



Plan Ahead;  
Don't Miss It

BY CAROL L. ALLEN

Here it is: already February of a new year that just got started “a day or so ago”, didn’t it? No, it was over a month ago, and 2024 is well underway. My how time flies, and it’s easy to miss opportunities because they’re often over even before we make our plans to participate.

So, what’s the bottom line here? Don’t miss out. Ideas are plentiful: from Arizona Game & Fish, from ‘Touch a Truck’ at Lake Pleasant, from Margie Anderson, from Fearless Kitties in Fountain Hills, from the

PLAN, continued on page 18



Touch-A-Truck Returns To Lake Pleasant

Children can interact with oversized vehicles.

Kids, big and small, will have the opportunity to interact with large vehicles such as firetrucks, earth movers, dump trucks, backhoes, excavators, and a bucket truck. Touch-A-Truck is being held at Pleasant Harbor, located on the southeastern shores of Lake Pleasant on February 24 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. The event is FREE. However, there is a \$9.00 entrance fee per vehicle.

Hands-On Experience

Touch-A-Truck affords kids the unique opportunity to climb on their favorite oversized vehicles, without parent reprimand. In addition to the large vehicles on-hand, this interactive event features food trucks, DJ, and a kids’ sand lot with toy trucks.



“Touch-A-Truck is a unique opportunity for kids,” said Deneen Ramirez, event director at Pleasant Harbor. “They will be able to be hands-on and explore a wide variety of large vehicles.”

But Wait, There’s More

Pleasant Harbor ([www.pleasantharbor.com](http://www.pleasantharbor.com)) is open to the public 365 days a year, featuring boat, sail and Jet Ski rentals, kayaks, paddle boards, fishing guides, boat and R/V sales, *H2-Whoa!*, the world’s largest floating water-slide, *The Phoenix* boat cruise, slip rentals and storage, as well as a full-service RV resort with 253 spaces, featuring a clubhouse, store, heated pool and Jacuzzi; they’re all here.

From the Phoenix area, Pleasant Harbor is the closest entrance to Lake Pleasant, conveniently located off Carefree Highway and 87<sup>th</sup> Avenue (8708 W. Harbor Boulevard, Peoria, AZ 85383). Visitors exiting I-17, travel west on Carefree Highway, or take North 99<sup>th</sup> Avenue/North Lake Pleasant Parkway from Bell Road to Carefree Highway and then west to 87<sup>th</sup> Avenue and then onto Harbor Boulevard.

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Let’s do February.

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Welcome the guests.

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LAND CRUISING

Take a Hike



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WESTERN WILDLIFE

Shhh. The eagles are nesting.

Katie Hobbs Nominates  
James E. Goughnour To Arizona  
Game And Fish Commission



GOUGHNOUR

Katie Hobbs has announced the nomination of James E. Goughnour as a member of the Arizona Game and Fish Commission.

Goughnour is currently finishing a five-year term that began after his appointment in 2019 by then-Governor Doug Ducey. He served as commission chair in fiscal year 2023 and was one of two candidates forwarded in November by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission Appointment Recommendation Board for Hobbs’ consideration.

He has lived in Arizona for more than 45 years and is a driving force for wildlife conservation and outdoor recreation in the Payson area. He is the owner of Rim Country Custom Rods, a small business.

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Arizona Renaissance  
Festival Announces:  
‘NEW In 2024!’

We are thrilled to announce the following new and exciting additions for the upcoming 2024 Arizona Renaissance Festival season. Whether you are a seasoned festival-goer or a first-time visitor, prepare to be captivated by the exquisite new additions awaiting your arrival. Huzzah!

The Hops!! - New Pub Crawl

Introducing “The Hops!!” - a brand new pub crawl at the Arizona Renaissance Festival!

Whether you’re a seasoned pub crawler or new to the experience, this limited capacity, ticketed event guarantees laughter and revelry that will take place

REN FAIRE, continued on page 18



Game And Fish  
Offers Ideas For  
A Better 2024

We’ve said goodbye to 2023 and now is a good time to reflect on the changes that we want — or need — to make in 2024; how about adding an outdoors resolution to your list?

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) offers some simple resolutions, any one of which should be easy for an outdoors enthusiast to stick to —

• **Fish local.** Make it a point to wet a line this year at one (or more) of the state’s 50-plus waters in the Community Fishing Program that are seasonally stocked with channel catfish, bluegill and rainbow trout. This is a great way to introduce a youngster to a fun, lifelong sport. Your reward? Hearing that youngster squeal with delight while pulling in his or her first

IDEAS, continued on page 18



**February Feature**  
During February, Fearless Kitties of Fountain Hills, Ariz., is seeking \$10,000 in donations to try to get matching funds. Any amount is welcome and can be a gift in memory of either a loved one or even a beloved pet. At the rescue home, there is also a Giving Tree with ornaments for sale. There will also be a raffle. Fearless Kitty Rescue is known for saving kitties in need, its Continuing Care Program and is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) cat/kitten rescue group. More information is available at [www.fearlesskittyrescue.org](http://www.fearlesskittyrescue.org) or by contacting [info@fearlesskittyrescue.org](mailto:info@fearlesskittyrescue.org).



**BEGINNING FEBRUARY 3**  
Escape to the 36th Annual Arizona Renaissance Festival where pleasure and celebration are the only orders of the day as decreed by the Queen! February 3 – March 31st, 2024, open Saturdays and Sundays and Presidents’ Day Monday, 10am – 6pm.



**FEBRUARY 6**  
The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) reminds hunters that the deadline to apply for 2024 hunt permits tags issued through the draw process for pronghorn and elk is right around the corner. To apply, visit <https://draw.azgfd.com/>. The deadline for the department to receive all applications is **11:59 p.m. (Arizona time) Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024.**

**Editor’s Note:** Please submit announcements for AZBW/WOT’s calendar of events — “Downstream” — to [editor@azbw.com](mailto:editor@azbw.com). To guarantee placement, as room allows, items must be received by the tenth (10th) of the month prior to publication. Every effort is made to ensure accuracy, but we assume no responsibility for print errors or omissions. We also reserve the right to edit each item. Please include the name of the event, the date and time, the location, the organization, and contact information. You can also submit your event individually at [westernoutdoortimes.com/classifieds](http://westernoutdoortimes.com/classifieds).



**FEBRUARY 17**  
RidersUSA presents Arizona’s annual “Celebrate & Protect The 2nd Amendment” on the Capitol lawn, 1700 W. Washington Street, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. Features a great lineup of local and national speakers and sponsored by MMP GUNS. Also at the event: vendors, rifle raffle, food.



**FEBRUARY 24**  
Kids, big and small, will have the opportunity to interact with large vehicles such as fire trucks, earth movers, dump trucks, backhoes, excavators, and bucket truck. Touch-A-Truck is being held at Pleasant Harbor, located on the southeastern shores of Lake Pleasant on February 24 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.



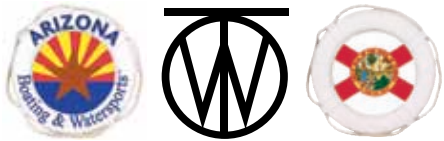
**MARCH 22**  
The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is seeking public input on a proposed amendment to its resource management plan to significantly reduce the amount of open area for recreational target-shooting within the Sonoran Desert National Monument, near Gila Bend. Comments may be submitted to [BLM\\_AZ\\_SDNMtargetshooting@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_AZ_SDNMtargetshooting@blm.gov), or by mail to BLM Sonoran Desert National Monument, Attn.: RMPA EA, 2020 E. Bell Road, Phoenix, AZ 85022. All comments must be received by Friday, March 22.



