



Dramatic mountain views near Phoenix? This hike has them

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The Goldfield Mountains and Four Peaks seen from Pass Mountain Trail near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Approaching the east flanks of Pass Mountain on the Pass Mountain Trail near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



An edgy section of the Pass Mountain Trail near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Mountain and valley vistas abound on the Pass Mountain Trail near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



The Pass Mountain Trail, which starts in **Usery Mountain Regional Park** and quickly enters Tonto National Forest, is a close-to-town hike with wilderness vistas.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Tangles of Sonoran Desert vegetation along the Pass Mountain Trail near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Pass Mountain viewed from its namesake trail in Usery Mountain Regional Park in Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Lichens color the cliffs and rocks of Pass Mountain in Tonto National Forest near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



A slickrock passage leads to a scenic saddle on Pass Mountain in Tonto National Forest near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Approaching the U-shaped saddle on Pass Mountain in Tonto National Forest near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Mesquite and paloverde trees shade the lower part of the Pass Mountain Trail.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Another view of the approach to the Pass Mountain saddle in Tonto National Forest near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Stunning views from the Pass Mountain saddle in Tonto National Forest near Mesa.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



A saguaro-cluttered valley precedes a steep climb up the Pass Mountain Trail that goes from Usery Mountain Regional Park into Tonto National Forest.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



Superstition Mountain views are a highlight of hiking the Pass Mountain Trail that starts in Usery Mountain Regional Park in Mesa and quickly enters Tonto National Forest.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



The Pass Mountain Trail heads north from the saddle.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC



View of the Pass Mountain saddle on the right ridgeline.
MARE CZINAR/SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC

We are in this for Tyler,' says wounded Phoenix officer's commander

JESSICA GOODMAN, WHITNEY CLARK

POSTED DEC 20, 2021

PHOENIX (3TV/CBS 5) -- A Phoenix police officer honored Officer Tyler Moldovan, who was shot eight times last week, with a 5K run in full uniform.

On Tuesday morning, Commander Brian Issitt spoke about Officer Conroy's gesture over the weekend, sharing a text message she had sent him. "I am honored to be part of this family. Tyler is an amazing person and



fantastic cop. He's a fighter. I wanted my run to give him strength," Issitt, who is Moldovan's commander, read.

Officer Tyler Moldovan was shot in the line of duty on Tuesday, Dec. 14.

It has been a week since Moldovan was shot, but Issitt says it feels like a year. It's a tough time for everyone. He said he has had a chance to meet with Moldovan's wife, Chelsea, and family. "I keep reminding my officers that we are in this together. We are in this for Tyler. We're in this for his family and we need all the prayer and support we can get," he said.

Issitt calls Moldovan the future of the department, saying he could do anything he wanted to do but wanted to be a cop. "His family said they have a family business and said, 'We will double the amount of money. We will pay you to work in our family business,'" Issitt said. "And the only thing Tyler wanted to do was be a Phoenix police officer. And I think that says all you need to know about Tyler."

[Aravaipa Running](#) and the Phoenix Police Department posted photos of Officer Kayla Conroy running at [Cave Creek Regional Park](#) over the weekend.

"When our officers call themselves 'brothers' or 'sisters,' this is what they mean," the [Phoenix PD Facebook](#) post says. "Officer Kayla Conroy ran a 5K this past weekend to honor her 'brother,' Officer Tyler Moldovan as he continues to fight for his life."

Conroy dedicated her run to Moldovan with the approval of Phoenix Police Chief Jeri Williams.

"The love and respect that our officers have for each other runs (sic) deep, and we are proud of Officer Conroy for honoring Officer Moldovan in such a special way," the Phoenix PD Facebook post says. Moldovan, 22, remains in extremely critical condition.

Phoenix police officer remains in critical condition after being shot multiple times

Phoenix police say the officer who was shot multiple times remains in the hospital Wednesday morning. He is still listed in critical condition.

Man dead, 3 injured after boat catches fire at Lake Pleasant

Officials say crews responded to the fire at dock four just after 4 p.m.

Author: 12 News

Published: 6:19 PM MST December 14, 2021

Updated: 6:59 PM MST December 14, 2021



How to submit a tip to Silent Witness
Volume 90%

PEORIA, Ariz. — A man is dead and three other people are injured after a boat caught fire at [Lake Pleasant](#) Tuesday night.

