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CV WEEKLY







LA QUINTA ART
Celebration
FEBRUARY 26 – MARCH 1,2026
LA QUINTA CIVIC CENTER PARK
LQAC.org
La Quinta
CALIFORNIA

Legends Of Pop Festival pg5
Wine & Design pg5
John Doe pg7
Reid Balog pg8
Chocolate & Champagne pg13
Dancing With The Stars Con pg15
Women's Wellness Clinic pg22


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CONTENTS

La Quinta Art Celebration 3
Legends Of Pop Festival at Agua Caliente ... 5
Wine & Design 5
Consider This - Jay Buchanan 6-7
John Doe - Joshua Tree Retreat Center 7
Reid Balog 8
Club Crawler Nightlife 9
The Groove Report - Soul Springs Festival .. 10
3rd Annual Chocolate & Champagne 11
Meteor Shower-Desert Ensemble Theatre .. 13
The Vino Voice 14
The Dinah 15
Dancing With The Stars Con 2026 15
Pet Place 16
Haddon Libby 18
Dale Gribow 18
Lunar New Year at Agua Casinos 20
Cannabis Corner 21
Women's Wellness Clinic 22
Send Me A Trainer 22
CV Firebirds 25
CWL Championships 25

LA QUINTA ART CELEBRATION SPRING 2026

FINE ART IN THE DESERT!
COME MEET 185 AMERICAN AND INTERNATIONAL FINE ARTISTS.
LA QUINTA CIVIC CENTER - FEBRUARY 26 – MARCH 1



Get ready to enjoy one of the most exciting art shows in the country! In fact, the annual La Quinta Art Celebration consistently ranks as the #1 Fine Art & Crafts Event in the Nation by Art Fair Source Books. Along with returning artists from as far-flung places as 28 US states, Canada, and Africa, this year's Spring Celebration will showcase 25 artists exhibiting for the first time at Coachella's signature art event. Artworks will span 11 media categories, including paintings, collages, woodworking, glasswork, photography, and sculpture. Whatever your artistic favorites, you'll find styles ranging from classical to whimsical throughout the four-day event.

Among the most sensational of La Quinta Art Celebration's 25 first-time presenters, Pacific Northwest woodcrafter and sculptor Jeffro Uitto, will be showing his stunning monumental driftwood sculptures. These expressive sculptures are handcrafted and imagined with rescued driftwood from Washington and Oregon. They will welcome you to the grounds, giving you just an inkling of the great art awaiting you inside the Art Celebration.

The La Quinta Art Celebration is presented by SCOPE Events, LLC, with premier sponsor, City of La Quinta. A long-time supporter and advocate for the arts, the City of La Quinta prides itself on its ever-increasing focus on emerging artists and art events throughout the year. Visitors will find the many fine-art booths exhibiting glass, wood, and metal pieces, photography, as well as traditional oil, acrylic, and watercolor paintings, conveniently placed throughout the gorgeous grounds of the La Quinta Civic Center. Event goers will also enjoy live music, performances, and the local culinary offerings as patrons stroll amid the internationally renowned Coachella Valley/La Qunita spring sunshine.

La Quinta Civic Center: 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253.

Event days: Thursday, February 26 – Sunday, March 1

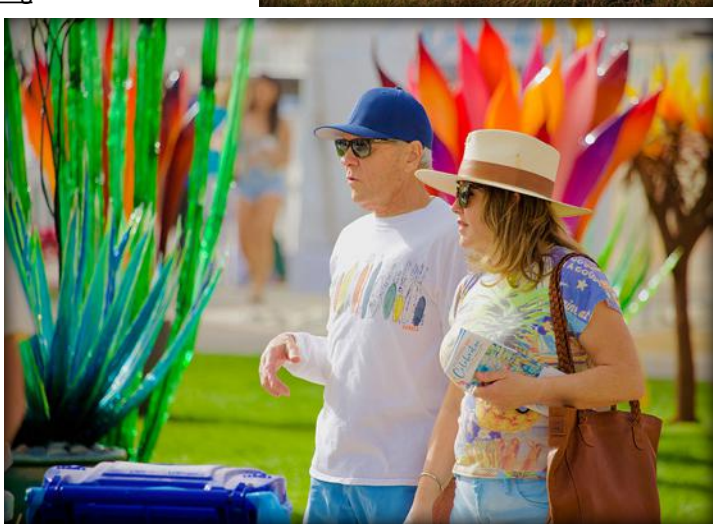
Hours: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm daily

Admission is $25, or $30 for multi-day pass. Children under 12 are free. Parking options include free parking throughout the Village of La Quinta; self-paid parking onsite $10; valet parking $20.

To avoid long line at the gate, you can purchase tickets online (as well as all event information) at : LQAC.org. CV


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AGUA CALIENTE BRINGS THE '80S BACK TO LIFE WITH LEGENDS OF POP FESTIVAL

MUSIC



BY CRAIG MICHAELS



On Saturday, February 28, 2026, Agua Caliente Casino Rancho Mirage will transform into a vibrant time capsule of music, fashion, and pop culture with the return of the Legends of Pop Festival. This all-day celebration invites guests to relive the sights and sounds of the 1980s through live performances, themed DJ sets, interactive activities, and immersive entertainment. Designed as a full-scale throwback experience, the festival brings together nostalgia lovers and music fans for a high-energy celebration of one of pop culture's most influential decades.

Festivities begin at 1:00 p.m., with continuous '80s-inspired music and live entertainment flowing throughout the casino floor. Pop-culture trivia, on-site activations, and lively hosting keep the atmosphere buzzing from afternoon into evening, turning the entire property into a hub of retro fun. Guests are encouraged to dress the part and fully embrace the spirit of the era, leading into one of the day's most anticipated features—the '80s Costume Contest. The Grand Prize winner will receive a signed guitar from Boy George, while the runner-up will be awarded a $150 Agua Caliente Casinos gift card.

Adding to the immersive experience, the resort will offer limited-time food and beverage specials inspired by bold, indulgent flavors. At Waters Café, guests can enjoy the Taco Salad Bowl, served in a crispy tortilla shell and loaded with classic toppings. Over at 360 Sports, the Smoked Tri-Tip Sandwich delivers smoky, savory comfort with barbecue sauce, tobacco onions, and lemon garlic aioli. Select bars and lounges will also feature "Legendary Cocktails," including the Vogue, Billie Jean, and Purple Rain, each crafted to reflect the glamour and flair of the decade.

The festival reaches its peak at 6:00 p.m. with Legends of Pop in Concert at The Show at Agua Caliente. This high-energy performance brings the era's most iconic music to life through three acclaimed tribute artists: Coty Alexander as Madonna, E'Casanova as Michael Jackson, and Bobby Miller as Prince. Backed by a live band and dancers, the performers recreate the sound, movement, and spectacle that defined a generation, delivering a concert experience filled with energy, emotion, and authenticity.

Together, these three elite tribute artists capture the essence of the superstars who shaped the global music landscape in the 1980s. From Madonna's groundbreaking pop anthems and bold stage presence to Michael Jackson's unmatched dance moves and Prince's genre-defying artistry, the concert promises a dynamic journey through some of the most celebrated moments in music history. Fans can expect meticulously crafted performances that honor both the artistry and legacy of these legendary performers.

Legends of Pop Festival is free to attend and open to guests 21 and over, making it an accessible and festive gathering for the community. Concert tickets range from $29.95 to $39.95 and are available now through Agua Caliente Casinos. Complimentary valet parking is offered, along with ample self-parking in the resort's garage and surface lots. For more information and ticket purchases, guests can visit www.AguaCalienteCasinos.com or call (800) 514-3849. With its blend of music, fashion, food, and unforgettable entertainment, Legends of Pop Festival promises to be one of the Coachella Valley's most exciting celebrations of retro pop culture in 2026. CV

AGUA CALIENTE CASINOS

WINE & DESIGN TO SUPPORT DESERT BEST FRIEND'S CLOSET

EVENTS

BY CRAIG MICHAELS



As a local Realtor® and Luxury Senior Real Estate Specialist, I truly enjoy bringing our community together to support meaningful causes and benefit our local nonprofits. Creating opportunities where neighbors, business owners, and friends can connect while giving back is something I'm deeply passionate about.

That's why I'm excited to invite you to our next Wine & Design Mixer, benefiting Desert Best Friend's Closet. Hosted by me, Craig Michaels of Desert Lifestyle Properties, this special evening takes place on Thursday, February 26th, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the beautiful Cambria Gallery, located at 42210 Cook Street in Palm Desert.

Join us for a chic and intimate design soirée that welcomes homeowners, design lovers, and community advocates alike. Desert Best Friend's Closet is dedicated to empowering individuals through education and employment opportunities, helping them achieve economic independence. Learn more at bfcloset.org.

This gathering seamlessly blends community spirit, innovative design ideas, and philanthropy in a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere. With the peak home buying and selling season in full swing, it's the perfect opportunity to gather fresh ideas to refresh, upgrade, or reinvent your space. Network with top local professionals specializing in home improvements, property enhancements, and creative design solutions, while connecting with like-minded individuals who share your passion for beautiful living and giving back.

Adding an artistic touch, featured local artist Paulina Torres will showcase her captivating artwork for guests to admire and collect. Enjoy complimentary wine, champagne, and a delectable selection of appetizers as you mingle and explore. Don't forget to bring your business cards for a chance to win exciting raffle prizes. Local businesses are also invited to donate raffle items, with supporters recognized during the event.

Best of all, a $15 donation at the door directly benefits Desert Best Friend's Closet, supporting low-income Coachella Valley residents by providing professional interview and work attire and empowering them to step confidently into their futures. Save the date and join us for an inspiring night of design, community, and giving back.

This evening would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors: Western Air Cooling & Heating, JTE Escrow, Desert Premium Paints, Can Genie, Adamson & McGoldrick Insurance Solutions, STV | PSC Home Automation Audio & Video Systems, Luminate Bank, Desert United, Mario's Tile Care & Concrete Cleaning, Palm Desert Chamber of Commerce, CV Weekly, Masvino Wines, and Trypps.

With its warm and inviting ambiance, the Wine & Design Mixer offers a perfect blend of style, community, and purpose. It's a fun opportunity to stay ahead of the latest design trends, discover talented local artists, and support impactful causes right here in our neighborhood.

And if you can't make it to the February event, don't worry—another fabulous Wine & Design Mixer is coming up in March. Space is limited, so be sure to reserve your spot today. Invite your friends and join us for an evening of inspiration, connection, and creativity.

Register now by visiting the Facebook event page: facebook.com/events/1481785916482855.

I look forward to seeing you there and continuing to bring our community together for great causes. CV

CONSIDER THIS

JAY BUCHANAN "WEAPONS OF BEAUTY" (SACRED TONGUE RECORDINGS/THIRTY TIGERS RECORDS)

BY ELENI P. AUSTIN





Jay Buchanan is probably best known as the charismatic frontman of Rival Sons. The Long Beach four-piece has been carrying the torch for Rock N' Roll since 2009. But before the band came together, Jay made his reputation as a compelling solo artist.

Born in San Bernadino, he was raised in rural Mountain towns like Fontana and Wrightwood. As far back as he can remember, he grew up singing. In church, school choirs-where he glided through complex German and Italian compositions-and finally fronting nascent bands during his teens. Both of his parents were musical, and he inherited their gift. His dad had taught him the rudiments of guitar. The rest he figured out on his own.

Although he took classes in Philosophy and Literature in junior college, music became his main priority, He began busking and playing in any coffee house that would have him. He bought a 4-track recorder and started writing his own music, honing his signature sound. As the responsibilities of adulthood began crowding in, he sold all his possessions and ended up backpacking through Alaska, finding work in the Kenai Peninsula. Returning to the lower 48th, he course corrected, heading down a true path.

Moving to Orange County, he played open mics and local joints around town. By day, he worked as a grave digger, later in construction. Dealing with the music industry was a rollercoaster ride. Labels showed interest, but nothing ever came to fruition. He had formed different bands with friends, Bitterness (named for a Stephen Crane poem) and Buchanan lasted the longest. Buchanan self-released three efforts, *Violence* in 1999, *All Understood* five years later, and the *True Love* EP in 2006.

He had an epiphany of sorts when he was performing solo, as an opening act, first for Ryan Cabrera and later The Veronicas. Both were lengthy world tours that gave him a taste of celebrity. When he returned to Buchanan, something had changed for him. Feeling restless, he was ready for a change. So, go it alone. Solo, he recorded *Live In The Studio* and later *Locust & Wild Honey,* which remains unreleased.

Michael Miley had played drums with Buchanan when their drummer, Chris Powell, took an eight month hiatus. Miley was putting together a band with guitar gunslinger Scott Holiday. They had been searching for a frontman when Scott came across Jay's Myspace page (you remember Myspace, right?) Miley assured the guitarist that Jay was now on a solo path, but Scott persevered, the pair finally connected and he wound up joining Rival Sons, effectively putting his solo music on hold.

The chemistry between Jay, Scott, Miley and original bassist Robin Everhart was electric, immediate and undeniable. The four-piece hit the ground running. Their debut, *Before The Fire* arrived in 2009. The band made their bones touring throughout Europe. Rather quickly, the music industry took notice, and the band were suddenly opening for legends like Aerosmith, Judas Priest and Kiss.

Their sound was a potent combo-platter of Soul, Blues and full-throttle Rock N' Roll. Jay's melismatic vocals were anchored by Scott's patented Fuzz and the tandem timekeeping of Miley and Robin (and later Dave Beste, who took over bass duties when Robin left the band in 2013). They released records at a furious clip, a self-titled EP in 2010, followed a year later by what became their cutting and concise calling card, *Pressure And Time* record. Switching gears, the sprawling *Head Down* arrived in 2012. Two years later, they released their commercial breakthrough, *Great Western Valkyrie.*

The Sons were personally selected, by Ozzy (R.I.P.) and Sharon to be the opening act for Black Sabbath's final world tour in 2016. Their *Hollow Bones* record was released in the midst of that two-year commitment. Their seventh long-player, 2019's *Feral Roots* garnered two Grammy nominations. Post-pandemic, they roared back with a pair of companion records, *Darkfighter* and *Lightbringer.* Released within months of each other in 2023, lyrical ambition coalesced with sublime songcraft. The enduring legacy of the Long Beach four-piece is that no two records sound the same.

Jay's protean vocals are a crucial component of the band's sound, and heavy-hitters immediately took notice. In between his Rival Sons duties he has collaborated with everyone from Jason Isbell and Massive Attack, to Bee Gees architect Barry Gibb, Brandi Carlile and The Five Blind Boys Of Alabama.

