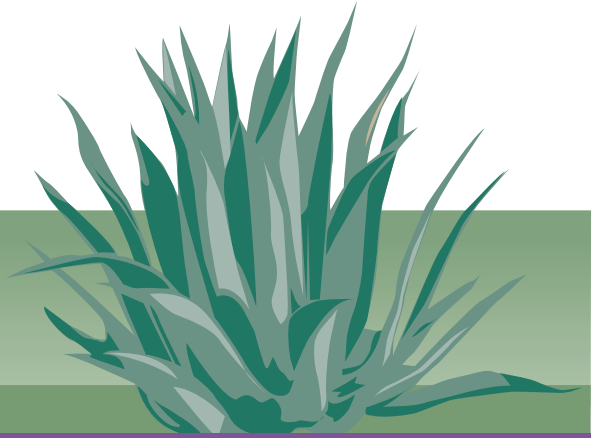


Northeast Mesa Up Close



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June 2023

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Valuable trees are in good hands with All Pro Tree Service experts



TRIM YOUR TREES BEFORE THE MONSOON CAN WREAK HAVOC

Submitted by All Pro Tree Service

Monsoon season is coming, and it takes its toll every year on cultivated trees and yard installations.

Thunderstorms can wreak havoc, uproot Mesquites, split Palo Verdes down the middle, or snap off large branches. But it does not have to be this way.

"A large-crowned tree is a beautiful sight," said Dennis Kirby, from All Pro Tree and Landscape Service. "But people don't understand that the wide canopy of a Palo Verde catches the wind like a full-blown sail." Such trees are easily uprooted or break off branches.

In the wild, Palo Verdes or Mesquite trees have branches hunched over to the ground for natural support. Their cultivated cousins, however, stand on reduced, spindly legs. Therefore, they need to be thinned out and trimmed regularly.

Whereas desert trees benefit from lightening, citrus trees can't have a hole in the crown. Their trunks are sensitive to sunburn, therefore often painted white for protection. Each tree needs a different strategy. That is where All Pro Tree Service enters the picture.

IRRIGATED TREES NEED FREQUENT TRIMMING

Tree specialist Dennis and his wife, Sue, have both grown up in this Valley. Sue is co-owner and office manager at All Pro, and has gleaned lots of arboreal know-how from her husband. "We started All Pro 17 years ago," she said. "Our clients know they can count on us."

Dennis has been honing his tree sense since taking yard work jobs in high school. After an interlude in retail management, he went to work for a tree and landscaping business for several years. Then he and Sue got into business on their own.

"Arizona trees are different," Dennis explained. "They need a lot of trimming." Cultivating leader branches and thinning out the excess is a survival strategy for trees in Arizona. And since irrigated trees grow fast here, you have to trim them often.



The Kirby Family

"We always want to do the right thing for the tree," Dennis said. But sometimes there is a fine line between making the customer happy and doing the best for the tree. He likes to dose his prime expertise just right to achieve maximum customer confidence.

"I always give clients the full picture of options," Dennis remarked. "If a homeowner asks me to reduce a tree considerably, I may need to do it in stages, 10 percent at a time, to minimize the shock to the tree and maintain its vitality."

Shaping and cleaning up a tree is an art, according to this specialist. "When you cut off a branch, you must keep in mind the rest of the life of the tree," Dennis explained.

In that regard, many handymen knocking on your door these days are not qualified. Dennis posed the question, "You wouldn't let a lawn mower guy work on your BMW, would you?"

JUNE IS PALM SEASON

Special trees thrive on expert care. A Queen Palm could be killed just from over-skinning it. Queen Palms should not be climbed — it hurts the tree — but trimmed by use of ladders. All Pro uses appropriate professional equipment for each project.

As palm season is upon us in June/July, seedpods need to be cut. If you trim too early, the pods happen anyway. Palm owners have stories to tell about that kind of debris cluttering their yards and pools. All Pro advises to take care of palms just in time.

Did you know frost damage left in the Ficus tree from

years yonder inhibits its vitality? In the survivalist mode to self-heal, the tree seeks to regenerate the damage. Only the removal of dead branches will promote the Ficus' healthy avenue of growth.

Whatever tree concerns homeowners might have, even reinstituting uprooted trees, All Pro Tree can help. The company has several employees and a fully-equipped machine truck.

A FAMILY-SIZE COMPANY FOR COMPREHENSIVE TREE PROGRAMS

"Although we are a small family company," Dennis said, "we can handle all residential needs up to major HOAs." Dennis provides all evaluations free of charge. "You pay only after you are fully satisfied with our work," he added.

"Our company strives to be professional, affordable, and customer-oriented," said Sue. Excellent referrals bear witness to All Pro's quality and dependability.

"Clients are always happy to know that we are fully bonded and insured and have workman's comp on all employees," Sue added. This makes All Pro's work altogether worry-free.

In addition to sculpting and trimming, All Pro provides a full range tree program. Services include fertilizing trees and shrubs, full yard cleanup and installing ambience party lighting high up in trees.

"Big trees are a great value and investment," said Dennis. "It pays off to maintain them properly. You don't want to lose such invaluable treasures in a storm. Weatherproof them now."

All Pro's work is always clean and neat. "It is our ambition to make your property look like we hadn't been there — only more beautiful," the tree master said. ■

If you need to give your trees a trim before the monsoon season strikes, or need a beautiful yard cleanup or monthly landscape maintenance, call All Pro Tree and Landscape Service at (480) 354-5802, or contact them by e-mail at dennis@allprotrees.com.

Sing School Children's Choir will host Summer Broadway Workshop

By Missy Gardiner, Artistic Director, Sing School

Sing School Children's Choir is hosting a Summer Broadway Workshop.

This is a wonderful opportunity for kids to spend a week singing, dancing, and making new friends, which will culminate in a mini concert for family and friends!

Sing School Children's Choir was founded in 2019 as a place where the children of Mesa who love to sing can come and enjoy learning and developing their musical gifts in a fun and uplifting atmosphere. Sing School is more than just music. Creating beautiful music together with other children helps a child gain confidence. The music and interaction enriches their lives with the discipline

of learning, and helps strengthen skills in healthy vocal technique, musicianship, and performance.

"I have found that some of my best childhood moments were spent making music with great friends. It has been one of the biggest and best influences in my life," said Artistic Director Missy Gardiner.

The Summer Broadway Workshop runs Monday, June 12 through Friday, June 16 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at Love of Christ Lutheran Church. The workshop will end with a special performance for friends and family on Friday, June 16 at 7 p.m. ■

For more information and to register, please visit: <https://sing-school.jumbula.com/#/home>.



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EDUCATION

ChatGPT and Artificial Intelligence

By Kirsten Lamb, Staff Writer,
Self Development Academy

Many schools and educators are facing the dilemma of how to handle ChatGPT and other AI tools.

ChatGPT is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) model that interacts in a conversational way. It can answer test questions, summarize texts, and write poetry and songs, among many other things. AI is here to stay, and as parents and educators, we must continually assess our stance on models like ChatGPT in order to uphold student integrity, promote cutting-edge performance, and truly value learning. So, is ChatGPT good or bad?

Academic honesty is critical when using technology and general tips for tech-savvy students. Let's explore how we should approach ChatGPT.

NOT A TEACHER

ChatGPT is not a teacher, it's not an academic source, and it's not even like Wikipedia, which is a one-stop shop for general information. In fact, it's proven to have a high rate of completely incorrect answers (*The Verge*).

Some people might think of ChatGPT as Google



on steroids, but it is not. On the contrary, ChatGPT is a language processing tool that basically takes in training data and formulates answers or responses to a user's questions or requests. It can't access search engines or the most current information like Google can. If a quick Google search results in dubious links and inaccurate information — as it does — then ChatGPT is even less reliable than that.

