

# Red Mountain Ranch Up Close

Bringing neighbors closer to their community

February 2013

## THE VISTAS PAVILION AT LAS SENDAS WEDDING & BANQUET VENUE SET TO OPEN

By Dawn Abbey

Finishing touches to the interior and landscaping continue as The Vistas Pavilion at Las Sendas wedding, corporate and banquet venue prepares to host its initial event, the annual general meeting of the Las Sendas owners, set for Feb. 18.

"The support from the community for this endeavor has been overwhelming," exclaimed Lloyd McBean, Las Sendas Golf Club Executive Director and Managing

Partner. "In fact, when we made our presentation for the project to the Mesa Planning Board, more than 100 Las Sendas residents took the time to come down and voice their support," he continued. "We had passed out white Las Sendas caps to all who came, and the board was met with a sea of white heads nodding their approval. It was amazing."



Lloyd also is excited about the overall effect of The Vistas Pavilion on the Las Sendas community. "As the golf club's facilities and amenities continue to expand and improve, it also has a positive effect on home values for the whole community," he stated. "It's a win-win for all of us. The new addition follows the

same Tuscan style, so all that's new blends into the old. We were extremely careful to maintain quiet and dust control during the major construction periods, and we have had no complaints," he added. "We can't thank the community enough."

The Vistas Pavilion is an apt name for the structure, perched high up on the mountainside above the existing club buildings, and with even broader views than the renowned Patio Restaurant. The 12,800-square-foot center features a 60-foot-by-26-foot kitchen area for banquets and catering. In addition, a huge covered patio around two sides, offers panoramic 180-degree views of the Valley, mountains, desert and golf course. Interiors feature neutral travertine and bold, black and beige paisley carpeting.

Lloyd envisions the pavilion as accommodating three main types of events—weddings and large parties; conferences and meetings; and attracting major golf events. "We were voted 2012 Best Golf Course in the Phoenix area, and we have already contracted for five major golf tournaments this year," he said. "It kicks off April 21, with the Alice Cooper Rock and Roll Pro Am, including a concert featuring Alice Cooper, the Eagles and Kiss. Tickets have sold out," Lloyd continued, "but the public is invited to come out and watch the tournament play." Other golf tournaments slated are for Save the Family, Mesa Chamber of Commerce, the Coyotes and Coyotes alumni.

"On the east side of the building, we are creating a serenity garden, with lush landscaping and water features to make a perfect wedding and reception setting that connects to the patio and main banquet room," Lloyd said. "This has the option of entertaining up to 400 guests." Weddings also can be staged on The Patio and other picturesque locations around the grounds. "In fact," Lloyd stated, "we have 10 weddings booked already, and expect to host around 100 this year."

As a conference and meeting center, 400 can be seated in the main room. "The area also can be partitioned to have two events simultaneously," Lloyd stated. "We are wired for state-of-the-art conferencing, and have four 20-inch-by-30-inch screens. Smaller meetings and events can be accommodated in the first floor, 16-seat board room, and for 40 in Bogey's."

Lloyd promises the same great quality of food and beverage preparation for the new center for which the three club restaurants are now known. Hotel packages for extended conferences and wedding parties are being coordinated with three local hotels, just 15 minutes away and convenient to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and Falcon Field. ■

For more information, or to schedule events, call (480) 396-4000. Applications are now being taken for on-call banquet, catering and service personnel.

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# UpClose

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## COMMUNITY

### RED MOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Hosts Dedicated Bikers

Submitted by Dave Bush

If you regard your children as your most precious possessions, you are correct.

Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA) is dedicated to enabling abused children to overcome their fear of their abusers.

Come to Madsen Hall at Red Mountain United Methodist Church on Feb. 16, from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., to learn how this unlikely group protects kids from their abusers. They provide dedicated cell phones, and are on call for the children 24 hours a day. If necessary, they will stand guard day and night to prevent the abusers from threatening the children.

They are known to escort children to and from school, and attend court proceedings where the children are required to testify in the presence of the abusers. BACA is not affiliated with any biker clubs. The members are volunteers who must go through rigorous background checks with fingerprints. They include parents, grandparents and professionals, from law enforcement, to business owners, etc.

The members of BACA promise we will not forget them.

Everyone, including your kids, is invited to attend this presentation. Parking is on the west and south sides of the church. Come and talk with the bikers, and see the bikes. A free nursery will be available, and refreshments will be served. ■



For more information, call (480) 981-3833. Visit the Web site at [www.rmumc.com](http://www.rmumc.com). Red Mountain United Methodist Church is located at 2936 N. Power Road.

## BEAUTY

### Let Cosmos Salon and Day Spa PAMPER YOUR VALENTINE

By Dawn Abbey

In our high-stress world, everyone can benefit from some me-time, and Valentine's Day is the perfect occasion to gift your special one with beauty and relaxation.

With this in mind, Cosmos Salon and Day Spa is offering the following special discounted Valentine's packages:

**Hugs and Kisses** includes a haircut and style, as well as a Classic manicure and pedicure, all for \$90. Now that she looks so beautiful, take her somewhere special.

The **Signature Spa Getaway** gives a renewed glow with a microdermabrasion by one of the skilled aestheticians at Cosmos, followed by a beautifying masque. A Signature Spa manicure and Signature Spa pedicure also are included in the \$150 package.

**Cupid's Cocoa Confection** is for you if you're always on the run. A mini-facial, using cocoa-based products designed to cleanse, exfoliate and hydrate, takes only 45 minutes and costs only \$65.

The **Heated Stone Sweetheart Massage** is for those who really need to relax. Cosmo's experienced, licensed massage therapists offer a 60-minute Focused Tension Relief Massage, using added heated stones and luxurious cocoa oil for \$80.

"Cosmos also can design a special gift package just for you, for the ladies and guys, too," said Sandy Barbetta, spa co-owner with husband Cosmo. "Come in and we can help you pick something just right for your Valentine." ■

For more information, or to obtain gift certificates, visit the salon at The Village at Las Sendas, located at 2837 N. Power Road, or call (480) 844-0707.



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FINANCE

BE SURE YOU ARE GETTING THE FULL STORY WHEN INVESTING

Submitted by John P. Duncan

A lot of people ask me the question, "What is a holistic advice?" The term is referring to comprehensive advice that is big picture in nature. There are a ton of different places competing for a consumer's investment, insurance and financial services business. The problem with most, in my humble opinion, is that they are offering only a specific product or service.

Why does this pose a problem to your finances? The reason it presents a potential for problems is when one is looking at a mutual fund, annuity, life insurance, stock, bond or any other place to park money without considering the impact on other holdings; the overall plan is at risk.

What is interesting is if you are being pursued to invest by a mutual fund company, annuity rep, or stockbroker, in my experience, you are going to receive very shortsighted information. Each is convinced his advice or vehicle to be superior to all others and kind of a one-size-fits-all. An example would be someone with millions of dollars being advised by a mutual fund representative to invest in mutual funds as the place to park money.

Mutual funds are typically for smaller investors who do not have the funds to go direct to the money managers. This would be an error to suggest the funds and would cost the client in terms of higher costs and lack of access to broader range of options his higher net worth affords. Call any large mutual fund company, though, and you will not hear this information. They are one-trick ponies.

