

Grayhawk Flight

A young girl with light brown hair in a bun, wearing a bright pink sleeveless dress and patterned leggings, sits on a green and blue plaid picnic blanket. She is holding a white cup with blue floral patterns and eating from it. The background is a soft-focus green lawn. To her right, a person's leg in grey pants is visible. In the foreground, there is a blue and silver thermos and a clear plastic water bottle.

June 2018

Inside:

Update on the CC&R Amendment

Confessions of a Plant Geek



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Features



17 Our Desert,
Our Home



18 Community
Garage Sale

INSIDE SCOOP

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Grayhawk Community Association

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CCMC
7940 E. Thompson Peak Pkwy.
Suite 102
Scottsdale, AZ 85255
www.grayhawkcommunity.org

Phone
(480) 563-9708

RSVP
(480) 563-9839

Fax
(480) 563-9709

Talon Guardhouse/Roving Patrol
(480) 502-7685

Raptor Guardhouse
(480) 502-5078

Hours of Operation
Monday - Friday
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

GRAYHAWK STAFF



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Community Manager
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Sarah Van Duyne
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Maintenance Supervisor
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Anthony Day
Maintenance Assistant
aday@ccmcnet.com

On the Cover
Summertime Fun

Manager's Corner



This month I thought I would update you on the numerous projects and issues that the on-site staff for the Grayhawk Community Association (GCA) and Retreat Village Association (RVA) has been working on for the past couple months and will be working on in the upcoming months. While some of our events and activities might slow down a little during the summer months, our projects continue to keep us very busy.

The on-site crew for Grayhawk's landscape contractor DLC Resources has finished the seasonal pruning throughout the community for this year. You may have noticed the DLC Resources tree crew throughout the community as they continue with the annual tree trimming project in which we crown thin 900-1,000 trees each year. DLC Resources will also be working several erosion repair projects this summer as well as removing overgrowth and plant debris from the Deer Valley Channel in accordance with the City of Scottsdale guidelines as recommended by Wood Patel for the Rawhide Wash Floodplain project. DLC has also completed this year's landscape enhancement project with the installation of new plants and trees throughout the community.

Speaking of the Rawhide Wash Floodplain, the Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) project to remove the west side of Grayhawk from the Rawhide Wash floodplain is continuing to move forward and has been accepted by FEMA for review after Grayhawk received approval of this project from the City of Scottsdale. It will likely still take several more months before FEMA makes their determination whether to remove this portion of Grayhawk from the floodplain which would eliminate the requirement for homeowners in this area to carry flood insurance.

The wall and fence painting project in the Serenity neighborhood began last month and the GCA's painting contractor, Advanced Painting, will begin prepping the stucco on the common area walls in the Los Vientos neighborhood in early June and will be painting the wrought iron view fences in Los Vientos later this month. The common area walls and view fencing in the Firenze neighborhood will also be painted later this year.

The GCA has completed the installation of new audio/visual equipment in the Talon Room in the GCA office. The new system is much less complex and is approximately half the cost of the original A/V equipment.

The street sealing project in the Peregrine Villas, Peregrine Vistas, Crown Point, and Talon Fairways neighborhoods is scheduled to be done from June 4 – 8. Also, last year the streets in the Los Vientos, Firenze, and Serenity neighborhoods were sealcoated, however, the manufacturer of the sealcoating product had a problem with the batch of sealcoat that was used last year on this project so these neighborhoods will be sealcoated again at no cost to the association from June 11-15. Homeowners in these neighborhoods who will be affected by these street repairs will be notified of the schedule for this project in late May.

Work on the GCA and RVA 2017 audits is nearing completion by the GCA's auditing firm of Mansperger Patterson and McMullin.

Finally, the RVA's gate maintenance contractor, Park Pro, has installed new operators and cameras at several of the entry gates in the Retreat Village and we will be looking at some possible upgrades to the gate access system during the summer months.

We'll talk again soon.

Michael Fee

Grayhawk Community Manager

GRAYHAWK ADVERTISING

The Grayhawk Community Association (GCA) offers advertising as a service to our community and does not support or endorse the products, persons or services advertised in the Flight. GCA shall not be held liable or responsible for any misleading or incorrect advertising.

