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February 2023

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Sweet Repeats Clothing Consignment Shop QUARTERLY CLEARANCE SALE IS HERE

By Kimberly Alvarado

Don't you feel your best when you are able to create your own designer-style wardrobe without breaking your budget? Do you wear your current clothing pieces for a couple of seasons before tossing them into a donation bag? Do you always seem to have a closet full of *nothing to wear*?

Consignment shopping is a trend that is rapidly exceeding department store shopping, and it is creating new opportunities to affordably reinvent your look, piece by unique piece. All this shopping and rotating is environmentally friendly, so you don't have to feel guilty about filling up landfills.

Sweet Repeats Clothing Consignment Shop is a hidden gem of a consignment store in Northeast Mesa



owner Jenn Franco. "Some of our most popular pieces are handbags from such brands as Coach, Dooney & Bourke, and Michael Kors."

Sweet Repeats selection of ladies clothes ranges from XS to 3XL and is constantly changing as new items arrive weekly. Such recognizable labels as Chico's, Banana Republic, Ann Taylor, J Jill, Talbots, Lucky Brand, White House Black Market, and Calvin Klein are client favorites and can always be found along with hundreds of others.

Sweet Repeats has just the right location and inventory to help you create a closet full of new favorites.

SAVE THE DATE

On Friday, Feb. 17 and Saturday, Feb. 18, fashion and designer items will be at their lowest prices as Sweet Repeats holds its quarterly clearance sale. Stop in for sweet deals at your fingertips.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

Jenn, and her artistic staff, have designed a method to strategically lower prices each month on every item in the shop. Their rotation system discounts items from 10 to 50 to 75 percent off and enables fresh, new items to circulate constantly. Last year alone, more than 21,000 items were processed into new closets.

Where else can you grab a pair of shoes for \$2 or grab a unique find at 75 percent off? While the prices for rent, food, and gasoline continue to rise, consumer desire for style still *craves*.

Shop online or the best option yet, grab a couple of girlfriends and come in to snag the freshest new deals each week.



WANT TO EARN A LITTLE CASH OF YOUR OWN

Do you have some special pieces that you no longer need? Consider consigning them to Sweet Repeats. It is the perfect way to make room in your closet for new pieces.

Walk-in days are Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. These walk-in days are limited to 10 items for review. Additionally, appointments are accepted for those wishing to consign more than 10 items.

Jenn enjoys the ever-changing relaxed atmosphere of her consignment paradise. "It's a laid-back atmosphere, where groups of friends can come in and get real advice about their purchases," she said.

Jenn is always pleased to see her routine consigners visit the shop and considers the personalization she provides to her customers as one of her greatest business strengths. ■

Sweet Repeats Clothing Consignment Shop is located at 6039 E. University Drive in Northeast Mesa. For more information, visit sweetrepeatsmesa.com or call (480) 275-2480. Store hours are Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and closed on Sundays.

Have Home Values Already Hit Their Bottom?

By Christine Anthony,
Realtor, Russ Lyon Sotheby's
International Realty

Whether you are already a homeowner or you are looking to become one, recent news headlines on home prices may leave you with more questions than answers. Talks of a recession, inflation, and layoffs in a few sectors are countered with positive job growth, tempered energy costs, and for real estate, a return to a more *balanced* market.

The *mood swings* of 2022 took us on a ride that began with unprecedented demand and quickly rising home values, taking an about-face in the second half of the year with softening prices and lackluster buyer and seller enthusiasm. This was mainly due to a sharp rise in mortgage rates and the reality of inflation eating away at purchasing power and consumer confidence.

The question that is on many minds may be: *What can we expect for the next few months with home prices?*

We are already starting to see that the trend of month-to-month depreciation seen from August through November may already be at its turning point, and many forecasters agree that we should not expect to see a



continued decline in home prices.

For most Phoenix area cities, the buyer's market of November/December 2022 appears to be short-lived, as we quickly moved into a balanced market where supply versus demand favors neither buyers nor sellers. According to data provided by *The Cromford Report*, by mid-January, most cities in the Valley have all switched from a buyer's market into a balanced market, with areas like Chandler, Scottsdale, and Paradise Valley already in a seller's market. Some outskirt cities are still in clear buyer's markets but are not far behind from becoming balanced markets as well — this includes cities like San Tan Valley, Goodyear,



Maricopa, and Buckeye.

Continued migration into our state, particularly into the Phoenix area, has fueled a growth in demand for housing; add that to typical seasonal demand, and we are seeing an increase in sales activity of more than 25 percent in just the first month of 2023. That is a welcome change for those considering selling, but the environment also has some positive news for buyers. Buyers can experience the best selection of homes seen in years, and new lending programs help to offset the higher mortgage interest rates, giving them time to refinance to a better rate if and when rates come down.

Historically, looking at *closed sales*, prices have been a trailing indicator of market direction — meaning that by the time a *trend* shows itself, it is already one to two months behind. The numbers to watch instead include *active listings* and *listings under contract*. With listings under contract on their way up and active listings in a downward trend, those waiting for a bottom may have already missed their mark, and with a healthier, more balanced market settling in, this may be a great time to consider that move! ■

It is important to note that individual communities and neighborhoods are sub-markets that can vary significantly; in order to determine if selling or buying is the right move for you, feel free to contact Christine Anthony, an experienced real estate agent who is familiar with the local market.

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In This Issue

Self Development Schools.....	3	Sasq-Watch Home Services.....	12
Las Sendas Golf Club.....	5	Rock and Mineral Show	14
The Exercise Coach	6	The Fix Drive Thru Coffee.....	15
Real Estate	7	Medicare Plans	16
Love Is In The Air.....	8	Service Directory.....	19



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EDUCATION

Self Development Schools — Where Education Matters

Submitted by Staff, Self Development Academy

At this time of the year, parents begin the search to find a distinctive school for their kindergarteners, an important decision that sets their academic futures. A well-rounded and integrated curriculum in a nurturing environment is a must in helping students succeed in elementary school, middle school, and beyond. We welcome parents to learn about the unique programs offered at Self Development Preschool (SDP) and Self Development Academy (SDA). Self Development Schools in Mesa offer a preschool, a K-8 program in-person school, and an online K-8 program.

