



Mesquite Ranch Community Crier

Mesquite Ranch Neighborhood Association

Summer 2008 Volume IV Issue 1

2008-2009

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been some time since the MRNA has distributed a newsletter but it's certainly not due to a lack of community activity. A lot has happened this year and on top of the list is the opening of the new Senita Valley Elementary School. Students from all over Mesquite Ranch and neighboring Civano and Desert Willow communities are benefitting from another quality school right in their own backyard. Mesquite Ranch has also benefitted from two community yard sales and clean-ups and we broke in Fall with a Hawaiian Luau which was quite an event. If you missed it, residents will have another chance next month to participate in the upcoming western BBQ which will be packed with great grub, roping, dancing and lots of prizes for kids and adults. The MRNA also has a new Board of Directors that are ready to serve you and offer the community some fun surprises this coming year.

MRNA residents continue to contribute volunteers for Ward IV and community events. Eight Mesquite Ranch volunteers contributed time and talents to the 8th Annual Back-to-School Bash in early August, distributing thousands of dollars in school supplies, backpacks, and raffle tickets to all participating students within the Ward IV boundaries. MRNA salutes Gail Kocourek, Pauline Gross, Paige Calloway, Drew Calloway, Jillian Calloway, Sylvia Katvala, Karina Trumbull, and Randall Pierce for their unselfish contributions to this important community event.

The Houghton Widening Project planning continues. MRNA was successful in ensuring traffic signals will be located at Poorman and Bilby Roads and a southbound left turn from Houghton Road onto Forest Glen has all been planned. Each intersection will be improved with lighting and two RTA bus stops will be installed on Houghton at Poorman and Bilby.

If you haven't attended a MRNA monthly meeting, I would encourage residents to make the extra effort to attend regular meetings. The meeting location has moved to the new Senita Valley Elementary facility so walking to meetings is now an option! The MRNA works hard to keep meetings interesting and relevant to the community. Next meeting is September 2nd at 6:30pm and we'll be discussing Marquette Street access options to the school grounds. Come early as it is anticipated this meeting will be heavily attended.



It was with great sorrow MRNA learned that Mesquite Ranch friend and resident Harold "Paul" Gross passed away on July 6, 2008. Paul was born July 6, 1920, in Lewis-town, PA., was a veteran of WWII serving with the 24th Army Signal Corp at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and was a Pearl Harbor Survivor. Mr. Gross was a treasured role model to the Mesquite Ranch community and was an avid supporter of MRNA. His presence, with his wife Pauline, at monthly meetings was inspiring to all who attended and his contributions helped shape MRNA to what it is today. Mrs. Pauline Gross and daughter Gail Kocourek remain active in the MRNA. God Speed Mr. Gross, you served your country and community with honor and you shall be missed!



SENITA VALLEY ELEMENTARY OPENS DOORS

July 14, 2008 was an exciting day for students, parents, and staff. Senita Valley Elementary opened its doors to 570 K-8th grade students. The staff was ready to teach and the students were ready to learn.

Senita Valley has the same instructional programs found at other Vail Schools. The fine arts, music, art and P.E. are a part of every student's day. The school library has 6,000 new books ready for students to check out. The students are anxiously awaiting for the Accelerated Reader program to begin. There are numerous after school extra-curricular activities that include Band, Choir, Orchestra, Intramurals, Garden Club, Spanish Club, Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, Computer Club, Reading Club, School Newspaper, and others that are being developed. Everyone is looking forward to an awesome year. August 28th, 2008 at 6:00 p.m., school dedication and family picnic.

Connie Erickson

Principal, Senita Valley Elementary School

MARQUETTE STREET ACCESS OPEN - Vail School District has opened the pedestrian and bicycle access to Senita Valley Elementary School on East Marquette Street. Students and parents can now walk or ride bikes to get to school by using this convenient access point from within the Mesquite Ranch community. Bike and scooter riders should exercise caution as the path leading down to the school is steep and losing control on the pavement will cause lots of "Owueeeees"! Senita Valley Elementary requires that helmets be worn when riding bikes to school. Residents are reminded that there are no designated drop-off points at the Marquette Street access gate. Parents driving students to school should drive them to the student drop off area on school grounds using Bilby Road. MRNA, MRHOA, and Ward 4 are working to establish a student drop-off area on the west side of Bach Drive at Marquette Street and provide appropriate signage.