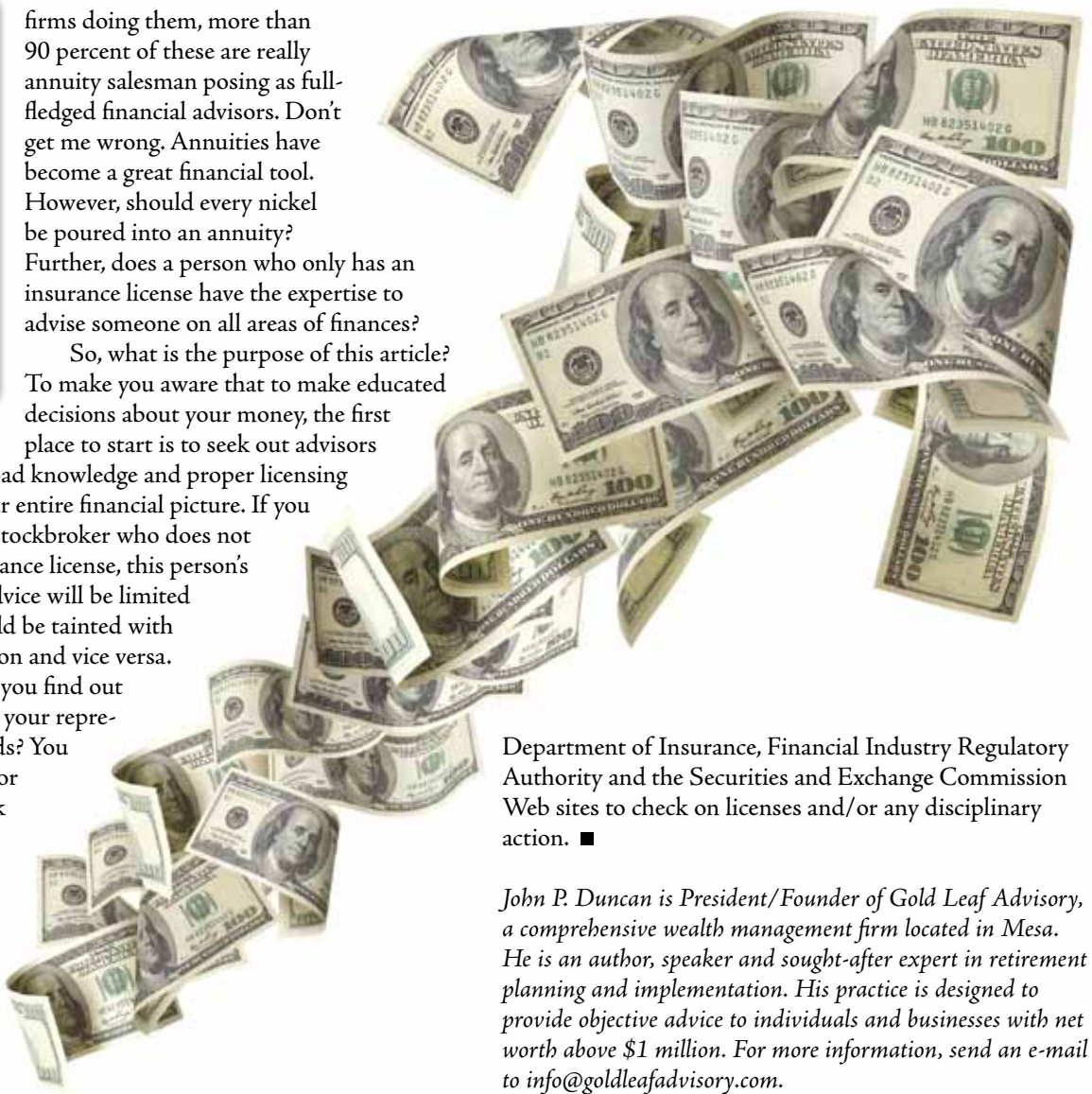
Many financial advisors locally hold seminars at restaurants. Heck, from time to time, we even do learning events such as these. I would venture to guess, of all the



firms doing them, more than 90 percent of these are really annuity salesman posing as full-fledged financial advisors. Don't get me wrong. Annuities have become a great financial tool. However, should every nickel be poured into an annuity? Further, does a person who only has an insurance license have the expertise to advise someone on all areas of finances? So, what is the purpose of this article? To make you aware that to make educated decisions about your money, the first place to start is to seek out advisors

who have broad knowledge and proper licensing to review your entire financial picture. If you work with a stockbroker who does not have an insurance license, this person's big picture advice will be limited and even could be tainted with misinformation and vice versa.

How do you find out what licenses your representative holds? You can ask him, or you can check out Arizona



Department of Insurance, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority and the Securities and Exchange Commission Web sites to check on licenses and/or any disciplinary action. ■

John P. Duncan is President/Founder of Gold Leaf Advisory, a comprehensive wealth management firm located in Mesa. He is an author, speaker and sought-after expert in retirement planning and implementation. His practice is designed to provide objective advice to individuals and businesses with net worth above \$1 million. For more information, send an e-mail to [info@goldleafadvisory.com](mailto:info@goldleafadvisory.com).

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DINING

FLANCER'S GET NAKED  
Valentine's To-Go Menu is Back

By Dawn Abbey

Set out the fine china, light the candles and add a bowl of fresh flowers.

This Valentine's Day, you can celebrate with a fantastic gourmet dinner at home. And you don't even have to cook.

Back by popular demand, Flancer's *Get Naked, Valentine's To-Go Menu* is available again this year. "Naked is optional, and only applies at your home," joked Greg Ringel, Flancer's Mesa general manager.

"The complete four-course meal is full of uniquely delicious flavors and uniquely different names," Greg added. "We hope everyone has as much fun and enjoyment eating it, as we and our chefs had putting it together."

Begin your meal with a soup appetizer, *El Starto Sizzleato!*—a creamy Shrimp Bisque with roasted fennel, decorated with red pepper hearts and tarragon pesto croutons.

Salad course is *Leafy Isa Greeny!*—fresh baby spinach topped with grilled Korean beef, garnished with sesame-crusted mangoes and slivered wonton noodles, dressed in an Asian vinaigrette.

The *Ohh Baby, Bay by Excitimo!* entrée features fresh Blue Crabmeat Crab Cakes with caramelized shallots in a fresh ginger *Velouté*, nestled on a bed of freshly house-made, lemon-zest/cracked-pepper fettuccini, and a side medley of sugar snap peas, mushrooms and carrots.

And the dessert, oh, the dessert, *El Choco Es Smoocho!*—decadent Brownie Lollipops dipped in Grand Marnier



ganache, then dusted with cocoa powder and drizzled with more chocolate and orange zest, all accompanied by fresh berries.

The cost of Flancer's *Get Naked, Valentine's To-Go Menu* is \$58.99 per person. Orders made before Feb. 8 also will include a free fresh-baked baguette. The meal is picked up cold and comes with simple heating instructions. ■

*The to-go dinner can be ordered now for pickup on Valentine's Day, Thursday, Feb. 14, at either Flancer's Mesa, located at 1902 N. Higley Road, (480) 396-0077; or Flancer's Gilbert location, at 610 N. Gilbert Road, (480) 926-9077.*

COMMUNITY

Fresh is the Name of the Game  
AT LAS SENDAS FARMERS MARKET

By Yasmin Rochette

Enjoy locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables at the Las Sendas Farmers Market, located at the Trailhead Members Club parking lot, every other Saturday, until the end of April, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Vendors will have their stalls set up at the Trailhead Parke on Feb. 9 and 23, March 9 and 23 and April 6 and 20. This is your chance to support local producers and encourage sustainability.

One of the great things about stopping by the Farmers Market in Las Sendas is the chance to taste products before making a purchase.

Red Mountain Cattle Company produces grass-fed beef less than five miles from Las Sendas. Manager Tim Kenney can tell you all about how the meat he raises differs from the store-bought variety, including the fact his cows are not given steroids. They also produce free-range chickens,



eggs and honey.

Jake Markham, of Davy Jones Seafood, will describe how he and his family catch salmon using gill nets in Alaska, flash freeze the fish and bring it to Arizona.

Green Bee Produce has all manner of fresh fruits and vegetables from which to select, as well as mint extract, salsas and sauces. You will find some unusual varieties of seasonal produce, including species of apples and onions never seen at supermarkets.

Baker Gloria Dickson, from Glorious Food, has a very tempting display of goodies she herself makes—muffins, cakes, cookies, jellies, pickles, soups and salads. She has it all.

All enthusiastic vendors have unique stories to tell about their products, and many have samples for taste testing. It is worth dropping by and treating yourself to some of the freshest and most delicious food in Northeast Mesa. ■

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## HEALTH

# CARDIOLOGIST EXPLAINS THE SYMPTOMS OF HOLIDAY HEART

By Dr. Afroze Ahmad, Las Sendas Cardiology, P.C.

"So, where were you last weekend, Luke? I thought we will have an encore of our New Year's Eve bash," said Eric.

"Oh, no. I have washed my hands of those binge drinking episodes," replied Luke.

"Really?" Eric asked the question more with disbelief than disappointment. "Does this have anything to do with your recent hospitalization, Luke?"

"Yes. It is a long story, Eric," Luke replied. He appeared pensive.

"Why don't you tell me?" Eric was curious.

"The hospitalization was a real eye opener," Luke admitted. "Here I thought the New Year would bring a lot of happiness. I had discontinued smoking and had lost close to 25 pounds. I was upbeat about the prospects for the New Year."

## HOLIDAY HEART

Socially, alcohol passes with flying colors both as an inebriant and an intoxicant. Good times and holiday celebrations equate with high alcohol consumption. However, the havoc this mode of celebration creates in our body may not always be that well known.

