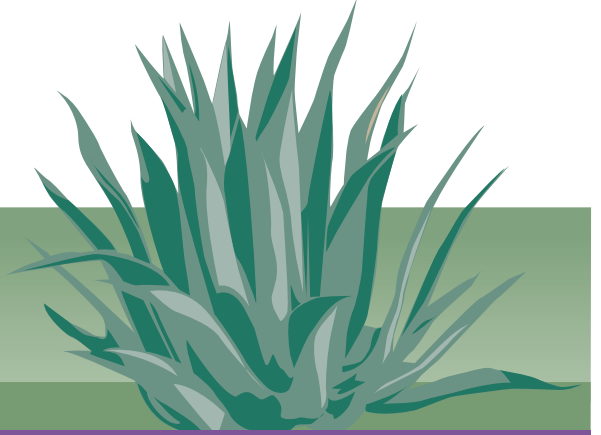


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Red Mountain Ranch Resident and Well-respected Author WILL HOST ANTICIPATED BOOK SIGNING

By Kim Phillips

Red Mountain Ranch resident and well-respected author Tommye Staley will host a much-anticipated book signing on Wednesday, April 10 from 5 to 6 p.m. at Pacino's Italian Grill and Bar.

Her new 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.

"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 inspiration to write the book to her students.

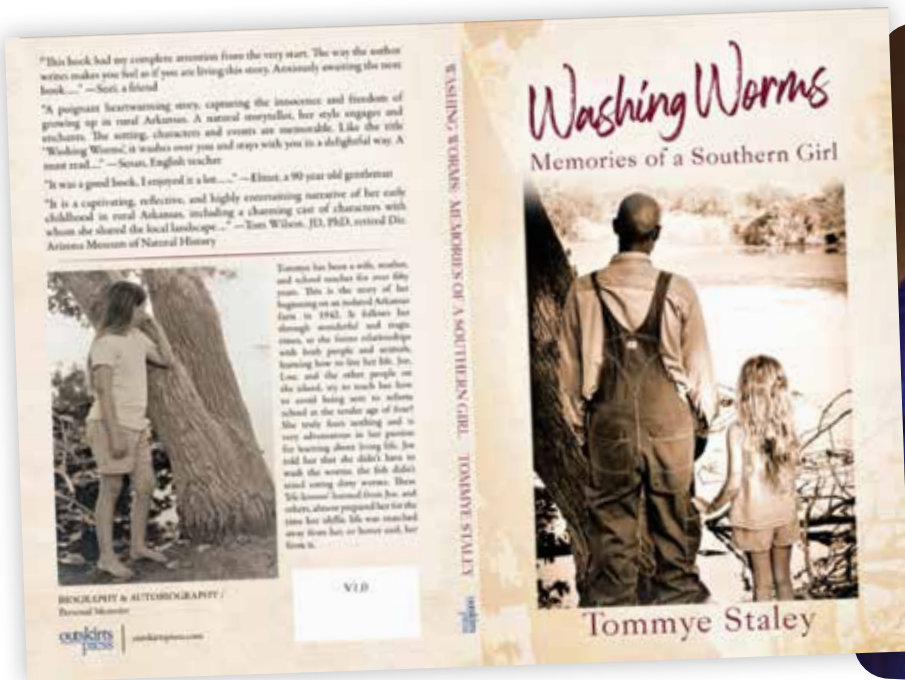
Her life lessons were in a different time and place, she said. "I did not realize how different things were when growing up. You really don't realize how impactful your early years are until you are past them."

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 this book," 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 six 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, or call Pacino's Italian Grill and Bar at (480) 985-0114. Pacino's is located at 2831 N. Power Road, Suite 104, in Mesa.



CLASS 101 Experts Simplify the College Planning Process

By Shawn Coats, M. Ed.

Navigating the college admissions process is daunting. With more than 4,200 colleges in the United States to choose from and drastic changes to the process in the last 25 years — test optional/blind, demonstrated interest, early action versus regular decision, etc. — students and parents can find themselves drowning in information.

Class 101's professional college advisors take an individualized approach to help students navigate the complicated college planning process and ensure families save money.

College advisors make college planning a simple and enjoyable journey. Securing admission opportunities and scholarships takes more than good grades and strong test scores. Parents do not want to nag their kids for three to four years to stay on top of college preparation.

Class 101 advisors work 1:1 with students to connect all the dots and make the process enjoyable. Their professional, experienced college planners help students prepare for college admission tests, improve GPAs, develop a targeted list of colleges that meet the student's interests, prepare resumes, write essays, visit schools, complete applications, and navigate the scholarship and the financial aid process. Class 101's proven process helps students make their dream school attainable.

While many students choose to stay in-state, Class



101 advisors want students to explore options, regularly helping them attend private schools for the same or less money than an in-state university. Finding the right college fit helps students feel confident in selecting a university that will allow them to thrive.

Class 101 Mesa Gilbert students are attending universities all over the United States, including Georgetown, Brigham Young University, Texas Christian University, Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University, Saint Louis University, and the University of Southern California, to name a few.

Early engagement in the process is a game-changer. The earlier, the better, when it comes to maximizing college and scholarship opportunities.

It's recommended to begin your college planning journey in 9th grade. However, our advisors work with students from 8th to 12th-grade levels. We often hear, "I wish we would have met with you years ago. You would have saved me thousands of dollars and alleviated a lot of anxiety." ■

For more information or to schedule a free consultation, contact Shawn Coats at (602) 647-8347, via email at coats@class101.com, or visit class101.com/mesagilbert/.

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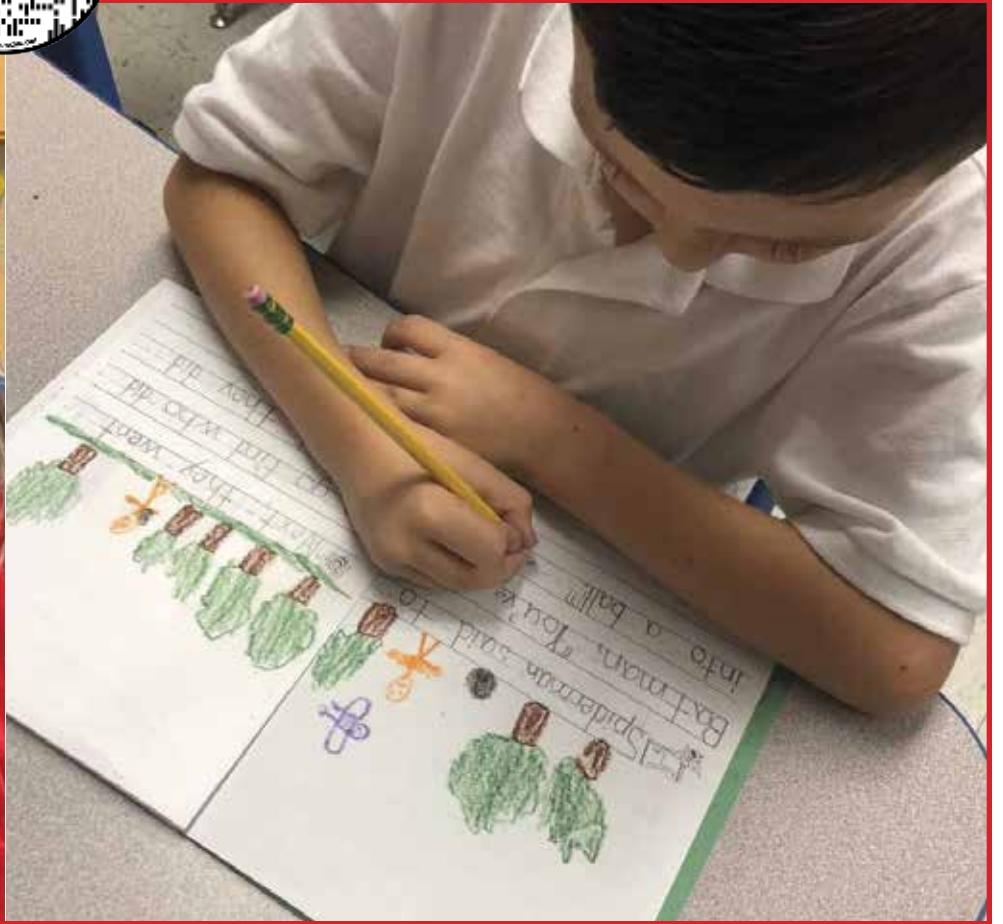
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EDUCATION

Why Students Seeking Accelerated Learning ATTEND SELF DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

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

One of the greatest joys for me as an education leader is to connect with our students and observe how they learn. Last week, I was in a third-grade class to read a familiar story, *The Stone Soup*. Recognizing the title of the book, a student commented that it was a *European* story. Another student immediately added that it was a French folktale that was narrated orally and was more than 100 years old. A third student, who was actually in second grade attending the third-grade class, said he had visited France, and when I asked if he knew French, he responded, "Oui, oui."

The reference to European folklore expanded the discussion to the folktales of other continents besides Europe. The discussion included Asia, Africa, and North and South America. Students excitedly shared about their grandparents and their migrations from different continents. Students' conversations and their world views took a life of their own, much beyond the third-grade level, past the planned curriculum on the genre and the elements of a story. What an enriching experience!

Self Development Academy (SDA) was established in 2001 in Mesa with the mission to recognize and maximize the inherent talent of students. In planning for the school year 2024-25, the school leaders are proud to share SDA's ongoing commitment to high academic achievement, a foundation of success to develop skills in research, leadership, and community service, and support for interest in music, art, and athletics.