Recently, he appeared in the major motion picture *Springsteen: Deliver Me From Nowhere.* The film chronicles Bruce Springsteen's experience creating the mostly acoustic and deeply personal *Nebraska* album. Jay plays a musician who performs in a local band at the legendary Stone Pony club in Asbury Park, New Jersey. Now, after deferring his solo career for more than 15 years, he is releasing *Weapons Of Beauty.*

The opening three tracks manage to leap tall buildings in a single bound. *"Caroline"* kicks into gear with strummy acoustic guitars, swoony pedal steel, reverbed electric riffs, wily bass and a stuttery beat. Wild West imagery sets the scene like a dusty daguerreotype: *"I look to the West and see that old sun going down, strap on my boots and I go blow the roof off this town, in goes the liquor and out of my mouth comes the flame, and my first word is always your name."* Jay's vocals, equal parts honey and woodsmoke, soar on the chorus as he deftly slips into the skin of a despondent desperado, pining for his deceased wife: *"A man takes your horse you just find him and shoot him down dead, a man takes your money, you just give him a heel to the head, what do you do when the Lord comes to take away your wife? Guess your only revenge is to curse every day of your life."* Shuddery, player-piano notes magnify the melancholy on the break, as the final chorus builds to a hypnotic crescendo.

As the final tremulous piano notes of *"Caroline"* fade, Jay's tender croon partners with Gospel-flavored piano, rough-hewn guitars, angular bass, a tumbling beat and gauzy pedal steel for *"High And Lonesome."* Lyrics paint a vivid portrait of reclusive prospector plagued by regret and recrimination in his pursuit of gold: *"I've been a foolish man longer than I can recall, see my name chiseled deep into these dark cave walls, so many memories that I cannot control, keeps the fuse too short, and the order too tall/That gold deep in the rock sings me a lullaby, if you'd only dug deeper, we'd be together tonight."* A gut-stringed, Spanish-flavored guitar intertwines with fluttery pedal steel on the break. Something of a *cri de Coeur,* the final verse is steeped in resignation but still manages to shift the blame: *"If you'd only dug deeper, we'd be together tonight, I'm rolling one last smoke and I sit by the fire light, I'm high and lonesome and the desert's too quiet."*

Meanwhile, *"True Black"* takes a page from Elton John's *Tumbleweed Connection* playbook, splitting the difference between Folk-Rock and Country-Soul. Pounding piano collides with ambling rhythm riffs, barbed electric licks, keening pedal steel, roiling bass, cha-cha-cha handclaps and a chugging beat. Jay's opening gambit finds him dancing between the devil and the divine: *"As I walk side by side with the wicked and the righteous, I do wonder to which one of them I truly belong, I have tread the narrow path, I have stumbled through the darkness, and the right I've done for many, is all for those that I've done wrong."* The arrangement accelerates on the break as knotty, bottle-necked guitar brushes up against some expansive Honky-Tonk piano and willowy pedal steel. Despite the lyrics' moral equivocation, Jay truly takes us to church.

The best tracks hopscotch across the record. Take *"Sway,"* a heartfelt ballad anchored by jangly acoustic guitars, liquid keys, fluid bass lines, spiraling pedal steel and a brushed beat. Jay's vocals are suffused with an erotic *frisson* that can hardly be contained, as lyrics maintain that the most lasting carnal connection comes from a lifetime commitment. His elastic vocals somersault an octave (or thereabouts), as he makes his case: *"Have you ever seen the way desire comes and goes, I want you now, while we're young, and I want you old…"* Courtly guitars dart through the mix ahead of a final, passionate benediction: *"Did you sing with a delight I've never known, crushing the doubt, clearing me out, calling me home, let the lightning of this moment live forever now, let the magic that you whisper travel high over it all."* Shivery pedal steel washes over spiky guitar and swirly Hammond B3 on the coda as he confides *"I was so lost without you, I didn't know before I knew you, so……so."* Then there's the dazzling *"Tumbleweeds."* Sun-dappled guitars and loping bass are tethered to a cantering gait. Jay's burnished vocals wrap around a nuanced narrative that spins a yarn about of a couple of strivers on the run: *"She turned the radio up a little more, to let the static sing out its lonesome song, is the wreckage in between the things we think we need to know just…discarded information? The deejay reads a dedication, 'this one's for you,' he's lost a little blood at the last stop, he lost a little before at the one before, since they split from Tennessee to make their way to California, keep the pressure on the wound, get to a doctor soon, you can win it all back."* His nimble vocals ascend on the sure-footed chorus, and the

continue to page 7

JAY BUCHANAN continued from page 6

plot thickens on the second verse: *"There was an addiction in his family, an overdose on religion had distorted his reality, raised among the flock, behind a fence of wooden crosses, so what would Jesus do? Break those crosses right in two and start a band/ She kept a pocketbook of her own thoughts, most of them were chicken-scratch from when the kids went down, sketches of a garden, and little low fences, the flowers all in bloom, each kid gets their own room."* Chiming guitars ride roughshod on the break and the final chorus looks to extend this folie a deux: *"We get lost along the way, stumble every now and then, click heels and keep on running, when he gets tired, he'll pass the wheel, she swerves he'll take it back, some engines don't die easy and the ending ain't written yet, she loved him before the money, he needs her now that it's gone, a future written in the wind, the tumbleweeds just roll on and on."* Finally, there's the kaleidoscopic *"Deep Swimming.* A punishing metallurgic beat, rapid-fire guitar riffs and tensile bass lines are bookended by blazing pedal steel notes that singe the soundscape. A bit of a carpe diem, Jay unspools a laundry list of tangled lives, missed opportunities and moments of domestic bliss in Dylanesque fashion: *"With the coats, the clocks and the memories, the clouds like outstretched arms, the summer sprinklers and the fescue, clock radios and circus charms, the late night movie marathons, the flash flood rains in soon, the falling asleep with the TV on, end of the month too soon/Damn this job, damn yours too, you know there's a lot of good living that we forget to do, the hours we traded were just supposed to be a few, there they are in the scratched records and photographs of the dogs, the kids and me and you."* Propulsive handclaps clank beneath stacked vocals on the chorus: *"Now we're out in the deep, and we're deep, deep swimming."* And that's just life….happening all around us. As it achieves lift-off, the buoyant arrangement manages to outrun regret, as the world just keeps spinning.

Other interesting tracks include the introspective *"Shower Of Roses,"* the bare-bones ballad is pared down to just Jay and bloopy electric piano. If AOR radio still existed, *"The Great Divide"* could sandwich nicely between the Eagles' *"One Of These Nights"* and Fleetwood Mac's *"Gold Dust Woman."* The lyrics seem to toggle between the personal and political: *"Lately I've been dreaming that you walk with me straight into the dawn, better than we used to be, to where we both belong, and when the last song has been sung, I'll sing across the great divide, to you on the left, to you on the right…fear takes its toll on a rational mind, dig a hole to fill a hole now, eye for an eye will leave you blind, how do we frow when we divide the sun? Push each other to the shadow, saying there's only room for one."*

Jay also takes a run at Leonard Cohen's *"Dance Me To The End Of Love."* Jettisoning the Hassidic cadence of the original, he reconfigures the arrangement into a breezy love song. Sugary guitars are matched by vroom-y pedal steel, rubbery bass and a slipstitch beat. On the break, skittery guitars dart between cascading tack piano runs.

The record closes with the piano-driven title-track. Lyrics offer up a mission statement of sorts: *"Give me the songs to sing in the fight, these weapons of beauty will destroy the night that's been so long, give me the words I can say what I feel and I speak this dream for to make it real."* It's a triumphant finish to a revelatory record.

Accompanying Jay on this mostly solo sojourn is longtime Rival Sons producer, Dave Cobb (now an industry superstar in his own right). Along with J.D. Simo on electric, acoustic and 12-string acoustic guitar, Phillip Towns on piano and keys and Brian Allen on all manner of bass. He also reunited with his Buchanan compadre Chris Powell who handled drums and percussion, along with his brother Leroy, supplies the twang of pedal steel, electric guitar and gut-string guitar. (These days, the brothers, along with Tim Jones earn their keep as the critically acclaimed Country Roots band, Whiskey Wolves Of The West).

Rival Sons fans need not fret. Jay isn't the first front-man to strike out on his own Much like Pete Townshend of The Who, Stevie Nicks with Fleetwood Mac and Jay Tweedy with Wilco, he'll most likely chart a parallel path that allows him to toggle between the Sons and his own occasional solo efforts.

This LP belongs in any collection that includes antecedents like Van Morrison, The Band and Nick Drake, as well as contemporaries like (the late-great) Jeff Buckley, Ray Lamontagne and Rufus Wainwright. With *Weapons Of Beauty,* Jay has rekindled a solitary artistic flame that was lit two decades ago. By flexing different musical muscles, he's found a way to return to his original vision quest. Quicksilver, quixotic and moodily elegant lyrics are matched by majestic musical vistas. The record is by turns, spiritual, starry-eyed, passionate, playful and poignant.

CV

JOHN DOE TO PLAY SOLO AT THE JOSHUA TREE RETREAT CENTER

MUSIC

BY ELENI P. AUSTIN



John Doe is returning to the high desert for a highly anticipated solo set at The Joshua Tree Retreat Center on Saturday, March 28, 2026.

John is best known, along with his musical soulmate, Exene Cervenka for fronting the seminal Los Angeles Punk band X. The four-piece, which includes guitarist Billy Zoom and drummer DJ Bonebrake, formed nearly half a century ago. In between X commitments, John has also managed to release a clutch of critically acclaimed solo records and carved out an intriguing acting career. He's also authored a pair of books that defined the L.A. music scene: *Under The Big Black Sun* and *More Fun In The New World.*

His most recent solo effort, 2022's *"Fables In A Foreign Land,* was a stripped-down and Rootsy, a sharp synthesis of Country, Folk, Blues and Folk, attributed to The John Doe Folk Trio. It garnered rave reviews, and word is, he will release a new album sometime this year. For The Joshua Tree set, John will be going it alone for a very rare solo show. Opening for John is local Desert legend Sean Wheeler and Billy Pitman.

Sister Midnight Presents John Doe At The Joshua Tree Retreat Center.

Saturday, March 28, 2026.

An intimate indoor show in the Sanctuary.

Doors open at 6pm, Show at 7pm.

59700 29 Palms Highway, Joshua Tree

jtrcc.org.

Tickets available through Eventim, Jambase and StubHub.

www.theejohndoe.com. CV



LOCAL MUSIC SPOTLIGHT WITH REID BALOG (MOURNING HIGH)

LOCAL MUSIC



BY PHIL LACOMBE



From sweaty desert shows to international metal stages, Reid Balog is helping lead a new generation of thrash into the future. As the frontman, guitarist, and primary creative force behind Mourning High, Balog blends old-school speed, razor-sharp riffs, and modern urgency into a sound that feels both classic and dangerous. With Mourning High earning serious momentum on the metal circuit, including major competition wins and global festival appearances, Reid is proving that thrash isn't just alive, it's evolving. We caught up with him to talk origins, pressure, growth, and what's coming next.

CVW: Mourning High has a very old-school thrash feel but still sounds fresh, what bands or eras shaped you the most when you were first picking up a guitar?

Balog: Bands like Metallica, Megadeth, Slayer, AC/DC, Van Halen, Guns N' Roses, and Iron Maiden were foundational influences early on, along with artists from outside the metal world. As a band, we draw from a wide range of genres, and that broad collective palette helps us find our own unique sound.

CVW: You're pulling double duty as lead singer and guitarist, how do you balance aggression, precision, and endurance when performing live?

Balog: It's simply the role I'm in, and I approach it with that responsibility in mind. With proper technical, physical, and mental preparation, it becomes natural to find a flow state, lock in, and deliver the intensity and precision the music demands.

CVW: Thrash metal has always been about rebellion and urgency, what are you angry or fired up about *now*, and how does that come through in your lyrics?

Balog: Our passion and determination come through clearly in the lyrics. We're a young band with a focused vision, and we use the music and words to paint that picture with intensity and purpose.

CVW: Winning major metal battles and earning international recognition is huge, did that moment change your confidence or your expectations for the band?

Balog: It was definitely a reassuring experience, and we're honored to be given that recognition and to represent the scene on an international level. That said, our confidence and expectations as a band have remained the same. We've always believed that with persistence and action, we're capable of achieving whatever we set out to do.

CVW: What's the songwriting process like for Mourning High? Do riffs come first, lyrics first, or does chaos win most of the time?

Balog: Riffs usually come first, and from there the drums, bass, and lyrics are built around them. The process is structured, but it leaves room for ideas to evolve naturally as the song takes shape.

CVW: You're part of a younger wave of metal artists, how do you see your generation reshaping or preserving the thrash scene?

Balog: We're in a unique position to bridge generations. Our music connects with younger listeners by introducing them to the sound and attitude of thrash, while also resonating with longtime fans who grew up with it. That balance allows us to help grow the scene with new audiences while preserving the spirit of something many felt they had lost and never expected to experience again.

CVW: Touring and high-pressure shows can either make or break a band, what's something you've learned the hard way on the road so far?

Balog: The biggest lesson is that it's never easy. There's no shortcut or golden ticket. Anything truly worth achieving takes effort, sacrifice, and often a fair amount of struggle along the way.

CVW: When fans see Mourning High live for the first time, what do you *hope* they walk away feeling?

Balog: Excited, refreshed, and hungry for more.

CVW: Looking ahead, what's next for you and Mourning High, new music, bigger stages, or something unexpected?

Balog: We're keeping the pedal to the floor, focusing on creating more music, hitting more tours, and building an even stronger experience and community for everyone who's with us on this journey.

