

## Fun things to do at night in Phoenix, from scorpion safaris to glow kayaking

Meredith G. White  
Arizona Republic

I know I'm over talking about the heat, and I'm sure you're tired of reading about it.

We've already discussed 100 things you can do in the 100-degree heat. Now it's time to pivot and talk about all the things you can do around metro Phoenix when the sun goes down.

When you live in the desert, the pro move is to adjust your entire schedule around the peak hours of the day. Of course, there's no easier way to avoid the sun than to become a night owl every summer.

So, to get you started on your new nightlife journey, here are 10 fun things to do after dark in metro Phoenix.

### Scorpion Safaris

Bring the family and join a park ranger on a nighttime search for scorpions at **Usery Mountain, White Tank Mountain and McDowell Mountain regional parks.**

Wear closed-toe shoes, bring a black light or flashlight, and bring plenty of water to hydrate you on a slow-paced walk searching for scorpions and other nocturnal animals in their habitat. Spaces are limited; call your park to reserve yours.

Details: Friday, July 26. 7-9 p.m. at McDowell Mountain and White Tank Mountain parks; 8-9 p.m. at Usery Mountain \$7 per vehicle.  
[maricopacountyparks.net/events](http://maricopacountyparks.net/events).

### Glow Kayaking at Tempe Town Lake

Enjoy nighttime kayaking under the stars at Tempe Town Lake. Participants will be adorned with glow-in-the-dark accessories and are encouraged to wear glow-in-the-dark clothing that can get wet.

Details: 7:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, July 26, and Friday, Aug. 23. Tempe Town Lake Marina, 550 E. Tempe Town Lake. \$34; \$20 for age 17 and younger. Youths must have an adult registered with them. 480-350-5200, [tempe.gov](http://tempe.gov).

### Creatures of the Night Walk at Estrella Mountain Regional Park

Join Ranger Eric on a walk through the Butterfield Trails in search of nocturnal animals and scorpions.

Bring your own flashlights and black lights if you can (there will be limited supplies available) and plenty of water.

The trails are rated easy and are mostly flat, and the hike will be about 2 miles round trip. There are limited spots available. Call to reserve yours.

Details: 7:30-9 p.m. Saturday, July 27. **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**, 14805 W. Vineyard Ave., Goodyear. \$7 per vehicle. 602-506-2930, ext. 6, [maricopacountyparks.net](http://maricopacountyparks.net).

### Stargazing at Lake Pleasant

Even if you live in a brightly lit area, part of Arizona's beauty is being able to drive an hour, maybe two, out of town and be able to stare up at the stars in a dark, dark sky.

For those wanting an informative and interactive stargazing experience, Ranger Kevin at Lake Pleasant Regional Park will guide you through a viewing of select objects through a portable telescope. There are 20 spots available. Call to reserve yours.

Details: 7:30-9 p.m. Saturday, July 27. Lake Pleasant Regional Park, 41835 N. Castle Hot Springs Rd., Morristown. Free, \$7 to park. 602-506-2930, ext. 2, [maricopacountyparks.net/events](http://maricopacountyparks.net/events).



### Night Mountain Biking at McDowell Mountain Regional Park

Riders of all levels are welcome to join this Summer Night Ride in partnership with McDowell Mountain Cycles.

Choose your trails, choose your companions and begin and end your trail ride at the Pemberton Trailhead parking lot. Bring a helmet and handlebar lights and enjoy a ride through the mountains at night.

Details: 6:30-8:30 p.m. Saturday, July 27. McDowell Mountain Regional Park, 16300 McDowell Mountain Park Drive, north of Fountain Hills. \$7 per vehicle. 602-506-2930, ext. 3; maricopacountyparks.net.

**First Fridays on Roosevelt Row**  
Roosevelt Row in downtown Phoenix really comes alive at night, with hopping bars, restaurants, tons of things to do, and art galore, from galleries to murals.

While Roosevelt Row is great every day of the week, it really pops at night on First Fridays when the streets are lined with people, performers, vendors, and artists. Truly, a night out that shouldn't be missed.

Details: First Fridays are 6-10 p.m. on the first Friday of each month. Free. [artlinkphx.org/first-fridays](http://artlinkphx.org/first-fridays).

### **West Wind Drive-In movies in Glendale**

There's nothing like a summer blockbuster and this year you can choose from "Twisters" or "Deadpool & Wolverine" or "Inside Out 2" just to name a few.

Why not see your summer movies at West Wind Drive-In, the only one in metro Phoenix? You can stretch out in your car or truck with pillows, blankets, a ton of snacks and no one to shush you.

Details: West Wind Drive-In, 5650 N. 55th Ave., Glendale. \$8.50 for age 12 and up, \$2 for ages 5-11. 623-939-9715, [westwinddi.com](http://westwinddi.com).

### **Flashlight Nights at Desert Botanical Garden**

If you want to explore the beauty of the Desert Botanical Garden without the pesky sun getting in the way, discover its beauty at night during summer Flashlight Nights Saturday through Sept. 14.

Explore the five themed trails, spot nocturnal desert creatures and cool off with tasty drinks and treats.

Details: 6:30-9:30 p.m. Saturdays through Sept. 14. Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix. \$16.95 for age 3 and older. 480-941-1225, [dbg.org](http://dbg.org).

### **A Night at the Museum: Phoenix Art Museum**

Wednesdays at the Phoenix Art Museum are "pay what you want" starting at 3 p.m., and the museum is open until 9 that night. It's a great opportunity for a date night, girls' night, family night, or me time.

On display now are works from the American Art and Modern American collections, a special exhibition of "Multiple Realities: Experimental Art in the Eastern Bloc, 1960s-1980," or get lost in Larry Bell's glass sculptures and collages in his "Improvisations" exhibition.

Details: 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursdays-Sundays. Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 N. Central Ave. Regular admission is \$8-\$18, free for age 5 and younger. 602-257-1880, [phxart.org](http://phxart.org).

## **Maricopa County Parks Bring Back Buy One, Get One Camping Promotion**

By Staff  
on July 24, 2024

Who's ready to enjoy a free night's stay in one of the Maricopa County regional parks?



(Pexels Photo)

Starting September 18, the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department is bringing back its popular Buy One, Get One camping promotion!

The promotion allows park visitors who pay the camping fee for one night or more at a participating desert mountain county park to receive one night of equal or lesser value for free during that same stay.

"Maricopa County is home to 12 beautiful regional parks where residents and visitors alike can enjoy activities like boating, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking, and camping," said Chairman Jack Sellers, who represents the East Valley communities of District 1 on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors. "You don't have to wait until temperatures cool down to start planning your fall camping trip – take advantage

of the 'Buy One, Get One' camping promotion being offered now at four of the County's regional parks to set aside time for exploring nature and spending time with your loved ones."

"We're excited to announce that the Buy One, Get One camping promotion will be returning this fall. Last year, we adjusted the campaign dates a bit to allow everyone to take advantage of the promotion before we head into the busy holiday season. The promotion has been activated on our online reservation system, so park visitors may start booking their fall stays immediately," said R.J. Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Director.

To book a camping reservation and receive a free night, contact the parks at (602) 506-2930 or book your reservation online at [maricopacountyparks.org](http://maricopacountyparks.org). The promotion is valid for stays booked between September 18 and October 31, 2024.

**Participating parks include:**

1. Cave Creek Regional Park. Located north of Phoenix, this park offers the illusion of being miles away from civilization. The campground has 55 individual developed campsites.
2. McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Nestled in the lower Verde River basin, this park is a desert jewel in the northeast Valley. This park has 76 developed campsites perfect for RV or tent camping.
3. Utery Mountain Regional Park. Located on the east side of the Valley at the

western end of the Goldfield Mountains and adjacent to the Tonto National Forest, this park offers 74 individual-developed campsites. Sites can accommodate an RV or tent camping.

4. White Tank Mountain Regional Park. At nearly 30,000 acres, this is the largest regional park in Maricopa County. Most of the park is made up of the rugged and beautiful White Tank Mountains on the Valley's west side. The park offers 40 individually developed campsites for tent or RV camping.

