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On the Road with Shawna Coronado

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Garden writer, blogger and speaker Shawna Coronado has always been a prolific speaker, bouncing around the country to talk about gardening, wellness and food. She's been public, too, with her diagnosis in 2015 of severe degenerative osteoarthritis of the spine that she initially thought would be the end of her career. Instead, it's served as the inspiration for a new diet, a new view on the impact of gardening and fresh foods in overall wellness, and it's the impetus for a new journey that will take her through 30 cities in five weeks.

Because of her diagnosis, she's moving from the Chicago-area to Mesa, Arizona, and the idea for a wellness tour came about when she realized she would have to stop about every 100 miles because of her back. What started as a tool giveaway every 100 miles has morphed into a 30-city, 3,300 journey supported by seven industry sponsors (those sponsors are Bower & Branch, MGK Solutions, Cool Wave Pansies, Rosies Work Wear, Veg Trug, Spiked Soil and CobraHead). It starts January 28 at the Morton

Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois.

"It's been an exciting thing planning it—I need, like, four managers to manage it," Shawna says by phone recently, adding most of the stops are at garden centers, botanic gardens and arboretums. "This has to be authentic; it's a real-life journey that's true. I'm learning about wellness and incorporating that into the garden story.

"It starts with me losing my ability to walk almost ... and ends with me inspiring people to do something about learning about their health and wellness."

She'll be speaking on three to four topics throughout the tour, including reducing arthritis and chronic inflammatory pain without medicine through gardening and diet, and techniques for cooking with food harvested from the garden. But it's not just the speaking engagements—she'll also be posting daily from the tour on her social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), as well as working with customers and visitors at the stops. Her tour will finish up at the Boyce Thompson Arboretum in Superior, Arizona, where she'll be a featured speaker during a two-day wellness fair.

Visit www.shawnacoronado.com/speaking to see the full list of stops. **GP**