





The Team

There's new things to see as the fall riding season is here! We have added a beautiful mural to the Rio Salado Pathway Tunnel by Mesa-raised artist Mary Schindell. As the pathways become more popular, we're working to add more public art activations.

Families with young riders are some of the residents who use our protected pathways the most. To help ensure young kids have the safety knowledge of riding, and the property safety equipment, we are excited to have expanded our school education program with Mesa Public Schools to reach hundreds more students. The whole program is featured as our cover story on page 16. Friends of the library: We will continue to do our classes in the library as well!

One way you can help ensure the continued growth and support of the Mesa Bike & Pedestrian Team's efforts to expand biking options for Mesa residents (like more pathways, more safety education classes and great programming like WinterFest and Ride-In Moves at the Park) is participating in the Census. The Census can have a greater positive financial impact on your local community than just about anything else you do. That's because for every person counted, your community receives approximately \$3,195 each year.

Most of this money goes to critical programs that base how much they give to each state on population, like funding for local schools, Medicaid, Medicare part B, and highway planning and construction. However, \$330 dollars per person can be used by the City to fund bike trails, bike lanes, parks and many other services Mesans care about. New this year, you can respond to the census online, by phone, and traditional paper mailer. Look for your invitation to participate and show some love for Mesa in early March 2020 and know you are supporting the Bike & Pedestrian Program when you complete it.

We hope to see you this fall at our signature events: CycloMesa WinterFest and three Ride-In Movies in the Park. See a full event listing in the back of the magazine.

Happy Riding!

City of Mesa Bike & Pedestrian Program team

The City of Mesa has proudly ranked a "Silver Status" as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists since 2015. Mesa's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program provides many services and educational opportunities to enrich the safety of cyclists and pedestrians in the City. The goal of the Bike and Pedestrian Program is to increase the ridership and activity throughout the City so residents can take advantage of this form of affordable and healthy transportation.



Spoke Life Mesa received a Platinum Award in the Print Media Publication category by the MarCom Awards for the fall 2018 issue. The MarCom Awards is administered by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals and is one of the largest international creative competitions for marketing and public relations.

Valley Metro Honors Mesa's Bike and Pedestrian Program as Champion for Clean Air

The City of Mesa Transportation Department's Bike and Pedestrian Program joined more than 50 Maricopa County Travel Reduction Program employers and individuals on stage to be recognized for their exceptional clean air activities this year at the 31st Annual Clean Air Campaign Awards and Luncheon. In attendance were nearly 500 guests who continually support and promote trip-savings as a way to keep pollution from Valley skies.

Mesa's Bike and Pedestrian accepted the Outstanding Marketing and Creativity Award, in the category of events with a budget of more than \$500 dollars to execute, for last year's Bike to Work event. Coinciding with Earth Day, the annual event hosted a pancake/smoothie breakfast benefiting local non-profit, We-Cycle-USA, boasting nearly \$600 dollars donated and more than 1,336 miles logged by 93 employees cycling to the City, an eight percent increase over the last year's log.





Jackie Dishner, mountain bike enthusiast, journalist and author of Backroads & Byways of Arizona (The Countryman Press, 2010), has been riding for 15 years. For one of her assignments for SpokeLife magazine, she finally learned how to change a flat tire. But she's still not giving up thick

Michelle Turner is an Arizona native who is excited about the idea of biking to a grocery store that is being built close to her house. She has already planned a route that will take her along side streets and has bought a bike helmet in anticipation of her grocery store trips.

Meghann Finn Sepulveda is a local freelance writer and communication professional. A native of New York and ASU grad, Meghann enjoys spending her free time running, cooking and volunteering at the school where her children attend. She lives in the East Valley with her husband and three children.

Gretchen Pahiar is an Arizona native and NAU alum. She keeps active by running, working out, playing sports and watching movies with her husband and two kids. Gretchen has been writing in the Valley for more than 15 years and is Principal and Owner of Media by Connection.

Amy McConnell is a City of Mesa PIO by day and a lover of shopping local, supporting the slowfoods movement and connoisseur of Broadway shows by night. This is SpokeLife's sixth issue with Amy at the helm.



