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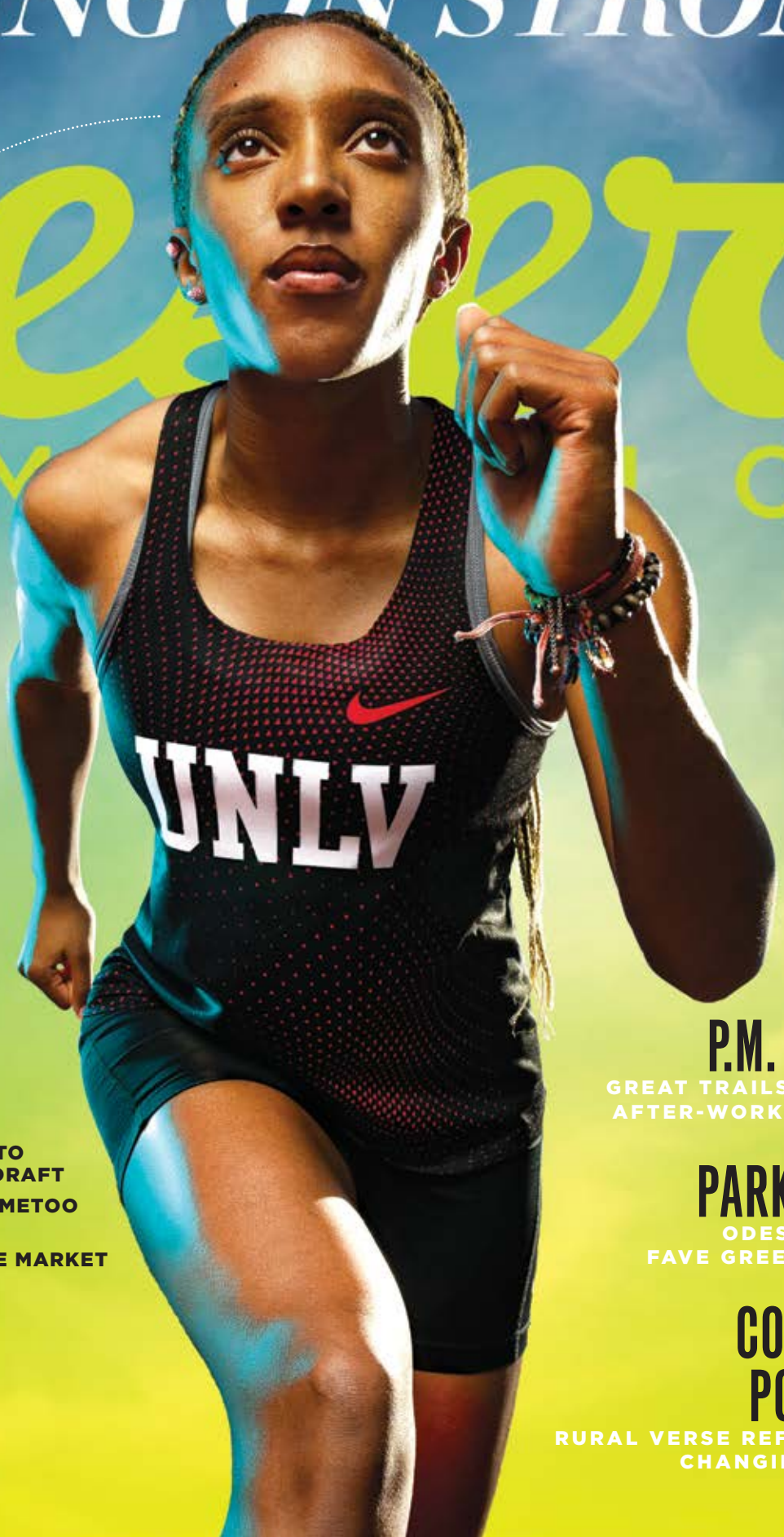

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Editor's Note

STRIDE OR DIE

I'm a walker. Not one of those elbow-pumping cardio-cult gazelles, enviably chugging along residential sidewalks and park pathways in superhero tracksuits. I *wish* I had that level of athletic will. No, I'm a nervous, ruminative walker who likes to tell himself he's striding in the deliberative spirit of Thoreau, in order to inspire and ponder ideas. High-minded ideas, like, you know, what to write for Editor's Note.

Walking requires proper space; otherwise, you're just pacing. And in an urban realm that's been essentially conquered by car-scale infrastructure and big-box architecture, such space isn't as plentiful as you'd think. This is a laborious way of saying that to talk about outdoor pursuits, whether it's hiking, playing sports, or faux-philosophically walking, is to talk indirectly about the importance of public space.

Not exactly a marquee cause at the moment, I know. But it rhymes with so many basic, enduring values that are in danger of getting lost in the daily churn of competitive outrage that passes for dialogue these days: the common good, stewardship of land and community — and even the idea that merit and worth can apply to things that don't fit into the profit puzzle of a world based on capital.

Ugh, that got heavy and pretentious. Best way to lighten up: Celebrate energy, excellence, and vigor on p. 61 with our Champions on the Rise; celebrate spring on p. 72 with a great a walk from our feature, "Hikes After 5"; and celebrate public amenities on p. 81 with our collection of odes, "Saturdays in the Park"! See you in space. ✦



Sitting in a park in my office chair to wryly reflect this issue's theme,
Andrew Kiraly
EDITOR

NEXT MONTH You're bound for discovery with our May/June travel issue.

OH, YEAH, ALSO

1. Modest Suggestions for Adding Even More Vegas Spectacle to the NFL Draft (see story on p. 13):

I. Gift baskets of Guy Fieri's signature Flavor Sauce and Hair Gel
II. In surprise DJ set, Diplo drops new single featuring beat based on raspy, hateful, withering cackle of Sheldon Adelson
III. Legislators in jet packs toss crisp new tax dollars on crowd
IV. Football explained to special musical guest Billie Eilish
V. Brittle, waxen body of Cher cracks open to unleash apocalyptic swarm of ravening locusts



2. A new word we learned and tried desperately to sneak into this issue but we couldn't so we're excitedly disgorging it here to get it out of our system: **immiserate**. It means to make miserable or to impoverish. Enjoy!

3. Hey, hit up our website! We've been posting all kinds of stuff — riffs, reviews, cool photos, accounts of an insanely wholesome family country band/clogging troupe called Mama's Wranglers. Also: Kristen Peterson recalls the generous heart of the late Downtown artist Alex Huerta; Scott Dickensheets considers the audacious debut fiction by a UNLV student; plus, hella Friday Photos depicting the valley's people, places, and odd things. Check it all out at desertcompanion.com.

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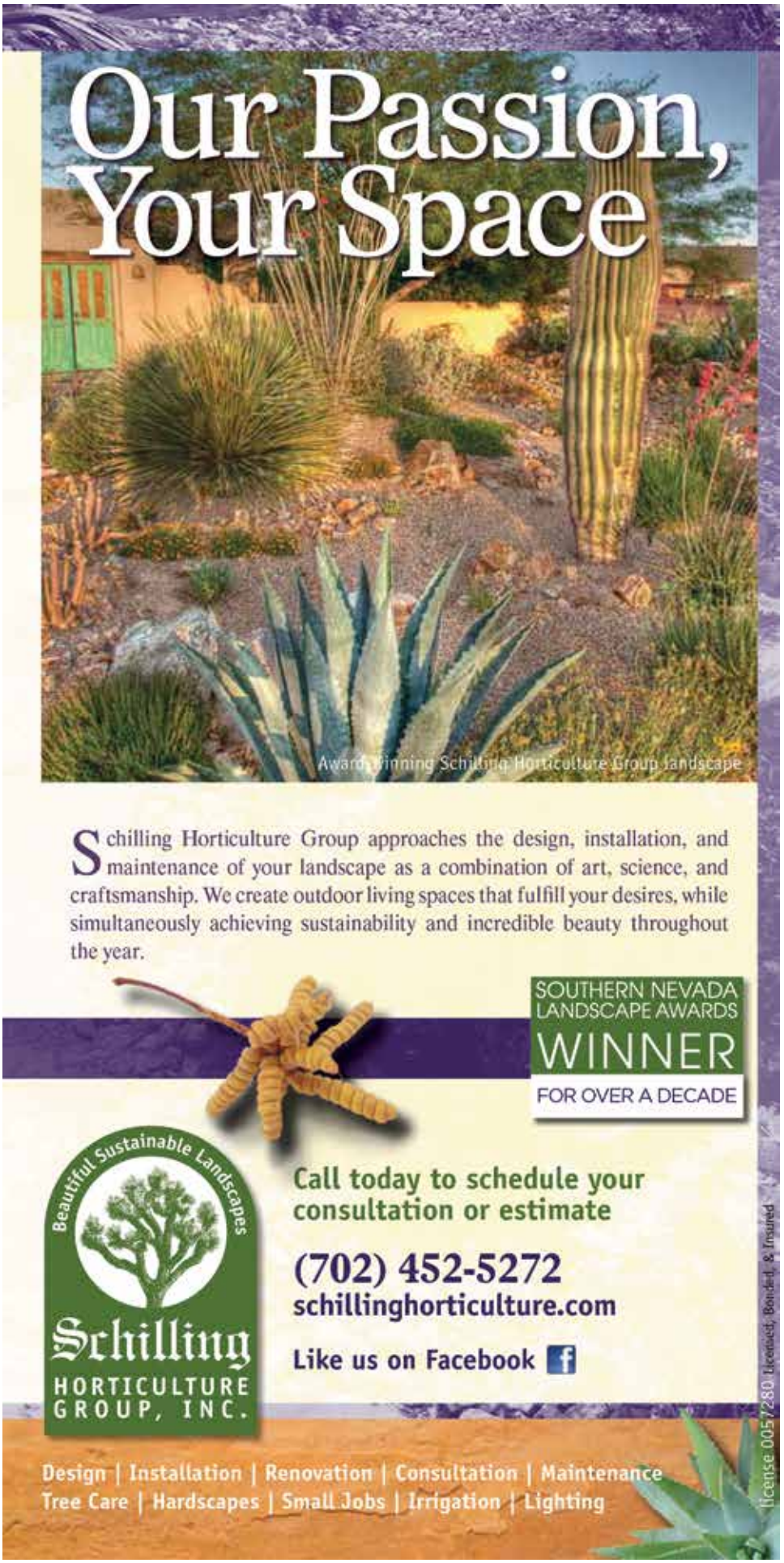

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ALL THINGS



SPORTS

The Big Takeover

The NFL used to hate us. Now it's holding football prom here. Here are 32 things to know about the upcoming NFL draft

BY ***Matt Jacob***

IDEAS, CULTURE, FOOD, AND OTHER WAYS TO USE THIS CITY

ILLUSTRATION ***Chris Morris***

A few years ago, you'd have thought humans would colonize Mars before the NFL deigned to stage one of its marquee events in the sports betting capital of the universe. And yet it's actually happening: The league that used to be so anti-Vegas that it rejected a multimillion-dollar Super Bowl spot from the LVCVA is gearing up for a 72-hour takeover of our town.

Las Vegas will be the center of the sports universe April 23-25 as it hosts the 2020 NFL Draft, the league's second-biggest annual showcase behind only the Super Bowl. Just what is the draft, why is it a big deal, and how will it benefit the city? We have the answers in our 32-point NFL Draft primer! (Why 32? It's the number of NFL franchises and the number of selections that will be made in the first round on April 23.)

32 Some history: Looking to improve parity among its then-nine franchises, the NFL in 1936 instituted an annual player-selection process in which the team with the worst record from the previous season would get the first pick in each round, while the second-worst team would get the second pick, and so on. The inaugural draft, held in Philadelphia, lasted nine rounds.

31 With the first-ever pick, the Philadelphia Eagles selected Jay Berwanger, a halfback who won the very first Heisman Trophy ... and who never played a snap in the NFL, as he and the Eagles (and later Chicago Bears) failed to agree on a contract.

30 The draft grew from nine to 10 rounds in 1937, increased to 20 rounds in 1939 and peaked at 32 rounds in 1943. By 1977, the draft was reduced to 12 rounds, then eight in 1993 and seven (the current number) the following year.

29 For the first three decades, the draft bounced between various U.S. cities, mostly on the East Coast and in the Midwest. But starting with the 1965 draft (held in 1964), New York City began a 50-year run as draft host, with the last nine staged at Radio City Music Hall.

28 Sensing an economic opportunity, the NFL abandoned New York after the 2014 draft and began rotating the event among its member cities. Since then, the draft has been held in Chicago (2015-16), Philadelphia (2017), Dallas (2018) and Nashville (2019). Las Vegas becomes just the 10th host city in the draft's 85-year history.

27 Why is it a big deal to host the NFL Draft? Money. After the 2019 draft, Nashville reported an economic impact of $224 million, including $133 million in direct spending. Both figures represented a 79 percent increase from the previous year in Dallas.

26 Last year's draft attracted a live crowd of 600,000 over three days, was broadcast in 115 countries, and drew a record 47.5 million TV viewers (up 5 percent from 2018).

25 Projections vary, but we're expected to welcome 350,000 visitors specifically for the draft. (New Year's Eve attracts about 300,000.)

24 Naturally, tourism officials are shifting into full VEGAS! mode. Players invited to attend the draft will be ferried across Bellagio's lake to a red-carpet stage. From there, the focus moves to the NFL Draft Main Stage, which will be built adjacent to the new Caesars Forum conference center.

23 A third component: the NFL Draft Experience, which will take over Flamingo Road from the Strip to Koval Lane and feature live entertainment, NFL player appearances, exhibits, and more.

22 The three-day spectacle is free and open to all.

21 What about traffic? The Strip on and around Flamingo Road is going to be a mess, starting with lane restrictions near Bellagio in early April. The Strip from Flamingo Road to Paris and Flamingo to Koval will be periodically shut down in both directions starting April 22.

20 What's all this gonna cost? In a January news conference, LVCVA chief Steve Hill estimated it would be in the "$2.5 million range."

19 Rest assured, officials will justify that expenditure as a drop in the bucket compared with exposure that comes with hosting the draft.

18 A total of 255 players will be selected in this year's draft.

17 While a significant number of the 255 draftees will come from marquee colleges (think Alabama, Ohio State, Florida, USC), dozens of lesser-known players from little-known schools are selected each year.

16 To wit: Jerry Rice, regarded as the greatest wide receiver of all time, was drafted 16th overall in 1985 out of Mississippi Valley State.

15 Not exactly a football factory, UNLV has produced 46 draftees. The first: defensive end Dan Orlich (8th round, 1949). The most recent: offensive lineman Joe Hawley (4th round, 2010). The highest pick: running back Ickey Woods (taken 31st in 1988). The most famous: quarterback Randall Cunningham (2nd round, 37th overall, 1985).

14 The draft epitomizes the term "inexact science." Numerous first-round picks have famously flopped, while

FEDDE: AP PHOTO/PATRICK SEMANSKY



SEE THIS YEAR'S CHAMPIONS ON PAGE 61.

WHERE ARE THESE CHAMPIONS NOW? STILL RISING!

ERICK FEDDE In 2014, when he was in our "Champions on the Rise" feature, Erick Fedde was a junior star pitcher for UNLV. Now, he's a major leaguer for the Washington Nationals. After making his big-league debut in 2017, he's played for both the team's major and minor league squads. In 2019, he played 21 games for the Nationals, although not during its postseason runs. ***Lauren Hyde***

TYRELL CROSBY As a University of Oregon freshman in 2014, offensive tackle Tyrell Crosby — a 2013 "Champion on the Rise" from Green Valley High School — played in all 15 games. Despite missing all but two games in his third year — he broke his left foot — by the end of his college career, he had received several awards, including 2017 Pac-12 Offensive Lineman of the Year. He's now a member of the Detroit Lions. ***Eduardo Rossal***

RANDALL CUNNINGHAM JR. High jumper Randall Cunningham Jr. was a Gatorade 2013 track and field athlete of the year — no wonder we made him a "Champion" the next year. In 2015, his first year at USC, he was



Clockwise from below: Jon Gruden; Joe Burrow, Roger Goodell

198 players in the 2000 draft were taken ahead of a doughy quarterback named Tom Brady, he of the six Super Bowl rings.

13 Indeed, today's sports media landscape is littered with "draft experts," but nobody really knows which players will be selected. Even team officials often wait until the last second to decide.

12 That said, there will be zero drama at the outset of this draft. When NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell strides to the podium to reveal the first pick, you can be certain of two things: He will be booed loudly, and he will announce the selection of LSU quarterback Joe Burrow.

11 The reigning Heisman Trophy winner, Burrow will go to the Cincinnati Bengals — unless the Bengals go Bengals and trade down.

10 There will be dozens of trades throughout the three-day draft as some teams move up to ensure they get a player they want, and others move down and stockpile future picks.

9 Our Raiders have posted a 17-31 over the past three seasons and have just one winning season (and one playoff appearance and zero playoff wins) since reaching the 2002 Super Bowl. Translation: Our new franchise needs a lot of help.

8 In good news, Raiders head coach Jon Gruden has seven selections this year, including two of the first 20 (picks No. 12 and 19). The Raiders also have three third-round picks, and one each in the fourth and seventh rounds — although that could change depending on trades.

7 Since returning to the Raiders after the 2017 season, Gruden has made 18 selections: 11 defensive players, six offensive players, one punter. He has yet to draft a quarterback.

6 Expect that to change in April because his current quarterback, Derek Carr, isn't the long-term answer.

5 Might Gruden use one of those first-round picks to nab one of the top-rated quarterbacks not named Burrow? He'd be an instant hero in his new city. But the smart money says Gruden will use one of his third-rounders (or trade up into the second round) to get his signal-caller.

4 There will be watch parties at bars and restaurants all over the valley, particularly for the first round.

3 Do not, under any circumstances, engage in any drinking game tied to the mention of Joe Burrow's name. You'll be passed out before the Raiders are on the clock with that 12th pick.

2 If you're unfamiliar with the phrase "on the clock," Google it. Also learn terms like "high motor," "gap sound," "edge rusher," "plug and play" and "north/south runner."

1 Forget about the economic impact and the media exposure and the traffic fiasco and the history that comes with being just the 10th city to host the one of sports grandest annual events. More important than all of that, the NFL's decision to firmly plant its flag in Las Vegas — on the heels of the Vegas Golden Knights' arrival — means we've officially graduated from small town to big city. ✦

an All-American. In 2016, he took first in the NCAA Division 1 Outdoor Track and Field Championships. At the 2018 NCAA Indoor Championship, he won with a USC record jump of 7 feet, 6.2 inches. ***ER***

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION SCOTT LIEN; GRUDEN: AP PHOTO/D. ROSS CAMERON; BURROWS: AP PHOTO/GERALD HERBERT; GOODELL: AP PHOTO/BRYNN ANDERSON

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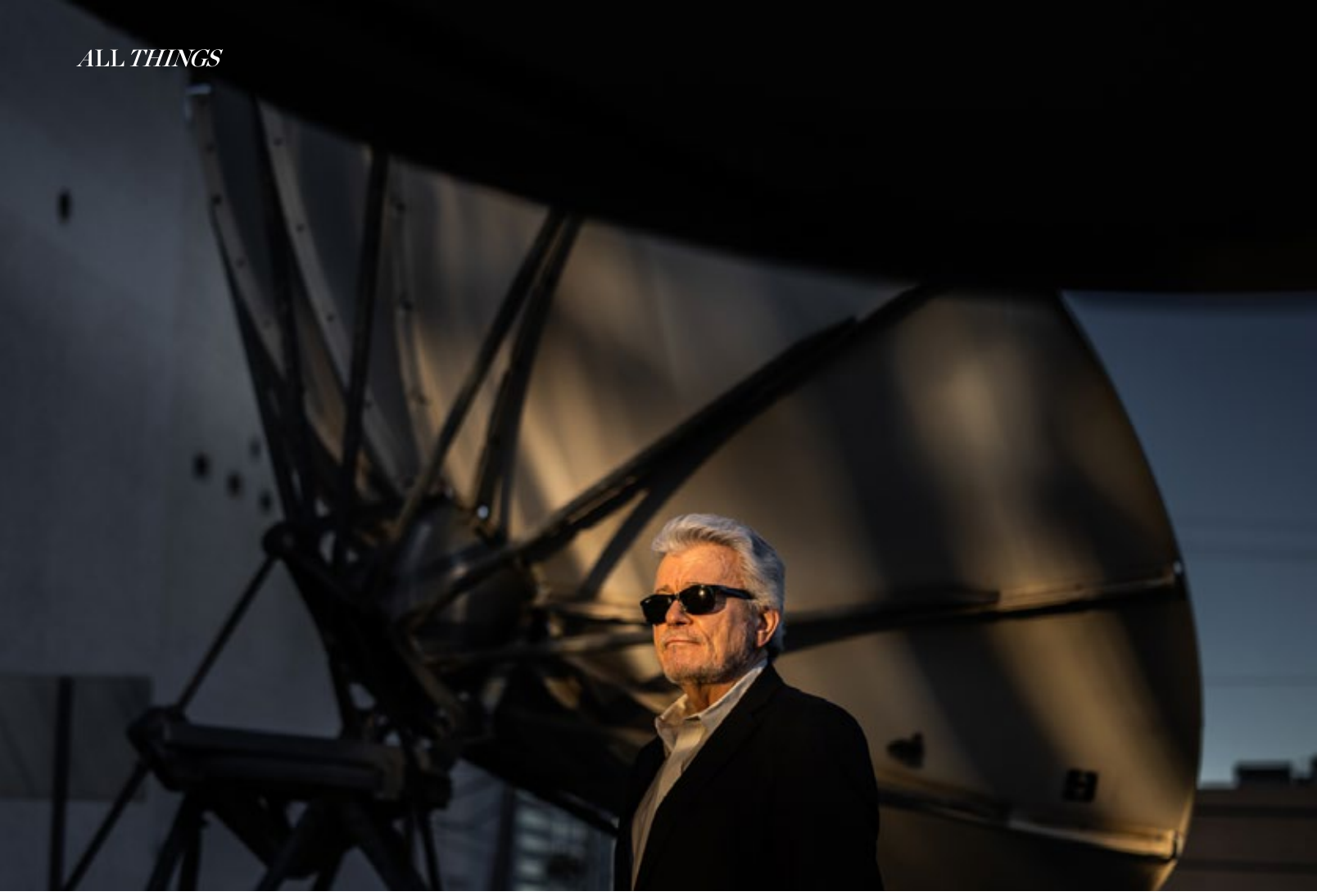

MEDIA

Explained Phenomena

With Mystery Wire, longtime journalist George Knapp builds on his own work to create the 'world's largest archive' of solid information about the unexplained

BY ***Geoff Schumacher***

George Knapp has been hearing the jokes for years. His reports for KLAS Channel 8 on unidentified flying objects, cattle mutilations, crop circles, and Area 51 have generated scores of smirking critics spouting quips about little green men.

Knapp tries to be good-natured about it. He can do this in part because he's received plenty of accolades from his colleagues. He has won more awards — and more prestigious ones — for his investigative reporting than any other Las Vegas television journalist. Ever.

Despite his thick skin, Knapp can't help but feel a little aggrieved by those who diminish his work, considering how much time and effort he has put into developing reluctant sources, filing Freedom of Information Act requests, and cobbling tidbits of information into coherent narratives. Sometimes, a story took several years of work before it ended up on TV.

"It's not my religion," Knapp says of his pursuit of hard-to-explain phenomena. "It's a news story."

This is what it's really about: Knapp doesn't like secrets — especially secrets kept by the government. He's curious about what's in that secret file, what's going on behind that guarded gate. He wants to know what the authorities aren't telling us.

This is the foundation of Knapp's work over the past four decades. At its core, it's not about aliens or paranormal activity. It's about asking this question: If all this is just fanciful nonsense, why has the government spent untold millions of taxpayer dollars on investigations and experiments, and tried to keep it all secret?

Bob Stoldal, who was news director at Channel 8 for many years, says Knapp possesses "a heavy dose of courage," as exemplified by his stories taking on the mob, local politicians — and Area 51. These are stories "that other journalists wouldn't touch," Stoldal says.

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Christopher Smith***

Consider what may be the signature achievement of Knapp's career thus far: His relentless investigative reports literally put Area 51 on the map. The government refused to even acknowledge the air base's existence until Knapp's reporting made it absurd to keep up the charade. Today, practically everyone has heard of Area 51.

After many years of full-time investigative reporting, Knapp recently transitioned into a new role at Channel 8. He's now in charge of a project called Mystery Wire (mysterywire.com), a web archive of Knapp's greatest hits — his nine-part 1989 series on Area 51, his reports on cutting-edge space technology, his revelations about the Kennedy assassination and the murder of Jimmy Hoffa, and much more. He's resurrecting entire interviews, rather than the snippets incorporated into three-minute reports for the 6 o'clock news.

Knapp describes Mystery Wire as the "world's largest archive of journalistically vetted news stories, interviews, and special investigations into unusual subjects that might otherwise be overlooked."

In addition to the archival footage, Knapp is producing fresh material for Mystery Wire. The site also curates news from around the world on paranormal, space science, and true crime topics.

If Mystery Wire were limited to the work Knapp has produced for Channel 8 and marketed locally, it would be interesting enough. But this project has much bigger ambitions. KLAS is owned by Nexstar Media Group, which owns 197 stations across the United States. Mystery Wire eventually will tap into the resources of all those stations, which include WGN in Chicago, KTLA in Los Angeles, and WPHL in Philadelphia. Knapp's reports will air in markets representing more than 60 percent of U.S. television households.

"I'm thrilled to death about the reach of this thing once it's fully up and running," Knapp says.

For Knapp, a turning point came in December 2017, when the ultimate mainstream news organization, the *New York Times*, published a front-page article exposing a secret Pentagon study of UFOs. After 30 years of reporting on these topics, Knapp takes pleasure in the fact that he's no longer a lone wolf.

"It is satisfying to see the rest of the world coming around to take a look at this stuff," Knapp says. "Every major news organization in the world is covering this now." ✦

Geoff Schumacher is the vice president of exhibits and programs for The Mob Museum.



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SOCIETY

Good by Design

Designer Mandy Telleria uses her skills to give others the helping hand she never got

BY ***T.R. Witcher***

Raised in Elko by a single mom, Mandy Telleria knows what it's like to struggle. She saw her mom work nights and weekends as a server and blackjack dealer to raise two kids. Lots of things broke down in their house. The family once went without a fridge for six months. Their struggles were even tougher because her father was a wealthy developer who also lived in Elko but left his wife and never supported his family.

Art was her way out. When she was 9, an aunt bought her paper and nice pencils, and Telleria proved an adept illustrator. She went on to study interior design at UNLV and graduated in 2007.

Five years ago, while working as a designer in Las Vegas, she fell into what she calls an "extremely deep depression." Most people work through a tough patch by focusing on their needs. Her solution was to "stop trying to solve my own problem and help someone else solve their problem. Let me use my skills and put them to use for good." Design, she felt, could have great purpose, but too often was superficial. Some cool new building with a cool new shape designed to sell cool new things or cool new experiences. Surely design could be about more.