BOARD MEETINGS – JUNE 2018

Board meetings are open to residents and we encourage you to attend.
Your involvement does make a difference!

Grayhawk Board of Directors

Mon., June 4 at 5:30 p.m. in the Talon Room,
GCA office
Grayhawk_board@grayhawkcommunity.org

Grayhawk Board of Directors Executive Session Meeting

The Board of Directors will be meeting in
Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. Section
33-1804 (A)(3) at 5:00 p.m. in the GCA office.

Retreat Village Board of Directors

Mon., June 4 following GCA meeting in the
Talon Room, GCA office
Retreat_board@grayhawkcommunity.org

Retreat Village Board of Directors Executive Session Meeting

The Board of Directors will be meeting in
Executive Session pursuant to A.R.S. Section
33-1804 (A)(3) at 5:00 p.m. in the GCA office.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Communications Committee

Call Jennifer Sheets at 480-563-9708 for
more information.

Event Planning Committee

Call Sarah Van Dwyne at 480-563-9708
for more information.

Landscape Committee

Call Stacey Harvey at 480-563-9708 for
more information.

Operational Review Committee

Call Stacey Harvey at 480-563-9708 for
more information.

Architectural Review Committee

Tues., June 5 and 19 at 4:30 p.m. at the
GCA office.



OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

Avian Condominium Association Board Meeting

No meeting scheduled. Call Associated
Property Management 480-941-1077
for details.

Cachet at Grayhawk Condominium Association Board Meeting

No meeting scheduled. Call FirstService
Residential at 480-551-4300 for details.

Crown Point Board Meeting

Call Stacey Harvey at 480-563-9708
for details.

Edge Condominium Association Board Meeting

Visit www.theedgegrayhawk.com or call
480-584-4647 for details.

Encore Condominium Association Board Meeting

Wed., June 20 at 6:30 p.m. in the Encore
Clubhouse. Call HOAMCO at 480-994-4479
for details.

Tesoro Condominium Association Board Meeting

Mon., June 25 at 6 p.m. in Tesoro Clubhouse
Call Kinney Management at 480-820-3451
for details.

Venu Condominium Association Board Meeting

Tues., June 19 at 7 p.m. in the Venu
Greatroom. Call Associated Property
Management at 480-941-1077 for details.

Village at Grayhawk Condominium Association Board Meeting

Thur., June 21 at 6 p.m. in the Raptor Room,
GCA office. Call FirstService Residential at
480-551-4300 for details.

Vintage Condominium Association Board Meeting

No meeting scheduled. Call Associated
Property Management at 480-941-1077
for details.

Grayhawk Community Association Board Members

Linda Shaw
President

Paul Alessio
Vice President

Jeanette Griswold
Treasurer

David Van Omen
Secretary

Margo Bellock
Director

Robert Mann
Director

Richard Zielinski
Director

Retreat Village Association Board Members

Arlene Smith
President

Ira Mallin
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Patrick Thompson
Treasurer

Mitchell Cooper
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Alan Fernandez
Director

VISION

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MISSION STATEMENT

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Association strives to enhance
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participation and pragmatic
stewardship of human,
financial and environmental
assets.

Grayhawk Master Association Board of Directors Meeting – May 7, 2018

Linda Shaw introduced Richard Zielinski who is the newest member to the Board of Directors.

A resident shared her concern over string lights at the home behind her and the height of the pole on which they are hung. Management will look into this further.

Development Committee

David Van Omen reported that the City of Scottsdale recently decided to hire Wood Patel Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$667,424 for advancement of the design of the Reata Wash Flood Control Project.

Paul Alessio reported that he had met with an Arizona State Land Department representative regarding the Crossroads East project which encompasses the property roughly from Grayhawk's southern border to Princess Blvd. and Scottsdale Road to the east of the power lines near the City of Scottsdale Water Campus. There is interest from a Fortune 100 company in purchasing the first parcel that will be auctioned off by the State Land Department. The state is anticipating the land will house retail, office space, apartments and possibly a 130-400 room hotel. A total of 450,000 square feet of non-residential space must be built before apartments are added.

Operational Review Committee

Stacey Harvey reported that the committee did not meet.