City of Mesa Bike & Pedestrian Team: Mark Venti, Garret Topham, Al Źubi, Maria Angelica Deeb and Ashley Barinka. (left to right)



SPKE LIFE

		3	Welcome	A Letter From the Editor
4	Contributors	7	Social Rides	Where to Find Out if Group Rides Are For You
6	I Bike Mesa Maps	8	Two-Wheel Tip	The ABC's of Bike Riding Safety







15	Local	Love
13	LOCal	Love

18 On the Road

20 Party in the Park

20 What/Where/When

Ride Now An E.R. Doctor's Tips for Safe Riding

Must-Do Mesa Two-Wheeled Tours

Cover Story Outreach Program Aims to Keep Kids Safe on Bikes



Sign up for e-notifications on Mesa's Bike & Pedestrian Program at mesaaz.gov/bikeped

Report potholes, graffiti, street light outages and more, download the City's free mobile app. Search Mesa CityLink to download from the App Store or Google Play.











Fall 2019 SPOKE LIFE MESA Who's Who on our Paths & Trails?

I BIKE MESA



Dennis Benzer

Age: 58

Information Technology Manager

Bicycling background: I have been riding around Mesa since 1968. I was a licensed racer in New Mexico in the mid 80's, though I only did that for fun. I do most of my own maintenance and help others with their bicycles as needed.

Where do you ride? For commuting, mostly on the streets. For recreation, a general mix of neighborhood streets and canal paths.

How many miles do you ride or commute each year? Usually around 600 commuting and 600 recreation.

Average length of ride? 12 miles

How often do you ride or commute? I commute roughly 48 times a year. During the non-summer months, two to four times a week.

What do you like most about riding in Mesa? I know a lot of Mesa all too well, since I have been doing it so long. So, I know the quieter back routes for recreation rides.



Ashley Keen

Age: 32

Production Supervisor at the Mesa Arts Center

Bicycling background: I actually don't have much of a bicycling background. I went to ASU and rode a bike daily to get to class, but I hadn't ridden much since then until this February, when my husband and I decided to buy new bikes. He has cycled in the past and we thought it would be something that we would enjoy doing together, and we do! Now we enjoy riding our bikes to dinner or taking long Sunday rides together.

Where do you ride? I love riding along canal paths. They're beautiful and they go for miles!

How many miles do you ride or commute each year? I've ridden 350 miles this year so far and I bought the bike in February.

Average length of ride? About 8 miles

How often do you ride or commute? 2-3 days a week in the spring, before it starts getting too hot.

What do you like most about riding in Mesa? It's very bike friendly. I really like working in a city that makes it so easy to commute to work on my bike.

Where to Find Out if Group Rides Are For You

By: Jackie Dishner

When I first started riding my bicycle as an adult, it was for stress relief. I rode solo. Recently, however, I started going out with a small group of cyclists to explore trails and neighborhoods I wouldn't normally ride alone. I've also made new friends. Interested? Aside from asking family, friends and colleagues to ride with you, here's where you can go to ride social.

Bike Shops

Local bike shops often schedule weekly rides. Depending on the popularity, you'll find one for all ages, abilities and interests. Stops for coffee or breakfast give cyclists a chance to socialize more.

Mobile Apps and Social Media Sites

Strava fans know they can find fellow roadies online, but there's also an app called Ride Alert that lets you find local rides. On social media sites like Facebook, connect with other cyclists through groups, including North Phoenix Dirt Ladies, Hawesaholics and Mountain Biking Over Fifty.

Clubs and Organizations

Sign up for annual events and charity rides. One I enjoy takes me to Northern Arizona every September for Pedal the Petrified. Closer to home, consider El Tour de Mesa in April. The Tempe Bicycle Action Group puts on the annual Bunny Hop, an Easter egg hunt by bike. Too bad it's just for kids.



SPOKE LIFE MESA

Two-Wheel Tip Photo credits: Ryan Glausser

The ABC's of Bike Riding Safety

By: Gretchen Pahia

Mesa is a beautiful biking city with lots of places to go. Know the ABC Quick Check you need before you even hit the road (or trail).

