

# Las Sendas Up Close

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April 2025

## Self Development Academy Celebrates 25 Years of Excellence in Education



By Jamie Phyllis

For the past 25 years, Self Development Academy has been shaping the future of Valley students with an innovative approach to education that includes advanced curriculum, critical thinking, creativity, and mindfulness.

The award-winning school opened in 2000 with just 37 students and has since grown into a highly respected charter school with locations in Mesa and Phoenix, earning accolades and recognition as one of the top schools in Arizona.

Its roots date back even earlier, to when it opened as a preschool in 1988. Parents were so enthusiastic about the curriculum and approach to learning, they urged Self Development Academy to expand its programming so their children could continue their education at the school.

One of the school's proudest accomplishments is the multi-generational impact it has had on families. Many former students have returned – not just to enroll their own children, but also to teach at the academy.

“Not only have students turned parents brought their children to our school, but now they are grandparents, and they’re bringing their grandchildren,” said

founder Dr. Anjum Majeed. “Our former students are also teaching at the school. It’s a real family.”

The family-like atmosphere is amplified by Self Development Academy’s focus on providing personalized, engaging education tailored to the students’ strengths and challenges. The research-backed approach instills a love of learning and focuses on teaching individual students, ensuring all students succeed.

“We are consistently ranked among the top schools in Arizona, and we are proud that we do not have a selective enrollment process or lottery system,” said Dr. Majeed. “We take students on a first come first serve basis and help them maximize their potential and encourage their love of learning.”

While the school is well known for its accelerated academic programs, its mission extends beyond academics. Self Development Academy places a strong emphasis on developing critical and creative thinking skills, as well as instilling a sense of responsibility and kindness in students.

One example of its innovative programs is International Day, designed to nurture global awareness and cultural appreciation. To prepare, each class

adopted a country, and learned its history, culture, and language, and presented their findings to parents and fellow students.

Self Development Academy also introduced a new research and report-writing course designed to promote critical thinking skills and prepare students for advanced education.

“We want our students to look at the community, identify problems, and offer solutions,” said Dr. Majeed. “Our goal is not just to prepare them for high school and college but to help them become active, responsible citizens.”

As Self Development Academy celebrates its 25th anniversary, it does so with gratitude for the students, parents, teachers, and community members who have contributed to its success. The academy’s low staff turnover, passionate teachers, and engaged families create an environment where students not only excel academically but also develop the skills and values necessary to become responsible, active members of the community. ■

For more information on Self Development Academy and its programs, visit [selfdevelopmentacademy.com](http://selfdevelopmentacademy.com).

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By Judy A. Knox,  
Charis Christian Church

Several years ago, I joined a health club and went four or five times a week to ride the recumbent bike. Being a people watcher, as I pedaled the miles away, I observed the other exercisers. One man in particular caught my attention. He was there every day wearing a brightly colored T-shirt with the message "JUST DO IT!" on the front in big letters.

After a few weeks I realized that although he was there every day, I never saw him do any kind of exercise. He mainly hung out in the easy chairs facing the basketball court, engaging in animated conversations with whoever else was sitting there. His behavior intrigued me. As he spent time at the health club among all the people who were exercising, did he hope some of their results would rub off on him? Did he go home later and talk about his day at the gym, failing to mention that all he had done there was talk with people?

Although I found the irony of this behavior amusing, I couldn't shake off the thought that there was a lesson there for me. Then it dawned on me that although I did spend my time at the health club exercising, there was a parallel between that man's gym behavior and my own Christian behavior. How easy it can be for

us to show up at church every Sunday, sing the songs, drink the coffee, chat with other believers, yet leave unchanged. Or we may attend Bible studies without letting what we've learned affect our behavior.

The only way to grow in our walk with God is to spend time alone with Him. Being around others who are doing so is not enough. The famous evangelist Billy Sunday once said, "Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to the garage makes you an automobile." There is no substitute for spending personal time with God.

Are our prayers meaningful dialogue with Him, or rote repetitions? When we read our Bibles, are we allowing God's Word to change our thinking and renew our minds, or are we just ticking off a requirement on our to-do list? James 1:22 tells us to, "be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

The "just-do-it" guy was deceiving himself. He was wearing the T-shirt on the outside while nothing much was happening on the inside. Let's be sure we aren't doing the same thing in our spiritual lives. ■

To hear good Biblical teaching about strengthening your relationship with God, visit us at Charis Christian Church, 4811 E. Julep St., Suite 101, in Mesa.

## EVENT

# Community of Women Hosts Women's Empowerment Luncheon

Submitted by Sally Marks,  
Marks Public Relations

The Community of Women business referral group will combine money and funny at their next luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 10 at Mimi's Cafe, located at 2800 W. Chandler Blvd. in Chandler.

Financial educator and wealth strategist Ashley K. Butler and comedy writer and fledgling stand-up comic Sally Marks will each provide their unique perspectives on self-improvement. Ashley, a Gilbert resident, will share tips on how to create and maximize cash flow, build legacies, and achieve financial independence.

Sally's stand-up routine will pair life lessons with her amusing anecdotes about becoming a comedy writer and self-help author. Sally is a Boulder Mountain resident, who has lived in Northeast Mesa for more than 20 years.

"Our April 10 luncheon will be a dynamic combo of money and funny. First off, Ashley is an awesome financial educator who is passionate about empowering others through personalized strategies. She will focus on financial literacy and personal growth. Sally is sure to get folks laughing with the humorous

misadventures that led her into the self-help arena," said Lena Morrissey, president and founder of Community of Women.

Ashley's information can be found at <https://ashleykbutler.com/> and Sally's at <https://markspublicrelations.wixsite.com/sallymarks>.

Community of Women welcomes women of all ages and provides them with a community that embraces them personally, professionally, and in business. The



Sally Marks



Ashley K. Butler

forward-thinking environment focuses on personal growth education, building friendships, sharing ideas, community involvement, and expanding the member's business connections.

Guests and members are encouraged to register online. However, payments will also be accepted on the day of the event. ■

More information about the organization and its upcoming events and speakers is available at [communityofwomen.org](http://communityofwomen.org).



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**LOCAL BUSINESS**

# Elysian Fields Bakery Brings Handmade Pastries and High Tea to Northeast Mesa

By *Jamie Phyllis*

Elysian Fields Artisan Bakery & Dainties is a family-owned and operated European patisserie known for its variety of fresh, made-from-scratch pastries, that are baked fresh daily using all-natural, high-quality ingredients and never from a mix or synthetic substitutes.

The tasty treats offered at Elysian Fields are made even better when enjoyed during the bakery's *High Tea* service.

"Stepping into the bakery and trying one of the treats creates a sweet moment in your day, and the high tea is an opportunity to make the most of that experience," said owner LaRee Johnson.

True to their European heritage, Elysian Fields embraces high tea as a beloved tradition. Customers can choose between two options, Afternoon Tea, featuring more savory options such as finger sandwiches, English scones with clotted cream, and pastries, and Cream Tea, which is more focused on sweets.

When enjoying tea, many guests choose to dress up to their preferred level of fancifulness and are served on the patio with fine china and beautifully arranged trays – making it a perfect way to enjoy time with your favorite people. The High Teas are also very popular for special occasions such as birthdays, Easter, and Mother's Day.

At tea, or during a quick visit to the bakery, guests will have their pick from a variety of American classics like



chocolate chip cookies and cupcakes, alongside traditional European items such as croissants, tiramisu, cannolis, and more. Plus, first-time visitors receive a complimentary specialty shortbread cookie of their choice.

What visitors might not realize is that the multi-generational family are also avid gardeners and have used their love of flowers and gardening to inspire their creations – distilling their own extracts used in their confections, as well as in creating handmade perfumes and beeswax candles.

In addition to its regular assortment of treats, the bakery also offers custom orders including cakes, cupcakes, pastries, dessert tables, and more. They've brought their customer's ideas to life by creating everything from elegant wedding cakes to a fully edible Dungeons & Dragons board.