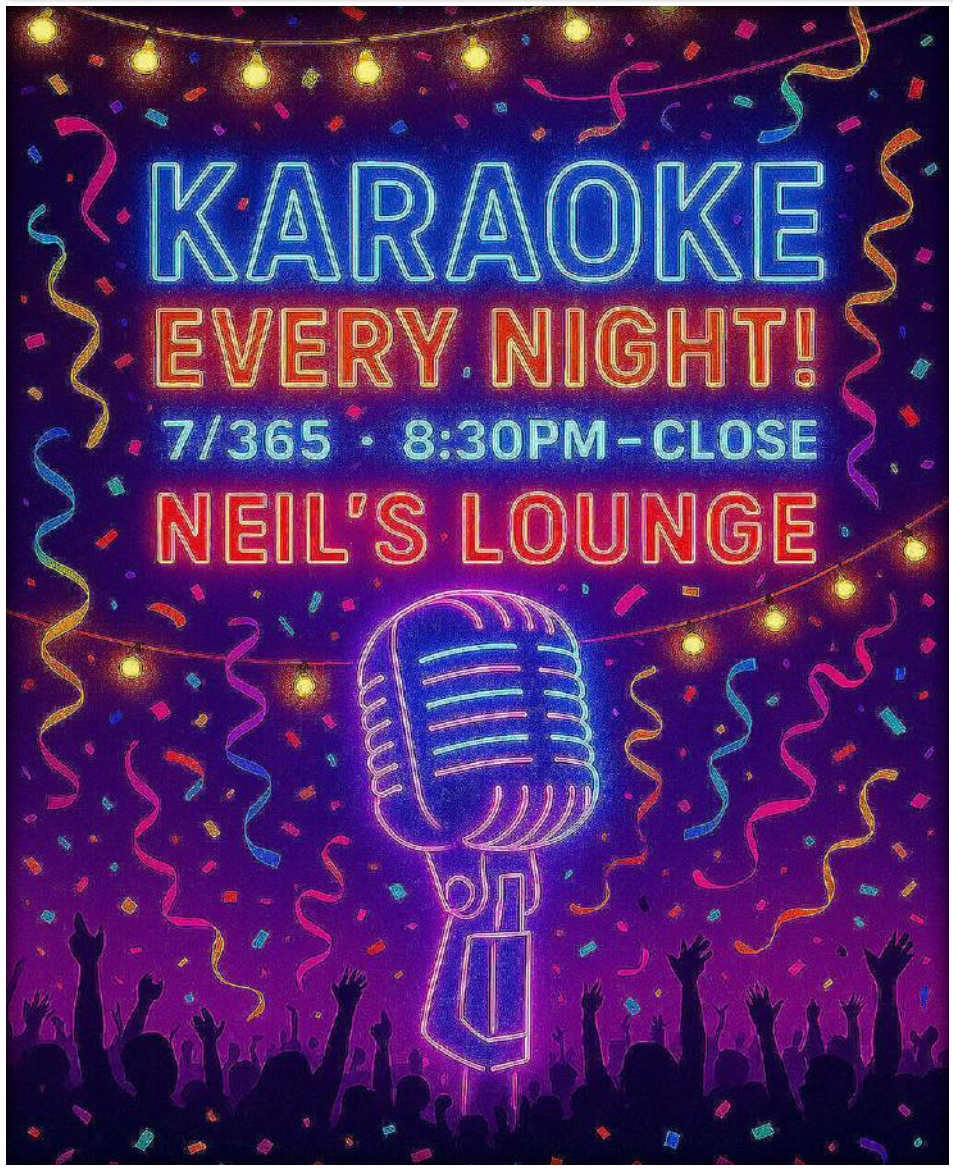
CVW: Where can fans find you?

Balog: Supporters can find us with a quick Google search. We're on all major social media and streaming platforms, and our website is www.mourninghigh.com.

With blistering energy, disciplined musicianship, and a deep respect for metal's roots, Reid Balog is carving out his place in thrash history one stage at a time. Mourning High's rise feels earned, forged through relentless practice, fearless performances, and a refusal to water anything down. If the past year is any indication, this is only the beginning of a very loud, very fast future.

That's a wrap on this week's Local Music Spotlight, but the party doesn't stop here. Hit the shows, feel the beats, and keep the valley's music scene thriving. Because around here, the next song that changes your life might be playing tonight. CV







CLUB CRAWLER NIGHTLIFE

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19

Babaloo Lounge – Steve Sanders Pianist – 4pm, Roger and the Rebels – 7pm
Bart Lounge – DJ – 8pm
Carousel @ Agua Caliente P.S. – Lynda Kay – 7pm
Casuelas Café – FX Experience – 5:30pm
Coachella Valley Brewery TP – Open Mic Night – 7pm
DJ's Sports Bar and Grill – Throwbacks w/ DJ Rapmarz – 9pm
Eddie V's – Kevin Tokarz Trio – 6:30pm
Hunny's - Cowboy and Lace w/ Brian Scott and Siobahn Velarde – 7pm
Kitchen 86 – Krystofer Do – 8:30pm
Lavender Bistro – Abie Perkins (Inside), Patrick Mahon and Carrie Wilson (Patio) – 6:30pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
Mojave Gold – Desert Beat Songwriter's Showcase – 6:30pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
Pappy and Harriet's – Joe Pug – 8pm
Plan B Live Entertainment and Cocktails – Thirsty Thursday Dance Party w/ DJ Tone – 8pm
Purple Room – La Vie en Rose w/ Jeremie Levi Samson – 6:30pm
The Roost Lounge – Sherie Rae Parker – 6:30pm
Shanghai Reds PS –TBA– 6pm
Twelve @ Fantasy Springs – HWY 111 – 8pm
V Wine Lounge and Martini Bar – Jason Weber – 6pm
Vicky's of Santa Fe – Richard Turner Jr – 6pm
Wildest – Live Music – 6pm

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20

Babaloo Lounge – Steve Sanders Pianist – 4pm, The Delgado Band – 7pm
Bart Lounge – DJ – 8pm
Big Rock Pub – Electric Feel – 6pm
Cascade Lounge @ Agua Caliente – Black History Month Celebration – 7pm, Cascade Nights Dance Party – 10pm
Casuelas Café – The Myx – 7pm
Coachella Valley Brewery – TBA – 7pm
The Dune Room – Devotional Depeche Mode Experience – 8pm
DJ's Sports Bar and Grill – TBA – 8pm, DJ Rapmarz – 11pm
Eddie V's – Johnny Meza Trio – 6:30pm
Giuseppe's @Shadow Ridge – Live Music – 8pm
The Hood – Drag Queen Bingo – 9pm
Indian Wells Resort Hotel – Marc Antonelli – 6pm
Kitchen 86 – Dueling Pianos – 9pm
Lavender Bistro – Abie Perkins (Inside), Scott Carter (Patio) – 6:30pm
Lit @ Fantasy Springs – Tre'Sure – 9pm
The Local on 50th – Live Music – 7pm
Macario's Grill Cantina – Karaoke – 7pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
Pappy and Harriet's – Kitchen Dwellers w/ Cordovas – 8:30pm
Plan B Live Entertainment & Cocktails – Red's Rockstar Karaoke – 9pm
Purple Room – Ben Jones: Timeless – 8pm
Shanghai Reds PS – Barry Baughn Blues Band – 7pm
Spotlight Casino – Rodrigo Torres Comedy Show – 8pm
Twelve @ Fantasy Springs – Moonchild – 7pm, Steel Rod – 10:30pm
V Wine Lounge and Martini Bar – Siobhan – 7pm
Vicky's of Santa Fe – Doug MacDonald – 5pm, John Stanley King – 7:30pm
Wildest – Live Music – 6pm

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21

Babaloo Lounge – Judy Wolman Pianist – 4pm, Off Da Cuff – 7pm
Bart Lounge – Indie Night – 9pm
Big Rock Pub – Sundawgs – 8pm
Cascade Lounge @ Agua Caliente – Cascade Nights Dance Party – 10pm
Casuelas Café – Avenida – 6:30pm
Chef George's Picasso Lounge – Saturday Night Fever w/ Gotti – 9pm
Coachella Valley Brewery – Taproom Tunes – 8pm
The Dune Room – TBA – 8pm
DJ's Sports Bar and Grill – DJ Rapmarz – 9pm
Eddie V's – Kevin Tokarz Trio – 6:30pm
Giuseppe's @Shadow Ridge – Live Music – 8pm
Grnd Sqrl – Live Music – 6pm
The Hood – TBA – 9pm
Indian Wells Resort Hotel – Marc Antonelli – 6pm
Kitchen 86 – Dueling Pianos – 9pm
Lavender Bistro – Abie Perkins (Inside), Scott Carter (Patio) – 6:30pm
Lit @ Fantasy Springs – Tre'Sure – 9pm
The Local on 50th – Live Music – 7pm
Macario's Grill Cantina – Karaoke – 7pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
Mojave Gold – Luna Negra Goth Night – 9pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
Pappy and Harriet's – Kitchen Dwellers – 8:30pm
Plan B Live Entertainment & Cocktails – Red's Rockstar Karaoke – 9pm
Purple Room – Ben Jones: Timeless – 8pm
The Roost Lounge – Jai Rodriguez – 6pm
Shanghai Reds PS – Barry Baughn Blues Band – 7pm
Sullivan's – The Myx – 6pm
Twelve @ Fantasy Springs – Moonchild – 7pm, Steel Rod – 10:30pm
Vicky's of Santa Fe – Rose Mallett and Co – 5pm, John Stanley King – 7pm
Wildest – Live Music – 6pm

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Augustine – The Myx – 6pm
Babaloo Lounge – Inka Kings – 7pm
Bart Lounge – DJ LF – 8pm
Big Rock Pub – The Myx – 10 -2pm
Cascade Lounge @ Agua Caliente – Latin Nights – 9pm
Casuelas Café – Las Tias – 1pm, Paul Douglas – 5:30pm
Coachella Valley Brewery PS – TBA – 4pm
Coachella Valley Brewery TP – Acoustic Afternoon – 3:30pm
DJ's Sports Bar and Grill – DJ Rapmarz – 9pm
Eddie V's – Chris Cerna Group – 6pm
Fisherman's Market, PS – Live Music – 6pm
The Hood – Drag Queen Bingo – 5pm
Kitchen 86 – Krystofer Do – 8:30pm
La Quinta Brewery (PD) – Live Music – 3 -7pm
Lavender Bistro – J Dee (Inside), Scott Carter (Patio) – 6:30pm
The Local on 50th – Live Music – 4-7pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
Plan B Live Entertainment & Cocktails – LNA Karaoke – 7pm
Purple Room – The Judy Show – 7pm
Shanghai Reds PS – Stanley Butler – 6pm

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Babaloo Lounge – The Evaro's – 7pm
Casuelas Café – Desert Suite Band – 5:30pm
The Dune Room – Motown Mondays – 7pm
Eddie V's – Chris Cerna Group – 6:30pm
La Quinta Brewery – Trivia Night – 6pm
Lavender Bistro – J Dee (Inside), Abie Perkins (Patio) – 6:30pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
The Roost Lounge – Open Mic – 6pm
V Wine Lounge and Martini Bar – Leanna and Miguel – 5pm
Vicky's of Santa Fe – Fun with Dick and Jane – 6pm

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

Babaloo Lounge – Judy Wolman Pianist – 4pm, Hotwyre – 7pm
Casuelas Café – Johnny Meza and Wallee Larson – 5:30pm
Desert Fox – Karaoke – 8pm
DJ's Sports Bar and Grill – Banda Night – 9pm
Eddie V's – Rick Taylor Trio – 6:30pm
Fireside Lounge – Red's Rockstar Karaoke – 9pm
Lavender Bistro – Abie Perkins (Inside), Patrick Mahon and Carrie Wilson (Patio) – 6:30pm
The Local on 50th – Trivia Night – 7pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
Pappy and Harriet's – Joseph w/ Sarah Klang – 8pm
Plan B Live Entertainment & Cocktails – Trivia w/ Esther Sanchez – 9:30pm
Purple Room – Rose Mallett – 6:30pm
The Roost Lounge – Karaoke – 6pm
Vicky's of Santa Fe – Slim Man Band – 6pm

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Babaloo Lounge – Steve Sanders Pianist – 4pm, Live Music – 6:30pm
Cascade Lounge @ Agua Caliente – Funk Monks Motown Meltdown – 7pm
Coachella Valley Brewing Co. – Trivia Night Hosted by Derek Wade Timmons – 7pm
DJ's Sports Bar and Grill – Country Night – 9pm
Eddie V's – Rick Taylor Trio – 6:30pm
The Hood – Open Mic – 9pm
Hotel Zoso – Desert Soul Club – 6pm
Indian Wells Resort Hotel – Patrice Morris – 6pm
Lavender Bistro – Scott Carter (Inside), Abie Perkins (Patio) – 6:30pm
The Local on 50th – Live Music – 7pm
Melvyn's – Live Music – 6pm
Mojave Gold – The Lounge "Unplugged" w/ Ty French and Amanda Davis – 6pm
The Nest – Live Music – 6:30pm
Pappy and Harriet's – Radioactive Chicken Heads – 8:30pm
Plan B Live Entertainment & Cocktails – Red's Rockstar Karaoke – 9pm
Purple Room – Charles Herrera, Darci Daniels and Michael Holmes – 6:30pm
V Wine Lounge and Martini Bar – Karaoke Hosted by Julian – 6pm
Vicky's of Santa Fe – John Stanley King Cowboy Songs – 6pm CV



DESERT HEAT, DEEP SOUL: INSIDE THE SOUL SPRINGS FESTIVAL

THE GROOVE REPORT

BY SWEET BABY J'AI



If you saw flames rising from Cathedral City last weekend, relax—those weren't sirens screaming out of the Cathedral City Amphitheater. That was the **David Patterson Band** setting the stage on fire at the **Soul Springs Festival**. Real flames. The musical kind. The kind that singes your eyebrows and rewires your nervous system in the best possible way.

And let's clear this up right now: if you thought they were going to ease us in with a polite opening act or roll out a high school band as a warm-up, bless your heart. Think again. If you weren't there from the jump, you missed the blaze. **This thing started hot and stayed there**.

What we got wasn't about chasing chart-toppers or flexing Grammy credentials. This was something better—**master musicians and seasoned singers delivering the songs you grew up with.** The ones lodged deep in your DNA. The ones that come with memories attached: car radios, kitchen floors, first loves, last loves, and that one song that still makes you pull over when it comes on.

At the center stood Patterson—sax in hand, cool and commanding—leading a band stacked with **grown-folk groove**: Cliff Brown on guitar, El Magid on keys, Del Atkins holding the bottom, and Kerry Griffin locking it all in on drums. No wasted notes. Just deep pocket, deep respect, and deep soul.

As someone who's played with many of these musicians over the years, I could feel the familiarity in the way the day unfolded. The connection was evident even from the audience: no forced moments—seasoned musicians trusting each other and the music. That kind of chemistry can't be manufactured; it comes from shared history and deep listening.

Throughout the afternoon, performers dipped into a deep catalog of soul classics—pulling out familiar favorites and surprise moments along the way.

The day rolled out like a family reunion with **Supreme Legacy's Ladies of Soul Tribute**, featuring Stellita Porter, Laticia Carrington, and Julie Harris. Songs like "You Can't Hurry Love," "Proud Mary," and "Tonight Is the Night" floated through the set—classics so familiar you don't even realize you're singing along until your neighbor turns and smiles because—yes—you both know every word.

Jeff Robinson followed, smooth and intentional, weaving through "Distant Lover," a Luther-smooth "Wait for Love," and other soulful selections that made you sit up a little straighter—like your heart recognized what was happening before your brain did.

And—because the universe was clearly feeling generous—**Madame Dee took the stage** and had the entire amphitheater swaying, singing, and smiling wide. When she eased into "Diamond in the back, sunroof top… diggin' the scene with a gangster lean," the crowd became one big, knowing choir—those lyrics already living in our bones.

