains and the west unit  
of Saguaro National Park.

JACK DYKINGA

■ To order a print of this photograph,  
see inside front cover.

6:17 P.M.

## The Price of Paradise

A hobbit and an elf pay the toll  
to see the waterfalls of Havasu Canyon

text and photograph by Peter Aleshire

**R**on Paradis steps gracefully to the cliff edge of paradise and unleashes a lopsided grin of pure joy. Balanced between curiosity and anxiety, I hesitate before stepping forward for a view of where D.W. James Mooney died, proof of the sometimes-high price of dreams.

Ron is tall, with a tousle of Greek-god dark hair, perfect features and the long, sculptural muscles of a rock climber. He is quick and smart and funny and graceful as a Tolkien elf. I run more towards Hobbit. He dances, I scurry—the antelope and the woodchuck.

But he beckons me now to the edge of the 198-foot drop of Mooney Falls, the tallest of the four major waterfalls I have dreamed of seeing most my life. Tinted travertine blue-green, Havasu Creek gathers itself at the top of the cliff before hurtling into the air in a hypnotic unfurling of spray and foam. The water falls with stop-action grace into the ethereal blue-green pool it has created, unleashing mists of spray to drift across the surface.

The Havasupai people say that once upon a time the walls of the canyon regularly closed together, killing anyone who went down into it. An old woman who lived up on top had two beautiful sons, who longed to hunt deer and antelope, but had nothing from which to make arrows. Their mother warned them against venturing into the chasm to gather reeds that grew there, but they were foolish and full of hope. They cut two juniper logs and went down into the canyon, each balancing a log atop his head. When the walls began to close, the boys held them apart with the logs. Then they went on down to the waterfall to gather up the reeds for their arrows.

The Havasupai Indians have a name for this waterfall, but they do not share it

with the herds of people who come down all agog into their canyon, on the southwestern end of the Grand Canyon.

On our maps, the waterfall is named for Mooney, a prospector who came down into the canyon seeking gold, but found the way blocked by the travertine encrusted waterfall.

Mooney fearlessly lowered himself over the side on a rope, driven by dreams of wealth. Some say his companions cut the rope, but it probably just frayed on the rasp of travertine. Mooney plunged to his death in the pool below. His companions hiked out and returned some months later and found a tunnel to the bottom where they encountered Mooney's body, already encased in travertine.

Swaying at the top of the precipice, I ponder the price of dreams as I watch the dizzying fall of water. I can follow individual droplets or let them blur into a single entity.

"Stay back from the edge," says Ron. "These travertine overhangs can just collapse."

I step back, Ron grins.

Ron Paradis. My guide to paradise. Am I reading too much into a name?

I have always envied his ilk, for I have spent my life as the observer, making notes about people like Ron. He has spent several years as a guide for Outback Adventures, introducing tourists to this land of waterfalls, whippoorwills, cottonwoods and constellations. In high school, guys as charming and confident as Ron filled me with a sick longing from behind my screen of books. When he graduated college, he sought adventure and waterfalls, giving up a house, regular income, even plausible relationships by refusing the compromises of career that have encrusted the rest of us, like a layer of travertine.

But I cannot resent him today, for he has wrapped the canyon and set it under

the Christmas tree of my day. He stands on the cliff edge to watch my face as I unwrap the view.

We are on a mission. I started this day with sunrise on the South Rim, then avoided the long drive and a steep, 8-mile hike into Havasupai by catching a ride on a Papillon helicopter so I could cover as much ground as possible on this singular October 1. When I got my breath back from the swoop of scenery into the canyon, I met Ron at the village and hiked a sandy mile down to the first of four major falls. I swam across that first pool and slipped back under the falls, hidden in an exuberance of bubbles and froth.

Then we hoofed it down to Havasu Falls and dropped our packs at the nearby campgrounds. We did not linger long, as we hoped to make it another 4 miles down canyon to Beaver Falls.

But first we must scramble down the tunnel to the bottom of Mooney Falls, clinging to the chains that provide handholds on the travertine slick rock.

At the bottom, I wade out into the pool where Mooney died. The Havasupai have worked waterfalls into the story of how human beings began. They say that two gods were at war with one another and the evil god drowned the whole world.

