

# Mesa bursting with varied activities this week

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Among the activities in a jam-packed weekend coming up is , the Día de los Muertos Festival, will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Oct 23-24, at Mesa Arts Center.

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It's a big week for events around Mesa.

Mesa Grande Cultural Park, 1100 N. Date, is celebrating a re-opening from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 16, after a two-year hiatus.

The re-opening coincides with International Archaeology Day.

Exhibits feature Native American baskets, artifact show and tell, archaeology tours of the Mound, crafts and activities.

Admission is \$6 per person and \$2 for Arizona Museum of Natural History members.

The park preserves a group of Hohokam structures constructed hundreds of years ago by the Hohokam people. The park's central feature is a massive ruin of adobe walls and platforms

As Halloween approaches, it's time for the Mesa Cemetery Tour.

The Mesa Historical Museum's annual walking tour of the historic cemetery at 1212 N. Center St. happens from 8 to 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 23.

Museum Executive Director Susan Ricci reminds residents and alerts newcomers to the city that the cemetery is the final home to a variety of interesting figures.

For example, John Powder River "Jack" Lee was counted among the eldest of the more authentic tradition of cowboy singers to cut records in the days before Gene Autry and Roy Rogers.

"After joining Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show around 1893, Jack met his future wife Kitty Miller," Ricci said. "Because of Jack's tendency to plagiarize, the duo's merit as cowboy performers has been challenged.

Another permanent resident is Helen Dana, who officiated at or assisted in the delivery of more than 12,500 babies and never lost a mother.

"In those early years she recalls going all over the countryside by horse and buggy to help deliver the babies," Ricci related. "She ran the Dana Maternity Home at 1312 S. Country Club Drive in Mesa for 35 years to help maintain the family.

“At the same time, she helped pregnant unmarried girls and arranged adoptions for their babies.”

Also interred is Dr. Ralph Palmer, often called “The Doctor on Horseback,” who opened the first hospital in Mesa.

Mesa Mayor John Giles and other members of the City Council will be special speakers at the featured gravesites, along with local historians and members of the community. Free admission to the Mesa Historical Museum is included.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at [mesahistoricalmuseum.com](http://mesahistoricalmuseum.com).

Another Mesa annual October event, the Día de los Muertos Festival, will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 23, and noon-5 p.m. Sunday, Oct 24, at Mesa Arts Center.

The opening and closing ceremony will be live-streamed via Mesa Arts Center’s Facebook page and website.

On Saturday, Telemundo Arizona News Anchor Paola Morales will kick off the free festival at 10 a.m. while the closing ceremony will include Jorge Mendoza Yescas, Consul General of Mexico and Mayor Giles.

In addition, the festival will offer a nonstop schedule of live entertainment, participatory hands-on artmaking activities, traditional face painting, a wide variety of food options, studio demonstrations, and a Mercado Marketplace, featuring traditional and contemporary merchandise, jewelry, and Mexican arts and crafts from local artisans and vendors.

In the spirit of traditional Día de los Muertos festivities, a community altar designed by artist Monica Gisel Crespo will be the centerpiece for the festival.

Attendees can leave mementos in honor of their loved ones who have passed. Photographs will be collected and replaced on the altar each year.

Beautifully created altars by local artists and organizations will be displayed in shop windows on Main Street. Participants include Marco Albarrán, Luis Estrada, Jose Benavides, Sharon Ann Hagen, Oliviero Balcells, Project Lit with Dr. Matthew Sandoval, Winona Fox, Edgar Fernandes, Andrea Myton and Mesa Sister Cities.

Participating businesses include Nunthaporn's Thai, Le Salon, Main Street Harvest, Sonoran Moon Vintage, Jarrod's Coffee, Atomic Age, Soul Center, Margarita's Grille, 101 Gallery and Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum.

Festival participants of all ages are invited to participate in the free hands-on activities, including making paper flowers, wood skull decorating and Marigold planting with MABEL.

To honor and remember over 19,000 people lost to the COVID-19 pandemic in Arizona, an immersive installation of paper marigolds, created by the community, will be installed on the Mesa Arts Center campus.

Festivalgoers can also enjoy face painting inspired by the Day of the Dead and live art studio demonstrations.

The festival will culminate in a performance and an open procession to the Community Altar led by Mariachi Pasion at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday. Mesa Arts Center's studios will offer free demonstrations throughout the festival and The Store, an artists' cooperative and gallery, will also be open and offering Day of the Dead themed items.

For details: [mesaartscenter.com/diadelosmuertos](https://mesaartscenter.com/diadelosmuertos). There is no charge to attend the Día de los Muertos Festival, and parking is free.

Also on tap 5-9 p.m. Saturday is the 10th annual Battle of the Badges sponsored by the Arizona Law Enforcement Outreach and Support and held at Mesa Community College's Southern Avenue and Dobson Road Campus, 1833 W Southern Ave.

This event features a flag football game, a "trunk or treat" sponsored by local first responders and the awarding of scholarships to students from Mesa Community College and Central Arizona College.

The game pits first responders from Maricopa County against first responders from Pinal County for the benefit of injured officers, who serve as team co-captains.

During the event, scholarships for future first responders will be awarded to the winning applicants from Mesa Community College and Central Arizona College. Each \$250 scholarship is made available through donations from businesses and community groups.

All kids are invited to participate in the free "trunk or treat" activity provided by local law enforcement and other first responder agencies. Costumes are encouraged.

Additional activities and entertainment will be featured, including dance routines and cheers throughout the game by the children's Royal Impact Cheer and Dance Company. Food trucks will make snacks and drinks available for purchase. A raffle and a silent auction will also be held.

The suggested donation is \$5 per adult; kids are free and no one will be turned away because of an inability to donate.

AZLEOS is a non-profit that serves as a collaboration hub for Arizona first responders, community members, civic groups, businesses and educational institutions to create and implement true proactive community policing programs.

The City of Mesa is holding a volunteer recruitment fair from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 19, at the Mesa Arts Center, 1 E. Main St.

Booths will provide information on volunteer opportunities with Mesa Police, Mesa Fire and Medical, Arizona Museum of Natural History, i.d.e.a. Museum, Parks, Mesa Public Library and the Mesa Arts Center.

And from 7 a.m.-noon Saturday, Mesa celebrates the Love Your City Citywide Service Day.

Hundreds of volunteers will work on dozens of projects all across Mesa that morning, from painting curb numbers to installing Little Libraries to neighborhood clean-up projects. Mesa's Volunteer Recruitment Fair will be at the outdoor Alliance Pavilion.

Booths from City departments, such as Mesa Police, Mesa Fire and Medical, Arizona Museum of Natural History, i.d.e.a. Museum, Parks, Mesa Public Library, Mesa Arts Center and Community Engagement, as well as representatives from Just Serve and Sleep in Heavenly Peace will provide information to residents about new ways to become active volunteers in the community.

The event will feature a volunteer craft from our Mobile Art-Based Engagement Lab (MABEL), the opportunity to sign-up as a City volunteer at our Community Engagement Van, a raffle and many other activities.

While there are no additional projects available that day, there are opportunities for residents to sign up for future projects at [mesaaz.gov/volunteer](https://mesaaz.gov/volunteer).