According to the City of Mesa, there is easy way you can make sure your bike is in good working order prior to any ride, called an ABC Ouick Check- which means "Air, Brakes, Chain."

Air – Be sure you have enough air in your tires before you leave.

Brakes – Make sure your brake pads are in good working condition, not worn out.

Chain & Cranks – Pull on your cranks to ensure they aren't loose and make sure your chain is free and clear from debris and dirt.

A few other quick reminders for riders is to make sure if you have any Quick Release axels on your bike, that they are closed and locked. Also, it is always a good idea to take a slow, quick little test ride in the area around you before you take off for a long ride.

"Safety should always be a top priority for bike riders across the city," says Ashley Barinka, Safety Educator for the Bike and Pedestrian Program. "The best thing you can do is to make sure you are ready for a pleasant and injury free ride is to just take a couple moments to review and prepare before you take any ride."

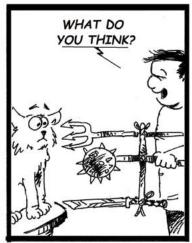


CONRAD by Zubi









An E.R. Doctor's Tips for Safe Riding

By: Michelle Turner



ou love it when your bike takes you places – just make sure your cycling doesn't land you in an emergency room.

Banner Desert Medical Center's emergency department, the fifth busiest in the United States, sees plenty of bike-related accidents, says Zach Bair, DO, assistant director of the Emergency Department.

"We see a bit of everything," Bair says. "People falling from their bike or crashing into something and there are always accidents involving vehicles and bikes. Some can be very serious; others can be minor."

Many crash injuries happen to people above the waist. As riders fall from their bike, they try to brace themselves for impact and break their arms, twist their shoulders or mangle up their hands.

"The most serious injuries can occur when people don't wear a helmet while riding," Bair says. "Not using a helmet can lead to traumatic brain injuries, spinal-cord injuries and even paralysis."

Bair remembers treating an experienced cyclist who just decided to take a quick spin without his helmet. He landed up in the Emergency



ways cross at clearly marked, signalized intersections.

No matter the miles, always bring water on a ride to hydrated.