**MARCH 31**  
Each year, more than 4,000 high school students from across the country participate in the VFW Auxiliary’s Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest. The contest began in 1979 to recognize up-and-coming artists and encourage patriotism in youth. This contest comprises only two-dimensional entries. The 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest is exclusively for three-dimensional art pieces. *See story on page 16.* ■



**PRESIDENTS’ DAY**  
*(If we only had one)*  
**February 10**



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**Publisher**.....Jim Allen  
**Editor**.....Carol L. Allen  
**Production**.....Angela Ogden  
**Boating Co-Editors**.....Ed and Debbie Huntsman  
**Outdoors Editor**.....Margie Anderson  
**Shooting Sports Editor**.....John Anderson  
**Special Features Writer**.....Tom Cole  
**Distribution**.....Steve Bazzar

Contributors	
Arizona Game and Fish Department	John Kolezar
ASU Bass Team	Kelsee Haws
Arizona State Parks	Kip Pollay
AWA, AYC, BASS	Lisa Brookes-Haws
Becky Thompson	Lost Our Home
Bill Roecker	LPSC
BoatU.S.	Mary Syrett
Bureau of Reclamation	M.D.R. Proctor
Chelle Brookes	Margie Allen
Christi Brookes	Maxine Brookes
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Debbie Huntsman	National Park Service
DJ Proctor	NAU Athletics
Don McDowell	Patrick Horning
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Fur and Feather	Rory Aikin
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Jay Williams	USA Water Ski
Jerry Tate	Wayne Gustaveson
John Campbell	

**CONTACT US**  
7620 E. McKellips Rd, Ste. 490  
Scottsdale, AZ 85257.  
Arizona: (480) 947-6219  
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# Our waterways are ready, but are you?

To learn more about boating safely in Arizona visit [www.azgfd.gov/boating](http://www.azgfd.gov/boating) or call: 623-236-7258

**Wear a life jacket.  
Every trip.  
Every time.**

Under state law, life jackets are required to be worn by children 12 years old and younger, but it's strongly urged that everyone wear one while on the water. Life jackets save lives.

Before heading out on the water, it's important that boaters check to ensure that their life jackets are in good condition and that they are the right size and fit for passengers. Look for:

- Any rips or tears
- Missing straps
- Broken fasteners
- Ensure that the flotation hasn't shifted.

Life jackets should be inspected each boating season due to the environment's impact on their materials and replaced if necessary.

## Register Your Watercraft

Make sure your vessel's registration is current before heading out on the water! Skip the line and renew your watercraft registration online at [www.azgfd.gov/boating](http://www.azgfd.gov/boating)



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## BoatUS: Be Vigilant When Renewing Your Boat's USCG Vessel Documentation

Official-looking vessel documentation renewal notices can lead to confusion and higher costs.

Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) is advising boaters with vessels that have a U.S. Coast Guard Certificate of Documentation to be wary of any letter arriving by U.S. mail offering renewal.

BoatUS advises that while the Coast Guard does send official annual renewal notices by U.S. mail, other notices being received by BoatUS members are not from the Coast Guard but rather third-party companies whose name or return addresses may appear similar to that of the official U.S. Coast Guard National Vessel Documentation Center (NVDC).

Members have complained that these letters direct them to websites that may be mistaken for the actual Coast Guard NVDC located in Falling Waters, West Virginia, and appear to show a significant increase in the annual fee to renew Coast Guard documentation.

A 2017 Coast Guard bulletin says in part:

"The NVDC is aware that there are commercial entities that offer to manage the certification/renewal process on behalf of vessel owners for a fee. The Coast Guard does not endorse any of these companies, and the companies do not operate on behalf of the Coast Guard in any



way. Any fees charged or agreements offered by such companies are in no way associated with the NVDC certification process. In addition, these companies are not authorized to issue any form of documentation, including travel letters and/or permits that authorize operation of ANY vessel. Customer complaints can be made through the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) website at <https://www.ftc.gov/>."

While third-party companies may legitimately provide services to assist with vessel documentation renewals, the Coast Guard's own renewal process is simple for most vessels and the price, \$26 annually, is often much lower than what third-party services may charge.

To renew, go to the U.S. Coast Guard National Documentation Center website and click on "instructions and forms," then "Certificate of Documentation Application for Renewal." The Coast Guard NVDC also offers renewal options up to five years for recreational vessels.

To be documented, a vessel must measure at least 5 net tons (10,000 lbs.) and,

**VIGILANT, continued on page 17**



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# What 222,000 Boaters Got Wrong

Test your knowledge: Take a BoatUS Foundation online boating course this winter.

The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water offers a range of online boating safety training courses — including 36 free state boating safety courses — that make boating safety education affordable and accessible.

More than 220,000 boaters took one of these boating certification courses last year, which require students to correctly answer some questions at the conclusion of each course. Which questions did course takers get wrong most often? While we can't outright give you the answers, here are some topics that course takers — or any boater — would be wise to study.

1. Do you know which way air moves? If you had said “from the prevailing direction,” you’d be incorrect. Air ultimately moves from high-pressure areas to low-pressure areas, caused by the uneven heating of the earth’s surface. Weather for Boaters has more.

2. You’re in Mexico on the hook and you see a yellow (Q) flag flying on the boat next to you. Being a friendly type, you welcome the neighboring crew to port with coffee and muffins, but they politely decline. What’s up? Did you just happen to have bad luck to find yourself next to the only cranky boat crew in Baja? While the flag indicates the vessel is healthy, it also means it is requesting approval — under quarantine — to enter port. Therefore, it’s best to hold off on the kaffeeklatsch until they’ve cleared



JENNIFER DADAMO/BOATUS FOUNDATION

**Weather for Boaters is one of many online education courses offered by the BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water**

in. Whether you’re headed near or afar, Planning Your Cruise will help you stay on the right side of the law.

3. There’s a lot of new technology on boats today, and one of them growing in popularity is AIS, or Automatic Identification System, which can help you steer clear of ship traffic. How does it work? AIS uses VHF radio frequencies to broadcast the AIS information, including a vessel’s unique identification, position, course and speed. AIS is also likely one of the last few remaining things that your smartphone cannot do by itself ... yet.

4. Can you explain compass variation and deviation? Variation is caused by the misalignment of the magnetic lines of force with the meridians of longitude (those imaginary lines from North Pole to South Pole), while deviation is caused by the effects of the magnetic properties of the vessel. What this also means is due to deviation, you might want to remove the wrench you left in the storage drawer

located just under the helm compass to ensure accurate functioning. Modern Marine Navigation has more.

5. What is the length of a mile? When you’re setting up your GPS, it’s a big deal whether you choose statute miles or nautical miles. A statute mile, at 5,280 feet, is about 12% shorter than a nautical mile, or **6,076** feet. The BoatUS Foundation’s How to Use GPS course shows how that whopping 796 feet of difference is more than enough room to get into trouble.

6. You’re in your powerboat heading down the lake and another powerboat

less than a half-mile ahead appears to be meeting or crossing with you and makes two short horn blasts. What does this mean? If you said that the boats intend to pass you starboard side to starboard side, congratulate yourself for this correct answer! You can learn all the signals you need to operate a boat safely by taking a free, state-specific Basic Boating Course.

To help boaters make the decision to take an online course this winter, the Foundation is offering a 25% discount on all paid courses through April 30 using the code SAVE-ON ■



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## Will Your Emergency PLB or EPIRB Work When You Need It?

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# All Good Things Must Come To An End; And So It Is With The ‘Gail Hine Presents Sailing Convention For Women’

FROM GAIL HINE

As the director and producer of all past conventions for 32 years — presenter of recent 5 years under my name and prior 27 years under the Southern California Yachting Association — it is time to retire from this very rewarding and popular event!

**WHY?** At 83, my health has interfered with my physical ability to manage the event. Early out-reach to support staff did not materialize, and therefore I could not go forward with planning.

**THANKS** to all in the past decades who have volunteered for coaching, instructing, donating boats, presenting unique and interesting workshops — all that made this originally-unique event a format for others across the country to emulate.

**THANKS** to those who spent several months at the planning meetings making the convention well organized



and smooth. And to our staff who handled merchandise and registration with great efficiency.

**THANKS** to many long-time and valuable sponsors who provided generous financial and product support — a substantial part of the event’s success!

**THANKS** to Bahia Corinthian Yacht Club with its outstanding staff and club facility for 28 years — an impressive venue! ■

## Auto Fire Suppression Turns Crisis Into Close Call

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A Sea-Fire NFD Pre-Engineered Fire System can be configured to protect spaces between 125 and 1,800 cu. ft. It has an activation temperature of 175°-225° F.

Engineered for smaller spaces, an NFG system is ideal for smaller spaces between 25 and 100 cu. ft. Depending on the model, activation is either between 200° and 250° F. or 175° and 225° F.

Sea-Fire NFD and NFG Series Pre-Engineered Fire Systems have a heat sensor valve that automatically releases the suppression agent. The systems can also be activated via a manual bi-directional pull cable. A safety pin arms and disarms the cable for maintenance and inspection.

