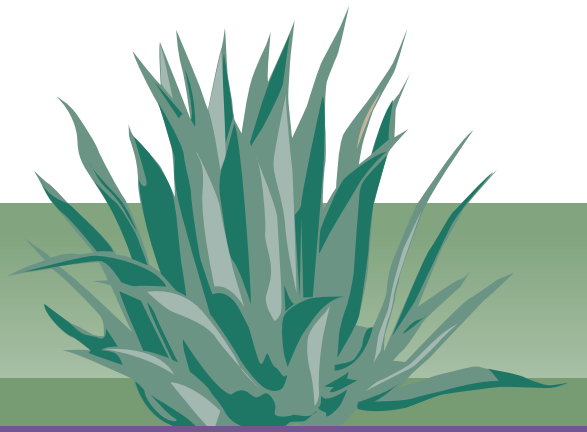


Mesa Uplands Up Close



Bringing neighbors closer to their community

January 2012

FAMILY MEMBERS OF MESA'S Biggest Loser winner all win big

By Dawn Abbey

Mesa resident John Rhode lost 220 pounds and won a quarter-million dollars as this season's *Biggest Loser* on NBC's TV reality show, which aired its final episode on Dec. 13.

According to his wife, Jill, when John, weighing in at 445 pounds, won a spot as a contestant on the show last spring, it was life changing, not just for him, but also for the entire family.

Jill, left home alone with their two sons for most of the summer and fall, gained a new sense of strength and independence. "I became aware of what it's like to be a military wife or single mom," said Jill. "We all had to grow and learn new ways of coping with our day-to-day lives, while John struggled through his weight-loss competition."

During the finale, John voiced his emotional appreciation for the support of his *amazing* wife and children (who were all wearing *Team John* T-shirts), saying, "Thank you from the bottom of my heart for letting me do this." He also acknowledged Jill's struggle at home as a single parent. She mouthed back, "I love you."

Participants in the show are cloistered for about the first three months, while they go through the *Biggest Loser*



BEFORE
Sandy Barbetta, (right) co-owner of Cosmos Salon and Day Spa, assesses makeover choices with Jill Rhode (seated) and colorist/stylist Kim Blake.



BEAUTIFUL
Jill shows off her new colorized look wearing a gold top from Bella Blue gifted from Sandy to accentuate Jill's darker dramatic hair shade and highlights.

weight-loss regimen, Jill explained. "Rules of the show only allow contact between contestants and their families by mail. So, it became really difficult to discuss anything with John, and we all missed having him around, his physical and emotional

support," Jill lamented. "It was so hard," she exclaimed, "I couldn't even leave the house at night to do the grocery shopping like I used to when John was there."

In addition, the couple had just adopted a 4 1/2-year-old special needs child from Ukraine the previous summer. According to Jill, although he is very bright, he was unable to talk. She felt even her own background as a speech pathologist wasn't always enough. Their 8-year-old son had been adopted as an infant from Russia. "And even though he didn't have the same issues as his brother, it wasn't a surprise that after a while, the older boy really began acting out about missing his dad," she acknowledged.

Staying at home with the boys all summer wasn't as tough, she related, as school was out, her parents came to visit for a while, and her sister lives nearby. But once school started, Jill's job as a speech pathologist for Gilbert schools began again, the boys were in class, and also involved in football, piano lessons and other activities. Scheduling became a challenge. Jill got

a reprieve to work part time at her job, and with the help of her sister and church friends, she worked out a system to handle it all until the show concluded. "Despite all the hardships to the family," she admitted, "it was worth it."

"I always knew he would make it," Jill said. "That was his goal, and he puts 100 percent into whatever he's doing. His nickname is *Never Say Die*. I supported his decision entirely, and I know he supports me in whatever I do," she continued. "We feel like we're a team in everything. We have the same goals and interests. We have a really good marriage." ■



TV INTERVIEW

KTVK 3TV anchor and reporter Tess Rafols (left) interviews Jill about her family's experiences during her husband John's appearance on the *Biggest Loser* reality TV show.



CHOOSING COLORS

Tess Rafols looks on as Jill, Sandy and Kim decide on the most flattering hair colors for Jill's new hairstyle.



A NEW COLOR AND CUT

A deeper brown with bright blonde highlights was chosen for a shorter, more youthful cut. Jill also wanted her hair long enough to tie back in a pony tail.



MAKEUP APPLICATION

Makeup artist and stylist Amy Larsen shows Jill how to perfect her makeup with fresh colors and shading.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Sandy and Amy add the final professional finishing touches to Jill's makeover.

A DAY JUST FOR HERSELF

By Dawn Abbey

While watching Mesa contestant John Rhode on the latest NBC TV *Biggest Loser* reality show, Sandy Barbetta became aware of John's family story and wife Jill's situation. Sandy felt Jill could use some pampering and time out for herself. As co-owner with husband Cosmo of Cosmos Salon and Day Spa, Sandy invited Jill to the salon and offered her the complimentary services of herself and her staff to do a complete makeover for Jill.

About a week before the show's finale, Jill spent almost an entire day at Cosmos, receiving a new hair-style and color, complete makeup application, wardrobe colorizing ideas, and lots of tips on how to style and care for her new hairstyle and makeup while handling her busy family schedule. KTVK 3TV reporter and anchor Tess Rafols with cameraman Gibby Parr came out to Cosmos to cover the makeover and did an interview with Jill.



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BEAUTY

Pretty feet are just a few days away

By Dawn Abbey
Has wearing sandals and going barefoot all summer made your feet rough and calloused? Are you embarrassed to slip on those glittery, party, strap heels? Have you always struggled with rough feet and thought there was nothing you could do about it? Now there is a solution.

“Cosmos Salon and Day Spa is offering new advanced treatments for rough feet, and also for hands that are dry and cracked, or just not as smooth as you’d like them to be,” said Margaret Midlick, Cosmos esthetician.

“Smoothing treatments work for both men and women,” Margaret continued. “The five-step process uses a series of products, and takes about 30 minutes to complete. It’s pain-free and involves no down time,” she said. “It only requires that the product be left on the skin undisturbed for 12 hours. Then, the skin is cleansed, and nothing more is needed except moisturizer and sunscreen.”

Hand treatments are lighter and done only on the top of the hands. It is best performed at the end of the day, so one can be at home or not have to be using their hands excessively. “If clients need to use their fingers or want to wash them before the 12 hours is up, we can leave the fingers free of product,” Margaret suggested.



“The hand peel is effective in ridding the hands of sun damage, dryness and fine lines, and producing a more youthful appearance.”
The foot treatment is done on the bottom and sides of the feet. “The skin will start flaking after about five days, and usually continues to rejuvenate through day 10,” Margaret said. “It rids the feet of dry, calloused skin, leaving them smooth and baby soft. Less than five percent of clients require a second peel to achieve their desired results, and most can go a full six months before noticing new buildup,” she continued. “In fact,

I’ve only had to do it twice on two clients, so far.”
During January and February, Cosmos is discounting the hand or foot treatments at a special rate of \$49 each. “And if a second treatment is needed,” Margaret said, “we will offer the \$49 price to them after February, as well.” ■

For more information about Cosmos Salon and Day Spa, or to make an appointment, call (480) 844-0707, or visit the salon at 2837 N. Power Road. You also can visit their Web site at cosmosalonandspa.com.