As if that wasn't enough, surprise guest **Keith Washington** rolled through with Supreme Legacy on background harmonies, **delivering straight-up old-school joy.** "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." "Ain't No Stopping Us Now." Songs that don't ask permission—they simply lift everybody in reach. The women rushed the stage like he was Sam Cooke in the late '60s, that same unmistakable pull, that same collective swoon.

Madame Dee returned to close the night with "I'd Rather Go Blind," delivering a rendition so raw and full-bodied it felt less like a cover and more like a testimony. Somewhere, **Etta James absolutely felt that energy.**

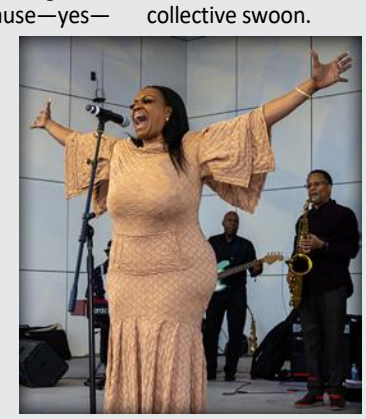
All of this unfolded picnic-style—blankets, folding chairs, food baskets, sunglasses tilted just right. And while much of the country was battling freezing temperatures and winter storms, Palm Springs was doing what it does best: gathering under open skies, 86 degrees in February, letting soul music do the warming.

This was the second annual **Soul Springs Festival**, sponsored by **Agua Caliente Casinos**, with a touch of L.A. soul brought to the desert by **Derrick Pipkin**, managing partner and owner of Pips on LaBrea. Mark it down now—this festival is on its way to becoming a staple.

This was soul music doing exactly what it's meant to do—bringing people together, right where they are.

For more information, visit soulspringsfest.com. CV









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A TOAST TO SWEET CHARITY



BY CRAIG MICHAELS



If there are two things in this world that speak directly to my soul, they are rich, decadent chocolate and crisp, bubbly champagne. They aren't just food and drink to me; they are my absolute favorite indulgences, the perfect way to celebrate life's little moments. So, you can imagine my delight when I stumbled upon the flyer for the **Parkinson's Resource Organization's 3rd Annual Chocolate & Champagne** event. It felt like the universe had curated a night specifically for my tastes—an elegant soirée dedicated entirely to my two greatest culinary loves, all set against the backdrop of Old Hollywood glamour.

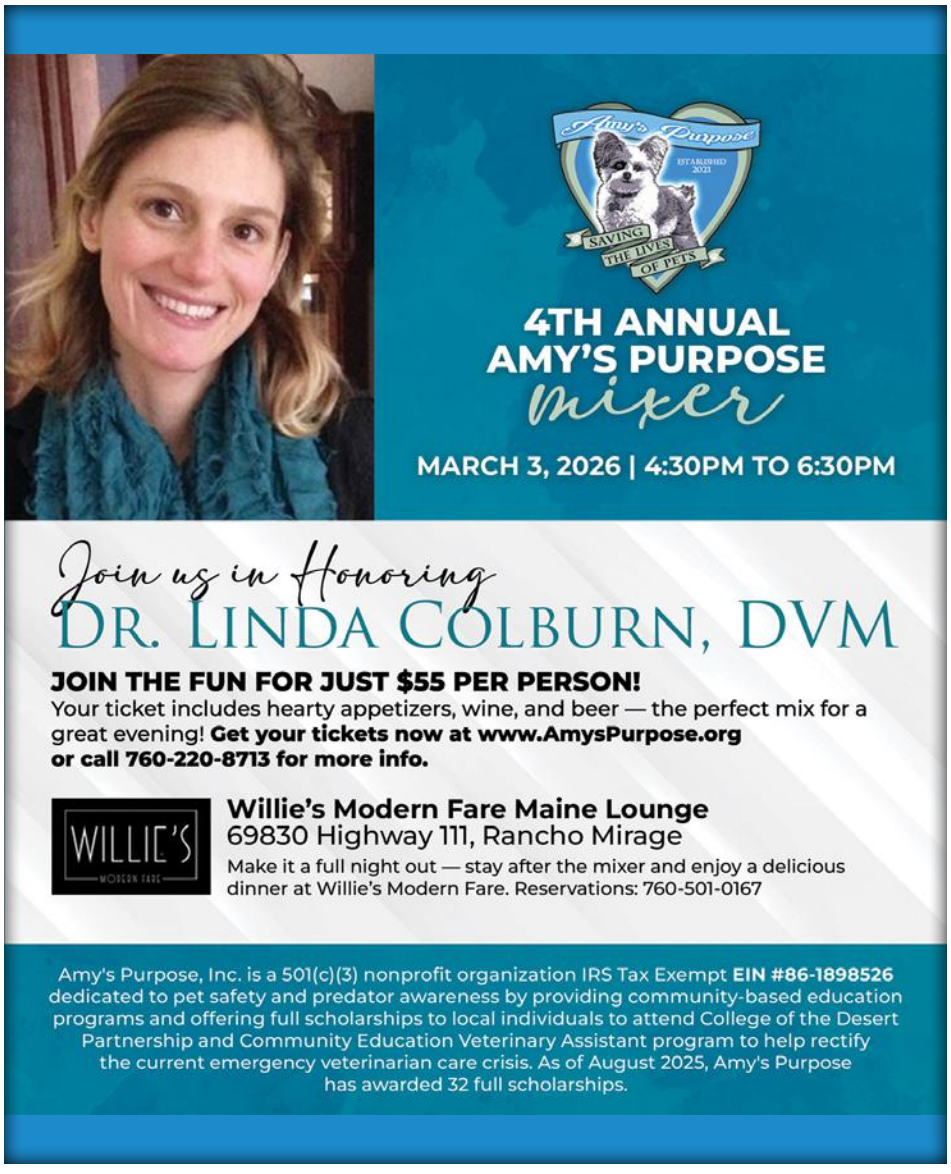
The event is taking place on **Thursday, February 26th at 5:00 PM**, and the venue is just as exquisite as the menu. We will be gathering at **The Velvet Rope Hotel** in Palm Springs, a boutique location that perfectly captures that classic, star-studded vibe. I can already picture myself there, mingling under the stars, a flute of golden champagne in one hand and a piece of artisan chocolate in the other. The evening promises not just these delicious treats, but also a silent auction and the kind of sophisticated atmosphere that makes for an unforgettable night out in the Coachella Valley.

But the sweetness of the evening goes beyond just the dessert table. The best part is that every sip and every bite supports a cause that truly matters. This event is a fundraiser for the **Parkinson's Resource Organization**, a dedicated nonprofit ensuring that no one in our community has to face Parkinson's disease in isolation. By indulging in my favorite foods, I'm actually helping to provide free resources and support to families right here in the desert. It turns a night of luxury into a meaningful act of kindness, which makes that chocolate taste even better.

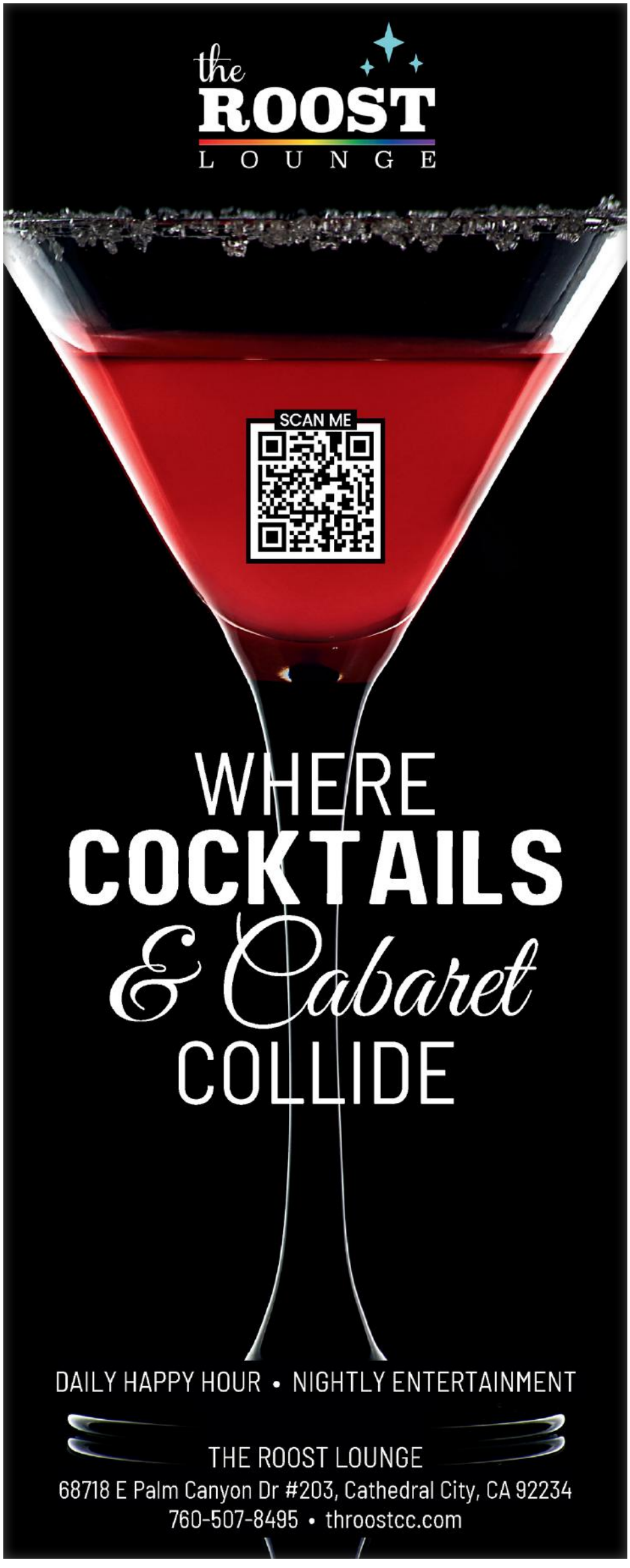
I've already marked my calendar, and if you share my passion for bubbles and sweets—or just want to support a fantastic local cause—you should join me. It's the perfect excuse to dress up, enjoy the finer things in life, and give back. You can grab your tickets and RSVP by scanning the QR code on the flyer or by visiting the link below. I hope to see you there for a toast!

Event Details & RSVP:

- **Link:** parkinsonsresource.org/chocolate
- **Phone:** 877-775-4111
- **Location:** The Velvet Rope Hotel, 120 W Veredasur, Palm Springs
- **Date:** February 26 @ 5 PM CV






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THEATRE

METEOR SHOWER TO HIT DESERT ENSEMBLE THEATRE — DAVID YOUSE STARS IN STEVE MARTIN'S ABSURDIST COMEDY



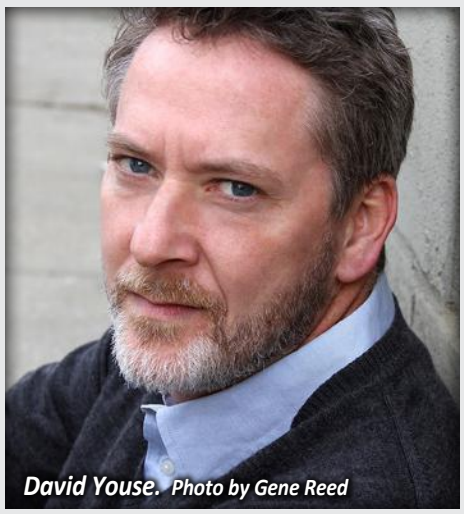
Desert Ensemble Theatre (DET) will present *Meteor Shower*, a surreal comedy where dinner and stargazing spiral into cosmic absurdity in classic Steve Martin fashion, at the Palm Springs Cultural Center, March 6–15.

Allison Adato of *Entertainment Weekly* called *Meteor Shower* "a very funny play — keening-like-a-howler-monkey funny… the premise is polished to sparkling."

In Martin's singular universe, Corky and Norm are thrilled to host Gerald and Laura at their home in the valley outside Los Angeles to witness a once-in-a-lifetime meteor shower. But as the stars come out and the conversation flows, it becomes clear that Gerald and Laura may not be all that they appear to be. Over the course of a wildly unpredictable, starlit dinner party, the unexpected repeatedly occurs. Using his trademark absurdist humor, Martin bends time and reality into a surprising and unforgettably funny theatrical experience.

Film and television veteran **David Youse**, seen in last year's DET runaway hit *God of Carnage*, leads a high-wattage cast of DET favorites including **Lizzie Sosa** (*God of Carnage*, *The Beebo Brinker Chronicles*, *Singing with the Desert Stars*), **Theresa Jewett** (*Esperanza*, *Showstoppers*), and—making his DET debut—**Skylar Gaines** (*Falsettos*, *Eureka Day* – Dezart Performs). Also making his DET debut is director **Keith Hoffman**, a veteran of New York and Los Angeles theatre.

Meteor Shower runs Fridays at 7:30pm, Saturdays 2pm and 7:30pm, and Sundays 2pm, March 6–15, at the Palm Springs Cultural Center, 2300 E. Baristo Road, Palm Springs. Tickets are $40 and available at **www.desertensembletheatre.org** or by calling **(760) 565-2476**.


David Youse. *Photo by Gene Reed*



About Desert Ensemble Theatre
Founded in 2011, Desert Ensemble Theatre is dedicated to daring contemporary work and the support of local artists, presenting new plays and socially resonant stories that reflect the diversity and creativity of the Coachella Valley. CV


David Youse in God of Carnage. *Photo by Tara Howard*





THE VINO VOICE

BY RICK RIOZZA



VINO OLIMPICO DI MILANO

As the **Winter Olympics** wind down in **Milano-Cortina,** I thought it fitting to mentioned some of the northern Italian wines we've been quaffing as we watched *i giochi fantastici [ee-JOKEE-fan-TASTEE-chee]—the fantastic sports and games!*

Although we were in Milano this past summer, we really couldn't stay an additional eight months to catch the sport & games; but, we met a few folks who reside in Milano, and they have acted as our far-flung correspondents—so we could enjoy the same or similar wines that the Olympic wine crowd were drinking at their local wine bars.

So speaking of ***the wine bars of Milano***, here are three of our favorite spots to chill, quaff, and practice our *Italiano:*

Bar Paradiso is the undeniably cool wine bar in Porta Romana in the fashion district. It's shoebox-sized, but being among the crowd that spills onto the street with a glass in hand is part of the fun. Rare wines are sourced from all over the place They do an occasional pop-up series called ***Bar Paradiso & Friends,*** so you might catch something special, like tacos from a Paris-based Mexican chef or a special menu from a London arts club.

We hear that there's a bunch of **2001 Brunello di Montalcino** pouring; a glass like that here in the states will cost you—over here it's five euros! We're happily enjoying the Brunello's baby brother—**Rosso di Montalcino**, the ***Il Poggione*** only at $25 a bottle and still living the life—*la vita di far niente!*

Of course, a Brunello is from Tuscany and not considered a "northern" Italian region; but no one worries about stuff like that in Italy.

Nombra de Vin: Finding a wine bar in the former monks' quarters of Milan's second-largest church may be unexpected, but that's exactly what N'ombra de Vin is all about.

This 16th-century church refectory turned subterranean bar-restaurant in the Brera district is your spot for aperitivo. Tables and a few bar seats fill up quickly in the moody cavernous space, and at sunset, the chic crowd sits on the street, glasses in-hand.

Downstairs, most folks order salumi boards and lots of bottles, their voices traveling across the tall vaulted ceiling and bouncing off thousands of for-sale reds, whites, and bubbles that line the walls—the energy there, keeps you ordering more glasses and reveling about space & time & love of life.

Deposito Enoteca is on Corso Buenos Aires. It looks like an industrial warehouse with brick arches and hundreds of bottles stacked on industrial shelves, and "just enough polish to feel intentional.". The amberjack crudo, bone marrow, and ragù of the day are great , but what makes one stay for dinner is the whole section of vegetable dishes, which is rare in Italian wine bars. Order a few shareable, produce-forward plates like garlicky grilled cabbage or watermelon that is pressed, marinated, and grilled until it becomes umami, almost carpaccio-like.

A 130-year-old establishment: Welcome to **Catine Isola**, a historic shop that's open



all day to pick up a bottle or proudly have an 11am pour of *pinot*. The vintage library setup, complete with rolling ladders, is filled floor to ceiling with rare bottles and new finds.

Though a simple plate of Italy's deli bites comes with your glass of wine, there isn't food beyond that. The good news: you're close to all the best dumplings and *baos* from Chinatown that is nearby. Oh yea! We love Chinatown all over the world! (That reminds me: the Chinatown over in Belize was the bomb! I need to write about it soon!). Also check out Cantine Isola's fall-off-the-pork plate—another bomb!

Bring them back to **Cantine Isola'**s stools and ask the bartender for a pour to match your fall-off-the-bone pork—they know what to do.

And now: some of the delicious Olympicl sports & wine pairings we have enjoyed:

Always condsider the Trento DOC Mountain Bubbles: Traditional method sparkling wines from producers like Ferrari and Reví are being highlighted specifically for the Games, as they originate from the host region of Trentino where they're all speeding on the downhill.

Curling: Conegliano Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore DOCG. UNESCO heritage bubbles from nearby Veneto.

Alpine Sking: Valtellina Superiore DOCG (Nebbiolo). Hearty reds grown on terraces overlooking the Olympic runs.

Biathlon: Alto Adige Gewürztraminer. Fragrant, high-altitude whites from the Bolzano province

Figure Skating: Gavi di Gavi. Described as "finely honed" and elegant, matching the artistry of the sport.

Cross Country: Trento DOC Methodo Classico Long-aged sparkling wines that mirror the endurance of the sport. ***Saluti***

Rick is your somm-about-town always checking out the wine scene here and there. Contact him at winespectrum@aol.com. CV





MARIAH HANSON SELLS THE DINAH AFTER 35 HISTORIC YEARS EVENT CHANGES HANDS WITH LONGTIME DINAH TEAM MEMBERS BELLA BARKOW AND ROSE GARCIA

EVENTS

ICONIC QUEER WOMEN PARTY & MUSIC FESTIVAL REMAINS IN LGBTQ+ FAMILY AS DUO'S NEWLY FOUNDED BELLAROSE PRODUCTIONS CHARTS THE NEXT CHAPTER

After 35 legendary years, ***The Dinah***, the world's most iconic and longest-running music festival and party for queer women, has been sold by founder and producer **Mariah Hanson** to queer event producer and longtime Dinah Operations Manager **Bella Barkow** and seasoned Dinah emcee, reality TV star and real estate entrepreneur **Rose Garcia.**

The acquisition ensures The Dinah remains independently owned, community-led, and deeply rooted in LGBTQ+ culture, now operating under the marquee of the duo's newly founded company, **BellaRose Productions**. The transition signals not only continuity, but a powerful evolution of an institution that has shaped queer women's space for more than three decades. Few LGBTQ+ events, particularly those centered on queer women, have ever achieved this level of cultural impact, longevity, and commercial success. This sale stands as a pivotal moment in LGBTQ+ history and culture.

With this historic transition, The Dinah remains firmly in the LGBTQ+ community and Dinah family's hands. Garcia and Barkow bring complementary strengths to the role, along with an insider's understanding of what has made The Dinah a trusted and transformative platform for queer women and allies.

Rose Garcia, the real-life inspiration for the iconic "Papi" on The L Word, combines star power with authenticity and a steadfast commitment to LGBTQ+ visibility. A fan favorite on The Real L Word, she has expertly balanced leading Garcia Real Estate Group with devotion to her family and advocacy within the LGBTQ+ community. As a prominent Latina lesbian entrepreneur, her real estate success has brought her features in Newsweek, BuzzFeed, Bravo's Million Dollar Listing Los Angeles, and HGTV's House Hunters. Garcia has also emceed The Dinah and other major queer events, further amplifying her influence. A Stage 3 ovarian cancer survivor now in remission, she steps into this chapter with renewed purpose as co-owner of The Dinah alongside Bella Barkow under their new venture, BellaRose Productions.

With a career spanning Toronto raves to major festivals in Los Angeles, Bella Barkow brings extensive experience in large-scale LGBTQ+ event production. From her early days in West Hollywood nightlife to producing speed-dating events for queer women and managing major festivals including LA Pride and the Outloud Festival, she has established herself as a key figure in California's queer event scene. Bella joined The Dinah team in 2018, quickly rising from Pool Party Stage Manager to Operations Manager, and now brings deep operational expertise and an intimate knowledge of the festival's inner workings.

"I've been to over 20 Dinah events, and each one has been unforgettable, a place to meet incredible women, build lifelong friendships, and feel fully accepted," says **Garcia**. "Keeping The Dinah in the family ensures Mariah's legacy lives on. Bella and I share the same deep love and unwavering dedication for this festival, and I know her vision is safe with us."

"The Dinah has been a cornerstone of queer culture for decades, and being part of its future is an honor. Coming out at 13 in the late '90s wasn't easy, but seeing The Dinah on The L Word made it feel a little less scary," adds **Barkow.** Working alongside Rose to carry forward Mariah's legacy is deeply personal for me. This festival was my safe space, and it's my hope that we keep it alive for the next generation of young sapphics searching for the same sense of belonging."



Together, their leadership promises a thoughtful blend of tradition and innovation, preserving what has made The Dinah mythic for over three decades while infusing it with fresh energy and bold new ideas. That energy is already taking shape. The excitement begins this year with the 35th edition of The Dinah.

It's official: The Dinah 2026 will take place September 30 through October 4th, returning to the Hilton Hotel and The Zoso. The full program and entertainment lineup will be announced in June, with more details rolling out in the months ahead.

This landmark transition powerfully solidifies the extraordinary legacy built by Mariah Hanson thirty-five years ago. Under her stewardship, The Dinah has stood in a league of its own, earning national and international headlines in both mainstream and queer media, appearing in television shows and documentaries, and becoming a globally recognized cultural phenomenon. What began as a bold idea in Palm Springs, CA, evolved into a rite of passage for queer women around the world, a destination event that helped define visibility, freedom, and celebration on a scale rarely achieved in LGBTQ+ entertainment.

"Rose and Bella are the perfect duo to take over The Dinah. Through their big hearts, business acumen and commitment to preserving what is most beloved about The Dinah, I am genuinely excited to watch them take The Dinah to new heights," says **Mariah Hanson**. "The Dinah is my life's work. I can't begin to explain how important this event has been to me, and the powerful way I have seen it change hearts and minds, year after year. That The Dinah will continue to be a game changer in our community and a beacon of hope for all of us, especially in these trying times, leaves my heart full. The Dinah is in good hands."

In an era when few queer women-centered events survive, let alone thrive, this milestone moment ensures The Dinah's story is far from over, it's only beginning to be written.

Stay tuned and visit www.TheDinah.com and follow The Dinah on its social media platforms for ongoing updates, announcements, and exclusive news. CV

DANCING WITH THE STARS CON 2026 - THE ULTIMATE DWTS FAN CONVENTION AND LIVE SHOW

EVENTS

FRIDAY JULY 31 – SUNDAY AUGUST 2 | PALM SPRINGS, CA | ACRISURE ARENA | A CELEBRATION OF ALL THINGS DANCING WITH THE STARS LIVE DANCE PERFORMANCES, LIVE PANELS, INTERACTIVE PHOTO EXPERIENCES, EXHIBITS AND SO MUCH MORE! TICKETS & VIP PACKAGES ON SALE SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14 AT 10AM PST AT TICKETMASTER.COM

Fans of *Dancing with the Stars* will get up close to all the action, when we bring the ballroom to life at the first ever **Dancing with the Stars Con! The Ultimate DWTS Fan Convention and Live Show** makes its dazzling debut in Palm Springs, California**, from July 31 through August 2** at **Acrisure Arena.**

This 3-day celebration of *Dancing with the Stars*, produced by Faculty in association with BBC Studios, will feature appearances by beloved *Dancing with the Stars* professionals including **Brandon Armstrong, Lindsay Arnold, Rylee Arnold, Alan Bersten, Hailey Bills, Sharna Burgess, Witney Carson, Val Chmerkovskiy, Sasha Farber, Jenna Johnson, Daniella Karagach, Pasha Pashkov, Jan Ravnik, Gleb Savchenko, Emma Slater, Ezra Sosa, Britt Stewart,** plus former celebrity Mirrorball Champions and fan-favorite contestants including **Hannah Brown, Danielle Fishel, Xochitl Gomez, Joey Graziadei, Elaine Hendrix, Rashad Jennings, Amanda Kloots, Whitney Leavitt, Phaedra Parks, Jojo Siwa, Johnny Weir, Rumer Willis, Kristi Yamaguchi, Ginger Zee**, and legendary **DWTS Judges Carrie Ann Inaba and Bruno Tonioli** plus more to be announced.

Designed to celebrate the iconic television series and its passionate fan base, **Dancing with the Stars Con** will offer two live dance performances featured on the ballroom floor, interactive live panels with your DWTS favorites, interactive photo experiences, exhibits, Q&A sessions, exclusive merchandise and unique fan experiences inspired by the hit show that's just celebrated 20 years on air!

"We are so excited to bring Dancing with the Stars fans a truly once-in-a-lifetime event. For the first time ever, we'll assemble the largest cast of pro dancers, Mirrorball Champions, and fan-favorite celebrities from throughout the show's twenty-year history for an action-packed, full-weekend experience that will thrill audiences. When everyone is under one roof, anything can happen — and we can't wait to bring the ballroom to life this summer in Palm Springs."

– Jared Paul, Faculty Productions

"Dancing with the Stars has always been about more than just competition, it's about courage, connection, and the unforgettable moments that bring people together through dance. For years our fans have been clamoring for even more ways to engage with the show, and we're thrilled to have created this rare and immersive opportunity to experience the magic, the music, the movement, the emotion, and the heart that continues to make this show so special."

-Ryan O'Dowd, President of Unscripted, BBC Studios & **Executive Producer, Dancing with the Stars**

TICKETS: Tickets will be available starting with a Verizon presale (details below) and Mirrorball Member presale that begin Thursday, February 12. Additional presales will run throughout the week ahead of the general on sale beginning Saturday, February 14 at 10am PST at ticketmaster.com, the official ticketing provider of Acrisure Arena.

VERIZON PRESALE: Verizon will offer customers an exclusive presale for DANCING WITH THE STARS CON 2026 in the U.S – no strings attached, simply for being a Verizon customer. The presale runs from Thursday, February 12 at 10am PST to Friday, February 13 at 10pm PST. Visit myAccess in the My Verizon app for more details.

MIRRORBALL MEMBER PRESALE: Fans who want early access to the best seats and VIP, can sign up for a Mirrorball Membership – this membership is FREE TO JOIN. Mirrorball Member Presale starts Thursday, February 12 at 12pm PST. Head to DWTSCON.COM to sign up now.

VIP: VIP Packages and VIP Upgrades will be available for DWTS CON 2026. VIP packages and upgrades vary and may include solo or group photos with a selection of DWTS CON talent, VIP Hospitality Area, Friday welcome event with select DWTS CON talent, Exclusive Merch, crowd free shopping and much more. Head to DWTSCON.COM for more information

TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATIONS: Traveling in from out of town? DWTS CON is working with a variety of hotels in the greater Palm Springs area to get discounted rates for DWTS CON attendees. DWTSCON.COM for details.

***talent subject to change* CV



PET PLACE

PUPPIES BEHIND BARS, SAVING THE INMATES



BY JANET McAFEE



For over 30 years, innovative programs throughout the country have paired rescue dogs with prison inmates. Participants who complete these programs have an extremely low rate of recidivism. In 2026, our criminal justice system is under renewed scrutiny to do better. Once again, dogs are our heroes, transforming the lives of incarcerated men and women who previously had no hope for a changed life. It is our hope that Riverside County will implement such a program.

Service dogs are the eyes for those who cannot see, the leaders for people unable to walk, and the healers for those suffering from emotional illnesses such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For some service dogs, it all began behind bars….

Before Puppies Behind Bars, an inmate named Tom spent most days watching television in his cell and pumping iron. Tom spent over thirty years in prison on a conviction for second degree murder. Tom explained the difference the dogs made in his life, "In the prison system, you shut down your feelings. You gotta do that to survive because it's hard. But the dogs brought me back, you know, to the human side." He had an incredible success rate of 6-0 with all his dogs successfully graduating, a success that gave him status within the prison and hope within himself.

Tom took on a dog that was failing in the program, a beautiful Golden Retriever named Tuesday, a dog that later became the subject of a best-selling book UNTIL TUESDAY. Tom began his relationship with Tuesday by simply laying down beside him for three hours without saying a word. He describes his first impression of Tuesday, "Tuesday has such sad eyes, especially when he's wounded, that at seven months old he probably looked like exactly what he was: a lost kid. When I think of him then, I see a perfect picture of longing, of innocence at the moment it discovers there is pain in the world."

Tom looks back on those days, "The only way the prison system could win was to get me to hate, and being around the dogs and everything, the hate was totally out of the picture." Today Tom owns a dog training business with his wife, providing a second chance for troubled dogs that others gave up on including many pit bulls. Inmates who participate in the Puppies Behind Bars program acquire job skills and exit prison to enter careers as vet technicians, kennel workers, and animal trainers.

