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May 2021

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Salt River Tubing is Back in Action

Submitted by Lynda Breault, Salt River Tubing

Salt River Tubing and Recreation (SRTR), in the beautiful Tonto National Forest, is opening for its 41st season on May 1. Daily operating hours are 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and the latest tube rental is 2 p.m., weather and water flow conditions permitting.

Come celebrate SRTR's 41st anniversary with two themed events in May.



ROCKING RODEO ROUNDUP! YEEHAW!

Calling all Buckaroos! It's tubing time. Join SRTR at its 41st Anniversary Rocking Rodeo Roundup Celebration. Free cowboy bandanas while supplies last.

The hoedown is Saturday, May 15, 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., and the cost is only \$19 plus tax and fees per person or tube which includes tube rental, shuttle bus ride, and free customer parking.

The buckaroo event will offer live entertainment with a radio station on-site, cowboy line dancing, pony races, steer lassoing, and free giveaways.

Henri Breault, president and chief executive officer of SRTR, says "Looking for a unique, western adventure in the great outdoors? Salt River Tubing's Rocking Rodeo Roundup event embodies the old West with stagecoach shuttles to and from the Lower Salt River in Tonto



Lynda and
Henri Breault

National Forest! Cowboy fun for everyone!"

Western attire is optional for tubers, however SRTR will be awarding free tube rental passes (valid on return visit) for the Best Cowboy and Cowgirl tuber costumes.

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FLOATING BEACH BLAST

Celebrate Memorial Day Weekend and join us for the 26th Annual Salt River Heroes = Litter Zero holiday event!

Enjoy a Floating Beach Blast and show your pride as public lands stewards in helping to keep the Salt River clean and beautiful. The Take Pride in America litter prevention initiative kicks off on Memorial Day holiday weekend, Saturday, May 29 to Monday, May 31, 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. The cost is only \$19 plus tax per person or tube which includes tube rental, shuttle bus ride,

SALT RIVER TUBING CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 »

Let's Get Things Straight – Macdonald Orthodontics

By Kimberly Alvarado

Two local orthodontists have mastered the work/life balance, thriving both personally and professionally. Both Keith and Robert Macdonald pursue the life of their dreams daily.

"Why don't you work on Fridays?" some patients ask.

"Because I live in a bigger world sometimes," Dr. Keith genuinely answers.

An arranged lunch interview at a favored local Mexican restaurant with Drs. Macdonald revealed the successes and secrets of two brothers who chose to follow in their father's footsteps to become accomplished local orthodontists. Dr. Keith Macdonald is a Las Sendas resident with a practice in Northeast Mesa, while Dr. Robert Macdonald works and resides in neighboring Gilbert.

Don't let the suntans or the physically athletic structures of these doctors deceive you. Yes, they both love travel, outdoor activities, and taking care of themselves. In fact, they mention these as key components to their happiness.

But their passions extend deeply to their orthodontic profession, where your smile is as important as their own. The doctors accomplish excellent results for each of their patients by providing the most advanced methods of treatment, using the least amount of force, through individualized treatment plans.

A couple of secrets for maintaining thriving practices for more than two decades? For starters they recognize the importance of forming outstanding personal relationships with their patients, emphasized by individualized treatment needs, while balancing their own work/life schedules.

"There is no one-stop shop for orthodontic needs," says Dr. Keith. "Every patient's treatment plan should be as individual as they are." The attention to the individual patient needs has brought multi-generational patients to each of their offices.

Drs. Macdonald concur that community involvement takes high precedence in the formula for success. You will often find financial sponsorship from Macdonald Orthodontics at local youth sport programs, or dedicating time to promote great oral hygiene at local schools.



DR. KEITH MACDONALD

After growing up right here in the East Valley, Dr. Keith received his undergraduate education at Brigham Young University and Arizona State University. He then graduated with honors from the University of Washington Dental School in Seattle and went on to receive his orthodontic specialty degree from UCLA.

His background includes extensive training in surgical needs, and he enjoys creating healthy, functional smiles for children of all ages. He has maintained his East Valley practice, located at 5753 E. Brown Road, Suite 101, for more than 20 years.

Outside the office, Dr. Keith enjoys traveling and outdoor sporting activities. He and his wife, Lori, have four boys.

DR. ROBERT MACDONALD

Dr. Robert earns his trust of commitment to his patients through his sense of honesty. He is also an undergraduate from Brigham Young University. His chosen path was

decided after completion of his undergraduate experience.

As he explained, "I needed to figure out what I was going to do." His father's success in the career was a motivator to his decision to attend the Oregon Health and Sciences University's School of Dentistry in Portland,

Ore. He graduated with a doctor of dental medicine degree with honors, ultimately earning his master's degree in orthodontics.

He has been in practice for 16 years. The Gilbert office is located at 2550 E. Guadalupe Road, Suite 103.

Outdoor activities and community involvement are also a favorite of Dr. Robert, his wife Ericka, and their five children.

Both doctors agree on the importance of several investments to their respective businesses. "When your name is on the door, you're responsible for the outcome of treatment of each and every patient," says Dr. Robert. "That is absolutely a motivator for excellence."

One essential valued resource is their highly trained, caring staff. "Our goal is to make sure every patient has a positive experience every time they come in for an appointment. Kids have so much negativity in their lives, we want to be that one constant positive experience that they can count on," added Dr. Keith.

As a home-away-from-home atmosphere for everyone at the office, happiness rates high on the priority list for maintaining a positive work environment. Next, state-of-the-art technology, including 3D intraoral scanning, digital impressions (no more U-shaped trays lined with alginate to get a model of teeth), and the most advanced technology rates among the most important investments to their practices. These components assist in keeping treatment duration times shorter while utilizing less force, resulting in more comfortable visits for patients. ■

If a healthy, beautiful smile is something you are seeking, contact the Macdonald Orthodontics office nearest you for a complimentary consultation with one of the life-loving professional orthodontists. Visit their website at macdonaldorthodontics.com.

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EDUCATION

Read for the Betterment of the World

By Dr. Anjum Majeed, Superintendent, Self Development Academy

Here is a true story of a little girl in Northern India and her journey in pursuit of education. This little girl, when she was about six years old, attended a grand-homecoming celebration of a man from a small town.

The man had gone to a far, far away land to obtain the highest possible education, a doctorate degree (Ph.D.) from a prestigious university. The man had made a name for himself and now he was returning home. People from the surrounding towns held him in the highest of esteem.

To celebrate his homecoming, the crowds came in droves from the nearby villages, thorpes, and towns; both rich and poor. Donned in their best clothes, set in their festive moods, they brought with them food, confetti, and their most precious children. They had hoped that perhaps a glimpse of this esteemed man's face, a touch of his hand, or the sound of his voice would inspire the very young and kindle a desire to learn. The year was 1928.

The little girl, who attended the celebration with her father, was so moved by the events of the day, that upon returning home she vowed that she, too, would someday go to the same university and pursue the same type of education in that far away land.

What the little girl did not know was that in those days in India, in 1928, most girls did not go to school.



Instead, they learned to sew, cook, and take care of household chores. Not this little girl. Instead, she wanted to read and write. Nothing could stop her. The fact that very few books were available in her tiny town did not deter her from learning to read, and to read voraciously. She began reading the printed information on every

piece of paper she could find, in the house, in the libraries, and even on the streets.

