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McDowell Mountain Ranch Real Estate News

September-October 2010

Vol. XIII, No. 6

Spotlight On Our Community

■ Sadly, the local commercial marketplace still seems to be unraveling. The problems associated with retail and office vacancies have been apparent for awhile but the primary concern has now shifted to the viability of the commercial centers themselves. For instance, the Desert Canyon Center is in the process of being foreclosed on and, in fact, is scheduled to be auctioned on November 3rd. At the same time, an affiliate of DMB Associates has announced that they've defaulted on the loan for The Marketplace at DC Ranch.

The reason for the clustering of these events is that commercial projects of this type are generally financed with 5-year balloon notes, and it just so happens that 2005 was the high-watermark for starting new ventures.

As uncomfortable as it is to contemplate, foreclosure and the subsequent change of ownership could actually help revitalize some of these centers — assuming, of course, there is a viable market out there for these properties. New owners with substantially lower overhead might be able to adjust the rents and attract new businesses.

Unfortunately, if the lenders employ the same logic they've used with residential properties, they're likely to simply hang onto the property rather than recognize the loss on their books. The probable outcome of that strategy would be little effort to secure new tenants, minimal spending on maintenance and a further decline in values. Regardless of the strategy, the properties will sell at some point. The bigger question is whether we can avoid an extended period of stagnation.

■ Despite these rather dramatic problems, the local business sector has been relatively

active. Perhaps the biggest news for our community is that *Caffé Portobello* has changed hands once again. Bill and Kari have sold it to fellow MMR Resident Greg Kruger, and it's been transformed into the *Twisted Lizard Tavern and Grille*.

The restaurant reopened on September 9th with a new menu, a new look and a new attitude. You can find some of the back story and representative photos on both our website



and on our new Facebook page (see page 5 for details about that). We wish Greg well and trust that "TLT&G" will continue to fulfill its role as the social nexus of the community.

■ As long as we're on the subject of "Sports Grills", did you know that Tony Pontarelli of *Amoré Pizza & Wings* has opened the *Amoré Sports Grill* in the location that was formerly occupied by *Oggi's* at Bell and Pima Roads.

Or, how about the fact that *18°*, the restaur-

ant which opened just a few months ago in the Ice Den is already undergoing renovations designed to improve the atmosphere and keep it competitive.

Interestingly enough, with *Amoré*, *Twisted Lizard Tavern & Grille*, *18°* and *Temple Bar*, all open for business, we now have four restaurants in our general area competing for very similar audiences.

One of those businesses, *Temple Bar Sports Grill*, is currently in the process of applying for both a "Series 6 Bar License" and a permit to have live entertainment on the premises. *TB* had been operating with a relatively inexpensive "Series 12 Restaurant Liquor License", but was unable to sustain the 40/60 ratio of food to liquor sales that the license requires — not an uncommon problem in Scottsdale, by the way. Although they expect to obtain approval to acquire the new bar license, those are hard to come by and are rumored to cost as much as \$100K on the open market. We wish them well.

On the significantly sadder side of the commercial news, the *Auto Salon* car wash & convenience store on Bell Road is out of business. There's no specific information available as to why, but it appears to be just another casualty of the economy. Unfortunately, I still have a few washes left on my card -- hope you were a bit luckier.

■ The Preserve and Tourism Development Commissions held a joint session on August 19th to discuss the Phase 2 feasibility study for the Desert Discovery Center and the issues that seem to draw the most attention were the size, cost and location of the pro-

(Continued on page 12)

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Just Some of Our Recent Transactions



Cachet

16420 N TPP #2130
2BR/2BA 1,338 SF

This Immaculate End Unit Split Plan is Located in a Gated Community & is Upgraded with Corian Counters and Newer Carpeting. 1C Gar and Views!

\$212,500



Panorama Point

10311 E Morning Star Drive
3BR/2BA 1,548 SF

Cute as can be and Backs to a Wash with Mountain Views & a Low Maintenance Yard. Great Room Plan with Gorgeous Granite Counters & a Fplc!

\$285,000



Sunset Point

10490 E Acoma Drive
3BR/2BA 1,650 SF

This Darling Home is Located on a Corner Lot with a Pool-Sized Yard and Mountain Views. Corian Counters & Updated Master w/Jetted Tub!

\$289,000



The Preserve

10408 E Raintree Drive
3BR/2BA 1,702 SF

Martha Stewart Inspired with Hand-some Wood Floors, Custom Paint Colors & a Darling Manicured Lawn Backing to a Wash with Mtn Views!

\$290,000



The Ridge

16600 N TPP #1028
2BR/2BA 1,674 SF

Shows like a Model! This Condo has a 2 Car Garage, Granite Counters, Stainless Appliances & Tiled Baths. Gated Community with a Rec Center!

\$300,000



Sunrise Point

11406 E Helm Drive
2BR/2BA 1,430 SF

This Patio Home offers a Great Room Plan & is Located in a Guard Gated Community. Travertine Floors, Corian Counters, Private Recreation Center!

\$319,000



Arizona Highlands

16290 N 105th Way
3BR/2BA 2,200 SF

This 3 Bedroom & a Den, with a 3 Car Garage, sits at the End of a Cul-de-Sac with a Grassy Pool-Sized Yard. Corian Ctrs & Stainless Appliances!

\$398,000



Desert Cliffs

10749 E Raintree Dr
3BR/2BA 2,647 SF

Immaculate 3 Bedroom with a Den or Play/Hobby Room has Granite Counters & a 1/4 Acre Wash Lot w/Views & a Sparkling Pool in a Gtd Community!

\$545,000



Sienna Canyon

10874 E Palm Ridge Drive
4BR/2.5BA 2,738 SF

Designer's Home looks like a Model with Wood Floors, Granite Counters & Tumbled Stone. Lush 1/4 Acre sits on a Wash & has a Pebble Tec Pool!

\$619,900



Cimarron Hills

11096 E Karen Drive
4BR/4.5BA 3,926 SF

Crisp, Clean & Classy with a Resort Yard, Heated Pool & Spa & Great Mtn Views. 2 Dens & a Casita, Travertine Flrs, Granite Counters. Guard Gated!

\$894,900



Trovas

11051 E Acacia Drive
4BR/4.5BA 4,169 SF

This Home has Old World Charm with Canterra Stone Accents, Ironwork & Travertine Floors. Corner Lot with a Htd Pool, Views & Kiva Fplc. Gated!

\$899,000



Sonoran Estates

10735 E Ludlow Drive
4BR/4.5BA 4,100 SF

Gorgeous Home on a Wash Lot with Mountain & City Light Views, Heated Pool & Spa. Slate Floors, Granite Counters, Casita, Den & Game Room.

\$1,050,000

With interest rates as low as they are.....

Our Feature Home



Immaculate Home Backing to a Wash

The Preserve

10423 E Texas Sage Lane

3BR/2BA 1,723 SF

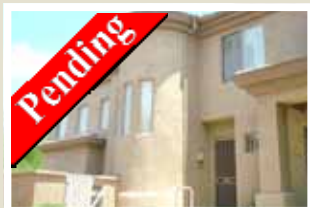
This Gorgeous Home has been Lovingly Remodeled with Rustic Hickory Kitchen Cabinets, a Backsplash with Mosaic Tiles and Copper Accents, Quartz Countertops in the Kitchen & Baths, Designer Mirrors & Lights and Ceramic Tile Flooring. The Spacious Kitchen has a Center Island as well as a Breakfast Bar, a Gas Fireplace, Vaulted Ceilings and Built-In Storage Cabinets in the Garage. It's Light & Bright with a South Facing Yard that features an Above Ground Spa as well as a New Salt Water, Pebble Sheen Pool built in 2009 with a Rock Waterfall. And, it's on a Wash Lot that's Private with Views!

\$315,000

**Just call me to see this gem
for yourself!**



Some of Our Most Recent Transactions



Cachet

16420 N TPP #1117
2BR/2.5BA 1,656 SF

Located in a Gated Community with a Rec Center & on a Wash with Mountain Views, this End Unit has a Den, a 2 Car Garage & Plantation Shutters!

\$285,000



Discovery Canyon

14897 N 102nd Street
4BR/3.5BA 2,197 SF

Gracious Home with 2 master Suites, Lots of Custom Woodwork and Wood Floors. Cul-de-Sac Lot with a Fenced Quartz Pool & Great Mountain Views!

\$315,000



Armonico

10835 E Acacia Drive
4BR/3BA 2,994 SF

Popular Floor Plan has a Split Master and is on a Corner Lot. Granite Counters & Surround Sound inside, Heated Pool with Slide, Spa & BBQ in Back!

\$499,000



Sienna Canyon

10790 E Gelding Drive
4BR/2.5BA 2,936 SF

One of the Best Lots I've seen with Gorgeous Mountain Views adjacent to a Private Wash with Granite Ctrs, & a Heated Pebble Tec Pool & Spa!

\$605,000

...Is it time to consider a move yourself?

Odds & Ends

■ Andy Steinberg, the new manager of the 18° 18' Neighborhood Grill and Over Easy restaurants at the Ice Den, reports that changes are underway at the grill.

Essentially, the bar area is in the process of being reconfigured to improve the atmosphere for its adult clientele. The biggest change involves moving the child-enticing video games closer to the Ice Den rotunda and replacing them with a pool table and an adult game venue featuring a giant version of Jenga.

Other changes involve improved flow and seating in the more family friendly dining room with a daily kids happy hour and kids eat free all day Tuesdays. With the NFL season now here, this will likely be a very exciting place to catch the action.

■ Danielle Vasta, the self-styled pack leader of Bella's House and Pet Sitting has just announced the expansion of her business into Fountain Hills.

She'd like her MMR clients to share in her tail wagging Grand Opening celebration and so is offering \$20 visits — if they whisper the code word FOUNTAIN HILLS when they call to book. You can reach them at 480-330-4552 or at www.bellashouseandpets.com

■ When I first picked up this book, I was actually stunned to find that it wasn't my biography.



What it is, however, is a very entertaining look at how one woman has managed to cope with both the overwhelming demands of

life in the early 21st century and the particular challenges of doing so in Scottsdale. Check it out. Sometimes, it's just nice to know that you're not alone. ☺

■ Desert Canyon Elementary School's Annual Fall Festival will be held on Friday, November 5th from 4:30 to 8:30.

There'll be a DJ, dance performances, carnival booths, jumping castles, rock climbing, plenty of food and drinks and an absolutely awesome raffle. The event will help fund critical student services and enhanced programs. BTW-you can buy your raffle tickets now on the PTO website (www.dcespto.org).

■ Scottsdale is one of the first cities to begin working with "Raids Online", a new law enforcement data sharing website that's available to the public.

So, if you're curious as to how the community is faring, you can now visit raidsonline.com, enter your address and view an interactive map showing what crimes, if any, might have been committed in your area.

I was somewhat apprehensive about presenting this information without placing it in some sort of context so I called the crime analysis unit of the Scottsdale Police Department and asked for some insight. The feedback I received was that "no area is crime free but any community in America would be pleased to have the incidence levels in MMR. In fact, if we could get people to lock their cars and close their garage doors, we could probably eliminate crime in that community entirely".

■ The Southwestern Autism Research and Resource Center is holding a "Ladies Luncheon and Shop-



ping Event" fundraiser at the Silverleaf Club in DC Ranch on Thursday October 7th from 11AM to 2 PM. The cost to attend is \$55 and the event will include a raffle and an auction. For more information, you can contact Karen Donmoyer at 480-993-6006.

■ Both the Twisted Lizard Tavern & Grill and Temple Bar now have courtesy taxi services that will pick you up and deliver you to their restaurants.

It's a great idea and a fabulous public service that not only makes the community a safer place but also eliminates the anxiety associated with an evening out. *TB* wins points for the cutest name, the Paddy Wagon, and the better paint job but *TLTG* scores for their larger vehicle. Both will cover a roughly 5 mile radius to accommodate their clients. Please call the respective restaurant for details.



■ Paul Kripal, the Financial Advisor with the Edward Jones office in the AJ's Shopping Center has hired a new assistant.



Her name is Cynthia Drasler and she hails from Waukegan, Illinois. She has a bachelors degree from ASU and an MBA from the University of Phoenix.

Please stop by and welcome Cynthia to the office and the community. ☺

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The Service You Deserve

■ As most readers are probably aware, we've never been complacent when it comes to trying to find ways to improve our services. Moreover, we've been fortunate thus far because "improvement" has always meant that we were simply adding more arrows to our quiver or upgrading the tools we had.



However, for the first time, making improvements may also require making choices. That saddens me a bit, I've really enjoyed the luxury of being able to add without ever having to subtract.

Here's our conundrum. Our marketing guru's are telling us that all of our tools — the newsletter, the website, newspaper advertising, flyers, direct mail, etc. are simply not reaching the 35 and under demographic (who they claim haven't read a piece of printed material in the last three years ☹).

That always seemed a bit of an exaggeration to us but, if you hang around a Starbucks for any period of time, you'll see people who are absolutely oblivious to their surroundings and are staring into their iPhones and iPads. In fact, it's so prevalent you start to believe that those guru's might be on to something. And, when we factor in the increasing number of residents who have been requesting that we deliver their newsletters online, it really seems that dramatic changes are afoot.

With all that "evidence", we eventually concluded that there was at least some merit in their contention. So we cinched up our belts a little tighter, found some extra time by sleeping only on alternate nights (see the tidbit

about *Stressed in Scottsdale* on page 4) and embarked on the 21st Century's greatest balancing act — putting your business (but not your actual life) on Facebook. Incidentally, just for good measure, we also decided to simultaneously start a blog focusing on the factors that are affecting the local real estate market (don't ask me what we had to give up to find time for that ☺).

By the time you read this, our Facebook page, www.Facebook.com/MMRhomes will have been active for about 60 days and guess what — it not only has some features that are very useful but it can also be very seductive.



For instance, having published our newsletter for (OMG!) thirteen years now, we've always been frustrated by the fact that our information isn't as timely as we'd like it to be. It's unfortunate, but it's simply the nature of the medium.

On the other hand, Facebook, turns out to be an astounding tool for delivering information quickly, but it's limiting in that it only allows you to communicate in 400 character bursts of information.

Still, even with that limitation, had you been logged in over the last 60 days, you would have been aware of much of the information reported in this newsletter — virtually as it happened. For instance, you would have known that HOA's contract with AAM was expiring and that the association's annual

budget was on the agenda for September — in enough time to voice your opinion, if you wished. You would also have been aware of the transition from *Caffé Portobello* to *Twisted Lizard* virtually as it happened — since we were on hand when Bill made the announcement to his staff.

It's funny, but I used to joke that one of the major advantages of our newsletter was that it could be read in the bathroom. However, I understand that advantage may be fading as well — who knows where electronics actually go these days? In fact, the one real remaining distinction is that the newsletter comes to you while you have to go to Facebook (unless, of course, you are a committed and "wired" fan and under 35 ☺).

I'm obviously kidding, but it turns out that the newsletter, the Facebook page and even the website are really complementary tools. The question we need to answer is what the best mix might be — the combination that will be of greatest value to the community — in an era when economic considerations and time constraints no longer allow us to simply "do everything".

Quite frankly, we need your feedback. What we're considering is formally moving the newsletter to a bi-monthly publication schedule beginning in January (we've published nine times a year in the past) and, at the same time, expanding our page count from 16 to 20. The latter would enable us to provide more in depth coverage about the community, more extensive market analyses, more special features, more business profiles, etc. It would also allow us to introduce

(Continued on page 14)

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The Resale Market, Analyzed

■ **If you don't mind, I'm going to take a moment to get the "commercial" out of the way before moving on to the analysis and insights component.** So here it is — my team and I played a role in *one third* of all the transactions that closed in MMR during July & August. We obviously know how to get the job done. Our goal now is to keep that momentum going.



■ **Speaking of momentum, regaining it could play a very large role in determining what our future looks like — at least in the short term.** After all, the Spring market in MMR was a relatively strong one and suggested that some overall improvement might be just around the corner. Then, as it always does (even in the best of times), Summer intervened and killed the momentum.

If we can regain any of that energy before the onset of the holiday season, it's possible that the "undetermined period of uncertainty" that the media and self-described pundits have been projecting might be shorter than anticipated. The early signs are good.

In a comparatively "normal market", buyer traffic starts to increase in mid-August as the kids return to school. That's followed by both a modest expansion of our traditional (non distressed) listing inventory and solid sales activity that begins in mid-September and runs up to the onset of the holiday season.

Well, the first two indicators arrived precisely on schedule and now I'm keeping my fingers crossed that buyers start pulling out their checkbooks to complete the pattern.

■ **This month's chart breaks down year-to-date sales at The Ranch by price range.** The most significant information that can be gleaned from this effort is that just 23 of the 168 homes sold thus far this year (or just 14%) were valued over \$700,000, and that overall, homes in the community have dropped another 9.29% in value since January 1st.

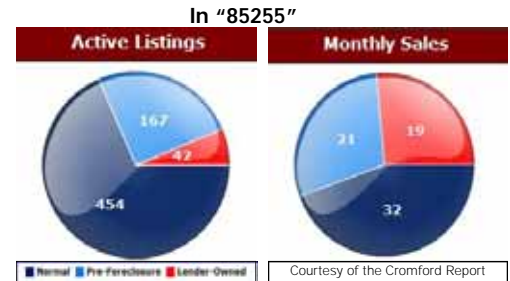
Actually, there's nothing particularly revealing about those numbers. However they do support the consensus among market watchers that the high end of the price spectrum remains especially weak and that we're unlikely to see any equity growth in most market segments for some time to come.

Interestingly though, there is empirical evidence out there to support the contention that the rate of decline is slowing and that some local stabilization is already underway. Remember, despite what the media might have you believe, not all segments of the real estate market recover evenly and both price range and geography play significant roles in determining who goes first. To cite just one example on the national level, the AP reports that values in San Francisco have actually been increasing for more than a year.

Personally, we expect there will be some stabilization but that we'll probably find ourselves bouncing along a rocky bottom before things actually do turn around — assuming, of course, that the overall economy doesn't take another serious tumble. So, our advice is the same as it's been for at least the last year or so. Don't put your life on hold

while waiting for the market to turn. If you have job security, a solid credit history and have been contemplating a change in your housing status, do it now while interest rates are at these unfathomably low levels.

Inventory versus Sales by Status



■ **In recent months, I've been particularly critical of those lenders that haven't been able to get their acts together on loan modifications and short sales after two years of trying.** I've even gone so far as to suggest that there might be something nefarious going on. Not because I have any evidence — just because it seemed implausible that anyone could be that bad at their jobs.

Well, even though I'm not entirely willing to dismiss the possibility of a conspiracy, I have fresh evidence that they might actually be just that incompetent.

I had two cases in the last month that contributed to my re-evaluation of the situation. The first involved Chase Bank and the fact that they sat on a file from A+ buyers for weeks after it emerged from underwriting, with a simple paperwork stipulation involving a new

(Continued on page 7)

Sales By Price Range through August 31st

Community	# Sold	Avg Price	Ave SF	DOM	\$/SF	% Change
Up to \$299,999	31	\$259,869	1616	178	\$160.81	-6.45%
\$300-\$399,999	46	\$345,115	2032	95	\$169.81	-9.07%
\$400-\$499,999	26	\$433,923	2496	116	\$173.82	-12.06%
\$500-\$599,999	28	\$543,622	2830	153	\$192.11	2.28%
\$600-\$699,999	14	\$623,536	3468	129	\$179.78	-11.37%
\$700-\$799,999	8	\$744,688	3511	162	\$212.09	-4.52%
\$800-\$899,999	7	\$839,886	3923	60	\$214.07	-7.14%
\$900-\$999,999	6	\$946,667	3897	101	\$242.95	-1.09%
Over \$1,000,000	2	\$2,078,750	5797	55	\$358.59	2.79%
The Ranch	168	\$481,181	2541	127	184.85	-9.29%

The key: SF = square feet; \$/SF = sales price per square foot; DOM = Days on Market; % Change = the change in the value per square foot since December 31st, 2009

Mortgage Interest Rates

Conforming* Loans

30 Year.....4.375%

15 Year3.75%

3 Year ARM....3.00%

5 Year ARM...3.25%

Jumbo* Loans

30 Year.....5.25%

15 Year4.50%

3 Year ARM.....3.375%

5 Year ARM.....3.625%

Rates effective 9-15-10

Fees vary by lender

All loans have Zero Points

*In Scottsdale, Conforming refers to loans up to \$417,000 and Jumbo to larger amounts

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Resale Analysis (Continued)

(Continued from page 6)

Fannie Mae reporting requirement. Despite endless promises, their loan processors were never able to comprehend what their own underwriters were requesting and their incompetence placed the buyers in risk of default and the possible loss of their down payment. Fortunately, at the last minute, these buyers simply opted to bypass the bank and pay cash for the house — a step that is obviously not an option for most people.

The other case involved an out-of-state medical professional who was relocating to Arizona to join a relatively new branch of a nationally known practice. Rather than receive a salary, he opted for what he felt was the far more lucrative alternative — a share in the proceeds.

Employment contract in hand, he went shopping for a home and provided the lender with documentation that others in this practice were earning tens of thousands of dollars a month. However, rather than look at the entire picture, the lender opted to deny the request because “since he had no guaranteed income, it’s possible he could earn zero”.

By the time this all played out, the buyer had already started work and no longer had the time to devote to house shopping. The result is that he’s now renting for more than his monthly payment would have been and plans to wait a year until he can document proof of income before he attempts to buy a home again — this time with a different lender.

It’s odd, but one of the reasons we are not emerging from this morass as quickly as we

might is that lenders have shifted from the obscenely generous lending policies of a few years ago to the to the absurdly conservative risk avoidance strategies of today. I think it’s time to find some middle ground.

■ Actually, there’s a bit of good news on the lending front and that’s the fact that the recovery-retarding rules regarding appraisals are in the process of being eliminated.

If you weren’t aware, the rules that were put in place in the aftermath of the mortgage debacle prohibited lenders from directly hiring appraisers or from having contact of any sort with an appraiser involved with one of their loans. Instead, they were required to hire their appraisers from a third party company which could serve as a firewall between lender and appraiser to prevent collusion of any sort. It may have looked like a good idea on paper, but the real life implications were horrible.

Not only didn’t this prevent anyone who was determined to break the law from doing so, but the third party companies also drove most of the experienced appraisers out of the market by paying substandard fees in order to increase their own bottom lines.

In addition to employing less experienced appraisers, these companies also tended to draw their staff from areas outside the market that they were required to service and, as a result, they could barely distinguish North Scottsdale from North Dakota.

Moreover, the companies and the vastly underpaid appraisers also tended to group their appraisals (after all, how many times do you want to have to make a trip up here from

Tucson — yes, Tucson) which led to many mortgage processing delays.

In addition, since they weren’t getting paid extra to handle appeals, the appraisers tended to stonewall review requests as a matter of expediency — even when they were initially flat wrong.

No matter, the worst aspects of this system are on their way out. Lenders will now be able to talk to and hire appraisers directly once again. And they’ll also be required to pay those appraisers “market rates”. Let’s hope that this returns some normalcy to the process. It’s interesting, but sometimes backwards is the right direction. ☺

■ Interest rates — like WOW!!! Now I know that’s not the most professional approach to evaluating the mortgage market, but I can’t seem to coax anything more cerebral out of my mouth when I look at those numbers.

However, after taking a deep breath, I do occasionally find myself asking why this largess isn’t enough to propel the real estate market forward. Now, I know that there are legitimate reasons to be hesitant and that the media is effectively scaring people to death but 30 year financing at 4.375% might be worthy of some risk taking.

■ By the way, I opted to downplay my usual emphasis on graphs and illustrations this month simply because there is really very little about what occurs during the summer months that’s significant in determining trends. However, for those who wish more detail, there are a number of articles and charts available on my website as “webpostscripts”.



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HOMES CURRENTLY FOR SALE

Address	Subdivision	Model	Price	Sq ft	Br	Gar	Pool
16420 N TPP #2081	Cachet	Heritage	\$190,000	1338	2	1	N
16420 N TPP #2020	Cachet	Heritage	\$192,500	1338	2	1	N
16420 N TPP #2130	Cachet	Heritage	\$212,500	1338	2	2	N
16420 N TPP #2061	Cachet	Heritage	\$226,500	1338	2	1	N
10489 E Star of the Desert	Discovery Trails	Sierra	\$255,000	1700	3	2	N
16600 N TPP #1077	The Ridge	Legacy	\$260,000	1727	2+Den	2	N
16600 N TPP #1054	The Ridge	Legacy	\$264,900	1727	2+Den	2	N
10275 E Caribbean Ln	Discovery Cnyn	Catalina	\$268,900	1504	3	2	N
16600 N TPP #2036	The Ridge	Heritage	\$269,000	1334	2	1	N
10295 E Morning Star Dr	Panorama Point	Mesquite	\$269,400	1548	3	2	N
16420 N TPP #2073	Cachet	Legacy	\$269,900	1659	3	2	N
16420 N TPP #1093	Cachet	Monarch	\$272,500	1659	3	2	N
10119 E Tierra Buena Ln	Arizona Vintage	Bordeaux	\$279,900	1478	3	2	Y
15120 N 102nd St	Discovery Cnyn		\$284,500	1622	4	2	N
10311 E Morning Star	Panorama Pt	Mesquite	\$285,000	1548	3	2	N
10322 E Saltillo Dr	Discovery Trails	Sabino	\$288,000	1622	3	2	N
10490 E Acoma Dr	Sunset Point	#1650	\$289,000	1650	3	2	N
16036 N 108th St	Castle Chase	Stirling	\$289,900	1701	3	2	N
10408 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Avalon	\$290,000	1702	3	2	N
15750 N 102nd St	Arizona Vintage	Bordeaux	\$296,000	1478	3	2	N
10312 E Penstamin Dr	Discovery Trails	Catalina	\$299,000	1504	3	2	N
16600 N TPP #1028	The Ridge	Monarch	\$300,000	1674	2+Den	2	N
10290 E Mallow Cir	The Preserve	Avalon	\$300,000	1702	3	2	N
16501 N 105th Wy	Arizona Highlands		\$305,000	1821	3	3	N
15221 N 102nd Wy	Discovery Cnyn	Mtn View	\$309,900	2268	4	2	N
10435 E Hillery Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$315,000	2132	4	2	N
10423 E Texas Sage Ln	The Preserve	Avalon	\$315,000	1723	3	2	Y
10341 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$318,000	2132	4	2	Y
11406 E Helm Dr	Sunrise Point	Saguaro	\$319,000	1430	2	2	N
16420 N TPP #1084	Cachet	Legacy	\$319,000	1656	2+Den	2	N
10664 E Penstamin Dr	The Overlook	Mesquite	\$320,000	1973	4	3	N
10353 E Star of the Desert	Arizona Vintage	Chardonnay	\$325,000	1744	3	2	N
10217 E Betony Dr	Arizona Vintage	Zinfandel	\$329,000	1603	3	2	Y
10348 E Star of the Desert	Arizona Vintage	Zinfandel	\$329,000	1604	3	2	N
10320 E Penstamin Dr	Discovery Trails	Catalina	\$329,900	1504	2+Den	2	N
10222 E Le Marche Dr	Arizona Vintage	Zinfandel	\$339,900	1604	3	2	N
10248 E Mallow Cir	The Preserve	Brisas	\$349,500	2132	3	2	Y
10476 E Hillery Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$349,900	2132	4	2	N
10230 E Blanche Dr	Discovery Cnyn		\$349,900	2357	5	2	N
10354 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$349,900	2132	4	2	Y
10201 E Betony Dr	Arizona Vintage	Chablis	\$351,900	2316	3+Den	2	Y
10804 E Betony Dr	Castle Chase	Nottingham	\$364,900	1881	3	2	N
15025 N 102nd Wy	Discovery Cnyn		\$365,000	2620	4+Den	2	Y
10319 E Saltillo Dr	Discovery Trails		\$367,000	2389	4	2	Y
10902 E Salt Bush Dr	Castle Chase	Stirling	\$375,000	1782	2	2	N



WebPostscript - This symbol indicates that more information on this subject is posted on our companion website. Just visit www.MMRHomes.com and click on the "my newsletter" selection in the menu box on the upper left.

Resale Activity at the Ranch (Continued)

HOMES CURRENTLY FOR SALE

Address	Subdivision	Model	Price	Sq ft	Br	Gar	Pool
11490 E Helm Dr	Sunrise Point	Acacia	\$375,000	1886	3	2	N
16554 N 103rd Wy	Eagle Ridge		\$379,900	2084	4	3	N
10490 E Saitillo Dr	Arizona Highlands		\$379,900	2361	4	3	Y
16290 E 105th Wy	AZ Highlands	Santan	\$398,000	2200	3+Den	3	N
10287 E Jasmine Dr	Montecito	Santa Barbara	\$419,900	2770	4	3	N
10376 E Acoma Dr	Sunset Point		\$429,000	2114	3+Den	2	N
10407 E Rosemary Ln	Eagle Ridge		\$429,000	1998	3	2	Y
10812 E Betony Dr	Castle Chase	Windsor	\$429,900	1941	2+Den	2	Y
16600 N TTP #2048	The Ridge	Monarch	\$445,000	1674	3	2	N
10566 E Blanche Dr	Cimarron Hills	La Jolla	\$464,900	2285	3	2	N
10316 E Acoma Dr	Sunset Point		\$490,000	3064	4	3	Y
11065 E Betony Dr	100 Hills	Valencia	\$495,000	2458	2+Den	2	N
10778 E Greenway Rd	Cimarron Hills	Valencia	\$495,000	2841	3	3	N
16789 N 106th Wy	The Summit	Victoria	\$499,000	2511	3+Den	3	Y
10982 E Butherus Dr	Desert Cliffs	#6040	\$499,000	2351	4	3	N
16789 N 106th Wy	The Summit	Victoria	\$499,999	2511	3+Den	3	Y
10453 E Acoma Dr	Sunset Point	#1908	\$500,000	1908	3	2	Y
14480 N 110th Pl	Sienna Canyon	Catalina	\$503,900	2738	4	3	N
10665 E Firethorn Dr	Mirador		\$509,777	2734	3	3	Y
11466 E Beck Ln	Cimarron Ridge	Valencia	\$525,000	2370	2+Den	2	Y
10263 E Verbena Ln	Montecito	Castillo	\$535,000	3089	5	3	Y
10749 E Raintree Dr	Desert Cliffs	#6050	\$545,000	2647	3+Den	3	Y
10436 E Acacia Dr	The Summit	Victoria	\$545,000	2510	3+Den	3	Y
16579 N 109th Pl	Vermillion Cliffs		\$549,000	2835	3+Den	3	Y
10470 E Conieson Rd	Sonoran Frwys	Ocotillo	\$549,990	2976	5	3	Y
10787 E Palm Ridge Dr	Sienna Canyon	La Palma	\$550,000	2936	4	3	Y
11028 E Betony Dr	100 Hills	Sevilla	\$550,000	2704	3+Den	2	N
11339 E Beck Ln	Cimarron Hills	Laredo	\$560,000	2788	4	3	N
10343 E Acacia Dr	Montecito	Castillo	\$575,000	3089	5	3	Y
11457 E Blanche Dr	Cimarron Ridge	Sevilla	\$575,000	2836	4	3	Y
10586 E Sheena Dr	Sonoran Frwys	Cholla	\$595,000	3466	4+Den	3	Y
10575 E Karen Dr	Cimarron Hills	Sevilla	\$599,000	2858	4	3	Y
11344 E Autumn Sage Dr	Cimarron Hills	San Rafael	\$600,000	3393	4+Den	3	Y
11054 E Karen Dr	Cimarron Hills	Montilla	\$615,000	3749	4	3	Y
10874 E Palm Ridge Dr	Sienna Canyon	Catalina	\$619,900	2738	4	3	Y
10746 E Greenway Rd	Cimarron Hills	La Jolla	\$620,000	2285	2+Den	2	Y
10967 E Bahia Dr	Trovas	Dante	\$625,000	3297	3+Den	3	Y
10959 E Greenway Rd	Cimarron Hills	Escalante	\$625,000	3375	4+Den	3	N
10888 E Mirasol Cir	Vermillion Cliffs	#932-5	\$640,000	3348	4+Den	3	Y
10835 E Palm Ridge Dr	Sienna Canyon	Talavera	\$649,000	4098	5+Den	2	Y
15072 N 114th Wy	Cimarron Ridge	Sevilla	\$670,000	2660	3+Den	2	Y
10948 E Cosmos Cir	Trovas	Verona	\$699,900	2826	4	3	Y
15602 N 109th Pl	Cimarron Hills	Laredo	\$700,000	2950	4	3	Y
11022 E Raintree Dr	Desert Cliffs	#6090	\$710,000	3924	5+Den	3	N
10936 E Butherus Dr	Desert Cliffs	#6090	\$715,000	3924	5	3	Y



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Resale Activity at the Ranch (Continued)



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ACTIVES

Address	Subdivision	Model	Price	Sq ft	Br	Gar	Pool
10951 E Cosmos Cir	Trovas	Dante	\$759,000	3297	3+Den	3	Y
11047 E Jasmine Dr	Trovas	Dante	\$795,000	3500	3+Den	3	Y
11503 E Caribbean Ln	Cimarron Ridge	Andorra	\$799,000	4076	5+Den	3	Y
11014 E Beck Ln	Cimarron Hills	Laredo	\$799,000	2894	3+Den	3	Y
10730 E Ludlow Dr	Sonoran Estates	Santana	\$879,900	3658	4+Den	3	Y
11096 E Karen Dr	Cimarron Hills	Andorra	\$894,900	3926	4+Den	3	Y
11026 E Verbena Ln	Trovas	Francesca	\$895,000	4128	4+Den	3	Y
10952 E Karen Dr	Cimarron Hills	Montilla	\$895,000	3911	3+Den	3	Y
11051 E Acacia Dr	Trovas	Medici	\$899,000	4102	4+Den	3	Y
10694 E Redfield Rd	Sonoran Estates	Saguaro	\$919,000	4037	4+Den	3	Y
14297 N 111th Pl	Sonoran Estates	Santan	\$999,900	3658	4	3	N
16132 N 110th St	100 Hills	Andorra	\$1,099,000	3951	4+Den	3	Y
16010 N 115th Wy	100 Hills	Medina	\$1,200,000	4111	3+Den	3	Y
11227 E Paradise Ln	100 Hills	Custom	\$1,399,000	5234	5+Den	3	Y
16046 N 115th Wy	100 Hills	Custom	\$1,699,000	6174	5+Den	4	N
11502 E Paradise Ln	100 Hills	Cardona	\$1,750,000	5008	4+Den	3	Y
11451 E Penstamin Dr	100 Hills	Cardona	\$1,799,000	4689	4+Den	3	Y
11503 E Paradise Ln	100 Hills	Custom	\$2,589,000	5167	5	4	Y
16469 N 113th Wy	100 Hills	Custom	\$3,900,000	5322	4+Den	3	Y
11549 E Penstamin Dr	100 Hills	Custom	\$4,250,000	6281	4+Den	3	Y

CURRENT PENDINGS & AWCS

Address	Subdivision	Model	Price	Sq ft	Br	Gar	Pool
16420 N TPP #2015	Cachet	Heritage	\$203,500	1338	2	1	N
16420 N TPP #1019	Cachet	Legacy	\$230,000	1546	2+Den	2	N
10122 E Tierra Buena Ln	Arizona Vintage	Zinfandel	\$250,000	1604	3	2	N
10226 E Saltillo Dr	Discovery Trails	Sabino	\$265,000	1622	3	2	Y
10414 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Montana	\$269,500	1504	3	2	N
10466 E Hillery Dr	The Preserve	Avalon	\$269,900	1702	3	2	N
16600 N TPP #1059	The Ridge	Legacy	\$275,000	1727	2+Den	2	N
10681 E Le Marche Dr	The Overlook	Primrose	\$285,000	1684	3	2	N
16420 N TPP #1117	Cachet	Legacy	\$285,000	1656	2+Den	2	N
10360 E Penstamin Dr	Discovery Trails		\$289,900	1509	3	2	N
14963 N 103rd Wy	The Preserve	Brisas	\$299,900	2132	4	2	Y
14897 N 102nd St	Discovery Cnyn	Mtn View	\$315,000	2197	4	2	Y
10311 E Saltillo Dr	Discovery Trails	Highline	\$320,000	1963	4	2	Y
11125 E Evans Rd	Sienna Canyon	La Palma	\$360,000	2936	4	3	Y
11481 E Helm Dr	Sunrise Point	Sierra	\$360,785	2083	2+Den	2	N
14620 N 103rd Wy	Sunset Point		\$375,000	3064	4	3	Y
11562 E Pine Valley Rd	Sunrise Point	Palo Verde	\$375,000	1667	2+Den	2	N
10320 E Verbena Ln	Montecito	San Miguel	\$375,000	2396	3+Den	3	N
10226 E Salt Bush Dr	Arizona Vintage	Chablis	\$409,000	2316	3+Den	2	Y
11469 E Helm Dr	Sunrise Point	Estrella	\$475,000	1792	3	2	N
10490 E Bahia Dr	The Summit	Victoria	\$479,000	2452	3	3	Y
10835 E Acacia Dr	Armonico	Montana	\$499,000	2994	4+Den	3	Y
10745 E Gelding Dr	Sienna Canyon	La Palma	\$515,000	2940	4+Den	3	Y



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Resale Activity at the Ranch (Continued)

CURRENT PENDINGS & AWCS (CONT'D)

Address	Subdivision	Model	Price	Sq ft	Br	Gar	Pool
15847 N 110th Pl	100 Hills	Valencia	\$525,000	2436	3	2	Y
10673 E Firethorn Dr	Mirador	Solano	\$595,000	2977	3	3	Y
10964 E Karen Dr	Cimarron Hills	Andora	\$625,000	3642	5	3	Y
10630 E Firethorn Dr	Mirador		\$650,000	3253	4+Den	3	Y
16575 N 109th Wy	Trovas	Medici	\$650,000	4102	4+Den	3	Y
16778 N 109th Wy	Trovas	Lido	\$695,000	4724	5+Den	3	Y
11211 E Paradise Ln	100 Hills		\$795,000	3751	4	3	N
11158 E Beck Ln	Cimarron Hills	Escalante	\$795,000	3573	4+Den	3	Y
16113 N 111th Wy	100 Hills	Morena	\$875,000	3559	4	3	Y
16449 N 109th Wy	Trovas	Medici	\$890,000	4102	4	3	Y
10735 E Ludlow Dr	Sonoran Ests	Santana	\$1,050,000	4100	4+Den	3	Y

Active with Contingencies* (AWCs) include short sales awaiting bank approval & other contracts where some aspect is still in need of resolution.

CLOSINGS DURING JULY & AUGUST

Address	Subdivision	Model	Price	Sq ft	Br	Gar	Pool
16600 N TPP #2016	The Ridge	Heritage	\$192,500	1335	2	1	N
16600 N TPP #2041	The Ridge	Heritage	\$198,000	1338	2	1	N
10217 E Karen Dr	Discovery Cnyn	Scenic	\$255,000	1837	4	2	N
10496 E Texas Sage Ln	The Preserve	Avalon	\$264,900	1702	3	2	N
15215 N 104th Pl	The Preserve	Sonterra	\$266,000	1222	3	2	N
10485 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Avalon	\$276,000	1702	3	2	N
10234 E Pine Valley Rd	Discovery Cnyn	Mtn View	\$281,900	2197	4+Loft	2	Y
14791 N 103rd St	The Preserve	Montana	\$285,000	1797	3+Den	2	Y
16420 N TPP #2078	Cachet	Monarch	\$286,000	1659	2+Den	2	N
16420 N TPP #1003	Cachet	Monarch	\$289,000	1659	3	2	N
10474 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$305,000	2132	4	2	Y
10426 E Raintree Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$310,000	2132	3+Den	2	Y
10203 E Le Marche Dr	Arizona Vintage	Chardonnay	\$322,000	1744	3	2	N
10572 E Acacia Dr	Arizona Highlands	Picacho	\$325,000	2395	5	2	N
10470 E Karen Dr	The Preserve	Brisas	\$330,000	2132	4	2	N
16452 N 106th Pl	The Summit	Molokai	\$362,000	2682	4	3	N
10405 E Pine Valley Dr	Sunset Point	#2797	\$367,000	2797	4	2	Y
15984 N 106th Wy	The Overlook	Mesquite	\$385,000	1972	3+Den	3	Y
10815 E Autumn Sage	Castle Chase	Windsor	\$390,000	1941	2+Den	2	N
10544 E Firewheel Dr	The Overlook	Ironwood	\$415,000	2613	3+Den	3	N
10263 E Jasmine Dr	Montecito	Santa Barbara	\$425,000	2770	4+Den	3	Y
16581 N 108th St	Armonico		\$485,000	3084	4	3	N
10787 E Redfield Rd	Sienna Canyon	La Palma	\$500,000	2936	4	3	Y
14049 N 106th Pl	Sonoran Frwys	Ocotillo	\$537,000	2976	6	3	Y
10790 E Gelding Dr	Sienna Canyon	La Palma	\$605,000	2936	4+Den	3	Y
11111 E Greenway Rd	Cimarron Ridge	Escalante	\$750,000	3375	4+Den	3	Y
16633 N 111th St	Trovas	Dante	\$821,200	3297	3+Den	3	Y
11020 E Acoma Dr	Mirador		\$840,000	3770	5	3	Y
11094 E Raintree Dr	Desert Cliffs		\$862,000	4530	5+Den	4	Y
10980 E Meadowhill Dr	Sonoran Ests	Santana	\$900,000	4600	5+Den	3	Y

Did you notice that our team was responsible for one third of the sales closed in MMR during July & August



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Spotlight (Continued)

(Continued from page 1)

ject. The reasons are that the price for the current proposal has now jumped to an estimated \$74 million (including first year operating costs) and because technical questions remain about whether the facility can even be built "in The Preserve" or if the boundaries would need to be adjusted to place it outside the perimeter.

By the way, the city has finished adding another 100 parking stalls and making other changes to improve traffic flow at the Gateway Center. Regular users will be amazed at how little impact the work seems to have had on the look and feel of the facility.

■ At the August meeting of the MMR Board of Directors, Barry Werblow was elevated to VP and Art Krumrei to Treasurer. The latter opening was the result of Stu Feldman's decision to step down. There was also a vacancy created by Laurie McCammon's decision to relocate out of the area and that was filled by Stan Koczka of Discovery Trails. Our thanks to Laurie for all her efforts.

Incidentally, if you have any interest in serving on the board in the future, you may want to visit the community website (mmraz.com) and complete an application. That's the first step in the process.

The Board also announced that our management contract will be expiring on September 30th and that they would be examining options in subsequent weeks. In addition to AAM, our current vendor, they will be interviewing Rossmar and Graham and one other. That Board members were unable to recall. As we went to press, it was not clear

whether the Board intended to ask for any public input before making their decision.

The primary focus of the September 28th meeting will be on the budget for 2011. A preliminary version was distributed to board members and, based on general comments, it appears unlikely that there'll be any increase in our quarterly fees. In fact, there was some support for offering a small reduction.

The Board also indicated that although the total dollar amount of delinquencies is still climbing slightly, they don't believe there is any significant cause for concern. The most encouraging news is that our reserves are expected to be at about 85% of goal by year's end and that makes us one of the most financially stable communities in the valley.

■ Although most of NewPath's cellular distribution system is operational, there are two more sites on MMR Road that still need to be constructed. The remaining aspects of the project, like clean up and light pole removal, will depend largely on the availability of APS.

■ Next up for consideration is an application from Clear Wireless LLC, a "4th generation" internet and video provider who would like to install a (hand painted) 30' saguaro on Bell Road at 108th Street. They already have an installation in place at the Desert Canyon Center and will eventually be seeking another at the Sanctuary. The Design Review Board hearing is scheduled for December 16th.

There are more details about both these projects on our website and on our new Facebook page. I'd encourage you to try the former for background information and the latter for the most current news.

LOOKING BACK AT THE RANCH

Just 5 Years Ago*

September 2005 - The hot issue of the day was the expectation that Circle K would be constructing a 2,500 SF convenience store on the SW corner of TPP & Bell. Work had begun on Bell Road between 98th Street & TPP and Scottsdale selected an architect for the Gateway Center. Satori Sushi was also about to open its doors. In the market, we began to express editorial concern about the fact that 40% of all new loans were of the negative amortization variety and a community poll we conducted indicated that confidence was waning. Interestingly, the actual end did not come for another 18 months.

Only 10 Years Ago*

September 2000 - The commercial parcel on the SW corner of Bell and TPP was sold to a Toronto based *Centrefund* which promised a supermarket, a free standing drugstore, space for a firehouse and room for a park and ride facility run by the City of Scottsdale. The Library and Park improvement bond was on the September ballot and home mortgage rates hit an 8 month low with 30 year programs available at 7.75%. For unknown reasons, my team's Adopt-A-Road voluntary garbage pickups along Bell Road climbed to 4X per month.

* As gleaned from the archives of our newsletter



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Business of the Month

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I know parents who feel that simply getting their kids to go to the dentist is an achievement that merits some sort of a special reward - perhaps a small trophy or a very big adult's

night out. However, it really doesn't have to be that traumatic. One of the best strategies is to begin by seeking out a pediatric dentist.

One who gets consistently positive reviews is DAFKO's Dr. Lee Weinstein. "Dr. Lee", as he's generally referred to, believes that children should feel special and that they should enjoy their visits to the dentist. In an effort to insure that's the case, he's shaped his practice by trying to view the experience through a child's eyes -- hopefully assuring a reasonably fun time for them and for himself!

He loves helping children overcome their fear of the dentist and is often able to persuade them to look forward to their next visit. One key is his ability to entertain and engage patients in conversations appropriate to their age level. Not surprisingly, copious laughter and physical playfulness is often the best way to turn difficult patients into great ones.

Even the office provides a relaxing environment for anxious little ones. It's decorated with an intriguing geography theme and tips about how to grow up with healthy teeth and bright smiles. And, there's even a movie and

game room stocked with toys and other items that will capture the interest and imagination of kids of all ages -- along with prizes and dental products for kids at each visit.

According to Dr. Lee, it's never too early to bring children to the dentist, and his patients often begin dentist exams as young as 6 months. Given that prevention is the key to good dental health, it's important that children develop a comfortable relationship with dentistry early on so that proper care becomes as positive an experience as possible.



Incidentally, in case you were curious, practicing pediatric dentistry is not simply a matter of deciding to concentrate your practice on children. Dr. Weinstein actually had to complete an extra two years of special training

after dental school to achieve his professional proficiency rating in the specialty.

He also has specific training in working with children with special needs and will develop a plan with parents to manage their care. Moreover, his expertise even extends to growth and development, child psychology, treatment of traumatic injuries, speech therapy and sedation.

In fact, DAFKO offers a full line of services, and provides individualized treatment plans based on each child's specific situation. And, they'll even help with the practical side of the process by assisting in the filing of insurance claims and working out payment plans so you can complete necessary treatments.

Originally from Philadelphia, educated there, and with a previous practice on the East Coast, Dr. Lee and his family, like most of the rest of us, moved to the valley for the lifestyle unique to this area.

Part of his commitment to his new home is to try to insure that every



child receives quality dental care. To help achieve that goal, he makes presentations to schools and various community groups and provides in-office tours for local organizations and schools. Moreover, he also sets aside time each quarter to treat area children without the financial means for dental care -- free of charge.

Incidentally, even though he tries to prep parents on how to handle emergencies should they arise, he will take such calls at any time.

Quite frankly, a visit to Dr. Lee's DAFKO office is a treat. If you have children 18 and under, or are starting a family soon, you owe it to yourself to take a look at the fun and educational environment the office provides -- either on-line or in person.

In fact, if you call in advance, the personable and knowledgeable staff, who set the tone for the experience, will be happy to provide an orientation visit.

You can find DAFKO on line at www.littlewhitetooth.com or you can reach them by e-mail at drlee@littlewhitetooth.com.

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Service You Deserve (Continued)

(Continued from page 5)

an exciting new feature that we are currently working on.

The problem is that the gaps between editions would need to be filled by some other mechanism. We think that could easily be accomplished using our new Facebook page, which is formally titled "McDowell Mountain Ranch Homes" (but I bet you could have guessed that ☺) and that the combination would actually provide a better mix of timeliness and insight than we now have. However, that assumes that we can persuade people to tune in to the Facebook page. And, that's where we need your help.

I'd like to ask you to visit our page and then, if you wouldn't mind, to give us your feedback. The easiest way to find it is to simply enter www.facebook.com/MMRhomes into your browser. For those who might not be familiar with social networking sites, let me assure you that you needn't join Facebook or make any sort of commitment at all in order to view our page. In fact, the experience is totally anonymous.

When you do visit, the first thing you'll encounter is the "the wall" (see the picture in the center panel). This is the place where most information relevant to the community is posted. However, if you look elsewhere on the page, you'll also find tabs that will link you to our listings, our website and even to our new market watch blog (BTW-our website now also has links to our Facebook page).

If you do like what you see when you get there, please consider joining Facebook and subsequently returning to our page to click

the "LIKE" button at the top. Once you do that, anything that's posted on our wall will automatically be delivered to you on your own very private "newsfeed".



Just as importantly, we need you to tell your friends. Our hope is that we can get enough people to tune in to make the page a viable forum for discussions about things affecting our community and the place to go to get questions answered about life at *The Ranch*. Quite frankly, it has enormous potential for adding value to life in our community.

In any event, please e-mail us with your insights, post something on our wall, call us or simply visit our website (MMRhomes.com) and vote in the poll we've posted there.

What we find out from you and the number of people who become "fans" of our Facebook page between now and the holidays will determine what we do for the coming year. So, please let us know. ☺

■ By the way, if you're interested in social

media but have been uncertain about exactly how to get involved, MMR Vendors, our new business networking group will be offering a free Facebook seminar for MMR residents. Just visit them at www.mmrvendors.com/facebook and they'll let you know the date, time and location of the class.

Incidentally, in case your apprehension about trying Facebook or any other social media tool is rooted in privacy concerns, let me reassure you that you can have just as much or as little interaction as you wish. While it can be a great tool for staying in touch with family and friends if you want it to be, it doesn't really have to be. In fact, my notoriously "introspective" husband's personal page is a social interaction dead end (opposites do attract ☺) that he uses simply to track news about topics that interest him.

■ We've just hired Kathi Van Der Werf to serve as our Commercial Relations Coordinator. Kathi's role will be to help insure that the business profiles on our website are up to date and to assist area businesses in reaching out to our community by utilizing our website, Facebook page and newsletter tools.



It's our hope that we can help some of our valued local commercial enterprises weather these tough times. After all, residential communities do not exist in a vacuum and having a viable commercial sector will go a long way toward insuring that our property values ultimately regain some of their past glory. If you have a local business, you may want to reach out to us for assistance. Much of what we have to offer is provided free of charge.

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The McDowell Sonoran Preserve

The following is the first of a series of "first person" articles about one of our community's finest assets, the McDowell Sonoran Preserve, contributed by Jace McKeighan, an MSC Steward and a partner in the Scottsdale law firm of McKeighan Pierce PC.

When my family and I moved to Arizona, we moved to MMR in large part because of its proximity to the McDowell Sonoran Preserve. MMR residents are extremely fortunate to have access to all of Scottsdale's urban amenities, while simultaneously living on the doorstep of one of the nation's largest urban wilderness preserves. The Preserve covers approximately 57 square miles and is approximately one-third of the City of Scottsdale.



There are a number of Preserve access points within MMR itself. We initiated this series of articles to better familiarize MMR residents with the Preserve and to encourage them to enjoy this tremendous resource. Polls show that people who interact with nature rate the quality of their lives higher than those who have little or no interaction with nature. The Preserve offers boundless opportunities for

natural interactions.

Besides the access points within MMR, the Gateway located north of Bell Road on Thompson Peak Parkway offers unique opportunities in The Preserve. For example, the Gateway's *Bajada Trail* is a paved ½ mile loop that teaches young and old about local flora and fauna. The Gateway is also a staging area for public hikes from easy to difficult that are led by McDowell Sonoran Conservancy



(MSC) stewards. Stewards also give educational talks at the Gateway amphitheater and staff the trailhead to answer questions.

We hope to see opportunities for interaction with The Preserve continue to grow. One way may be the Desert Discovery Center, currently planned for the area between the Gateway and the Village Health Club. MSC is excited about the potential of this community resource. While at this time we are not sure what MSC's involvement will be, we will want to be involved. MSC has a great deal to offer and is interested in being part of any significant development in The Preserve. We are eager to learn more as the consultants prepare to provide their reports to the City

CHECK OUT THE MSC'S FAMILY FRIDAY SUNSET SERIES

The McDowell Sonoran Conservancy's Family Friday Sunset Series provides hands-on learning opportunity for kids and their parents, and focuses on the native wildlife and geology of the surrounding Sonoran Desert.

The first program is scheduled for Friday, October 1st at 4:30 PM and is entitled



"Raptors, Raptors Everywhere". It will be held at the Gateway Access Area Amphitheater off Thompson Peak Parkway.

and the public.

In the meantime, we are approaching that time of year when public hikes and programs in The Preserve will be increasing. McDowell Sonoran Month kicks off on September 30th with the 2010 McDowell Sonoran Conservation Festival at Market Street at DC Ranch. Join us as we celebrate with Scottsdale Mayor Jim Lane reading a proclamation proclaiming October as McDowell Sonoran Month to the release of a rehabilitated hawk. The celebration continues with the Scottsdale Cycling Festival from Sept. 30 through Oct. 3 at Market Street, including the 7th Annual 70-mile Tour de Scottsdale at 7 a.m., Sunday, Oct. 3.

For more information about these or any other activities, please call the MSC offices at (480) 998-7971 or go to www.McDowellSonoran.org.



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