STRUGGLE MATTERS

Who hasn't cried at the dining room table with seemingly impossible math homework in front of them? It's not fun, and it feels pointless at the time. Not only is it a rite of passage — did you even take trigonometry if you didn't ball your fists in frustration every once in a while — it's also part of the learning process.

We learn when we try and fail. Learning should not

come easy. It can't be handed to you. We must experience curiosity, ask questions, be confused, dig for answers, and chase understanding.

When it comes to learning material, you can't beat good old-fashioned notetaking. Notetaking promotes cognition, has linguistic benefits, and is a cornerstone of teaching.

Of course, using ChatGPT to write a report or speech is not only cheating students out of the opportunity to learn, but it's downright cheating.

But don't throw it out.

With all of that in mind, don't throw ChatGPT out. As mentioned, AI is here to stay. ChatGPT came out in November 2022. There will be many iterations, improvements, changes, etc. to come. It's a good idea to explore the technology — after all, it is free and available to anyone!

For entertainment, ask it to write a bit about your best friend's favorite animal in the tone of a despised comedian. Or present a real problem you have — like getting a three-year-old to eat vegetables — and ask it to give you a step-by-step guide to fix it. Maybe there will be some valuable ideas, to be taken with a grain of salt.

Play around with it. Ask it to summarize your favorite novel, and see how accurate it is. Test it by giving it a complex math problem to answer and see if it's correct. Ask it to write a ballad incorporating your favorite foods and see how cheesy it ends up being.

ChatGPT can be a fun tool, a source of entertainment, and an exciting component of AI. It is not, however, a replacement for teaching or learning.

If you're looking for a school that understands the challenges and benefits of learning in a technological world, check us out. Self Development Academy is recognized as one of the best K-8 charter schools nationwide. We have campuses in Phoenix and Mesa. We can't wait to hear from you. ■

For more information and to schedule a tour, please contact the Front Office at (480) 641-2640. Self Development Academy has been proudly serving Mesa for over three decades.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

WANT TIGHTER SKIN?

Discover the Benefits of Sylfirm X and Exosome Treatments

By Kimberly Alvarado

More youthful glow is within your reach. And it is just what the doctor ordered. La Peau Dermatology is offering a new, world-first, and FDA-cleared pulse wave and continuous wave micro-needling technology which addresses early signs of aging — like fine lines, hyperpigmentation, and even acne scarring. The technology combines the benefits of micro-needling and radio frequency skin tightening technology to increase collagen production leading to tighter, younger-looking skin. Sylfirm X is a non-surgical form of treatment that is performed in-office. It is considered a safe procedure, with minor discomfort to the patient. There are no stitches or bruising or lengthy recovery times to endure. In fact, most patients can tolerate the procedures without any numbing. Healing time is generally considered minimal, and the results are impressive and long-lasting.

As we lean into summer, you might be wishing for more beautiful skin. Over-the-counter beauty products and treatments can only do so much to help. Thanks to modern technology, a more permanent solution is now an option. Sylfirm X and Exosome treatments tackle skin issues of all kinds. Maybe you have enlarged pores or loose skin, wrinkles, or skin discoloration. All of these conditions could benefit from the new Sylfirm X procedures. Treatments should be coupled with dedicated



skincare routines and a healthy lifestyle to maintain optimal results. To find out if you are a candidate for Sylfirm X and Exosome treatments, contact Dr. Zaina Rashid at La Peau Dermatology for a consultation. Your skin will thank you. ■ La Peau Dermatology is located at 5424 E. Southern Ave., Suite 103, in Mesa. You can contact the office at (480) 396-2300 or email LaPeauDermatology@gmail.com.

UpClose

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Seasonal rates are now in place for summer golfing at the Las Sendas Golf Club. Beginning June 1, you can book a tee time Monday through Thursday, before noon, for just \$59. Weekend rates (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) are \$79 before noon.



AERATION OF THE COURSE — JUNE 19 & 20

This month also brings the necessity for aeration of the course. The process of punching holes into the greens is essential for their health and beauty. Annoying or not for the golfer, the procedure enables air to reach the soil beneath, which becomes compacted over time. Compacted soil makes roots struggle to breathe. The temporary holes allow excess moisture to evaporate and will promote a gas exchange in the soil, resulting in a stronger root system. The result of the aeration procedure creates a turf that can better endure golfer traffic. On June 19, nine holes are open and available to accommodate play. The course will be closed on June 20.

FATHERS RECEIVE 25 PERCENT OFF THE FIRST ITEM ON JUNE 18 AT THE PRO SHOP
That's right, bring Dad in for a little shopping on Father's Day and watch his face light up when he receives a discount on his first chosen item. The Pro Shop is featuring a new stylish collection of golf and everyday wear by Vuori for men.

Ladies will adore the new selections of summer, beachy wear from Bella Dahl. These lightweight jumpers, shorts, and tops are favorites for poolside, or long walks on the beach. Filter out the harmful rays from the sun with Maui Jim's latest selection of sunglasses, featuring PolarizedPlus2 lenses. Style options are plentiful, and the comfort and clarity of summer can be fully enjoyed with a pair (or two) of these exceptional lenses.

THE PATIO & GRILLE AT LAS SENDAS

Celebrate Independence Day on July 4 at The Patio & Grille at Las Sendas. The fun begins at 4 p.m., with live entertainment from 5 to 9 p.m. Call ahead at (480) 396-4000 to reserve space for the entire family, or a group of close friends. Outdoor and indoor seating will be available.

This year's celebration will include a buffet of your summer favorites, including barbecue ribs, smoked brisket, barbecue chicken, baked beans, corn on the cob, coleslaw, and cornbread for just \$29.95 and \$16.95 for children under 18. Enjoy the panoramic views of firework displays throughout the Valley cities, while listening to the music. It's a local's favorite.



SUMMER BRINGS SIZZLING NEW MENU ITEMS TO THE PATIO & GRILLE

Light fare and bold flavors are themes of new menu items this summer over at The Patio & Grille at Las Sendas. Try a tempting Green Apple and Cream Cheese Bruschetta or Hawaiian Flatbread for a late afternoon treat. Doesn't a Mandarin or Pear and Blue Cheese Salad sound light enough, yet crazy wonderful? There's also a new twist to the burger selections this summer with the Habanero Fig Jam Burger and the Honolulu Chicken Burger, both guaranteed to satisfy your taste buds. New dinner choices will now include Pistachio Crusted Salmon and Marigold Tortellini. Drop in for Happy Hour specials. Try a signature Las Sendas knock-your-socks-off Bread Pudding, or an Espresso Chocolate or French Dessert Martini. Summer hours at The Patio & Grille are Monday through Thursday 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Sunday 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. ■

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Take Control of Your Health

Submitted by The Exercise Coach, North Mesa
Whether you've been coming to The Exercise Coach for years, you've recently started, or are contemplating starting a program, the truth is that you are investing in your most precious commodity, your health.

It's easy for us to find excuses, distractions, or to prioritize other things in life, but *you* have decided to take control of your health and you should be proud and excited about your decision. Like anything else, there will be days when you wonder if the time, the workouts, and the investment are worth it. Rest assured, they are. And your body is reaping the benefits.

But what exactly is happening within your body? That's the first and most natural question to ask. No matter your background, history, age, or fitness level, we all know, or have been told, that we need to exercise. But how exactly is your body benefiting from exercise? Why do we push our physical and sometimes mental limits twice a week?

