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Cover Photo By Julia Hill



HAPPY Halloween

HOW TO STAY SAFE THIS HALLOWEEN

BY JULIA HILL

The season for tricks and treats is here, and if you've got young kids, it's an exciting time for dreaming up costume ideas and looking forward to making the rounds for something sweet. The spooky holiday is usually very safe, especially in amazing neighborhoods like ours, but it's always best to keep safety in mind before sending out or accompanying little ones for trick-or-treating. These Halloween safety tips will assure the scares only come from your neighbor's spooky decorations!

Watch Where You Walk

When you're in high spirits, it can be hard to remember not to dash across the street to the next house. In the dark, you're that much harder for cars to see even at corners and intersections. Encourage children to obey crosswalk signals, look left and right before crossing, walk instead of run, and to make eye contact with drivers as they are crossing in front of vehicles. Minimize street crossing with a route that follows houses on one side of the street, and look for cars entering or leaving driveways. Limit the use of handheld devices or phones while walking, which can cause a distraction.

Costume Common Sense

If your child is donned in dark colors or anything that limits visibility at night, it's fun to spruce up an outfit or trick-or-treating bag with reflective tapes, glowsticks or other creative ways to stand out. Masks might make the costume, but if it can be replaced with face paint, consider an option that won't obstruct vision. Flashlights are a must to see and be seen.

Go with an Adult or Set Rules

It's up to you to decide what age your child and their friends or siblings should trick-or-treat without supervision, but it's strongly recommended that an adult accompany children under the age of 12. Older kids should be advised to come home at a designated time, and to stick to a route you planned and reviewed together.

Treat Tips

Candy your children receive should be commercially produced and wrapped to avoid anything suspicious. If you are not accompanying your child trick-or-treating, make sure they know beforehand what candy is OK to accept. Send everyone out with a meal and discourage snacking on treats before you can inspect what they've gathered and monitor the intake – food allergies, choking hazards and simply eating too much are never good ways to end a fun day.

Be a Smart Driver

If you'll be driving on Halloween, you'll need to be smart and cautious too. Pedestrian accidents are twice as likely for kids on Halloween than any other day of the year. Keep an eye out for kids crossing streets and as you enter or exit your driveway. Popular times for families and children to be out and about are between the hours of 5:30 and 9:30 pm, so be especially mindful during this time. As always, don't text and drive.



October Farm Festivals to Fall For

BY JULIA HILL

Autumn's cooler weather is just around the corner, and it's the perfect time to gather up the family for a day at Phoenix's plentiful fall festivals. Don't forget to buy pumpkins!

These fall events offer a chance to enjoy family fun on the farm, plus some spooky surprises, all throughout the month of October. Please check online for more information about for each event before you visit, as times, dates and admission vary.

Pumpkin Days and Corn Maze at Tolmachoff Farms (West Valley)

Tolmachoff Farms invites you to get lost in its famous six-acre corn maze, which challenges puzzlers each year with a new theme and a scavenger hunt to build pieces of a map. Little ones will love the mini corn maze, and thrill-seekers can face their fears in a ghoulish haunted corn maze. Other fall activities include a petting zoo, gigantic pumpkin patch, play areas, a hay pyramid, bounce house on the weekends and farm train rides. Please check online for 2018 dates and times.

Schnepf Farms Pumpkin and Chili Party (Queen Creek)

Chili (and fun) is the name of the game at Schnepf Farms' annual festival, where the good food flows and exciting rides delight even the youngest family members. Admission includes hayrides, roller coasters, carousel rides, a petting zoo, mini golf, a rock climbing wall, and even a zip line. Fridays and Saturday nights, there are fireworks! The entertainment lineup includes everything from pig races to a dog show, and the 10-acre celebrity corn maze promises to challenge. Chili, chicken, hot dogs and burgers and more will be grilling every day.

The Schnepf Farms Pumpkin and Chili Party will take place every Thursday through Sunday in October.

Corn Maze and Fall Festival at Vertuccio Farms (East Valley)

Kick off the season at Vertuccio Farms with a fall festival that's packed with pumpkins, fun and games. Kids will love the giant jump pad, tube roll, zip line and extreme air pillow, and the whole family can join in on a mule-pulled wagon ride, Saturdays and Sundays until sunset. There's also an animal area and 7-acre corn maze, plus exciting magic shows on the weekends. Your perfect jack-o'-lantern pumpkin awaits in the pumpkin patch.

The Vertuccio Farms Corn Maze and Fall Festival is open daily through November 4th. Times are Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 9 pm; Friday and Saturday, 9 am to 10 pm; and Sunday 10 am to 6 pm.