SDP, a private preschool, was established nearly 35 years ago to provide an ideal early education integrating arts, science, music, and math using a thematic curriculum. The unique curriculum incorporates play as a way for children to learn about concepts of float and sink and volume while spending time at the water table. At the theatre and puppet center, our children learn about their and others' emotions and how best to address them. At the library center, they develop a love for reading and appreciating works of various authors.

And of course, SDP is deeply immersed in areas such as music, art, and technology. Students listen to various genres of music. They learn about composers as well as famous painters. They become familiar with the works of masters such as Michelangelo, Da Vinci, and Van Gogh.

Most parents bring their children to SDP because it is a safe place, with nurturing and rigor in the curriculum. Often you may see children crying at the end of the day, not because they are missing their parents, but because they are having too good a time and their parents came early and children don't want to leave. Ms. Vernetta, SDP director, a familiar face, is their favorite aspect of SDP.

Next, SDA offers an advanced kindergarten program. This program allows children to begin their educational learning experience in a caring and intellectually stimulating environment. The classroom introduces kindergarten and first-grade curriculum goals and encourages concept mastery and academic confidence.

SDA uses multi-sensory phonics instruction, focusing



on visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic techniques, which reach each child's learning styles. They learn phonemic awareness, sight words, spelling, writing, and reading within each lesson. By the end of their kindergarten year, children are reading at or above a first-grade level, writing grammatically complete sentences, and authoring and editing their own books. Mathematical components include number concepts and an introduction to addition and subtraction, with daily math facts, fact families, and word problems.

By the time SDA students reach middle school, many are prepared to enroll in Algebra I, Advanced Literature, and Advanced Science. During middle school, students have the opportunity to complete Pre-Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Literature, and Science including Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Technology. Many of these courses are not offered until high school.

Students completing the eighth grade at SDA are enrolled in Honors and Advanced Placement courses upon entering high school. Additionally, many students receive high school credit for courses completed at SDA. This level of coursework enhances their grade point averages and makes them highly competitive students when applying to colleges and universities.

"I attended Self Development Preschool and Self Development Academy from the age of two years to the end of eighth grade. Even though the academics were rigorous, it never felt out of the ordinary," said Max Gau, a graduate of Fordham University in New York and currently an intervention teacher at Self Development Academy. "Entering high school, I was blown away at how far ahead of the other students we were because of SDA's advanced curriculum. I found myself taking junior and senior-level classes as a freshman. This freed up the time in my schedule later in high school, which meant I could take more classes that I enjoyed along with the normal course load."

SDA has consistently been ranked among the top elementary and junior high schools in the state and nationally. To give your children a strong foundation for developing a love for learning, please contact Self Development Academy, a tuition-free, K-8 in-person and online public charter school, at (480) 641-2640.

Give your children an early start by giving them an opportunity to participate in a highly enriched educational environment by contacting Self Development Preschool at (480) 396-3522, a private preschool that serves students from ages two to five years and has a before-and-after school program for students up to age 13 years.



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LOCAL BUSINESS

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AS IF YOUR VALENTINE
WEREN'T SWEET ENOUGH

By Kimberly Alvarado

Gourmet Gelato & Coffee is becoming widely known for their unique flavor selections of incredible gelato, rumored to be straight from the tastes of Italy. On Tuesday, Feb. 14, bring your Valentine in for a sweet treat after lunch or dinner for a specially priced dessert cup. This offer is good from 1 to 8 p.m. on Valentine's Day only. Couples mentioning UpClose Publications will receive 20 percent off the regular price of two delightful desserts.

A few seasonal flavor options your sweetheart can choose from are red velvet, strawberry, coconut, dark chocolate, creme brûlée, and raspberry. Select one of these or a long-time favorite of your own. Iced or hot coffee orders are also available to warm your heart. Dietary-restricted customers are accommodated with dairy-free dark chocolate and fruit choices. ■



Gourmet Gelato & Coffee is conveniently located at 6727 E. McDowell Road, Suite 105, in Northeast Mesa, at the southwest corner of Power and McDowell roads.



LOCAL BUSINESS

A Warm Community Welcome
with Alpha House



By Kimberly Alvarado

Alpha House Home Decor Gallery owner, Juliette Grigsby, sincerely appreciates the enthusiasm of those who recently attended the local gallery's grand opening event, which showcased a unique selection of upscale artwork, decor, and home furnishings.

"We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended our grand opening event. For those of you who came in to browse, emailed, or called with your best wishes, we are extremely grateful. We would also like to thank our generous sponsors: Bomb Confections and Defy Dry," she said.

Valentine-inspired chocolates and pre-made artificial rose/flower bouquets will be offered on Valentine's Day.

The local gallery owners look forward to hosting a range of future events, so you will want to check in frequently for updates. ■

Alpha House Home Decor Gallery is located at 2823 N. Power Road, Suite 105, in The Village at Las Sendas. For more information, follow on Facebook at facebook.com/AlphaHouseHomeDecor, call (480) 812-5406, or email alphahousegallery@yahoo.com.



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LAS SENDAS GOLF CLUB

WE ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR DINING AND GOLF

Las Sendas Golf Club is bustling with activities

The Las Sendas Golf Club is bustling with outdoor activity — as if the next few months needed additional reasons to be perfect for a round of golf. If you're one of many looking for opportunities to be out on the golf course, please book tee times well in advance.

Back Nine and Breakfast remains a popular favorite for early birds. Nine holes followed by breakfast at the Las Sendas Patio & Grille is a surefire way to warm up a season of *only birdies*.

BUNDLE UP. HOW OFTEN CAN WE SAY THAT?