Unlike many other girls, this girl was fortunate to have the support of her loving father, who was an educator himself. By the time she was 16 years old, she had completed her master's in philosophy and psychology from one of the most prestigious universities in India. Determined to achieve her childhood goals, she did not rest till she completed her much-coveted Ph.D. in child psychology from Columbia University in New York.

She was highly influenced by the collective works and theories of Dewey, Piaget, Carl Rogers, Maslow and Bloom, to name a few. She authored numerous books in her subject area and wrote articles on child development and student learning. Above all, she guided many young children to believe in themselves, develop self-confidence, and rely on self-determination. Her academic focus was on the self and student-centered learning.

This amazing woman's name was Dr. Mehrunnisa Ahmad and she was my mother.



LAYING THE FOUNDATION OF SELF DEVELOPMENT PRESCHOOL

On one occasion, when my mother was visiting me in the mid 1980s, I requested if she could review the curriculum of the preschool we were planning on opening in Mesa, Ariz. Excitedly, she took the responsibility of designing a unique and innovative curriculum to maximize the potential of individual children. In developing the curriculum, she integrated the philosophies of Maria Montessori, John Dewey, Carl Rogers, and Benjamin Bloom. The focus of the preschool model was based on student-centered learning, where the young children engaged in activities that had been previously presented to them.

My mother laid the foundation for a strong belief that preschoolers can learn to think critically. They can learn to solve real world problems and prepare themselves for the future. With the emphasis on self-motivation and self-determination, Dr. Ahmad named the preschool: Self Development Preschool (SDP). This student-centered preschool opened in 1988 in Mesa, Ariz.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF SELF DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY AND ITS FOUR R'S

Dr. Ahmad's philosophy embraced the concept of self which includes self-awareness, self-knowledge, and self-acceptance. By asking questions, students learn about themselves, as to who they are, what they like, and how do they do things that are important to them. This self-awareness leads to self-knowledge which, in turn, results in self-acceptance. Once students accept themselves as they are, they gain confidence, and their sense of self is solidified.

Soon after the preschool was established, the parents of the young preschool children began noticing the amazing growth in curiosity and discovery which was permeating in their daily routines. After observing the benefits of the student-centered educational philosophy at the preschool level, parents began repeatedly requesting that the leaders of Self Development must consider expanding the preschool program to offer K-8 schooling.

The student-centered learning hones the develop-

ment of independence and self-reliance, where the student takes the responsibility of discovering and learning. Being Responsible is one of the four R's of our school's culture. The other three R's are be Ready, be Respectful, and be Resilient. Students learn certain skills that can be applied in many other situations. They learn to apply the knowledge gained in one area to a new area. Thus, they learn to process information to create new knowledge rather than stacking information, one layer on top of another.

This process of developing a new understanding or creating new meaning is inherent to student-centered learning espoused by Dr. Ahmad, my mother. The students learn to apply prior experiences to new situations and develop an enhanced level of understanding and eventually become a lifelong learner.



DEVELOPING A LIFELONG LOVE FOR LEARNING

My mother was an avid reader. A proponent of student-centered learning, she envisioned students taking an active role in selecting what they want to learn. Unlike the traditional teaching where the teacher-centered approach set the stage for passive learning, the student-

centered classrooms encourage students to select what they would want to learn and to pace their learning as they engage in a rigorous curriculum.

Self Development's approach to mastery encourages students to try new concepts, appreciate their abilities, and link effort with achievement. What this means is that students not only learn new material, but they synthesize what they learn by exploring, discovering, and creating.

THE COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SUCCESS

The commitment to student-centered learning has earned Self Development Academy numerous awards and accolades. We are grateful for the awards, but we are most proud of the accolades from our own families and graduates whose lives have been positively touched by Self Development Academy.

One of our former students, Nathan B., writes, "Self Development School was the perfect beginning to my education, teaching me how to write well and seek out advanced mathematics. It prepared me to do well in high school and was a key factor toward getting me into Princeton University."

In 1988, my mother, Dr. Ahmad, was diagnosed with a terminal illness. As we said our goodbyes, I hugged her and said how sad I was that she was leaving us, and with her she was taking away a wealth of information and a brilliant mind. The educator in her awakened. She quickly quipped, "Anjum, all you have to do is to read."

Yes, what a legacy she left behind: The belief that a love for knowledge is the key to transcend obstacles for the betterment of self and for others. All we have to do is instill in our children a love for reading. ■

For more information regarding Self Development Academy, please contact the front office at (480) 641-2640. This article is a tribute to my late mother, Dr. Mehrunnisa Ahmad, whose passion for education has deeply influenced my commitment to student learning.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

YOUR CBD STORE OFFERS Product Line Designed for Restful Sleep

By Jamie Killin

Up to 70 million U.S. adults have a sleep disorder that makes it difficult to fall or stay asleep. While there are a variety of treatments to help combat this, CBN, or cannabitol which is similar to CBD, is one of the most effective emerging options for those wanting to improve their sleep quality with natural products. Since opening Your CBD Store in November 2020, owners Tiana and Tracy Klimczak have seen several customers return for the specialized sleep products containing CBN, sharing positive feedback about the products' effectiveness.

Recently, Tracy shared that a customer came in who had experienced problems with her sleep for decades, only to find that the CBN products were not only more effective than the pharmaceuticals she was taking, but also less expensive and without the side

effects the traditional medications had caused. "Her words were 'You can't put a price on that,' and when I hear that as a business owner, it's why we got into this business. It's very thrilling to hear," said Tracy. Your CBD Store offers three different, high-quality SUNMED CBD products to promote restful sleep — a CBN tincture that is taken under the tongue sublingually, a gummy, and a beverage enhancement that can be added to water. Each product is designed to be taken 30 to 45 minutes before bed for optimal results. All CBN products also offer many of the same overall benefits of CBD such as relaxation and pain relief.



Tiana and Tracy have found that each person has a product their body responds to best for improved sleep, so to help customers determine their optimal treatment plan, they've put together a sample pack with smaller sizes of all three products at a great price point. "Once they find which one their body seems to receive better, then we can make sure they get that product on an ongoing basis," said Tracy. "All of the products are dominant in the strain that goes to the receptors in the brain to help with rest and relaxation, and we have gotten fantastic feedback on all three products."

Your CBD Store also has a variety of other wellness supporting products to promote relaxation such as CBD infused bath bombs, CBD infused honey perfect to mix in caffeine-free teas, and an award-winning topical with soothing peppermint for joint pain. Additionally, the shop offers free samples of all its products to help potential customers determine the best CBD varieties for their needs. ■

Your CBD Store is located at 345 S. Power Road, Suite 104, in Mesa. For more information, call the store at (480) 597-6887.



UpClose

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Five Great Reasons to Visit the Patio

By Dawn Abbey

Looking for something fun to do? Then check out these five great reasons to visit The Patio at Las Sendas Golf Club.

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Every day, from 3 to 6 p.m., get discounted deals on specialty cocktails, premium wines, and superb gourmet-style appetizers like Blistered Shishito Peppers with Sesame Garlic Sauce, Hand-Battered Golden Mozzarella Wedges with Marinara, Steamed Pork Pot Stickers with Fresh Ginger and Soy Dipping Sauce, and more. Mixology includes many variations on your favorites.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Beginning at 6 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays, listen to a variety of talented local performers while you sip your Tito's Martini



or Prosecco Brut, or order an enticing dinner entrée. If you want to catch a game, sidle up to the sports bar in the adjoining Grille lounge for comfortable chairs and 12 HD TVs.

THE VIEWS

Perched at an 1,800-foot elevation, The Patio offers spectacular views of our gorgeous sunsets. The Valley of the Sun spreads out below and you can watch the city lights appear. Wildlife like quail and rabbits begin to emerge from the golf greens and surrounding mountain and desert areas. "Did you just see that owl?" Daytime views are just as relaxing and magical.

THE FOOD

Whether you choose one of many creatively inspired luncheon sandwiches (like Roasted Arizona Mushroom

Medley with Goat Cheese Spread on Rosemary Focaccia), salads (try Blackened Chicken Caesar), flatbreads (yummy Cajun Chicken), a chef-prepared dinner (Bacon-Wrapped Bison Meatloaf), or our Sunday or specialty brunches, you can always be guaranteed of a delicious dining experience. Check out our diverse menus at LasSendas.com.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Everyone is invited to enjoy the casual dining ambiance and the creative lunch and dinner offerings at The Patio seven days a week. Shading, fans, and heaters maintain the perfect environment surrounding your comfortable chairs and tables. Social distancing and an outdoor location make for a relaxing occasion. Come and join the fun with your friends or meet new ones. ■

The Patio at Las Sendas Golf Club is located at 7555 E. Eagle Crest Drive. For information or reservations, visit LasSendas.com or call (480) 396-4000.



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A woman with curly hair, wearing a purple sports top and leggings, is performing a seated hamstring stretch on a white background. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. Her legs are extended straight out in front of her, and she is reaching forward with both hands to grasp her right foot. Her left leg is bent at the knee, with the foot flat on the floor. She is wearing purple sneakers.

Knock, Knock — Who's there? Home Swap!



A wide-angle photograph of a modern kitchen. The kitchen features white upper and lower cabinets with silver handles. A large central island with a thick, light-colored marble countertop and dark wood base is prominent. The island has multiple drawers and cabinets with silver handles. The countertop is equipped with a sink, a faucet, and various kitchen items. In the background, there is a stainless steel refrigerator, a built-in oven, and a range hood. The floor is made of light-colored wood. The lighting is bright, with recessed ceiling lights and pendant lights hanging over the island.



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» SALT RIVER TUBING CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

and free customer parking.

Salt River Tubing will be distributing free patriotic bandanas while supplies last.

“During the past 25 years, responsible tubers have greatly contributed to helping to protect and conserve the Lower Salt River’s natural resources,” Henri said. “Their public lands stewardship of *stashing and bagging* their picnic litter while floating helps to ensure that this recreational paradise will be enjoyed by future generations. We invite everyone to experience an Arizona *floating tradition* on Memorial Day weekend in Tonto National Forest’s mini-Grand Canyon on the Lower Salt River!”

The Memorial Day holiday weekend on the Lower Salt River has been a celebration for millions of floaters during the past 40 years. Family reunions as well as college and high school reunions have enjoyed a unique Arizona tradition in the great outdoors.

In the past 25 years, the nationally acclaimed Take Pride in America program has reduced the amount of picnic trash on the Lower Salt River by over 90 percent. To date, 820 tons of picnic trash has been stashed and bagged during the Memorial Day and Labor Day holiday weekends.

Take Pride in America is a national partnership that aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers to put their love of country to work to improve our national parks, wildlife refuges, public lands, cultural and historic sites, playgrounds, and other recreation areas. Salt River Tubing has received a record four National Take Pride in America awards for the company’s conservation efforts in Tonto National Forest (1991, 2003, 2006 and 2010).



RECREATE RESPONSIBLY WITH SAFE DISTANCING

SRTR encourages floaters to help ensure a responsible *safe distancing* atmosphere at the terminal building and on its shuttle buses during transport to the Salt River. SRTR’s safety protocols require a face covering during the Tube Rental Transaction process, shuttle bus transport to/from the Salt River as well as during the Tube Return process at the end of the floater’s visit. No exceptions.

- SRTR requires its employees to wear face coverings as well as gloves.
- Daily temperature checks are administered.
- SRTR’s passenger buses have been downsized to transporting twenty (20) passengers per bus.
- Shuttle buses are disinfected nightly (every 24 hours).
- SRTR enforces safe distancing between guests awaiting the tube rental transaction process, and last but not least, family and/or friends that have traveled together in vehicles may choose not to socially distance themselves since they chose to travel together with said precautions.
- Safety protocol signage will be posted at the Terminal Building and Bus Stops #1, #2, and #4. *Safety protocols subject to change at SRTR’s discretion.*

TUBING TIPS

Shooting the Salt River rapids is great fun, and company officials recommend the following helpful tubing tips to assist tubers in planning their floating beach blasts for the holiday weekend:

- A valid driver’s license is required for a tube rental deposit per five tubes rented.

- Children must be at least eight years or older and four feet tall for tubing and shuttle bus service.
 - Life vests are strongly recommended for children, non-swimmers and inexperienced swimmers.
 - Glass containers by law are not allowed in the Salt River Recreational Area. Ice chests will be inspected for glass containers before boarding shuttle buses. Please use plastic bottles or aluminum can containers.
 - Have a great time during your floating beach blasts, but remember that drugs, alcohol and the Salt River do not mix. Responsibly appoint a designated driver before your tubing adventure.
 - Floating picnic ideas include fresh fruit, burritos, fried chicken or sandwiches. Pack picnic items in Ziploc bags to keep dry. Please stash and bag all picnic supplies in litter bags while floating.
 - Sun block, tennis shoes and a cap or visor should be worn. A minimum 30 SPF is recommended.
 - Ice chest/coolers: Fill with ice, sport drinks, fruit juice and water. One to two bottles of water per hour while floating is recommended to help prevent dehydration.
- Salt River Tubing accepts Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover cards and cash. Credit card and cash transactions require a valid driver’s license for tube rental deposits and credit card information. Please visit saltrivertubing.com for more details regarding credit card transactions. ■

Salt River Tubing is located in Northeast Mesa, just minutes from Highway 202 East and Power Road (North) Exit 23A, in beautiful Tonto National Forest. For more information about Salt River Tubing and these May events, please visit saltrivertubing.com, or call (480) 984-3305.



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There is no doubt that smart devices are convenient. But they are also a great way to protect yourself and your family from germs, especially when you opt for voice control.

Think about how many surfaces you frequently touch around your home every day, from light switches and remotes to your thermostat. Voice control gives you hands-free control of your devices so you significantly reduce the chances for germ transmission.

Here are a few other ways smart home devices keep you safe.

- ♦ **Smart Thermostats:**
Did you know that viruses can multiply faster in dry environments? A smart thermostat lets you easily control humidity levels to slow the spread of germs.



Linda Palm

- ♦ **Motion Detectors:**
Motion detectors not only give you hands-free control of your lights, they help save you on energy bills.
- ♦ **Smart Lighting:**
With smart lighting, you can actually set the beam to red to warn others to stay away if someone in the house is sick.

ADDITIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OPTIONS

- ♦ **Video Doorbells:**
Video doorbells let you communicate with people at your door without the need for face-to-face contact.
- ♦ **Smart Locks:**
If you get a delivery, smart locks enable you to unlock your door remotely so the delivery person can leave the item safely inside.
- ♦ **Smart Window Shades:**
If you have motorized shades, you can program them to raise and lower automatically to prevent strangers from looking into your home.
- ♦ **Smart Plugs with Timers:**
You can even set timers on your devices like coffee makers or space heaters to ensure they don't stay on for too long.

