

# *Pinal* **NUGGET**

December 2016  
Volume 10 Number 2

**FREE**

Calendar of  
December  
Events,  
pages 14-15

**MEDLEY'S  
ICONS &  
NIKONS**  
pages 6-7

A community publication of [Copperarea.com](http://Copperarea.com)

Photo by James Carnes



**PHOTOGRAPHER**

Valley photographer MiMi Paris will lead a limited space available walk at Boyce Thompson Arboretum on Dec. 31.

# Arboretum presents Beginners Photo Walk with MiMi Paris on Dec. 31

**Valley artist MiMi Paris has photographed landscapes and people from Arizona to the Mediterranean, criss-crossing America, west to east and north to south exploring National Parks, urban landscapes and taking amazing portraits.**

## NUGGET

*Covering the Copper Corridor Communities of Globe, Miami, Superior, Kearny, Hayden, Winkelman, Dudleyville, Aravaipa, Mammoth, San Manuel, Oracle, SaddleBrooke and Catalina.*

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*"We sure could use a little good news today."*

— Anne Murray

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Please call (520) 385-2266 for more information or email Mila Besich-Lira at [mila.lira19@gmail.com](mailto:mila.lira19@gmail.com)

She's kicking-off the New Year as host of a new photography walkabout at Boyce Thompson Arboretum Dec. 31.

The venue is outdoors and informal, and the goal is to share a few basic camera lessons while photographing the gardens. Her walking tour will include time for participants to learn basic camera functions ranging from aperture and exposure to white balance. In addition, participants will be able to get their specific questions answered in a supportive environment - a small group with a friendly camera coach whose goal is to put the fun in camera functions, and eliminate aspects of photography that can be intimidating to beginners.

"Whether you have a simple 'point-N-shoot' camera or a powerful DSLR and just haven't made it past that automatic setting, we'll visit a few of my favorite places around the Arboretum looking for Winter color and landscapes and just

chatting about cameras and photography. My goal is to help you get more comfortable with your camera and more confident in your images," said MiMi. "If there is time, we can practice a few posed portrait compositions, too, and I'll share a ways that I have learned to get natural, but stylish, photos of your family and friends."

There's no additional charge to attend; as with most Arboretum nature walks, MiMi's new photography walk is included with daily admission of \$10, or free to BTA annual members. Spaces are limited, though; MiMi asks that participants RSVP by email to [mimi.paris@gmail.com](mailto:mimi.paris@gmail.com) or call her at 480-319-2229 so her group can be contained to a manageable dozen participants. Anyone on her waiting list will be among the first invited to her walks in February, March and April.

See more of her work at [mimiparisphotography.com](http://mimiparisphotography.com).

The Arboretum is located

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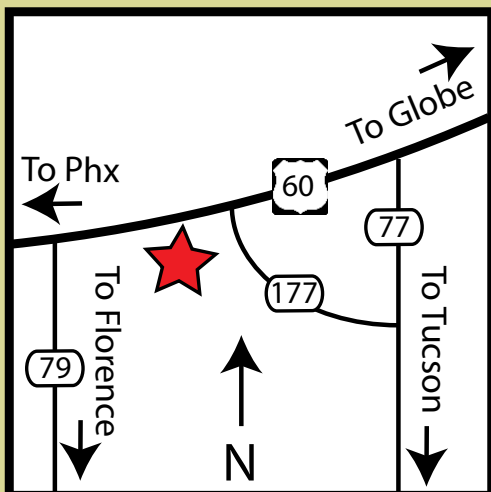
# Photographer

Continued from page 2

at Highway 60 Milepost #223 near the historic copper mining town of Superior, about one hour's drive due east of Phoenix on the Superstition Freeway.

Arriving from Tucson? Take Oracle Road North to Highway 79, continue through and past the town of Florence to the junction where Highway 79 meets Highway 60, then turn right and drive another 12 miles East on Highway 60 to our front gate.