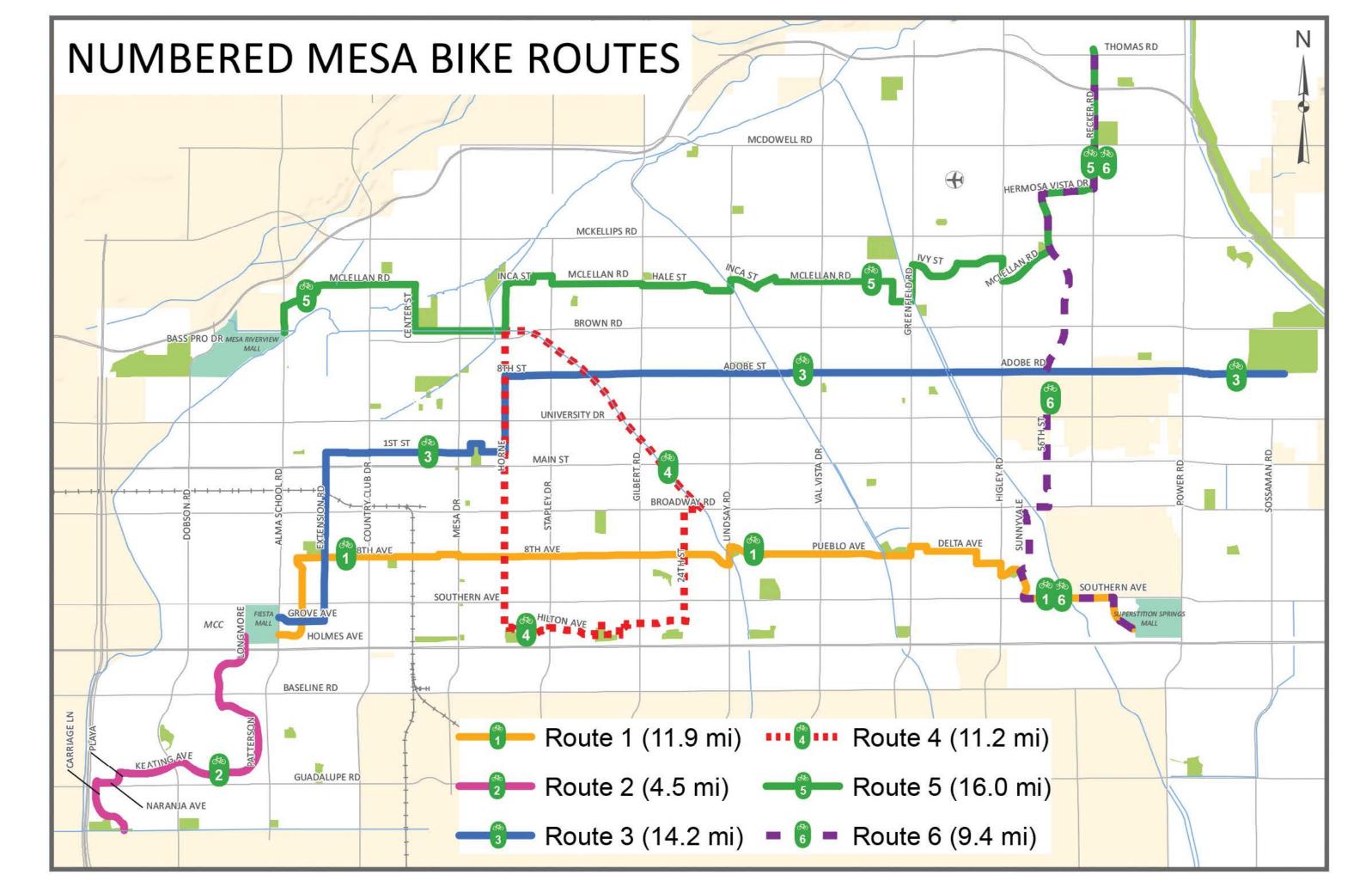


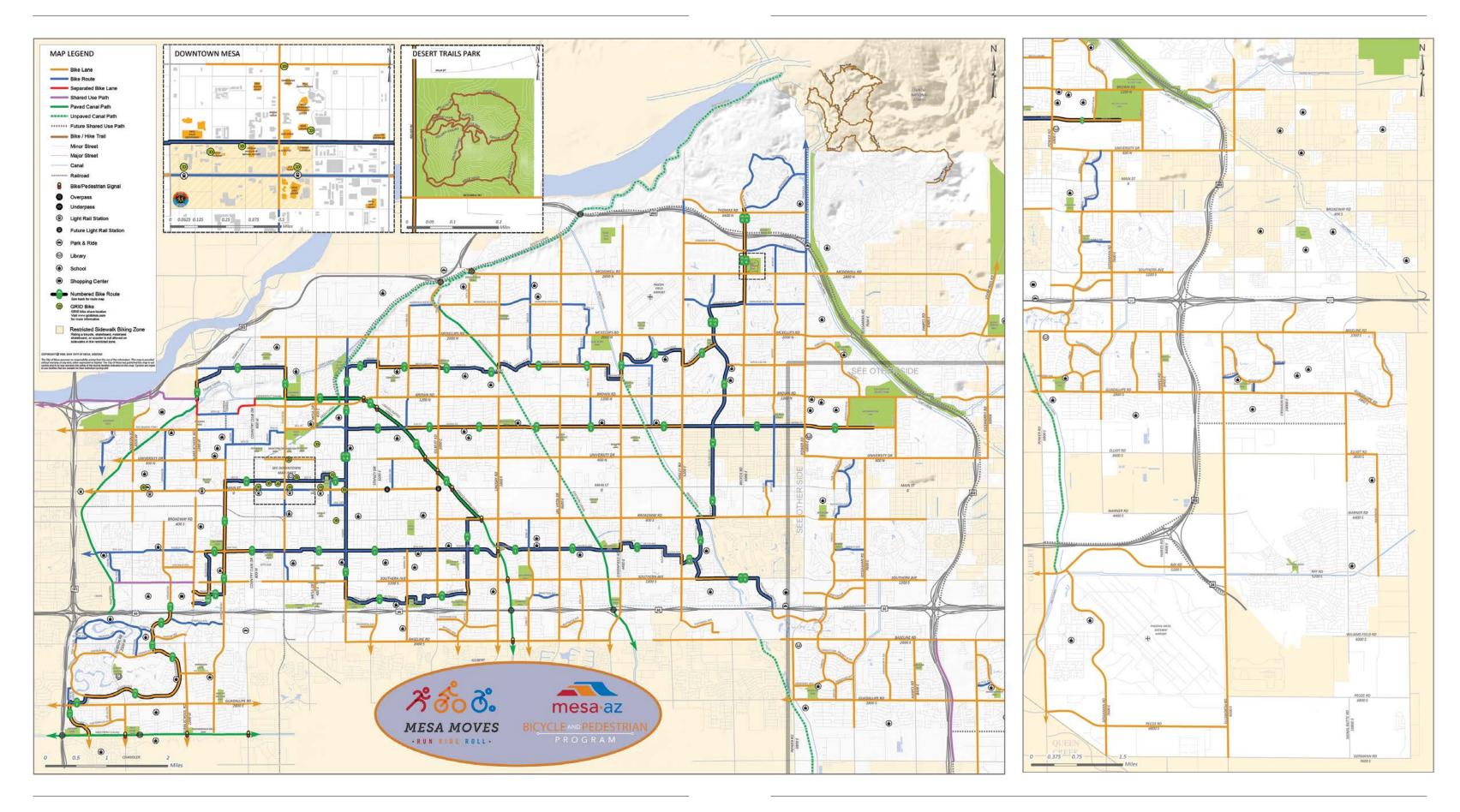
Department with a traumatic brain injury, faced with a long recovery time.