At the end of 2014 she sought out nonprofits looking for pro bono architectural services. She quickly lined up two clients and started the Good Deed Project (it received official nonprofit status in 2017). She teamed up with a teen pregnancy shelter, Living Grace, to renovate a bathroom with bad plumbing. The job took three months to plan and three more to complete. She found donors and cold-called subcontractors to help do the work.

The second project proved more daunting. She partnered with Safe House, the domestic-violence shelter where 60 women and their children live, on an array of projects: rehabbing the entire exterior and creating a new playground, gardening spaces, and a barbecue area; and renovating interior spaces, including a living room, dining room, bathrooms, and new floors. "We had to gut everything and redo everything, even the landscaping," says Judy Belanger, a board member with Safe House.

Telleria was game. She reached out to women at the shelter for their input. She tapped a network of volunteers and vendors. Alex Baker, a childhood friend from Elko, was a project manager with Silver Lands, a landscape architectural contractor. His firm created a playground and a small planter garden. "Give Mandy credit she's due for combining all the different trades," Baker says.

Another key ally was Doris Mejia, who worked as an HR manager at Lowe's in Henderson; among her jobs was to identify, once a year, nonprofits in need of renovation assistance. Telleria gave her a presentation of everything she had in mind for the Safe House renovation. "It blew me away," Mejia says. "It was way above the scope of what we'd ever done." It was beyond what a single Lowe's store could do.

Undeterred, Telleria put together a PowerPoint that Mejia could take to other stores — ultimately eight other Lowe's each agreed to supply materials and labor to renovate one of nine units (one unit consists of two bedrooms and a bathroom). The work proved so demanding that Lowe's ended up paying its workers for their time. Telleria hadn't anticipated how long it would take: almost three years. Through it she has come to rely on local suppliers to donate material and local architecture firms to donate storage space.

"Mandy was so organized," Mejia says. "She knew what she wanted, she knew what would work and what wouldn't. ... She had a lot of know-how."

"We're more than thrilled. It was an amazing project. Mandy was so patient, she had such a positive attitude about everything," Belanger says. "Some of the women who were going to be moved from the old suites to the new ones, they would cry, (saying) 'I cannot believe I can live in this beautiful environment.'"

After the Safe House job, Telleria shift-



PHOTOGRAPHY ***Anthony Mair***

ed her focus to smaller, nimbler projects — working with individual families and single mothers who need help with basic maintenance, what she calls "pain points" for folks living in deteriorating homes who can't afford critical repairs.

Last year she helped out a family of five — a single mother, Ana, her mother, and three teenage boys, one recently diagnosed with MS. They were living in a small, two-bedroom trailer home. There were no beds, just mattresses on the floor; her grandmother and one of her sons were sleeping in one bed. Worse, there were holes in the floor.

With her team of suppliers and volunteers, Telleria oversaw the renovations in two weeks. She put in a new kitchen, including new appliances and cabinets. She put in a partition with sliding doors. Ana had been sleeping in the kitchen on a sofa. Telleria moved her into the living room. Now she and her son are closer together and have their own space.

"I can't even tell you how many things needed to be done on that home," says volunteer Debbie Florek. Forty volunteers spent "14 long days literally ripping that place apart and creating a whole new home for them." On the 14th day, the family returned, and the boys had made angel necklaces for all the volunteers.

"Design tends to be all about luxury, and people with disposable income can afford it," Telleria says. "But, really, our skills can be utilized in a much more wholesome way to help people who are living in undesirable conditions." This year she hopes to renovate housing for veterans in need, and, ultimately, she'd like the Good Deed Project to become a developer of low-income housing.

The irony is not lost on her that her father was also a developer. He died in November 2018. They never quite had the reconciliation she might have hoped for, but after he suffered a stroke she went to see him — a difficult decision. Her father had not shown her much love — much of anything — but she held his hand anyway. "He had enough strength to grip my hand." It was some kind of resolution. She was able to show him the same compassion she's shown so many others.

"We're always stronger than we think we are," Telleria says. "We're always more blessed than we think we are. We always have about 40 percent more in our tank than we think we do. There are a lot of people out there silently struggling. They can use a little helping hand to restore their spirit."

Good Deed Project is a small operation — to keep it rolling, Telleria desperately needs more resources, so she can store materials herself, pay a small staff, pay herself (she still works full-time as a designer to make ends meet).

"The key is Mandy," Florek says. "She is beyond dedicated to helping people. She puts herself into it more than 100 percent. She eats sleeps and breathes the GDP."

"When I really think about it, I think we're here to help each other along through the journey," Telleria says. "Everybody has a tough experience along the way, and it's much easier if someone is there to help you in some way. No one was there to help us." ✦

For more information, including details of Good Deed Project's April 19 fundraiser: thegooddeedproject.org/events

OPEN TOPIC

Butterfly Effect

Climate change is spoiling the outdoors — and that's the least of our troubles

BY ***Heidi Kyser***

I've had ample opportunity to observe climate change in the outdoors. In 2016, my husband and I backpacked our first section of the Pacific Crest Trail, from Kennedy Meadows to Kearsarge Pass in California. Before leaving, we'd kept an eye on the Chimney Fire, which burned 46,000 acres of forest and closed sections of the trail. We were lucky; the fire stopped short of our departure point.

That trip was the best experience of our lives. We intended to do another section each year, but have only been back once, in 2018. The interim years, another effect of climate change kept us out: the combination of deep winter snowpack followed by high spring temperatures that puts waterways on steroids. In 2017, two PCT hikers were swept to their deaths trying to cross rivers in the section we had planned to hike.

Drought is also a backpacking buzzkill. Water weighs a lot, so you want to be able to carry as little as possible and hike from water source to water source for refills. On the Ruby Crest Trail, the Northern Nevada route we backpacked last year, there's a 14-mile dry stretch. You either have to do it in one shot or carry enough water for all day and overnight. Lots of Western trails have sporadic water sources. As climate change dries them up, more of these trails will become inaccessible. And to come full circle, we almost had to cancel that Ruby Crest hike because of another wildfire, which burned nearly 17,000 acres and temporarily closed the trailhead access road.

Like many, I see the outdoors as my playground, religion, and therapy, so you could say climate change is burning, flooding, and desiccating my church. Perhaps this is a petty complaint in the context of the 2018 California wildfires that killed dozens of people and displaced hundreds of families, not to mention the historically destructive Australian wildfires, which have killed 27 people and a billion animals (so far). But the effects that outdoor recreationists like me are seeing on our beloved wilderness areas could serve as a warning that we need to make serious changes before we end up like Australia.

Right now, the signs I see are comparatively small, but they're ominous. Since 2004, when I started road biking, my cycling season has gotten shorter by a few weeks. I don't ride during 100-plus degree stretches. In Las Vegas, the historical average number of those days is 71 per year, but in 2017 there were 86. The Union of Concerned Scientists says that, on the current trajectory, we'll see 96 three-digit days a year by 2100. Of course, cyclists living in that future hell can always head to the mountains, where it's cooler ... provided there are no wildfires, floods, or drought. And this is just one activity, cycling, in one person's experience. Now extrapolate that out to all the other people who do all the other activities there are to do outdoors, and the countless ways that climate change can interfere, from longer allergy seasons to extreme

weather events.

Outdoor recreation is big business. Last year, the Outdoor Industries Association estimated that it accounts for 87,000 jobs creating $4 billion in wages and salaries, and generates $12.6 billion in consumer spending and $1 billion in state and local tax revenue for Nevada. So, even if you're not worried about killing people and animals, maybe you care about losing a chunk of this change.

Outdoor recreation companies certainly do. Powdr Corp, owner of Lee Canyon ski area, is following the trend of converting snow sports resorts to year-round recreation destinations — a reaction to the decreasing length and quality of ski seasons worldwide. The company has proposed a retooling of Lee Canyon to include mountain bike trails, a hillside coaster, and a zipline, all warm-weather activities, in addition to more ski lifts, runs, and snowmaking capacity.

The environmental impact report on this project predicts that it will likely be detrimental to the endangered Mount Charleston Blue Butterflies, which breed in the area. The company, known as a good steward of the environment, says it will keep an eye on any damage to the butterfly's habitat as construction proceeds, and a local scientist tells me that the butterfly should continue to thrive in other, higher-elevation areas. But if the project does go forward as planned, the implicit message will be that this patch of butterfly habitat is an acceptable price to pay to save the resort.

In the past, public relations agents have chastised me for writing about the "bathtub ring" at Lake Mead, citing the impact that such a negative image has on the lake's boat rental companies and tour guides. More recently, I've gotten pitches to write about how Nevada is bucking declining national trends by seeing growth in outdoor recreation.

I appreciate what the abundance of nearby public lands and nice weather do for the economy. I'm grateful for the outfitters large and small who have facilitated my passions. But for their sake, and my stepkids' and their kids', I'm less inclined to talk about all their great products and services than the changes they — and I, and everyone else — must make to preserve the spaces that support their business, my leisure, and countless plants and animals.

Because it's a bummer to have to cancel your hike due to a wildfire or flood, but it's a tragedy to watch your world burn knowing you could have done something about it sooner. ✦



PERSONAL HISTORY

Keeping It Reel

Through life's many changes, fishing in local parks keeps this mother and son connected

BY ***Soni Brown***

We are not fishing people, my son and I. Yet fishing is what we've done to connect as mother and son, though we have never caught a fish or even talked as we do it. It started when he was 4 years old. I left his father and our home in Los Angeles. We moved in the dead of winter to New York City. I found work that kept us on the edge of poverty. The toilsome commute and long hours meant my son was in daycare for close to 60 hours a week. His only friend was the neighbor's daughter, who had no compunction about teasing him for not having a father or wearing the purple and pink, unicorn-print pajama pants I found in a laundromat. I needed something we could do together that was cheap and cheerful while giving me a break from the nitpicking judgment of my family.

Fishing in Manhattan was as close to free as I could find. Central Park loaned rods and gave you free bait. Somehow, sitting on the concrete banks of the Harlem Meer with a line in the water delighted my otherwise morose son. The high-rises surrounded us like giants, and he earnestly believed

ILLUSTRATION ***Delphine Lee***

EASTER BUNNY PHOTOS



MARCH 31–APRIL 2

TUESDAY – THURSDAY · 3:00PM – 7:00PM

APRIL 3–11

MONDAY – SATURDAY · 11:00AM – 7:00PM

APRIL 5, SUNDAY · 12:00PM – 6:00PM

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he was on the hunt for a leviathan. I knew very little about fishing. A library book showed us illustrations on the basics of casting and setting up a line. My son was impatient in the way children are when they believe their mother is keeping them from certain joy. The tree branches welcomed his hook as he flicked his line above his head. He laughed when it happened. I laughed, too, happy to see him shake off the weight of our fractured family.

It's a brisk Saturday morning after the new year. My son is 11 now. We drive in silence past the red-tiled roofs of the Las Vegas suburbs to Floyd Lamb Park. The city din doesn't reach this far into the park, although the crisscross contrails from planes leaving McCarran remind you of its closeness. We head past the pavilion where people are setting up a repast.

My son and I stand in silence at the pond's edge as we tie our clinch knot on the hook. He sticks his tongue out and licks the five kinks in the line, producing more spit than necessary to lubricate the knot. He turns to smile and nod at men with lines in the water — a sign of comradeship to fellow anglers. He motions for us to move to a knoll away from the trees. He intuits the trout are lingering there, ready for our cheese bait. Our lines fly behind our shoulders and with the split-shot sinker anchoring the hook, they land in the middle of the pond. We'll squat there. Our eyes will stay on the water, on our rods, on the men across the way, but never on the face so akin to the other. The silence stays, and we stay steeped in it, already knowing we won't speak.

And yet, these are emotionally expansive moments. In the quiet, something passes between us. I want to understand my son, and I want him to understand me. There is a great deal of condemnation for mothers raising sons on our own. And it's mostly aimed at black mothers. When five dollars went missing at a family gathering, my son was the immediate suspect. And while he could have done it — he says he did not — it was the relative's earnest warning of how easily fatherless boys end up in the penitentiary that immediately shamed me. Fishing gives us a measure of relief from whatever future is out there for us. It is the one thing that has remained ours, even in this place not known for it, even as puberty sets in and he begins texting girls "what's up?" Every throw of the line into the water is me saying to my son that I will always be a constant in his life. ✦

THE STORY OF US

Lordy, Lordy, Look Who's 40!

(Sorry, had to.) This year, Nevada Public Radio marks 40 years of churning out news, culture, and warm community feels for Southern Nevada. Here are the highlights, from our birth to teen years to midlife crisis!

THEN ...

DECEMBER 26, 1975
Founder **Lamar Marchese** incorporates Nevada Public Radio as an independent, nonprofit corporation. He spends the next four years raising money, gathering support, and building a board of directors.

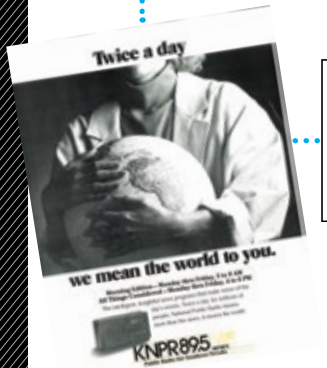
"(We) converted a former janitor's closet underneath the Silver Bowl stadium seating. It was 800 square feet. ... It was basically, you know, putting egg cartons on the side of the wall (for acoustics). It wasn't optimal, obviously."
— Lamar Marchese

MARCH 24, 1980
Broadcasting from the Silver Bowl on Boulder Highway, KNPR signs on the air, featuring "Morning Edition," "All Things Considered," and a variety of music.

2000
An amibitious endowment campaign raises $2.2 million for Nevada Public Radio.



OCTOBER 2003
Nevada Public Radio divides its single broadcast into two full-time FM stations, KNPR 88.9 and KCNV 89.7.



OCTOBER 2003
"KNPR's State of Nevada," our flagship public affairs program, debuts on KNPR 88.9 FM with host Gwen Castaldi.

DECEMBER 2004
Nevada Public Radio's total weekly audience surpasses 100,000 for the first time, with 108,100 listeners.

"(The media landscape) had changed so much, and I was not as adept as Flo was in that world. Everything was computerized. No recording on 10-inch reels anymore. ... And I really wanted to explore what my life was going to be like without work, without a job. I've worked since I was 14 years old. I've never not worked. I wanted to say, 'What am I going to do with my life? What am I going to be when I grow up?'"
— Lamar Marchese

2007
Founder and CEO Lamar Marchese retires from Nevada Public Radio. Flo Rogers becomes general manager.

JANUARY 2011
Desert Companion begins publishing monthly.

MAY 2013
The station achieves the long-sought goal of having 10,000 members.

APRIL 2017
Nevada Public Radio's third station, NV89, a "music discovery" channel, launches in Reno.

SEPTEMBER 2019
CEO and GM Flo Rogers steps down amid a station financial crisis; NV89 is shut down and its staff laid off; longtime board member Jerry Nadal takes the helm as interim CEO.



"When we were starting this back in the '70s, (public radio) was still a cause. For us aging hippies, it was an alternative to commercial radio. So, we felt like we were part of the anti-establishment. Later on, it became a business, obviously, as it is now. But then it was much more of a social cause, and you had to have that passion for it."
— Lamar Marchese

DECEMBER 1980
Nevada Public Radio moves into its new studios in the parking lot of Sam's Town.

MARCH 1982
The acclaimed "Four Queens Jazz Night from Las Vegas" begins airing on KNPR, and then nationally on NPR beginning in 1983. It airs until 1997.

JULY 10, 1998
KNPR signs on the air from its new home, the Donald W. Reynolds Broadcast Center, on the West Charleston campus of the College of Southern Nevada.

"I decided that of the (CSN) campuses — there was one in Henderson and one in North Las Vegas — this is the most centrally located. Not to mention it was five minutes from my house. That was an incentive." — Lamar Marchese



2007
Originally begun as the *Southern Nevada Almanac*, *Desert Companion* debuts as a biannual magazine covering arts, culture, and dining.

JANUARY 2020
After tapping endowment funds to pay debts and reorganizing its finances, Nevada Public Radio enters its 40th year.

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Editor's note: Lamar Marchese's outtakes have been edited for length and clarity. Program Director Dave Becker interviewed Marchese in June 2019.

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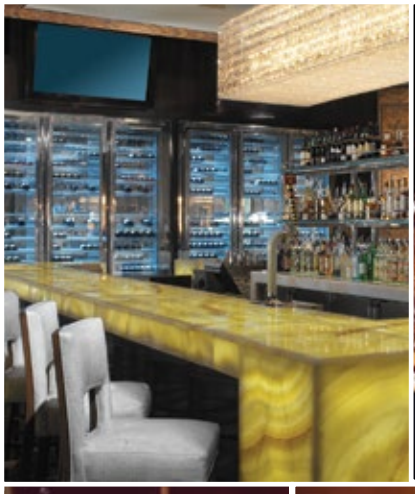





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CULTURE







(Beats)

DRUM TAO 2020

APRIL 11

Disclaimer: This may not be a traditional concert so much as a cathartic Peloton rhythm workout for your soul. Drum Tao performances are famously fiery celebrations of traditional Japanese percussion forms, but the sights are as compelling as the sounds: You'll see and hear everything from handheld snares to enormous Odaiko drums that weigh in at — pause for some exclamation points!!! — three tons. Meticulous sets and elaborate choreography make the taiko beats go on. ***(AK)* 7:30p, Reynolds Hall in The Smith Center, $29-$79, *thesmithcenter.com***

MUSIC

Miró Quartet

APRIL 16

The Miró Quartet is named after the renowned surrealist painter Joan Miró, and for good reason: The music of this tight-knit chamber group partakes of the same imaginative vigor as Miró's celebrated works. The quartet is known for its thoughtful, studied renditions of classical works, and praised for promoting the sonic virtues of chamber music. ***(AK)* 7:30p, UNLV's Lee and Thomas Beam Music Center, $30, unlv.edu/pac**



HORNS

Mnozil Brass

MARCH 28

Brass instruments are inherently funny. I mean, come on, they're wavy, banana-colored metal tubes that make pooty sounds. Recognizing this fundamental truth, Austria's Mnozil Brass has perfected a brand of musical comedy that exists at the intersection of absurdist theater, slapstick humor, and children's TV specials. However, there's a method to the madness: These seasoned performers, many of whom are graduates of the Vienna College of Music, have serious musical chops that are most certainly no joke. ***(AK)* 7:30p, UNLV's Artemus Ham Concert Hall, $20-$50, unlv.edu/pac**

(Visual Arts)

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE: STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

MARCH 18

Jodi Cobb's era-defining career as a National Geographic photographer spans four decades of history and culture — covering everything from Japan's secretive Geisha society to global child-trafficking rings to portraits of iconic rock musicians such as Bruce Springsteen and Ray Charles. In this special show, Cobb will talk about her life, work, and globetrotting career in photography while highlighting some of her most acclaimed images — images whose startling honesty reflects not a mere visitor, but rather an engaged, curious mind very much at home in the wide world.

(AK)* 7:30p, Reynolds Hall in The Smith Center, $20-$39, *thesmithcenter.com

MNOZIL BRASS: DANIEL AMATEJSCHEK; MIRÓ QUARTET: WIKICOMMONS; DRUM TAO, JODI COBB: COURTESY THE SMITH CENTER

(Opera)

ORPHEUS IN THE UNDERWORLD

MARCH 12-14

Circa 1858, this satire on the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice scandalized some for spoofing timeless Greek legend, at the time still considered Peak Culture. In composer Jacques Offenbach's irreverent retelling, Orpheus and Eurydice are glad to be done with each other, Eurydice wants to go to the underworld (she's in love with its overlord, Pluto), Orpheus has to be cajoled into going after her, and everyone dances a wild can-can at the end. Way to tweak those Greeks, Jacques! Performed by UNLV Opera Theater and UNLV Symphony Orchestra. ***(SD)* 7:30p (2p on March 14), UNLV's Judy Bayley Theatre, $25, unlv.edu/calendar**

(Theater)

SPITFIRE GRILL

MARCH 6-22

A rustic café is the only place to eat in Gilead, Wisconsin, and it's also dying a small-town's slow death. In the absence of a buyer or heir, the obvious solution is to raffle it off. Right? The newcomer waitress secretly hopes it's her fresh start; unfortunately, her recent past has some secrets working against her. This musical by James Valcq and Rachel Sheinkin is based on the 1996 movie starring Alison Elliott and Ellen Burstyn. ***(HK)* Las Vegas Little Theatre, $22-$25, *lvlt.org***

FESTIVAL

Henderson Industrial Days

APRIL 17-18

The nickname Hendertucky becomes stale and passé just about the time it dawns on you that, hey, meanie, for your information, Henderson was a significant player in World War II, supplying magnesium to the U.S. military for weapons and airplane parts, bolstering the war effort and ultimately helping the Allies win. In other words, Henderson = FREEDOM!!!! Henderson Industrial Days celebrates the city's patriotic origins with food, music, line dancing, a costume contest, a car exhibit, and a pie-eating competition. For FREEDOM!!!!! ***(AK)* 4-9p, April 17; noon-8p April 18, Water Street District, free, cityofhenderson.com**

(Music)

LV PHIL STRADIVARIUS SERIES

MARCH 6-8

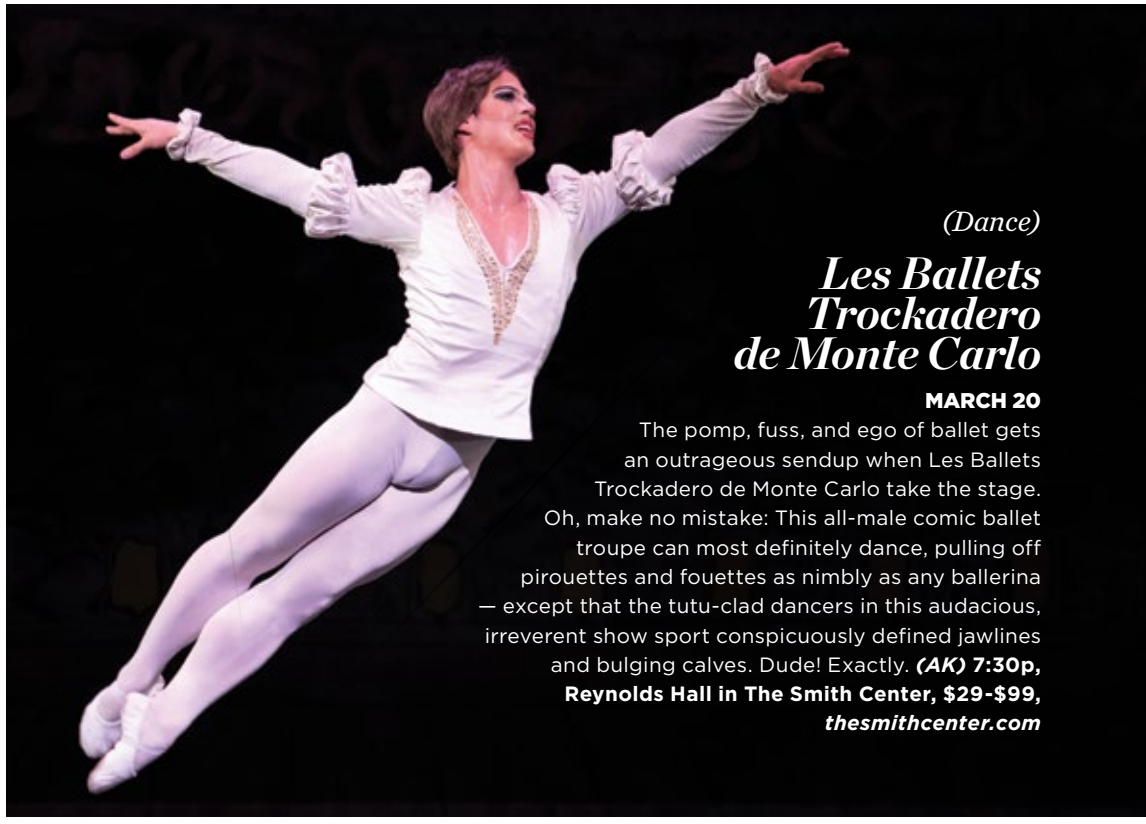
Score! The Las Vegas Philharmonic got its hands on five rare, gorgeous Stradivarius violins, and the Phil is doing the sensible thing: THROWING A RAGER. Well, okay, three days of events that showcase the sound and story of these exceptional instruments. They kick it off March 6 with an exclusive dinner and intimate chamber concert featuring guest artists Margaret Batjer, Adele Anthony, Cho-Liang Lin, and Eugene Drucker on the prized violins; a full orchestra performance of Vivaldi's Four Seasons March 7; and, on March 8, an up-close musical demonstration of the Stradivari over brunch and Bellinis at a private Las Vegas residence. Posh! The only thing missing is a Super Soaker loaded with caviar. ***(AK)* March 6 and 7 events at Reynolds Hall in The Smith Center; visit lvphil.org for times and ticket prices**

THEATER

MEAN GIRLS

APRIL 14-19

Ah, spring. A time for cutting tulips, decorating eggs, and indulging in the guilty pleasure of watching pink-clad adolescents whose shopping budgets could solve L.A.'s homeless crisis abuse each other for sport — to song! The cherry on top: comeuppance. ***(HK)* The Smith Center, $30-$138, *thesmithcenter.com***



(Dance)

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

MARCH 20

The pomp, fuss, and ego of ballet gets an outrageous sendup when Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo take the stage. Oh, make no mistake: This all-male comic ballet troupe can most definitely dance, pulling off pirouettes and fouettes as nimbly as any ballerina — except that the tutu-clad dancers in this audacious, irreverent show sport conspicuously defined jawlines and bulging calves. Dude! Exactly. ***(AK)* 7:30p, Reynolds Hall in The Smith Center, $29-$99, *thesmithcenter.com***



WILCO: ANNABEL MEHRAN; TROCKADERO: EMMA KAULDAR/COURTESY THE SMITH CENTER

MUSIC

Wilco

APRIL 4

"Nobody needs more Wilco music," Jeff Tweedy has said, and, yes, we can see you vigorously nodding in agreement. Whatever, hipsters. Anyway, he meant it as motivation — as added pressure to create something freshly meaningful. We'll leave it to you to debate whether the band's new album, *Ode to Joy*, clears that bar. Here's what we care about: This is a rare chance to see Wilco's guitar master Nels Cline, whose closing solo on "Impossible Germany" — gorgeous, penetrating, virtuosic — has pretty much been this blurbist's only bulwark against rampant insanity for the past decade. ***(SD)* 6:30p, Brooklyn Bowl, tickets start at $59.50, brooklynbowl.com**

THEATER

WHAT WOULD TWITTER DO?