Founded in 1997, this innovative program in New York initially trained dogs for people with physical disabilities. After 9/11, there was an increased demand for bomb sniffing dogs. Later they began training dogs to assist veterans returning home from Iraq and Afghanistan with PTSD, acquired brain injuries, and physical conditions. The dogs spend 20 months with their inmate trainers, living with them in their cells. Here, it's the dogs that get weekend furloughs in outside homes to gain exposure to things they don't encounter in prison such as doorbells and elevators. The dogs learn an amazing 80 commands.

A similar program, Pups on Parole, began in Las Vegas when a rescue group called Heaven Can Wait Animal Society didn't have enough foster homes for the dogs they rescued. The dogs are placed with specially chosen inmates in the female correctional facility. The abandoned and sometimes abused dogs needed a place to heal before going to adoptive homes in the community. Inmates have all the time in the world, but for dogs on "death row" in shelters time is of the essence. Famed trainer Cesar Milan helped develop the training curriculum. One of the program coordinators wrote this poem about her experience:

LITTLE ONE

Little one…so full of fear
No one's gonna hurt you here.
Soon, you'll see, how it feels to trust
cuz, you've been rescued, just like us.
We promise that it's not too late
because we all know that Heaven can wait.
Forget the broken road you've traveled on
for, yesterday has come and gone.
That's a lesson, we must all learn
and now, little one…it is your turn.
Come with us, walk by our side
hold your tail up high with pride.
And in the end, when we're all through
there'll be a family just waiting for you.
Because, Little one… so full of fear
no one's gonna hurt you here

Los Angeles County started a rescue dog training program in their jails in 2012. California inmates have a recidivism rate of 67%. They come out of prison with few job skills after learning unsavory "tricks of the trade" from fellow offenders. Millions of shelter dogs, whose only crime is not having a home, languish behind bars without hope. It costs California taxpayers an average of $106,000 per year to house an inmate. It costs California taxpayers an average of $575 to capture, house, and then adopt or euthanize a shelter animal. When will Riverside County implement a program like this? Who rescues who? After exposure to these wonderful canine creatures, confidence replaces fear, purpose replaces idleness, and hope for a better future replaces anger.

Janetmcafee8@gmail.com CV



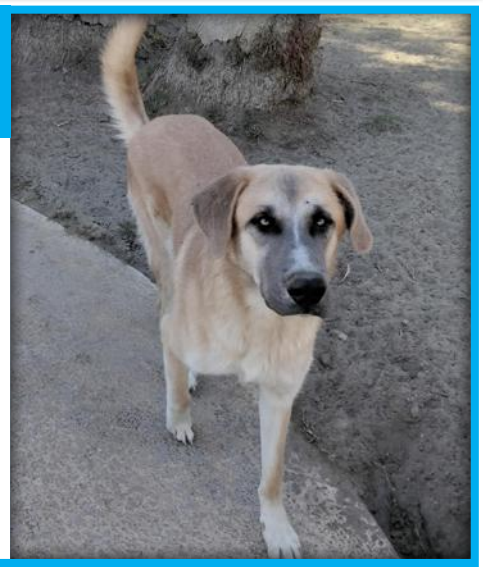
MEET PHOEBE

Beautiful 2-yr-old Lab/ Shepherd girl Phoebe seeks a loving home where there is another dog for her to play with. Call Loving All Animals at (760) 834-7000 to schedule an appointment to meet her with you and your dog!



MEET COBIJO

This "Gentle Giant" enjoys playtime with the other dogs of all sizes in his Loving All Animals foster home. He's almost 2-yrs-old & 90-lbs of doggie love. Call Loving All Animals at (760) 834-7000 for an appointment to meet this handsome fellow.





Here is a partial list of animal shelters & rescues:

COACHELLA VALLEY ANIMAL CAMPUS – Open 11:00am-6:00pm Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Open 10am to 4pm Sat, Sun, Closed Monday. LARGEST SHELTER IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY! View animals online at all 4 county shelters www.rcdas.org, 72-050 Pet Land Place, Thousand Palms, (760) 343-3644. (Public)

PALM SPRINGS ANIMAL SHELTER – Open to the public, closed Tuesday. View animals online at www.psanimalsshelter.org, 4575 E. Mesquite Ave, Palm Springs, Call (760) 416-5718. (Public)

DESERT HOT SPRINGS ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL - Open daily 9:30-4:30. www.cityofdhs.org/animal-care-control.com, View animals at www.petango.com/dhsacc. 65810 Hacienda Ave, Desert Hot Springs, Call when you arrive (760) 329-6411 ext. 450.

ANIMAL SAMARITANS – Open to the public. View their animals at www.animalsamaritans.org. Email volunteer@animalsamaritans.org to foster or volunteer. Located at 72307 Ramon Rd, Thousand Palms, (760) 601-3918. (Private)

KITTYLAND – Open to the public 12noon to 2pm to adopt cats and kittens. Located at 67600 18th Avenue, Desert Hot Springs, www.kittylandrescue.org, (760) 251-2700. They also have cats at PetSmart in Palm Springs (Private)

PRETTY GOOD CAT – Foster based rescue for cats located in La Quinta. Contact them at www.prettygoodcat.com, (760) 660-3414 (Private)

LOVING ALL ANIMALS – Call for appointment to adopt dogs. Located at 83496 Avenue 51, Coachella, www.lovingallanimals.org, (760) 834-7000. (Private)

ANIMAL RESCUE CENTER OF CALIFORNIA (ARC), Foster based rescue for dogs and cats in Indio. www.thearc-ca.org, (760) 877-7077 (Private)

DESERT PAWS SANCTUARY – Foster based rescue for dogs and cats in Indio, www.desertpawssanctuary.org, P.O. Box 342, Indio, CA 92202, (760) 574-9284 (Private)

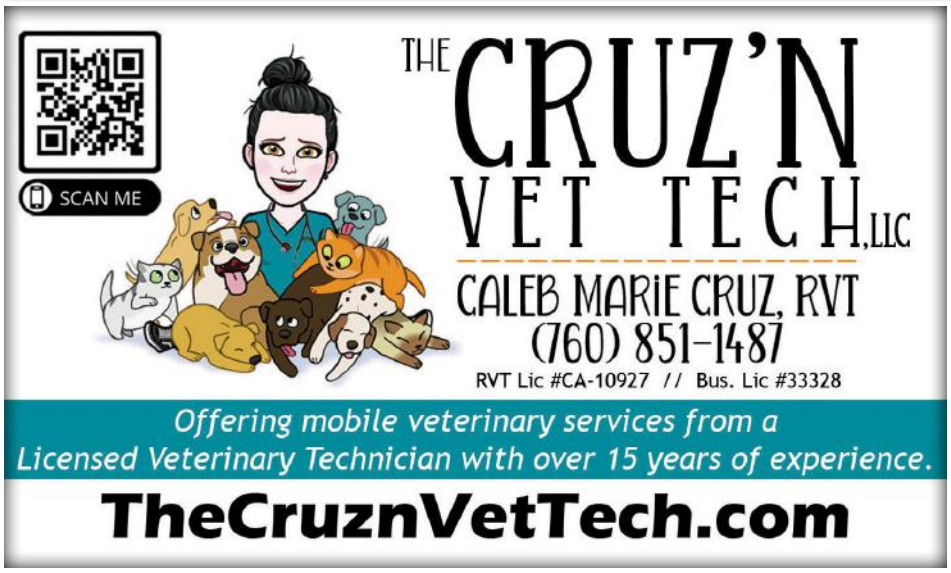
FOREVER MEOW - Foster based for cats & kittens, Palm Desert, www.forevermeow.org, (760) 335-6767 (Private)

FLUFFS & SCRUFFS – Foster based rescue for small dogs in Cathedral City. FLUFFSANDSCRUFFS@AOL.COM, (310) 980-3383 (Private)

SOCIETY'S OUTKAST ANIMAL RESCUE – Foster based rescue for dogs in Rancho Mirage, www.societysoutkasts.com, (760) 832-0617. (Private)

LIVING FREE ANIMAL SANCTUARY – Large outdoor shelter for dogs and cats up Hwy 74, Mountain Center, www.living-free.org, (951) 659-4687.

CV



These friendly dogs are at the Coachella Valley Animal Campus waiting for homes. Come meet them at 72-050 Petland Place, Thousand Palms, and www.rcdas.org for more info.

RIVERSIDE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL SERVICES









HAIR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

HADDON LIBBY



BY HADDON LIBBY

People spend a lot of money on their hair. Whether it is hair care products, hair removal or hair regrowth/loss treatments, the global personal care industry is huge. Driven by social media trends, an aging population, rising disposable incomes, demand for natural and premium options, and innovations like at-home devices, these markets continue to expand worldwide.

The hair care products category which consists of products like shampoos, conditioners, styling aids, colorants, and treatments, is the largest. Globally, people spend over $100 billion annually with growth rates at +/- 5% annually. The Asia-Pacific region leads in total volume with approximately a 35% market share due to the large populations of China and India, where affordable, herbal, and traditional products dominate amid rising middle-class spending. Europe frequently tops regional rankings with a focus on countries like Germany, the UK, and France.

The United States stands out for high per-person investment in our hair care. With a market size of approximately $20 billion in 2025, the US accounts for nearly 20% of global spending despite representing just 4% of world population. Per capita spending hovers around $60 annually, though household surveys indicate that active hair care folks average closer to $100 per household. Numbers reflect strong demand for organic, clean, and specialized products, plus a vibrant salon and e-commerce scene. In contrast, per capita figures are much lower in populous Asia (e.g., 10 in China and $5 in India), while wealthier spots like Japan, South Korea ($100), and parts of Europe or the Middle East often exceed US levels. These numbers seem low on a per person basis until you realize that 15% of Americans do not use hair care products. Of those who regularly care for their hair, the average spent is $372/year. Women who are more active in the care of their hair spend $872/year while men spend $592/year.

Whether it is a razor, cream, wax, at-home IPL/laser device or professional services, the hair removal business is smaller but growing quickly. Global product markets are estimated at between $15 and 30 billion, with devices and services higher here in the U.S. North America often claims the top regional spot in hair removal with one-third of all spending. The U.S. spends roughly $20 per person with Europe exceeding the U.S. by about $10 per person and Asia lagging at $10. Among regular users, spending is around $700/year.

Hair loss, particularly androgenetic alopecia (aka pattern baldness or male/female pattern hair loss), is extremely common and primarily genetic/hormonal. It affects a large percentage of both men and women, with



prevalence increasing significantly with age. Four in five men will experience some hair loss in life. For most, hair loss begins after 50. For women, between 33% and 50% experience some hair loss in their lifetimes. Most of these hair losses begin after menopause.

Roughly 13 million Americans use hair regrowth/loss treatments like minoxidil, supplements, serums, at-home laser caps and transplants. Globally it is estimated that $7 billion is spent annually on hair regrowth with U.S. spending around $4 billion. On a per person basis, Europeans spend about what Americans spend while the Asia-Pacific region spends about half U.S. levels. That said, the Asia-Pacific market is the fastest growing region.

Across categories, Americans consistently rank among the highest per capita spenders, often 5–20x more than in developing high-population markets. This stems from our cultural focus on appearance, higher incomes, wellness trends, and access to innovative/premium solutions. While Asia-Pacific surpasses in total size and growth speed due to demographics, and Europe competes in luxury, Americans drive outsized demand for quality and tech.

Haddon Libby is the Founder and Chief Investment Officer for RIA firm Winslow Drake Investment Management. For more information on our services, please visit www.WinslowDrake.com. CV

WINSLOW DRAKE INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

ABC'S OF A 2026 ACCIDENT

DALE GRIBOW ON THE LAW

LEGAL REPRESENTATION OF THE INJURED & CRIMINALLY ACCUSED





At the Law Office of **Dale Gribow**, we represent victims injured in accidents — including those harmed by drunk or distracted drivers — and we also defend individuals accused of DUI. This outline explains the typical stages of a Personal Injury (PI) accident case so you understand what to expect from beginning to resolution.

SILENCE IS GOLDEN

DON'T talk, give statements, or settle with ANY insurance company, without your lawyer's permission. It's not what's said. It's what they thought you said.

If contacted, politely say: "I would be happy to speak with you, but my lawyer has instructed me not to discuss anything without his permission." Get their name and number and we will handle all communications. It is our policy that accident clients don't speak directly with insurance adjusters. Insurance companies are trained to minimize payouts.

YOU NEED TO:

Prepare a Written Summary: Describe your condition **from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet and explain,** How the accident happened; How you felt immediately after, and How you feel now.

1. Self-Check for Injuries:

• Gently touch different parts of your body to identify pain or tenderness.

• Notice discomfort when moving, bending, sitting, or sleeping.

• Sometimes symptoms appear days later.

2. Medical Updates:

• Inform us of all medical providers.

• Continue treatment as recommended.

• Gaps in treatment can hurt your case.

We are always happy to meet at your convenience, and will provide directions upon scheduling.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A PI case may settle at **any stage**. This outline describes what happens if settlement is not reached early. We stay in contact with our clients throughout the process so you always know your case status.

STAGES OF A PERSONAL INJURY CASE

1. Retainer Agreement

2. Medical Treatment: We collect medical records once treatment concludes, or when appropriate for settlement discussions.

3. Settlement Demand: We prepare and send a formal demand package to the defendant's insurance company seeking fair compensation. Many cases resolve at this stage.

4. Filing a Lawsuit…If:

• The insurance company refuses to be reasonable, or

• The **two-year Statute of Limitations** (from the accident date) is approaching,

We file a **Summons and Complaint** to protect your legal rights. The defendant must then file an **Answer within 30 days** of being served.

5. Discovery Phase may take 6 months or longer: Both sides exchange information, including:

• Interrogatories (written questions)

• Requests for Documents

• Depositions

• Requests for Admissions

• Independent Medical Examination (IME)

6. Arbitration: The court may order non-binding arbitration.

• Typically scheduled 3–4 months out

• Arbitrator issues a decision within 30 days and both sides have 30 days to request a **Trial de Novo** (a new trial before a judge/jury).

7. Mandatory Settlement Conference (MSC): Before trial, the court schedules an MSC — a final formal attempt to settle before the judge. Many cases resolve here.

8. Trial: If no agreement is reached, a final verdict is rendered…absent appeal.

COURT DELAYS

The **Riverside County Superior Court, (PS and Indio)** experienced case backlogs. Justice delayed often benefits insurance companies — not injury victims…and thus the reason they Delay.

AFTER SETTLEMENT OR VERDICT

1. We receive the insurance settlement draft, which can take 30+ days.

2. Insurance companies often "deny and delay" to retain interest, "the float", on their money.

3. Upon receipt:

• Draft is signed, with client approval.

• Deposited into our Trust Account

• A detailed Disbursement Sheet is prepared showing: Gross settlement; Attorney fees; Costs; Medical liens and the Net to client.

