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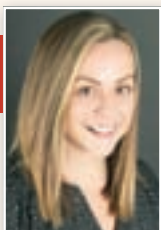
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EDITOR'S NOTE

The F.Q. Story historic neighborhood – from McDowell Road south to Roosevelt Street and from

Seventh Avenue west to Grand Avenue – consists of 602 homes built between the late 1920s and 1940s in various architectural styles: Spanish Colonial Revival, English Tudor and Craftsman, to name a few.

The area's development began when Francis Quarles Story, a Boston wool merchant (and someone who never actually lived in Phoenix) invested in the area. He helped stimulate agricultural and urban development, and in 1919, sold land that would later become the F.Q. Story neighborhood.

Today's homeowners work hard to preserve the history of their abodes while upgrading to modern amenities. Each home's historical elements are placed above all else, and the neighbors have become a family.

Story ideas and feedback are always welcome – reach me at editor@arcadianews.com. Until we meet again in November, thank you for reading Arcadia News and Arcadia Home & Design!

Mallory

On the cover: The second annual Tempe Blooms Festival showcased 20 Valley floral businesses.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHELSEY VELASQUEZ

Contents

4 THIS STORIED COMMUNITY

A few of Phoenix's F.Q. Story homes have undergone significant renovations, but one important aspect remains: the preservation of their history.

8 HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

March is prime planting time, but gardeners face challenges with wildlife and tender crops. Learn how deep watering, soil amendments, and worm castings can keep your garden thriving.

10 LIGHT IT UP

Experts from The Lifestyle Lab offer tips for selecting the correct bulbs, fixtures and lighting to transform any room in a home, perfecting its ambiance and functionality.

12 PROTECT THE PREDATORS, SAVE THE ECOSYSTEM

Rodenticides meant to control the pest population are poisoning essential predators, threatening the delicate balance of nature. Four experts weigh in on what we can do to help.

14 UNLEASH YOUR INNER FLOWER CHILD

This year's Tempe Blooms event attracted over 80,000 visitors with displays, live art, music, and a themed marketplace, all in the name of showcasing the Valley's creative floral talent.



Old bones, new life

How F.Q. Story homeowners honor history while embracing today

By Sherry Sklar

By the 1940s, the F.Q. Story neighborhood – spanning McDowell Road south to Roosevelt Street and Seventh Avenue west to Grand Avenue – had become a living showcase of Spanish Colonial Revival, English Tudor, Craftsman bungalow, Prairie, Mission, and transitional ranch homes. Today, this collection of early 20th-century architectural styles remains one of our city’s most distinctive historic communities.

The area and its many individual houses are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Securing this designation is no small feat. Phoenix has 36 designated historic districts, and in 1988, F.Q. Story became one of the first to receive the status.

This process required extensive documentation, advocacy, and compliance with city and state preservation guidelines through the City of Phoenix Planning and Development Department. While designation helps protect the architectural integrity, it also comes with responsibilities.

Homeowners must complete a formal application detailing their home’s significance

and adherence to historical guidelines. F.Q. Story is landmarked as a neighborhood. Therefore, all homeowners must abide by these rules when undertaking external home renovations. However, not all homes are individually designated so internal renovations may be exempt for those properties.

This past December, the Subdivision hosted its 38th annual F.Q. Story Home Tour & Holiday Street Marketplace. Residents opened eleven houses and six gardens to the public – and the event was an overwhelming success. Roberta Hancock, an Historic Homes Committee member, noticed that community spirit through this and other events has been renewed.

“People were eager to reconnect. Some of us started hosting little driveway coffee klatches so we could gather safely and feel part of a community again. The home tour this year felt like a celebration of welcoming people back, sharing our homes, and showing that this area is still thriving because we care about its history,” she said.

Kimberly Richichi’s 1929 English Tudor, known as “The Delph House,” was no exception. The home’s original kitchen was





The living room and backyard spaces at Roberta's home.



tiny, divided into three separate rooms, including a refrigerator room and a breakfast nook.

“A sizable project was to expand and modernize the kitchen to make it more usable for my family,” Kimberly explained.

The renovation required extensive

of chiseling plaster, removing the lathe, back-breaking work of removing three stories of a brick chimney, and exposing brick along the inside of an exterior wall to ensure some of the historic feel was not lost as we crafted an updated kitchen,” she said.