**Guidelines:**

Visitors interested in taking advantage of this offer must:

1. Book reservations online at [maricopacountyparks.org](http://maricopacountyparks.org).
2. To receive the offer, you must use one of the following promotional codes:
  - a. 1 Night Free (valid for one free night during a one to seven-day stay) or
  - b. 2 Nights Free (valid for two free nights during an eight to fourteen-day stay).
3. The offer is valid for designated camping spaces but not for primitive camping, group campground reservations, or unit fees.
4. Rain checks will not be issued if space is not available.
5. The offer is not valid at Adobe Dam Regional Park, Estrella Mountain Regional Park, Hassayampa River Preserve, Lake Pleasant Regional Park, San Tan

Mountain Regional Park, and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

6. The offer is only valid for camping stays between September 18 and October 31, 2024.

At approximately 120,000 acres, Maricopa County is home to one of the largest regional park systems in the United States. The parks are located throughout the county and within a 45-minute drive from downtown Phoenix. Some restrictions do apply. To learn more about Maricopa County's regional park system, visit [maricopa.gov/parks](http://maricopa.gov/parks).

**Arizona  
Representatives  
Urge Maricopa  
County to Reopen  
Joe Foss Shooting  
Complex in  
Buckeye Hills**

By Taylor Johnson  
Published on July 24, 2024



Source: Google Street View

The recent shutdown of the Joe Foss Shooting Complex, located in **Buckeye Hills Regional Park**, has drawn reactions from the local community and state representatives who have concerns about the site's

availability to the public. Arizona State Representatives Quang Nguyen and Selina Bliss have stepped forward to address these issues, urging Maricopa County to reconsider the decision that halted public access to the facility.

In a letter, dated June 30 directed to Sheriff Russ Skinner and the Maricopa Board of Supervisors, Representatives Nguyen and Bliss outlined their position. "We write to you today in our official capacity to express concerns regarding the Joe Foss Shooting Complex. It is our understanding that on June 30th, 2024, the Joe Foss Shooting Complex located in Buckeye Hills Regional Park was closed. According to the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, the reason for this closure was to allow for more officers and deputies to be able to learn, qualify, and requalify with firearms and reduce the wait time for such training. We strongly urge you to reopen the shooting range to the public as soon as possible," the letter says.

Quang Nguyen, a Republican serving Legislative District 1 and chairing the House Judiciary Committee, alongside Selina Bliss, emphasized the implications of the decision not simply on the convenience for firearm enthusiasts but also the potential ripple effects on the environment and public safety. As noted in the letter, which AZLeg.gov recently published, they highlighted how "Keeping the Joe Foss Shooting Complex open to the public would eliminate that concern and avoid other unanticipated

problems or unintended consequences."

The representatives suggested that the closure could divert the shooting activities to less regulated environments, such as the desert, which possess the risk of people starting shooting in places not designed for such activities, leading to broader environmental and safety issues. Their concern is backed by voices from the community, many of whom are frustrated with their favorite shooting range closing, according to the information from the [representatives' letter](#). Nguyen's and Bliss' stance resonates with a population that holds the Joe Foss Shooting Complex in high regard for its long-standing presence and service to shooting enthusiasts in Arizona. As the dialogue continues, the response from the Maricopa County officials remains to be seen.

## How to enjoy a free night at Maricopa County parks this fall

By Good Info News Wire Team |  
The Copper Courier  
July 23, 2024



Maricopa County's BOGO camping deal is back. Here's

how to take advantage of it this fall.

The **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department** has announced the return of its popular Buy One, Get One (BOGO) camping promotion, starting Sept. 18. This offer allows campers to receive a free night's stay for each paid night at participating parks. The promotion aims to encourage residents and visitors alike to explore Maricopa County's outdoor recreational areas during the fall season.

According to Chairman Jack Sellers, who represents District 1 on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, the county's regional parks offer various activities such as boating, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking, and camping. RJ Cardin, director of Maricopa County Parks and Recreation, stated that the promotion would be available for booking through the department's online reservation system. Campers can take advantage of the BOGO offer at four specific regional parks until Oct. 31.

The participating parks include Cave Creek Regional Park, McDowell Mountain Regional Park, Utery Mountain Regional Park, and White Tank Mountain Regional Park. These parks offer a variety of developed campsites suitable for both tent and RV camping.

Visitors must adhere to specific terms to benefit from the promotion, including booking online and using promotional codes "1 Night Free" for stays of one to seven days or "2 Nights Free" for stays of eight to 14

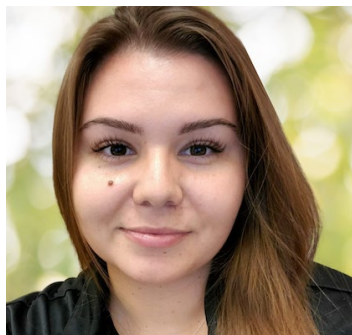


days. The offer does not apply to primitive camping, group campground reservations, or unit fees. The promotion excludes certain parks, such as Adobe Dam Regional Park and Estrella Mountain Regional Park, among others.

For more information or to book a stay, visitors can contact the parks at 602-506-2930 or visit the online reservation system at [maricopacountyparks.org](http://maricopacountyparks.org). Additional details about Maricopa County's regional parks can be found at [maricopa.gov/parks](http://maricopa.gov/parks).

## Lake Havasu City Welcomes New Parks and Recreation Director

By Staff  
on July 19, 2024  
[Signalsaz.com](http://Signalsaz.com)



With 15 years of experience in parks and recreation, Vera brings a wealth of expertise and a proven track record of success

She previously served as the **Regional Park Superintendent for Maricopa County**, where she oversaw the development and management of numerous

regional parks as well as innovative programs that enhanced community engagement and outdoor recreation.

City Manager Jess Knudson is excited to have Vera join the City's team.

"After an extensive search, I am excited to announce the hiring of Ms. Vera as Lake Havasu City's Director of Parks and Recreation. She comes to us with a passion to better the quality of life for our kids (of all ages) and an impressive background in recreation and parks maintenance," he said.

Before her tenure in Maricopa County, Vera held significant roles as a Recreation Coordinator II for the City of Phoenix Parks and Recreation Department and Recreation Manager for the Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation department in Miami, Florida

Vera has a degree in Business Administration and holds multiple professional certifications, including Certified Parks and Recreation Professional, Certified Aquatic Facilities Operator, and Certified Youth Sports Administrator. Currently, she is working on attaining a master's degree in Recreation Management from Northwest Missouri State University.

In addition to her extensive field experience, Vera shared her insights and knowledge as a speaker at several national conferences and through published work for the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), focusing

on leadership in parks and recreation management, as well as personal and professional development.

"I am thrilled to be joining the Lake Havasu City Parks and Recreation department. I'm eager to contribute to this vibrant community and work alongside other like-minded professionals. I'm most looking forward to connecting with my team, as well as our residents and visitors," she said.

## Queen Creek fire crews visit woman saved from heat

Queen Creek Independent  
Posted Tuesday, July 16, 2024  
1:02 pm



On Monday, Queen Creek Fire & Medical Department personnel visited Lacey Gibson whose life they saved in June.

Members of the Queen Creek Fire & Medical Department recently had an emotional reunion with a woman whose life they saved in June.

On Monday, crews from QCFMD's Engine 415, Medic 413 and Battalion 411 visited Lacey Gibson in a hospital.

On June 28, QCFMD responded to reports of a "hiker experiencing heat related illness at **San Tan Mountain Regional**

**Park.** With assistance from Mesa Fire & Medical and Gilbert Fire & Rescue the individual (Gibson) was located off the trail and transported with life threatening injuries from extreme heat exposure,” according to a town of Queen Creek Facebook post.

As Gibson prepares to be released from the hospital, she and her family invited the crew members to come for a visit.

“This is truly a once in a career type experience,” shared Battalion Chief David Vilt in the post. “To work a call like Lacey’s and know the condition she was in when we last saw her, it is really miraculous that we were able to visit her and have a conversation with her. I am so proud of our crews and all of the regional support we had that day. Lacey has been on our minds and seeing her doing so well, it’s just amazing.” Gibson hiked often and early to avoid the heat, but on June 28 something felt off to her. She called 911 and “that is the last thing she remembers before waking up in the hospital nearly two weeks later,” the post stated.