UpClose
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EDUCATION

HOW TO CHOOSE A GOOD Preschool Program for your Child

By Cori Fabian
Director and Co-founder of
Bridges Preschool

What are you looking for? I have been in Early Childhood Education for more than 20 years. I have my bachelor's degree in education, and have worked in daycare centers, taught public kindergarten, and have been invited to speak at several Early Childhood conferences. As parents on the search for a quality program, you have told me you are looking for a social, yet educational experience. You want a physically and emotionally safe environment, and you want to know that the teachers have the necessary talents and skills to enrich your child's curious mind.

How do you identify a socially enriched program?

You have to ask about the *unwritten curriculum*. Children are experimenting with independence, and learning the fact they have a cause and effect on their environment. With this comes social responses like sharing, taking turns and knowing *how to get their shovel back* on the playground. Find out how the school intends on teaching communication skills during this critical time, when your child is learning how to communicate effectively. Along with this comes assertiveness training, whereby children learn how to identify and express their emotions effectively. Age appropriate, positive discipline teaches children how to use problem-solving skills in order to get their needs met without

infringing on the rights of others. A positive, socially rich environment is very important for your child's development.

Curriculum: What will my child learn? The magic of a quality program is the teacher's ability to make learning purely exponential! We know scientifically that children learn best when they are moving and using all of their senses. A quality curriculum has as much breadth and depth as it does simple A-B-Cs and 1-2-3s. For example,



science experiments, cooking projects and gardening activities offer a myriad of dendrite connections versus a worksheet of the letter Aa. Such activities also provide opportunities for phonics, reading, and mathematical and social skill building. Throw in a little Spanish and Sign Language, and you have an excellent recipe

for genius! Meaningful experiences are stored in the long-term memory. It is in meaningful curriculum and experiences that your tuition becomes an investment. ■

Please visit Bridges Preschool and Kindergarten at bridgespreschool.com. Bridges has limited enrollment opportunities for the fall, as well as enrollment wish lists for future semesters. Our East Mesa campus offers affordable and professional preschool (starting at age 2) through private kindergarten. You are invited to call (480) 924-8008, or you can take a tour at any time.

SPORTS

Mesa's own Charlie Beljan Earns PGA Tour Card

Submitted by Las Sendas Golf Academy

On Dec. 5, in LaQuinta, Calif., lifelong Mesa resident and Red Mountain High School graduate Charlie Beljan qualified for the 2012 PGA Tour, a feat few aspiring golf professionals rarely accomplish.

Charlie's road has been full of twists, turns and plenty of expectations. He remained poised and confident over three tenuous qualifying stages—what many revere as the most grueling process in competitive golf. Since turning pro in the summer of 2007, he proved this year he was up for the challenge more than ever. Charlie is the only professional to qualify for the 2012 PGA Tour residing in Arizona, an incredible statistic, with our state being the home of the second most touring professionals behind Florida.

He scored an astounding 25 under par over 14 rounds of golf in three different cities. "Charlie displayed resilience and will power that most professional athletes can only dream about," said Ben Weir, director of instruction at Las Sendas Golf Club and one of Charlie's mentors and coaches.

Charlie endearingly credits his fiancé Merisa Hansen, her parents, his parents Dennis and Anne, the entire Beljan clan, Alta Mesa Golf Club's entire community,

Cleveland Golf Corporation, and all his high school, college, and swing coaches for much of his success.

"With my father recently being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, I played inspired on every shot," Charlie said. "He is my hero. I couldn't have done

it without all the love and support around me," he continued. "It's been overwhelming with everyone giving me the inner strength to pull through all my challenges."

His major accolades include the 2002 U.S. Junior Amateur Champion, three-year Arizona state high school individual champion, 2007 Arizona State Amateur Champion, 2008 and 2009 U.S. Open participant, as well as the most decorated

recruit ever to sign with the University of New Mexico. Charlie's accomplishments also include 2010 Gateway Tour Championship winner and money list champion, as well as two-time event winner on the 2011 Gateway Tour. Furthermore, *Golfweek Magazine* heralded him as the No. 1 mini-tour player in the nation spanning the past three years.

If you would like to follow Charlie on Facebook, Twitter, or catch his weekly statistics on pgatour.com, you can begin from Jan. 12 through 15 at the Sony Open in Hawaii. ■



Charlie Beljan (left), and Ben Weir (right)

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REAL ESTATE

Are You Eligible for the New Home Affordable Refinance Program?

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

There has been a lot of buzz about the new government program—Home Affordable Refinance Program (HARP).

This is not a new program, but rather a revamp by the federal government of the existing one, which had too many restrictions to do much good. The revisions have been made in an attempt to help struggling homeowners, who have stayed current on their mortgage, and would benefit from a refinance at today's low interest rates. It is expected to help 1.8 million borrowers, according to the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Although it was supposed to be in effect on Dec 1, a firm date has still not been set, and the latest information on the start date is the first quarter 2012. The program will be offered through Dec. 31, 2013.

BIGGEST CHANGE IN THE PROGRAM

The original program failed to meet expectations and help many homeowners when it was launched in March 2009. One of the main reasons was it couldn't help homeowners, who were deeply under water. You were not eligible unless your loan to value was less than 125 percent.

Well, that certainly didn't help most homeowners here in Arizona, where the housing market has been one of the hardest hit. Now, with the new guidelines, if you have a

fixed rate mortgage with a term of up to 30 years, the cap has been removed, and it doesn't matter how upside down you are. This will now open the program up to many more homeowners, who previously wouldn't have been eligible.

CHANGES IN FEES

The new guidelines have reduced the closing costs previously charged, but one of the biggest differences is in the appraisal fee. Borrowers will not need a new property appraisal if Fannie and Freddie have enough data in their automated valuation system to estimate the value of the property. This not only speeds up the refinancing process, but also eliminates the appraisal fee.

ELIGIBILITY

You may be eligible if you meet all the following:

- You have a mortgage owned by Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac.
- The mortgage must have been sold to Fannie or Freddie on or before May 31, 2009.
- The mortgage cannot have been refinanced under HARP previously, unless it is a Fannie Mae loan that was refinanced under HARP between March and May 2009.
- You are current on your mortgage, and have not been more than 30 days late in the past year.
- The current loan to value (LTV) must be greater than 80 percent.
- The refinance will improve the long-term affordability or stability of your mortgage.
- You have the ability to make the new payments. ■

For more information on HARP and short sales, or for a free confidential consultation, contact me directly, or visit my Web site at www.ArizonaShortSaleToday.com. You also can call my cell at (602) 571-6799, or send an e-mail to Lorraine@ArizonaShortSaleToday.com. Visit the Web site at www.ArizonaShortSaleToday.com.