At times during a holiday season and immediately thereafter, demands of socialization, stress and memories past may prompt one to consume alcohol, not in moderation, but in large quantities and in binge drinking. Similarly, stress relief on weekends also may lead people to consume alcohol heavily.

Individuals consuming large quantities of alcohol during holidays and on weekends are at a risk of what has been termed and labeled as the holiday heart. It is intriguing that although the holiday heart is commonly seen in men, women and adolescents are not spared.



The holiday heart is not limited to any particular race either. Surprisingly, the holiday heart is common among young individuals with healthy hearts.

Despite significant research, the exact mechanism for alcohol causing heart rhythm abnormalities is unknown. Nevertheless, alcohol seems to adversely affect the electrical system of the heart, which, in turn, causes the rhythm disturbance.

## ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

The most common rhythm disturbance associated with the holiday heart is atrial fibrillation. In patients with heart disease, this rhythm can lead to heart failure and stroke. However, given the healthy heart in people with a holiday heart, these complications do not occur.

The sensations and feeling accompanying the holiday heart may vary. It may include palpitations, lightheadedness, dizziness, the heart jumping out of the chest and/or rapid fluttering. In some people, such symptoms also may be confused with an anxiety attack. The persistent nature of the symptoms lands the patient in an emergency room where an EKG promptly leads to the diagnosis of atrial fibrillation.

When the cardiologist initially examines such a patient, she looks for any signs of underlying heart disease, using an ultrasound and a stress test. The ultrasound is employed to assess the function and the size of the heart. The stress test is used to evaluate for risks of a heart attack.

## HEALTHY HEART

In a patient with a holiday heart, the ultrasound commonly confirms a normal function and size of the heart.

Additionally, in such cases, a stress test also is reassuring, with results showing no signs of heart disease. Thus, the

two tests establish the presence of a healthy heart.

Then, the cardiologist correlates the temporal relationship of binge or heavy drinking with the onset of symptoms, and a diagnosis of a holiday heart is established.

No definite drug or surgery is indicated for a holiday heart. All one has to do is refrain from heavy or binge drinking.

"And you will follow her advice?" Eric asked the question with concern.

"Yes. I will," Luke responded.

"You know, Luke, I may rewrite my own New Year's resolution tonight, as well," uttered Eric with a determination in his eyes. ■

Dr. Afroze Ahmad is a multiple board certified cardiologist practicing at Las Sendas Cardiology, P.C., located at 3514 N. Power Road. For information, or to make an appointment, call (480) 361-9946.



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Dr. Ahmad is a highly experienced cardiologist. She holds numerous board certifications and is fellowship trained:

- American Board of Internal Medicine
- American Board of Cardiovascular Disease
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- American Society of Nuclear Cardiology

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HEALTH

# Chiropractic Care CAN BENEFIT YOUR SEX LIFE

Submitted by Red Mountain Chiro-Med

Chiropractic care and a healthy sex life are very closely linked. Having a nagging painful back will get in the way of energetic sex or adventurous positions. So, it is important to have regular chiropractic adjustments to prevent your sex life from falling short of expectations.

According to Dr. Lynn Pangburn, of Red Mountain Chiro-Med, chiropractic can work wonders for your sexual energy, stamina and performance. Chiropractic adjustments can take pressure off the nerves, which transmit sensation and give you physical function, so you and your partner can enjoy sex, which is physically and spiritually fulfilling.

The low back and pelvis have a complex system of nerves and muscles closely linked with the sexual organs. Pressure on those nerves can lead to low back pain and sexual (erectile) dysfunction. Back problems also can limit your movement both in and out of the bedroom.

A chiropractic adjustment cannot only provide significant relief from pain, but can put your sex life back on track.



SPECIAL OFFERS

The first special is called *Massage for Lovers*. The cost is \$85 for an hour with a licensed massage therapist, teaching a couple how to give each other a sensual massage.

The second special is an hour-long massage for \$39.95. There is a limit of five sessions per person. This special offer expires on May 24. ■

For more information on this topic, or our two Valentine massage specials, call (480) 924-7632 today. Red Mountain Chiro-Med is conveniently located at 2044 N. Recker Road, on the northwest corner of Recker and McKellips roads.

EDUCATION

# CHARTER SCHOOL ADDRESSES CONCERNS Associated with Middle School Transition

Submitted by Self Development Charter School

The transition to middle school is met with both excitement and apprehension by parents and students alike.

The three major concerns parents have for their children's transition to middle school are academics, safety and social growth. Self Development Charter School (SDCS) administration staff, and faculty are dedicated to addressing these three areas, and ensuring each student's transition to middle school is a successful one.

SDCS is well known for its rigorous academic program, and provides an unparalleled college preparatory program. Students are able to enroll in classes traditionally taken in high school, such as algebra II, geometry, biology, chemistry and literature. The foreign language program is a hybrid class, combining traditional classroom and online learning. This program is offered through Middlebury College, and prepares students for future distance learning experiences. Many SDCS graduates enter high school honors and Advanced Placement programs. Others complete high school requirements within two years, and begin earning college level credits.

In addition to a commitment to each student's education, SDCS staff and faculty ensure the well-being and safety of each student. SDCS provides a safe and protected environment whereby students have freedom, as well as responsibility. Teachers serve as advocates and mentors for students, responding to their social and emotional needs. Their role of advocacy strengthens the positive relationships between students and teachers.

In addition to receiving a high quality academic experience, SDCS students have many opportunities for



social growth, healthy competition and new experiences through extra-curricular activities. SDCS offers clubs, including Sports Club, Foreign Language Club and Dance Club. Students prepare to participate in the Grand Canyon State Games.

Other students enter academic competitions, such as Math Counts and Science Bowl. Every spring, students showcase their creative spirits, performing in class plays, as well. A rigorous academic program, caring staff and faculty and various extra-curricular opportunities help develop well-rounded students who are well prepared for high school.

Self Development Charter School is a publicly funded, accelerated school, which has received Arizona's excellent school ranking ever since it became eligible for such a ranking. Teaching one grade level above the Arizona standards, SDCS is one of the top performing schools in the state. ■

A middle school program information night is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 12, at 6 p.m. Please join us to learn more about the middle school curriculum and extra-curricular activities. For more information, please call (480) 641-2640.

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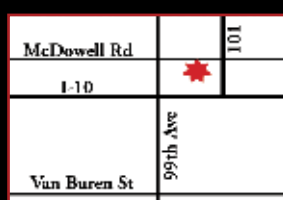
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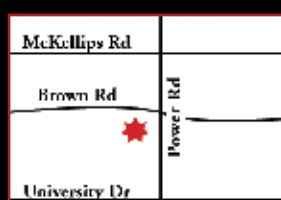
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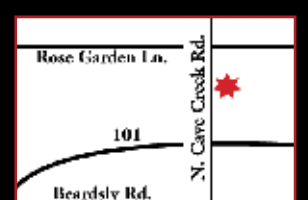
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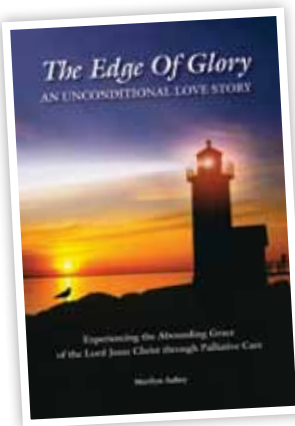
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COMMUNITY

Author Offers Unique Faith-Based Perspective on Role As Caregiver



The Edge of Glory is an unflinchingly honest and sweeping journal of a caregiver caught up in a struggle with palliative care of a spouse.

Edited and designed by Up Close Publications Copy Editor Sandra Van Dyke, The Edge of Glory is a Christian-based story of unconditional love in the face of the ultimate adversity. The care described is immeasurable. The love exhibited is extraordinary. With guidance from the Lord, the caregiver and the spouse become one, dreading the day their battle is lost. Both find solace, however, in knowing one day they will be reunited in heaven.

Author Marilyn Aubry lives a triumphant life by trusting in the Lord. In Him, she finds a personal, reassuring and everlasting peace. Her source of strength comes from The Word of God. She wrote this book with true love for her husband and a close relationship with the Lord. Writing The Edge of Glory brought her peacefulness and the strength to continue her role as caregiver for the man she loved.

“Caring for my husband was my privilege,” Marilyn said. “He was the love of my life. I wanted to care for him. I know he would have done the same for me.”

The Edge of Glory offers insight for the individual who is a caregiver for a loved one, as well as the person thinking about taking on this responsibility. The book also may offer comfort for anyone who has lost a loved one to illness.