MARCH 24

Twitter mocks the very idea of "best practices" — mostly, it's a nonstop flensing of trollery, misinformation, shouty opinionizing, angry mobbing, and presidential syntax bombs. "It's a poison," one British intellectual wailed in disgust. "It is making you stupider, uglier, and worse every second you're exposed to it." Stipulated. However, amid the carnage, some inventive writers find on Twitter a space for creativity and community. That's the needle novelist Kristen Arnett (*Mostly Dead Things*) and poet Morgan Parker (*Magical Negro*) will thread in this free Black Mountain Institute event. **(SD) 7p, room 101 of UNLV's Rogers Literature and Law building, RSVP at *blackmountaininstitute.org***

(Festival)

TACOS AND TAMALES FESTIVAL

MARCH 28

You had me at *tacos*. You had me even more at *tamales*. Okay, you neither gained nor lost me at *margarita, tequila, and craft beer tastings*, even though those things are cool. You had me a bit more at *Lucha Libre wrestling, local and international musical performances, and games and activities*. But then you REALLY had me at *taco and tamale creations ranging from the traditional to the totally insane* — if there's one thing I'm 100 percent here for, it's a totally insane tamale. See you there! ***(SD)* Noon-8p, Desert Breeze Park, free, *tacosandtamaleslv.com***

(Music)

Voices of Women: Sojourner Truth

MARCH 15

The spirituals and freedom songs that chronicle the historic struggles of African Americans are a national treasure. Vegas City Opera celebrates them in this concert with a special focus on the story of a towering figure in human rights: Sojourner Truth. ***(AK)* 3p, Windmill Library, free, *vegascityopera.org***

(Music)

LAS VEGAS BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL

MARCH 21

Uh, what happened to country music? Asking for a friend. Looks like death by acute toxic pancreatitis due to a constant diet of sugar and yokel machismo. [Removes obstructive kernels of Billy Ray Cyrus and Blake Shelton.] Welp, fun while it lasted! Thank heavens that *bluegrass*, by contrast, still sticks to a healthy diet of talent, soul, complexity, and earnestness. At this year's Las Vegas Bluegrass Festival, you'll catch hot acts such as Fog Holler, Steel Betty, and Blue Highway. And, who knows, maybe you'll see the tortured ghost of Rascal Flatts' salon highlights haunting the periphery. Close your eyes! Run away! Stay in the light! ***(AK)* 11a-7p, Centennial Hills Park, free, lasvegasnevada.gov**

STAGED READING

THE CHILDREN

MARCH 27 & 29

Lucy Kirkwood's drama is both hoarily traditional (the ol' "unexpected guest" plot) and headline-fresh (the topic: eco tragedy). In the aftermath of a nuclear disaster, two retired physicists dotter about their seaside home not far from the site. Shit gets suddenly real when a former colleague appears, making a morally vexing, emotionally complicated, and utterly urgent request (no spoiler here). Clue: It was inspired by the Fukushima disaster in Japan. Precisely the kind of enjoyably knotty material we expect of the folks at A Public Fit. ***(SD)* March 27, 7:30p, Clark County Library; March 29, 7:30p, Windmill Library, free, apublicfit.org**

(Film)

LAS VEGAS BLACK FILM FESTIVAL

APRIL 23-26

In its seventh year, the Las Vegas Black Film Festival is a work-hard-play-hard kind of shindig. Consider Saturday's lineup. Films begin at noon and lead up to the evening premiere of the festival feature, *Emerge*, which ends at 7 p.m. That's followed by a filmmakers' showdown, in which competitors take to a specially constructed boxing ring to pitch their work for three minutes each. After that is a comedy show, followed by an afterparty. The event is also interspersed with interactive seminars and workshops for budding filmmakers, who can rest their tired brains at Sunday's bottomless Champagne-doused awards brunch. ***(HK)* Suncoast Hotel & Casino, $25 (individual ticket)-$200 (festival pass), lasvegasblackfilm-festival.com**



VISUAL ART

The Rose Is Always Redder Next Door

THROUGH MARCH 28

East doesn't just meet West in these splendid graphite drawings by Mayuko Ono Gray. Through a kind of quantum entanglement, her scenes of gentle domesticity absorb, and are absorbed by, wild tangles of lines mutated from traditional Japanese calligraphy. Gray was born in Japan and lives in the U.S.; these drawings, she says, speak to "a life which is both culturally Japanese and American." See them while they're up. ***(SD)* Artspace Gallery, CSN Cheyenne campus, free, csn.edu**

(Visual Art)

A MODICUM OF CANDOR

MARCH 6-JUNE 20

Tragedies — shootings, fires, earthquakes, refugee crises — now occur with such conveyor-belt implacability that each one bumps a previous incident from our minds before we've fully brought our emotions to bear. Welcome to the new modernity, where all that is solid melts into the feed. Japanese-born American artist Jave Yoshimoto is doing his bit to take on this ephemerality. "I address this social amnesia through my art, with the work acting as a social memory for tragic events so quickly forgotten in our information age." But he does more than simply jog your memory. In a piece such as the laser-cut wood sculpture "What Is Your Emergency?," yes, the image of displaced people in Aleppo reminds you of the war you'd sorta forgotten Syria is suffering; but its high-tech framing within a simulated cell phone, in particular the Ignore/Answer option, unfurls an unambiguous moral challenge, too. How will you answer? ***(SD)* Artist talk March 5, 7p, CSN Fine Arts Gallery, free, csn.edu**



TAYLOR: UNLV SPECIAL COLLECTIONS; GRAY DRAWING COURTESY THE ARTIST



PIONEERING ARCHITECT OF VEGAS' MID-MOD ERA, HUGH TAYLOR

(Design)

A CELEBRATION OF VEGAS COOL

APRIL 17-19

Home + History Las Vegas is a three-day effusion of history, architecture, and preservation advocacy put on by the Nevada Preservation Foundation. Marking this year's theme of "Vegas Cool," tours and events will focus on the Beverly Green Historic District, Hoover Dam, the Neon Museum's Ne10 Studio, mid-mod design, and celebrity homes. ***(SD)* Various times and locations, *nevadapreservation.org***



BETTER BELIEVER IT!

This year's Believer Festival ponders the future to illuminate the present

"One main thing about The Believer Festival is that only one thing happens at a time," Joshua Wolf Shenk, executive director of the Black Mountain Institute, recently wrote in one of the longish pensées he regularly sends to BMI's mailing list. It's a prix-fixe alternative to the buffet amplitude of most book and arts festivals, which stack multiple presentations in the same time slots. The Believer Festival's sequential structure is meant to ensure all attendees share a communal experience and aren't tugged by FOMO between two events they want to see. Or, as Shenk put it, "You are relieved of the burden of choice."

This year's theme is "Here + after," which acknowledges the way our expectations of the future shape our present. Among the writers, thinkers, and performers: novelists Jonathan Lethem (bottom left), Lisa Ko (top right), Kristen Arnett, and Ahmed Naji; poet Kaveh Akbar (bottom right); *On Being* host Krista Tippett (top left), choreographer Annie-B Parson; and performer Jean Grae. In addition, the festival will kick off with the city's first MothSlam, hosted by Dan Kennedy.

The Believer Festival is known for its inventive venue selection, and that continues this year. Events will take place in Red Rock Canyon, Fremont Country Club, The Writer's Block, the 9th Bridge School, the Light Box at Area 15, and Fergusons Downtown. As it did last year, the festival will feature an ongoing suite of programing at The Lucy complex Downtown on May 2.

The Believer Festival was created by the Beverly Rogers, Carol C. Harter Black Mountain Institute and its magazine *The Believer*. ***Scott Dickensheets***

BUNDY: JOHN LOCHER/AP IMAGES; YOSHIMOTO COURTESY THE ARTIST

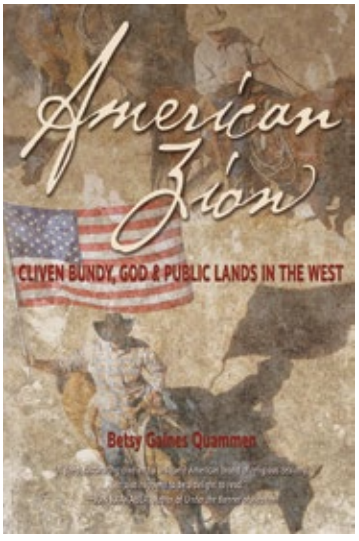
4/29 **THE BELIEVER FESTIVAL**, April 29 - May 2, various locations. Tickets and schedule at *believerfestival.org*

REVIEW

Holy Land

A new book examines the Bundy movement through the lens of Mormonism

American Zion: Cliven Bundy, God & Public Lands in the West (Torrey House Press, $18.95) provides a literate reminder that it is difficult to fully appreciate the struggle over public lands in the West without understanding its ties to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "A map of the American West is a Rorschach test," writes author Betsy Gaines Quammen; "people see what they want to see as reflections of who they are." In her narrative, Bunkerville rancher Cliven Bundy has blended the "legend of the cowboy with early Mormon beliefs" while convincing "himself and others that God wants him to go to war over our public lands."



Although Bundy and his family filled headlines around the world, he was far from the first self-appointed member of his faith — or Mormon right-wing agitator — to break federal laws in service of "God's higher authority." But Bundy was fortunate to come away from the April 2014 standoff between his family's supporters and federal officers with the criminal charges against him dismissed. They thanked God for their courtroom victory, basking in the "macho cowboy contest to show the feds that when you mess with the bull, you get the horns."

But they were more lucky than righteous. Thanks to the prosecution botching the case by deliberately concealing potentially exculpatory evidence from the defense, all the charges against Bundy and his sons were dropped and they left court free men.

The state that spawned "the Sagebrush Rebellion" has no shortage of range war reactionaries in its past. Quammen writes about several decidedly colorful Nevada characters, including former Mormon and ex-Green Beret-turned-separatist spokesman James "Bo" Gritz. A closer look reveals that most of them are motivated as much by self-interest as the future of the Republic.

Quammen observes that Bundy places the Mormons' presence on the land ahead of the Paiute Indians and other Native American tribes who had been on the land for centuries prior to the arrival of the Saints. "According to Cliven, land tenure changed when a Mormon man's horse drank from a Paiute river — his rights arrived in the establishment of Zion. 'And that's what the range war, the Bundy war, is all about right now — it's really about protecting three things: our life, liberty, and our property.'" He still maintains this stance, even though the property in question does not belong to him, according to decades of court rulings.

In the end, the strength of Quammen's book is also its shortcoming. There is a much broader history left to be written. Still, *American Zion* tells a valuable version of events through the lens of religion, and against the backdrop of the Mormon experience in the American West. ***Sally Denton***

Sally Denton has written extensively about Mormonism and the West, including the book American Massacre: The Tragedy at Mountain Meadows, September 1857.



PROFILE

A CONJURER OF MAGICIANS

Jeff McBride is more than a skilled performer of magic. He's also perhaps its best teacher

BY JOHN M. GLIONNA

The master dresses in a flowing black robe. There's a subtle showmanship to the way he points a finger or flicks a wrist, his delivery marked by expectant pauses, the way he fixes you with those penetrating brown eyes. Remember, though, don't linger on his face — that's just what Jeff McBride wants. Keep an eye on those hands. *Always* watch the hands.

The veteran magician has set numerous Guinness World Records for his dexterity, like rolling a silver dollar through his fingers 31 times in a minute. One gonzo ruse involves an entire deck tumbling from his mouth. A scholar of magic who owns one of the nation's most complete libraries of his art form, McBride performs worldwide and has lectured before the International Brotherhood of Magicians — the Smithsonian, too — detailing the arcane history of magic and theater, as well as their applications in everyday life.

On a recent night, the 59-year-old is doing the thing he perhaps loves most: mentoring young magicians, lending a practiced eye to their timing and delivery. He introduces the evening's cast of 10: There's Rick Maisel, the escape artist; card shark Jeff Lockett; Will Bradshaw and his dancing cane; Cuba-born Jarol Martin, who conjures up entire floor lamps.

"You may have seen Jarol on the show *Masters of Illusion*. He did the lamps," McBride says to Tetro, a fire magician who will soon appear on the same show.

They've all gathered inside McBride's sorcerer's lair of a home. Red curtains drop from ceiling to floor, framing a scene rife with incense and an ambient mystical backbeat. The lighting is low, windows covered to keep secrets unrevealed. Masks leer from corners. Even some of the chairs are gothic. The magicians, of course, feel right at home. Now it's time to go to work.

For 18 years, McBride has used the room for his Magic and Mystery School, considered the foremost teaching institution on the art of stage magic. He tutors magicians worldwide, by Skype and through video consultations on The Locked Room, a private internet site. But how do you help promote the next generation of sleight-of-hand virtuosos in a city that's considered the very capital of magic — a place overcrowded with talent, including the craft's high-wattage performers?

More than a decade ago, McBride founded *Wonderground*, a once-a-month public showcase in which practitioners experiment with new material before an audience of colleagues and dedicated fans. (Sometimes, headliners such as Mat Franco, Lance Burton, and Criss Angel perform unannounced sets, too.)

The three-hour show at The Olive Mediterranean Grill is a virtual magic salon that combines stage performances and dancers with close-up card tricks, tarot readings, jugglers, and fire-eaters. Each month features a fresh lineup. For magicians, the scene evokes an intimate jazz club, where they reveal acts they've been woodshedding for months, even years. McBride likens it to a gym for magicians. For the performers, the stakes — and the pressure — are immense.

The night before, McBride collects the cast at his home for last-minute fine-tuning. He announces each to polite applause, offering technical pointers and emotional support.

One by one, performers do five-minute acts from a one-step-up dining room that serves as a stage, their peers sitting on folding chairs, filling out comment cards before McBride weighs in, sometimes videotaping acts for further study. The room is tense. This crowd can spot the smallest flaw. McBride tells performer Joan DuKore to articulate her words, even with a pack of cards in her mouth. One novice tips his hand to a trick and collapses sadly onto his chair as his peers lend support. "You won't be the first person to mess up a magic trick," says a performer named Bizarro, "and you won't be the last."

When Martin, the lamp-conjurer, finishes

PHOTOGRAPHY *Christopher Smith*

a new act involving color-shifting scarves, the master offers a silent thumbs-up, making him blush with pride.

❄ ❄ ❄ ❄ ❄

MCBRIDE WAS RAISED in New York's Catskill mountains, where a borrowed library book became his Bible, his how-to guide to fathom the impossible: *The Golden Book of Magic*, by The Great Merlini. "As a third-grader, it set my mind on fire," he recalls. "Kids look for empowerment, and I had it early on." His first trick, one that remains in his repertoire, involved passing a pencil through a handkerchief, which he attempted without reading the entire chapter. He ripped the hankie, crying "No, no, no," as he tried to pull it back together. He got better, working resorts around the Catskills, where he was spotted by a talent scout.

After that, he appeared on the TV show *What's My Line*? Eventually moving to Manhattan, McBride did street performances and worked at Flosso-Hornmann Magic, a shop once partly owned by Houdini himself. At night, he studied at the American Mime Theater and, at 19, got a regular gig at a joint called Club Idis. He later opened for Diana Ross at Radio City Music Hall. In the mid-1980s, McBride moved to Las Vegas and performed at such venues as Caesars, the Hilton, and the Golden Nugget.

Burton says McBride holds a special place in magic. "He's not only a first-rate magician but an organizer who's created an entire magic community which a lot of people, including myself, are excited to be a part of." Former protégé Mat Franco still shows up at McBride's classes. "Jeff doesn't just teach, he gives people confidence in what they're doing," he says. "They're life lessons, not just magic tricks." Even David Copperfield weighs in: "Jeff McBride possesses enormous skill and knowledge of our art."

John E. McLaughlin, who in 2004 briefly served as acting director of the Central Intelligence Agency, says the magic that McBride instructs is at the center of spycraft, pointing to a Cold War-era booklet called *The Official CIA Manual of Trickery and Deception*. Now a magician himself, McLaughlin lauds McBride's scholarship. "If I have a question about magic, he either knows the answer or how to find it, from the history to the deeper meaning of the art form."

For decades, McBride studied under Eugene Burger, a religious scholar known for his close-up skills, who taught at McBride's master classes until his death in 2017. "He made magic relevant to life," McBride says, "more than just some trick or puzzle."

Burger also instilled in McBride the joy of teaching. "At a crucial part of my career, I was burning the candle at both ends. Eugene showed me how to burn out one end and use it to light someone else's candle, without extinguishing my own light."

❄ ❄ ❄ ❄ ❄

THE PERFORMERS ARRIVE hours before the 8 p.m. *Wonderground* show, gathering amid the couches and chairs arranged around low tables, where customers will later eat, drink and smoke from hookahs under red-tinted lighting. They discuss their mentor.

As a boy, Tetro saw McBride perform on TV and decided, *That's what I want to do.* Years later, the teacher took the young performer into his library to help him develop a new illusion. Says magician Will Bradshaw, "Jeff spends more time reading about and performing magic than anyone I've ever met." No wonder the Society of American Magicians voted him into the Magic Hall of Fame in January.

At 8 p.m., McBride is onstage, dressed in signature black, an ornamental red scarf cascading from the back of his top hat. In the first act, five performers — including McBride's wife, Abigail — perform a belly-dance improvisation as the master works the room. Only when magician David DaVinci, whose tricks feature exotic parrots, drops in for a brief set, does McBride relax. He sits on a couch to enjoy the act, without a shred of envy or one-upmanship. "This is so hard," he says. "He makes it look so easy."

McBride's protégés perform without observable mistakes, making the master proud. When Martin, the illusionist from Cuba, finishes his act, McBride joins him onstage. This was the first time Martin had performed the routine before a live audience, he says.

"I did it well because of you," Martin responds. "You're like a hero to me."

The following night, the magicians gather once again at McBride's home. Normally, they'd review their *Wonderground* performances. But tonight, the group wants to help Tetro celebrate his debut on *Masters of Illusion*. McBride scans his students' faces, marveling at their chutzpah. "It takes years of practice just to get up there," he says, "let alone create something original."

Tetro's fire-levitation act is short but thrilling. Afterward, McBride pats him on the shoulder. "It looked clean," he says. The room applauds, McBride the loudest of all. ✦











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FOOD + DRINK



AT FIRST BITE

SPECTACLE SERVED NIGHTLY

With so many amazing neighborhood restaurants in town, trekking to the Strip to dine these days requires a little something extra for locals. The recently opened Mayfair Supper Club in the Bellagio proposes to have the answer: spectacle. The food — contemporary American fare from shrimp cocktail to prime rib — is excellent, but Mayfair's setting supplies just as much delight: A flowing mosaic bar with a cut-glass back encasing underwater flora and fauna, all beneath a languid seashell skirt in iridescent teal. Windows looking out to the casino are but a vague reminder that a world outside this aqueous luxury landscape even exists. In the main dining room, a crooner and chanteuse lead an ensemble of costumed dancers, and the exuberance is punctuated by wild bursts from the Bellagio fountains — a dramatic backdrop for a rollicking show. If this is the future of Strip dining, I say let's dive in. ***Veronica Klash***



HUBS OF GRUB

Shop 'Til You Nosh

Get your graze on at these valley markets featuring delis, dining counters, and food courts that serve up global cuisine

BY ***Sonja Swanson***

You know the rule: Never go grocery shopping hungry. Fortunately, several grocery stores around the valley make following that guideline easier with dining options right inside in their doors. As a bonus, if you try something you like, the ingredients to make it at home are just steps away.

RANI'S WORLD FOODS

EASE YOUR WAY past the check-out counters and you'll find the literal center of the grocery store is its dining room, a well-lit space bordered by a counter of Hindu gods on one side, a television screening Bollywood dance videos, and a glass case of colorful sweets at the back. The dining options at Rani's World Foods, the owner tells me, represent a mix of regional Indian cuisines, including makki roti, a Punjabi corn flatbread, and idli, a savory rice cake from the South. All are vegetarian. After ordering, be sure to pick up a complimentary cup of hot chai to the right of the counter (add sugar to taste), and don't forget to pick up some desserts for now and extras for later (sugar syrup-drenched gulab jamun are best enjoyed on the spot, but the dense, sugary saffron peda packs up easy).

Must-order: Chana bhutura, $9.99. *Desert Companion* designer Brent Holmes is a Rani's regular. I took his advice when ordering the chana bhutura, and he did not lead me astray. A North Indian favorite, bhutura is a puffed fried bread whose tender crumb with just enough chew recalls beignets. Tear off a piece and dip it into the chana masala, a savory cup of chickpeas stewed in tomatoes and spices. Of note is the achaar, a tart and piquant pickle mix that you can dab onto your bread. Rani's makes its achaar in-house with mango, carrot, cauliflower, lemon, and chilies. *4505 W. Sahara Ave., 702-522-7744, ranisworldfoods.com*

GREENLAND SUPERMARKET

GREENLAND IS AN expansive grocery store that dominates the northeast corner of Spring Mountain and Rainbow — it's earned the "super" in supermarket. The dining options greet you inside before you even make it to the grocery aisles: A stand with Korean baked goods to your left, a cart with rice cakes up ahead, and a bustling food court to your right. The food court restaurants are a typical spread in Korean fast dining: A couple of home-style cooking options; a Chinese-Korean counter for black bean noodles and spicy seafood soup; a Japanese-Korean venue that serves sushi and fried pork cutlet; a snack food stand with fried chicken and more. Working your

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Brent Holmes***



DELI-LICIOUS
Opposite page: Chana bhutura and chana masala (fried bread and stewed chickpeas) at Rani's World Foods; left, mushroom hot pot at Greenland Supermarket; bottom, kuanta firir (sautéed beef) at Melkam Market



CRAFTHAUS: CHRISTOPHER SMITH

way around the food court is the barest primer on the variety of Korean meals — it's far, far more diverse than simply barbecue and bibimbap.

Must-order: Anything tofu. Contrary to its representation in the U.S., tofu isn't a bland vegetarian stand-in for meat. In Korea, it's a tender, mildly nutty ingredient often served alongside meat, perfect for cutting the heat in spicy stews and soaking up flavor in meaty broths. Take the mushroom jeongol, for example: Jeongol can be roughly translated to "casserole" or "hot pot," and this one comes out in a broad metal serving dish, big enough for two at least, filled with mushrooms and vegetables simmering alongside slices of tofu. Need a single-sized serving? Opt instead for the soondubu, a densely packed bowl of creamy, tender tofu with a variety of filling options, from meat to seafood. *6850 Spring Mountain Road, 702-459-7878*

MELKAM MARKET

MELKAM IS A newer Ethiopian grocery store, open for about a year, though the family that owns it was in the grocery business for more than 30 years back in the suburbs of Addis Ababa. Walk in and the first thing you notice is the fragrance of savory spices. "Melkam" means "good" in Amharic, and it's also the word you would use to say "happy birthday" or "merry Christmas." The dining room is a quiet, walled-off space in the back with a handful of tables and cheery, foliage-patterned wallpaper. The veggie combo ($11.99) is a popular choice, and comes with a range of seasonal vegetable dishes that you scoop up with the accompanying injera, or sourdough flatbread. Meat options also abound, and don't forget to finish your meal with an order of extra-strong Ethiopian coffee, whose bitter edge you'll ease with a generous pour of sugar.

Must-order: Kuanta firfir ($12.99). Kuanta firfir is a beef jerky dish sautéed with torn pieces of dried injera that soaks up a tomatoey, berebere-infused sauce. The beef jerky is dense in flavor, with plenty of chew (this is the point of jerky, after all), and the heat in the sauce is just enough to bring a flush to your face. Melkam's injera, made with organic teff, is a tender, spongy bed for all these flavors. The customers at the table next to us had also ordered kuanta firfir, and I noticed that they had asked for a side of soft, crumbly white cheese. "Is that a typical side with this dish?" I asked. "Not really, but I like it," our neighbor replied, so ... I followed suit. It was a good call: The creamy cheese offsets the spice just-so. *4230 S. Decatur Blvd., 702-909-7267, melkammarket.com*

LA BONITA SUPERMARKET

LA BONITA IS a popular Mexican grocery chain in the valley. With the many excellent Latin food options available to us,



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BEER FLIGHTS AT CRAFTHAUS CraftHaus is my new spot *not* to get drunk at. These locally brewed beers! You sip and chew on them with a deliberation beyond the standard praxis of Ooh-this-is-a-craft-beer-so-I'll-drink-it-slowly that you apply to your Whole Foods scores. And in that context, CraftHaus' build-your-own tasting flights — $2 per 4-ounce pour — aren't merely swatches of sampler beer to help you decide how you want to carpet the rest of your stomach. They're rich, complex, satisfying — and in many cases happily strange, challenging, fizzy, piquant, bitter, smoky, and sour. I recently did a foursome that included Wundernutz! brown ale (a rich Nutella brown that drinks like liquid silk), a foamy, feisty boysenberry sour called All the Bois, and a Belgard coffee stout that triggered a caffeinated epiphany: So, *this* is how that coffee-and-beer thing is supposed to work — all that toasty chocolateness going on is like a UN translator who brings the coffee and stout together in a common, harmonious language. (Also, I did a bunch of housework when I got home.) **Andrew Kiraly** *197 E. California Ave. #130, 702-888-1026, crafthausbrewery.com*

it's hard to say that the food court is the draw here. Instead, head straight for the juice bar. La Bonita's fresh juices incorporate ingredients such as jicama, papaya, watercress, and nopal. Something more traditional? Order from an array of aguas frescas. And those with a sweet tooth can opt for a smoothie or nieve (a creamy Mexican sherbet).

Must-order: Jugo rojo (20 oz., $4.99). The jugo rojo is a jewel-tone juice made with beetroot, cucumber, lemon, jicama, broccoli, and lettuce. This healthy drink carries a mild, earthy sweetness from the beets, lightened with cucumber and jicama, plus a bright twist of lemon juice. It's the perfect morning jolt of energy or afternoon pick-me-up. *Multiple locations, labonitasupermarkets.com*

RON'S MARKET

RON'S MARKET IS a delightful emporium of Eastern European foods, from Latvian farmer's cheese and pickled fennel, to Polish smoked sausage and frozen pelmeni (Russian dumplings) that you can scoop up by the pound. Russian pop music thumps from the speakers, and you'll hear at least three different languages being spoken as you peruse the well-stocked aisles. The owners here are Armenian (Armenia was once part of the U.S.S.R.) and the hot food counter serves primarily Armenian food, from lamb kabobs to falafel. You'll also find grilled sturgeon and ikra, a Slavic eggplant spread, as well as burgers and fries.