The Las Sendas Pro Shop is showcasing Vuori men's and women's apparel that is both super-soft and super-stylish for a winter round of golf or afternoon lounging on the patio at The Patio & Grille. Vuori calls it an *Investment in Happiness* and snuggling up in a *seaside hoodie* is sure to make you a believer.

You will also want to check out the new shipment of Vessel golf bags that radiate sweet ideas about Valentine's Day gift giving. These premium quality lightweight bags offer key features: carbon fiber legs, waterproof zippers, interchangeable straps, and genuine leather handles. The synthetic leather design makes for easier cleaning as well.

The long chilly nights could be enhanced with a handmade Himalayan candle — *sugared lemon* is a favorite. Complete the ambiance of love with a tasteful wine decanter attractively embossed with the representation of our community.



Shop on Valentine's Day for a gift for your spouse and receive 20 percent off clothing purchases. *This offer is good for apparel only. Mention Up Close.*



LAS SENDAS VISTAS PAVILION NEW YEAR, NEW PLANS

Is there a wedding or special event in your future? The Vistas Pavilion at Las Sendas invites you to discover *The Venue with the Views* as an opportunity to plan your premiere significant occasion. Work together with the culinary team to create your own menu that is a signature of you. Email cshaw@lassendas.com to schedule a tour of the neighborhood facility of your dreams.



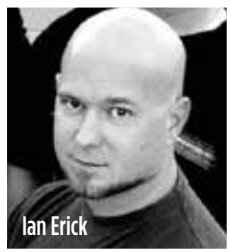
LAS SENDAS PATIO & GRILLE

The entertainment event schedule opens in February at The Las Sendas Patio & Grille with Ian Erick. He performs on Wednesdays, Feb. 1, 15, and 22, delivering *the unexpected*.

"Since the beginning of my career, I have been known for performing songs that one would not expect to hear from a solo acoustic performer," says the Long Island, N.Y. native. While keeping a large catalog of staple songs typical to a solo acoustic show, Erick's sets have been designed to make the audience take notice. He accomplishes this by adding layers of dimension for his unique sound.

A romantic Valentine's Dinner is planned for Tuesday, Feb. 14 at The Patio & Grille, featuring a selection of carefully chosen delectable options for you and your sweetheart. A reservation is required for this special event, so call (602) 734-5524 to reserve your spot.

Additional features at The Patio & Grille include Friday specials on fish and chips during the season of Lent. Beginning Wednesday, Feb. 22, and each following Friday during Lent, stop in for battered-dipped halibut with a side of crispy fries and Cajun tartar sauce. ■



Ian Erick



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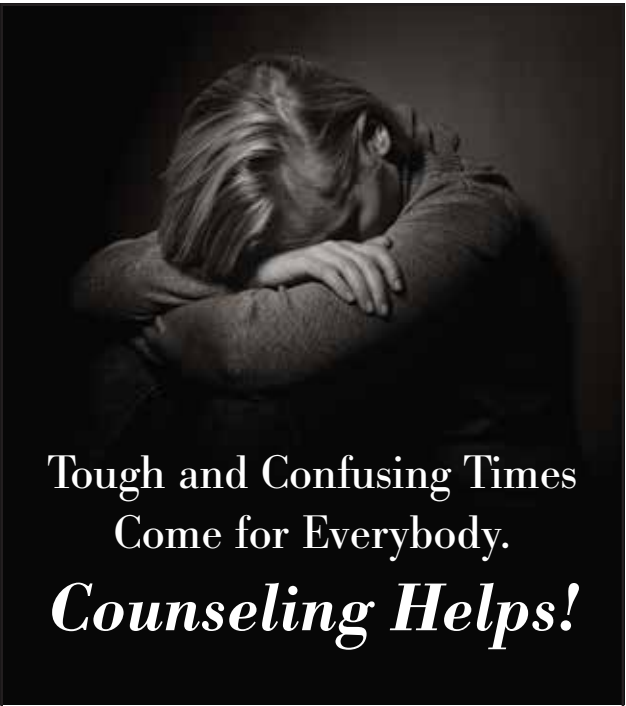
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LOCAL BUSINESS

What Do We Want from Exercise?

Submitted by *The Exercise Coach*

For many years the idea of exercise has been shaped around the notion that if we just *get moving*, we can burn calories, improve cardiovascular health, and tone muscles. The prescription has been the same for decades — eat less, move more, and exercise for at least 45 to 60 minutes four to seven days a week.

There's just one problem, it doesn't work.

Let's gauge the effectiveness of these recommendations by looking at where we are in our society. People are exercising more than ever before, our nation's obsession with dieting is greater than ever before, 2.6 billion dollars per year is spent by Americans on gym memberships and personal training, and more people than ever before have gym memberships yet don't have the time or motivation it takes to fulfill these requirements.



The bottom line remains. Obesity, type II diabetes, and inflammatory-related conditions all threaten not only our health but also threaten to bankrupt our entire country.

INSANITY IS DEFINED AS DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND EXPECTING A DIFFERENT RESULT

The prevailing sentiment about exercise remains the same. While every other industry in our country has seen improvement in regards to effectiveness and efficiency, exercise and dietary recommendations have continued to be ineffective and inefficient for over 40 years.

Since The Exercise Coach's inception 16 years ago, there has finally been a different and evolutionary approach to exercise, fat loss, and health improvements — all centered on the most critical goal in improving the things that matter most to us: *muscle quality*. If we take the approach that maybe *calories in/calories out* isn't the solution and look at how muscle quality can improve our quality of life and decrease inflammation in our body, we open ourselves up to a new horizon for more effective and efficient physical wellness.

MUSCULAR STRENGTH, ABOVE ALL ELSE, HAS THE GREATEST IMPACT ON THE LONGEVITY OF LIFE (BIOMARKERS)

Muscles have been called the windows to every system of the body. If we start with this premise, we can see how transformative whole-effort exercise — exercise which delivers immediate effects as well as longer-term benefits that force the body to make positive adaptations — can be so meaningful.