Most systems can be installed vertical or horizontal for greater flexibility in tight



and confined engine compartments. Both Pre-Engineered Fire Systems utilize FK-5112 Fire Suppression Fluid. Non-toxic, it has zero ozone depletion potential and an extremely low global warming potential (GWP) of one. Non-conductive and non-corrosive, it will not damage machinery or electronics during discharge. Plus, it’s a nitrogen-pressurized gaseous form that leaves no oily or powdery residue behind.

Sea-Fire Pre-Engineered Fire Systems have an operating temperature range of 20° to 130° F. They come with a marine-grade mounting bracket, system status indicator light mounted in a faceplate and full instructions for a fast, trouble-free installation. Depending on the model, they weigh between 6 and 175 lbs.

There are 36 models of Sea-Fire NFD Series Pre-Engineered Fire Systems; prices start at \$974. Eight models of the NFG Series start at \$384.

Contact local dealers or Sea-Fire Marine, 9351-G Philadelphia Rd., Baltimore, MD 21237. 410-687-5500. [www.sea-fire.com](http://www.sea-fire.com). ■

# Boating Infrastructure Grants Offer Funding For Docks, Visiting Boater Amenities

States and U.S. territories that shared \$19.8 million in total BIG funding in the 2023 grant cycle included Arizona.

Does your town or region make it easy for boaters to visit and spend locally? Having safe, protected dockage and offering amenities to these tourists by water can bring boaters in, but how do you pay for it? The Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program, first championed by Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS), has proven effective in attracting boaters and their spending dollars by providing safe transient dockage as well as a range of important boater amenities.

Since its inception in 1998, BIG has provided \$283 million for safe harbor facilities including infrastructure such as piers, breakwaters, floating docks, bulkheads, mooring buoys, day docks, dinghy docks, slips, bathrooms, showers, laundries, recycling stations, fuel docks, utilities, navigation aids, limited dredging and other services. A key BIG requirement is that grant funds must be designed for use



SCOTT MEISTER – USFWS

**A Tier 1 Boating Infrastructure Grant in Brunswick, Georgia, funded installation of dockside power pedestals, giving local utility access to visiting boaters.**

by for visiting transient boats greater than 26 feet in length for stays of up to 15 days.

Managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service but administered locally



SCOTT MEISTER – USFWS

**BIG gives traveling boaters parking spots to safely tie up for the night and facilitates access and tourism spending in waterfront communities, such as this recently completed Tier 1 BIG project in New Iberia, Louisiana.**

through state boating agencies, BIG funding comes from taxes that boaters and anglers pay on motorboat fuel, fishing tackle and equipment, imported boats,

and small engines. BIG project costs are shared through matching funds, typically provided by a state, county or town. The application deadline for public municipalities, marinas or boat clubs varies in each state, as do program requirements. To get started, the State’s Organization for Boating Access offers BIG Applicant’s Guide as well as a list of state boating agency contacts. State application deadlines are typically each Fall.

Here’s a look at the BIG program by the numbers:

**\$20 million:** The amount of BIG funds available to local municipalities and marinas in the 2024 grant cycle for the construction, renovation and maintenance of safe harborage for transient vessels.

**2:** The number or type of BIG funding “tiers” accepting applications. Tier 1 provides funds for smaller projects up to \$200,000 and is noncompetitive. Tier 2 provides a maximum of \$1.5 million per application and is competitive. Both tiers require a minimum additional 25% matching share funds.

**6,800+:** The number of transient berths across the U.S. that the BIG program has created since its inception. Each

**GRANTS, continued on page 9**

### Tutoring, Editing, Writing

As a college English teacher, editor, and writer of both fiction and non-fiction for many years, I am available online (or by U.S. mail) for tutoring, editing, proofreading, copyediting, and writing. I have skills in academic research at both high school and college levels and can also assist those working toward their GEDs, those who need help with resumes, and with both advertising and proposals.

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# Catching Cold Front Crappie: Fish Slowly, Methodically

BY MARGIE ANDERSON

A lot of old-timers will tell you that the best way for a crappie fisherman to deal with a cold front is to stay home. Unfortunately, most of us don't have the luxury of choosing which days to go fishing. Why does it always seem like the dreaded cold fronts pass through just before the weekend, or right in the middle of the tournament?

### Crappie Recover Faster

The effects of a cold front are particularly devastating in the spring. A five degree drop in surface temperature can drive the fish off the beds in a flash, and stop a great bite in its tracks. Crappie may react to a cold front much faster than largemouth bass, but the upside to that is that they also recover faster.

There are a couple of ways you can react to cold front conditions and put some fish in the boat, and you can also prepare for a cold front so you'll spend less time looking for fish and more time catching them. Kelly Matthews guides for crappie on Weiss Lake in Alabama. When he has a trip scheduled, he can't just postpone it because of weather. Over the years, he's found ways to continue to put slabs in the boat and keep his clients happy.

### Getting Crappie To Bite

"You can be loading the boat every trip with slab crappie up on the spawning flats," says Kelly, "and then it happens: a cold front brings a nasty north wind and shuts down the spawn just like that." The surface temperature on Weiss Lake can drop from 52 to 47 degrees and shut the trolling bite down in a heartbeat, and the effects can last three to four days. Kelly says that on Weiss Lake, a lot of anglers just call it quits and decide to park in front of the television for a few days. Not having that option, he has learned that by changing his tactics and slowing his presentation, he can get the crappie to bite.

Normally, spring will find Matthews trolling jigs through the shallows, but once a front moves through that bite seems to disappear. "You have to keep in mind that the more severe the cold front is, the further back to the main lake the crappie will retreat," he says. At other times, he finds that although there are fish in the same areas he's been fishing, they simply won't bite.

### Same Place, Different Method

One of Kelly's cold front techniques is to fish the same area he found crappie in before the front passed, but using a different presentation. "A lot of times those same fish can be caught by slowing way down using a fly and cork rig," he explains. A fly and cork rig is not only a great way to fish for reluctant biters, it's also easy to use on windy days.

Matthews prefers a pear-shaped "cork" with just the bottom of the bobber secured to the line. This allows the cork to float



John shows off a nice slab he caught deep on a jig during a massive cold front at Roosevelt.

on its side in the water, then stand straight up when a fish takes the fly. This built-in strike indicator makes it easy for even a beginner to know when to set the hook.

### Jigs Are Crucial Part

The jigs are a crucial part of Kelly's cork and fly presentation. He uses two 1/32-ounce Southern Pro jig heads tied about fourteen inches apart on 6-pound-test Sufix line. The two 1/32-ounce jigs are light enough to allow the cork to rest on its side – anything heavier will tend to stand the cork upright. He ties the jigs on with loop knots to allow them as much action as possible.

"I put a Southern Pro two-inch Hot Grub on the bottom hook and a two-inch Stinger on the top hook so I get different styles at different depths," Kelly says. "Another thing that will help you get the fish in the boat is to keep an EGO Reach crappie net close by – those inactive fish are sometimes just barely hooked and they will get off if you try to lift them into the boat."

### Tempting The Fish

The best way to work this rig is to make the longest casts you can, then work the rig very slowly by twitching the rod tip to move it back toward the boat. Matthews fishes his cork and fly rig on an 8-foot B'n'M pole so he can really sling it out there. What he's trying to do is give the jigs a good chance to come in contact with the isolated stumps that are scattered over the flats. He's going after the same fish that he was catching aday earlier with a trolling rig.

Often, those fish will remain in the same area after a cold front, but hunker in tighter to cover. Twitching this rig ever so slowly across the flat will let the lures stay in the strike zone long enough to tempt the fish into biting.

### Success With Technique

"I've had great success with this technique when dealing with moderate cold fronts that haven't caused a sudden drop



In spite of the cold, John and his buddy the late Leroy Price put plenty of crappie in the boat on Roosevelt.

in the surface temperature," says Kelly. This presentation requires confidence and a knowledge of the area you are fishing.

Most of the time you'll be fan-casting to open water with no visible structure. If you were just catching fish there a few days before, you know what kind of structure is beneath the surface. Keep the jigs just barely moving, and be patient. The fly and cork can be a real day-saver, especially in early spring.