"We're here to make people smile and help make them feel special – whether they're ordering something custom for themselves, or a loved one," said LaRee. "Everyone has ideas that are unique to them, whether it's a flavor combination or design, and we do our best to bake well-balanced, tasty, and beautiful confections that are sure to delight even the most particular critics." ■

*Elysian Fields Artisan Bakery is located at 6727 E. McDowell Road, Suite 104, in Mesa. For more information, or to make a reservation for tea, visit [elysianfieldsmagic.com](http://elysianfieldsmagic.com).*



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LOCAL BUSINESS

# Dr. Irina Brings Passion for Patient Care to Okun Dentistry

By Jamie Phyllis

Okun Dentistry, known for its comprehensive and patient-centered approach to dentistry, is proud to have Dr. Irina Martinez as part of its team at both its Mesa and Tempe locations. A second-generation dentist, Dr. Irina's career in dentistry was influenced by her childhood experiences at her father's practice, where she developed a love for the artistry of dentistry.

She earned her degree from A.T. Still University in Mesa, where she met her husband, who was not only a pediatric dentist, but also a dental patient of Dr. Amy Okun's father for many years. When he completed his pediatric residency, Dr. Amy invited him to join the practice to treat children. A few years later, Dr. Irina transitioned from corporate dentistry to join Okun Dentistry herself. Now, after seven years with the practice, she is a beloved dentist at the practice.

"The family atmosphere here is what makes Okun Dentistry special," Dr. Irina said. "It doesn't feel like work because you're surrounded by people who want to support you and care about you – especially Dr. Amy, she's not only my boss, but she's also become my friend and a part of my family."

Outside of the practice, Dr. Irina is deeply committed to giving back to the community with her dental expertise.



Dr. Irina Martinez

She has volunteered with several Arizona organizations including Arizona Mission of Mercy and Give Kids a Smile.

"I love volunteering at an annual event through Arizona Mission of Mercy that provides people with dental care," she said. "There are people who wait in line for days leading up to the event so they can see a dentist, which they might not have the opportunity to do otherwise and I love the challenge of doing as much work as I can during my shift - it's very rewarding."

Dr. Irina is also passionate about working with her elderly patients, and enjoys not only restoring their smiles, but spending time with them and hearing about their life stories and experiences.

"I really like helping people smile by transforming the look and health of their teeth so that they can feel confident walking around and showing off their beautiful smile," she said. "Having that confidence in your smile can transform how you feel about yourself and how you interact with others."

Outside of dentistry Dr. Irina loves spending time with her husband, their son Henry, and their yellow lab Zeus. ■

Okun Dentistry in Mesa is located at 7448 E. Main St. To make an appointment, call (480) 396-8684. For more information, visit [okudentistry.com](http://okudentistry.com).

SPIRITUALITY

# Easter is a joyous time TO EXPLORE OUR FAITH

By Pastor Brian Weinberger, Bethlehem Lutheran Church

As a pastor, what I have always found fascinating about Easter is the joyous celebrations we have compared to what we hear in our scriptures.

While there is excitement, the visitors who encounter the tomb are more often described as scared, and terrified. In fact, the first thoughts of the women on Easter morning were not to go and praise God, but to prepare Jesus for burial. What some say is the original ending of *Mark's Gospel*, it tells us that the women said nothing to anyone, despite the angel telling them to share the news with the disciples.

Again, why do we have joyous Easter celebrations when Easter was met with such trepidation by those who first experienced the empty? We celebrate because we have the knowledge that they didn't; Christ didn't just die but he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. Even though there was fear, and misunderstanding that first Easter morning, they did tell people. Despite what happened when they first came to the tomb, despite the fact they said they weren't going to say anything, they did.

They told the story of Jesus' resurrection. That's part of why we celebrate Easter, the courage in the face of fear to share the good news that Jesus rose from the dead. That's why I love John's telling of the Easter story. Jesus is mistaken for a gardener and Jesus meets the women in the

midst of their sorrow and brings them to a place of joy. What a message that is! Jesus meets us in our sorrow and replaces it with joy.

That is why I love that during the season of Lent, the time leading up to Easter, we have been exploring the idea of *Everything in Between*. We often see the world in black and white, like the first visitors to the tomb. Jesus was in the tomb, and he must be dead, and because of that we're sad. When he was alive, he made our lives happier and better.

Jesus can meet us in those extremes of our lives, but more often than not, Jesus meets us in the middle: Jesus meets us and is with us from the high points to the low points and *Everything in Between*. Come join us for Easter and beyond as we explore our faith on the mountains, in the valleys, and everything in between!

Blessings, Pastor Brian ■

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is located at 2745 N. 32nd St. in Mesa. For more information, call (480) 599-4147, visit [blcmesa.org](http://blcmesa.org), or email [pastorbrian@blcmesa.org](mailto:pastorbrian@blcmesa.org). "We are a home to share God's love and grace."





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# WHAT IF INNOVATION MADE OPTIMAL AGING EASIER AND IN ONLY 20 MINUTES TWO TIMES A WEEK?

Submitted by *The Exercise Coach*®

Is 20 minutes really enough? Will two 20-minute workouts a week help someone get toned? According to the scientific definition, toneness refers to the level of tension in a muscle at rest, but most people refer to being toned as being lean. In that regard, strength training will absolutely help you get leaner and build firm muscles.

One misconception about toning is around spot reduction. Often, when people talk about toning their body, they are talking about making a particular area of their body leaner by targeting it with exercise, but that isn't how the process works. Effective strength training is about getting whole body results that impact your metabolism and decrease body fat throughout the whole body.

Strength training is the most important thing you can do for health, longevity, quality of life, and reducing body fat. Whole effort strength training is the best way to achieve the best body leanness, definition, or tone that you can.

**IS TWICE PER WEEK REALLY OFTEN ENOUGH?**

One of the most common questions we get at The Exercise Coach is, "Is exercising twice a week really often enough?" Below we will explore why whole-effort exercise twice a week is not only enough, but also the optimal amount you need to achieve the best fitness results for your body in the shortest amount of time possible. Exercising twice a week is more than enough. In fact, exercising more often can actually be counterproductive.

The most important thing you can do as you age is to address the health of your Type 2 or fast-twitch muscle fibers. To stimulate and improve the quality of your fast-twitch muscle fibers the exercise needs to be intense, brief, and sufficient



intensity to force adaptations. When we work our muscles in this way it forces adaptations, which are the end results we are seeking from an exercise program. The flipside of this intense exercise is that you need to give your body enough time to fully recover and super-compensate, which takes at least 48 hours.

All the results we want from exercise, like increased muscle mass, strength, neurological efficiency, and improved insulin sensitivity, are not actually caused directly by exercising. Our bodies produce the results we want once we've achieved adequate recovery.

If you exercise more frequently than twice a week, all we are doing is interrupting and disrupting the body's innate ability to produce the very results we want. Overtraining can cause people to stall out and even go backward in terms of their fitness improvements or worse, lead to overtraining and possible injury.

The answer to getting the best possible results is almost never just exercising more. The key is combining whole effort exercise and whole food nutrition to get all the results we want.

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We should be able to measure the results of any exercise program, which is why this idea is built into every program at The Exercise Coach. If you're not seeing results from your exercise routine, question whether your exercise is intense enough and whether you are giving your body enough time and resources to recover properly.

During a workout, you are depleting the stored energy in your muscles so that they will build themselves back up over time. Your recovery time is just as important as your workouts. The consumption of your muscles fuel is a major metabolic signal that triggers these kinds of transformations.

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- Brian Pavlet
- Brandon Bingham
- Nathan Schwan
- Brian Kontak
- Dustin Howell



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Get ready for the next exciting event with a *shotgun start* scheduled for April 3, 4, and 5. The fun begins at 7 a.m. each day, and for just \$149, participants will enjoy 18 holes of golf, a cart, and a \$20 food and beverage credit at The Patio & Grille. Don't miss this opportunity to experience great golf at an unbeatable value!