Susan Renner unexpectedly

“The home tour felt like a celebration of welcoming people back, sharing our homes, and showing that this neighborhood is still thriving because we care about its history.”

structural work, including removing an entire north-facing exterior wall, relocating the home’s primary electrical panel, and integrating the kitchen with an outdoor patio.

“Before we even got to the floors, the demo we tackled ourselves consisted

purchased her 1925 bungalow, drawn in by its history and her love of family antiques. How she found her home can be described as ‘kismet.’ One day, out for a drive, she randomly turned onto Willetta and spotted a “for sale” sign.

Curious, she called the telephone

Continued on **page 6**

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number to schedule a viewing. Charmed by the antique O’Keefe and Merritt stove and original hardwood floors, she didn’t even walk through the entire house before writing a check in the kitchen.

“All I can say is it’s a feeling you get. The age of the home, the things that I brought with me from my family – I could visualize them being in here,” she said.

When Susan first stepped into the home, she was greeted by wild magenta walls, aging pipes under the kitchen sink, and a faux mantel that had seen a

“All I can say is it's a feeling you get. The age of the home, the things that I brought with me from my family – I could visualize them being here.”

fire or two. Despite its flaws, the home felt like it was meant to be hers.

Significant updates included installing central air and heat, upgrading the electrical panel, replacing the sewer line, and putting on a new roof. She discovered her home had four old roofs stacked on each other, causing structural strain. Now, with only one, the house is considerably lighter!

Susan’s favorite spots include her pink art deco-era tiled bathroom and lush backyard, a haven for hummingbirds.

“My house is known as ‘the hummingbird home’ because inside and



Roberta's cowboy cocktail pool.



Susan's 1925 bungalow included the original hardwood floors.

outside, they're everywhere. Even my front gates have hummingbirds worked into the iron," Susan said.

Native American Southwest lore holds deep meaning for hummingbirds, symbolizing good luck and renewal – perfectly aligning with Susan's serendipitous journey.

Roberta has extensively renovated and lovingly restored her home, which she and her husband have owned for 38 years. When they first moved in, they faced resistance.

"The neighbors weren't happy with us because we wanted to remove the sod and introduce desert landscaping," Roberta said. Despite the pushback, their vision was clear – preserving water in an era of extended drought.

"We've been living in drought conditions for over 35 years, and conserving water has always been our priority," she said.

The transformation began by replacing traditional greenery with native mesquites and a Palo Verde tree. The backyard followed a more gradual evolution.

"We kept sod while our kids were young because falling on decomposed granite isn't fun," she said.

Eventually, they transitioned to concrete pads for seating and elevated planters. The backyard's standout feature, however, is a stock tank Roberta affectionately calls her "cowboy cocktail pool."

"It's so adorable, and I'm so grateful for it on hot summer evenings," she said.

This blend of charm and practicality extends to the rest of the property, including a detached garage that's become her studio. Every change reflects a balance of sustainability, function, and the thoughtful reimagination of a home rooted in history.

The homeowners agree that it wasn't just the charm of the neighborhood that enticed them but a strong sense of community and a convivial way of life.

"Home isn't just where you live – it's the community around you. And I've been lucky to have great neighbors who feel like family," Susan said.

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Tucked away on one of the largest lots, 10,800 sq ft in El Coronado Estates, lies this charming quintessential 3000+sq ft Arcadia Ranch home built by modern builders and remodeled by well-known local contractor Don Matteson. The Gourmet Kitchen has a commercial grade gas stove top, luxurious custom cabinets and oversized island which opens to a cozy family room & dining room resembling her previous Calle Del Norte house. Featuring 4 spacious BR, 3.5 BA, laundry room & storage, and many patios surrounded by enchantingly lush landscaped grounds with arbors & English gardens. Top rated Arcadia Schools, amazing neighborhood with cul de sac lots, and a community pool!



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The gateway to summer

How to get your spring garden thriving in no time

By Sherry Klusman

In Phoenix, March signals prime time for planting vegetables and herbs. “Gateway” implies that March is a transitional period where the characteristics of summer begin to appear – such as longer daylight hours. Thoughts drift to planting basil, beets, carrots, sweet corn, cucumbers, peppers, cantaloupe and watermelon, green onions, pumpkin, sunflowers, and squash.