EDUCATION

Preschool at Red Mountain United Methodist Church ADDS MID-YEAR CLASS

Submitted by The Preschool at Red Mountain United Methodist Church

Is your 3-year-old ready for preschool this winter? Sometimes that young 3-year-old is just not ready to go to a group or school setting in the fall, but come the middle of the school year, every month makes a difference in their growth and readiness. They may be ready to enjoy a group setting and begin developing those important social skills.

The Preschool at Red Mountain United Methodist Church on Power Road, just north of McDowell Road, is adding a new 3-year-old class in January. If your child turned 3 by December 2011, and is potty trained, this is a chance to start preschool mid-year. This class provides a fun morning of activities, new friends and exploration of the world around us, in a Christian setting.



The new class will start on Feb. 2, and meet on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 a.m. to noon. Tuition is \$150 per month. The preschool opened six years ago, and the program is growing. Last year, Spanish was added to the curriculum, and this year, a special music and movement class was added.

For more information about the program, you may stop by for a tour of the facility during regular school hours. ■

Please note the school will be closed for the holiday break, through Jan. 3. You also can learn more when you visit the Web site at www.redmtUMCpreschool.com.

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M/W/F 9:00am to noon or M-F 9:00am to noon

Young Learners

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COMMUNITY

LAS SENDAS QUILT CLUB SEWS Holiday Cheer for Ryan House

Submitted by Las Sendas Quilt Club

Making charity quilts and distributing them to needy organizations throughout the Mesa area has been a part of the Las Sendas Quilt Club since 2005, with AZ Blankets 4Kids, House of Refuge and Taft Elementary School quilt recipients in past years.

Recently, on behalf of the Las Sendas Quilters, Cheri Maniz, Karen Plante and Audrey Good delivered 23 beautiful hand-made quilts to Phoenix's Ryan House. Learning about the need for welcoming quilts for children with life-threatening conditions through a newspaper article, we called to find out more about Ryan House and how the club could help.

Located in Central Phoenix, Ryan House is a non-profit children's hospice home, the only such facility in the Southwest. Alexandra Paul, development coordinator, welcomed the opportunity to explain the services at Ryan House, guided by the principles of pediatric palliative care. This philosophy of comfort care addresses not only physical pain, but also emotional, spiritual and social needs of the child and family. The mission is to provide essential care in a home-like setting where children with life-threatening conditions



and their families may come for respite and, as needed, end of life care.

The home-like setting greets you at the door. A warm family/great room includes a library, reading corners, comfy sofas and open views to the outdoors. Each of eight children's bedrooms opens to a playground area and has accommodations for a family member, friend, or sibling to stay if they wish. Rooms for hydrotherapy, sensory development, music, crafts, as well as a wheelchair accessible playground and patio all say kids. Families also have bedrooms, a living room and reflection rooms to help them cope with the challenges they face.

To welcome every child staying at Ryan House, a quilt is placed on each bed. That quilt goes home with the child upon leaving. These quilts become special to each child and their families in different ways, and are a special, personal memory of their stay.

Learn more about this very special place called Ryan House. Visit the Web site at ryanhouse.org.

REAL ESTATE

HOUSING MARKET LOOKS good for the New Year

By John Karadsheh

At long last we are seeing more consistent positive signs in the real estate market.

As I mentioned in my October Up Close article, the law of supply and demand would eventually take over, and prices had to start coming up because of the low inventory. In November, we saw the median sales price climb for the first time in a year. At the same time, inventory has continued to drop and remains very low. The inventory of single-family homes actively on the market in the middle of December was only 19,000 homes compared to almost 22,000 in August.

Many of my clients have been waiting for prices to inch up so they can upgrade or downsize. Given that you may want to list your home in the next year, now is the time to make a plan for getting your house in great shape to sell. With busy schedules and limited budgets, a plan is always helpful. Here are a few things you may want to put on your to do list to help your house sell when that time comes.

- Do an assessment. Go room by room, and make a list of all the little things that need to be done inside and out, and formulate your plan of attack.
- Start to declutter. We all seem to accumulate a lot of stuff. Take this time to streamline, and get rid of the stuff you aren't using.



Buyers will be looking for location and layout, but they also are looking for a home. They try to imagine themselves living in your space. Think about what you love and don't love about your house. Then ask a friend to give you an honest assessment of your space. Try to imagine how others will perceive your home.

- Cosmetic surgery. Consider making some minor interior upgrades. For example, plant flowers, repaint, add some interesting houseplants and also consider minimizing scents. I have had buyers walk out of homes that are so scented with room sprays and pungent candles that it was hard to breathe. Plus, these heavy odors make buyers wonder what other smells you might be trying to hide.
- Clean the carpets, touch up the baseboards, restrain the side gate, clean the ceiling fans, scrub and seal the grout, etc.
- Organize your closets. This will help them to appear larger.

These tips are all things you should be able to do yourself, and trust me, you will be happy you started well in advance.

John Karadsheh is a licensed REALTOR® with Coldwell Banker Trails And Paths Premier Properties. He also is 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.

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Sales over \$250,000 for the Month of November 2011

Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price	Short Sale or REO
1420 N. Drexel Cir.	2,470	Saguaro Mountain	\$260,000	
8246 E. Willetta St.	1,890	Valley View	\$269,000	
9437 E. Mallory St.	2,245	Boulder Mountain	\$275,000	
2914 N. Kashmir St.	3,031	Mesa Desert Heights	\$280,000	
3508 E. Fairfield St.	4,077	The Groves	\$290,000	X
8336 E. Indigo St.	2,001	Mountain Bridge	\$293,950	
6225 E. Camelot Dr.	3,031	Camelot	\$300,000	
2016 E. Norcroft St.	2,915	Groves of Hermosa Vista	\$310,000	
1247 N. Faith	2,249	Saguaro Mountain	\$328,900	
8331 E. Ingram St.	1,986	Mountain Bridge	\$330,000	
3221 E. Fairbrook St.	3,108	The Groves	\$330,000	
3111 E. Fairbrook Cir.	3,004	The Groves	\$339,000	
3634 E. McDowell Rd	3,343	County Island	\$358,000	
9414 E. Nora St.	2,548	Boulder Mountain	\$379,000	
7532 E. Laurel St.	4,463	Saguaro Vista Estates	\$382,500	X
3340 E. Jacaranda Cir.	3,207	Arboleda	\$385,000	X
3737 E. Ellis St.	3,338	Trovita Estates	\$416,118	
3526 E. Indigo Cir.	3,416	Arboleda	\$417,500	X
3850 E. Menlo St.	5,022	El Camino Dulce	\$424,000	X
3716 E. Mallory St.	4,039	El Camino Dulce	\$425,000	
5345 E. McLelland Rd. #97	4,121	Alta Mesa	\$440,000	
3657 E. Enrose St.	3,338	Trovita Estates	\$446,856	
3665 E. Enrose St.	3,179	Trovita Estates	\$449,663	
1653 N. Channing	3,932	Mountain Bridge	\$500,000	
4122 E. McLellan Rd. #13	4,160	Highgrove Estates	\$540,000	X
3961 E. Norcroft Cir.	7,000	Rosewood Estates	\$915,000	

Information gathered from the Arizona Regional Multiple Listing Service is deemed reliable, but not guaranteed. Sales Information provided By John Karadsheh, ABR, CRS of Coldwell Banker Trails & Paths Premier Properties. www.BuyAndSellAZ.com

LAW

The Difference a Word Can Make

By Billie Tarascio of Tarascio and Del Vecchio Legal Firm in Mesa

Just hearing the *D* word, divorce, can bring strong, emotionally charged feelings to mind. The word mediation has a much different feeling to it. It is a positive word that can be brought into the painful process of divorce. Mediation is about deciding, with a neutral third party, what is best for you and your children in regard to property, assets and custody. After spending five days in a 40-hour mediation training by the Arizona Attorney General's Office, I can truly tell you my perspective on family law has shifted. The biggest factor for me is that families splitting up are restructuring, not ending. What better way to restructure in this New Year than through beginning to communicate, and make decisions on your own, with the help of a trained mediator? Why choose a mediator, such as the experts at your neighborhood law firm Tarascio and Del Vecchio, for family law issues?

1 Cost. This is a given and the one that most people think about. Litigation is extremely expensive, and the average divorce costs \$20,000 per person. That's \$40,000, which is no longer available to a family already strapped financially by slipping assets and adding an additional household for which to pay. The average cost to mediate a divorce is \$2,500. The initial payouts are just part of the equation, though. Many couples continue to return to court after a divorce to settle issues like enforcement and modifications, which brings me to my next point.

2 Relationship. If you have children, there is no such thing as a clean break. You and your partner will continue to be co-parents. Therefore, you will need some sort

of relationship. Litigation pits two sides against one another in an adversarial relationship. Judges decide who wins and who loses. In families, everyone loses. Each parent and your children will suffer the ramifications of litigation. In litigation, it is an attorney's job to present you in the best possible light, and also place the opposing party in the worst possible light. The result, as you can imagine, is a family that is splitting up becomes even more broken.

3 Constraints. In a traditional family, you make up your own rules. You are not bound to parent or co-habitate in accordance with statutes or a judge's ruling. Why, then, should co-parents, who don't live together, be constrained to work within the statutory framework? In mediation, you can come up with any agreement that works for your family. Each family is unique, and so, too, should their agreement be moving forward.

4 Confidentiality. A court case is open to the public, and a record of all of the proceedings is then available. Many families would prefer not to have all of their personal and financial information readily available to the public. In mediation, all statements within the mediation remain confidential, and cannot be used in court, in the event litigation takes place afterward.

Tarascio and Del Vecchio offer low cost and limited scope legal services. They offer a pay-as-you-go plan in some cases instead of a retainer. Their firm has a wide variety of legal experts, who are happy to help with your legal needs, and will make sure you get the justice you so deserve. ■

For more information, contact Tarascio and Del Vecchio, located at 1 N. MacDonald St., Suite 201. Call (480) 649-2905. Check out the Web site at www.TandDlawoffices.com, or send an e-mail to Billie.Tarascio@TandDlawoffices.com.



COMMUNITY

True Essence Salon is truly appreciative

By Kim Phillips

True Essence Salon displayed true appreciation on Wednesday, Dec. 7, honoring the salon's loyal clients with a gala holiday *Client Appreciation Night Party*, featuring yummy hors d'oeuvres, wine and other beverages, free massages, and drawings for gifts. "We have been here since 2000," said salon owner Maytee Green. "In this economy, we have to be thankful for our customers." "We appreciate the loyalty," she added. The entire staff was on hand to offer free consultations on all types of services and products, and the *relaxation stations* with mini-spa specialties, such as moisturizing hand relief treatments, neck massages, and reflexology, were wonderful. Debbie Arden, a longtime client, said she thought the party was fabulous. She commented, "They treat you beautifully, and you feel beautiful when you leave." True Essence Salon is the only Aveda Concept Salon in Mesa, where Aveda's natural, botanical-based hair, skincare and makeup is available. For more information on the only Aveda Concept Salon in Mesa, call (480) 396-3112, or visit the Web site at www.trueessencesalon.com. ■





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EDUCATION

Kumon Philosophy Prepares Students for Lifelong Learning

By AnnElise Makin

Come 4 p.m., the local Kumon Center in Superstition Springs really gets busy, with children buzzing in to pick up their package from the honeycomb compartments behind the reception desk.

Learning is sweet at Kumon, it seems. Kids just sit down and do it.

“Each child learns at a different speed and rate,” stated Kathy Leano, owner and executive director. “We cater to each child’s individual math or reading ability. Once the student has achieved mastery of a concept, he is moved on to the next level.”

If you’re quick and accurate, let’s say, solving 140 problems in 30 minutes max, you have mastered the level. Students enjoy this self-directed challenge, because they only have to compete with themselves.

At the starting point, students receive a placement test. Then, they are gently eased into a performance curriculum. Regardless whether students seek remedial coaching or enrichment, they soon catch up to their best potential—or a grade level above.

“Here at Kumon,” Kathy said, “you can be advanced and not be stressed. Students can progress as far as they want, and not be limited by their grade or age. Schools don’t have the manpower for such an individualized approach.”

Kathy, originally from Hawaii, has lived the Kumon creed for many years. She has an MBA in finance and marketing, and was a longtime field consultant for Kumon corporate, ensuring U.S. centers correctly applied the method. Kathy bought the Superstition Springs location three years ago, because she wanted to be involved with students again.

“We provide precise math and reading curricula for students K through 12, and even into college,” the director said. In the process, students build up concentration, focus and mental acuity, as well as time management and test-taking strategies.

“We tell students to preview

each test, and put the hardest problems last as to not lose points on easy questions,” Kathy continued. “At the higher levels, we teach students to solve problems in a more efficient way and explore strategizing.”

Kumon sometimes has to patch significant academic gaps. “A lot of kids are struggling in first grade, because they suddenly are expected to read, but they never learned the blended sounds and vowel combinations in kindergarten,” Kathy pointed out.

“We are always strict on grammar and punctuation,” she said. “We can’t let the standards go just because they write beautifully. The handwriting has to be neat, as well.” The pencil grip! Definitely. It is not just an outdated technique.

At the center, students work quietly and independently, while parents sit by or run errands. Sixth-grader Alex pulls a pre-algebra packet he has not finished, and fourth-grader Rachel works on decimal conversions. They go right to it.

Shraddha Patel, mom of Shivam, who is in the first grade, and Shrey, who is in the fourth grade, at Franklin Elementary School, had specific goals in mind when she enrolled her sons. “Shrey had a problem in preschool. He was bilingual, and we were unfamiliar with the teaching style,” she said.

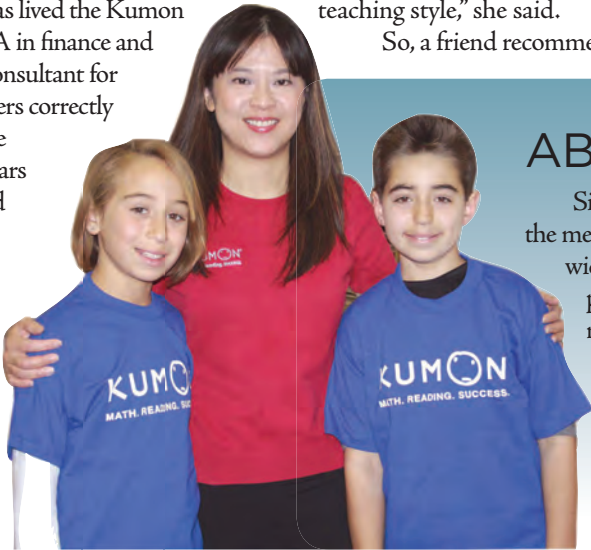
So, a friend recommended Kumon

to Shraddha. Both boys started the program at 4 years old, and have been very happy with their accomplishments. “Our goal is to get Shrey into level G, Algebra I, before he is in fifth grade.”

“I challenged myself to do the package within time limits,” said Shrey, who wants to be a doctor. His younger brother, Shivam, is just as ambitious. “He is so fast in his tasks and helpful that his teacher loves him,” Shraddha stated.

No limits to the top indeed. Ayush, a second-grader, from Cambridge Academy, has been attending Kumon studies for two years. He has become a wizard at division, so much so that everybody in class wants to get the right answers from him.

And what does he want to be when he grows up? “A Kumon instructor,” he said without hesitation. That’s how much he has come to love learning and mentoring there. ■



ABOUT KUMON

Since 1954, when Toru Kumon developed teaching materials for his son, who was struggling in math, the methodology has spread to 46 countries worldwide. There are more than 26,000 Kumon centers worldwide, and well above 4 million students enrolled. The Kumon success principles are based on three pillars—the level of material must correspond to the student’s ability; the rate of progress is determined by the student, not the teacher; and the material must be organized into a logical progression.

Stop in for a visit on Monday or Thursday afternoons, from 3:30 to 7 p.m. at the Superstition Springs Kumon Center, located at the southeast corner of Power Road and Southern Avenue. To find out more about Kumon learning strategies and availability, call Kathy Leano at (480) 807-5515.

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COMMUNITY

NEW TECHNOLOGY Makes Lasting Love Possible

By Dr. Lisa Gold and Dr. Everett Bailey

Dr. Lisa Gold and Everett Bailey, two of Arizona's most experienced and well-respected couples therapists, will present a workshop from Jan. 26 through 28, at Psychological Counseling Services, Downtown Scottsdale, 7530 E. Angus Drive.

The workshop fee is \$450 per couple, with an early registration discount, before Jan. 10, of \$400 per couple. Register at www.azcouples.com.

Workshop sessions are Thursday, Jan. 26, from 6 to 9 p.m.; Friday, Jan. 27, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with a 1.5-hour lunch break; and Saturday, Jan. 28, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Love and what makes it last are no longer a mystery. New technology has made it possible for us to study romantic love—where it goes wrong, how to repair rifts, and how to keep a good thing going. We now know how to make love last.

Learn real solutions for resolving conflict, feeling closer and improving physical intimacy. Don't just settle for getting by. Discover what keeps love alive.

Dr. Sue Johnson, one of the founders of Emotionally Focused Therapy and author of *Hold Me Tight*, developed this workshop. Emotionally Focused Therapy is based on the latest research of love, and how to help couples create the relationship they want. It is the most successful form of couple therapy, with a 75 percent success rate versus the 35 percent success rate of traditional couple therapy.

Here's what men who have attended these workshops are saying:

"Now I understand how to get out of the argu-

ments that would go round and round without end... finally!" "I was dragged there by my girlfriend, but was glad to find out it wasn't what I thought it would be... This stuff really works."

Women who have attended are saying: "I finally feel like we understand each other." "We aren't where we want to be yet, but now we have a map of how to get there." The most common response from both men and women is: "We wish we would have known all of this sooner!"

Dr. Gold and Dr. Bailey are licensed therapists and founding

members of the Arizona Community for Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT).

They have been trained by some of the world's best couples therapists, including Sue Johnson (one of the founders of EFT) and Dr. Lisa Palmer-Olsen (the family therapist on Dr. Drew's *Celebrity Rehab*).

Dr. Gold is the founder and clinical director of Desert Vista Counseling Services, and The Arizona Relationship Institute. She is the first Arizona therapist to become certified as an EFT therapist, and the first EFT supervisor in Arizona. She has been practicing as a therapist for 15 years, working with individuals, couples and families.



Both Dr. Gold and Dr. Bailey have taught at some of the country's best universities, and their writing has been published in professional journals. Their clients include corporate executives, stay-at-home moms, other therapists and professional athletes. Many of their clients drive several hours and even travel from out-of-state to work with them, specifically because of their expertise as couple therapists.

If you would like to be happier in your relationship, or you want to ensure that the happiness you already enjoy continues, this is the workshop for you. We look forward to seeing you there. ■

For more information, visit our Web site, which is indicated above for registration, or send an e-mail to dr.gold@azcouples.com.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

THE RESUMÉ THAT WILL LAND YOU YOUR NEXT CAREER

By Michael S. Seaver

Are you in career transition, have a job but are looking to change employers or on the verge of a promotion? Enhancing your resumé can help you progress to the next stage in securing your dream career. Effective resúmes provide recruiters and Human Resources (HR) professionals with a reason to invite you in for an interview. The best ones typically include the following:

- **Keywords**, which match those on the job description.
- The **scope** of your previous responsibilities.
- Quantifiable **results**, which entice recruiters to want to learn more.

KEYWORDS

Especially in today's economy, recruiters and other HR professionals are constantly inundated with as many as hundreds of resúmes for one position. To save time, organizations explicitly state what they are looking for in their job descriptions. They are trained to look for specific keywords when narrowing the list of viable candidates. To increase the chances of your resumé reaching the top of the heap, take the company's job description, and select seven to 10 keywords important to or repeated in the description. Tailor your resumé to that company and that job by using those keywords throughout your resumé to best explain your valuable experiences.

SCOPE

The Experience section of strong resúmes speaks not only to how well something was

done, but also to the quantifiable scope of the work. As a recruiter, it is much easier to form a mental picture of an applicant's experiences if she says, "Managed a project team of 12, with a \$250,000 budget..." versus "Managed a project team." Explain experiences in such a way that a recruiter can understand the breadth and depth of your work, and envision you in the role before meeting you.

RESULTS

Quantifying results of one's work can be difficult, but it is very important. A strong bullet point on a resumé begins with a past tense action verb, describes the action taken, and details the impact of that action. An average bullet point may be, "Increased annual sales." A strong bullet may be, "Increased annual sales by 25 percent year-over-year, exceeding stretch targets and securing \$500,000 of new revenue."

I recently spoke to a recruiter for one of the largest employers in the state of Arizona. The organization annually receives more than 500,000 applications for fewer than 8,000 job openings. Use the above tips to help your resumé get the recruiter's attention, and give her no option but to schedule you for an interview for your dream career. ■

Michael S. Seaver, MBA, SPHR, is the founder and CEO of Seaver Consulting, LLC. If you would like to learn more about career and life coaching, leadership training or business consulting, visit www.michaelseaver.com.



HEALTH

HIT CENTER OFFERS WIDE RANGE of health and fitness services

Submitted by HIT Center

The HIT Center is unlike any fitness facility or gym in the entire Valley. I recently had the chance to visit their Mesa location, and was astounded at their facility and scope of services. This state-of-the-art facility includes a human assessment laboratory, world-class equipment and degreed fitness professionals, who have helped hundreds of Mesa residents get some truly amazing results.

Tim O'Neil is a managing partner at the HIT Center. A native Arizonan, with a lifelong involvement in the fitness and health industry, he also is the track and field coach for the Brophy and Xavier preparatory schools, and has coached dozens of world class athletes. What Tim really wants everyone to know, however, is that they are passionate about helping people reach their goals, and they specialize in making fitness fun again. Whether you are a world class athlete, or just want to lose a little weight, their programs are designed for optimal results. In fact, they guarantee results.

The 12,000-square-foot facility is not a typical gym. All staff members possess exceptional credentials. "All of our fitness professionals hold degrees in exercise science, kinesiology, physiology or athletic training," Tim said. "They are not your basic certified personal trainers." The staff includes a seasoned assortment of trainers, including

those with bachelor's and master's degrees and one working on his PhD. The HIT Center offers one-on-one and semi-private personal training, as well as programs for weight loss, boot camp, kid's fitness, general fitness, retirement fitness, sports conditioning, nutrition consultation, fitness evaluation and testing services and much more.

Health and nutrition evaluation programs at the HIT Center utilize state-of-the-art machines and techniques that determine body fat, pounds of lean muscle, how many calories you need each day versus how many calories you are burning (yes, they can measure your metabolism), optimal training heart rate and complete metabolic profiles. Of course, any effective weight loss or training program needs a nutrition plan and the HIT Center can provide counseling and develop personalized meal plans, including those with special dietary requirements. There are no contracts or long-term commitments. ■

You must see the HIT Center for yourself. Arrange for a tour, and meet some of the trainers at the HIT Center, located at 4811 E. Julep St., Suite 110 (Greenfield Road, north of McKellips Road). Learn more at www.MesaPersonalTraining.com, or call (480) 981-0600 to schedule a free, no obligation fitness consultation.



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HEALTH

Chiropractic can help those having TROUBLE GETTING PREGNANT

Submitted by Reed Chiropractic

According to the Centers for Disease Control, more than 6 million women in the United States are infertile, and over 9 million use some kind of infertility service.

Recently, a series of research papers published in the *Journal of Vertebral Subluxation* suggested chiropractic adjustments performed by chiropractors to address nerve interference caused by spinal distortions, can offer hope to many of these women. Positive results were found in 12 studies, regardless of the women's age, number of infertile years, medical intervention or health history (including miscarriage, blocked fallopian tubes, amenorrhea, colitis or trauma).

In explaining how chiropractic care could affect fertility, Dr. Reed, from Reed Chiropractic, responded, "Chiropractic care is not a treatment or cure for any particular condition or disease. It merely eliminates stress on the nervous system, and allows the body to function properly," he continued. "If there is not an organic reason for a woman to not be able to get pregnant, chances are the nervous system might be the answer."

Dr. Reed was asked if pregnant women should continue receiving chiropractic care during their pregnancy. He responded by explaining that women who continue care during pregnancy typically have easier and less complicated births. He went on to discuss his unique certification in the Webster Turning Technique. Research shows a 92 percent success rate of breech or transverse



babies turning using this chiropractic technique.

"I have had mothers come in for treatment as late as 37 weeks pregnant with breech babies, and still had success with the babies turning head down prior to birth," Dr. Reed said, "With this protocol, the baby is never touched. The technique is designed to reduce any pelvic torsion or soft tissue structural distortions that are preventing the baby from going head-down," he continued.

Babies should naturally go head down, Dr. Reed further explained.

"They are just not able to when there are imbalances or stress within the pelvis," he continued. "Most mothers report that their babies turn within just three to 10 visits. However, it is much easier to keep the pelvis free of stress and tension throughout the pregnancy so the baby never is at risk of being breech."

So, whether you are having trouble getting pregnant, or want to have a safer, easier birth, chiropractic care has been proven to help. Dr. Reed is Webster Technique certified, and a member of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association. ■

For your free evaluation, contact Reed Chiropractic at (480) 721-0099.



LOCAL BUSINESS

Saguaro Lake Ranch Rides offers scenic riding trails

Submitted by Saguaro Lake Ranch

Saguaro Lake Ranch Trail Rides, located at historical Saguaro Lake Ranch, only 30 minutes north of downtown Mesa and one mile south of Saguaro Lake, on the Tonto National Forest, offers some of the best Arizona trail riding with spectacular views of Saguaro Lake.

Surrounded by the Goldfield Mountains and Bulldog Cliffs, trails will take you along Saguaro cactus-studded mesas, across and along the

filled and scenic ride through the Sonoran Desert both relaxing and enjoyable. This is a wonderful way to entertain and show out-of-town guests a memorable time when they visit Arizona. In addition, we offer gift certificates, which are great gift ideas for the holidays, birthdays and special occasions.



We offer rides of varying durations, ranging from 90 minutes to two hours, to two and one-half hours and finally, rides of four hours. ■

Salt River, and up creosote-covered hills overlooking Saguaro Lake.

Rides are available by reservation six days a week, from Oct. 1 through the end of April. Whether an experienced rider, or you have never been on a horse before, our experienced guides will help make your fun-

For more information, or to make your reservation, call us at (480) 984-0335.

You also can visit our Web site at www.saguarolaketrailrides.com.

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HEALTH

FOLLOW YOUR NEW YEAR'S FITNESS resolution to k Pilates and Karve Studio

By Dawn Abbey

Every New Year, we all resolve to exercise more, lose weight and eat right, so this year, why not really do something about getting in better shape by attending Karve classes at k Pilates and Karve Studio.

The Karve Method is the creation of studio owner Kendra Jordan, who says Karve literally *carves* your body by sculpting, reshaping and elongating the major muscles. Kendra explained that she melded the dance-like exercises of famed ballerina Lotte Berk with callanetics, Pilates and yoga to create the Karve technique. "This approach is the fastest, most effective and *safest* way to change your body from the inside out. It really sculpts those *vanity* muscles," Kendra claimed.

"This technique can help you create a high, lifted seat, lean, shapely thighs, beautiful shoulders and triceps, and a trim waist, all without jumping, jarring or damaging movements," Kendra said. "It also increases metabolism and stamina, and provides cardiovascular benefits."

According to Kendra, Karve is a unique, interval-training-based class designed to develop the physique of a dancer—long, lean muscles that are strong, yet flexible. "All major muscle groups are worked in a one-hour class of carefully designed strengthening and orthopedic stretching techniques," she said. "Karve fuses highly focused and controlled movements through ballet barre work, yoga and Pilates. It's all based on core strengthening," Kendra continued. "When you have strong abdominals, it's the foundation for strengthening all the muscle groups."

Using high repetition, small range of motion, accuracy and focus, each muscle group is worked thoroughly and completely, and then stretched to create long, lean lines. The entire body is challenged throughout the class, which quickly improves posture and body alignment, and creates a body

equal in strength, beauty, balance and youthful vitality. "Our classes are small, so instruction is very individual, depending on your goals and fitness level," Kendra said.

According to Kendra, k Pilates is Mesa's only Pilates and fitness studio offering authentic Pilates instruction on Classical Pilates spring-based equipment. "Since classes have only five or six members, everyone has their own piece of equipment to use. All our instructors have been trained in the Classical Pilates technique designed the way Joseph Pilates himself originally intended, and all are Pilates Method Alliance Certified. Our staff carefully watch to make sure everyone is properly executing their

exercises for the most effective results," Kendra said, "Our mission is to provide personal attention to each individual's form, in limited, semi-private class sizes to ensure rapid results."

Kendra has more than 10 years of fitness, Pilates, sport medicine and athletic experience. She holds a degree in kinesiology and a master's degree in sport management from the University of San Francisco.

Kendra has certifications in Pilates Method Alliance, the NSCA and as an athletic trainer (sports physical therapy). Kendra also owns a Karve Studio in Old Town Scottsdale, and a licensed Karve Studio recently opened in Lindon, Utah. In addition, two future Karve licensed studios are set to open in Gilbert and North Scottsdale. ■

For more information about k Pilates and Karve Studio, located at 3514 N. Power Road, call (480) 840-1860, or visit kpilates.com.



EVENT

Cut-a-thon to benefit **SUNSHINE ACRES CHILDREN'S HOME**

By Dawn Abbey

The holidays may be over, but the need for charitable giving still remains, and that's why Mike Magri, owner of Mike's Barbershops, is planning a fund-raising haircut-a-thon on Sunday, Feb. 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., to benefit Sunshine Acres Children's Home.

All proceeds from haircuts done that day at Mike's Barbershops, 5057 E. McKellips Road, will go to the children. In addition, Mike plans to park his pickup truck outside the shop with a sign saying, *Fill the bed for Sunshine Acres*. "Everyone is encouraged to bring clothes, toys, donations or whatever for the home," said Mike. ■

For more information, call Mike's Barbershops at (480) 218-5964.



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EDUCATION

Begin preparing for college early for best results

By Mary Martha Gingerella

While the re-entry into the everyday routine after the holidays is a stark reminder January has arrived, this month also signifies the start of the second semester for schools, and for high school seniors, a sudden *reality check* commences.

January is a pivotal month for seniors, their parents, counselors and teachers. The pace is notably different between first and second semesters in a high school. It's as if someone picked up the slow-moving wind-up toy and twisted it tightly, forcing it into overdrive mode. There are now pages of to-do lists for everyone. The relaxing holidays have ended, and the fast-approaching high school graduation and college planning, admission and financial aid deadlines hit both students and parents hard. No more procrastinating on scholarship research and submissions for students. And the financial fear factor for how to pay for college is in full swing for parents.

January also is a key financial aid month. High schools will host their *Financial Aid Night*. Counselors, college representatives and financial aid experts will discuss the Free Application for Student Financial Aid (FAFSA) and other financing options available through the universities/colleges (e.g., private scholarships) and educational loan partners. The FAFSA is required for all prospective college students seeking Pell grants, scholarships, work-study programs and student loans.



A COUPLE OF RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING FINANCIAL AID:

GET A PIN NUMBER EARLY

Go to the FAFSA Web site at www.fafsa.ed.gov to register for a pin number (the response is immediate, but may take longer if you wait till later months). You must have a PIN to submit the FAFSA electronically. While you're on the Web site, print a copy of the FAFSA worksheet to use as reference for the information you will need to complete the FAFSA application (e.g., tax information).

COMPLETE YOUR TAXES IN JANUARY

(or as early as possible) in order to apply for FAFSA

While you're waiting to receive your W-2s, read through the worksheet to see what other information you can locate in advance. Set a time in advance with your son or daughter to sit down together and complete the FAFSA worksheet.

The worksheet serves as a facilitator in the discussion about finances, Expected Family Contributions and many other topics

(and acronyms). Once the worksheet is completed, the information can be transferred easily and quickly to the online application for submission.

SEEK ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE, IF NEEDED

for completing the FAFSA application

Help is available through college financial aid offices (and through AZ Leaders and Learners). Also, during February each year, there is one weekend

when parents and students can get answers to questions and one-on-one help with the FAFSA. In 2012, this assistance (called College Goal Sunday) will take place on Saturday, Feb. 11, at Mesa Community College and Sunday, Feb. 12, at Arizona State University Polytechnic Campus. You can obtain more details at www.collegegoalsundayusa.org.

DON'T HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR YET?

You can still benefit from getting familiar with and planning for this critical time for your teen's senior year. Although, the school year for most students begins in August each year, for junior high and high school students, the planning for the next year is now (January through March). They will be registering for next year's classes, and prudent planning and good decision-making for these classes (and preparing for life after high school) also is now. Happy new semester to you and your family. ■

For more information, call
(480) 329-0450, or e-mail
azleadersandlearners@gmail.com.



REAL ESTATE

Coldwell Banker Trails And Paths Expands Even In This Market

Submitted by Coldwell Banker Trails And Paths

Solid expansion is the mark of a healthy business, but it's not always common in today's environment.

We have all witnessed the shortfalls of today's paradigm of business in the wild fluctuations in all asset classes and markets. However, a strong business is capable of providing value and thus producing a profit and growth, no matter the circumstances. On rare occasions, when a company pulls this off, you may be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of something great, indeed.

This certainly has been the case with Coldwell Banker Trails And Paths. Trails And Paths is a real estate brokerage, owned and operated by the Brown family, living in the Las Sendas area for the past 15 years. And with all the headwinds in the real estate market these days, they still have managed to expand.

This is no small feat.

The company has grown to support four primary businesses. First off, you have the regular resale business division. Secondly, Trails And Paths now offers an in-house mortgage division. Thirdly, they feature full service in the areas of short sales and lender-owned, or REO properties. And lastly, Trails And Paths has added a division with a focus on the investor, which features a **REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT SPECIALIST**.

Of course, many of us are familiar with the first area. That being your normal real property transaction, which takes place absent any unconventional procedures. This is, of course, the standard transactional business, which occurs between your everyday buyers and sellers. But what you may not be familiar with is that this transaction accounts for only a small part of today's market. Some estimates show this to be 30 percent to 35 percent or so. With this being the case, maybe *normal* isn't the best word to describe this area anymore.

Which leads us to the second division—mortgage. Ron Brown and his team have worked to ensure those aforementioned *normal* real estate transactions do not fall apart

at the financing level. Having the in-house mortgage division allows for more personal interaction with underwriters, who ultimately decide whether or not a client is a good risk. When coupled with high-tech service and extremely competitive rates, this mortgage division helps support buyers, sellers and agents by allowing for the highest probability of mortgage approvals, which, of course, leads to a greater degree of closed deals. This, of course, is in the best interest of all principles involved, but also creates more income opportunity for agents of Trails And Paths.