"Get busy living, or get busy dying."
- Red, Shawshank Redemption

Well, it starts first with a basic understanding of Mother Nature. Simply put, we are either getting better or getting worse. Unfortunately for most, poor diet, needless activity, and bad advice have led us into a gradual decline in health. It certainly doesn't have to be this way, however, and no matter your physical or health condition, you can get better.

For over a decade, we at The Exercise Coach have worked with and helped people with health conditions varying from seemingly minor to more serious and threatening. Our combination of exercise and nutrition can and will improve the greatest threats to our health:

- Heart Disease (high cholesterol, triglycerides, blood pressure)
- Sarcopenia (loss of muscle mass, poor posture, shrinking)
- Diabetes (failing glucose metabolism, organ function)
- Gastrointestinal Disorders (celiac, colitis, heartburn)



- Autoimmune Disorders (multiple sclerosis, asthma, Crohn's)
- Neurological Disorders (ADD, Alzheimer's, depression)
- Lack of Sleep, Energy, Vitality (sleep apnea, chronic fatigue, "the blah's")
- Thyroid and Hormonal Disorders (low estrogen, low testosterone, hypothyroidism)
- Weight Gain (belly fat)

THE EXERCISE COACH: A NEW HOPE

At The Exercise Coach, it is our firm belief, fueled by years of experience and clients' testimonies, that success begins with each workout and each meal and continues until you are healthy and thriving. The Exercise Coach is here to stand beside you every step of the way, and we aren't going anywhere.

Make today the day to start on that road to better health and fitness. Let our caring and knowledgeable certified coaches get you started. ■

Call or text The Exercise Coach at (480) 716-6080, or visit online at exercisecoach.com/north-mesa for your complimentary initial consultation and two free sessions.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Hava Java to Host Coffee with your Councilmember

Coffee WITH YOUR Councilmember

Join me for coffee and conversation.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7
8:00-10:00am

Hava Java
2849 N Power Rd Suite 103
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No agenda, I'm here to listen.

By Kim Phillips

Hava Java, a community-minded coffee shop in Northeast Mesa, will host a coffee and conversation event with councilmember Alicia Goforth of District 5 on Wednesday, June 7 from 8 to 10 a.m.

"Join me for coffee and conversation," said Alicia. "No agenda, I'm here to listen."

Hava Java offers a relaxed atmosphere, a great menu, and community interaction as top priorities at the *anything-but-usual* coffeehouse.

Charm and a unique setting add to the inviting environment with colorful Sonoran artwork and a rope wall separating mingling conversations. Stop in and get comfortable on the patio with a favorite beverage during a warm summer evening, or lounge on a comfy couch with a sandwich and your favorite book.

The menu and entertainment offerings at Hava Java have recently expanded under new ownership. Come meet Barb and Tim Beaubien from Michigan during the conversation event to ask them questions, too.

The local coffee shop is open from 5:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Fridays, 5:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Saturdays, and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sundays. ■

Hava Java is located at the northeast corner of Power and McDowell roads in The Village at Las Sendas, 2849 N. Power Road, Suite 103, Mesa.

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REAL ESTATE

New Mortgage Fees: Borrowers with a Higher Credit Score Pay More

By Lorraine Ryall
Associate Broker, CDPE,
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Everyone is talking about the new mortgage fees that seem to punish borrowers with a higher credit score and offers a discount to riskier borrowers. So what is the truth about these fees and how will they affect you?

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac announced the new loan fees in January, but the general public has only started hearing about these changes recently. The fee changes apply to the loan-level price adjustments (LLPAs) imposed by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, the two entities that guarantee a vast majority of new mortgages.

LLPAs are based on loan features such as your credit score and the loan-to-value (LTV) among other things. They've changed several times over the years, but this was a fairly substantial change compared to the past.

WHAT IS A LOAN-LEVEL PRICE ADJUSTMENT?

In 2008, as government-backed loans began going bad, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac realized they were under-capitalized and over-exposed to risk. Both organizations were losing money, so they decided to increase fees. As some loans were less risky than others, they didn't want to make an across-the-board fee change, and the loan-level pricing adjustment was born.

Loan-level pricing adjustments are literally adjustments to the price of a loan. They are the government's way of raising prices for riskier borrowers without putting a penalty on safer ones. Just like auto insurance, a person loaded with risk will typically pay a higher premium, or at least that is how it is supposed to work, but not with these new price changes.

WILL BORROWERS WITH HIGHER CREDIT SCORES PAY MORE?

In many cases yes. The revised LLPA pricing structure increases fees for many borrowers with high credit scores (680 and above) and reduces fees for most borrowers with a score lower than 680. The biggest increase affects borrowers with a credit score of 680 or higher who make a 15 to 20 percent down payment.

All borrowers paying five percent or less as a down payment will see lower LLPAs regardless of credit score. The result is more favorable mortgage rates for buyers with a credit score lower than 679 and smaller down payments than under the previous system.

Ultimately, borrowers with lower credit scores will still pay more fees than those with higher scores, so don't go skipping those credit card payments in the hopes of getting a lower rate. This new structure shrinks the gap and reduces the penalty for having a score under 680.

At the time of writing this article, a coalition of fiscal officers from 27 state governments called on the Biden administration and the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) to scrap the loan-level pricing adjustment (LLPA) fee changes.

In a letter to President Joe Biden and FHFA Director Sandra Thompson, the fiscal officers said the new policy will force homebuyers with good credit to pay more on their mortgage every month. "Those who make down payments of 20 percent or more on their homes will pay the highest fees — one of the most backward incentives imaginable," the letter said.

AN EXAMPLE OF THE NEW FEE STRUCTURE

640 to 659 Credit Score with a 20 to 25 Percent Down Payment: You now pay a fee equal to 2.25 percent of the loan balance. Before these changes, the same borrower paid a three percent fee. On a \$350,000 loan, that's a savings of \$2,813.

740 to 759 Credit Score with a 20 Percent Down

Payment: You would have paid a fee of 0.5 percent with an 80 percent loan-to-value (LTV) ratio. Under the new rules, that fee rises to 0.875 percent. On a \$350,000 loan, that's an extra cost of \$1,313.

Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac stated the increase is based on risk management and not to help those with a lower credit score at the expense of borrowers with a higher credit score, but I will let you be the judge of that.

The following table shows the difference in LLPAs before and after the change.

Credit score	Loan-to-Value Range									
	< 30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-95%	> 95%	
780	No change	No change	-0.25%	0.25%	0.12%	0.12%	No change	No change	0.42%	
760-779	No change	No change	-0.25%	No change	0.12%	0.12%	0.25%	-0.25%	0.18%	
740-759	No change	No change	-0.12%	0.12%	0.37%	0.37%	0.30%	0.37%	-0.25%	
720-739	No change	No change	No change	0.25%	0.50%	0.75%	0.30%	0.37%	-0.25%	
700-719	No change	No change	-0.12%	0.12%	0.37%	0.50%	0.25%	0.12%	0.42%	
680-699	No change	No change	0.12%	0.12%	No change	0.37%	0.25%	0.12%	0.25%	
660-679	No change	No change	-0.25%	0.37%	0.37%	0.42%	0.30%	-0.42%	1.00%	
640-659	No change	-0.50%	-0.12%	1.25%	0.75%	-0.37%	-0.75%	-0.87%	1.25%	
620-639	-0.5%	-0.37%	No change	0.87%	0.37%	-0.37%	-0.42%	-1.00%	1.75%	
< 620	-0.5%	-0.37%	No change	0.87%	0.25%	-0.37%	-0.42%	-1.00%	2.00%	

RED = rising costs. GREEN = falling costs.

THE BOTTOM LINE

No matter which way you want to slice it, fees went up for a borrower with a higher credit score and down for a borrower with a lower credit score.