"You've got to wear that helmet," Bair says. "You have to protect yourself out there."

Cyclists also may want to wear gloves to protect their hands in case of a fall. In addition, Bair suggests taking plenty of water and sunscreen — the Emergency Department also treats many cases of people coming in for heat exhaustion and dehydration.

Fall 2019





Two-Wheeled Tours

Downtown Mesa bike tours highlight hidden historical gems

By: Michelle Turner

Photo credit: Ryan Glaus



One of the best ways to discover downtown Mesa's hidden gems is behind the bars of a bicycle.

Lori Ann Mecham can be your guide. Mecham owns Arizona "ING" Tours, which provides bicycle and walking tours of downtown Mesa and other metro Phoenix locations.

"I can't tell you how many times I have heard people on the tour say 'I never knew that was here'," says Mecham. "So many people live in areas farther out in Mesa that they don't venture downtown unless they go to court."

Mecham takes riders on leisurely, safe tours through downtown Mesa that not only cover distance but different eras as well. There's the Joel Sirrine House, Mesa's only fully restored Victorian home, or the Mesa Arizona Temple, an

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internationally known Mormon temple built in 1927.

A resident of Mesa for the past 34 years, Mecham did her homework with local historians to get her facts straight as she teaches on the trail.

During the "Magical Mix Mesa Tour", Mecham also spotlights local art and culture, showing riders the eclectic Jarrod's Coffee, Tea & Gallery, urban gardens, murals and a great place to get empanadas.

Arizona "ING" Tours puts a 12-person limit on the number of riders to help ensure their safety. "Riding through downtown Mesa is a piece of cake," she says.

The tour company can provide bikes to those who don't have them.

Mecham's scholarship about Mesa and passion for revealing the city's most interesting stories is paying off. Social-media reviews are overwhelmingly positive as people praise her for giving friendly, informative, one-of-a-kind tours.

Mecham started Arizona "ING" out of her own love of travel. After having enjoyed similar tours through bike-friendly European cities, she realized that they provide a unique way for people to understand different cultures -- all from on top of a bike seat.



Photo Captions:

Upper left: Lori Ann Mecham takes tours on the alleyways of downtowr Mesa to see the hidden murals.

and operator Lour owne and operator Lori Ann Mecham started offerin downtown Mesa bike tou after she experienced bil tours in Europe and wan to bring it to her own city

Ride-in Movies Returns this Fall

By: Gretchen Pahia

Lights.. Camera.. Action! Movie lovers: Time to grab the blankets, and picnic dinners as the Saturday night movies in the park are returning to Mesa. Families, friends and even your well-behaved pets are welcome to this year's events. Presented by The City of Mesa's Bike and Pedestrian Program, visitors are encouraged to ride their bikes or walk to the movies.

