

# ARIZONA Coach Talker

Newsletter of Arizona Guides Association  
Volume 18, Issue 4 ★ March 2005

## AGA March Meeting Update

by Leita Tallman

The next AGA meeting on Monday, March 7 at Pueblo Grande Museum (4619 E. Washington Street) should probably come with a warning label.

Pure education? Hardly! If that's what you're after, show up early. That way, you can tour the museum's latest exhibit and productively "mark time" while exploring the fascinating topic of archaeoastronomy. Ever wondered what some of those petroglyphs mean? Wished you understood the role celestial observation sites throughout the Southwest played in calendar creation and daily life for Hohokam and Pueblo tribes? This is your chance to know!



Photo by Todd Bastwick

Then you can feel appropriately virtuous while laughing and learning with long-time *Phoenix Gazette/Arizona Republic* columnist-turned-author – "near native" Valley resident and all-around funny guy Sam Lowe.

Lowe covered the white-hot sidewalks at the forefront of local news for decades. Upon retirement, he turned his attention to hard-hitting, blinding humor. A prior book, *Arizona Curiosities: Quirky Characters, Roadside Oddities and Other Offbeat Stuff*, offered the lowdown on vitally important topics such as extra-large folk art, interesting (okay – bizarre) roadside attractions and eccentric sporting events throughout our state. (Where do you go to lose cash on a worm race? Not to Las Vegas, baby!). It's all top-secret information you simply cannot get elsewhere.

Lowe will treat us to the same fresh (if half-baked) perspective as he discusses his upcoming book, *100 & 1 Things About Arizona*.

More about Lowe: You might think he'd chose to live someplace – well – different. I'm sorry to report that isn't

true in the least. Lowe's two-bedroom abode is thoroughly normal. No way he's the only man in the Valley of the



Photo by Sam Lowe

This superskull rests over what used to be a bar. Travelers along Interstate 19 between Tucson and Nogales can catch a glimpse of this behemoth from the road.

Sun with a billboard-sized circus poster plastered across a garage wall....

Okay – he's clearly dehydrated. Been outside just a bit too long. But honestly, what else is there to think about? The next meeting promises a one-of-a-kind, non-stop romp.

You will congratulate yourself for having been there, so RSVP by Thursday March 3 to Joan Moran: 480-538-7999.

Knee and shoulder pads suggested but optional.

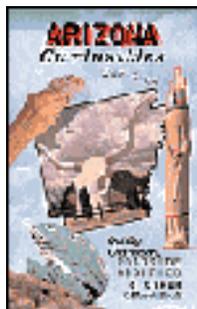
DID YOU KNOW???? Arizona is the only state in the union (nay – the only place in the world!) to ever prosecute a man for murder by Gila monster.



## March Meeting Site

**Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre – West** in Mesa, Arizona is the newest member of The Prather Family of Theatres. The theatre opened in October 2001 and is now in its fourth fantastic season. The theatre seats 500 and is known as "The valley's ticket to great entertainment." Centrally located, the theatre is just minutes away from Scottsdale, Phoenix and Tempe.

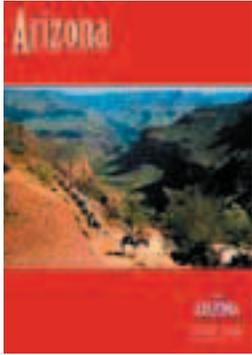
The Prather family, Tom, Deborah and Will, are a true theatrical family that has produced quality theatre for more than 38 years. The Prathers bring years of expertise to each production and are known for creating a comfortable but luxurious ambiance in each of their theatres. The Prather Family of Theatres operates under one basic philosophy: "give our guests great entertainment at a great value". By following this simple rule, Broadway Palm, Dutch Apple and Broadway Palm West Dinner Theatres have earned a reputation as their area's most entertaining destinations.



## Did You Know.....?

### Hot Off The Presses – 2005 Official State Visitors Guides & Maps

The Arizona Office of Tourism is pleased to announce that the 2005 Official State Visitors Guide (OSVG) and map have arrived! With a scenic shot of the Grand Canyon on its cover, the Guide has expanded to 144 pages this year. The new publication includes more listings, plus a new section on RV parks. There are also “postcards” in each section that look like letters from the road and include fun facts about Arizona. In addition, the Guide features dramatic photography that focuses on experiences for the individual visitor, rather than just scenic shots. The accompanying map includes valuable travel and tourist



information, including a detailed listing of campgrounds and recreation areas, information on the state's Native American lands, a listing of Arizona's designated Scenic Roads, and travel tips for each of the state's five regions.

