

HOME+LIFE

SUNDAY, JULY 31, 2022 | tucson.com | SECTION E



A 'love letter' to AZ

GLORIA KNOTT
Arizona Daily Star

Isaac Caruso is writing a book. The illustrations? Murals across Arizona.

"It's a 50-page children's book illustrated with murals across Arizona, and they all tell one cohesive story," the Phoenix-based muralist says.

Caruso finished writing the story, dubbed "Sam & Sara," in 2019 while in Tucson completing a mural at the Palo Verde pool. With the story complete, he set off to create coinciding murals across the state.

In the end, he will photograph the murals, which for now includes at least four in Southern Arizona, and compile them into a physical book. He hopes to finish the project by the end of the year.

"This is my 50-page love letter to my home state," he says.

The origins of 'Sam & Sara'

The idea first popped into Caruso's head when he was a sophomore in design school and his teacher asked students to illustrate a story graphically.

"All the art I had done at that point could be looped into a narrative, and I thought, 'How cool would it be to do that with murals?'" says Caruso, who became interested in graffiti around age 13 and knew by 19 that he wanted to be an artist. "Ten years later, here I am."

He looks at the book as a community service, but it's also an ode to Arizona.

"I think, as a whole, this state has a lot of personality, and I wanted to explore it," he says.

The book itself is a bit autobiographical, Caruso says. A gifted nontraditional learner himself who found that the school system wasn't made for people like him, Caruso created "Sam & Sara" as a way to celebrate non-traditional learning.

The book tells the whimsical story of a girl, who potentially has attention deficit disorder and is described as a daydreamer. One day, she blinks into her imagination, where she decides to stay.

"It's meant to kind of underscore how useful and valuable and beautiful that type of thinking is," Caruso says.

The book is dubbed a children's book because of the way the story is told, but Caruso hopes it's something that everyone can enjoy.

While traveling through the state, Caruso has been creating the murals, editing videos

and exploring typography, calligraphy and graphic design.

"I'm kinda able to use all of my creative outlets with this project," he says.

Of course, he also wrote the story himself — the first thing he's ever really written.

"I definitely consider myself an artist more than a writer, but I guess I can call myself a writer now."

An exploration of Arizona

Instead of painting the murals in only one city, Caruso decided to hop in a van — his dog in tow — and illustrate "Sam & Sara" all over the state.

"I really wanted to see more of the state, and, for example, I know Phoenix — born and raised there. I was living in Tucson, and I like Tucson," he says. "But I didn't feel putting (the whole project) in Tucson would tell enough of the story."

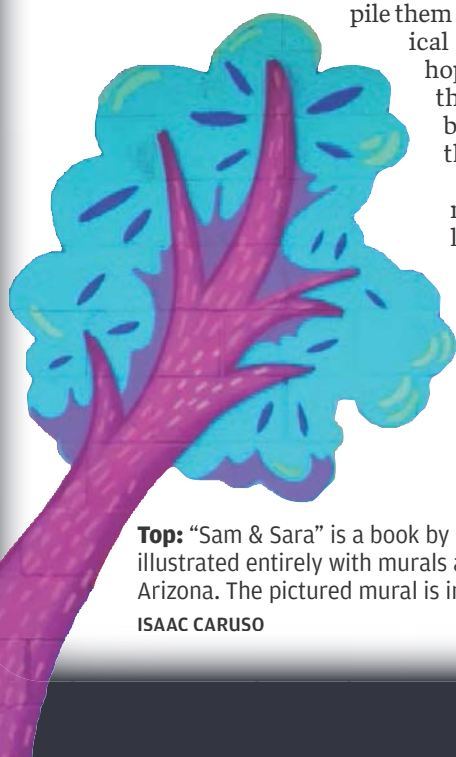
"I want people to have an excuse to see the state," he says, adding that it could be a fun summer project for someone to hit the road and explore the book in real life.