### Finesse For Severe Fronts

Since not all the crappie in the lake move up to spawn at the same time, there are always some located on channel ledges adjacent to the spawning flats this time of year, says Matthews. When a bad front blows through, he moves out to those channel ledges and targets those deeper

fish. "The major factor for this kind of fishing is the north winds that usually accompany the front," he explains. "I try to plan ahead by knowing a few spots that are protected from a hard north wind."

### Launch In Protected Areas

A good lake map and a little pre-trip studying will help you locate areas that are out of the wind to some degree. If the wind is really bad it can be difficult to navigate from place to place, so you may want to plan your launch site so you're close to protected areas.

Bottom bumping is a finesse technique for crappie that requires a lot of patience as well as excellent boat control skills. This can make it difficult, so it's usually Kelly's second choice – made after the fly and cork technique has failed to produce. "At this point we're dealing with a sudden deep freeze that has sent most of the crappie back out to the comforts of deeper water," says Kelly.

### Live Minnows

These fish are fairly inactive, so Matthews uses live minnows to get them to bite. It's a vertical presentation on a drop-rig, very similar to fishing a drop-shot rig for bass. He spools up with 12-pound-test Sufix. The heavier line means that most of the time he can pull a snagged jig loose. "There's nothing worse than having to retie your rig every time you hang a stump," he says.

The hook he uses is an Eagle Claw #2 Aberdeen, tied on about eighteen to twenty inches above a half-ounce bell sinker. He fishes this rig on an eight-foot B'n'M pole. This rod gives him plenty of length so he can get the presentation away from

CRAPPIE, continued on page 10





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## GRANTS

Continued from page 7

one is an economic engine for the local community that benefits traveling boaters.

**381:** The number of transient boat slips and berths that were funded at the previous 2022/23 Tier 2 level, along with thousands of feet of side-tie transient docking space. Tier 1 2022/23 grants provided nearly \$17 million in funding for smaller projects in 10 states.

**26:** The minimum length in feet of a recreational boat that the BIG program is designed to attract. This is about the size of a vessel with three key onboard amenities critical for overnight stays or

cruises: 1. a cooking facility, 2. a sleeping facility, and 3. bathroom or "head."

**20:** The number of years a municipality must commit to keeping a BIG project available and open to the boating public. Access to facilities must be maintained at all times during the boating season, and BIG obligations continue with any transfer or sale of a boating facility.

**22:** The number of states and U.S. territories that shared \$19.8 million in total BIG funding in the 2023 grant cycle: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands. ■

# Jump In The ‘Pool’ For Population Management Hunts

AZGFD aims to meet elk objectives.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) is seeking to bolster its pool of hunters who apply to be randomly selected throughout the year for specific population management hunts.

Population management hunts enhance the department’s ability to meet population and habitat management objectives when traditional harvest strategies are not meeting these objectives. At this time, a population management hunt for any elk is planned for February in portions of Game Management Unit 28, near Safford, Ariz. The date for this hunt is pending at press time.

Only those hunters who have submitted a Hunter Pool Application for population management hunts will have a chance to be drawn. Applicants should note that if they choose to participate in a population management hunt, and fill their annual bag limit for that species, they cannot take part in a general season for that species even



if selected through the standard draw process. A successful hunter is still eligible to purchase a bonus point for elk in the upcoming general draw, however.

AZGFD encourages all interested hunters to complete a “Hunter Pool Application, which can be found — along with detailed information about population management hunts — on Page 51 of the “2023-2024 Arizona Hunting Regulations.”

Applicants should mail their completed application and nonrefundable application fee of \$13 for residents, or \$15 for nonresidents (do not send cash), to Arizona Game and Fish Department, Attn.: Drawer FAB, 5000 W. Carefree Highway, Phoenix,

**POPULATION, continued on page 18**

# Raffle Proceeds Benefit Arizona’s Wildlife

Why don’t you give someone special (perhaps yourself!) a ticket for Conservation First USA’s 2024 raffle! Seven lucky individuals will win one of seven special big-game tags (bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, pronghorn, bison and turkey) for the 2024–25 hunting season.

**Buy tickets today!**

New this year: Purchase the “All 7 Package” and receive one entry per species, PLUS a free entry for the Swarovski Optics Package.

**Details:**

- Raffle tickets are \$10 each, per species. There is no limit to the number of tickets customers can purchase.
- The deadline to purchase tickets is 9 p.m. on July 7, 2024.
- The winner can hunt for 365 days (Aug. 15, 2024 to Aug. 14, 2025).
- Raffle tickets must be purchased \*online (see below), and the buyer must



be in Arizona at the time of purchase.

- The drawing will be conducted in July 2024.

Every dollar raised for each species through the raffle is returned to the Arizona Game

and Fish Department and managed by the Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee. With input from local habitat partners across the state and sponsoring organizations involved in the fundraising, project priorities are determined that provide the most benefit to each species.

In the 18-year history of the Arizona Big Game Super Raffle, more than \$11 million have been raised for wildlife and wildlife management in Arizona. ■

## CRAPPIE

Continued from page 9

the boat, and makes landing the fish easier than with a longer pole.

**Important: How You Hook Your Minnows**

“I think it’s very important how you hook your minnows,” emphasizes Kelly. “You want to hook them so they stay alive longer and look natural to the crappie, so I

hook mine straight through the eyes.”

Weiss Lake is a man-made lake of about 30,000 acres. The deepest channels, says Matthews, are twenty-five to thirty feet deep. These creek and river channels are where the crappie head when a severe cold front hits. When you begin to fish these deeper areas you are looking for one thing – structure. There is no point wasting time fishing barren sections of the ledges, insists Kelly.

**Pre-Study Of Lake Map**

This is where pre-study of a lake map pays off. First of all, Matthews finds the channels. Then he moves over them slowly, looking for structure. A depthfinder is a vital tool for this search. He keeps the boat moving slowly by heading into the wind.

The heavy weight helps keep the line vertical as you bump it gently up and down, keeping the weight in contact with the bottom. Once he sees structure, Kelly stops and takes the time to work the structure from all sides, letting the rig rest for a few seconds each time he moves it. On Weiss Lake, he can usually manage to pick up six to eight nice slabs off each piece of structure using this technique.

On Roosevelt Lake, a cold front will send crappie to deeper water immediately. “It’s the worse thing that can happen in the spring,” Curt Ramboused to tell me. “Five degrees difference is all it takes, and they’re gone. They can go from being two feet deep to being twelve or fourteen feet deep just like that.”

When this happens, Rambo heads out to the secondary dips or ditches. Roosevelt is a typical Arizona reservoir, which means it can be well over a hundred feet deep in places. There is very little structure besides rocks and a few old mesquites. Most

of what the fish use in Roosevelt is rock piles. But savvy anglers like Curt will put out brush just like crappie fishermen everywhere.

“Go out to your deeper stuff and slow way down,” Curt recommends. His specialty is vertical jigging, and when the bite has been shut down by a cold front he slows down to half as fast as he was fishing before. He often goes to a smaller bait and a lighter jig. The lighter jig falls slowly and gives you more time in the strike zone.

“You’ll have to put your jig right in the brush and wiggle it two or three times,” says Curt, “and when they bite all you get is a little slack in your line.” This kind of fishing requires an extraordinary amount of concentration and finesse, and can be difficult to do in the wind. If wind is a problem you can move to another area or try a heavier jig. The fish are lethargic, so you have to tease them into biting.

A cold front, even a severe one, doesn’t have to mean calling off that fishing trip. Pack a jacket, do a little map searching beforehand, and be prepared to fish slowly and methodically. With a little patience, you can put fish in the boat despite the weather. ■

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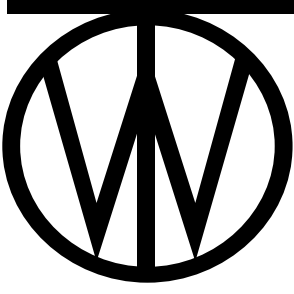
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# Fill Your New Year’s Bucket List To The Brim

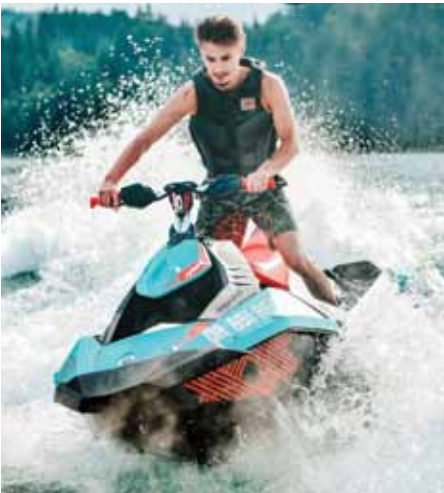
Go Lake Havasu presents ideas to do just that.