To learn more about The Edge of Glory, or to purchase a copy of the book, please contact Sandra Van Dyke at (480) 219-3830.

DINING

LUNCH IS QUICK AND SPECTACULAR AT IL Forno Italian Restaurant



By Dawn Abbey  
We’re always looking for something different for lunch, whether it be a quick bite on our lunch break, or a leisurely gathering with friends.

This month, Il Forno Italian Restaurant is rolling out an entirely new lunch menu, according to owner Mat Tran. His business partner and chef Giorgiono Vignali has created eight delicious new sandwiches starting at \$7. They are ham and provolone; Italian; chicken, meatball or sausage parmigiana; Italian roast beef; New York steak; and prosciutto Di Parma, all made fresh when you order. Each week, the restaurant will feature one sandwich for only \$5.

Eating lighter? Fresh-made salads like Caesar, Mediterranean, New York steak or salmon start at \$5.50, and come with your choice of homemade dressings.

In addition, they are offering large, two-topping calzoni for \$8; large 16-inch, two-topping pizzas for \$16; and lunch-size pasta dishes, including homemade cheese raviolis for \$8, and spaghetti and meatballs for \$10. There also are favorites

like eggplant parmigiana, lasagna and chicken alfredo, from \$12. “We also have a new \$6 kids menu, with mac and cheese, meatballs and spaghetti and more,” said Mat.

Freshness and service are key at Il Forno. “We don’t keep pizza slices just sitting around keeping warm,” Mat declared. “Everything is made fresh and with the same care and pride as our dinners. Our lunch servers’ goal is not only to fulfill a customer’s expectations, but to exceed them,” he continued. “And we guarantee it won’t take longer than 15 minutes to get your order.”

If you want an order to go, Il Forno opens at 11 a.m. every day. If you need it early, though, Mat suggests calling the restaurant 15 or 20 minutes before it opens. “Staff is here by then, and we always answer the phone,” he assured. “Right now, we don’t have lunch delivery, but call us ahead if you have a special situation, like a party or meeting.”

However, Il Forno does offer dinner delivery up to an hour before closing. “It’s free for orders of \$25 or more, within a two-mile radius of our restaurant at McKellips and Power roads,” said Mat. “That covers Red Mountain Ranch and Las Sendas neighborhoods to the north, Power Road to the east, Higley Road to the west, and south to University Drive.”

Il Forno is located on the west side of The Home Depot shopping center, at Power and McKellips roads, near Dunkin Donuts and Sports Clips. Hours are Monday through Thursday, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. For orders or information, call (480) 807-0888.



COMMUNITY

Christmas Came Early AT THE RED MOUNTAIN RANCH SOCIAL CLUB



By Jay Williamson, Acting Secretary and Publicity Chairman

The Social Club’s annual Christmas party was held on Tuesday, Dec. 18, at the Overlook Room, at the Red Mountain Ranch Country Club, with a social hour beginning at 6 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m.

Tables beautifully covered with Christmas decorations greeted the 40 guests. The room looked like Christmas had arrived.

After an hour of visiting and catching up with family news, club members and guests were seated for the party. Social Club President Betty Day welcomed everyone to our annual event. Wanda Wimp, the host for the evening, also made some announcements. Char Underwood gave the prayer thanking God for the meal and for everyone attending the party.

The first course was served, and the band, consisting

of Gerhardt Gast and John Harrison, started the evening’s entertainment. The band played a guitar and harmonica and sang for our enjoyment. The music was great. Gerhardt is Char’s son. We invited the band back, as we enjoyed the music of oldies when they played at our spring cocktail party this past May.

Red Mountain Ranch Country Club Chef Bo Neill prepared an outstanding meal. We want to thank Bo and the Country Club staff for providing us with a wonderful dining experience.

For you gourmet cooks, the menu for the evening during the cocktail hour consisted of Artisan Cheese and a cracker display with smoked Gouda and fresh mozzarella. There also was a Vegetable Crudites platter with ranch dipping sauce. The salad course consisted of a fresh spinach salad with red wine poached pear and fresh queso frescos dressed with a red wine reduction. The main meal included a duet of grilled fillet and grilled chicken breast, served with scalloped cheese potatoes, bacon sautéed green beans, finished with mushroom Marsala wine sauce. Dessert consisted of a red velvet cheesecake with whipped cream.

During dessert, Betty, Wanda and Shirley Bender conducted a raffle. Guests were given raffle tickets when

they checked in. Everybody looked at their tickets in hopes of being winners. We then had the drawing. Numbers were called out, with many gifts awarded.

The band then played some of the old Christmas standards. As the party came to a close, Betty thanked everyone for coming. We hold our meetings on the second Thursday of the month.

We want to thank Wanda for being the host of the Christmas Party. She and her committee spent long hours planning the event. Thanks to Ewin and Pat Trapp for checking in the guests as they arrived. A thanks also is extended to Shirley and others for their help in making this event successful.

For more information about the Red Mountain Ranch Social Club, send an e-mail to Acting Secretary and Publicity Chairman Jay Williamson at jaynwilliamson57@yahoo.com.





LOCAL BUSINESS

Love Thy Neighbor this Valentine's Day

BUY LOCALLY AND SHOP WITH HEART AT PALAVELA HOME

By Dawn Abbey

Valentine's Day makes this month the perfect time to recognize that we are all intertwined—a time to interact with and support our community, according to Sue and Ryan O'Meara, mother and son co-owners of Palavela Home interior design and retail showroom.

To facilitate giving back to the community, they have created their *Shop with Heart* fund-raising program by joining with local nonprofits. These designated charities receive 10 percent of all Palavela Home sales made in their names.

Here's how it works. When a customer makes a point-of-sale purchase, whether it be a gift or piece of furniture, 10 percent of the price is donated to the customer's charity of choice. At present, Palavela Home supports Save the Family, Homeward Bound, Arizona Opera, Southwest Center for HIV/AIDS, Phoenix Chapter of the ALS Association, Reyes Foundation for Burn Victims and Point Foundation. "Palavela facilities also are available to the groups for fund-raising and social events," said Sue. "We're also looking to expand by partnering with local schools and parent-teacher organizations."

In addition to helping local nonprofits, Sue and Ryan believe one small business grows itself and other small businesses. "We believe no business exists in a vacuum," Sue said. "We all inter-connect and prosper together. Local businesses benefit their neighborhoods and communities in so many ways. So, we use local trades and crafts people, and suppliers as much as possible."

That way, the money stays in the community where everyone has a vested interest. "These businesses are our support—electricians, wallpaper installers, showrooms, movers, tile and carpet installers, drapery and upholstery workrooms," Sue continued. "All of our support businesses share the same desire to make sure our clients are happy."

Ryan, the company's interior designer, related how their relationships with other local businesses began.

"In 2007, my mom and I went against all odds and opened our new business in a 300-square-foot space at an antique mall type of establishment," he said. "By 2009, even though the economy was still on very shaky circumstances, we felt confident enough to move to our own 1,200-square-foot building in Downtown Scottsdale," Ryan continued. "Having our own space was exciting and scary at the same time. We would now be responsible for everything—rent, phones, credit card transactions, in addition to purchasing inventory."

Their leap of faith gave the pair the opportunity to work with other small businesses. "By doing everything ourselves in the showroom, and finding great local trades people, we continued to grow," Ryan said. "In addition, we realized that customers and clients were looking for that personal experience and relationship that builds with small businesses. We were fortunate to find professionals we can rely on."

By 2011, the two moved into the beautiful Spanish Colonial building. "The tenets of our first years moved with us," Ryan continued, "and we continue to offer value, great customer service and fun social events for business and nonprofit organizations."



Applications are welcome from nonprofit organizations to participate in the *Shop with Heart* program. "We invite members in for coffee and refreshments to see who we are and what we offer," said Sue. "It costs nothing, but you must have 501c3 status. Once approved as a community partner, your charitable organization will receive 10 percent of proceeds from purchases when customers indicate, at the time of sale, that they support your organization," she continued. "We tally up all proceeds, and make contributions on a quarterly basis."

Palavela Home offers unique decorative items, furnishings and expert design assistance. ■

For more information on interior design or the *Shop with Heart* program, visit the Palavela Home Web site at [PalavelaHome.com](http://PalavelaHome.com), or call (480) 946-1006. You also can visit the showroom, located at 6939 E. First Ave., in Downtown Scottsdale.

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Red Mountain Ranch Area Market Report

Sales for the Month of December 2012



Address	Square Feet	Sold Price	Short Sale or REO*
6048 E. Roland St.	1,934	\$180,000	X
4106 N. Recker Rd.	1,943	\$212,000	X
6545 E. Snowdon St.	2,472	\$245,000	
6334 E. Viewmont Dr. #6	1,702	\$265,000	
6327 E. Star Valley Cir.	3,769	\$465,000	
6404 E. Redmont Dr.	3,585	\$639,815	
4364 N. Santiago Cir.	5,792	\$1,300,000	

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

Sales Information Provided By John Karadsheh, ABR, CRS, ASSOCIATE BROKER, Coldwell Banker Trails & Paths Premier Properties. [www.BuyAndSellAZ.com](http://www.BuyAndSellAZ.com)

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LOCAL BUSINESS

CUT-A-THON TO BENEFIT  
Sunshine Acres  
CHILDREN'S HOME

The holidays may be over, but the need for charitable giving still remains, and that's why the team at Mike's Barbershops is planning the second annual fund-raising cut-a-thon on Sunday, Feb. 24, to benefit Sunshine Acres Children's Home.

Last year, Mike's Barbershops raised \$780 and donated clothing and other charitable goods as well. The event will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All proceeds from haircuts done on Sunday will go to the children. "Everyone is encouraged to bring clothes, toys and donations for the home," said Mike. ■

For more information, call Mike's Barbershops at (480) 218-5964, or visit 5057 E. McKellips Road, at the southwest corner of Higley and McKellips roads.



COMMUNITY

New Church Comes  
TO NORTHEAST MESA



**Submitted by St. Ignatius of Antioch Church**

A new Christian community in Northeast Mesa has turned a former office building into a house of worship.

St. Ignatius of Antioch, an Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, is now conducting services at 5515 E. Redmont Circle, just off Thomas Road, between Higley and Recker roads. Reverend Father James Coles is the pastor of the church, which has been active in the Mesa area for the past 10 years.

St. Ignatius is home to a group of Christians worshipping in accordance with the Eastern Orthodox tradition. Divine Liturgy is served each Sunday morning at 9 a.m. preceded by Orthros Services at 8 a.m. Great Vespers services are held on Saturday evenings at 5 p.m. All services are conducted in English, and the congregation is a mixture of Orthodox Christians from all ethnic backgrounds.

Visitors are always welcome and are encouraged to attend services. The congregation wants to be an active presence within the Northeast Mesa area. Evening Prayer and Inquirer classes are held at the church on Wednesday evenings. ■

For information about St. Ignatius of Antioch, please call (480) 892-6224, or visit the Web site at [www.saintig.org](http://www.saintig.org).

COMMUNITY

Skyline Bands  
Will Host Rummage Sale

The Skyline Concert and Jazz bands will host a rummage sale on Saturday, March 2 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Skyline High School parking lot, located at 845 S. Crismon Road in Mesa.

The band members need to raise approximately \$15,000 to participate in the Music in the Parks competition in Southern California on May 4. Currently, band members are collecting donations. Anything in good, working condition will be accepted. ■

Arrangements can be made for donation pick up or drop off by e-mailing [shscoyoteband@gmail.com](mailto:shscoyoteband@gmail.com), or by calling (480) 354-2544.





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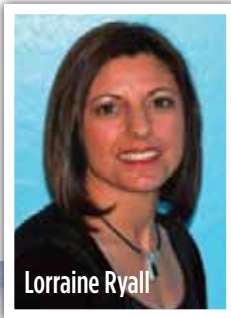
## REAL ESTATE

# MORTGAGE DEBT RELIEF ACT IS EXTENDED ONE MORE YEAR

By Lorraine Ryall, Realtor, Certified Distress Property Expert (CDPE), CSSN Coldwell Banker Trails and Paths Premier Properties

Many struggling homeowners were waiting to see what would happen with the Mortgage Debt Relief Act before making a decision on how to move forward in the New Year.

On Jan. 1, as part of the fiscal cliff bill, Congress passed a one-year extension of the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act, which was set to expire this past Dec 31. The extension of this act, which has saved homeowners more than \$1 billion in taxes, is great news for homeowners who are upside down on their mortgages.



Lorraine Ryall



example, if the current balance on the mortgage is \$400K, and the house is sold as a short sale for \$300K, there is a \$100,000 deficiency. The borrower will receive a 1099C from the bank for \$100,000, and it will be reported to the IRS. With the Mortgage Debt Relief Act, this \$100,000 will still be reported on your tax return, but will not be taxable.

## ELIGIBILITY

The cancelled debt must be for the purchase, building or substantial improvements of your principal residence. Maximum amount of forgiven debt is \$2 million, or \$1 million if married and filing separately. It does apply to refinance, but only if the previous mortgage would have qualified (which in

most cases they do). It applies to debt reduced through foreclosures, short sales and loan modifications.

## WHAT IS THE MORTGAGE DEBT RELIEF ACT?

Normally, when a debt is forgiven, it becomes income and is taxable. It is reported to the IRS by the creditor and must be included on your tax return. The Mortgage Debt Relief Act allows you to exclude the cancelled debt of purchase money on your principal residence, and you won't be subject to any tax on the deficiency. You can find the complete Mortgage Debt Relief Act on my Web site at [www.ArizonaShortSaleToday.com](http://www.ArizonaShortSaleToday.com).

## WHAT IS CANCELLED DEBT/DEFICIENCY?

When a homeowner does a short sale, the bank is agreeing to sell the property for less than the amount owed, therefore, selling the home short. This will be an agreement between the homeowner and the bank. The remaining balance is the cancelled debt or the deficiency. In a basic

## WHAT THIS MEANS TO HOMEOWNERS

Now that the Mortgage Debt Relief Act has been extended, homeowners who are upside down on their mortgage, facing foreclosure or considering doing a short sale, can move forward without worrying about any tax consequences on the deficiency. With this extension, and banks being more willing than ever before to work with homeowners to avoid foreclosure, there has never been a better time to do a short sale. ■

Contact me today for more information on the Mortgage Debt Relief Act and short sales, or for a free confidential consultation. You can call my cell at (602) 571-6799, or send an e-mail to [Lorraine@ArizonaShortSaleToday.com](mailto:Lorraine@ArizonaShortSaleToday.com). Visit my Web site at [www.ArizonaShortSaleToday.com](http://www.ArizonaShortSaleToday.com).

## LOCAL BUSINESS

## Breadsmith Showcases Unique Dessert Bread

Submitted by Breadsmith

In celebration of Valentine's Day, Breadsmith is adding Chocolate Cherry Dessert Bread to its dessert bread lineup for the month of February.

"Since Valentine's Day is the festival of romantic love, we wanted to offer a bread in line with the spirit of the holiday," said Breadsmith owner Greg Farr. "It's not overly sweet. The tart, yet sweet cherries and rich chocolate give this bread a fantastic taste. It's made fresh every day, and just like everything else at Breadsmith, it contains no additives or artificial ingredients," he continued. "It truly is the perfect bread for Valentine's Day."

Breadsmith, a true all natural European-style artisan bakery of bread and sweets items, opened its doors in August 2005. Operating from the store in The Village at Las Sendas, Breadsmith has been serving its award-winning bread to retail and wholesale customers throughout the Valley. ■

Breadsmith Artisan Bread Bakery is conveniently located at 2831 N. Power Road, on the northeast corner of Power and McDowell roads. For more information, contact Breadsmith at (480) 981-7600, or visit the Web site at [www.breadsmith.com](http://www.breadsmith.com).



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Whether you are still current, behind on your mortgage payments, or are just upside down and need to sell, give me a call. Even if you already have a foreclosure notice, it may not be too late.

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HEALTH

Victory Energy Wellness Center  
HOSTS MONTHLY EVENTS

Submitted by Victory Energy Wellness  
Victory Energy Wellness Center, at Power and Thomas roads, in the Zahara Center, will host the following events for February:

Friday, Feb. 8 at 6:30 p.m.  
Group Energy Session - Attracting Love into Your Life

Wednesday, Feb. 13 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.  
Kangen Water Presentation with Dr. Laura Vandenheede

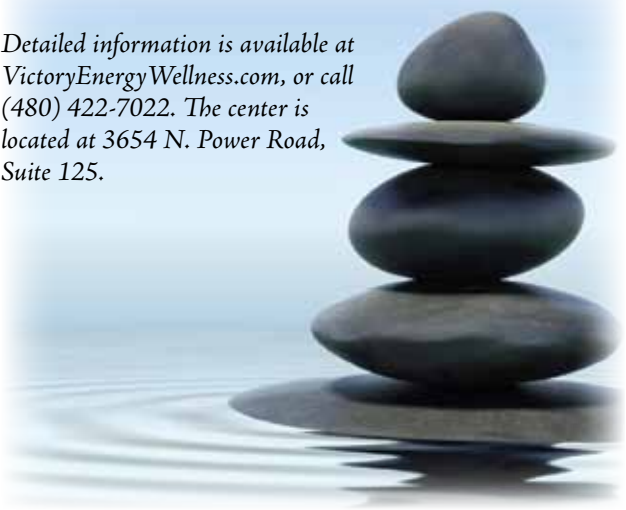
Wednesday, Feb. 20 at 6:30 p.m.  
Group Energy Session - Bring back the 'Wow' in Your Relationship

Thursday, Feb. 21 from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
Nikken Magnets Samplers Workshop

Thursday, Feb. 28 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Child Workshop

On Thursday, Feb. 28, The Institute of Healing Arts will join Victory Energy Wellness Center to present: Emotional Health Preview at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Children's Clinic Workshop from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. ■

Detailed information is available at VictoryEnergyWellness.com, or call (480) 422-7022. The center is located at 3654 N. Power Road, Suite 125.



COMMUNITY

CAR AND BIKE SHOW SLATED TO  
Have Great Food and Music

Mahnah Club of the East Valley is excited to announce its annual spring fund-raising event, to be held on Saturday, March 2. Ticket to Ride Car and Bike Show and evening Benefit Reception promise to be festive events. The day begins with the Car and Bike Show, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., followed by a Benefit Reception from 7 to 10 p.m. Both events will take place at San Tan Village, 2218 E. Williams Field Road, in Gilbert. The Car and Bike Show is slated to have great food, raffle prizes, music and 18 different classes in which vehicles can compete for trophies. The Benefit Reception will showcase San Tan Village restaurants, which will serve heavy hors d'oeuvres and beverages, and compete for trophies in several categories. Dance to the music of *Still Cruisin'*, Tucson's No. 1 band. Participate in the auction and raffle prizes, and look for several surprises throughout the evening. Proceeds from the Ticket to Ride Car and Bike Show and Benefit Reception will benefit Save the Family Foundation of Arizona and the Child Crisis Center, as well as the Mahnah Club East Valley high school scholarship program. For more than 50 years, members of Mahnah Club, a nonprofit 501c3 all volunteer women's service organization, have worked tirelessly to support charities striving to improve the lives of children and provide supportive family units. Save the Family Foundation of Arizona provides transitional housing and support services in order to assist families in breaking the cycle of homelessness. The Child Crisis Center, founded in 1981 by the Mahnah Club, provides a safe environment for



children in need, as well as support services to help strengthen families. Mahnah Club has presented scholarships to civic-minded high school seniors who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend college or higher educational classes. Tickets to register vehicles for the Car and Bike Show can be obtained by contacting Theresa at (602) 881-0855, or Mary at (602) 690-6724. Tickets to attend the Ticket to Ride Benefit Reception can be obtained by contacting fundraiser@mahnahclub.org. Mahnah Club encourages anyone who wants to make a difference in the lives of others to join them at their Ticket to Ride Benefit Reception. ■ For additional information about the Car and Bike Show and Benefit Reception, Mahnah Club, or its charities, please visit their Web site at www.mahnahclub.org.

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## REAL ESTATE

# Do Not Go New Home Shopping WITHOUT A REALTOR

By John Karadsheh

After a long break, new home sales are finally on the rise.

This is great news for Arizona, as the construction industry helps fuel growth in our local economy. With renewed confidence in the real estate market, and limited resale inventory, many buyers are once again shopping for new homes.

Thinking of buying new? Wait.

Did you know there is no additional fee to the buyer to use a Realtor when buying a new home? Further, there is no discount to the buyer when purchasing a new home without Realtor representation. None. Through a separate marketing budget, the builder typically pays the Realtor's fees. In other words, the builder is giving you representation for free—if you choose.

Of course, there is a catch. Your Realtor must accompany you on your first visit to the models. It is clearly stated on the model showroom door so you won't forget. If you walk through that door alone, and start touring the models, you are on your own.

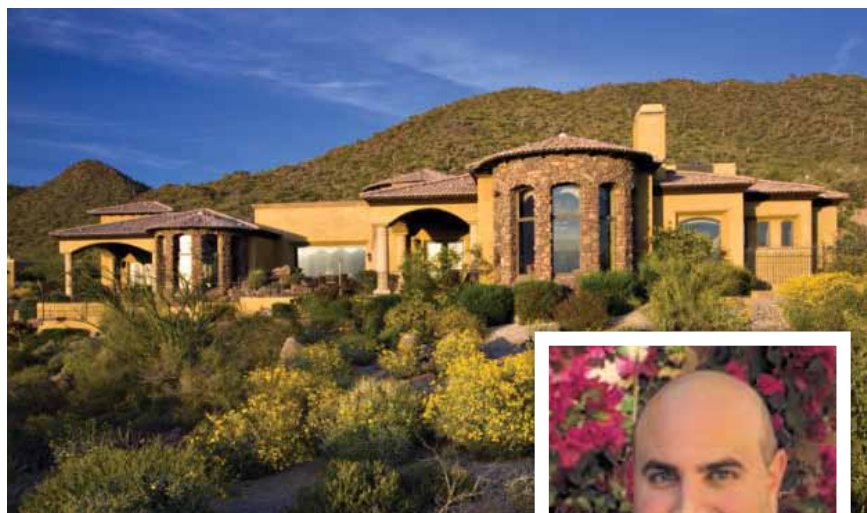
Here are a few very important reasons why you should use a Realtor when buying new (other than the obvious reason—it's free).

1. Your Realtor will be your representative and advocate. A Realtor is trained to help you through the entire new home building process, from negotiating the contract (yes, it can be negotiated) to monitoring the transaction right through closing. Your Realtor will help watch out for your financial interest.
2. It is the builder's motivation to sell each lot in the subdivision, even the least desirable lots. It is the Realtor's objective to help the buyer choose a lot that has minimal drawbacks and that will be best for

resale. During our recent recession, homes on non-desirable lots had a much, much harder time selling. Allow your Realtor to help you weigh the pros and cons of the lots available, and make a sound investment.

3. A Realtor can help you walk through the model and recommend ideas and options to help you design a home, which best suits your needs, and is good for resale. When getting ready to resell their homes, many of my clients have regretted the design choices they made when they chose their options.
4. A Realtor can help you enhance your new home investment. How should you best spend builder incentives to create the greatest value for your home? What is more important to upgrade—cabinets or countertops? Tile or appliances?
5. Your Realtor also will be there to represent you during your building inspections. Experienced Realtors have been on many building sites, and may help you see issues you may miss.
6. Your Realtor is working for you. The salesperson at the new model office is working for the builder. Who do you think has your best interest at heart?

My wife and I live in a Blandford home, which we built and customized. I have advocated for my clients through the new build process in subdivisions from here to Laveen, to Desert Ridge and back. I have even worked with



John Karadsheh

T.W. Lewis and local developer Amberwood Homes on special investment projects. Even if you have already started with a builder, I am happy to answer any new build questions you may have. But please, don't go shopping alone. ■

John Karadsheh is an Associate Broker and a licensed REALTOR® with Coldwell Banker Trails And Paths Premier Properties. He is also an Associate Broker, Accredited Buyers Representative and a Certified Residential Specialist. You can contact John with any of your real estate questions. Call him at (602) 615-0843, or go to his Web site at [www.BuyAndSellAZ.com](http://www.BuyAndSellAZ.com).



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FITNESS

# LA FITNESS

## Offers Pre-Opening Rates

**By Kim Phillips**  
Sean Levine, sales counselor for LA Fitness, is offering pre-opening rates to local residents who are interested in working out with their friends, family and neighbors at a state-of-the-art gym right around the corner. “We understand this gym will be a focal point for the health-conscious people of Northeast Mesa,” said Sean recently. “Here at LA Fitness, we are quite confident that this area will grow to appreciate the incredible value that comes with every membership.”  
He said the company wants people to feel comfortable at the new facility. “We anticipate the gym will have a very strong community vibe, just because of the family-minded people who live here.”  
LA Fitness offers top of the line equipment, as well as free weights, basketball, racquetball and kick box cardio. Also included are cycling classes, yoga, sauna, swimming pool, and more. New members will receive one complimentary session with a personal trainer, too.  
“We are the No. 1 fitness club in the world,” said Sean.

