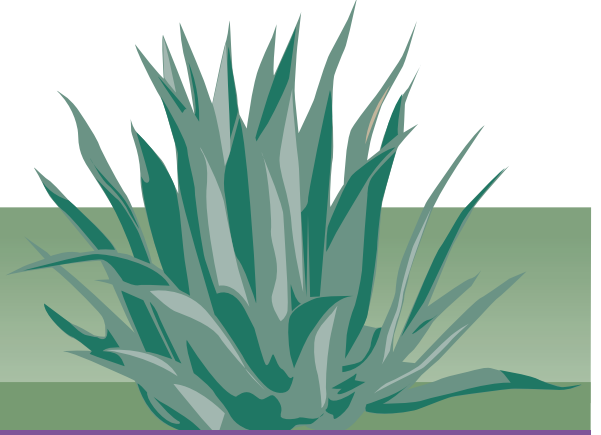


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The Exercise Coach is revolutionizing workout routines using AI Technology

Submitted by The Exercise Coach®

There are many common misconceptions around exercise. Let's reveal the secret to how The Exercise Coach clients are getting maximal results from only a couple of 20-minute workouts each week.

The way we exercise really matters because what's at stake is significant. We begin losing muscle mass around age 30. Dieting without exercise can accelerate muscle loss. Exercise is a strategy that people can use to improve their quality of life, so how you go about doing it matters.

Many people avoid the gym because they are worried about getting hurt or it takes too long, or it is just plain boring! This makes sticking with an exercise program especially challenging, which is where The Exercise Coach comes in.

The truth is that walking and other weight-bearing activities do *not* stimulate improvements in strength. What's more is that moderate intensity strength training where no meaningful demands are put on the musculature does *not* induce the improvements either.

It's important to understand what you are trying to do during a workout. Counting reps or total time moving isn't very helpful. The real point of exercise is to stimulate the body's natural ability to adapt to stress. When we exercise, there is an exercise effect that takes place, which is often confused for the results of training. The results that we seek from exercise are adaptations produced by our bodies in response to the challenge of exercise.

If we don't exercise the way that's appropriate for our goal, we may put in a lot of work and still not get the results we want. The optimal exercise approach focuses on safety, effectiveness, and efficiency. This is the best way to compare the different approaches and figure out what's appropriate for you.

Exercise is nothing more than a stressor and only serves as a stimulus if it is sufficiently intense. We become stronger and fitter if the stressor is enough to force an adaptation. The right stressor will produce the results you want when you give the body the rest and nutrition it needs to accomplish your goal.



The average amount of time it takes for your body to recover and become stronger is a couple of days, which is why The Exercise Coach employs intense periods of exercise a couple of times a week. The frequency we need to perform high intensity exercise is less when the intensity itself is higher.

Muscle is the window to the rest of the body. Growing stronger makes the rest of your body more effective as well, such as increased bone mineral density, improved metabolic function, weight loss, improved balance, balanced hormonal levels, and many more.

The Exercise Coach approach is to get the maximal results in the shortest length of time. There is an inverse relationship between intensity and duration of exercise. The level of intensity required to create adaptations is high but doesn't require much time.

Studies have shown that a single set of exercises at the right level of intensity is more effective than multiple sets. Exercising intensely for 20 minutes is sufficient to achieve results. The conventional wisdom of needing to exercise

more doesn't bear out.

Why not spend as little time as possible to get the best results you are looking for? Optimizing exercise allows you to enjoy more of the good things in life.

Safety is essential for exercise. Many exercises can be fun but if the focus is on results, it's better to avoid the risk. The biggest key to making exercise safe is being in control of the forces that are applied to the body. The key to reducing force in strength training is using slow controlled movements instead of explosive movements.

The Exercise Coach can help you no matter where your current fitness level is. The coaches are very good at meeting people where they are and tailoring the program to the person's situation. ■

See for yourself how you can improve your workout and muscle quality using our unique hi-tech process that helps our clients get the results that matter most to them at The Exercise Coach. Visit exercisecoach.com/north-mesa or call (480) 716-6080 for two free sessions!

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EDUCATION

Live Your Life Every Day

By Dr. Anjum Majeed, Founder/Superintendent, Self Development Academy

When receiving a diagnosis of a brain tumor, it is only natural to experience a range of emotions. The individual not only ponders over the side effects of the treatment but also faces the emotional roller coaster of a range of moods, from stress to anxiety and depression. However, there are ways to lessen the confounding effects of the life-changing diagnosis. Using various coping skills, one can set small goals, acquire the strength to affirm a positive outlook and rely on resilience for serenity and composure.

After suffering from severe headaches for weeks and feeling dizzy, Kathi Haschke sought medical consultation. On April 16, 2024, Kathi Haschke received the devastating diagnosis of a brain tumor. Like anyone receiving a similar diagnosis, Kathi's mind first wandered to the treatment and associated physical and emotional challenges. But not for very long. She said, "I thought about my students. I wanted them to know how much I care for them. I wanted to attend their kindergarten graduation in May. And I did."

Kathi is a beloved teacher at Self Development Academy (SDA) and has taught there for nearly 14 years. Kathi's return to SDA in mid-May to finish the year helped her feel accomplished. She stated, "My job in the classroom (for the year) has been completed." This positive feeling of accomplishment made her summer much more manageable as she traveled with her husband, Dr. Randy Haschke, soaking in the beauty of the picturesque places in Wyoming and Montana. Setting achievable goals promotes resilience and brings tranquility to an individual facing a shattering diagnosis.

Besides setting reasonable goals, another strategy for coping with serious illness is connecting with others and deepening relationships. In the fall, Kathi returned to teaching at SDA. "My students can't imagine what they do for my soul," she stated. She added, "As a teacher, my students are a big part of my recovery."

Kathi did not plan on becoming a classroom teacher

as a young person. It wasn't until she saw one of her older sisters teach a second-grade class that she "fell in love with teaching." Kathi taught in schools in Florida and Arizona. Observing Kathi teach a kindergarten class, one of her former principals suggested, "Kindergarten is the perfect spot."

Kathi started teaching kindergarten at SDA in 2011. She takes her profession very seriously and wants to be a role model for her children. She wants to model for students her love of learning. She focuses on "how her students can feel good about themselves."

Kathi adds, "I want teachers to think when they were little, how did they want to live their lives?" She does expect students to respect rules. She adds, "Everything I do, I do with love," which inspires her students to develop a love for reading and learning. She makes learning fun.

Kathi espouses the philosophy that "A child who reads will be an adult who thinks." A parent of her former student shared that Kathi inspired her daughter to want to be an author. Another parent expressing her appreciation to Kathi for fostering a love of reading sends the following message:

"You may not remember me, but my daughter Payson was in your class roughly eight years ago, and I wanted to thank you for being her favorite teacher of all time and for creating a love of reading for her. She is currently in 7th grade and reads tons of books. ... She started reading in kindergarten and has not stopped! ... We appreciate everything you did because neither my husband nor I are huge readers, but she always reads. Thank you; you brightened her world."

When meeting this phenomenal human being named Kathi, one would not know about the personal challenges she is enduring. She believes in moving on. Despite her diagnosis, she sports her beautiful smile, views the world through positive lenses, and finds it necessary to connect deeply with her family, students, and friends. Her special moments with her son Bryton and husband Randy have become increasingly more precious. She declares, "It is all about relationships."



Kathi Haschke



It is also about resilience; a trait Kathi models well for her students and one of the four "Rs" at the core of SDA's character development. The other three "Rs" at SDA are respect, readiness, and responsibility.

Kathi claims, "SDA is my Happy Place." She wakes up each morning and is thankful for the day. She looks forward to going to SDA, seeing the teachers and administrators, and, more importantly, her students. She rejoices at the thought that students are "so happy to see me." Kathi shares that she does not focus on negativity. She is grateful for all the positive aspects of her life, a characteristic necessary to thrive in adversity.

In conclusion, Kathi reflects on life: "There is a purpose in everyone's life. I fully accept the plan. Live your life every day."

From the depth of our hearts, we wish Kathi and her family the very best. ■



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LOCAL BUSINESS

Okun Dentistry Brings its COMPREHENSIVE CARE APPROACH TO MESA

By *Jamie Phillis*

Okun Dentistry, which opened its first location in Tempe 50 years ago, is bringing its unique, comprehensive approach to dentistry and focus on personalized care to Mesa.

Dr. Amy Okun, a third-generation dentist who graduated from New York University's College of Dentistry, joined the Tempe practice two decades ago, and since her father's retirement, she has continued his legacy of cultivating a close-knit, family-like environment.

"We miss my dad at the practice, but he still comes in and gets his dental work done here, of course," said Dr. Amy Okun. "It's been important to me to keep the environment he created, and that I've always loved; it's that *Cheers* feeling where everyone knows your name. The team and patients have been here for many years, which has helped to build our family feeling."

The friendly, compassionate approach to care has allowed the practice to thrive over the decades, with many loyal patients and new patients coming through positive referrals and reviews. The practice has never advertised and has been fortunate with just word of mouth for the past 50 years.

As Dr. Okun has continued to lead the practice, her busy lifestyle as a mother of two and business owner inspired her to bring dental specialists in-house to make dental care easy and seamless for her patients. Unlike most dental offices that require patients to seek referrals for specialized treatments, Okun Dentistry's Tempe team includes an orthodontist, an oral surgeon, an endodontist, and a pediatric dentist.

"Patients love it," she said. "They want to come in and have the same parking space, the same receptionist to greet them, and the same assistant in the hallway. I love my patients, and I know for some of them it's comforting just hearing my voice while they're with a specialist – I might



Dr. Amy Okun

even run in and hold their hand while they're being numbed."

Dr. Okun had the opportunity to take over an established Mesa practice, previously known as Sandstrom Dental Group, which has been serving the area for 30 years. Since acquiring the office, she has kept the same team and service prices in place and is beginning to bring in specialists to offer the same comprehensive care her Tempe office does.

Beyond the practice, Dr. Okun is passionate about giving back and loves helping others - she has even traveled to Jamaica and the Dominican Republic to provide free dental care.

To celebrate the rebrand, Okun Dentistry is offering several new patient specials at the Mesa location, including specials on mouth guards for sports and night.

To learn more about the practice and additional specials, such as discounts on X-rays and cleanings, call the office to schedule a consultation. Dr. Okun and the team are excited to welcome new families and patients of all ages. ■

Okun Dentistry in Mesa is located at 7448 E. Main St. To make an appointment, call (480) 396-8684. For more information, visit www.okundentistry.com.



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(480) 748-1127

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kim Phillips

ADVERTISING

Monica Adair (480) 772-1949

Kim Phillips (480) 748-1127

STAFF WRITERS

Kimberly Alvarado, Aidan Current

Jamie Phillis, Mark Moran

DESIGN

LuckyYou! Creative

Erin Suwwan, Jaclyn Threadgill

www.luckyyoucreative.com

VIDEO PRODUCER

Chase Balsley

CONTRIBUTORS

John and Natascha Karadsheh, Lorraine Ryall

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LOCAL BUSINESS

BODY20 Las Sendas Celebrates Grand Opening

PROVIDES PATH TO FITNESS IN 20 MINUTES

By *Jamie Phillis*

Achieving your fitness goals in under an hour a week might sound too good to be true, but BODY20 utilizes a tech-forward FDA-cleared electro-muscle stimulation suit and one-on-one coaching to make it possible with a maximum of just two 20-minute sessions each week.

Alexia Bertsatos, BODY20'S Las Sendas franchise owner, struggled to make fitness a part of her life as a busy real estate agent and single mother, even with an active lifestyle, until she tried BODY20.

"I started going down a wellness rabbit hole a few years back after gaining some weight," she said. "I'm not very big on going to the gym, but I was forcing myself and even with an active lifestyle I couldn't find a way to get healthier – especially exercise wise. I did a demo at BODY20 and immediately I was ready to sign up knowing it only required 20 minutes twice a week, I thought, 'I can do anything for 20 minutes.'"

Alexia loved her sessions and the results, so she decided to open her own location to help others share her experience and to build a community wellness hub. She's



partnered with physical therapists, chiropractors, massage therapists, dieticians, and more to offer her members a comprehensive approach to wellness. Soon, she'll also be bringing in experts weekly to share tips on yoga, recovery, and other modalities with her members.

"I wanted to create the space that I needed for my own wellness," she said. "I want there to be a culture where we feel like family, and if you have a question, we'll figure



it out and help you, and if we don't have the answer, we'll find the person who does."

The customized, low-impact workouts are a great option for everyone from athletes to those with mobility issues. The electro-muscle stimulation allows for 150 times more muscle contractions than conventional exercises and can be targeted for those with injuries or specific exercise goals.

"There was a man in a wheelchair who started doing the workouts and within weeks he was able to start walking with a walker," Alexia shared. "The technology allows us to target muscles you can't target through exercise and it's effective for everyone from body builders to those who want to lose weight."

The community is encouraged to visit the studio now for an arm demo. To stay up to date on the latest announcements, follow on Instagram at @BODY20lassendas.

"We have a sport recovery specialist (recovery massage, cupping, and scraping) come in every Friday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Available to non-members too. Call for an appointment," said Alexia. ■

BODY20 Las Sendas is located at 2837 N. Power Road in Mesa. For more information, visit body20.com/location/las-sendas or call (480) 672-3117.

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The March entertainment lineup is as follows:

- 1st Michael Spero (singer songwriter rock)
(Brunch & Dinner)

- 2nd Rachele Romeo (sax) (Brunch) Buddy Martel
(Dinner)

- 3rd Matt French (singer songwriter)

- 4th Eric Miller (Spanish guitar)

- 5th Anthony Mazzella (guitar virtuoso)

- 6th Taide Pineda (singer songwriter)

- 7th John Burak (piano vocalist)

- 8th Krystal Waters (singer songwriter diverse genres)

- 9th Rachele Romeo (Brunch) Anthony Mazzella
(guitar virtuoso) (Dinner)

- 10th Matt French (singer songwriter)

- 11th Eric Miller (Spanish guitar)

- 12th Anthony Mazzella (guitar virtuoso)

- 13th Taide Pineda (singer songwriter)

- 14th John Burak (piano vocalist)

- 15th Scott Hallock (Brunch) (vocals & guitar, classic rock)
Christopher Robin (singer songwriter)

- 16th Rachele Romeo (sax) (Brunch) Michael Spero
(singer songwriter rock) (Dinner)

- 17th Matt French (singer songwriter)

- 18th Eric Miller (Spanish guitar)

- 19th Bill Miles (singer songwriter folk)

- 20th Taide Pineda (singer songwriter)

- 21st John Burak (piano vocalist)

- 22nd Scott Hallock (Brunch) (vocals & guitar, classic rock)
Christopher Robin (singer songwriter)

- 23rd Rachele Romeo (sax) (Brunch & Dinner)

- 24th Matt French (singer songwriter)

- 25th Eric Miller (Spanish guitar)

- 26th Bill Miles (singer songwriter folk)

- 27th Taide Pineda (singer songwriter)

- 28th John Burak (piano vocalist)

- 30th Rachele Romeo (sax) (Brunch) Michael Spero
(Dinner)

- 31st Matt French (singer songwriter)



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REAL ESTATE

Are Buyers or Sellers Paying the Buyer's Agent Commission?

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



By now, you've likely heard about the new rules regarding buyer agent commission now referred to as *compensation stemming* from the National Association of Realtors (NAR) settlement. These rules took effect on Aug. 1, 2024 but so far, aside from making the process more complex and harder to explain to buyers, we haven't seen any significant changes.

For those who may have missed the details, here is a quick overview of the changes and how they affect buyers, sellers, and Realtors.

WHAT PROMPTED THE CHANGE?

The National Association of Realtors (NAR) settled a class-action lawsuit alleging that their rules regarding real estate commissions violated antitrust laws, essentially forcing sellers to pay both the buyer and seller agent commissions, which inflated prices; as part of the settlement, NAR agreed to pay a large sum of money and change their practices to allow buyers to directly negotiate their agent's compensation with no pre-set commission displayed on list. Of course since the change in August last year we have not seen prices come down as a result of the change.

HOW THE CHANGE AFFECTED REAL ESTATE

The NAR settlement has significantly altered how buyer agents are compensated. Previously, it was standard practice for the seller to pay the buyer agent's compensation, which was determined before the property was listed. This compensation amount was included in the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and the listing agreement.

However, under the new rules, buyer agent compensation cannot be included in the MLS or the listing contract. Instead, it must now be negotiated separately, bringing a fundamental shift in how buyer agents are paid.

BUYER BROKER AGREEMENTS: A NEW REQUIREMENT

One of the most significant changes from the settlement is the requirement for buyers to sign a Buyer Broker Agreement before viewing any property.

This agreement outlines the terms and responsibilities between the buyer and their agent, including:

- The agreed-upon compensation amount (usually a percentage of the sale price).
- The responsibilities of both parties.
- The duration of the agreement.

With this agreement in place, the buyer becomes responsible for compensating their agent. This means compensation must be negotiated with the offer to have the seller cover the buyer agent's compensation or the buyer needs to pay it themselves at closing.

HOW IS THIS WORKING IN THE CURRENT MARKET?

In many areas, the real estate market has become more of a buyer's market. Despite the new rules, sellers are still willing to pay buyer agent compensation to attract more buyers.

Here's how the process typically works under the new system:

- 1. Signing the Agreement:** Buyers sign a Buyer Broker Agreement committing to a specified compensation amount for their agent.
- 2. Making an Offer:** When the buyer's agent prepares an offer, they request that the seller covers the buyer agent's compensation.
- 3. Seller's Response:** If the seller agrees, the compensation is included in the transaction. If the seller counters with lower compensation or refuses to pay, the buyer is now responsible to pay it at closing. If this happens it may become another negotiation between the buyer and the buyer's agent.

If the buyer cannot cover the agent's compensation and the seller refuses to pay, the buyer may have no choice but to withdraw their offer and look for another property where the seller is willing to pay the compensation.



WHY ARE SELLERS STILL PAYING BUYER AGENT COMPENSATION?

With more homes on the market than buyers, many sellers are willing to pay buyer agent compensation to make their property more attractive. Offering to cover these costs can widen the pool of potential buyers and increase the likelihood of a successful sale.

WHAT BUYERS AND SELLERS SHOULD KNOW MOVING FORWARD

For buyers, understanding their financial responsibility is crucial. They should discuss compensation expectations with their agent and how to negotiate these costs with the seller. They also need to discuss and have a plan on what to do if the seller is unwilling to cover the cost.

For sellers, offering buyer agent compensation remains a strategic tool to attract interest and ensure a smoother transaction. This becomes a point of negotiation when an offer is received, and whether you agree to pay buyer agent compensation will depend on several factors — such as the current market conditions, how quickly the home sells, and whether there are multiple offers.

As the real estate landscape continues to evolve under these new rules, staying informed and working closely with experienced real estate professionals can help both buyers and sellers navigate the changes effectively. ■

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like more information on the new rules or buying or selling a home.

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REAL ESTATE

A Perfect March!

By Natascha Ovando-Karadsheh, Las Sendas Resident and Associate Broker/Owner at KOR Properties



Natascha and John Karadsheh

March is arguably the BEST month in the Valley of the Sun. Whether you are a long-time resident or just visiting, now is the time to get outside and enjoy all of the fabulous activities the Metro Phoenix area has to offer. Grab your calendar and make a plan to enjoy every drop of fabulous weather!

1. SPRING TRAINING

We can't discuss March in Arizona without talking about baseball. The whole country comes to enjoy the beautiful weather and Cactus League Spring Training. If you are headed to a game in Scottsdale, consider adding a pre-game pub crawl on a group party bike. Arizona Party Bike will take you to several bars before the game and drop you off at the Scottsdale Stadium in Old Town. Visit CactusLeague.com and ArizonaPartyBike.com for details.

2. ENJOY A FREE CONCERT IN THE PARK

Enjoy *Sun and Sounds* at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts every Sunday afternoon in March from noon to 4 p.m. Grab a picnic blanket and bring your friends. Add brunch or an early dinner at The Mission and enjoy walking around all the fun shops in Old Town.

3. EMBRACE A DAYCATION

Did you know that you can buy a day pass to the pool at resorts such as the Scottsdale Princess, Arizona Biltmore, Hotel Valley Ho, and The Phoenician starting at just \$50 per person? Spend the day lounging poolside or upgrade to a cabana with friends. Visit ResortPass.com for details.

4. LANTERNS, CACTI, AND BUTTERFLIES

March is loaded with activities at the Desert Botanical Gardens that you won't want to miss. During the day, enjoy Morning Sound Meditation, the Majestic Mariposas butterfly exhibit, the Spring Plant Sale, and special Dog Days at the Garden. Evenings bring the stunning Light Bloom display, Sunset Yoga, the Friday night Music in the Garden concert series, and Mexican Loteria nights. The gardens are stunning at this time of year and a great place for a charming stroll. Book your tickets at DBG.org.

5. GO BACK IN TIME

The Arizona Renaissance Festival offers visitors a medieval village experience complete with a jousting tournament, arts and crafts fair, majestic falconry, roasted turkey legs, and over 2,000 costumed characters roaming about who create the full experience. It's a sight to see! Get tickets at Arizona.RenFestInfo.com.

6. TAKE A WILDFLOWER HIKE

There are so many great trails around the Valley and when you hike in March and April you can also check out the majestic desert wildflowers. Check out the great trails at Papago Park, Urey Mountain Regional Park, Lost Dutchman State Park, South Mountain Park, Pinnacle Peak Park, and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Don't forget to bring sunscreen, a hat, and plenty of water! Check out VisitPhoenix.com for more hiking details.



The overall Arizona economy still remains strong due to growth.

Phoenix was the No. 1 industrial market in Q4 2024 delivering 7.16 million square feet of industrial space with an additional 22.3 million square feet under development. Job growth was above the national average again last year with 57,000 jobs added in 2024 across the state. The outer areas of the Valley are growing the fastest with Buckeye, Queen Creek, and Surprise leading the charge. A couple of the challenges from recent data include a decline in retail, restaurant, and bar sales.