The 2007 movie *The Bucket List* made the term “bucket list” a cultural phenomenon. According to the Internet Movie Database, it’s the comedy-drama where Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman play two terminally ill men who escape from a cancer ward and head off on a road trip with a wish list of to-dos before they die.

Along Arizona’s West Coast, home of the historic London Bridge and 60 miles of Colorado River shoreline, tourism officials like to think of a bucket list as a fun way to help people live their best lives at all stages of life.

“Bucket list adventures aren’t only for adrenaline junkies,” says Susan Smith, Go Lake Havasu’s newly-appointed CEO. “Want to raise your blood pressure? We’ve got you covered. But for those seeking calmer experiences, such as enjoying nature, learning about local history or e-bike riding, Lake Havasu City delivers.”

Here are a few ideas for your list:  
**Cruising On Personal Watercraft (PWC) Is A Great Way To Tour The Lake**



**Go Fast on a JetSki** – Arizona Boat Rentals offers for rent all-purpose boat rentals, personal watercraft (JetSki, WaveRunner, Sea-Doo) water toys, guided water sport lessons and boat tours. The WaveRunners have powerful, super-charged engines with fantastic speed to pull up double skis, wakeboarders, kneeboards, tubes, air chairs and wakeskates, often at speeds of 50 to 75 mph. (Sample rental pricing: a new 2023 Sea Doo RXT 300 hp Supercharged with sound system rents for \$2,045 per Day.)



**Hard To Beat A Wallaby When It Comes To Cuteness**  
*Visit Keepers of the Wild Nature Park*  
– Embark on a wild journey through a picturesque 175-acre canyon in Valentine, Arizona, the heart of Historic Route 66. Just 20 minutes east of Kingman, you’ll be in close range of over 130 wild animals such as lions, tigers, wolves, bears, leopards, primates, and various wildlife indigenous to the Southwest. (\$20 p.p. adults, admission and guided safari tours \$30.)



**Take a Cruise On A Floating Tiki Hut**  
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For more details, see [www.golakehavasu.com](http://www.golakehavasu.com) ■





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## Arizona’s Easiest Trails And Easy Hikes To Start Your Arizona Outdoors Journey

### Activities For Beginners

Venturing into the great outdoors can seem a bit daunting at first. Here are some beginner-friendly suggestions to get you started and have you feeling like an Arizona outdoors pro in no time.

#### Double Butte Loop Trail

[www.phoenix.gov/parks/trails/locations/papago-park/trail-map](http://www.phoenix.gov/parks/trails/locations/papago-park/trail-map)

**Papago Park**  
**Phoenix/Tempe**

Over the course of 2.2 miles, the Double Butte Loop Trail circumnavigates the large red sandstone Papago Buttes that are visible from vantage points throughout much of metro Phoenix. The rocky dirt trail is generally wide and flat, making it a pleasant hike for the whole family (and even a pooch on a leash).

#### Blue Mesa Trail

**Petrified Forest National Park**  
**Holbrook (3 hours northeast of Phoenix)**

Blue Mesa Trail transports hikers into another world with a 1-mile loop strewn with petrified wood and petroglyphs among white and blue-hued bentonite clay badlands. Alternately paved and gravel, the mostly flat loop is a bit steeper at the beginning and end.


#### Aspen Loop Trail

[www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=55064](http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coconino/recarea/?recid=55064)




**Coconino National Forest**  
**Flagstaff**

Located at [Arizona Snowbow](#) on the western side of the San Francisco Peaks, the 2.5-mile Aspen Loop Trail is an easy hike that’s among the most photogenic in the state: lined with aspen, spruce, pines and wildflowers, and serving up views of volcanic fields, meadows, mountains and on clear days, even the Grand Canyon. ■



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# Seven Great Places To Take Winter Guests

BY MARGIE ANDERSON

This is the perfect time of year to take your winter guests or your family to some of the wonderful places in Arizona that get a bit warm in the summertime. We've taken the granddaughters to all of these places, and believe it or not, Trinity tells us that the Hassayampa Preserve was her favorite hike ever!

Some of these places are free to visit, and others are not, so I'm including current prices as well as how to get there and what not to miss! Enjoy!

## Boyce Thompson Arboretum

The girls have loved going here ever since they were little. There are great trails, bridges, mining shacks, and even a small lake to explore. Our favorite trail is the High Trail, which has rock stairways and gives you an amazing view of the beautiful desert around Superior. You can bring your well-behaved dog, too.



One of the trails at Boyce Thompson has a gorgeous bridge that goes over Queen Creek.



Boyce Thompson Arboretum has lots of fun trails that the kids love.

The Arboretum has incredible gardens with plants from all over the world, and they have daily general tours as well as specialty walks if you want to focus on birds, geology, or botany. They also have classes and programs including gardening, gourd art, and photography. You can find out all about the programs at [www.tbarboretum.org](http://www.tbarboretum.org).

*Cost: \$24.95 13+, \$10 5-12, under 5 free.*

*Address: 37615 E. Arboretum Way Superior, AZ 85173 Just take US 60 east and watch for the sign near Superior.*

*Hours: May thru September Mon-Sun 6 am to 3 pm Closed Tuesdays June – September*

*Oct thru April open daily 8 am – 5 pm Closed Thanksgiving and Christmas*



John and I couldn't resist a selfie on this beautiful spot on one of the trails at Gilbert Riparian Preserve.

## Gilbert Riparian Preserve At Water Ranch

This is an amazing place with a number of ponds and trails, lots of trees, and an incredible number of birds almost all year long. You can spend hours here wandering around looking at the different birds on the ponds. The kids love the trails and they also have Parent/Tot programs, After School Adventures, and more. This place is beautiful and the amazing thing is that it's right in the city! You'd never know it once you get on the trails though. You can bring your dog along, too! Find out more at [www.gilbertaz.gov](http://www.gilbertaz.gov)

*Cost: Free unless you want to rent a facility.*

*Address: 2757 E Guadalupe Rd, Gilbert AZ 85234*

*Hours: 5:30 am – 10 pm Trails open dawn to dusk*



The wide flat trails at the Gilbert Riparian Preserve wind around and between a number of ponds that are irresistible to many different kinds of birds.



Sabino Creek creates a lush riparian area that draws lots of wildlife.

## Sabino Canyon

This amazingly beautiful canyon is part of the Coronado National Forest. John and I visited there years ago and had a wonderful time. We saw a lot of wildlife, birds, insects, etc. What we did was take the tram to the top of the road, then we walked down. It's closed to pri-



Taking the tram to the top of the road allows you to walk down at your leisure, stopping to see the beautiful views of Sabino Creek and the surrounding canyon.

vate vehicles, but there are two different shuttles that have 30-minute round trips and three stops. You're welcome to get off at any stop. There are 30 miles of trails, and a bookstore with maps and souvenirs. No pets allowed in Sabino Canyon and no camping. Find out more at [fs.usda.gov](http://fs.usda.gov). For shuttle info [www.sabinocanyon-crawler.com](http://www.sabinocanyon-crawler.com)

*Cost: Day use \$8 per vehicle*

*Shuttle tours: \$15 for adults, \$8 under 12, \$8 for one-way ride*

*Hours: Sabino Canyon Recreation Area is always open, but the bookstore, visitor center, and shuttle services are only open 8 am – 4:30 pm daily.*

*Address: 5700 N Sabino Canyon Rd, Tucson, AZ 85750*

## Arizona Sonora Desert Museum

This place is a must-see for Arizona as

SEVEN, continued on page 15

# TripleWall Productions

TripleWall Productions specialize in outdoor video production as well as all your video-production needs.

*"We pride ourselves in the quality of our videography and editing. We are all avid outdoor enthusiasts with backgrounds in fishing, hunting, mountain and technical rescue. We understand the outdoors."*

A photograph of three men holding a large fish. The man on the left is wearing a blue shirt and glasses. The man in the middle is wearing a purple shirt. The man on the right is wearing a light blue shirt. They are all smiling and holding the fish. The fish is very large and has a yellow and black pattern on its side.