Landscape Committee

Arlene Smith reported that the committee did not meet. DLC Resources continues to work on the routine cycle maintenance of the community landscaping. During the past month, DLC has continued to focus on monitoring the water usage throughout the community. The watering schedule for the turf areas soon will be cut back in an attempt to get the winter rye grass to die off and promote the growth of the summer Bermuda grass.

Post emergent is continuing to be applied to weeds and volunteer plant material. The tree pruning project is approximately 75% complete and the crew is continuing with the seasonal pruning of about one-third of the shrubs in the common areas.

Community Enhancement Committee

Bob Mann reported that the committee recently reviewed and discussed the

proposals/projects submitted by all eight condominium associations for funding through the GCA community enhancement fund, and three landscape proposals submitted by management.

The Community Enhancement Committee is recommending GCA Board approval of the condominium association projects and three proposals submitted by DLC Resources to be funded by the GCA community enhancement fund:

A motion was made and approved to fund \$15,000 toward a keyless entry system for the pool areas at Avian.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$15,000 to upgrade and expand the bathrooms at the community center at Cachet at Grayhawk.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$13,104 for erosion repair and landscape enhancement at the Edge.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$13,775 for exterior lighting enhancements in the pool area at Encore.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$7,935.52 to Tesoro for two projects. Those projects include installation of a keyless entry system for the bathrooms in the pool area and additional security cameras, as well as installation of five pet waste stations

A motion was made and approved to fund \$17,000 to upgrade the irrigation system and install 750 new plants at Venu.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$16,095.00 for automated chlorine/chemical feeding system for the three pools at the Village at Grayhawk.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$16,920.00 for major erosion repair along 76th Street adjacent to the property at Vintage at Grayhawk.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$5,023.00 for erosion repair under the sidewalk between Avian and Crown Point Norte.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$5,327.00 for sediment removal from a drop structure in the Deer Valley Channel per the City of Scottsdale as recommended by Wood Patel for the Rawhide Wash Floodplain project.

A motion was made and approved to fund \$22,248.00 for remediation of the Deer Valley Channel per the City of Scottsdale as recommended by Wood Patel

for the Rawhide Wash Floodplain project.

Event Planning Committee

Margo Bellock reported that the committee continues to look at charitable partnerships, and has narrowed their selection down to five organizations. Members of the committee hope to do site visits with those organizations soon.

Sarah Van Duyn reported that there were over 600 people at this year's Family BBQ and Movie Night. The Golf Tournament was a huge success. Small changes were made this year that had a big impact on the overall event. Upcoming events include the Just For Her Tea Party and an in-home wine tasting.

Communications Committee

Jennifer Sheets reported that the new website is still in process. Some members of the committee recently met to look over final aesthetics before the content transfer begins.

Coventry at Grayhawk recently held the block party they earned as the winners of the CC&R amendment vote contest. Over 75 people signed up to attend and Sunland Asphalt provided hot dogs and hamburgers.

Architectural Review Committee

Paul Alessio reported that there were meetings on April 3 and 7. The committee has been seeing a lot more unique submittals, including new entryways, pavers, and light fixtures.

The monument sign project is moving slowly but still underway. Paint and stone samples are up.

Budget/Finance Committee

Jeanette Griswold reported that the committee did not meet.

Executive Committee

Linda Shaw reported that there was a condo Board presidents meeting in April. A Board member orientation was also held recently for the newest member of the GCA Board of Directors Richard Zielinski.

Voting for the CC&R Amendment to restrict short term rentals officially closed on April 30. In the 12+ months that the GCA gathered votes for this proposed amendment, the GCA received 1,996 total votes, of which 1,673 (approximately 84%) were in favor of amending the proposed

CC&R amendment to prohibit short-term rental properties less than 30 days in length. This fell well short of the 2,536 “Yes” votes needed to pass the amendment and at the April 2 GCA Board meeting, the Board of Directors agreed not to extend the deadline past April 30.

New Business

A motion was made and approved to accept Michael Loya as a new member on the Communications Committee and Scott Darnall as a new member on the Community Enhancement Committee.