Movie-goers are encouraged to arrive early to save the best seats in the park, have time for kids to play at the playground and grab a bag of free kettlekorn (thanks to SRP!) before the feature film begins.

This year's movie line-up includes Beetlejuice, Elf and How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World.

For the most up-to-date information, or to invite your friends and neighbors to the movies, check out the Bike and Pedestrian's page on Facebook (Facebook.com/mesabikepedprogram) where they'll share reminders about each showing.





07

MARCH

Red Mountain Pak 7:00pm How to Train Your Dragon

Shape your future START HERE >

Census 2020

iCount · 2020 mesaaz

Every Person Counted in the 2020 Census **BRINGS \$3,195** to Mesa each year

Article I Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution requires a count of all persons every ten years, also known as the Census.

The 2020 Census will direct federal funds to services Mesans value:

Education

- Title 1 Grants to Local Schools
- Pell Grants for College
- Head Start Early Education Programs
- National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program

Healthcare

- Medicare Part B
- Medicaid
- State Children's Health Insurance Program

Economy

- Highway Planning and Construction
- Federal Prime Contracts with Small Businesses

Safety

- Assistance to Firefighters Grant
- Crime Victim Assistance
- And many more...

Take the Pledge and Respond to the 2020 Census!

*George Washington University, Counting for Dollars 2020 The Role of the Decennial Census in the Geographic Distribution of Federal Funds, January 2019. Assumes Arizona population of 7,171,646 and a Mesa population of 496,401 (U.S. Census, July 1 2018).

Fall 2019 SPOKE LIFE MESA

Outreach Program Aims to Keep Kids Safe on Bikes

Partnership with Mesa Public Schools provides education and free helmets

By: Meghann Finn Sepulveda

Bike safety is a top priority for the City of Mesa. Last year, the City of Mesa Bicycle and Pedestrian Program partnered with Mesa Public Schools to implement a program to teach school-aged children about bike safety. This year, the program will expand its reach and educate even more students at local elementary schools.

Identifying the need

The City of Mesa's Bike and Pedestrian Program worked closely with Mesa Public Schools, the largest public-school district in Arizona, to select the school locations for bike safety education.

"First we narrowed down our target audience to fourth through sixth graders because those are typically the students who ride their bike to and from school," said Laurie Struna, media communications specialist at Mesa Public Schools. "We then went out to elementary and junior high schools and counted the number of bicycles on campus and evaluated the traffic in the neighborhood."

The City of Mesa worked with eight elementary schools and two junior high schools to roll out the program in 2018.

"We developed a 30-minute presentation and connected with principals and physical education teachers to schedule the visits," said Ashley Barinka, safety educator for the City of Mesa Bicycle and Pedestrian Program.





hoto Captions

Top: Ashley Barinka, Mesa's Bike & Pedestrian Program Safety Educator, taught nearly 4,000 students about bike and helmet safety last school year.

Bottom: Both elementary and junior high school students participated in bike safety training from the Bike & Pedestrian Program team.

Teaching valuable skills

During the assembly, students learned about proper bike gear including the importance of wearing bright and reflective clothing, closed toe shoes and a helmet.

"We not only talked about how wearing a helmet is crucial when you ride a bike, but we also demonstrated by using a raw egg," Barinka said. "That helped the students visualize what could happen to our brain if it isn't protected."

Barinka and her team also brought a bike on stage and gave a quick overview of how to perform basic safety checks on different parts of a bike, and discussed the rules of the road.

Following the presentation, each school provided a list of students who were in need of a helmet, and Barinka returned at a later date to properly fit those students.

"Our budget allows us to provide helmets to kids who don't have the means to purchase one on their own," Barinka explained. "We also partnered with Phoenix Children's Hospital which graciously gave us extra helmets and allowed us to accommodate even more students."

Expanding the reach

During the 2018-2019 school year, the City of Mesa's Bike and Pedestrian Program was able to educate nearly 4,000 kids and gave out 479 helmets.