Only one person survived this great flood—the daughter of the benevolent god, who hid in a log that floated for a long while until it came to rest on the top of Humphreys Peak. Crawling out of the log, she found herself alone in the world. She wandered, despondent, until one day she lay down and opened herself up to the rays of the sun and conceived a son. As time went on, she longed for another child and wandered into Havasu Canyon, where she encountered its beautiful waterfalls. Here, with the waterfall, she conceived a daughter. Her two children grew, married and gave birth to all of humanity.

I stare at Mooney Falls until Ron gently nudges me into motion. He can jog to the rim and back twice in a day, but knows he must move at Hobbit pace on the 8-mile round-trip to Beaver Falls.

I have already noticed how he slows to an amble so as to not embarrass me, one

**Fatal Falls** Guide Ron Paradis ponders Mooney Falls in Havasu Canyon, which are named for D.W. James Mooney, a prospector who fell to his death when the rope broke as he was climbing down alongside the falls.

more reason to love—and resent—elves.

So we head downstream, where the wonders grow more intimate; turquoise pools, a sea of wild grapes, the sound of running water, the scarlet flash of summer tanagers, white-boled sycamores, sculpted limestone boulders, a shower of cool water from a cleft.

We reach Beaver Falls late in the day.

Two couples, collected like driftwood on the bank—savor the multilayered waterfall. Turns out, they live in California and North Carolina, but all subscribe to *Arizona Highways*. I feel absurdly triumphant to have found beloved readers here.

We sit for a long while, watching the water spill over the falls. Ron swims across the pool, scales the waterfall and leaps out into the luminous blue pool with perfect grace.

I am content to memorize the arch of his descent, for, finally, I understand.

I understand how Mooney came to be at the wrong end of that rope.

I understand why the last woman opened herself to the waterfall and why the two brothers risked the canyon with logs on their heads.

I understand why Ron lives on spare change and tips.

For paradise lies close at hand, if you but pay the price. ■■■

*Peter Aleshire is editor of Arizona Highways magazine.*

### when you go

**Location:** Havasu Canyon, Village of Supai.

**Getting There:** From Flagstaff, drive west on Interstate 40 for 75 miles to Seligman and Historic Route 66, Exit 123. Take Route 66 north for approximately 30 miles to Indian Route 18. Take Indian 18 north approximately 60 miles to Hualapai Hilltop and the Hualapai Trail. Hike or ride horseback 8 miles to the Village of Supai in Havasu Canyon.

**Lodging:** Havasupai Lodge, (928) 448-2111; Camping reservations, (928) 448-2141.

**Additional Information:** Havasu Canyon and the Village of Supai are accessible by foot, horseback or helicopter. You may reserve a horse through the Havasupai Tourist Enterprise, (928) 448-2121. For helicopter tours, contact Papillon Helicopters, toll-free (800) 528-2418; www.papillon.com. The canyon and village are the home of the Havasupai Indians and while landscape photography is permitted, please do not take photographs of the people or their homes. The canyon is sacred to the Havasupai Tribe, so please be respectful of the people and the surroundings.



## Creaking Shoes and Bugling Elk Can a city girl get close to a lovesick bull?

by Jayme Cook photograph by Morey K. Milbradt

**T**urns out, the first rule in elk-calling is to wear quiet shoes.

Although I'd abandoned my lipgloss, jingling jewelry and poignant perfume, my blatantly urban Doc Martens boots creak with every step as I drudge through the Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area near Springerville, at the unholy hour of 5 A.M.

I am obviously out of my element.

Bruce Sitko of the Arizona Game and Fish Department is not amused. "Watch the noise and avoid any brush," he whispers. "If they hear us, we won't get very close."

I nod, knowing my squeaky shoes

shoulders of the White Mountains. No use. As the precious morning minutes slip away, doubt dawns. I need to see at least one elk, recompense for the dawn and the drive and my foolish shoes. Just one glimpse and justice will prevail, the universe will balance and the yin will yang.

Bruce stops us near the top of a small mesa. Finger to lips, he points to a clearing below as he hands me his binoculars. I squint two blurs into the shape of elk.

"I don't know if we'll see any much closer than this," he says.

I feel responsible; Godzilla-girl, crash-

"There's a satellite bull right over there," he whispers. "Satellite?" I ask.

"Bulls too small to have their own harem that follow the groups of the bigger bulls."

Elk, like ancient kings, maintain harems of up to 20 cows each.