Treasurer's Report

Jeanette Griswold reported that there was an increase in revenue, but expenses are also over budget largely in part to social event expenses, however, the GCA is still ahead of budget through the first three months of 2018. Over \$80,000 was taken in Community Enhancement Fees, totaling \$184,000 year to date.

Management Report

Michael Fee reported that maintenance assistant Anthony Day has transferred to another CCMC property closer to his home and a new maintenance assistant has been hired. The new maintenance assistant will start on May 14.

The new A/V equipment is completely installed in the Talon Room. It is more user friendly and cost half as much as the original equipment.

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Vet Spotlight

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Ann Fan, DVM
Medical Director

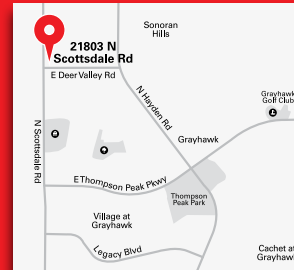
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Thanks to David Van Omen and Andrew Bloom with Keller Williams AZ Realty, Pinnacle Dental Services and Mo Hamideh with Homeowner's Financial Services for sponsoring the 2018 Family BBQ and Movie Night.



New Resident Orientation

Wed., June 13 at 6 pm

Talon Room, GCA office, 7940 E. Thompson Peak Pkwy, Ste. 102

Join us to learn more about your community and all it has to offer. Meet your neighbors, learn a bit about the association and win prizes! Bring your appetite- appetizers, desserts and water will be served. Kids are welcome. RSVP to 480-563-9839 by Monday, June 11.



Night at the Movies

Thurs., June 21 at 5:30 pm

Harkins 101, 7000 E Mayo Blvd., Phoenix

Gather your family and friends and come join us at Harkins 101 for a private Grayhawk movie night. We are going to be showing Incredibles 2 at no cost to you! Our wonderful sponsors are providing the tickets; you are just responsible for your own concession purchases. This popular series is rated PG. Please watch the reviews and decide if this movie is appropriate for your child. Feel free to view the trailer by copying this link into your browser: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5qOzqD9Rms>. Thanks to our sponsors Movement Mortgage, Kathy Craig and Nancy Costlow-Skin Care Consultants with Rodan + Fields, and Kelley Carter & John Doering, Realtors with The Agency Group at HomeSmartElite for providing the free movie night. Space is limited. RSVP to 480-563-9839 by Monday, June 18.

Child and Babysitting Safety Certification Class

Mon., June 25 from 9 am to 1 pm

Raptor Room, GCA Office, 7940 E. Thompson Peak Pkwy, Ste. 102

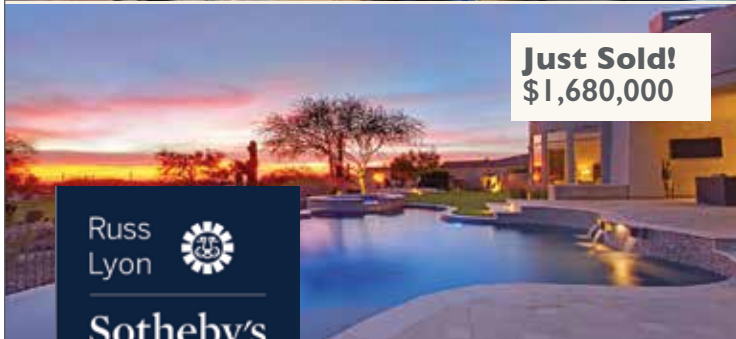
This popular class covers infant/child safety and basic care techniques for present or would-be babysitters. Topics cover everything from pediatric CPR and first aid to basic child safety and diaper changing. A workbook for participants to keep is included in the course fee. Certification cards are issued upon successful completion of the course. Certification is valid for two years. Participants must be at least 10 years old and up to 17 years old to participate. Price is \$40 and includes a pizza lunch. Payment may be made in cash or check. Checks can be made out to "ABC's of CPR". RSVP to 480-563-9839 and prepay by Thursday, June 21. We must have at least 8 participants to hold this class so please RSVP early. Non-Grayhawk residents are welcome to register, so spread the word!