Contact Mike Wallace at (480) 228-7733 or [triplewallproductions@gmail.com](mailto:triplewallproductions@gmail.com)



**This is just one of the attractions that makes the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum so much fun for kids.**

SEVEN

Continued from page 14

far as I’m concerned. It’s a zoo, a botanical garden, and a museum all in one, and it’s an absolutely amazing and beautiful place. Just walking around the place is an adventure, and you’ll see desert animals like wolves, deer, mountain lions, bobcats, bighorn sheep, javelina – you name it. The kids always especially liked the snakes and spiders, and there is always a lot of oohing and aahing in that area! It takes at least 2 hours to see the whole place!

They have tours and demos, raptor free flights, avian adventures, gardens, aquariums (you can touch sting rays!), and even a packrat playhouse for kids. Honestly, you have to go. Learn more at [www.desertmuseum.org](http://www.desertmuseum.org).

*Cost: \$29.95 adults, \$27.95 65+, Arizona resident \$24.95, 3-12 \$19.95, Military \$27.95*



**One of the things I love most about the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum is the chance to get photos of Arizona wildlife in their natural habitat. Isn’t this bobcat gorgeous?**

*Hours: Oct – May 8:30 am – 5 pm  
June – September 7:30 am – 2 pm open for cool summer nights on Saturdays  
Address: 2021 N Kinney Rd, Tucson AZ 85743*



**The trails at the Hassayampa Preserve are beautiful, and we rarely see other people there.**

Hassayampa River Preserve

This place changes with the seasons, and cool rainy seasons are the best! The ground is carpeted with grass so green it looks fake, and there are little streams to cross on wooden planks, which the kids absolutely love. There are plenty of trails here, and the visitor center is a beautiful old building that is fun to explore as well. A few years back the Nature Conservancy took care of this place, but now the Maricopa County Parks runs the Preserve.

You might see any of 280 species of birds that live or migrate through this amazing place, and the trails are beautiful with lots of trees, a lovely pond called Palm Lake, benches to sit on, and a picnic area. Last time we were there a fox was in the picnic area! They have guided bird walks (registration required), a discovery station called Cactus Curiosity, and a guided riparian walk that also requires



**If you go during a wet season, you’ll get to cross the Hassayampa over plank bridges -- the kids love that! For most of its journey, the Hassayampa runs underground. The Preserve is one of the few places where it surfaces regularly.**

registration. You can find out more at [www.maricopacountyparks.net](http://www.maricopacountyparks.net). No pets allowed.

*Cost: \$5 per person, 12 and under free  
Hours: May through October Wed-Sun 7 am to 4 pm. Trails close at 3:30*

*Nov thru April: Wed-Sun 8 am to 5 pm. Trails close at 4:30.*

*Address: 49614 US Hwy 60 89, Wickensburg AZ 85390*



**The best of both worlds are on the Dragonfly Trail - beautiful desert and a lush riparian area.**

Dragonfly Trail

This is one of our favorite desert hikes and the girls still love to go there. After the hike it’s our tradition to have breakfast at the Grotto in Cave Creek – it makes for a great day. We’ve taken many of their friends to Dragonfly as well, and everyone loves it. It’s a pretty easy hike, only about a mile and a half long, and not too much elevation gain. Pretty smooth going most of the way, but not set up for strollers or wheelchairs at all.

When Cave Creek is flowing this trail is really hard to beat. The lower part of the trail follows the creek for quite a ways, then crosses the creek right before a big open area that turns into a nice little pond when the creek is running. There are plank bridges for the crossings. There used to be a little cave the kids liked to go in (only about 4 feet deep) but last time we were there it was closed off.

You’ll see a lot of gorgeous Arizona scenery here in the riparian area by the



**When Cave Creek is flowing after a rain, the Dragonfly Trail is even more fun because you get to cross the creek on boards.**

creek and on the hills around it. Absolutely beautiful. This is part of what is called The Jewel Of The Creek. Dogs on leashes are allowed.

*Cost: Free  
Hours: all  
Address: Spur Cross Ranch Road 0.2 miles before the main parking lot for Spur Cross. Look to your left for the small parking area and Jewel of the Creek sign.*



**The area by the outflow of the Well is not to be missed! You won’t believe you’re in the middle of the desert!**

Montezuma Well

We’ve always thought that Montezuma Well was a lot more fun to visit than Montezuma Castle, but of course if it’s your first time, definitely do both. The well is about an 11 mile trip north from the castle. Park, walk up a small hill, and boom! There’s Montezuma Well, a circular depression with an almost perfectly round lake at the bottom. There is a paved path down to the water, and there are cliff dwellings along the sides of the sinkhole.

Kids absolutely love walking that little trail and exploring some of the ruins, and there are interpretive signs to help you understand the importance and uniqueness of this spot. Whatever you do, don’t miss the trail to the outlet. Water comes out of the rocks there and goes into a little channel and the area right around it is lush and shady, so different from the desert around it. This place is definitely magical and the kids absolutely love it. Pets on leashes are allowed (leashes 6’ and under).

**SEVEN, continued on page 17**

# Do You Know A Young Artist Who Might Want To Enter?

Each year, more than 4,000 high school students from across the country participate in the VFW Auxiliary's Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest. The contest began in 1979 to recognize up-and-coming artists and encourage patriotism in youth. This contest comprises only two-dimensional entries. The 3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest is exclusively for three-dimensional art pieces.

**Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contest**  
<http://tinyurl.com/4w2dht22>

**Who is Eligible to Apply?**

• Students in grades 9-12 by the March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents of U.S. military or civilian personnel in



overseas schools.

- Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence status (the application for which has not been denied) to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or older, GED and adult education students, or national winners of previous Young American Creative Patriotic Art Contests are ineligible.

**What is the Scholarship Amount?**

- The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling \$37,000.

What are the Scholarship Submission Requirements?

- **Two-dimensional** art must be on canvas or paper. Watercolor, pencil, pastel, charcoal, tempera, crayon, acrylic, pen, ink, oil, marker or other media taught may be used.
- Do not frame two-dimensional pieces.
- Submit canvas entries on a stretcher



frame or canvas board. Other entries, if matted, must be matted in white. Do not use color mats. Reinforce the back with heavy paper. Mounted and floating mats may also be used.

- The art should be no smaller than 8" x 10" but no larger than 18" x 24", not including mat.
- Complete entry form and attach to back of entry.
- Submit a typed explanation of patriotism expressed in art (250 words or less).

**What is the Contest Deadlines?**

- March 31: Student Entry Deadline to VFW Auxiliary.\*
- April 15: VFW Auxiliary winners due to Department (state) Scholarships Chairman for judging.\*
- May 5: VFW Auxiliary Department (state) Winners to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.\*

\* required deadlines

**3-Dimensional Patriotic Art Contest**  
<http://tinyurl.com/s7w3ez4v>

**Who is Eligible to Apply?**

- Students in grades 9-12 by the March 31 deadline who are enrolled in a public, private or parochial high school or home study program in the United States, its territories and possessions; or dependents

of U.S. military or civilian personnel in overseas schools.

- Although U.S. citizenship is not required, students must be permanent residents or have applied for permanent residence status (the application for which has not been denied) to become a U.S. citizen.
- Foreign exchange students, students age 20 or older, GED and adult education students are ineligible.

**What is the Scholarship Amount?**

- The first-place winner from each state competes for national awards totaling \$5,500.

**What are the Scholarship Submission Requirements?**

- **Three-dimensional** art can be paper, papier-mâché, pottery, clay, metal work, fabric, etc.
- Pieces should be no larger than 18" in any direction.
- Art cannot be more than 5 lbs. in weight.
- Complete entry form and submit with entry.
- Submit a typed explanation of steps taken to create three-dimensional art/artists statement (total of 250 words or less).