While smart devices can definitely help keep you safer, remember to clean and disinfect them on a regular basis. ■

To speak with Linda to learn more about her Window to Design store, you can contact her at (480) 207-6450, or visit her website — windowntodesign.com, or [instagram.com/windowntodesign](https://www.instagram.com/windowntodesign).



FINANCES

YOU HAVE A GRADUATE,
Are You Prepared for an Emergency?

By Michael J. Day, CPA, PFS™, Grand Canyon Wealth Management



Michael Day

Congratulations, you have a graduating senior. This is an exciting new time in your and your child's lives. There are many new opportunities and experiences that await the graduate as well as risks that you may not have thought of.

Your child is most likely now a legal adult and they will now be treated differently by society as expected, but your legal relationship with your child has now also changed.

Imagine the nightmare scenario of your child getting into an accident or a sudden severe illness while away at school, traveling, or even while still living in your own home. Imagine having the medical professionals and institutions treating your child unable to share any information with you or allow you a voice in their treatment because of privacy laws.

A preemptive step you and your child can take would be to establish a Medical Power of Attorney. What is a Medical Power of Attorney? It is a legal document that allows you to choose someone to make important healthcare decisions on your behalf in the event that you are injured in an accident, undergoing surgery, or develop a medical condition that prevents you from making decisions

on your own. In this document you will be able to choose your own Medical Power of Attorney Representative as well as an Alternate Medical Power of Attorney Representative, who will then be able to make these decisions in the event that you are unable to make them on your own.

A Medical Power of Attorney is a critical step in your estate planning process and could be put into place on a stand-alone basis or as part of a comprehensive review of your personal situation. You may have an attorney draft a custom document for you that lists out specific decisions related to your health and healthcare options.

There are also many fill-in-the-blank Medical Power of Attorney forms available that you may use. The form will need to be witnessed or notarized to become effective.

Scheduling time with an experienced financial professional to review your specific circumstances is an important step in putting your personal and financial affairs in order and well worth the time you invest in yourself. ■

The above is the opinion of the author and should not be relied upon as investment or legal advice or a forecast of the future.

Michael J. Day, CPA, PFS™ is the founder of Grand Canyon Wealth Management, where he provides financial planning, estate planning, wealth management, and investment services. For more information, or to schedule a complimentary consultation, visit grandcanyonwealthmanagement.com, call (480) 590-3590 or e-mail Michael.j.day@lpl.com.

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REAL ESTATE

Buying As-Is and Waiving the Appraisal Contingency — What That Really Means

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



Buying a home today looks very different than it did a year or two ago. Back then, if a buyer had a budget of \$500,000, they would look at homes up to \$525,000 or even \$550,000, knowing there was probably room to negotiate.

Today, that same buyer will be looking at homes in the range of \$450,000 to \$475,000, knowing they are going to have to bid above the list price to compete with multiple offers. The highest price doesn't necessarily guarantee the winning bid – buyers have to have the highest and the best offer.

While cash is still king, financed buyers are removing some of the contingencies to make their financed offers more appealing and competitive with cash offers.

The top two concessions buyers are adding to their offers are 1) purchasing the home *as-is* and 2) waiving the appraisal contingency. While these might be attractive to the seller, there is risk to the buyer.

AS-IS

Once the offer is accepted, the 10-day inspection period (or the time period agreed to on the contract) begins. This is when the buyer has the opportunity to do their due diligence on the property and have the home inspected.

Purchasing *as-is* means the buyer will not ask the seller to make any repairs, even after the inspection is done. This is a huge benefit to the seller as they don't have the expense or, more importantly, the hassle of finding contractors and scheduling repairs.

Purchasing *as-is* does not mean the buyer has to waive the inspection itself or agree to purchase the home no matter what is found during the inspection. The inspection period is for the buyer to do their due diligence and find out about the home.

It is important to have an inspection even if buying *as-is*, so the condition of the property can be evaluated before moving forward. If it does need a lot more repairs than expected, the buyer can cancel the contract and get their earnest deposit back – so long as the cancellation happens before the end of the inspection period.

As-is is a huge benefit to the seller and, it can really make a buyer's offer stand out in this competitive market.

APPRAISAL WAIVER

A lot of people are talking about waiving the appraisal contingencies right now and this is a term that financed buyers are using to make their offers more competitive. But what exactly does this mean?

All lenders require an appraisal of the property to ensure the current market value is not lower than the purchase price. If the appraisal comes in below the purchase price, the buyer can cancel the contract or, as most often happens, negotiate. When the appraisal is lower than the purchase price, the

buyer and seller can mutually agree to split the difference or reduce the purchase price to the appraised value, but this is not common in today's hot market.

In today's market, sellers often receive multiple offers, and the list price is often bid up tens of thousands of dollars. In a market where prices are moving up so quickly, appraisals cannot keep up with the higher prices as there are no comps to support them. As a result, many appraisals are coming in below the purchase price.

While sellers love to see offers above the list price, the over list offers really don't mean anything if the property can't appraise for the purchase price.

For example, take a home listed for \$500,000 that sells for \$580,000. If the appraisal comes in at \$550,000, the lender will only loan based on the \$550,000 value, and if the buyer has waived the appraisal, they will have to make up the \$30,000 difference between the sales price and the appraised value with additional funds. If the property appraised at \$500,000, then a buyer would have to contribute an additional \$80,000 in cash – and this is on top of the down payment. This is a big risk!

Waiving the appraisal is a great way for a buyer to strengthen their offer, but it comes with a risk that buyers need to understand. This is not a workable term for every buyer.

In this fast-moving market, be sure your Realtor can give you expert advice and educate you about the risks you may be taking. If you have any questions about buying or selling in today's market, please do not hesitate to contact me. I have the experience and many other tools in my toolbox to help you win your offer and find your next home! ■

Lorraine is a Multi-Million Dollar producing agent, has been a full-time Realtor for over 13 years, is an Associate Broker of KOR Properties, a Certified Negotiation Specialist, and is on the Professional Standards Board. You can reach Lorraine at (602) 571-6799.



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—Goran and Jessica



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EVENT

City of Cottonwood Hosts VINTAGE RUN

On Saturday, June 12 at 6 a.m., the City of Cottonwood will be hosting their 28th Annual Vintage Run. “This is a historic event for the city that showcases the area’s most breathtaking views, and we are thrilled to be able to safely bring it back,” said the Parks and Recreation Manager Jak Teel. “The waves of different start times will allow ample spacing for all runners as they enjoy a run through *The Heart of Arizona’s Wine Country*.”

Details regarding each race include:

- **1/2 MARATHON** Beginning at 6 a.m., attendees can run or walk through historic Old Town Cottonwood, along the gentle hills to Sycamore Canyon Road up to Tuzigoot National Monument, where the Sinagua Native Americans once lived. The path continues on a short series of trails with views of the beautiful Verde River into Dead Horse Ranch State Park.
- **10K** An evening run beginning at 5 p.m., the 10K trail winds through beautiful Dead Horse Ranch State Park nestled between Sycamore Canyon and Mingus Mountain.
- **5K** An evening run beginning at 5:30 p.m., runners race through the Heart of Arizona Wine Country in historic Old Town Cottonwood, and through the natural canopy of the beautiful State Park’s Jail Trail.
- **2-MILE** An evening run beginning at 6 p.m., attendees can run or walk from the Riverfront Ramada area to Dead Horse Ranch State Park’s main gate and back. This route is fairly flat, but the scenery is breathtaking. ■

To register, visit runcottonwood.com.