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**Blue Christmas**  
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**Software is Eating the World**  
 Thursday, Dec 15, 6:30 PM

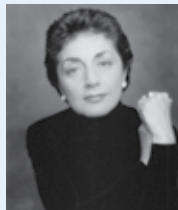
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Sunday, Mar. 5, 3 p.m.  
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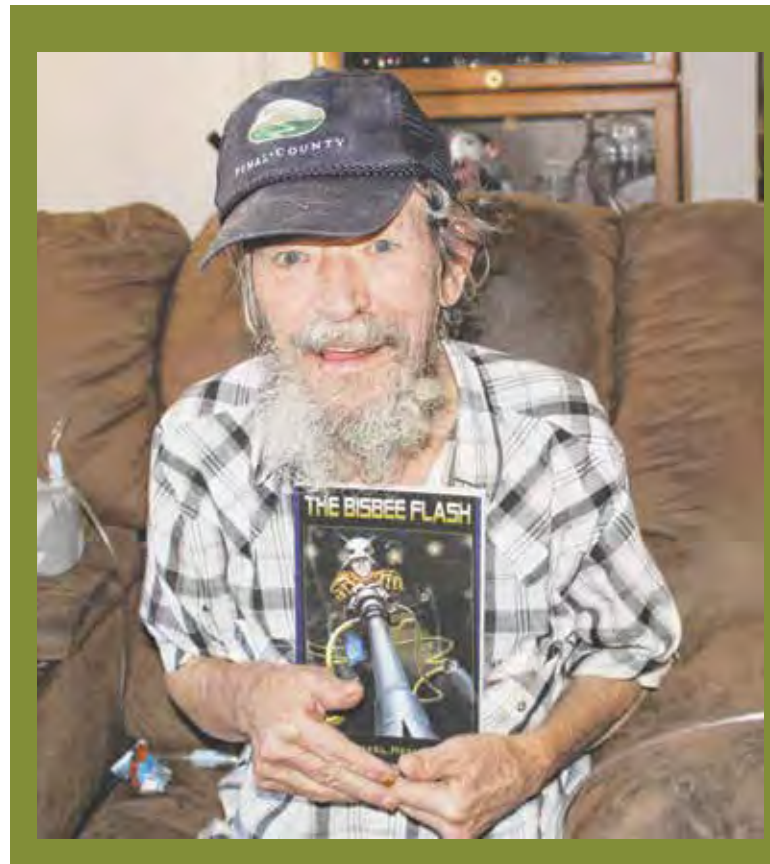
Saturday Mar. 18, 3 p.m.  
**Music to Celebrate St. Patrick with Acoustic Cadence Irish Folk Trio**  
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Sunday, Apr. 2, 3 p.m.  
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# Michael Herndon the Bisbee Flash

**John Hernandez**  
**Pinal Nugget**

**Long time miner Michael Herndon has published his book, *The Bisbee Flash*, which has been nearly 30 years in the making.**

Michael started writing stories of his mining experiences and adventures along the border for the Oracle (newspaper) in the 1980s. He said he wrote the book because “you never see stories or read about miners unless they are trapped in a cave in somewhere.” He wanted to show readers what it was like to be a miner.

“Not even our wives know about the life working underground,” he said. “It is an unseen world.” Michael was born in Bisbee, Arizona in 1942. His father died in a V.A. hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah from complications of a disease he caught while in the Philippines where he had also been wounded during



**Not even our wives  
know about the life  
working underground.  
It is an unseen world.**



## **BACKYARD VIEW**

Michael Herndon has transformed his backyard into a work of art.

World War II. Michael was 11. His dad had been a miner at Bisbee before going off to fight the war. Michael's mother moved the family to Kentucky to be with other family members. After graduating high school, one of Michael's uncles who worked at the Copper Queen mine in Bisbee told him he could get him a job. Michael returned to Bisbee and was hired even though he was 17 years old which was against the law. You had to be 18 to work underground.

Michael's uncle told him to work until he saved enough money to go to college. He said he never saved enough. He was too busy having fun in the bars and cat houses in the nearby border town of Naco in Sonora, Mexico. Michael said there were five cat houses in Naco that serviced the soldiers from Fort Huachuca and the miners.