AS MUSCLE QUALITY IMPROVES, SO IMPROVES:

- Neurological activity and motor unit recruitment (the greater the ability to recruit muscle fibers). This means we can use more muscle fibers which in turn leads to a greater capacity for increased muscular growth (density/quality), and a greater ability to improve glucose metabolism.
- Our body's ability to lose fat and reduce the risk of obesity and type II diabetes by improving glucose metabolism and insulin sensitivity.
- Cardiovascular function and oxygen uptake in the body. This enhancement leads to lower blood pressure and takes stress off the heart. This also eases the burden of the lungs to ensure oxygen is delivered into the body.
- Our skeletal system because demanding greater load on our muscles leads to stronger tendons and stronger bones.
- Our gastrointestinal tract and its ability to digest food and filter out nutrition while helping the waste exit our bodies.
- Our endocrine system and its ability to properly balance the production and release of anabolic and catabolic hormones (stress, cortisol, HGH, and its impact on the thyroid).
- Our body's ability to deal with inflammation and the host of chronic diseases that begin with cellular inflammation.
- Our body's ability to actually slow down and in some cases reverse the aging process as well as keep us living a fully functional life. ■

To see for yourself how you can improve your muscle quality using our unique hi-tech process that helps our clients get the results that matter most to them at The Exercise Coach, visit exercisecoach.com/north-mesa or call (480) 716-6080 for two free sessions. Mention Up Close.

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REAL ESTATE

A GUIDE TO SELLING YOUR HOME PART 2

The Top 3 Strategies to Sell Your Home for the Highest Price

By Lorraine Ryall
Associate Broker, CDPE,
CSSN, CNE
KOR Properties



With the change in the market, it is time to get your house ready to list and have a good marketing strategy. Here are my top three strategies to sell your home at the highest price.

1. CHOOSING THE RIGHT LISTING AGENT

The biggest and most impactful thing you can do when selling your home is to choose the right agent. Choosing the wrong agent can cost you tens of thousands of dollars, a lot of stress, and possible complications with the sale. So if there is only one thing you do before selling your home, this is it.

Some agents and brokerages have very different approaches on how to sell a home and work with their clients. Some may offer a discount that can save you a few thousand on the commission but may cost you tens of thousands in the long run. Others promise to sell your home in a matter of days, and sell for a lot higher than a traditional sale, but are these just gimmicks to get you to list with them? Do they deliver on their promise?

I decided to check into one brokerage that claimed they would sell your home for a higher price in a shorter time than other agents. Of course, during the boom of 2021-2022, every agent sold their listings for above asking price, and within a few hours of it being on the market, that was nothing unique to this brokerage.

When I ran the comps not only did their listings stay on the market longer than some other agents, but when I compared the price of homes they sold to my sales in the same neighborhood in 2022, my listings sold for 8 percent higher.

You want a local expert with a top-notch marketing plan and a proven track record. I recommend meeting

with two or three agents or as many as you need to find the right one for you.

Not only do you want a top agent with a great marketing plan, but it is so important that they help get your home ready to list.

When I am showing homes, I am always shocked at how many I see that have not been prepared for listing or showings. Equally shocking is when I deal with an agent who clearly doesn't represent their clients to the standard they should. No matter how much you prepare your home for sale, if you don't hire a top agent, you won't get top results.

With the help of Google, you can research any agent and make sure they have a good online presence, which is essential in today's market, and read their reviews. It doesn't cost more to hire a top professional agent, so don't settle for anything less.

For a list of questions to ask a Realtor when you meet with them for the first time, please visit my website blog at www.Homes2SellAZ.com or contact me directly and I will send them to you.

2. DON'T OVERPRICE YOUR HOME

Everyone wants to sell their home for the highest price but overpricing your home will have the opposite effect. An overpriced home is going to sit on the market and you will end up having to make price reductions until you get to the realistic market price.

This is what we call chasing the market and you will end up selling for a lower price than if you would have priced it right when you first listed it. If your home is overpriced, you make the competition look more attractive to buyers and actually help sell your neighbor's home.

3. STAGING

I am such a big advocate for staging and how important it is for every seller no matter what kind of market we are in. Even when homes were flying off the shelf with multiple offers and above list price, I still staged all my listings. That is because staging a home can get you thousands more and



sell your home faster.

Staging a vacant home: If you are selling a vacant home, having the rooms furnished will make the home warm and inviting and give the buyer a true sense of the space. If you can't stage with furniture, just having accessories will make a big difference. It not only gives the buyer something to look at other than bare walls and empty rooms but can be used to accent and highlight the best features of the home.

Staging an occupied home: If you are living in your home, having someone come in and stage the home for you can make such a big difference. While your home may be tidy, everything in its place, and just how you like it, the problem is it's how you like it. It is very hard for someone to view their own home through a buyer's eyes.

Moving or removing furniture, decluttering, depersonalizing, and adding fresh new accessories will make your home feel bright, open, and spacious.

I offer a free staging consultation and free home staging. If you would like a consultation on what you need to do to get your home ready to list or need your home staged, please contact me to set up an appointment. ■

Lorraine is a Multi-Million Dollar producing agent, has been a full-time Realtor for over 14 years, is an Associate Broker of KOR Properties, a Certified Negotiation Specialist, and is on the Professional Standards Board. You can reach Lorraine at (602) 571-6799.

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SPiritUALITY

LOVE IS IN THE AIR

By Judy A. Knox, Charis Christian Church

It's February, and love is in the air. Everywhere you look you see red and pink hearts, cuddly teddy bears, and beautiful flower arrangements — all reminders that Valentine's Day is near.

It is the time to celebrate love. But where did Valentine's Day come from?

The name *Valentine's Day* comes from Valentinus, a third-century Roman Catholic priest. One story is that when the emperor had outlawed marriage, Valentinus secretly married a young couple, and was discovered and executed. Other stories claim he was a martyr killed for trying to free Christians from prison, or that he left a note signed "from your Valentine" to his lover before his death.