Peoria police and fire crews responded to the fire at dock four just after 4 p.m.

When crews arrived on scene they found the man deceased inside the boat.

Police said three people who tried to put the fire out were transported to the hospital with minor injuries.

The cause of the fire is under investigation, officials said.

The victim is not being identified at this time.

This is a developing story. Stay with 12 News for updates.

One man dead after boat catches fire at Lake Pleasant Tuesday afternoon

By: [abc15.com staff](#)

Posted at 5:37 PM, Dec 14, 2021

Fire officials say one person has died after a boat caught on fire at Lake Pleasant Tuesday.



LAKE PLEASANT, AZ — Fire officials say a man has died after a boat caught on fire at Lake Pleasant Tuesday. The incident involved one boat at the docks at [Lake Pleasant](#).

Three people nearby who helped to put out the flames were transported to local hospitals for minor injuries.

Aerial footage of the scene showed several fire crews surrounding a boat at one of the docks, with obvious signs of fire damage.

Peoria police will be investigating the incident.

This is a developing story. Stay with ABC15 for updates on this story.

One man dead after boat catches fire at Lake Pleasant dock

ARIZONA'S FAMILY DIGITAL NEWS STAFF

POSTED DEC 14, 2021



Crews worked to put out the flames, and found that someone had died. (Source: 3TV/CBS 5)

PEORIA, AZ (3TV/CBS 5) -- Authorities are investigating after a boat caught fire at **Lake Pleasant** Tuesday afternoon and a man died.

According to the Peoria Fire-Medical Department, fire crews responded to dock four a little after 4 p.m. for reports of a boat on fire. Crews worked to put out the flames, and found that a man had died. It's unclear how he died, but Peoria police are now taking over the investigation. The victim's name has not been released.

Peoria police have not released any information regarding the investigation. Additional information was not available.

Person killed in Lake Pleasant boat fire: authorities

By FOX 10 Staff
Published December 14, 2021
FOX 10 Phoenix

Lake Pleasant deadly boat fire under investigation

A person was found dead after a boat caught fire at Lake Pleasant, the fire department said on Dec. 14.

MARICOPA COUNTY, Ariz. - A person died in a boat fire at **Lake Pleasant** on the afternoon of Tuesday, Dec. 14, the Peoria Fire-Medical Department says.

Police will be investigating the incident.

The victim hasn't been identified.

This is a developing story and no further information is available.

This Week In Running's trail and ultra recap for December 20, 2021. By [Justin Mock](#) on December 20, 2021 | [Leave a comment](#)
iRunFar

Oh shoot, it's the shortest column of the year. There were only a handful of trail races and ultramarathons around the country that we picked up on. With the Christmas holiday next weekend precluding most racing, this will be the last "This Week In Running" column of the year. We'll see you right here on Mondays in 2022!

Races and Runs

Ancient Oaks 100 Mile – Titusville, Florida

Josh Cline and Amy Guevara were victorious at this 100-mile event on the 29-lap Florida course in 19:42 and 25:10, respectively. Race participant and longtime ultrarunner Earl Blewett went missing during the race on Saturday night, some 14 hours into the event, but was found safe on Monday morning. Read more in our [in-depth story](#). [Full results](#).

Paramount Ranch Trail Runs 50k – Calabasas, California

An old movie ranch has given way to trails and the Paramount Ranch Trail 50k. Nick Allen and Stacia Watson won the late-year contest in 3:51 and 4:59. [Full results](#).

Woodside Ramble Winter 50k – Woodside, California

Inside Trail's winter edition of the Woodside Ramble raced around Huddart County Park, for a number of different race distances. Logan Williams was way out front, 45 minutes better than everyone else with a 3:39 finish. Zuzana Trnovcova won the women's race in 4:37. [Full results](#).

Cave Creek Thriller 50k – Cave Creek, Arizona

This Aravaipa Running event happened in the **Cave Creek Regional Park**. In the 50k, Ryan Raff and Megan Kupres triumphed in 3:51 and 4:20, respectively. [Full results](#).



