



January 2023

Happy New Year!

2023

Happy New Year Sunridgers! We'd like to share some good news with you (always nice to start of the new year with good news!):

* The new landscaping in our community is healthy and looks good. Our landscaper added more solar lighting to the cul-de-sacs and will be exchanging a few plantings based on feedback from residents. These changes are free of charge as our landscape company, [Southwest Grounds](#), wants to ensure our community is delighted with their products and services. If you have feedback about the landscaping, please contact Board Member [Shari Colson](#) to let her know your thoughts.

* The Association's move to electronic billing and, now, electronic payment has been a big success! We worked with our bank to set up a Zelle account. Many of our residents took advantage of the new electronic payment method and sent their annual dues via Zelle. Thank you to all residents for prompt payment of the annual dues statement. If you did not receive a statement in your email or mailbox, please contact [Loretta Dominguez](#), the Association's bookkeeper, to let her know.



Board Member Mark Gilkes

Meet New Board Member Mark Gilkes

The house Mark Gilkes lives in on Piping Rock Road was not the house he intended to purchase. He was living in Santa Barbara, CA, but a divorce and the oh-so-high cost of homes prompted him to look for a new start somewhere else. He had work ties to Tucson and liked the area, especially Oro Valley.

After reviewing dozens of listings with his agent, he found a house that seemed perfect. A showing was set, and he flew into town. It seemed so perfect on paper but once he walked in, he knew immediately it was not the right house. The house just did not feel right. The realtor noted there was an open house close by and they took a look.

He walked in and knew this was the right house for him. In May of 2021, he moved into a wonderful home in Sunridge Estates.

Mark was born in Britain; he grew up there and in Barbados. He had not planned on living in the U.S.... that decision was an 'accident.' While driving late one night in Barbados, he fell asleep and suffered a serious accident. So serious that Barbados did not have the facilities to treat him, so he was transported to Florida for medical care.

He lived through it but would require a long period of recovery. It was unsure if he would ever walk again.

His father (a respected poet, dramatist and filmmaker) took a faculty position with Indiana University and Mark traveled with him to be with the family during his recovery. While the accident left physical disabilities (a pronounced limp), it certainly did not affect his mental prowess. Mark graduated from Indiana University and worked as a physicist at several labs across the U.S.

Mark eventually moved to Santa Barbara and transitioned his career into software engineering. He now works for a Santa Barbara-based high-tech sensor division of Raytheon. He primarily works from home but when he needs to be in Santa Barbara, it is not too far to drive.

When he is not working, Mark loves to exercise, compose music, and write poetry. His Sunridge home has enough space for him to have a music studio. Currently he is collaborating remotely with professional musicians on an album he hopes to release in a year or two. While writing poetry does not require a lot of space, he said the view from his window on the expanse of the Santa Catalina Mountains certainly is inspiring.

As for exercise, Mark loves running and can be seen EARLY in the morning running through the neighborhood. The limp that has remained since his auto accident is a

challenge when running, requiring a lot of focus. But as you might expect, he has not let it hold him back. He has run the Pier-to-Peak half marathon in Santa Barbara 11 times.

Between work and play, Mark does not have a lot of time to volunteer. Thankfully, he made an exception for his Sunridge community and is now on the Board of the homeowners' association. -- Written by: Michael Theis



This isn't Sunridge... yet. Let's keep Sunridge Estates a beautiful community: please abide by HOA rules and park vehicles in the garage.

Reminder: Please Park Vehicles in Your Garage

We've noticed several residents with one or more vehicles consistently parked in their driveway (instead of in their garage). Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the [HOA rules](#) regarding vehicle parking. The rules are in place to ensure Sunridge Estates continues to be a sought-after neighborhood, known for its aesthetic appeal, well-built homes, and steady property values.



Sunridge resident Jay Hillmer would like neighbors to consider attending the OVPD Citizen Academy.

Sunridge Resident Encourages Neighbors to Join Upcoming OVPD Citizen Academy

Wouldn't you like to be an ambassador? One of our Sunridge Estates II residents graduated from the Oro Valley Police Department (OVPD) Citizen Academy and is now an ambassador. Jay Hillmer, who lives on Sedona Ridge Place, helps form a stronger bridge between the community and the OVPD by providing feedback to the department and representing it and the community at a variety of functions like Coffee with a Cop, National Night Out and other events.

So, what is the Citizen Academy and why should you consider it? The Citizen Academy provides the public with information on the OVPD. It consists of twelve free classes with a different topic covered each week. Instruction is provided by sworn police personnel and civilian staff. The goal is to provide citizens information to dispel misconceptions. Citizens, in turn, provide officers and civilian staff feedback on community concerns.

Jay decided to attend the Academy in order to contribute and give back to the community in which he lives. Jay served in the United States Army for decades and retired in 2004. He said being in the military gave him a strong sense of commitment to country and community.

At the OVPD Citizen Academy, Jay learned from all of the class subjects, but some (like K-9 Unit and Mental Health Support Team) were really fascinating to him. He said the police and employees who conduct the training are doing it on their own time, which shows their commitment to the program.

Some graduates of the Citizen Academy (including Jay) go on to volunteer for the OVPD Citizen Volunteer Assistants Program (CVAP). Jay noted that Oro Valley has a very active volunteer community; at the time he took the training, there were 74 volunteers who assist the police officers. They are a great help to the police force that has a little over 100 officers.

The next OVPD Citizen Academy begins January 31. Jay said he's happy to answer any questions neighbors may have or you can visit the [OVPD Citizen Academy website](#). -- Written by: Michael Theis

Sunridge Estates HOA Board

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