Suddenly, I spot the satellite bull, rubbing my eyes to be sure I haven't invented him. Sure enough, he is still there, lying in the mud, enjoying his morning.

"I think he's staring at me," I say.

"Yeah, he knows something's up," Bruce says. "They get wary during hunting season. Let's see if we can get him to come closer," he adds, unwrapping the elk whistle from his neck.

"Quiet now," he whispers. "Don't move a muscle."

Asking me not to move is like asking a bull elk not to mate in late September. Immediately, my palms sweat, my knees shake and I feel light-headed.

As Bruce blows his whistle, I nearly choke on a laugh, for the mimic call of the cow sounds like a lascivious duck.

"Quack—quack—quack."

The bull turns and heads toward us.

Bruce quacks again. The bull trots away. "That's it for the day," says Bruce.

But as we head back toward the ranger station, my squeaky step has a skip in it. I've seen an elk, the yin has yanged. I am no longer the gym class reject, Godzilla-girl or Elmer Fudd.

Still, next time, I'll wear moccasins. ■■

*Jayme Cook is a freelance writer and a former intern at Arizona Highways magazine. She lives in Phoenix.*

*Morey Milbradt of Phoenix says the bulls didn't see him in the early morning "because I looked like a walking tree!"*

### when you go

**Location:** Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area, 10 miles southeast of Springerville.  
**Getting There:** From Springerville, head south on U.S. Route 180/191. Look for a sign on the right (west) side of the highway where it splits at Mile Marker 405, 2.5 miles south of the intersection with State Route 260. Drive 5.2 miles on a dirt road to the headquarters.  
**Additional Information:** Arizona Game and Fish, Pinetop office, (928) 367-4281; [www.gf.state.az.us/outdoor\\_recreation/wildlife\\_area\\_sipe.shtml](http://www.gf.state.az.us/outdoor_recreation/wildlife_area_sipe.shtml).



6:01 A.M.

**Eagle-eyed Elk** An elusive bull elk gazes across the grassy fields of the Sipe White Mountain Wildlife Area on October 1. MOREY K. MILBRADT

have made me the elk-calling equivalent of the gym class nerd.

Bruce presses finger to lips. "Listen."

At first, I can hear nothing but my heart hammering against my ribs. Suddenly, I hear the haunting sounds of elk floating through the thick trees, deep as whale calls—each mournful moan punctuated by low grunts. It sounds soothing and hypnotic, secrets shared. The siren songs engulf us, coming from everywhere and nowhere.

"It's the bugle of the bulls," Bruce whispers. "They're rounding up the cows."

I tiptoe as first light glows behind the

ing through the forest with thunderous boots, scattering the wildlife like Japanese school kids.

"There's a herd just over the top there," says Bruce. "We'll use the cover of those trees to try to move in."

I drop back as the others move forward, resigned to gym class nerd status.

As my three camera-clad companions creep through the brush on hands and knees, I succumb to a pang of envy. But then Bruce motions excitedly for me to join him. I tiptoe toward him, avoiding every twig, breath abated. I look ridiculous, like a certain cartoon character lisping, "Shhh, I'm hunting wabbits."

Somehow, I make it without squeaking, creaking, screaming or knocking down any trees. Gently, Bruce positions me behind the brush.

8:58 P.M.



**Bus Stop Blues** Flagstaff jug band Thunderbird, with nary a paying gig to their name, jams on October 1 at the bus stop outside the Orpheum Theater. From left (barely seen) are John Taylor on guitar, Fred Phillips on drums, Mammoth on guitar and Jim Marzolf on bongos. GEOFF GOURLEY

flagstaff



**Off to the Races** The runners and riders start the 25-mile, six-hour Man Against Horse Race on a cloudy Prescott October 1 morning. KERRICK JAMES

## A Bar Bet Pays Off Prescott race pits riders against runners

by Wynne Brown photograph by Kerrick James

**I**n the clear cold October first dawn, I'm warm enough in jeans and Polartec jacket—yet I feel oddly naked.

All around me runners, riders and horses in a multicolored, multilegged mass simultaneously pace, jog or jig. But here I am at Prescott Valley's 23rd annual Man Against Horse Race—with no horse. I rode this event in 2004, but this year I'll be translating the miles of mountain trail into words instead of sweat, aches, thirst and exhilaration. Even so, I can feel the adrenaline surge when ride manager Ron Barrett bellows: "The trail is now open for competition."