Runners during the 2021 Cave Creek Thriller Trail Runs. Photo: Aravaipa Running
The HUFF 50k – Albion, Indiana

It was rainy and muddy for the 25th annual HUFF 50k. Sam Skeels and Shea Aquilano slipped and slid to 3:58 and 4:12 winning times, respectively. [Full results](#).

Mel Williams Memorial Seashore Nature Trail 50k – Virginia Beach, Virginia

The top four men all went under four hours with Steven Keller leading in 3:33. Judy Doldorf was first for women in an also fast 4:06. [Full results](#).

Pilot Mountain Goat – Pinnacle, North Carolina

A late-year fire forced the Pilot Mountain Goat race from Pilot Mountain State Park to Stone Mountain State Park. Erick Ramirez and Tina Parsons won the seven-mile race in 50:24 and 69:08, respectively. [Full results](#).

Mason-Dixon Shortest Day 50k+ and 50k- Challenge – Wrightsville, Pennsylvania

Both courses are point-to-point fatass-style trail races held on the Mason-Dixon Trail in Pennsylvania. The 50k+ course is 36 miles and the 50k- is 27 miles. Both races start at sunrise and the goal is to beat the sun and finish by sunset.

For the 50k+ course, the first male was Noah Dusseau in 6:04:23 and the first female Kathleen Cusick in 8:24:53.



On the 50k- course, the first male was Ryan Leppo in 5:43:11 and the first female was Rachel Slusher in 6:33:15. [More information.](#)

Lookout Mountain Trail Race – Lookout Mountain, Georgia
We haven't yet found 50-mile race results, but in the 18-mile contest, Christian Thompson won in 2:12, and Rachel Vedder led the women in 3:00. [Full results.](#)

Tallahassee Ultra Distance Classic – Wakulla Springs, Florida
The longtime Florida event hosted 50-mile and 50k races. Over 50 miles, Charlie Johnson was way out front in 6:37 with Teresa Lucas being the only women's finisher in 9:36. Scott Abshire and Alyssa Moore won the 50k in 4:04 and 4:28. [Full results.](#)

Next Week – Across the Years – Phoenix, Arizona
The Aravaipa Running cross-year event starts on December 28 and has fixed time races from 10 days on down. Mongolian multi-day runner Budjargal Byambaa is in the 10-day race. He totaled 561 miles at the Six Days in the Dome race earlier this year. John Geesler, who did 403 miles in that same race, as a 61-year-old, is also in for 10 days.
Sandra Villines-Burruss ran 422 at the 2021 Six Days in the Dome race, and she's again up for six days. Pete Kostelnick will go for six days too.

First overall at this year's Plain 100 Mile, Rachel Entekin will likely lead the 48-hour field.
The 200-mile ace Michael McKnight is signed up for the 24-hour race. [Full entrant list.](#)

Call for Comments
That's almost it for 2021! What highlights will you remember? I called out Harvey Lewis's Big's Backyard Ultra win and record as my vote for the men's (North American) Ultra Performance of the Year. It beat out both Nick Coury's new American 24-hour record and Jim Walmsley's 100k

near-world record, in my mind. For the women, Courtney Dauwalter's new UTMB record ranked higher than both Camille Herron's Javelina Jundred record and her Desert Solstice 100-mile, for me.

Blazing a trail

Bob Burns, Reporter
Dec 9, 2021
Fountain Hills Times



The Fountain Hills McDowell Sonoran Preserve provides a network of trails that extend over 10 miles in the 800-acre preserve and those trails offer access to hundreds of miles of trails within the Scottsdale Sonoran Preserve and the **McDowell Mountain Regional Park.**

One aspect of the Preserve trail system within Fountain Hills is that every mile was built by hand by a team of volunteers. Soon after the incorporation of the town there were those who began looking toward the McDowell Mountains as a place to develop a natural preserve. Roy Kinsey was a driving force behind those efforts planning a Preserve boundary, pushing for acquisition of the land and planning and building the trail system.

Kinsey founded the Trailblazers group and led it until he reached age 90. Many

of the volunteers are retired and into their 70s and 80s. About a dozen years ago Bill Craig signed on to volunteer with the group. When Kinsey retired to California (he has since passed away) Craig took over the leadership responsibilities of the trail building group.