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Ladies Bunco

Tues., June 26 at 6 pm

Raptor Room, GCA Office, 7940 E. Thompson Peak Pkwy, Ste. 102

Join neighbors for a night of food, drinks and Bunco! Never played before? Don't worry! It's an easy dice game – all you need to know is how to roll dice and count. We'll do a quick lesson before we get started. All you need to do is bring yourself, \$5 and an appetizer OR a bottle of wine to share. Your \$5 will go into the pot for cash prizes at the end of the night. RSVP to 480-563-9839 and prepay \$5 to the GCA office by Thursday, June 21 to hold your spot.

COMING SOON

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Chess Wizards Summer Chess Camp

July 23 to July 27 from 9 am to 3 pm

Talon Room, GCA Office, 7940 E. Thompson Peak Pkwy, Ste. 102

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June 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
WHO TO CALL ROVING PATROL (480) 502-7685 GRAYHAWK ASSOCIATION (480) 563-9708 SCOTTSDALE POLICE (480) 312-5000 RSVP FOR GRAYHAWK (480) 563-9839					1	2
3	4 GCA and RVA Board Mtg. 5:30 p.m. Talon Room	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 New Resident Orientation 6 p.m. Talon Room	14	15	16
17	18	19 Venu Board Mtg. 7 p.m. Venu Great Room	20 Encore Board Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Encore Clubhouse	21 Free Movie 5:30 p.m. Harkins 101 Village Board Mtg. 6 p.m. Raptor Room	22	23
24 Babysitting Class 9 a.m. Raptor Room Tesoro Board Mtg. 6 p.m. Tesoro Clubhouse	25 Ladies Bunco 6 p.m. Raptor Room	26	27	28	29	30

Update on the CC&R Amendment Vote

Is the vote closed?

Yes, the Grayhawk Community Association (GCA) Board of Directors had extended the deadline to April 30, 2018 and elected not to extend the deadline past that date.

Why didn't they extend it again?

Voting for the CC&R amendment had been open for over 12 months and the deadline had been extended four times. The Board of Directors did not feel extending the vote again would help the community reach the desired result.

How many votes did we have for the amendment?

The GCA received 1,996 total votes, of which 1,673 (approximately 84%) were in favor of amending the proposed CC&R amendment to prohibit short-term rental properties less than 30 days in length.

That's a lot of votes, why didn't the amendment pass?

Yes, many people were in favor of the amendment. However, the GCA CC&Rs require that 67% of the 3,784 Grayhawk homeowners vote in favor of the amendment for it to pass. That amounts to 2,536 "Yes" votes. We were

short 863 "yes" votes for the amendment to pass.

But couldn't we have done something else to get more votes?

During the duration of the ballot, homeowners received multiple "robo-calls" and postcard mailings if they had not voted. In addition, signs were placed throughout the community, flyers were near the mailboxes and information was in our newsletter and e-blast on an ongoing basis.

Volunteers talked to residents about voting at community events and we ran a block party contest. A few dedicated residents even hit the pavement and went door-to-door soliciting votes.

Ultimately, the Board of Directors felt that they made every effort to solicit votes and spending additional time and money on the ballot was not in the best interest of the association.

Why didn't more people vote?

There is not one easy answer to this question. Grayhawk has eight condominium associations, accounting for 2,007 of Grayhawk's 3,784 homes. All eight of the condominiums already have a short-term rental restriction in their documents. We believe that many condo residents felt that it was unnecessary for them to vote on the

GCA amendment because their condo already had a more restrictive policy. We did work closely with the sub-associations' managers to get information to condominium residents about why it was still important to vote (property values and safety being two of the big reasons) but unfortunately, there were still a large number of people that did not vote in those neighborhoods.

The condominiums were not the only neighborhoods that fell short in vote count. The Park section of the community also had low percentages of participation in the vote. While we can't know for sure why that is, many feel that residents perhaps had not been impacted by a short-term rental and were apathetic, not feeling the need to vote.

So what now?

The Grayhawk Community Association and Retreat Village Association are now unable to restrict short-term rentals. The only neighborhoods in Grayhawk with restrictions in place are the condominiums. Residents in those communities should reach out to their sub-association management company if they have questions regarding their policy.



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Sip and Tell

By Sue Lukenbill, Encore Resident

Welcome to the wonderful month of June. This month we officially say hello to summer, although by now those of us in Arizona have been living with summer weather for some time. This month, it is Dad's turn to be celebrated and like many other months of the year, June seems like a great month to eat. After all, what else is there to do when it is so hot out?

If you remember from my previous June articles, I love this time of the year because it is the beginning of many birthday celebrations with my family. I love birthdays possibly more than anyone I know. I guess I am still a kid at heart! Truthfully, all of that family fun gives me something to keep my mind off of the heat.

This month, Grayhawk's Director of Communications Jennifer Sheets and I made our way over to High & Rye, located on High Street. Not to be confused with high and dry (a place I never want to be), High & Rye is comfort food in a casual setting, designed to make you feel right at home.

Their menu features Southern favorites like fried chicken, smoked brisket, biscuits, and mac & cheese; as well as plated dishes like the smoked and grilled pork chop with hoppin' john, collard greens and a bourbon peach compote. As the perfect compliment to their food, they serve up specialty cocktails made with house-infused spirits or one of their 100+ whiskey selections. If spirits aren't your thing, they have a great wine list and 20 beers on tap, not to mention their signature sweet tea.

Jennifer and I did have a great time there last month. Although they are scheduled to start opening for lunch in June, they were only open from 3 p.m.-close at the time of our visit. Unfortunately, 3:30 p.m. in the afternoon was a tad early for the two of us to get serious about a cocktail. We both ordered something less lethal and took a glance at the menu. Both having family waiting for dinner later, we opted to order off of the starter menu. They have a nice variety of appetizers to choose from which are \$2 off during Happy Hour, which runs from 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. daily.



We chose to try the Pastor's Plate which was a platter with Benton's Tennessee Ham, deviled eggs, pimento cheese, creole mustard aioli, bacon peppered jam, chow chow, a black peppered thyme biscuit and toast. We also ordered the blue crab hushpuppies with creole aioli and pickled garnish. We enjoyed both appetizers. The bacon jam was yummy as were the chow chow and deviled eggs. There were many things that I'd never tried and I was pleasantly surprised. Had there been crackers we likely would have eaten even more! The Benton's Tennessee ham was good and reminded me of prosciutto as it was sliced thin. I am not a fan of pimento, so opted not to try the pimento cheese. Jenn said it was more like a dip than the pimento cheese she is used to, but still good.



Next time I stop in I will try the smoked trout deviled eggs and the crispy brussels sprouts, which people say are fantastic. I will also order the shrimp po' boy.

I think this is a great place to go for a drink and a few appetizers. I really like that they have a few unique items on the menu. You can also create your own Martini, Manhattan, or Old Fashioned. This would be a fun place to go with a group or for an event. We actually saw a group walk in for a birthday party right as we were leaving. They have a great bar area and nice open space with seating as well.

In closing, I want to wish a Happy Father's Day to all of the Dads out there. I hope everyone enjoys what the month of June has to offer. Remember to smile - June 15 is the Power of a Smile Day.