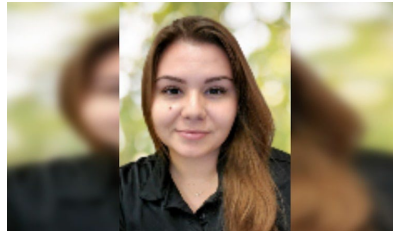
“Thank you for helping our daughter ... You saved us when you saved her,” Gibson’s mother stated.

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## **Lake Havasu City Welcomes Gabrielle Vera as New Director of**

## **Parks and Recreation**

By Aisha Khan  
Published on July 17, 2024



Source: Lake Havasu City

Lake Havasu City officially has a new helmsman—or should we say helmswoman—at the helm of its Parks and Recreation Department. Gabrielle “Gabby” Vera, a seasoned professional in the field with 15 years under her belt, has been chosen to lead, scheme, and possibly dream up the future of the city’s public spaces. Vera takes on the role after a stint as the Regional Park Superintendent for Maricopa County, as the official announcement details her accomplishments, which apparently include launching innovative programs to ostensibly boost community engagement and enjoyment of the great outdoors.

“After an extensive search, I am excited to announce the hiring of Ms. Vera as Lake Havasu City’s Director of Parks and Recreation. She comes to us with a passion to better the quality of life for our kids (of all ages) and an impressive background in recreation and parks maintenance,” City Manager Jess Knudson expressed, enthusiastically welcoming the new director. The city, it seems, is eager to see how Vera will continue to

quickly grow its recreational offerings.

Prior to controlling **Maricopa County’s regional parks**, Vera honed her skills in Phoenix and Miami-Dade, where she served as Recreation Coordinator II and Recreation Manager, respectively. With a degree in Business Administration, she’s not only been a coordinator and manager but is also a triple threat with certifications as a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional, Certified Aquatic Facilities Operator, and Certified Youth Sports Administrator. It doesn’t end there—she’s also leveling up her expertise by working towards a master’s degree in Recreation Management from Northwest Missouri State University.

Vera is no stranger to the proverbial spotlight either, having shared her expert insights at national conferences and through published articles for the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). “I am thrilled to be joining the Lake Havasu City Parks and Recreation department,” she told Lake Havasu’s official news release. “I’m eager to contribute to this vibrant community and work alongside other like-minded professionals. I’m most looking forward to connecting with my team, as well as our residents and visitors,” she added, signaling an intent to not only run the program but to deeply embed herself within the communal fabric.

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## **BOGO camping promotion to be**

**offered at Maricopa County's regional parks**

Jul 18, 2024, 4:15 AM  
BY KTAR.COM

MARICOPA COUNTY'S PARKS ARE BRINGING BACK...

**BOGO**

**WHAT** THE BUY ONE, GET ONE CAMPING PROMOTION RETURNS THIS FALL!!!

**WHEN** 09/18 THRU 10/31

ADDITIONAL DETAILS AVAILABLE IN THE POST.

PHOENIX – Starting in mid-September, Maricopa County will bring back its “Buy One, Get One” camping promotion.

The campaign allows park visitors who pay the camping fee for one night or more at a participating desert mountain county park to receive one night of equal or lesser value for free during that same stay. The promotion is valid for stays booked between Sept. 18 and Oct. 31, 2024.

At approximately 120,000 acres, Maricopa County offers of the largest regional park systems in the nation. Its parks are located within a 45-minute drive from downtown Phoenix.

Participating parks include:

- **Cave Creek Regional Park.** Located north of Phoenix, this park offers the illusion of being miles away from civilization. The campground has 55 individual developed campsites.
- **McDowell Mountain Regional Park** . Nestled in the lower Verde River basin, this

park is a desert jewel in the northeast Valley. This park has 76 developed campsites perfect for RV or tent camping.

- **Usery Mountain Regional Park** . Located on the east side of the Valley at the western end of the Goldfield Mountains and adjacent to the Tonto National Forest, this park offers 74 individual-developed campsites. Sites can accommodate an RV or tent camping.
- **White Tank Mountain Regional Park** . At nearly 30,000 acres, this is the largest regional park in Maricopa County. Most of the park is made up of the rugged and beautiful White Tank Mountains on the Valley's west side. The park offers 40 individually developed campsites for tent or RV camping

Visitors interested in taking advantage of this offer must book reservations online.

**Travel + Leisure: Castle Hot Springs resort named no. 1 in Arizona**

Castle Hot Springs has been named the No. 1 Resort Hotel in Arizona in this year's edition of the Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards. Posted Monday, July 15, 2024 10:37 am

Yourvalley.net



Courtesy Castle Hot Springs

Castle Hot Springs has been named the No. 1 Resort Hotel in Arizona in this year's edition of the Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards.

Each year, the readers of Travel + Leisure – with a total audience of more than 33 million across all platforms – share their thoughts on air travel, destinations, hotels, resorts, spas, and more in their annual survey. The list – curated on reader-generated survey responses – recognizes the greatest travel brands spanning the world on all seven continents.

This recognition is a powerful testament to the experience Castle Hot Springs provides, as Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards are a leading barometer of the air carriers and modes of transportation, places, and companies that satisfy some of the world's most passionate and discerning travelers, according to a news release. Additional information about methodology including criteria can be found here. You can see the full list of the World's Best Winners in Travel + Leisure's August 2024 issue, on newsstands July 19 or digitally on Apple News+.

Tucked against the Bradshaw Mountains just 50 miles outside

of Phoenix, the sprawling 1,100-acre property is comprised of 30 cabins and bungalows and was once the wellness retreat of choice for America's titans of industry - The Cabots, Vanderbilts, Wrigleys, Roosevelts, Astors, etc. Adjacent to **Lake Pleasant Regional Park**, the expansive nature-driven resort melds its natural surroundings with an array of adventure activities paired with restorative wellness programs designed to cater to the traveler looking to experience the perfect mix of 'soft adventure' and 'slow travel.' Guest accommodations have been built with the intention to immerse guests in the environment at every moment – commune with nature, enjoying the sights and sounds of Mother Nature and taking time to reflect, relax, and reconnect. At the heart of the desert oasis lies historic world-class hot springs. Castle Hot Springs boasts a 'digital detox' philosophy alongside a formidable culinary and 'Flavor Farming' agricultural program.

All visitors are encouraged to dive into natural tranquility in the three mineral-rich natural hot springs (85 – 106F) and participate in the Castle Hot Springs Soaking circuit, featuring a quick dip in the property's new cold-plunge pool (43-46F).

Contrast hydrotherapy and the minerals found within the waters are known to remedy anxious minds and soothe aches and pains whilst also improving mobility and boosting skin health. Those in search of

an extra layer of water relaxation and learning can opt for the new Connecting with Water Guided Tour, where an activity guide will take guests on a walking tour of the hot springs and share/educate guests about the hot springs' geology, natural components of the water, therapeutic benefits, water infrastructure, and lead a guided soak in which guest will be invited to experience the waters using all five senses.

Visitors can also participate in Paddleboard Yoga or book a Watsu Water Therapy session, where a spa therapist will gently move you through a womb-like rhythmic dance within the thermal waters. In turn, you'll leave feeling rebirthed with natural pain relief, decreased muscle tension, increased flexibility, improved circulation, and overall enhanced well-being.

Additionally, a culinary evolution is well underway at Castle Hot Springs. At Harvest restaurant, guests can enjoy a true farm-to-table experience, serving hyper-seasonal & nutrient-dense dishes with the freshest produce picked at their prime. Chef Knouse frequents the on-property farm (a stone's throw from the restaurant) multiple times each day, both for inspiration and to ensure sustainability and flavor are at the forefront of the culinary direction, where they incorporate the farm's produce to the ever-evolving menu of seasonal creations.

The 2024 T+L World's Best List is featured in the August 2024 issue of Travel + Leisure and select highlights of the list will

be found at <https://www.travelandleisure.com>.