EMPHASIZING HIGH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

SDA is one of the top-performing K-8 schools in Arizona as well as nationally. SDA's leadership recognizes the needs of talented students who thrive in a challenging environment, requiring opportunities for advanced academics. The design of our curriculum takes into consideration the



specific components necessary to help maximize the potential of students. Students take accelerated coursework, which is at least one grade level higher. Many students with specific subject area strengths can attend the next higher grades without officially enrolling in the higher grades.

Talented and high-achieving students also have opportunities to join small group pull-outs for enrichment and deeper understanding. By the time SDA's talented students reach 5th grade, they can take courses that are one to three grade levels higher, including Algebra 2, high school literature, biology, chemistry, and physics in middle school.

SDA students enter high school well-prepared to take Honors and Advanced Placement classes. The ability to take these more challenging and weighted classes allows them to graduate with a high grade-point average and positions them well for college scholarships and admissions in competitive colleges. Many of our former students have attended elite colleges including Ivy League universities.



DEVELOPING ABILITIES IN RESEARCH, LEADERSHIP, AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

For the coming year, plans are underway to help students hone skills in research, develop leadership qualities, and undertake community service.

We believe that research is the heart of knowledge acquisition. For our high-achieving students, we are laying the foundation to think critically, ask specific questions, and investigate laboriously to find the answers to their questions. Research skills are specifically taught, and talented students are to work collaboratively to research topics of interest.

Leadership and community service are about relationship building and becoming responsible citizens. Self-awareness and self-management are at the core of the philosophy of Self Development Academy and necessary skills for leadership. Students learn about kindness, respect, and compassion. Students will undertake projects during the school year and focus on a major annual project serving the community.

SUPPORTING THE ARTS, MUSIC, AND ATHLETICS

An important aspect for students at SDA is the emphasis on class plays, an appreciation for the arts, and helping develop an interest in choir and music. Research indicates that kids who are involved in the arts perform better academically. Self-discipline and hard work required to practice a musical instrument help in understanding that effort leads to success. ■



To learn more about Self Development Preschool, please contact (480) 396-3522, and for the accelerated K-8 program, Self Development Academy, call Self Development Academy at (480) 641-2640.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

RJ Hill Painting Brings 27 Years of Painting Experience to the Valley

By Jamie Killin

Ray Hill has brought his nearly three decades of painting expertise to Mesa and its surrounding cities, launching an Arizona headquarters of his successful painting business, RJ Hill Painting, which has operated in Michigan for 11 years.

RJ Hill Painting is licensed and fully insured, offering both residential and commercial painting services, having built a positive reputation for doing work on historic properties as well as large commercial projects such as hospitals, assisted living centers, and hotels in Michigan.

The company's residential offerings include exterior painting, interior painting, and cabinet painting, all completed with high-quality products and a talented team.

"The team I've trained is multi-faceted, and I find the right personnel to fit what I need to do," said Ray. "I was fortunate to find some veterans in the industry when I moved to Arizona to start the business here with."

For Ray, the most important thing is building a company that Valley residents can trust and rely on for years to come – especially when poor quality work and using low-grade product is becoming more common.

"It's unfortunate that I've seen people water down paint or use cheaper products to stretch the job, which then won't last more than two or three years here in Arizona where we have such violent UV rays," he said. "I want to do right by my clients. This is where I plan on hanging my hat up – it's a family-owned business that my nephew is going to continue even when I step away."

Whether it's using the appropriate paint for



maximum longevity on a metal gate or using a waterborne lacquer that's safe for exposure to pets and children, Ray prioritizes using the best products for each job.

Ray not only lends his expertise on product and painting technique to each job, he also ensures his clients feel comfortable and understand the process before the work begins, taking the time to discuss their preferences and put together a plan.

"It's important to us that our clients feel comfortable," he said. "My team is friendly and they're not going to be in your way. If you work from home, we're going to give you the option to have that room done first so you can have that space back, or we'll do it last so

you can get what you need to get done completed."

Additionally, whether

it's an interior or exterior paint service, the RJ Hill Painting team takes the time to carefully cover your valuables – from furniture to windows – to ensure a clean and stress-free experience. ■



For more information on RJ Hill Painting, or to schedule an estimate, visit rjhillpaintingllc.com.



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LOCAL BUSINESS

Navigating Mortgage Down Payment Myths Unveiling Options Beyond the 20 Percent Barrier

Submitted by *Trusted Lending Center*

In the realm of real estate, the notion of saving up a daunting 20 percent down payment has long been entrenched as a prerequisite for purchasing a home.

However, contemporary mortgage practices have shattered this misconception, opening up a myriad of options that render homeownership more accessible and flexible than ever before.

Contrary to the belief that a substantial down payment is non-negotiable, many lenders today offer mortgages with significantly lower down payment requirements. Down payments as low as 3 percent or 5 percent have become increasingly common, particularly for first-time homebuyers. This shift reflects a recognition within the industry that rigid down payment thresholds can pose significant barriers to homeownership for many aspiring buyers.

Moreover, the origins of funds for the down payment are not as restrictive as once thought. While personal savings remain a traditional and reliable source, they are by no means the sole option. Families eager to support their loved ones' homeownership dreams can provide financial assistance through gift funds, which can be utilized for the down payment. This avenue not only fosters intergenerational wealth transfer but also serves as a practical solution for individuals who may not have substantial savings of their own.

In addition to familial support, certain retirement savings plans offer avenues for accessing funds for a down payment. For instance, many 401(k) plans allow for penalty-free withdrawals specifically earmarked for a first-time home purchase. While tapping into retirement savings



should be approached with caution and careful consideration of long-term financial implications, it can serve as a viable option for bolstering a down payment.

Understanding these alternative pathways to homeownership empowers prospective buyers to navigate the mortgage landscape with confidence and strategic foresight.

Furthermore, it's essential for prospective buyers to engage with reputable financial advisors and mortgage professionals who can provide personalized guidance tailored to their unique circumstances.

In conclusion, by leveraging lower down payment requirements and exploring diverse funding sources, individuals can transform their homeownership aspirations into tangible reality, embarking on a journey of financial empowerment and security.

Ready to make homeownership a reality and explore all the options available to you? Reach out to our local team today! ■



For more information, call (480) 400-9884 or visit [trustedlendingcenter.com](https://www.trustedlendingcenter.com).

LOCAL BUSINESS

Sense of Community

By *Tim Beaubien, Hava Java Mesa*

As many of our customers know, Barb and I moved from Michigan to become the new owners of Hava Java Mesa.

Back in Michigan, because of our location for 21 years, being more rural than city, we never really had a sense of community. Of course, we knew our neighbors, but the lots were big so maybe we said hi once a week.

Now we are living in East Mesa, in a large neighborhood, and talking with our neighbors is almost a daily event. Even more so at Hava Java. We are constantly greeting and talking with customers. We learn about their jobs or retirement, their history and what brought them to the Valley, or maybe, as we were in Michigan, born and raised in Ariz. Some are working from the coffee shop; some are studying for that next test; and some are just taking a break from a busy day or meeting up with friends.

It's this daily interaction that I take very seriously. I feel that we are more than just a cup of coffee – you can wait in line at any drive-through for that. We are an important part of our customer's routine.

We truly now have a *sense of community*. But it's more than that, it is what I believe is an obligation to our community. The community has chosen us to be part of their lives, so we are always trying to give something back.



So, in that spirit, we try to make the coffee shop available for different events that will benefit the community. On Tuesday, May 7, starting at 8:30 a.m. to about 10 a.m., we will be hosting our City of Mesa Councilmember Alicia Goforth from the 5th district to meet with residents and talk about local issues (still working on Mayor Giles by the way). The last time Councilmember Goforth was at the shop she brought Commander Chris Rash of Mesa Police. We will be inviting him again.

Oh, by the way, you don't have to have an issue or complaint, if you feel Councilmember Goforth is doing a good job please stop by as well. ■

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.





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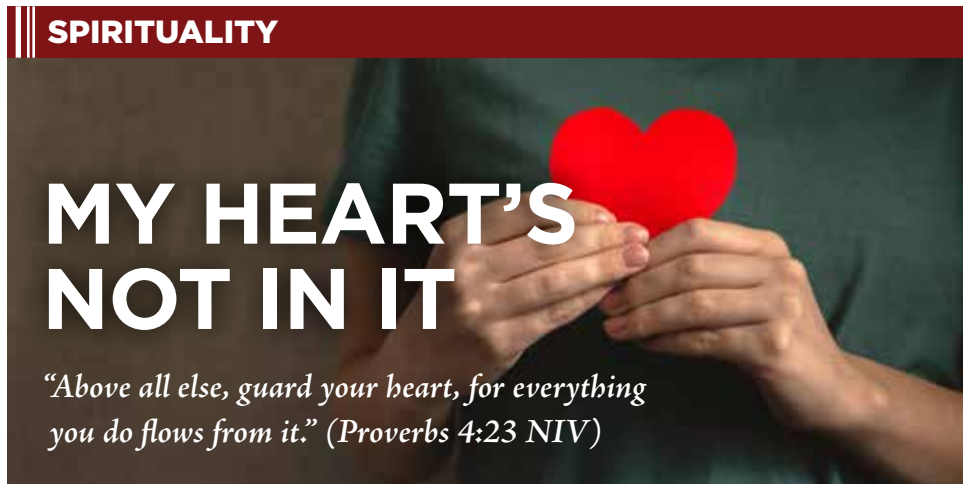


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By Judy A. Knox,
Charis Christian Church

Around 2002, I became an avid scrapbooker. In 2012 my husband passed away, and I got busy with other things. Two moves and 10 years later, I intended to get back to it and complete some unfinished albums, but it never happened. If anyone asked whether I was still scrapbooking, I would say, "No, not really." When they asked why, my usual answer was, "For some reason, my heart just isn't in it." Even sheer willpower couldn't get me back into the groove.