Last week Craig had a group of about a dozen interested hikers gather around him as he explained the background of the trails and what goes into the construction. He led the group to the start of the Ridgeline Trail, a recently completed pathway that runs south from the Adero Canyon Trailhead (ACT) along the ridge above the subdivision and the resort hotel below the south end of the ridge.

Craig used the Ridgeline as an example of how the process works, beginning with a vision. A few years ago, Toll Brothers Homes, the developer of the Adero Canyon subdivision, donated the 80-plus acre parcel that includes the ridge to the Town of Fountain Hills to add to its Preserve. At this point Craig saw the opportunity for a new trail running along the ridge leading to a peak that has been a prominent feature for years from the SunRidge Canyon subdivision below the east side of the ridge.

In developing the vision for the trail, they used high-tech tools including Google Earth and GPS along with good old-fashioned legwork and bushwhacking, Craig explained to the group.

He said he used Google Earth for mapping to establish a potential corridor. Once that is done, he goes out and marks a corridor about 30-feet wide with ribbon. With two or three other sets of eyes they go out to establish the path that will be cut by the trailblazers.

The Preserve is Town of Fountain Hills property and there is a formal process for getting the trails established. It is the process used for setting up all the trails including the Ridgeline. Craig said they



are currently in the process for a potential trail alignment on a ridge farther to the north, off the Promenade Trail that leads out of the trailhead.

The process includes the Sonoran Conservancy of Fountain Hills, a volunteer group that organizes hikes in the Preserve and other locations, as well as provides volunteers to act as Trail Stewards to lead hikes and serve as Trailhead hosts on in-season weekends at ACT. The board of the conservancy researches and advises on various trail issues. They make recommendations to the McDowell Mountain Preservation Commission, a seven-member advisory panel appointed by the Town Council. Proposals that are approved by the MMPC are passed along to the Council for final approval or rejection.

Craig said these proposals often come with a lot of questions and issues to consider. For instance, the proposed trail on the northern ridge has potential neighborhood impact, and an issue they must consider for all Preserve development going forward is the parking capacity at ACT. It has about 50 parking spaces with limited overflow space.

Craig said when he is flagging a trail he considers two key elements – sustainability and safety. The main element to consider for sustainability is erosion. He said this past summer is a good example. With as much as a foot of rainfall over the summer monsoon the Trailblazers are spending a lot of time right now making repairs in the system. One trail they maintain is the Lake Overlook Trail near the downtown area. The Trailblazers have spent the better part of November making repairs to that trail. Craig notes that trail was built by a developer and not the Trailblazers. It sustained a lot of erosion damage.

There are also some repairs to be made on the Preserve trails before they continue work on the companion to the Ridgeline, the Lower Ridgeline parallels the Ridgeline down slope from the top.

It will offer a loop and alternative route for hikers.

As the group continued along the Ridgeline Trail Craig pointed out the connection to the Lower Ridgeline and provided some insight on how trail routing decisions are made during construction.

Craig said there are about 30 volunteers in the Trailblazers group, and they often work every Saturday between November and the end of March. There are normally 12 to 15 working at one time. The group is always willing to talk to someone interested in signing on as a volunteer. Anyone wanting more information may email contactSCFH@gmail.com. The Conservancy is also looking for volunteer Stewards and Trailhead hosts.

Maricopa tween races mountain bike to new heights

By [Bob McGovern](#)
Dec 9, 2021



Kallie Stewart navigates a trail through the woods of the Coconino National Forest in Flagstaff during a September race. She competed this year in a four-race series for sixth-grade girls in the Arizona Cycling Association's South Division. [Jason Rziha]

Kallie Stewart knew she could be better, faster.

Her introduction to mountain bike racing late last year was encouraging: she improved significantly with each race and even garnered a few top-five finishes.

She wanted to perform better in the Arizona Cycling Association's 2021 race series for middle schoolers. The 12-year-old committed to raising her game this past summer for when the series resumed from its COVID hiatus last year. With assistance and support from her parents, she stepped up her training ahead of the four-race season that began Sept. 12.

"She really worked hard in the off-season and came in stronger for the 2021 season," said her father, Matt Stewart, an airline pilot who owns Arizona Bike Garage, Maricopa's only bicycle shop, and started a mountain bike riding group in town.