EDUCATION

MCC Expands Career and Degree Choices

STUDENTS UPGRADE SKILLS, EARN TRANSFER CREDITS AND STEP INTO NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Submitted by Mesa Community College
Mesa Community College’s (MCC) growing partnerships with the City of Mesa, as well as with businesses and industry, are offering exciting opportunities to earn degrees, upgrade job skills and begin rewarding new careers.

For the Fall Semester 2021, MCC welcomes the first Mesa College Promise students. Announced by Mayor John Giles in his 2020 State of the City Address, the program provides free MCC tuition for graduating Mesa high school seniors who have a GPA of 2.0 or higher, and demonstrated financial needs not completely covered by federal grants and other scholarships. Details can be found at mesacc.edu/mesa-promise.

Students graduating from a Mesa high school with a GPA of 3.2 or better can apply for the Presidents’ Honors Scholarship that provides free tuition, not based on income. Go to mesacc.edu/honors/presidents-honors-scholarship-program for more information.

PARTNERSHIPS

MCC’s nationally acclaimed Boeing partnership began when the aerospace giant needed 450 electrical technicians skilled in electrical wiring and harness. A unique, stackable, customized, and for-credit training program — structured as a Cable Harness Wiring Bootcamp — was created with the tuition refunded upon successful completion. Boeing continues to hire hundreds of students from the program.

Apple, Red Hat, Adobe, Cisco, and Amazon are some of the information technology firms whose training programs are found at the MCC Downtown Center’s East Valley IT Institute. Go to mesacc.edu/miti to find out more. As well, class days, hours and formats are working-professionals friendly.

With the iconic beauty house

of L’Oreal and Arizona’s legendary Rolfs Salons of the Future, MCC has created an Associate of Applied Science in Beauty and Wellness. This program educates beauty professionals in business knowledge and new concepts in customer service needed to grow their careers. More information can be found at mesacc.edu/beauty-wellness.

Health care education is a major focus, particularly at the Red Mountain campus, and MCC is expanding the current offerings and adding several fast-track entry points such as home health aides and various technician and LPN trainings. MCC has acclaimed EMT, dental hygiene, exercise science, and nursing programs. Biomedical equipment technology, in partnership with Banner Health, and advanced paramedic certifications were recently launched.

Agreements with four-year educational institutions such as Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University, and the University of Arizona provide pathways to bachelor’s and master’s degrees, which in some cases, can be earned entirely on MCC campuses. Check this out at mesacc.edu/transfer.

Opportunities to earn credits, achieve certifications, and take fun classes are popular with seniors, especially with their 50 percent discount. Find out more at mesacc.edu/senior-discount. And, MCC’s partnership with New Frontiers offers hiking, cycling, travel, cultural events, and other activities for mature adults. Go to newfrontiers.mesacc.edu to find out more.

RETURNING TO CAMPUS

Students, staff, and the community are anticipating returning to the inspiring collegiate atmosphere on MCC campuses. Following mask and distancing protocols, spectators are now welcomed at Thunderbird sports competitions — mesabirdsports.com. ■



MCC classes on-campus and hybrid (on-campus and online) are being added to the popular online and live online course options. Register online at mesacc.edu. Support services are available via web, chat and phone.



Register Now for Summer and Fall 2021 Classes

For some, committing to four years in the classroom just isn’t an option. That’s why Mesa Community College offers a number of flexible, short-term career programs designed to land you a good job with a good paycheck to match.



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- Mesa College Promise program

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The Maricopa County Community College District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs or activities. For Title IX/504 concerns, call the following number to reach the appointed coordinator: (480) 731-8499. For additional information, as well as a listing of all coordinators within the Maricopa College system, visit <http://www.maricopa.edu/non-discrimination>.



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REAL ESTATE

Why is the Real Estate Market So Hot?

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



John and Natascha Karadsheh

Have you noticed that everyone is talking about real estate again? Whether it is about multiple offers on a house down the street, sales prices wildly over list, or crazy new build wait times, it is no secret that the basic factors of supply and demand are driving real estate prices both locally and nationally. But why are houses suddenly in such short supply and, more importantly, what does that mean for buyers and sellers moving forward?

IT ALL GOES BACK TO 2008

First of all, our hot market is being driven by a lack of inventory. This is not a new thing — the problem of housing inventory has been growing for years. The incredibly slow recovery from the 2008 crash resulted in builders underbuilding while at the same time, the home buyers that aged in delayed their purchases due to financial instability, interest rates, student loans, and tiny house trends. By the way, those millennial home buyers who didn't buy years ago are suddenly coming to market now with everyone else.

CHALLENGES FOR BUILDERS

While new builds started to take off again about three years ago, homebuilders quickly started running into a variety of issues that curbed the speed with which they could bring homes to market. The cost of purchasing and developing land increased. Finding qualified labor in the trades has been a constant issue. In the past 12 months, lumber costs have nearly tripled and the pandemic has exacerbated supply chain

issues, resulting in shortages in building materials. Builders are now having to limit new sales and raise prices simply because they are having challenges executing what they have in the pipeline. Furthermore, these investors are buying to hold. They are banking on rental cash flow and equity growth, and their properties are not re-entering the general inventory as they might otherwise.

STAYING PUT

COVID quarantines, low interest rates, and rising home prices created the perfect cocktail for homeowners to stay put. Quarantines kept many potential sellers from moving forward with a move. Others took advantage of low interest rates, cashed out some equity, and by the time they finished remodeling, the option to move was no longer really financially viable or they just liked their renovations enough to stay. Other sellers who may have considered a move, were priced out of the market by the time they were ready.

DEMAND FROM EVERY CORNER

The flip side of the supply issue is, of course, demand. We have written about increasing demand frequently in our articles. Demand is being driven by our Valley's economic vitality, explosive population growth, investors, more millennials and Gen Z buyers ready to purchase, low interest rates, pandemic lifestyle shifts, politics, taxes, stimulus checks, and the new opportunities afforded by work from home.

The takeaway from all of this to share with friends at your next happy hour is that all of these factors of diminished supply and increased demand have hit the market at the same point. It is a true perfect storm that will keep prices moving forward and won't normalize overnight. The inventory shortage is real and was predicted. The demand is real and not diminishing. Our advice to sellers is simply — have a plan. Prices are rising nationwide, so know where you are going before you sell and have a great agent lined up before you take the plunge. Our advice to buyers is also simply — have a plan. If you don't want to spend six months throwing crazy offers at random properties, work with an agent who can expertly guide you through today's market. This market is moving at light speed and is literally changing weekly. Get the best representation and make sure you completely understand the deal you are entering. Rest up and get ready. Buying and selling in today's market is an adventure and getting educated about the process is the most important first step. As always, we are available seven days a week to answer your real estate questions, so please don't hesitate to give us a call. We love this business and we are passionate about providing our clients with the best representation! ■ John and Natascha Karadsheh are co-owners of KOR Properties, a boutique real estate brokerage serving the Valley of the Sun, and the creators and founding sponsors of Mesa Food Truck Fridays. John has been a Multi-Million Dollar producing agent for over 17 years and is an Accredited Buyers Representative (ABR) and Certified Residential Specialist (CRS), and is the Chairman on the Arizona Regional MLS Rules & Policies Committee. Natascha is an Associate Broker of KOR Properties, a Multi-Million Dollar Producer, Past-Chair of the City of Mesa Economic Development Advisory Board and the founder of the Falcon Business Alliance. You can reach John at (602) 615-0843 and Natascha at (602) 909-4995, or visit their website: KORProperties.com.

Real Estate In Mesa Uplands brought to you by: Mesa Uplands Area Market Report Sales over \$460,000 for the Month of March 2021

Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
6245 E Star Valley St	2,291	Red Mountain Ranch	\$460,000
2444 N Rugby St	2,744	Villa Royale	\$470,000
6447 E Orion St	2,200	Trigram Estates	\$475,000
2613 N Platina Cir	2,072	Villa Royale	\$477,000
8726 E Hobart St	2,294	Grandview Estates	\$482,111
1503 N Steele	2,862	Grandview Estates	\$486,500
9649 E Greenway St	1,809	Saguaro Mountain	\$500,000
2120 N Red Cliff	1,741	Mountain Bridge	\$521,000
7365 E Ivyglen St	1,923	Moondance	\$525,000
3938 N Sapphire	2,328	Red Mountain Ranch	530,000
4333 N Recker Rd	2,451	Red Mountain Ranch	538,000
1843 N Channing	1,987	Mountain Bridge	551,500
3939 N Tirol Cir	2,723	Red Mountain Ranch	552,000
6802 E Hermosa Vista Dr	2,577	Saguaro Estates	589,000
4230 N Everest	3,205	Red Mountain Ranch	590,000
1641 N Channing	2,013	Mountain Bridge	595,000
8723 E Jaeger St	2,321	Mountain Bridge	642,000
1846 N Waverly	2,321	Mountain Bridge	656,000
2824 N Kashmir St	3,222	Mesa Desert Heights	660,000
8747 E Jaeger St	2,056	Mountain Bridge	680,000
9760 E Greenway St	3,887	Saguaro Mountain	\$699,900
8540 E McDowell Rd 6	3,495	Thunder Mountain	\$715,000
1920 N Steele	2,321	Mountain Bridge	\$721,000
2312 N Calle Largo	3,141	Estates at Desert Shadows	\$725,000
9215 E McLellan Rd	3,025	County Island	\$730,000
3230 N 90th St	3,375	County Island	\$810,000
7028 E Granada St	3,428	Alta Mira Estates	\$835,000
2248 N Trowbridge St	3,204	Mountain Bridge	\$950,000
8144 E Laurel St	4,130	Estrella Vista	\$994,000
8253 E Kramer Cir	4,368	Savona	\$1,180,000
4055 N Recker Rd 14	5,958	Red Mountain Ranch	\$1,275,000
8540 E McDowell Rd 28	4,631	Thunder Mountain	\$1,900,000

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

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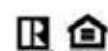
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Spotting and Addressing Ten Common Parkinson’s Symptoms

Submitted by Home Care Assistance

One of the most common neurological disorders is Parkinson’s disease (PD), a progressive nervous system disorder that affects movement. An estimated 60,000 people a year are diagnosed with PD. Symptoms associated with Parkinson’s tend to start gradually and can be barely noticeable. Interestingly, various signs of Parkinson’s have been recognized and described for over 2,000 years, yet it wasn’t until James Parkinson’s observations that caused him to develop the first description of this disease. Generally speaking, people with Parkinson’s disease have trouble controlling the speed and/or the size of their movements, but the form that may take varies.

Here is a list of symptoms associated with Parkinson’s disease and what to look out for if you or a loved one is experiencing any one of these. If you are concerned, be sure to discuss any symptoms with your doctor.

1. Tremors

They are the most frequently noticed symptom of early Parkinson’s disease. A limb, most commonly the hand or fingers, begins to tremble at rest.

2. Slowed Movement

This is considered one of the early symptoms of PD. One must be diagnosed with this, as well as one other major symptom such as tremor or rigidity, to be diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. Simple tasks become difficult and time-consuming.



3. Rigid Muscles

Muscle stiffness may occur in any part of the body and can limit your motor functions. This stiffness goes beyond the aches and pains of aging or arthritis. Many describe this symptom as a tightening of the muscles leading to a reduction in the range of motion. Facial muscles can seem to freeze leading to one of the advanced symptoms called facial masking.

4. Decreased Posture

Posture often becomes stooped and hunched over. Take notice if you are unable to stand up as straight as you used to.

5. Trouble Balancing

As your posture may become stooped, balance can also decrease.

6. Speech Changes

Speech may soften or quicken. One may also slur or hesitate before talking and lose the usual inflections and become monotone.

7. Trouble Swallowing

Difficulty swallowing may increase over time and lead to dehydration, malnutrition, and/or aspiration (when food or water goes down the wrong pipe).

8. Vertigo and Dizziness

While non-movement related symptoms are common in people diagnosed with PD, doctors often overlook them when considering Parkinson’s as a possible diagnosis. Dizziness can often be related to poor balance and should be discussed with one’s doctor. Vertigo and dizziness can be caused by medications or a drop in blood pressure.

9. Writing Changes

One’s handwriting may begin to change. It can become difficult to write and writing may become smaller. A few helpful solutions include using a weighted pen and practicing writing as a daily exercise.

10. Dystonia

The warning signs of dystonia include clenched toes or hands, and cramping in the hands or feet. It is caused by repetitive muscle spasms that twist muscles, causing painful cramps. Dystonia often occurs when beginning a movement. For example, one can start to walk and suddenly feel the toes curling or the foot turning in on itself at the ankle.

These are a few of the common symptoms of Parkinson’s disease. While there is no cure, there are many proactive approaches that one can take to improve their quality of life. Once you talk to your doctor and have an understanding of the symptoms, creating an exercise routine, eating healthy foods, drinking lots of water, and getting plenty of rest can all help you maintain an active lifestyle. ■

Amanda Butas is a Geriatric Case Manager at Home Care Assistance Mesa Office, located right next to Bed Bath and Beyond on Power and McKellips roads. Her company provides home care services on an hourly or around-the-clock basis to older adults who need help. Her services include support with basic activities of daily living and those living with certain conditions such as Alzheimer’s or Parkinson’s, as well as supporting a successful transition home from the hospital or a rehab facility. Amanda can be reached at her office at (480) 699-4899.

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EDUCATION

MESA PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANNOUNCES EXPANDED SUMMER PROGRAMMING

Submitted by Mesa Public Schools
Photos by Tim Hacker, Mesa Public Schools
*Photos taken prior to COVID-19 pandemic

Summer opportunities abound for students at Mesa Public Schools. Starting June 1, district students in kindergarten through 12th grade can participate in a variety of exciting learning and enrichment activities.

Many opportunities will be available free or at a reduced cost thanks to federal coronavirus relief (ESSER) funds. Programming includes site-based opportunities at every school, music camp, Xplore, online learning, and more.

Eisenhower Center for Innovation Principal Robby Meldau is excited for the summer program and says his teachers have committed to providing rich learning opportunities that are also fun. “We want this summer school to look and feel different than years past,” Robby said. “This experience is about restoring a relationship to school and learning for our students.”

Poston Junior High Principal Michael Rapier says summer academies are a wonderful opportunity for students entering junior high to launch their on-campus experience in a smaller group. “Students will be able to walk from class to class, see where the cafeteria is located and build their confidence,” Michael shares. “Teachers are looking forward to building relationships with students, and we can support and remove any anxieties they may be experiencing.”

SUMMER ACADEMY OPPORTUNITIES

Free school-based programming for students in grades K to 8 is available June 1 to June 18. For students in grades 9 to 12, free school-based programming runs June 1 through July 9 at all senior high sites except Skyline High, which will offer programming June 1 to June 30. Transportation and meals will be provided at school-based programs.

Mesa Digital Learning Program (MDLP) will provide free online learning for enrolled students in grades 5 to 12.



All courses are self-paced and taught by appropriately certified teachers.

Shepherd Junior High hosts free summer music camp for students in grades 3 to 8 from June 1 to June 18. Classes include band, orchestra, ukulele, music composition, and guitar. Students are grouped by ability level based on their years of experience.

The community education department will offer free senior high summer school for enrolled students in grades 9 to 12. The program runs June 1 to June 18 and June 21 to July 9 at Dobson and Red Mountain high schools.



Summer Xplore is a full-day instructional and recreational program available five days a week from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. The program is offered June 1 through July 28 at Franklin at Brimhall, Hermosa Vista, Mesa Center for Success at Jordan, and SHARP. Additional locations may be added. Reduced fees are \$82.50/week with a one-time \$12.50 material fee. ■

Learn more at mpsaz.org/summer.

Enjoy expanded summer programming at Mesa Public Schools for K-12 students!

Starting June 1, students can enjoy free and low-cost Summer Academy programs that provide opportunities for learning and enrichment.

- Free school-based programming for elementary, junior high and senior high students
- Free self-paced online learning, taught by certified teachers
- Free summer music camp for students grade 3-8
- Full-day instructional and recreational Xplore summer program available at multiple schools five days a week

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HEALTH

Are You Physically Ready for Summer?

Submitted by GSC Therapy Services

Summer means swimsuits, vacations, extra activities with the kids, and May means it's time to start thinking about getting in shape for all of these activities.

Most of the time we tend to focus on looking good in a swimsuit, which can mean extra attention to diet and exercise. But most injuries that occur during the summer months do not happen from wearing a swimsuit.

Preventing sun burns, dehydration, and insuring pool and water safety can help make your summer great but how do you prevent summer injuries? And get in shape to wear that new swimsuit? The best way to start is to assess what your status is and where you want to be. So, starting out, you want to know:

- How flexible am I? Can I touch my toes? Touch my opposite shoulder blade? Put my arms behind my back?
- Can I balance on one leg for 15 seconds without holding on?
- Can I complete a three-minute step up at a fast pace and return to my starting heart rate after 1 minute?
- Do I have pain anywhere?
- Do I have flat feet or pain when walking or standing?

If you are unsure about how to complete your own baseline, then schedule your free assessment today at GSC Therapy Services, located at 6239 E. Brown Road, Bldg. 2, Suite 112, in Mesa.



After you have established a baseline, the next step is to develop an action plan that might include:

- **Physical therapy** to strengthen muscles; develop proper movement mechanics; and reduce symptoms so that you can tolerate other exercises or activities.
Fact: 36 percent of all back injuries are due to poor mechanics.
- **Personal training** to develop cardiovascular skills and conditioning for travel, hiking, and sightseeing; strength and endurance for transporting luggage; and nutrition counseling to fit into your summer clothes and to allow for vacation-related weight gain.
Fact: Normal walking requires a heart rate of 85 to 145 beats per minute; walking while pulling luggage requires a heart rate of 109 to 200 in a healthy adult.
- **Proper footwear** including orthotics to compensate for sandals and barefoot activities.
Fact: A normal foot exerts 2.5 pounds of pressure when walking on a hard surface, walking in sand requires 3.6 pounds of pressure, making the muscles of the legs and feet work harder.

Getting in shape for summer can be challenging but having a great vacation without injury is even better! ■

For more information about how GSC Therapy Services and Spectrum Sports & Training can help you to get into shape for summer, contact us at (480) 855-8866, check out our website at gsctherapy.com, or follow us on Facebook.

LOCAL BUSINESS

Give the Gift of Clean FOR MOTHER'S DAY

By Gina Bring
Owner, Carnation Home Cleaning

While you may think disinfecting and sanitizing are words that can be used interchangeably, there are subtle differences.

Disinfecting uses chemicals to kill germs. Because the germs are removed, the risk of infection is reduced significantly.

Sanitizing is the act of reducing the number of germs to a safer level in alignment with public health standards.

In your home, it is practically impossible to disinfect everything, so your goal should be to clean and sanitize thoroughly.

While you may want to reach for some special cleaner, in most instances, plain old soap and water will do the trick.

If you want to add a little something extra, instead of choosing harsh chemicals for cleaning and sanitizing, try lemon juice, baking soda and vinegar. Used alone or together, they pack a powerful punch.

To actually kill germs, you will need to use chemicals. If you want to keep it simple, you can mix 1/3 cup of bleach with a gallon of warm water. Put that in a spray bottle and let it sit as you would with any store-bought disinfectant.

Carnation Home Cleaning gift certificates for Mother's Day are available in any amount, starting at \$200, and can be used toward a one-time cleaning, or repeat cleaning services. ■

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SPORTS

Junior Pickleball Clinics Gain POPULARITY IN RED MOUNTAIN RANCH



By Laurie Johnson

People naturally assume that it is difficult to grow young plants in the Arizona desert, but in fact, those plants can grow well here — if taller plants stand alongside them, providing valuable shade, humidity and protection.

Turns out, the same type of growing is found in the world of pickleball.

A healthy junior program recently has sprung up in Northeast Mesa, and thanks to the support of enthusiastic older players, young players now are gravitating to pickleball like roots gravitate to water.

Red Mountain Ranch Country Club pickleball director Ryan Trefry, himself a California transplant to Arizona, had a dream of bringing organized competitive pickleball to junior players in the Valley. In March he invited Mesa K-12 students to participate in four USAPA-sponsored free junior clinics held at RMRCC.

Almost overnight, the clinics filled up.

“Kids love to be active, love to play games, and love challenging themselves,” Ryan explained. “That’s what the clinics were all about.”

Ryan said he had many positive takeaways from those clinics, which in turn reaffirmed his hopes for building a strong foundational program for junior players.

“Coaching juniors is different from coaching an adult. Juniors are a little more raw, and oftentimes easier to teach because they have no prior experience. They are blank slates, not bringing any bad habits to the game.”

Because so many juniors signed up for the free clinics, Ryan knew he needed help to give the players the attention they needed. He turned to his adult players, and eleven RMRCC picklers immediately volunteered to register kids or coach a group of their own.

Kathy Hawthorne, one of the volunteers, said she saw happy faces — both young and old — everywhere she looked during the clinic.

“I thought it was fabulous first of all to see all the adults who normally wouldn’t be interacting with such young kids have such big smiles on their faces,” Kathy said. “It was amazing how quickly the kids picked up the game, and the adults almost had more fun than the kids, just giving them ownership — showing them that this is going to be their game, and that they could do it.”

Eight-year-old Marley Snider said she had a great experience at the clinic she attended. “I felt good because of all the big kids that were there,” Marley said. “I liked playing the games with them”

Marley, who now says pickleball is her favorite sport, said she loved the drills she got to practice with her fellow junior players. “My favorite part was playing from the baseline. I really like to practice hitting from the baseline and making volleys at the kitchen,” she explained.

