

Parent Times

Dec 2021



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President's Corner

Hello North Central Parenting Group!

Can you believe we have made it through the first half of the NCPG year? It has flown by for me. I cannot believe the holiday season is here already.

Thank you to all who joined us at the zoo! It was such a fun day! A huge thank you to our special events directors **Rachel Hall**, **Jenn Barham**, and **Liz Anzalone** for putting on such a wonderful event

And wow, what a year for **Salvation Army Christmas Angels!** Thank you everyone who selected a tag on behalf of NCPG. It was a wonderful turnout and we hope you all enjoyed your breakfast burritos! Thank you to **Channa Abramson** and **Katrina Makhni** for putting on such a wonderful community outreach event.

I just wanted to take an opportunity to tell all of you how **THANKFUL** we are for you. North Central Parenting Group is a lot of things, but it's nothing without our members and teachers. It's been another weird year, but we are still here because of your commitment to this organization. I appreciate your dedication to this organization!

Lastly, we are already looking to fill our board for next year! It is definitely bittersweet for me, but after 4 years on the board, this is my last year and **Ilyssa Reading** will be filling the role as President! I could not be more proud to be passing the torch to her. She's been an amazing Vice President and I'm so confident in her taking on the role of President. We have some spots open on the board, so if you are interested in learning more, please join on **January 10 at 6:30pm at Christ Church School** for our **Boards & Bites** session to learn about what positions we have open.

As always, reach out with any question, comments and concerns. Enjoy this holiday season with your families, and we will see you in 2022!

All my best,

Megan Hedstrom, President
president@ncpgaz.com

ncpg
north central parenting group



2021-2022 Board of Directors

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NCPG is a non-profit, non-denominational organization providing classes to parents of infant to middle school aged children.

ncpgaz.org Like us on Facebook:  **ncpgaz**

Parent Times

Members, this monthly newsletter is for your benefit, so we want to ensure our team is publishing content that is valuable, useful, informative, and fun! Please let us know if you have suggestions, comments, concerns, or any input that would help us to improve this publication. Shoot us an email at **communications@ncpgaz.org**. Thanks for your help! Also, please send us photos of you and your family — we are always looking for photos of our community to include in the newsletter and on the NCPG website. Please keep in mind that when you submit photos, you are agreeing that we can use them in our newsletter as well as the NCPG website.

Editors – **Ashley McFate**, **Amanda Shaw**
Designer – **Neill Fox**, **www.foxnoggin.com**

Front Cover – **Barham Family Preston Barham (4) and Ainsley Barham (2)**. Photo: **Mary Lily Photography**

The information provided by NCPG instructors should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.



Member to Meet: Naomi Bentley

Child & Age: Isabella Kate (“Bella”), 23 months.

Spouse’s name: Scott Bentley.

How did you meet your spouse: An event at Heritage Square in downtown Phoenix.

Years married: Our 3-year wedding anniversary was November 15.

Spouse’s favorite date night spot: Hillstone, for ribs and martinis.

Career or previous career: In-house counsel for a vehicle sales and finance company.

Five words to describe you: Loving, encouraging, creative, thoughtful, hard-working.

Favorite family vacation spot? To the beach, but somewhere that’s driveable — so far we’ve done Newport and San Diego with Bella and loved both trips.

Favorite family spot to dine in town? Lou’s at Papago for brunch. Bella’s not really ready to sit still for nice dinners at the table yet.

Do you have a hidden talent? I’m a pretty good writer. My dream is to write short stories or maybe even a novel someday.

Favorite date spot or activity when you are child-free? Scott and I have been playing pickleball and tennis lately, and I love having that time to connect, play, and be outdoors. If we have time, I’d follow that up with brunch and mimosas, and then a nap.

Favorite children’s book to read? “I Like Myself!” by Karen Beaumont.

Favorite adult book to read? Thrillers, mysteries and female-driven narratives. “Where the Crawdads Sing,” “Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine,” and “Little Fires Everywhere” are recent faves.

Where were you born and raised? Northeast Missouri.

What do you miss most about being a kid? Summer days spent outdoors from morning to evening — something I definitely took for granted growing up in the Midwest!

When you have 30 minutes of free time what do you do? Grab a quick workout or take a walk through the neighborhood while I listen to a podcast. Probably true crime.

What story does your family always tell about you? Bella loves activities and interaction. If she’s coloring, she wants you to sit there and watch her. If there’s a party, she wants to be in the middle of it and not go to bed. My family likes to remind me I was exactly the same way.

What’s your favorite thing to do with your child? Right now we love singing “Wheels on the Bus” in the car, going down the slide at the park over and over, and toddler ballet at the TuTu School. I also really love our nighttime routine of bathtime, books and cuddles.

Most meaningful moment as a parent? I loved when Bella started taking an interest in family pictures and identifying people by name - Mama, Daddy, our siblings, our parents. I love that she’s remembering family that live out of state.

Most “OMG did that really happen” moment as a parent? She likes “tidying up” — shutting cabinets and open doors, putting toys away, straightening her crayons. It’s hilarious.

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2021-2022 Calendar

NOTE: Classes will be offered virtually until in-person classes are able to resume.

Class Schedule

Newborn B - Elementary:

Class will begin promptly at 9:45am and end by 11:30am.

Newborn A & Middle:

Class will begin promptly at 11:30 and end by 1:15pm.

Class Dates

January 12**	April 6**
January 26	April 27
February 9**	May 4**
February 23	May 18
March 23**	

** Parent Times magazine distributed.

Board Meeting Dates

January 10	April 4
February 7	May 2
March 7	



Church of the Beatitudes

555 West Glendale Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85021

Board

Announcements

Church Update on Masks

The Church of the Beatitudes is now requiring that NCPG members wear a mask **AT ALL TIMES** when indoors on their campus. Please remember to bring your mask to class and to properly cover your mouth and nose while inside your classroom or in any public indoor area at the church.

Communications

WE WANT YOUR PICTURES!

We still need holiday pics for *Parent Times*!

Holiday Fun

Send us high-resolution photos of the kids or your family for our photo spread. Who knows... you might wind up on the cover!



Please send all birth announcements, snapshots of NCPG kids and parents, and professional photos to be considered for the front cover to communications@ncpgaz.org.

Membership

Spots remain available in a handful of classes for the 2021-2022 year! Space is limited. Please contact membership at membership@ncpgaz.org for additional information about open classes and registration.

Childcare

Due to limitations on church space there will be no childcare this year! If you're in need of a babysitter, we encourage you to utilize Busy Bees!



Public Relations



Please continue to follow along on our private Instagram page [@ncpgaz](https://www.instagram.com/ncpgaz) for helpful information and updates!



Please continue to use the members-only NCPG Facebook Group [ncpgaz](https://www.facebook.com/ncpgaz) to ask questions, share advice, local events, deals and to buy & sell. We ask that we keep everything positive and respectful on the page. Please request to join the group, if you haven't already and join the fun!

Community Outreach

Know someone in NCPG that needs a hand? NCPG Cares. Please email us at outreach@ncpgaz.org; we want to help!

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HOT FOR THE HOLIDAYS

JEWELRY IS ALWAYS THE PERFECT GIFT.
HERE IS WHAT IS ON-TREND THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

By Schmitt Jewelers | schmittjewelers.com



The holidays are filled with everything shimmering and the jewelry you will wear will be no exception. If you're looking to stay on-trend this holiday (and beyond), take a little inspiration directly from the fashion runways.

The return of pearls.

We've always loved pearls, so we couldn't be more ecstatic to see them back on the runway in a much bigger way. Always a classic, we're seeing some makeovers and, pardon the pun, some pearl designs coming out of their shell. Look at every type of pearl this season from South Sea to Akoya. While a simple strand may always be a safe bet, you can also leave convention behind and select something more contemporary or edgy.

Chains and more chains.

Good as gold, a fabulous gold chain is a staple for any wardrobe. And, lucky for us, it's totally back in style. This year, wear them bold and layered. Perhaps it's time to break out some of those chains you purchased several decades back and couple them with something new. We love the mix of vintage and contemporary, giving you a more modern interpretation and look. You simply can't go wrong!

Diamonds are forever.

As we all know, diamonds are never out of style. Trending this year are long and linear earrings with swinging movement and a very elegant look. Many designers have stepped it up a notch with the must-have larger diamond hoop. Look for modern and antique versions that can reach as far down as your shoulders. Always trending? Stunning diamond stud earrings, and simple, classic pendants.

Dainty as ever.

We have loved the bold, chunky look that's been around for the past few seasons. However, now we're seeing a trend in the more delicate and petite, so keep that on your radar and gift-giving list. And don't be completely set on wearing that dainty ring on your ring finger. We're seeing some pinky rings stealing the show. This holiday season, what's big may be little!



May Your Holidays Shine



4402 E. Camelback Rd. Phoenix | (602) 840-1144 | SchmittJewelers.com

The rainbow connection.

Simply put, color is the perfect expression of your personality and style. It continues to be big this holiday season! Color can express your deepest desires, from rings and pendants to bracelets and earrings. The right gem and color on the right person is more than remarkable. It also happens to be a specialty at Schmitt Jewelers. We're passionate about exotic, vibrant, colored gemstones in every hue and shade.

Custom. Custom. Custom.

What might not be on the runway, but certainly an enormous trend in the jewelry world, is custom design. Why custom? Because it provides you the opportunity to create something no one else will have. It is a true expression of you! It's also a great way to turn a family heirloom into something more contemporary and current.



HAPPY
HOLIDAYS
TO ALL OUR NCPG FAMILIES

2021 Holiday Activities for Kids in Scottsdale



Salt River Fields

As if the sunny days and mildly chilly nights aren't enough reason to head to Scottsdale during the holidays, our resorts and attractions pull out all the stops to transform into winter wonderlands sure to cheer even the most Grinch-y members of the family — from tykes to teenagers.

Background: freepik.com



SCOTTSDAZZLE

This holiday extravaganza returns to Old Town with a host of activities for the whole family! Highlights include Letters to Santa at the Old Town Farmers Market (bring your letter pre-printed from home to drop in the special mailbox and receive a reply from Santa by old-fashioned mail!), Prancer's Puzzle Ride: "Hijacked by Elves," and the festive holiday Sing-Along & Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Dates: Nov. 27 – Dec. 31, 2021

Times: Vary by activity. See website for details.

Info: scottsdazzle.com

ZOOLIGHTS

One of the area's most cherished holiday traditions, ZooLights, returns this season with millions of twinkling lights, dazzling animal sculptures, a three-story Christmas tree and two Music-in-Motion Light Shows on the main lake. Stroll through the Phoenix Zoo to meet Santa and his elves at Leapin' Lagoon, take a spin on the Endangered Species Carousel, and see a special exhibition by artist and wildlife conservationist Russell Ronant, featuring more than 13 illuminated pieces. You also can choose to experience all the magic on Cruise ZooLights, a special drive-thru experience you'll enjoy from the comfort of your own car!

Dates: Nov. 7, 2021 – Jan. 31, 2022 (Walk-Thru*)

Nov. 29-30, Dec. 6-7, 13-14, Jan. 3-4, 10-11 (Cruise)

*Some blackout dates apply; see website for details.

Times: 5:30-10:30 p.m. (Walk-Thru)

5:30-7:30 p.m. or 7:30-9:30 p.m. (Cruise)

Info: phoenixzoo.org



CHRISTMAS AT THE FAIRMONT SCOTTSDALE PRINCESS

Celebrate the splendor of the season at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess, where holiday festivities and an enchanting winter wonderland are found at the 12th Annual Christmas at the Princess. The fun starts with the four-story, musically animated Christmas tree, aglow with 70,000 LED lights that twinkle to the tune of 18 classic holiday songs. Next, try your skills at ice skating on the resort's 6,000-square-foot Desert Ice Holiday Rink. Other holiday highlights include S'mores Land, Frosty's Ferris Wheel, sledding on Snow Mountain, and the Princess Express Train ride, which takes families on a whimsical ride around the resort's majestic lagoons, which are twinkling with millions of colorful LED lights and displays including a pirate ship, mermaids and Nessie, the 30-foot Loch Ness monster.

Dates: Nov. 16, 2021 – Jan. 2, 2022

Times: Vary based on attraction. See website for details.

Info: scottsdaleprincess.com/christmas-at-the-princess





HOLIDAY LIGHTS AT McCORMICK-STILLMAN RAILROAD PARK

This event's centerpiece is the Paradise & Pacific Railroad, which takes visitors on a mesmerizing ride through thousands of holiday lights and fanciful displays. This 5:12-scale train is an exact replica of the Colorado narrow gauge railroad and features three steam locomotives, two diesel engines and one electric engine. Before or after the train ride, hop aboard the historic Charros Carousel or delight in some hot cocoa or an ice cream cone at Hartley's General Store.

Dates: Daily from **Nov. 26, 2021 – Jan. 2, 2022** (except Dec. 24, 25 and 31)

Times: **6:00-9:30 p.m.** To adhere to safety protocols, the event will feature limited-capacity, one-hour blocks. See website for details.

Info: therailroadpark.com/?post_type=event&p=200



HOLIDAY LIGHTS AT SALT RIVER FIELDS

Back for a second year by popular demand, Holiday Lights is a dazzling, drive-through holiday extravaganza that glows with nearly 5 million lights and displays along a 1.2-mile route at Salt River Fields. At every turn, spectacular light displays are synchronized to Christmas melodies that bring popular holiday themes and characters to life. Your favorite holiday songs will be simulcast directly into vehicles on a designated FM radio signal.

Dates: **Nov. 19, 2021 – Jan. 1, 2022**

Times: Daily from **6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

Info: saltriverfields.com/holiday-lights



THE MAGICAL CHRISTMAS JOURNEY AT VERDE CANYON RAILROAD

Embark on a magical train ride from Verde Canyon to the North Pole! This Christmas-themed experience features a miniature village at the train depot for even the tiniest tots to explore and a train ride with open-air viewing cars that will pass through a "magical" tunnel before stopping at the North Pole.

Once there, children will delight in viewing a collection of life-size buildings, including Santa's Workshop, Mrs. Claus' Bakery, the Ugly Sweater Factory and the Reindeer Flight School, to name a few. Santa will board the train for the return trip, gifting each child with a memento signifying their North Pole adventure!

Dates: **Thursdays – Sundays Dec. 3-24, 2021**

Times: **Trains depart at 5:30 and 7 p.m.**

Info: verdecanyonrr.com/events/christmas-train



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SEGWAY TOUR

Hold onto your antlers for the 9th annual Christmas Lights Tour with Segway of Scottsdale! The lights in Old Town Scottsdale are bright and dazzling at night, and the memories made with family are sure to last a lifetime. Don helmets with reindeer antlers, sip hot chocolate at the halfway point and enjoy holiday tunes while cruising Old Town's streets dressed in holiday cheer. (Note: Must be age 12 or older to ride).

Dates: **Dec. 1-30, 2021** (no tours Dec. 24-25)

Times: **6 p.m.**

Info: segwayofscottsdale.com/christmas-lights.html

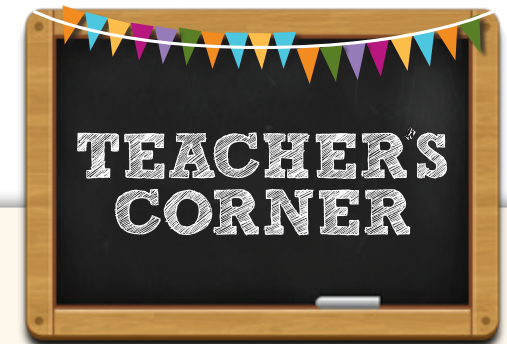
THE POLAR EXPRESS WITH GRAND CANYON RAILWAY

Every winter the Grand Canyon Railway's Polar Express comes to life on a journey from Williams, Arizona, to the enchanted beauty of the "North Pole" where Santa Claus and his reindeer are waiting with a keepsake present for every good boy and girl! On the ride, you'll enjoy hot chocolate and chocolate cookies while listening to the timeless holiday story of "The Polar Express" by Chris Van Allsburg.

Dates: **Nov. 12 – Dec. 30, 2021**
(no trains Nov. 15-16, 23, 25, 30 and Dec. 7, 14, 25)

Times: **Trains depart at 5:30 and 7:30 p.m.**

Info: thetrain.com/events/polar-express



What is one thing you wish you knew as a new mom?



Monique Nelson
Newborn A & B

Trust yourself and perfection should never be a goal.

No mom is perfect. Motherhood, although amazing at times, is hard. You will make mistakes and that is ok. You will have a messy house and that is ok. You will go without showering some-days and that is ok. You will worry about doing things "right" and you may find that what everyone else says worked for them, doesn't work for you and that is ok. You will figure out what works best for you and your baby and it will be the right way. Relax as much as you can and enjoy it because these first few months and years go by way too fast. The days are long but the years are short. :)

Recipe: Gluten Free Ginger Molasses Cookies

www.simplyrealhealth.com/gluten-free-molasses-ginger-cookies/

These cookies are perfectly chewy with just the right amount of sweet and holiday spice. And, the easiest!

Ingredients

- 1 cup almond flour
- 1/2 cup quinoa flour (or garbanzo bean flour or coconut flour — but the best texture is with quinoa flour if you can get it)
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup coconut sugar
- 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar or extra coconut sugar to roll cookies in

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Mix batter together and place in fridge for 10 minutes first.
3. Then roll into small 1/2 inch balls, roll in brown sugar and gently flat ten with your fingers.
4. Bake for 12-15 minutes until golden brown.



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www.easypeasyandfun.com/pinecone-winter-owls-craft/

Supplies

- Pinecones*
- White and beige felt and a tiny bit of orange too
- Cotton balls / Cotton
- Googly eyes
- Glue
- Scissors

**If you gathered the pinecones in the nature (I gathered some and got some from the store) do give them time to dry or dry them in the oven.*

3 Easy Steps

STEP 1: Once your pinecones are ready to go, start tearing up the cotton balls and stuffing them in the pinecone. You don't have to use glue as cotton balls will stay just where they are. Work your way around the pinecones – this will give them the “owl feather like” texture.

STEP 2: Make the owl “accessories” out of felt, cut out a pair of wings out of white felt (or any other color you want really). Next cut a small oval shape for the head from beige felt, also cutting a little bit smaller oval shape from the white felt. You can make one side of the white shape a bit heart like to give it a more “facial” look. Cut a small orange beak.

STEP 3: I glued the beak on top of the beige oval shape and glued the smaller oval shape on top of that. Next in line are googly eyes which stick nicely onto felt.

We used white school glue to stick on the wings and head details and it worked out nicely, although I think a glue gun would do an even better job.



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