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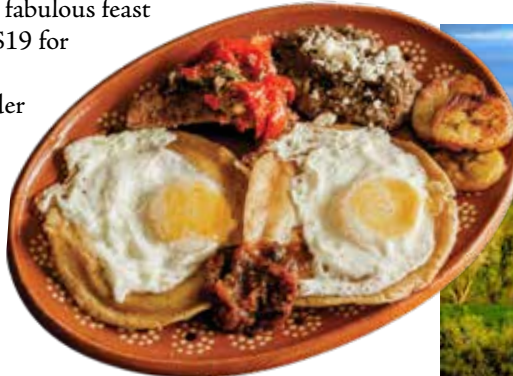
Hop on over to The Pro Shop, where new arrivals are rolling in throughout the month! Plus, don't miss the clearance rack with items up to 50 percent off, perfect for filling your Easter basket with great finds. And here's a tip: Keep an eye on your green, as an exciting Easter sale is in the works.

### THE VISTAS PAVILION

The Vistas Pavilion at Las Sendas is gearing up for our Easter Brunch on Sunday, April 20. Call or email us to make your reservation for the Grand Buffet, including: assorted breakfast pastries, antipasti and cheese display, seafood, chilled shrimp and oysters on the half shell with mignonette and cocktail sauce, an omelet station, eggs, bacon and sausage, vanilla French toast with maple syrup, a chef's carving station – including ham, top round; seared chicken breasts, grilled salmon with local vegetable relish and lemon Burre Blanc, assorted dinner rolls with whipped butter, and assorted mini desserts, cakes, and pies.

Seatings are available every 30 minutes from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The price for this fabulous feast is \$79 for adults and \$19 for children, plus tax and gratuity. Children under 5 are free. Enjoy a lovely meal with stunning views of the Phoenix Valley. Contact [cshaw@lassendas.com](mailto:cshaw@lassendas.com) or by phone at (480) 396-4000 ext. 222.



Do you have an upcoming graduate in the family? The Vistas Pavilion at Las Sendas is the perfect place for a graduation party! We have approximately 4,000 square feet of banquet space with tables, chairs, linens, sound system, AV equipment, and amazing culinary options for your day of celebration. Call today to start planning this very special event.



### THE PATIO & GRILLE

Masters' week offers a full seven days of golf, featuring the top pros in the sport. In 2025, Masters week will take place from Monday, April 7 to Sunday, April 13. Come by to cheer on your favorites and delight in the special bites and drink specials at The Patio & Grille. You'll love the atmosphere, the live entertainment, and the new tasty Pimento Cheese Sandwich being offered this spring. ■



# Las Sendas GOLF CLUB

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## 2025 Golf Membership Options

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#### Fully Refundable Membership

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(Seasonal dues available)

#### Non Refundable Membership

\$30,000 Initiation Fee + Yearly Dues  
(Seasonal dues available)

#### 1 Year Trial Membership

\$5,000 Initiation Fee + Yearly Dues  
(Fully transferable towards non-refundable)

#### Junior Membership

Under age 45  
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#### Proxy Membership

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#### Social Membership

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Receive 8 Winter golf Passes, 8 Summer Passes, 10% OFF Pro Shop & Restaurants

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(480) 396-4000 Ext. 201  
[wmcbean@lassendas.com](mailto:wmcbean@lassendas.com)

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LOCAL BUSINESS

# People Please!

By **Tim Beaubien**, *Hava Java Mesa*  
I kept telling myself that I would not write another politically oriented article.

But the climate we are now in together with the fear that I noticed being generated lately is so sad I thought something should be said. It's gone way past "agree to disagree" to, "if you're of that opinion I have no respect for you, and we can't be friends."

This is so wrong. It's our duty to speak out, and to hold our elected officials accountable. But to disrespect or even hate your neighbors because their views differ from yours is just wrong.

I go by the 50 percent rule; whatever you see or hear on your preferred stations is only half true at best. Every news article has a little truth and a little exaggeration mixed in. You the viewer must figure out which is which. If we could only agree on that we could move forward and make real progress for all.

I talked with an old friend the other day. He said that he removed the horn on his motorcycle because he fears that if he uses it, it could be taken wrong, and

he would be attacked. I also saw someone wrongly accused of being a Nazi because of how he waved to some friends.

We post opinions as fact, which is only meant to spread fear. One friend told me that they were out for dinner when the table next to them heard their conversation. Then an argument started. People Please! Is it just me or have we reached a critical point? This intolerance helps neither side.

If you started each post or debate with "in my opinion" that would lower the threat syndrome. That is, in my opinion.

Hava Java Mesa maintains a political neutral position in the community. I listen to both sides of our current political climate. It's easy, you just have to show respect even if you don't totally agree with it. When you have intolerance for a different opinion, you can't move forward.

People Please! ■

*Hava Java Mesa is located at the northeast corner of Power and McDowell roads in The Village at Las Sendas, 2849 N. Power Road, Suite 103, in Mesa. For more information, visit [havajavamesa.com](http://havajavamesa.com).*



Barb and Tim Beaubien



EVENT

# The Human Library COMES TO MCC

Submitted by **Paula Osterday**

The Human Library, in partnership with Mesa Community College at Red Mountain, is hosting an event on Saturday, April 26 from 9 a.m. to noon, in the MCC library, located at 7110 E. McKellips Road, at the intersection of Power and McKellips roads. Check-in will begin at 8 a.m.

The event is free, and registration is open to the public.

tions are invited as our Books engage in sharing their personal experiences with the Readers. The event will cover such diverse experiences as surviving trauma, racism, and addiction, among others.

Readers will be required to pre-register as space is limited. (See the registration link below.)

Each Reader will select three Book sessions when they check-in. Each session will last 50 minutes with a 10-minute

*"There are few transformational events like The Human Library that occur in one's life, where in a matter of minutes, we can be taken to a new level of collective awareness and deep connection. That is how peace comes to our life and our world."*

—Margaret Joy Weaver, Chair of Sedona International City of Peace

The Human Library® is a library of people and their experiences with prejudice. Instead of books, actual people are on loan for conversations. The concept is about acknowledging and challenging the prejudice we all carry toward one another.

The Human Library creates a safe space for dialogue where people, acting as books, share how they have directly or indirectly experienced prejudice, bias, or discrimination based on aspects of their person, heritage, or life experience.

At The Human Library, all ques-

break in between sessions. Participants are encouraged to arrive at least 20 minutes before the event begins for check-in and to select the Books they are interested in checking out.

Space will be limited. To register, please visit the following link or scan the QR code:



<https://tinyurl.com/ycwyj8a3>. ■

For more information, contact Paula Osterday at (480) 236-3173 or email [pmosterday@gmail.com](mailto:pmosterday@gmail.com).

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Universal recording artist Jeff Senor

**FRIDAY, APRIL 11 6 to 9pm**  
Singer Song Writer Scott Hallock with Beat Box Kent

**FRIDAY, APRIL 18 6 to 9pm**  
Rock / Jazz Fusion of Notes from Neptune

**THURSDAY, APRIL 24 5:30 to 9pm**  
Hava Java Open Mic by Brenda & Jack of Milon's Music Center

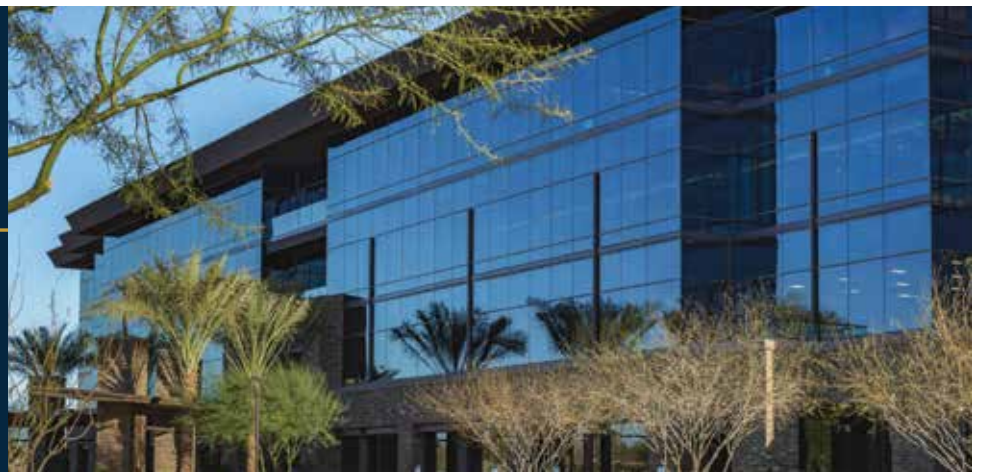
**FRIDAY, APRIL 25 6 to 9pm**  
25th Classic Rock from Brenda and the Big Bad Wolf

**SATURDAY, APRIL 26 6 to 8pm**  
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COMMUNITY

# Red Mountain Ranch resident announces second book in the saga of a Southern Girl

## *Jumping on Snakes: Memories of a Southern Girl*

By Kimberly Alvarado

Local well-respected author and Red Mountain Ranch resident, Tommye Staley, announces a second book in her series, titled *Jumping on Snakes: Memories of a Southern Girl*.