Kallie's focus was on improving her speed by increasing her strength and endurance.

"I would do spin bike for 45 minutes a day and then we started riding our bikes more on the trails," Kallie said. "We also started running miles, starting off with like one or two miles."

Soon, she was going three miles on her runs.

"It wasn't so much us telling her she needed to do it," Matt said.

"She just wanted to do it and would ask what she needed to do to be better."

The work paid off.

The nonprofit Arizona Cycling Association was organized in 2012 to develop interscholastic cycling teams for grades 6-12. An affiliate league of the National Interscholastic Cycling Association, its focus is providing a first-rate mountain bike racing experience that promotes equality, camaraderie and health among its young competitors.

The ACA's middle school program, designed to introduce its youngest riders to the sport of mountain biking, is "focused on fun, fitness, skills and trail etiquette, with a taste of the



competitive aspects of mountain biking that they will find when in high school, minus the additional pressures when team scoring and season overall standings are applied,” said Mike Perry, the association’s president and executive director.

Hundreds of kids participate in its annual race series at courses across the Phoenix area. Race distances get longer as racers get older. Middle schoolers like Kallie compete in one-lap races on 5- to 6-mile-long, hilly courses through the woods or desert.

On Sept. 12, Kallie raced in the first of the four races in the 2021 series. Riding a 6-mile course through the Ponderosa pines at Fort Tuthill County Park in Flagstaff — with 365 feet of climbing — the work she put in over the summer was evident.



Kallie, 12, and her brother Jack, 9, are following in the footsteps of their racing parents, Matt and Katrina Stewart. [Carrie Schmidt]

Competing as an Independent in the Middle School South division — her school, Legacy Traditional, does not affiliate with ACA — she finished second with a time of 28 minutes, 33 seconds, less than eight seconds behind the winner from El Grupo, a youth cycling group in the Tucson area.

It was the last time Kallie would cross the finish line behind another rider.

Two weeks later, she made her move in the Coconino National Forest — elevation: 8,000 feet — in Flagstaff. Clad in her black cycling pants, matching golden-yellow jersey and helmet, pink shoes and gray-and-black

gloves, Kallie propelled her black Trek around the 5.1-mile Arizona Nordic Village course and its 385 feet of incline in 31:37, besting the next rider by more than a minute. The third-place rider was more than five minutes behind Stewart.

Kallie continued her domination in the final two races of the series, Oct. 10 on a 6.2-mile track with 425 feet of climbing at Pioneer Park in Prescott and Oct. 23 on a 5-mile, desert course with about 325 feet of incline at **White Tank Mountain Regional Park in Waddell.**

Her No. 706 bike, with the sticker from her dad’s cycle shop on her seat tube, again crossed the finish line first — by nearly two minutes in Prescott and just over a minute in Waddell.

RACING IN THE DNA

The focus of the ACA’s middle school program may not be on competition, but Kallie tackled her races with a fierce, competitive spirit nonetheless. She wants to win.

The desire and determination to race is in her family DNA.

Matt, her father, started racing BMX bikes at age 9, the beginning of a lifetime in racing. He went on to compete in motocross, super moto and sport bikes, before retiring six years ago, he raced sprint cars.

“Basically, I raced anything I could get my hands on,” he told InMaricopa last year.

“I rode bikes as a kid like everyone else, but it became a family thing for us,” he said. “When I raced bikes, my dad was racing cars.

He stepped back from cars and bought motorcycles for my sister and me and it bloomed from there, and it turned into a career.”

Kallie’s mother, Katrina, and her uncle, Dean, were national motocross champions in Canada and the United

States, respectively. Their 65-year-old father still rides motocross.

“She just gives it 110%, no matter what she does,” Katrina added. “Whether it’s racing or school, she just has that personality where she’s just competitive, so competitive naturally.”

She said the training and the racing are helping to prepare Kallie and her brother, Jack, for the rest of their lives. “We know the dedication it takes, the sacrifice, and the blood, sweat and tears, you know,” she said. “Kallie is in, Jack is in. (He will compete in January as well.) We’ll go alright some days and they have so much fun. And then we’ll go some other days and they’re complaining the whole time because it’s hot or the trail’s hard. I really like that they ride the bikes because it’s such a mental toughness you have to have, and I think it teaches them so much.