Not many bar bets last a quarter of a century, but today's event started with

a seemingly foolish 1880s wager in Prescott's historic Palace Bar that a human could outrun a horse on a 60-mile trail.

The route has changed, but the race remains.

Originally, mixed five-person teams covered 60 miles from Williams to Verde in two days. The first full team across the finish line won. But now ultrarunners and endurance riders compete as individuals in the 25- or 50-mile divisions. The 25-mile contestants must finish in less than six hours, while 50-mile competitors have 12 hours. There's also a 12-mile ride and run—just for fun.

Longer than a 26.2-mile marathon, ultraruns can cover 100 miles in a single day. The Man Against Horse Race is one

of only two events left where runners and riders compete on the same course. So pedestrians and equestrians regard one another with bemused amazement, but cheer one another along as the day goes on.

The 50-mile loop course begins on flat ranch roads, follows washes and trails into Prescott National Forest, climbs 1,800 feet over Mingus Mountain, peaks at 7,600 feet, then careens down Yaeger Canyon back to base camp. As a rider on one narrow section of trail, I well remember seeing . . . nothing . . . below my right stirrup. Best to gaze instead at the Colorado Plateau, Sedona, and the distant San Francisco Peaks while appreciating the four sure-footed hoofs under me. The 100-mile-a-day routes of competitive endurance riding demand strict rules to protect the horses. That includes "vet checks" every 12 to 15 miles, with a 30- to 60-minute stop so that veterinarians

can pull the mostly Arabian horses for medical reasons. That enforced rest stop for the horses gives the human runners their one faint hope of beating their four-legged foes.

The first runner to conquer the mountain and cross the finish line was Paul Bonnet, a history teacher and soccer coach from Phoenix.

On the hoofed side, aptly named mare Fit Asa Fiddle, ridden by local veterinarian Tandi Gaul, won the race and the coveted Best Condition award.

Over time, the race has become a community event. Barrett said proceeds in 2004 "bought 260 25-pound turkeys from Youngs Farm, which provided holiday meals for every food bank in town." Youngs Farm also supplies food for the 250 competitors at the awards dinner, York Motors provides race headquarters and Creative Touch Interiors and Fain Ranch and Mingus Springs Ranch pro-

vide additional support. Yavapai Jeep Posse volunteers man the 19 checkpoints with food and drinks.

So—back to the bet. Who's the fastest, horse or human?

The fastest runners always finish first, since the riders' time includes 75 minutes of required rest stops. Not counting the rest stops, the horses usually win—but not always. In 2001, Dennis Poolheco, a Hopi Tewa Indian, finished in a record six hours and 33 minutes, beating the lead horse by three minutes.

How can humans outrun horses? Rocks—especially on treacherous downhill stretches where riders slow down to spare their horses' legs.

But in truth, it's not really man against horse.

In fact, it's flesh and blood versus rocks and heat.

And on any given day, it's anyone's bet which will win. ■

*Wynne Brown of Tucson has completed more than 3,300 endurance-riding miles, including the 50-mile 2004 Man Against Horse Race. She's hoping to ride it again this year. In her nonequestrian life, she's a K-12 curricular materials developer and author of More Than Petticoats: Remarkable Arizona Women and Falcon Guide to Trail Riding Arizona, both from Globe Pequot Press.*

*Kerrick James says he never felt like such a wimp as he did watching these great athletes ascend the Mingus Mountain switchbacks with 25-plus miles to go. He lives in Mesa.*

### when you go

**Location:** 7 miles northeast of Prescott Valley.  
**Getting There:** From Phoenix, take Interstate 17 to Cordes Junction, then State Route 69 north to Fain Road. Turn right onto Fain Road and drive 7 miles to State Route 89A, turn right and go 3 miles. Past the Yavapai County Fairgrounds entrance, look for a dirt road turnoff posted as "Man v Horse." Go through the gate (remembering to leave it open or closed as you found it) to the base camp a mile down the dirt road near a windmill.  
**Travel Advisory:** This year's race will be held on October 7.  
**Additional Information:** (928) 636-2028; www.endurance.net.



10.01.05

# grand canyon

**Star Tracks** Just after midnight, as October 1 begins on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, the photographer's open exposure captures both his brief campfire and four hours' worth of stars tracking across the night sky. The lights on the horizon are Tuba City, 60 miles away. PAUL GILL

12:01 A.M.



## Bliss in a Boat Apache Lake gleams with possibilities

by Lee Allen photograph by George Stocking

The bass boat bobs gently in the quiet of Apache Lake's predawn skies. A blanket of stars twinkles as night quickly trades place with day. Sounds of sleepy campers stirring mingle with the splash and slurp of fish feeding near the marina. Early rising anglers float their boats off trailers and engines cough to life on October 1. A new day. A clean slate. And proof that while a thousand fishing trips can go by, indistinguishable from one another, one suddenly comes along with a promise of perfection.

Naturalist John Muir observed that anglers become a part of the waters they fish: "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."

As the sun rises, it infuses the sky with a blue not found on artist palettes and mottles the clouds.

Leaving the no-wake launch ramp, decisions must be made. Where to? How to? The Arizona Game and Fish Department report indicates that the 17-mile-long Apache Lake is 95 percent full, with "horrible" fishing for smallmouth bass but a good shot at largemouth.

So conventional wisdom would send anglers east, past Davis Wash and Burnt Corral and the backside of Roosevelt Dam. Naturally, I am drawn westward toward Ash and Alder creeks.

Poet Robert Frost would approve the road less traveled, as cloudbanks cast shadow puppets across the mountains. My troubles evaporate with the mist.

No matter how many times I fish certain waters, they're always different. A certain cove, sunken riprap or a deep-water ridge yields results on one visit but nothing the next time. With daylight established and a slight ripple on the water, we ponder the options—bait-casting, spin-casting or fly-casting? Factor in wind, weather and water temperature. Will they bite on topwater lures like a Zara Spook or a pencil-type stickbait? Will they strike shallow at a small-billed Rapala crankbait or go deeper with a thicker Fat Rap? Do they want the flash of a teardrop twin-bladed spinnerbait or the zigzag of a Z-Ray? Will they wait deep in the thermocline pockets for a Senko or a Wired Worm or a Johnson spoon?

Decisions. Decisions. None of them wrong. Fickle as teenagers, some days they crave burgers, some days tacos. Fishing offers no guarantees, only possibilities.

Asked how he picked a lure, professional bass angler Jimmy Houston replied, "Whatever lure is lying loose in the boat gets tied on first." If that works for a man who's made millions chasing fish, it ought to work for me. And so it does. A

6:37 A.M.

**Just Jokin'** The author thinks he has a largemouth bass on his fishing line, but it turns out to be just a snag.

largemouth bass running a gravel bank and an aggressive channel catfish hiding along a mud line taste treblehooks before I pull them in and let them loose to fight another day.

As daylight dwindles, the water gets choppy, the fish go deeper and anglers head home—thankful for another perfect day on the water, with or without a bucket of fish. ■■■

*A lifelong angler, Lee Allen was honored last year as Arizona Outdoor Writer of the Year and received Hall of Fame status from the Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers. He lives in Tucson.*

*George Stocking of Phoenix, not a fisherman, found the sunrise on the lake moving and memorable.*

### when you go

**Location:** Approximately 65 miles east of Phoenix.

**Getting There:** There are two routes to Apache Lake. For a paved route, from Phoenix take U.S. Route 60 east to Globe and State Route 88. Turn north (left) onto State 88 and drive 35 miles to Roosevelt Dam. Turn south on 88, (also called Apache Trail) and follow for 5 miles to Apache Lake. For a shorter, but rougher route from Phoenix, take U.S. 60 to Apache Junction and paved State Route 88 (Apache Trail) north for 18 miles to Tortilla Flat. Follow State 88, which becomes an unpaved road past Tortilla Flat for another 15 miles to Apache Lake.

**Additional Information:** Apache Lake Marina & Resort, (928) 467-2511; [www.apachelake.com](http://www.apachelake.com). Tonto National Forest, (928) 467-3200; [www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto](http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto). Arizona Game and Fish Department, (480) 981-9400; [www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov).

**Music in the Shadows** The light was soft and the strings humming on October 1 as Mary Bouley played the harp at Sharlot Hall Museum during the Prescott Folk Music Festival. KERRICK JAMES



3:12 P.M.

# Cocktails

## MONTE VISTA LOUNGE



WELCOME BACK  
NAU  
STUDENTS

10.01.05

### flagstaff

Moody Moment Former Monte Vista Lounge bartender J.D. Smith takes a break from the crowded smoke-free zone within. Photographer Geoff Gourley says, "Flagstaff was chaotic because of the Fat Tire Festival on October 1. I came around the corner, and it was quiet, and I loved his pose." GEOFF GOURLEY

6:58 P.M.



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## ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

# Deep Mystery Lost & Found

Will the Sinagua people return to Walnut Canyon?

“Home is this moment and moments are always moving.” — DEEPAK CHOPRA

**WHY DID THE NORTHERN** Sinagua Indians living in the remote narrows of Walnut Canyon in the 14th century vanish? War? Famine? Disease? As I wander their neighborhood some six centuries after they abandoned it, I come up with my own theory: What if the Sinagua never really left?

Daybreak spills over the northern Arizona horizon this October 1 morning, spreading honeyed light across Walnut Canyon National Monument's Island Trail. Senses heighten with each step down the 185-

foot stairway the Civilian Conservation Corps built in 1941, as I set out with photographer Geoff Gourley, his family, my brother John and his wife, Monica.

Above us, ravens flock in alarming numbers. Across the canyon built into rock frozen in mid-ooze, an inaccessible ruin basks in first light—a scene so commanding we are forced to stop and stare. How did they design a house to so perfectly capture dawn without a scrap of modern technology like, say, nylon ropes, climbing shoes or an elevator?

The sight triggers memories for my brother and me who grew up 12 miles from here. When our parents divorced and Dad moved to the east side of town, he and his new wife gifted us with a love of the place through long bike rides and walks along Walnut Canyon Road.

We continue into the canyon that Woodrow Wilson saved from looters by designating it a national monument in 1915, following the trail along light limestone dwellings. Everywhere, buxom cliff rose hangs from the rock, like a feathery

## ▶ trail tips

**Length:** 1.6 miles (Island and Rim Trails combined).  
**Elevation Gain:** 185 feet.  
**Difficulty:** Easy to strenuous.  
**Payoff:** Up-close views of Sinagua ruins, rare plant and wildlife sightings. Autumn months bring spectacular color to canyon foliage.  
**Getting There:** From Flagstaff, take Interstate 40 7.5 miles east of Flagstaff to Exit 204. Take Walnut Canyon Road south for 3 miles to the canyon's rim.  
**Travel Advisory:** Bring plenty of water and wear sunscreen. The paved Island Trail begins and ends with a steep, 185-foot stairway.  
**Additional Information:** Walnut Canyon National Monument, (928) 526-3367; [www.nps.gov/waca/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/waca/index.htm).



8:35 A.M.

## VANISHING TREASURES

A cliff-dwelling aperture in Walnut Canyon reveals the same ancient forest view that greeted the Sinagua on many October firsts. Their name means “without water” in Spanish.

boa, interspersed with verdant stems of Mormon tea, mustard weed, fernbush, wolfberry, Fremont barberry, hoptree and maroon-tipped prickly pear, all lining the pathway like an ancient strip mall, complete with apothecary, produce stand and hardware store.

Not only did the geology offer shelter in the canyon, up on the rim the mix of sand, volcanic ash and soil nurtured crops of corn, squash and beans. Clearly, the Sinagua had it all.

So why leave?

Early archaeologists believed the Sinagua built fortresses high above the canyon floor during a long war with invaders. Perhaps warfare drove them out of the canyon to join neighboring

tribes like the Hopi. However, the only real evidence of violence uncovered so far are the bones of a woman in her 30s who died from an arrowhead through the rib cage.

As we complete the loop to Third Fort and head back up the stairs, the woman with the arrowhead haunts me. Was she just a Sinagua woman who met an unfortunate end, or was she the keystone of her community and the reason it disbanded?

When my dad died in 1982, my family migrated from the places we called home. As in Walnut Canyon, our dwellings suffered no catastrophic damage. Close examination would reveal only the remains of a good life. Still, we split and scattered to find new clans and places. We didn't vanish, but the loss of my father made us different people—no longer able to inhabit the same spaces, no matter how beautiful or bountiful.

We finish by exploring

the short, flat length of the Rim Trail, where the Sinagua farmed. Agaves dangle with ripe fruit along the path, dislodged nuts from piñon trees pepper the ground, ponderosas bleed sap and walnut leaves drift to the creek bed below.

Back at the visitors center, we hear the clear sound of an Indian drum and long chant. We stop to find the drum, but it is hidden somewhere across

the gorge. The greasy ravens circle overhead until the music fades, then swoop off down canyon.

At first, I think that everything is leaving. But then it seems to me that they're just starting a round-trip journey. It may take minutes or millennia, and they'll be different when they return.

But they'll be back. Just like us. **AH**



**online** Before you go on this hike, visit [arizonahighways.com](http://arizonahighways.com) for other things to do and places to see in this area. You'll also find more hikes in our archive.



# Route 66

## Small-town pleasures and characters still abound on the Mother Road

THE SUN IS NOT YET UP, but Angel Delgadillo is bustling around his barbershop, broom in hand, preparing for the day's business. As his wife Vilma straightens stacks of correspondence and souvenirs, the octogenarian steps out onto the sidewalk and gazes up and down Historic Route 66, taking in the cool highland air.

"This is just the way it ought to be," he says, smiling a Cheshire-cat smile and looking benevolently out upon his native, still-asleep town of Seligman. "I hope they leave it just like this. This is what the world seems to love—America as it was, just like this."

As if on cue, two early-birds enter the barbershop, which doubles as an informal museum, tourist-information booth and gift shop. Visiting from Germany, the two are heading west on the famed highway. Angel gladly advises them on what to see along the way. There's no better guide, as Route 66 hands know, for Angel once logged many thousands of miles on the road with his family's big band, once a mainstay of entertainment in little towns throughout northern Arizona.

After calling on the Delgadillos and tucking away coffee and eggs, photographer Terry Moore and I leave Seligman and begin our leisurely journey along the

storied highway. Crossing the northwestern corner of the state, this stretch of asphalt seems tailor-made for unhurried travel, though it wasn't always such a quiet place.

Until the coming of the Interstate Highway System in the 1950s, Route 66 was the main artery between Chicago and Los Angeles. During the Depression, thousands of Midwesterners took to the road to try their luck in the farms and factories of California, the stuff of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. Night and day, towns like Seligman shook with the rumble of traffic.

On this cool October 1 morning, though, we have

10:31 A.M.

**OPEN FOR BUSINESS**  
On October 1, Bonnie Sanders sits outside the kitschy Hackberry Store, which doubles as a Historic Route 66 visitors center. The town of Hackberry, named for Hackberry Mine, lies across the tracks from Route 66, but the store sits right alongside the Mother Road.

Route 66 to ourselves. We edge westward, watching as the sun fills the broad grassy valley that lies beyond Seligman, my truck the only vehicle on the well-tended ribbon of road even as hundreds of cars and trucks fly by on the just-visible interstate.

A Cooper's hawk wings



### travel tips

**Vehicle Requirements:** Two-wheel-drive vehicles are acceptable for this route.  
**Additional Information:** Route 66 Museum in Kingman, toll-free, (866) 427-7866; [www.kingmantourism.org/contact-us/index.php](http://www.kingmantourism.org/contact-us/index.php).

### COMPASSIONATE COWPOKES

A rodeo cowboy tries to rope a steer at an October 1 fund raiser for charity near Grand Canyon Caverns in Peach Springs.

across a field, chasing a cloud of flickers. An immature bald eagle, sitting on a fencepost, stretches his wings in the glow of the rising sun, prompting us to pull over to have a closer look. Perhaps knowing he affords a sight worthy of entry on a birder's life list, the eagle flaps away a millisecond before we can wrestle our cameras out of their bags. Undeterred, and elated to have seen the sight, we scan the looming cliffs for signs of condors, reintroduced in 1996 along these great rock reefs bordering Grand Canyon country.

The day warms as we climb out of the Aubrey Valley to Grand Canyon Caverns, where a few dozen pickups stand parked alongside a pipe corral. We pull in to find an old-fashioned rodeo in

**ROAD MEMORIES** Cool Springs, built as a restaurant and gasoline station in the 1920s, served travelers before they braved the curving road westward into the Black Mountains. The rest stop made of rock shared its heyday with Route 66, and now functions as a museum and gift shop.

progress. Well, perhaps not so old-fashioned, since I hear one young vaquero say to another, "What's happening, dude?"

Once upon a time, "dude" was a fighting word, but none of the cowboys and cowgirls blink. They have other things on their minds. They have come to rope calves and show off their horses on this fine day for a fine reason: At another rodeo a year earlier, a toddler fell 20 feet from a

grandstand and was hurt. He quickly healed, but now there are doctor bills to pay. Thus the rodeo, a fundraiser drawing participants from four counties. Terry and I watch the riding and roping for an hour, visiting with the cowpokes, proud that the tradition of taking care of friends and neighbors is alive and well.

We head west a few miles farther to Peach Springs, the capital of the Hualapai Indian

Reservation, with fortresslike stone government buildings standing as a monument to a troubled frontier. A quarter-hour later we descend into the rocky hollow called Crozier Canyon, whose steep red walls and winding course once challenged the builders of Route 66. On the northern horizon, we catch a glimpse of the Grand Canyon.

In the shadow of the Grand Wash Cliffs, another monument to a bygone era





**CLIMBING CURVES** One of the more striking stretches on picturesque Route 66 climbs slowly into the Black Mountains, hugging the mountainside as it winds toward Sitgreaves Pass.

awaits us in the desert hamlet of Hackberry. Over the years and a couple of changes of ownership there, an old Mobil station, still selling gasoline, has been remade into an impromptu Route

66 museum, a destination guaranteed to thrill antiques aficionados and old-time rock 'n' roll enthusiasts alike. There's even a modest shrine to Elvis, although most of the visitors seem more

interested in the petting zoo of old cars and roadside signs that rings the station.

Twenty-five miles later, we pass through the fast-growing city of Kingman, where big rigs and city traffic fill the old highway. Contrails and parachutists decorate the sky, courtesy of an air show at the Kingman Airport. Rattled by the hubbub, we seek the cool sanctuary of the city's new, artifact-packed Route 66 Museum, where we stop for a soda before heading out on the final leg of our journey.

That segment takes us another 25 miles southwest of Kingman and over the foothills of the rugged Black Mountains, which offer some of the most challenging territory of the whole length of Route 66. The terrain sets a flatlander to wondering whether the migration west was worth the effort. Many a jalopy drew its last breath on this twisty stretch of road, which may explain why the last building before the highway climbs into the rocks is another old service station.

**SIGN OF THE TIMES** Established in 1926, a major western migration path, a nurturer of communities, economies and spirits, Route 66 originally spanned more than 2,400 miles. The well-beaten path was officially decommissioned in 1985, replaced by the Interstate Highway System. Signs (right) directed travelers to multiple cities.

Modern vehicles negotiate the grades out of Cool Springs more easily than those old-time machines, which prompts station caretaker Jacqueline McGraw to grumble good-naturedly, "It's mostly folks from southern California that go by. They drive so fast that they don't stop to look at the beauty—and this is really a beautiful place. The sunrises are spectacular, and you can hear the birds sing. It makes me know why I was put on Earth."

It is a beautiful place, to be sure. As we climb up the rough mountains above Oatman, the sun begins to set, filling the deep canyons that line the Colorado River far below with shadow, yielding a view of one mountain range backing onto another, and another, and another, straight out of a Japanese landscape painting. Terry and I stand quietly, watching flights of birds, enjoying the now-cool breeze.

The silence is broken by a braying wild burro, then a half-dozen of them, clambering down from the rocks for a look at us strangers. Doves coo loudly, punctuated by the keening of a passing hawk. An old Volkswagen bus putt-putts up the western face of the mountain, its Quebecois driver pausing to call out a cheery *Bonsoir* and receiving a howdy in return.

Highway noises of the best kind, those. It is just the way it should be, as Angel Delgadillo told us at the beginning of our daylong journey along a fabled highway that safeguards America as it was. **AM**

#### route finder

Note: Mileages are approximate.

- > **Begin at Historic Route 66** at its junction with Interstate 40 (Exit 121) just outside Seligman.
- > **Drive west on Route 66** approximately 90 miles to Kingman, where the road becomes Andy Devine Avenue and then Old State Highway 66.
- > **Continue through town** approximately 10 miles. The road passes under Interstate 40 at Exit 44.
- > **Continue approximately a quarter mile** and turn left at the junction of Shinarump Road and West Oatman Road.
- > **Oatman lies about 25 miles to the west.** The Arizona portion of Route 66 ends at Interstate 40, Exit 1, about 25 miles south of Oatman.