4. Client reviews /signs the Disbursement Sheet.

5. Net funds are issued to the client.

6. Provider checks, doctors, are mailed.

Consult your CPA regarding tax implications as most personal injury recoveries are tax-free, but confirm professionally.

ABOUT DALE GRIBOW - For over 30 years, **Dale Gribow** has defended the rights and dignity of accident victims and those accused of DUI in the Coachella Valley.

Recognitions Include:

40+ Career Top Lawyer Awards

"Top Lawyer" – Palm Springs Life (2011–2026)

"Top Lawyer" – Inland Empire Magazine

5-Star |10.0 | AVVO Rating |"Preeminent" Martindale AV Rating …the highest possible.

10-Man of the Year | 5-Dale Gribow Days

Founding Member – American Association of Premier DUI Attorneys

10 Best Attorneys for Client Satisfaction (California – DUI Law)

14-year "Accidentally Yours" Talk Show Host | 1,000 Legal Columns | 15-year Desert Sun Society Reporter:

PHILOSOPHY - "Often referred to as a PI/DUI criminal defense lawyer, I don't view my clients as criminals. I see good, honest people in a frightening situation. My job is to protect their Constitutional rights."

However, when representing injury victims harmed by drunk drivers…"I change hats, and sue negligent drivers."

FINAL WORD

DRINKING/TEXTING CAUSE ARRESTS AND ACCIDENTS.

Being "intexticated" is as dangerous as being intoxicated.

Don't drink/ drive or text.

A Taxi/Uber are far cheaper than me…760-837-7500 CV


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EVENTS

BY CRAIG MICHAELS



FORTUNE, FLAVOR & FESTIVITY: AGUA CALIENTE CASINOS CELEBRATE LUNAR NEW YEAR

As the Lunar New Year ushers in the Year of the Horse, Agua Caliente Casinos is inviting Coachella Valley residents and visitors to celebrate with a month-long lineup of entertainment, promotions, and culinary specials across its properties in Rancho Mirage, Palm Springs, and Cathedral City. The highlight of the festivities will take place over Lunar New Year Weekend, February 20 through 22, when the casinos will transform into vibrant centers of culture, music, and celebration.

Throughout February, guests can take part in the $300,000 February Fortune Sweepstakes, held every Friday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., with preliminary drawings offering up to $750 in free play or promotional chips every 30 minutes. Each evening culminates in a grand prize drawing for $25,000 in cash, encouraging players to stay engaged on the casino floor while welcoming good fortune for the year ahead.

Live entertainment will play a major role in the weekend's festivities. On Friday, February 20, Sons of Legion brings its Soul to SØL Tour to Rancho Mirage, setting an energetic tone for the celebration. The following night, legendary performer Smokey Robinson headlines with his Legacy of Love Tour, offering audiences an evening of classic hits and soulful nostalgia. Also on Saturday, Dog N Butterfly – The Heart Experience will perform at the Agave Caliente Tequila Bar in Cathedral City, while Palm Springs hosts a special Cascade Cabaret program honoring Black History Month.

One of the most anticipated cultural highlights of the weekend will be the traditional Lion Dance performances on Saturday, February 21. Designed to symbolize luck, prosperity, and protection, the colorful dances will take place on the casino floors at 3 p.m. in Palm Springs, 5 p.m. in Cathedral City, and 7 p.m. in Rancho Mirage, allowing guests at all three locations to experience this time-honored Lunar New Year tradition.

Dining also takes center stage during the celebration, with a variety of limited-time food and drink specials inspired by the season. Guests can enjoy $10 Lunar New Year cocktails at Cathedral City's 360 Sports, along with an $8 Strawberry Raspberry Freeze available at all Java Caliente locations. Featured dishes include Mei Cai Rou at Waters Café and Tempura Lobster Tail Lo Mein at Palm Springs 360 Sports, offering festive flavors that reflect both tradition and modern fusion.

While the February 20–22 weekend serves as the focal point of the festivities, Agua Caliente's Lunar New Year celebration extends throughout the month, giving visitors multiple opportunities to participate. With high-profile concerts, cultural performances, generous sweepstakes, and themed dining experiences, the casinos aim to create a welcoming atmosphere that blends entertainment and tradition. For many in the Coachella Valley, the celebration offers a chance to gather with friends and family, embrace cultural heritage, and start the Year of the Horse with optimism, excitement, and a little extra luck.

For more information and a complete schedule of events, visit: **aguacalientecasinos.com**. CV







INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR CANNABIS: THE LANDSCAPE IS SHIFTING

CANNABIS CORNER





BY RUTH HILL R.N.

There are 67 million Medicare beneficiaries nationwide, and nearly 20% of seniors use CBD for pain, arthritis, and other age-related conditions. Based on reports from late 2025 and early 2026, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) developed a pilot program to cover certain hemp-derived CBD products, with a projected launch as early as April 2026. While CMS implemented an earlier final rule last April specifically stipulating that marijuana derived from federally legal hemp is ineligible for coverage under its Medicare Advantage program and other services, *the agency is now revising that policy*.

The pilot initiative, announced by CMS Administrator Dr. Mehmet Oz alongside a broader executive action on cannabis rescheduling, aims to provide eligible Medicare beneficiaries coverage for doctor-recommended, compliant CBD products. The program addresses a critical gap in senior supportive care by reducing out-of-pocket costs through Medicare reimbursement, making CBD more affordable for seniors and low-income Americans while lowering downstream healthcare expenses.

Details Surrounding the Proposed Program

• Launch Date & Scope: The pilot is expected to start in early 2026, with April often cited as the target date for access to begin. The program aims to assist with the management of chronic pain and cancer-related symptoms.

• Eligible Products: The program focuses on hemp-derived CBD products that comply with state and local quality and safety standards. The products must come from legal sources, and the initiative will help the FDA establish clear manufacturing, dosing, and labeling standards.

• Coverage Amount: Early reports indicated that eligible patients could receive up to $500 annually in CBD products at no cost if recommended by their doctor.

• Target Population: The pilot focuses on seniors (age 65+) and veterans. Some initial reports suggested targeting older adult oncology and palliative care patients.

• Partnerships: The initiative involves collaboration with industry stakeholders, such as Charlotte's Web, to facilitate access through existing Medicare channels.

• Data Collection: CMS plans to use this pilot to collect data on patient outcomes to evaluate whether CBD improves care and reduces reliance on more expensive or higher-risk treatments.

Important Considerations

Despite the announcements, there is uncertainty regarding the final implementation, with some analysts noting potential challenges related to the 2018 Farm Bill, legal compliance, and future 2026 legislative "cliffs" that could affect the industry. Under the Medicare pilot framework, enrolled patients will connect with Realm of Caring's support services as part of their program participation.

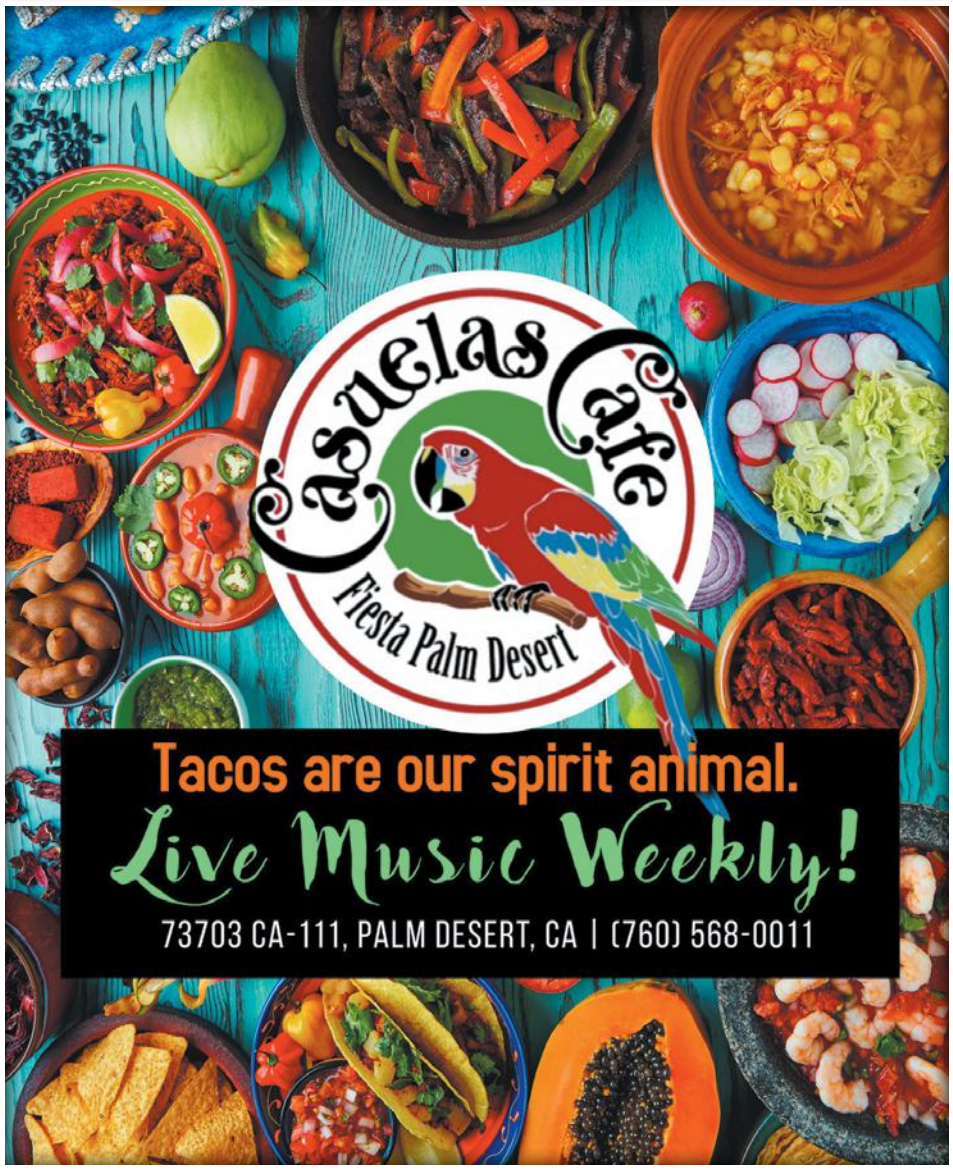
Support services include personalized consultations on product selection and dosing, ongoing communication with healthcare providers, and structured outcomes tracking, ensuring participants receive comprehensive care coordination rather than just product access. This integrated support model reflects the program's commitment to evidence-based, patient-centered CBD healthcare delivery.

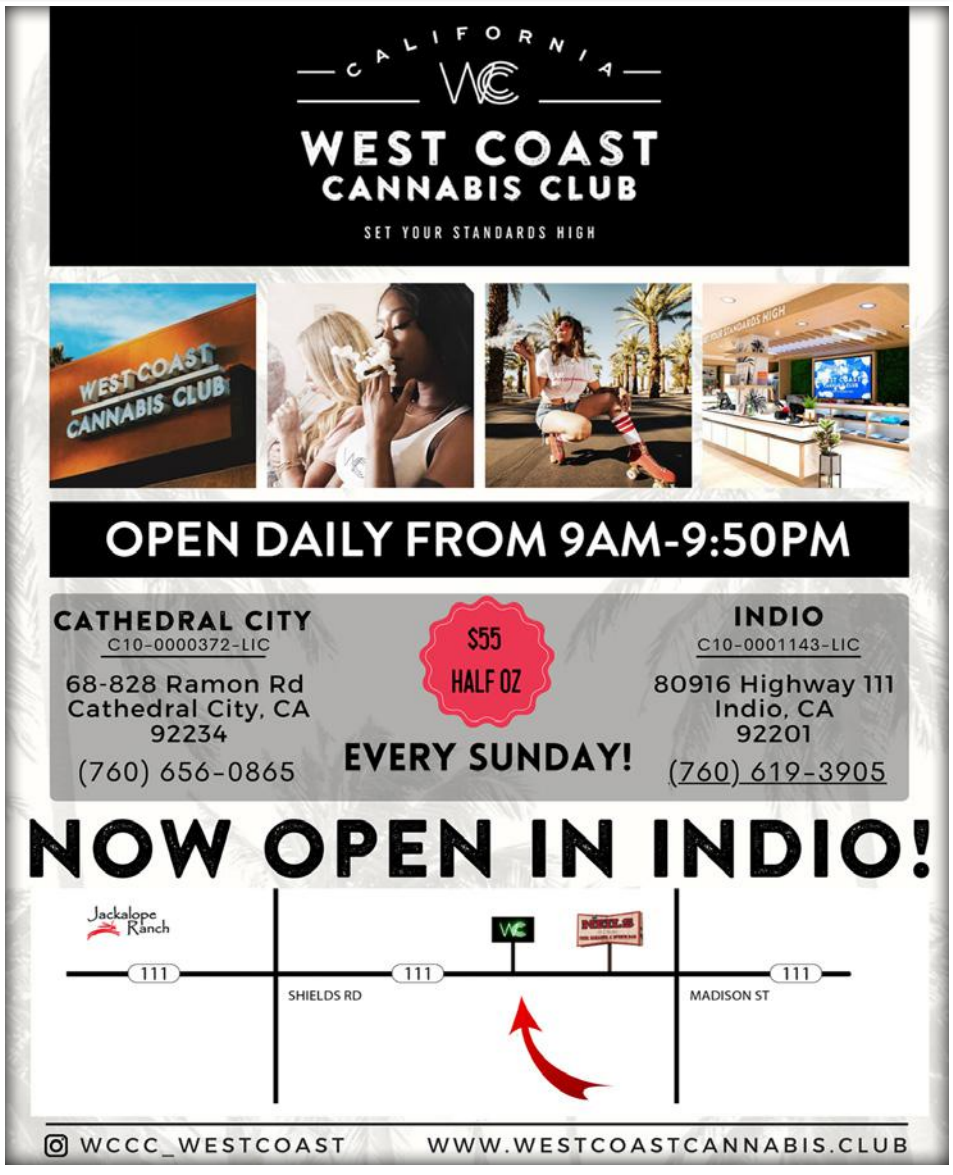
"This initiative represents a blueprint for patient-centered CBD healthcare - one that advances alongside our medical channel expansion and deepening clinical research. The potential of the hemp plant is still being furthered, and studies like the Phase 2 FDA clinical trials investigating hemp-based therapies for autism spectrum disorder at our affiliated company, DeFloria, are critical to making its therapeutic promise even more accessible for health insurance-covered care. Our work through this program and our ongoing research demonstrate how rigorous science and compassionate care can converge to serve patients who need it most," stated Mr. Bill Morachnick, the Chief Executive Officer and a board director of Charlotte's Web Holdings, a prominent CBD company.