BILBY SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION BEGINS - Ward 4 has informed MRNA that a sidewalk will be installed on the south side of Bilby road from Metropolitan Road to the school grounds. Construction has begun and a November completion is anticipated. Parents and students using Bilby are requested to exercise caution when crossing Bilby Road to get to the school grounds. Please do not use the south side of Bilby Road during construction of the sidewalk.

SOCIAL HAPPENINGS

MRNA DONATIONS - All residents should know that the MRNA does not require dues to be a part of YOUR neighborhood association. Over the last year MRNA has sponsored several community events that were FUN and enjoyable for those residents who chose to participate, and we look forward to sponsoring more innovative and creative activities that will mean fun for all ages. MRNA is seeking donations from residents so that these activities may be funded without incurring personal debt from board members. If you would like to contribute monetary donations to MRNA, you may do so by mailing your contribution to MRNA at the address at the bottom of this page or contacting the MRNA Treasurer at mrnatreasurer@mesquiteranch.org. MRNA has a long list of activities which YOU have suggested...with your help, we CAN!

COMMUNITY BBQ - Cowboy and Cowgirl UP because the MRNA is planning a Fall BBQ that will knock yer BOOTs off! The event will be held on Saturday, September 13, 2008 at the East Pool Facility. If you have never attended an MRNA community BBQ or Luau, you are missing one great time of tasty grub, FREE whistle wettin' drinks, games for the kids, great music and friendly neighborhood conversation. One thing about that grub is undeniable, it TASTES DARN GOOD! From smoked brisket and barbecued chicken, hamburgers and hot dogs, and resident's contribution of their own excellent recipes no one will leave hungry! Residents should plan to bring one of their favorite fixin's but don't plan on leftovers! So lasso the family, stop in, relax, and share some time with neighbors! A hickory smoked prime rib will be raffled off to one lucky resident!!

Karina Trumbull, MRNA's Social Director, would also like to reach out to community residents who would like to participate in the planning or execution of any social event. There are a lot of creative people out there who have excellent social skills and enjoy supporting worthwhile events that raise the quality of life in our community. If you would like to contribute your time or expertise putting together a community event, email Karina at mrnadirector1@mesquiteranch.org or call MRNA at 444-2024.

Mesquite Ranch *Neighborhood Association*

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Tucson, AZ 85747

Phone: (520) 444-2024

Email: mrna@mesquiteranch.org

Website: www.mesquiteranch.org



PLANS & DEVELOPMENT

HOUGHTON ROAD WIDENING PROJECT - The Houghton Road Widening Project planning continues with plans nearing 30 percent completion. Houghton Road will be widened to allow six lanes of traffic, however, only four lanes will be paved with the remaining two lanes available for future paving. The project will occur in three phases. Phase 1 from I-10 to Valencia will begin in July 2008, with expected completion in 2009. Phase 2 from Valencia to Irvington will begin in late 2009 with completion approximately one year later. Phase 3 will begin after Phase 2 is completed. When the widening project is completed, the assigned speed limit will be 45 mph during daytime AND night time hours.

A new hard and soft walking path system will be installed along Houghton between the road and Mesquite Ranch. Two RTA Bus Stops will be installed, one on the northeast corner of Houghton and Poorman and the other on the northeast corner of Houghton and Bilby. A new Florida "T" signal control will be installed at Houghton and Poorman and southbound left-hand turn lane will be installed for access to Forest Glen. No left-hand turn onto Houghton from Forest Glen will be allowed.

The Community Design Review Committee, consisting of City and Neighborhood Association leaders will be scheduling open houses to communicate progress to the community within the next few months. Other planned development includes development at Valencia and Drexel believed to be for a Valero gas station/mini mart, Eastside Church of Christ has purchased land at Houghton and Escalante to build a church, and Home Depot/Target are still planning a multi-retail development on land between Old Vail Road to the railroad tracks.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE USE - The illegal operation of off-road vehicles in and around the Mesquite Ranch subdivision has declined in past months in part to the educational efforts of the Tucson Police Department and the State Game and Fish Department. Seventy-three people were stopped and warned of operating violations including two weapon violations.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

WATCHFUL EYES - It's getting close to that time when snakes and other critters prepare for the cooler days of fall by eating more. Eating more means hunting more and the possibility of becoming more visible. If you find a dangerous critter call animal control first. If people or pets are in immediate danger, you may call MRNA at 444-2024 to help resolve the issue.

FALL YARD SALE AND CLEANUP - The next yard sale and community cleanup will be scheduled sometime in October 2008. Four roll-off containers will be ordered and placed throughout the community for residents to discard tree and shrub clippings and those items around the house that are truly junk. Please visit the MRNA website for up-to-date information.

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY

MRNA MOVES TO PROVIDE SAFE EAST BOUNDARY - MRNA Board of Directors gained Vail School District approval to close access to a 5' eastern perimeter VSD strip of land to prevent access to the area. Residents have reported at least seven rattlesnake encounters prompting the move which will help to alleviate a potential danger to curious students looking for an alternative route to school. MRNA takes student safety seriously and if this action prevents one mishap, it will be worth the effort.

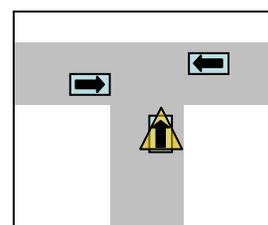
WILDCAT DUMPING IS NOT COOL - MRNA has reported increased dumping east of the Mesquite Ranch subdivision just north of Poorman Road. If residents observe unauthorized dumping of trash or construction material, please call 911 and report the activity to police OR contact MRNA at 444.2024. Violators face stiff fines. Please use proper refuse disposal discipline.

BILBY ROAD SIGNAGE TO GET FACELIFT - TPD Traffic Division and City Traffic Engineers are working with MRNA and Ward 4 to update existing signage on Bilby Road. Additional speed limit signage will be installed to increase safety to students and other pedestrian traffic making their way to and from school grounds. In addition, TPD will step up speed enforcement east of Houghton Road and the City will be looking to ensure speed signs are consistent with existing city statutes.

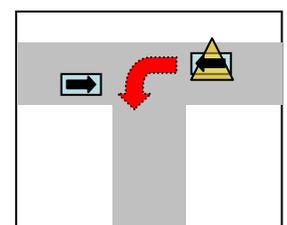
WATCH THOSE "T" SECTIONS - Now that Senita Valley Elementary School has opened, there are several "T" sections that are experiencing increased foot, bike, and scooter traffic due to students walking to school within the community. East Marquette Street is now an access point for foot and bicycle traffic to the school complex and, believe me, there are a lot of pedestrians, bicycles and scooters on the road between 7:30am - 8:00am AND 2:30 - 3:00pm. Residents are asked to pay special attention when driving near the following "T" sections: Bach and Marquette, Metropolitan and Marquette, Bach and Malta, and Metropolitan and Malta. The illustration to the left depicts proper "T" intersection yielding.

Yielding 101

There are 21 "T" intersections in Mesquite Ranch. Be sure to yield the right of way according to basic traffic rules. Need a refresher?



Vehicles in the stem of the T always yield.



Vehicles turning left always yield.



MESQUITE RANCH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Regular Meeting:

Tuesday - September 2, 2008 - 6:30 P.M.

Senita Valley Elementary - 10750 E. Bilby Road

Multi Purpose Room

ALL Mesquite Ranch residents are invited to attend the next MRNA Monthly Meeting. Residents have requested a special meeting to revisit Marquette Street access to the new Vail School District School complex east of our subdivision. Specifically, residents will discuss AND VOTE on inclusion of vehicular access to the school grounds from Marquette Street. Interested residents should come prepared to offer their thoughts concerning the access point with regard to student and neighborhood safety. In addition, residents will consider AND VOTE on receiving a volunteer to fill the last remaining MRNA board position.

All community residents should know that when you receive mailers, newsletters, or flyers that indicate a VOTE will be taken, your attendance is particularly important to vote on community issues. Non-attendance means decisions will be made without your input. This is YOUR Neighborhood Association! Come Happy...Leave Happy!

Have You Registered for "MRNAInfo" Information List?

MRNA has implemented a very innovative and useful communication tool in our community. MRNAInfo is a subscription service that places subscribers on an information email list that will quickly and efficiently inform them of meetings, agendas, and community happenings on a periodic basis. Subscriber emails are not shared or sold to anyone so you won't have to worry about getting strange emails from people you don't know! If you would like to subscribe to MRNAInfo, please email mrna@mesquiteranch.org for instructions. Its fast, efficient, informative and you'll always know what's happening!

For questions, please contact Randall Pierce at mrna@mesquiteranch.org or call 520.444.2024.