“We own about 800 fitness facilities nationwide. So, you are not limited to where in the country you can work out.”  
Sean said the reason to sign up now is because introductory rates are lower. “We have special rates until our doors open,” he emphasized. “I look forward to being part of this community to help do my part to make it as healthy and vibrant as it can possibly be.” ■  
For more information, contact Sean direct at (602) 282-0243 or (248) 508-0258. The preview center is located at 2824 N. Power Road, Suite 109, in the Bashas’ shopping center, at the northwest corner of Power and McDowell roads.



LOCAL BUSINESS

## Baby Bookworms Creates Love of Reading FROM TUMMY TO TODDLER TO FOREVER

**Submitted by Baby Bookworms**  
Many parents may wonder why they should read to their baby, while others may question whether babies really understand it is story time.

Reading to the growing baby in your tummy is important, according to Mollee Bauer, from Pregnancy.org. “Newborns demonstrate their preference for the songs or stories you read to them in the womb,” she states. “They actually remember the specific ones they heard in the third trimester up to four weeks after birth.”  
Reading with your baby establishes a sharing time, which is soothing and calming. It creates a routine, making reading exciting. The more stories you read to your child, the more words to which she is exposed. It develops her brain and helps build developmental skills.  
Sharon Wozny, owner of Baby Bookworms, brings this to life with her Baby Bookworms’ canvas totes. The custom-created tote is filled with



10 board books and a read aloud anthology, and a sippy cup.  
Besides a one-of-a-kind baby shower gift, the Baby Bookworms tote is perfect for a first, second, third or fourth birthday present. New grandparents will enjoy a tote to keep at their home for when the grandchild comes to visit. Everyone should be making reading and language a priority.  
Reading to your baby fosters

closeness and establishes connections.  
According to Marilyn Jager Adams, “Reading aloud with children is known to be the single most important activity for building the knowledge and skills they will eventually require for learning to read.”  
Baby Bookworms creates it all for you. ■  
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EDUCATION

# Spanish for Survival Class COVERS BASICS OF EVERYDAY COMMUNICATING

*Submitted by Mesa Active Adult Center*  
**A** 10-week class covering the Spanish you need to know to communicate successfully will be sponsored by the Mesa Active Adult Center, 247 N. Macdonald St., from Feb. 7 to April 4.

Mesa resident Sonia Dillehay, a native of La Serena, Chile, together with longtime Spanish teacher Chuck Smith, of Tempe, teach each two-hour class, taught from 10 a.m. to noon (beginner level), and from 1 to 3 p.m. (advanced level), on Thursdays.

The \$75 fee and \$15 cost of the lesson/workbook is incorporated into an experience, including conversation and *Loteria*—a game similar to Bingo, which builds vocabulary. In addition, homework assignments and other interactive sessions encourage communication among students.

Sonia, a native-Spanish speaker, holds a master's degree in social work from the University of Chile. She recently retired after serving for many years as



activities director at the Sirrine Day Care Center in Mesa.

Chuck received his Bachelor of Science in community journalism from California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, Calif. He was a Peace Corps volunteer in Chile in the late 1960s, and has taught Spanish since 1971. ■

*To find out more about the class, contact Chuck Smith at (602) 531-2650. You also can register ahead of time at the Mesa Active Adult Center.*

LOCAL BUSINESS

# CASTLE KEEPERS Will Watch Over YOUR CASTLE

*Submitted by Castle Keepers*  
**I**magine coming back to your home after an extended time away only to find standing water all over the floors.

The water has leaked from a shut off valve unnoticed for weeks and causing extensive damage to cabinets, baseboards, walls and carpets. Welcome home.

Strange things happen to unattended homes. Refrigerators and freezers stop working, and small animals find their way inside, making your home their home. These things and more can and do happen when you are away. That's where Castle Keepers enter the picture.

Castle Keepers is a bonded and insured home watch service. We look after your home while you're away. Your home's interior and exterior are inspected every week, using a comprehensive checklist, which includes checking refrigerator temperature, HVAC thermostat settings, faucets, toilets and drains, exterior security, doors and windows, as well as irrigation systems.

We also verify the fact the pool and

landscape services have been there and so much more. If any problems are found, we can make the necessary arrangements on your behalf with qualified repair professionals.



Using Castle Keepers also relieves you of burdening friends and neighbors with a request to check on the house for you.

Our service is ideal for winter visitors, homeowners with busy travel schedules and vacation rental homeowners. ■

*Let Castle Keepers watch over your castle. Give us a call at (480) 374-9078.*

COMMUNITY



# Soroptimist International HOSTS BUNCO NIGHT TO BENEFIT CHARITIES

*Submitted by Soroptimist International of Mesa*  
**T**he Soroptimist International of Mesa will host its 11th annual Bunco Night on Saturday, Feb. 9, at the Mesa Women's Club, 200 N. MacDonald St.

The evening begins with appetizers at 6 p.m. A lively night of Bunco and great prizes will follow.

Your \$25 donation makes a big difference to local charities, such as Helen's Hope Chest, Save the Family, Project Undercover and Yes I Can! ■

*For reservations or further information, contact pfimbres@cox.net , or call (480) 964-6400.*

COMMUNITY

# Go Cruisin' ON OUR DESERT LAKES

*By Dawn Abbey  
Photos by Dawn Abbey*

**W**hen looking for that unique experience to share with your Valentine, your out-of-town visitors or for a family outing, consider a cruise—but not on an ocean liner.

Instead, book a sightseeing cruise on one of our desert lake boats, Saguaro Lake's Desert Belle or The Dolly Steamboat on Canyon Lake.

Both boats offer a variety of cruises, with basic 90-minute narrated tours starting at \$20 for adults, \$19 for seniors and children from \$10. Tours run from morning to twilight, and some offer entertainment venues. The Dolly Steamboat also specializes in on-board buffet dinner cruises, and themed cruises at various prices, like the Astronomy Cruise. Both are available for group charters and events, such as weddings and parties.

I recently shared a cruise on The Desert Belle with family from back East. From the Las Sendas/Red Mountain area, the trip to Saguaro Lake is a mere 20 minutes or so.

It's a great way to experience our amazing desert environment, canyon walls and mountain views. Wildlife is abundant around water. We were lucky enough to see some bighorn sheep cavorting on top of a high cliff. Birdwatchers can catch a glimpse of many species nesting in the reeds. Evening cruises offer spectacular star shows. And if you want music, entertainment or dinner, some cruises offer that, too.



Kids of all ages exude

excitement as the double-decker boat lowers its gangplank and the captain welcomes you aboard.

The Desert Belle's on-board snack bar sells soft drinks, water, beer and wine. However, make time before or after your cruise to grab a bite or enjoy dinner at the Lakeshore Restaurant at the Saguaro Lake Marina. The restaurant sits on a knoll overlooking the lake, with great views all around, especially from the patio. And you must try their fish and chips, a huge, delicious, crunchy platter, with a side of interestingly different slaw, enough for two nibblers or one filling meal. Because large crowds gather before and after every scheduled tour, come early, as service can be slow.

It's best to make cruise reservations online or by phone, since they fill up fast. You also must exchange your online voucher for a ticket on the dock before boarding, so get in line about 20 to 30 minutes before cast off. Seating is first-come, first-serve, but you can move around the boat once it is under way, on either deck and inside in air-conditioned or heated comfort. Both have special needs restroom facilities on board and at the dock. Tonto Forest passes are not required for boat tours or restaurant patrons.

The Dolly Steamboat dock at Canyon Lake Marina is about 35 minutes from U.S. 60 and Idaho Road in Apache Junction. The Dolly also has snacks and drinks for sale on board, and you can try the Lakeshore Restaurant and Cantina, which sits overlooking the lake, serving lunch, dinner, appetizers and libations. ■

*For videos, photos and complete information, contact: DesertBelle.com, (480) 984-2425; SaguaroLakeRestaurant.com, (480) 984-5311; SaguaroLakeMarina.com, (480) 986-5546; DollySteamboat.com, (480) 827-9144; CanyonLakeRestaurant.com, (480) 288-8290; CanyonLakeMarina.com, (480) 288-9233.*





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COMMUNITY

# HELP STOP THE RUIN of the Sonoran Desert

Submitted by Yasmin Rochette

While many of us living in Northeast Mesa enjoy the hiking terrain practically in our backyards, and we admire the saguaros and cacti so unique to Arizona's landscape, many also may have noticed other plants, which don't really fit into what one might imagine is desert landscape.