Eventually, Feb. 14 came to be celebrated as Saint Valentine's Day. The day became associated with romance in the 1500s, and the first commercial Valentine cards were issued in the 1700s.

The question is, do we really need a special day to celebrate love? Shouldn't we be celebrating love, and those we love, every day? And what is love anyway? The Bible uses three different Greek words that are translated to *love* in English, each depicting a different form of love, from physical to brotherly to God's kind of love.

God's kind of love as described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 (NLT) is patient and kind, not jealous, boastful, proud, or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable and keeps no record of being wronged. It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices in the truth. True love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

Nothing about hearts, flowers, and fuzzy teddy bears in this description. Notice that this kind of love has nothing to do with feelings, but describes everyday,



observable actions toward the other person.

Jesus said we should love God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind. This is the kind of love He is talking about. How can we love a person we know that way, let alone God whom we haven't really seen?

However, Christianity is not about how much we love God. What we need to understand is how much He loves us. He loved us so much that He gave us His only Son, Jesus, to die for us so we would not perish, but have eternal life. Isn't that better than a fuzzy teddy bear? ■

If you would like to learn more about God's love for us, come visit us at Charis Christian Church, 4811 E. Julep St., Suite 101, in Mesa.





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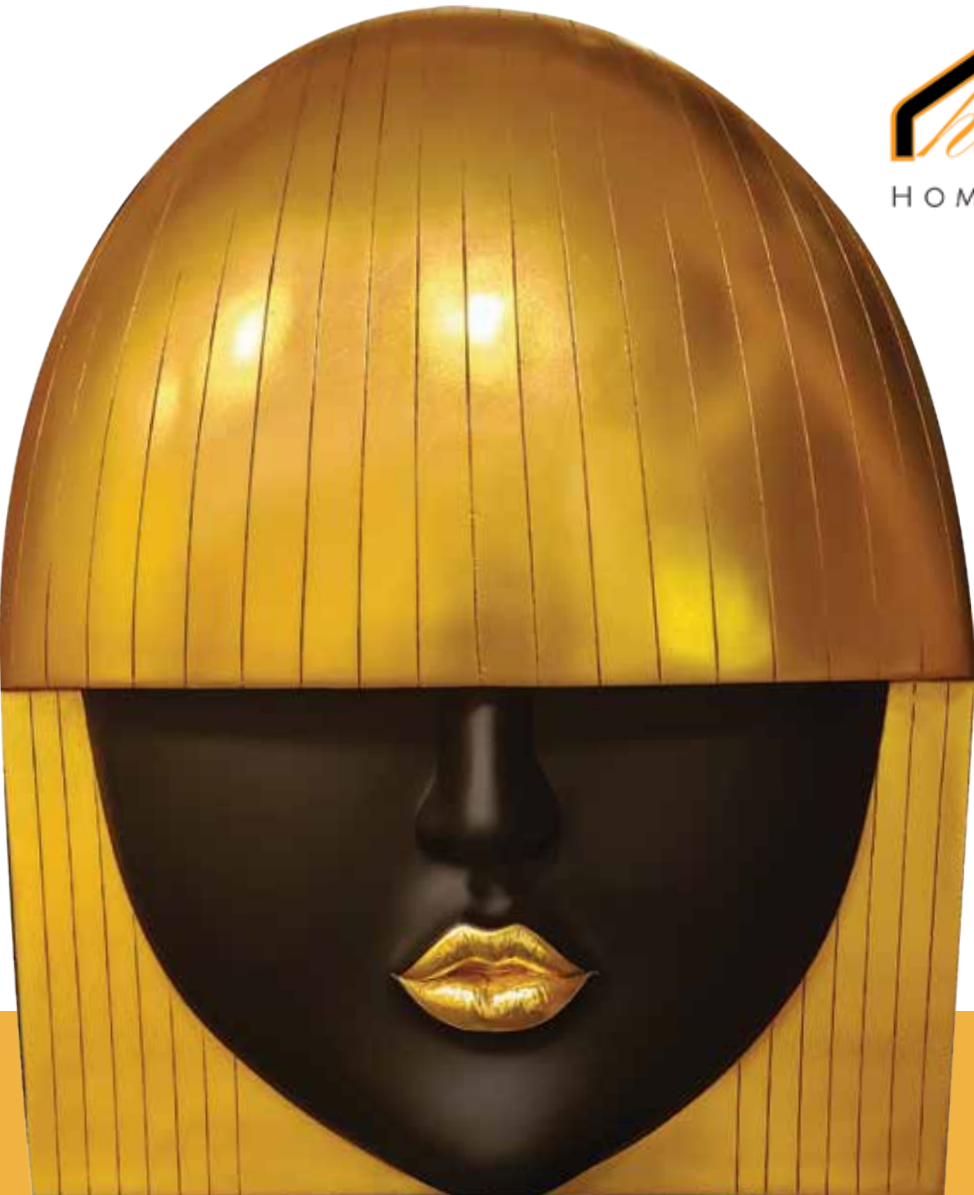
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REAL ESTATE

Are We in a Buyer's Market or a Seller's Market?

By John and Natascha Karadsheh, Designated Broker, Associate Broker, and Owners, KOR Properties



It has been an interesting three years of riding the pandemic real estate market roller coaster. The craziness in the market was fueled over the last few years by the uncertainty of the pandemic, expanded work-from-home opportunities, low interest rates, and strong stock and cryptocurrency gains. Then 2022 came along and it may be best described as the last hours of a crazy party followed by a rough hangover.

As we enter 2023, it feels more like we just finished a juice cleanse and are ready for a fresh start. On Jan. 9 of this year, the switch flipped and the market took a palpable turn. Buyers started to return to the marketplace, showings increased, and multiple offers even returned on some properties. We believe we have passed the bottom of the housing market and are moving forward once again.

Why are things improving? We believe that *stability* is the real reason. We are seeing mortgage rate stability, a slowing of inflation, and a strong job market. The other big story is that our real estate inventory remains low, both locally and nationally. Low inventory is what is keeping the balance and helping keep home values stable even though rates are higher and demand is less than it was during 2021-2022.