If you have any questions on how these new fees will affect you or want more information, please don't hesitate to contact me and I will put you in touch with one of my top lenders. ■

Lorraine is a Multi-Million Dollar producing agent, has been a full-time Realtor for over 13 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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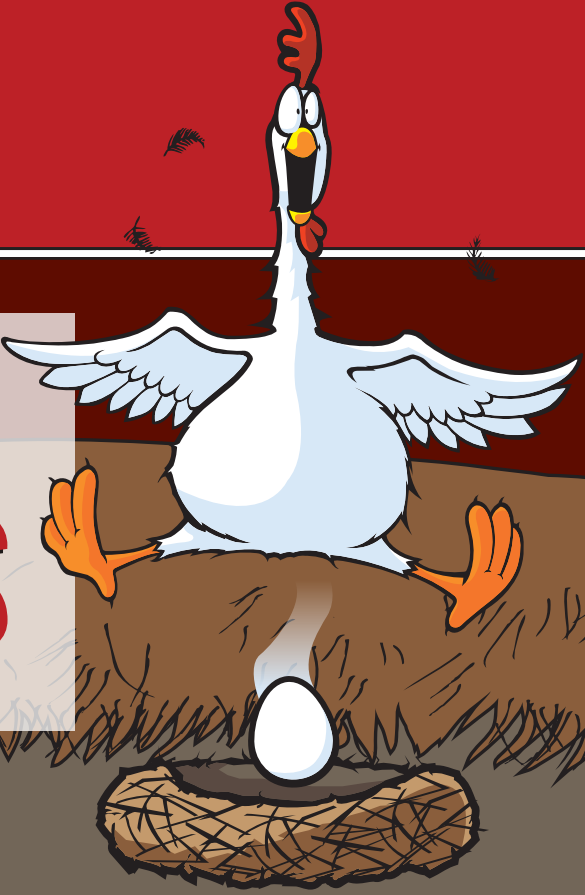
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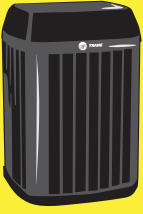
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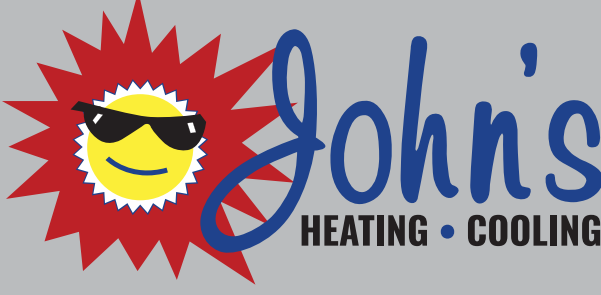




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LOCAL BUSINESS

Secure Your VA Loan with TRUSTED LENDING CENTER

Submitted by Trusted Lending Center

If you are a veteran, active-duty service member, or surviving spouse, you may be eligible for a VA loan — a home loan program offered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. However, the process of applying for and securing a VA loan can be complicated and time-consuming, which is where Trusted Lending Center comes in.

Trusted Lending Center is a mortgage company that specializes in helping families with home loans, especially veterans and military families, and there are several reasons why you should consider using Trusted Lending Center for your VA loan needs.

First, Trusted Lending Center has a team of experienced and knowledgeable loan officers who can guide you through the entire VA loan process. The team understands the unique needs and challenges that veterans and military families face when purchasing a home, and they are committed to providing personalized service to each client. They can answer any questions you have about VA loan eligibility requirements, the application process, and the benefits of a VA loan.

Second, Trusted Lending Center has access to a wide variety of VA loan products and programs, including VA streamline refinancing, cash-out refinancing, and VA jumbo loans. We can help you determine which loan product is best suited for your specific financial situation and goals. Additionally, we work with multiple lenders, which means we can shop around to find the best interest rates and terms for your VA loan.

Third, Trusted Lending Center under-



stands that time is of the essence when it comes to VA loans. Many veterans and military families need to secure financing quickly to take advantage of time-sensitive opportunities, such as a home purchase or a refinance. Trusted Lending Center can help expedite the loan application and approval process, allowing you to close your loan quickly and efficiently.

Trusted Lending Center is committed to providing excellent customer service to each and every client. We take pride in building long-lasting relationships with our clients and we are always available to answer questions and provide support throughout the life of your loan.

Trusted Lending Center never charges fees, which can save you thousands, and our interest rate is one of the best in the industry because we believe it is important to serve those who have given so much for our freedoms. When the option of refinancing comes up, we are here to serve you without changing your loan amount. Trusted Lending Center strongly believes in taking care of those who take care of others. We look forward to serving you. ■

For more information on Trusted Lending Center, visit [trustedlendingcenter.com](https://www.trustedlendingcenter.com) or call (480) 400-9884.

SPIRITUALITY

Father's Day Reflection

By Judy A. Knox, Charis Christian Church

When I was five years old, my dad took me to the Texas State Fair. I got my first taste of cotton candy and rode on lots of kiddie rides. I had my daddy all to myself that whole day. That was almost 80 years ago. As a memento of our day, he had this picture taken.

Last year on Father's Day, my first waking thought was, "It's Father's Day." Another thought followed quickly, "Well, that means nothing to me." My dad passed away in 1997, and my husband in 2012. I had no dad to celebrate. Then came a better thought: "But I do have a Father, and He is very much alive!"

Some of us had positive relationships with our earthly dads, leaving us with lots of pleasant memories. Others may have had dreadful experiences with their dads, or maybe no dad at all. But even really good dads sometimes fall short of what we

want or need. They are human. They are not perfect.

However, this is not the case with God. One of my favorite worship songs is called *Good, Good Father*. The song begins by saying we hear many stories of what people think God is like. While there may be many opinions on His true nature, the Bible says we can know what He's like by observing what Jesus was like. Jesus told His disciples, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father." (John 14:9).

The second verse portrays people searching for answers and points out that only God can give us the real answers. Our heavenly Father knows exactly what we need even before we ask Him (Matthew 6:8). The final verse expounds on God's undeniable love and His unexplainable peace. To say He is a good, good Father is an understatement. I find it overwhelming to realize how intensely He desires us to deepen our relationship with Him, to draw closer, and get to know him better.

Regardless of whatever experience we had with our earthly fathers, they made mistakes. Our heavenly Father, however? His way is perfect (Psalm 18:30). He never falls short. He's never too busy, out of town, or in a cranky mood. He is always available and always pleased with us.

This year on Father's Day I plan to sit straight up in bed and say, "Good morning, Lord. Happy Father's Day! Thank You for being such a good, good Father." ■



If you would like to hear great teaching from the Bible about God the Father and His amazing love for you, come visit us at Charis Christian Church at 4811 E. Julep St., Unit 101, in Mesa. Sunday services begin at 10 a.m.

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FINANCES

What should you expect from your investments?

Submitted by Linda Drake and Brent D. Hoskinson

What can you expect from your investments? Ideally, of course, you want them to help you meet your goals, such as a comfortable retirement. But you should be aware that your expectations can be affected by several factors.

First of all, you should expect different results based on the type of investments. If your portfolio is predominately bonds and fixed-income vehicles, there may not be as much growth potential as if you owned mostly stocks. On the other hand, you should expect a stock-heavy portfolio to fluctuate in value more than one that's fixed income-heavy.

Another factor contributing to expectations could be what's called recency bias – that is, just because some investments have done well lately, you can't necessarily expect them to continue doing so indefinitely.

One other investment behavior that may explain your expectations is called *anchoring* – the insistence on sticking with an investment you once liked, even if it consistently underperforms.

Being familiar with the factors that may shape your expectations can help you be more realistic about your investments – and make it easier to understand what you need to do to reach your goals. ■

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



LOCAL BUSINESS

Bathroom Window Treatments blend light and style
OPTIONS FOR THE PERFECT COMBINATION OF POLISH AND PRIVACY

Submitted by Window to Design

Whether you're giving your bathroom a total do-over or just want to refresh its look, window treatments should be a key part of your plan.

After all, the optimal bathroom windows treatments need to blend just the right amount of light control and style, while providing privacy from your neighbors and standing up to humidity.

Here's a look at shutters, blinds, and shades for giving your bathroom the perfect finishing touch.

VINYL SHUTTERS: With a rich, classic aesthetic, shutters are like custom cabinetry for your windows. And unlike genuine wood shutters, vinyl shutters can take heat and moisture, making them ideal solutions for bathroom windows. Look for shutters with a UV-resistant material that prevents them from warping, cracking, fading, chipping, peeling, or discoloring over time.



If you desire a lot of natural light in your bathroom (and privacy won't be an issue), consider installing shutters only on the lower halves of your windows.

FAUX WOOD BLINDS: Do you have real wood blinds in other rooms of your home and want a consistent look in your bathroom? Then faux wood blinds are your answer. Like vinyl shutters, they stand up to humidity, so they won't warp or crack, they're extremely durable and they're available in a variety of colors and finishes.



You can enjoy as much natural light or privacy as you desire without raising or lowering the blind; simply tilt the slats.

BANDED SHADES: For a different look on your bathroom windows, you may want to consider banded shades. Also known as layered shades, these unique window treatments are a spin on a standard roller shade. They combine alternating sheer and solid fabric bands on

a single shade, for a solution that gives you two options for light.

Simply align the solid fabric bands to let the sheers diffuse natural light (they also filter the view from the outside in). When you desire privacy, shift the solid bands so they overlap with one another. (Of course, you can also raise the entire shade for a wide-open view.)

Keep in mind, though, that fabric window treatments are more susceptible to mildew than vinyl shutters or faux wood blinds, so make sure you run your exhaust fan long enough to allow the fabric to dry.

WOVEN WOOD SHADES: Want to add a touch of nature to your bathroom? Consider woven wood shades. Handcrafted from natural fibers like bamboo, grasses, reeds and jute, woven wood shades add a peaceful ambiance so you can enjoy a relaxing soak or shower at the end of the day.

The amount of natural light that filters through a woven wood shade depends on its weave. While the shade you choose may provide privacy during the day, it may become more see-through at night. For increased privacy, opt for a room-darkening liner.

CONVENIENT CONTROL: As you're narrowing down your choices for new bathroom window treatments, also think about how you want to control them. While you can certainly open and close them manually, you could also enjoy convenient control with automated shades — which is especially ideal if you have hard-to-reach windows, such as behind a soaking tub.

You can easily raise and lower automated shades (or tilt the louvers on automated shutters) with a button press on a remote, tap on your mobile device, automatically, or even with your voice (and your favorite voice assistant). ■

If you are considering home renovations or remodeling, make sure to visit Window to Design online at windowtodesign.com to schedule a preliminary one-hour consultation, free of charge, or call Lisa at (480) 207-6450. Graciela Coronado can be reached directly at (480) 993-9090, or email graciela@windowtodesign.com.

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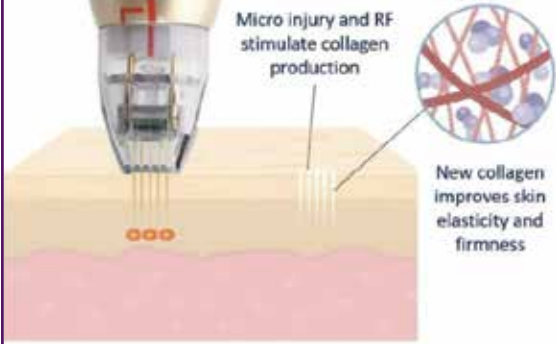
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A yellow circular sticker with a purple starburst at the top left and bottom left. The text inside the circle reads: "ATTENTION" in white, "Mention this ad" in purple, "and you will" in purple, "receive a" in purple, "SPECIAL" in white, and "PRICE!" in white. To the right of the circle, there are two more purple starbursts and a partial view of a red and white striped object.



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REAL ESTATE

Take Stock of Your Home this Summer

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

Your home is among your biggest investments and the place you spend the most physical time each week. In fact, we spend so much time in our homes that we actually start to *un-see* our spaces. Most of us typically only *re-see* our homes when we get ready to sell (or have company coming over!).

However, you don't have to sell your home to give it a good once over. You can get a fresh start right where you are just by taking a closer look and investing time and energy into your existing space.

Grab your notebook and we will guide you through.

1. START AT THE FRONT DOOR

The best place to start evaluating your home is at the front door. Look at the door, trim, and the threshold. Does it need repair, staining, painting, adjusting, or replacing? Does the doorbell work? Does the light by the front door work? Do you like the entry chandelier, or have you been



meaning to change it for ages? Does the lock still work, and do you have a key? Is the entry visually pleasing? What are your impressions walking up to the door?

Really studying the front door in detail will prepare you for how to evaluate the rest of your home. We promise you will learn a lot about the space you call home.

2. RATE EACH ROOM

When we first move into a home, we typically define the space and then live within that vision until we move out. However, our lives change so our spaces need to change, too. In our house, we have a front room that started as a formal living room 20 years ago and then morphed into a music room. When our son went to high school, the piano left, and in came a pool table and dart board. The pool table became an Amazon package table until the pandemic came along and required that we have a second home office for Zoom calls.

The point is we viewed that room as a flex space that could change with our lifestyle. When you sit in each room in your house note what you like about it and what you don't. Have you always hated the paint color? Does the wobbling fan bother you? Does the room feel crowded or uninviting? Or perhaps it is your favorite room in the house, and it is where you want to spend all your time.

Take notes on each space and write down the good and the bad so you can figure out how to maximize the function of your home.

3. AUDIT YOUR MECHANICALS

Did you know you can order a home inspection of your home even if you aren't moving? We have one every few years just so we have an idea of what needs to get fixed.

You probably don't know if you have broken roof tiles or corrosion starting under a sink. You may not know that there are issues in the attic or with your water heater. Take the time to audit your ACs, roof, water heater, toilets, appliances, etc. so you can get ahead of issues. A little prevention goes a long way and will give you peace of mind.



4. ASSESS YOUR EXTERIORS

Evaluate your exterior lighting, plants, hose bibs, pool equipment, screens, windows, stucco, fascia, exterior paint, and watering systems. Our exteriors take a beating from the Arizona sun, so they are the first things to get shabby.

Also, think about how you use your outdoor spaces. For years we had a big grassy area we struggled to keep green. We disliked our backyard so much that we never went outside, and it really made us want to move. Last year we turned that grassy area into three raised bed gardens that we absolutely love. Changing the space has completely changed the way we feel about our home and now we spend time in our yard every day.

5. CLOSE YOUR EYES

Stand at the entrance of each room and close your eyes for at least 10 seconds and then open your eyes. What is the first thing you see in each room? What is the focal point? How does the room make you feel? Is the space aesthetically pleasing? Consider your daily views and then stage your house not to sell, but rather for your own enjoyment.