### AOT Names New Director Of Media Relations & Communications

Director Margie Emmermann has announced that Jacki Mieler has been promoted to the position of Director of Media Relations & Communications. Mieler has served as AOT's Media Relations Manager since February 2002. In her new role, Mieler will direct all external communications and oversee media relations activities. She will lead international and domestic media relations campaigns and develop strategic public relations initiatives for the agency and for the state as a premier tourism destination.

### Grand Canyon Imax Road Show

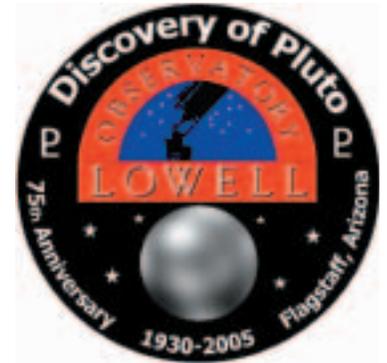
The Arizona Office of Tourism is creating its largest ever international marketing campaign highlighting the Grand Canyon IMAX movie. **Grand Canyon: The Hidden Secrets** is the most watched IMAX movie of all time, and this April it will be viewed by 8,000 consumers, travel trade representatives and media in the United Kingdom. The Road Show will visit six cities including Glasgow, Bradford, Manchester, Bristol, London and Birmingham from April 12–28. It will be backed with an extensive public relations campaign creating a desire for consumers to visit Arizona.



Arizona Office of Tourism  
[arizonaguide.com](http://arizonaguide.com)  
[www.azot.com](http://www.azot.com)

## Discovery of Pluto Reaches 75th Anniversary

Clyde Tombaugh discovered the ninth planet in the solar system on the afternoon of February 18, 1930 while he meticulously examined a pair of deep sky photographs at Lowell Observatory. Lowell Observatory's search for a ninth planet was begun by founder Percival Lowell in



1905. While Dr. Lowell did not live to see the discovery of Pluto, the observatory made the official announcement of the discovery on his birth date, March 13, 1930. After many suggestions, Pluto was selected as the name for the new planet. As an added plus, the astronomical community adopted a symbol for the planet that also was a combination of Percival Lowell's initials. Eleven-year-old Venetia Burney from Oxford, England suggested the name.

The observatory will present a Pluto 75th anniversary program on the evening of Friday, February 18 as part of its regular evening programs. The nighttime program consists of a special Cosmic Cart at 7:45 p.m., a series of demonstrations particularly suitable for children. This will be followed by a lecture about Pluto at 8:30 p.m. The observatory opens at 7:30 p.m. and telescope viewing will occur throughout the evening, weather permitting. For more information, visit [www.lowell.edu/Public/Info/Specials.html](http://www.lowell.edu/Public/Info/Specials.html).

In addition to its Pluto research, Lowell Observatory has ongoing and long-term programs to identify near-Earth asteroids, survey a region of the solar system beyond Neptune known as the Kuiper Belt, conduct decades-long research on the sun and sun-like stars, study comets, search for extrasolar planets, and pursue a variety of astrophysical investigations. The observatory is also building the Discovery Channel Telescope, a partnership with Discovery Communications that will produce a versatile, powerful 4.2-meter telescope. Lowell Observatory's mission is to pursue the study of astronomy, especially the study of our solar system and its evolution; to conduct pure research in astronomical phenomena; and to maintain quality public education and outreach programs to bring the results of astronomical research to the general public. The observatory was founded in 1894.



The Lowell Observatory  
[www.lowell.edu](http://www.lowell.edu)

1400 W Mars Hill Rd, Flagstaff AZ 86001  
(928) 774-3358 · FAX (928) 774-6296

## Weekend at Rancho Esmeralda

by Howard Christensen

Hello friends, I just came back from one of the greatest places I have found in my four-plus years in the tour business. I have never before done a direct plea, but you have got to see this place. Rancho Esmeralda is in the mountains approximately six miles south of Nogales, Sonora. There is a pool, hiking, horseback riding, a great GREAT room, thousands of acres, great birding, good food and great facilities. It has recently been renovated to accommodate conferences. The interior decorator deserves a gold star! I have reserved May 6-8 for approximately 30 people, give or take 10. The cost is \$300 per person and that is all inclusive, transportation, food, riding (tip the vaqueros please), a visit to the original Arizona Ranch (from which the State of Arizona gets its name), beverages, including liquor, a tour to Tubutama, possibly Saric and of course, lunch at MoMo's in Magdalena. My favorite lunch spot!

Some of you who have known me for years, don't know exactly what I am doing these days. This would be a wonderful way to find out! The horseback ride will take us to Planchas de Plata (Sheets of Silver) where in the 1730s they found a silver nugget weighing 1 1/4 tons. There is a ghost town there and the ride is beautiful. Yes, bring the Advil, but the Bacanora should relieve those sore muscles. Don't know what Bacanora is? Well it is not something you soak in! This is an adult weekend; sorry we can't take the kids this time. They would very much enjoy it as well. Maybe next time.