“We just come from a very athletic background.”

Matt said the social aspect of racing has been good for Kallie, too, providing an opportunity to meet girls her own age with a common interest.

CHALLENGING TRAILS AHEAD

Even before the 2021 season began, Kallie’s father knew she had gotten faster.

Before the races, riders can travel to the site and do a pre-race ride to gain familiarity with the course.

Kallie and her father rode the trail through the woods at the county park in Flagstaff before the first race.

“We were going up the hill and she went in front of me,” Matt recalled. “I couldn’t keep up with her. I knew she was going to be good.”



Kallie Stewart

Age: 12

Family: Dad Matt, mom Katrina and brother Jack, 9, also a mountain biker

School: Legacy Traditional School

Favorite activity: An animal lover, she enjoys working with Ty, the family's adopted Dogo Argentino mix.

Possible future career: Professional racer, veterinarian or doctor

He wasn't too surprised. They would go to the pre-races and see high school and other middle school racers riding the easier trails. Meanwhile, Kallie and her dad would be on more challenging trails with a higher degree of climbing.

Kallie plans on competing in the ACA series next year and through her middle and high school years, but first has a goal for the first half of 2022.

"I want to qualify for nationals," she said.

That challenge will begin in January. She will compete in the Mountain Bike Association of Arizona's 2022 XC Race Series, which will include races with many of the same riders on some of the same courses in the ACA series. It culminates in a state championship race in May. The top 10 finishers in each age group qualify for the USA Cycling National Championships in Colorado in July.

Even though Kallie will not turn 13 until August, she will compete in the 13-14 age group for junior beginners. Her mother will join her, competing in the 30-39 age group for intermediate women.

This Christmas, Kallie will find something under the tree to help expand her cross-training regimen, her father promised.

With racing in her blood, a fierce dedication to pedaling faster and a supportive family, Kallie appears to be well-positioned to chase her dream in Colorado — and perhaps in a future Olympics if that's where the trail leads.

"She's super self-disciplined," Katrina said. "She'd get up in the morning and be like, 'Hey mom, how long have do I have to be on the spin bike for?' or 'Mom, can we go for a run this afternoon?' We've never had to push her. She just has this natural drive."

Trailblazers

Dec 8, 2021

Fountain Hills Times

Fountain Hills is an ideal destination for folks who like to hike. Whether you're in the mood for a brisk march up a mountain or a leisurely stroll through rolling hills, there are literally hundreds of miles for folks to tackle in the Scottsdale Sonoran Preserve and **McDowell Mountain Regional Park**. Heck, there's even a nice little Overlook Trail in the heart of downtown, adjacent to Fountain Park.

It can be easy to forget that those winding paths are the work of countless hours, spread across decades of effort, from volunteers who are passionate about building and maintaining local trail systems. As you will see in our reporting beginning on page 1A of this week's paper, most of these "Trailblazers" are retired individuals who have found a unique way to give back to the community they call home. They cut trails, maintain them, serve as Preserve Stewards who organize events and also serve as trailhead hosts to provide information to visitors looking for the ideal place to hike or bike. Members also help maintain the Desert Botanical Garden downtown. It's a monumental task, and one dozens of

volunteers have quietly executed over the years.

These folks should be commended for their work, and the best way to do that is to respect the trail system they have worked tirelessly to create. Remember to stay on the trails, hang on to your trash and pick up after your pets while enjoying a hike. The trails are there to help show off the beauty of nature, so our impact on the surrounding areas should be minimal.

And, hey, if you've got some free time, maybe consider volunteering with the group to help ensure all those wonderful hiking destinations are well maintained and continue to grow for years to come. For more information, read this week's 1A story and visit scfh.org/volunteer-groups.

Sunset Farms by Landsea Homes opens in Tolleson

REAL ESTATE | 2 Dec | HOME & DESIGN

AZ Big Media



Landsea Homes Corporation, a publicly traded residential homebuilder, announced today that it will hold its grand opening with model homes available to tour on Saturday, December 4 at Sunset Farms in Tolleson, Arizona.