Must-order: Beef lula plate ($9.99). Lula is a kind of Armenian kebab made with ground meat and onions that are grilled on a skewer. It comes out hot, spiced and fragrant, with a side of pita bread that you can wrap it up in to capture the juices. The meat might take center stage, but the pepper and tomato on the side, charred with a smoky finish, are worth mentioning. You'll have a choice of sides — I opted for the baba ganoush, but really, you can't go wrong with any of them. *6085 S. Fort Apache Road, 702-431-6444* ✦

FOOD STUFF

It's Not Easy Being Greens

Collard greens, that is — an overlooked vegetable ready for its close up

BY ***Soni Brown***

Culinary school introduced me to collard greens. That the chewy, grotty-smelling leaf venerated in the South but disdained elsewhere is taught at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York — an institution whose publicity department dubbed it the "Harvard of cooking schools" — should give you an idea of its potential. Sitting with the few other black culinarians in the alcove of the former Jesuit chapel that served as our dining hall, I would joke that it seemed we were always the students selected by the chef-instructor to cook "greens."

A few weeks after the new year, I ate at Bell's BBQ in Henderson. Eating greens in the new year is supposed to bring favor; besides, I make it a point to order collard greens whenever it is on a menu. Bell's knows how to do greens. The leaves were silky tender yet *al dente.* The greens came with the potlikker, the bittersweet, astringent, and aromatic broth the greens release, and which restaurants sometimes omit. Potlikker is a must with greens. There is too much missing when cooks don't serve it. My brother loves to tell a tale of a woman who felt pure malice toward her stepchildren and only fed them potlikker. As the tale goes, the stepchildren grew strong because all the nourishment — and plenty of flavor — was in the broth.

"Why," I wondered, "have people not elevated this leafy green like they have kale?" Both are chewy, with an assertive and acidic taste. They share a bitter overtone, but collard has a mustardy quality. Kale has moved from a garnish on buffet tables to hipster royalty while collard greens waits for its turn. And though closely related to kale in that they come from the non-forming head



BRENT HOFACKER/SHUTTERSTOCK

of *Brassica oleracea*, collard greens are scientifically more kin to cabbage. A great source of vitamins and minerals, collard greens are affordable, can serve as a substitute for tortilla wraps, and are hearty enough for stews, soups, and other crockpot favorites.

If pigeons can be a delicacy and caviar can go from salty bar snack to high society, then why not collard greens? There is just too little appreciation for greens outside of the South.

As a food, collard greens have long been associated with enslaved blacks and the South. But they really stem from colonial days. In *Collards: A Southern Tradition from Seed to Table*, authors Edward H. Davis and John T. Morgan point out that collard greens as we know them probably started out 3,000 years ago in Spain and were subsequently brought to America, as the crop grew well in the mild winters of the South. Enslaved blacks brought from West Africa were accustomed to eating a variety of green-leafed vegetables. Once in America, the lucky ones were able to supplement their meager rations with foraged greens from the plantation. West Africans, says Davis, saved collard greens from extinction.

Perhaps the association with slavery is what causes consternation among people about eating it. While I was shopping for collard greens in Las Vegas a few years ago, a well-to-do friend asked me why I was literally buying a stereotype. They saw collard greens as a source of racial animus and not a delicious vegetable. In the movie *The Inkwell*, two sets of black families argue that foods like collard greens are "slave food," thus equating it with a lack of social and economic mobility.

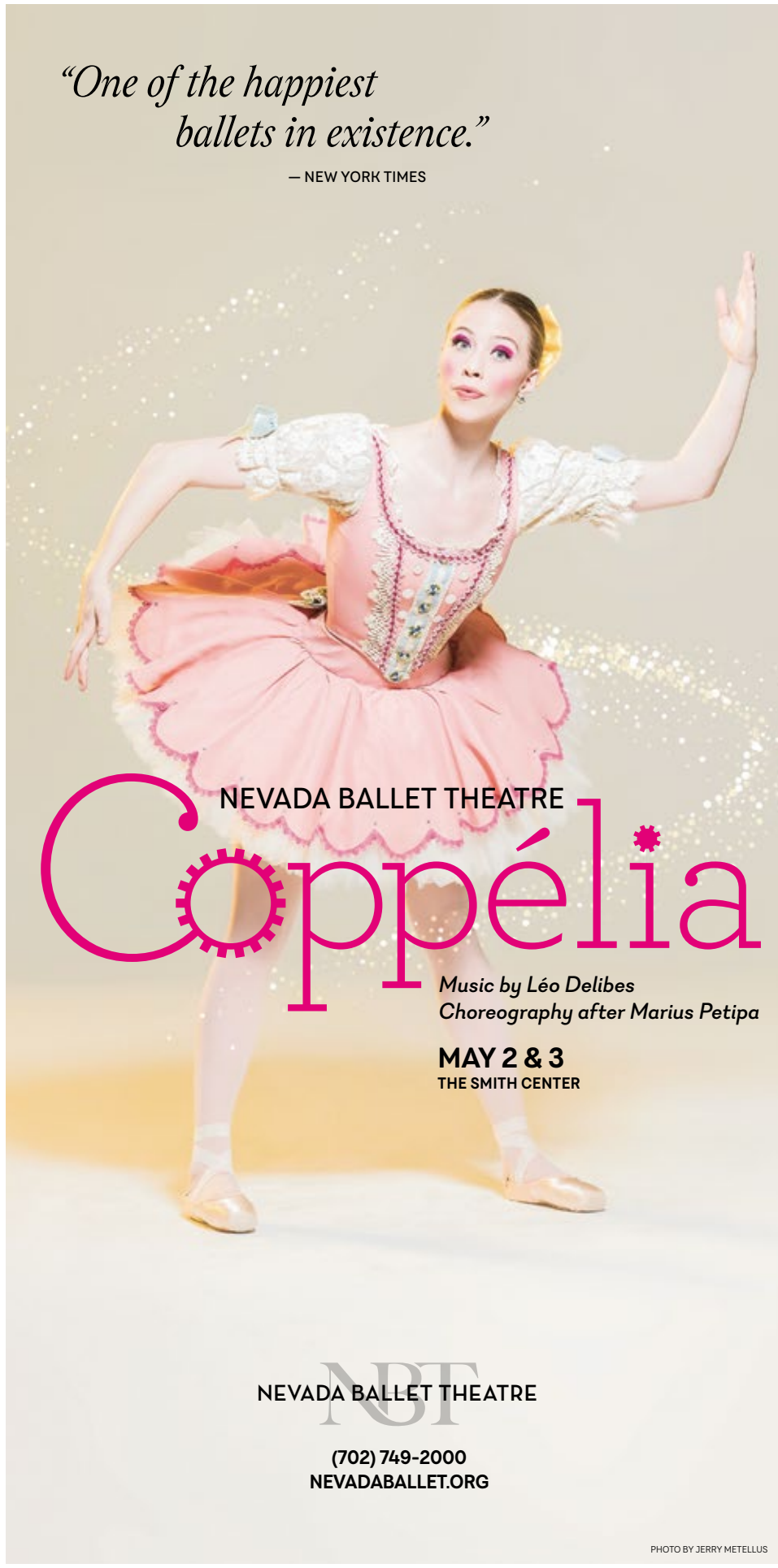
But collard greens are also a story of America, a blend of the old world with the new. ✦

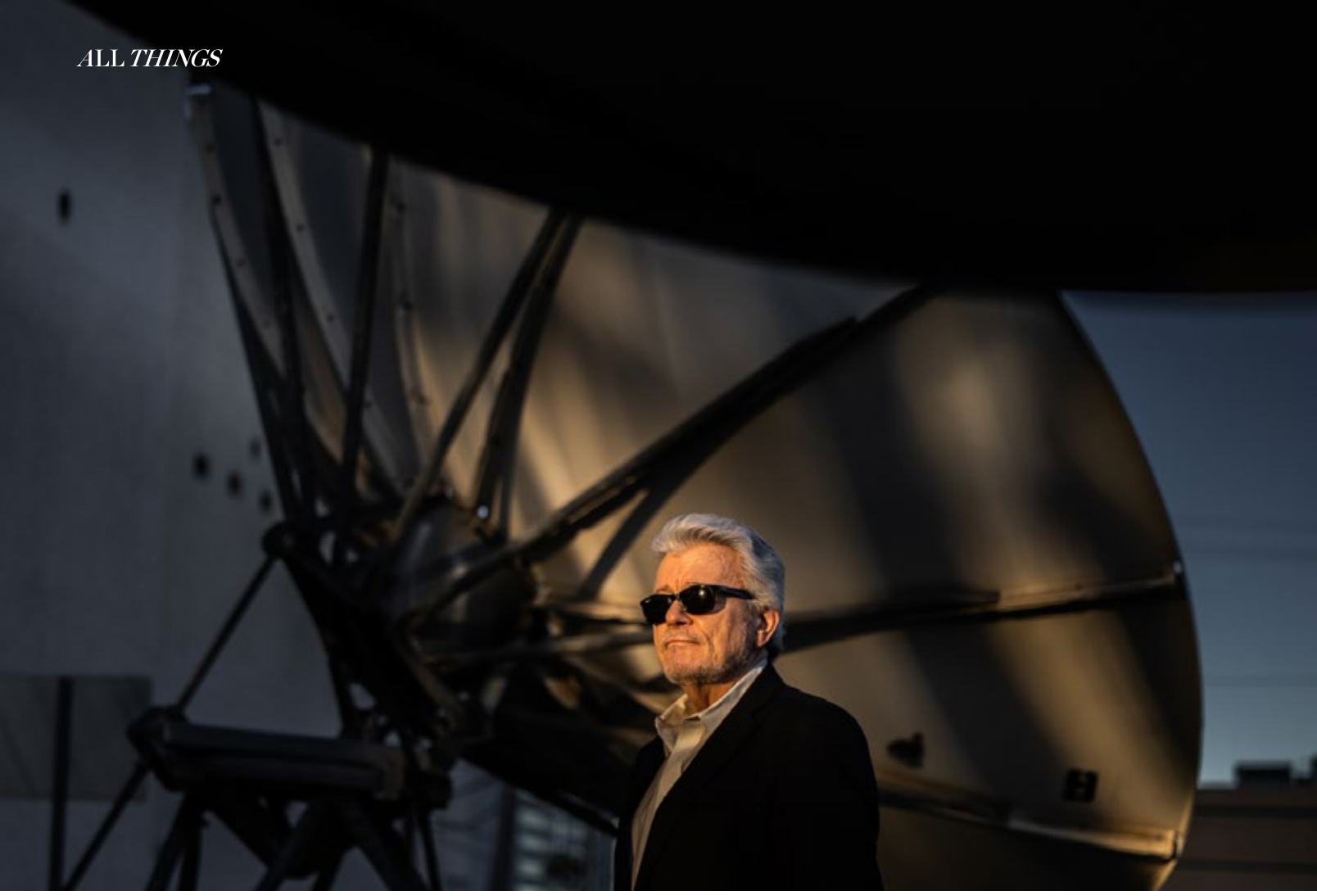
THE COLLARD GREENS NEW DEAL

Tenderize for Salads
Raw collard greens are chewy. Tenderize by removing and throwing away the *petiole*, or leafstalk. Tear the leaves into bite-size pieces. Massage with olive oil to tenderize the leaves' fiber. Toss into your favorite salad.

In Pesto
Add blanched and chopped collard greens for a mustardy flavor in your pesto.

Instead of Doritos
Spray chip-size pieces with oil and dust with Parmesan cheese or nutritional yeast. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes, flipping pieces halfway through. Chips are done when crisp and browned around the edges.





MEDIA

Explained Phenomena

With Mystery Wire, longtime journalist George Knapp builds on his own work to create the 'world's largest archive' of solid information about the unexplained

BY ***Geoff Schumacher***

George Knapp has been hearing the jokes for years. His reports for KLAS Channel 8 on unidentified flying objects, cattle mutilations, crop circles, and Area 51 have generated scores of smirking critics spouting quips about little green men.

Knapp tries to be good-natured about it. He can do this in part because he's received plenty of accolades from his colleagues. He has won more awards — and more prestigious ones — for his investigative reporting than any other Las Vegas television journalist. Ever.

Despite his thick skin, Knapp can't help but feel a little aggrieved by those who diminish his work, considering how much time and effort he has put into developing reluctant sources, filing Freedom of Information Act requests, and cobbling tidbits of information into coherent narratives. Sometimes, a story took several years of work before it ended up on TV.

"It's not my religion," Knapp says of his pursuit of hard-to-explain phenomena. "It's a news story."

This is what it's really about: Knapp doesn't like secrets — especially secrets kept by the government. He's curious about what's in that secret file, what's going on behind that guarded gate. He wants to know what the authorities aren't telling us.

This is the foundation of Knapp's work over the past four decades. At its core, it's not about aliens or paranormal activity. It's about asking this question: If all this is just fanciful nonsense, why has the government spent untold millions of taxpayer dollars on investigations and experiments, and tried to keep it all secret?

Bob Stoldal, who was news director at Channel 8 for many years, says Knapp possesses "a heavy dose of courage," as exemplified by his stories taking on the mob, local politicians — and Area 51. These are stories "that other journalists wouldn't touch," Stoldal says.

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Anthony Mair***

Consider what may be the signature achievement of Knapp's career thus far: His relentless investigative reports literally put Area 51 on the map. The government refused to even acknowledge the air base's existence until Knapp's reporting made it absurd to keep up the charade. Today, practically everyone has heard of Area 51.

After many years of full-time investigative reporting, Knapp recently transitioned into a new role at Channel 8. He's now in charge of a project called Mystery Wire (mysterywire.com), a web archive of Knapp's greatest hits — his nine-part 1989 series on Area 51, his reports on cutting-edge space technology, his revelations about the Kennedy assassination and the murder of Jimmy Hoffa, and much more. He's resurrecting entire interviews, rather than the snippets incorporated into three-minute reports for the 6 o'clock news.

Knapp describes Mystery Wire as the "world's largest archive of journalistically vetted news stories, interviews, and special investigations into unusual subjects that might otherwise be overlooked."

In addition to the archival footage, Knapp is producing fresh material for Mystery Wire. The site also curates news from around the world on paranormal, space science, and true crime topics.

If Mystery Wire were limited to the work Knapp has produced for Channel 8 and marketed locally, it would be interesting enough. But this project has much bigger ambitions. KLAS is owned by Nexstar Media Group, which owns 197 stations across the United States. Mystery Wire eventually will tap into the resources of all those stations, which include WGN in Chicago, KTLA in Los Angeles, and WPHL in Philadelphia. Knapp's reports will air in markets representing more than 60 percent of U.S. television households.

"I'm thrilled to death about the reach of this thing once it's fully up and running," Knapp says.

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SOCIETY

Good by Design

Designer Mandy Telleria uses her skills to give others the helping hand she never got

BY ***T.R. Witcher***

Raised in Elko by a single mom, Mandy Telleria knows what it's like to struggle. She saw her mom work nights and weekends as a server and blackjack dealer to raise two kids. Lots of things broke down in their house. The family once went without a fridge for six months. Their struggles were even tougher because her father was a wealthy developer who also lived in Elko but left his wife and never supported his family.

Art was her way out. When she was 9, an aunt bought her paper and nice pencils, and Telleria proved an adept illustrator. She went on to study interior design at UNLV and graduated in 2007.

Five years ago, while working as a designer in Las Vegas, she fell into what she calls an "extremely deep depression." Most people work through a tough patch by focusing on their needs. Her solution was to "stop trying to solve my own problem and help someone else solve their problem. Let me use my skills and put them to use for good." Design, she felt, could have great purpose, but too often was superficial. Some cool new building with a cool new shape designed to sell cool new things or cool new experiences. Surely design could be about more.

At the end of 2014 she sought out nonprofits looking for pro bono architectural services. She quickly lined up two clients and started the Good Deed Project (it received official nonprofit status in 2017). She teamed up with a teen pregnancy shelter, Living Grace, to renovate a bathroom with bad plumbing. The job took three months to plan and three more to complete. She found donors and cold-called subcontractors to help do the work.

The second project proved more daunting. She partnered with Safe House, the domestic-violence shelter where 60 women and their children live, on an array of projects: rehabbing the entire exterior and creating a new playground, gardening spaces, and a barbecue area; and renovating interior spaces, including a living room, dining room, bathrooms, and new floors. "We had to gut everything and redo everything, even the landscaping," says Judy Belanger, a board member with Safe House.

Telleria was game. She reached out to women at the shelter for their input. She tapped a network of volunteers and vendors. Alex Baker, a childhood friend from Elko, was a project manager with Silver Lands, a landscape architectural contractor. His firm created a playground and a small planter garden. "Give Mandy credit she's due for combining all the different trades," Baker says.

Another key ally was Doris Mejia, who worked as an HR manager at Lowe's in Henderson; among her jobs was to identify, once a year, nonprofits in need of renovation assistance. Telleria gave her a presentation of everything she had in mind for the Safe House renovation. "It blew me away," Mejia says. "It was way above the scope of what we'd ever done." It was beyond what a single Lowe's store could do.

Undeterred, Telleria put together a PowerPoint that Mejia could take to other stores — ultimately eight other Lowe's each agreed to supply materials and labor to renovate one of nine units (one unit consists of two bedrooms and a bathroom). The work proved so demanding that Lowe's ended up paying its workers for their time. Telleria hadn't anticipated how long it would take: almost three years. Through it she has come to rely on local suppliers to donate material and local architecture firms to donate storage space.

"Mandy was so organized," Mejia says. "She knew what she wanted, she knew what would work and what wouldn't. ... She had a lot of know-how."

"We're more than thrilled. It was an amazing project. Mandy was so patient, she had such a positive attitude about everything," Belanger says. "Some of the women who were going to be moved from the old suites to the new ones, they would cry, (saying) 'I cannot believe I can live in this beautiful environment.'"

After the Safe House job, Telleria shift-



PHOTOGRAPHY ***Christopher Smith***

ed her focus to smaller, nimbler projects — working with individual families and single mothers who need help with basic maintenance, what she calls "pain points" for folks living in deteriorating homes who can't afford critical repairs.

Last year she helped out a family of five — a single mother, Ana, her mother, and three teenage boys, one recently diagnosed with MS. They were living in a small, two-bedroom trailer home. There were no beds, just mattresses on the floor; her grandmother and one of her sons were sleeping in one bed. Worse, there were holes in the floor.

With her team of suppliers and volunteers, Telleria oversaw the renovations in two weeks. She put in a new kitchen, including new appliances and cabinets. She put in a partition with sliding doors. Ana had been sleeping in the kitchen on a sofa. Telleria moved her into the living room. Now she and her son are closer together and have their own space.

"I can't even tell you how many things needed to be done on that home," says volunteer Debbie Florek. Forty volunteers spent "14 long days literally ripping that place apart and creating a whole new home for them." On the 14th day, the family returned, and the boys had made angel necklaces for all the volunteers.

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For more information, including details of Good Deed Project's April 19 fundraiser: thegooddeedproject.org/events

OPEN TOPIC

Butterfly Effect

Climate change is spoiling the outdoors — and that's the least of our troubles

BY ***Heidi Kyser***

I've had ample opportunity to observe climate change in the outdoors. In 2016, my husband and I backpacked our first section of the Pacific Crest Trail, from Kennedy Meadows to Kearsarge Pass in California. Before leaving, we'd kept an eye on the Chimney Fire, which burned 46,000 acres of forest and closed sections of the trail. We were lucky; the fire stopped short of our departure point.

That trip was the best experience of our lives. We intended to do another section each year, but have only been back once, in 2018. The interim years, another effect of climate change kept us out: the combination of deep winter snowpack followed by high spring temperatures that puts waterways on steroids. In 2017, two PCT hikers were swept to their deaths trying to cross rivers in the section we had planned to hike.

Drought is also a backpacking buzzkill. Water weighs a lot, so you want to be able to carry as little as possible and hike from water source to water source for refills. On the Ruby Crest Trail, the Northern Nevada route we backpacked last year, there's a 14-mile dry stretch. You either have to do it in one shot or carry enough water for all day and overnight. Lots of Western trails have sporadic water sources. As climate change dries them up, more of these trails will become inaccessible. And to come full circle, we almost had to cancel that Ruby Crest hike because of another wildfire, which burned nearly 17,000 acres and temporarily closed the trailhead access road.

Like many, I see the outdoors as my playground, religion, and therapy, so you could say climate change is burning, flooding, and desiccating my church. Perhaps this is a petty complaint in the context of the 2018 California wildfires that killed dozens of people and displaced hundreds of families, not to mention the historically destructive Australian wildfires, which have killed 27 people and a billion animals (so far). But the effects that outdoor recreationists like me are seeing on our beloved wilderness areas could serve as a warning that we need to make serious changes before we end up like Australia.

Right now, the signs I see are comparatively small, but they're ominous. Since 2004, when I started road biking, my cycling season has gotten shorter by a few weeks. I don't ride during 100-plus degree stretches. In Las Vegas, the historical average number of those days is 71 per year, but in 2017 there were 86. The Union of Concerned Scientists says that, on the current trajectory, we'll see 96 three-digit days a year by 2100. Of course, cyclists living in that future hell can always head to the mountains, where it's cooler ... provided there are no wildfires, floods, or drought. And this is just one activity, cycling, in one person's experience. Now extrapolate that out to all the other people who do all the other activities there are to do outdoors, and the countless ways that climate change can interfere, from longer allergy seasons to extreme



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SOCIETY

PART OF THE JOB

The gaming industry's sexual harassment policies are well-intended, but they don't change the ugly reality on the casino floor

BY ***Brittany Bronson***

Although it was officially referred to as "Overnight," graveyard lived up to its nickname. Unoccupied slot machines lined the casino floor like tombstones. Empty glasses bore witness to a livelier time, earlier in the evening, when tourists crowded around dice tables or cheered after winning bets. I already knew that if I wanted to make any money on grave, I had to consistently revisit each plot, peer around Wheel of Fortune and Walking Dead machines in hopes of encountering a player. Many appeared just like Fred, as ghostly apparitions shrouded in cigarette smoke.

After I set down his whiskey, he took a long look at me. "Do you have a boyfriend?" he asked.

"Yes," I lied.

It was a habitual response I offered to all guests who inquired. I always hoped it would detour the conversation, but after five years of cocktailing, I had learned that regardless of the season — the early springs of committed relationships or the lonely winters of singledom — the "I have a boyfriend" escape strategy never actually worked.

Fred promised, "Well, I would treat you better."

He unfolded the bills from his money clip and tried to convince me of what a good boyfriend he would be. I reached for his three dollars, a higher tip than most, but he intercepted my hand — complimenting my eyes, my skin, my hair — then finally released my palm and allowed me to take the money.

As I walked away, I strolled past closed pits and an empty poker room. The place was dead. Nothing unusual for graveyard, particularly a midweek shift during the height of slow season. I thought about my exchange with Fred, wondering how long a handshake should last, then arrived at my final destination, the service bar on the opposite side of the casino.

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ENDURING SEXUAL HARASSMENT is so habitual for hospitality workers, it often feels as if it's just a part of the job, like an item on a side-work checklist: Restock coolers, wipe down trays, refill sugar caddies, get hit on by Fred.

But it doesn't just *feel* that way — the data proves it. The single largest source of sexual harassment claims in the United States is the restaurant and accommodations industry. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, the workers who are most likely to fall victim to workplace harassment eerily resemble your standard Las Vegas casino employees. They are low-wage workers. Tipped workers. Immigrant workers. Workers who do not speak English. Workers burdened by intersectional disadvantages, like race and gender. Workers who navigate large power discrepancies at work, such as restaurant servers with their customers. Workers who experience extended isolation on the job, like housekeepers in hotel rooms.

ILLUSTRATION ***Brent Holmes***

After the allegations against Steve Wynn became national news in 2018, the reality of harassment in casinos finally had its moment in the #MeToo spotlight. Wynn was accused of harassing multiple frontline workers who matched the demographics the data defines — manicurists, massage therapists, cocktail waitresses. Several claimed that Wynn coerced them into unwanted sexual acts. To this day, he has denied the allegations, but his punishments have been surprisingly significant. Forced resignation. The selling of company stock. A potential lifetime ban from the casino industry. A $35 million fine to corporate.

Shortly after Wynn's resignation, a coworker asked me in the service well: "Do you think he did it?"

I told her with conviction that I did.

"I don't know," she said. "I think those women just wanted the money."

She had worked in the casinos for 16 years and wasn't leaving anytime soon — a real casino lifer. Her industry experience far outweighed my minuscule career. And maybe she was right, in a way. Most of the times I experienced sexual harassment, I also just wanted the money.

The three dollars from Fred. The five dollars from the poker player who touched my thigh and offered to be my sugar daddy. The 20 percent gratuity from the cabana guest who exposed himself to me when I worked at a luxury pool.

Almost two years later, Wynn's sexual misconduct scandal led to a unanimous decision in November by the Nevada Gaming Commission to include sexual harassment language in its regulations. The proposed changes reflected existing federal protections, which is why some argued they didn't go far enough. Regardless, the new amendments went into effect in November. The Gaming Control Board can start requesting compliance plans from casinos in March.

The delayed action by the Nevada Gaming Commission feels like a culmination. Like the industry can now finally move forward from the barrage of bad press and the scrutiny of the national microscope. Although Wynn has his own legal messes yet to clean up, the gaming industry appears to have covered its bases.

It doesn't tolerate sexual harassment, and they can now prove that on paper.

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AT FIRST, I concluded it wasn't worth going back. But after 45 minutes with no orders, as I peered into the dark tunnel of the 4-6-a.m. stretch that was always the slowest on graveyard, I headed back to Fred in video poker.

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"So, you're happy with your boyfriend?" he asked.

"Very happy."

"He turns you on?"

I avoided answering the question and told Fred what a good guy my imaginary boyfriend was. I made up details about his hobbies and his job. Once again, Fred took time reaching into his pocket, as if he had learned from previous exchanges that if he tipped more than a dollar, the cocktail server would always wait.

"Can you do me a favor?" he asked.

I anticipated a request for a paper straw paired with a nostalgic comment about plastic. Or maybe he needed a napkin. His "Hold," "Draw," and "Max Bet" buttons were peppered with cigarette ash.

"My pleasure," I told him.

"Think about me when you're in the shower."

I'm not sure what I said after that, but I waited for his reliable three-dollar tip. There were only a few waking souls nearby, and I called out to them for rescue —"Cocktails? Cocktails?" but no one else wanted drinks. They stared, trancelike, into their slot machines, hypnotized by the jingles of extra spins and bonus games.

I brought Fred two more drinks over the course of the shift. As we talked, I stayed focused on all the things I could buy with three dollars. A gallon of gas. Half a latte. A bag of trail mix. A bottle of shampoo.

* * * * *

POWER DISCREPANCIES ARE inherent to the hospitality industry. If you take a walk through a casino resort, you can identify hundreds of them, whether between me and Fred, a manicurist and a CEO, a baccarat dealer dropping a player's cash through a slit, or a housekeeper cleaning up a high roller's luxury suite.

But strangely, since Wynn's resignation, conversations about preventing sexual harassment in the casino industry have focused on questions of policy rather than questions of power. The focus is misplaced, since workers who rely on gratuities, like the majority of Wynn's victims, are those with the least amount of power — and the most to lose by reporting. The historic origins of hospitality culture, rooted in exploitative labor practices, are another factor that still shapes the dynamic between frontline workers and those they serve. In the subculture of hospitality, tipped workers know that customers always come first. Similarly, guests know that their actions will rarely, if ever, be questioned.

