Arizona canyons grand in different ways

Adventures permeate from wondrous destinations

The Grand Canyon is a pit of seemingly bottomless beauty. It's a masterful work of ecological art that needed millions of years to be completed.

It's nearly 277 miles long and 18 miles wide and is more than a mile deep. Unparalleled measurables, no doubt, and it can overwhelm sightseers and naturalists.

The Grand Canyon epitomizes Arizona. It symbolizes greatness and could lead you to believe it's the state's only massive gorge.

That's hardly the case.

Thirty-two canyons can be found in Arizona. They range in size and depth, and many are worth a visit. Other popular ones include Aravaipa Canyon, Madera Canyon, Oak Creek Canyon, Paria Canyon and Salt Lake Canyon.

Aravaipa Canyon hugs the northwest border of the Galiuro Mountain Range in southern Arizona and is 11 miles in length. Backpackers and hikers revel in its topography. Hike through Aravaipa Creek, a seasonal home to hundreds of bird species. Explore side canyons and witness desert wildlife. See bighorn sheep, coyote, coatimundi, Gila monsters and javelina.

GORGE-OUS – Salt River Canyon comprises more than 32,000 acres of Tonto National Forest. *Image: Teressa L. Jackson. Adobe Stock.*

Twenty-five miles southeast of Tucson rests Madera Canyon – a part of the Coronado National Forest. Campsites, picnic areas and miles of hiking trails grab your attention. Desert surroundings add to the ambiance, making it a jewel.

Northern Arizona houses Oak Creek Canyon – a 12-mile-long gorge that spans from Flagstaff to Sedona and is considered one of the state's most scenic. It offers many activities, including hiking, backpacking and fishing. It ranges in width from 0.8 to 2.5 miles and reaches depths from 800 to 2,000 feet. Its association with Sedona makes it second to the Grand Canyon in most popular tourist destinations in the state.

Paria Canyon is nestled in Northern Arizona. Known as a premier hiking and backpacking destination, Paria Canyon is a 112,500-acre wilderness area that hugs Utah's southern border. The Wave is a massive sandstone rock formation and the canyon's most-visited destination. White House Ruins and Lee's Ferry are popular backpacking routes that pass through Buckskin Gulch – the longest slot canyon in the world. Hikers should expect to be wet anywhere from ankle deep to waist high and do research before hiking the canyon. Flash flooding is common.

Salt River Canyon's wilderness, meanwhile, is comprised of nearly 32,100 acres in the Tonto National Forest, east of the Phoenix Metro Area. Its elevations range from 2,200 feet at the canyon's lower end to 4,200 feet. The hiking trails aren't maintained and most exploration happens by raft or kayak during Spring River-running season. The upper Salt River can be run from March through May, with rapids that range from Class II to IV. Permits are required when running the river between March 1 and May 15.

This is a snapshot of what Arizona offers and proof that not everything has to be grand to be considered great.

Staying in right lane not always simple

'Wrong-way' driving growing concern, leads to grave results

Moving in the wrong direction can lead to grave results – especially if you are behind the wheel of your vehicle.

Fatal, wrong-way crashes on our nation's highways have become a persistent and devastating threat that are making roadways less safe. A recent data analysis from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found there are approximately 500 deaths per year as the result of crashes on divided highways.

Researchers found that the odds of being a wrong-way driver increased with alcohol impairment, older age and driving without a passenger.

"Wrong-way crashes on divided highways are often fatal as they are typically head-on collisions," said Dr. David Yang, executive director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety.

AAA works with National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and other traffic-safety organizations to educate drivers on the deadly impact of wrong-way driving. AAA and NTSB urge state-transportation agencies to adopt driver-based countermeasures that address these factors, such as alcohol-ignition interlocks, strengthened deterrence strategies like sobriety checkpoints, driver-refresher courses for older adults and the installation of more visible signs and signals.

LOSING DIRECTION – Driving drunk and senior drivers are most likely to drive their vehicles in the wrong lanes on highways. *Image: Brandon Klein. Adobe Stock.*

Researchers examined eight factors related to these types of crashes, with these three standing out: alcohol impairment, older age and driving without a passenger. Six in 10 wrong-way crashes involved an alcohol-impaired driver. Those with blood-alcohol concentrations more than the legal limit of .08 were significantly more likely to be wrong-way drivers than non-alcohol-impaired drivers involved in the same crashes.

"Alcohol impairment is, by far, the single-most significant factor in the majority of wrong-way driving crashes, which unfortunately has not changed since the NTSB issued its 'Wrong-Way Driving' special investigation in 2012," said NTSB Director of the Office of Highway Safety Dr. Rob Molloy. "The important work done by AAA shows that we need to redouble our efforts to address this safety hazard."

An alcohol-ignition-interlock device prevents a vehicle from starting until the driver provides a breath sample that registers below a preset limit, usually a BAC of .02.

The data also indicates that drivers older than 70 are more at risk of driving in the wrong direction than their younger counterparts. Previous Foundation research from the AAA Longitudinal Research on Aging Drivers (LongROAD) project found that drivers aged 75-79 spent less time on the road and drove fewer miles per trip than younger age groups. Yet, this same age group significantly represents wrong-way crashes.

Nearly 87% of wrong-way drivers were traveling alone, leading to the belief that the presence of a passenger might offer protection. Passengers could alert drivers that they are entering a one-way road, preventing them from entering the highway in the wrong direction, or alerting them to the error, helping the driver take corrective action before a crash occurs.

AAA reminds drivers to use common sense before getting behind the wheel. If you are driving, don't drink. If you are drinking, don't drive. And always remain alert.

Simple requests that too often are taken for granted.

Tech company creates innovative lenses

Improving drivers' optics should lessen odds of accidents

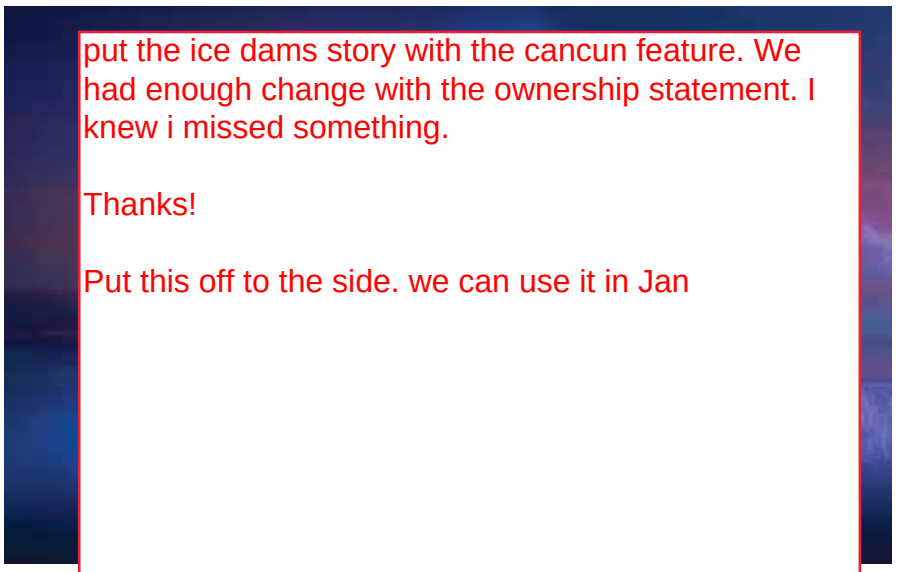
Artificial intelligence is sneaking its way into most aspects of our lives. Whether it's a good thing remains to be seen.

A technology company is using AI to help make driving safer. Shamir Optical Industry recently launched an innovative product. Its Shamir Driver Intelligence lenses are designed to transform operating a vehicle by making it safer, more comfortable and visually clear.

Its new lens development began with Shamir's decision to address the issue of visual challenges that confront drivers on roadways, such as sudden changes in conditions, varying light intensities from the sun, streetlamps or oncoming headlights, and the need to keep switching focus from the close vehicle interior to the distant road.

Its research showed one in five drivers suffer from eye fatigue and 25% have trouble focusing quickly on varying distances. This modern technology introduces disturbances to drivers, such as in-car, digital-screen displays and bright LED lights.

The lenses' designs are based on extensive measurements of head movements and eye-tracking, providing comprehensive understanding and prediction of a driver's visual behavior. By applying elements of AI, Shamir



put the ice dams story with the cancun feature. We had enough change with the ownership statement. I knew i missed something.

Thanks!

Put this off to the side. we can use it in Jan

SEEIN to make

invented a lens solution ideally suited to all types of drivers.

Shamir Driver Intelligence comes as a set of two pairs of glasses, available as single or progressive vision – "sun" for daylight and "moon" for nighttime driving – to provide uncompromised-optimal vision for all conditions.

The "sun" lens incorporates an advanced filter that enhances color perception, making colors and objects appear more vivid, similar to the effects of Formula F1 racing helmet visors. The clear "moon" lens is designed for conditions of low-light and nighttime driving, with visual age-based myopic shift for improved low-light sharpness. It reduces visual noise, eye fatigue and improves drivers' reaction times for safer performance.

"The rich insight and extensive data received from professional drivers under conditions of extreme challenges have enriched our big data set and have been invaluable in the development of the new driving-dedicated performance lens," said Shamir CEO Yagen Moshe. "Going the extra mile with this valuable partnership, Shamir exercises its ability to see through the eyes of its consumers, to study the environment, the activities and needs of the users, and then to apply the most advanced technologies, including elements of AI to maximize the user experience. The lens solution we have developed upgrades the driving experience to premium, allowing drivers (professional as well as passionate and everyday drivers) to enjoy clarity of vision, whether of the road ahead or of the image in their mirrors, bringing them safely to their destination."

Shamir Driver Intelligence is available throughout Europe, the Asian Pacific and North America. Visit Shamir.com for more information about the product.

Seeing the road ahead is getting easier, thanks to AI. Drivers can put on their shades and lessen the odds of getting into an accident.