7. IT'S EVENT SEASON

There are so many fun events in March, including the Indian Fair and Market at the Heard Museum (March 1-2), Melrose Street Fair and Vintage Car Show in Phoenix (March 1), Tempe Festival for the Arts (March 7-9), Flavors on Main in Downtown Mesa (March 8), Arizona Aloha Festival (March 11-12), Roots and Boots Queen Creek Rodeo (March 12-16), Chandler Ostrich Festival (March 16-19), Carefree Fine Art and Wine Festival (March 22-24), The Uncorked Wine Festival (March 29) and, of course, Mesa Food Truck Fridays in Las Sendas (March 7).

8. SHOP FOR REAL ESTATE

March is one of the busiest months for real estate in the Valley. The weather is just perfect for touring homes, and it is also the time of year when many of the best homes come to market. If you are in the market to buy or sell, March is the month for you! ■

Call today to schedule your personalized home consultation with us at (602) 615-0843.

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NE Mesa Area Market Report

Sales over \$640,000 for the Month of January 2025



Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
2633 E Enrose St	2,597	Meadowvale	\$640,000
5764 E Leonora St	1,940	Apache Wells	\$645,000
6528 E Bambi Dr	2,722	Skyway Village	\$649,000
2035 E Kael Cir	3,012	Orange Blossom Estates	\$660,000
2026 E Laurel Cir	2,439	Citrus Del Ray	\$682,000
1412 N Bernard	2,752	Sierra Estates	\$685,000
1814 N Waverly	2,056	Mountain Bridge	\$689,900
1448 N Gaylord Cir	2,872	Chateau D'arnett	\$750,000
1803 N Harper	2,372	Mountain Bridge	\$785,000
3154 E Hope St	2,655	Mesa Northgrove	\$840,000
2056 N Vista Del Sol	2,756	Estates At Desert Shadows	\$848,000
1454 N Orlando	3,251	Valencia Park Estates	\$850,000
2527 E Russell St	2,612	Grove at Lehi	\$859,970
3642 N 59th St	2,462	Reserve at Red Rock	\$869,420
3634 E McDowell Rd	3,343	County Island	\$920,000
3645 N 58th St	1,700	Reserve at Red Rock	\$940,000
1843 N Lynch	2,680	Mountain Bridge	\$955,000
1823 N Atwood	2,355	Mountain Bridge	\$970,000
8921 E Nora Cir	2,993	Madrid	\$1,075,000
3641 E Fountain St	3,294	Trovita	\$1,095,000
3331 E Indigo Cir	4,286	Arboleda	\$1,165,000
2538 N 91st Pl	2,983	County Island	\$1,195,000
9642 E Flanders Rd	4,034	County Island	\$1,213,870
8105 E Plymouth	6,046	County Island	\$1,270,000
3816 E Fairfield St	4,333	Trovita Norte	\$1,300,000
3354 E Jaeger Cir	5,420	Arboleda	\$1,340,000
2502 N 85th St	3,299	County Island	\$1,500,000

Information gathered from the Arizona Regional Multiple Listing Service is deemed reliable, but not guaranteed. Sales Information Provided By John Karadsheh, ABR, CRS, DESIGNATED BROKER KOR Properties www.KORproperties.com

LOCAL BUSINESS

Planning Your OUTDOOR SPACE

By Frank Weinberg, Landscape Designer

Last month's article focused on planning and designing a great backyard. The basics of this article came from a booklet titled, *Landscape with Style in the Arizona Desert*.

Again, referencing this booklet, I will try to help homeowners like yourself begin to attack some of the key issues that are needed to accomplish your goals.

Oftentimes, homeowners may choose to call a landscape designer like myself. On a personal side, I am a semi-retired designer who lives in the Red Mountain Ranch area.

First questions to deal with: Is this going to be a plan for a new home with zero landscaping? Is this going to be a plan for some existing landscaping and you want to add both hardscape and plantscape? Or is it going to be a plan to start over again by pulling out most of the existing landscape work?

Homeowners need to consider their wish list and most importantly ask themselves if it will meet their landscape and budget requirements.

Another question to consider, if you live in a neighborhood with an HOA is, "What are the requirements regarding landscaping?" If you do not live in an HOA community, then you are free of those restrictions.



The booklet also points out essential elements to consider: Good planning and design, low water-use plants, appropriate turf areas, efficient irrigation, soil conditions, use of ground cover types, and appropriate maintenance that may be required.

Hopefully we'll receive some rain this month. We do need to remember to adjust time clocks too, if you have one. This is to save on your water bill and save on your sewer bill, which is correlated to the amount of water used during the winter months. ■

Call Frank to discuss your landscape design needs at (480) 235-0383.

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EDUCATION

SPARC Program Fosters Leadership, COMMUNITY THROUGH SPORTS

By Laurie Struna

Photos by Tim Hacker and Torrence Dunham

Sports are more than just a game for many students — they're an opportunity to grow, connect, and build confidence. Thanks to SPARC (Sports, Programs & Activities Reuniting Community), a nationally recognized partnership between Mesa Public Schools and the Mesa Police Department, fourth and fifth graders across the district are discovering their potential on and off the court or field.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO SPORTS AND MENTORSHIP

SPARC provides basketball and soccer workshops, offering students who may not otherwise have access to extracurricular activities a chance to play, learn, and grow. The program fosters mentorship as Mesa police officers work directly with students, helping them develop teamwork, leadership, and life skills in a fun, supportive environment. The workshops culminate in a final game hosted by a feeder high school, where elementary school teams come together to showcase their growth and sportsmanship.



BUILDING CONFIDENCE THROUGH SPORTS

"Sports have a lasting impact on students that goes beyond athletic ability," said Nina Allred, supervisor of marketing and engagement at Mesa Public Schools. "Through participation in sports, students develop essential life skills like resilience, communication, and confidence — things that will benefit them long after the game is over."