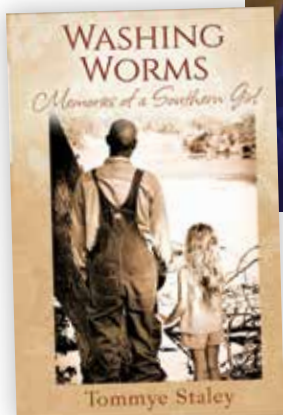
Her first book, *Washing Worms*, is a fascinating story of a southern girl who grew up on a farm on an island in central Arkansas. The story features the people who influenced her, the simplicity of life in the South, and the hardships and heartaches of a little girl in less complicated times.

In the latest of her series, Tommye continues the saga of a southern girl growing up in rural Arkansas and the life changes she experienced. At their new home in Palmyra, she learned that jumping on snakes cleared the swimming hole of the cottonmouths that lurked in the cool waters of her favorite swimming spot. The newly found knowledge was just one of the many new experiences for Tommye, George, and Wes to discover in their new homestead.

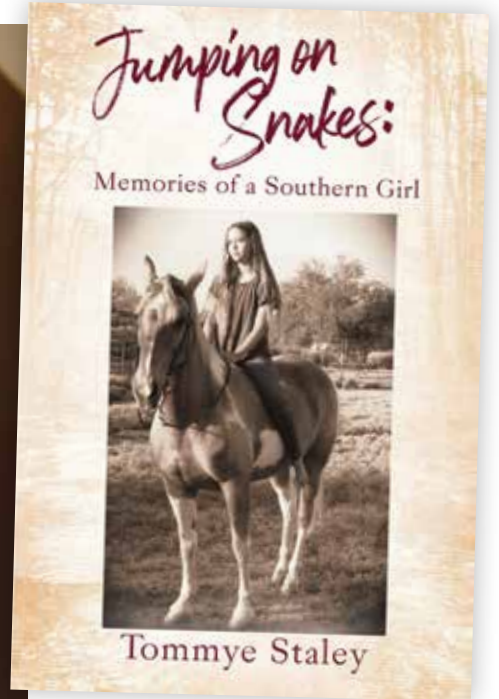
Going to school turned out to be one of the simpler adjustments for Tommye. Friendships were plentiful, but boy/girl relationships added a new layer of awkwardness.

This page turner invites you to tag along on hunting, fishing, and horseback riding trips, as experienced by the young trio and their newly acquired friends.

"This is just my way of sharing, to let my readers know how much I appreciate them," said Tommye, who taught at Wesley College in Dover, Del. and attributes her inspira-



Tommye Staley



tion to write books to her students.

Her life lessons were in a different time and place, she said. "I did not realize how different things were when growing up. You really don't realize how impactful your early years are until you are past them."

The majority of the people she grew up with in the South were not white, and as she remembers, there was no division within the community. "There was a time when you did not have to be afraid of people," Tommye said, as she describes her time on the farm with dogs, horses, and dust, she chuckled.

Tommye said in her youth she learned to hunt and fish with her comrades, whom she did not fear or have prejudice against. "If there is a message in my books," she said, "there have been times when there was no need for fear in this country... where fear wasn't a part of a child growing up."

Tommye and her husband Phil have lived in Red Mountain Ranch for more than seven years. One of their hobbies is to participate in historical skits on Saturdays at the Superstition Mountain Museum. ■

For more information, email [tcarstaley@aol.com](mailto:tcarstaley@aol.com).



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REAL ESTATE

# THE SHIFTING HOUSING MARKET

## Strategies for Buyers and Sellers in 2025

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



The housing market is driven by supply and demand, and we are currently in a buyer's market with more homes available than there are buyers.

Inventory gradually increased last year, and we saw a sharp increase in supply in August as buyers decided to hold off on purchasing, expecting interest rates to drop and waiting for more certainty after the election.

Many expected buyers to return in 2025, potentially shifting back to a seller's market. However, so far this year, demand remains slow, while the real surprise has been the surge in new listings. Inventory has risen sharply, up 23% since January 2025 and 48% since March 2024. With more homes sitting on the market, the average days on market is 79 days. This shift means sellers need to be more strategic than ever to attract buyers.

May and June are typically the busiest months for closings as buyers aim to move while school is out and before the peak summer heat sets in. With the seasonal increase in buyers and if interest rates continue their (slow) decline we hope to see a much stronger spring market.

### WHAT DO CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS MEAN FOR BUYERS AND SELLERS?

#### BUYERS

For buyers, the current market presents a great opportunity. There are more homes to choose from and less pressure to have to make a quick decision or having to compete with other buyers and multiple offers (although we are still seeing multiple offers with some listings).

In a buyer's market, you have much more negotiating power and can ask for things such as:

- A lower purchase price
- Seller-paid closing costs
- Seller concessions to help buy down your interest rate
- More repairs before closing
- A home warranty paid for by the seller
- Other terms that would be beneficial for you

However, not every home is negotiable. Properties that just come on the market are less likely to negotiate or reduce their price. A home with stunning views, recently updated, and move-in ready are selling quickly and we are still seeing multiple offers on homes that stand out from the competition.

#### SELLERS

With increased supply, buyers have more choices and are taking their time. The homes selling the fastest are:

- **Move-in Ready, Updated Homes**  
Today's buyers prefer homes that are move-in ready. Properties with modern kitchens, fresh paint, updated flooring, and stylish bathrooms tend to sell quickly. Many buyers, especially first-time homebuyers, don't want the hassle of remodeling. Homes with open-concept layouts, newer HVAC system, and a new roof are particularly desirable.
- **Well-Maintained Homes**  
In today's market, buyers no longer have to settle for a property that shows signs of neglect. They are far more likely to choose a well-maintained home with fewer potential issues over one that may require extensive repairs.
- **Homes with Unique Features**  
Properties with standout features, such as spectacular views, resort-style backyards, outdoor living spaces, or multi-generational layouts, often sell faster than standard listings.

#### TIPS FOR SELLERS: HOW TO SELL FASTER

If you're planning to sell your home, here are some tips to help increase your chances of a quick sale:

- 1. Price It Right**  
Work with a local experienced real estate agent to set a competitive price based on market trends and comparable sales in your area.
- 2. Make Key Updates**  
Small upgrades, such as fresh paint, new fixtures, and updated landscaping, can make a big impact.
- 3. Stage Your Home**  
It doesn't have to cost anything to stage your home. Doing a deep clean and simple decluttering can help buyers envision themselves in the space.
- 4. Choose a Local, Experienced Realtor**  
With increased competition, you need a top realtor with strong marketing and negotiation skills — someone who knows your neighborhood and local market inside and out.
- 5. Be Flexible with Showings**  
The more available your home is for potential buyers to view, the better chance you have of receiving offers quickly.
- 6. Consider Incentives**  
Offering a home warranty or assisting with closing costs can make your home more appealing.

By understanding market trends and making strategic updates, sellers can position their homes for a faster sale. Whether you are looking to buy or sell, staying informed is key. ■

*If you would like advice on selling your home in today's market or are looking to purchase a home, please don't hesitate to contact me.*

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**Las Sendas**  
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**Las Sendas**  
Red Mountain Views, Pool - \$1,025,000  
4275 sq ft, 5 Bed, 3.5 Bath

## Lorraine Ryall

ASSOCIATE BROKER, CDPE, CSSN

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“ Our experience working with Lorraine was top notch. We wish we had several homes to buy just to work with her! From start to finish, she was always available, if she didn't have the answer to something, she found the person who did know. She was professional and clearly has perfected her craft. We are truly lucky to have worked with her buying our dream home. ”

—Elizabeth Clarkson

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REAL ESTATE

# FOUR THINGS YOU SHOULD DO

## Even if You Aren't Buying or Selling Now

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



Natascha and John Karadsheh

Your home is a significant part of your financial portfolio, so we always like to share our advice on how to keep it at top value. Here are a few things that typically occur when people buy or sell a home, but may not be done when people are already living in a home.

### 1. GET A HOME INSPECTION

Most homeowners last had a home inspection when they were in the process of buying their home - which was likely years ago. We all repair things as they arise, but we don't know what we don't know (as we discover on virtually every home inspection).



Did you know that you can get a home inspection even if you aren't buying? We actually recommend that you have a home inspection every 7 to 10 years just so you stay on top of all of the natural aging that is occurring on your property. A licensed inspector will come out and do an independent analysis of all the systems of your home and give you a report with photos.

The great thing is that the report will allow you to plan for major repairs and help you coordinate the smaller repairs by vendor so you can save on service calls. Think of it as getting a regular physical for your home to keep it healthy! Inspections range between \$500 to \$750 depending on the size of the home and its features.

### 2. GET A HOME WARRANTY

Many buyers get a one-year home warranty when they purchase their home, however, did you know that you can get a home warranty at any time during ownership? If your home is nearing the point of needing a new AC, new water heater, or new appliances then it might be a good time to consider a warranty.

Many people do not like home warranties because they have had less than great experiences. We get it. All warranty companies have their moments, and some are better than others. But we have definitely seen them work and have watched clients get new ACs, water heaters, dishwashers, pool equipment, and so much more.

### 3. EVALUATE YOUR HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

Most of us price out and compare homeowner's policies when we buy our homes, but then we may not regularly review those policies. Between inflation and the California fires, now is a good time to do a policy review and make sure your home and its contents are properly covered at today's values. Also, check and see if your policy covers



water lines from the house to the street. The City of Mesa markets this type of coverage through Service Line Warranties, but you may have better coverage through your homeowner's policy.

### 4. CHECK YOUR TITLE

When you purchase a property the title company searches the county records to make sure that clean title can be delivered. However, in light of all the deed fraud that is going on, it is wise to regularly log on to the Maricopa County Assessor and Recorder's sites to research your property. Go to [mccassessor.maricopa.gov](http://mccassessor.maricopa.gov) and enter your property address. Properties attached to that address should generate.




Click the APN number to be redirected to the Parcel Info page, which has everything from a link to view your tax bill to a Deed link that will redirect you to the County Recorder's site, where you can view your recorded deed. Make sure your names are correct, and if you have refinanced your property, make sure it was placed back in your trust, if you have one. You can also register for Maricopa Title Alert so you will be notified if anyone records a document under your name. A little digital housekeeping is always a good thing to protect your property. ■

*We have a great list of inspectors, vendors, title companies, and more. Don't hesitate to call us for a referral!*

*Real Estate* In Las Sendas  
 brought to you by: **Las Sendas Area Market Report**  
 Sales for the Month of February 2025  
   


Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
7445 E Eagle Crest Dr #1065	1,668	Cachet	\$470,000
3055 N Red Mountain #187	1,571	Ironwood Pass	\$540,000
7445 E Eagle Crest Dr #1093	1,762	Cachet	\$545,000
2947 N Sonoran Hills	2,087	Desert Creek	\$550,000
7253 E Nance St	1,925	Trailridge	\$595,000
3222 N Sagewood Cir	1,794	Granite Ridge	\$640,000
6931 E Teton Cir	2,842	Sonoran Hills Estates	\$690,000
3722 N Sonoran Hls	2,475	Cobblestone	\$697,500
3060 N Ridgecrest #98	2,733	Desert Vistas	\$725,000
2917 N Avoca Cir	2,500	The Terraces	\$785,000
3756 N Rowen	3,406	The Preserve	\$1,329,250
3750 N Piedra Cir	3,244	Eaglefeather	\$1,475,000
8519 E Regina Cir	4,245	Granite Mountain	\$2,430,000
4256 N Desert Oasis Cir	8,259	Hidden Canyon	\$2,650,000

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](http://www.KORproperties.com)

*Real Estate* In NE Mesa  
 brought to you by: **NE Mesa Area Market Report**  
 Sales over \$530,000 for the Month of February 2025  
   


Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
6258 E Hermosa Vista Dr	1,929	Vonbehren	\$530,000
6455 E Inglewood St	1,838	Maplewood	\$539,000
3536 N Arabella	1,710	Summit	\$544,000
2510 E Fountain St	1,855	Brownmore Estates	\$546,500
3818 N Lomond Cir	2,184	Red Mountain Ranch	\$550,000
4638 E Encanto St	1,958	Sundance Groves	\$575,000
2449 E Inglewood St	2,038	Russell Manor	\$579,000
2351 N Tierra Alta Cir	1,811	Boulder Mountain Highlands	\$584,000
2560 N Lindsay Rd 66	2,151	Madera de la Mesa	\$584,900
6334 E Viewmont Dr 9	2,146	Red Mountain Ranch	\$585,600
4963 E Hobart St	1,997	Mira Mesa	\$599,900
7452 E June St	2,801	Falcon Hill	\$660,000
3036 E Hermosa Vista Dr	3,312	Vista Mesa	\$700,000
1746 N Harper	1,765	Mountain Bridge	\$705,000
8727 E Jasmine St	2,321	Mountain Bridge	\$755,000
2458 E Preston St	2,462	Grove at Lehi	\$779,970
6210 E Mallory St	2,290	County Island	\$780,000
3129 N 82nd St	2,467	County Island	\$815,000
5841 E Sierra Morena St	2,462	Reserve at Red Rock	\$845,000
8134 E June St	2,276	Monteluna	\$849,900
3423 E Enrose St	4,082	Thayer Estates	\$919,000
3665 E Enrose St	3,181	Trovita Estates	\$950,000
5840 E Sierra Morena St	2,498	Reserve at Red Rock	\$982,000
2415 N Keesha	2,993	Madrid	\$983,475
8733 E Russell St	4,325	County Island	\$1,350,000
3262 E Inglewood Cir	4,044	Arboleda	\$1,779,000
3745 E Julep St	5,511	Estates at Mandarin Grove	\$2,772,000

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  
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**KOR**  
PROPERTIES

## *Copper Canyon Estate*

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Presented by: John & Natascha Karadsheh 602-615-0843



### *Newly Listed*



3529 N. Boulder Canyon \$1,680,000  
Incredible Golf Course Lot in Las Sendas

### *Remodeled Gem*



7357 E. Rochelle Circle \$1,275,000  
Modern Updates and a Resort Backyard

### *Private Casita*



4066 E. Grandview \$1,195,000  
Half Acre Lot in the Estate Groves

### *Just Sold*



8346 E. Regina Circle \$1,985,000  
Model Perfect with Mountain Views



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EDUCATION

# Barkin' Buddies at Westwood

## A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Story and Photos by Laurie Struna

On a Tuesday morning, the rich scent of peanut butter fills Eli Duncan's classroom as students move through an assembly line, crafting their well-known Barkin' Buddies Biscuits — a project that blends hands-on learning with a labor of love.

The initiative is part of Warriors On-The-Job, a training program at Westwood High School that connects students of all abilities with meaningful employment experiences. With the support of teachers and staff, students gain job skills, build confidence and independence, and develop valuable career readiness — all while making a lasting impact on the community.

"We have a variety of students with different disabilities and a range of abilities to work," Eli said. "We believe they can all contribute at some level."

Barkin' Buddies Biscuits was created as a student-run enterprise designed to teach workplace fundamentals through real-world experience.

Among the team members is Marah, a senior and the program's go-to pitch person. Using a tablet with a stylus, she selects responses that her device vocalizes for customers. Marah has cerebral palsy, a neurological condition that affects body movement, muscle coordination, and speech.

She carefully selects tiles on her device to ask, "What

kind of dog do you have — small, medium, or large? How many bags would you like to purchase? Thank you for your purchase."

Problem-solving is an essential part of the program. When Marah struggled to hold her stylus, students from Westwood's manufacturing career and technical education program designed and produced a custom stylus holder to support her work. They also created paw print-shaped cookie cutters for the biscuit-making process.

Angela Edelbrock, district occupational therapist and former chef, shared industry tips with students, such as using a fondant roller to scrape every bit of peanut butter from the jar and an ice cream scoop to ensure consistent portions while making handling easier.

Beyond the classroom, Warriors On-The-Job partners with businesses such as Marriott Hotels in Downtown Mesa, where students gain real-world experience in a professional setting. Marriott employees help students develop job skills while fostering a more inclusive workforce. The partnership also allows students to sell their homemade dog treats at the pet-friendly hotel.

"One of the great things about our students is their outstanding work ethic," Eli said. "They work hard, arrive on time, and rarely call out sick. Their attention to detail is unmatched."

Looking ahead to the 2025-26 school year, Eli hopes to expand Barkin' Buddies' reach by developing a robust social media presence. His goal is to make it easier for the community to connect with students, follow their progress, learn where Barkin' Buddies will appear, and ask questions. ■

For more information, visit [mpsaz.org](http://mpsaz.org).



FINANCES

# How can you boost YOUR SAVINGS?

Submitted by Linda Drake, Edward Jones Financial Advisor



It might not be on your calendar, but America Saves Week is observed from April 7 to 11. Are you saving enough? If not, how can you save more?

Actually, you can take several steps to potentially boost your savings.

Start by making a budget. You can find many free budgeting apps to help you track your spending and show you ways of cutting back.

It's also important to pay yourself first. Consider having money automatically moved from a checking account into an account you don't use for your daily expenses.

And take advantage of cash-back offers. You may already have a credit card that pays you cash back for purchases, but you can go online and find apps that do the same thing.

Also, do what you can to lower your debt load, or possibly consolidate your debts.

Finally, get some help. Your employer may offer an employee assistance program that offers credit counseling and other financial guidance. You might also want to work with a financial professional who can offer suggestions on saving and investing.

Explore every avenue available to improve your savings skills. It could make a big difference in your life. ■

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LOCAL BUSINESS

# Make Cleaning Fun for Kids Turn Chores into Play



Submitted by Gina Bring, Owner, Carnation Home Cleaning

Cleaning doesn't have to be a chore — especially for kids! With a little creativity, you can turn tidying up into a game, making it fun, engaging, and even educational.

In our latest blog post, "Making Cleaning Fun for Kids: Turning Chores into Play," we share some easy ways to make household tasks more exciting while teaching your little one's responsibility and eco-friendly habits. Here are a few fun ideas to get started:

♦ Gamify Cleaning

Turn chores into a race against the clock, a scavenger hunt, or a bingo game to keep kids motivated.

♦ Use Kid-Safe, Eco-Friendly Products

Non-toxic cleaners like vinegar, baking soda, and essential oils are safe for little helpers and good for the planet.

♦ Teach Sustainable Habits

Show kids how to sort recyclables, conserve water while cleaning, and donate gently used items to those in need.

Cleaning can be a fun bonding experience for the whole family, and when kids feel like they're part of the process, they develop lifelong habits that benefit both the home and the environment.

At Carnation Home Cleaning, we believe in safe, eco-friendly cleaning that keeps your home fresh without harsh chemicals. If you'd rather leave the heavy lifting to us, we're here to help.

Let's make cleaning a joyful family tradition! Wishing you a happy (and fun) home. ■

P.S. Looking for an eco-friendly cleaning service? Contact us for a free estimate, and let's make your home sparkle — without the stress! Visit [carnationhomecleaninginc.com](http://carnationhomecleaninginc.com) for more information.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

# PLAN WITH A PLAN With Warmer Weather Just Ahead

By Frank Weinberg, Landscape Designer

Wow, it's already April! Many homeowners should be thinking about replacing weather beaten, old plants that barely made it through the heat of last summer.

Now is the perfect time to consider making changes to your landscape. You could choose great water-saving plants that can handle summer heat. There are so many beautiful plants arriving in local stores and nurseries to choose from.

If you are bewildered by the many options, and not sure what would be best for your yard, you may want to consult with an excellent free booklet, *Landscaping with Style in the Arizona Desert*.

You can find this booklet at the Mesa Red Mountain library branch. Another

option you might consider is using an independent landscape designer for a small fee.

If you hire Frank, a local landscape designer, you will enjoy an individualized experience. He can help you with your plant choices and much more!

Hiring an independent designer, who's not connected to any installation companies, means you'll get designs and suggestions based on what will really work best for your yard, not the company wanting to sell you something.

Frank is a one-man band who creates personalized designs which can then be bid out to companies that can do the actual work. ■

If you would like to chat with Frank about your landscape design needs, call (480) 236-0383.



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LOCAL BUSINESS

# Spring Clean Your Body

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

The human body is made to process and remove toxins through your detoxification pathways: Skin, lungs, kidneys, liver, and colon. Your skin is your largest organ and can both absorb and emit. If you put a clove of garlic under your foot in your shoe, you would taste garlic in about 20 minutes. Conversely, if you consumed a lot of garlic, it would emit through your skin to the point where others can smell it.

Your lungs filter some of the toxins you breathe but it is your kidneys and liver that do most of the work. Your kidneys are responsible for filtering blood and releasing toxins via your urine. Staying adequately hydrated helps to flush your kidneys and keep them working optimally.

Your liver takes the brunt of detoxification. It filters your blood, neutralizing toxins before they can pass through the rest of your body. It also helps break down fats and helps maintain blood sugar stability. As great as this all sounds, these organs get overwhelmed by the amount of modern-day toxins we are exposed to daily. Over time, this burden can negatively impact your health. Therefore, providing a little support can be helpful.

Here are 5 herbs (there are many more) that can support your body's natural detoxification process:

- Burdock Root
- Cilantro



- Dandelion
- Milk Thistle
- Garlic

Here are 5 nutrients that can support detoxification:

- Acetylcysteine (or "N-acetylcysteine" (NAC))
- L-glutamine
- Glutathione
- Magnesium
- Probiotics

At Prime IV Hydration & Wellness, we offer acetylcysteine, glutathione, and magnesium intravenously (IV). We can also offer injectable glutathione and magnesium, as well as many other nutrients. IV and injection therapy allows for higher doses to be administered that are more bio-available because the digestive process is bypassed.

For information on IV or injection therapy, please call us at (480) 992-4202 or go to primeiveastmesa.com. ■

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**LOCAL BUSINESS**

# Studio 480 The Salon Welcomes Three New Stylists



By **Jamie Phyllis**

Studio 480 The Salon is here for the spring season by making it easier than ever for East Valley residents to reach their hair goals with the addition of three new stylists – each with their own specialties, allowing every client to find a stylist whose passions and skills match their unique goals.

“We’re thrilled to bring on three new talented stylists who each bring unique skills and experiences to our team,” said salon manager Jamie Mariano. “It allows us to better serve our clients and ensure there’s a stylist for everyone’s hair goals.”

The newest additions to the team are Allison, Amy, and Kristi.