"Sunset Farms is another exciting community of High Performance single-family homes, and we are thrilled to open our new models," said Todd Condon, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Landsea Homes' Arizona division. "As we continue to expand our footprint in Arizona, our priorities remain providing High Performance



Homes with quality and value in mind, and they will find that at Sunset Farms.”

Sunset Farms consists of 140 single-family homes, with seven different and unique one-and two-story floor plans. The houses range from 1,315 square feet to 3,018 square feet, with options for two to four or more bedrooms and two to two-and-a-half bathrooms. Prices begin at \$322,990.

All homes at Sunset Farms include Landsea Homes’ [High Performance Home](#) features, which gives homebuyers connected living at their fingertips through a partnership with Apple®, providing ease, security and privacy.

Buyers will have the opportunity to implement Landsea Homes’ [LiveFlex®](#) program to transform spaces into whatever their lifestyle may need, whether that’s a home office, an at-home learning space, a guest bedroom or a place to exercise. These new spaces incorporate thoughtful construction and innovative technology with smart home features, privacy and ambiance that can be individually designed.

The community is ideally located in proximity to the nearby Gateway Pavilions, Park West shopping center in Peoria, as well as State Farm Stadium and the Westgate Entertainment District in Glendale.

For outdoor enthusiasts, Sunset Farms is just two miles north of the breathtaking, 20,000-acre **Estrella Mountain Regional Park**. Massive and diverse, Sunset Farms is home to an array of amenities and activities. There is the Phoenix Raceway, a one-mile NASCAR oval, wildlife habitat, a golf course and horseback riding. There are also baseball fields, the only grass picnic area (65-acres) in the Maricopa County Park System, and fishing on the Gila River. More than 33 miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding meander through the

park, ranging from the 2.4-mile Baseline Trail to the challenging Pederson Trail.

For more information about Sunset Farms, visit: <https://landseahomes.com/arizona/sunset-farms/>.

WHAT’S UP IN ULTRA THIS WEEKEND – DEC. 4

Jeffrey Stern 12/01/2021
Ultrarunning.com

As we enter the last month of 2021, there is no shortage of options to close out your own [UltraRunning Calendar](#) for the year.

Taking the lead this week is the 2021 USATF 100-Mile Trail National Championships at the [Brazos Bend 100](#) in Needles, Texas. The multiple-loop course features one ten-foot hill and other than that is 99.9% flat and 100% beautiful. It features a stout lineup of potential mammal, reptile, amphibian and bird sightings in the enormous 4,897-acre state park along the Brazos River.

Expected to battle up front in the women’s field are three-time National Champion Liza Howard, recent [Paris Pair 100k](#) overall champion Shanda Moore, sixth-place finisher at the [High Lonesome 100](#) this summer, Megan Eckert, and Tatiana Rypinski, [2021 Rocky Raccoon 100](#) runner-up.

On the men’s side, the favorite has to be Mark Hammond, [2020 USATF 100-Mile Road National Champion](#), followed by [2021 Cruel Jewel 100](#) third-place finisher Jonathan Ibach, [Mohican 100](#) third-place finisher Nicholas Mamrak and [2019 Tunnel Hill 100](#) runner-up Jim Sweeney.

In Fountain Hills, Arizona, the [McDowell Mountain Frenzy 50k/50m](#) features a few more hills than Brazos Bend. Running through the [McDowell Mountain](#)

Regional Park and Sonoran Preserve, it has plenty of wildlife viewing options as well. This is a great time of the year to be running in the southwest.

The [Capstone 50k](#) is a 10km loop course through Moe’s Valley with panoramic views of the desert around St. George, Utah, and has a very pedestrian start time of 12 p.m. MST on Saturday, December 4.

If you’re looking for a cold-weather ultra, get yourself to the [Arctic Frog 50k/50m](#) in Mayville, Wisconsin, on Saturday. The forecast is calling for a high of 35 degrees and a chance of snow flurries.

At Howard Buford Park/Mt. Pisgah in Eugene, Oregon, is another chilly test with the [Frozen Trail Run Fest 50k](#). Wet and muddy conditions can be expected with this hilly, three-loop course in the Pacific Northwest.