The Innovation Center models will allow millions of Americans on Medicare to become eligible to receive CBD as early as April of this year, at no charge if their doctors recommend it. The accountable care organizations in this country that work with Medicare will be able to provide these products again at no cost to patients. Medicare Advantage is also agreeing to consider using CBD for the 34 million Americans it covers.

For a more in-depth discussion on this topic, go to Reg & Maro Outlook for U.S. CBD.

Sent comments to hilruth@gmail.com CV





U.S. WOMEN'S LIFE EXPECTANCY RANKS 33 OUT OF 38

EDITORIAL

THE DESERT HEALTHCARE DISTRICT AND FOUNDATION, IS DOING THEIR PART TO ADDRESS THIS CRITICAL NEED

BY DEE JAE COX



There are few things more terrifying than a woman in treatment for invasive breast cancer, hearing that her insurance will not approve coverage for the 30 rounds of radiation that the doctor recommends. She must either settle for 15 or crowd-fund to cover the remaining costs. A pregnant woman who has been told that her child will not survive delivery and the sepsis from the dying fetus in her body may kill her, but the doctors can't do an abortion because of laws passed by legislators in their state. Or the woman who has been raped and beaten, but has no medical insurance or any means of paying for treatment. (*1 in 5 women in America, will be raped in her lifetime.*)

Compared to women in other high-income countries, American women have long had obstacles in accessing the health care they need. Americans spend more money on health care than other advanced countries, but research frequently finds that Americans avoid seeking health care or do not receive the extent of life saving treatments they need, because of the prohibitive healthcare costs.

In America, the rate of death for women of reproductive age is on the rise. Women are 50% more likely to die in childbirth due to restrictions in reproductive care, than they were 30 years ago. And Black women are 3 to 4 times more likely to die than white women.

Women in the United States don't live as long as women in other high-income countries, largely due to the fact that progress on many women's health measures has stalled or reversed. ***The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, (OECD)*** was established in 1961, as an intergovernmental organization to promote polices that improve economic and social well-being. Of the 38 countries that are members, the U.S. ranks 33 in women's life expectancy.

Women were already poorly represented in medical research before the 1970s, but progress in researching drugs and medical devices in women was further set back in 1977, when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) created a policy to exclude women in clinical trials. It was not until 1993, that the U.S. Congress passed a law requiring the inclusion of women in clinical research.

Outside of Cancer, only 1-2% of health research investments are dedicated to women's health care research. A 2024 analysis of common medical interventions found that 64% had a lower effectiveness on women, as result of excluding women in research.

Significant cuts to the *Affordable Care Act* by the current administration and healthcare restrictions or misinformation, (based on ideology rather than science,) continues to place the lives of women living in America in danger.

What do we need?

-More medical research that includes women.

-Medical decisions made by doctors, rather than legislatures and insurance companies.

-And Organizations such as ***Desert Healthcare District and Foundation.*** (www.dhcd.org) Their slogan, *"Advancing Community Wellness in the Coachella Valley*," symbolizes the community efforts being made to provide healthcare to not only homeless or low income, but for women facing economic challenges with medical care in particular.

Desert Healthcare's mission is to advance community wellness in the Coachella Valley. A major part of this outreach is the mobile medical clinic program that was launched in 2022. (They have recently added a second mobile unit to their service.) These mobile units are equipped with private exam rooms, as well as state of the art medical equipment that allows medical professionals to perform on site medical care in various locations throughout the desert region.

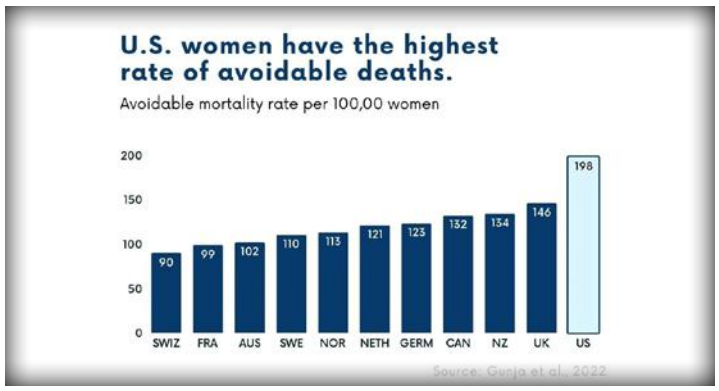
On Saturday, February 21st from 9am to 4pm, *Desert Healthcare* will bring their medical mobile unit to Esperanza Park, - 30600 San Diego Dr., Cathedral City, CA. And **February 27/28th**, at Empire Polo Grounds, 81-800 Avenue 51, Indio, Ca., in order to provide a ***"Women's Wellness Clinic,"*** *offering free Mammograms and Pap Smears.*

These are two critical health services for women that can save lives.

Pre-scheduling is required. Call 760-567-1212 in order to schedule your free mammogram or pap smear.

Medical care is not a luxury, it is a necessity. CV







STRENGTH TRAINING FOR LONGEVITY: WHY MUSCLE IS YOUR GREATEST ASSET

SEND ME A TRAINER

BY COACH NADIA POPOVA,
PRESENTER OF THE HOLLYWOOD NATURAL BODYBUILDING & FITNESS AWARDS, RESIDENT OF COACHELLA VALLEY





When we think about health and longevity, cardio often comes to mind first - walking, cycling, or time on the treadmill.

However, after the age of 35, one of the most important predictors of long-term vitality is not how far you can run - it's how much quality muscle you maintain.

Muscle is not simply about appearance.

It is a biological asset.

Why Muscle Matters

As we age, we naturally lose muscle mass - a process known as sarcopenia. This gradual decline can affect:

- Metabolic health
- Bone density
- Joint stability
- Balance and fall prevention
- Energy levels
- Insulin sensitivity
- Overall strength and independence

The encouraging news is that this process is highly preventable - and often reversible - with properly structured strength training.

Muscle tissue functions as a metabolic engine. The more lean muscle you maintain, the more efficiently your body regulates blood sugar, supports hormonal balance, and protects your joints and spine.

In many ways, muscle acts as built-in protection for the decades ahead.

Strength Training as Preventative Care

Modern research consistently shows that resistance training:

- Improves bone density
- Enhances posture and alignment
- Supports cardiovascular health
- Reduces risk of chronic disease
- Improves cognitive performance
- Increases overall resilience

It is one of the most effective forms of preventative care available - particularly for adults who value independence, energy, and quality of life.

Importantly, strength training does not require hours in the gym.

It requires intelligent programming, proper technique, and progressive structure.

Quality Over Volume

Many residents are already active, which is excellent. However, activity alone does not always provide the stimulus necessary to preserve or build muscle.

Effective strength training emphasizes:

- Controlled, well-executed movement
- Proper alignment and posture
- Progressive resistance
- Core stability
- Joint-friendly mechanics
- Adequate recovery

When approached strategically, even one well-designed session per week can create meaningful improvements in strength, posture, and metabolic health.

The Confidence Effect

There is also something less measurable - yet equally important.

Strength changes how you carry yourself.

Improved posture.

Greater physical presence.

More energy throughout the day.

A sense of capability.

It becomes not just a physical transformation, but a shift in how you move through life.

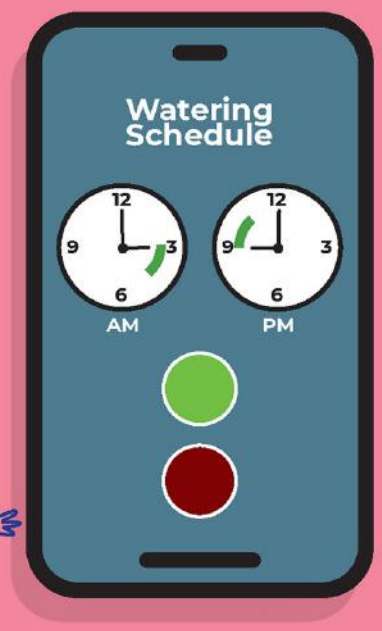
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FIREBIRDS COMEBACK FALLS SHORT IN 3-2 LOSS TO ROADRUNNERS

SPORTS SCENE

NYMAN AND GOYETTE SCORE FOR COACHELLA VALLEY AS THREE-GAME WINNING STREAK IS SNAPPED BY TUCSON



The Coachella Valley Firebirds, proud American Hockey League affiliate of the Seattle Kraken, were defeated the Tucson Roadrunners on Sunday afternoon at Acrisure Arena by the final score of 3-2. Jani Nyman and David Goyette each found the back of the net for the Firebirds in the loss that snapped the team's three-game winning streak.

Tucson opened the scoring at the 11:19 mark of the first period on a goal from Jalen Luypen. The Firebirds responded 1:02 later as Jani Nyman carried the puck in on an odd man rush and ripped a wrist shot through Jaxson Stauber for his 13th goal of the season. Jagger Firkus collected the lone assist and gave Nyman goals in five straight games.

The Roadrunners scored twice in the second period to lead 3-1 after forty minutes of play. Cameron Hebig (4:15) and Kevin Rooney (9:26) hit the back of the cage in the middle frame for Tucson.

Coachella Valley pulled within one at 5:51 of the third period on an individual effort by David Goyette who wrapped around the Tucson net and banked the puck off a defenseman for his third goal of the season. Lukas Dragicevic earned the only assist. Stauber made a few highlight reel saves for the Roadrunners as the third period continued to keep the Firebirds off the scoreboard and hang on for the 3-2 win.

Coachella Valley goaltender Victor Ostman made 22 saves on 25 shots in the loss that moves the team's record to 26-16-5-0. The Firebirds outshot the Roadrunners 41-25. Coachella Valley finished the game 0-for-1 on the powerplay and 2-for-2 on the penalty kill.

Next Game!

The Firebirds hit the road to face the Bakersfield Condors this Wednesday, February 18th at Dignity Health Arena. Puck drop is set for 7 p.m. PT.

Get Your Ticket Plan Today!

Don't miss your chance to be a part of a special season of events. With ticket packages designed to fit your lifestyle – including half season, flex, 9-game plans, and more – there is something for every fan this season. Join the Firebirds Family!

Premium Seating at Firebirds' Games

For the first time in three years, a limited number of seats have been released in our premium clubs, the desert's most exclusive and sought-after premium experience! This is the spot where the Coachella Valley's leaders and tastemakers gather to connect, unwind, and enjoy world-class entertainment with family, friends, and clients. Elevate your game day like never before with Firebirds' Premium Seating! Experience access to VIP amenities and inclusive food options all from the comfort of one of our several club options located throughout Acrisure Arena

Fan-Centric Gameday Enhancements

For the 2025-26 season, the Firebirds are rolling out a series of fan-first enhancements designed to make the gameday experience more accessible, convenient, and enjoyable. Highlights include advance-purchase parking savings, new Pocket-Friendly Picks food and beverage options, earlier weekday start times, and pregame Happy Hour at The Oasis, and more!

Stay up to date on the latest Firebirds' news and info by visiting CVFirebirds.com and by following the team on social media @Firebirds.

STATEMENT FROM SEATTLE KRAKEN GM JASON BOTTERILL ON SUSPENSION OF DAVID GOYETTE

Firebirds' Forward Goyette Suspended for Violating Terms of the AHL/PHPA Performance Enhancing Substance Program

The American Hockey League announced today that Coachella Valley Firebirds forward and Seattle Kraken prospect David Goyette has been suspended 20 games for violating the terms of the American Hockey League/ Professional Hockey Players Association Performance Enhancing Substance Program.

Statement from Seattle Kraken General Manager Jason Botterill:

"Earlier today we were informed that David Goyette tested positive for a performance enhancing substance under the AHL/PHPA Performance Enhancing Substance Program. We fully support the Performance Enhancing Substance Program and hope this was a learning experience for David."

Goyette has 10 points (3 goals, 7 assists) in 47 games this season. The 21-year-old will be barred from participating in games, practices, and other team related functions during his suspension. Goyette was selected by the Seattle Kraken in the second-round (61st overall) of the 2022 NHL Entry Draft.

Goyette is eligible to return for the team's game on Saturday, April 10th at Ontario.

Both the Coachella Valley Firebirds and Seattle Kraken will have no further comment on this matter. CV

WASHINGTON BLUE SOX DOMINATE CHAMPIONSHIP GAME TO WIN SECOND STRAIGHT CWL TITLE

SPORTS SCENE

With only three losses the entire season and six straight wins to finish their campaign, the Washington Blue Sox dominated their way to a second straight California Winter League (CWL) title by beating the British Columbia Bombers 14-3 on Sunday.

With a beautiful, party cloudy forecast over Palm Springs Stadium, the Blue Sox crushed 14 hits on the way to a big win over the Canadian division's Bombers. Washington's offense dropped four runs in the second inning and the third inning. Shortstop Bubba Thompson totaled six RBI, and cleared the bases in the third inning with a double. Former Grinnell standout Ethan Crawford had two hits for Washington and finished with three RBI. Overall, two hitters in the Blue Sox lineup had six at-bats and three hitters had five at-bats, marking a long day for the Bombers' pitching staff.

In a nine inning game that lasted three hours and six minutes, Washington (16-3) reliever AJ Moreno showed out as one of the best pitchers on the mound. In a win, Moreno completed four innings for the Blue Sox, allowing just two runs to cross. The Bombers (10-9) used several arms, but starter and former North Star Jordan Riley allowed six runs, a team high. Former A's reliever Dominick Castillo pitched three innings for the Bombers, a game high for the pitching staff.

The Bombers put together a slight two-run rally in the sixth inning when Jack Halloran reached on an error and brought home shortstop Mason Baronian. After a sac fly off the bat of Jeffrey Reseigh, Shane Skelly was put out by the Blue Sox defense when trying to advance to second, foreshadowing a worsening margin against the Bombers. The Blue Sox added two runs in the bottom of the sixth inning, then scored two runs in the seventh inning and one run in the eighth inning.

The 2026 CWL season concludes after a thrilling three weeks in the Coachella Valley. As of February 15, over 30 players have been signed to independent baseball leagues and teams across the country. The Frontier League, Pioneer League, USPBL, American Association, Atlantic League and more are interested and have signed players from



this year's CWL talent pool. Stay up to date with future signings from this season and all offseason news on californiawinterleague.com and on the league's Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Fans can also catch every 2026 stadium game live on the Bally Sports Live App, ensuring supporters can follow the action from anywhere.

The California Winter League is the longest running professional showcase league of its kind. Since its inaugural season in 2010, the CWL has seen over 950 of its players sign professional contracts. Each year, it is the premier destination for free agent baseball players who are looking to be scouted and signed.

Stay up-to-date with the California Winter League at californiawinterleague.com or by following the CWL on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Palm Springs Stadium is located at 1901 E Baristo Road in Palm Springs.

For more info, visit californiawinterleague.com or call (760) 778-4487. CV


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