## **State Route 74 near Lake Pleasant reopened in both directions after crash**

Jul 14, 2024, 5:49 PM | Updated: 7:38 pm  
BY KTAR.COM



State Route 74 near Lake Pleasant has closed in both directions due to a crash, according to ADOT. (Lake Pleasant Regional Park Facebook photo)  
Share

PHOENIX — State Route 74 near Lake Pleasant was reopened in both directions Sunday after a closure due to a crash, according to the Arizona Department of Transportation. The crash was at North Castle Hot Springs Road in Morristown, north of Peoria. Eastbound lanes were closed at highway U.S. 60 outside Morristown, while the westbound lanes were closed at North Lake Pleasant Parkway.

The highway was reopened after about two hours.



**Gold in Arizona: 6 spots to find the rare metal**

Arizona Republic  
July 12, 2024



Date Creek, with Weaver Mountains to the north as seen from the **Vulture Mountains** near Wickenburg.  
Mare Czinar/Special For The Republic



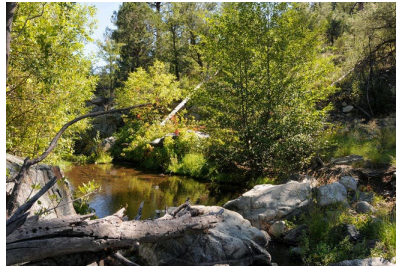
The sandy Hassayampa riverbed makes for a good workout.  
Mare Czinar/Special For The Republic



Benches are placed at scenic spots on the Clay Mine Trail in **Cave Creek Regional Park**.  
Mare Czinar/Special For The Republic



Agua Fria River at Arizona's Agua Fria National Monument north of Phoenix.  
Brian Passey/The Spectrum



Lynx Creek at the Highland Center for Natural History in Prescott.  
Mare Czinar/Special For The Republic



The Little Grand Canyon segment of the Black Canyon National Recreation Trail near Phoenix passes by interesting geological formations.  
Mare Czinar/Special For The Republic

**What would Cave Creek Town Council candidates do**

**about growth, budget?**

Sam Kmack  
Arizona Republic  
July 9, 2024

Cave Creek voters are deciding who will fill six Town Council seats in the July 30 election.

Cave Creek Town Council incumbents Tom Aughterton, Thomas McGuire, Dusty Rhoades, and Kathryn Royer are hoping to retain their seats.

There are four newcomers hoping to replace their incumbent competitors: Cynthia Driskell, Joe Freedman, Julie Goldammer and Alex Nadesan.

The Arizona Republic asked each candidate about everything from their reason for running to how they plan to address issues facing Cave Creek.

Here's what they had to say, in alphabetical order. Some answers may have been slightly edited to fit agreed-to lengths for all.

Why are you running for Cave Creek Town Council? If elected, what will your first priority be?

Tom Aughterton: Originally on Town Council in the 1990s, shortly after incorporation, I asked voters to return in 2022, to offer an historical perspective of original community goals, and suggest recalibration of specific town issues related to lifestyle and growth.

Now, the most important priority for Cave Creek Town

government is an examination of Council decision-making, and resident access to their elected officials, staff, consultants and legal advice, underpinning those decisions.

Public testimony is limited at all Council meetings; agenda packets are published immediately before a Council meeting; (agendas released on a Thursday, with Town Hall closed on Fridays does not provide access to staff for inquiries before the Monday meeting). The chair controls all agenda items with an ordinance preventing other council member access.

Special interests have routine agenda access; other town issues representing resident interests do not.

The Council is a deliberative body with seven seats, but needing only a subset of four to decide the town's pace and direction on the tailored, pre-vetted agendas.

I am glad to be here to speak against the proposed return to four-year terms, which the town began with in 1986, but changed to two-year terms with other voter-approved operational reforms.

Cynthia Driskell: I have lived in Cave Creek for 40 years and own a debt of gratitude in support of a wonderful community. The town is maturing and making good progress on safety, utilities and paying down debt. As a business owner, commercial property owner and resident, I feel I have a balanced perspective on the impact of Town governance decisions for

the future. I have regulatory experience at the state and local level. My first priority is to continue strong fiscal management, pay down debt, and develop a reserve fund for economic downturns. Improving efficiencies in town utilities, service management and staffing will benefit the town's bottom line. Cave Creek has a bright future and I want to help support it!

Joe Freedman: When I attended Arizona State University in the early 1980's studying political science (1985, B.S.) I had an internship with a U.S. Congressman in District One. I learned then there is nothing more noble than giving back to your community to serve the best interests for the majority of people regardless of political motivation. It's better to give back than to take. I consider myself a grassroots candidate not controlled by anyone or any group's individual interests. Since college I have always wanted to run to "give back" and I feel that now is the best time of my life to do this. I am retired and can give 100% of my dedicated time to help guide and improve Cave Creek going into the future.

My first priority will be to meet with the town staff to identify where we stand regarding our water supply and how we are set up going into the future. I will also discuss this with fellow council members. It's very complicated and to understand it entirely you must be an on-going student of the past, present, and future to intelligently make prudent decisions. I know quite a bit

now but there is still much to learn.

Julie Goldammer: In the last 5-plus years, my Saguario West neighborhood has been the brunt of nine different up-zoning notices-both from the Town of Cave Creek and the county. I've advocated in support of a balanced lifestyle where our neighborhood can benefit from essential services, but still protect our quality of life. The town has targeted our area as the place to potentially allow upzoning to commercial, but there are loopholes in our ordinances that can add unnecessary consequences from high density development. Our small town is made up of neighborhoods. It's just a matter of time before other neighborhoods deal with similar circumstances. I'd like to bring my knowledge of compliance, project management and advocacy to the table to help resolve issues in a way that doesn't jeopardize property rights and quality of life. My first priority is to change the way we manage Town Council agendas. The current system gives full discretion to the mayor. An elected six-person council exists for a reason. Let's incorporate those voices in agenda-setting.

Thomas McGuire: My first priority is to serve Cave Creek in line with our vision of the community. Cave Creek is a unique town and we want to preserve its character and to attract new residents who share our love of the natural desert environment. Growth cannot be stopped, but I support using tools such as zoning and limitations on water availability

that can result in modest growth guided by the voter-approved Cave Creek General Plan.

Selecting and monitoring our town manager is a major part of council responsibilities. Many voters will recall when we had a nearly complete turnover of the Town Council in 2013. Most of the incumbents chose not to run in that election, but I stayed with the job. That council selected a temporary town manager replaced by a regular town manager. Both did poorly in management of our excellent town employees, and both needed to be replaced. I was proud to show my dedication to the community by finding other, better qualified candidates. Fortunately, this council has selected an excellent town manager, and I will be vigilant in ensuring his best professional service for the town.

Alex Nadesan: I am recently retired from a successful business career. My experience, energy, and openness to listening to and collaborating with others will benefit residents and the TOCC. My priorities will be to use the General and Strategic plans as guidelines in decision making.

Dusty Rhoades: I am running for re-election as there are many issues that still need to be tackled. My highest priority is that the mayor is the only person who can add an item to the council agenda. Lacking the ability to add items to the agenda, we get a singular view of where we stand as a town. It has precluded the council from public discussion on important but controversial issues such as water on the west side of town,

updating the Town Code, Dark Sky International, and a multitude of long-term decisions that will determine the town's future.

Kathryn Royer: If re-elected to my fourth term, my priority would be to strategically manage our financial resources to enable Cave Creek to preserve more open space and maintain the low-density lifestyle we all enjoy. Other primary goals include completing the construction of a water utility interconnection with Phoenix in case of a catastrophic failure of our single, 12.5-mile pipeline from the Central Arizona Project (CAP) canal; finalize our water utilities master plan, including drought contingency and water conservation strategies, prior to any 2027 reductions in our CAP water supplies due to a 24-year drought on the Colorado River; fully fund a pavement management plan to improve surface streets throughout the community; support the newly created Cave Creek Fire Department and its second location off Carefree Highway; and enhance public safety, security and parking in our town core. Finally, my presence on the council helps to ensure an open, transparent government through improved communications, teamwork and collaboration with colleagues, staff members and community volunteers on all committees, commissions, and task forces. Cave Creek residents deserve to know and understand their local government and become involved in the leadership of their town.

Perceptions: What would Cave Creek Town Council candidates change?

What is the best thing about Cave Creek that you would never change? Why? What is the first thing that needs changing and why?

