

# Bright Side

A P U B L I C A T I O N O F T H E C I T Y O F P A L M D E S E R T

march/april  
2016



## What's Inside

MARY HELEN KELLY  
HONORED WITH  
SENIOR INSPIRATION AWARD

18TH ANNUAL OPEN CALL  
TALENT COMPETITION

FREE, SAFE DISPOSAL  
OF USED OIL AND OIL FILTERS

ART FILM SERIES CONCLUDES  
WITH COMPELLING  
DOCUMENTARIES

ENJOY ARIAS OUTDOORS AT  
THE FESTIVAL OF OPERA & ART

YOU CAN HELP US  
PROVIDE HOMES FOR VETERANS

WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL  
BRINGS SEASONAL COLOR  
TO FIRST WEEKEND

FAMILY SAFETY FESTIVAL  
OFFERS FUN  
AND INFORMATION

## culture and cuisine meet at Fashion Week El Paseo/ Food + Wine Festival palm Desert



One of the season's most scintillating happenings – **Fashion Week El Paseo** – returns to Palm Desert, April 2 through 9, to celebrate its 11th year and a new location.

This year, the extravaganza debuts on the top floor of the parking structure at the Gardens on El Paseo in the heart of Palm Desert's world-renowned shopping district. Top designers will showcase their newest collections along with fresh ideas from emerging talents including a collaboration with Saks Fifth Avenue featuring the sophisticated and elegant style of internationally-recognized designer Monique Lhuillier, whose luxurious collections demonstrate femininity, allure, and glamour.

Other highlights include Michael Costello and the Stars of Project Runway showcasing their Spring/Summer 2016 collections and a finale featuring South African born New York superstar designer, Marc Bouwer, who will showcase his latest collection on the Fashion Week Big White Tent's runway.



Monique Lhuillier



Fashion Week draws more than 13,000 visitors a year and has supported over 100 local charities since its inception.

This is the sixth year that Fashion Week will include the **Food + Wine Festival Palm Desert**. This popular, rapidly growing event brings together celebrity chefs and sommeliers for three extraordinary days of fabulous food and premium wine tasting, April 8 - 10. A portion of the proceeds benefit Friends of the James Beard Foundation.

Featured celebrities include Cat Cora, acclaimed television personality, cookbook author, owner of five restaurants, and first female "Iron Chef." Other featured chefs include James Beard award winner Gale Gand, partner and founding executive pastry chef of TRU in Chicago; Suzanne Tracht, who in 2002 was named a Best New Chef by *Food & Wine* magazine, and has appeared on the *TODAY* show, Food Network, and *Extra* and was a featured chef at the 2010 World Equestrian Games; award-winning chocolatier and author Valerie Gordon, who has appeared on Food Network, The Cooking Channel, and as a guest judge on Bravo's *Top Chef: Just Desserts*; and restaurateur and chef Ricardo Zarate, author of *The Fire of Peru: Recipes and Stories from my Peruvian Kitchen*.

**Fashion Week El Paseo** April 2 – 9

Tickets and information: [www.fashionweekelpaseo.com](http://www.fashionweekelpaseo.com)  
or 760-325-2333

**Food + Wine Festival palm Desert** April 8 – 10

Tickets and information: [www.palmdesertfoodandwine.com](http://www.palmdesertfoodandwine.com)  
or 760-325-2333





The City has established a **Short-Term Rental Afterhours Hotline – 760-833-7998** – so that residents can conveniently report problems with rentals in their neighborhoods when City Hall is closed.  
**Afterhours Hotline: 760-833-7998**  
**Business hours: (8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday – Friday): 760-346-0611, ext. 360**

The **City's Vacation Home Check Program** provides Palm Desert residents with enhanced security and peace of mind during extended vacations. COPS volunteers patrol and visit registered single-family homes in non-gated communities while residents are away for two weeks or more.  
**Information: 760-776-6416**



The City's free **docent led public art tours** continue on March 5 at 9 a.m. with a tour of the El Paseo Exhibition. Participants are invited to meet at the northwest corner of El Paseo and Portola Avenue. April's tour will feature the City's Public Art in Civic Center Park. Participants are invited to meet at the Park's south entrance from Fred Waring Drive (in front of the *Messenger of the Puul* sculpture).  
**Information: 760-346-0611, ext. 664**  
 or visit [www.palmdesertart.org](http://www.palmdesertart.org)



The Desert Horticultural Society of the Coachella Valley presents the **11th Annual Desert Garden Tour** on Sunday, April 3, from noon to 4 p.m. Explore desert-friendly, water conserving gardens of all sizes created by homeowners and design professionals. Cost is \$15 for members and \$5 for students.  
**Information and registration:**  
[www.deserthorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.deserthorticulturalsociety.org)

## Dates to Remember

**Daylight Saving Time Begins**  
 March 13

**First Day of Spring**  
 March 20

**Annual Clean Up Day**  
 April 16

**Earth Day**  
 April 22



## Mary Helen Kelly to receive Senior Inspiration Award



Mary Helen Kelly, lifelong volunteer and former first lady of Palm Desert, is being recognized as Palm Desert's honoree at the 2016 Riverside County Senior Inspiration Awards.

Born in Okemah, Oklahoma, and raised in El Monte, California, Mary Helen Akin worked on her father's goat farm as a young girl, rising daily before 4 a.m. to milk the goats and then rushing home from school each afternoon to milk again as part of her evening chores.

In high school, she met a young athlete named Richard Kelly who was impressed by her beauty and her keen mind. After graduation, she attended UCLA while working as a governess to support her studies in International Affairs and History.

Then World War II broke out and Richard was eventually called up for service. The young couple decided to marry before he shipped off, cementing a bond that would last for the next 65 years.

During that time, Mary Helen raised two children while volunteering for a variety of charitable organizations including the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, Campfire Girls, and Rotary Anns. Periodic stints as a substitute teacher eventually gave way to full time employment at Bank of America as a way to help pay for the children's college education.

In 1978, the Kelly's moved to Palm Desert starting a family love affair with that community that persists to this day.

Five years later, Richard "Dick" was elected to the Palm Desert City Council where he served for the next 27 years until his death in 2010, including six terms as Mayor. A valued partner and advisor to her husband, Mary Helen continued to volunteer with Rotary as well as at Trinity Lutheran Church, the Chamber of Commerce, and the East Valley Republican Women Federated.

Today, at age 91, she continues to volunteer at her church while serving as a member of the City of Palm Desert's Parks and Recreation Commission.

Kelly will be honored at a special Senior Inspiration Awards luncheon on Friday, March 25, at the JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort and Spa. For more information, please call **760-863-8211**.

## McCallum Theatre Institute's Open Call celebrates 18 Years of Talent

The McCallum Theatre Institute presents its 18th annual Open Call Talent Competition, Thursday through Saturday, April 14 to 16, at the Theatre. Open Call presents the Coachella Valley's best performers in an exciting talent competition.

This annual, sell-out event has become an audience favorite and is fun for the entire family. Audience members will vote for their favorite acts at the Thursday and Friday evening (7 p.m.) and Saturday matinee (2 p.m.) performances. Winners will be announced at Saturday evening's final performance at 7 p.m.

Open Call tickets go on sale March 1 at the McCallum Theatre box office, 73000 Fred Waring Drive, and start at \$17 for adults (\$12 for children 12 and under). Tickets can also be purchased online at [www.mccallumtheatre.com](http://www.mccallumtheatre.com), and by calling **760-340-2787**.



Photo credits: Jack Hartin

## Free, Safe Disposal of Used Oil and Oil Filters



Palm Desert residents can safely dispose of their used oil and oil filters in a convenient and environmentally friendly way at the City's Used Oil and Oil Filter Recycling Event on Saturday, March 5, from 8 to 11 a.m. at Burrtec's Recycle Center, located at 41800 Corporate Way.

Used oil must be stored properly in a clean, sealed, uncontaminated container. Workers at the event will accept up to five gallons of used oil per vehicle. It is illegal to transport more than five gallons of used oil in a personal vehicle.

Anyone who is unable to participate in this event can dispose of their used oil and oil filters free of charge at Burrtec's Recycle Center and at other certified collection centers in Palm Desert. For more information, please call 760-776-6416.



# Film Series concludes With compelling Documentaries



The 2016 Palm Desert Public Art Documentary Film Series continues on March 17 with a free screening of *Beyond These Walls: Building Community through Public Art*.

In 1992, a small group of community leaders in Portsmouth, Ohio asked, "How can we create pride in our community, improve the local economy, and change a dying part of town into the vibrant place it once was?" This film tells the story of the local visionaries and extraordinary artists who transformed a drab, 2,200-foot section of floodwall into a vast display of public art, history, and pride.

The evening will include a screening of *Murals: Transformations*. This short, nine-minute documentary tells the story of how the Palm Springs Unified School District started and maintains a thriving mural program, with a collection of over 80 murals. Louisa Castrodale, Arts Coordinator for the Palm Springs Unified School District, will be the evening's featured speaker.



The popular series of free public art-themed documentary films concludes on April 21 with *A Model for Matisse*.

Directed by Barbara Freed, the film documents the association between the nun Sister Jacques-Marie and Henri Matisse. Their relationship began when she started working as his personal nurse, but she soon began posing for the painter. Eventually, Sister Jacques-Marie played a critical role in helping Matisse design the Chapelle du Rosaire, one of the greatest accomplishments in the famous artist's remarkable career. Emily Culhan, Programs Coordinator for Children's Discovery Museum of the Desert, will be the featured speaker.



The film series is presented by the City of Palm Desert Public Art Department and the University of California, Riverside Palm Desert Graduate Center. All films screen the third Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. in the auditorium at UCR Palm Desert, 75080 Frank Sinatra Drive. Each screening will include a featured speaker who will answer questions about that night's film. Admission is free, but reservations are recommended. For more information and reservations, please call the City's Public Art Department at 760-837-1663 or register online at <http://palmdesert.ucr.edu/programs/ArtDoc2016.html>.

## You Can Help Us Provide New homes for Veterans



The City of Palm Desert is committed to supporting our military and their families in achieving the dream of first-time, affordable home ownership.

In keeping with that commitment, the City donated land for the construction of two homes for veterans in Palm Desert.

One home will be fully accessible for a disabled veteran and the other home will be fully adaptable, depending on the needs of the veteran and his or her family.

Last September, the City, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of the Coachella Valley and the Home Depot Foundation, hosted a "Wall Standing Event" for the construction of the two homes. Now, the homes are nearly done, but still require some finishing touches.

You can help by donating money to help pay to finish construction of the homes or by donating needed materials.

Because these are homes for veterans with particular needs, construction requires specific and specialized building materials in a variety of categories including flooring, landscaping, accessibility features, appliances, cabinets, and showers.

Your generosity will help deliver keys for a new home to those who have sacrificed so much for their country and our freedom.

To donate and for more information, including a detailed list of needed construction materials, please call Habitat for Humanity of the Coachella Valley at 760-969-6917.

Experience inspiring vocal artistry in a beautiful setting at the seventh annual Festival of Opera and Art on Sunday, March 20, from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the Civic Center Park amphitheater.

This fun, free event, presented by the City of Palm Desert and Opera Arts, features world class vocalists and an orchestra performing a thrilling program of music and much more.

The theme of this year's program is "All the World's a Stage: An Operatic Grand Tour."

The day's fun kicks off at 11 a.m. with a special musical presentation featuring jazz, followed by a sound check with the singers and orchestra at noon. Beginning at 1 p.m., keyboardist Gale Enger will provide entertainment until 1:50 p.m. when Festival organizers will honor Brian Webb with a special award. The Opera program begins at 2 p.m.

In addition to the wonderful music, there will be art displays and interactive activities for all including face painting, magic, and crafts for children lead by representatives from S.C.R.A.P. Gallery.

Attendees are invited to bring blankets, chairs, and umbrellas to enjoy the afternoon. Food and non-alcoholic drinks will also be available for purchase.

Civic Center Park is located at 73510 Fred Waring Drive (Fred Waring and San Pablo Avenue). For more information, please call 760-323-8353.



Enjoy  
arias  
Outdoors  
at THE  
FESTIVAL  
OF  
OPERA  
& ART



Wildflower  
Festival  
Brings  
Splash of  
Seasonal  
color  
to First  
Weekend



First Weekend fun continues in March and April with an exciting lineup of free events highlighted by the Coachella Valley Wildflower Festival on Saturday, March 5, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Held at the foot of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, the popular annual festival celebrates wellness, recreation, and the beautiful outdoors featuring interpretive hikes, a kids' zone, beer and wine garden, and a wide variety of exhibitions and vendor booths. Other highlights include the "Sand Guys" from the Travel Channel's show *Sand Masters*, who will be building a sculpture for the festival.

Drenching winter rains have set the table for a magnificent display of wildflowers and all are encouraged to come out and enjoy nature's fireworks as part of a fun day.

Regular shuttles run between the event and St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, 47535 Highway 74, where parking is free.

The Wildflower Festival is just one of the many exciting events featured as part of First Weekend Palm Desert. Starting every first Friday of the month, November through May, and continuing throughout the weekend, the public is invited to discover a celebration of world-class arts, culture, and entertainment in Palm Desert, from guided art tours and musical theater, to classic cars and concerts.

For more information about First Weekend events, visit [www.pdfirstweekend.com](http://www.pdfirstweekend.com).

For more information about the Wildflower Festival, visit [www.desertmountains.org](http://www.desertmountains.org) or call 760-862-9984.

## Family Safety Festival

Offers Fun and Information



Young and old alike can have fun while learning about public and personal safety at the 2016 Palm Desert Family Safety Festival on Saturday, March 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Civic Center Park (Fred Waring Drive and San Pablo Avenue). Admission is free.

Come and enjoy a day of free activities and information on important subjects including

earthquake and fire safety, bicycle and skateboard safety, dog bite prevention, swimming safety, and much more.

Children are encouraged to bring their bikes for a fun bicycle rodeo, which will give participants an opportunity to learn, practice, and demonstrate safe bicycle handling skills in a fun, non-competitive atmosphere. Palm Desert residents are also eligible to receive a free bicycle helmet and assistance with helmet fitting.

Representatives from the City's Police and Fire departments will be there to answer questions, demonstrate equipment, and hand out free literature and giveaways. Experts will be offering free car seat check-ups, and children can have their fingerprints taken.

Hot dogs and frozen lemonade will be available for purchase. For more information, please call 760-836-1697.



PALM DESERT

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Websites

[www.palmdesert.org](http://www.palmdesert.org)

[www.cityofpalmdesert.org](http://www.cityofpalmdesert.org)

Watch City Council meetings live online at [www.cityofpalmdesert.org](http://www.cityofpalmdesert.org) on the 2nd and 4th Thursday each month at 4 p.m.

Robert A. Spiegel  
Mayor

Janhamik  
Mayor Pro Tem

Sabby Jonathan  
VanGerner  
Susan Marie Vitor

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