"I saw some pretty good

fighters between the miners and soldiers," he said. There are some funny stories in the book about his adventures there.

This was the beginning of a mining career that would last 30 years. He learned quickly from the older miners, many of them World War II and Korean War veterans. It is a testament to Michael's love of mining and his courage that he continued to work underground even after being buried alive and witnessing his partner being killed in a cave in. There is a chapter in the book about this incident. Michael said that in the 1960s there were 1,200 people working at the Bisbee mine.

"There was at least one fatality a month at the mine," he said.

Michael worked in Bisbee until 1969 when the mine shut down. He went to work at the Duval mine but it was surface work.

"I didn't like it. I wanted to get

underground," he said. "I heard they were hiring miners in San Manuel so I went there."

He started at the Magma mine in 1972 and worked until BHP closed the mine. He then went up to the Oracle Ridge Mine and was hired as a supervisor. While there he continued to drill and load powder. One day the Superintendent saw him drilling and pulled him aside and told him he was not supposed to be drilling, he was a supervisor. Michael told him, "I love doing this." The Superintendent told him, "Well if you love it go ahead and keep doing it." The job at Oracle Ridge lasted two years. Then they closed the mine.

He gave up mining and went to work for Pinal County for 10 years. He took care of the parks in Oracle and Dudleyville.

At the San Manuel mine, Michael continued to work as a miner and was a member

of the Mine Rescue team. He talked about fighting a fire at the Magma mine in Superior, Arizona in the 1980s. He said that the Mine Rescue team was there for three weeks fighting the fire. The team stayed at a hotel in Superior.

"Our bar tab was out of this world!" he remembered with a smile.

A meeting was held with the supervisors who told them they needed to stay away from the bar, that the company had spent more for the bar tab than the costs of their rooms and meals.

Michael said that the difference between the mine in Bisbee and the mine in San Manuel was the size. He said in Bisbee the shafts and drifts were smaller. The "cage" which took the miners down the shaft to the different work levels only held 11 people. At San Manuel the cage could hold 50 men.

Continued on page 13

## → THE ARTIST

Karen Medley's new art installation encourages viewers to look up.

## ↓ CLOSER VIEW

Reflective surfaces change the art and allow the viewer to be a part of the art.



# Medley's Icons & Nikons

**John Hernandez**  
**Pinal Nugget**

**Oracle artist Karen Medley's new show "Icons & Nikons: A Photographic Journey Towards a Golden Celestial Overload" is at the Triangle L Ranch Land Adobe Barn Gallery. The show began Nov. 7 and will run through Dec. 21, 2016.**

The Artist's Reception was held on Saturday, Nov. 12. A good crowd showed up and the art installation piece was well received.

Karen has lived in Oracle for over 30 years and taught art at San Manuel High School. She received her Bachelors of Art degree from Arizona State University. She did graduate work at University of California,

Northern Arizona University, University of Arizona and Arizona State University. Karen completed her studies at the J.P. Getty Art Institute of Los Angeles.

Icons & Nikons is named for religious icons or images and the photographs of them that she uses in her art installation.

"This art installation explores

my personal connection with the world of spirituality and Christian culture thru religious iconography," Karen explained.

It was inspired by her recent travels with her husband John through Europe where they visited many cathedrals and art galleries including the Louvre in Paris and the Sistine Chapel in Rome.

"It happened in Rome," Karen

said.

The idea or "vision" came to her as she stood on the balcony of their hotel room. She was looking up the street where they had a view of the Roman Colosseum.

Karen says of her project: "When you walk into the barn, the walls are empty because I want you to look up to view the religious icons. This is not



**↑ GAZING UP**

Visitors to Karen Medley's art show opening gaze upwards, taking in the beautiful work.

a traditional way of displaying art. You glance up and catch the fractured mirrored iconic images in this exhibit. It challenges the viewer to search for the iconic images, just as one might search for their own spirituality or a religious experience. The adobe barn brings us closer to more of a humble place for your personal religious/spiritual experience. The viewer will have their own personal experience; it is not just dictated by the iconic images."