Our extensive calendar also features, but is not limited to, the [Devil Dog Ultras](#) in Triangle, Virginia, the [Jackson County 50-50](#) in Brownstown, Indiana, and the [Ray Miller 50/50](#) in Malibu, California, all on Saturday, December 4. On Sunday, December 5, is the [Pine Mountain Trail Run 40-miler](#), which is celebrating more than 40 years and purportedly the oldest ultramarathon in the state of Georgia.

Not to be missed in the Sierra Foothills of California on Saturday is the [Western States Endurance Run](#) lottery, beginning at 8 a.m. PST at Placer High School. Follow our [Instagram](#) stories for on-the-ground live interview coverage of athletes and attendees. The [Hardrock 100](#) lottery is also taking place on Saturday.

We know there’s a lot more happening this weekend, so keep us in the loop with What’s Up in Ultra in your local community by dropping a comment below.



For some of the most dramatic mountain views near Phoenix, try this hike. Here's how

Mare Czinar
Special for The Republic



In terms of sensory overload, the Pass Mountain Trail works sort of like an old-style 5-disc CD changer to deliver a cycle of ever-changing delights that, once engaged, just keeps on spinning.

The 7.5-mile route that loops through **Usery Mountain Regional Park** in Mesa and the urban-wildland interface of Tonto National Forest packs in the hiking equivalents of mellow slow dance vibes, sultry tangos and pounding hip-hop rhythms.

Accessible by way of convenient trailheads in the park, the rocky single track blends low desert strolls, a carousel of vistas and just enough raw mountain exposure to serve up one of the most diverse, close-to-town hikes in metro Phoenix.

Park rangers recommend taking on the loop from either the Wind Cave or Horse Staging trailhead in a clockwise rotation (begin by going left) for a longer but milder ascent to the hike's scenic saddle.

For those who just want to get to the high-point vista and then double back, that's the ticket. However, full-loop hikers should consider a counterclockwise (go right) approach. It's harder that way, but it gets the difficult climbing over quicker and eliminates the chore of negotiating

a steep, slippery down climb on tired legs.

Heading right from the Wind Cave trailhead, the trail almost immediately exits the park boundary and enters Tonto National Forest. The first relatively flat half-mile runs through classic desert vegetation and ruffled washes in the shadow of the pyramid-shaped Cat Peaks.

Over the next mile and a half, views of the Superstition Mountains rising above Apache Junction command the eastern horizon as the trail makes a northward bend and a barely noticeable ascent on the mountain's east face.

More:[See late-season fall colors on this Tonto National Forest hike](#)
Residual glimpses of rooftops and roads are soon swallowed up in the folds and drainage cuts of the mountain's wild side.



A valley flush with saguaros sits below the destination — a U-shaped pass visible on the north ridgeline. The climb to get there isn't too difficult until about a half-mile from the top where the route hangs on precipitous edges and a slickrock ledge for an appetizer of adrenaline before the trail emerges on the prize.

Bam! The wind-in-your-face jolt of stepping onto the 2,593-foot saddle is a jaw-dropping experience. With a single bend in the trail, the vistas make an explosive transition from saguaros and suburbs to layers of mountains and river valleys.

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In the foreground, the blocky, colorfully layered Goldfield Mountains rise above a scoured divide. Behind them, the iconic Four Peaks and rows of wilderness peaks stand over the Salt River Valley.

Save for some minor drainage crossings and exposure, the remainder of the trail is just a moderate trudge that hugs the mountain's eastern flanks, unspooling views of the Usery Mountains and hazy peeks at the McDowell range near Scottsdale before it swings south and descends to the base of Pass Mountain for the final 2-mile walk back to the trailhead.

More:[Easy Scottsdale hike has mountain views and mushroom rocks](#)
Pass Mountain hike

Length: 7.5-mile loop.

Rating: Difficult.

Elevation: 1,866-2,598 feet.

Getting there: Usery Mountain Regional Park, 3939 N. Usery Pass Road, Mesa. From U.S. 60 in Mesa, take Ellsworth Road (Exit 191). Go 6.7 miles north on Ellsworth (which turns into Usery Pass Road) to the park entrance on the right. The trail may be accessed from the Wind Cave and Horse Staging Area trailheads. There are restrooms at both trailheads.

Admission: \$7 per vehicle.

Details: <https://www.maricopacountyarks.net>