A CAMPUS-WIDE IMPACT

Last year, Webster and Adams elementary schools participated in the program, experiencing its far-reaching impact.

Kate Ryan, principal at Webster Elementary, shares that SPARC is an outstanding program that connected her entire campus — teachers, students, and the community.

"It's one of the best, most well-organized programs I've seen, and it was the highlight of the year for our students," Kate said.

TRANSFORMING STUDENT LIVES

For students like Armondo, a student at Adams Elementary, SPARC has been a game-changer. In fourth grade, Armondo struggled with behavioral issues and found himself in fights. Upon joining SPARC in fifth grade, the program's emphasis on teamwork, leadership,

and life skills helped him make positive changes and turn his behavior around.

"I've learned how to be a good teammate and to never give up, even when things get hard," he said.

A PARTNERSHIP MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Mesa Police Department's dedication to students and the community has not gone unnoticed. The department recently received the *Outstanding Partner in Education Copper Medallion Award* from the Arizona School Public Relations Association for its commitment to student success.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

"By focusing on enrichment and personal growth, SPARC strengthens the bond between students, schools, and the broader Mesa community," said Dr. Andi Furlis, superintendent of Mesa Public Schools. "It's a reminder that when schools and local organizations work together, they create opportunities that change lives."

For more information, visit mesaaz.gov/Public-Safety/Mesa-Police/Community/SPARC-Youth-Programs.



Find out what's inside



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DISCOVER ARIZONA

Revel Surf Park ARRIVES IN EAST MESA

By Kimberly Alvarado

Imagine a day basking in the Arizona sunshine, not on a desert trail, but on a pristine beach with the white sands of the new Revel Surf Park in East Mesa.

It's the ultimate new, year-round destination for surf enthusiasts, families, and anyone craving a coastal escape in the heart of the desert. This brand-new oasis offers surfing, surfing lessons, delicious food, and entertainment. It's the perfect setting to gather with family and friends. Best of all, there's no need to travel out of our state.

Adjacent to the new prestigious tide pool, you'll find a high diving area where 16 feet of refreshing water awaits to catch your best dive or jump. It's the perfect spot for thrill-seekers and those looking to make a splash. A lagoon area is the perfect wading spot to cool off with your feet in the sand as you watch surfers peel through the tide.

Dine beachside with savor tasty bites like garlic shrimp and flatbreads or indulge in signature cocktails and ice-cream floats



that are sure to delight your taste buds. Build sandcastles with the kids or cozy up near the firepits as you watch local surfers showcase their talents against the back-drop of crashing waves.

The surf shop at Revel Surf Park is a treasure trove of 'hard goods' including surfboards and wet suits. Whether you need new gear or simply want to browse, the shop has everything you need to hit the waves in style.

Hosting a birthday party? Shaded cabanas are available for rent, where you and your guests can relax in misted, private comfort while enjoying waiter service. It's a little slice of paradise right in your backyard.

For a lineup of upcoming special events, including live entertainment, surfing competitions, movie nights, and more, check out the website at revelsurf.com. ■

Revel Surf Park is located at 4503 S. Power Road and is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday, so there's plenty of time to soak in the sun, catch some waves, and create lasting memories. Surf's up!



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Thurs. 13th	Dave Clark
Fri. 14th	Eric Miller
Sat. 15th	Kristy Dee Swan
Sun. 16th	Ian Eric
Mon. 17th	Dave Clark
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Weds. 19th	Pete Pancrazi
Thurs. 20th	Kristy Dee Swan
Fri. 21st	Moon Dog
Sat. 22nd	Jonny Splash
Sun. 23rd	Eric Miller
Weds. 26th	Jonny Splash
Fri. 28th	Moon Dog
Sat. 29th	Scott Hallock
Sun. 30th	Dave Clark

SPIRITUALITY



Cakes, Kites, and Memories

By Judy A. Knox, Charis Christian Church

When my son Doug turned nine years old, we had a birthday party. Now he's in his 60s.

I haven't thought about that party for years, but recently it came to mind as though it happened only a few days ago. I baked a chocolate-frosted racetrack cake, complete with little cars; bought special paper plates and napkins; decorated the dining room with balloons and streamers, planned games, bought prizes, and even invested in a few kites, hoping for nice sunny, windy March weather.

The day came, nine boys arrived, and the fun was on! For me, the fun had started with the preparations. Checking each item off the list, I imagined how things would go. Then as I welcomed the guests, I watched it all unfold. We played games, ate cake and ice cream, and watched Doug open his presents. Then we went outside. The weather was perfect for flying kites. I sat back and enjoyed the cool spring day, watching the excitement of boys being boys.

Afterwards, I started picking up the mess, basking in that glow that follows a job well done. A few minutes later Doug walked into the kitchen. "Hey, Mom!" he said. "That was a real good party. Thank you." Well, that just topped it off for me!

Why was I thinking about that party after all these years? Then I heard a still, small voice saying, "Remember how you felt as you planned that party and then watched everything fall into place? Remember how much fun it was watching the boys doing everything you set up for them? Well, that's how I feel when I set things up for My children and they enjoy what I planned for them." 1 Timothy 6:17 tells us He "gives us richly all things to enjoy." And Psalm 35:7 says God "delights in the prosperity of His servant."

God is always at work behind the scenes. He loves doing good things for His children. Whether He orchestrates something "big" like finding us a new home or a better job, or something "small" like an unexpected encounter with a person we needed to talk to, God loves putting things in place and watching the details unfold. I'm sure He especially enjoys seeing us recognize His hand in it.