"This year we hope to accommodate between 13 and 15 elementary schools," Barinka said. "Our goal is to continuously rotate schools and ultimately educate every student."

The program, which is built on the foundation of safety, has been well received.

"The experts from the City of Mesa Bicycle and Pedestrian Program have done a great job of taking bike safety information and making it relevant and interesting to our students," Struna said. "We love the community support."

Learn more about the City of Mesa's upcoming community bike safety education opportunities at mesaaz.gov.

Photo credit: Mesa Public Schools





Fall 2019 SP●KE LIFE MESA 1

On the Road

Joy Ride

Be Transported by New Tunnel Mural on Rio Salado Pathway

By: Michelle Turner



esa has a new mural – and this one's for cyclists. Walkers and joggers, too.

To see it, follow the Rio Salado Pathway underneath the Loop 202 freeway and enter the tunnel heading south toward Riverview

Park. It's meant to emotionally transport you in and out of an imaginary swimming pool of turquoise water and bright blue sky. As you pass through the "water," bold and colorfully painted imagery inside the tunnel – egrets landing, hawks soaring, mountains flanking, bubbles floating, oranges hanging and hummingbirds feeding also features glimpses of actual surrounding landscape. The scenery, some stenciled in, changes from a mesquite bosque in the wild desert on one end to a blooming orange grove (reminiscent of Mesa's past) on the other. Leaves appear to blow in the wind throughout.

Playful, vibrant and lifesize it's a cool respite in more than one way.

"Public art, in general, is a great way to engage others in public spaces," says Robert Schultz, assistant director of Arts and Culture at the Mesa Arts Center, "But [mural art, in particular] is something that can involve just about anyone. It's easily accessible to people. You can walk up and touch, see and feel it."

Schultz saw the early renderings and was part of the





team that helped choose Phoenix-based. mixed media artist Mary Shindell to create the mural. She was commissioned by the City of Mesa's Transportation Department.

Inspired by youthful days spent learning how to swim at the public pool, Shindell, who grew up in Mesa, created the mural to mimic her memories. She says, prior to design, when she first visited the site and walked down into the tunnel, the first thing she noticed was how cool it felt, just like getting in the pool on a hot day. She added lines of blue mosaic glass tiles down the tunnel walls for the full effect.

With help from a friend and an assistant, she finished the project in mid-July. As people came through the tunnel while they worked, she says they'd ask, "Am I supposed to see underwater?" Locals who fish in the river stopped to suggest she add fish. Others suggested deer. But she wanted to leave space for imagination.

"This [project] came out of the blue to us. It was exciting," Schultz says, "Using art in public spaces is a positive thing in any community. It can help make everyday places more intriguing and encourage more visitation." Shindell hopes you enjoy it.





PARKING & ADMISSION ARE FREE

For more info visit mesaartscenter.com/diadelosmuertos

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100% Chance of Snow in Mesa

Annual CycloMesa WinterFest Guarantees Winter Fun for Everyone

By: Gretchen Pahia

There's no play like snow play, just ask the folks behind the annual CycloMesa WinterFest. The yearly event is a party in the park created to increase helmet safety awareness for winter snow sports and biking.



20 tons of snow, freshly delivered to Alta Mesa Park is the signature attraction of CycloMesa WinterFest.

Great for the entire family, kids and adults alike are invited to come out and play in 20 tons of snow, ride a mechanical snowboard, learn how to properly wear a helmet and get some basic information on concussions. Past attendees like Cortni Enders say the event was an amazing time for her and her family. "My family and I spent all day enjoying the snow and fun activities, not to mention all of the delicious food trucks to choose from. One thing that I enjoyed most about the event was how family friendly and pet friendly it was. It was very nice to see the community come together."

Those who would like to take part are encouraged to ride bikes to the party, where a bike valet will park your two-wheel ride for you.

CycloMesa Winterfest is scheduled for Saturday, December 14, 2019. Be sure to wear snow clothes for those playing in the snow—it gets chilly fast! Also, come hungry to taste delicious food trucks from across the Valley who will be serving up treats, hot cocoa and warm food.