Augherton: The best thing about the Town of Cave Creek is the geographical location and the utter unbridled beauty of the surrounding Sonoran Desert region, with its hidden canyons and high desert rugged mountains. It is elevated above the urbanized Valley floor and still retains its cooler, open-space land use patterns, and darker nighttime sky to peer into deep space.

It may not be classically rural anymore, but it is the next-best alternative in 2024.

When viewed, four-legged neighbors tend to have a calming effect in a community. Instead of soaring freeways, the desert trails of migrating javelina, jackrabbits and deer each have their own unique traffic pattern.

After witnessing the abandoned pit-house foundations of the Hohokam and faded petroglyphs and pot shards right off local roads, you realize that there have been, and will be, many other residents of these desert lands.

Driskell: The best things not to change are the open space and community trail system. Cave Creek is home to two of Maricopa County's best parks - Spur Cross and Cave Creek Regional Park. These are

beloved open spaces to let residents and our visitors truly enjoy the best Arizona has to offer. The community trail system is our own rural, rustic sidewalks. Perfect for walking dogs, riding horses, and kids on their bikes. These attributes, and the additional zoning of more open space preservation, will keep Cave Creek more rural and unique as the other area cities add residential density.

One primary challenge that needs our attention is that Cave Creek needs to balance the needs and desires of residents for small town quiet life with the need for visitor/tourist income for economic viability. We have two distinct commercial areas - the Town Core and the Carefree Highway corridor. We need to balance economic development with resident satisfaction.

Freedman: I would never change the current town plan that was recently written, adopted, and ratified by our citizen's vote in 2021. It was written by a combination of that current council (2021), the town staff and most importantly citizens groups.

Goldammer: Cave Creek is a treasure trove of culture, history and natural beauty. I would never change the eclectic makeup of our town that has resulted from a diverse and resilient group of people who came together to incorporate Cave Creek in the '80s. We should do a better job supporting local commerce and attracting new business that can thrive in our community especially during the summers. Besides making it easier to do business in town, we should

promote the Town's brand including bringing events and festivals that can drive revenues for those establishments. With this comes better education around parking in the town core and Dark Sky certification.

McGuire: Most of us have common values, a love of the natural desert setting, and using or appreciating the importance of trails. As a frequent user of our public open spaces, I look for opportunities to expand them. Maricopa County and the Desert Foothills Land Trust have coordinated with the Town of Cave Creek to expand the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation area** by 30 acres. If other high-priority properties become available at reasonable prices, we need to be sure that the town, along with those partners, have the financial resources to obtain them. The highest priority properties are those adjacent to the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area and the **Cave Creek Regional Park**.

Nadesan: I value Cave Creek's western heritage, zoning ordinances, and open spaces. Moving forward, I would work with the staff and council members to build upon the existing modes of communication and collaboration with our residents since a more informed community leads to a stronger community.

Rhoades: Our rural lifestyle and community atmosphere is the best thing about Cave Creek. It is unique and worth preserving. For example, most of the people in the town favor us joining Dark Sky International and limiting the amount of light pollution so

our kids and grandkids can enjoy viewing the night sky. Our town code needs to be updated to reflect that change. As far as changing things, we bill ourselves as a quirky and unique destination community, but we lack a sound plan to draw visitors. The town can assist our merchants by working with them to sponsor weekend child friendly events, host equine and other events at the Rodeo Grounds, and partner with our merchants to promote specialty events with food, art, and western or mining themes to draw visitors. Destinations also need an aesthetic appeal that promotes the image we want to project. We should plan for enhanced roadway medians, Dark Sky International compatible street lighting, and adding some features of interest like old fashioned hitching posts, water troughs, mining paraphernalia, etc., to enhance our public trails and increase tourist appeal.

Our town staff has recently negotiated the long-range extension of our 20-year arrangement with the Arizona State Land Department giving Cave Creek priority in the purchase of nearby state land as natural desert open space. These properties are also protected by open space zoning. But if purchase is necessary, we must be ready.

What most needs to change is for the council to focus on the needs of the whole town rather than a small number of dissatisfied citizens, or a single neighborhood group that come before us.



Royer: Cave Creek is an eclectic western community composed of artists, bikers, entrepreneurs, equestrians, and outdoor enthusiasts of every kind. We have incomparable mountain views, luscious desert landscape, a variety of amazing critters, and low-density housing, allowing personal privacy and dark skies. We would never want to change our physical environment or unique way of life, which we passionately protect. As with every town and city in Arizona, water is becoming even more precious than it was 20 years ago. Our relationship with outdoor watering and any other wastefulness of the resource is a behavioral change that needs to happen sooner than later.

## **McDowell Mountain Regional Park plans activities**

McDowell Mountain Regional Park will host several activities this summer.

Posted Monday, July 8, 2024  
2:19 pm

Fountain Hills Times



**McDowell Mountain Regional Park** adjacent to Fountain Hills has several activities planned for visitors in the coming week.

A full moon hike is planned for Thursday, July 18, to begin at 7 p.m. This event is limited to 15 people, so registration is required and closes Tuesday, July 16.

This nighttime walk with Ranger Jacque under the near full moon will provide the mysterious sounds of the desert, and possible encounters with creatures of the night.

This moderate out-and-back hike follows a 1 to 1.5-mile section of Pemberton Trail toward Pemberton Pond. Plan to hike for two hours and for a total distance of 2 to 2.5 miles. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and cash per vehicle for the self-pay station. Small hand-held flashlights and blacklights are okay. Refrain from using headlamps, and no pets please. Registration is required.

The meeting location is the Trailhead staging area at Pemberton trailhead, south access.

The hike is limited to 15 participants. To register, call the McDowell Nature Center at (602) 506-2930, ext. 3 with name, phone number and number of people attending.

If it is necessary to cancel after registration call the Nature Center ASAP so those on the waiting list may be contacted. Registration for this program closes on Tuesday, July 16.

A Discovery Station event will be held on Saturday, July 20, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Skulls, bones, furs, scales – what do clues left behind by desert creatures tell about their ways of life? Ranger Jacque will have displays and open questions and answers to discuss curious adaptations of common desert dwellers.

Enter the world of the Sonoran Desert with this educational table, “Skins and Skulls.” Discover the biodiversity of this unique ecosystem with a hands-on learning experience. This activity is for all ages. The exhibit is a non-structured come and go display table. Ranger Jacque will be on hand for questions in the nature center between 9:30 and 11 a.m. Stop any time.

Early Saturday morning, July 20, Ranger Jacque will introduce visitors to the peaceful quiet time of a desert morning. The ranger will lead a four-step process.

The Quiet Hour process can help reduce the stresses of everyday life. It blends nine techniques or influences that research indicates have a calming or uplifting effect. This seated program is for all abilities, ages 12 and up.

Meet the ranger near the restrooms at the Trailhead Staging Area at 6:30 a.m. and find a quiet spot from there. For maximum comfort, wear comfortable clothing and shoes, bring water, and a yoga mat or towel to sit on. No pets. No registration required.

## **Cave Creek voters choose among 8**

## **candidates for 6 council seats. What to know**

Kerria Weaver  
Arizona Republic  
July 8, 2024

Residents of Cave Creek will be voting between eight candidates on who will win six Town Council seats in the July 30 election.

Cave Creek voters will be choosing between four incumbent candidates and four newcomers, so the new panel will have at least two fresh faces.

Incumbents Tom Augherton, Dusty Rhoades, Thomas McGuire and Kathryn Royer face challenges from Cynthia Driskell, Joe Freedman, Julie Goldammer and Alex Nadesan. All of the candidates spelled out their ideas in response to the Arizona Republic's candidate questionnaire.

This election comes at a time when the city faces issues on water, reducing congestion of traffic and providing more parking.

Voters will have to decide between candidates who oppose one another regarding a current city ordinance governing mayoral powers and plans to fix water issues.

Arizona election: Read our full coverage of the Cave Creek council race

Early voting began July 3. Voters can check on the status

of their mailed-in ballot on Maricopa County's website at <https://elections.maricopa.gov/voting/voter-dashboard-login>. Those who choose to vote by mail are advised to mail their ballot by July 23 or drop it off at a ballot drop-off location or voting location by July 30.