That brings us back to our question: Are we in a buyer's market or a seller's market?

The answer is that we are simultaneously in both. Sellers have an advantage if they have the type of product that is in demand and priced correctly. The homes that are selling with multiple offers have the fewest defects (i.e. don't back to a street or power lines), are well-maintained, are in a desirable location, have been updated (or at a minimum are super clean), and are well presented.

However, when properties have challenges, sellers must be realistic. Buyers are not looking to overpay for defects, deferred maintenance, or drab interiors, and they are willing to walk away when homes don't meet their expectations for condition and value.

Buyers in this market have the advantage because demand has slowed. They have more room to negotiate pricing, concessions, contingencies, and repairs and they have a better chance of getting more of the items on their homebuying wish list. They also have more time to make decisions, and because of this, they are generally more selective. But like sellers, buyers need to know the market. The perfect house is still going to sell quickly and for top pricing.

If you are buying or selling in today's market, we are here to make sure you know the market nuances of the moment. The market is changing weekly and with our decades of experience, we can help you navigate your way to the best opportunities.

Good old-fashioned expertise, no gimmicks, and a mission to help our clients have the best buying or selling experience possible — this is why our family has been successful in residential real estate in Mesa for 50 years. We are here to help! ■

John and Natascha Karadsheh are co-owners of KOR Properties, a boutique real estate brokerage serving the Valley of the Sun.

John is the Designated Broker of KOR Properties and has been a Multi-Million Dollar producing agent for over 20 years. He is an Accredited Buyers Representative (ABR) and Certified Residential Specialist (CRS), and serves on the Arizona Regional MLS (ARMLS) Rules & Policies Committee, ARMLS Appeals Committee, and the West and Southeast Realtors of the Valley Professional Standards Committee.

Natascha is a Multi-Million Dollar Producer and Accredited Buyers Representative (ABR). She is the Founder of Mesa Food Truck Fridays, a Member and Past-Chair of the City of Mesa Economic Development Advisory Board, and on the Board of Directors of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council.

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Sales over \$427,000 for the Month of December 2022



Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
1633 N 74th Pl	1,743	Stoneridge	\$429,000
1435 N Sterling	1,822	Moondance	\$435,000
6611 E Sierra Morena St	1,886	Red Mountain Ranch	\$445,750
1730 N Sea Pines St	1,914	Sonata	\$455,000
6106 E Presidio St	1,851	Ridgeview	\$458,000
1821 N Sunrise Cir	1,547	Moondance	\$470,000
3641 N Tirol Cir	2,114	Red Mountain Ranch	\$470,000
1701 N Sundial	2,657	Alta Mesa	\$500,000
1423 N Sierra Heights Cir	1,595	Sierra Heights	\$516,000
9557 E Princess Dr	2,258	Saguaro Shadows	\$522,500
6008 E Scafell Cir	1,565	Red Mountain Ranch	\$542,500
6516 E Halifax Dr	2,509	Suvaro Hills Estates	\$550,000
3906 N Kashmir	2,309	Red Mountain Ranch	\$595,000
8632 E Indigo St	2,798	Mountain Bridge	\$597,000
6031 E Portia Cir	1,806	Ridgeview	\$600,000
1457 N Duval	3,853	Sierra Estates	\$619,900
1858 N Bernard Cir	1,765	Mountain Bridge	\$639,000
2124 N 88th St	1,842	Mountain Bridge	\$640,000
7659 E Knoll St	2,863	Morada	\$719,900
8540 E Mcdowell Rd #46	3,221	Thunder Mountain	\$720,000
2066 N Canelo Hls	1,741	Mountain Bridge	\$739,000
2933 N Kashmir St	3,499	Mesa Desert Heights	\$750,000
8030 E Jacaranda St	2,279	Monteluna	\$754,300
8722 E Jasmine St	2,056	Mountain Bridge	\$775,000
3653 N 56th St	3,007	Reserve At Red Rock	\$799,320
9847 E El Paso St	3,631	County Island	\$830,000
9540 E Lockwood Cir	2,331	Boulder Mountain	\$845,000
9545 E Hannibal Cir	3,919	Saguaro Shadows	\$900,000
8145 E June St	2,759	Monteluna	\$908,664
9513 E Northridge Cir	3,314	Estates At Boulder Mountain	\$1,030,000
7819 E Kramer St	4,293	Estates At Desert Shadows	\$1,035,000

Information gathered from the Arizona Regional Multiple Listing Service is deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.
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LOCAL BUSINESS

Protect Your Investment with Sasq-Watch Home Services

By Jamie Killin

Whether your home is a vacation house or a rental property, having someone you can trust to ensure your property is safe and cared for is crucial to protecting your investment.

Las Sendas resident Brad Smith saw the value of these services after owning and managing a short-term rental property and wanted to provide a high-value home watch product to his neighbors.

He became an accredited member of the National Home Watch Association, learned the Association's software offerings, and had his company licensed and insured to provide his customers the best possible service and experience.

"Protecting the homeowner and their assets is our goal," he said. "We want to build a relationship with the homeowner so they have someone on the ground, in the area that they can call — whether it's an emergency situation or they have furniture being delivered."

As part of the home watch services, customers can expect a customized inspection of their home followed by a comprehensive report with updates and photos. The service includes a variety of checks to ensure the home is secure and running smoothly, including a visual inspection, appliance cycling, irrigation system check, filter changes, mail pickup, and much more depending on the home and client's specific needs.

"When you talk to National Home

Watch Association members, you hear from every single person that, at one point or another, they've saved a homeowner from an extremely expensive repair because they've caught the power going out, the AC going down, or bugs infiltrating the home. Detecting these things early on and dealing with them quickly can save a lot of money," said Brad.

Sasq-Watch Home Services also offers a variety of concierge services such as mail and package forwarding, grocery pickup, repair coordination, and more to give homeowners peace of mind while they are away.

