

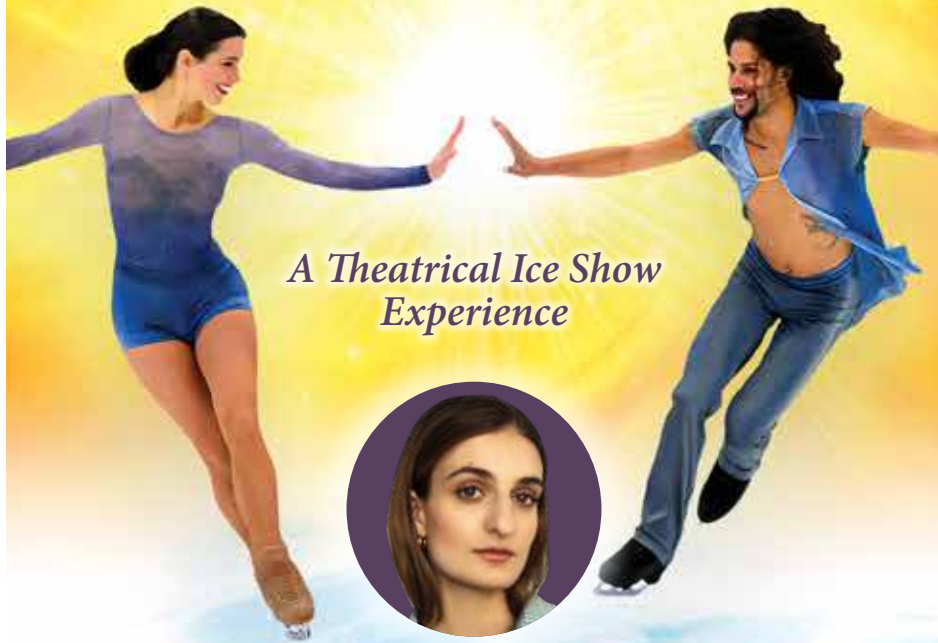
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## Beautiful Things

Welcome to our best time of year! Our clear desert skies are blue, the mountains shine in copper and gold and the crisp air brings calm with every deep breath. It's a welcome sight in what has already felt like an overwhelming year.

Have you found yourself dwelling on negative thoughts? With this year's many tragic events and uncertainty, I'll admit I have. They seem to captivate our brains playing over and over in a repetitive loop, spiraling into a storm of emotions that feels completely out of our control.

Clearing my mind through meditation and focusing on beautiful things helps. Like the weather we are enjoying, and figure skating.

I had the great honor of working with Dorothy Hamill over 30 years ago when she purchased the Ice Capades. A trip to meet her brought me to the Coachella Valley for the first time. 20 years later, life brought us together again through a chance meeting and figure skating came back into my world, along with the wonderful emotions that come with being a part of this warm and welcoming community.

Then Acrisure Arena brought ice to the desert offering everyone in the valley a myriad of opportunities to come together, cheer on our team and lace up our skates. This edition is dedicated to their efforts and the beauty of ice skating, and also offers many tools to address negative thoughts and feelings.

The search for deeper internal peace is global and this year's wellness trends (p.5) may surprise you. We need to lean on each other more than ever as Alison Mullins shares in "The Value of Friendship" (p.11). Jen Yockey welcomes spring and the opportunity for our souls to bloom (p.13), while wellness coach Phillip Moore shares strategies to help ignite inner drive (p.4). Maintaining a healthy diet also directly affects mental well-being and you'll find much inspiration from Edith Jones-Poland, MD, in "Eating a Rainbow" (p.21).

As psychologist and philosopher William James said, "The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another." Let's all make a conscious effort to fill our lives with beautiful things that warm our souls.

Thank you so very much for reading. We look forward to seeing you out and about this spring!



*Lauren*

Lauren Del Sarto  
Founder/Publisher

Desert Health's Wendy Fink  
and Lauren Del Sarto with  
Dorothy Hamill and Ice Capades  
alum J. Scott Driscoll



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A LITTLE OF  
EVERYTHING

\*Photo by Lani Garfield

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# A Treasure to Our Community

## ACV Honors Esmaeil Sebti, MD, FAAN

By Wendy Fink

This year, Alzheimers Coachella Valley (ACV) is recognizing neurologist Esmaeil Sebti, MD, FAAN, as the recipient of its Edie Keller Leadership Award at its fourth annual fundraising event, the “Endless Possibilities” Gala.

Each year, the Edie Keller Leadership Award is given to an exceptional individual who contributes significantly to the community by helping those struggling with Alzheimer’s and other dementia-related illnesses. This year’s honor is appropriately appointed as few have demonstrated the amount of kindness, empathy and genuine care for patients that Dr. Sebti has.

For more than 24 years, Sebti has served the Coachella Valley as a physician, educator and advocate who puts his patients above all. I had the unique opportunity of assisting him and his Desert Oasis Healthcare associate Jamie Robinson, DNP, (my mom) at the annual Los Médicos Voladores (Flying Doctors) in September, a volunteer-led event providing free medical, dental and vision care to families in the community. It allowed me to see first-hand the care he puts into his practice, and how thorough and intentionally present he is with each patient.

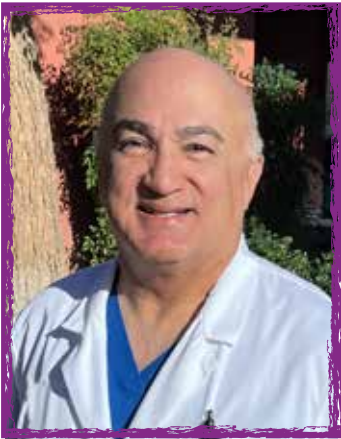
At different times throughout the day, he could be overheard making patients and colleagues laugh and taking the time to get to know each person with whom he was interacting. In addition to his contagious smile, empathy and quick wit, his wealth of knowledge and passion for sharing that knowledge make him an outstanding physician and person.

Of Alzheimer’s and dementia, Sebti always tells his patients, colleagues and students to remember the connection between the two: “Dementia is a symptom diagnosed ONLY by getting a complete history of the person. Alzheimer’s is the disease that causes dementia, among many other symptoms. When it comes to dementia, remember three words: Alzheimer, Alzheimer, Alzheimer.”

Sebti is also known for often saying, “Focus on the patient, not the scan.” Taking a patient-centered approach in all he does, he leads by example, as both a teacher and lifelong learner, and is truly a treasure to our community.

ACV’s “Endless Possibilities” will be held March 27 at the Desert Willow Golf Resort in Palm Desert from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Come honor Esmaeil Sebti, MD, while enjoying an evening of dinner, cocktails, hors d’oeuvres, and live and silent auctions to raise funds for ACV’s activities and educational programming. All monies raised stay in the valley to help those in our community affected by cognitive impairment.

Wendy Fink is lead editor of Desert Health. For gala tickets and more information, call (760) 776.3100 or visit [www.cvalzheimers.org](http://www.cvalzheimers.org).



Desert Oasis Healthcare  
Neurologist Esmaeil Sebti, MD

# Support for Those Supporting Children

By Lauren Del Sarto

Today’s youth face many new and ever-evolving challenges. Ronnie’s House for Hope is a local nonprofit providing free peer support grief services to children, teens, their families and adults in the valley. Through group activities, participants are able to share their experiences and create a sense of community. The organization’s goals are to help clients develop an understanding of grief and its complexities, to garner healthy coping skills and build resiliency.

As part of their community outreach, Ronnie’s House is hosting Focus on the Hope, a roundtable discussion for local professionals directly working with youth in our community. Their goal is to offer support in six areas: grief, addiction, LGBTQ+, immigration, mental health and Fentanyl awareness. The event will be held May 17 at The Classic Club from 1 to 4 p.m.

“This event is an opportunity for those ‘boots on the ground’ working with community youth to not only garner support and resources, but to share their experiences and insights as well,” says Ronnie’s House for Hope founder Jennifer Loza.

Presenters include Tori St. Johns, consultant for Desert Sands Unified School District (DSUSD), whose 34 years of experience will offer a great deal of insight into how we can best serve our LGBTQ+ youth; and Shannon Brigham, a Student Assist Program therapist conducting the Insight programs in DSUSD which focuses on substance abuse and conflict resolution, who will discuss addiction.

TODEC, a program that has been offering legal services and assistance for immigrant families for over 40 years, will speak on immigration, specifically how to support immigrant youth and understand the fears many of them face today.

Executive Clinical Director of 417 Recovery Monica Patino-Ayala, LMFT, has over a decade of experience in the mental health field and her passion lies in working with adolescents and their families, guiding them on healthy journeys. She will share new ideas for mental health support of our youth.

Loza will share information on Fentanyl, how our conversations with our youth on the subject have changed, and how to help someone who has overdosed. All participants will receive Narcan training and leave with Narcan in hand.

Ronnie’s House for Hope believes anyone who works with children can benefit from sharing knowledge with others in this ever-changing environment. Loza adds, “Working together to share ideas, and what we see that is and isn’t working, can help us collectively strengthen our youth to face today’s many challenges.”

Focus on the Hope Roundtable takes place May 17 at The Classic Club, 75200 Classic Club Blvd. in Palm Desert, from 1 to 4 p.m. For tickets and information, visit [www.ronnieshouseforhope.org/events](http://www.ronnieshouseforhope.org/events).



Ronnie’s House, which provides grief services for children, is hosting a roundtable event for others who serve our valley youth.



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## Helping to Unlock Inner Drive

### Self-Determination Theory helps older adults thrive

By Phillip Moore, MS

As our valley's population matures, health care providers and families seek effective ways to support older adults in maintaining active, engaged lifestyles. Recent research in psychology offers promising insights through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which helps us understand how to nurture genuine motivation in those 55 years and older, leading to better health outcomes and improved well-being.

SDT, developed by researchers Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, identifies three basic psychological needs essential for developing internal motivation: autonomy (feeling in control of one's choices), competence (feeling capable and effective), and relatedness (experiencing genuine connection with others) as measured by self-reporting questionnaires.<sup>1</sup> When these needs are met, we naturally develop a stronger internal drive for healthy behaviors and social engagement, which is especially important as we age.



Therapies proven to best motivate older adults can be utilized by both professionals and loved ones.

Research shows that seniors for whom these three needs are met demonstrate remarkable outcomes. A recent study identified key factors that supported exercise adherence in older adults stating that autonomy-supported environments significantly contribute to sustained physical activity.<sup>2</sup> Research indicates that older adults who experience a greater sense of competence in their daily activities report higher levels of life satisfaction. A 2014 *Journal of Aging Studies* report found that among adults aged 80 years and older living in residential homes, the satisfaction of psychological needs including competence was significantly associated with overall well-being.<sup>3</sup>

Here are ways that family members and health care providers can support elder relatives and patients with these essential needs:

**Supporting autonomy.** Providing older adults with choices in their physical activities rather than prescribing rigid routines fosters a greater sense of autonomy, leading to improved motivation and long-term adherence to health behaviors. In a 2016 study, researcher Marcos Baez found that when older adults participated in personalized, online group exercise programs tailored to their individual preferences and physical abilities, they demonstrated higher engagement and consistency. This research underscores the importance of autonomy-supportive environments, reinforcing that when older adults have agency in selecting their activities, they are more likely to sustain healthy behaviors over time.<sup>4</sup>

**Building competence.** Start with achievable challenges and celebrate progress. Whether learning new technology or starting a fitness routine, breaking tasks into manageable steps helps build confidence. Studies indicate that older adults who experience regular success, even in small tasks, are more likely to tackle new challenges.<sup>5</sup>

Continued on page 17



## News To Smile About!

### We've just been named one of U.S. News & World Report's Best Hospitals for Maternity 2025



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See videos, photos and learn more at [EisenhowerHealth.org/Maternity](https://EisenhowerHealth.org/Maternity)







# Top Wellness Trends for 2025

By Wendy Fink

In their Wheel of Wellness, a popular model used for conceptualizing dimensions of wellness, researchers Jane E. Myers, PhD, Thomas Sweeney, PhD, and J. Melvin Witmer, PhD, define wellness as “a way of life oriented toward optimal health and well-being... ideally it is the optimum state of health and well-being that each individual is capable of achieving.” This encompasses all aspects of wellness including the physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, social, environmental, financial and occupational.

As we find our footing in 2025, a year that has already seen a large amount of unprecedented change, many people are looking toward new and beneficial ways to not only take care of their own health and wellness, but also our collective well-being.

This March, the annual Global Wellness Summit’s (GWS) wellness trends report was released – the longest-running, most detailed forecast of what we can expect in health and wellness for the year ahead. The Future of Wellness: 2025 Trends<sup>2</sup> report shares what consumers are seeking globally and as a result, what businesses, governments and industries are providing them.

The report is a compilation of trends that have met certain criteria identified by GWS wellness experts. To be included, these trends must: “Reflect major, long-term cultural or demographic shifts that will inevitably change the world and the world of wellness; tackle major crises in human and planetary health; impact the wellness of people beyond the one percent; and capture what is truly new but won’t be fleeting.”

Of those trends, we highlighted the top four we feel will be most interesting and beneficial to our readers. Below is an edited summary of those trends as provided by GWS:

**Analog Wellness.** In our world today, there’s a demand for slower, low-tech living. Most people are tired of disinformation, feeling manipulated by online content, and general brain and culture “rotting.”

Apps keep getting more addictive, designed to keep us on our screens with siloed algorithms and hate speech creating more division.

The report predicts 2025 will be the year more people don’t just engage in “digital detox” but get more aggressive about logging off and “analog-ing on.” Trailblazed by younger generations, there’s a growing obsession with retro tech, and analog hobbies and experiences, that restore our attention and the sense of the tactile. This includes structured, super-social classes and clubs revolving around social ceramics studios, old-school game-playing clubs, intellectual “academic bars,” and reading salons set to live music. These analog clubs and salons are giving fitness studios and pricey “social wellness clubs” competition as new grassroots third spaces.



Many are feeling an urgent need for logging off and analog-ing on.



People are gravitating toward pre-industrial, analog experiences.

Wellness resorts are also launching sophisticated analog arts programming: painting, ceramics, calligraphy and writing workshops, as well as pre-industrial experiences like learning blacksmithing and wheat milling.

While digital detox and analog-living trends have been gaining traction for years, people are now prioritizing them less for their trendy nostalgia and more for an urgent need to return to a human “retro future.”

**Longevity Redefines Work.** The report states that, while many might find it hard to believe, the fastest-growing workforce age group globally is now made up of those over 75 years old. Many factors are driving people to work longer including the vast knowledge and resources they hold, their financial needs, global and national labor needs, and the four percent gross domestic product (GDP) boost available to countries for every year of increased work participation. This trend explores seismic shifts happening in the workforce around what roles we’ll fill, how long we’ll stay, and how we’ll adapt.

Experts acknowledge that health and well-being will play a major role in productivity, satisfaction and longevity for older populations in the workforce. To support these workers, it will be essential for governments and businesses to implement wellness initiatives, health-focused policies and age-inclusive strategies. This will also boost productivity and foster intergenerational collaboration. By incorporating wellness and technological innovations, businesses and governments won’t just improve retention, increase satisfaction, and minimize barriers – they will create a cultural transformation and help all workers thrive together for longer.



When workers of all generations thrive in their roles, we all benefit.

**Teen Wellness.** Many teenagers today are facing “diseases of despair,” a phrase coined by Columbia University professor in the Clinical Psychology Program Lisa Miller, PhD, when referring to anxiety, depression, addiction and suicidality. Loneliness has also seen a sharp rise among this population as teens are more connected digitally, less connected emotionally, and mentally exhausted. Many factors, including climate and financial crises, technology, mass shootings and the far-reaching effects of social media have shaped their experiences.

According to Child Psychiatrist Sami Timini, MD, we should look at what’s happening with teens as not just an indication of the mental health of the individual, but as a “barometer pointing to something ‘unhealthy’ in the society and culture that invented it.” A sedentary lifestyle and habits of eating ultra-processed foods are also impacting this younger generation.

To help them live more balanced lives and make healthy choices into their future, various therapies such as sound healing, meditation and nature immersion are being offered to teens through retreats, resorts and educational apps and programs for urban

Continued on page 10



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## Coachella Valley's Health Care Industry MENTORING THE FUTURE

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## My Experience Preparing for a Future in Health Care

By Cathedral City High School Senior Kalie Carbajal

As a senior in Cathedral City High School's Career Technical Education (CTE) Health and Environmental Academy of Learning (HEAL), I can confidently say that this program has set the standard for career preparation in health care. It has provided me with the knowledge, hands-on experience and professional exposure needed to excel in the medical field. From my first year in the program, I've gained both technical expertise and valuable certifications that have given me a competitive edge for my future career.

My journey in HEAL began in ninth grade, when I developed essential skills for both academic and professional success. The curriculum emphasizes college and career readiness, effective communication and professionalism in health care settings. I was introduced to a wide range of health care fields, including public health, biotechnology, environmental health, nutrition and mental health. Courses in medical office support and cultural diversity in medicine helped me gain an understanding of the essentials of the health care system and the importance of patient-centered care.



Author Kalie Carbajal

From the very beginning, we were given hands-on training. I earned my American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR and First Aid certification, which gave me the life-saving skills necessary in emergencies. One of my first eye-opening experiences was visiting Desert Regional Medical Center, where I had the rare opportunity to see surgical robots in action and learn about their role in modern medicine. These experiences introduced me to cutting-edge medical technology early in my education.

As I advanced into my sophomore year, I transitioned into more complex medical topics such as anatomy and physiology, pharmacology, medical ethics, and health care systems. I learned how to assess vital signs and analyze medical case studies, and gained my Stop the Bleed certification from a nationally recognized program that teaches critical bleeding control techniques. I also completed my Food Handler certification, essential for those entering fields related to nutrition, food safety and public health.

Other standout experiences included college trips, where students got to visit at least 15 colleges and universities over the course of the program. I had the opportunity to participate in two separate three-day college trips, which allowed me to explore health science programs at multiple institutions. These trips helped me make more informed decisions about my future and reinforced the importance of higher education in pursuing a career in health care.



HEAL students at the HOSA state leadership conference

As I advanced into my junior year, I transitioned into my Advanced Concepts of the Medical Profession CTE class, which focuses heavily on life-saving techniques, triage and advanced first aid with medical emergencies. Now, as a senior in the Public Health Solutions CTE class, I've expanded my focus to developing strategies to address community health challenges.

In addition to coursework, the HOSA-FHP (Future Health Professionals) Career and Technical Student Organization is fully integrated into the HEAL curriculum. I've had the opportunity to mentor underclassmen in their projects, such as freshmen with their Health Career Displays and sophomores with their research posters and PSAs. Fortunately, the three PSA groups who entered their videos in competition qualified to move forward to the state-level competition – a huge accomplishment for all of us.

HEAL has not only given me leadership skills, hands-on medical experiences and real-world knowledge, but it has also shaped my future. Whether pursuing higher education or entering the medical workforce, I know that HEAL has equipped me to thrive in the future of medicine.

For more information on OneFuture Coachella Valley, visit [www.onefuturecv.org](http://www.onefuturecv.org) or call (760) 625.0422.





# Bruxism: Life Can Be a Grind

By Sarah A. Khoshniyati, DDS

Do you notice yourself waking up with jaw pain in the morning? Or, do you notice yourself clenching or grinding your teeth when stressed or angry? Both scenarios can be signs of bruxism, an involuntary habit of clenching or grinding your teeth. Bruxism can happen while awake or asleep, but usually those affected by night grinding are unaware until they experience symptoms such as jaw pain or tooth discomfort, or are diagnosed due to tell-tale signs.

Individuals with sleep bruxism are not grinding their teeth continually, but instead have periods of clenching and grinding that may last seconds. The frequency of periods of grinding is not usually consistent, and grinding may not occur every night. Usually, bruxism happens early in the sleep cycle, but the pain or discomfort is only noticed upon waking. Pain occurs due to the tightening of the jaw muscles during the acts of bruxism.

Symptoms of bruxism may include audible grinding during sleep and can be severe enough to disrupt sleep. Dental findings may include flattening, chipping or fracturing of teeth, increased tooth sensitivity, tooth wear that can lead to erosion and recession, or even cheek biting. Facial pain such as tight or sore jaw muscles, jaw-lock, headaches and ear discomfort are also signs of bruxism.

Bruxism can be a primary disorder not associated with other conditions, or secondary where multiple contributing factors are present.

**Primary bruxism** (not resulting from another condition):

- Common in children when their teeth are growing. Since the jaw and teeth grow

quickly as children grow, bruxism tends to resolve on its own.

- In adults, stress tends to be one of the main causes, whether symptoms appear when awake or asleep.
- Misaligned bite or missing teeth can also cause habits of grinding.

**Secondary bruxism** (a result of another condition):

- **Medications:** Bruxism can be a common side effect of some medications including antipsychotics and antidepressants. Specifically, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) have been linked to the condition.
- **Sleep apnea:** A condition where breathing stops periodically while sleeping, resulting in a reduction in sleep quality which can ultimately cause teeth grinding
- **Anxiety and depression:** May be precursors to stress related bruxism

Bruxism does not always require treatment, and treatment depends solely on the cause. If malocclusion (misaligned teeth) is the cause, then the best treatment option may be orthodontic alignment. If the action is only happening at night, then a great treatment option might be a night guard. When properly fitted, a guard redistributes the grinding forces from the teeth, which ultimately relaxes the muscles and reduces symptoms. Nightguards do not cure the cause of bruxism, but ultimately help to reduce or eliminate the negative effects that grinding can cause. In severe cases, one treatment option is injections of botulinum toxin, also known as Botox, which helps to paralyze the muscles of mastication responsible for bruxism.

If you have questions or are experiencing symptoms related to bruxism, contact your dentist for further evaluation.

Sarah Khoshniyati (“Dr. Sarah”) is a dentist with Palm Desert Smiles and can be reached at (760) 568.3602.



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# Why Every Business Needs a Strong Digital Presence

By Isning Gamez

In today's digital landscape, having a strong online presence is not just an option – it's a necessity. Consumers rely heavily on online searches to find businesses, compare services and make purchasing decisions. If your business isn't visible where potential customers are looking, you're losing opportunities to competitors who are visible.

Online listings are the foundation of a business's digital footprint, and effective search engine optimization (SEO) is imperative. Platforms like Google Business Profile, Yelp, Bing Places and industry-specific directories ensure that potential customers can find your business easily. An optimized and consistent online listing offers several benefits:

- **Increased visibility.** When customers search for your services, you want your business to appear at the top.
- **Enhanced credibility.** Accurate business details build trust with potential clients.
- **Better engagement.** Features like Google Reviews and Q&A sections encourage customer interaction.
- **Improved local search rankings.** Search engines favor businesses with complete, optimized and regularly updated listings.

Local SEO is the key to appearing in location-based searches. When users search for businesses near them, search engines prioritize companies with strong local SEO. Optimizing for local search includes:

- **Keyword optimization.** Integrating relevant keywords for which your audience is searching
- **Google Business Profile Management.** Ensuring your profile is fully optimized with engaging content, images and up-to-date business details
- **Local citations and backlinks.** Building credibility through authoritative directories and industry-relevant links
- **Review management.** Encouraging and responding to customer reviews to improve trust and rankings

Managing your business's online presence can be time-consuming and overwhelming. An experienced social media management company can help ensure:

- Your business is accurately listed and consistently updated on all major directories.
- Your local SEO strategy is built to improve search rankings and attract more customers.
- Your brand reputation is managed effectively through review monitoring and response strategies.
- You distribute high-quality multimedia content – such as videos and graphics – to enhance your listings and digital marketing efforts.

The digital world is constantly evolving and businesses that adapt to these changes thrive. If you want to improve your online visibility, attract more customers and stay ahead of the competition, make sure your online presence is a key part of your marketing strategy.

Isning Multimedia is a full-service video production and marketing company located in the Coachella Valley. Founder and award-winning producer Isning Gamez can be reached at (760) 610.4106 or isning@isning.com.

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## Galleri: On Course for Golf and Health

By Lauren Del Sarto

The PGA TOUR Champions returns to Mission Hills Country Club March 26-30 for the third-annual Galleri Classic Presented by Spotlight 29 Casino. The tournament will bring the 50+ tour's top talents back to the desert and shine a light on advances in cancer diagnosis through Galleri, a multi-cancer early detection (MCED) blood test.

Past tournament standouts, including 2023 champion David Toms, reigning champion Retief Goosen and two-time runner-up Steven Alker will join Bernhard Langer, Stewart Cink, Miguel Angel Jimenez, Colin Montgomerie and Galleri player ambassador Steve Stricker, to name a few.

Further empowering the fight against cancer, The Galleri Classic will once again benefit local organizations supporting individuals along their cancer journey: American Cancer Society, The Desert Cancer Foundation, Eisenhower Health, Hanson House, Pendleton Foundation and Shay's Warriors Life After Cancer.

Early cancer detection is proven to save lives and Galleri's parent company GRAIL is a leader in the global effort to enhance screening standards. They are currently conducting multiple clinical studies including those with England's National Health Services and Medicare to enroll more than 385,000 participants globally.<sup>1</sup>

The Galleri test can be taken annually as a simple blood test and screens for a "fingerprint" of many of the deadliest cancers before they become symptomatic, including those with no recommended screening tests today such as pancreatic, esophageal, ovarian, liver and others.<sup>2</sup> Positive results are followed by subsequent medical testing to confirm that a cancer is truly present helping to eliminate the possibility of a false positive.

We reached out to Director of Communications Tina Amirkiai for the latest on GRAIL's clinical trials:

- GRAIL has completed more than 290,000 commercial tests in the U.S.
- Their clinical implementation study, PATHFINDER, showed that Galleri identified more than twice the number of cancers when added to standard-of-care screening. About half of the MCED-detected cancers were at an early stage. About seven in 10 of the MCED-detected cancers had no other standard-of-care screening available. The positive predictive value in the study population was 43 percent, an order of magnitude higher than those of the leading single-cancer screenings.<sup>3</sup>
- Later this year, GRAIL will present foundational data, including the early results from their 35,000-participant PATHFINDER 2 study.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2026, they expect final data from the longitudinal 140,000-participant NHS-Galleri study in the UK.
- GRAIL now has over 12,000 prescribing physicians nationally with 40 clinics here in the Coachella Valley including their partnership with the Comprehensive Cancer Center at Desert Regional Medical Center.
- They are progressing in their modular premarket approval (PMA) submission for FDA approval and expect final submission to be in the first half of 2026.

"Hopefully, multi-cancer early tests will soon be an everyday occurrence in our lives," says Timothy Tyler, MD, director of pharmacy, lab and oncology at the Comprehensive Cancer Center. "Personally, I'd much rather spend money finding a cancer early, when it is easy to remove, rather than spend a tremendous amount more trying to treat it, when it finally starts causing symptoms."

The Galleri test requires a prescription from a licensed health care provider and is recommended for adults with an elevated risk for cancer, such as those aged 50 or older. At this year's Galleri Classic, GRAIL will not have their mobile phlebotomy lab on site, but will offer attendees \$100 off the cost of the test which is currently out-of-pocket. The Galleri test should be used in addition to recommended cancer screenings such as mammography, colonoscopy, prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test or cervical cancer screening.

If you're 50+, come see the legendary players you've enjoyed watching for decades at The Galleri Classic, and learn more about the Galleri test as part of your proactive health care plan.

The Galleri Classic takes place March 26-30 at Mission Hills Country Club in Rancho Mirage. Tickets start at \$30 and are available at [www.TheGalleriClassic.com](http://www.TheGalleriClassic.com). For more information on the Galleri test, visit [www.Galleri.com](http://www.Galleri.com).

References: 1) <https://clinicaltrials.gov/study/NCT05673018>; 2) <https://www.galleri.com/what-is-galleri>; 3) <https://cancerworld.net/multi-cancer-detection-blood-test>; 4) <https://clinicaltrials.gov/study/NCT05155605>



Reigning champion Retief Goosen and GRAIL CEO Bob Ragusa (Photo by The Galleri Classic Presented by Spotlight 29 Casino / Scott Avra)

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# Work Meets Wellness

## A blueprint for shifting careers

By Christine Carter

Chances are, at some point in your life, you will need to make a career shift. Whether you're transitioning by choice or external circumstances, this period of change can feel overwhelming. However, it's also a great time to reassess your purpose, align your work with your passions and create a more meaningful professional life.

During this time, you may want to consider not just what you will do next, but how you will approach this transition with clarity, confidence and care for yourself. A career shift isn't just about finding another job; it's about realigning with what truly matters to you and creating a professional life that reflects your values, passions and strengths.

Here are a few suggestions on how to navigate this transition in a healthy and productive way:

**Start with self-reflection.** Before rushing into applying for random jobs online, take a step back and assess what you truly want. Ask yourself:

- Who brings out the best in me?
- Where do I feel called to make a difference?
- What do I want my life and my work to look like in this next chapter?
- What work energizes me so much that I lose track of time?
- Where am I providing the most value?
- When do I feel my best?
- Why am I experiencing this change and what do I want out of it?
- How am I defining success in this new chapter?

The answers to these questions will help guide your job search with intention, rather than urgency. Instead of settling for any job, you'll be searching for a role that aligns with your purpose and values.

**Focus on career exploration.** Exploring new career paths can feel overwhelming if approached without structure. Focus is key. Define what industries or roles interest you, research emerging opportunities and be strategic in your search. It is ok to explore and change your mind. During this time, use career coaches, mentors and sponsors who can provide guidance, insights, encouragement and connections to help you move forward.

**Engage with intention.** One of the best ways to explore new opportunities is by getting involved in your community. Volunteering allows you to gain experience and contribute to meaningful causes while assessing if a certain field is right for you. Networking, on the other hand, isn't just about handing out business cards; it's about forming genuine connections. Attend local meetings and events, engage in industry discussions online and reach out to people doing work that interests you. Your next opportunity is more likely to come from a conversation than a job board.

**Leverage technology and branding tools.** Today's job market is more competitive and digital than ever. Take advantage of tools that can streamline your transition:

- AI-powered tools to refine resumes, draft cover letters and practice interview responses
- Online job boards like LinkedIn, Indeed, remote job boards and niche industry platforms to find openings and hiring trends
- Personal branding strategies to position yourself effectively

### Ice in the Desert

Continued from page 1

Follies and Ice Capades.

Hamill, who now lives in Indian Wells, enjoyed leisurely skating at the rink when not on the road. "I remember the sun would filter in from the second-floor windows above and it was always a warm and relaxing feeling."

She shared that when she and fellow Olympian Robin Cousins were filming "The Nutcracker: A Fantasy on Ice" that same year, the cast would rehearse at the Chalet late in the evening after crowds went home.

Other big names in skating have called the Coachella Valley home as well. World Figure Skating Hall of Fame Coach Frank Carroll, considered one of America's greatest, lived here for decades before passing last year. National Hockey League Hall of Famer and five-time Stanley Cup champion Grant Fuhr is a long-time local and now broadcaster for the Firebirds.

However, the Firebirds were not the desert's first hockey team. That honor goes to the Desert Lions formed by Gary Steven in 1998, a year before the Town Center rink closed. Left without a place to play, Steven mortgaged his home to build a small rink on Cathedral Canyon called the Ice Garden (2003). He later moved the rink to Dune Palms in La Quinta around 2009.

Then in 2011, Desert Ice Castle opened in Cathedral City and became the official home for figure skaters, hockey players and leisurely fans. Frank Carroll trained top skaters there and it became the new home for the Desert Lions until the facility closed its doors because of the pandemic in 2020.

Then in 2022, we were given the gift of Acrisure Arena, a top-notch entertainment venue designed for events and concerts, and home to our Firebirds. And if that wasn't enough, they also gave us the Berger Foundation Iceplex inviting the community to lace up their skates and come together once again for leisure and sport on ice.

Firebirds fever quickly set in and games became a new social hub bringing all demographics together for a united purpose. At the Iceplex, skaters of all ages continue to take to the ice in what the Global Wellness Trends dubbed one of 2024's fastest growing pastimes with rink reservations up 698 percent from the year before. The Iceplex is also the (hopefully forever) home of the Desert Lions, still going strong after 27 years.

Continued on page 14

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- Ensure your resume and LinkedIn profile tell a compelling story of your skills and aspirations.
  - Develop a clear and engaging elevator pitch. Have a 30-second introduction that captures who you are, what you've done and what you're looking to do next. The ability to confidently articulate your value is key.
  - Create a marketing plan for yourself. Think of your career transition as a personal brand relaunch. Map out your goals, identify your transferable skills and craft a strategic approach to showcase your expertise. Consider how your past experiences make you uniquely suited for your next role, even if it's in a new field.
  - Prioritize true self-care. Career transitions can be stressful, but self-care goes beyond a workout, facial or good glass of wine. Real self-care means:
    - Understanding your value and refusing to settle for less than you deserve
    - Giving yourself the space and grace to explore without fear of failure
    - Finding balance by maintaining hobbies, social connections and activities that feed your heart and soul
  - Embrace the journey. A career transition is more than a job search. It's an opportunity to reinvent yourself, align your work and life with your purpose, and step into a more fulfilling future. By leading with intention, focus and self-care, you'll navigate this change with confidence and clarity.
- Christine Carter is a career consultant with LHH, a global leader in career transition services, and a private practice consultant specializing in career transitions. She is the author of *Restart Strong*, a guide for those navigating career change and can be reached at [chris@startstronglife.com](mailto:chris@startstronglife.com).

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# The Value of Friendship in Health

By Alison Mullins, MS, CHHC, IAYT

Friendship is one of the most significant aspects of a fulfilling and healthy life. It provides emotional support, companionship and a sense of belonging – all of which contribute to our overall well-being. Friends play a critical role in both difficult and joyful times, offering encouragement, perspective and shared experiences that enrich our lives. Whether they are long-standing friendships that have stood the test of time or new connections that bring fresh energy and insight, each relationship can add value to our emotional and mental health.

**The role of old and new friendships.** Longtime friends can serve as anchors in our lives, offering continuity, shared history and deep understanding. These relationships often provide a sense of stability, reminding us of who we are and where we have come from. Old friends know what we've been through and may see us in ways we may not see ourselves, often bringing forward the best sides of our character and reinforcing our strengths.

**New friendships bring vitality and fresh perspectives.** They introduce us to new ideas, experiences and opportunities, helping us grow and adapt. Whether formed through work, hobbies or chance encounters, these relationships can be invigorating and add diversity to our social lives. Together, old and new friendships can create a balanced and supportive network that enhances our emotional strength and well-being.

**The value of friendship in difficult times and celebratory moments.** Friendships become especially valuable during life's highs and lows. In times of struggle, such as personal loss, illness or professional setbacks, friends provide comfort, practical assistance and emotional strength. Their presence can alleviate stress and offer a sense of hope and encouragement. Knowing we are not alone in our struggles can significantly impact our mental and physical health. Conversely, friends also play a key role in celebrating life's achievements and joyous moments. Whether it's a promotion, a personal milestone or a major life event, sharing happiness with friends magnifies the joy. Their support and excitement can reinforce our accomplishments and remind us of our worth, fostering a deeper sense of fulfillment.

**The most important friendship is the one we have with ourselves.** While friendships with others are invaluable, the foundation of all meaningful relationships is the one we have with ourselves. Cultivating self-love and self-respect enables us to build healthier and more fulfilling friendships. When we are comfortable with who we are, we attract and maintain relationships based on authenticity and mutual respect.

Practicing self-compassion, setting boundaries and recognizing our own worth allows us to show up fully in our friendships, offering the same kindness and support to others that we give to ourselves. A strong sense of self not only enhances our own well-being but also enriches every relationship we cultivate, making our friendships more meaningful and enduring.

Friendships, both old and new, are integral to our health and happiness. By nurturing both our internal and external connections, we create a life filled with meaningful relationships, emotional resilience and overall well-being.

*Alison Mullins is a certified holistic life and health coach, yoga therapist, sound healer and founder of Coppermoon Rising. She can be reached at [alison@coppermoonrising.com](mailto:alison@coppermoonrising.com) or [www.coppermoonrising.com](http://www.coppermoonrising.com).*



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“Dailiness” is one of the most important cyclical patterns we perform regularly. Life happens in acts of repetition, over and over. It is the thousand small eye blinks of routineness that make up our lives. Nature awakens daily and shows us slight visible and invisible variations carving throughout the terrain of our world. Our personal inner and outer topographies are shaped the same way. The most important aspects of our lives, such as marriage, parenthood and our careers, are built from tiny daily, mundane moments. These moments in the aggregate amount to wonderful momentous meanings.

We often take on new hobbies to add more meaning into our lives. We prepare to learn new skills by attending workshops or educational classes. These experiences are enlightening as many of us anticipate these moments to satisfy our creative pursuits. When we practice the newly learned skill over and over, it can create a deep inner spark and mastery within. This is achieved through the act of “dailiness.”

Through embodied presence, we mark what matters to us and how much it matters, and then we decide to invest day by day.

Everyone partakes in mundane aspects of life, acts of “dailiness” that may seem arbitrary; however, at closer glance, these decisions hold more weight than we know. The daily acts of dropping your children off at school, making a nightly family meal, or brewing the morning coffee while enjoying time for solitude all have small and large reverberating effects.


Other seemingly extravagant acts might be “meaning-making experiences” if practiced as acts of “dailiness.” Daily creativity through art, journaling rituals or any regular act of creating something regardless of the magnitude, may become part of what makes life meaningful.

We can also analyze the “dailiness” of things that do not contribute to sustenance in our lives. We can begin to carve out destructive habits that have seeped their way into the crevasses of our life routines.

We are what we do. Our daily work is a doorway. The process can become sacred as we begin repeatedly each day. When we take a closer look at what we have allowed to become part of our “dailiness,” we can see how we are shaped – and make changes or repeat actions that are aligned with who we want to be.

We have all had moments when we have moved away from the “dailiness” of our lives – on an extended vacation or going through a life change – only to wish for the “dailiness” we already had. In these moments, we can celebrate and return to “dailiness” and honor the small building blocks that make our lives the most meaningful.

*Jennifer Di Francesco is a wellness explorer and desert adventurer and can be reached at [www.coachellabellaboho.com](http://www.coachellabellaboho.com).*



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# The Impact of the Heart’s Magnetic Field

By Cindy Douglas

Since 1991, the HeartMath Institute has researched heart-brain communication and its relationship to managing stress, increasing coherence and deepening our connection to ourselves and others. One of the most interesting research areas has focused on the heart’s magnetic field.

Each time the heart beats, a magnetic field is produced that travels out from the body, extending about 10 feet. (Many researchers believe it extends much further from the body, but the technology to measure it is limited.) The brain also has a magnetic field but it extends only about an inch from the body, and the field from the heart is 100 times greater in strength than the brain’s.

The magnetic field generated by the heart acts as a personal field environment. Scientists have found that each of our thoughts, attitudes, and emotions create different signals that are embedded in each person’s field.<sup>1</sup> Our attitudes and emotions affect other people, not only through body language and voice tone but also through these magnetic fields acting as carrier waves.<sup>1</sup>

Using spectral analysis, it’s been shown that our emotions influence or cause changes in the heart’s magnetic field.<sup>1</sup> Different emotions create different patterns in the heart’s field, which are then perceived by others. If you’ve ever encountered someone and without exchanging words you immediately felt uncomfortable, it’s often because your magnetic field was reading the emotions and attitudes of the other person’s field.

Emotions influence the heart’s magnetic field similar to the way a radio or TV transmission works where the sound or picture is carried by an electromagnetic wave. Essentially, we broadcast information about how we are feeling, whether or not we are conscious of it.

Animals also have an electromagnetic field. Scientific studies found that a type of heart-rhythm synchronization occurs in interactions between people and their pets.<sup>2</sup>

HeartMath conducted an experiment with a 15-year-old boy, Josh, and his dog, Mabel.<sup>2</sup> The experiment used electrocardiogram monitors to record heart-rhythm data when Josh and Mabel were together and apart. Two recorders were used, one fitted on Mabel and the other on Josh. The recorders were synchronized and Mabel was placed in one of the labs. Josh then entered the lab and sat down and proceeded to consciously feel feelings of love toward Mabel.

When Josh entered the room, consciously experiencing feelings of love toward his dog, his heart rhythms became more coherent. Interestingly, the change in Josh’s heart also influenced Mabel’s heart rhythms, which then also became more coherent. And, if you’ve ever wondered what goes on in your dog’s mind, or heart, when you leave home, they measured this result as well. When Josh left the room, Mabel’s heart rhythms became much more chaotic and incoherent, suggesting initial separation anxiety.

Being aware of the powerful magnetic field that extends from our hearts is an important step in realizing how our thoughts and emotions have an impact on those around us. They affect both people and pets, even when it’s unintended!

*Cindy Douglas is a certified reiki master, life coach, HeartMath Institute trainer and founder of Takota Alchemy. She also creates and facilitates retreats to unplug and reconnect to the power within and can be reached at (619) 726.0408 or [www.takotaalchemy.com](http://www.takotaalchemy.com).*

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# When Your Soul Needs to Bloom

By Jennifer Yockey

Like the desert wildflowers pushing through the sunbaked earth, awakening from winter’s quiet slumber, we too might feel an internal stirring. This annual rhythm of renewal can inspire us to emerge and bloom.

As a yoga teacher, I’ve witnessed countless students recognize this moment – when something within them is ready to emerge and expand.



Spring often inspires internal desire to evolve and grow.

Nature knows exactly when to bloom. The desert gold poppy doesn’t question its timing or compare its emergence to others. It simply responds to the perfect combination of warmth, light and moisture. We carry this same wisdom within ourselves, though we can often doubt, dismiss or question it. Our inner knowing whispers when it’s time to grow, change and blossom into something new. Sometimes it comes as a gentle nudge, and other times as an uncomfortable feeling that something must shift. Like the flower, we don’t need to force or rush this process; we simply need to trust and respond to our own perfect timing.

The journey of emergence requires courage. Just as a tender shoot must push through layers of soil to reach the surface, our own growth often means breaking through layers of comfort, old patterns and familiar ways of being.

This is where yoga practice becomes invaluable. In those moments on our mats, when we breathe through discomfort and find new edges of possibility in a posture, we build the resilience needed for transformation. Each time we move through a challenging sequence or hold space in a difficult shape, we’re practicing the art of gentle persistence – the same quality needed for personal growth.

Before new growth can occur, we must create space. In nature, old leaves decompose, creating rich soil for new life. Similarly, our own blooming requires us to clear away what no longer serves us. This might mean releasing old beliefs, outdated habits or relationships that have run their course. Twisting postures in yoga are particularly powerful for this clearing process. As we wring out our bodies, we symbolically and energetically release stagnation. Heart-opening postures then create space for what wants to emerge.

The yoga mat becomes our garden, a sacred space where we cultivate conditions for inner growth. Through conscious breathing (pranayama), we oxygenate the soil of our being. Through meditation, we learn to distinguish between the weeds of distraction and the seeds of true purpose. Through mindful movement, we tend to our inner landscape with the same care a gardener has when tending their plants.

As spring awakens the desert, let it also awaken you. Your inner blooming might be a new creative project, a shifted perspective or a deeper connection with your authentic self. Whatever is stirring within you, honor its timing. Clear the space it needs. Trust the wisdom that comes from your own seasons. And remember – just as each desert flower adds its unique beauty to the landscape, your personal growth contributes something essential to the world.

Let this season of renewal guide you inward. What’s ready to bloom within you?  
*Jennifer Yockey is an E-RYT500 yoga instructor, an IAPRC professional life and recovery coach and owner of GATHER Yoga + Wellness. She can be reached at (760) 219.7953 or for more information, visit [www.gatherlaquinta.com](http://www.gatherlaquinta.com).*



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**BLUE ZONES PROJECT**  
Community News

### Blue Zones Project: Building a Healthier, Happier Community Together

In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to get caught up in our individual lives and forget the importance of community. But what if, by coming together, we could create a healthier, happier and more vibrant community for all?

That's exactly what's happening in our desert region, as Blue Zones Project has launched in both Palm Springs and Coachella. When a community comes together through a Blue Zones initiative, the impact is felt far beyond its borders – the ripple effects of the movement do not end at city limits. By applying the principles of Blue Zones, we can create a community that supports and uplifts each other, fostering a culture of well-being that impacts the entire desert region.

#### The Power of Community

Blue Zones research has shown that people in the blue zones regions – who live the longest, healthiest lives in the world – enjoy strong social connections. People in these regions prioritize relationships and community, avoiding the negative impacts of loneliness. Blue Zones Project applies this insight by bringing individuals, organizations and community leaders together to create an environment and culture that encourages meaningful relationships and a deeper sense of community.

By designing environments, policies and systems that support social connections, we can create a community that truly thrives. Examples include:

**Public spaces.** Vibrant public spaces that invite people to gather, socialize, move naturally and connect with one another.

**Walkable and bikeable neighborhoods.** Walkable neighborhoods encourage people to get outside, move around and connect with their community.

**Community gardens.** Spaces that provide opportunities for people to grow their own food, share knowledge, and build relationships.

**Community events.** Fun things to do that bring people together around healthy activities, such as farmers' markets, walking, volunteering and socializing.

**Moai groups.** A concept that originated in the blue zones region of Okinawa, Japan, Moais are organized groups launched and run by the Blue Zones Project teams that meet regularly around healthy habits (walking, healthy potlucks, etc.)

#### Join the Movement

Whether you're a long-time resident or new to the area, what do you love about our community? What would you like to see change? How can we work together to build a healthier, happier community for all?

To get involved, learn more and stay in touch via the Blue Zones Project newsletter, visit [www.bluezonesprojectcoachella.com](http://www.bluezonesprojectcoachella.com) and [www.bluezonesprojectpalmsprings.com](http://www.bluezonesprojectpalmsprings.com).



Community gardens bring neighbors together as part of the Blue Zones Project initiative.

#### Ice in the Desert

Continued from page 9

On par with our valley's international stature in sports, the Firebirds won the Western Conference Championship in their first two years. Acrisure hosted the AHL's crown jewel, the Calder Cup finals, as well as the league's All Star Classic (broadcast on the NHL Network) earlier this year.

#### Ice skating for mental and physical fitness

Simply standing on the ice in skates is a good workout. It takes balance, coordination, flexibility and strength – both challenging and rewarding. The sense of accomplishment that comes from achieving new skills boosts self-esteem while the focus required can take your mind off everything else and help reduce stress and anxiety.

"Skating has been a gift for me," says Hamill. "I was a shy kid and not that great in school and when I was on the ice, I was free. I loved the time alone and the challenge of learning." She recommends starting with baby steps and not to worry about your ankles or falling; skating schools and rinks have equipment to get your through those initial phases.

"No matter where you start, you will be supported," she adds, as the skating community is very close-knit and inclusive. "We all started at the same place, and you never know where it will take you."

"The Iceplex is committed to providing a fun, safe and healthy environment for all," says Vice President and General Manager Leslie Deason. "Hockey and skating are lifetime sports and all ages and abilities are welcome and encouraged to participate."

Open from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week, the rink offers daily public sessions, skate and hockey lessons for youth and adults, as well as U.S. Figure Skating levels for kids who want to compete, camps, clinics and more. Special events take place regularly including DJ skate nights, high school free skates, birthday parties and corporate events.

The Iceplex is the official training center of the Coachella Valley Firebirds, and the home rink for both the Junior Firebirds travel hockey team and the Desert Figure Skating Club, whose goal is to support skaters of all levels while developing our future champions for national and international competition.

Continued on page 22



Skating offers a variety of fitness activities for all ages. (Photo by Tara Howard)



A leisurely skate with the family is a fun and healthy workout for all. (Photos courtesy of the Berger Foundation Iceplex)

[www.DesertHealthNews.com](http://www.DesertHealthNews.com)

March/April 2025





# Update on Cryoablation for Breast Cancer

By Lauren Del Sarto

As many readers know, I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018. Following extensive research, I chose to do cryoablation (cry-o-a-blay-shun), a minimally invasive procedure which freezes the tumor and was in clinical trials at City of Hope at the time. The therapy was successful for me and others, but with COVID, many facilities stopped offering the procedure. However, trials continued with Dennis Holmes, MD as a primary source of information and a lead advocate for women's breast health.

As Dr. Holmes describes, cryoablation uses a small, needle-like cryoprobe and extremely cold temperatures to destroy cancer cells along with a margin of surrounding normal breast tissue—similar to the goals of a lumpectomy. Unlike traditional early stage 1 breast cancer treatment such as a lumpectomy, the 45-minute in-office procedure is performed under local anesthesia offering a faster recovery that enables patients to quickly resume daily activities. According to Holmes, studies on patient-reported outcomes have shown that cryoablation provides a greater sense of physical well-being, improved sexual well-being, and higher breast satisfaction compared to lumpectomy.

Many of us feel very strongly that cryoablation should become an acceptable standard of care for early stage breast cancers. Recently, Holmes shared an update on the current clinical trials which I am delighted to share as reported.

**The ICE3 Trial.** In September 2024, the 5-year follow-up results of the ICE3 Trial were published in the *Annals of Surgical Oncology*. The study demonstrated cryoablation to be as safe and effective as lumpectomy for many women with early-stage breast cancer.

The ICE3 Trial was a multicenter, single-arm, non-randomized clinical study designed to evaluate cryoablation as an alternative to lumpectomy. It enrolled 194 women, aged 55 to 94 years (mean age 75), with clinical stage I invasive ductal carcinoma measuring ≤1.5 cm by mammography and ultrasound. Eligible tumors were histologic grade 1 or 2, estrogen receptor (ER) positive, progesterone receptor (PR) positive, and HER2/neu negative, as confirmed by needle biopsy.

The trial did not mandate the use of anti-estrogen or radiation therapy, or sentinel node biopsy. However, nearly 80% of participants received anti-estrogen therapy, 14% received radiation therapy and only 8% had sentinel node biopsies. After 5 years of follow-up, there were 7 cases of cancer recurrence in the same breast, resulting in a local recurrence rate of 4.7%. Among the 124 participants who received anti-estrogen therapy, the local recurrence rate was even lower at 3.7%.

These low recurrence rates in ICE3 closely mirror results from other clinical trials that did not use cryoablation, but evaluated traditional care lumpectomy plus anti-estrogen therapy without radiation. Recurrent breast cancer rates from LUMINA (2.3%), IDEA (3.5%) and PRIME II (4.1%) trials are similar to ICE3, which support cryoablation as a safe and effective alternative to lumpectomy for women meeting the criteria.

**The FROST Trial.** The Freezing Instead of Removal Of Small Breast Tumors (FROST) Trial is a multicenter, non-randomized clinical trial designed and led by Holmes. Beginning in 2016, the trial enrolled 82 women with clinical stage I invasive ductal carcinoma (tumor extended outside of milk ducts) measuring ≤2.0 cm, as determined by mammography, ultrasound and/or contrast-enhanced MRI. All tumors were ER

Continued on page 16



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## Understanding Fat as Stored Energy

By Joseph E. Scherger, MD, MPH

I want you to think differently about body fat. The biology of how body fat forms is simple: Carbohydrates are rapid-energy foods, but consuming more than we use for energy triggers insulin to form body fat. So, it's important to understand that consuming fat from foods like nuts, seeds, eggs and cheese does not make us fat, as well described in *Eat Fat, Get Thin*, written by Mark Hyman, MD.

Our body stores fat to help us survive food scarcity or famines, which many of our ancestors experienced. In his book, *Nature Wants Us to Be Fat*, Richard J. Johnson, MD, describes a "survival reflex" which causes us to hold onto body fat and gain it back whenever we can. An example of the survival reflex in action can be seen with the "Biggest Loser Challenges," a popular weight-loss competition. The failure of these contests is that after losing a significant amount of fat, contestants regain the fat even when they eat the same diets as people with stable weight gain.

One of the proven ways to keep excess body fat away is to live a "fat burning" lifestyle with a low amount of carbohydrates, and to follow time-restricted periods of eating for 12 to 14 hours every day. Scientists have shown that such fasting time is necessary to keep us from re-accumulating unwanted body fat.

It's also important to remember that we need a certain amount of body fat to be healthy. Women have 10 percent more body fat than men for reproductive purposes; healthy men have 10 to 20 percent body fat and healthy women have 20 to 30 percent body fat. When we are within those ranges, we look and feel great.

Body fat is also beneficial for endurance sports because it keeps our blood sugar levels steady which can reduce the amount of cramping we experience. This is called being "keto-adapted" and requires 4 to 6 weeks of adjustment, as well as refraining from the more common use of carbohydrates for energy such as sugary energy drinks. Jeff Volek, PhD, and Stephen Phinney, MD, PhD, describe this in more detail in their book, *The Art and Science of Low Carbohydrate Performance*.

Sometimes I comment to an overweight or obese patient that they have "a lot of stored energy." They usually smile, a far better response than that experienced when you tell someone they are fat. Another approach is commenting that their "stored energy" will allow survival during food scarcity or the next famine. Since these tragic events are not likely to happen here anytime soon, burning off excess fat for better health is always a good idea.

*Dr. Scherger is the founder of Restore Health Disease Reversal in Indian Wells, a clinic dedicated to weight loss and reversing chronic medical conditions. To schedule a consultation, call (760) 898.9663 or visit [www.restorehealth.me](http://www.restorehealth.me).*

Update on Cryoablation for Breast Cancer

Continued from page 15

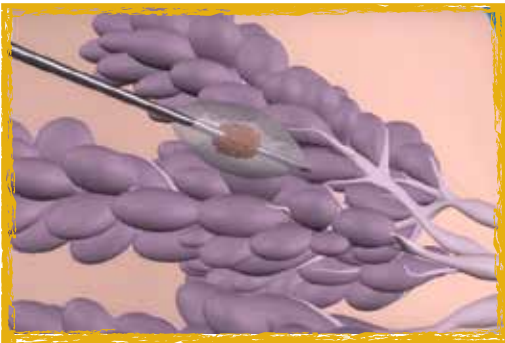
positive, PR positive, and HER2/neu negative, as confirmed by needle biopsy.

The trial included two treatment arms: 1) Women aged 50-69 were required to receive radiation therapy, a sentinel node biopsy and anti-estrogen therapy; 2) Women aged 70 and older were only required to take anti-estrogen therapy.

The mean patient age was 75.6 years (range: 56-94 years). At a follow-up of 6.5 years, only 3 recurrences were reported yielding a 3.6% local recurrence rate—a rate that is comparable to lumpectomy outcomes in similar clinical trials. There were no breast cancer-related deaths.

The FROST Trial's findings reinforced results from the ICE3 Trial, suggesting that women over 70 may safely omit radiation therapy and sentinel node biopsy following cryoablation, provided they are willing to take anti-estrogen therapy. Furthermore, the FROST Trial may begin to pave the way for the expanded use of cryoablation in women under 60, offering a promising alternative treatment approach for this population.

Long-term follow-up of all trial participants is ongoing and a full report of the FROST Trial is expected to be published this year.



Cryoablation removes the tumor and surrounding tissue similar to a lumpectomy.

DCIS Cryoablation Trial. "Nearly every invasive breast cancer begins as DCIS which is commonly referred to as pre-invasive or non-invasive breast cancer," Holmes explains. "If not for the risk of progression to invasive cancer, the treatment of DCIS would be entirely unnecessary."

In 2023, he launched the DCIS Cryoablation Trial as a single-center clinical study investigating cryoablation as an alternative to lumpectomy to prevent the progression of DCIS to invasive breast cancer.

Participation in the trial is currently open to women aged 18 and older who have a core needle biopsy diagnosis of grade I-III DCIS, measuring <2 cm based on mammography, ultrasound and breast MRI (if performed). In this study, the use of anti-estrogen therapy and radiation therapy is optional. To date, none of the study participants has experienced a recurrence at their original cancer site.

A few open slots remain in this ongoing trial. The study is open to women across the U.S. and requires just one in-person visit to Los Angeles. Treatment administered as part of the trial is free of charge, and Holmes generously volunteers his time to treat study participants.

**Status of FDA approval of cryoablation technology**

In November of last year, the FDA General and Plastic Surgery Devices Panel of the Medical Devices Advisory Committee convened to evaluate whether the committee should recommend FDA approval for the IceCure ProSense™ Cryoablation System, the medical device used in the ICE3 trial. After a 9-hour review of safety and effectiveness data, the panel voted in favor of recommending FDA approval as a treatment option for women aged 60 years and older with stage I, low- or intermediate-grade, ER+, PR+, HER2/neu-negative invasive ductal breast cancer, measuring ≤1.5 cm—the exact group studied in the ICE3 Trial.

While the panel's affirmative vote does not guarantee final FDA approval, its recommendation plays a critical role in the FDA's decision-making process. An official FDA decision is anticipated in the spring of 2025. It is expected that FDA approval could ultimately lead to insurance coverage for the procedure which is currently out-of-pocket pay for non-trial participants.

For more information on these trials and to receive updates from Dennis Holmes, MD, visit [www.cryoablation.com](http://www.cryoablation.com). For more on Lauren's personal journey, visit [www.deserthealthnews.com/health-categories/laurens-cancer-journey](http://www.deserthealthnews.com/health-categories/laurens-cancer-journey).

Source: 1) L.A. Breast Chronicles, Dennis R. Holmes, MD, FACS, December 24, 2024.



By Tammy Porter, DNP, MLS, RN-BSN, CPHQ, CCM

caregivers. Taking a few proactive steps today can provide peace of mind for the future.

- A list of current medications, allergies and medical conditions
- Contact information for your primary care physician and specialists
- A copy of your insurance card and policy details
- Your most recent test results or imaging reports
- A list of emergency contacts

- A living will which specifies your wishes for medical interventions like life support or resuscitation
- A health care power of attorney (POA) which appoints someone to make medical decisions on your behalf

- A list of essential medical information (if you don't have a digital copy)
- Comfortable clothing and non-slip socks
- A phone charger and headphones

Continued on page 18

## Continued from page 4

## A valley resident discovers new purpose

- Involving older adults in treatment decisions
- Providing clear, achievable action steps
- Creating opportunities for social support
- Celebrating progress, no matter how small

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Is It All For the Good?


By Amy Austin, PSYD, LMFT

When devastation and despair looms, it can be challenging to find the good in our daily lives and keep the things that scare us at bay.

In *Night* by Elie Wiesel, a Romanian-born American professor, political activist, Nobel laureate and holocaust survivor, the author's 12-year-old self asks persistent questions about suffering answered by his poor village mentor, Moishe the Beadle, who offered, "Every question possessed a power that did not lie in the answer." It may be less crucial to focus on an existential question that can never be answered than to dive deep into exploring the layered intricacies and nuances that birth more questions. Truth hides and we seek.

When faced with perilous life situations, the notion that everything is for the good can be hard to grasp. In these circumstances, many people often turn to faith or a higher power to ask, beseech or cry out. As Martin Luther King Jr. said, it is only when it's dark enough that we can see the stars. Even in the worst circumstances, it is important to remember that something helpful, some truth, may be found.

Living life "b' simcha" (Hebrew for "living in a state of joy") can empower one to embrace an attitude and mindset of all things working together for good. In fact, happiness is derived from the Middle English word "hap" as in happenstance or haphazard, implying random chance or luck. It's a fallacy that if you are lucky enough to be born into ideal circumstances, then you will be happy, and if not, there is not much you can do to change your sense of satisfaction in life.



A hopeful mindset can help see us through seemingly hopeless times.

How we view our life circumstances is a way of thinking, something we can consciously direct. Put simply by Plato: "Reality is created by the mind. We can change our reality by changing our mind." It isn't luck or happenstance that ensures our happiness, but the way we think about and process the circumstances we encounter along the way.

Resiliency is an important factor in having a mindset that everything is ultimately working out for the good. As I wrote in my doctoral dissertation, "Study of Attachment Through Relational Models of Therapy" "Many individuals, regardless of lifestyle, cultural diversity, differences in family patterns and relationships, face serious crises at some point in the life cycle. They become temporarily less functional, in some cases dysfunctional, in response to persistent stressors, whatever the etiology. Some have called upon certain internal assets and strengths that allow them to rebound from adverse situations, and in some cases, severe traumatic events."

There lies within the human spirit a desire to forge ahead, push through no matter how difficult the circumstance, with the belief that if one leaps, the net will appear, and, to focus less on our material wants and needs and seek to positively impact the lives of others.

Is it all for the good? Without offering mind-numbing hope as we all continue living life on life's terms, within the depths of my soul where questions and answers ultimately unite as one, I emphatically believe it is.

Dr. Amy Austin is a licensed marriage and family therapist (MFC#41252) and doctor of clinical psychology in Rancho Mirage. She can be reached at (760) 774.0047.

Planning for Sudden Hospitalization

Continued from page 17

• A small notebook and pen for taking notes

• Copies of advance directives and insurance information

• Toiletries (lip balm, lotion, toothbrush, etc.)

• A pair of glasses, hearing aids or mobility aids if needed

Having a bag ready to go can make a hospital stay more comfortable and reduce the stress of scrambling for essentials at the last minute.

Know your insurance coverage. Unexpected medical bills can be as stressful as the hospital stay itself. Take the time now to:

• Review your insurance policy to understand what is covered, including hospital stays, specialist visits and rehabilitation services.

• Identify in-network hospitals and providers to avoid unexpected out-of-pocket costs.

• Keep track of deductibles, co-pays, and out-of-pocket maximums so you aren't caught off guard financially.

If you have questions, contact your insurance provider to clarify your benefits.

Have a care plan in place. Who will take care of things at home while you're hospitalized? Planning ahead can ease the burden on family and ensure continuity of care. Consider:

• Arranging for child or pet care, or care for a loved one who depends on you in case of an emergency

• Making a list of essential household tasks (bill payments, mail collection, etc.)

• Discussing your hospital and post-hospital preferences with a trusted family member or caregiver

If you have ongoing health conditions, working with a nurse advocate can help coordinate care and ensure you receive the best possible treatment.

Speak up – be your own advocate. If you find yourself unexpectedly admitted to the hospital, don't be afraid to ask questions. Advocate for yourself (or your loved one) by:

• Asking about treatment options and potential risks before consenting to procedures

• Keeping a log of doctors' names, tests and treatments to track progress and avoid errors

Peace of mind starts today. A sudden hospital stay can be a stressful experience, but taking a few steps now can make a world of difference when the unexpected happens. Planning isn't about expecting the worst – it's about ensuring the best possible care when you need it most. Take charge now and experience the peace of mind of being prepared.

Dr. Porter is CEO and founder of MyHealth.MyAdvocate in Palm Desert. She has over 30 years of nursing practice experience dedicated to unraveling the mysteries of health care processes and advocating for patients, families and caregivers. For immediate assistance, you can reach her at (760) 851.4116 or visit www.myhealthmyadvocate.com.

www.DesertHealthNews.com

March/April 2025





# YOUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

By Michele T. Sarna, CFP®, AIF®



## Insuring Our Furry Family Members

Spring is in the air and so is the birth of many baby animals. This warm and wonderful season of renewal often inspires the desire to add to your own family...

If you are in the market to adopt a four (or two) legged friend from a shelter, or purchase a pet from a breeder, you may want to consider getting pet insurance. Although most pet insurance covers dogs and cats, there are some carriers like Nationwide that cover other exotic pets like birds, rabbits, reptiles and more.



Considering pet insurance before you need it can be prudent financial planning.

Similar to health insurance for humans, with pet insurance, you pick a plan, pay a monthly fee and get coverage depending on the plan you select. Some pet policies only cover accidents, or accidents and illness, while others also cover prescriptions. There are also options to add on coverage for preventive care like exams and vaccinations. Keep in mind that pre-existing conditions may not be covered or there may be a waiting period for the coverage to begin. Older pets may not be eligible for coverage at all.

Pet insurance premiums can range between \$14 to \$60 per month. Annual deductibles will vary depending on your premium and plan. Usually, the lower the deductible, the higher the monthly premium - just like human health insurance. With pet insurance, it's typical to pay the entire vet bill at the time of service and then submit it for reimbursement. The reimbursement amount will vary depending on the plan you picked. However, some providers will pay the vet directly. There are also coverage limits to consider; some plans have annual limits while others offer unlimited coverage.

If you have more than one pet, many providers will offer a multi-pet discount.

Is pet insurance worth it? Yes, especially for the unexpected. We get very attached to our pets and in an emergency, we will do whatever we can to care for our furry family members. A minor accident or injury could drain your bank account or max out your credit cards instantly. Remember, not having a plan is a plan you choose as well.

Multiple websites objectively compare pet insurance providers including Nerdwallet, Forbes, Consumer Affairs, and Pet Place. Make sure to do your research so you can find the best options for you and your pets.

Michele Sarna is a certified financial planner™ with Beacon Pointe Advisors and can be reached at (760) 932.0930 or msarna@beaconpointe.com.

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## Avocado, Mango and Shrimp Cocktail

Recipe by Barbara Rogers

This lovely Palm Springs-style creation can be served as an appetizer, salad or a light meal. Make it for date night as the martini glass adds a little zest to this slightly spicy serving of healthy goodness.

Serves 1-2

Ingredients:

- 1 mango pitted and diced
- 8-10 shrimp (precooked or deveined and peeled)
- ½ cup red bell peppers, corded and diced
- ¼-½ cup jalapeno, seeded and finely chopped
- ½ cup red onion, diced
- ½ cup bunch fresh cilantro, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- ½ cup cucumber, diced
- 1 small avocado
- 1 lime sliced for garnish

Directions:

If you bought shrimp, place in boiling water and take out when they start to turn pink and orange, about 2-3 minutes.

Chop the shrimp into chunks however you like, leaving two shrimp for each serving to place as garnish.

Mix diced mango, diced red bell pepper, finely chopped jalapeno, diced red onion, finely chopped cilantro, sea salt, lime juice, diced cucumber and cubed avocado together.

Serve in a martini glass, adding more salt or lime juice, if necessary. Garnish by hanging shrimp on the edge of the cocktail glass with a slice of lime.

Barbara Rogers is the author of one of our favorite books, *It's A No Grainer*, available on Amazon.com.



## Chocolate Avocado Pudding

By Lauren Del Sarto

Have you tried avocado pudding yet? We featured this recipe many years ago and I had to bring it back for those who have not yet discovered this decadent delight. It is still one of the best desserts I have ever tasted, and because of its guilt-free ingredients, I can never get enough.

It's a staple in my kitchen because it meets all the parameters - sugar, dairy and gluten free - and very easy to make. You'll find a variety of recipes online offering an array of sweetener options, but I enjoy mine truly sugar-free with stevia.

Serves 2-4

Ingredients:

- 2 ripe avocados
- 4 heaping tablespoons of raw cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon of sea salt
- 2 teaspoons of organic vanilla extract
- ½ cup of unsweetened coconut milk (or non-dairy milk of choice)

Sweetener of choice: Type and measurement of sweetener really is a personal preference, so play with it. I use 2 droppers of liquid vanilla stevia, but recommend adding stevia slowly to taste. Other natural options include monk fruit, maple syrup (2-3 tablespoons), honey or chopped dates.

Extras to spice it up: Add a handful of coconut flakes, teaspoon of espresso powder, chopped nuts, fresh mint or even a dash of cayenne pepper.

Directions:

Place all ingredients together and blend until smooth and creamy. I find it easiest to use a hand (or immersion) blender and bowl, but a standard blender works as well. For best results (if you can wait that long!) place pudding in refrigerator for one hour.

Serve straight up or top with whipped coconut cream, berries or fruit. My favorite is to leave a pint of So Delicious No Sugar Added Vanilla Bean Coconut Milk ice cream out until it gets nice and soft and then scoop it into the pudding for an irresistible chocolate vanilla pairing!

Share your favorite additions and toppers with us online. Search "avocado pudding" at [www.DesertHealthNews.com](http://www.DesertHealthNews.com).







# Eating a Rainbow of Healthy Food

By Edith Jones-Poland, MD

When we see a plate of fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables, we know we are about to eat something good for our bodies. In fact, a food's color is one of the most important sensory cues informing us of its freshness and our expectations of how it will taste.

Eating a diet full of color has been important to many cultures and practices including the mindfulness tradition, which posits that the eyes have their own hunger for beauty. For most people, sight is the most important of the senses, and a plate displaying the beauty of a rainbow feeds our eyes and guides us toward healthy choices.



According the United States Department of Agriculture, a healthy dietary pattern consists of a variety of vegetables from all five subgroups – dark, leafy greens; red and orange foods; beans, peas and lentils; starchy foods; and others. This includes all fresh, frozen, canned and even 100 percent vegetable juices. Vegetables should be consumed in their most nutrient-dense form with minimal added salt or creams.



When consuming fruit, it is best to consume the whole fruit or 100 percent fruit. The focus should be on eating the whole fruit so that you also get the benefit of the fiber. So, no more than half of the daily fruit servings can be from juice. Ideally, fruit juice is consumed at a minimum due to the high sugar content because it is low in fiber. Fruit can be fresh, frozen or even canned. If you consume canned fruit, look for fruit with natural juice and not syrup. A typical serving size of fruit is 4 to 6 ounces, or the size of a tennis ball. This translates to one medium apple, banana, orange or pear.

The daily recommended serving of fruits and vegetables is only four and a half cups daily. This should be broken down further to two and a half cups of vegetables daily and two cups of fruit. Again, the recommendation is to eat fruits and vegetables in their whole form and with a variety of color.

Four and a half cups of fruits and vegetables may not sound like a lot for many readers. However, nearly 90 percent of Americans do not meet this goal for vegetable intake and 80 percent do not meet it for fruit intake.

So, why does eating the rainbow matter to our overall health? Color is an indicator of a food's nutrients. Dark green vegetables contain vitamins C, A and K, as well as fiber, calcium, and iron. Red and orange foods contain vitamins A and C, fiber, potassium, beta-carotene and lycopene. Purple foods contain anthocyanins, potassium, B vitamins, manganese and vitamins A and C, while white and brown foods contain allicin and polyphenols.

Here are some tips to start integrating the rainbow into your diet:

**Start with your personal preference.** Visit the local grocer or farmers' market, survey the foods and see what foods appeal to you.

**Start where you are.** If you already like one type of vegetable, try another food that has a similar look or texture but offers more color. For example, choose a sweet potato over a white potato.

**Honor cultural traditions.** Incorporate nutrient-dense, culturally-relevant foods from your own traditions or sample another cuisine that has colorful foods as a staple.

**Consider your budget.** It is a common misconception that a healthy diet is more expensive. There are many cost-effective options to integrate a wide variety of fruits and vegetables.



Dr. Jones-Poland offers this motivating chart free at <https://circecares.com/eattherainbow>

beauty into our daily routine and get curious. By expanding our diet to include more color, we can have a significant impact on our health.

Edith Jones-Poland, MD, is a family physician and functional lifestyle coach with Circe Coaching and can be reached at (760) 773.4948. For more information, visit [www.circecares.com](http://www.circecares.com).

Sources: 1) [https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2021-03/Dietary\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Americans-2020-2025.pdf](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/sites/default/files/2021-03/Dietary_Guidelines_for_Americans-2020-2025.pdf); 2) <https://flavourjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13411-015-0031-3>



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### MARCH 6

#### Women Leaders Forum: Philanthropy and Longevity

Engaging in acts of giving builds stronger community and contributes to a longer, healthier life. A panel of philanthropists and health experts share their insights. Sponsored by Desert Care Network. Classic Club, 5:30-7:30p. Tickets \$48-\$65 include dinner and glass of wine. [www.WLFDesert.org](http://www.WLFDesert.org).



### MARCH 27

#### Alzheimer Coachella Valley's Endless Possibilities Gala

Enjoy an evening of cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, dinner and live and silent auctions, to raise funds for the organization's innovative programs and services. All monies raised stay locally to help those in our community affected by dementia. The evening will honor neurologist Esmaeil Sebti, MD. Desert Willow Golf Resort, 5:30-8:30p. Tickets \$200. [www.cvalzheimer.org](http://www.cvalzheimer.org). (See p. 3)

### APRIL 3

#### Women Leaders Forum: Unlock Your Potential

A powerful event featuring inspiring women who have successfully changed careers mid-stream. Learn what you need to know about making bold choices and navigating your own journey. Sponsored by Deborah Tryon of Morgan Stanley. Classic Club, 5:30-7:30p. Tickets \$48-\$65 include dinner and glass of wine. [www.WLFDesert.org](http://www.WLFDesert.org).

### MAY 3-4

#### Volunteers in Medicine Celebrity Classic

A fun-filled weekend of great company and friendly competition including a Saturday reception and Sunday golf tournament featuring many celebrities. Bermuda Dunes Country Club. For sponsorship and ticket information, contact Mary Martin-Coor at (760) 625-0737. [www.CVVIM.org](http://www.CVVIM.org).

### JUNE 13-15

#### Finding the Power Within Retreat

An empowering three-day, two-night retreat offering engaging activities aimed at reconnecting with your inner strength. Includes transformational breathwork, sound bath, kundalini yoga, spa time at SecHe, activities and dinner guided and prepared by a Cherokee Elder, and more. Activities in both Joshua Tree and Palm Springs. Tickets \$590 (plus optional hotel). [www.TakotaAlchemy.com](http://www.TakotaAlchemy.com).



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## Upcoming Speaker Events

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**STEPHANIE MINOR**  
Director of Development  
for the Regional Access  
Project (RAP) Foundation  
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**CINDY BURESON**  
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Museum of the Desert



**JODI DELANEY**  
President of  
The Global  
Change Agency



**LINDA EVANS**  
Chief Strategy Officer,  
Desert Care Network  
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### APRIL 3

#### Unlock Your Potential: A Roadmap for Women Leaders

Making bold choices and navigating your own journey. Every day is a new opportunity to pursue something you love—without letting it rule your life. Get ready to be inspired by these brave and amazing stories.

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of Farley Interlocking Pavers



**MARIANNE EMMA JEFF**  
The Get it Done Diva,  
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The Women's Business  
Momentum Center



Women Leaders Forum  
of the Coachella Valley

Find more details about WLF and  
to register for upcoming events:  
[wlfdesert.org](http://wlfdesert.org)

WLF is a nonprofit organization bringing together women leaders of the Coachella Valley to network, volunteer, and fundraise for the advancement of the next generation.

### Ice in the Desert

#### Ice skating entertainment

Firebirds hockey continues through April as our hometown team works to defend their Western Conference title. Theme nights include \$5 Beer Night every Wednesday in March and April; St. Patrick's Day celebration on March 15; Fuego's Birthday on March 19; KGAY Night at The Firebirds on April 9; Kraken Night Bobblehead on April 12; Autism Awareness Night on April 13 and Fan Appreciation on April 18.

On March 23, Ice Dance International (IDI) presents *SOAR!*, a theatrical journey of artistry and athleticism showcasing the magic of skating through mesmerizing ensemble performances. The cast of world-class figure skaters includes current Olympic Ice Dance Champion Gabriella Papadakis, two-time U.S. Champion Alissa Czisny, National Champion Rohene Ward, and Junior World Champion Ice Dancers Oona and Gage Brown. IDI was founded by ballet great Edward Villella and skating icon Dick Button and their Iceplex show will be hosted by Dorothy Hamill. General admission tickets are \$30 and VIP tickets are \$75, which includes a meet and greet with the cast after the show.



Ice Dance International's  
Rohene Ward (Photo  
by David J. Murray,  
[Cleareyphoto.com](http://Cleareyphoto.com))

Cirque du Soleil is also coming to Acrisure Arena with Crystal, their acrobatic spectacular on ice, March 28 through 30. The show takes audiences on an exhilarating tale of self-discovery in a visually stunning blend of ice dancing, aerial gymnastics, juggling and trick skating. Tickets are between \$72 and \$174.

For more information, visit [www.acrisurearena.com](http://www.acrisurearena.com) and [www.bergerfoundationiceplex.com](http://www.bergerfoundationiceplex.com).



The Firebirds' season continues with Fuego's birthday celebration March 19. (Photos by Mike Zitek/Coachella Valley Firebirds)





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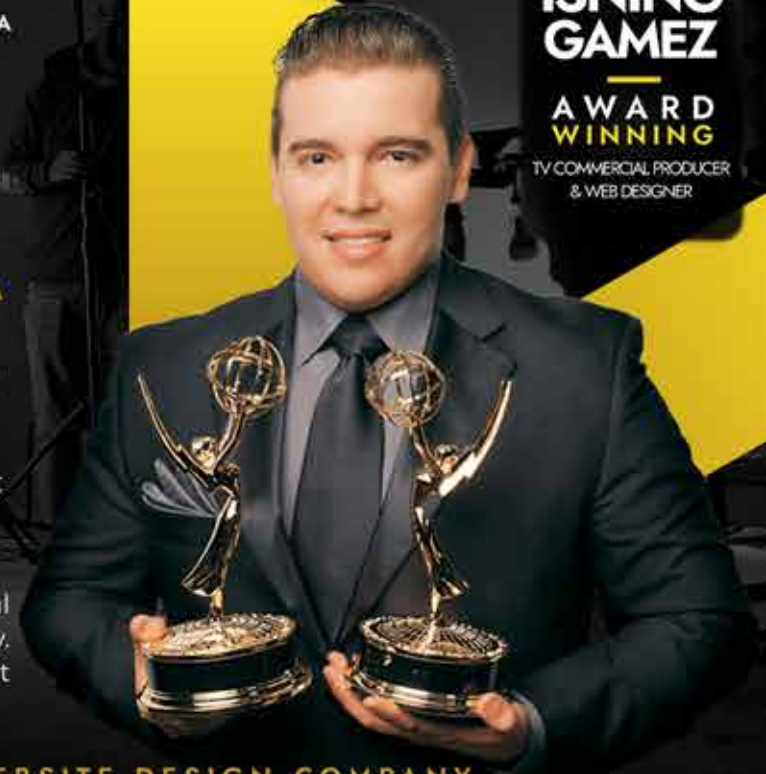
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