### **Who is running for City Council for Cave Creek?**

Augherton, 69, has worked for the state of Arizona for 40 years in legislative affairs for both the private and public sectors. He has served on the planning and zoning commission and the town council. Augherton was the first elected mayor of Cave Creek and is currently a town councilman.

Driskell, 67, has served three years on the Cave Creek Planning Commission and is the owner of Carefree Physical Therapy.

Freedman, 66, is a retired sports marketing professional who has worked with Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, the Phoenix Suns and the Fiesta Bowl. He has lived in Cave Creek since 2001.

Goldammer, 59, has a background in corporate and small businesses, including engineering, real estate and local advocacy.

McGuire, 79, is a current member of the Town Council. He has lived in Cave Creek for 24 years and is a retired educator. He has been active with the Cave Creek Museum, the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation area** and the Desert Foothills land trust.

Nadesan, 60, is a former infantry officer and a U.S. Army veteran. He is also an entrepreneur and former business owner. He has served on the water advisory committee and was the board chair of the Holland Center. He was also an assistant regional coordinator for the Arizona Site Steward program.

Rhoades, 43, has been a resident of Cave Creek since 2017 and is a retired Colonel U.S. Marine Corps. He is part owner of an IT consulting firm.

Royer, 67, was elected to the Cave Creek Town Council in 2018 and has served as vice mayor since 2022. Royer was an associate general manager of communications and public affairs for the Central Arizona Project in Phoenix for 20 years.

## **Maricopa County closes shooting range for 'public safety,' leaving gun safety in the dust**

Letter to the editor: Safety and skills training are as important for gun owners as the sheriff's deputies who will take over a public shooting range.  
Arizona Republic  
July 7, 2024

I was upset to learn that Maricopa County Parks and Recreation made the decision to close the Joe Foss Shooting Range in the **Buckeye Hills Regional Park** to the public and transition the complex to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) for their exclusive use.

They claim that this decision “prioritizes public safety and is fiscally responsible,” with no rationale for what was meant by those terms.

This appears to be another bureaucratic decision made without any input from their customer stakeholder: the county gun owner and recreational user.

This decision was made to make it easier (but not essential) for MCSO’s training needs – which, in my opinion, is not sufficient reason to transition the range.

Gun safety and skills training are just as important for county gun owners as for law enforcement.

The parks department should not transition the Joe Foss Shooting Range to the MSCO and keep it open for public use.

Edward Jemiola, Buckeye

## Day Trip: Cave Creek

Jamie Faye Killin July 5, 2024  
Phoenix Magazine



The spirit of Arizona’s Western heritage is strong in Cave Creek, located less than an hour away from Downtown Phoenix. The

town – which was settled in 1870, decades before Arizona’s statehood – offers many of the things that make the state so special: horseback riding, desert trails and good ol’ cowboy-style line dancing – plus modern crowd-pleasers like art galleries, quality dining and live music.



### Tonto Bar and Grill

Tonto Bar and Grill has been a locals’ favorite for nearly 30 years and is part of the Rancho Manana Golf Club, which has roots dating back to the Rancho Manana Dude Ranch that opened its doors in the 1940s. The menu continues to pay homage to the state’s roots with Southwestern and Indigenous-inspired cuisine. Classic dishes include Three Sisters salsa and guacamole, golden corn chowder and ancho chile-rubbed filet.

5736 E. Rancho Manana Blvd.  
480-488-0698,  
[tontobarandgrill.com](http://tontobarandgrill.com)

### Cowboy Pizza

Opened in 2022, Cowboy Pizza has become a fast favorite thanks to its creative pies – like the Steak & Blue, topped with garlic cream sauce, mozzarella, steak, blue cheese crumbles, crispy onions and aioli.  
6920 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-488-2588,  
[cowboypizzaco.com](http://cowboypizzaco.com)

### Cryin’ Coyote

Cryin’ Coyote is another relative newcomer to the dining scene. Despite the pressures of taking over the beloved Bryan’s Black Mountain Barbecue location, the barbecue eatery has thrived in its first year with slow-smoked standbys including brisket, pulled pork and ribs.

6130 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-575-7155,  
[cryincoyotebbq.com](http://cryincoyotebbq.com)

### 3 Things To Do



### Buffalo Chip Saloon & Harold’s Cave Creek Corral

No trip to Cave Creek is complete without visiting the classics. Take in bull-riding at Buffalo Chip, then do some country dancing at the historical Harold’s Cave Creek Corral.

6823 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-488-9118,  
[buffalochipsaloon.com](http://buffalochipsaloon.com)

6895 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-488-1906,  
[haroldscorral.com](http://haroldscorral.com)

### Cave Creek Regional Park

Cave Creek is known for its preserved desert beauty, and one of the best ways to explore it is Cave Creek Regional Park, which has several trails perfect for biking, horseback riding and hiking. Just come prepared, drink water and explore with

caution – especially during the sweltering summer.

37019 N. Lava Ln.  
602-506-2930,  
[maricopacountyparks.net](http://maricopacountyparks.net)  
The Finer Arts Gallery  
Immerse yourself in Cave Creek’s art scene by exploring The Finer Arts Gallery, a 4,000-square-foot gallery housed in the historical Treehouse building, which is where the Cave Creek Craft Council – now the Sonoran Arts League – started. Today, the space features work by 50 Arizona artists and rotates pieces on a bi-yearly basis.

6137 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-488-2923,  
[thefinerartsgallery.com](http://thefinerartsgallery.com)

**Overnight Option**

Prickly Pear Inn  
Guests enjoy spacious rooms, mountain views and walkable access to shops and restaurants at this upscale boutique inn.

6268 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-488-2616, [pricklypearinnaz.com](http://pricklypearinnaz.com)

**Photo Op**

Frontier Town  
Complete your trip by snapping a photo with the Frontier Town cowboy sign before perusing the specialty stores.

6245 E. Cave Creek Rd.  
480-488-9129, [frontiertownaz.com](http://frontiertownaz.com)

**Celebrate July 4th in Phoenix and across Arizona:**

**Where to see fireworks, celebrations**

By Kenneth Wong and FOX 10 Staff

Updated July 4, 2024 10:40am MST  
FOX 10 Phoenix

Looking for places to celebrate the 4th of July? Here’s a list of some of the places holding some dazzling Independence Day celebrations for 2024: **Within the Phoenix area**

**Apache Junction - 4th of July Fireworks Celebration**

- July 4. Gates open at 6:00 p.m., fireworks at 8:30 p.m.
- Superstition Shadows Park - 1091 W. Southern Avenue, Apache Junction (event is not at the high school football/track field)
- Free event
- <https://www.apachejunctionaz.gov/700/4th-of-July>

**Buckeye - Independence Day Celebration**

- July 4, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Buckeye Airport - 3000 S. Palo Verde Road, Buckeye
- Free event
- <https://www.apachejunctionaz.gov/700/4th-of-July>

**Chandler’s All-American Bash**

- July 4, 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- Dr. A.J. Chandler Park: Stage Plaza - 178 E. Commonwealth Avenue, Chandler
- Free admission
- <https://www.chandleraz.gov/explore/special-events/chandlers-all-american-bash>

**Fountain Hills - Fourth at the Fountain**

- July 4, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Fountain Park - 12925 N. Saguaro Boulevard, Fountain Hills
- Free event
- <https://www.experiencefountainhills.org/events/2024/fourthatthefountain>

**Gilbert 4th of July Celebration**

- July 4, 4:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- Gilbert Regional Park - 3005 E. Queen Creek Road, Gilbert
- Free attendance, VIP experience tickets available for \$30
- <https://www.gilbertaz.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/special-events-and-permits/gilbert-s-july-4th-celebration>

**Goodyear - Star Spangled Fourth**

- July 4, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Goodyear Ballpark - 1933 S Ballpark Way, Goodyear
- Goodyear Recreation Campus - 420 Estrella Parkway, Goodyear



- Free attendance, activities and parking
- Fireworks begin at 8:45PM. It is viewable at both locations
- <https://www.goodyearaz.gov/government/departments/parks-recreation/special-events>

**Mesa - Arizona Celebration of Freedom**

- July 4, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Downtown Mesa - 263 N. Center Street, Mesa
- Free admission
- Fireworks at approximately 9:30 p.m.
- <https://azcelebrationoffreedom.com/>