Unionization has been foundational in strengthening casino workers through higher wages, set schedules, and career longevity, but still, sexual harassment persists. In their first contract negotiations of 2018, the housekeepers of Culinary 226 — some of the highest paid in the country — requested to be issued panic buttons on the job. Like some on the Nevada Gaming Board, they advocated for *stronger* sexual harassment language in their collective bargaining agreements, a crucial, but vague appeal.

At certain points in my casino industry career, I have been protected with the shield of the union. I wasn't when I served Fred, but I'm doubtful my response would have changed. Because whenever I experience harassment at work, I perform a split-second, cost-benefit analysis of how to proceed. *Has the behavior happened before? Am I serving a regular or a weekend tourist? Are they a*



high roller or a budget traveler? Have they been tipping red chips or green?

My answers to these questions evolve with every exchange. But they've never led me to decide to file a sexual harassment claim. It's not that I concluded those moments weren't harassment — they were. But the prospect of navigating a complex corporate bureaucracy to file a complaint while experiencing emotional and financial vulnerability was far too daunting — in some cases, too terrifying — to pursue. Policies alone were not enough to empower me to act.

This is the vast disconnect between those at the top who enact policies and those who experience harassment at the bottom. In terms of power, it's difficult to imagine how the same policies that are designed to protect the interests of a multibillion-dollar industry can equally serve the people at the bottom with the least amount of organizational agency. Yes, policy is important for weeding out harassers — Steve Wynn, a problematic manager, a guest who gets out of line — but without more radical cultural changes, hospitality will continue to remain an ideal environment for harassment to thrive.

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BACK IN THE service well, where employees leaned against coolers and checked their cellphones, I set my tray down and transferred Fred's three dollars into my tip cup.

"I saw you met Fred," my coworker said.

"You know him?"

She nodded. "He's here a couple nights a week. We all take turns."

She shared her Fred stories. His request of me was not an unusual one. Apparently, he wanted all of us to think about him when we were in the shower. The uncomfortable few minutes I chatted with him was, in context of my coworker's stories, brief.

A week later, I overheard another coworker talking about Fred in the employee dining room. She described the immediate discomfort she felt whenever she discovered he was sitting in her section. She used the phrase *I know this is part of the job* more than once.

Because I was on extra board and worked varied shifts, overnight only came up in my schedule once every few weeks. When I finally served Fred again, three months later, I approached his machine with familiarity and caution.

After I set down his drink, he struck up the conversation like clockwork: "Can I ask you something?"

"Sure," I said.

"Do you have a boyfriend?"











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MOST OF THE harassment I've experienced working in casinos isn't extreme. It's like Fred's: Gradual, subtle, and strategic. It can't quite be categorized as harmless, but neither can it be considered threatening. With repetition, the uneasiness it produces diminishes over time, until it feels more like inconvenience than maltreatment. And because it's so often diffused over multiple low-wage workers, it can be even more difficult to prove.

Legal definitions of sexual harassment rely on patterns of behavior. In many of the recent high-profile cases — Harvey Weinstein, Steve Wynn, Roger Ailes — it was not any one individual story, but the strikingly similar, collective stories that successfully established the patterns necessary for the law to work.

The law also requires the behavior to be "severe." Wynn's behavior qualified as such, but Fred's behavior likely didn't. The same skills workers need to excel at their jobs — social skills, physical appearance, emotional warmth — are capitalized on by harassers to continue their behavior without consequences. Hospitality training focuses primarily on teaching workers how to say yes, how to create a *guest experience,* how to anticipate guests' needs at all times. It's not a shock that the same default training kicks in during moments of questionable treatment. No one has trained us on how to tell a guest: *You can't treat me this way.*

If I were to outline the pattern of sexual harassment in my working life, it would stretch over eight years, four properties, two restaurants, two lounges, three pool decks, and two casino floors. After absorbing so much harassment, my perspective has been fundamentally skewed so much that I don't always recognize severe behavior when I see it. Although I don't remember the names, dates, or details, the resulting feeling was always the same: powerlessness.

It's a big claim. I would have no idea how to format it on sexual harassment paperwork.

I've been asked whether anything is different since the Wynn scandal. I can concede that yes, there have been some changes.

The Nevada Gaming Commission's new regulations extend jurisdiction to include non-casino staff, such as vendors and suppliers. Of the collective board members of the major casino operations in Las Vegas, 11 out of 57 are now women.

A few months after his resignation, Steve Wynn moved out of his on-site villa and purchased a $13 million, 13,000-square-foot mansion.

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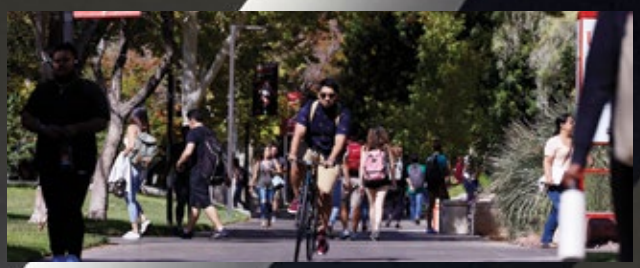

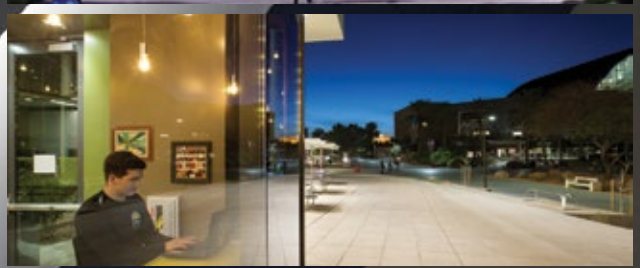

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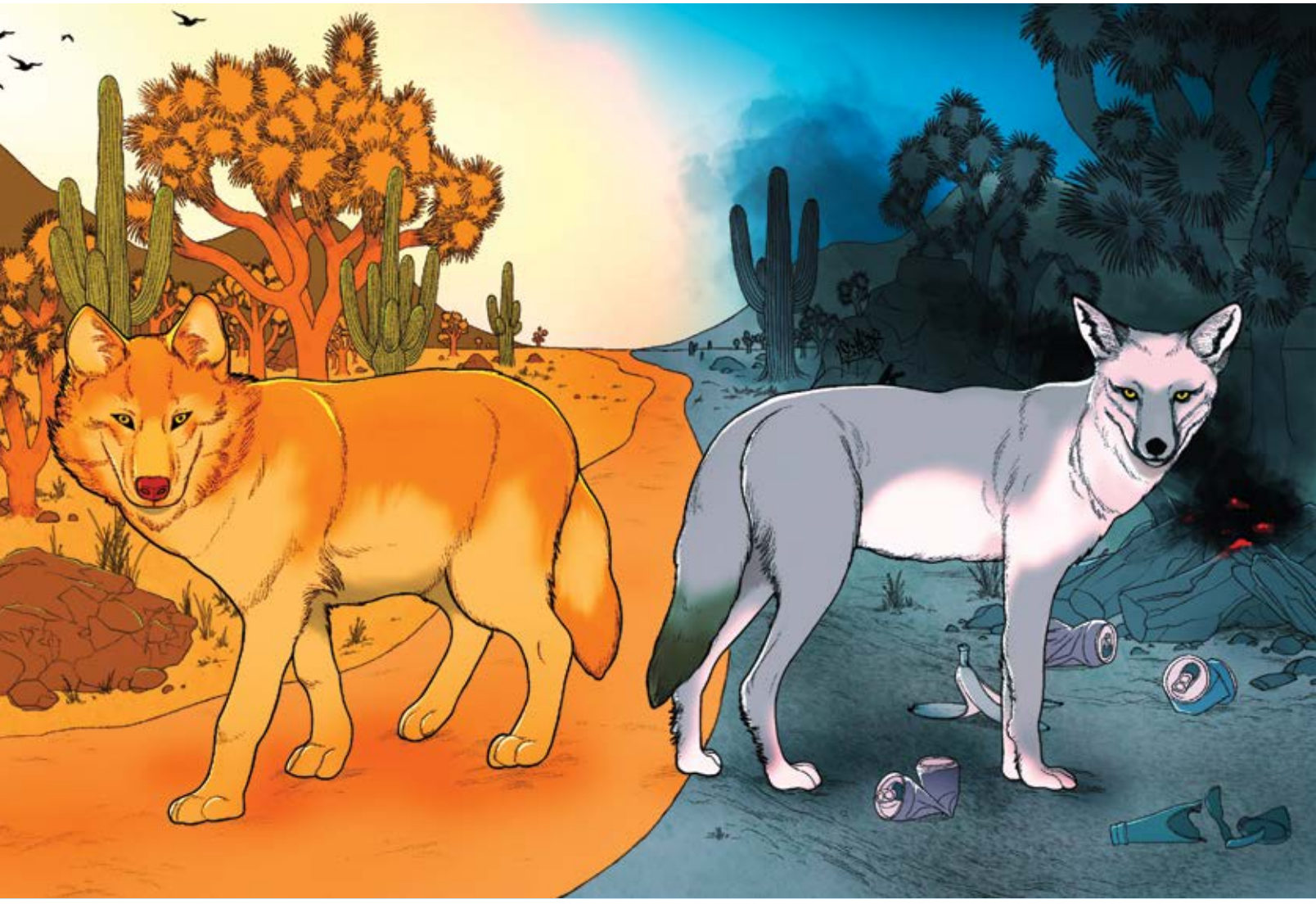

ENVIRONMENT

CLASS IS OUT(SIDE)

Environmental stewardship programs aim to curb people's bad outdoors behavior. Do they work?

BY ***Heidi Kyser***

In January, local writer Alan Snel logged onto Facebook to post a photo from his morning bike ride to Red Rock Canyon. He added a note about finding some trash — coffee and drink cups — along the scenic route and picking them up. A couple of tourists stopped to help him, he said, and all shared their dismay over the litter they'd seen. "Red Rock is an amazing natural resource, and we're lucky to have this so close to a metro area of 2 million-plus people," Snel wrote. "It's simple stuff. Don't trash Red Rock."

The post elicited expressions of shock ("It disgusts me," "absolutely unbelievable") and descriptions of similar experiences with finding trash in other popular areas.

This kind of thread is not uncommon among outdoor recreationists, who use social media to call out transgressions ranging from playing loud music on hikes to leaving toilet paper (or worse) in the open. They, in turn, have been taken to task for lording their privilege over people who may not have the luxury of spending much time in nature and, therefore, be unaware of the behavior required to preserve its beauty and vitality.

At the heart of this back-and-forth is a question that's becoming more urgent as the number of people visiting places like Red Rock and Mount Charleston steadily climbs: Who's teaching outdoor ethics? And does their approach work?

A HEALTHY EXCHANGE

THE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS of the Mojave Desert relied on oral tradition to teach respect for the environment, says Ashly Marie Osborne, tribal council secretary for the Moapa Band of Paiutes. Her mother was raised on the tribe's reservation northeast

ILLUSTRATION ***Kristina Collantes***

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of Las Vegas and, after some time away, moved back to raise Osborne there when the girl was 3 years old.

"That was my first primary education," Osborne says, "my grandfather and grandmother telling me about life through folklore ... We have a connection with spirit, animals, and nature. We respect all of those within our belief system."

To illustrate her tribe's oral tradition, Osborne recalls the story of the wolf and the coyote, taught to her as a young girl:

They're brothers. My grandfather explained that they both live within us and you can choose which one you want to be. The coyote takes shortcuts, takes advantage of others, is lazy, while the wolf works hard and does what's right. So, my grandfather would ask me, "Who are you going to be today, wolf or coyote?" And I'd laugh and be like, "The wolf, grandpa." That helped me understand that, as humans, we're not perfect. ... But we have a choice when it comes to which way we want to be. You understand the balance and learn how to make life's decisions. We use that to keep people on the right path. Coyote runs wherever he wants. You might need to be reminded to get back on the path. Wolf is mercy, merit, honesty, trust — core values that everybody shares.

Among these core values is a view of the Earth as creator, Osborne says. Just as an obedient child does what his mother asks, because he knows that, in turn, his mother takes care of him, so should we watch for opportunities to give back to the natural world.

"In our culture, we're taught to take care of children and teach them, and take care of elders and learn from them, and take care of the environment, the food and water that nourish us and give us life," Osborne says. "Mother does things for you, and you do things for her. It's a healthy exchange."





NATURE STUDIES
Children in the City of Las Vegas Safekey program at Rose Warren Elementary School participate in an interactive presentation by Get Outdoors Nevada.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

What can you do, if you catch someone littering at Red Rock, trampling the wildflowers on Mount Charleston, or otherwise behaving badly in the outdoors? Ben Lawhon of Leave No Trace suggests using his organization's Authority of the Resource method, which is basically these three steps:

1. Make an objective statement about what you see. "It looks like you guys are headed out to do some rock climbing."

2. State the potential consequences of the action. "It rained yesterday, and the climbing here is on sandstone, which is very fragile for two to three days after a rain. If you climb on it today, it could damage the rock."

3. Offer an alternative or different way to do things. "If you want, I can show you some nearby places to climb on granite." ***— HK***

Southern Paiutes widely share this view of an interdependent relationship with the Earth. But Osborne and others are concerned about the effects that forced assimilation and cultural oppression have had on the oral tradition keeping Paiute beliefs and practices alive.

Responding to this concern, the Moapa Paiutes recently received a childcare development fund, which they've used to establish service-program grants for federally recognized Indians, "from all over, not just here," Osborne says.

"Using those funds, we're building a daycare center on the reservation commingled with an elder center, so children and elders would interact and be part of the culture exchange," she says. "So, even in a household with family members who missed out on that oral tradition, or they work a lot and are too busy to spend time with their kids, they can drop their children off there, and they'll be able to connect with an elder and have that exchange."

She's hoping that the center will be completed by summer.

A GOOD START

"DON'T TOUCH!" SHOUTS a group of around 100 first- and second-graders, sitting cross-legged on the floor of the Walter E. Jacobson

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multipurpose room. They're answering a question — What should you do if you see a desert tortoise? — asked by Aaron Leifheit, Get Outdoors Nevada's education program director. Assisted by local TV weather celebrity Nathan Tannenbaum and two staff members from Clark County's Desert Conservation Program, one in a Mojave Max costume, Leifheit is leading an interactive presentation on the desert tortoise.

The team is skilled at keeping a roomful of squirming 6-year-olds' attention, an ability acquired by making more than a dozen of these presentations per year. They ask questions to review main points, giving prizes for correct answers; pick volunteers to place different parts of a tortoise costume on their teacher (thus naming the tortoise body part); and, when the squirming and whispering start to build, count down to silence. The knowledge the kids acquire is rudimentary, but they seem to get it, and their teachers will go over it again later in class. The question is: Are they actually learning anything?

"It's totally possible to measure," Leifheit says, "but it's kind of hard, and that's why we've switched to having specific outcomes for all of our programs. If you have an outcome, then you can measure it."

One method the group uses is to survey teachers, asking them to rate statements such as, "I feel comfortable teaching about the desert tortoise in my classroom," or "My students enjoyed this activity." Another way is by getting the students themselves to complete an activity, such as drawing a desert tortoise's habitat, both before and after the presentation. Those evaluating the drawings look for specific elements, say, cacti or sagebrush, and compare the percentages of drawings that contain those elements pre- and post-presentation.

"We like to do it that way, because it's an accurate representation of what they know," Leifheit says.

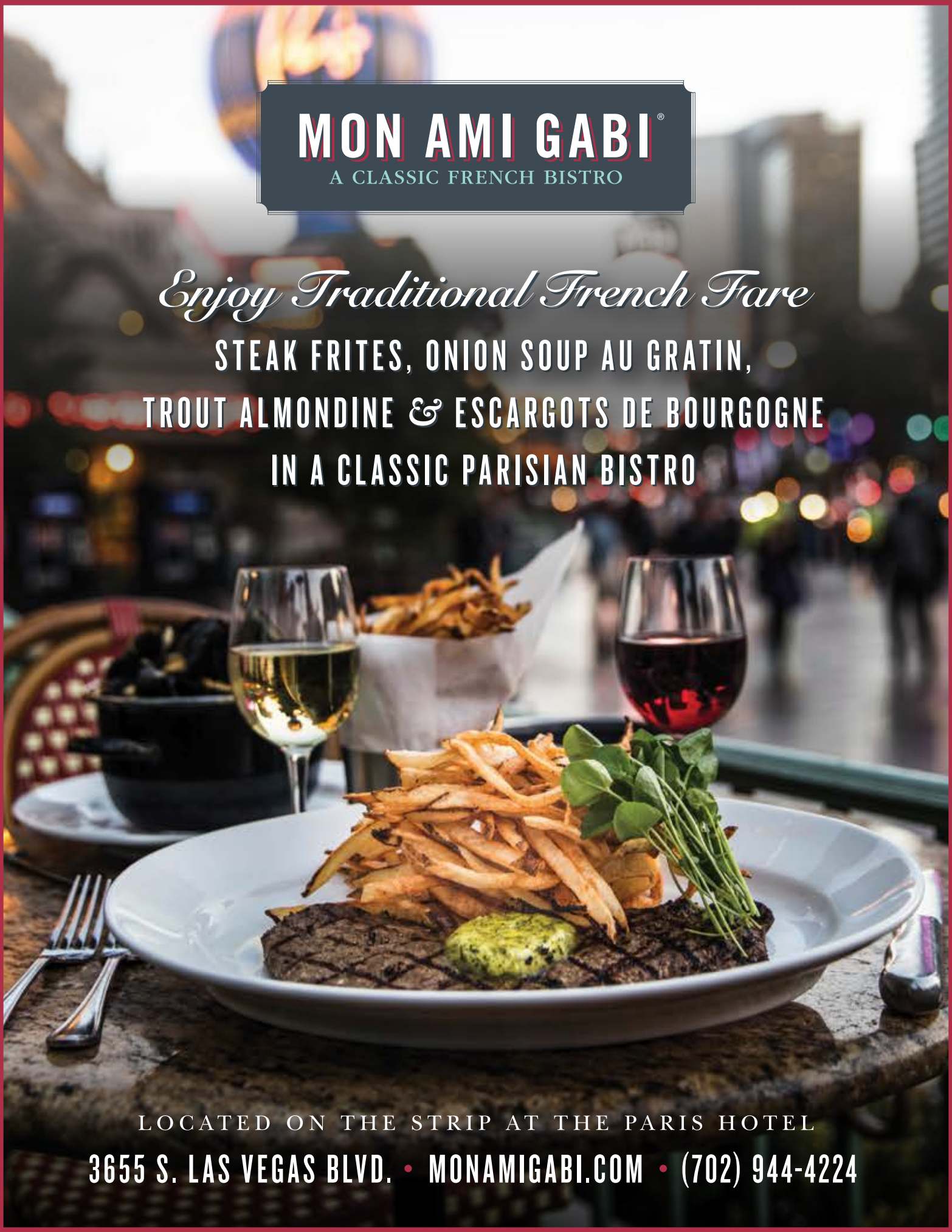
Results from such surveys indicate that Get Outdoors Nevada's programs have a positive effect, at least in the short term. For instance, knowledge of local drinking water's sources increased from 83 percent to 95 percent among participants in 2015's YMCA Nature Summer Camp. And 91 percent of teachers said they learned something new, and believed their students did as well, from the 2018 Meet Your Mojave microgrant program, which provides transportation grants for school visits to public lands.

Beyond these programs, Get Outdoors Nevada has several others, the most intensive of which may be its Next Generation Science Standards Program. For this, Get Outdoors Nevada educators teach an accredited curriculum focused on specific outdoors topics. The lessons culminate in field trips, where students can see subject matter first-hand.

"If you think about the way science used to be taught," Leifheit says, "it was, 'Here are some words; here's a test on them.' We're saying, 'No, science is about conducting investigations, making models.'"

Underlying all the programs is a belief implied in the approach of the Moapa Paiutes: The best way to get adults who are responsible in nature is to make responsible nature-lovers out of children.

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"We tell kids, 'You may be small. You may not have your own bank account or car, but there are a lot of things you can do to make the world a better place,'" Leifheit says. "'Don't litter. Stay on the trail so you don't step on plants. Don't take animals out of their natural habitat.' We're trying to instill respect for the environment in the culture of the region."

Get Outdoors Nevada's six full-time educators conducted 606 programs in 2019, reaching a little over 17,000 kids. On one hand, Leifheit says, that's a huge accomplishment. "On the other, that's only a small portion of the population of Las Vegas."

In order for it to really work, adults have to step up and do their part, too.

TRACING IT BACK

MOST GROWN-UP OUTDOOR recreation enthusiasts have heard of REI. This outdoor retail giant has been driving the community engagement bandwagon in recent years, offering an urban interpretation of the hunting classes and guided treks that backcountry outfitters have done for decades. Las Vegas' two REI locations have event space, where staff teach customers, including members (it's a co-op), how to do things like fix flats, tie climbing ropes, and use a map and compass in the wilderness. This isn't ethics education, per se, but it does promote stewardship, says Daniel Grillo, the company's head of program development.

"Empowering people to recreate in spaces changes how they value them," Grillo says. "It's like the difference between something you see in a museum and something you own. Both are valuable, but one feels personal."

In other words, REI guides and educators focus on getting folks outdoors, and once they're there, they incorporate practices that minimize their impact. The company likes beginners. It's easier, Grillo says, to create good habits than to change bad ones. And REI leans heavily on regional nonprofits that do on-the-ground preservation and restoration, such as, locally, Friends of Sloan Canyon and the Southern Nevada Climbing Coalition.

But REI doesn't actually develop the outdoor ethics training methodology it uses or track its effectiveness. For that, it turns to organizations such as outdoor leadership school NOLS and the granddaddy of all recreation rule-makers, Leave No Trace.

Ben Lawhon, the education director of Leave No Trace organization, would dislike

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the characterization of its principles as rules. Being didactic, he says, is one of the approaches that doesn't work, along with shaming, moralizing, inconsistency, and creating in-groups and out-groups.

"We're not a regulatory entity," he says. "It's got to be fun. We have to be viewed as the smart way to enjoy the outdoors. Often, it's not only the right thing to do, but also, it's the easiest."

Lawhon and his colleagues at the Boulder, Colorado-based nonprofit have gleaned this wisdom from 25 years of research. The organization's roots go back to the 1980s, when programs with names like Wilderness Manners began to pop up. The Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and Army Corps of Engineers "learned over time that they needed to coalesce behind one concept," Lawhon says. "They called it Leave No Trace. We, as an organization, started in 1994, resulting from a large outdoor recreation summit hosted by them and numerous corporations from the outdoor industry."

Since then, the group estimates, 15.5 million people — including 235,000 children last year — have heard its message, which it disseminates through a multitude of programs, from a Girl Scouts curriculum to a workplace Power Point talk that can be downloaded for free on its website. That message consists of seven, continually evolving principles: plan ahead and prepare; travel and camp on durable surfaces; dispose of waste properly; leave what you find; minimize campfire impacts; respect wildlife; and be considerate of other visitors.

Like Leifheit, Lawhon is proud of his work, but he worries that it's a drop in the bucket.

"There are millions and millions of people going to these spaces, and there are more of them all the time. So, for us the goal post is always moving," he says. "Research indicates that 9 out of 10 people who spend time in the outdoors are either un- or under-informed about minimizing the impacts of their activities on natural resources."

Here's a specific example, from Leave No Trace's own research. A 2017 study of around 10,000 people at three national parks found that more than a quarter of them were not disposing of their waste properly. (The organization has also found that 100 million pounds of waste are generated each year in national parks. So, you do the math.)

Still, there are some positive results too, such as people's acknowledgment that the principles are important to practice and that they'd do the right thing if it were made easy for them by having the proper infrastructure. And Lawhon says the organization has expanded its approach to reach a broader audience.

"We've moved far beyond the wilderness boundary, and the vast majority people we educate now are in what we call front-country, places you can visit by car, day users," he says. "As that has happened, we've shifted the way we teach them, from technical education to simpler, more user-friendly messages."

After all, whether you jog at Lone Mountain, ride your dirt bike in Logandale, fish at Sunset Park, or just lie on your back and watch the clouds go by, "you're an outdoors person," Lawhon says. "And what you do isn't done in a vacuum. It affects the entire ecosystem." ✦





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CULTURE

VERSE FROM THE NEW WEST

A stalwart Nevada tradition, the Cowboy Poetry Gathering isn't just a festival – it's a chronicle of a changing sense of rural identity

By Sonja Swanson

ELKO

You won't find too many Las Vegans in Elko — the town of 20,000 residents in northeast Nevada is closer to Utah, Idaho and Oregon by a long shot — and the snowy peaks surrounding it are a reminder that we're really not in the Mojave anymore. But at the beginning of every year, for the last 36 years, the population swells by a few thousand more: They come for the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering, an enduring Nevada tradition that draws ranchers, poets, and cattle-driving songsters, as well as a handful of city folk like me.

I am by no means a cowboy, or a poet, for that matter. I'm a city girl from Las Vegas ("You mean East L.A.?" someone teased, not unkindly, in Elko). It's easy to feel like we're not quite so rural West down here, with our just-barely-there inclusion in the state, like someone cut an extra-long piece of cake to sneak in another bite.

Still, the history of our city is part of a frontier tradition — a street named Rancho runs through the heart of town, and Vegas Vic and Vickie both sport Stetsons, after all. The history of the West, the good and the bad, is our history too. So it was in search of this that I packed my boots and made my way north.

"*Gathering* is a ranching term — you gather the cattle, that's

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Michelle Min***

WIDE, WIDE RANGE
Zydeco musician Geno Delafose, left, with barbecue expert Kelvin Arnsworth at the 2020 National Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

seasonal work," says Kristin Windbigler, executive director of the Western Folklife Center, the organization behind the event. "It's a really important part of how we think about ourselves." As such, the weeklong jubilee takes place in winter, when there tends to be less ranch work for most.

People come from all over the world; I met a folk singer from Northern England, a Canadian cowboy, and even a few New Yorkers. The event is a celebration of Western storytelling, with movies and music, cooking workshops and square dancing — you won't be able to do it all, but that's maybe why so many return year after year.

At the bar on the first floor of the Western Folklife Center, the space fills up with broad-brimmed hats, and the first orders of beer start coming in just around 10 a.m. You might go from a thought-provoking panel on ranch management to a rollicking blues concert, followed by a workshop on hearty trail ride cooking. In the afternoons and evenings, impromptu jam sessions start up in the back of the room around the fireplace.

Naturally, the heart of the Gathering is the poetry. Cowboy poetry is a genre born out of the cattle-ranching operations of the American West, based in the oral tradition of campfire storytelling. The form tends toward tradition, with regular rhyme and meter. Themes center around Western life: Horses, hard work, and the simple life. The romance of the ranch is often tempered with wry humor.