6. YOU WILL NEVER HAVE ENOUGH STORAGE

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» CONTINUED ON PAGE 19

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Northeast Mesa Area Market Report

Sales for the Month of April 2023



Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
2516 E Golden St	1,384	Sahara Palms	\$400,000
1843 N Avery Cir	1,335	Falcon Hill	\$401,000
9537 E Flanders Rd E	1,186	Oasis Verde	\$406,000
2404 N Saffron	1,702	Villa Royale	\$408,000
1122 N 89th St	1,599	Falcon Ridge	\$419,000
7230 E Ivyglen St	1,724	Moondance	\$423,000
1427 N 62nd Pl	2,136	County Island	\$438,000
4933 E Halifax St	2,042	Mira Mesa	\$444,000
1125 N Quail	1,567	Sundance Groves	\$445,000
6358 E Hannibal St	1,918	Desert Skies	\$449,000
6512 E Menlo St	2,034	Villa Royale	\$450,000
7436 E Hannibal St	2,184	Stoneridge East	\$460,000
6646 E Saddleback St	1,700	Red Mountain Ranch	\$465,000
1353 N Avoca	1,942	Moondance	\$465,000
2218 E Elmwood St	1,716	Tierra Este Park	\$470,000
1309 N Rochester	1,496	Mira Mesa	\$474,900
6711 E Ivyglen St	1,501	Maplewood	\$475,000
5302 E Hobart St	1,794	Alta Mesa	\$490,000
2624 E Enrose St	2,290	Meadowvale	\$490,000
2466 N Saffron St	1,868	Villa Royale	\$496,000
7312 E Jasmine St	2,800	Falcon Hill	\$500,000
6623 E Saddleback St	1,700	Red Mountain Ranch	\$500,000
834 N Arvada	2,276	Silverado	\$505,000
6444 E Virginia St	1,710	Summit	\$519,000
1504 N Sinova St	2,009	Alta Mesa	\$519,000
2906 E Nora St	2,100	Rancho De Arboleda	\$520,000
6704 E Juniper St	2,170	Maplewood	\$520,000
4014 N San Gabriel Cir	2,108	Red Mountain Ranch	\$530,000
5366 E Fairbrook St	2,049	Crosspointe	\$535,000
2717 E Fairfield Cir	2,084	Meadowvale	\$535,000
2341 N Tierra Alta Cir	2,162	Boulder Mountain	\$537,500
1816 N Salem St	2,094	Alta Mesa	\$546,000
9324 E Grandview St	2,081	Sierra Estates	\$550,000
6218 E Camelot Dr	2,131	Alta Mesa	\$559,843
2512 N 67th St	2,173	Villa Royale	\$570,000

Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
5728 E Leland St	1,587	Apache Wells	\$580,000
1358 N Estrada Cir	3,239	Grandview Estates	\$590,000
5353 E Hermosa Vista Dr	1,760	Apache Wells	\$590,000
8756 E Inca Cir	1,730	Mountain Bridge	\$595,000
2236 N Shannon Way	3,732	Apache Wells	\$600,000
9545 E Gary St	2,335	Saguaro Shadows	\$630,000
2060 E Lockwood St	2,301	Orange Blossom Estates	\$630,000
4238 N Ranier	1,743	Red Mountain Ranch	\$659,000
2053 N Red Cliff Cliff	2,000	Mountain Bridge	\$672,000
2344 N Gayridge Rd	1,792	Apache Wells	\$680,000
3121 E Greenway St	2,593	Mesa Northgrove	\$680,000
6338 E Hermosa Vista Dr	2,478	Tara Vista	\$695,000
1437 N 64th St	3,190	Suhuario Hills Estates	\$699,000
2037 N Chestnut	4,015	Regency At Garden Grove	\$730,000
2060 N Canelo Hls	1,741	Mountain Bridge	\$789,000
8431 E Kenwood St	2,382	Mountain Bridge	\$810,000
9360 E Nora St	3,314	Boulder Mountain	\$810,000
821 N 99th St	2,766	County Island	\$849,000
3811 E Omega Cir	2,560	Somerset Estates	\$856,000
5921 E Sierra Morena St	2,462	Reserve At Red Rock	\$867,119
2015 N Woodruff	2,601	Savona	\$890,000
5928 E Sierra Morena St	3,615	Reserve At Red Rock	\$905,810
837 N 99th St	3,205	County Island	\$920,000
1841 N Hillridge Cir	2,759	Monteluna	\$947,400
5345 E Mclellan Rd #107	3,567	Alta Mesa	\$950,000
3933 E Elmwood St	3,862	Trovita Estates	\$972,500
4055 N Recker Rd #1	4,398	Red Mountain Ranch	\$1,025,000
10006 E Glencove Cir	3,710	La Jara Estates	\$1,100,000
1847 N Hillridge Cir	3,177	Monteluna	\$1,190,740
3820 E Oasis Cir	3,865	Somerset Estates	\$1,215,000
3227 E Encanto St	4,381	Groves Unit 2	\$1,300,000
3843 E Fargo St	4,075	Trovita Norte Phase 2	\$1,350,000
2222 N Val Vista Dr #22	4,748	Avalon Grove	\$1,487,000
3433 E Kenwood St	5,318	Hermosa Groves South	\$1,551,000
2846 N 88th Pl	6,183	County Island	\$2,297,500

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LOCAL BUSINESS
Clear Choice Flooring
HAS SUMMER SPECIALS

By Mark Moran
It's clear. Summer is the season to save at family-owned Clear Choice Flooring, based in Gold Canyon but serving the entire East Valley for more than four years. Clear Choice fits pretty much all your possible remodel and finishing job needs. Clear Choice specializes in floor coverings with products and services for your carpet, laminate, tile, luxury natural stone, area rugs, hardwood, and other floor coverings needs. They also provide kitchen and bath design and remodeling products and services including countertops, custom backsplashes in kitchens and bathrooms, and more.

Clear Choice has a full in-store showroom, but if you cannot go there, Clear Choice is still equipped to be of service. "We'll bring the store to you," said Clear Choice owner Jon Howlett. "We will come out with full-size samples and let you try them in your home to be sure they are what you are looking for."

Jon said Clear Choice specializes in custom work, has the years of experience to back that up, and guarantees all of their products and work.

"I've been doing floors since I was a kid," Jon chuckled. "I got tired of being an installer and just kind of came up through the ranks to be an owner."

The slate of specials at Clear Choice for the upcoming summer months is extensive, according to Chris Hintz, sales and project manager, starting with 25 percent off in-stock carpeting, which includes installation, and 15 percent off countertops. "We do custom showers," Chris said.



"We throw in a free decorative band with the purchase of a custom shower, which is also part of the summer specials."

Also part of the summer special is 15 percent off on waterproof vinyl planking and installation. Chris said Clear Choice can also do next-day, in-person estimates to help you make your decision quickly.

Chris said the key to every project is proper preparation, including getting all of the surfaces ready for installation and or remodeling.

"We stand by our installation," Chris added. "We stand by our products. From start to finish we make sure the project is properly inspected from the time you pick out material with our onsite designer."

The design is free, Chris said, and Clear Choice hires only the best, most conscientious installers in the business, all of whom, he said, are bonded and insured.

"We pay our installers top dollar," he said. "And we expect top dollar installations." ■

Clear Choice has a full in-store showroom located at 6832 S. Kings Ranch Road, Suite 2, in Gold Canyon. View their website at clearchoiceflooring.com or give them a call at (800) 505-9583.



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LOCAL BUSINESS

Milano's Wood Fired Kitchen & Pizzeria OFFERS STYLISH CHOICES



By Kimberly Alvarado

Local and independently owned, Milano's Wood Fired Kitchen & Pizzeria is a stylish choice for Italian and Mediterranean fare.

Mike and Ali have been serving customers for 21 years and continue their passion to make sure everyone who comes through their front door leaves satisfied with their food choices and happier than before they entered their doors.

You'll see evidence of their wish to create a lovely atmosphere through the transformation of the dining area, which boasts new artwork and lighting. Even the kitchen has been updated with new equipment.

When the chef has the proper tools, it makes the systems of preparation and delivery more efficient. "It's part of making sure our customers have a great dining experience," says Mike.

Savor the selections on the lunch menu, which has special pricing Monday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. It's your choice, whether to dine in or call ahead for take-out or delivery. Customers choosing the dine-in option will experience the convenience of tasty recommendations along with a full-service bar, and daily special selections. Happy Hours are all day on Saturday and Sunday in the restaurant as well.

As the temperatures outdoors heat up, it's nice to

know there is a local option for great food just around the corner at Milano's. Set up a weekday on your calendar for Italian or Mediterranean and call the restaurant directly to arrange a pick-up for a quick, tasty dinner. Signature favorites for summer include the Italian chicken salad, lasagna, and chicken shish kabobs.

How about a unique Mediterranean platter to serve poolside with guests? The chicken shawarma platter pairs well with beach towels and soft music.

Milano's utilizes Door Dash and Uber Eats too, but as you think locally, you'll be excluding the percentage sharing by picking it up yourself.

When you support local businesses, you are helping our community thrive.

The staff at Milano's has done a great deal to keep prices surprisingly low, during a time when costs are trending up. "Our profit margins have gone down," added Mike. "We prefer the lower margin ratio to help keep our customers happy." ■



Milano's Wood Fired Kitchen & Pizzeria is located at 4545 E. McKellips Road, Unit 103, in Mesa. Visit their website at milanospizzamesa.com or call them at (480) 325-1600 for ordering options as well as catering information. The restaurant is open from 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Thursday, staying open until 9 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Dine in - Pick Up - Bar - Catering - Delivery Available (LIMITED AREA)

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Gourmet Gelato & Coffee
OFFERS GREAT SELECTIONS
FOR FATHER’S DAY

Submitted by Gourmet Gelato & Coffee

Gourmet Gelato & Coffee has added milkshakes and floats to its menu selection, a delightful treat for the fathers and besties in your life.

Stop by and grab your favorite flavor for a cool on-the-go treat.

Take advantage of the free WiFi and get some work done beneath the shaded patio area. It’s the perfect month to flee from the confines of your home office space.

Specialty gelato flavors include Oreo white chocolate fudge, peanut butter brownie, Nutella biscotti, and chocolate chip cookie dough.

Did you know that Gourmet Gelato & Coffee has catering services available? Whether you’re planning a birthday party, wedding, shower, or corporate event, the neighborhood sweet shop can provide indulgent palate-pleasing tastes for your guests.

WHAT IS GELATO?

Gelato is the Italian version of ice cream, known for its intense flavor, silky smooth texture, and fresh taste. Its name means *frozen* in Italian and differs from ice cream in one standout difference — texture.

Because of the difference in ingredients and preparation, the two desserts’ end results also vary. Gelato contains six to nine percent butterfat, which is significantly lower than ice cream. It is also churned at a slower speed and contains less air, making it dense, as opposed to the fluffiness of ice cream. ■



Gourmet Gelato & Coffee is located in the shopping center on the southwest corner of Power and McDowell roads. For more information, call (480) 415-8429. You can also follow them on Instagram at [gourmetgelato&coffee](#).

EDUCATION

Dads Make a Difference
AT MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By Laurie Struna
Photos by Tim Hacker

Mesa Public Schools provides quality educational choices for students from pre-K through high school. With a long tradition of excellence in academics, athletics, service, and the arts, Mesa’s schools are the heart of the community.

When families and communities donate their time and resources, it makes students’ educational experiences richer and schools stronger. Motivated by a desire to make a difference in our schools, meet two exceptional dads who are making a difference one substitute assignment at a time.

MODELING A NEW LEVEL OF PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOLS

Oscar White is a former Marine, father of a Mesa Public Schools alumni, and member of Mayor Giles Human Relations Advisory Board. He volunteers with veteran organizations and has a successful management career at Amazon. With a full schedule, one would wonder why he also devotes his time to being a substitute teacher at Mesa Public Schools.

Oscar shares that our children are the future of our community, and it’s too important not to get involved. Schools need the community to engage with them.



Mark Pond retired from the aerospace industry and now gives back to youth as a substitute teacher and robotics coach.

“Yes, my schedule is busy, but I believe that it’s imperative to make the commitment to give back to our youth,” Oscar says. “I remember all of the special angels in my educational career that helped me along my way and as a positive male role model, I want to pay it forward.”



Oscar White enjoys making a difference in the lives of students as a substitute teacher and mentor.

MPS ATTRACTS AND EMPLOYS GOOD PEOPLE WITH BIG HEARTS

Mark Pond retired from the aerospace industry, and in his family’s best interest, became a stay-at-home dad. Mark celebrates eight years of substitute teaching and shares that his daughter’s counselor at Mesa Academy for Advanced Studies originally talked him into it. He completed his paperwork on a Wednesday and the next day was subbing for the Mandarin Chinese teacher. Mark shares that he enjoys being a substitute teacher because it’s fun, and the students keep him young at heart.

“When my daughter was a fourth grader, she figured out dad early on in life,” Mark says. “She knew that if she asked me to join the PTO, I would probably do what most dads do and say I don’t have the time, but instead she joined the robotics team and asked me to build a table for her team.”

Mark built the table, became a robotics team coach, mentored other coaches, and for the past three years has worked just about every day as a substitute. ■

For more information regarding volunteer and community partnership opportunities or careers at Mesa Public Schools, please visit [mpsaz.org/volunteer](#) or [mpsaz.org/careers](#).

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LOCAL BUSINESS

By the Bucket Offers Lunch Specials and Catering Options



By Jamie Killin

By the Bucket, a fast-casual Italian eatery which opened earlier this year, has become well-known for buckets of delicious spaghetti, but it's also becoming a go-to for lunch with 8-inch hoagie subs, salads, a la carte protein options, and more.

"By the Bucket is not just spaghetti and marinara sauce," said owner Jenna Peterson. "We have a variety of hot subs, garlic bread pizza, and mac n' cheese that has been added to our menu."

Customers are even mixing and matching to create their own specialty meals with By the Bucket's long list of options.

"We've had people customize our lunch options, which is great," said Jenna. "Someone recently added our parmesan chicken to our macaroni and cheese, which is really good, or we've had people mixing our sauces — like the marinara and alfredo to make their own."

The restaurant has also expanded its seating, so diners can enjoy their meal at the restaurant both inside and outside.

By the Bucket also has catering options perfect for family parties and summer events, available with just 24 to 48 hours' notice, allowing guests to share their favorites — like By the Bucket's classic spaghetti —

with large groups of family and friends. "We offer full trays of pasta, meatballs, and Caesar salad that are easy to come and pick up," said Jenna. "They're super portable and stay really fresh so they're great for parties. We like to make it as easy as possible for our customers."

In addition to its pasta buckets, salads, and subs, By the Bucket offers everything you need for a satisfying multi-course meal for the whole family, including cheesy bread, garlic bread, and New York-style cheesecake.

On most days you'll see Brian, Jenna's husband, working and operating the store. He is currently offering the following specials when you mention this article: \$1 off Small buckets, \$2 off Medium and Large buckets, and \$1 off all subs.

The Red Mountain location is located on the northwest corner of Power and McDowell roads facing McDowell Road, next to the cleaners. The eatery is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. ■

For more information on By the Bucket, visit bythebucket.com. To stay up-to-date on the Mesa Red Mountain location, follow on Instagram [@bythebucket_mesa_redmountain](https://www.instagram.com/bythebucket_mesa_redmountain).

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, call (602) 828-0718 or visit sasq-watchhomeservices.com.





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EDUCATION

ENGINEERING FOR KIDS offers a Wild, Wild Summer

By Kimberly Alvarado

Welcome to Engineering for Kids. This year has been named the *Summer of Exploration*. Look no further than Northeast Mesa's Uptown Jungle Fun Park as the *basecamp* for this year's overload of entertainment and discovery.

For the sixth consecutive year, Uptown Jungle, located at 5741 E. McKellips Road in Mesa, will be the host location for weekly programs for East Valley children from Pre-K to 8th grade. Let your child discover new ways to have fun this summer with the knowledge they will gain through interactive hands-on projects and fun demonstrations.

Courses will encourage opportunities to explore future career options as students creatively invent their own solutions to real-world problems. There are new courses to choose from, each week, for ten straight weeks. Shhh — they may not even realize they're learning!

Interested parents and students are encouraged to visit the website engineeringforkids.com/phoenix-metro. Pull up your phones, and together search all of the possibilities to carefully select from a wide range of course choices from this season's selections.

Possibilities this year for apprentice campers include challenging courses, such as:

- LEGO Moon Mission

- Game Builder Garage with Nintendo Switch
- Podcast Production — encouraging campers to share their story
- Nutrition Science Camp
- Astronomy Camp

The educators at Engineering for Kids are first to admit that they too are continuously learning new things. Just like engineers in the real world, the educators

discover new ways to improve, teach, and learn, so they work together with campers to assess the elements of each camper's experiences.

Week No. 1 began on May 30 this year, and the conclusion of summer fun is Aug. 2. Sign up for a day, a week, or the whole summer.

Drop off time is 8 a.m., with classes beginning at 8:30 a.m. and wrapping up daily at 3:30 p.m. After-care is also available until 6 p.m.

"We begin each class with a 15-to-20-minute lecture of instruction and then encourage each child to take their imaginations as far as they can," says Zach. Each camp course encourages interactive, open-ended learning. Classes also encompass 15 to 20 minutes of break time, to allow the kids to access all the action-oriented activities of Uptown Jungle Fun Park.

This summer could be your child's wildest season of exploration and self-discovery! ■

For more information, visit engineeringforkids.com/phoenix-metro.



» REAL ESTATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

you will have. All our clients who get ready to move do a pre-move purge. But you don't have to move to get organized — you just need to create your motivation. Once you start purging it becomes liberating and even a little addictive. Editing your possessions creates space and peace.

7. LIVE AUTHENTICALLY

If you have a dedicated home office but do all your work in the kitchen, own that. If you have always wanted a home gym, make it happen by getting rid of the guest room. You are not obligated to have a formal living room because your parents did — make it a game room if that is what brings you joy. Create the spaces you want and need from the spaces you have in your home.



8. MAKE A PLAN

Once you have collected all the information about your home, start making a list of priorities. Categorize them and then work your way through the list. A good handyman can probably help with half the things on your list and then prioritize the rest over time.

Because we see so many houses, attend so many home inspections, and live fully immersed in the real estate world, we do this for our clients and ourselves on a regular basis. Our lists are always long, but what may seem overwhelming can usually be achieved quickly. In fact, everyone always says, "Why didn't we take care of these things sooner!"

So, consider this a friendly reminder to take stock of your home this summer. It will reduce stress and make you fall in love with your home all over again.

If you need a service referral, just give us a call. 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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HEALTH

Over 50

When to Enroll in Medicare

By Lynne Jones, Tapestry Insurance

I ran into a friend this week who mentioned he needed to get signed up for Medicare. He is turning 65 in the fall and thought he should talk to me right away. This is a common concern so I thought I would talk about it this month.

Most people do enroll in Medicare when they are close to their 65th birthday. However, there are some exceptions to be aware of.

You do not need to sign up for Medicare when you turn 65 if you have employer-based insurance through you or your spouse's current job. You can wait to sign up until you are ready to stop working or you lose your health insurance (which-ever comes first).

Be aware if your employer has less than 20 employees or you have COBRA; you will need to enroll in Medicare at 65 to avoid any penalties. If you are still working and have employee insurance, you can enroll in Medicare Part A. Medicare pays secondary to other insurances, including paying the deductible. There are some restrictions: the charge must be Medicare-



Lynne Jones

covered services and the total amount paid must be equal to or less than the Medicare-approved amount.

There's little downside to enrolling in Part A. It covers hospital stays and skilled nursing care once you've paid the deductible (\$1,600 in 2023). It is premium-free to anyone who worked for at least 40 quarters in Medicare-covered employment.

My friend's situation was interesting. His wife is younger than he is and so he plans to work for a few more years so that she can continue to be covered through his employee plan, but he wants to compare the cost of Medicare to the cost of staying on his employee plan. We will do a comparison based on monthly premiums and deductibles.

Everyone's situation is unique. Things like the cost of your current health plan, your plan's deductible, your prescription coverage, doctor networks, and other considerations should all be considered when deciding when it is best for you to enroll.

As always, please call me to make an appointment if you are about to enter the Medicare world or have questions about your situation. I would love to be your guide. ■

Please call Lynne Jones, licensed sales representative, at (480) 212-2246 or email at jonesdvp@yahoo.com.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Over 50

Dirk Celebrates 10 Years of Driving Friends to the Airport

By Dirk Van Leenen

Ten years ago, I went to a convention in New York. When it was over, I ordered a shuttle to take me to the airport. They told me I had to be ready at 3 a.m. for my 9 a.m. flight. I thought that was ridiculous.

I was ready and waiting for an hour. At 4 a.m., the shuttle started making its way through New York. The shuttle ended up getting in an accident, but the shuttle driver let me know he was still going to make it to pick me up, but that it would be another five minutes. I was waiting more than an hour. I was pretty nervous about possibly missing my flight.

After waiting all morning for the shuttle, which never showed up, I took a taxi and arrived at the airport only 30 minutes before my departure. That was



Dr. Dirk Van Leenen

such a bad experience.

I didn't want anyone else to go through something similar, so that day I made a plan to start driving people to the airport. All of my clients became friends, because I am always on time. My motto became A.O.T. (Always on Time) and I stick to my motto. I will never allow it to become A.A.O.T., if you know what I mean. It has become a hobby I enjoy. I keep my prices low. I have great conversations with my friends. Ten years of service and I continue to love it. ■

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LOCAL BUSINESS

The Desert Belle Offers Family Fun



By Jamie Killin

Families can enjoy the beauty of the Sonoran Desert with a serene cruise around Saguaro Lake on The Desert Belle, which offers a one-of-a-kind experience that is both informative and enjoyable for out-of-towners and locals alike.

The Desert Belle operates 700 cruises a year, offering several different cruise options including wine cruises and craft beer cruises. The Desert Belle also offers the top-rated 80-minute narrated cruise, which is led by a coastguard-certified captain describing the history, geology, geography, and wildlife native to the Sonoran Desert.

Cruisers will see a variety of wildlife including bald eagles, wild horses, deer, bobcats, and even bighorn sheep.

For those celebrating a special occasion, or wanting to gather family and friends, the Desert Belle also offers private charters — perfect for a memorable event.

“The Desert Belle has been operating for 58 years now and is the longest continuously running tour boat in Arizona,” said president and co-owner David Smith. “It’s so well-loved, and we get the sweetest reviews. We love seeing people walk away saying, ‘Not only did we have a great time, but we also really learned something.’”

Next door to the Desert Belle is the Saguaro Dockside, a docked boat that features a specialty gift shop and deck.



“We sell a lot of items that make perfect gifts — amethyst, fine jewelry, clothing, and souvenirs,” said David. “Then, guests can head upstairs for beer and wine on the view deck, which is quite nice.” ■

For more information on the Desert Belle, or to purchase tickets, visit desertbelle.com. For more information on Saguaro Dockside, visit saguarodockside.com.

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