I think He was just reminding me to be on the alert for evidence of His involvement in our everyday lives, and that our acknowledgement and gratitude bring Him delight. ■

If you would like to hear good Bible teaching about discovering God's goodness in everyday life, come and visit us at Charis Christian Church, 4811 E. Julep St., Suite 101, in Mesa.

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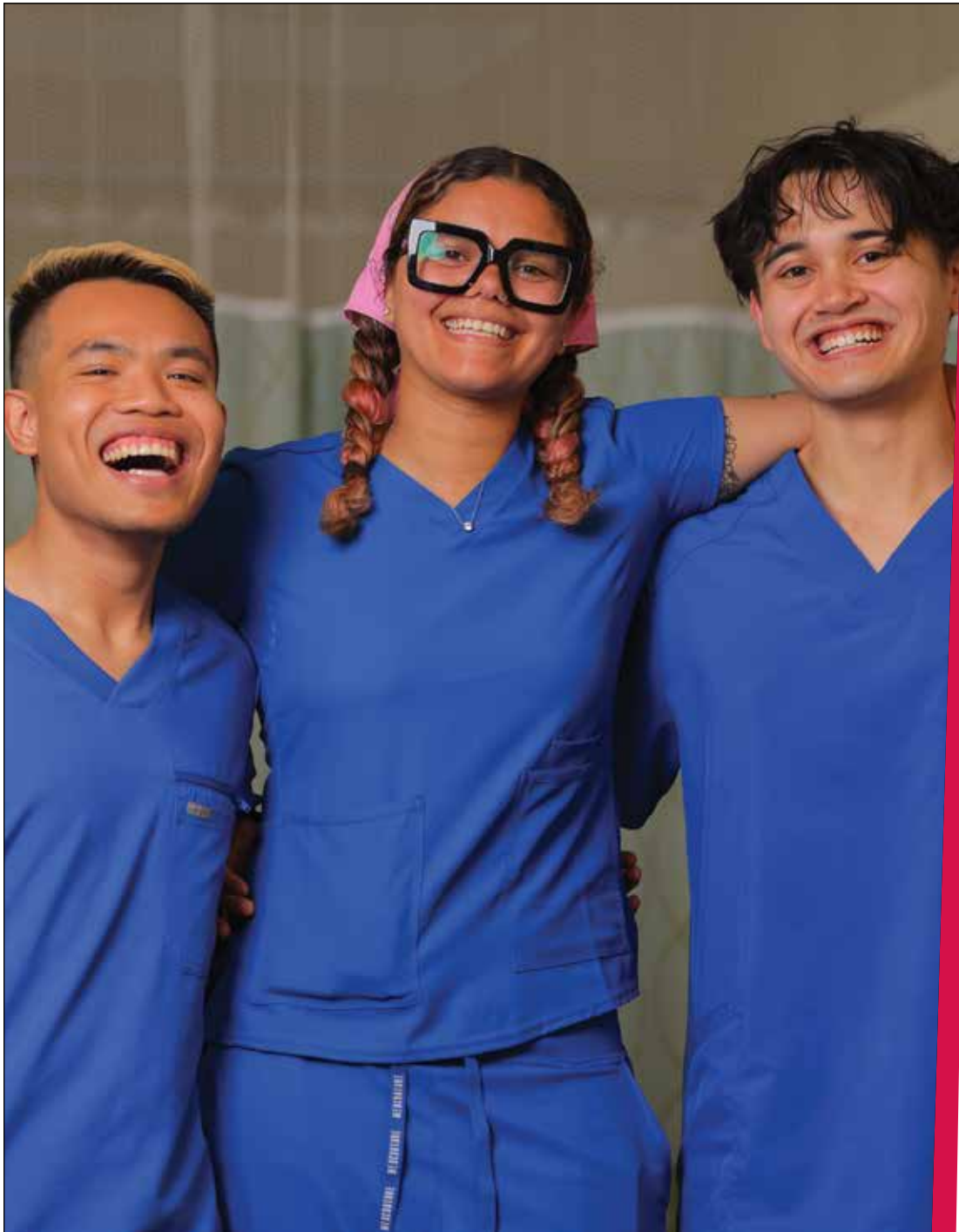
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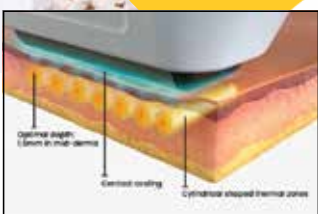
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EDUCATION

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MCC President Dr. Richard Daniel

Submitted by Mesa Community College

Join us in celebrating Mesa Community College's 60th anniversary on Wednesday, April 9, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at both the Red Mountain and Southern and Dobson campuses.

The community along with students, alumni, faculty, and staff are invited to honor our college's legacy and bright future ahead.

MCC President Dr. Richard Daniel along with special dignitaries will kick off the celebration. Enjoy refreshments and indulge in some celebratory cake and festivities as we reflect on MCC's remarkable past and look forward to an even brighter future.

"MCC has been unwavering in its focus on creating an inclusive environment for students where everyone is supported

to achieve success," said Dr. Richard. "In addition, we deeply value our partnerships with the business community, which enable us to expand curricula and develop new programs to meet the immediate needs of our community and those of the foreseeable future."

For the past six decades, MCC has built a legacy based on improving student lives and enriching the local community through academic excellence, cutting-edge career training, and workforce development programs. The college has played a vital role in the economic growth of Arizona, while shaping the careers and futures of thousands of students. ■

Additional details and RSVP are available at mesacc.edu/60/events. Please RSVP by 5 p.m. on March 31.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Importance of the Nitric Oxide Cycle

By Gina Van Luven, Owner, Prime IV Hydration & Wellness – Red Mountain Gateway

Nitric oxide (NO) is a gas the body produces to dilate and relax blood vessels and help deliver oxygen throughout the body. NO supports a healthy heart, blood pressure, exercise performance and recovery, and libido, as well as digestion and cell metabolism. When your body senses stress on the blood vessels, it signals the body to produce NO to relax the vessels and increase blood flow to the area.

