



Montevista Community Corner Newsletter March 2024



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The Landscape Committee reports that tree trimming will begin in May for the upcoming monsoon/nonsoon season. Designated trees will be tagged beforehand. In addition, the Landscape Committee has been in routine talks with Shea Homes regarding the sewer easement. According to Shea, this process turned out to be much more complicated than anticipated resulting in multiple delays and frustration for many. However, progress is being made and there is a light at the end of the tunnel. A meeting recently took place with representatives from this committee and Shea Homes to include management, architects, landscapers and irrigation experts - all of whom are committed to returning the easement as close as possible to the way it looked prior to the beginning of this project.

The Communications Committee announced that updates have been made to our Montevista website, mymontevista.com. Check it out!

The Architectural Committee has seen an uptick in requests for repainting of homes. Once again, it is imperative that residents submit a completed architectural form and await its approval prior to making any changes to the exterior of the home. This includes, but is not limited to paint, gravel, turf, exterior structural changes, etc. Once such changes have been approved and work has been completed, a member of the Architectural Committee will come out to make sure any changes made are in compliance with the approved requests.

Christine Harper has now joined the Architectural Committee and is working to simplify our current system of choosing the right paint colors for your home/elevation. Feel free to contact her or our other volunteers via our website if you have any questions.





Did You Know?

The tot lot will soon have a brand-new canopy to replace the old torn one. Lookin' good, Montevista!

Residents and their pets are not the only ones enjoying the sunshine and warmer temperatures. So are rattlesnakes who have already come out of hiding to soak up some sun. As they prefer feeding on small rodents, if your home provides a habitat for mice, rats, and the like, you may just find a rattlesnake nearby. They also like to seek shelter in sheds or other structures; even your garage to hide and protect themselves from the elements. Tall grass, dense shrubs, and other vegetation create cover for rattlers and their prey. Piles of rocks, debris and clutter make good hiding places for rattlesnakes, too, so be careful when you venture outside. If you do come in contact with a snake, it is best to contact a professional snake removal service, pest control company or local animal control agency to have them removed.

Reminders!

Montevista would like to remind our residents to visit our advertisers! They are all hardworking folks who are eager for you to check them out. When you do, remember to let them know that you are from Montevista. They look forward to meeting you and seeing their advertising dollars at work. Be sure to check out this month's Honeybaked Ham ad as it has a special discount for our residents!

Next Board Meeting
Thursday, March 21st
at 6:00 pm
via Zoom



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Too Close for Comfort

There have been a slew of recent burglaries of high-end homes throughout Scottsdale, as well as other parts of the Valley in recent months, by a syndicate referred to by police as the South American Theft Group (SATG). According to the City of Scottsdale Dinner-time Town Hall Meeting held on February 27th, this group is made up of "crime tourists" aka Chilean tourist burglars. These highly-organized criminal groups enter the United States through ESTA (the Electronic System for Travel Authorization), whereby they only need to answer a few questions and vow they are not criminals in order to obtain a VISA waiver, fly into the U.S. and then disappear among us. Once here, the police, FBI, Homeland Security, etc., have no access to any information about them and no fingerprints. The "tourists" then obtain fake IDs, live in short-term rentals, hotels, or with others from their host country and their criminal sprees begin.

So, what is known about these offenders and what is their MO? According to Scottsdale PD, these are fast, illusive and professional groups that work in crews of 4-5 (males and females) targeting high-end homes near golf courses and large washes to steal cash, non-serialized jewelry, precious metals and high-end purses to sell on the black market (not guns). Their objective is to be in and out of one's home in 5-10 minutes (smash and grab). Perpetrators usually scale a fence to enter a home through windowed sliders in a backyard or a bathroom window. They use WiFi jammers to disable Wifi and cell service thus disabling alarm systems and other security devices that are not hardwired. They prefer to target two-story homes where master bedrooms are known to be located and such items typically found; homes that they believe to be vacant during the hours of 4-8. They are usually dropped off by vehicles with in-state plates, some stolen. The burglars like to switch things up using different cars and targeting different areas. They do not carry weapons or use physical force; thus, no homeowners or pets have been injured or killed to date. There have been no kidnappings or child abductions. They prefer to avoid confrontation as this would risk them being identified and thrown in jail.

If you see suspicious activity or a crime in progress (in these cases persons dressed in hoodies, "looking like ninjas," wearing gloves and masks, and smashing windows), call 911 immediately. The Scottsdale Police Department is currently operating with increased patrols in order to be able to respond more quickly to calls. Surveillance teams have been created to monitor criminal activity via infrared drones, helicopters, electronics, additional undercover agents and more with local and state police, FBI, and other agencies working together across the United States. These burglaries are currently the #1 priority of the Scottsdale PD. If you are unable to report suspicious activity in a timely manner (suspects have already left the area), please report what you see anyway by contacting the Scottsdale PD non-emergency line at 480-312-5000, option 6. Should you see suspicious activity around our community, which has NOT been reported to date, one can contact the City of Phoenix non-emergency line (Crime Stop) at 602-266-6151.

Too Close for Comfort...

What can you do at your home? Get to know your neighbors! Not just those next door, but across the street and in your community. Notify neighbors if you will be out of town and familiarize yourself with their cars. Become each others' eyes and ears. Be vigilant! Remove valuables from your master bedroom! This is the burglars' prime target. Make sure you have an alarm system that works. Activated systems with glass breakage sensors, as well as hard-wired interactive cameras and motion-activated lights on the outside of your home may help delay entry to it. Leaving inside lights and TVs on in different places throughout your home when you are gone are also deterrents, as are security screens and shatterproof window film along with putting valuables in a heavy safe outside the master bedroom/bathroom and preferably bolted to the foundation so they cannot be carried out. For those who live out of state several months of the year, hurricane shutters are an option. Notifying neighbors when you will be gone is a must! According to the Scottsdale PD, communities helping communities is the key to solving this problem with the common denominator in arrests made so far being police and community working together.

What should you not do? According to Scottsdale PD, the most common question posed to them is, "Can I shoot them?" In the State of Arizona, if you are confronted by an intruder inside your home, unless you have an "articulable" fear for your life or the life of a person in your home, or a belief that you may be grievously injured, you do NOT have the right to shoot the intruder. Doing so can land you in jail. If you do own a firearm, it is recommended that you take a Firearm Defensive Handgun Class and secure your firearms) in a safe place, especially if young people live in your house. Should you be in a wash or on a trail hiking, biking, jogging, etc., be aware that in Scottsdale in particular, there is an increased number of undercover patrol officers monitoring our washes. If you spot someone who you think may be a criminal, do not confront them. It could be that it is an undercover officer that you are confronting. Once again, it is worth mentioning that these intruders are not looking for confrontation. If they feel they have been spotted, they are very likely to flee.





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KNOW YOUR ACRONYMS



WHAT IS AN HOA?

An HOA, otherwise known as a Homeowners Association, is an organization in a planned community such as ours that makes and enforces rules for the property and its residents. HOAs are typically created by a real estate developer, in our case Toll Brothers, as a way of ensuring that the community continues to flourish. It accomplishes this by establishing and enforcing rules (CC&Rs) whose goals are to maintain and improve shared spaces and make sure that the community looks its best and functions smoothly.

WHAT ARE CC&Rs?

No planned community can function without a Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions, also known as CC&Rs. CC&Rs are the rules and limitations of a planned community usually created by a real estate developer to preserve and enhance property values in an area. Such rules define what one can and cannot do with their property. The term CC&Rs refers to a legal document that lists all such rules and regulations for an HOA community. It is filed with the county recorder's office becoming a part of the official real estate records for the land and community. When purchasing a property in an HOA community, residents must sign a document stating that they have read the CC&Rs and agree to abide by them. Once a real estate developer turns over a planned community to its residents, a HOA Board is established along with a management company (in our case AZCMS) to monitor compliance towards rules and regulations through regular inspections. Should violations occur, various types of penalties such as verbal and/or written warnings, penalties and fines.

WHAT ARE AGLS?

Architectural Guidelines or AGLS (not a real acronym - LOL) are separate from CC&Rs. They are a governing document that complements CC&Rs by providing more specificity. They exist in order to help maintain property values. In general, such guidelines control modifications made to the exterior of one's property. They are administered by a review committee that is responsible for enforcing standards and reviewing members' applications for additions or modifications to determine whether they are consistent with community guidelines.

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Springing into March

What You Need to Know

The Arizona desert has two optimal growing seasons, Spring and Fall. Daytime temperatures and the amount of sunlight vary dramatically between these seasons, so it is important to know how to take care of your plants accordingly.

March is a great time to begin to prune plants to prepare for the growing season. Such cutbacks allow for the removal of dead and dying plant material due to frost effects and opens them up to receive more sunshine and nutrients at their core to help them bloom as temperatures warm up.

Selective thinning is one method used to prune plants. It involves removing branches back to the point of attachment with another branch, or to the ground. This will open up the canopy and increase exposure to light and air while maintaining the natural growth habit of the shrub.

Spring is also a good time to begin to revitalize dormant Bermuda grass back to its lush summer lawn by applying soil conditioners to it such as gypsum or sulfur. Such conditioners can increase water retention and work to loosen compacted soils that tend to lock up important nutrients.



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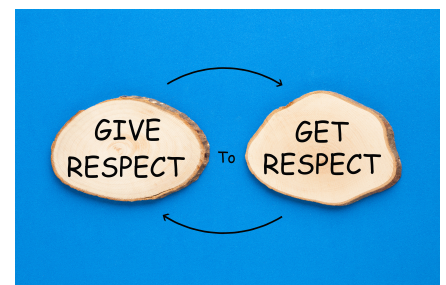


Parking Etiquette 101

Attention homeowners! The HOA and AZCMS have been receiving a significant increase in complaints from residents regarding parking issues. These complaints are in reference to a variety of things such as: Cars being parked on sidewalks; service vehicles/guests of a residence being parked in front of other residents' homes creating an inconvenience and eyesore for them when space is available at their own residence; parking against the flow of traffic with vehicles driving down the road in the improper lane in conflict with vehicles using the correct flow of traffic; and residents parking in highly congested areas by the main park where emergency vehicles, school buses, garbage trucks, moving vans, landscape trucks/trailers, delivery drivers and other large vehicles have difficulty seeing oncoming traffic with the increased potential for accidents involving vehicles as well as residents and their children.

Our Montevista HOA looks to our CC&Rs, as well as the City of Phoenix traffic codes for guidelines when it comes to parking issues within our community out of concern for the safety and well-being of all of our residents. Such guidelines include parking on a sidewalk; blocking a driveway or area of a sidewalk, or impeding pedestrian use of a sidewalk in a manner that is not consistent with the Americans With Disabilities Act.

Once again, out of respect for the safety and well-being of all of our residents, please take note of the above-mentioned concerns. Treat your fellow neighbors as you would like to be treated in return. The HOA does not want to resort to the use and expense of hiring a parking company or other means of parking enforcement. Thus, your cooperation would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.





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SCAN TO SEE PROJECT PHOTOS
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Mystery on the Mountain

The Cougar Chasing Prey is about to rear its larger-than-life shadow on the western face of the Superstition Mountains in Apache Junction. This enormous shadow appears twice a year for one week during the third week of March and September when the sun shines equally day and night; an awesome phenomenon as the sun sets at exactly the right latitude on the western horizon. The actual sighting depends upon one's viewing location and the weather. The last 30 minutes before the official sunset is to occur is prime time for viewing. For an unobstructed view, head out to the vicinity of Superstition Boulevard and Goldfield Road in Apache Junction where there is a wide shoulder on the east side of Goldfield Road to pull off.



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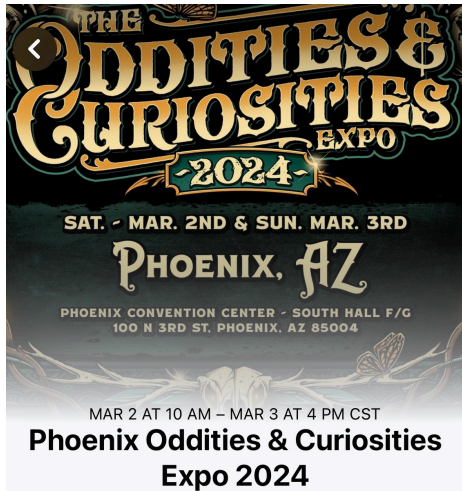
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March Fun for Everyone



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FRI, MAR 8 - MAR 10
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FRI, MAR 15 - MAR 17
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SAT, MAR 23 - MAR 24
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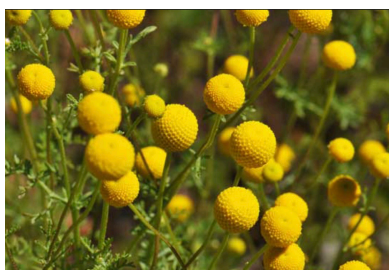
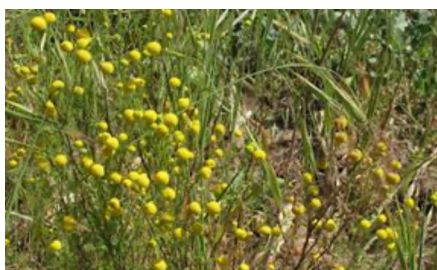
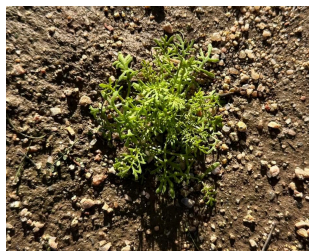
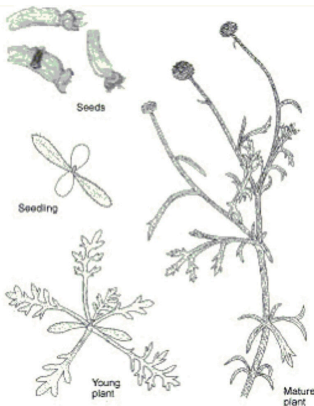


This Stinks

With our recent rains, Stinknet (globe chamomile) has already started to rear its ugly head and will only become worse as the weather begins to warm prior to our scorching summer heat. This weed starts out in the winter as a dense clump with small dark-green leaves, but it quickly grows into a much bigger shrub that produces bright, circular yellow flowers when exposed to rain and warmer temperatures. This plant is highly invasive, capable of spreading into natural areas overtaking and killing native foliage. If not removed, it will dry out as the weather heats up and turn into a fire risk with caustic smoke that presents a hazard to health and home.

Stinknet got its name from the pungent odor it releases when crushed. It was declared a Noxious Weed in 2020 by the State of Arizona and has been linked to contact dermatitis and respiratory distress.

Removing Stinknet is not a simple thing to do. Once it has died and dried, it is easy for a weed whacker to create a spark and subsequent fire. It is therefore imperative that one have a hose or fire extinguisher on hand if using this method to try and get rid of it, which is best to do as soon as possible to avoid further spread. Stinknet must be removed, roots and all, so that it will not grow back. Once removed, shrubs should immediately be placed into a garbage bag so as not to spread more seeds.



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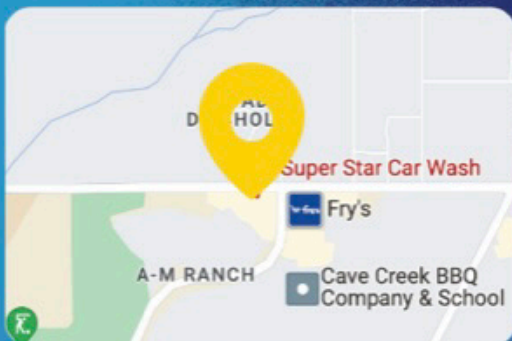
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Recipe of the Month

Key Lime Tarts

INGREDIENTS:

24 Key Lime Cooler Cookies or crushed Archer Farms Key Lime cookie straws (Target) or graham cracker crumbs.

8 oz cream cheese softened.

1 egg

1/2 cup sugar

2 Tbsp key lime juice

1 Tsp lime zest

fresh sweetened whipped cream or Reddi Whip.

fresh sliced strawberries

Topping:

1/4 cup sour cream

1/8 cup sugar

1/4 Tsp vanilla

2 Tsp key lime juice



DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Fill mini muffin trays or one 12 cupcake tin with paper cups and spray cups with cooking spray. Place one Key Lime Cooler cookie in each cup flat side down or crush cookies or crumbs in bag with rolling pin and add about one-third stick melted butter or margarine and form into cups.

Prepare filling: Cream together cream cheese, egg, sugar, lime juice and zest until well mixed. Fill the cups to the top, bake **10-12 minutes** for minis, **20 minutes** for cupcake size. Remove tarts to cool.

When tarts are completely cool, fit a star tip in a pastry bag and fill with the whipped cream. Pipe the whipped cream on top of the tarts or use dollop of Reddi Whip and garnish with slice of fresh strawberry or lime zest.

Mix all ingredients well. Spread on top of tarts once cooked, then cook an additional **three minutes**. Remove from oven and cool. Prevents cookies from sinking.

Refrigerate when done - **eight hours** if possible.