It's been said that cool-season veggies are out, and warm-season veggies are in, but something felt different this year. Mornings are delightfully cool followed by afternoons ranging in the high 60s to low 70s. Tomatoes have continued to showcase an abundance of stunning yellow flowers while providing nonstop sweet fruit.

Landscapers have voiced frustration over requests to trim back plants due to their untidy appearance. This can't be safely done now because temperatures may drop, plants will freeze, and trimming away damaged leaves will become a necessity. Too much trimming at the wrong time can result in the death or stunting of plants. Patience is hard, even for the most

experienced gardener. What are our gardens and home yards missing?

RAIN. A good ol' soaking rain that gets absorbed into the subsoil and replenishes depleted nutrients. The list is painfully long, recalling the plants, cacti, trees and other assorted items homeowners have lost during this dry spell. Due to the lack of rain an overabundance of wildlife has appeared in our neighborhoods and made themselves at home. Not only are javelina, bob cats, and coyotes venturing closer, quail have staked their claim for all to witness.

Despite the lack of rain and unseasonably comfortable days, basil, bell peppers, potatoes, garlic chives, and tomato plants are all growing unscathed. How can this occur? Because in a quail's world, these plants are considered toxic and are avoided unless starvation is looming. Instead, the quail are gravitating to the tender, moist leaves of broccoli, cauliflower, Oregon sugar pod II peas, arugula, Swiss chard, all varieties of lettuce, spinach, and, much to my surprise, the old-fashioned fragrant sweet pea sprouts.



Despite the dry conditions, Arcadia's dedicated gardeners know that with the right care and a little patience, spring gardens can prosper.

Yes, they nibble 100 percent of everything in the ground – leaving only stems. It's probably safe to say the quail have visited and feasted on everyone's cool-weather crops. Seen in the hundreds, they have placed the intimidating black grackle on notice to find its own food source elsewhere.

Had I imagined earlier that this feeding frenzy would manifest itself, wire cages would have been pulled from storage to act as a fortress, as well as bird netting to protect the tender seedlings. Joking aside, the garden seemed to disappear within 24 hours. Frost cloth works effectively but lessens slightly the amount of sun the young plants get. When push comes to shove, these options work to save a precious garden.

It's not always possible to deep water due to the contours of gardens, but it does encourage deep root growth and drought tolerance. All plants, from ground covers to towering trees, depend on it to carry nutrients through their stems to their leaves. It's also essential for photosynthesis, the chemical process in the leaves that transforms water, sunlight, and carbon dioxide into food. Water also keeps plants cool as days tiptoe into higher temperatures. It must be mentioned that when more water is given than what's needed, growth is accelerated resulting in more trimming.

Phoenix's native soil may be great for growing desert vegetation, but it's not the best for a vegetable garden unless a generous mix of gardening soil and compost is added. At most, a garden should have no more than 20-25 percent native soil. Most Valley soils are naturally sandy and rocky, low in nitrogen and organic matter, and lack iron, zinc, and phosphorus.

In the coolest part of the day, such as early morning or late evening, supplementing outdoor plants as well as established grass with a slow-release fertilizer that's high in nitrogen is recommended. While fertilizers promote growth, they also increase water consumption ... it's a vicious cycle.

I sing the praises for amending soil with worm castings in containers, in-ground gardens and raised beds. This practice has become a vital regiment to gardening success. Worm castings are an excrement earthworms produce as they digest organic matter in their digestive tracts. Essentially, worm castings are the end-product of an earthworm's journey through decaying leaves, food scraps, and other organic material found in the soil.

They are odorless, softer to the touch than coffee grounds, and are the 'black gold' of the agriculture industry as they provide endless benefits without the harmful toxins and pesticides that fertilizers have. Unlike using chemical fertilizers, worm castings won't harm plants regardless of how much you use and will improve the soil structure, increase aeration, drainage, and water retention.

Castings act as mineral clusters that can withstand water erosion and help form soil aggregates, thereby improving quality soil. The humus (dark organic matter in soil that is formed by the decomposition of plant and animal matter) in worm castings can extract harmful fungi and bacteria from the soil and curb certain plant diseases, such as crown and root rots and wilt disease. On the plus side, worm castings inhibit some pests, including mites, aphids and mealy bugs by way of enzymes known as various forms of chitinase, which insects have a strong aversion to.

Because castings are nutrient dense, a little goes a long way. Grab a pair of gloves and sprinkle on a light coating, water to hydrate or if time permits scratch the castings into the soil surface and water. Within several weeks your attention will be drawn to vigorous growth and a deeper color. Worm castings benefit all types of plants including vegetables, perennials, flowers, fruit trees, herbs and even grass lawns.

Time to grab our sunhats – and as Winnie the Pooh says – “Hang on Piglet, it's March.”

“
At most, a garden
should have no more
than 20-25 percent
native soil.
”



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BY SHERRY KLUSMAN

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Vanity lights placed at eye level on either side of the mirror offer even illumination

Bring forth the glow

Tips on how to pick the right lighting in your home

By Stephanie Johnson
and Sandra McCullough

Lighting is more than just a necessity – it transforms a space, making it feel warm and inviting, instead of dull and lifeless. Arcadia News reached out to the experts at The Lifestyle Lab for some helpful tips on which lighting works best in each room of your home.

Whether you're updating a single room or planning a full remodel, here's what you need to know.

Kitchen: Layered & Functional

The kitchen is the heart of the home, and it needs bright, functional lighting. Start with recessed ceiling lights to provide overall illumination, then add pendant lights over the island for style

and focused lighting. Under-cabinet lighting ensures countertops are well-lit for meal prep.

"For the home entertainer, dimmable options allow you to adjust the mood from bright and lively to warm and intimate," TLL's Stephanie Johnson said.

Living Room: Warm & Inviting

Here, lighting should be both practical and cozy. A statement chandelier or flush-mount fixture creates a focal point, while table and floor lamps add warmth and ambiance. To highlight artwork or architectural details, consider wall sconces or LED picture lights. Smart lighting or dimmable bulbs can help you transition from bright daytime settings to a softer evening glow.

Bathroom: Bright & Balanced

A common mistake in bathrooms is relying on overhead lighting alone, which casts unflattering shadows.

Vanity lights placed at eye level on either side of the mirror offer even

illumination, perfect for daily routines.

"For extra brightness, recessed ceiling lights or backlit mirrors work well," TLL's Sandra McCullough said. "If you're designing a spa-like retreat, consider soft LED strip lighting under floating vanities for a sleek, modern feel."

Bedroom: Soft & Relaxing

Bedroom lighting should be all about comfort and relaxation. Table lamps or sconces with warm, soft-white bulbs create a cozy atmosphere. A statement pendant or chandelier can add elegance, but make sure it's on a dimmer for customizable brightness. If you enjoy reading in bed, opt for adjustable wall-mounted sconces for targeted lighting.

Dining Room: Dramatic & Elegant

The right dining room lighting sets the tone for gatherings. A chandelier or linear pendant should hang 30-36 inches above the table for the perfect balance of illumination and style. Dimmable



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE LIFESTYLE LAB



fixtures are ideal for adjusting brightness depending on the occasion. Wall sconces or LED strips around built-ins can add another layer of warmth.

Other things to consider:

- Don't use the wrong color temperature: Use warm white (2700K-3000K) in bedrooms and living areas, and neutral white (3500K-4000K) in kitchens and bathrooms.
- When in doubt, go bigger! A fixture that's too small can feel lost in a room.

- A well-lit area often combines three types of lighting:

Ambient lighting: The main source that brightens the entire room (ceiling lights or chandeliers).

Task lighting: Focused light that helps with activities like reading, cooking, or working (desk lamps or under-cabinet kitchen lighting).

Accent lighting: Used to highlight architectural features or artwork (track lighting, sconces, or spotlights).

thelifestylelab.shop

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Protecting Birds of Prey



Arcadia neighbors call for safer pest control solutions

By Mallory Gleich

The consequences of being exposed to anticoagulant rodenticides are severe for the hawks, vultures, eagles, falcons, and owls that call the Valley home. In Arcadia, where populations of roof rats run rampant in the spring – thanks to an abundance of citrus – the use of rodenticides, while helpful in ridding the neighborhood of pests, are unintentionally killing owls and other predatory birds that play a vital role in keeping rodent populations in check.

Arcadia News spoke to four specialists who discussed the issues surrounding rodenticides and what homeowners can do to keep the pest population down and the ecosystem healthy.

WHAT ARE RODENTICIDES?

Rodenticides are commonly used to control rodent populations, particularly when they invade homes or cause property damage.

“These chemicals, especially anticoagulant rodenticides (ARs), cause internal bleeding which can lead to secondary poisoning of any wildlife that might prey on them,” Owens-Viani said.

“Where there are people, there are rodents; it is that simple,” Kern said. “With our dry dwellings, food storage, and disruption of natural habitats, we create ideal conditions for many mice, rats, and other species which are undesirable in our homes.”



Cynthia Hopf-Dennis

*Clinical Wildlife Veterinarian;
faculty at Cornell University*



Hardy Kern

*American Bird
Conservancy Expert*



Lisa Owens-Viani

*Founder of Raptors Are the
Solution nonprofit*



Dr. Loretta Mayer

*Co-founder of the Wisdom
Good Works nonprofit*

Rodenticides are often employed to manage rodents that thrive in human habitats, where food storage and dry spaces create ideal conditions. Unfortunately the toxins can spread through the food chain, affecting scavengers and pets.

“A killing strategy produces dead carcasses that are diseased and dangerous,” Dr. Loretta Mayer said. “As they’ve been developed to be more lethal with less product, the current rodenticides used today lead to slow rodent deaths and provide easy prey for raptors and urban wildlife such as coyotes, foxes, raccoons, and domestic animals like dogs and cats.”

Despite their widespread use for centuries, rodenticides have limitations – such as rodents’ rapid

reproduction rates.

Additionally, their use has led to significant infrastructure damage, including fire hazards from rodents chewing wires. In response to these risks, regions like California and British Columbia have restricted rodenticide use, and other areas are considering similar legislation.

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS?

When these birds eat rodents that have ingested ARs, they may suffer from internal bleeding, organ failure, sensory loss, and confusion. These effects can leave them unable to hunt, causing

them to collide with structures, become more vulnerable to predators, or fall ill due to weakened immune systems.

For species like Harris's Hawks (pictured on page 12), such poisoning can severely impact their survival. As it accumulates in the birds over time, it leads to lethargy and eventual death.

HOW DO BIRDS HELP?

Birds of prey are nature's best rodent control. They can eat upwards of thousands yearly and also help control other populations of wildlife we may consider pests.

"Birds of prey are typically territorial as well, meaning that when there are healthy populations of owls or hawks in an area, they encourage the spread of raptors into other areas too, helping scale-up their control operations," Hardy said. "Human communities benefit from natural pest control in our homes, parks, businesses, and schools."

WHAT CAN WE DO?

The most obvious answer here is to stop using poison to get rid of pests. Hopf-Dennis and Mayer also mentioned that supporting the local ecosystem involves several actions to minimize harm to wildlife and promote healthy habitats.

These include keeping areas clean to prevent animals from consuming harmful trash, securely storing waste to avoid attracting wildlife and reducing pesticide and rodenticide use to protect insects, birds, mammals, and raptors.

"Professional pest control companies are increasingly specializing in exclusion, which involves finding out how vermin are getting into a structure and using hardware cloth, sealing up holes, or other means to prevent them from regaining access," Owens-Viani said.

It is also crucial to provide perching, nesting, and hiding spaces within trees and plants and plant native flowers to support pollinators. State wildlife agencies may offer specific guidelines for local ecosystems.

"There are live traps that can be utilized for rodents, but these should be checked regularly and food and water should be provided inside them," Hopf-Dennis said. Snap traps may not be the most popular option, but they can work on a small scale. These should only be set up inside houses and in a place that is safe from pets and children – but this goes for all rodent interventions.

Arcadia neighbor Carrie Aaron built a screech owl house in her front yard.

"These houses can encourage the natural exterminators to settle in our neighborhoods. A single family of owls can consume hundreds of

rodents in a single season," Aaron said.

If you suspect a bird of prey has been poisoned, the first thing you should do is call a local wildlife rehabilitator – like Liberty Wildlife or Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center – and do not attempt to handle the bird yourself.

HOW DO WE BUILD AWARENESS?

"Only when we know better can we do better. Many people do not realize that rodenticides impact species outside of those they target," Kern said.

"Although people think of birds of prey as 'tough,' they are actually quite vulnerable – only 30-50 percent of all raptors make it through their first year," Viani-Owens said. "They face many threats, from climate change and loss of habitat to people shooting and trapping them, to wind and solar power impacts, to being harmed by razor and barbed wire...the list goes on."