Allison recently moved to Mesa from Chicago and has been working as a licensed stylist since 2016. She specializes in vivid, low-maintenance color and detailed haircuts.

Amy brings over 35 years of experience to the salon and specializes in mature hairstyling, including perms, short haircuts, and all-over coloring.

Kristi has been a stylist for two decades and is passionate about staying up to date with the latest hair trends. She specializes in balayage, highlights, baby lights, and updos for special occasions.

New clients who book with any Studio 480 The Salon stylists will receive 10 percent off on their first visit.

To get started on your hair goals, new clients can book online or over the phone. Walk-ins are also welcome when availability permits.

“We’ve seen an increase in demand for appointments, and we’re happy to have more stylists for our clients to book with,” said Jamie. “If you had trouble getting in before, now is a great time to book an appointment. Mondays through Wednesdays are typically the easiest days to secure a spot, while Thursdays through Saturdays tend to fill up fast, especially evening appointments.”

The salon offers extended hours on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, staying open until 7 p.m.

In addition to cuts, color, and styling, Studio 480 The Salon carries high-quality hair care products from Redken and Pureology. Stylists can provide clients with recommendations to ensure they’re prioritizing their hair’s health and style.

In addition to hair services, the salon offers aesthetic and wellness treatments, including Botox, fillers, microneedling, vitamin injections, and weight loss injections provided by an on-site registered nurse. ■

To learn more or to schedule an appointment at Studio 480 The Salon, call (480) 985-2369. The salon is located at 6655 E. McDowell Road, at the southwest intersection of Power and McDowell roads.

**EVENT**

# Royal Tobacco and Cigar to host CUSTOMER APPRECIATION EVENT

By **Kim Phillips**

Royal Tobacco and Cigar will host a customer appreciation event Saturday, April 19 to express their appreciation for the support from the community.

The free event will be held from 5 p.m. to midnight and will feature live music by Depths of the Underground DJs Steve Madera, DJ B, Jeremy Martorano, and Big Ken. In addition, the customer appreciation event will feature a fire show, a cigar hand roller, and a 10 percent discount on purchases.

The cigar lounge is located in Mesa at the northeast corner of Power and McDowell roads in The Village at Las Sendas.

For your enjoyment, the lounge offers a great place in Arizona for cigars and pipe tobacco.

“Let’s celebrate the beginning of spring,” said Moe, the owner of Royal Tobacco and Cigar. “We have a great selection of cigar brands and are ready for you to enjoy with us.”

Moe said he appreciates the beginners and the experts, and the shop offers a good variety. “Friendships are established here,” he said.

“We provide a great atmosphere. We engage in live conversation,” Moe said.

The cigar shop has been here in Northeast Mesa for more than 10 years and has received several positive reviews.

Bryan A. from San Tan Valley, Ariz. said on Yelp, “Yes Sir, the Royal Tobacco definitely has class, style, a warm and inviting atmosphere, and the owner Moe makes you feel right at home. This was my first visit to Royal Tobacco and Moe greeted me with a smile and friendly conversation. He took the time to show me around and gave me some great suggestions for my purchase. He wasn’t pushy, or rude, and he didn’t try to ignore me either. Moe recognized that I was a veteran and offered a military discount. It was a pleasant shopping experience and I’m for sure making this my new go to place for cigars!”

“Thank you Moe for the advice!” “Let’s connect people with common interests,” Moe said. “We want to bring people together.” ■

For more information, visit Royal Tobacco Mesa on Facebook, Yelp, or Instagram, or call (480) 396-1750. The cigar lounge is located at 2837 N. Power Road, Suite 113, in Mesa, at The Village at Las Sendas.



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DISCOVER ARIZONA

# Japanese Friendship Garden IS A CHANCE TO EXPERIENCE ZEN

By Kimberly Alvarado

Recently I have been exploring methods to bring a sense of tranquility into my daily life. With countless external disturbances and noise crowding our minds, it's easy to feel anxious, frustrated, or worried.

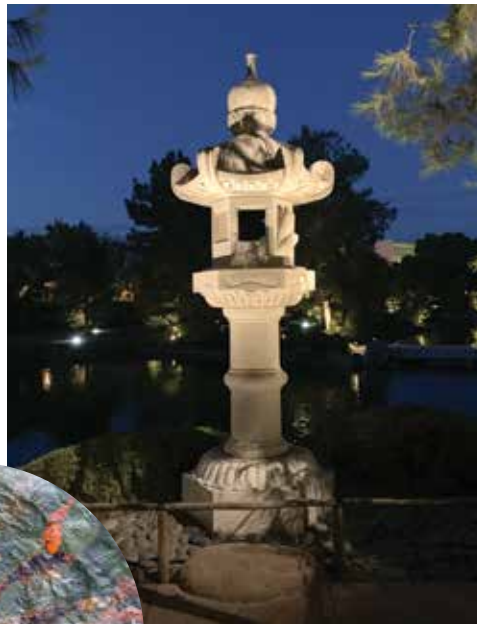
From stressful commutes and busy workdays to concerns about upcoming medical appointments or world events, these distractions can be draining and overwhelming. So, what can be done to help alleviate the pressures and find moments of calm within the chaos?

An easy method is to create a peaceful environment through Zen practices. Zen emphasizes mindful breathing and meditation, which helps create a more peaceful environment. The practice can be done in your own living room, or any quiet space. In fact, Zen's calming effects can even be found within the hustle and bustle of city life at the Japanese Friendship Garden.

The Japanese Friendship Garden, located in Phoenix at 1125 N. 3rd Ave., is open Tuesday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Friday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

This unique, inner-city gem is carefully tucked into the center of urban space. The garden is a joint project of the City of Phoenix and our Sister City, Himeji, Japan. Himeji Mayor Matsuji Totani proposed the garden in 1987 to cement the bonds of friendship between Japan and the United States and particularly between the peoples of Himeji and Phoenix. The mission is to provide a tranquil space for serenity and cultural engagement.

Explore the beauty of Japanese culture within the 3.5 acres of lush gardens and tranquil water. You will see how the Japanese culture rests on principals of balances between efficiency, cleanliness, humility, and consider-



ation for others. In addition, their precise attention to detail can be observed in their ceremonial tea offerings and within the landscape designs.

Experience the practice of traditional tea, a cornerstone of Japanese culture for centuries. The preparation of space and serving and drinking tea in a setting harmonized by flavors and surroundings allows guests a break from the outside world while focusing on awareness of the current moment. Visit the garden's website to reserve your place at the table.

Additionally, you can sign up for a Moon Meditation Workshop to experience the ancient tradition of full-moon ceremonies, which invite you to release anything that does not support your peace and joy into the night skies.

Curious minds may enjoy a walk-in tour to learn more

about the garden's landscapes or history of the sister city, Himeji. Your guide will offer insights into the detailed art form throughout the garden as well.

Ultimately, finding Zen in our everyday lives is about seeking balance amidst chaos. It's about creating pockets of tranquility through mindful practices like meditation, and savoring moments of serenity in places like the Japanese Friendship Garden.

When we incorporate these simple yet powerful techniques, we create inner peace and strength, which allow us to navigate through life's complexities with greater clarity and calmness. Could Zen be a practice that encourages you to be more fully present and more appreciative of the beauty of every moment? ■

For more information, visit [japanesefriendshipgarden.org](http://japanesefriendshipgarden.org).

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COMMUNITY

# Be Epic: The Power of Showing Up

By Victoria Cramer, Las Sendas Resident, Coach, Advisor, and Keynote Speaker



Have you ever wondered why 9 percent of the population can show up to New Year's resolutions or commitments and 91 percent fail?

Did you know that my oncologist said that 60 percent of cancer patients don't show up to fight cancer? What makes the difference between the ones who show up and the ones who don't? If you look at gym memberships and attendance, you'll see this is not surprising. Those first few weeks at the gym in the new year are packed and then it gets to be fewer and fewer that show up for the hard stuff.