"When people come to their homes, they want to be able to enjoy them, and this service allows them to do that," said Brad. "They don't have to say, 'Gosh, the refrigerator's been out for a month, and it smells awful in here. We're going to spend our entire time cleaning that up.'"

The home watch services are also ideal for short-term rental owners who live out of state. Sasq-Watch Home Services can help coordinate transitions between guests and ensure there are no missing items or damage to make your rental business as stress-free as possible.

"When you look at why you invested in your home, home watch services are a small price to pay to ensure the value of your investment and make sure it's protected," said Brad. ■

For more information or to schedule a consultation, visit sasq-watchhomeservices.com.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Weldworx Revitalizes Home and Auto Pieces WITH HIGH-QUALITY WELDING

By Jamie Killin

After going to school for welding and taking on side projects while working a full-time job, Michael Sanchez was able to make his hobby of welding a career with the launch of Weldworx, helping people to fix household items, repair car parts, and create custom handrails for staircases.

"I do a little bit of everything," Michael said. "I like the creative projects as much as the small jobs. A lot of people look at something broken around their home for years, and when I'm able to fix it, they're so happy about it."

For example, Michael is currently fixing a decorative metal cross that had broken in half, breathing new life into an item the owner wasn't sure could be repaired.

"A lot of people would have prob-



ably just thrown that piece away without knowing that it can be repaired," he said. "People might think some of those jobs are too small to call someone and have them fix it, but I don't mind those small jobs — things like fixing that cross or welding a latch on."

From small jobs to larger projects, he aims to provide clients with excellent customer service and a finished product that exceeds their expectations — earning him top ratings on HomeAdvisor.

"I'm fair, I do quality work, and I try to give people more than they're expecting," Michael said. "For example, I'll paint part of an item to make sure it looks nice, even if it's not the part I repaired. I just try to do a little extra. I'm not just there to make a buck and move on."

Michael also does rust repair with welding, which can be common for homes exposed to water from sprinkler systems or pools. ■

For a quote, potential clients can call Michael directly and arrange for him to look at the item. Contact him at (480) 612-5108.



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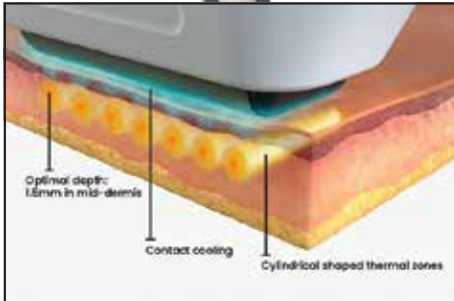
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EDUCATION

Mesa Public Schools Virtual Campus Serves
UNIQUE NEEDS FOR FAMILIES

By Laurie Struna
Photo by Tim Hacker

Internet access has transformed how society shops, communicates, socializes, and for some families, even how children attend school. Mesa Virtual Campus (MVC) is a free online program offered by Mesa Public Schools. The campus provides a virtual synchronous K-12 live option for students to attend school from home or anywhere there is internet access.

Catherine Beaudoin, principal at Mesa Virtual Campus, shares that Mesa's program serves a diverse community of 430 students and is different than the emergency remote learning created as a response to the pandemic.

"Last year families enrolled with us because of the COVID-19 pandemic and that's not the case this school year," Catherine said. "Students found success in a virtual environment and wanted to continue."

Catherine shares some families desire flexible remote schedules, and Mesa's program allows students to work without missing school. Some of the need includes student-athletes with demanding travel schedules, children with chronic illness, or students who moved out of state and whose parents prefer to keep their children at Mesa Public Schools with their friends. Virtual

learning is a way that they can stay in touch with their peers and have interaction while maintaining a structured environment.

"We have a saying on our shirts that says *Connected by Any Distance*," Catherine shared. "I truly feel that if you speak with our students they feel connected to our teachers and school."

FOSTERING STUDENT SUCCESS

Students are equipped with everything so that they have all the materials needed to learn — laptops, PE equipment, books, manipulatives, and art kits. Students and families receive support to navigate technology so they can log in and access courses via their learning management system: Canvas.

Heather Gookin is a sixth-grade teacher who says MVC is the online school of innovation and the future.

"We provide a K-12 community and platform like no other in the state of Arizona," Heather says. "What sets us apart is that we have all chosen to be a part of this community. Teachers are highly qualified, classes are rigorous, students are held accountable for their learning, and they are thriving because the online platform works for their needs."

Heather shares that parents appreciate the accessibility they have to their children's teachers.

"It's as simple as parents just hopping on at the end of class and sharing that they need to get in touch with their teacher. The ease of access and responsiveness for our teachers makes a huge difference to our students." ■

For more information regarding Mesa Virtual Campus, please visit mpsaz.org/mvc.



EVENT

Rock and Mineral Show
COMING TO MESA

Submitted by Linda Huss, Secretary,
AJ Rock & Gem Club

Apache Junction Rock & Gem Club is hosting its semi-annual Rock & Mineral Show at a new location in March. They are bringing the rock show to Mesa Community College, located at 1401 S. Dobson Road.

This dog-friendly event will be held in the parking lot under the solar panel shade structures. Over 70 vendors from Arizona and nearby states will be selling precious gems, minerals, rocks, slabs, and jewelry.

The show is outdoors on Saturday, March 4 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, March 5 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Cost for adults is \$3, students with school ID are \$1, and children 12 years and under are free.

Other great features of this rock show are all the activities for kids to learn and share an interest in rocks. The club encourages rock hounding at a young age and participates in STEM nights at local junior high schools. Children enjoy being involved in spending time outdoors digging around in the dirt on the hunt for sparkly rocks and rocks of deep hues like red Jaspers, green Malachite, Turquoise, blue Azurite, Chrysocolla, and Payson Diamonds.

When kids go rock-hounding, it can be a great outing for the whole family. Connecting with nature is a wonderful thing for everyone's physical and mental health.