**City of Peoria's All-American Festival**

- July 4, 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Peoria Sports Complex Main Stadium - 16101 N. 83rd Avenue, Peoria
- Free admission (VIP Experience and Sam Adams Terrace Experience tickets are sold out)
- Fireworks show scheduled for 8:40PM
- <https://www.peoriaaz.gov/government/departments/arts-culture/special-events/all-american-festival>

**Phoenix - Fabulous Phoenix 4th**

- July 4, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Steele Indian School Park - 300 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix
- Free admission

- Fireworks show begins at 9:15 p.m.
- <https://www.phoenix.gov/parks/special-events/fabphx4>

**Pleasant Harbor - Celebrate America**

- July 3, 5:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
- Pleasant Harbor at **Lake Pleasant** - 8708 W. Harbor Boulevard, Peoria
- Free to attend, but paid parking
- <https://pleasantharbor.com/event/celebrate-america-2021/>

**Scottsdale 4th of July Celebration at WestWorld**

- July 4, 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- WestWorld - 16601 N. Pima Road, Scottsdale
- Fireworks start at 9 p.m., events ends promptly after
- Cashless event
- <https://scottsdale4th.com/>

**Surprise - Independence Day Celebration**

- July 4, 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Baseball game at Surprise Stadium - 15850 N. Bullard Avenue. Gates open at 4:30PM, and stadium will remain open after the game for those who want to watch the fireworks from the stadium seats
- Live entertainment and food at Mark Coronado Park - 15960 N. Bullard Avenue
- Fireworks will begin at 8:45 p.m.

- <https://surpriseaz.gov/1162/City-Calendar>

**Tempe 4th of July Celebration**

- July 4, 4:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Tempe Beach Park - 80 W. Rio Salado Parkway, Tempe
- Admission Fee: \$5 for kids 6-12, \$12 for general, \$50 for child VIP, \$100 for adult VIP
- <https://tempe4th.com/>

**Tolleson - 4th of July Celebration**

- July 4, 4:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- Tolleson Veterans Park - 8601 W. Van Buren Street, Tolleson
- Free event, free Uber rides to the celebration also offered for Tolleson residents only
- <https://az-tolleson4.civicplus.com/846/Fourth-of-July>
- Free Uber rides (for Tolleson residents only) - <https://r.uber.com/rXSd7YR9DnQ>, or enter code **rXSd7YR9DnQ** directly to your Uber wallet.

**Other Parts of Arizona**

**Casa Grande 4th of July Celebration**

- July 4, 7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
- Paul Mason Sports Complex - 2525 N. Pinal Avenue, Casa Grande
- Free event
- <https://casagrandeaz.gov/564/4th-of-July-Celebration>

**Flagstaff - Annual 4th of July Parade\**

- July 4, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Downtown Flagstaff
- Free event
- <https://www.flagstaff.com/4th-of-july>

**Flagstaff - A Flag Fourth - Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra**

- July 4. Doors open 2:00 p.m., show from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Pepsi Amphitheater - 250 Garrison Road, Flagstaff
- Free event
- <https://www.flagstaff.com/4th-of-july>

**Florence 4th of July Freedom Fest**

- July 4. Activities begin at 1:00 p.m., fireworks at 8:45 p.m.
- Florence Aquatic Center - 174 W. 1st street, Florence
- Free event
- <https://www.florenceaz.gov/specialevents/>

**Grand Canyon/Tusayan 4th of July**

- July 4, 3:15 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.
- All events held at gravel lot north of IMAX. IMAX is located at 450 AZ-64, Grand Canyon Village
- Free event
- Pet-friendly drone show after dark
- <https://tusayan-az.gov/july4th/>

**Maricopa - Great American 4th Presented by Haydon Building Corp**

- July 4, 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

- Copper Sky Regional Park - 44345 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Maricopa
- <https://www.maricopa-az.gov/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/5819/1297?toggle=all>

**City of Nogales 2024 4th of July Celebration**

- July 4, 4:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
- Turley Park
- Fireworks at 8:30 p.m.
- <https://nogalesaz.gov/headlines/2024-4th-of-july-celebration/>

**Payson - 4th of July Celebration**

- July 4. Event starts at 1:00 p.m., fireworks at 9:00 p.m.
- Green Valley Park - 1000 W. Country Club Drive, Payson
- Free event
- <https://adventurepayson.com/4thofjuly/>

**Prescott's 4th - Freedom, Fun and Fireworks**

- July 4, 1:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.
- Watson Lake - 3101 Watson Lake Road, Prescott
- Free general admission
- <https://www.experienceprescott.com/event/prescotts-4th-freedom-fun-%26-fireworks/378/>

**City of Tucson 27th Annual 4th of July Fireworks Celebration**

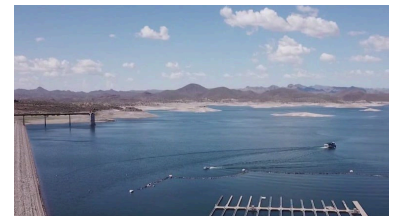
- July 4. Event opens at 7:00 p.m., fireworks at 9:00 p.m.
- Tucson Convention Center Parking Lot B -

400 W Cushing Street, Tucson

- Free event. Paid parking at Mercado District
- <https://www.tucsonaz.gov/Events-directory/City-of-Tucson-27th-Annual-4th-of-July-Fireworks-Celebration>

**Boy's leg caught in boat propellor in July 4 accident at Lake Pleasant**

By Tom Kuebel  
Published July 4, 2024 3:08pm MST  
FOX 10 Phoenix



LAKE PLEASANT, Ariz. - A teenager is recovering after his leg was caught in the propellor of a boat in the water at Lake Pleasant.

The incident happened at 11 p.m. according to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

Officials emphasize safety tips at **Lake Pleasant**

Officials provide safety tips for partiers planning to spend time at Lake Pleasant ahead of the Memorial Day holiday. FOX 10's Dominique Newland has the story.

The 13-year-old boy was taken out of the water at the Pleasant Harbor Marina where he was transferred to a local hospital.

The hemorrhage is not life-threatening.

## **Fire restrictions increased in Maricopa County's regional parks**

Queen Creek Sun Times Staff  
Jul 3, 2024 2:13 PM

Maricopa County parks have included smoking restrictions as part of fire ban, effective July 1. The usual restrictions, which include banning all campfires, fire pits, and charcoal in grills or any other manner, are still in effect; however, using gas/propane grills in designated areas is acceptable. Violation of Park Rule R-113 may result in a citation. A date to lift the fire ban has not been established.



Effective July 1, 2024, smoking in Maricopa County's regional parks will be prohibited except within enclosed vehicles and campers. Individuals who smoke are asked to ensure all materials are fully extinguished and disposed of properly. The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department initiated its annual fire ban on May 1, 2024. Stock image

As the Arizona heat continues to dry out the vegetation, a number of brush fires have started popping up around the Valley. On June 12, the Hassayampa River Preserve narrowly escaped the Rose Fire,

which destroyed 15 structures and 166 acres in its wake.

"This is not the first fire to come dangerously close to one of Maricopa County's regional parks," said R.J. Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation director. "We've also had fires around the park's perimeters at Cave Creek Regional Park and McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Our team has strategically cleared brush to create fire breaks and defensible spaces. But there's only so much our team can do. Given what we're seeing, we have decided to heighten our fire restrictions to include smoking. This move is not a knee-jerk reaction to the current situation but rather a preventative measure to keep park visitors, the natural resources, and the communities surrounding the park safe. Recently, Coconino and Kaibab National Forests also heightened their fire restrictions to Stage 2, which prohibits smoking."

Effective Monday, July 1, smoking in Maricopa County's regional parks will be prohibited except within enclosed vehicles and campers. Individuals who smoke are asked to ensure all materials are fully extinguished and disposed of properly. The Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department initiated its annual fire ban on May 1.

The usual restrictions, which include banning all campfires, fire pits, and charcoal in grills or any other manner, are still in effect; however, using gas/propane grills in designated areas is acceptable. Violation of Park Rule R-113 may result in a

citation. A date to lift the fire ban has not been established.