One way NO is produced is through what is called the "nitric oxide cycle" by converting L-arginine to L-citrulline (the byproduct) and then back again. During the conversion, there is an off-gassing effect, which is NO. L-arginine (LA) and L-citrulline (LC) are amino acids found in food. LA comes from animal-based products, whereas LC comes from plants.

Both are critical to the NO cycle. Some supplement companies promote taking LC.



However, it is the conversion from LA to LC that makes NO. While both supplements can be beneficial, I believe L-arginine to be superior and the best form is via injection or intravenous (IV) because your body does not have to digest it.

While consuming healthy whole foods is critical in maintaining optimal health and wellbeing, the degradation of the digestive system can significantly impair the ability to uptake nutrients, leading to deficiencies. IV and injection therapies can deliver high-dose nutrients to optimize your levels. ■

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HEALTH

Over 50

Medicare Supplemental Insurance Choices

By **Lynne Jones, Tapestry Insurance**



I have worked with several people this past month who are turning 65 or are older than 65 but just now retiring.

It is a busy time and a lot of process concerning leaving employer health insurance, signing up for Medicare and then the big process of picking an Advantage plan or a Supplemental plan. I thought it might help to review what is supplemental insurance.

Medicare Supplemental insurance is different from Medicare Advantage plans. Supplemental insurance is something you purchase through a monthly premium. It does not have networks or many of the restrictions that some of the advantage plans have.

Someone might choose a supplement plan if they did not want to be bound by counties or state networks. When you have a supplement, you can go to any medical facility that accepts original Medicare.

Something to be aware of is that to enroll in a supplement, generally you will need to go through the underwriting process and the companies have the right to rate you based on your health or to deny coverage.

However, when you first enroll in Medicare part B (either at 65 or when you choose to leave employee insurance), you have a six month *guarantee issue*. This means that you can enroll in any supplement plan, with any company at the lowest rate. This makes your choice even more important. I always recommend speaking with an agent who can guide you through this significant time.

Please remember, you can make an appointment if you are about to enter the Medicare world or have questions about your situation. I would love to be your guide. ■

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



FINANCE

Over 50

Key Decisions for Retired Couples

Submitted by **Linda Drake, Edward Jones Financial Advisor**



Once you and your spouse retire, you'll have some decisions to make — decisions that could affect your quality of life in your retirement years.

For starters, how much should you withdraw each year from your 401(k) and other retirement accounts? You'll want to avoid taking out too much, too soon.

Next, when should you each take Social Security? If you wait until your full retirement age, probably age 67, you'll typically get bigger payments than if you start taking benefits at age 62. Also, one spouse's decision may affect the other, in terms of spousal benefits.

You'll also want to think about downsizing — you could save money by moving into a smaller home. You might also think about moving to a more affordable area.

Finally, if you haven't already done so, you'll need to work with your legal professional to decide which estate-planning documents are needed, such as a will, a living trust, and various powers of attorney.

You and your spouse will want to discuss all your choices and then decide which steps to take. After you've got your plans in place, you may well find that you can fully enjoy your retirement years. ■

This content was provided by Edward Jones for use by Linda Drake, your Edward Jones financial advisor, at (480) 985-2651.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Over 50

Celebrating 12 Years of Driving My Friends to the Airport

By **Dirk Van Leenen**

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

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

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

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

Twelve years of service and I continue to love it. ■

For more information or to schedule your ride to the airport, call Dirk at (480) 512-9757.



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LOCAL BUSINESS

YOU CAN'T HAVE TOO MANY

By *Tim Beaubien, Hava Java Mesa*

I really thought that I would not have an article ready for this month's publication. Both Barb and I have been extremely busy, and I just could not think of anything I wanted to say. I always wait for something that jumps out at me and then I say to myself, "Oh that's it!"

The articles are due on the 10th of each month, and I had nothing until early morning of the 10th. I happened to be on Facebook and an old friend of mine, Glen, made a post.

Now I have worked with Glen back in Michigan for 28 years and we always had a special bond. See both of us started working at Knight Industries in the shop. Neither of us went to college. He grew up in a very bad part of Detroit but had the drive to work hard and be better.

Fortunately, the two owners of Knight Industries were extremely good and promoted from within and gave to everyone who wanted a chance to grow. And boy did we. That business went from a handful of employees to being one of the largest material handling companies in North America. It's now Knight Global.

But this article is really about friendship. You see Glen and I have always had a special friendship. As the business grew, we did not always have a chance to see each other.

He went into sales, and I was a division manager. But when we did, we always had a great time. We could always find something to laugh about. Now years later, Glen



Barb and Tim Beaubien

has done very well. He has built and sold several houses in Vegas and still works in sales for Knight Global. I of course have moved to Arizona and now own Hava Java Mesa with my wife Barb.

Glen made a road trip out to see me a couple of months back. This meant a great deal to me. He is a true friend. My mother once told me that if you have one true friend in this world you are a very lucky person. Well with that said I am truly blessed. Barb and I have several back in Michigan and have made several new friends here in Arizona.

Since we've been in Arizona, I have met great people that we go to concerts and movies with and have enjoyed seeing new friends taking their vows – actually after knowing them only for a couple months she said to me, "We would like you two to come to our wedding because I know we are going to be very good friends." She was right. We have made many more friends when we get together on Friday music night or play games on the back patio – we just have a great time. Also lost a couple along the way to cancer.

So, it doesn't matter if you have one good friend or many, cherish them every day. ■

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