We all have things we want to be doing, or not doing, but it just isn't happening. If we're honest with ourselves, we would have to admit that our heart just isn't in it. Most of these things are far more serious than making scrapbooks. Changing our habits can't be done by sheer willpower. The only solution is a change of heart. This isn't something we can't do ourselves. We need heavenly heart surgery.

I learned about worldly heart surgery when my husband went through it, a scary process. The doctors cut open his chest, replacing defective parts with new ones. The surgery was a success and Alan

emerged with the equivalent of a new clog-free, normally functioning heart.

This is a graphic analogy of what God does in our lives, changing defective things in our hearts and making us new. However, there are differences between God's surgery and what the doctors do.

First, we must open our own heart. God has given us free will, so He won't do it for us. We must willingly make our heart available to the Holy Spirit. Then, instead of a scalpel or knife, God uses a spiritual laser, shining the pure light of His love and grace into the dark places where evil lurks, burning impurities away. Whatever needs removal, once He shines His light on it, it has to leave and be replaced.

In the natural realm, heart surgery may take place once or twice in a person's life, but God's open-heart surgery is an ongoing process. The more often we allow Him access to our heart, the more benefits we gain. When God reveals our need for correction, and we open our heart to the Great Physician, He will fix the problem. ■

If you would like to learn more about how the Great Physician operates in our lives, come visit us at Charis Christian Church, 4811 E. Julep St., Suite 101, in Mesa.

LOCAL BUSINESS

TNK Clinical Spa Expands Offerings and Availability

By Jamie Killin

TNK Clinical Spa is expanding its services and availability to help patients look and feel their best this summer.

Owner Tuyenke Romane has offered natural beauty and wellness treatments inspired by her family traditions from Santiago, Chile for more than 20 years, and has been able to provide her patients with valuable insights and healing through epigenetics testing that can show mineral and vitamin deficiencies, toxicities in the gut, exposure to heavy metals, and more.

"It's a time of renewal, and the perfect time to start getting ready for the new season ahead," she said. "People can focus on beauty, and also their health with offerings like our epigenetic testing which will show them what's really going on in their system and what they're deficient in."

Once testing is complete, Tuyenke can create a full program for her clients based on their results to help them achieve optimal wellness. Now, one of the tools available to patients is IV therapy provided by a nurse who is joining the TNK Clinical Spa team.

This therapy will help patients quickly address their vitamin and mineral deficiencies to begin feeling better.

Tuyenke is also still offering patients'



favorite services, such as PRP, a treatment created from a patient's own blood that stimulates healing. It can be used as a more natural alternative to Botox and filler to help patients look younger and more refreshed.

"PRP is a really good option for people who want a more holistic approach to beauty," she said. "Not only is it rejuvenating, but it can also be very healing."

PRP is also very popular in treating hair loss and has even been found to help with pain management. Tuyenke has found success in using PRP injections to treat injuries – perfect for helping people to alleviate pain so they can better enjoy the summer activities and travels ahead. ■



TNK Clinical Spa is located at 4320 E. Brown Road, Suite 101, in Mesa. For more information, or to book a treatment, visit tnkclinicalspa.com.

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Stretch Zone Longbow is located in the Longbow shopping plaza at 3204 N. Recker Road, Suite 104, in Mesa. They accept HSA and FSA insurance. Call today at (480) 590-1133, or visit the website at stretchzone.com/locations/longbow.



HEALTH

Naturopathic Medical Centers can help with weight loss goals

By Dr. Jordan Trapp, Naturopathic Medical Centers



We've all been there, haven't we? We muster up the courage to embark on our weight loss journey, hit it with all we've got for a month or two, only to throw in the towel when results don't magically appear. It's a classic tale of frustration leading to surrender.

But what many fail to grasp is the myriad of factors at play when it comes to shedding those stubborn pounds. From stress-induced snack binges to environmental toxins, hormonal imbalances, and even poor sleep, the naturopathic approach acknowledges the diverse factors contributing to weight gain and difficult weight loss.

By recognizing these influences, I offer a roadmap to sustainable weight loss and overall well-being.

Stress is a pervasive factor in modern life and can have profound effects on both physical and mental health, including weight management. When the body experiences stress, it triggers the release of cortisol, a hormone associated with increased appetite and fat storage, particularly around the central abdomen. Chronically elevated cortisol levels can disrupt metabolism and lead to weight gain over time.

As a naturopath, I recognize the importance of stress management techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, and breath work in promoting weight loss. By addressing my patients' stress levels and supporting your adrenals, we can regulate cortisol levels, reduce emotional eating, and improve overall resilience to stressors, facilitating healthier weight management outcomes.

Environmental toxins, pesticides, herbicides, plastics, and heavy metals like lead, mercury, and arsenic, have been associated with various health issues, including weight gain and metabolic disturbances, as they disrupt hormonal balance, impair detoxification pathways, and contribute to inflammation, all of which can impede weight loss efforts. Identifying, removing, and supporting the body's detoxification processes is paramount for weight loss support,

enhancing metabolic efficiency, reducing inflammation, and promoting overall health.

Detox protocols involve dietary adjustments, herbal supplements, hydrotherapy, IV chelation, and other modalities aimed at supporting the liver, kidneys, colon, and lymphatic system, enabling individuals to overcome barriers to weight loss and rejuvenate their energy and vitality.

Understanding that sometimes lifestyle changes alone are not enough, a medical intervention alongside our holistic approach to support your weight loss journey may be needed.

One approach is the HCG Diet, which utilizes human chorionic gonadotropin hormone to promote fat loss while preserving muscle mass. Another promising medical intervention for weight loss is the use of GLP-1 inhibitors such as semaglutide (Ozempic). GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) is a hormone that regulates appetite and food intake, and medications that mimic or enhance its effects have shown efficacy in promoting weight loss.

When appropriate, I incorporate these interventions into a comprehensive weight loss plan for individuals who have struggled to achieve results through lifestyle interventions alone.

If you're eager to kickstart your weight loss journey, I invite you to join me starting April 1 for an empowering detox program. Through targeted detoxification protocols, we'll support your body in eliminating toxins, optimizing metabolism, and promoting overall well-being.

This experience is tailored to not only enhance weight loss but also to revitalize your energy levels, clear your skin, and increase mental clarity.

Together, let's embark on this journey toward a healthier, revitalized you! For more details and to reserve your spot, give the office a call today at (480) 590-0272. ■

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LAS SENDAS GOLF CLUB

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Las Sendas Golf Club is ready for spring celebrations

THE PATIO & GRILLE

Food and Beverage Director, Jose Martinez, is excited to announce new scrumptious menu options for the spring season.

“We are rolling out a new Sunday brunch menu soon, keeping the classics and adding some signature dishes. We also continue to offer wine down Wednesdays, with any bottle under \$100 a good 30 percent off,” he added.



Don't forget to check out Mother's Day Brunch, at The Vistas Pavilion, on Sunday, May 12. It's a local's favorite event, but please remember, reservations are a must.

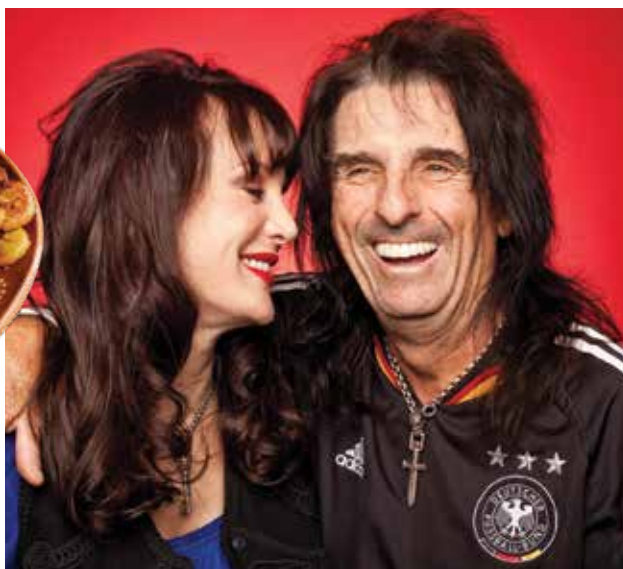
As a reminder, The Patio & Grille offers live music seven days a week. Grab a few of your closest friends and experience the fun. (Heaters and blankets are available to keep you comfortable during your dining experience.)

LAS SENDAS GOLF CLUB

Alice Cooper's 26th Annual Rock & Roll Fundraising Bash is scheduled for Saturday, April 13.

Once again, the stage will be set on the Las Sendas Golf Course's driving range. This time *the godfather of shock rock* will be joined by Devin Cronin of REO Speedwagon, Tommy Thayer of KISS, and Micky Dolenz of The Monkees, along with others.

Secure your tickets at alicecoopersolidrock.com. The evening's performances, and a silent auction, benefit Alice Cooper's Solid Rock Teen Centers in Mesa and Phoenix. You are invited to participate in a range of ways: VIP, which includes dinner, drinks, and valet parking, or simple



lawn access with your very own chair or blanket. However you decide to experience the evening, the benefit is sure to have you singing along to familiar songs from your past. And while *school is (not quite) out for summer*, Alice Cooper and his lineup of entertainers will provide a sense of anticipation and enthusiasm, at Coopstock, that the final bell of the school year delivered all those years ago.

In addition, a benefit golf tournament at the Las Sendas Golf Club is scheduled for Sunday, April 14.

THE GREENS

The course is currently in *excellent* condition. Check the website for the possibility of more open tee times, due to winter visitors leaving for the season.

THE PRO SHOP

The Pro Shop is fully stocked with new arrivals. Stop in to see the collection of merchandise before summer arrives.

THE VISTAS PAVILION AT LAS SENDAS

Spring Cleanup Has Never Been Easier!

Events and Catering Director, Carla Shaw, reminds us that spring is a beautiful time to host bridal showers, baby showers, all *April showers*.

“Are you dreaming of planning a party this year but are hesitant to have to prepare for the day?” Carla asks. At The Vistas Pavilion at Las Sendas, party planning is the team's specialty.

“We understand all the time and effort that goes into the perfect party – cleaning the house, mowing the lawn, grocery shopping, preparing the meal, setting up for the party, and the hardest – cleaning up after the fun has ended,” she adds.

“Imagine the perfect party, with amazing views of the Phoenix Valley, fully manicured landscaping, and breathtaking sunsets,” Carla said.

Greet your guests with confidence and enjoy the moment with your closest friends and family, knowing that all the details have been fully executed to your specific guidelines.

The team at The Vistas Pavilion is prepared to make your special event a memorable experience. Simply contact the team, decide on the food selection, pick your linen color, and table décor, and voila... you're done.

Call The Vistas Pavilion at Las Sendas to start planning today.

“We're easy to reach – by phone call (480) 396-4000, ext. 222 – or by email at cshaw@lassendas.com. We can't wait to get started on the planning of your special event,” Carla concluded. ■



Las Sendas GOLF CLUB

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<p>Non Refundable Membership</p> <p>\$30,000 Initiation Fee + Yearly Dues (Seasonal dues available)</p>	<p>Proxy Membership</p> <p>\$220/Month + Yearly Dues (2 Year Commitment) Deposit Required (Limited Availability)</p>	<p>New Range Pass</p> <p>\$1,200 Unlimited Range Only (Can be added to Social Membership or Family Pass)</p>
<p>1 Year Trial Membership</p> <p>\$5,000 Initiation Fee + Yearly Dues (Fully transferable towards non-refundable)</p>	<p>Social Membership</p> <p>\$2,000 Initiation Fee + Yearly Fee of \$1,000</p> <p>Receive 8 Winter golf Passes, 8 Summer Passes, 10% OFF Pro Shop & Restaurants</p>	

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REAL ESTATE

Is Home Staging Really Worth It? Free Home Staging

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



Is home staging really worth it – Absolutely, in fact I believe home staging is so important and such a benefit to the seller that I offer it as a free service to all my clients.

The benefits of home staging are undeniable. From creating visual appeal and highlighting functionality to eliciting emotional connections and standing out in online listings, staging offers a multitude of advantages for sellers looking to maximize their sale. By staging a home, sellers can achieve a higher selling price with less time on the market.

THE BENEFITS OF HOME STAGING

First impressions are everything. When putting your property on the market, you want to do everything you can to have your home stand out from the competition and staging is one of the top resources. Staging involves strategically arranging furnishings and décor to showcase the property's best features and maximize its appeal to potential buyers. The benefits of home staging can be substantial, ultimately leading to faster sales and higher selling prices.

1. CREATING VISUAL APPEAL

Whether you are in a buyers or sellers market, it's crucial for a property to catch the eye of prospective buyers. Staging helps achieve this by creating visually appealing spaces that are both inviting and memorable. By carefully selecting furniture, artwork, and accessories, stagers highlight the home's architectural features while minimizing any flaws.

2. HIGHLIGHTING FUNCTIONALITY

Beyond aesthetics, home staging also emphasizes functionality. By arranging furniture in a way that maximizes space and flow, staging showcases the potential uses of each

room. Whether it's transforming a cramped corner into a cozy reading nook or repurposing a spare room as a home office, staging helps buyers envision themselves living in the space.

3. EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

Buying a home is not just a rational decision; it's also an emotional one. Staging aims to tap into this emotional connection by creating environments that evoke positive feelings and resonate with buyers on a personal level. From warm and welcoming living rooms to serene bedrooms that offer a retreat from the world, staged homes are designed to evoke a sense of comfort and belonging. This emotional connection can be a powerful motivator for buyers, driving them to envision their future lives within the space and increasing their likelihood of making an offer.

4. STANDING OUT IN ONLINE LISTINGS

In today's digital age, the majority of homebuyers begin their search online. As such, the photographs featured in online listings play a pivotal role in attracting potential buyers. Staging ensures that these photographs are not only visually appealing but also accurately represent the property's potential. Staging can make even the most mundane spaces look warm and inviting, capturing the

attention of online browsers, and prompting them to schedule a viewing.

5. GETTING TOP PRICE

Staged homes sell for a higher price than their unstaged counterparts. Presenting a home in its best possible light, staging creates the added value in the minds of buyers. Well-staged properties are seen as meticulously maintained and move-in ready, qualities that justify a higher price tag in the eyes of potential buyers.

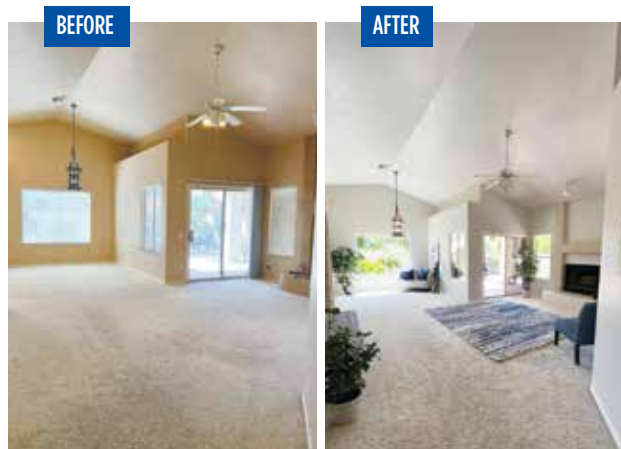
6. LESS TIME ON THE MARKET

Staged homes have been shown to sell faster, often spending significantly less time on the market. The enhanced visual appeal, emotional connection, and perceived value created through staging can lead to quicker offers and smoother transactions. Additionally, staged homes are more likely to attract serious buyers who are ready to make a move, further expediting the sales process and minimizing the inconvenience of prolonged showings and open houses.

Home staging is different for every home; it may be as simple as rearranging the furniture you have to full-home staging, especially for vacant homes. Staging a home for sale invariably includes depersonalizing and decluttering, which can often be hard for sellers who cherish their space as it is. Having a fresh perspective and someone to view the home through the eyes of a potential buyer can help with this process. No matter how much or how little staging you need, my team and I can help you get your home ready to list, and the best part is, our services come at no cost to you.

If you are thinking of selling your home, please contact me for a free no obligation staging consultation. ■

Lorraine is a Multi-Million Dollar producing agent, has been a full-time Realtor for over 14 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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Lorraine Ryall

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Maximize Your Earnings Smart Tax Strategies for Vacation Rental Owners

Submitted by
Brandon Balsley,
Grand Welcome,
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Owni
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can offer impactful
revenue-protecting tax benefits depending on how you use and rent the property. The largest of these benefits stems from the IRS's generous depreciation of the property, an annual deduction that reduces your taxable income from renting the property.

This article delves into the intricacies of tax planning for vacation rentals. From leveraging IRS depreciation rules to optimizing deductions, we'll equip you with the knowledge you need to navigate this financial landscape.

Here are some general guidelines to consider:

- If you rent the property for 14 days or less per year, you can keep the rental income tax-free and deduct the same expenses as your primary residence, such as property taxes and mortgage interest.
- If you rent the property for more than 14 days per year, you must report the rental income on your tax return. However, you can also deduct rental expenses, such as maintenance, repairs, insurance, and depreciation.

You must allocate the expenses between personal and rental use based on the number of days the property is used for each purpose.

- If you use the property as a personal residence and rent it out for more than 14 days per year, you can deduct the rental expenses up to the amount of rental income, but not more. You must also divide the expenses between personal and rental use as above.
- If you use the property as a rental only and do not use it for personal purposes, you can deduct all the rental expenses and losses against your other income, subject to the passive activity loss rules. You do not need to allocate the costs between personal and rental use.



These are some of the basic tax rules for vacation rental properties, but other factors and exceptions may apply to your situation.

Therefore, it is advisable to consult a tax professional before buying or renting a vacation home. You can also use tax software like TurboTax to help you prepare your tax return and optimize your deductions. ■

Contact Brandon Balsley at (480) 933-8874 or email Brandon.Balsley@grandwelcome.com for more information on available services. Also, check out the website: eastvalleyazrentals.com.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

La Peau Dermatology discusses when a mole becomes dangerous

By Kimberly Alvarado

Moles, also known as nevi, are common skin growths that appear as dark spots on the skin. They are formed from a type of skin cell called melanocytes. These cells produce melanin, which is the pigment responsible for our skin, hair, and eye color.

When these cells cluster together, they create a mole. We can acquire moles from early childhood and adolescence, and they continue to develop into adulthood. These little brown spots can be attributed to genetics, sun exposure, hormonal changes, age, skin friction, and many other unknown factors.

Vian Alrubaie, physician's assistant at La Peau Dermatology in Mesa, helps explain the differences between common, and dangerous, moles.



"There are three common types of non-dangerous moles. Compound melanocytic nevi, dermal melanocytic nevi, and junctional melanocytic nevi. These are fancy names for those raised or flat, light brown, and sometimes hairy brown spots sprinkled over our bodies. Luckily, most of the time these moles remain non-dangerous, or benign, and require no treatment," she said.

"Other types of moles, identified as atypical, or dysplastic nevi, are the unusual looking moles with irregular features. Those features can be examined thoroughly under a microscope and are worth your attention because they are a type of mole that has an increased risk for a dangerous skin cancer called melanoma," said Vian.

WHAT CAUSES MELANOMA?

Melanoma affects the melanocytes, or the melanin-producing skin cells responsible for the color of your skin. DNA changes in these cells cause the cells to divide and multiply at an abnormally fast rate. The most common reason for these changes is exposure to UV radiation, including the UVA and UVB rays from sunlight and tanning lamps. Genetic factors can also play a role.

WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

The five warning signs of dangerous changes in moles, also known as the ABCs of melanoma growth conditions, include:

- A. Asymmetrical appearance, where one side of the mole looks different from the other.
- B. Borders that are uneven in appearance.
- C. Variation of colors within a single mole.
- D. The diameter of a mole being greater than the size of a pencil eraser.
- E. Evolution of changing shape, size, or color over time.

A skin cancer diagnosis always requires a biopsy, as visual examinations cannot always determine this rare type of skin cancer, which can occur with dangerous moles.

However, regular examinations provide the opportunity for the most appropriate treatments to prevent spreading to other parts of the body. If a patient develops melanoma, a dermatologist recommends a wide local excision of the mole to ensure complete removal of the dangerous lesion.



Although melanoma is the rarest type of skin cancer, it is responsible for almost all skin cancer related deaths.

La Peau Dermatology is currently accepting new patients, booking out anywhere from two to four weeks.

Vian Alrubaie has been a physician's assistant at La Peau Dermatology for the past seven years. She enjoys forming professional relationships with patients and encourages routine examinations, beginning at age 20, to maintain healthy and safe skin. This recommendation holds particularly true for those of us who live in the sunny Arizona environment.

"Patients love coming into our office not only for routine skin checks but necessary surgeries and elective cosmetic procedures. We are extremely fortunate that we have many patients that have been referred to us from others that have had pleasant experiences in our office," she said. ■

La Peau Dermatology is located at 5424 E. Southern Ave., Suite 103, in Mesa. Visit them online at lapeaudermatology.com or call (480) 401-5966.

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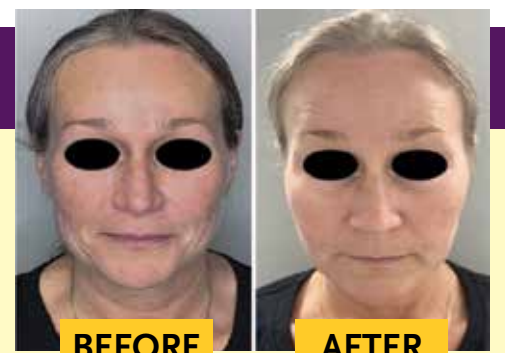
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LOCAL BUSINESS

Show Your Microbiome with the Right Fertilizer

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

Microbiome has made great strides in popularity and many scientists are studying this complex ecosystem and its benefits. There is a saying in the medical community that, “your gut is your second brain.”

The microbiome is a collection of microbes that live in your digestive system to facilitate and support digestion, nutrient synthesis, and immune function. It even helps regulate mood and metabolism. The following are some benefits of a healthy microbiome:

- Stimulating the immune system
- Protecting against pathogens
- Regulating mood and stress
- Breaking down potentially toxic food compounds
- Synthesizing certain vitamins and amino acids, including the B vitamins and vitamin K
- Regulating metabolism, appetite, and blood sugar

There are over 10,000 species of microbiome and ten times as many of them in the human body than there are human cells. Up to 90 percent of all health issues can be traced back to an imbalance of microbiome. The following disrupt this delicate ecosystem:

- Antibiotics
- Birth control
- Chlorinated water
- Sugar
- Alcohol
- Ultra-processed foods
- Pesticides
- Stress

Additionally, eating the same foods daily can cause a disruption because you are only feeding certain types of microbes. Microbes need food to survive. Therefore, having a diet rich in a variety of plants can help maintain a diverse



population of microbiomes, plus, avoiding the disruptors.

You may be wondering if meat helps or hurts microbiome. The answer is *both*. Plants, on the other hand, only *help* microbiome. Having a diverse plant-based diet is the best fertilizer for healthy microbiome and the best way to maintain optimal health and well-being.

One of the reasons for this is *fiber*. Meat does not contain fiber, but plants do. Not only is fiber a great fertilizer for microbiome, but it also helps you feel full; supports healthy cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar; and acts as a broom inside your intestines, sweeping out your intestinal track and removing toxins.

The recommended daily intake of fiber is 25 to 30 grams. Foods highest in fiber are lentils, beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds, with chia seeds being highest at 34.4 grams fiber per 100 grams chia. Just a single ounce contains nearly 10 grams of fiber. You can add chia seeds to just about anything you eat! Go online to search for recipes using this excellent microbiome fertilizer and amp up your meals and your health. ■

Prime IV Hydration & Wellness – Red Mountain Gateway is located at 2025 N. Power Road in Suite 106. For more information, visit primeivhydration.com or call (480) 992-4202.

FINANCES

Slow and steady

A smart way to invest

Submitted by Linda Drake, Edward Jones

You may have heard about investors who get in on the ground floor of a hot new company and quickly make a fortune — but that’s rare and certainly not a viable plan for most people. Instead, try to follow a slow-and-steady strategy.

With this approach, you can start out small. If you’re beginning your career and you can’t afford to invest large amounts, put away what you can each month into stocks or mutual funds. When your salary goes up, you can increase your contributions.

And take advantage of your employer’s 401(k) or similar retirement plan. At least try to put in enough to earn your employer’s matching contribution, if one is offered.

Also, don’t let the inevitable drops in the market throw you off from consistently investing — ups and downs are a normal feature of the investment landscape.

Finally, check your progress regularly by comparing where you are today versus where you were last year — and where you want to be in the future.

Slow and steady may not sound like an exciting approach to investing. But a little less excitement, and a lot more diligence, can prove to be quite effective. ■

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



Linda Drake

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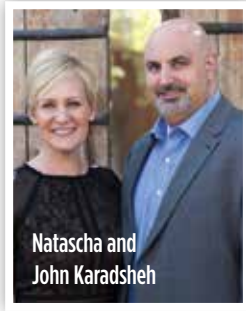
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REAL ESTATE

Three Things NOT to Do BEFORE SELLING YOUR HOME

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



rates are close to 7 percent. Instead, be proactive and get issues taken care of in a professional manner before you list your home. Making sure your home is clean and in good condition will instill confidence in buyers and help you attract more opportunities in the marketplace.

3. DON'T ASSUME YOU WILL HAVE ENOUGH TIME DURING ESCROW TO PACK UP FOR THE MOVE

Once your house goes under contract and the close of escrow date has been established, time seems to go at double speed. There are inspections, appraisals, negotiations, and repairs to be juggled – all in addition to work, family life, finding a new place to live, and moving. The process can be very stressful! Instead, do a pre-move before you list your home for sale. Pack up everything that is non-essential and get rid of anything that you no longer want or need.



This will help to reduce your stress during the moving process and better prepare you and your house for a smooth sale.

Natascha and I have decades of experience working with sellers and we bring the same details of preparation to all the properties we list. We provide complimentary staging, design guidance, and help simplify your selling process. ■

If you are thinking of selling, let us help you tackle the project! We are always here to help, so call us today for a complimentary selling consultation at (480) 568-8680.

1. DON'T ONLY THINK LIKE A SELLER

For most of us, our homes reflect our personal style, memories, and money we have spent. We are emotionally connected to our homes and view them from our own unique perspectives. However, when you get ready to sell your home it is more important to think like a buyer. A great Realtor will help you view your home from a buyer's perspective and position it for today's market. They can help explain what today's buyers are looking for and how to best prepare your house so you can attract the best offers. Don't be blinded by your own view... just remember, you aren't buying your house!

2. DON'T BE CHEAP AND EXPECT THE HIGHEST VALUE

We often see homes with unprofessional repairs, poorly done upgrades, and extensive deferred maintenance all paired with a high listing price. The reality is that today's buyers are pretty savvy. They don't want to buy a hot mess for top dollar – and certainly not when mortgage interest

Real Estate In Northeast Mesa

brought to you by:



Northeast Mesa Area Market Report

Sales over \$525,000 for the Month of February 2024



Address	Square Feet	Community	Sold Price
1813 N Saranac Cir	1,743	Moondance	\$530,000
6659 E Menlo St	2,807	Villa Royale	\$535,000
2727 N Trevino Pl	1,812	Apache Wells	\$537,000
921 N Sandal Cir	1,731	Alta Mesa	\$538,000
3217 N Loma Vis	1,798	Lehi Crossing	\$539,900
2323 N Nicklaus Dr	1,860	Apache Wells	\$550,000
2560 E Golden St	2,058	County Island	\$550,000
8732 E Ivy St	1,484	Mountain Bridge	\$550,000
6257 E Star Valley St	2,292	Red Mountain Ranch	\$560,000
2310 N Rose	2,085	Citrus Del Ray	\$564,000
1251 N Terripin	2,780	Meadow View Estates	\$570,000
8055 E Fox St	2,658	Gila Ridge	\$570,000
9564 E Grandview St	2,003	Saguaro Shadows	\$582,000
923 N Seton	2,844	Alta Mesa	\$585,000
2717 E Nora St	2,019	Pacific Palms	\$594,900
2719 E Hope St	2,390	Chateau D Arnett	\$599,900
3650 E Quenton Dr #5	2,269	Val Vista Estates	\$610,000
1240 N Abner	2,449	Alta Mesa	\$615,000
6641 E Odessa St	2,022	Corona Del Monte	\$615,000
6749 E Elmwood St	2,479	Torino Village	\$615,000
2244 N Doe St	2,316	Skyway Village	\$625,000
3542 N Olympic Cir	2,552	Pred Mountain Ranch	\$625,000
7335 E Gary St	2,780	Meadow View Estates	\$645,000
2451 N Snead Dr	1,944	Apache Wells	\$660,000
8401 E Ingram Cir	2,009	Mountain Bridge	\$665,000

LOCAL BUSINESS

Declutter and Reorganize for a Stress-Free Home

Submitted by Carnation Home Cleaning

With the arrival of spring, there's no better time to rejuvenate your living space and create a stress-free sanctuary. As the days grow longer and the weather warms, it's the perfect opportunity to declutter and reorganize, paving the way for a serene and harmonious home environment.

SIMPLIFY YOUR SPACE FOR PEACE OF MIND

Decluttering isn't just about tidying up — it's about reclaiming your space. Start by tackling one room at a time, sorting through your belongings, and asking yourself: Do I use this regularly? Does it bring me joy? If not, it may be time to bid farewell.

Be firm yet mindful in your decluttering efforts, resisting the urge to hold onto items out of guilt or sentimentality. Remember, *less clutter means less to clean and maintain.*

CREATE SYSTEMS FOR SUCCESS

With clutter eliminated and surfaces gleaming, it's time to focus on organization. A well-organized home looks better and functions more efficiently, saving you time and stress in the long run. Start by identifying problem areas such as closets, cabinets, and pantries, and devise a system that works for you.

Invest in storage solutions such as bins, baskets, and shelving to corral loose items and maximize space. Labeling containers and shelves can help you quickly locate items when needed.

THE BENEFITS OF A CLUTTER-FREE HOME

As you declutter, clean, and organize your home, you'll experience the transformative power of a clutter-free environment. Here are just a few of the benefits you can expect to enjoy:

- **Improved mental health:** Studies have shown that living in a clutter-free environment can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression.
- **Better sleep:** A serene and tidy bedroom promotes relaxation and better sleep quality, improving overall health and well-being.
- **Easier maintenance:** With fewer items to clean and organize, keeping your home looking tidy and welcoming is simpler.

CALL CARNATION HOME CLEANING FOR STRESS-FREE CLEANLINESS

Looking to achieve a stress-free, clean home for the upcoming spring season? Look no further than Carnation Home Cleaning. Our expert team specializes in eco-friendly cleaning services, ensuring a safe environment for your family.

Whether you're preparing for spring gatherings or need a helping hand, Carnation Home Cleaning is here to help. Contact us today for a free, no-obligation quote and schedule your home cleaning online. Let us help you create a beautifully clean and welcoming home, setting the stage for a joyful and refreshing spring season. ■

For more information, call Carnation Home Cleaning at (480) 924-2096, or visit the website at carnationhomecleaninginc.com

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

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COMMUNITY

MESA MATTERS: Water
THOUGHTS FROM COUNCILMEMBER MARK FREEMAN

For Mesa, the persistent drought in the West remains a pressing issue, requiring long-term solutions that involve local, state, and federal efforts and resources.



Mark Freeman

We must continue to develop sustainable goals that address current water challenges while planning for future needs beyond just basic conservation measures. Mesa is at the forefront of promoting infrastructure investment, behavior incentives, beneficial reuse, and local resiliency practices for effective and sustainable solutions.

Mesa recently began upgrading water utility infrastructure with Advanced Metering (Smart Meters) that gives customers greater stewardship over their water use, quickly identifies high usage, and helps families and businesses save water and money. This investment in utility technology will save approximately two million gallons in water lost per year.

Mesa focuses on strategic water management as an ongoing commitment to ensure a sustainable and secure water future. Mesa's collaborations, innovative thinking, and targeted policy measures are on the forefront of proactive water solutions.

In 2019, Mesa implemented a large water user ordinance to manage commercial/industrial customers by setting water budgets and in some cases requiring them to bring their own water to the table.

Mesa is collaborating regionally on two important projects with Salt River Project, including Bartlett Dam Modification and SRP/CAP Interconnection Facility. These projects

will increase the capacity to store water during wet years and move water where it is most needed during times of shortage.

The Central Mesa Reuse Pipeline project expands on Mesa's beneficial reuse of treated wastewater (effluent). Mesa exchanges effluent for agricultural use with the Gila River Indian Community and receives potable Colorado River Water in return. This project will increase Mesa's water supply by an additional 12,000 acre-feet per year.

Mesa is not without challenges. We face threats from state legislation that would impact the Assured Water Supply program, regulations on emerging contaminants, and public skepticism toward new water sources like Advanced Water Purification.

I am proud of how Mesa manages our water supply. We boast a 100-Year Assured Water Supply Designation from the Arizona Department of Water Resources. This means that Mesa has shown continuous physical and legal availability of water along with quality and financial capability standards to maintain water supplies.

Our dedicated staff of water professionals help make us a leader in responsible water management, while meeting demands for economic growth and preparing for a future with less Colorado River water. ■

It is crucial that we continue our efforts to protect our water supply and use it efficiently. Every Drop Counts. To learn more, visit mesaaz.gov/water.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Fat Loss Facts versus Fiction

Submitted by *The Exercise Coach*®

With type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and America's waistline bulging to frightening highs, what we think we know, and what we've been led to believe about fat loss, is not only wrong, but completely backward.

That's right. Your difficulty losing weight is truly not your fault. You have been misinformed for years about healthy eating (i.e., fat makes you fat; replace fat with carbs). You have been misinformed about exercise's role in reducing body fat. And, you have been bombarded by celebrity messages that claim, "This worked for me, so it will work for you."

At The Exercise Coach®, we make it our policy not to cave in to popular fitness trends, but rather to go wherever the science of fat loss and exercise leads us. It is our hope that you take the time to read, understand, and pass along this information to as many people as you can.

Share it with others so together you can maximize your fitness and fat-loss efforts while enjoying total freedom from time-consuming and defeating conventional approaches. You can enjoy maximum fitness and fat loss results with just 20 to 40 minutes of exercise per week – and I will tell you how. First, let's start tearing down the myths.

MYTH #2 CALORIC RESTRICTION + WILLPOWER = WEIGHT CONTROL

Everybody knows that if you just eat less, you'll lose fat. Right? Wrong! While it is true that a caloric deficit within your body is necessary to lose weight, this deficit alone does not guarantee fat loss.

Fat loss requires the regulation and control of insulin. Insulin is a hormone. Hormones are like biological instant messages. When they hit a cell membrane, they communicate a specific message to that cell, and the cell reacts. When insulin hits the membrane of a fat cell, it says, "more fatty acids are on the way; make room." And fat cells are very accommodating to insulin. In fact, it appears that there is no limit to their ability to make room to store fatty acids.

Unfortunately, this means fat cells have an almost



limitless ability to grow in size. So, starve the fat cells, right? Well, the problem with caloric restriction is that it puts your body into a catabolic state. Just because you start consuming fewer calories, that doesn't ensure the weight loss comes strictly from your fat. Sure, you will lose some fat, but it is estimated 25 to 50 percent of the weight one loses from dieting, without strength training, comes from lean mass, i.e., muscle, bone, organs, etc.

This means that you will lose muscle, the most metabolically active tissue (calorie-burning tissue) within the body. In addition, calorie restriction can send threat signals throughout your body, causing it to pull some other nifty metabolic tricks to burn fewer calories as a survival technique.

This is called adaptive thermogenesis. These consequences of calorie cutting mean that a return to normal eating will even more readily lead to fat accumulation. Did you know that literally 95 percent of people who succeed on a diet regain all the weight they've lost within

one year? That's not even the whole story. The majority of people, due to diet induced muscle loss, end up with even more body fat than before they dieted.

This is the danger of what has long been called yo-yo dieting. Nutrition and exercise strategies must be focused primarily on the creation of sustainable weight loss and the long-term maintenance of muscle *any*—effect on insulin.

Carbohydrates (all breads, pastas, grains, chips, junk food, regular soda, cookies, candy, etc.), on the other hand, are converted into sugar, i.e., glucose. Glucose is food for the brain and fuel for our muscles. So, after digestion, glucose is absorbed into the blood stream and is used by the brain, our muscles, or is synthesized into glycogen to be stored in the muscles for later use.

Unfortunately, our muscles/liver can only store so much glucose, which begs the question – what happens to the extra glucose? The answer is that insulin is called into action to get rid of it.

Since insulin has already tried to stuff the excess glucose into our muscles (as glycogen) with no avail, it heads to the liver, which converts it into triglycerides so it can be stored as fat. (Note: Elevated triglycerides are a good indicator of serum insulin levels that are too high and are a major risk factor for heart disease and diabetes.)

Thus, the dangers of excessive carbohydrate consumption not only lead to difficulty losing fat, but also puts your health at risk.

In addition to elevated triglycerides, excess insulin activates an enzyme which turns the omega-6 fatty acids – so prevalent in the American diet – into a substance called arachidonic acid. This fatty acid is the building block of a type of hormone that causes inflammation in the body. And, science is demonstrating that inflammation is the root cause of heart disease, stroke, some cancers, autoimmune deficiencies, and brain disorders.

Coming next month, Myth No. 3. In the meantime, the choice is yours to make, and at The Exercise Coach®, we can help. ■

Make TODAY the day to start on that road to better health and fitness! Let our caring and knowledgeable Certified Coaches get you started! Call, text, or visit us online for your complimentary Initial Consultation and 2 FREE Sessions at (480) 716-6080 or exercisecoach.com/north-mesa.

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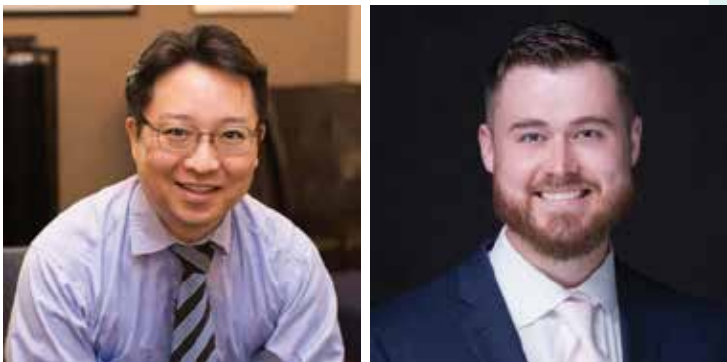
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EDUCATION

Mesa Public Schools Addresses Student Hunger with Free Meal Program



By Laurie Struna
Photos by Tim Hacker

For many students, the school cafeteria is more than just a place to eat — it's a vital resource.

Thanks to the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) of the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, effective March 1, students at 45 Mesa Public Schools and five programs can now receive free breakfast and lunch through the 2024-25 school year.

This initiative represents a significant shift for families facing financial challenges. With rising food costs and economic uncertainty, many students rely on school meals as their primary source of nutrition. CEP ensures that every student, regardless of their financial situation, can access healthy, nutritious meals without stigma.

Sabrina Kvalve, director of Food and Nutrition at Mesa Public Schools, notes that managers across the district have noticed an increase in food insecurity struggles at their sites. Parents are struggling to stretch their paychecks.

"For example, we have a single mom with children

attending three different schools who has expressed immense gratitude for the opportunity for one of her children to receive free school meals, as she has faced financial difficulty in providing meals," Sabrina says. "Her children didn't qualify for free meals through the free/reduced application, and every little bit helps."

By participating in the CEP Program, Mesa Public Schools is taking a crucial step in addressing food insecurity and promoting equity in education. Students can focus on learning and growing, without the burden of hunger holding them back.

Kirk Thomas, principal at Mesa High School, is pleased about having this support for his students.

"There are many families that just miss the income cutoff for free/reduced meals through the meal application process and struggle to find money for their child's school meals. This will truly help many of our families." ■

For more information on the federal CEP program, visit fns.usda.gov/cn/community-eligibility-provision.

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LOCAL BUSINESS

Unlock the Secrets to Slashing Your Energy Bills A Homeowner's Guide to Smart Energy Savings

Submitted by Inergy Systems

Are you tired of watching your energy bills climb every month? Wish there was a straightforward way to understand how much you could save without enduring a sales pitch? Look no further! Dive into our intuitive online savings estimator and uncover potential savings with ease — see the details in our advertisement.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE OF HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY WITH INERGY SYSTEMS

Greetings, intrepid homeowners! Embark on an epic quest to deflate those ballooning energy costs. Inergy Systems is here to illuminate the path to significant savings and eco-friendly living. We're not just talking about cutting corners; we're introducing you to a world where energy efficiency meets innovation. Here's what awaits on your journey:

- **No Solar? No Problem:** Imagine slashing your energy bills without a single solar panel in sight. Thanks to the magical world of Electric Utility Demand Rates and the wizardry of Demand Management Systems (DMS), you're on the verge of unlocking significant savings. This isn't a fantasy — it's reality, and it's accessible without the need for solar installations.
- **Affordable Innovation:** The thought of adopting new technology might seem daunting, especially concerning costs. However, the DMS is a game-changer that's surprisingly affordable, with installation costs typically under \$2,500. The investment pays for itself in about three years, and if you're living in a larger home or drive an electric vehicle, the return on investment could accelerate even faster.
- **Expert Allies by Your Side:** Venturing into the world of smart energy can seem like navigating uncharted waters. Fear not! Inergy Systems partners with elite, licensed electrical contractors who are not just installers but educators. They ensure your journey to energy efficiency is smooth, enlightening, and ultimately rewarding.



- **Maximize Your Savings:** The true power of the Electric Utility Demand Rate is unleashed when paired with a DMS. This dynamic duo works tirelessly to optimize your energy usage, enhancing your savings further with a \$600 income tax credit. It's like finding hidden treasure in your energy bill.

DEMAND MANAGEMENT: YOUR HOME'S ENERGY MAESTRO

Imagine your home's energy usage orchestrated with the precision of a symphony conductor. That's what a DMS does — it's the maestro of your energy consumption, ensuring that high-demand appliances (A/C, Water Heater, Dryer, Pool, EV Charger, etc.) don't perform their energy-intensive solos all at once. This strategic coordination happens during peak hours when energy prices soar, reducing demand charges and maintaining your home's comfort. It's a seamless integration of technology and lifestyle, designed to keep your home running efficiently without sacrificing comfort.

TANGIBLE SAVINGS, REAL-LIFE IMPACT

The evidence is clear and compelling: Homeowners who harness the power of Inergy Systems have seen their savings soar, with cumulative savings surpassing the \$10 million mark. This staggering figure represents more than just numbers; it symbolizes a shift toward smarter, more sustainable living without compromising

on comfort or convenience. It's a testament to Inergy Systems' commitment to not only enhancing your home's energy efficiency but also to making a positive impact on your wallet and the planet.

INERGY SYSTEMS: A LEGACY OF INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

For over three decades, Inergy Systems has been at the forefront of energy management technology. Our journey began with a vision to redefine how homes consume energy, and today, we stand as pioneers in the field, having developed autonomous demand control and energy orchestration systems that have consistently proven their worth. Our technology is capable of reducing energy demand by 35 to 50 percent, marking a significant milestone in our quest to facilitate sustainable and cost-effective living.

This journey is not solely about reducing energy bills; it's about leading a green revolution, offering innovative solutions that resonate with our core values of sustainability and efficiency.


By choosing Inergy Systems, you're not just making a financial decision; you're making a statement about the kind of world you want to live in — a world where energy is consumed wisely, where savings and sustainability go hand in hand.

In summary, stepping into the world of smart energy savings with Inergy Systems is more than an investment in your home — it's an investment in your future.


We invite you to join us on this exciting voyage, to transform your home into a beacon of efficiency, comfort, and sustainability. Together, let's rewrite the narrative on energy consumption, one home at a time. ■

JOIN THE MOVEMENT

For more information about Inergy Systems and to embark on an efficient, cost-effective journey, visit Inergysystems.com, contact sales@inergysystems.com, or call (480) 500-9406. Embrace the change, be part of the solution, and become Inergy smart.




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COMMUNITY

MESA ARTS CENTER Let Us Entertain You

“Art and culture are not just frills, but crucial elements of human life.” – Daniel Libeskind

By **Kimberly Alvarado**

Warm afternoons followed by sunsets descending beneath a deep orange horizon are two of the things Arizona residents look forward to during this time of year.

The colors of contemporary art and the sounds of culturally rich music and theater are also ways to welcome the onset of longer days and comfortable outdoor temperatures. It is possible to capture this essential Arizona experience at Mesa Arts Center.

Mesa Arts Center, located at 1 E. Main St. in Downtown Mesa, is a local destination for families and friends to gather and explore art galleries, concerts, and performances in the largest, all-inclusive arts campus in our state.

Admission to the Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum is free. The post-modern campus spaces that you will discover on your visit are both indoor and outdoor, and designed for your browsing entertainment.



While touring the campus, you can expect to meander among performance venues, art galleries, and live entertainment. And though Mesa Arts Center hosts a year-long variety of touring performances and international entertainment, it also graciously provides a series of community events and festivals.

Discover the *Out to Lunch Concert Series*, with midday free performances by local and touring musicians. Bring along folding chairs or a blanket to enjoy the music and architecture of spaces insightful of the Sonoran Desert. It's the perfect place to take family, or *out-of-towners* who crave culturally rich Arizona experiences.

A day at Mesa Arts Center might include browsing through one, or all five, exhibition galleries, that display the work of contemporary artists celebrating local and international diversity. Or utilize the new spring season to arise your visual and audial senses by attending some carefully chosen performances in one of the four performing venues onsite.

April and May have a variety of touring engagements including Derek Hough's high-energy Latin and ballroom dancing.

If a ballet is something you've always wanted to explore, you'll be pleased to choose from a lineup of one of the most popular ballets of all time, *Swan Lake*. This ballet tells the story of Odette, a princess turned into a swan by an evil sorcerer's curse. The performance includes a live orchestra and consists of professional dancers from 10 different countries. Two evening performances are available for ticket purchases in May.

Keep things smooth and jazzy this spring with sounds of Grammy-winning trumpeter and composer, Chris Botti. The Friday evening performance scheduled in April would make an extraordinary date night.

After exploring the Mesa Arts Center and enjoying performances, you'll likely develop an affection for the



vibrant local campus. Excitingly, a diverse array of classes await, catering to both youth and adults. From ceramics and painting to photography and movement, your next creative adventure is within reach!

As Daniel Libeskind's quote suggests, art and culture are not only luxuries in life, but they also play important roles in shaping who we are as people. They foster connections and help enrich our experiences. In fact, he suggests, art and culture highlight the significance of human existence.

To view a more complete list of shows, classes, and performances, visit the Mesa Arts Center website. ■

For more information, visit the Mesa Arts Center at 1 E. Main St., Mesa AZ 85201. Call (480) 644-6500 or visit the website at mesaartscenter.com.



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HEALTH Over 50

Which Medicare Plan Is Right for Me?

By **Lynne Jones**, *Tapestry Insurance*



Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit, Scrabble, checkers, or chess? These choices are easy. Picking the right Medicare plan? That can be hard.

Do you want Original Medicare (Parts A and B)? Should you add prescription drug coverage (Part D)? What about Medigap insurance? Or is Medicare Advantage (Part C) — which combines Parts A, B, and D — better for you? Sometimes, it might feel like a roll of the dice!

Before you get lost, take a step back. You want to pick a plan right for you. So, think about what your life will look like after 65. You can start by asking some questions to figure out your next move.

- **Will I be on a fixed income?** Original Medicare with a supplement has a monthly premium, Medicare Advantage has copays.

- **Do I want to see a specific doctor?** Original Medicare with a Supplement allows you to go anywhere in the U.S., Medicare Advantage requires in-network doctors.
- **Is Dental, Vision, and Hearing an important part of my needs?** Original Medicare with a Supplement usually does not cover these things, most Medicare Advantage plans do.
- **Do I plan to travel?** Medicare Supplements usually cover foreign travel, Medicare Advantage covers emergency visits.
- **What if I don't know what I want?** I get it, it is hard to decide, especially when your needs may change as you get older. That is why it is a good idea to speak with a licensed insurance agent like me. You can make an appointment if you are about to enter the Medicare world or have questions about your situation. I would love to be your guide. ■

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- 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.

Call me today for help navigating Annual Enrollment this year!

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By calling this number, you will be connected to a licensed insurance agent.

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.

COMMUNITY Over 50

Local Authors Celebrate National Erase Self-Negativity Day with Hopeful News

Submitted by **Sally Marks**

Erase Self-Negativity Day has officially been added to the National Calendar and will make its debut on April 10.

Sally Marks and Jacqueline Howard, co-authors of the book, "Erase Negativity and Embrace the Magic Within," will honor the day by discounting the e-version of their popular self-improvement book to only 99 cents.

The direct link to purchase the e-book is available at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/11183>. "Jackie and I are thrilled that more attention will be paid to erasing negativity by adding it to the National Calendar," said Sally. "However, we also wanted to provide folks with some concrete and affordable help. Now, for less than a dollar, folks can have a primer on how to maintain a positive mindset in a negative world. And that is priceless."

The book is a practical guide on

how to reduce negativity and embrace happiness. From meth addicts to multi-millionaires, Erase Negativity and Embrace the Magic Within offers powerful experiences of individuals who have faced dramatic challenges but did not lose



Sally Marks

hope. Using these compelling biographies, as well as practical advice and simple exercises, the reader is guided on an internal journey toward adopting a more joyful way to live.

The paperback version of the book is available on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/Erasing-Negativity-Embrace-Magic-Within/dp/1452850771> for \$14.99.

Sally Marks is a long-time East Mesa resident, writer, and comedy consultant. Jacqueline Howard, formerly from Mesa, now resides in Albuquerque, N.M. ■

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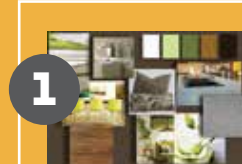
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THOMAS JOSEPH CAREY, 1666 N. 66th Street, Mesa, AZ 85205 is being served by the Superior Court of Arizona in Maricopa County, Mesa, Arizona, Civil Lawsuit, Case No. CV2023-091612. On April 10, 2023, many notifications were served by U.S. Postal Service Certified Mail Receipts and Valley Process Services.

LOCAL BUSINESS

AirTime Heating and Cooling Helps HOMEOWNERS STAY COOL THIS SUMMER

By Jamie Killin

AirTime Heating and Cooling is a Mesa-based HVAC company that's been a friend in the air conditioning business to its clients since 1999 – whether it's offering live support over the phone, helping customers make their homes more energy efficient with personalized recommendations, or installing a new air conditioning unit while providing honest pricing and professionalism.

"We have straightforward pricing," said owner Brian Boyer. "We don't do sales commissions and our team is paid hourly, unlike many of the larger companies that build a service ticket which takes advantage of the homeowner. We're like finding that good car mechanic that's honest and tells you the truth – that's how we operate."

The long-running family business serves the entire Valley, specializing in the East Valley, and offers HVAC service, tune ups, replacement, and installation. It is also SRP certified, NATE certified, and BPI certified – so customers can feel confident they're receiving top-quality service from qualified experts.

AirTime Heating and Cooling's fair pricing and integrity have earned them a large network of repeat clients and referrals, who have trusted the company with keeping their homes comfortable – even during the fast-approaching hot summer months.



Brian recommends homeowners do regular maintenance on their air conditioning units to ensure the essential machines are ready for the summer ahead. A tune up performed by AirTime Heating and Cooling can extend the life of an air conditioning unit, provide cleaner air, lower energy costs, and even lessen the likelihood of costly repairs.

"It's good to be preventative because we can catch small things early like a bad run capacitor, low levels of

Freon, dirty air filters, dirty coils, or clogged condensate drains, and save the customer from having larger issues later on," he said. "It makes a big difference. No one ever really wants to maintain these things, but you don't want to be in a situation where your unit is breaking down on the hottest day of the year."

He also advises homeowners not to forgo regular maintenance and rely on a home warranty company for repairs, as the warranties are not regulated by the State of Arizona and collect high service fees to use low-quality parts and cut corners on fixes – or in many cases find ways to avoid repairing your unit at all.

During the summer, Brian says there are simple ways homeowners can increase their energy efficiency for a more comfortable home temperature and lower energy bills.

"Set the temperature that you're comfortable with and let your unit run," he said. "If you do an on-peak and off-peak plan, we have calculations that we can use to help the homeowner maximize their usage with SRP."

AirTime Heating and Cooling also offers additional services such as air duct cleaning and insulation installation in the attic that can make a big difference in energy usage. ■

For more information, or to schedule an air conditioning tune up, visit airtimeaz.com.

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Fresh brewed coffee, espresso/americano, cafe/latte/mocha latte, cappuccino, macchiato, hot chocolate, milk, orange & apple juice

ENJOY BREAKFAST AT LAS SENDAS GOLF PATIO & GRILLE!

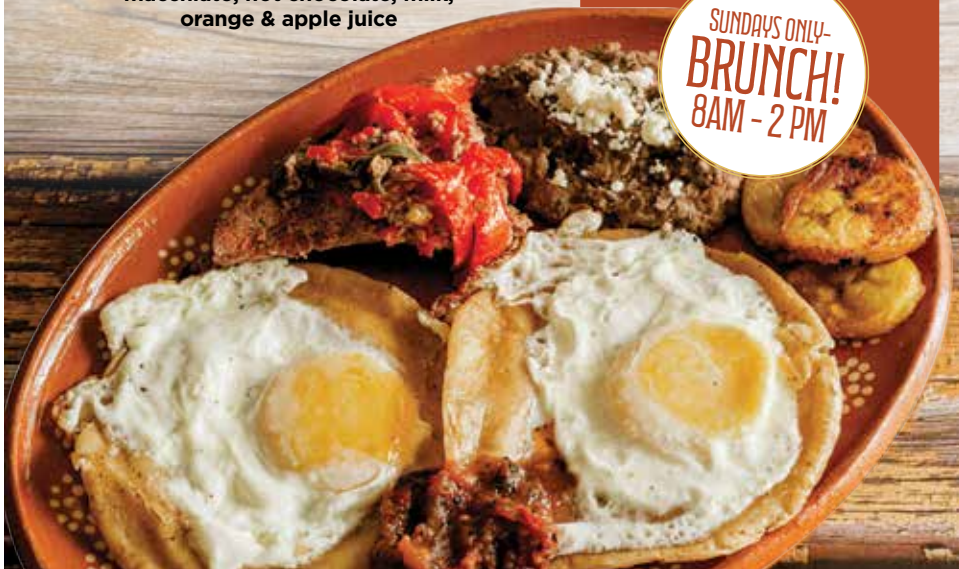
Monday-Friday: 9-11 AM
Saturdays: 8-11 AM

**CALL FOR RESERVATIONS:
602-734-5524**

THE PATIO & GRILLE AT LAS SENDAS

7555 E. Eagle Crest Drive, Mesa, AZ 85207
WWW.LASSENDAS.COM

SUNDAYS ONLY-
BRUNCH!
8AM - 2PM



Celebrate National Tea Day
THE VISTAS PAVILION
AT LAS SENDAS
7555 E. EAGLE CREST DRIVE, MESA, AZ, 85207

High Tea

- Sunday, April 21st, 2024
- 11:00am to 1:00pm
- Reservations Required

480.396.4000 ext 222 or
email: cshaw@lassendas.com

- \$50.00 Per person plus Tax and Service Charge

Mother's Day Brunch

THE VISTAS PAVILION AT LAS SENDAS

Stunning Views of the Valley
➤ and a Grand Buffet ➤

Sunday, May 12, 2024 • 9AM - 1PM

\$79.00 for Adults • \$29.99 for Children 5-11 (plus Tax & Gratuity)

Children 4 & Under Eat Free!

GRAND BUFFET

Assorted Breakfast Breads and Pastries

Antipasti and Cheese Display

Seafood Display

Chilled Shrimp, Oysters on the Half Shell with Mignonette and Cocktail Sauce

Omelet Station
Eggs and Omelets
Made to Order

Bacon and Sausage

Vanilla French Toast with Maple Syrup

Chef Carving Station

Leg of Lamb

Carved New York Steak with Thyme Demi Glaze and Creamy Horseradish

Seared Chicken Breast over Crimini Mushroom Sauce

Chive Baked Salmon Filet with Caper Butter

Assorted Dinner Rolls with Whipped Butter

Assorted Mini Desserts, Cakes, Pies

KIDS BUFFET

Fruit Salad
Scrambled Eggs

Bacon
Macaroni & Cheese

Chicken Fingers

Tater Tots
Assorted Cookies

Reservations Required

480-396-4000 ext 222
cshaw@lassendas.com

7555 EAST EAGLE CREST DRIVE
MESA, AZ 85207