In Nevada poet Waddie Mitchell's "Evening Chat," performed during the keynote, the speaker tells his young horse about the value of experience: "Sort of lets an older feller / Work at a slower pace / And still get as much accomplished / On account of fewer mistakes."

The audience here is studded with Stetson silhouettes. Pearl snaps, leather boots, and vests abound. For those who wish, the convention center and surrounding venues have even more shopping opportunities, with ornately carved saddles, silverwork and Western art on display. I learned how to tie a silk wild rag, standard attire for the event, and learned that boots go *inside* your jeans.

RHYMES WITH REASON

THE GATHERING IS also a reminder that the West isn't a monolith. "We take our cues from the evolving American West," says Windbigler. "We also take cues from our



LET'S CELEBRATE

Eleven local environmental organizations are sponsoring a host of activities to mark the 50th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2020. The celebration has already begun, led by the Sierra Club's Earth Day 50 Art & Essay Contest (deadline 3/19), followed by a free movie screening at UUCLV on 3/29. Then comes a series of events during Earth Week:

Earth Week Events **April 18-26**

APRIL 18-26 The Earth Day 50 Art Exhibition at Sierra Club (dark 4/22)
APRIL 18 LV Electric Vehicle Association Rally at Springs Preserve
APRIL 18 Earth Day 2020 Las Vegas at Art Square
APRIL 22 Gala Earth Day 50 Awards Ceremony at Clark County Library
APRIL 22-24 Youth Climate Strikes Mobilization at various locations
APRIL 25 Book Launch: "Dinosaur Dreaming, Our Climate Moment" at Sierra Club

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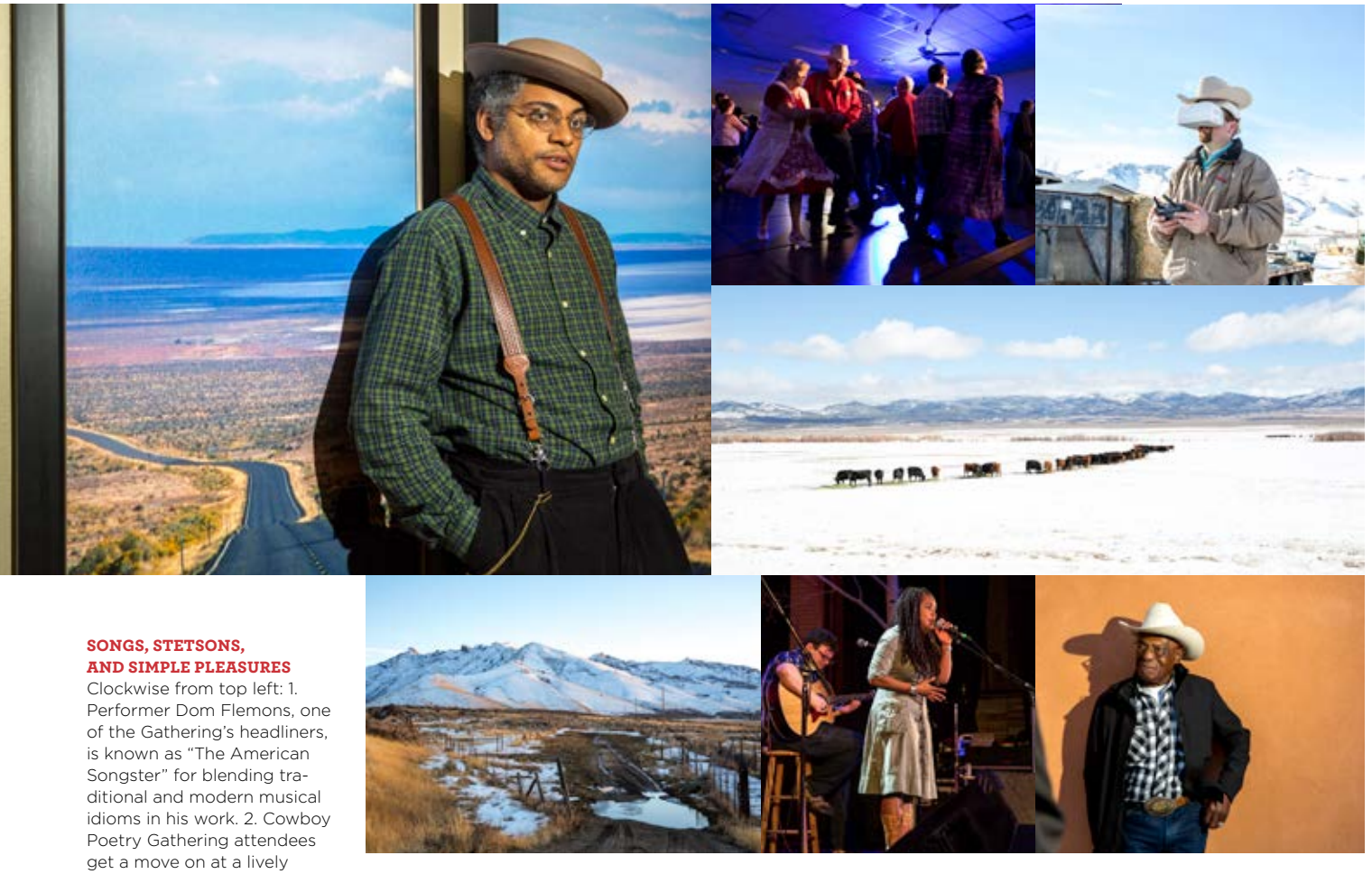

SONGS, STETSONS, AND SIMPLE PLEASURES
Clockwise from top left: 1. Performer Dom Flemons, one of the Gathering's headliners, is known as "The American Songster" for blending traditional and modern musical idioms in his work. 2. Cowboy Poetry Gathering attendees get a move on at a lively square dance. 3. Rancher Jordan Brough demonstrates how he herds stray cattle off of higher elevation using his drones. 4. Participants were shown working cattle ranches in nearby Clover Valley, during the "A Day at the Ranch" tour. 5. ProRodeo Hall of Famer Myrtis Dightman Sr. was a key figure in this year's National Cowboy Poetry Gathering showcasing the contributions of black cowboys. 6. Miko Marks, based out of Oakland, California, performs at a Gathering musical showcase. 7. Just outside of Elko, Lamoille Canyon sets the stage for the 2020 National Cowboy Poetry Gathering.

artists, what's important to them, what they're talking about."

In that spirit, this year's theme of "Black Cowboys" was particularly relevant, as the wild success of Lil Nas X's "Old Town Road" in 2019 opened up a national conversation about the long and underrepresented history of black cowboys. Folks on Twitter might be familiar with the term "yee haw agenda," coined by Bri Malandro, to describe the resurgence in cowboy aesthetics among black musicians and artists, including Solange, Megan Thee Stallion, and Lizzo.

"It's been really interesting to see how deep the story has reverberated with the popular culture," says Dom Flemons, whose 2018 Smithsonian Folkways album *Black Cowboys* was nominated for a Grammy. Flemons and his wife, Vania Kinard, were consultants for the Gathering, and curated an exhibit in the Western Folklife Center's gallery that featured displays of black cowboy legends, a newly unearthed black cowboy comic strip from the 1950s called "The Chisholm Kid," and modern-day portraits of Mississippi Delta cowboys by photographer Rory Doyle.

"Now is a time to repatriate this information back into the mainstream," says Flemons, noting that segregation was partly to blame for the loss of black cowboy stories. He cites figures like rodeo legends Bill Pickett, who mentored Will Rogers, and Myrtis Dightman Sr., often called the "Jackie Robinson" of the rodeo — a living legend who joined the Gathering this year.

The point that both the Gathering and the "yee haw agenda" make is that black cowboys aren't new. They've been around as long as there have been cowboys. One historian estimates that a quarter of all cowboys were black, and a third were non-white (case in point: the word "buckaroo" originates from the Spanish "vaquero").

Hollywood's whitewashed portrayal of the Wild West, with its blue-eyed deputies, papers over a much more complex history. "We kind of grew up with it, with *Gunsmoke* and *Rawhide*. There's this whole romancing of the American West," says Geralda Miller, a Reno-based historian and nonprofit executive who led several panels at this year's Gathering.

Not only did popular culture downplay the presence and contributions of black cowboys, it also conveniently downplayed the racism. "Many people think that racism and segregation didn't happen in the West, but it did,"

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Miller says. When logging companies moved to Oregon from the South, for example, they brought their policies with them, segregating the logging towns. And Nevada's casinos, in an effort to cater to Southern customers, were segregated until well after the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964.

"Part of the way that each of these black cowboys survived was that they overcame these obstacles and built new lives for themselves," Flemons says. "The album and the exhibit are reflections and manifestations of that sort of resilience moving forward."

The racial politics of the West are still complicated, and still relevant. Something Miller said stuck with me: "African American or black history is not just my history, it is the history of America," she said. "It's the story of all of us, and how we have in this one land, the United States of America, grown and developed as a people, as Americans."

SHARED WORK, SHARED RISK

YES, IF YOU were wondering, the vast majority of the faces at the Gathering were white. My photographer and I were among maybe half a dozen Asian Americans at the event — it took me a couple days to realize why the littlest children were staring at me, and why a woman at breakfast insisted we had met before.

But when I smiled at them, they grinned back. The welcome we received at the events was warm and real. A black cowboy I met who preferred to go unnamed said that he had actually been a little worried before coming, but was pleasantly surprised by how kind everyone was, and how eager they were to hear his stories.

Flemons surmises that it was the centrality of work in the West that laid the groundwork for progress. "Many of these black cowboys were exceptions to the rule because they were working people — there was connection through the pioneer spirit."

It's this sense of shared work and shared risk that young poet Clare McKay drew on when she recited a poem written through the eyes of a black cowboy: "As long as I'm breathing God's fresh air and doing right / I figure it don't matter much / whether my skin is dark or light."

None of these truths negate the others. There's no easy way to tie it up with a neat bow on top, because the experiences of race in the West are vast and varied — there is no one black cowboy experience.

And even though I thought I was coming to the Gathering with an open mind, I realized that I had underestimated the capacity for nuance in the rural political landscape. Though politics were rarely discussed, the conversations I overheard ran the gamut. I noticed just one red MAGA hat that week (perhaps on account of all the other elaborate headgear on display). On a walk from one side of town to the other, I only saw three campaign signs: A Trump banner, a Julian Castro poster, and a yard sign that read "Any Functioning Adult 2020."

I asked Windbigler whether she'd seen any minds changed by the black cowboys exhibit and events. She hesitated. "I don't want to call somebody out," she said, but she had seen conversations online after the event that moved her. "The specificity of people's own personal stories can still change other people's minds about how they see something," Windbigler said. "That means civility in discourse is still alive in this country — despite how people talk about how divisive everything has become."

I wasn't the only young person hooked on the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering. Windbigler says this year, anecdotally at least, there seemed to be more young attendees than ever. I think it has something to do with the way cowboy poetry feels like a rejection of the cynicism and snark that's too often the currency of Twitter dialogue.

I felt it when the audience sighed around me while watching a newborn calf die in a documentary screening, and when workshop attendees murmured sympathy for a speaker's murdered cattle "because a black man wasn't supposed to own Herefords." I felt it when amateur poets stepped up to the open mic events with nervous hands — and met enthusiastic applause. It was in the audience of hundreds singing a yodeling refrain (and myself joining in), in the laughter between our ungainly sets while I square danced for the first time in my life.

One midweek morning in Elko, I awoke to find our car covered in a layer of snow. "That's why they gave us an ice scraper with the car rental," I marveled. As I trotted around the car scraping ice off the windows, it occurred to me how much fun it was to be transported outside of my comfort zone, how privileged it was to feel mere amusement (and not fear worse), and how much work lay ahead of me to do this story justice. I stepped back to observe my progress — not perfect, but it would do. We'd be able to see out the windows. And the sun would thaw the rest in time. ✦

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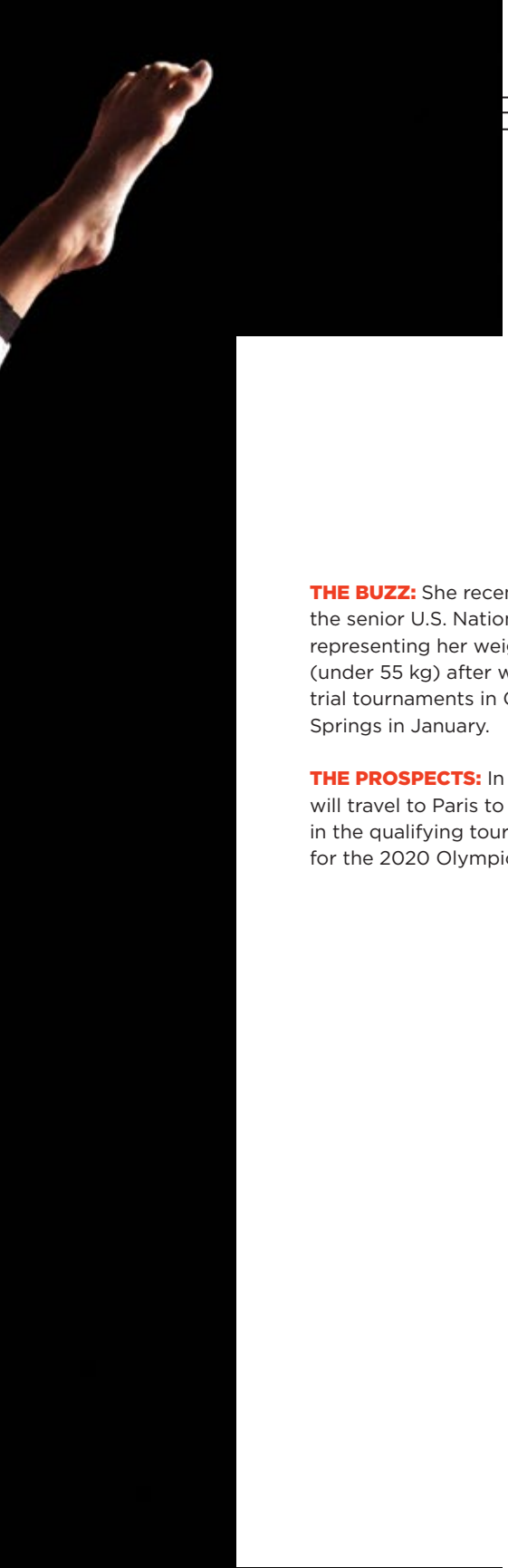


TRINITY ALLEN
KARATE

THE BUZZ: She recently made the senior U.S. National Team, representing her weight class (under 55 kg) after winning two trial tournaments in Colorado Springs in January.

THE PROSPECTS: In May, Allen will travel to Paris to compete in the qualifying tournament for the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Trinity Allen's 2019 was a leaping flurry of kicks and punches. The highlight reel: There she is at the Junior International Cup in Las Vegas, delivering a surgical high-kick to an opponent's face. There she is in Rijeka, Croatia, pedaling her fists into a blur before firing off a decisive combo. There she is in Ljubljana, Slovenia, unleashing her signature front-kick that locks on like a guided missile. Watching the video, you can feel the potent *thud*.

To Allen, karate isn't just a sport. It's a discipline, a philosophy, and family tradition. "I was pretty much born into it," says Allen, 18. Her father, Hiroshi, and her grandfather, Bob, were both on the U.S. National Team. Hiroshi owns and runs a local karate academy. But in this case, the family tradition served to liberate rather than limit her.

"Growing up, I was always keeping to myself, just naturally," says Allen, who's enrolled as a psychology major at UNLV. "I'm kind of an introverted person. But when I started competing more around age 12, that's when I started traveling, and I started going out more and having new experiences. That side of karate brought me out of my shell a lot more. I was able to take more risks and become more of a people person." It's not uncommon for Allen's tournament opponents to become good friends.

Now that she qualified for the senior U.S. National Team in January, Allen will compete in Paris in May for a spot on the U.S. Olympic karate team. What techniques will she unleash then? It's hard to say, given that her arsenal is always evolving.

"When she was younger, she was a counter-fighter," Hiroshi says. "And then we transitioned her into more of an aggressive pressure-fighter. Now that we've given her all the tools, I've kind of stepped away as a coach and I'm letting her find her identity as a fighter. Once she does that, I think she's going to really explode." ***Andrew Kiraly***

LAIRD BRUNSON

SKATEBOARDING

THE BUZZ: With a slate of respectable contest placements under his belt, he's most recently landed a sponsorship from Pharmacy Boardshop, and is on the lookout for more sponsors.

THE PROSPECTS: Brunson hopes to launch a YouTube channel focused on skateboarding.

If modern skateboarding is the province of technical wizards — with their arsenal of intricate flips and spins — Laird Brunson is a 15-year-old throwback. On a recent Tuesday afternoon, he's carving up the concrete waves of the Anthem Hills Skate Park with the confident flow of a veteran surfer. He's not an acrobat; he's a dancer.

"I guess I try to be more stylish in my skating — I draw out my grinds and stuff like that. My foot placement is a little different — my front foot is always behind the bolts — and I feel like that adds a little more style, too. I try to be fluid." His surfy approach to ramp and park skating has earned him a handful of sponsors during his budding career, but digital native Brunson knows where real opportunity lies in the 21st century: the internet. His immediate goal is to complete a full-length skate video, and then use that to launch a YouTube channel.

"That's where skating is going. Like, back in the '80s, it was like everyone was skating their contests and stuff like that. But now it's like, 'What did you post on Instagram? How many views did you get?' Stuff like that. It's not as easy as it seems." He unwittingly hits upon what makes his skate style so watchable. Those long, leisurely carves and grinds, those floaty, luxuriant airs: He makes it all look so easy.

"Laird has really creative tricks that look different," says Kohl Marantz, a friend who helps Brunson on his videos. "It's not the same lipslide down the same handrail. There's a charisma about his skating that pushes him over the edge. He goes to a spot and just puts it down."

Andrew Kiraly






UNLV

AVI'TAL WILSON-PERTEETE

TRACK & FIELD

THE BUZZ: A runner who specializes in the 800 meters for UNLV's indoor and outdoor track-and-field teams, Wilson-Perteete also is on the Rebels' cross-country team. She is a three-time All-American, a three-time Mountain West Conference 800-meter champion, and a gold-medal winner at last summer's NACAC U18 & U23 Championships in Querétaro, Mexico.

THE PROSPECTS: Wilson-Perteete is among the favorites to win the 800-meter national championship at the 2020 NCAA Division 1 Track & Field Championship in June. A week later she will compete in the U.S. Olympic Trials.

Gifted athletes usually can pinpoint the precise moment when they first recognized they had a special talent. For Avi'Tal Wilson-Perteete, recalling the specifics is a bit challenging. She was in kindergarten. "I would race boys who were in the fifth grade," says the Oakland native. "And I'd win."

While she didn't think much of her blazing speed at the time, her mother took notice — but didn't immediately enroll her daughter in the nearest track club. Just the opposite. "My mom knew I was going to be good in track, but she didn't want me to (compete) when I was young because she heard stories about people who got burned-out," Wilson-Perteete recalls. "She put me in literally every other sport and after-school activity, except track."

The ban was lifted when Wilson-Perteete got to high school, where, as a freshman, she initially competed in the 100 and 200 meters. At her third meet, her coach asked if she wanted to try the 800 meters. She did not. "He said, 'If you run and win your heat, you'll get a free T-shirt," Wilson-Perteete says. "Of course, I said yes, because who doesn't want a free T-shirt?" She won, by something like 120 meters. "It wasn't a super-fast time — 2 minutes, 33 seconds — but the fact I was so far ahead of everybody and I looked so fast, I was like, 'Wow! This might be something I can actually be good at.'"

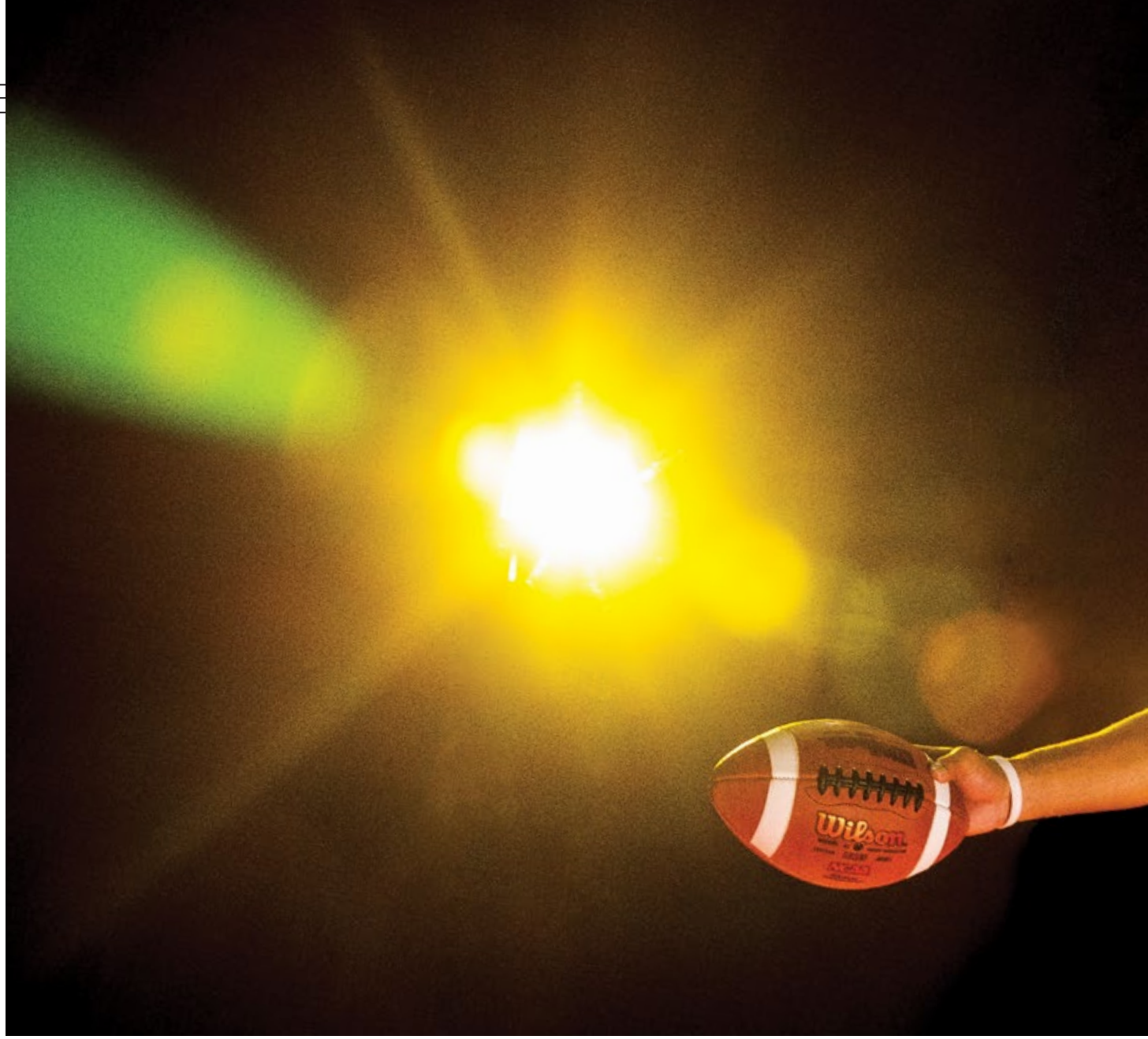
She went on to collect more first-place medals, trophies, and, yes, T-shirts throughout high school. Then, during her senior season, her phone rang. On the other line was Jebreh Harris, who at the time was UNLV's head cross-country and assistant track-and-field coach. Harris made Wilson-Perteete a scholarship offer she couldn't refuse. "I really didn't need to look anywhere else," she says. "I knew this was the place for me."

Last summer, after placing third in the 800 at the NCAA national championships meet, Wilson-Perteete was one of two women selected to run the 800 for Team USA in an event in Mexico for competitors ages 20-23. She captured the gold medal. Now she has a chance to claim a spot on the U.S. Olympic Team and race in the Tokyo Games.

The effervescent 20-year-old is taking it all in stride. "Whatever happens, happens," she says. "I heard this on a podcast: If you think too much about the result you want to achieve, then in your head you've already achieved it, and then your subsequent actions reflect that, and you kind of lose your drive a little. So I prefer not to think too far ahead and just go with what I know and be the best I can be."

In other words, she's far from burned-out. Her mother's plan worked.

"Her deciding that I wasn't going to compete in track until I was in high school was the best thing she could've done for me," Wilson-Perteete says. "She made the right call, 1,000 percent. And I'm thankful for that every day." ***Matt Jacob***



ZYRUS FIASEU
FOOTBALL

THE BUZZ: During a spectacular 2019 season in which he helped lead Liberty High School to its first state football championship, Fiaseu rushed for 1,026 yards and 17 touchdowns. Fiaseu also played defensive back/linebacker and recorded 32 total tackles and three interceptions.

THE PROSPECTS: Fiaseu already has drawn interest from as many as 10 colleges, including UNLV, UNR, San Diego State, Oregon, and Nebraska. College coaches are enthralled by the 17-year-old's size (6-feet, 215 pounds), production (he's averaged 7.2 yards per rush), power, and versatility. He's expected to play linebacker or running back at the next level.

The words are jarring. Not so much because of the context — the young man is a football player, after all — but because of how they're delivered: barely audible, almost to the point of being sheepish. "If you give me the ball," says soft-spoken Zyrus Fiaseu, "I'm going to try to, like, kill you."

Fiaseu had spent the previous 20 minutes checking all the right boxes: humble, grateful, deferential. But with that sentence, Fiaseu reminds his inquisitor that when he dons a helmet and shoulder pads, he becomes a bad dude with bad intentions.

It's pretty much been this way since Fiaseu was 6 years old and first followed his older brother onto a football field. "By the time



I was in fourth or fifth grade, I thought, 'Dang, I might really be good at this.'"

While he was playing for a youth football team whose players were mostly zoned for Liberty High School, Fiaseu says, Liberty head coach Rich Muraco invited Fiaseu (then just 12), his brother, and a few of his teammates to train with the high-school players. Liberty's coaches knew they had an impact player heading their way. "They always told me, 'When you get to high school, you're going to be on the varsity team as a freshman,'" Fiaseu says.

Sure enough, as a freshman and sophomore, Fiaseu played running back (rushing for a combined 1,364 yards and 12 touchdowns) and defensive back. Then last season, he exploded for 1,026 rushing yards and 18 total touchdowns while also collecting 32 tackles and three interceptions on defense. Thanks in large part to Fiaseu's play, the Liberty Patriots rallied from an 0-5 start to close the season with 10 straight wins, capped by a 50-7 rout of Centennial High School in the championship game.

During their magical three-game playoff run, the Patriots erased a 17-3 halftime deficit and knocked off 10-time defending state champion Bishop Gorman 30-24, with Fiaseu scoring the game-winning touchdown in overtime.