Caruso has so far completed 29 of the 50 "Sam & Sara" murals in Flagstaff, Tempe, Ajo, Sierra Vista, Sahuarita and Tubac, among others. Patagonia and Rio Rico are on the way.

Missing from the list? Tucson.

Caruso is actively looking for more space and more cities to add to the list of "Sam &

Caruso has so far completed 29 of the 50 "Sam & Sara" murals. This one is in Tempe.



Top: "Sam & Sara" is a book by Isaac Caruso, illustrated entirely with murals across Arizona. The pictured mural is in Globe. ISAAC CARUSO

Please see **LOVE LETTER**, Page E4

Help your garden grow while saving water

How to water your plants when it's 100+ degrees

DOMINIKA HEUSINKVELD
Arizona Daily Star

Irrigation is a must in our climate. Even if your garden has all native plants, they will need supplemental irrigation for at least their first two summers before they become established. In addition, native plants in residential yards can look a bit bedraggled without some supplemental irrigation in the hottest months. If you're planning on growing any non-native plants, such as fruit trees, you will definitely need an irrigation system.

The best system for our climate is a drip irrigation system. It's about 95% efficient which will save our water and save you money. Some other efficient options include using ollas, vertical perforated


pipes (for trees), or soaker hoses, although these can have clogging issues due to our hard water. One thing you will definitely want to avoid is a sprinkler system — you will waste a lot of water through evaporation and runoff.

The advantages of a drip irrigation system are many. A properly installed system applies water directly to the roots, avoiding problems from overhead watering like leaf burn and mildew. This direct application of water also deters weed growth. It produces no runoff waste, and has little water loss from evaporation. In addition, it can be easily retrofitted to existing plants, thanks to flexible hoses and DIY kits.

Please see **GARDEN**, Page E4

Watering: Are you doing it right?

If you've ever wondered how often you should be watering your plants, or how long you should water certain types of plants, we've got your complete guide on watering to help your Tucson garden grow on Page E6.

 **Read:** Learn about irrigation maintenance and water harvesting techniques for your Tucson garden. Point your smartphone camera at the QR code, then tap the link. **NEWSVU**



GETTY IMAGES

Drip irrigation systems are the most efficient irrigation systems for home gardens in the desert.

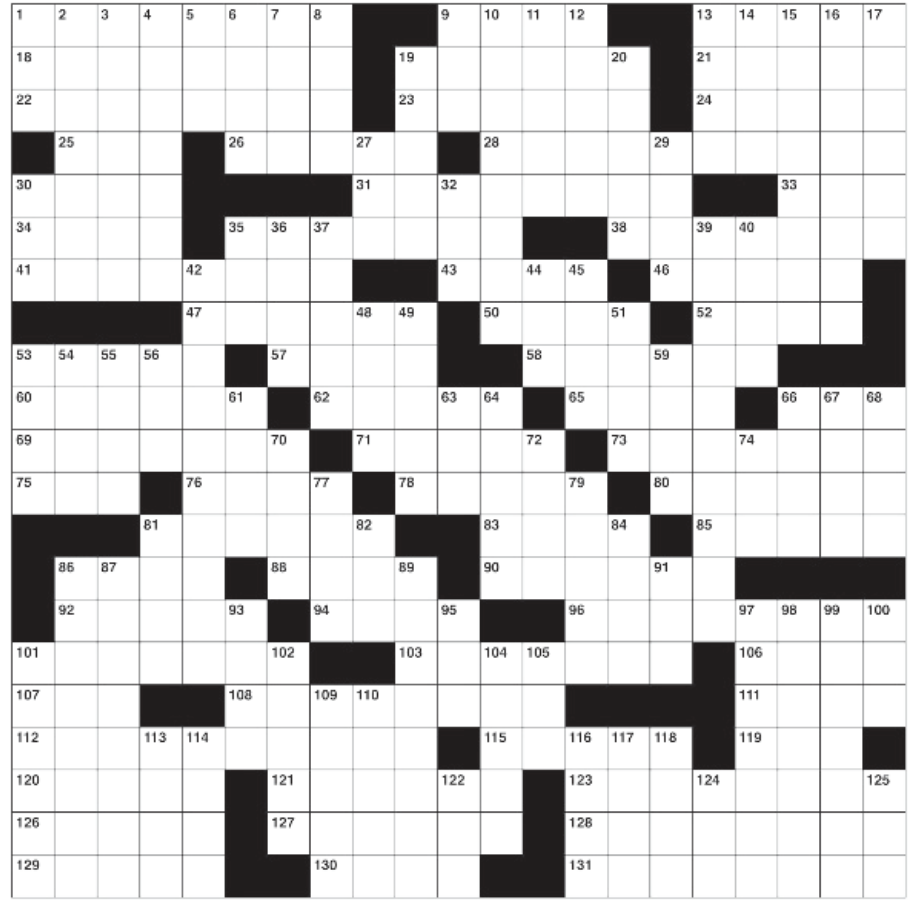
NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

ANSWERS / E2

IT'S ALL ON THE TABLE
BY GREG SLOVACEK / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Greg Slovacek is a software engineer from San Francisco. This is his first published crossword. He finds puzzle making similar in a way to programming — each involves problem-solving within constraints. He enjoys puzzles that have layers to be uncovered, which is certainly true of today's. — W.S.
A note on Texas hold'em (useful for completing this puzzle): Players seek to combine up to two of the cards they hold with cards laid out on the table to make the best possible five-card poker hand.

- ACROSS**
- 1 Italian almond-flavored cookies
 - 9 Highland boating spot
 - 13 Thick slices
 - 18 Local at St. Mark's Square
 - 19 Put right
 - 21 Bridal path
 - 22 Plant with clusters of tiny white flowers
 - 23 Come forth
 - 24 Do OK, academically
 - 25 Instinctive
 - 26 Source of the phrase "Look before you leap"
 - 28 Opportunity for making professional connections
 - 30 Little cells
 - 31 Traditional Easter entree
 - 33 MGM rival, once
 - 34 Part of a sword
 - 35 Hurriedly
 - 38 More versed in esoterica, maybe
 - 41 Reason one might not go out for a long time?
 - 43 "Forbidden" fragrance
 - 46 Biblical verb with thou
 - 47 One after the other
 - 50 Model Banks
 - 52 Bhutanese bovines
 - 53 Fire-resistant tree
 - 57 Fruit also called blackthorn
 - 58 Works as a mixologist
 - 60 Raid and plunder
 - 62 Taken (with)
 - 65 Waterworks, e.g.: Abbr.
 - 66 Zip
 - 69 Put on the map, say
 - 71 Control element in medical trials
 - 73 Anger
 - 75 Do some hemming, but not hawing
 - 76 Zip
 - 78 Waters of the world, figuratively
 - 80 From Serbia or Croatia, say
 - 81 Anne Hathaway's role in 2010's "Alice in Wonderland"
 - 83 Actress Perlman of "Cheers"
 - 85 Uses a ride-ordering service
 - 86 Public discussion venues
 - 88 1975 Wimbledon winner
 - 90 Daybreaks
 - 92 Roulette bets with nearly 1:1 odds
 - 94 Old imperial title
 - 96 Steve Martin, Tina Fey and Drew Barrymore, all more than five times
 - 101 Fraser of 1999's "The Mummy"
 - 103 Groups within groups
 - 106 100 percent
 - 107 Part of U.S.D.A.: Abbr.
 - 108 Original first name of Mickey Mouse
 - 111 It can have a French or pistol grip
 - 112 What can keep a bubble from bursting
 - 115 Trumpeter Armstrong
 - 119 F.D.R. initiative for workers' rights
 - 120 Sci-fi author Asimov
 - 121 "That's cool, man"
 - 123 Some loungewear
 - 126 "Whole ___ Love" (Led Zeppelin hit)
 - 127 Artifacts
 - 128 Held in high regard
 - 129 Scornful look
 - 130 Philosopher Descartes
 - 131 1998 Matt Damon film featuring this puzzle's game
 - 12 Like a geocentric orbit in which the orbital period is more than 24 hours
 - 13 Wise
 - 14 Actor Schreiber
 - 15 Footnote indicator
 - 16 They might be down for a nap
 - 17 Economy part
 - 19 Some tow jobs, for short
 - 20 Aired again
 - 27 Hour, in Italy
 - 29 Resort chain since 1950
 - 30 Tuna type
 - 32 QB stat: Abbr.
 - 35 The Tabard in "The Canterbury Tales," e.g.
 - 36 They're picked by the picky
 - 37 Schleps
 - 39 123-Across's holding that wins this puzzle's game
 - 40 Letter starter
 - 42 Indicator on a clock ... or one of four in this puzzle?
 - 44 How words may be recited
 - 45 Language in which "khuoburat" means "beautiful"
 - 48 Frolic
 - 49 "America" singer, 1981
 - 51 Noted sparkling wine region
 - 53 Some gear for a gig
 - 54 Register ring-up
 - 55 Fore, for the H.M.S. Pinafore
 - 56 Consume
 - 74 Place to wear goggles
 - 77 Cardinal point?
 - 79 Good judgment
 - 81 Small songbird
 - 82 Fireplaces
 - 84 Em or Bee, e.g.
 - 86 Missouri site of 2014 civil rights protests
 - 87 Think too highly of
 - 89 Entering gingerly
 - 91 Counterpart of "Thx"
 - 93 Humphrey Bogart role
 - 95 Common component of a tiki-bar cocktail
 - 97 Honest and caring
 - 98 Diana Ross, once
 - 99 One picking up the tab
 - 100 Spot
 - 101 "Purple" and "Thai" herbs
 - 102 Polite refusal
 - 104 Big swigs
 - 105 Sign of a full house
 - 109 Public-transit customer
 - 110 Patterned fabric
 - 113 Kismet
 - 114 Place to dine on a train
 - 116 Account creator, maybe
 - 117 "___ Excited" (Pointer Sisters song)
 - 118 Yearly January speech to Congress: Abbr.
 - 122 Chill
 - 124 Give new hope to
 - 125 1960s campus activist grp.



No. 0724

Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 7,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year).

Arts scene

July 31-Aug. 6

Find out what's happening in the Old Pueblo



'Painting and Bliss'

Enjoy a three-hour paint and sip event with step-by-step instructions on the Reforma patio at St. Philip's Plaza. Food and drinks are available for purchase. No experience is necessary. All supplies provided.

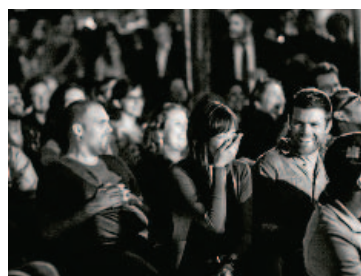
- WHEN: Monday, Aug. 1, 6 to 9 p.m.
- WHERE: 4340 N. Campbell Ave.
- COST: \$45
- MORE INFO: tucne.ws/10w



First Thursday

On the first Thursday of the month the Tucson Museum of Art and Historic Block offers extended hours and pay-what-you-wish admission. Programs include guest artists, live music, performances, artmaking and more.

- WHEN: Thursday, Aug. 4, 5 to 8 p.m.
- WHERE: 140 N. Main Ave.
- COST: Pay what you wish
- MORE INFO: tucne.ws/111



Summer Fun Concert

The Tucson Summer Chorus along with the Tucson Flute Club and The Trailheads present a concert of summer-themed songs as a benefit for the Interfaith Community Services (ICS).

- WHEN: Friday, Aug. 5, 7 p.m.
- WHERE: 4625 E. River Road
- COST: Free, but bring cash or a non-perishable food item to donate to ICS.
- MORE INFO: tucne.ws/110y



Mainly Murals Downtown Walking Tour

An approximately 2-mile walk of many of the murals found north of Congress Street in downtown Tucson. Discussion will focus on the artists, history of the murals and many of the artists' inspirations behind the pieces. Pre-registration is required.

- WHEN: Saturday, Aug. 6, 7 a.m.
- WHERE: 196 N. Court Ave.
- COST: \$25
- MORE INFO: tucne.ws/110z



Shooting Star

Shooting Star is directed by Live Theatre Workshop's Samantha Cormier and stars Shanna Brock and Stephen Frankfield. Snowed in overnight at a middle-America airport, college lovers Elena and Reed have an unexpected and life-altering reunion.

- WHEN: Saturday, Aug. 6, 7:30 p.m.
- WHERE: Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit
- COST: \$17 to \$23
- MORE INFO: tucne.ws/1110

List your event at Tucson.com/calendar

WE RECOMMEND

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR
Nothing beats the heat like reading a summer cozy mystery (indoors).

A cozy mystery usually involves an amateur sleuth trying to solve a crime, but in a more "cozy" way — not as much gore, language or other adult things. These books usually have a theme, such as ice cream, bookshops, cats or knitting.

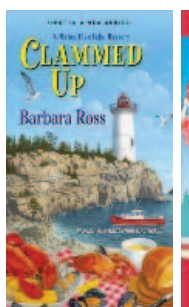
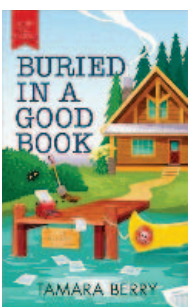
Here are four book recommendations brought to you by your friends at Pima County Public Library.

- "A Game of Cones" by Abby Collette



Collette

- "Buried in a Good Book" by Tamara Berry
- "Clammed Up" by Barbara Ross
- "Pint of No Return" by Dana Mentink



Mentink

Like these? Be sure to check out the full list at tucne.ws/1107. Visit library.pima.gov for more great reading suggestions and to check out the E-Library.



Love letter

From E1

Sara" illustrations. If you have a public-facing wall that you'd like to be beautified with a mural for the book, reach out to Caruso. The piece would be created for free, in exchange for the space.

For now, the locations of the existing murals are kept secret as a way to encourage travelers to "have an adventure of their own" while exploring Arizona towns on their mural hunt, Caruso says. "They might talk to locals

or stop to eat at a restaurant, and hopefully will be more engaged with the towns," Caruso says of the murals that are all highly visible and public-facing.

But he's already spilled the beans on the Sierra Vista mural, so here's that location to get you started: It's in the children's section of the Sierra Vista Public Library, 2600 E. Tacoma St., and the mural is the first page of the book.

Check out the "Sam & Sara" website at samandsara.org, and get in touch with Caruso via email at Info@SamAndSara.org.

Garden

From E1

Start with the garden design

To have the ideal system, start with your garden design. This is key, because different plants will have different water needs, and you will want to put all of the plants with similar watering needs on one watering zone. You also need to figure out how many plants you want, and their water requirements, so you can install the appropriate size system. You don't want a system that loses pressure before the water gets to all of your plants.

You can divide the watering areas into zones, based on the number of plants and their water needs. One way plants differ in their watering needs is size: a tree will need more water than a shrub or a smaller perennial plant. Pots will need a different watering regime, as will vegetable beds. Another difference is in the type of plant. Native and desert-adapted plants like mesquite or desert willow trees will use less water than citrus and other fruit trees, for example. It doesn't mean that you can't interplant these together; just keep in mind that your irrigation system will need to reflect these differences.

You can figure out how much your plants need by looking at some

Drip irrigation system components

A basic drip irrigation system has several components:

Backflow preventer: Keeps the water from the irrigation system from contaminating your drinking water.

Pressure regulator: Keeps the water pressure at a level that is appropriate for the irrigation system components; usually this is between 20-40 pounds per square inch or PSI

Filter: Keeps small particles from clogging your smaller tubing and emitters. This is particularly important if your water source is a well or a rainwater tank and it is recommended for city water as well.

Timer: Controls the length of time and frequency of your waterings. Look for one that has the option of having different watering zones for different plant needs.

Supply piping: This may be rigid PVC or flexible polyethylene tubing (preferred for DIY). This should be buried about 4-6 inches.

Micro-tubing: This is quarter-inch flexible small tubes that attach onto the supply tubing and reach out to the individual plants.

Emitters: These come in anything from quarter-gallon-per-hour to 4 GPH and determine how much water a plant gets.

charts available for the Tucson climate, including Brad Lancaster's plant lists with water requirements (tucne.ws/1105), seasonal watering guidelines from the city of Tucson (tucne.ws/1kr8) or the very thorough drip irrigation guide (tucne.ws/1106) from Arizona Municipal Water Users Association.

Another thing to keep in mind when planning your system is that you will need to be able to move irrigation out to a tree's dripline as it grows. Many people leave the irrigation in place for years after their plants have grown to many times their original size — this is a

great way to stress your plants and to waste water. Always plan for the final size of the tree, shrub or other plant and make sure you can move the emitters outward away from the main trunk or root ball as the plant grows. You can do this by either replacing the micro-tubing as the plant grows, or by cutting a longer piece to start with and then moving it outward. Most irrigation kits provide plastic stakes which allow you to pin down the emitter end of the tubing where you want it to drip.

It's also important to figure out where your water will come from.

Is it city water? Well water? Or will you harvest rainwater or grey water? Perhaps you will include air conditioning condensate or discarded water from a reverse osmosis filter? Each of these water sources may need different configurations. For example, city water is provided at a pressure much higher than drip irrigation systems are designed for, so you will need a pressure regulator valve to reduce the water pressure to appropriate levels. On the other hand, a rainwater tank or grey water pipe may not have much pressure at all, and you will need to compensate for this so that your system delivers water to all of your plants. If pressure is too high or too low it will not work properly and may damage your tubing. If using rainwater or grey water, make sure you check the pressure of the water with a pressure meter to make sure it's appropriate for your irrigation system.

If you're doing the installation yourself, use fittings and parts from the same manufacturer to ensure a proper fit without leaks. In addition, make sure you have a filter in place, since even city water can contain some particulates (mainly from older pipes) that can clog your drip emitters. The type of filter you choose may vary depending on the water source.

Once you have installed your system and have your plants, cover the irrigated areas with organic

mulch to reduce evaporative water loss. Use rock mulch for cacti, succulents or palms. Make sure the mulch covers all of your tubing to protect it from the sun. Inspect your system thoroughly at least twice a year. Take a walk around your yard once every week or two to make sure all of the plants are doing well; any stressed-looking plant warrants a check of the irrigation system.

More irrigation resources

- Drip Irrigation: The basics (tucne.ws/110e)
- Irrigation requirements of southwestern landscape trees (tucne.ws/110f)
- Irrigating citrus trees (tucne.ws/110g)
- General resources on watering from the city of Tucson (tucne.ws/110h)
- For a deep dive into the nitty gritty of sprinkler system design, here's the drip irrigation guide from AMWUA (tucne.ws/1106)

For more gardening information and articles on gardening in the Tucson area, subscribe to the free Tucson Garden Guide newsletter at tucson.com/newsletters.

Do you have any gardening topics you'd like to see covered in the Tucson Garden Guide? Email dheusinkveld@tucson.com with your suggestions and questions.