

Taking steps to keep a wet spring from becoming a dangerous summer

On a warm Friday in April, nearly 50 firefighters and colleagues from a handful of state agencies cleared more than a mile of overgrown vegetation along Ranch Gate Road, which leads to Tom's Thumb Trailhead in the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

On its face, the work was a training exercise so members of statewide wildfire response organizations—including the Scottsdale Fire Department—gain experience working together.

Clearing this vegetation had another, more immediate benefit—it helped create an all-important barrier against wildfires.

Beautiful green plants dotted with sprays of color make for lovely spring scenery, but turn into dead and dangerous fuel for the summer fire season.

As the city focuses on managing this threat in the preserve, residents are encouraged to do the same around their homes. Eliminating the non-native “invasive” plants that thrive after rainy seasons not only reduces the threat of fire, but also helps preserve the delicate ecological balance of the desert.



By establishing defensible space around your home, you could help the Fire Department protect your property from brush fires.

Specific rules apply if you live in a designated Natural Area Open Space zone, but the general guidelines are to remove dry and dead vegetation on your property, trim tree canopies and remove dead branches and leaves, and do not keep flammable items or foliage underneath wooden decks and overhangs.

Find additional tips and information at ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “wildland fire.”

It's against the law to use fireworks in or within one mile of the McDowell Sonoran Preserve and Pinnacle Peak Park.

The Fire Department recommends leaving firework shows to the professionals. ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “fireworks.”



THE RAILROAD PARK CHUGS TO A NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

When Scottsdale residents were asked to show the nation why there's no place like McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park, you went all aboard, pushing the park to a national title thanks to more than 3,500 online votes and approximately 2,400 Instagram posts.

The bracket-style contest started with a field of the top 32 parks in the United States owned and managed by local governments. McCormick-Stillman ultimately earned the 2019 ELGL Knope Award for the nation's best park or open space after narrowly edging Amerson River Park in Macon, Georgia, in the final vote.

Engaging Local Government Leaders sponsors the award, named for Deputy Parks Director Leslie Knope from the NBC sitcom “Parks and Recreation.”

“We are blessed to have such dedicated community support, and there's no way we would have come out on top without the enthusiastic support of our visitors, families and non-profit board,” said Nick Molinari, who supervises the park. “Our staff also deserve a ton of credit. They put in the work every day to make the railroad park a special place.”

The 30-acre McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park is in the heart of Scottsdale at Scottsdale and Indian Bend roads and entertains about 1 million visitors each year.

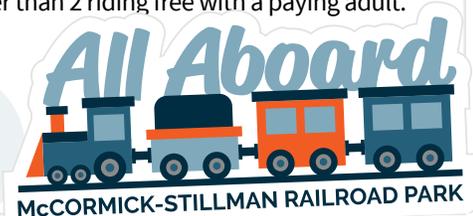
It's probably among your favorite Scottsdale places already, but if you haven't yet enjoyed the park, what are you waiting for?

In addition to riding on the Paradise & Pacific Railroad and the 1950-vintage Allan Herschell carousel, you can immerse yourself in the massive model railroad museum and enjoy one-of-a-kind playgrounds, shopping and ice cream.

The Railroad Park's Summer Concert Series runs every Sunday evening through June 30.

Enjoy local bands from 7:30-9 p.m. Bring a blanket, chairs and snacks – or buy munchies on-site. Park admission and the concerts are free; train and carousel tickets are \$2 each with kids younger than 2 riding free with a paying adult.

Learn more at TheRailroadPark.com.



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Respondents to the **National Citizen Survey** conducted in Scottsdale late last year gave the city high marks as a place to live, with 97 percent rating Scottsdale “excellent” or “good” in that category. Other high marks include overall quality of life (96 percent) and neighborhood safety (98 percent) while 96 percent of residents would recommend living in Scottsdale.

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96

Find survey results and reports at ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “citizen survey.”



Neighborhood Watch goes digital

Scottsdale police want help catching criminals from residents who have smart technology doorbells and home video systems.

The CamerEyes program seeks to reduce crime and improve safety in neighborhoods across the city. Anyone with a security or doorbell camera can let the Scottsdale Police Department know by filling out a quick online questionnaire.

“Residents have always worked hand-in-hand with the city to make their neighborhoods safer,” said Jamie Petermann, a citizen advisor in Scottsdale’s Office of Citizen Service and coordinator of the city’s residential CamerEyes program. “It’s truly about being a neighborhood watch in a virtual world and providing police with another potential investigative tool.”

If a crime occurs, police can refer to the secure CamerEyes database and contact camera owners nearby to see if anything may have been recorded that could aid the investigation. Participants are not obligated to provide any video, but police hope this partnership will make the city even safer.

People concerned about the potential for privacy violations shouldn’t worry. Police cannot access live video or system sign-on information for any registered device. The database is voluntary and contains only basic contact information.

For more information or to register for the program, visit ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “CamerEyes.”

Come sling mud at this year’s Mighty Mud Mania, 7 a.m.-noon Saturday, June 8, at Chaparral Park, 5401 N. Hayden Road. This free event offers muddy obstacle courses for people of all ages. ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “Mighty Mud Mania.”

Keep your kids active and engaged at Scottsdale summer camps, available June 3 through Aug. 2. Kids in first through eighth grades can participate in sports, fitness competitions, science experiments, craft projects, arts, special events, excursions and more. Learn more and register at ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “summer camp.”

Weekday summer swim lessons are available at all Scottsdale aquatic centers. Sessions begin June 10 and 24. Learn more and register at ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “aquatics.”

Be red, white and COOL at the Scottsdale 4th of July Celebration, 4-9:30 p.m. Thursday, July 4, at WestWorld. It’ll be a featured Fortnite 4th Experience where fans can watch professional games live, play Battle Royale Laser Tag, build forts and meet professional gamers. The evening caps off with a traditional fireworks show. Info at Scottsdale4th.com.

SCOTTSDALE UPDATE is published six times per year by the city of Scottsdale. If you have questions or suggestions, please email communications@ScottsdaleAZ.gov.

General city information:

480-312-3111 or email questions@ScottsdaleAZ.gov



Scottsdale is one of seven American cities to achieve 2019 What Works Cities Certification, a national standard of excellence in city governance. Scottsdale earned silver certification for adopting a business mindset to run a well-managed government, embracing transparency, embedding data in decision-making—and several other accomplishments that resulted from those practices.

Thirteen cities have achieved certification since the program’s inception including Boston, San Diego and Seattle—Scottsdale is the smallest city to be certified. Learn about Scottsdale’s certification and performance management initiatives at ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search “performance.”

Mayor W.J. “Jim” Lane is pictured above with employees from different city departments who also serve on Scottsdale’s performance management team.



MORE THINGS TO DO

Find more info and events at ScottsdaleAZ.gov/events:

- Learn about cutting-edge green buildings June 6
- Enjoy ice cream socials at Via Linda Senior Center July 9 and at Granite Reef Senior Center July 12
- Stroll the Summer Spectacular Art Walk July 11



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