Tis the season to be jolly and enjoy community spirit around you. After the annual WinterFest, stick around and hop on your bike to enjoy the holiday lights around the Alta Mesa neighborhood.

The Mesa Bike and Pedestrian program takes riders on a guided tour to check out all the beautiful holiday light displays. Since it is night, to enjoy all the lights, you are encouraged bring a bike light. Don't have one? City leaders give away bike lights to all who would like one and you get to keep it at the end of the tour.



Fall 2019

> EVENTS FALL 2019 - SPRING 2020

September 25, 2019

Adult Education Class RM Library, 6 p.m. https://events.mesalibrary.org/

October 5, 2019

Tour de Fat Tempe 2019 http://www.biketempe.org/ tour-de-fat/

October 23, 2019

Kids Education Class DR Library, 4 p.m. https://events.mesalibrary.org/

October 26, 2019

Ride in Movie Mountainview Park, 6:30 p.m. Mesaaz.gov/bikeped

November 16, 2019

Ride in Movie Palo Verde Park, 6 p.m. Mesaaz.gov/bikeped

November 23, 2019

El Tour de Tucson http://www.perimeterbicycling. com/el-tour-de-tucson/

December 14, 2019

CycloMesa Winter Fest Mesaaz.gov/bikeped

January 22, 2020

Adult Education Class DR Library, 6 p.m. https://events.mesalibrary.org/

March 4, 2020

Kids Education Class RM Library, 4 p.m. https://events.mesalibrary.org/

March 7, 2020

Ride in Movie Red Mountain Park, 7 p.m. Mesaaz.gov/bikeped

April 15, 2020

Bike2Work Day Mesaaz.gov/bikeped

April 18, 2020

El Tour de Mesa http://www.perimeterbicycling.

June 3, 2020

Adult Education Class MN Library, 6 p.m. https://events.mesalibrary.org/

June 10, 2020

Kids Education Class MN Library 4 p.m. https://events.mesalibrary.org/

→ BIKE CLUBS & **ORGANIZATIONS**

Blazing Saddles Ride Club

Group road and mountain bike rides for all levels. Skills and maintenance clinics.

meetup.com/bike-masters-bikesdirect-blazing-saddles-rides-club

Gravity Riders Organization of Arizona

Advocacy, rider education and trail work. The Gravity Rider community includes downhillers, freeriders, all-mountain riders, dirt jumpers and BMX riders of all ages.

gravityridersaz.com

San Tan Shredders

Group rides for mountain bikers of all levels.

meetup.com/santan-shredders

Tempe Bicycle Action Group

Working to make bicycling a prominent, safe and convenient form of transportation and recreation in the region. Also hosts group rides and events.

We-Cycle-USA

biketempe.org

Help kids and adults in need to recycle and refurbish bikes. wecycleusa.org

> BIKE SHOPS

ABC Bicycle & Jetski Rentals

3655 E. Main Street 480-641-2453

Adventure Bicycle Company 1110 W. Southern Avenue 480-649-3374 2336 E. Baseline Road 480-649-3394

Archer's Bikes

1530 N. Country Club Drive 480-275-5818

Bikes Direct Mesa

1545 S. Power Road 480-891-8901 bikesdirectaz.com

Bike Masters Gilbert

San Tan Village Mall 2244 E. Williams Field Road 480-857-7000

DNA Cycles

2031 N. Power Road 480-924-2453

Electra Bike Shop 1545 S. Power Road

480-428-2349

Mike's Bike Chalet

5050 E. University Drive 480-807-2944 mikesbikechalet.com

Paragon Cycling 1106 N. Gilbert Road

480-830-1620 paragoncycling.com

Performance Bicycle

1155 S. Power Road 480-832-0034

Two Wheel Jones

2837 N. Power Road #110 480-380-8222





Recent trends continue to highlight a strong desire for communities to be bike-friendly, and the City of Mesa's Transportation Department Bike & Pedestrian Program is continuously working on creating enhanced pedestrian pathways to provide safe connections for residents to travel through the city on two-wheels.

Stay up to date with current projects and announcements! Sign up for e-notifications on Mesa's Bike & Pedestrian Program at mesaaz.gov/bikeped or follow us:





