60 YEARS LATER: REVISITING THE TRAGIC CRASH OF TWA FLIGHT 260

albuquerque
THE MAGAZINE

THE Coffee ISSUE

ABQ BRUNCHES (AND BLOODY MARYS) YOU MUST TRY, ASAP

PLUS: 200+ CAN’T-MISS ABQ NONPROFIT EVENTS
Editor's Note

Auctioning art to help the homeless; tips for cutting Valentine's chocolate calories; feeding Albuquerqueans in need; an ABQ urban paradise; the meaning of rose colors; chili vs. chile; Central New Mexico Community College's fancy fake cadaver; behind the scenes with Cirque du Soleil; an epic ABQ art collaboration; ABQ on Film

Adam Tries It

Every month, we send our staff writer to try something new in the city. This month, Adam hits the "grounds" running with an educational Coffee 101 class at New Mexico Piñon Coffee Company.

Faces and Places

Datebook

People

Albuquerque the Interview

Just in time for the show's premiere, "Better Call Saul" actress Rhea Seehorn opens up about bringing her signature intensity to the small screen alongside actor Bob Odenkirk.

 Personality

For Heather and Josh Arnold—owners of Routes Rentals & Tours—making the jump from a romantic relationship to a business partnership proved to be an easy ride.

Behind the Scenes

Officers with the Albuquerque Police Department's Open Space Division use every tool at their disposal—including a swamp boat—to reach the most isolated areas of the Land of Enchantment.
Taking Burque by Bike

For Heather and Josh Arnold, mixing business with pleasure comes easy. Their company, Routes Rentals & Tours, seamlessly pairs their love for each other with their passion for pedaling.

To Albuquerque natives Heather and Josh Arnold, a perfect Valentine’s Day means biking and picnicking together in the bosque. Cycling brought them together during their courtship, and this shared love solidified in their business venture: Routes Rentals & Tours, which offers guided tours and rentals year-round, with special outings just in time for this romantic month.

Heather and Josh, who often finish each other’s thoughts, if not sentences, launched the business on Memorial Day 2011, while engaged. Each had grown up around cycling. Josh’s mountain bike was his ride to the general store from his East Mountains home. Heather’s father and stepfather competed in triathlons. Later, as a couple, “We loved to travel and to get out of our cars to experience a place by bike,” says Josh.

“Touring by bike is more immersive and interactive because you’re literally powering the tour,” Heather continues.

The couple built the business off their respective talents. Heather brought a background in corporate marketing and graphic design; Josh had experience in computer science and design as an architectural project manager for Albuquerque Public Schools and University of New Mexico. Both are overflowing with creativity—evident in the multi-page list of themed tours they brainstormed to guide cyclists to the couple’s favorite city attractions and through urban and rural spaces.

The company’s signature red-and-yellow cruiser bikes, which boast the colors of the New Mexico flag and have the added benefit of being easily seen, roll up to the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, through Old Town on Christmas Eve to view the luminarias, along the bosque, to haunted destinations around Halloween, and to “Breaking Bad” filming locations.

Locals and visitors alike represent the company’s tour clientele. Heather and Josh delight in hearing that even Albuquerqueans learn new bits of history and culture about their hometown on the company’s tours. Routes’ popular Bikes & Brews tours rotate among the city’s myriad breweries, and are often made up of at least half local residents.

The Arnolds pride themselves on making their seven employees local experts. Each undergoes an in-depth interview process that includes leading Heather and/or Josh on a tour, and completes a 20-hour training on the city’s history, culture, and landmarks. “We have a high expectation. We want to be able to offer concierge-level service,” says
Heather.

Tours undergo intense quality testing. Josh and Heather complete the ride several times themselves, then they do test tours for their employees and family members. In 2015, they expect to launch a New Mexico chile tour, a public art tour, and a Pueblo artisan tour, the latter of which will be the company’s first hybrid tour as participants bike to destinations and walk around to meet artisans.

“The more we work with them, the more services we add,” says Nancy Kinyanjui, director of hospitality and sustainability at Los Poblanos Historic Inn & Organic Farm, for which Routes operates tours as guest add-ons. “They are always positive and responsive. And they are true entrepreneurs with how adventurous they are with their business.”

Although designing and leading tours is the Arnolds’ favorite part of the business—and still one of their favorite pastimes as a couple—Routes Rentals & Tours also includes, of course, rentals of city cruisers, road and mountain bikes, hybrid bikes (a combination of the two), and tandem (two-seat) bikes—“They’re a relationship test,” says Heather. The shop also rents snowshoes in winter.

The business has also expanded in unforeseen ways, including operating a bike maintenance shop. “We’re not bike snobs. We’ll take your Walmart bike and make it run like it isn’t a Walmart bike,” says Heather.

Routes has also taken over servicing Sandia National Laboratories’ bike fleet, which the labs encourages employees to use on campus, and those for guests at Los Poblanos Historic Inn and Organic Farm. Kinyanjui says the Arnolds have well advised Los Poblanos about protecting against the literal thorn in the side of every Albuquerque cyclist: insidious goat heads that pierce bike tires. Routes has also sponsored for Intel build-a-bike workshops—the chip manufacturer donates the finished products.

Although these facets of their business were unexpected, they were welcome. “Overcoming challenges together and
getting that sense of accomplishment makes us stronger as a couple,” says Josh.

The Arnolds married on Cinco de Mayo in 2012. As their business evolved, so, too, has their relationship. “We enjoy working together, and we prefer spending most of our time together,” says Heather. Though she points out that they aren’t together every moment; each still has a side business. (Heather does graphic design, and Josh does architectural design.)

The couple enjoys leading tours together, but even after a day at the shop they will go on an evening ride for frozen yogurt or to a brewery.

“We still go on rides for dates. That’s important,” says Heather. “The Valentine’s tour [at Routes Rentals & Tours] is modeled after our favorite way to celebrate the holiday—going to the river for a picnic. The only thing we’d add is a staycation at Los Poblanos. It’s very rewarding to have our relationship be part of the business.” —ASHLEY M. BIGGERS

THE NEW:

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CLASSIC JAMS