So it's not surprising that Fiaseu's mailbox has been inundated with letters from college football recruiters. When the time comes to decide on a college, he says he'll be looking for two key attributes: "On the field, it's stability in the coaching staff. But more importantly, I want a college that will offer me more than just football. They say college is a 40-year decision, not a four-year decision. So I want to go somewhere that will get me ready for life."

And what if that life includes a stop at football's ultimate level?

"The NFL has been a dream since I first started playing football as a kid," he says. "But my parents always tell me to have a backup plan. ... If the NFL gives me that opportunity, of course I'll take it. But if they don't, I'll have my backup plan in my back pocket and just go from there." ***Matt Jacob***

TAYLOR BIGBY

BASKETBALL

THE BUZZ: A nationally ranked high school guard, she's equally good at setting up teammates or scoring herself.

THE PROSPECTS: Her skills in high demand, Taylor has committed to play college hoops at the University of Oregon, which has been recruiting her since her freshman year.

Taylor Bigby was about 10 years old when she told her parents she wanted to try basketball. They were surprised. She was a girly girl who was into cheerleading. They thought she had no interest in sports. But her dad, Lamar Bigby, coached a team. Taylor spent a lot of time at his practices, and it captured her interest. So, the family signed her up for a kids team at the community rec center.

"We put her in, like, a little NJB (National Junior Basketball) eight-week program," her mother, Lonyae Bigby, says. "I remember telling (Lamar), this will be over in eight weeks. I remember our first tryout for NJB, where they do a draft and pick the kids. I didn't even think that she could pass the draft. Could she dribble, could she shoot? We had not seen her do any of that."

Today, ESPN ranks her daughter among the top 25 girls basketball players in the country. In Taylor's position, guard, she's No. 8. A junior at Centennial High School, she's committed to University of Oregon, where she'll go on a scholarship in 2021.

Recruiters write about her "big-guard drives" and how she's "active on the glass." Watching her on the court, you can see this in action — how she anticipates where the ball is going and moves it down the court with ease. She's also big on setting up shots for her teammates, but lately has learned to be more selfish, she says. "Sometimes, I'm the person who needs to be scoring the goal. Sometimes I don't need to make the play, I am the play."

She's been pursued by recruiters since seventh grade, written about in national sports magazines and on websites. But none of this seems to faze Taylor, who is as easy to approach and talk to as any other 16-year-old.

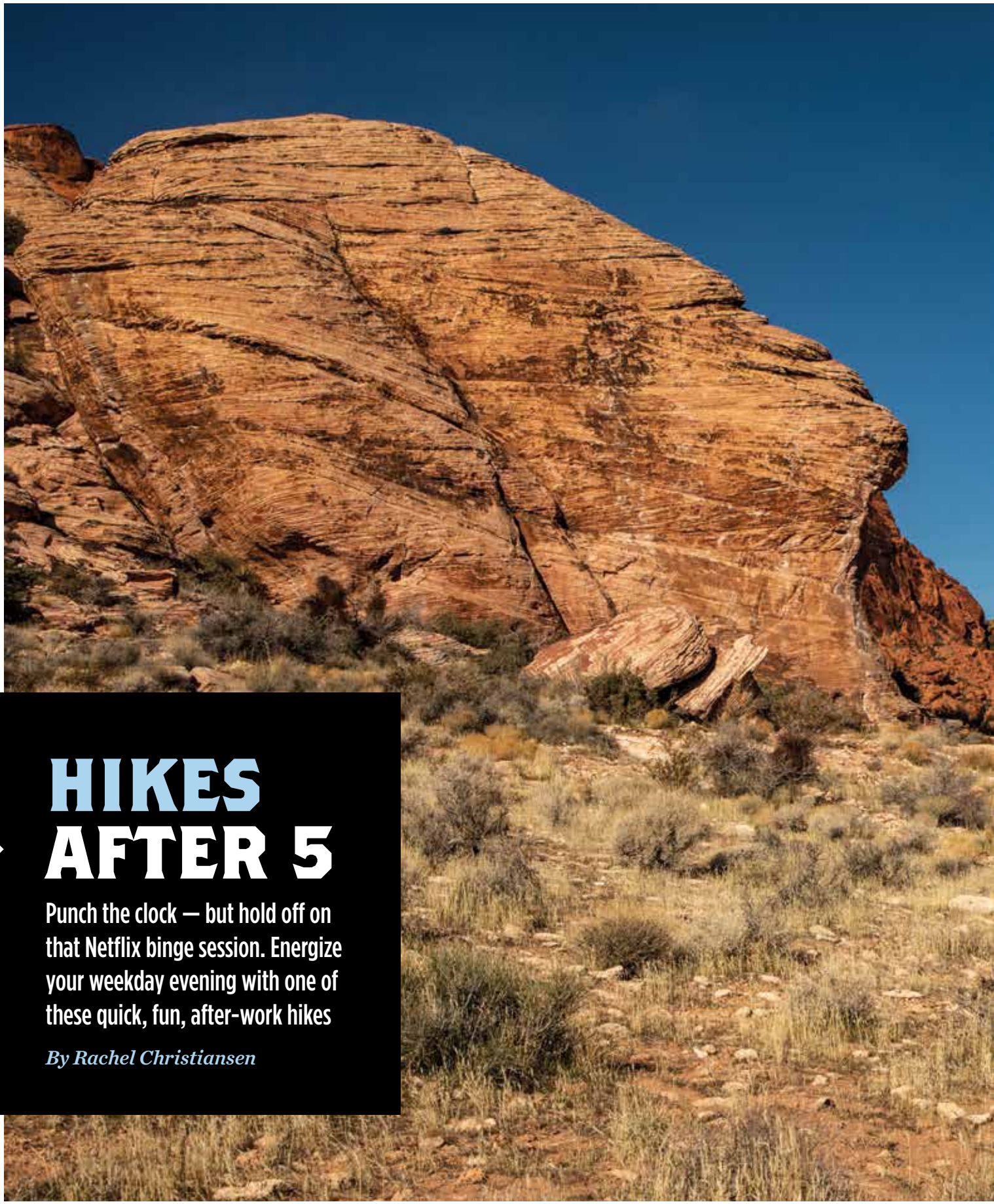
"I do like to shop," she says, reflecting on her life balance. She also likes to watch movies and chill with her family. Still, "basketball is my life. ... I practice six days a week and work out on my own three to four times a week. So, I'm usually pretty busy with that and when I'm not, I'm tired."

"I am her mom, so I'm there to support her and do all the other fun things with her," Lonyae says. "I don't have a background in basketball, so we do all of our girly things together."

She adds that the surprise of her daughter going into sports has been a nice one. "It fits now, because this is what she loves. But Taylor, I think anything she wanted to do, she would do it well." ***Heidi Kyser***




BULLDOG
4



HIKES AFTER 5

Punch the clock — but hold off on that Netflix binge session. Energize your weekday evening with one of these quick, fun, after-work hikes

By Rachel Christiansen

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Christopher Smith***

YOU'VE SWOOSHED off your last email, Googled your last goog, and that victorious punch on the clock is minutes away. It's a warm spring afternoon, and the thought of cramming yourself into an overcrowded gym suddenly looms like a dark, Arnold Schwarzenegger-shaped cloud. But here's something to pump you up again. This is the perfect time of year to stay *outdoors* for your daily exercise rituals. One of the best perks of living in Southern Nevada is having the option to hike a mountain *and* dine at a James Beard Award-winning restaurant all in the same afternoon! There are trails all over the valley that are easily accessible and walkable — before the sun sets.

No tedious planning. No heavy packs. No special clothing. Just grab a good pair of shoes and a bottle of water, and you're ready to go.





LOCATION:
4445 N. Jensen St.
DISTANCE: 2.25 miles
TIME: 45 minutes
ELEVATION GAIN:
183 feet*





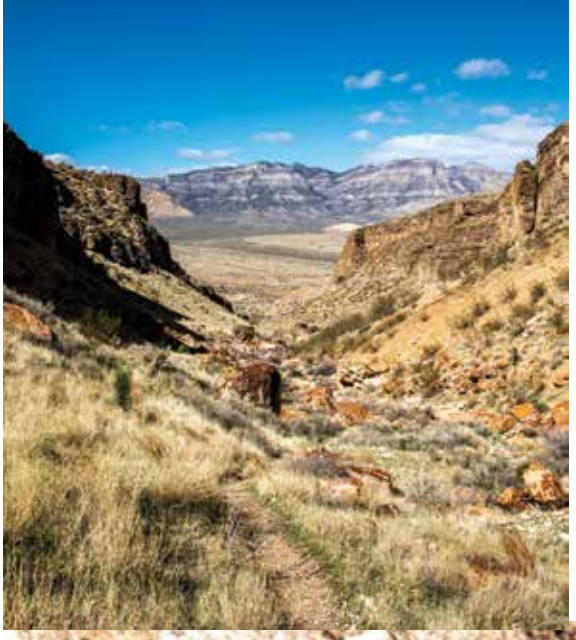


LONE MOUNTAIN

Have a peaceful evening stroll — or post-work cardio blowout — at this northwest gem

AS ITS NAME implies — okay, states outright — this mountain stands by itself among the surrounding residential neighborhoods and several nearby parks. The trail is accessible from multiple entry points, including Lone Mountain Regional Park and the trailhead at the corner of North Vegas Vistas Trail and West Holloway Heights Avenue. It's an uphill hike, but the trail is flat and graded, so it's good for runners or even those with strollers. For a cardio boost, several paths diverge from the main trail and go directly up the mountain to rock overhangs and peaks. This trail is great for beginners or anyone looking for an easy after-work jaunt. And even though it's well-populated, you can still catch some desert wildlife hopping around on the mountain side. Hey, critters have to relax after work, too.

**Elevation figures are based on Rachel's Apple Watch stats. Those stats reflect her actual hikes, not the complete hikes' total elevation gains.*





FOSSIL RIDGE

Ravine Loop

Time-travel to the distant past on this Red Rock-adjacent hike with stunning views









ON THE WAY up this trek, take a closer look at the ground you walk on. Permian Extinction fossils can be found throughout this hike in the rocks and boulders right underneath your feet. (Can you believe this desert was once ... the ocean?!) Once you hit the ridge, look up. Stunning 180-degree views of the west side of Red Rock National Conservation Area surround you. Because the trail is next to the Cowboy Trail Rides, horses and horseback riders are often present, as well as mountain bikers. Trot by the corrals on your way back to the car to say hello to Jackson the Red Rock Canyon Burro.

LOCATION:
On the northwest side of Blue Diamond Hill across from Red Rock NCA
DISTANCE: 2.4 miles
TIME: 1 hour
ELEVATION GAIN:
421 feet

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Christopher Smith***

LOCATION:
Nawghaw Poa Road,
Henderson
DISTANCE: 6.92 miles
TIME: 1-3 hours
ELEVATION GAIN:
584 feet

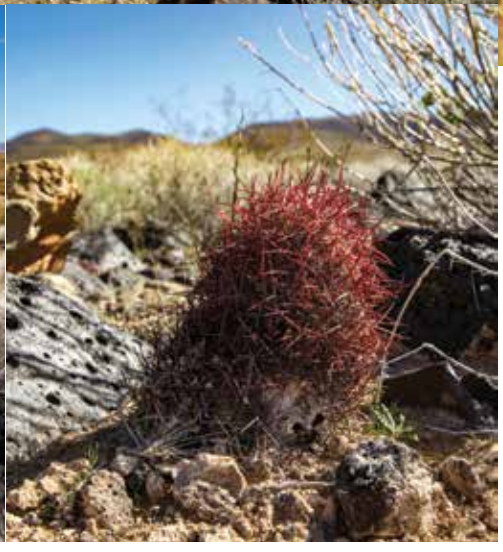














SLOAN CANYON 101

Break off a piece of this big hike for a bite-sized, after-hours power-up

IN ITS ENTIRETY, this hike is probably a bit too long for an after-work trek. But the easy, winding nature of the path lends itself perfectly to making the journey as long or as short as you want. I went to the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area with the noble intention of completing the Petroglyph Canyon hike, but I changed course because I had my four-legged hiking buddy with me. I learned that dogs are not allowed on the Petroglyph Canyon hike because it is bighorn sheep-breeding territory — but dogs *are* allowed on the adjacent 101 trail. I was not disappointed. It took me about an hour and a half to do four miles of the hike — two miles out and two back in.

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Christopher Smith + Scott Lien***



GYPSUM RIDGE

This former mining territory is a little rough around the edges — but the panoramic valley views really pay off







GYPSUM RIDGE IS an area composed of about 1,200 acres of old mining territory on the west side of the valley. With a similar elevation to that of Sunrise Mountain or Lone Mountain, it provides spectacular panoramic views of the Strip's casinos from the top. Aside from lovestruck/mischief-prone teenagers who occasionally frequent the caves in the area, this is a pretty easy walk that has a good cardio warmup at the beginning. Note: There's not a shade tree to be found on this hike, so take advantage of springtime's mild temperatures for this one. Added bonus if there's a good wildflower bloom.







LOCATION:
Trailhead near Warm Springs and Fort Apache Roads
DISTANCE: 4.1 miles
TIME: 1.25 hours
ELEVATION GAIN:
446 feet

CALICO BASIN

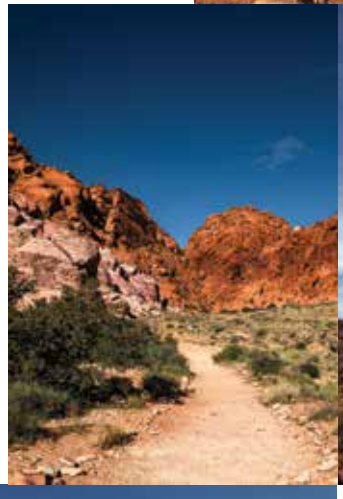
from the Red Spring Picnic Area

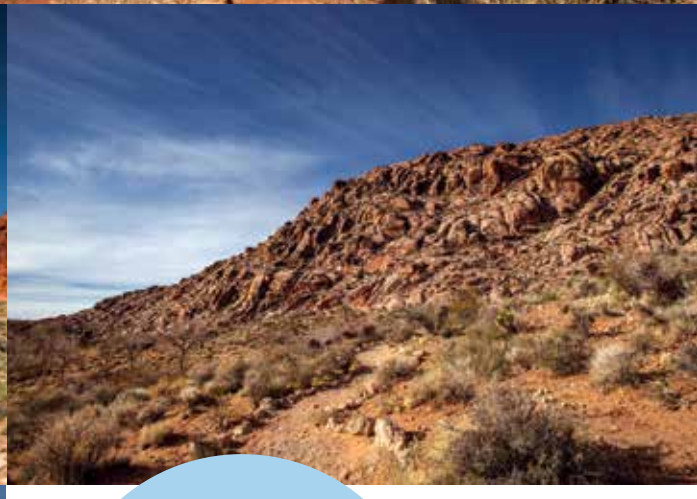
It's like Red Rock — but without all the, you know, Red Rock hassles



THE CALICO BASIN area is an outlier to the Red Rock Canyon Scenic Loop, and it's a good way to enjoy the unique red sandstone without (shhhhh!) paying the entrance fee to the proper loop. From the Red Spring parking lot, take the trailhead to your right. Stay to the right once you reach the base of the mountains, where you can follow the trail over to the Calico Spring area. A sea of pink, white, red, and brown waves crash through this desert oasis hike. This is another hike that's easy to customize — make it as easy or as hard as you like.

I tried my hand at some rock scrambling near the base of the mountain known as Cannibal Crag, which is also a good spot to post up and watch the legit rock climbers — just look straight up.









LOCATION: Turn right on Calico Basin Road before the Red Rock NCA turnoff
DISTANCE: 3-4 miles
TIME: Less than 2 hours
ELEVATION GAIN: 562 feet

PHOTOGRAPHY *Christopher Smith*

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SATURDAYS IN THE PARK

REFLECTIONS ON OUR FAVORITE PARKS FOR PLAYING, PONDERING, EXPLORING, AND UNWINDING

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Christopher Smith + Brent Holmes***

REFUGE AMID CHANGE

WHITNEY MESA NATURE PRESERVE



My love for the outdoors began when I moved to Las Vegas 30 years ago — at Red Rock, at Valley of Fire, and, closer to home, at Whitney Mesa. My friends and I, in our early teens, would amble across Sunset Road to play tag, hide-and-seek, and to explore. Whitney Mesa was wild back then.

Much has changed over the decades. We watched from atop the mesa as our playground was graded to make way for houses that would become Whitney Ranch.

Luckily, all was not lost. The paths we ran 30 years ago have become miles of family-friendly hiking trails. The wide-open views we had from Whitney Mesa's bluffs now overlook a thriving Henderson. Our former playground now features multiple actual playgrounds. And I now own a home in Whitney Ranch.

Today, as I walk my dog along Whitney Mesa, I marvel over what it's become. There is now an aquatic center and a recreation center. There are tennis, bocce, and pickleball courts, large grass fields, an archery range, baseball diamonds, and picnic areas. The latest addition: a full-fledged BMX park!

But it's still the natural side of Whitney Mesa that captures my heart. As I hike its trails, I stop to smell the creosote, to watch the brittlebush bloom with vibrant yellow flowers, to see the globemallow push out bright orange blossoms.

My favorite spot is called Armijo's Camp, tucked into the cliffs behind the aquatic center. It's quiet there. Peaceful. I can no longer slide down the hills of Whitney Mesa on an old cardboard box like I did as a teenager, but it's still a place of refuge, a place where I can connect with the desert I fell in love with so long ago. It's home. ***Alan Gegax***

1990 Patrick Lane, Henderson





ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD
CRAIG RANCH REGIONAL PARK

January, last year: I'm stretched out on one of the large concrete blocks that serve as outdoor furniture, taking a selfie. It's something I rarely do, and when I do do it, it's like this — not a shot of my face, but of my neck-down form, bundled in cycling gear, with my road bike in the background. I don't want the picture to be of me, but of the moment I'm having.

In this case, it's a moment I've experienced precious few times in my 51 years: total female freedom. I remember feeling it when, as a teenager, I would borrow my older sister's 10-speed to ride to the rich neighborhood and home again in the pre-dawn hours before school — my interpretation of the Jane Fonda fitness craze. It got buried over the years but resonated again in my late 30s, when I bought my first road bike and took it and my spaniel Aja on a trip to my native New Mexico. In Albuquerque, I left Aja at the hotel and set out to ride the Paseo del Bosque along the Rio Grande. I got a flat, which I fixed myself, politely turning down the help offered by passing male riders. I was recently divorced then, starting a new life, and I hadn't realized how much I needed the self-sufficiency, speed, and unmitigated joy of being on a bike.

That chord was being struck again during my North Las Vegas ride last January, when I paused to soak it in at Craig Ranch park. My current husband was working. My girlfriends declined to come along, wary of the drive to my house Downtown and the sketchier parts of the bike trail to get to the payoff. I don't mind weaving through the homeless encampments and broken glass scattered along the Las Vegas Wash before the nicer parts of trail above Washington Avenue. When you get to a street crossing in North Las Vegas, car drivers always stop for you. There are more everyday bikers here, with less resentment, it seems, for people on two wheels.

And then, midway through the ride, there's the park, a yawning invitation to rest. I like to tool around the web of sidewalks watching the CrossFit club members cheer each other on, checking out the status of plots in the community garden, banging on the chime poles around the huge steel gazebo. When I'm by myself, I can take all the time I want. I'm fast enough to make up the time. And besides, there's no school today, and this spot in the sun is nice. ***Heidi Kyser***

628 W. Craig Road, North Las Vegas

GROOVING IN THE NOW
MOUNTAIN CREST PARK

The offspring are really gunning it this morning. Their throws curve through the dewy air, through the many trees. Beautiful. Aerodynamic. *Far*. Well, of course; they're young men, reasonably fit. And they've studied this sport we're playing, disc golf. The angles, the plastics, the "hyzer" and "anhyzer," whatever those are — they get it. But me? My game, never particularly on, is spectacularly off today; these poor trees flinch when I draw back to throw. Meanwhile, my aching back, knees, and shoulders comprise a bleak summary of age-related fubars. Here is where the rising arc of my sons' physical prowess really diverges from the scarily falling arc of their father's. But, hey, that's life, and what're you gonna do, except keep playing.

Here: Mountain Crest Park, near Centennial Hills. Thirty-eight green acres that snuggle a moderately challenging, 5,205-foot disc-golf course among the sidewalks, play areas, and community center. There's a nice rhythm to the course layout, shorter holes poised against longer ones, changes in elevation, trees in the way to keep it interesting.

It's not quite 9 a.m. on a Sunday. You could sprinkle a thesaurus' worth of synonyms for "pleasant" onto the scene: An old lady walks her dog; two men stroll

in muted conversation; a family loiters by the kiddie equipment. #classicparkstuff

Also, it's 31 miles from where I live. I can disc-golf closer to home. So why am I here?

Because this is where my kids play. So it's where I play. Therefore, it's my favorite park. Look, generally speaking, a park is a park; I like 'em all. Some are bigger, have spiffier amenities. Some activate their neighborhoods in vital ways. But, mostly, they're not all that dissimilar. With its tree-filtered sunlight and blanket of suburban hush, Mountain Crest offers the same respite vibe as the parks near my house. That's good; it reinforces the democratic ideal of parks as a communal resource — *everyone* should feel welcome in *all* of them. So what distinguishes each is us, the users, what we do there. In my case, I have great memories of my kids falling off the slides and swings at other parks. But Mountain Crest is where they play now. And while I'm not as old as my knees make me feel, I am increasingly mindful of Jonathan Swift's truism that "observation is an old man's memory" — meaning, I think, that it's time to stop bookmarking experiences for later appreciation and, in the time I have left, groove on what's in front of me. Like my sons' excellent tee shots on Hole 5 at our current favorite park. My turn. Stand back, boys! Look out, trees! I'm 20 over par, so the old man's gonna *crank* this one.

Scott Dickensheets

4701 N. Durango Drive





This was simply called Jaycee Park until 2012, when it was enrobed in its current mouthful of memorial rebranding. It makes sense, I guess: the late Judge Leavitt lived in the area and coached youth sports here. But the propulsive brio of "Jaycee" (it's a youth service organization) feels like a better fit, especially when you visit this lively Downtown park on the weekend. Because Jaycee Park is in the thick of the city, it's not so much a proposed *escape* from the urban as it is a particular extension of the urban. Jaycee is an extract of Downtown's demographics, cultures, preoccupations — and, yes, problems — incidentally concentrated in a leisure space. Roll call from a recent Saturday: a soccer match bebopping on the east field (it must be a league game, because there are silky blue and yellow-green uniforms involved that look super-legit); in the small skatepark tucked in the northeast corner, skaters carve the juicy concrete pocket and grind the benches and blocks; in the dog run, pooches of every size swarm, break, and scatter in a pheromonal canine rave; and middle-aged joggers weeble by on the



WALKING MEDITATION

FLOYD LAMB PARK AT TULE SPRINGS

When Floyd Lamb Park was transferred from state to city jurisdiction in 2007, there were community fears that the 2,000-acre oasis would somehow stumble on the threshold and become prey to developers colonizing Centennial Hills during those heady days of the runaway housing bubble. You have to wonder whether the recession saved the park.

The northwest's suburban homes and ranch estates hug the Tule Springs area on three sides, but, fortunately, the park proper is buffered by big, raw desert. And that's the key virtue of Floyd Lamb Park at Tule Springs: While the city has curled around it with subdivisions and strip malls, Floyd Lamb Park still feels like a true escape. You can settle in pondside with your cooler, cast your rod amid the swaying reeds, and truly forget you're in Las Vegas.

What I love in particular about Tule Springs is how its landscape of gentle hills creates an earthen scrollwork where countless dips and groves create fertile spaces for solitude and reflection — while still within eyeshot of a family picnic here or child's birthday party there; the literal lay of the land siphons the decibels off everything and serves up a softer version of life's clamor. Even the placidly indifferent geese peppering the park's slopes seem to be feeling it; no hater psycho geese up in here. And when you get the urge to stroll, striding up an incline never fails to reward you with a soft breeze. To me, it's that kind of park, a park for rumination and meditative strolling.

Adding a slightly funereal touch are the numerous memorial plaques, benches, and plinths, some recognizing lives cut short in their teens and twenties. I spent a good amount of a Saturday midmorning pondering them in that state of cordial, all-purpose solemnity usually inspired by cemeteries. It adds an elegiac grace note that is not unwelcome. ***Andrew Kiraly***

9200 Tule Springs Road

DOWNTOWN'S EVERYTHING BAGEL

JUSTICE MYRON E. LEAVITT & JAYCEE COMMUNITY PARK



perimeter path that loops the entire spread.

Ain't gonna lie, though, Jaycee Community Park can be a hive of small, stinging exasperations if you have an overdeveloped sense of civic politesse. For instance, you might get nearly creamed by the two infuriating tots on a buzzing minibike; there's a swaggering extra from *The Wire* spraying tepid R&B all over our park vibes with his boom box; and in some of the covered picnic areas, you see the blurring of the line between an ambitious picnic and the beginnings of a homeless encampment. At times, your inner mom cop wants to call a manager. Now, I suppose you could retreat to your Netflix and SodaStream castle and bahrump about the devolution of public space and the tragedy of the commons, etc. Or you can consider these minor-key aggravations of public space as an expression of its most fluid and promising attribute: It's the way we use particular parks, not their rule sets and ordained functions, that ultimately determine their role and personality. In other words, if you don't like the way it's used, use it more your way. What are you waiting for? A little bit of everyone is using Jaycee Park, and you should, too. ***Andrew Kiraly***

2100 E. St. Louis Ave.







WINDMILL LIBRARY

It's the new hang, where connected kids find a third place of their own

I'm sitting in a refreshingly well-populated auditorium as the Dr. Shirley Linzy Young Artists Orchestra of Las Vegas performs the music of Beethoven, and, for about 10 measures, it provides a distraction-free moment. However, the serenity of ol' Ludwig Van is rudely thwarted by someone two rows up who is suddenly compelled to record the performance, his screen brightness set to cornea fry. It's not until some 20 minutes later that a gentleman one row up delivers an exasperated-mom sigh and moves to the end of the row, which shames the amateur videographer into putting his phone down. I could have performed my own ode to joy.

Alas, it's a rare victory for the anti-gadget set. The most striking thing about Windmill Library — aside from its beckoning, modernist, LEED-certified building design, the lone aesthetic triumph in the architectural wasteland that is the Southwest valley — is its omnipresent tension with technology, a digital/analog balancing act clearly tipped by free Wi-Fi, as I discover during an after-school visit. At first glance, the sight of hardware cohabitating with so many physical books suggests a postmillennial accord. Belying that potential harmony is access — virtual access, that is — and its enabler, the library system itself. To wit: Windmill boasts a free phone-charging station, lest you can't wrest your slot-reeling eyeballs away from YouTube, which, as one circuit around the library reveals, is the platform du jour of any visible phone screen and more than a few public-use computers. Online video games also populate the desktop lab monitors, and you have to wonder why these kids and their parents even bother slogging through rush-hour gridlock on Rainbow Boulevard to come here.