At the very least, anticoagulant rodenticides are one thing we can do something about now. By not using them, we can reduce the threat of secondary poisoning. According to Kern, Americans currently use more than one billion pounds of pesticides per year in the United States, which exacts a cost on our wildlife. By working with nature instead of against it, we can create healthier habitats and less toxic environments for wildlife.

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Laura Thurbon was one of 10 muralists bringing art to life at the event.

Flower Power

Tempe Blooms shines a light on the Valley's floral industry

By Mallory Gleich

The final weekend of January saw the streets of Tempe – from University Drive to Rio Salado Parkway, from College Avenue to Maple – alive with blooms, thanks to over 20 Valley floral businesses. The event brought in over 80,000 guests for a walking tour centered on engaging the residents and spotlighting local businesses.

The idea for Tempe Blooms originated with Downtown Tempe Authority's Events Director

Kim DeMeritt and former President and CEO Kate Borders. After visiting New York City and experiencing the vibrant LEAF flower festival in the Meatpacking District, they were inspired to bring a similar concept to their hometown.

"The purpose of the event was two-fold. We aim to increase foot traffic and engagement downtown while promoting diversity in the types of events we offer and inclusivity in the programming," Marketing Coordinator Chelsey Velasquez said. "It also served

as a way to support merchants and to uplift creatives such as floral designers, artists, and musicians."

The main focus is the living flower installations placed around downtown Tempe. Each business – including shops like Amazing Flowers, Arizona Flower Market, Fleur De Vie Studio, Rowan Tree and Watson Flower Shop – was tasked with choosing a theme and creating a display that could go as high and wide as they chose.

During the event, three certified floral evaluators (whose identities are kept secret) were tasked with selecting the "best" installations based on color, originality, visual appeal, and other factors.

Watson Flower Shop, a fourth-generation, family-owned business that has been operating in the Valley for almost a hundred years, won first place.

"I led the project with my best friends Mckenzie Coburn and Madeline Danielson rounding out the team," Watson's Hannah Miles said. "We wanted to see if we could create a floral installation and bring beautiful flowers to the city."

With a lot of hard work – and a few miracles, according to Hannah – the trio created an installation inspired by Arizona's motto, "Ditat Deus," that celebrates the beauty and resilience of the Sonoran Desert with vibrant colors and a butterfly centerpiece.

"We all love flowers and any opportunity to work with them or gift them to people," Miles said. "It was special to be able to participate in the event this year, and we were shocked we won first place."

Second place went to Amazing Flowers, who created a series of three "eternal circles" in bold,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOWNTOWN TEMPE AUTHORITY



The VW Bug display by Mountain High Flowers was setup at Flower Power Park on 7th St. and Mill Ave.



vibrant hues. Metro Tech High School Floral won third place with their installation, “When We Learn, We Grow.” The design highlighted the connection between creativity, growth, and the beauty of flowers.

In addition to the floral aspect was an art aspect: live muralists were strategically placed along the walking tour. Attendees watched as each muralist brought their floral creations to life.

Live music and a marketplace with over 40 local vendors also took place across the two-day event. One of the main draws was the Flower Bar, where guests could build their own bouquets or purchase premade bouquets, flower crowns, and more.

“Attending Tempe Blooms was an incredible experience, both as a floral industry professional and someone who simply loves the artistry. The event showcased an amazing variety of floral designs, local artists, and handcrafted products, all inspired by nature’s beauty,” attendee Dani Seals said. “It was awesome to see how florals can be incorporated into many different mediums: candles, body scrubs, and my new favorite, resin art.”

In person seminars were another draw for guests, who learned how to arrange large-scale tropical arrangements, creative techniques, and innovative ideas for transforming flowers into masterpieces and selecting the perfect flowers for an event. Downtown businesses also got involved by offering floral-themed specials like drinks, food, and retail offerings.

“One of the best parts was sharing it with my three-year-old, who was just as mesmerized as I was. Watching him ‘ooh’ and ‘ahh’ at the different floral masterpieces made the event even more special,” Seals said. “Flowers have this incredible ability to evoke emotion and creativity, and Tempe Blooms captured that magic.”

This month, Tempe will shut down Mill Ave. to host their annual Festival of the Arts from Friday, March 7 through Sunday, March 9.

downtowntempe.com



Watson’s Flowers – the 2025 first place winners – set up their floral design outside of Postino.

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