To continue the momentum started by the free clinics, Ryan is now offering beginning, intermediate, and intermediate/advanced junior clinics on Mondays and Thursdays. The clinics run for an hour and begin either at 4 p.m. or 5 p.m.

In addition, Ryan will be offering a junior pickleball

summer camp in June and July. “At camp we will have different units covering different skills,” Ryan said. “It will be a different experience for every kid. And we will also have water balloon fights and games on the grass. We want to give them a chance to be kids while learning the sport of pickleball.” ■

Parents can register their child for the Monday/Thursday clinics or the June/July summer camp sessions by going to pickleballforjuniors.com. For more information, call or text Ryan at (623) 444-0987, or email him at TrefPickleball@gmail.com.



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COMMUNITY

A New Fairy Tale RainShadow

By Candice Gartzke

Candice Gartzke is the writer and illustrator of the new fairy tale *RainShadow*. It contains 46 fully illustrated pages. Embark on this journey together by opening the book to adventure.

RainShadow is a courageous new fairy tale that has an empowering female protagonist, Rain, who encounters drama, love, and adventure. It is a story about a jungle princess that, when happy, creates



Another interesting fact is that rain shadows are where the mountains block the rain clouds from going over, so the other side of the mountain is dry and barren. In the story, the character ends up on the other side of the mountainous jungle in the desert trying to find her protector Shadow.

Candice visited Arizona a lot growing up and currently resides here. Arizona's landscape and environment played a big role in creating a depiction of a desert. ■

RainShadow can be purchased on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or austinmcauley.com/us/book/rainshadow. For information about the book, go to the writer and artist's personal website at candicegartzke.com.



ample amount of rain for the rainforest. However, when the jungle princess Rain is sad, it becomes too sunny and creates a drought. Unfortunately, her protector Shadow gets captured and causes Rain to become distraught making the whole jungle search for Shadow.

Candice was raised in the Pacific Northwest for a good portion of her life. It rains a lot around Seattle and the Hoh Rainforest, but she learned that rain was essential for life. The concept of rain being a good thing became a focal point in *RainShadow*.



EDUCATION

National Elementary Honor Society Raises Funds for Shelter Pets

Submitted by Dianne Szonn

The National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS) at Red Mountain Ranch Elementary School organized a shelter pet donation drive for the Arizona Animal Welfare League (AAWL). The AAWL is the oldest no-kill shelter in Arizona and they help support other shelters across the state, especially those located in more rural communities.

Last year they helped save over 4,000 pets and we are proud to be a part of that continued effort. The items gathered included office, cleaning, and first aid supplies as well as pet food, treats, and plenty of toys for the cats and dogs to enjoy while they wait to find their fur-ever home!

Our Red Mountain Ranch families were very generous with their donations despite still being in a pandemic. These supplies will be utilized at the AAWL as well as sent to other shelters in need throughout the state.

The NEHS is the elementary chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS). Students involved

with this organization are not only academically focused but also service-minded in regard to helping support their local and school community.

"Pets are such an important part of our lives and the students in the NEHS saw a need to help the many pets currently in Arizona shelters," said Mrs. Szonn, who is the NEHS advisor at Red Mountain Ranch Elementary. "During this drive, students learned about the many wonderful things the AAWL does for shelter pets across the state as well as educational programs offered to many students in the Phoenix-metro area." ■



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FINANCES

Over 50

Will investors change behavior after the pandemic?

Submitted by Brent D. Hoskinson and Linda Drake

The COVID-19 pandemic may end up changing our lives, from how we work to how we learn. But will there be similar changes for how we invest?

Some areas may be affected. For example, many people found that they didn't have enough liquid savings to meet their needs and had to dip into their retirement accounts.

To prevent this from happening, try to build an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, with the money held in a separate, easily accessible account of cash or cash equivalents.

But, in other ways, post-pandemic

life will be similar to life before. Apart from building an emergency fund, you should still put away what you can afford into your IRA, 401(k) and other retirement accounts. If you have children, you may still want to explore college-funding vehicles – because even if online learning becomes more prevalent, higher education will still be costly.

And no matter what the future looks like, you'll always make the right move by creating a long-term financial strategy tailored to your individual needs, goals and risk tolerance. ■

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



HEALTH

Over 50

How Do You Know What Medicare Coverage is Right for You?

Submitted by Tapestry Insurance

When I meet with someone trying to make the decision of what Medicare coverage is right for them, some of the criteria for making a decision are answers to these questions. How is your personal health? What is your family health history? Who is your doctor or doctors? What medications do you currently take? Do you plan to travel in the near future?

Many of the answers to these and other questions will help narrow down the choices, and will facilitate making an informed and positive decision to your Medicare coverage. There are many types of Medicare plans and options. Having someone provide guidance to help understand the options can be advantageous.



If you are about to retire or are turning 65 in the next six months and would like to explore your options, please call me to set an appointment. If you have a plan and are not sure it is the right one for you, we can talk about it now and look toward changing during the upcoming open enrollment in the fall. ■

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FINANCES

You and the Big Investment Mistake

Submitted by Scott Johnson, CFP®, AIF®, CPFA

At some point, all investors face The Big Mistake. Examples of The Big Mistake can be over concentrating your investment portfolio in a particular stock, chasing investment returns, purchasing a Variable Universal Life policy or annuity that you don't need, misallocating your 401(k) investments, or attempting to time the market.

Our propensity to time the market is only natural. When the market drops, like it did in March of 2020, our instinct is to sell now and stop the pain. When the market shoots up, we tell ourselves it's time to buy, buy, buy!

Nothing illustrates this better than the flow of money into 401(k) plans in April 2020. According to data from Alight Solutions 401(k) index, 49 percent of all new money contributions into 401(k) plans that month flowed into bond funds

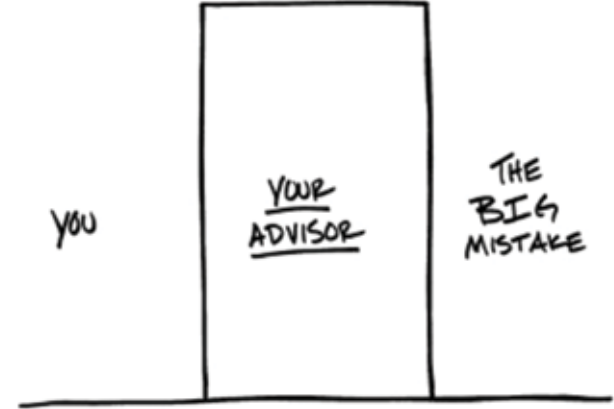


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and money market. Conversely, 401(k) investors pulled \$112 million out of mostly equity target date funds last April — the precise time that global equities began one of the greatest rallies in history. As the sketch by Carl Richards below illustrates, our odds of avoiding The Big Mistake go up dramatically when we have a good fiduciary advisor who can help us separate our emotions from our investment decisions. The next time you are feeling emotional anxiety over your investments, seek the guidance of a financial advisor who can prevent you from making investment decisions that may jeopardize your long-term financial goals. ■

Scott Johnson is the CEO of DecisionPoint Financial, LLC. He is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and an Accredited Investment Fiduciary. He and his firm provide comprehensive financial planning and investment management services to individuals and institutions. Scott can be reached at (480) 553-6249 or scott@dpplanners.com. Visit decisionpointfinancial.com.

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