Eleven Maricopa County regional parks have been affected by the fire ban: Lake Pleasant Regional Park, White Tank Mountain Regional Park, Adobe Dam Regional Park, Buckeye Hills Regional Park, Estrella Mountain Regional Park, Hassayampa River Preserve, San Tan Mountain Regional Park, Usery Mountain Regional Park, McDowell Mountain Regional Park, Cave Creek Regional Park, and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

If you have any questions regarding the fire ban, contact the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department at 602-506-2930, or visit [maricopa.gov/parks](http://maricopa.gov/parks).

## **Outdoor smoking banned at Maricopa County regional parks to mitigate fire risk**

Jul 3, 2024, 5:00 PM  
BY KTAR.COM

PHOENIX – If you're planning to visit a Maricopa County regional park during the Fourth of July holiday weekend, leave your cigarettes in your vehicle or at home.

Outdoor smoking in the parks was banned Monday, as officials expanded existing fire restrictions. Lighting up is permitted only within enclosed vehicles and campers. In addition, smokers must make sure to fully extinguish

materials and dispose of them properly.

The regional park system for metro Phoenix already banned fires as part of their wildfire season burn restrictions, which are in effect from May 1 to Sept. 30 each year.

As a result, all campfires, fire pits and charcoal grills are prohibited.

## **Maricopa County Escalates Fire Restrictions Amidst Brush Fires, Smoking Ban Enforced in Regional Parks**

By Steve Wilson  
Published on July 02, 2024  
Hoodline.com



Source: Maricopa County Parks and Recreation

As flames lick the edges of civilization in Maricopa County Arizona, officials have reacted by escalating fire restrictions across regional parks. The parched landscape left in the wake of the Arizona heat has morphed into kindling, igniting multiple brush fires and threatening the tranquil preserves that dot the valley. On one hand, the Hassayampa River Preserve had a close

encounter with destruction on June 12, narrowly avoiding the devastation of the Rose Fire which demolished 15 structures and scorched 166 acres, according to Maricopa County.

Understanding the gravity of the situation, **Maricopa County Parks and Recreation** director, R.J. Cardin, conveyed the gravity of this recurrent threat. "This is not the first fire to come dangerously close to one of Maricopa County's regional parks," Cardin said, referencing previous incidents at Cave Creek Regional Park and McDowell Mountain Regional Park, "We've also had fires around the park's perimeters at Cave Creek Regional Park and McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Our team has strategically cleared brush to create fire breaks and defensible spaces. But there's only so much our team can do. Given what we're seeing, we have decided to heighten our fire restrictions to include smoking. This move is not a knee-jerk reaction to the current situation but rather a preventative measure to keep park visitors, the natural resources, and the communities surrounding the park safe. Recently, Coconino and Kaibab National Forests also heightened their fire restrictions to Stage 2, which prohibits smoking."

Starting July 1, the simple act of smoking in Maricopa County's regional parks will be permitted only within the confines of enclosed vehicles and campers. Smokers must make certain materials are completely extinguished and disposed of in the correct manner. The announcement serves as a

harbinger of a strict adherence to fire safety as the region grapples with a combustible reality. A standing ban on all campfires, fire pits, and charcoal use in grills remains steadfast, though gas/propane grills in designated areas will stand as the sole exception. Those who sidestep Park Rule R-113, may find themselves facing a citation, as informed by Maricopa County.

Eleven regional parks buckle under the weight of this ban, from Lake Pleasant Regional Park to the expanse of White Tank Mountain, Adobe Dam, Buckeye Hills, Estrella Mountain, the Hassayampa River Preserve, San Tan Mountain, Utery Mountain, McDowell Mountain, Cave Creek Regional Park, to the borders of Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area. For inquiries or details regarding this fire ban, Maricopa County invites individuals to contact the Parks and Recreation Department or to visit their website.

## **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Buy One, Get One Camping Promotion Returns To Maricopa Parks**





Who's ready to enjoy a free night's stay in one of Maricopa County's regional parks? Starting September 18, the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department is bringing back its popular Buy One, Get One camping promotion! The promotion allows park visitors who pay the camping fee for one night or more at a participating desert mountain county park to receive one night of equal or lesser value for **free during that same stay.**

"Maricopa County is home to 12 beautiful regional parks where residents and visitors alike can enjoy activities like boating, fishing, horseback riding, mountain biking, and camping," said Chairman Jack Sellers, who represents the East Valley communities of District 1 on the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors. "You don't have to wait until temperatures cool down to start planning your fall camping trip - take advantage of the 'Buy One, Get One' camping promotion being offered now at four of the County's regional parks to set aside time for exploring nature and spending time with your loved ones."

"We're excited to announce that the Buy One, Get One camping promotion will be returning this fall. Last year, we adjusted the campaign dates a bit to allow everyone to take advantage of the promotion before we head into the busy holiday season. The promotion has been activated on our online reservation system, so park visitors may start booking their fall stays immediately," said R.J. Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Director.

**To book a camping reservation and receive a free night, contact the parks at (602) 506-2930 or book your reservation online at [maricopacountyparks.org](http://maricopacountyparks.org).** The promotion is valid for stays booked between September 18 and October 31, 2024.

Participating parks include:

1. **Cave Creek Regional Park.** Located north of Phoenix, this park offers the illusion of being miles away from civilization. The campground has 55 individual developed campsites.
2. **McDowell Mountain Regional Park.** Nestled in the lower Verde River basin, this park is a desert jewel in the northeast Valley. This park has 76 developed campsites perfect for RV or tent camping.
3. **Usery Mountain Regional Park.** Located on the east side of the Valley at the western end of the Goldfield Mountains and adjacent to the Tonto National Forest, this park offers 74 individual-developed campsites. Sites can

accommodate an RV or tent camping.

4. **White Tank Mountain Regional Park.** At nearly 30,000 acres, this is the largest regional park in Maricopa County. Most of the park is made up of the rugged and beautiful White Tank Mountains on the Valley's west side. The park offers 40 individually developed campsites for tent or RV camping.

**Guidelines:**

Visitors interested in taking advantage of this offer must:

1. Book reservations online at [maricopacountyparks.org](http://maricopacountyparks.org).
2. **To receive the offer, you must use one of the following promotional codes:**
  1. **1 Night Free** (valid for one free night during a one to seven-day stay) or
  2. **2 Nights Free** (valid for two free nights during an eight to fourteen-day stay).
3. The offer is valid for designated camping spaces but not for primitive camping, group campground reservations, or unit fees.
4. Rain checks will **not** be issued if space is not available.
5. The offer is not valid at Adobe Dam Regional Park, Estrella Mountain Regional Park, Hassayampa River Preserve, Lake Pleasant Regional Park, San Tan Mountain Regional Park, and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.
6. The offer is only valid for camping stays between

September 18 and October 31, 2024.

At approximately 120,000 acres, Maricopa County is home to one of the largest regional park systems in the United States.

The parks are located throughout the county and within a 45-minute drive from downtown Phoenix. Some restrictions do apply. To learn more about Maricopa County's regional park system, visit [maricopa.gov/parks](http://maricopa.gov/parks).

## **Fire Restrictions Increased In Maricopa County's Regional Parks On July 1**

As the Arizona heat continues to dry out the vegetation, a number of



brush fires have started popping up around the valley. On June 12, the Hassayampa River Preserve narrowly escaped the Rose Fire, which destroyed 15 structures and 166 acres in its wake.

"This is not the first fire to come dangerously close to one of Maricopa County's regional parks," said R.J. Cardin, Maricopa County Parks and Recreation director. "We've also had fires around the park's perimeters at Cave Creek Regional Park and McDowell Mountain Regional Park. Our team has strategically cleared brush to create fire breaks and defensible spaces. But there's

only so much our team can do. Given what we're seeing, we have decided to heighten our fire restrictions to include smoking. This move is not a knee-jerk reaction to the current situation but rather a preventative measure to keep park visitors, the natural resources, and the communities surrounding the park safe. Recently, [Coconino and Kaibab National Forests](#) also heightened their fire restrictions to Stage 2, which prohibits smoking."

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Regional Park, and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

If you have any questions regarding the fire ban, contact the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department at (602) 506-2930, or visit [www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks).