

## Top 10 local A&E personalities of 2015 remembered

**Brace Fessier** The Desert Sun

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I don't normally do stories like Barbara Walters' "10 most fascinating personalities of the year."

I do an annual "Top 10 desert personalities who died," but I tend to stay away from living folks.

But I'm thinking, maybe I should give more year-end recognition to the local personalities who had special years before they make my top 10 obituary list.

This year, we saw "the singing chef," Barry Minniefield, advance several rounds into "The Voice," hosted by College of the Desert alumnus Carson Daly. Long-time desert rockers Brant Bjork and Eric Burdon represented Joshua Tree at Coachella and Stagecoach, respectively. Ric and Rozene Supple both turned 90, sold off several radio stations and sponsored a new Classic Science Fiction Festival at their Camelot Theatres. Beverly Johnson, the first black super model, released an autobiography detailing her attempted rape by Bill Cosby in the 1980s, which she first alleged in a 2014 Vanity Fair article. "In Living Color" star Damon Wayans, who was criticized for making jokes about Cosby's accusers, was heckled for needling Michael Jackson during a tour stop at Spotlight 29 casino, prompting him to walk off stage and enter early retirement amid complaints that audiences are now too politically correct.

But those are just the runners-up in my list of favorite arts and entertainment personalities of 2015. My top 10, based on their achievements and all-around interest, are, in alphabetical order:



Jamie Kabler, *Courtesy Photo*

**Jamie Kabler.** Kabler was well known for accompanying philanthropist Helene Galene at gala benefits before he co-founded the Rancho Mirage Writers Festival in 2014. But, taking the helm by himself for 2015, Kabler took the festival to another level, bringing in more big name authors and selling it out by summer. With the third festival again sold out for Jan. 21–23, Kabler has done the unimaginable by adding another must-see event to the busy winter calendar.