According to Karen, some of the reflections of deep thoughts or "musings" that this work of art may illicit are: Celestial overload; fractured thoughts of spirituality/religion; Celestial Dream Sky; churches build to the grandeur of God; Do we come away with a unique and different experience/feeling than the grandiose churches of worship; What would we need to add to these images of spiritual/religious iconography?

Karen's husband Royal John, a published author and poet

said of Karen's art installation: "She lurches toward churches as the statues stare at ya."

The artist "can't dictate what the viewer should feel or perceive as art" but this "photographic journey towards a Golden Celestial Overload" will have you come away with your own interpretation and perhaps a spiritual awakening. The display was unique and interesting. The art piece was ever changing depending on your view angle and the changing of the natural sunlight during the day. A breeze coming through the doorway of the barn would slightly move the mirrors reflecting light and changing images. As people look up at the ceiling they may see the fragmented reflections of themselves or the other patrons. They, in a way, become part of the art.

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### NATIVE AMERICAN

The beaver is native to North America and once could be seen in every state. He's a little hard to find in Arizona, though.



### MAJESTIC

The American Bald Eagle can still be seen in Arizona.



## Finding Arizona Beaver

**Gary Every**  
Pinal Nugget

**I awaken at sunrise, stalking my subject at sunrise with camera in hand, strolling the sands of Bignotti Beach trying to capture the perfect beaver shot. Reeds crackle beneath my careless feet. Suddenly there is a cannonball loud splash as a frightened beaver dives from the bank into the river. He splashes his tail, the slap cracking like a gunshot, alerting the other beavers. I take a picture of the beaver swimming away, just his head pokes above the water.**

I already have several photos of beaver swimming away but I was hoping for better than this today. I have noticed that many of my wildlife photos have titles like “tail of deer as it runs away”, “splash where fish has just jumped”, or

“quivering branch where eagle has just launched”. As the beaver swims off I put my camera away and head to the car. That warning shot when the beaver slapped his tail against the water will inspire all the other beaver to hide for a

long time.

Beaver are the largest rodents in North America and can weigh as much as eighty pounds, although most adults tip the scales at about forty pounds. During the Ice Age a giant beaver which





Beaver are no longer extinct in southern Arizona. A reintroduction program along the San Pedro River has been wildly successful.



← **SUMMER BIRD**

This summer tanager has beautiful bright plumage.

↑ **BRIGHT PLUMAGE**

The yellow headed blackbird is one of the prettiest birds in the desert.

was eight feet long and weighed just over two hundred pounds with six inch incisors roamed over much of North America. These prehistoric beaver would have been the size of a bear.

Beavers used to be plentiful all across Arizona, wherever there was flowing water. One of the first Americans to traverse Arizona was James Ohio Pattie. My favorite James Ohio Pattie story took place near Gila Hot Springs, New Mexico. Pattie stated that he could drop a fishing line in the cool swift waters of the Gila River, hook a trout and reel it in. Then he would turn around and lower the fish into the hot spring. After just seconds the fish would be completely cooked and he could eat it

right off the line. Pattie trapped his way along the Gila River and its tributaries. Pattie discovered so many beaver along the banks of the San Pedro River that he named it “Beaver River.” He proudly claimed to have taken two hundred skins there. One can see why such avaricious trapping quickly led to the extinction of beaver in many places. The San Pedro River was one of these places where beaver went extinct.

Beaver are no longer extinct in southern Arizona. A reintroduction program along the San Pedro River has been wildly successful. Eight beaver were reintroduced in 1999, followed by five more in 2000, and two more beaver were released into the San Pedro in

2002. It is now believed that as many as forty or fifty beaver now call the river home. It was not the first beaver reintroduction program that Arizona had ever seen. In the 1950’s beaver were reintroduced to the Mogollon Rim to help with stream restoration projects there. In the 1930’s the U.S. government put beaver to work restoring riparian habitats in Wyoming, Utah, and the Pacific Northwest. Beaver are considered a keystone species for riparian habitats. It is amazing how diversity of bird species increases along beaver streams.

My friend Jerry saw his first beaver while still a Marine stationed outside

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## Arizona Beaver

Continued from page 9

Yuma. He would often see the large chubby rodents scurrying across the road after midnight as they ran from one irrigation canal to another, making commando raids on lettuce fields. There was even one beaver breakout from the Sonoran Desert Museum. One night the beavers left their pond and waddled through the bighorn enclosure before escaping into the desert. In the morning, museum workers followed the tracks which went west for a short while. The beaver tracks stopped where they intersected coyote tracks. Then the beavers prints whirled around and the fugitives headed directly back to the safety of their pond, never attempting to escape again.

My quest for the perfect beaver shot has led me to many early morning sunrises along the shores of Bignotti Beach along the Verde River in Cottonwood. There is a den there and I almost always see the beaver but never get a good photograph. The beaver are too wary. One stumble, sneeze or misstep and the water erupts with a cannonball tail slap and all the other beaver swim away underwater. Beaver are very good swimmers with webbed hind feet and can stay submerged for over fifteen minutes. I figure that in order to have evolved to be so cautious the beaver must be delicious.

Knowing that beaver are mostly nocturnal creatures I went down to the river under the full moon figuring that would be the best time to get a photo. The problem is the beavers like trees and trees cast shade. Thick groves of trees cast lots of shade. I

hardly saw anything but about every ten or fifteen minutes I would frighten one of the beavers and be startled by a loud splash as that big round flat beaver tail struck the water with a crack like a gunshot. Often the tail splashes were only a few feet away from a beaver I had never seen. Once I was so startled that I nearly dropped my camera into the water.

I have learned the best way to see the beaver is to sit calm and still for long periods of time. The beaver still freak out every time I try to move my camera but I have learned to enjoy just watching them. Then too there is that thing about the birds. Like I said before, beavers are well known as a keystone species for riparian habitats. The presence of beaver in a stream greatly increases avian diversity. While I sit on the shores of Bignotti Beach and watch the beaver swim back and forth I have learned to listen and enjoy all the birdsongs erupting from the trees. Sometimes the loudest birds are the most beautiful like the summer tanager or yellow headed blackbirds. One sunrise I had just scared away the beaver and was putting my camera away when I looked up and saw five raccoons climbing a giant desert willow covered in grapevines. My favorite experience was walking a little further upstream than usual and pausing to rest when a bald eagle landed on the opposite riverbank.

If you happen to be up at sunrise, preferably just before sunrise, think of me, knowing that I will be stalking along the shore of Bignotti Beach hoping to capture the perfect beaver shot.

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# Bisbee Flash

Continued from page 5

They used five-ton ore cars in Bisbee. The San Manuel mine used 20-ton ore cars underground.

“You could fit two or three of those ore cars in the ore cars used by Magma,” he said. “Everything was bigger except the jackleg (jackleg drill).”

The deepest level he worked in Bisbee was 2,500 feet below the surface. The deepest he worked in San Manuel was the 3,200 level.

Michael said he was a good miner. In Bisbee they held annual drilling contests in Brewery Gulch with cash prizes. He won every year he entered.

“I was good on a jackleg,” he said. “It was like it was part of my body.”

“I miss working underground. I miss working with the guys,” he told the *Pinal Nugget*.

Most of all he misses the camaraderie between the miners.

“I met some incredible people

underground. I knew a man that built guns from scratch and would sell them. A man who could build beautiful cabinets and one that designed turquoise jewelry. Many miners have a love for something else and worked in the mine to pay the bills,” he said. “I didn’t have any talent, I just worked in the mine.”

Michael’s wife, Carolee Sutton Herndon disagreed with him and indicated his paintings and the koi pond and wall he built in the backyard. And then there is his writing talent.

Michael goes back to Bisbee once in a while. He has taken the Queen Mine tour there. On the tour, he began telling stories to the tour guide and tourists about his days at the Bisbee mine. They told him they liked his stories so much he should become a tour guide.

Michael got the nick name Bisbee Flash in 1968. There was a popular song Jumping Jack Flash by the Rolling

Stones at the time. He was known as a fast runner and quick on his feet. He had many a close call at work with rocks falling near him. Some miners took to calling him Flash.

“They said I could out run a boulder as it was falling on me,” he said.

His book, *The Bisbee Flash*, looks like it will be an entertaining book about the life of a hard rock miner and his experiences in Southern Arizona and Sonora Mexico. The stories include romance, close calls with the law, exotic means of travel and of course mining.

You can purchase *The Bisbee Flash* on Amazon. It is also available at Sue & Jerry’s Trading Post, 1015 W. American Ave., Oracle and at the Tri-Community Visitors Center, 1995 W. American Ave., Oracle. For books purchased at the Visitors Center, Michael is donating \$5 of the purchase price of each book to the Visitors Center.

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# calendar of events

## December 2016

With the holiday season upon us, we wanted to share a few of the local events with our Pinal Nugget readers.

Happy Holidays from the staff at Pinal Nugget.

### LIGHT PARADE

10

On Saturday, Dec. 10, beginning at dusk. This year's theme: "20 Years of Lighting the Globe." One of the largest holiday events of the season presents over 60 floats of all shapes and sizes. Everyone invited, from organizations, businesses, schools, clubs and families. Be watching the Globe light up 20 years later! In Historical Downtown Globe, 101 S Broad St., Globe. [globemiamichamber.org](http://globemiamichamber.org)



### CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

12

On Monday, Dec. 12 at noon. The holiday lunch menu planned is turkey and all the traditional fixings. The cost for all this tasty goodness is \$5. Want to bring something? Bring two cans of food for the local food bank. For more information, call Shirley at 520-954-2722. Oracle Community Center, 685 E. American Ave., Oracle. [oraclecommunitycenter.org](http://oraclecommunitycenter.org)



### SMALL TOWN CHRISTMAS

17

On Saturday, Dec. 17, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Enjoy some hot chocolate, see the pretty decorations, and listen to the Christmas music. Oh and let the kids tell Santa what they want! Who needs a busy mall with pushy people for the kids to see Santa when you can do it here with the friends and family you love at Miami's Small Town Christmas? In Miami Park on Sullivan St., Miami. [globemiamichamber.org](http://globemiamichamber.org)



## LUMINARIA DISPLAY

18

On Sunday, Dec. 18, at 5 p.m. Enjoy a peaceful evening under the glow of thousands of luminarias lining the walls of the Besh Ba Gowah Archaeological Park. Music and light refreshments will complete this evening ... a wonderful way to start the Christmas week. On Jess Hayes Road in Globe. A shuttle is available from 550 S. Broad Street to alleviate any parking concerns. Free admission. [globemiamichamber.org](http://globemiamichamber.org)



## LOVELIGHTS

19

On Monday, Dec. 19, at dusk. Uptown Kearny will be lit up with luminarias honoring someone, a group, memorial for someone who passed, sending a prayer for or maybe just wanting to say thank you! Proceeds go towards the Copper Basin Jr. Chamber of Commerce program. On Alden Road in Kearny. Call 520-363-7607.



## HOLIDAY ART MARKET

22

From Nov. 25 to Dec. 22, Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thirteen Oracle artists have been hard at play creating items for all your holiday gift giving needs. There is ample parking on site. Come shop for original works made by local artists at attractive prices. At the Oracle Art Station, 1395 W. American Ave., Oracle. [oracletown.com](http://oracletown.com)



## SANTA'S DRIVE

24

On Saturday, Dec. 24, beginning at dusk. Santa Claus rides around Superior atop a Superior Fire Department Fire Truck, greeting kids and handing out small gifts and stuffed animals. The Department is currently taking donations of new stuffed animals and toys. Contact Superior Fire Department at 520-689-5671. [facebook.com/supiefire/](https://facebook.com/supiefire/)



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