Mother Nature Farm's Pumpkin Patch (East Valley)

Have you ever seen a 500-pound pumpkin? Mother Nature Farm's patch has everything from tiny pumpkins to ones clocking in the triple digits! Admission entrance is \$10 per child (\$5 per adult) and includes a pumpkin, stickers and decoration station, fun playtime on a spider crawl and hayride, feeding animals in the petting zoo and entrance to Alexander's Adventure Maze. Stay a while to lunch on picnic tables on grassy fields under shade trees.

Mother Nature Farm's Pumpkin Patch is open daily through October 30th from 9 am to 9 pm, and open October 31st from 9 am to 6 pm.





OCTOBER'S COOLER WEATHER MEANS IT IS TIME TO TAKE A HIKE!

By Julia Hill


Now that it's October, we are looking forward to enjoying one of the best parts about living in the valley: the beautiful weather. What better way to experience it than on one of our desert trails? If you are new to hiking or looking for a way to get back into it this season, I've rounded up some short favorite trails that offer a great "warm up."

It's still important to practice safety and be mindful of the heat. Don't start trails in the midday sun, and opt instead to take advantage of cooler mornings and after the sun is going down. Wear protective clothing and bring more water than you think you need. You should always turn around as soon as half of your water is gone, no matter where you are on the trail.

Happy hiking!

Papago Park

These iconic red butte formations near Tempe are unmissable as you drive by, but did you know they are surrounded by hiking trails? The level, well-maintained paths make this area great for families or beginners, and the views and natural wildlife make you forget you're in the heart of the city. Consider the two-mile Double Butte Loop on the west side of the park to get familiar with the area, then add on the famous Hole in the Rock on the park's east side: This short trail is only a few hundred feet, but climbs into a beautiful natural rock opening. Tip: Hole in the Rock is a great place to watch a sunset!






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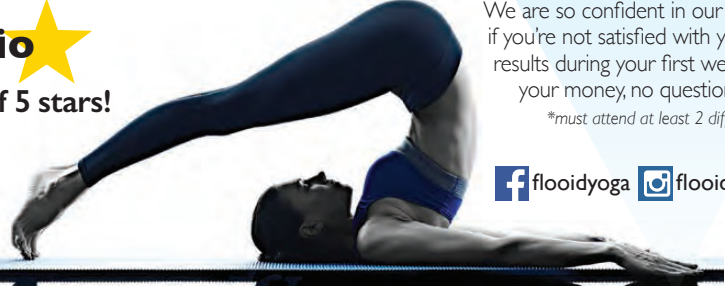
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Waterfall Trail in White Tank Mountains Regional Park

The namesake feature of this trail is only visible after a rain, but it's worth a visit even in months like this when we won't have storms. The White Tank Mountains fill the skyline on the valley's western edge, and this two-mile trail puts you right into their rugged beauty. Beginners and hiking lovers alike will love spotting a wide variety of Sonoran Desert flora and fauna, from saguaros to cholla to hedgehog cacti. The Waterfall Trail is short, level and barrier-free. Tip: You will need to pay \$7 for vehicle entry at this regional park.

Wind Cave Trail in Utery Mountain Regional Park

Families love this trail on the valley's eastern side, where a three-mile out-and-back adventure puts hikers in the shade of a rock overhang. The view from the top will entice you to stay and enjoy the scenery for a while. Wind Cave Trail's path is well-marked and easy to follow, making it approachable for families and beginners. While the trail does continue past the "cave," this hike can be done to whatever level you are comfortable with; Any place you need to turn around will still mean you soaked in some beautiful desert landscapes. Tip: You will need to pay \$7 for vehicle entry at this regional park.

Trail 8 in the Phoenix Mountains Preserve

Centrally located and free to visit, the Phoenix Mountains Preserve offers some of the best hiking right here in the city. Famous landmarks and hiking destinations like Camelback Mountain and Piestewa Peak dominated the area, but for beginners or those looking for a shorter hike in warmer weather, there are options like Trail 8. This two-

mile hike begins at the area's 40th Street Trailhead and offers a short but rugged escape in the desert preserve. It will be hard to believe you are in the middle of the city once you're walking past so many saguaros and rocky canyons. This trail is rated up to moderate, so it might be better for warm-up hikes rather than families new to trails.

Judith Tunnell Accessible Trails in South Mountain Park

South of downtown Phoenix is one of the country's largest city parks and preserves, with more than 50 miles of trails on 16,000 acres of wild Sonoran Desert. To get started exploring the area, families and individuals with accessibility needs will enjoy the short, wheelchair friendly Judith Tunnell trails. There are two half-mile loops to explore: an interpretive loop with signage about the wildlife and landscape of the area, and a slightly steeper challenge loop. Both start from the South Mountain Environmental Education Center, making it a great option for a family outing with education about our Sonoran Desert home.



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