High and Rye

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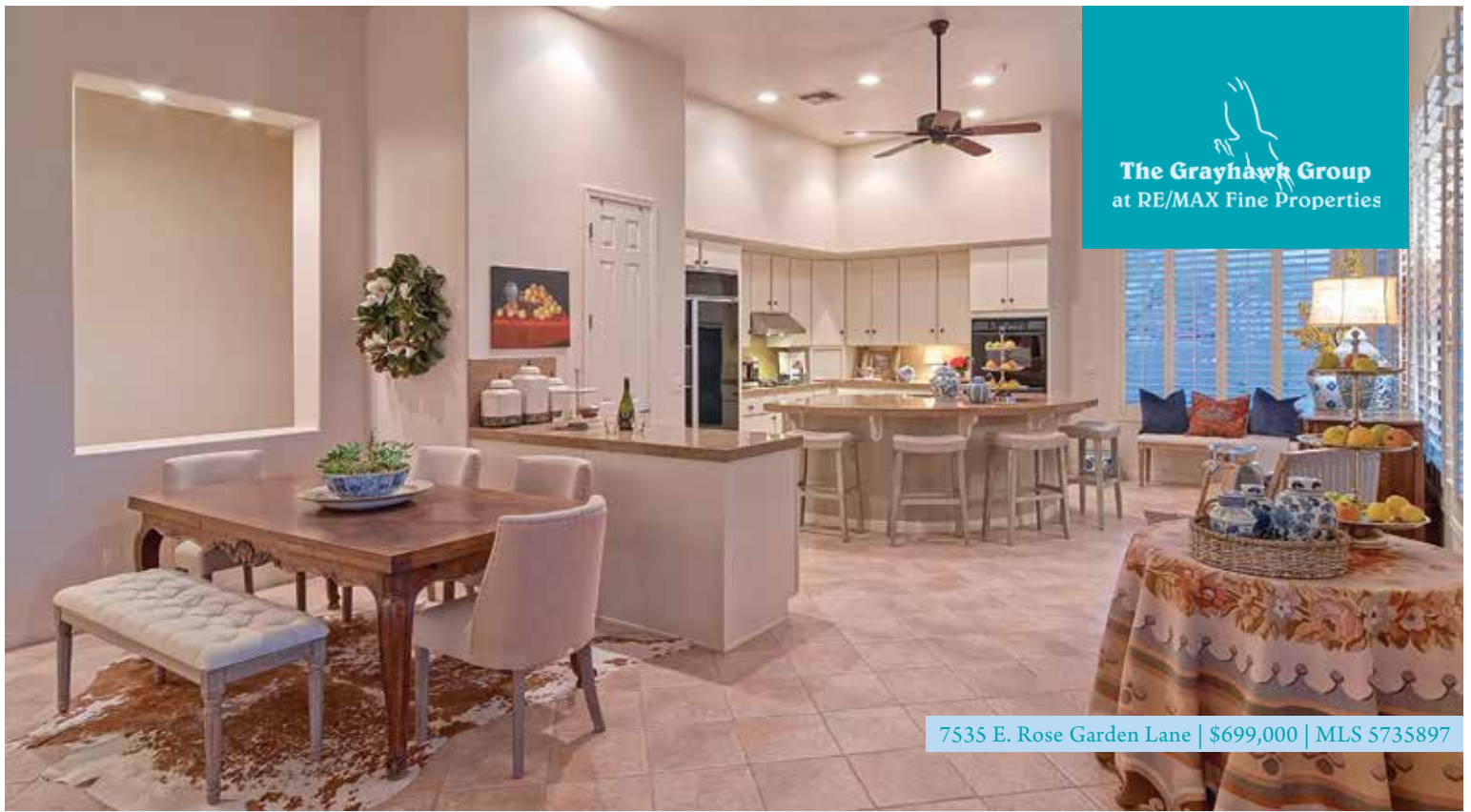
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Cashman Partners with Russ Lyon Sotheby's International Realty recently partnered with the Grayhawk Community Association to help raise \$340 for Grayhawk Elementary School.

During the Community Garage Sale on April 21, Cashman Partners helped collected 3,400 lbs. of donations to Goodwill. Goodwill donated 10 cents for every pound donated to the school, making this a win-win for everyone.



“It was a beautiful day to meet more of our neighbors in Grayhawk, support the efforts of Goodwill and help a healthy planet earth by keeping 3,400lbs of trash out of our landfills,” said Karen Nychay of Cashman Partners. “Big thanks to everyone for bringing this together. Cashman Partners is delighted to serve the Grayhawk community!”

Thanks to Cashman Partners and everyone who participated in the Community Garage Sale.



Confessions of a Plant Geek

By Victoria Kauzlarich, Volare

There's no way around this. I am a plant geek. I'm obsessed. And, there is no cure, no program, no therapy and no magic pill. There is only continual fascination and awe.

I have a life-long interest in plants but it wasn't until I moved to the desert that my obsession became evident. I continue to ask myself the "how" and "why" when it comes to desert plants' survival. And, it happens all the time. Every time I learn something new, I always want to know more.

Learning about photography has fueled my obsession because, with a camera, you can get "up close and personal" with a plant and magnify a focal point at will.