We will leave from Phoenix about 8:00 a.m., pick up people in Tucson, stop for lunch in Tubac and cross the border about 2:00. You will need identification to prove your citizenship only to return to the States on Sunday. We should be back by 4:00 or 5:00. This is going to be a relaxing three day weekend. No cell phones, no computers, no stress! Sound good? Call your friends and let them know. Maybe you would like to bring someone special. Give it a thought. It is well worth it. I know you will enjoy yourselves! I plan to.

Make your reservation at 602-300-5297. Look forward to hearing from you.



## AGA Certification

The May certification date is scheduled for Saturday, May 21, 2005. Anyone who plans to take the test on that date, please call Liz Schnackel at 480-641-5457 to schedule your time.

## From the President...

In the January 2005 issue of *Sunset Magazine*, there is a great article on the Arizona Falls, located at 5650 E. Indian School Road, Phoenix. The AGA Guides visited the site on our spring trip last year.



Artist rendering

**Spring Day Trip** — This year will be on Monday, June 6. We will be the guests of the City of Mesa. Great things are happening in Mesa with the new Mesa Arts Center (MAC). Mr. Robert Briton will be our host and guide for our trip. He is the Executive Director of the Mesa Convention and Visitors Bureau. Betsy Todd and I had a great visit with Mr. Briton in January, working on details for our trip.

Our Annual May Meeting will be at the Broadway Palm West Dinner Theatre at 5247 E. Brown Road, Mesa, on Monday, May 2.



Our thoughts and prayers go out to Karen Monbarren and Rosalie Welty on the loss of their mothers.

Please call Marcia Fisher, our Corresponding Secretary, if you know of anyone who is ill, in the hospital or for other reasons to send correspondence.

*Sue Ellen Knorr, President*



## Hillerman Country Tour Connects With Native American Culture

Millions of readers worldwide have experienced the thrilling stories created by acclaimed author Tony Hillerman and now a small touring company named **Detours** has connected some of the intriguing settings of Hillerman's novels in a 5-day tourism masterpiece. Two itineraries dubbed "Hillerman Country" (the same name as the popular Hillerman map/guide to the Native American Southwest) depart from Phoenix or Albuquerque and travel to destinations that have been featured in the best selling Hillerman novels. The tour descriptions can be seen at [www.DetoursAz.com](http://www.DetoursAz.com).

CONTACT: Mike Finney, 480-897-3331  
[mike@gcanyon.com](mailto:mike@gcanyon.com)

## Notes from the Editor...

Here are some guidelines for submissions for *The Arizona Coach Talker*. Articles need to be e-mailed, either as the text in the e-mail or an attached Word document. Please do not double space between sentences. If you have photos to accompany the article, they can also be attached to the e-mail.

May/Summer 2005 deadline: April 1, 2005

I have a new email to handle Arizona information and AGA. Please update your information with my new e-mail — [azlegacy94@hotmail.com](mailto:azlegacy94@hotmail.com). If you have any questions or comment, please contact me.

*Diana Brubaker*

Arizona Guides Association  
[www.azguide.com](http://www.azguide.com)

### AGA Meeting

Monday, May 2, 2005

### Broadway Palm West Dinner Theatre

5247 E. Brown Road  
Mesa, Arizona

## AGA Meeting Monday, March 7, 2005 Pueblo Grande Museum

4619 E. Washington Street  
Phoenix

6:00 PM Hospitality  
7:00 PM Program  
8:30 PM Business Meeting

The speaker will be Sam Lowe, a Phoenix based writer, who has been writing about Arizona for about 30 years. Author of the book, *100 & 1 Things About Arizona* and numerous magazine articles.

RSVP by Thursday March 3  
to Joan Moran: 480-538-7999



## The Arizona Coach Talker

AGA Newsletter  
P.O. Box 45302  
Phoenix, AZ 85064-5302



## Fun Events

2/26/2005 - 2/27/2005

**21st Annual Matsuri: A Festival of Japan** highlights Japanese culture with entertainment, authentic crafts, food & fine arts, includes martial arts demos, Taiko drums & audience participation in traditional Japanese folk dances, free, 10:30 am - 4:30 pm, Heritage Square

**3rd Annual Flower Power** celebrate the start of spring with a festival all about flowers, variety of local plant societies and conservation organizations as well as trailside interpreters of flowers from orchids to roses, enthusiasts and visitors may participate, entertainment, 10 am - 3 pm, Desert Botanical Garden 480-941-1225