I know why I've always headed to the library: to get things done. But for so many others, it's devolved into a different place to do the usual. One teen couple has a spread of takeout and Cheetos that would shame a stoner. Another duo cuddles on a cushioned one-seater, free from their parents' gaze and unconcerned with everyone else's. Unnerved, I stash my own device to remain on task — and to take full advantage of this space. I still want the library — while hardly the quiet sanctuary on which its cultural reputation was established — to be a place to ply and nourish the brain. Forsaking that in lieu of viral skater wipeouts and rounds of *Fortnight* seems like wasting this precious resource.

As it turns out, in a town with very little real estate for them, the young lounge lizards of the Windmill branch merely need a location — a third place that doesn't constantly tempt them to spend money (see: Starbucks, Barnes & Noble, Town Square). And libraries need people. They very nearly lost them to the internet, the de facto Central Library of the planet. But in that fight for survival, libraries have become an incredibly versatile emporium of otherness: tax workshops and yarn-weaving classes at Windmill, DJ lessons at the Enterprise branch, and full-scale theatrical productions at the Summerlin Library.

This is all to say that local libraries such as Windmill reasserted their importance by becoming everything to everyone. And ultimately, everyone wins — not least, the institution itself. For decades, the library was the least cool place in town. Now, it's a hang. ***Mike Prevatt***

PHOTOGRAPHY ***Brent Holmes***

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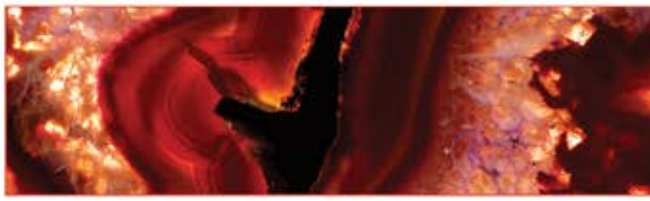

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Sam Kaufman
Chief Executive Officer
Henderson Hospital

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ANCHORING HEALTHCARE DELIVERY IN HENDERSON

As a long-time resident of Henderson, I'm proud of the care and services now available in my hometown. Henderson Hospital, located at 1050 W. Galleria Drive, features 170 private patient rooms and medical/surgical services ranging from Emergency care to Cardiology to Maternity as well as GI and Surgical services. Because of the explosive growth in our community, we've added more services so residents can receive the care they deserve, close to home.

In November 201 8, we opened the ER at Green Valley Ranch, a freestanding emergency department located on the southeast corner of St. Rose Parkway and Coronado Center Drive, providing 24-hour emergency services every day of the year. It is staffed with the same medical personnel and equipped with the same diagnostic technology found in Henderson Hospital's emergency department, including an on-site laboratory, CT scanner and imaging equipment.

Meanwhile, at Henderson Hospital, we've increased the number of surgical suites, along with another cardiac catheterization lab for heart procedures. A level three neonatal intensive care unit to enhance our Birthplace services will open this summer, and a 25-bed observation patient care unit will open in late summer, dedicated to patients who need either additional evaluation for a specific medical condition or diagnosis before they are either discharged from or admitted to the hospital.

To accommodate anticipated growth in our community, we are also finalizing the design of a new patient tower that will allow us to further expand our services. This tower will be operational in the 4th quarter of 2021.

Our commitment to outstanding care is reflected in several nationally recognized achievements, including:

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- Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019 "A" Hospital Safety Grade by The Leapfrog
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We are also proud of several accreditations focused on the rapid triage, diagnosis, treatment and outcomes of heart attacks and stroke:

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- Chest Pain Center accredited by Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) by the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care
- 2019 Get with the Guidelines Stroke - Gold Award by The American Heart Association (AHA)
- 2019 Mission: Lifeline® Silver Receiving Quality Achievement Award by the AHA

We want Henderson Hospital to be different from other hospitals in the community. That's why our staff is dedicated to providing the highest level of care and compassion to you and your family, and we appreciate the opportunity to be your hospital of choice.

Sincerely,
Sam Kaufman
CEO/Managing Director

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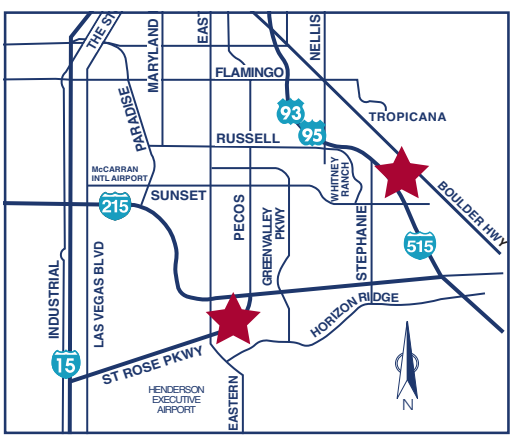
- **Family Sensitive Caring Staff**

You Think ...
your neighborhood



ACUTE CARE HOSPITAL IN HENDERSON"



Henderson Hospital is a Joint Commission-accredited, 170-bed facility that is part of The Valley Health System.

In addition to Henderson Hospital, our facilities include:

- **Henderson Hospital Outpatient Center**
- **Now Open - ER at Green Valley Ranch**
  An Extension of Henderson Hospital
  2581 St. Rose Parkway - Henderson, NV 89074

HENDERSON HOSPITAL

A Member of The **Valley Health** *System℠*

1050 W. Galleria Drive / Henderson, NV 89011
henderson hospital.com / 702-963-7000

Physicians are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Henderson Hospital. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the non-discrimination notice, visit our website. 200951-0649 2/20





HENDERSON PAVIILION

EXPLORE A WORLD OF GREAT ADVENTURES, SHOPPING, DINING, PARKS, SCHOOLS & MORE!

An oasis for outdoor enthusiasts, art lovers, foodies, and families looking for "a place to call home," Henderson offers small town values with big city amenities. With a flourishing economy, upscale master-planned communities, abundant green spaces, top notch restaurants and casino-resorts, and easy access to several of the country's national and man-made treasures, Henderson is one of Southern Nevada's most popular cities. Which is why it's no surprise the city has been ranked one of the best cities for an active lifestyle (WalletHub.com, January 2020), one of the best cities to start a business (WalletHub.com, May 2015), and one of CNN Money's best places to live.

Just 16 miles southeast of the Strip, Nevada's second-largest city has allocated 1,300 acres to parks and recreation–with 69 neighborhood and community parks (including five school parks), lighted sports fields, 11 aquatic facilities, and seven recreational centers. The city has prioritized its outdoor spaces, and it shows. Even dog lovers will be happy to have their own splash pad at the Bark Park at Heritage Park, for dogs only. Nearly 70 percent of residents live within a half mile of a park or recreational spot. In fact, Henderson has been nationally recognized for its parks and recreation system, receiving the National Gold Medal for Excellence in Parks and Recreation Administration in both 1999 and 2014.

The city boasts three hospitals and a four-year state college along with low crime, a low cost of living, and appealing weather.

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PAVILION, MCCULLOUGH HILLS: CITY OF HENDERSON; BIRD PRESERVE: HENDERSON BIRD VIEWING PRESERVE

Henderson is home to a broad range of quality educational options, ranging from pre-school, elementary schools, and high schools – including Henderson International School (1165 Sandy Ridge Ave.), Elise L. Wolff Elementary School (1001 Seven Hills Drive), and Foothills Montessori School (1401 Amador Lane) – as well as several colleges and universities. Nevada State College (1125 Nevada State Drive), a baccalaureate college, is attended by a majority of first-generation, non-traditional college students. Roseman University of Health Sciences (11 Sunset Way) is a private university which confers degrees in nursing, pharmacy, and business. The College of Southern Nevada also maintains a branch campus in Henderson, along with California's National University, Touro University Nevada, and Devry University. Also operating in the city are several for-profit colleges, such as the International Academy of Design & Technology, The Art Institute of Las Vegas, and the Nevada branch of the ITT Technical Institute.

The city has continued to develop its culture and community with a vibrant library system. Paseo Verde Library (280 S Green Valley Pkwy), one of four libraries in the Henderson Library complex, features a staffed genealogy room and a coffee shop.

Amenities like these ensure that Henderson will be a highly desirable destination for visitors and residents alike for years to come.



MCCULLOUGH HILLS TRAIL



HENDERSON BIRD VIEWING PRESERVE

Top 10 Ways to Stay Active in Henderson

››› ***The River Mountains Loop Trail (rivermountainstrail.org)*** is a 35-mile route that cuts a 10-foot-wide swath around the River Mountains, connecting Boulder City, Henderson, and the desert in between. Popular with bicyclists, runners, and hikers, much of the paved trail goes through an unspoiled desert setting, with opportunities to see bighorn sheep and other wildlife in their natural habitat. A third of the trail passes through Lake Mead National Recreation Area, and an equestrian trail run parallels a 15-mile stretch of the route. Motorized vehicles are prohibited, and only a few spots require crossing roads.

››› Sitting on 140 acres near Sunset Road and Boulder Highway is the ***Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve (350 E Galleria Drive).*** With nine ponds as well as marshes and creeks, the preserve hosts thousands of migratory waterfowl and a variety of desert birds. The dirt paths crisscrossing the preserve are soft and level, but expect to do a lot of walking and wear sturdy, comfortable shoes. No binoculars? No problem. The visitor center has a few available to loan.

››› ***McCullough Hills Trail*** is an 8.5-mile hiking path in the Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area. The trail features gradual climbs, sweeping views and desert vegetation. Look for creosote bush, white bursage, littleleaf ratany, bunchgrass and the occasional silver cholla and beavertail cactus. To accommodate hikers, bikers and horseback riders, there are places where three paths run parallel, and paths are marked to indicate which trail is for which group.

››› Whether you're a newbie or a seasoned climber, you'll find something to suit your climbing needs at ***Origin Climbing and Fitness (7585 Commercial Way)***. With 23,000 square feet of space, there's plenty of room to spread out while getting trained in rope climbing, bouldering and yoga. Origin's

Generations of *Humankindness*

Compassionate care is the essence of who we are and what we do.

Our community's only not-for-profit, faith-based healthcare system, Dignity Health-St. Rose Dominican's healing mission in Henderson began in 1947 when seven Adrian Dominican Sisters arrived to provide health care for a small desert community. Today, more than 70 years later we are still guided by the same values.

One of the original tenants on Water Street, St. Rose de Lima hospital remains a vital part of the Henderson community. Over the course of seven decades, we've established a health care foundation that spans four generations of Nevadans.

Everyone has a St. Rose story.

And like the community of southern Nevada, our mission has grown.

Not far from Water Street, beneath a bell tower crowned with a titanium cross, our flagship St. Rose Siena Campus prepares to celebrate its 20th anniversary this July.

Now part of Dignity Health, our services range from Primary Care Physicians to, Neighborhood Hospitals, Diagnostic Imaging, Wellness Centers offering free fitness and health education, and state-of-the-art Surgical Suites with robotic surgical capabilities.

Our most recent advancement, Dignity Health Rehabilitation Hospital, opened its doors in 2019 to provide expert care for the most severe brain and spinal injury patients.

Through it all, we are eager to grow our ability to care for our neighbors, but grateful that our commitment to our compassionate healing mission remains unchanged.

Hello Humankindness.

Dignity Health®
St. Rose Dominican


















Proudly Serving Henderson Since 1947










BLAZIN' PADDLES ON THE COLORADO RIVER

5-week Climbing Academy teaches young climbers, ages six and up, foundational skills and techniques. Courses like Belay Basics and Lead Climbing Basics help adult climbers master ascents and descents.

»» Kayak through the beauty of the Black Canyon on the Colorado River with a guided tour from ***Blazin' Paddles (911 American Pacific Drive, #120)***. Tours include professionally guided half-day or full-day options, both of which include state-of-the-art paddling equipment. With two departure times offered, the half-day tour takes you four miles roundtrip with a chance to see Bighorn Sheep. Or, spend a whole day on the river and paddle by Hoover Dam while enjoying cliff views and a variety of wildlife up close and personal.

»» If a private paddle on the Colorado River is what you're angling for, stop by ***River Dogz (34 Via Vasari, Unit 102)***. Equipment options include kayaks, paddle boards and hydro bikes, and all levels are welcome. Choose from tours of Lake Mead, Hoover Dam Hot Springs, Willow Beach, Valley of Fire and more. Strengthen that core and make all your paddling experiences better with SUP Paddle Fit training on Willow Beach.

» Tread the same stones our ancient ancestors did by viewing the petroglyphs in ***Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area (Nawghaw Poa Road).*** Sloan Canyon National Conservation Area can be explored by mountain bike, horseback, or by hiking. With more than 300 rock art panels, the Sloan Canyon Petroglyph Site is one of the most significant, scenic, and important cultural resources in southern Nevada. There are nearly 1,700 designs representing native cultures dating from Archaic to historic era. Just remember to look but not touch because making rubbings can damage the petroglyphs.

»» Situated away from the hustle and bustle of busy Stephanie Street, the 100-acre ***Cornerstone Park (600 Wigwam Pkwy.)*** has large pavilions, lighted basketball and volleyball courts, and covered picnic areas. A corporate plaza and warming kitchen make it ideal for teambuilding events. The 31-acre lake is not for swimming but makes for a pretty view as you walk or jog.

»» Spend the day at ***Lake Las Vegas.*** Start your adventure at Le Café Du Lac (40 Costa



CORNERSTONE PARK



DOWNTOWN HENDERSON

Di Lago) with coffee and a pastry baked fresh every morning by their French chef. Then wander through the storybook-like village before heading out on the lake for some fishing. For lunch, enjoy South-of-the-Border cuisine at Sonrisa Grill (30 Via Brianza). Browse the village's unique boutiques before winding down with a leisurely dinner of Italian fare at family-owned Luna Rossa Ristorante (10 Via Bel Canto).

» The first private Jack Nicklaus Signature Course in Nevada, ***Southshore Golf Club (100 Strada Di Circolo***) is an award-winning, members-only course. Inspired by the unique topography of Lake Las Vegas, the 6,925-yard course's layout is dramatic, with elevations stretching from 1,410 to 1,750 feet. Generous fairways, up to five tee boxes per hole, strategic bunkering and forced carries over canyons and water create a one-of-a-kind golfing experience.

Top 10 Unique Pursuits in Henderson

» History and entertainment come together in the ***Water Street District (waterstreetdistrict.com).*** Unique restaurants, classic casinos and exclusive boutiques comprise the historic heart of Henderson, all within a few walkable blocks. A self-guided walking tour takes visitors through the development of Henderson and reveals fun facts, such as how Water Street was named, the major impact of Basic Magnesium Inc., and how a place that was started as a temporary home for company workers grew into Nevada's second largest city.

» Sample the sweet life at ***Ethel M Chocolate Factory and Botanical Cactus Garden (2 Cactus Garden Drive)***. On the tour of this factory named for the mother of famous chocolatier Forrest Mars Sr., you can watch chocolate being made according to Ethel's original, unchanged recipe. Walk off any calories from the tasty treats by strolling through the three-acre botanical garden. With over 300 types of cactus, this is a popular holiday spot when it's transformed into a winter wonderland of lights, festive decorations, Santa visits and carolers.

» An assortment of bounce houses, basketball hoops, slides and video games make ***Bouncy World (225 N. Stephanie Street)*** an indoor bounce playland for kids. A sitting area for adults includes comfy furniture and television. Socks are required in this "shoe free" zone, but they're available for purchase if you forget to bring a pair. Food and drink are available on site.

» ***Pinot's Palette (The District at Green Valley Ranch, 2260 Village Walk Drive #104)*** is a paint-and-sip studio that hosts upscale public and private painting events. At the studio bar, patrons can choose from wine, beer, soda, and water. Perfect for date nights, birthdays, and girls' nights out, each class can accommodate up to 72 guests. With two artists instructing



BOTANICAL CACTUS GARDEN AT ETHEL M CHOCOLATE FACTORY

RIVER: BLAZIN' PADDLES; CORNERSTONE: BRENT HOLMES; WATER STREET: SCOTT LIEN; BOTANICAL GARDEN: ETHEL M CHOCOLATE FACTORY

Henderson, we are here for you, just as we've been for 48 years—part of the community, building the care you need, when and where you need it.

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HENDERSON LOCATIONS

S. Boulder Hwy. Healthcare Center
at Walgreens
101 E. Lake Mead Pkwy., Suite 110
Henderson, NV 89051
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Lake Mead Healthcare Center
270 W. Lake Mead Pkwy.
Henderson, NV 89015
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Siena Heights Healthcare Center
2845 Siena Heights Dr.
Henderson, NV 89052
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Lake Mead Convenient Care
310 W. Lake Mead Pkwy.
Henderson, NV 89015
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Valle Verde Convenient Care
75 S. Valle Verde Dr.
Henderson, NV 89012
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Horizon Ridge Healthcare Center
4895 N. Horizon Ridge Dr.
Henderson, NV 89012
M – F • 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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Part of OptumCare®



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Henderson Locations

OptumCare Cancer Care and Breast Care at Seven Hills
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Henderson, NV 89052
702-724-8787
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

OptumCare Lung and Allergy Care
at Horizon Ridge
2610 W. Horizon Ridge Pkwy.
Henderson, NV 89052
702-724-8844
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

OptumCare Primary Care
at Pecos
56 N. Pecos Rd.
Henderson, NV 89074
702-724-8777
M – F • 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Urology Specialists of Nevada, part of OptumCare
Green Valley Campus
58 N. Pecos Rd.
Henderson, NV 89074
702-877-0814

Office hours vary slightly based on the day. Please call to verify.

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DOWNTOWN HENDERSON

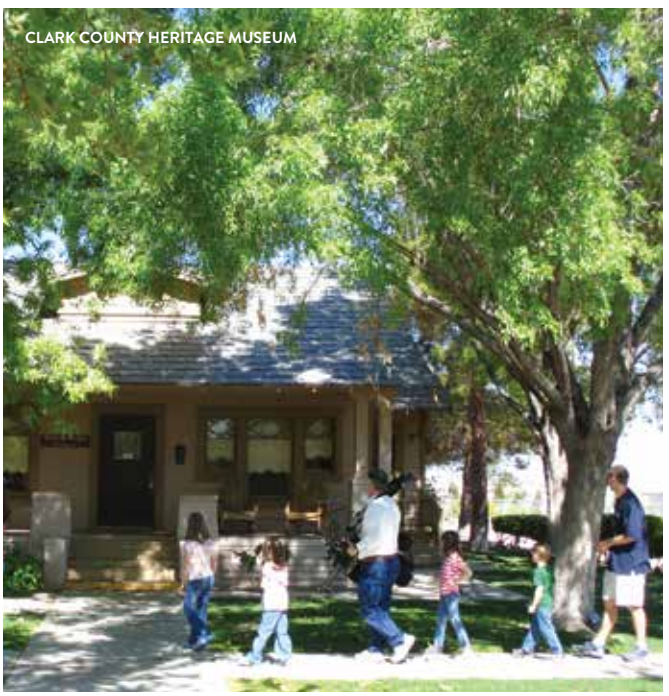

LION HABITAT RANCH

and plenty of elbow room, every student leaves with a piece they're proud to hang on the wall.

It's not often you can see lions outside of a show on the Strip, but at the ***Lion Habitat Ranch (382 Bruner Ave.),*** the great cats roam a 6-acre ranch. With glass enclosures and safety barriers, the security of the patrons and animals is a priority—while still allowing visitors an opportunity to interact with the felines, ostriches, and emus. There's even a painting giraffe named Ozzie, who holds a paintbrush in his mouth to add color to canvas. A friendly, knowledgeable staff combined with a reasonable admittance fee means this is an outing the whole family will love.

If you've ever dreamed of being a fighter pilot, you'll want to book some time at ***Sky Combat Ace (1420 Jet Stream Dr, Street 100)***. This is no simulation. In this aerial combat experience, you'll be flying the plane under the supervision of a highly trained, actual Air Force fighter pilot. After you land, stop into the hangar for refreshments, game and aviation memorabilia.

Travel 100 years back in time on Heritage Street at the ***Clark County Heritage Museum (1830 S Boulder Highway)***. Five fully furnished buildings are frozen in time, ready to be explored. Dating from the early 1900s and to the 1950s, there are houses, a wedding chapel and a printing shop. Follow the Mojave Desert Trail to a genuine ghost town. Then back inside for a host of other historical exhibits and Vegas trivia.


CLARK COUNTY HERITAGE MUSEUM

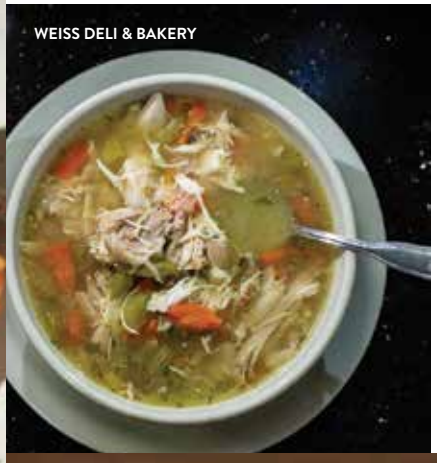
As the longest running casino in Nevada, the ***Railroad Pass Casino (2800 S. Boulder Highway)*** has been welcoming travelers and gamblers for decades. After an afternoon of gaming, refuel at the Box Car Buffet. The menu changes daily and celebrates culinary traditions from around the world, including China, Mexico, and Italy.

Located in historic downtown Henderson, ***Gold Mine Tavern (23 S Water Street)*** has been serving locals and tourists for over 45 years, making it the oldest bar in the city. Aside from the cold beer and cocktails, the 80-foot wood bar is big draw, along with the old pictures on the wall that document the bar's history. In a nod to the employees that keep the city running, Gold Mine hosts a daily happy hour every day from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Golfing high above the Las Vegas Valley is part of the appeal of Anthem Country Club (1 Club Side Drive). Designed by Hale Irwin and Keith Foster, this championship golf course includes waterfalls, six lakes, and panoramic mountain views. In addition to the 18-hole course, membership offers access to six tennis courts, basketball court, sand volleyball court, fitness center, fitness classes, resort-style swimming pool, Mixed Grill, Desert Sky Dining Room, Fountain's Café, Clubhouse and all events and activities.

WATER STREET: SCOTT LIEN; CLARK COUNTY HERITAGE MUSEUM: COURTESY; LION HABITAT COURTESY;KITCHEN TABLE, WEISS, STEAMIE WEENIE: BRENT HOLMES


KITCHEN TABLE


WEISS DELI & BAKERY


THE STEAMIE WEENIE

Top 10 Places to Eat & Drink in Henderson

Serving internationally inspired breakfast and lunches, ***Kitchen Table (1716 W Horizon Ridge Pkwy, Suite 100)*** is the brainchild of Former Circo and Le Cirque opening chef Antonio Nunez and Javier Chavez of Whist Stove. The eatery boasts an open kitchen and seating for nearly 100 guests. Try the gluten-free sweet bread, served with house-made jam or bacon & egg shooters with house mayo, pickled jalapenos, and crispy bacon.

Fighting a cold? A visit to kosher ***Weiss Deli & Bakery (2744 N Green Valley Pkwy)*** for some chicken noodle soup is a must. When you're feeling better, sample the deli's baked goods. Favorites include apple fritters and challah bread.

The humble hot dog is elevated to a gastronomic art form at ***The Steamie Weenie (1500 N Green Valley Pkwy #130)***. Here, each bun is considered a canvas, as illustrated by creations like The Coney, a premium Vienna Beef frankfurter with their special hot dog chili, diced onions and yellow mustard; the State Fair Corndog, a quarter-pound turkey frank hand-dipped in the same batter that's used at the Iowa State Fair; and the PBB & JJ, a bacon-wrapped Nathan's frankfurter with creamy peanut butter and jalapeno jelly. Everything here rings in under $7.

After refining his culinary skills as Executive Chef at Bally's, Todd Clore opened ***Todd's Unique Dining (4350 E Sunset Rd, Suite 102)*** with his wife Terri, offering an innovative menu of contemporary cuisine. You'll often find Todd waiting tables in this intimate venue, perhaps serving his signature "on fire" grilled skirt steak, which is so spicy it makes your eyes water. Reservations are recommended.



OPENING SUMMER OF 2020

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RAIDERS


MOTHERSHIP COFFEE

You don't normally think of apple pie as refreshing, but when it's Grandma's Apple Pie Moonshine over ice, it cools better than a dip in the pool. Pick some up at Las Vegas Distillery (7330 Eastgate Rd, Unit 100), the first artisan spirit manufacturer in the state. While you're there, sample the whiskey, vodka, rum and gin at a tasting or take a tour of the distillery.

Mixing Old Vegas charm with a modern vibe, ***Elixir (2920 N Green Valley Pkwy #611***) features interesting house-made cocktails and hand-crafted food made from the freshest ingredients. Start your evening off with a Melonbomber, made with Midori, New Amsterdam, Tropical Red Bull and orange juice before digging into The Bloody "Mary-Nated" Steak*, a arinated flat iron with olive tapenade, bacon, blue cheese, garlic herb mashed potatoes, sautéed greens, and Bloody Mary cream sauce, which will set you back only $15.95.


COO COO'S GOURMET COFFEE CAFÉ

Cozy ***Coo Coo's Gourmet Coffee Café (19 Pacific Ave)*** is a locals' favorite. Breakfast is served all day. Drinks run the gamut from buzzy (the Jumping Jentri, an energy-packed concoction with green tea, gingko and Red Bull) to decadent (a Brownie Frappe with actual chunks of brownie). The California, made with fresh avocado, turkey, smoked bacon, Swiss cheese, and sprouts, can be served on a French roll or in a wrap and receives high marks from reviewers.

Nitro coffee is the signature beverage at ***Mothership Coffee (Green Valley Plaza, 2708 N Green Valley Pkwy)***. It comes in two variations. Infused with nitrogen, this single origin, cold-brewed comes on tap. It's described as smooth, fluffy and incredibly caffeinated. The hopped nitro brew, made with hops but is non-alcoholic. Pair your caffeine with a vegan Twinkie made with coconut whipped cream and dark chocolate.

Born and Raised Sports Bar and Tavern (10050 S Eastern Ave) is all about taking the sports bar experience up a level. This the second BAR location for owner and native Las Vegan Scott Godino Jr., and it retains the full menu and popular happy hour offerings of the original. More importantly, it continues its emphasis on providing an exceptional customer experience.

As the story goes, Granny put Lucille to work in her lunch shack as soon as Lucille was tall enough to clear tables, sharing her secret recipes with her granddaughter in the process. Now ***Lucille's Smokehouse BBQ*** has locations in California, Arizona and Nevada and is known for its special spice rubs and savory wet 'mops' and sauces. The Henderson location ***(2245 Village Walk Dr)*** combines the fall-off-the-bone goodness of Granny's original barbeque with the upscale ambiance of the District at Green Valley Ranch.

MOTHERSHIP, COO COO'S; BRENT HOLMES