Many of these plants are not quite as innocuous as they might first appear. Non-native invasive plants, introduced both inadvertently and intentionally over the years, from as far away as Russia and Africa, have become a real threat to the Sonoran Desert, including Tonto National Forest. The U.S. Forest Service, in Mesa, has identified six particularly noxious plants. The culprits are Fountain Grass, Buffelgrass, Salt Cedar, Saharan Mustard, Malta Starthistle and Tree of Heaven.

Recently, volunteers met at the Mesa Ranger District office to hear Ranger Patti Fenner and Volunteer Ranger Don Pike discuss the characteristics of these plants and ways in which to slow down their exponential growth and proliferation in our area.

"The major problem with these plants is their fibrous roots mine so deep into the soil that they out compete native plants for critical water supplies," Patti explained. "Non natives drop leaves so high in salts that they poison the surface soil such that native plants cannot grow or reproduce."

One of the scariest realities is these plants provide fire ladders to native trees and saguaros, burning at temperatures as high as 1400 degrees Fahrenheit. This holds fire around the base of a plant, from which there is no escape.

"Malta Starthistle is particularly dangerous for horses," Patti added. "When ingested, lesions form on the brain, leading to throat paralysis and ultimate death from starvation. Salt Cedar crowds out native riparian trees, increases soil salinity and changes the channel characteris-



tics of streams," she further stated. "If the sap from a Tree of Heaven enters an open wound, it can cause heart problems."

These are just a few examples of why we need to eradicate invasive species. Economically, the issue affects us all. The state pays millions in removal of these weeds from highways, and bigger long-term concerns include the effect on the water table.

What is being done? Don Pike demonstrated how he has mapped the locations of invasives using geo-coding and a Web site, iMapInvasives.org. This is an area where individuals can help, by volunteering to send data to the U.S. Forest Service as to where invasive plants have been spotted.

How are these plants being dealt with on the ground? The Forest Service has used herbicides, and has mechanically dug out and burned invasive plants. Individuals can remove plants from their property, and encourage local landscapers not to sell these as nursery products. "With 3 million acres of land lost to invasive weeds every year, it's going to have to be an ongoing effort," said Don, "because the plants are spreading in a alarming way." ■

Further information can be obtained from the Mesa Ranger District, located at 5140 E. Ingram St. Visit the Web site at [www.mrdvolunteers.org](http://www.mrdvolunteers.org), or call (480) 610-3300.

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**Integrity Pools LLC, Cleaning Service and Repairs.** Professional, Personal and Affordable pool maintenance and pool repairs; including filter clean-outs, acid washes, salt cells, etc. **480-818-3832.**

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**Web site: [www.mkremodeling.com](http://www.mkremodeling.com) Email: [mike@mkremodeling.com](mailto:mike@mkremodeling.com)**

**"Just Call Mike" Home Maintenance & Repair.** Plumbing, electrical, water heaters, disposals, RO systems, fans, lights, switches, sockets, irrigation, timers & valves, etc. Mesa, **(480) 628-2757.**

**Mesa Home Maintenance and Repair.**

Plumbing, electric, irrigation, garage doors, water heaters, tile and drywall repairs, carpentry, handyman lists, and other services. All work guaranteed. Sean Sornberger **(480) 699-7990.**

**Casteel's Landscaping & Pool Service**

**Services Include:** Mowing, Edging, Trimming, Blowing, Sprinkler Installation & Repair. Pool maintenance, cleaning & chemical balance. "Offering a quality & reliable service for those who leave for the summer months and need their yards and or pools maintained." **Christopher Casteel: 602-826-0656, Email: [christopherdcasteel@msn.com](mailto:christopherdcasteel@msn.com)**



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Tree Trimming, Removals, Stump Grinding, Bushes, Shrubs, Yard Clean Ups, Landscaping, and Deep Root Fertilization, Etc. **FREE ESTIMATES.** Very Professional, INSURED & BONDED. Mention this ad and receive **15% OFF!** We accept credit cards. Please call **(480) 354-5802**



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**Painting and Decorating. Residential and Commercial.** Drywall, Wallpaper, Tile and Bath. Experienced in many phases of home repair. No job is too small, reasonable rates. Call Dave at **(480) 304-1336.**

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Long/short term home management. We specialize in managing your home while you are away. We will prepare your home for you or your guests; provide cleaning, shopping services & manage repairs. **Call today 1-888-958-4889.**

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**IN HOME CHILD CARE.** Full or part time. Excellent references, over 11 years experience. Educational activities, large daycare room, full industrial playground in backyard. CPR certified, fun and safe environment! Please call Sue **(480) 209-5865**



**LAS SENDAS MOM,** newborn & up; 16 years experience. CPR certified. Homemade meals and healthy snacks; loving, safe environment; no pool; flexible schedule. Early childhood development activities offered. Many references! Call Lina **(480) 324-8466**

HELP WANTED

**Phillips West** has an opening for a motivated **Freelance Writer** to cover the areas of Las Sendas, Red Mountain Ranch, and Mesa Uplands communities. Join us and experience the rewards of working for a friendly, community-oriented company. Call (480) 748-1127 to schedule an interview. We are also seeking experienced **Advertising Sales Reps** to join our team.





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**Linda Sims**  
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**\$1,299,999**  
4,026 sq. ft. 3BR, 3.5BA, 4G. Panoramic city light & Mtn. views, gourmet kitchen & negative edge pool.



**\$3,100,000**  
7,179 sq. ft. 5BR, 5.5BA, 6G, 1.85 acre lot. City light & Mtn. views, granite counters, canterra columns.



**UNDER CONTRACT**  
4,084 sq. ft. 5BR, 3BA, 3G. Cul-de-sac golf course lot w/city light & Mtn. views, wrap around view deck.



**\$329,000**  
2,126 sq. ft. 3BR, 2BA, 3G. Newly remodeled, granite counters, SS appliances & a Pebble Tec® pool.



**\$555,000**  
4,275 sq. ft. 5BR, 3.5BA, 3G. SS appliances, granite counters, tile backsplash, Pebble Tec® pool & spa.



**\$225,000**  
1,959 sq. ft. 2BR plus a den, 2BA, 2G. Golf course views, spacious floor plan & no HOA fees.



**SOLD**  
3,650 sq. ft. 4BR, 3.5BA, 3G. Granite counters, SS appliances, wine refrigerator, pool w/waterfall, BBQ.



**\$629,000**  
3,891 sq. ft. 5BR, 3.5BA, 3G. Golf course lot, pool, hot tub, two covered patio areas & putting green.



**\$349,000**  
1,731 sq. ft. 3BR, 3BA, 2G. SS appliances, granite counters, artificial grass, built-in BBQ & gas firepit.



**\$849,900**  
4,524 sq. ft. 4BR, 3.5BA, 4G. City light & Mtn. views, cherry cabinetry, double ovens, pool, spa & built-in BBQ.



**\$330,000**  
2,226 sq. ft. 4BR, 2BA, 2.5G. Plantation shutters, tile flooring, fenced pool, grass play area & built in BBQ.



**SOLD**  
2,383 sq. ft. 4BR, 3BA, 3G. Stainless steel appliances, granite counters, maple cabinetry & an oversized lot.



**\$415,000**  
3,330 sq. ft. 5BR, 3BA, 3G. Tile flooring, plantation shutters, low maintenance backyard w/built-in BBQ & fireplace.



**\$889,000**  
5,056sq. ft. 6BR, 4.5BA, 3G. Viking® and SubZero® appliances, citrus & pecan trees, game room w/wet bar.



**SOLD**  
3,829 sq. ft. 4BR, 3BA, 3G. Granite counters, travertine tile flooring, alderwood cabinetry, view of Red Mtn.



**\$369,900**  
3,912 sq. ft. 5BR, 4.5BA, 3G. Granite counters, SS appliances, double ovens & Pebble Tec® pool.

Gina Chavez #203308  
Kelly Zitlow #164330  
Alisa Glutz #204235  
480-398-4900  
**CHERRY CREEK**  
MORTGAGE CO., INC.  
NMLS #3001 AZ BK#0904024



**UNDER CONTRACT**  
3,888 sq. ft. 5BR plus den & game room, 3.5BA, 2G. Cul-de-sac lot, double ovens & Pebble Tec® pool.



**\$470,000**  
5,275 sq. ft. 4BR, 3BA, 3G. Golf course lot w/Mtn. views, pool w/water features & built-in firepit.