This spring I was on a mission to photograph a prickly pear, but not just any prickly pear. A purple one with black spines. This is an unusual and semi-protected species, but probably not rare. And, I knew right where I could find one. Over a couple of days, I got the photos I needed and then began to search for the plant's actual identity.

This is where the real fun began because I thought this plant was one thing and it turned out to be another thing entirely. I was certain that this plant was a *Violacea Santa Rita Prickly Pear* (remember that). It isn't. I also thought that the plant of my dreams was a hybrid. It isn't that, either. It turns out to be an Arizona native.

Going Down a Rabbit Hole

Identifying the plants we commonly see in local landscapes generally isn't difficult. It's when we drift away from the norm that the challenge begins.

Pictured here is a Santa Rita Prickly Pear. The plant of my obsession isn't a variant of this one. It's different - way different.

For starters, my obsession is deep purple, not the pale blue/lavender you see here. The purple prickly pear of my dreams has smaller pads than you see here and gorgeous black (and I do mean black) spines. Did I mention that the flowers are to die for? Your garden variety Santa Rita is a pretty great plant, but what I thought was the '*Violacea*' is in a class by itself.



Santa Rita Prickly Pear

The Reveal

The plant I've been lusting after is commonly known as, wait for it, a Purple Prickly Pear. Well, duh. And, it is so special that it just had to be this month's plant. One of the great things about these cacti (and the Santa Ritas) is that their pad color changes through the seasons and this change is inconsistent across the plant. When they get fairly large the pads end up being of varying hues at the same time making them multi-colored.



Candelilla, Up Close

Another Deep Dive

Another example of my geekiness is the Candelilla. What fascinates me about these plants is their extraordinary ability to store water. I've written about this before, but just as a reminder, Candelilla don't transpire - that is they don't lose moisture through their stems. Their stems have a waxy coating that prevents moisture from escaping. These plants can go for months during the summer, in pots, without manual watering. Why? Let's take a closer look.

As you can see here, each stem is only about 3/8" across. But, they are 16-18" tall and there are a ton of them on each plant. A single stem has the capacity to store approximately 6 cubic inches of water.

I recently learned that in addition to their extraordinary storage capacity, they also take water into their stems at lightening speed. I discovered this quite by accident recently when I was using a weak fertilizer solution on another plant and had a little bit of the liquid left over. I poured the remainder on a small potted Candelilla and the plant responded by growing its stems 4" in a week! Lesson learned.

These plants don't have much of a root system, but what's there is extremely effective and efficient. So let these get dry, dry, dry. They'll be fine until the next rain or whenever you remember to water them - whichever comes first.



*Candelilla
(blooming Red Yucca behind)*

Plant of the Month

Be on the look out for this gorgeous Purple Prickly Pear on the facing page and, if you can find one, buy it. They are great in pots or in a landscape. They provide year-round color and are guaranteed to be a conversation piece. All this and virtually no maintenance. What could be better?



Plant of the Month: *Purple Prickly Pear Cactus*

Latin Name: *Opuntia macrocentra*

Common Name: Purple Prickly Pear Cactus

Native Distribution: Arizona (in the foothills for the Santa Rita Mountains)

Size: Normally 3' H x 4' W; Size Can Be Controlled By Pruning Pads

Flower: 2" Funnel Shaped Golden Yellow Flowers that are Red at the Base; Emerge in April and May; Egg-Shaped Dark Red Edible Fruit Follows Beginning in July

Pads: Flattened Rounded, about 5x5"; 3-4" Black Spines Appear on the Top Edge of the Pads

Site Preferences: Full Sun in Well-Drained Soil; Supplemental Water Required in Drought Years

Landscape Uses: Cactus Rock Garden, Specimen, Accent, Beautiful Counterpoint to Desert Succulents and Shrubs



Plant Characteristics:

- Moderate Growth Rate
- Large, Segmented Cactus
- Spreading Shrub-Like Form
- Hardy to 30 Degrees
- Minimal Maintenance
- Prune by Removing Pad Segments

Thanks to PR Partners Julie Pelle and Christina Rathbun with Realty One Group, DLC Resources, Trident Security and Kathy Craig and Nancy Costlow with Rodan + Fields for sponsoring the 2018 Grayhawk Community Golf Outing.



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