TRAILS AND PATHS

In developing our third division, a great deal of thought went into how the short sale market could best be served. Contrary to popular belief, the short sale market is quite large, and it exists in all areas. No one has been immune. Areas that we tend to think of as affluent or wealthy, like Las Sendas, have a short sale market, which needs to be serviced, and Trails And Paths is doing just that.

They have agents whose primary focus is short sales. That is important to note. A short sale transaction is completely different from other more standard real estate transactions. They require a greater time commitment and timely follow-up in addition to meeting the deadlines and documentation requirements of today's lenders. When done properly, a short sale creates a win-win-win scenario, whereby the lender gets to recoup some of its cash, the borrower gets freedom from a burdensome loan or an upside down loan-to-value ratio, and a new buyer gets a deal on a great property.

Successful short sales are not accidents. A quality short sale agent is the only guarantee that a seller can rely on to create the best chance at a positive outcome and avoiding foreclosure. Anything less, and a seller could find himself in a foreclosure.

Finally, we come to the division focusing on **REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT**. I am reminded of an old business adage: *In business, you only get what you negotiate*. There is a great deal of power in that idea. And for an enterprising seller, buyer or real estate agent, who understands this, a great many doors open.

What if your transaction was in trouble?

Maybe due to financing or foreclosure or whatever reasons you can imagine. Then, you realize you have access to investors. Perhaps an investor would be your lender, or perhaps you structure your transaction another way. But the point is you now have more options. That's what the real estate investment division is all about. Having access to this division gives all principles and agents a greater possibility of a closed transaction.

And let's not forget about the benefit to investors. Many of the Trails And Paths investors are earning double-digit returns on their money. Contrast that with today's returns in other markets, and you'll see a strong opportunity for yourself as an investor. ■

For details on these four divisions, and specifics on how you can benefit from working with Coldwell Banker Trails And Paths as a buyer, seller, agent or investor, give Ron Brown a call today at (480) 355-4700.



By AnnElise Makin

A 3D illustration featuring a globe, a palm tree, a hotel building, and an airplane. The globe is positioned on the right, showing the Americas. A palm tree stands to the left of the globe. In front of the palm tree is a blue and white hotel building with a sign that says 'HOTEL'. A white airplane with blue accents is flying towards the right, passing over the globe.



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LOCAL BUSINESS

IT IS POSSIBLE TO GO GREEN WITHOUT GROWING GREEN

By Dawn Abbey

With temperatures cooling, it's time to get in the backyard and enjoy the evenings and weekends, but weekend fun shouldn't have to include putting in a winter lawn, constant watering, and worst of all, mowing, over and over again.

Instead, now is the time to go green with artificial turf.

"Real grass is a constant battle in Arizona," claimed Dan Bjorkman, owner of AZGrassman. "A green lawn can be a thing of beauty, but quality artificial turf gives the look and enjoyment of a green lawn without the hassles," he continued. "We live in a desert, especially out here in the East Valley. It takes a lot of water to keep a lawn growing green and healthy."

Turf pays for itself in three to five years in water savings alone. According to Dan, the average Valley lawn requires approximately 61,000 gallons of water each year, which is approximately 70 percent of a homeowner's water bill.

"Artificial turf can keep your free time relatively maintenance-free," Dan said. "There's no more dirt, mud, burnt grass or unsightly pet stains. You can just sweep or blow leaves off turf," he continued.

"Turf is very pet and kid friendly," Dan said. "Since it is used on professional football fields, it is cushiony enough to absorb falls. With a wide range of grass types and colors, the plush green appearance of your lawn looks authentic, enhancing the value of your home and yard."

Dan believes turf is a great alternative to gravel, as well. "It's not easy keeping gravel looking neat, and it



requires chemicals to kill weeds, which are constantly cropping up," he said. "It's certainly not as usable or attractive for playing or relaxing as a soft turf cushion."

There also are other ecological benefits. Turf is made from recycled materials and uses no chemicals. AZGrassman also uses an environmentally friendly product underneath their turf. In addition to a bed of sand, they add Durafil, made of 99 percent silicone dioxide. It is resistant to bacterial spore growth, does not absorb pet urine or other contaminants, and it contains no heavy metals. Some installers have come under criticism from environmentalists for using fill made from shredded tires. Durafil also can be some 30 degrees cooler to the touch in direct sunlight.

In addition, artificial turf can turn an ugly brown space into a putting green. AZGrassman offers a texturized nylon turf, which allows the ball to land similarly to that on a real green.

"To budget for artificial turf, calculate the square footage of the area (multiply length by width) and estimate \$4 to \$7 per square foot for the turf and installation. An average installation takes one to two days," Dan said. "Although the upfront cost to install turf is not small," he admitted, "it quickly pays for itself." ■

For more information, an estimate, or to see the new AZGrassman outdoor showroom, located at 16628 N. Saguaro Blvd., in Fountain Hills, and featuring nine different lawns and putting greens, call Ozzie Strand at (480) 363-2154.

You also can view turf options and get a free quote by visiting www.azgrassman.com.

LOCAL BUSINESS

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Submitted by The Fireplace Guy

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If you have had your fireplace for over a year, you can probably see a white film on the glass. We safely can remove the glass and clean it off for you. While doing this, we will clean out your pilot assembly, add new embers and check for gas leaks. In addition, we will make sure your fireplace is safe and in good working condition.

Additional services offered by The Fireplace Guy include the installation of fireplaces and gas logs, running gas lines, welding and various other jobs, which might be found on a honey do list.

Such jobs include hanging and wiring light fixtures, installing towel racks and window coverings, as well as hanging pictures. We also install sinks and garbage disposals. Just ask. If we don't know how to do it, we probably know someone who does.

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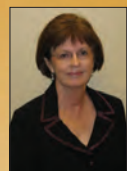
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Private Equity Financing Available

- Countless good people were unfortunately caught up in the recent real estate downturn
- Our private equity network can provide competitive financing when other lending institutions refuse; even after a short sale

WE CAN SELL YOUR HOME FASTER

At **Coldwell Banker Trails & Paths®** we're part of a real estate company with an international reputation and clout. For more than a century the **Coldwell Banker®** brand has been among the leaders in real estate. Today, we are building on that legacy as we pioneer a "New Way" of doing business that combines the convenience and marketing power of the Internet with the personal service of real estate professionals. The tools and unsurpassed marketing infrastructure we have developed over the years plus our partnership with **Coldwell Banker® International** make us ideally suited to help you succeed in real estate.

- Unsurpassed marketing infrastructure in 47 countries
 - Public relations presence with the Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, USA Today, CNBC, CNN.com, Fox News and more
- #1 brand website by Nielsen Net
 - Over 32 Million annual visitors to **Coldwell Banker®** websites
 - Online marketing in major websites like Realtor.com, Homes.com and Google
- #1 brokerage in reputation and trust by BrooksRose® Brand Tracking

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