The club is a 501c3 non-profit organization that provides scholarships to students whose main interests are Earth Sciences and Geology. This year, there will be a scholarship program for undergrad students to apply for at Mesa Community



College. The Scholarship Committee at the rock club is facilitated by Vicki Bretey.

If you love rocks, consider joining the club, located at 2151 W. Superstition Blvd. The facility has a large lapidary room set up with machines to cut rocks, polish, grind down, and shape to make cabochons for necklaces or other jewelry items. There is also a Silver Smithing program to learn how to set stones in jewelry.

The club is a learning center providing hands-on instruction by talented club trustees. The club also arranges more than 40 local field trips a year to go on rock hunts plus holds a monthly general meeting open to the public on the second Thursday of the month from September through May. The cost to join the club is \$4 per month plus fees for equipment use. ■

To find more information about the Apache Junction Rock & Gem Club, or to request to be a vendor at their upcoming rock shows, visit their website at ajrockclub.com.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

The Fix Drive Thru Coffee Offers Cheerful Service

By Mark Moran and Jamie Killin

The Fix Drive Thru Coffee, a family-owned and operated coffee stand, is celebrating its three-year anniversary in Northeast Mesa and is about to open its third Valley wide location in San Tan Valley, bringing top-notch locally roasted coffee beans and its relationship-based approach to service.

The Fix is also now roasting and selling its own beans. “It’s called The Heartland Blend,” said Matt Stewart who, together with his wife Darcy, work behind the scenes while daughter Stevie and son Hunter oversee day-to-day operations of the stands.

“It’s a medium Brazilian roast, the highlights of which have a chocolatey, nutty flavor to it,” Matt said of The Heartland Blend. “It was a big deal to have our own local roaster roasting our own blend,” he said. “We are selling those beans out of our stands and working on selling them online. It was another avenue for us to go down.”

After working in the coffee industry since he was 16, Hunter had the dream to open a coffee stand, and the rest of the family quickly came on board to support.

“We just love serving people as a family, so that’s where my son’s heart was at,” said Darcy. “He loves the people aspect and we decided we would back him, so now it’s become where Matt and I are behind the scenes, but Stevie and Hunter are running the stand.”

For Stevie, who serves as a manager of both locations, one of her favorite things about working with family is that they provide her with extra support.

“Working with family is not something everyone gets to experience and having family just a phone call away — knowing that they’ll pick up and you can depend on them — is a different dynamic, and it’s a special dynamic,” said Stevie.

All of the Stewarts also enjoy being able to make their customer’s days with friendly service and their exceptional espresso-based drinks.

“Our goal in opening these stands was not just to



serve coffee, but to serve love,” said Darcy. “We’re faith based. We’re Christians. It’s a way to give back to people and we love that if someone’s having a bad day, we can give them a better day.”

Since opening the first location in Tempe in late 2018, they have also enjoyed building relationships with their customers by serving them with a genuine, positive attitude and intention.

The Fix Drive Thru Coffee’s extensive menu includes classic coffees, specialty coffees, milkshakes, smoothies, teas, gluten-free oatmeal, protein cookies and muffins, with a focus on healthy options for those with dietary restrictions.

“I have some pretty severe food restrictions, so all of our flavors are natural-derived flavors, and we make sure to label gluten-free and all natural,” said Stevie. “We have healthy options, but we have options you can splurge with too.”

This year, they’ll also be looking into more locally produced and healthy food options to add to the menu. ■

The Fix Drive Thru Coffee is located at 5135 E. McKellips Road in Mesa. For more information, visit thefixdtcoffee.com.

Edward Jones

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HEALTH

Over 50

There are Multiple Times to Enroll or Make a Change in a Medicare Plan

Submitted by
Tapestry Insurance

We are all familiar with Medicare's annual enrollment, from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 of each year. This is the time Medicare beneficiaries are allowed to change their drug plans and Medicare Advantage plans. However, there are several other opportunities to enroll or make a change to your Medicare plan.

- Here is a list of some special circumstances:
- You changed where you live;
 - You are losing your current medical coverage;
 - Your plan changes its contract with Medicare;
 - You qualify for extra help paying for Medicare;
 - You have a chronic condition that qualifies you for a Special Needs Plan.

The above is just a short list of examples of election periods available. There are many more opportunities to make changes. Call me if you want to see if there is an option available to you.



Lynne Jones

As I visit with people, one of the main concerns I see is whether they are picking the best plan. It is hard to know what the future may bring, and picking the right plan can be stressful. That is why it is advisable to have an agent help navigate some of these choices. Being an independent agent, I am able to share a wide variety of plans that can work for your particular situation.

If for any reason you find yourself on the wrong plan or if you have questions about the plan that you picked, please give me a call. I can help ease your concern and make sure you have the plan that is right for you. Right now is a good time to ensure you have the right plan. You may be eligible to make a change or find a better fit. ■

To discuss your Medicare plan needs, please call Lynne Jones, licensed sales representative, at (480) 212-2246.



FINANCES

Over 50

Worried about inflation? Consider these moves

Submitted by Linda Drake and Brent D. Hoskinson

As you know, inflation was big news in 2022. And while it may cool off in 2023, it's still something to consider as you work toward your long-term goals.

If you're still working, and you can afford to boost your contributions to your IRA and 401(k), try to do so. The more resources you'll eventually have available in retirement, the better protected you'll be against inflation.

You might also want to work with a



Linda Drake



Brent Hoskinson

financial professional to develop scenarios showing how different rates of inflation could affect your portfolio, and how you could adjust your investment mix in response.

If you're already retired, you might consider doing some consulting or part-time work. With the added income from employment, you may be able to reduce the amount you take out from your retirement accounts, which could make them last longer.

Also, by doing some type of work, you could possibly delay taking Social Security — the longer you wait, the bigger your monthly payments, although they will max out once you reach 70.

We'll always have to deal with some level of inflation — so it's a good idea to be prepared. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC



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- Would you like personalized help exploring your Medicare options?

You are not alone. This time of year is very confusing for most people that are on a Medicare plan.

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