**What is the Contest Deadlines?**

- March 31: Student Entry Deadline to VFW Auxiliary.\*
- April 15: VFW Auxiliary winners due to Department (state) Scholarships Chairman for judging.\*
- May 5: VFW Auxiliary Department (state) Winners to VFW Auxiliary National Headquarters.\*

\* required deadlines

**(Digital art, photography, weapons, 3-D printed art and jewelry are NOT ACCEPTED for either contest.)**

*For more information, contact Marianne Hayes, rdhhays@gmail.com or Carol Allen, editor@azbw.com, both at Scottsdale VFW Post 3513. (Please put SCHOLARSHIP in the subject line.)* ■

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## Ann-Margret Risked Her Life For The Troops

**BY TOM COLE, USMC RETIRED**  
SPECIAL FEATURES WRITER



Ann-Margret is gorgeous, vivacious, and talented in so many ways. Singer, song writer, actress, dancer: she had it all. She was every man's girl next door and every man's wish — a dream girl, every man's beauty to come home to. But, she was SO MUCH MORE.

**Ann-Margret Olsson** was born April 28, 1941 in Valsjöbyn, Jämtland County, Sweden, emigrating to the United States in 1946. Ann-Margret has been a U.S. citizen since 1949. Star of stage, screen and television with many, many awards to her name, she was and is a great talent.

However, the main person she was

to me and to thousands of other military personnel in and during Vietnam was that she was our hope to go home and an absolutely lovely person. There's a story about when she was at a recent book signing for the book she wrote and there was a large sign stating that she would not sign anything but her book. However, a Vietnam vet came up, apologized for asking, but asked her if she would sign it for him as it would mean a lot to him. Her "handlers" immediately said no, but she supposedly said, "Hold on. People, this is one of my Vietnam gentlemen and I will definitely sign this for him, which she did.

I don't know if this story is true, but many of us believe it and love this woman for who she was, risking her life to come to a dangerous war zone to visit the vets who were serving and give them some love and a great show.

God bless you, Ann! ■

PLEASE DO NOT DISTURB

# Bald Eagles Prepare For Next Generation

Arizona’s bald eagles are back, and they are now preparing for the next generation of eagles at breeding sites statewide.

To assist with the state’s continued bald eagle population growth, the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) encourages outdoor recreationists, aircraft pilots, drone operators and motorized paragliders to do their part by not disturbing the state’s 97 eagle breeding areas.

To protect breeding attempts, some portions of public land and water areas will be temporarily closed to help these majestic animals and ensure even more young eagles take to the skies this spring.

“Arizona’s bald eagles are hard at work preparing their nest for what we hope will be a productive breeding season,” said Kenneth “Tuk” Jacobson, bald eagle management coordinator. “The birds nest, forage and roost at rivers and lakes that are also popular recreation spots. That’s why we must be vigilant to help protect



the birds and ensure their populations statewide continue to flourish. That success wouldn’t be possible without the co-operation of outdoor recreationists who respect the closures during the breeding season.”

During the 2023 breeding season, 76 young hatched, and 65 reached the important milestone of their first flight, known as fledging.

Pilots are reminded to maintain the FAA-recommended 2,000-foot above

ground level advisory when flying over bald eagle habitat, while drones and paragliders are asked to avoid the areas completely. Bald eagles are sensitive to even short durations of low-flying aircraft activity near their nests, and just a few minutes of disturbance can lead to a nesting failure.

Help conserve and protect bald eagles, and conservation research and recovery efforts, by reporting any harassment or shooting of bald eagles. Call the Arizona Game and Fish Operation Game Thief Hotline at 800-352-0700 or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Law Enforcement at 480-967-7900.

AZGFD’s bald eagle management efforts are supported by the Heritage Fund, an initiative passed more than 30 years ago to provide for wildlife education and conservation through Arizona lottery ticket sales. ■



The trail down to the Montezuma Well is paved and definitely worth taking. You’ll get to explore some old dwellings near the water.

## SEVEN

Continued from page 15

Cost: \$10 per person at Montezuma Castle (The Well is considered part of this)

Hours: The Castle and Visitor Center are open 8-5, closed Christmas and New Years. Montezuma Well hours are 8-4:45, picnic area 8-4

Directions to Montezuma Well: Take exit 293 from I-17.

Address: Montezuma Castle 2800 Montezuma Castle Road, Camp Verde AZ 86322 ■

## Walk On The Wild Side: Yuma Wetlands Wildlife Area

Located in western Arizona, the Yuma Wetlands Wildlife Area offers outdoor recreational opportunities such as wildlife viewing, angling and hiking. There is a 2.5-mile walking trail that takes visitors through areas of restored cottonwood, willow and mesquite habitat along the Colorado River and restored back channel.

Common mammals in the wildlife area include beavers, bobcats, Botta’s pocket gophers, cactus mouse, desert cottontails, round-tailed ground squirrels, and gray foxes. Common birds include brown pelicans, white-faced ibis, great egrets, least bitterns, snowy egrets, killdeer, Yuma clapper rails, and Gila woodpeckers.

Yuma Wetlands is located at Gateway Park in downtown Yuma. A walking trail begins at the eastern edge of Gateway Park, at Gila and 1st streets. ■

## New Data Warehouse Tracks Wildlife, Including Those Pesky Javelina

Kudos to StateScoop and reporter Keely Quinlan for a recent news story about how the Arizona Game and Fish Department is consolidating all of its wildlife tracking data into a new, cloud-based management system known as the wildlife data warehouse.

With the data available in one place, Arizona’s wildlife researchers can help conservationists, policymakers and land developers make better-informed decisions about how to coexist with wildlife, including those pesky javelina.

More Information: <https://statescoop.com/arizona-wildlife-data-warehouse-javelina/> ■

## VIGILANT

Continued from page 4

except for certain oil-spill response vessels, owned by a U.S. citizen. About what size is that? Vessels at least 27 feet long generally meet the minimum weight requirement.

BoatUS also advises boaters who may have received mail that they believe is misleading or deceptive to contact the U.S. Postal Inspection Service at 877-876-2455 or through its website <https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov>. ■

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https://itradepay.com

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**Kokopelli Trailers**  
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REN FAIRE

Continued from page 1

twice a day at 11:00 and 2:00.

New Music Stage!!

We are excited to announce the newest stage addition at the Festival, Mynstrel’s Roost!

You will be transported to a realm where music reigns supreme and melodies weave through the air, captivating people of all ages.

Nestled amidst the merriment of the festival grounds, our newest stage promises to be a haven for music enthusiasts. You can find Mynstrel’s Roost between the Local Yokels Village and Carnevale Stage, and right next door to the Green-tree Weavers booth.

New Entertainment!!

In addition the new music stage, we are bringing even more new Stage & Lane

acts to our village of Fairhaven! You will find something for everyone to enjoy.


New Food, Drink, and Shopping!!

We have wondrous news to share with all who appreciate scrumptious culinary delights and artsy craftsmanship.

The Festival is thrilled to announce a brand-new Pleasure Feast Menu, some delicious new selections at your favorite food kitchens, and several talented new artisans within our quaint village!!

Whether you’re drawn to the allure of shopping or are yearning for a culinary adventure, the Arizona Renaissance Festival has something for everyone!

Escape to the 36th Annual Arizona Renaissance Festival where pleasure and celebration are the only orders of the day as decreed by the Queen! February 3 – March 31st, 2024, open Saturdays and Sundays and Presidents’ Day Monday, 10am – 6pm. ■



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TOUCH-A-TRUCK

Continued from page 1

For More Information

For more information about Pleasant Harbor, please call the event information line at 623-203-5173 or visit: www.pleasantharbor.com. Pleasant Harbor RV Resort and Marina is located on the southeastern shores of Lake Pleasant, and conveniently adjacent to the metropolitan Phoenix area is open to the public 365 days a year. The full-service marina, features boat and slip rentals as well as more fun activities for you to enjoy.

Pleasant Harbor also features an RV Resort with 253 full hook-up sites, 60 partial hook-ups and dry camping sites featuring amenities including a club house, pool and Jacuzzi, bocce ball, basketball, shuffleboard, horseshoes, laundry facilities, showers, convenience store and picnic grounds. For more information about Pleasant Harbor RV Resort and Marina, visit www.pleasantharbor.com or call the Pleasant Harbor RV Resort at 623-235-6140 or the Pleasant Harbor Marina at 623-235-6130. ■

COMMISSION

Continued from page 1

ness that designs and builds custom fishing rods.

Prior to starting his business, Goughnour worked 26 years for General Dynamics Aerospace Systems Group (previously Motorola Space Systems Group), culminating in his position as project manager responsible for all aspects of the Aerospace Operations Program.

At press time, Goughnour’s nomination is pending confirmation by the Arizona Senate. ■

PLAN

Continued from page 1

Arizona Ren Faire, and they include kids and trucks, kittens, shopping, land cruising, hunting, fishing, camping, and even scholarship opportunities. A plethora to pick from!

Why wait until it’s too late?! Choose something special, plan ahead so you don’t miss it, and enjoy the coming year with us. ■

POPULATION

Continued from page 10

Ariz., 85086-5000.

A few points about population management hunts:

- AZGFD will purge the Hunter Pool Application list Dec. 31 each year. An application may be submitted at any time during the year (do not include the Hunter Pool Application with a hunt permit-tag application. Each application must be sent separately.).

- If selected during a random drawing for a population management hunt, the department will attempt to contact the applicant within a 24-hour period. If that applicant cannot be contacted, their application will be returned to the pool for inclusion in future population management hunts that year.

- If a successful applicant agrees to participate in a population management hunt, it is likely that person will be asked to arrive in the field to hunt within a few days of being contacted. The purchase of a restricted non-permit-tag and applicable hunting license prior to hunting is required.

- An applicant will not gain or lose bonus points when applying for, or participating in, a population management hunt.

**Note:** Join our Conservation Membership program and ensure a wildlife legacy for the future. ■

IDEAS  
Continued from page 1

fish. Buy a general fishing license, or combination hunt and fish license, online at [www.azgfd.com/license/](http://www.azgfd.com/license/) (youth under age 10 do not need a license).

• **Support wildlife.** Wildlife lovers can put their money where their heart is by joining our Conservation Membership program. Your annual dues provide much-needed funding to sustain important wildlife and habitat conservation projects. Help to ensure a wildlife legacy for the future.

• **Take a youngster outdoors.** Look for animal tracks together and identify the critter that made them. Armed with only a bird identification guide, embark on a “hunting” expedition and see how many species you can find. A day in the field will create memories that last a lifetime — for both of you.

• **Pick it up.** Vow to clean up not only after yourself, but those who aren’t as considerate. Take an extra trash bag along on your next outing, and spend a few minutes picking up those empty cans, cigarette butts or campsite trash. After all, respected access is open access.

• **Be a wildlife viewer.** Arizona provides some of the best wildlife-viewing opportunities in the nation, with more than 800 species of native wildlife. It’s a fun, inexpensive activity that the entire family can enjoy.

• **Invest in good optics.** Most hunters know that success in the field begins with a quality pair of binoculars or spotting scope. Don’t skimp. Better to buy the best you can afford that fits your needs than settle for a middle-of-the-road piece of equipment and be forced to upgrade later.

• **Be a conservationist.** It’s difficult to imagine what our wildlife populations might be like today without the North American Model of Wildlife



Conservation. For a presentation from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, produced by Arizona Game and Fish, visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=WE4L9KicSeU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WE4L9KicSeU).

• **Get hunting.** Don’t let the odds of being selected in the random draw keep you from applying for what could be the hunt of a lifetime. If you’ve always dreamed of hunting bison, pronghorn or bull elk, then get in the game and fill out an application. Also, don’t overlook small game or other species that can be hunted year-round. Buy a license online today at [www.azgfd.com/license/](http://www.azgfd.com/license/).

• **Enter AZGFD’s portal.** The portal lets you create a secure account where you can view and manage your licenses, draw results, bonus points and memberships in your own personal “My AZGFD Dashboard” section. Just click on the “Account Login” button at the bottom of the [www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov) home page, then select the “Register” option in the upper right-hand corner. ■



Post 720 celebrated its 100th anniversary in early 2021.



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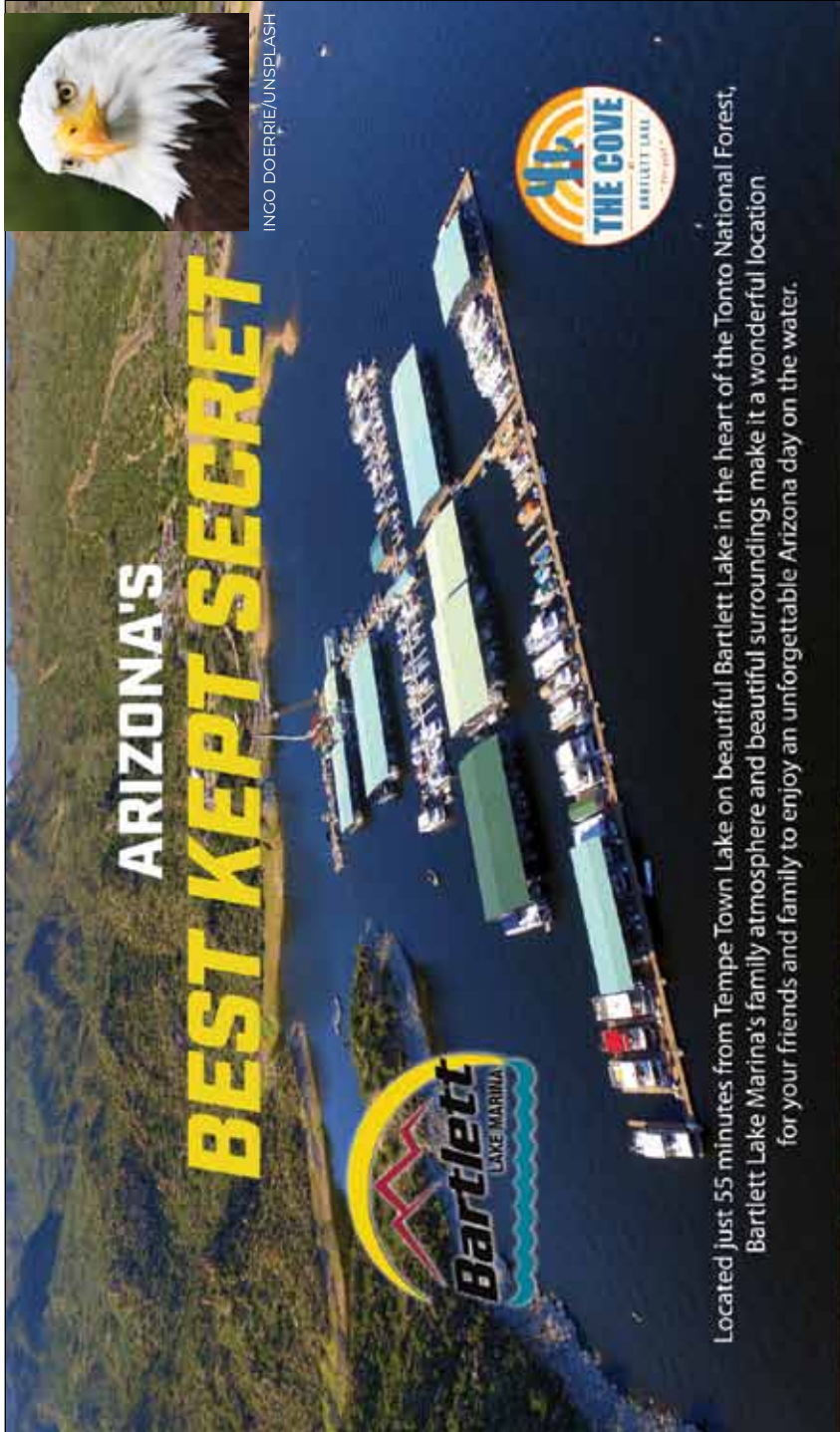
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Outdoor enthusiasts frequent Bartlett Lake for a variety of recreational opportunities, including shoreline camping in Arizona's natural desert terrain. While in this part of the Tonto National Forest, visitors may see mule deer, bald eagles, javelina, coyotes, and many indigenous desert plants, including the majestic saguaro, mesquite trees, and blooming ocotillo.



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Bartlett Lake Marina we are ideally located 17 miles northeast of Carefree and only one hour from Phoenix. Our marina offers a range of well equipped comfortable pontoon rental boats. All safety gear and full instruction are included. We welcome novices! You can trust our rental boats to keep you and your family safe while exploring the surrounding bays. We have a number of different pontoon boats for your party needs. We also offer a variety of packages from full day rentals, and weekend rental packages.



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VOLUME 19 | ISSUE 2
WESTERN
FEBRUARY 2024

# OUTDOOR TIMES

A PUBLICATION OF ARIZONA BOATING & WATERSPORTS

# Keep On Truckin',






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