The Desert Discovery Center

The fate of the Desert Discovery Center (DDC) has commandeered the front page of the newsletter once again this month. However, this time the issue is not the plan itself but the City Council’s decision to try to negotiate a contractual relationship with the sole respondent to their Request for Qualification (RFQ) seeking an “operator/manager” for the new facility. The decision on this course of action was made at their September 8th meeting and the vote was 5 to 2.

As I’ve explained previously, I’m not a particular fan of the current development plan for the DDC. I feel that it’s actually contradictory to the general concept of a Preserve, that the scale (18 individual pavilions set on 20 acres) and the number of visitors required to achieve economic viability (333,000 at about $15 per person) are too large to be accommodated on the edge of a residential area. Moreover, I think that the City’s anticipated contribution (estimated to be $50 million or more) might be better spent in other ways.

However, once again, the issue for today is the RFQ. The image at the upper right is a snapshot of the proposal submitted by the organization, Desert Discovery Center Scottsdale, Inc. (DDCS). After reviewing it, I’d have to admit that the proposal does appear to be comprehensive and, while I’m unable to offer a meaningful analysis of the content, the City’s staff scored it 895 out of 1000 based on their criteria.

I’d also have to say that although I disagree with the plan that they are promoting, the people behind the effort have extensive histories of service to Scottsdale and the valley as a whole and, under other circumstances, I’d be inclined to give them the benefit of the doubt. However, in this case, I think that they simply fell in love with a grand plan and have never stepped back to re-evaluate it in the context of a post recession environment. Of course, it’s always possible that I could be the one in the wrong. I may simply be thinking too small. Quite frankly, it’s really up to you to decide.

The bottom line is that this is a big project with the potential to affect our community in rather significant ways and you owe it to yourselves to learn what’s being proposed and to evaluate it based on its likely impact on your lifestyle and the quality of life here at The Ranch. Most of us tend to wait for something to have become a fait accompli before reacting. Don’t let that happen this time.

According to the City engineer, who handled the presentation at the Council meeting, the contract negotiations should take about 60 to 90 days and the value of the “consultant’s contract” could be somewhere between $500,000 and $800,000. There was little said about the subsequent steps in the process or whether the public will have an opportunity to weigh in or, in fact, approve of the project. However, with the dollars involved and the appropriation of Preserve property that’s required, it would seem to be a moral obligation.

I’d have to say that my biggest concern is the way that this project has evolved and whether transparency and public input will be a part of the process. It’s certainly not a priority for DDCS, nor should it be. They’re quite a sophisticated organization and

(Continued on page 13)
## Some of Our Team’s Recent Sales in MMR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Bedrooms/Baths</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discovery Trails</td>
<td>16150 N 102nd Way</td>
<td>2BR/2BA</td>
<td>1,093 SF</td>
<td>New Carpeting, Private Grassy Back Yard w/Raised Platform for City Light Views &amp; 2 Car Garage!</td>
<td>$285,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Preserve</td>
<td>14875 N 103rd Street</td>
<td>3BR/2BA</td>
<td>1,358 SF</td>
<td>Great Rm Plan w/Ceramic Tile Floors, Private Yard with Grass Area &amp; Newly Painted Exterior!</td>
<td>$325,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Preserve</td>
<td>15265 N 104th Way</td>
<td>4BR+LOFT/3BA</td>
<td>2,132 SF</td>
<td>New Carpeting &amp; Wood Floors, Pebble Tec Pool w/Rock Waterfall &amp; Beautiful Mountain Views!</td>
<td>$425,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Preserve</td>
<td>10448 E Texas Sage Ln</td>
<td>3BR/2BA</td>
<td>1,702 SF</td>
<td>Exterior Stone Accents &amp; Front Porch! Slab Granite Counters in Kitchen &amp; Bths, Stainless Apps!</td>
<td>$389,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Overlook</td>
<td>16056 N 106th Way</td>
<td>4BR/2BA</td>
<td>1,972 SF</td>
<td>Remodeled Kitchen w/Granite Counters and Cherry Cabinets. 16 SEER A/C and 3C Garage!!</td>
<td>$446,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sienna Canyon</td>
<td>10859 E Palm Ridge Dr</td>
<td>6BR+LOFT/3BA</td>
<td>3,801 SF</td>
<td>Lovingly Maintained Split Plan on Cul-de-Sac Street Backs to a Wash w/Pool &amp; Stunning Views!</td>
<td>$710,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Overlook</td>
<td>10479 E Morning Star Dr</td>
<td>4BR+DEN/3BA</td>
<td>2,711 SF</td>
<td>Remodeled Kitchen w/Granite Cntrs, Viking Range &amp; Stainless Apps. Pebble Tec Pool, Firepit &amp; BBQ!</td>
<td>$550,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Overlook</td>
<td>16720 N 109th Street</td>
<td>3BR/DEN/3.5BA</td>
<td>3027 SF</td>
<td>Lovingly Maintained Split Plan on Cul-de-Sac Street Backs to a Wash w/Pool &amp; Stunning Views!</td>
<td>$700,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## A Few of Our Listings For You to Consider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Bedrooms/Baths</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Castle Chase</td>
<td>15972 N 108th Street</td>
<td>2BR/2.5BA</td>
<td>1,775 SF</td>
<td>Gorgeous, Upgraded &amp; Contemporary w/Limestone Floors and a Resort Yard w/Pool, Fplc &amp; BBQ!</td>
<td>$450,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Summit</td>
<td>10505 E Acacia Drive</td>
<td>4BR+DEN/2.5BA</td>
<td>2,452 SF</td>
<td>Exterior Stone Accents &amp; Pristine Inside with Ceramic Tile Flooring, Corian Counters, Stainless Apps!</td>
<td>$550,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Summit</td>
<td>10859 E Acacia Drive</td>
<td>6BR+LOFT/3BA</td>
<td>3,801 SF</td>
<td>Located on a Wash Lot w/Fenced Pool, Rock Waterfall &amp; Mountain Views! First Floor Master Suite!</td>
<td>$710,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cimarron Hills</td>
<td>10738 E Greenway Road</td>
<td>2BR+DEN/2BA</td>
<td>2,598 SF</td>
<td>On a Wash Lot in a Guard Gated Community with Stunning Mountain Views, Htd Pool, Spa &amp; Fplc!</td>
<td>$715,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Any of These Homes Have Piqued Your Interest.....
Our Featured Home

**Backs to a Wash!**

**Castle Chase**

10604 E Autumn Sage Dr  
2BR+DEN/2BA  1,701 SF

Large Picture Windows will Greet You to Showcase the Back Yard, with its Pebble Tec Pool & Views of the Majestic McDowell Mountains! The Kitchen Boasts Raised Panel Maple Cabinets, Stonite Counters, Smooth Cooktop Range, and a Center Island with a Breakfast Table. The Den has a Custom Wood Built-In Entertainment Center with Bookshelves. You’ll also find Ceramic Tile Flooring on the Diagonal, Custom Paint Colors, Surround Sound, Plantation Shutters, Security System, Water Softener & More! Built with Block Construction, this Lovely Home is Located in a Gated Community w/ Private Rec Center Pool, Spa & Fitness Room! Call me at 480-563-3333 to See this Beautiful Home!

$475,000

And Just A Few More of Our Listings For You to Consider

**Trovas**  
16580 N 109th Way  
4BR/3.5BA  3,618 SF

Open floor Plan, Granite Kitchen Counters, 2 Ensuite Bdrms, Pebble Tec Pool, Spa, 3CG & Gated!  
$770,000

**Sienna Canyon**  
10727 E Palm Ridge Dr  
5BR+LOFT/4BA  3,801 SF

Gorgeous Views! Backs & Sides to a Wash w/Heated Pebble Tec Pool+Spa. 1st Floor Master Suite!  
$774,900

**Desert Cliffs**  
10802 E Raintree Drive  
5BR+LOFT/3BA  3,924 SF

On a Wash w/Gorgeous Mtn & City Light Views! Granite Cntrs, Htd PebbleTec Pool+Spa, Gated!  
$795,000

**Cimarron Hills**  
10990 E Greenway Rd  
4BR+DEN/3.5BA  3,375 SF

Guard Gated! Granite Counters, 4th Bdrm Ensuite with Courtyard Entry. Heated Pool w/Rock Wtrfl!  
$849,000

Contact Me at Either 480-563-3333 or at Helene@Realtor.com
Scholars and Scholarships

The Scottsdale Unified School District Class of 2015, which graduated 1,886 students, earned more than $52.3 million in scholarships toward their post-secondary education! That’s almost exactly $5 million more than the Class of 2014 earned. It’s a truly terrific achievement that undoubtedly made many parents quite happy! Congratulations Class of 2015 and let’s see if our 2016 graduating class can keep up the trend.

We’ve been participating in it for about a year and, for the record, have specifically avoided using it as a business development tool. Instead we’ve found it to be the ideal place to raise issues like high risk skateboarding on local streets and other similar concerns.

We’ve also seen many people use it as a way to introduce themselves to the community, but the most frequent use seems to be as a way to solicit advice about vendors and/or to try to give items that may have outlived their usefulness (i.e. moving boxes, bikes that have been outgrown, etc.) a new life. The site took a major step forward as a communication tool recently when the City of Scottsdale began using it as a way to reach out to residents about city issues and services. There’s no cost to participate.

Library Cards are FREE!

In our last issue, we mentioned that one of the budget balancing measures that Scottsdale was considering involved raising the fees for library cards. While the statement is true, Mary Wilber, who’s the chairperson of the Scottsdale Public Library Board and an MMR resident, asked us to clarify and reinforce the fact that there are absolutely no fees for residents of Maricopa County to use the library. The fees that were referenced in the proposal were for non-residents.

It’s unfortunate, but it seems that the confusion is more widespread than you might imagine. It’s apparently not unusual to find parents who’ve avoided introducing their children to the wonders of the library because they were apprehensive about the cost. I certainly don’t want to be responsible for perpetuating that misunderstanding, so if you would, please spread the word.

Nextdoor.com

If you’re not yet familiar with the social networking site Nextdoor.com, you may want to take a moment to check it out. It’s a forum where members of a community can exchange thoughts, ask neighbors for help, etc. The strategy that differentiates it from other networking sites is that it limits access to people in clearly defined neighborhoods and, on occasion, some adjacent communities.

We’ve been participating in it for about a year and, for the record, have specifically avoided using it as a business development tool. Instead we’ve found it to be the ideal place to raise issues like high risk skateboarding on local streets and other similar concerns.

The Best Laid Plans

It’s sad, but Christian Driessens, who had just been appointed the Chef at La Pizzeta has had to walk away from the opportunity. He’s crestfallen, but family circumstances required that he return home to help care for his ailing grandfather. It’s probably of little solace at the moment but his choice does mark him an individual of great character. We wish you and your family the best, Christian!

In the meantime, Chris assures us that he’s left the community in good hands. Justin Bowser has been trained to prepare all the delectable menu items that we’ve already become so fond of. If you have yet to stop by, welcoming Justin offers you the perfect reason to rectify that omission.

So Many Great Causes

However, for MMR resident Christy Cole, the list is topped by the Baehr Challenge, an organization which is partnered with the Michael J Fox Foundation in the battle against Parkinson’s Disease.

They’ll be sponsoring an Oktoberfest celebration at High Street in Desert Ridge on Saturday evening, October 17th from 5 PM to 9 PM. The goal is to attract 2,000 attendees and raise $100,000 for the cause.

Check out baehrchallenge.org/Oktoberfest for details about the event or visit our Facebook page for details.

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MMR Real Estate Newsletter | September-October 2015
A Little Self–Congratulations!

I know that it’s generally considered bad form to congratulate yourself on personal achievements but I’m going to take the risk this time, because there is one that I’m really quite proud of and want the world to know about.

RE/MAX just published their corporate stats for the first half of 2015 and our little group made the list of the TOP 100 teams in the country. You can take it from me, that’s one heck of an accomplishment.

Twisted Lizard’s Football Pool

Twisted Lizard’s Professional Football Pick’em pool is now in its 4th year, a fact that probably marks it as something of an Autumn institution here at The Ranch. We had so much fun sponsoring it last year that we’ve signed up for another season.

The pool actually began with the games that were scheduled for Sunday, September 13th, but there’s still plenty of time to join in the fun. The game is really just a cool social tool and it’s simple enough to be fun for novices and experts alike. There’s no cost to participate.

All you need do is pick the winners of each Sunday game and the total points for the Monday night game (that serves as a tie-breaker, if it’s needed) and turn in the sheets by Saturday night. Experience tells us that picking the team with cool uniform colors can often work as well as any of the more “scientific” methods. The winner earns a $50 gift card and bragging rights for a week. 😊

(Continued on page 19)
It’s hard to offer meaningful commentary on the future of the real estate market when your frame of reference is the level of activity in July and August. Although there’s always business to be done during the summer, expectations are generally modest and there is rarely, if ever, anything about the season that either suggests a trend or provides a reliable perspective on the future of the market.

Of course, having made that assertion, I should confess that there may be a reason to doubt that I know what I’m talking about. After all, our Senior Associate, Lea Ann Harvey, ignored all my wisdom about modest expectations and somehow managed to rack up eleven transactions on her own over the summer — a really prodigious achievement in the 117th heat. Thankfully, my associates don’t always take everything I say too literally.

What may indicate something about the future is the state of the local and national economies. And not only was the unemployment rate in our area considerably lower than the national average (5.1% for the Phoenix Metro area and just 4.4% for Scottsdale) but the national rate itself was very close to what used to be considered “full employment” before the issue became so politicized.

More specific to our own situation, the Scottsdale Airpark Corridor is reportedly booming. Commercial vacancy rates are back where they were before the recession and projections indicate that the 54,000 jobs currently available in this five square mile area will grow to 75,000 in the next few years.

Interest Rates and the Fed!

Of course, nothing is ever that clear cut or simple. An increase in the Fed Funds rates in September looked like a forgone conclusion and, in fact, was going to be the main focus of this column. That was until the Chinese decided that this was the perfect time to admit that their “economic miracle” might need some tweaking and a stock market, that had been looking for a correction anyway, decided to go all in.

The decision to proceed with an increase now seems considerably less certain but, then again, “who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men” (other than the Shadow, of course). More importantly at the moment, mortgage rates have actually dropped significantly since the date of our last publication. They are down an average of about 5% in each loan category. Now, I’m know that I’m prejudiced, but it could be that the marketplace is giving everyone one last change.

(Continued on page 7)
Seller’s Market or Not?

Much has been written in the national media lately about how we’re now in a seller’s market and, given our relatively sparse inventory and our very decent level of buyer interest, that’s technically accurate. Unfortunately, the appreciation numbers for MMR are not reflecting that shift….yet!

As we went to press, there were just 59 homes for sale in the community and that’s just a bit more than half of what used to be considered customary at this time of year. By the way, you may have noticed that I specifically avoided using the term “normal” in that last sentence. That’s because I no longer have a firm idea of what that means.

The YTD prices valley-wide are estimated to be up about 10% but our market has, for the most part, been relatively flat. In fact, if you examine the chart on the previous page you’ll find that strictly speaking, we’ve slipped about 2.36% in value since the first of the year. However, that’s actually a bit of a statistical anomaly and I doubt that anyone would say that it accurately reflects the situation. The prevailing wisdom is that we’re still dealing with the virtually balanced market that’s been in place for the last year or so.

Part of the reason for the strength of the valley-wide market is that the “growth” is being generated in the lower price ranges. Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that the homes priced under $300,000 are the ones that are selling quickly and drawing the kind of aggressive offers that tend to drive values

(Continued on page 17)
RESALE ACTIVITY AT THE RANCH

Address | Subdivision | Model | Price | Sq Ft | Br | Gar | Pool
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
16420 N TPP #2021 | Cachet | Heritage | $270,000 | 1338 | 2 | 1 | N
16420 N TPP #1133 | Cachet | Monarch | $324,900 | 1659 | 2+Den | 2 | N
16420 N TPP #2058 | Cachet | Monarch | $335,000 | 1659 | 2+Den | 2 | N
16420 N TPP #1073 | Cachet | Monarch | $350,000 | 1659 | 2+Den | 2 | N
16600 N TPP #2083 | The Ridge | Monarch | $350,000 | 1674 | 3 | 2 | N
16600 N TPP #1077 | The Ridge | Legacy | $359,000 | 1890 | 2+Den | 2 | N
10386 E Satillo Dr | Discovery Trails | Catalina | $380,000 | 1504 | 3 | 2 | Y
14952 N 103rd Way | The Preserve | Avalon | $387,000 | 1702 | 3 | 2 | N
10448 E Texas Sage | The Preserve | Avalon | $389,000 | 1702 | 3 | 2 | N
14852 N 103rd St | The Preserve | Avalon | $392,500 | 1702 | 3 | 2 | Y
14803 N 103rd St | The Preserve | Avalon | $395,000 | 1702 | 3 | 2 | Y
14927 N 103rd Wy | The Preserve | Avalon | $419,900 | 1702 | 3 | 2 | Y
11480 E Raintree Dr | Sunrise Point | Saguarro | $425,000 | 1430 | 2 | 2 | N
15806 N 107th Pl | Castle Chase |Carlisle | $425,000 | 1489 | 3 | 2 | N
10423 E Texas Sage | The Preserve | Avalon | $427,900 | 1702 | 3 | 2 | Y
10412 E Acoma Dr | Sunset Point | #1912 | $434,900 | 2114 | 3 | 2 | Y
10266 E Mallow Cir | The Preserve | Brisas | $439,000 | 2132 | 4 | 2 | Y
10376 E Acoma Dr | Sunset Point | #1912 | $464,900 | 2114 | 3+Den | 2 | N
10426 E Coniesson Rd | Sonoran Fairways | Cottonwood | $474,900 | 2077 | 4 | 3 | N
10719 E Autumn Sage | Castle Chase |Helmley | $475,000 | 1681 | 3 | 2 | N
10604 E Autumn Sage | Castle Chase |Stirling | $475,000 | 1701 | 2+Den | 2 | Y
16738 N 106th St | Arizona Highlands |Santan | $500,000 | 2200 | 4 | 3 | N
14632 N 103rd Wy | Sunset Point | | $510,000 | 2488 | 4 | 2 | Y
16093 N 107th St | The Overlook |Ironwood | $510,000 | 2613 | 3 | 2 | N
10390 E Bahia Dr | Eagle Ridge | #3344 | $535,000 | 2367 | 3+Den | 2 | N
10479 E Morning Star | Panorama Pt | Ironwood | $550,000 | 2711 | 4+Den | 3 | Y
10562 E Morning Star | Panorama Point | Ironwood | $575,000 | 2711 | 4 | 3 | Y
10614 N Blanche Dr | Cimarron Hills |La Jolla | $589,000 | 2312 | 3 | 2 | Y
10671 E Caribbean Ln | Cimarron Hills |La Jolla | $589,000 | 2328 | 3 | 2 | N
10426 E Helm Dr | Sunset Point | #2787 | $599,000 | 2797 | 4+Loft | 3 | Y
16591 N 105th Wy | Arizona Highlands |Picacho | $629,000 | 2696 | 4 | 3 | Y
10867 E Acacia Dr | Armonico | Tierra | $654,900 | 2413 | 4 | 3 | Y
10761 E Gelding Dr | Sienna Canyon |Catalina | $698,000 | 2738 | 4 | 3 | Y
1448 N 113th Pl | Sunrise Point |Cardelback | $699,000 | 2429 | 3 | 2 | N
16720 N 109th St | Vermillion | #923 | $700,000 | 3027 | 3+Den | 2 | Y
10634 E Raintree Dr | Desert Cliffs | | $725,000 | 3509 | 4+Bonus | 3 | N
11125 E Evans Rd | Sienna Canyon |La Palma | $749,900 | 2936 | 4 | 3 | Y
10914 E Gelding Dr | Sienna Canyon |Talavera | $750,000 | 3801 | 5+Den | 3 | Y
1085 E Evans Rd | Sienna Canyon |Talavera | $750,000 | 3808 | 6+Loft | 3 | Y
16933 N 102nd Way | Montecito | | $750,000 | 3847 | 4+Den | 3 | N
14138 N 106th St | Sienna Canyon |Talavera | $765,000 | 3801 | 5+Den | 3 | Y
16580 N 109th Wy | Trovas |Francesca | $770,000 | 3618 | 4 | 3 | Y
10727 E Palm Ridge | Sienna Canyon |Talavera | $774,900 | 3801 | 5+Loft | 3 | Y
16532 N 108th St | Armonico | Ladera | $779,000 | 3596 | 5 | 3 | Y
10903 E Winchomb Dr | Sienna Canyon |Talavera | $779,000 | 3801 | 5+Den | 3 | Y
16198 N 109th St | Trovas |Dante | $780,000 | 3297 | 3+Den | 3 | Y
11045 E Raintree Dr | Desert Cliffs | | $789,000 | 3498 | 5 | 3 | Y

**OUR STUFF** - Although the listings and transactions shown in this publication involve a variety of organizations and agents, you’ll note that all of our Team’s listings and sales are printed in **BOLD BLUE TYPE** and **UNDERLINED.**
COMING UP NEXT MONTH

There are just 59 homes on the market in MMR right now. That’s just a three months supply and, statistically speaking, should mean that prices will begin creeping up pretty soon. Can’t wait to see what Autumn has in store for us.

HOMES CURRENTLY FOR SALE CONT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Sq ft</th>
<th>Br</th>
<th>Gar</th>
<th>Pool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10601 N 114th W</td>
<td>Discovery Canyon</td>
<td>Sabino</td>
<td>$365,000</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10644 E Penstemon Dr</td>
<td>Discovery Canyon</td>
<td>Sabino</td>
<td>$365,000</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>3</td>
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PENDING & UCB * TRANSACTIONS

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<tr>
<th>Address</th>
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<th>Gar</th>
<th>Pool</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16715 N 108th W</td>
<td>Discovery Canyon</td>
<td>Sabino</td>
<td>$385,000</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10272 E Acacia Dr</td>
<td>Discovery Canyon</td>
<td>Sabino</td>
<td>$385,000</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OUR INVENTORY— There are just 59 homes on the market in MMR right now. That’s just a three months supply and, statistically speaking, should mean that prices will begin creeping up pretty soon. Can’t wait to see what Autumn has in store for us.

*UNDER CONTRACT-BACKUPS (UCB) Indicates that there’s an accepted contract on the property, but the sellers have requested that the home continue to be marketed in hopes of getting backup offers. As a practical matter, these listings receive little, if any, attention within the real estate community. However, when inventory grows very scarce, there is a possibility that they might draw some interest.
CLOSED SALES IN JULY & AUGUST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Subdivision</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Sq ft</th>
<th>Br</th>
<th>Gar</th>
<th>Pool</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16420 N TPP #2131</td>
<td>Cachet</td>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>$236,000</td>
<td>1338</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16150 N 102nd Way</td>
<td>Discovery Trls</td>
<td>Cholla</td>
<td>$285,000</td>
<td>1093</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16420 N TPP #2103</td>
<td>Cachet</td>
<td>Monarch</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
<td>1659</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10348 E Caribbean Ln</td>
<td>Discovery Canyon</td>
<td>Sunset</td>
<td>$359,500</td>
<td>1622</td>
<td>3+Den</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10418 E Saltillo Dr</td>
<td>Discovery Trails</td>
<td>Catalina</td>
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OUR TEAM’S FABULOUS PERFORMANCE– It may not be apparent at first glance but our team was actually responsible for almost 20% of the sales that closed in MMR during July and August. Actually, we’ve been the #1 team servicing the community for more than 15 years.
### RESALE ACTIVITY AT THE RANCH

#### ACTIVE RENTALS

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#### RENTALS RENTED IN JULY & AUGUST

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**DATA COLLECTION CUTOFFS:** Full disclosure requires that we advise you that these lists were not assembled at the end of the month but on 8-30-2015. Accommodating our newsletter production schedule generally requires us to forgo a few days worth of data from the end of the month. The delay to report on the city council meeting means that the possibility that materially impacting the resulting stats should actually be a great deal less than usual this time around.
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their actions thus far suggest that they have a well-thought-out strategy for achieving their goal that does not include “distractions”.

They appear to have built their organization quietly to avoid triggering any opposition or competition, to have approached the City to issue an RFQ only when they were ready to file an application (it’s doubtful that this project was any sort of a priority for the folks at City Hall) and persuaded the City to do so at a lightly publicized and attended work study meeting that had virtually no press coverage.

We’ve also tried many times to reach out to them for comment but have been told that they are in a self-imposed “quiet phase” and won’t be speaking to the media or anyone else until the contract is signed. I guess the ball’s in our court now!

The Desert Canyon Center

If you’ve driven by the Desert Canyon Center on MMR Road recently, you may have noticed some activity in the storefront on the west side that was once occupied by the landlord, Whitestone REIT. That work is in preparation for a new tenant, HonorHealth, that is planning on opening there in early November. If you’re not already familiar with the organization, it’s probably because it only made its formal debut on the scene in March. It does, however, have a long and highly respected relationship with residents of the Northeast Valley. It’s actually the organization that was formed by the merger of Scottsdale Healthcare and the John C. Lincoln Health Network.

The organization’s goal is to “make healthy personal” and opening a new Medical Group practice in our community is a manifestation of that philosophy. When they first open, the office will house two primary care physicians, Christopher Finlay, MD and Stacey Dault, DO, both of whom are board-certified in family medicine, have strong clinical interest in sports medicine and will be accepting new patients.

We’ll be welcoming them aboard in our next edition by treating them as our featured business. Needless to say, we expect to have a great deal more information to share about their services at that time.

Whitestone has also finished prepping the remaining office space on the 2nd floor of the main building and has already signed a lease for one of the two resulting offices. Unfortunately neither the name or type of business was available at the time we went to press. If you have any interest in the one remaining space, you can contact Property Manager, John Huntley at 480/397-1907.

Our Local Business Climate

In addition to the impending opening of the new HonorHealth medical facility, there have been several other significant changes on the local commercial scene. The first was the decision by Holland Boone, the polished pew-ter and home accessories shop that was located on Bell Road and 90th Street, to alter their marketing strategy and focus on providing their products online.

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Looking Back...

Just 5 Years Ago*

September 2010 - Commercially speaking, the community was still working its way out of the recession. The Desert Canyon Center was in the process of being foreclosed on and the Auto Salon (now the site of Tom’s Thumb) had just closed its doors. Still, there were some positive signs. Caffé Portobello changed hands and was reinvented as Twisted Lizard Tavern and Grille, Amore Sports Grill replaced Oggis, Temple Bar was in the process of applying for an upgraded liquor license and we debuted our Facebook page. Unfortunately, there were 120 homes for sale in MMR and property values were down 9.3% YTD.

Only 10 Years Ago*

September 2005 - The McDowell Mountain Marketplace took center stage this month. Circle K submitted an application to build a convenience store/gas station/car wash on the corner parcel that’s now being considered for an Italian restaurant and both Satori Sushi and the Chicago Pizza J oyn opened their doors. The City announced that it would begin grading the TPP “extension” sometime in November. We described interest rates as being staggeringly low. They were at 5.375% for a 30-year loan and we were in the midst of the “madness”. There were 63 homes on the market in the community.

About 15 Years Ago*

September 2000 - Centrefund, a Toronto based developer purchased what is now known as the McDowell Mountain Marketplace. The Library and Park Improvement Bond was on the September ballot. Scottsdale Education Center was planning to open it’s doors in the new Desert Canyon Center (curiously enough, it’s our featured business once again this month — 15 years later). The newsletter was expanded to 8 pages to accommodate the 100 homes then on the market. Rates for a 30-year mortgage just dropped to 7.75% and the average sale price was about $315,000.
SAFEWAY INSTALLS SOLAR CELLS

Like most desert dwellers, you’ll probably park your car half a lot away under a scraggly 10-foot-tall Palo Verde tree just to get a wee bit of shade. After all, nothing melts ice cream faster than a super-heated car.

Well, Safeway in the Scottsdale Horizon Center is just finishing up a project that will help your car stay a bit cooler while you shop: solar cells now cover much of the lot right in front of the store.

While the new cells are actually expected to provide about 23 percent of the store’s annual electrical energy needs, shoppers generally seem more enthusiastic about their value as a source of shade. Editor’s note: As great as the change is for all concerned, I wish they had seized the opportunity to reconfigure the lot itself. I’ve never quite understood the logic of the current layout.

The effort is part of Safeway’s goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent from 2010 to 2020. Toward that end they’ve even upgraded the parking lot lights to be motion sensitive so that they don’t waste energy when there are no vehicles in the vicinity. Perhaps there’s some hope for the planet yet!

Interestingly enough, while the retail store has closed, the owners aren’t actually saying goodbye to the neighborhood. They will be continuing to operate the smoothie bar that they added in the last year or so and will be using the remaining space to develop a new fitness facility. We wish them well 😊

The second major change was the departure of Champion Field, the sports bar that occupied the SW corner of Bell and Pima Roads. This was at least the fourth attempt to develop a sports related venue at this site and it’s probably time to conclude that the only way that something will thrive at this location is if it offers a product so unique that it can’t be found elsewhere. There are just too many similar establishments within a 10 minute drive for a new sports bar to get any traction.

The final change was the departure of the GoodWill drop off store in the McDowell Mountain Marketplace. Alas, this wasn’t really a great surprise. While it proved to be a convenience on several occasions, a neighborhood shopping center was a fairly odd choice of location, particularly since there’s another store right across Frank Lloyd Wright in the Safeway shopping center.

The only lamentable thing about the departure is that it may signal the return of the differently serviced clothing drop off boxes. Fortunately, the Marketplace has exciting things in the works right now (i.e. a new Italian restaurant — see rendering — and the animal rescue facility) that this minor blip should have little, if any, discernable impact.

There is one other change to the commercial scene that’s deserving of note and that’s the fact that one of our longtime advertisers, Dennis Piluri, the owner of Westworld Landscape Brokers, has retired. The last time we spoke, he was traveling the beautiful (and relatively cool) northeastern U.S. So we’re actually more envious about the situation than sad. Congratulations Dennis, we’ll miss you!

SPOTLIGHT (CONTINUED)

HOA Update

As has become customary over the last few years, the board of directors elected to pass on their July meeting. That made it all the more surprising that the session on August 25th took just a little more than a half hour to conduct. Personally I’d consider that good news. Particularly when the housekeeping segment of the meeting included a report that our reserve fund is currently at 97% and should make it to 100% by years end.

Beyond that, the two most compelling items discussed were the status of the Trovas gate and the possibility of creating a permanent facility for Pickleball (a.k.a. the fastest growing sport in the country).

As to the Trovas situation, the majority of those responding to a community plebiscite suggested replacing the hydraulic system for the front gate with a less expensive version that opens the gates without lifting them first.

(Continued on page 16)
Scottsdale Education Center

Coincidentally enough, we first introduced the Scottsdale Education Center (SEC) to the MMR community in our September 2000 issue. That’s precisely 15 years ago for those of you who, like myself, have not had the benefit of their services and still count primarily on their fingers. At the time, they were located in the Desert Canyon Center but they long ago outgrew that facility and moved to their current location on the SE corner of 91st Street and Bell Road.

SEC is actually one of the state’s premier college prep support centers and inspires and motivates over 1300 students each year to be the best they can be academically and as happy, productive individuals who believe in themselves.

SEC offers a huge array of educational support services designed to assist each student to reach their full potential and to achieve their goals — whether that be graduating high school, attending one of our in-state universities, an out-of-state institution or even an Ivy League school. The programs are flexible and can be adapted to the student’s specific needs and aspirations.

Their services include tutoring in specific subjects, SAT/ACT test preparation, study and test taking skills, homework support, ADD/ADHD coaching, diagnostic testing, college coaching and much, much more.

New this Fall is SEC’s on-line class support program. With so many students nationwide taking on-line classes for high school or college credit, on-line support for those courses can be hugely valuable in providing additional help in mastering the material. SEC tutors can now offer local students the convenience of on-line tutoring and can even service other students nationwide.

Tutors at SEC are all current or retired AZ certified teachers, private high school instructors or experts in their fields. Collectively, they have over 200 years of experience! Moreover, they’re also quite familiar with the curriculums offered by most public and private schools in the area. Not only are they experts in their fields; but, to be associated with SEC, they must also have a passion for mentoring students to reach their potential.

In fact, their services are in such demand that SEC has just expanded their space by about 60% to include additional tutors, more classes and more resources.

Actually, what really makes SEC particularly special are the owners, Dave and Kim Duckworth. They have a unique capacity for compassion and an extraordinary ability to make both parents and students feel safe and supported.

Regardless of whether you have a student who is at risk or one who is gifted and would like to master honors or AP classes, Kim and Dave will embrace them, help them gain confidence, motivate them, hold them accountable and share sincerely in their journey.

Beyond that, Kim and Dave are also a wonderful source of information regarding curriculums, study skills, test taking, college entrance exams, essay writing, college planning and applications and so much more.

A perfect case in point is Kim and Dave’s extensive knowledge about the upcoming changes in SAT testing and specifically how to best prepare for the new test which includes a “no calculator” rule on a section of the math testing and significant information about many of “America’s Founding documents”. They can even help you evaluate whether your child might be better off planning to take the SAT before these changes go into effect.

It does take a village to raise a child and our kids simply can’t have enough sincere people around who believe in them and who want to mentor, support and help them reach their full potential. Please call 480/538-0828 or visit their website at www.sectutoring.com for more information.

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This would allow the gates to operate much more quickly. The association will rebid the project using the new specs.

The Pickleball question actually drew so much interest that the evening’s attendance rivaled that of the last annual meeting. The discussion centered on the success of the summer program sponsored by my sales team and the added value that a permanent facility would bring to the community.

In general, the tenor of the discussion was quite positive and, for the most part, the focus was on how to do it, where to locate it and what sort of approvals might be needed, rather than the relative merits of the idea.

The finance committee indicated that there would be little impact on operating expenses and estimated that the allocated cost of the project would range from $10 to $40 per household depending on the specific course of action selected, a relatively minuscule sum when compared to the value it would add to the community.

By the way, if you’re planning to attend the next meeting, you should know that the date has been shifted to 9/29 to accommodate the Jewish High Holiday of Yom Kippur.

SoHo in Scottsdale?
The Sales and Design Center for SOHO Scottsdale, the highly anticipated new luxury live/work project that’s located on Bahia Road just one block south of Bell, has just opened.

The center itself is actually located in the McDowell Mountain Medical Building at 9377 E. Bell Road, Ste. 101 and it’s the perfect place to gather all the details about the project and to get a feel for the finished product.

There’ll be 10 Luxury Live/Work lofts, 18 Live/Work Townhomes and 8,000 SF of restaurant and retail space in Phase 1 of the project.

If you’d feel more comfortable working with someone who can guide you through the purchase process, help with selections, etc., please feel free to reach out to any member of my team.

Ground breaking is slated for October and phase one should be completed by the fourth quarter of 2016.

Harley Davidson Goes Vroom!

If you have ventured down Hayden just south of Frank Lloyd Wright lately, you’ve undoubtedly noticed the massive construction project underway on the west side of the street. This will be the largest retail Harley-Davidson operation in North America when it opens in November! The primary reason that is of significance to us over here in MMR is that the driving force behind this enterprise is Bob Parsons, the same person responsible for our own McDowell Mountain Marketplace.

Bob really seems to put his heart and soul into his projects and the specs on this place are amazing. You’ll have to wait for our next edition for more details but, in the interim, mark your calendars for the Grand Opening. It’s going to be a weekend long celebration (November 5th to 6th) that will culminate with a concert by the “The Doobie Brothers” and a personal appearance by “Tig” (Kim Coates) from the “Sons of Anarchy” TV show.

OdySea Takes Shape
The obstacle course known as the 101 Freeway is probably forcing you to keep eyes peeled on the road ahead of you. However, if you risk a glance to the east (toward Via de Ventura Road), as you travel south on the 101 you’ll see a giant construction crane hanging out in front of Butterfly Wonderland.

The crane is being used to erect the 16-acre, $175 million OdySea Aquarium, which is slated to open in July of next year.

In mid September, construction crews will begin erecting the 58-foot-tall walls of the aquarium and installing the large acrylic windows for the fish tanks. That should be quite a sight, but we couldn’t get a commitment on the date when the hammerhead sharks will be dropped into their new home.
higher. The phenomenon intensifies as the prices drop and, in fact, anything priced under $200,000 that’s in good condition and in a desirable location will likely draw multiple offers. As you can see from the price range chart on page 6, we’re not really an active participant in either of those categories.

On the other hand, as you can see from the charts on page 7, the community’s general market performance indicators are just fine. Prices are holding firm and our “speed of sale” still beats the rest of the market by a considerable margin. With those factors in mind, I’m perfectly content to wait to see whether or not the arrival of fall kicks our market into gear.

New Construction

New construction has always played a key role in the valley’s economy and it appears that it’s ready to fulfill that obligation once again. Homebuilding permits in the valley were up 55% in July and for the first time in years, builders are beginning to complain that they can’t find enough skilled construction workers to help satisfy the demand.

This is good news for Scottsdale because, in pre-recession days, construction fees produced about 15% of the revenue needed to run the city. Unfortunately, most of the developable land remaining in the city is actually state property. However, we’ll be reaching out to the Arizona State Land Department shortly to see what plans they might have for making that land available in the near future.

Investor Interest Declines

Headlines that include the word “declines” are usually not indicators of positive change. However, this case is the exception.

Back in 2012, investors (speculators might actually be a more accurate term), accounted for as many as 25% of the transactions in the Scottsdale market and we were quite happy to have them on the scene. Frankly, they helped clean up all the foreclosure and short sale inventory that was barring the way to economic recovery. In fact, they did such a good job that they allowed Scottsdale and the Valley to begin recovering value much earlier than most markets elsewhere in the country.

In fact, their efficiency is one reason that I can be somewhat philosophical about recent reports of “exciting” value growth in areas like the Northeast while our own situation seems to be a little tepid. What’s happening is that their markets are finally experiencing the part of the recovery process that we went through two or three years ago. In essence, we booked all that equity a long time ago.

It can be interesting to examine why market areas respond differently and there are actually a number of reasons why it took the Northeast longer to get to this point.

The top two, in my humble opinion, are the fact that homes in that region are much more expensive and, with the mortgage markets virtually closed to investors, self financing was a much more difficult proposition. The other is that the foreclosure process in most northeastern states is a fairly protracted legal quagmire that can take years to navigate while ours is a non-judicial system that generally takes less than 90 days from the time a Notice of Default is filed.

In any event, investor purchases in Scottsdale now account for just 12% to 13% of the market, a number that most would consider relatively normal (there’s that word again). That’s a significant indication that our market is now pretty healthy and that we can go back to worrying about all the other things in our lives that can complicate our existence.
The Pickleball program that was sponsored by our Team over the course of the summer formally ended its run on September 2nd but in some ways it feels like we’re actually at the beginning of something rather special. Our program ran weekly from Memorial Day to Labor Day and, generally speaking, had two stated goals. The first was to introduce a game that has become something of a national phenomenon to the community and the second was to try to identify a group of individuals who would both build on our initial effort from an organizational standpoint and perhaps even pursue the idea of creating formal court facilities within the community.

Our reasons were simple and the first was admittedly just a little self-serving. As a real estate sales team, we quite frankly believe that communities with Pickleball facilities and clubs are going to be a draw for relocating retirees and high-level competitors in the years to come. In fact, we have our first piece of anecdotal evidence to support that contention. One of the individuals whom we expect to help drive this effort forward actually purchased his home in MMR based in part on the fact that we were trying to get a Pickleball-oriented program together.

The second reason was the opportunities it created for socialization. This was also borne out during our summer effort as we watched participants not only show up for our scheduled events each week but also pair up, borrow equipment, and arrange to play on alternative dates.

By the way, the attendance was wonderful. It reached as high as 40+ on occasion but generally hovered around two dozen, which is a remarkable number when you consider that we could only accommodate a dozen players at a time and the temperatures reached as high as 115°F on some of our play dates.

We anticipate that both attendance and the socialization opportunities will each be greatly enhanced once the snowbirds return to the scene and we begin to introduce more social opportunities into the planning. After all, more than half the sign-ups when we first announced the program back in April were people who indicated their enthusiasm but announced they were leaving for the summer.

In any event, having carried things this far, we have no intention of dropping the ball now. We’re going to continue to support the effort to bring the game to the community in any way we can. However, we’re also hopeful that we can turn the operational elements of the program over to the newly formed McDowell Mountain Ranch Pickleball Club (MMRPBC) and their coterie of volunteers.

Incidentally, the first order of business for the MMRPBC was actually to ask the HOA’s Board of Directors to include the construction of dedicated courts in the budget for the next fiscal year. They did that at the Board’s meeting on August 25th and received what members of the group felt was an encouraging response. The Board has asked Mike Woolington, the Community Manager, to investigate the cost and logistical challenges involved.

One of the ideas proposed involved repurposing the site currently occupied by the virtually unused volleyball court. However, it seems that might require the formal approval of MMR residents and could result in an unusually protracted process.

If you’d like more information about the club itself or to track the progress of their efforts, please visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mmrpbc. In the interim, we’ll do our best to keep you in the loop.

Look for us this later fall when the MMRPBC plans to make their formal debut. We’re planning to help sponsor the kick off event and may even be offering awards and prizes to the participants.
Solar Power Revisited

There’s a great deal of controversy surrounding the economic advantages of solar power these days and much of it revolves around the efforts by utilities like APS and SRP to either recoup their fair share of the infrastructure costs or to deliberately handicap a potential competitor.

While the truth seems to be a matter of perspective, the bottom line is that the dispute has probably caused a great many people to delay making a commitment to this exciting alternative power source. Regardless, I’m sure that once these issues are resolved, we’ll see solar power become an increasingly significant factor in our marketplace.

What’s of particular concern to me as a Realtor is how solar panel installations might impact the sale of a home. Not surprisingly, the situation is very different depending upon whether the system is leased or owned.

My team and I actually had our first two transactions involving leased systems just recently and, fortunately, both went off without a hitch. However, the options in such cases are limited. The buyer either has to agree to assume the lease or the seller has to remove the system to a new location serviced by the same utility or, if that’s not possible, pay off the lease in its entirety. Quite obviously, finding a viable solution to the dilemma can be the key to selling the home involved.

On the positive side of the solar equation, a consensus is finally beginning to form regarding the value of those systems that’ve been purchased directly. Appraisers, who’ve been reluctant to tackle the issue previously, are finally beginning to address it in a more formal manner and other market participants also seem to be more willing to discuss the impact that an installation has on pricing. In fact, the Department of Energy just released research indicating that buyers are generally willing to pay a $15,000 premium for a home with an “average” solar powered system.

Things are changing rapidly in this particular arena and the impact on the real estate industry could potentially be dramatic. I plan to devote a series of articles to the situation in subsequent editions.

Oktoberfest is Coming!

The HOA’s entertainment committee is hoping to build on the success of last year’s event and we’ll be there again to help out in any way we can. The date is Saturday, October 24th and we’ll be reprising our very popular Pumpkin Patch exhibit.

Once again, we’ll be ably assisted by the great folks from MMR Vendors who will be offering everyone the opportunity to decorate those pumpkins before they take them home. Please stop by our “booth” to say hello and join the fun!
We’ve Been The “Best Selling” Realtors in McDowell Mountain Ranch for More Than a Decade and a Half.

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September-October 2015