When motivation and inspiration leave you, discipline is what moves you forward. I live with stage 4 breast cancer and I live a life loudly and on point and I can tell you that showing up for chemo every three weeks is not something I am motivated to do but I have the discipline to do it so much so that sometimes against all odds I end up in the Mayo Clinic parking lot and wonder how I got there and figure if I'm there, I might as well go do the work.

In fact, if you want to curate your most epic life then you must start it today. I have become an expert on this topic, and I've written books on it. So, I am going to give you a CliffsNotes version that starts with you deciding what you need to start showing up for and committing to in life.

Here is how the best shows up and are the survivors and the achievers. You are that. You just might not have been given the tools to be successful up to this point.

## THREE CRITICAL ACTIONS NECESSARY

### CHOOSE HAPPINESS

This is done by cutting the things in life that don't bring you joy. For instance, if you have never woken up and said, "I want to be inspired today so I will turn on the news," then maybe you need to cut the news. Or if social media makes you feel sad then cut it. Also, infuse a mini vacation in every day. Lastly, choose to do something for someone else every day and you'll notice your own pain disappears.

### MOVEMENT

Moving your body every day, many times in a day, is necessary to release endorphins and create sunshine in your mind. It means you dance hard for a minute when you wake up (try to be grumpy when dancing. It isn't possible). Unless you are a professional athlete, you do not need a rest day. You rest on average 23 hours in a day.

Stop making excuses by choosing movement that you enjoy and vary it. You must also do it with someone or tell someone you are doing it, so they check on you and give you accountability. Teamwork is crucial and so is account-

ability through an app or human-centered action. This is the No. 1 requirement for moving anxiety and depression or ambivalence out.

### BOUNDARIES

You must know what your boundaries are and learn how to communicate them to be able to accomplish your epic life. Start with evaluating the relationships in your life that bring value, positivity, and strength and cut those that do not. Evaluate how others would view you, and whether you show up to be a light or strength for others? Protect your energy and your time. These are what the most epic do differently.

Sending you strength, intentionality, and laughter in your day. ■

If you want to learn more about any of these specifically, then you can find me at [victoriacramer.com](http://victoriacramer.com).

As a stage 4 breast cancer survivor, I talk often about the importance of being your own medical advocate and the importance of boundaries when tackling life's speed bumps. Owning your journey often leads to medical outcomes that fuel your success.



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# Over 50 Up Close

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**HEALTH** *Over 50*

## Everyone's Situation is Unique With Medicare

By **Lynne Jones**,  
Licensed Sales  
Representative,  
Tapestry Insurance



There are many things to consider when choosing a Medicare plan.

Last week I met with a couple who are both turning 65 this year. He turns 65 in June; she turns 65 in December. He is deciding whether to retire or continue working. She is on his employee plan insurance but works a part time job. There is so much uncertainty at this time of life. Should you retire yet? What about health insurance and the cost?

Also questions such as which is better, Medicare or an employer plan? What about contributions to an HSA? How does Medicare work with traveling? Do you have to sign up or do you have an option? All of these questions are not only difficult but also confusing.

What I have found over the past 12 years is that each situation is a little different. Even between husbands and wives. What might work well for one is not

necessarily the best choice for the other. So, as I say every month, please get help making sense of this.

With the couple I mentioned at the first part of this article, we talked about their current coverage, their health, their retirement plans, and what will be the best course of action for them.

It is always so interesting to help people make these very important decisions. As an independent Medicare agent, I can help you find a plan that fits your individual needs and lifestyle. I can also help you determine if staying on your current plan is the best choice for you.

Also, I can help with questions about when to sign up for a plan and any late enrollment penalties to be aware of. If you are new to Medicare or turning 65 in the next year and have questions about what plan to choose, or any other Medicare questions, please call me at (480) 212-2246 or email me at [lynnejones17@gmail.com](mailto:lynnejones17@gmail.com). ■

*I would love to set an appointment and help you work out what will be best for you. Call Lynne Jones, a licensed salesperson, at (480) 212-2246.*

**EVENT**

## Falcon Field Airport hosts Family Day



By **Kim Phillips**

Falcon Field Airport is hosting a Family Day on Saturday, April 12 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Commemorative Air Force Museum, located at 2017 N. Greenfield Road in Mesa.

The event will feature special reduced family pricing. Children 12 and under can participate in an aviation technology challenge sponsored by the Civil Air Patrol.

Family members can watch airplanes and helicopters up close, while enjoying frequent take-offs and landings.

The airport features two viewing areas, one located beside the administration building. Follow the kid-sized runway to a large glass, see-through wall, which makes for great plane viewing.

There is a grassy area nearby, where the family can enjoy playtime and two kid-sized planes the young ones can climb on and pretend to fly their own airplane.

Members of the Falcon Field Airport community enjoy sharing their passion for aviation and adventure with each other and aviation enthusiasts. To foster a spirit of community among airport tenants and to encourage others to learn, explore, and pursue their aviation dreams, the airport hosts events throughout the year for the general public. Falcon Field Airport is home to a variety of aviation organizations and pilot groups. ■

For more information, visit [falconfieldairport.com](http://falconfieldairport.com).



### ARE MEDICARE PLAN CHANGES TOO CONFUSING?

Some Medicare plans are prone to change more than others each year. Let me help take some of the confusion out of choosing a plan for 2023 and beyond.

- Have you received a letter showing that your plan's rates have changed more than you would have liked?
- Would you like personalized help exploring your Medicare options?

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

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We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE to get information on all your options.

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## LOCAL BUSINESS

# Redline Rentals and Sales offers opportunities TO ENJOY WATER AND WILDERNESS EXPERIENCES

By Mark Moran

Located on Power Road and Main Street in the heart of East Mesa, Redline Rentals and Sales has come a long way from those two used kayaks they bought on OfferUp to becoming one of the premier water sports companies in the area.

Redline rents kayaks, paddle boards, other personal watercrafts, and even e-bikes, for people to use to explore the lakes and wilderness areas around them.

Redline, in addition to providing you with the most thrilling and beautiful

experiences on Arizona's most pristine bodies of water, is also laser focused on giving back to the community, and being a good corporate citizen.

"It's easy for us to serve the community because we are the community," said Jeremy Schroeder, owner of Redline Rentals and Sales in East Mesa.

"We are Arizona born and raised. We love our state and the people in it," Jeremy continued. "We try to give back by discounting rentals for different organizations such as Ability 360 and other groups."

Beyond providing water experiences second to none and being a good corporate citizen, Redline has also recruited people to help in a massive effort to remove trash from the bottom of Canyon Lake. They even throw in free kayaks for use during the lake cleanup projects as part of the SWATT Team or the Salty Scuba Squad.

"We are raising awareness to these groups in hope to increase volunteers and donations to the 501c3 nonprofit Salty Scuba Squad, in the hopes people join cleanup groups like the SWATT Team or Natural Restorations. They are cleaning the river more than ever before and we want to support this and keep this effort moving forward," Jeremy said.

"The Lower Salt River is a beautiful riparian area that needs to be appreciated. Tourism is a major factor in the economy of the surrounding cities as many people travel to the Phoenix metropolitan area to visit the Salt River. We do not want tourists going back to their hometown

talking about the trash they see at the river," he continued. "This is why all cities and anyone who is involved in the tourism industry should donate to the Salty Scuba Squad. This is our goal for this year to get them more donations."

Redline is a premier water equipment rental and outfitter, but for Jeremy, the company's mission runs deeper.

"We feel we stand out because we don't just support the community, we are members of it. Our core values are professionalism, knowledge, teamwork, and environmental awareness," he said.

"We incorporate these values into not just our business but our way of life. We plant seeds of safety and environmental education and awareness. We lead by example with hopes that others will follow the trend that we want to set. When you come to Redline you don't just rent our equipment, you get to experience our way of life, our knowledge, and our culture. A surf shop in the desert." ■

For more information, visit [evkayakrentals.com](http://evkayakrentals.com), [redlinemesa.com](http://redlinemesa.com), or call (480) 548-8921. Redline Rentals and Sales is located at 6343 E. Main St., Suite A17, in Mesa.



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