

El Mirage News

www.cityofelmirage.org

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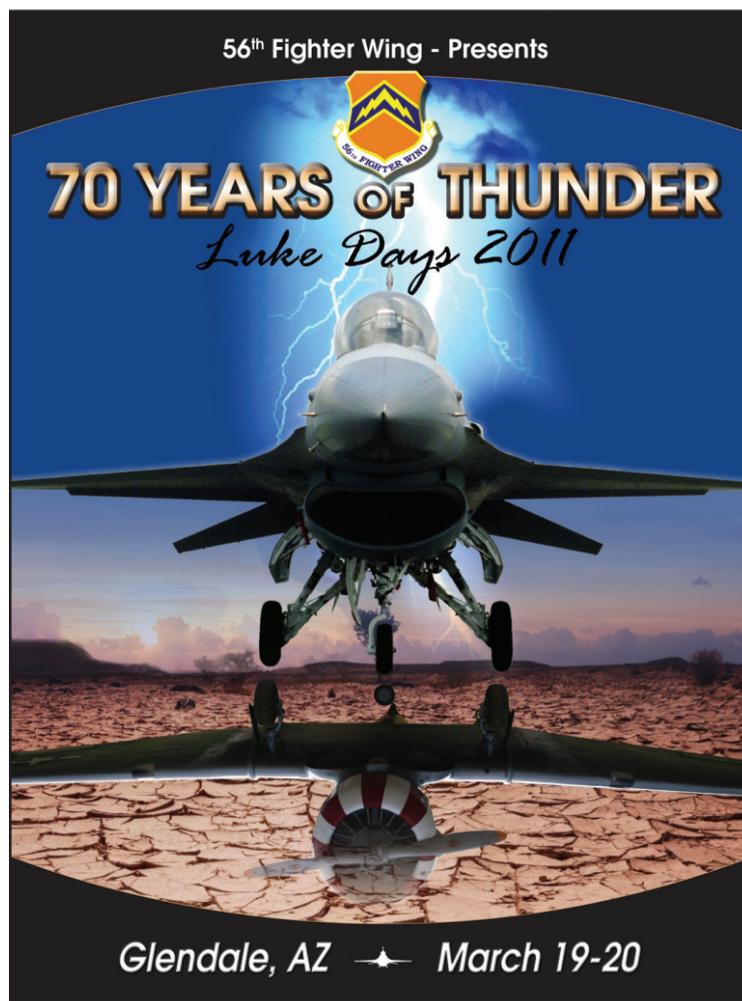
Luke Air Force Base Presents 70 Years of Thunder

The U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, the "Thunderbirds," will bring their special brand of high-flying excitement to Luke Air Force Base's open house and air show March 19-20, 2011. The theme for this display of historic and current air power is "70 Years of Thunder" as Luke AFB celebrates its 70th Anniversary. "It is my hope that all El Mirage residents will make every effort to attend this fantastic – and free – event," stated Councilman Lynn Selby. "Luke AFB is an important neighbor and El Mirage is home to many of its personnel. This event is a great way to have some family fun and express our appreciation for the base at the same time."

The Thunderbirds team is performing at nearly 70 shows in 25 states, one U.S. territory and 10 European countries. "Our team is anxious to get on the road to represent the nearly 700,000 Airmen serving today," stated Lt. Col. Case Cunningham, Thunderbird No. 1 Commander. "We take pride in all they do, and the manner in which

they are doing it, with integrity and excellence, while placing service before self, time and time again." El Mirage Mayor Lana Mook is also excited about the event. "The Thunderbirds are just amazing – these pilots are so skilled and the stunts are so thrilling to watch. This free event is not to be missed."

Joining the Thunderbirds in the air show lineup is the U.S. Army's Golden Knights parachute team. The event, which also features food and additional attractions including ground displays and performances for all ages, is expected to draw approximately 100,000 spectators each day. Gates open at 9 a.m. and flying begins at 11 a.m. on both days. Admission is free. For more information on the open house, including prohibited items, please visit www.luke.af.mil and click on "70 Years of Thunder." For more information about the Thunderbirds, visit www.airforce.com/thunderbirds or follow them on Facebook (U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds) and Twit-



ter (USAFThunderbirds).

IMPORTANT DETAILS:

WHEN: Saturday, March 19 & Sunday, March 20; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WHERE: Luke Air Force Base

HOW MUCH:

Admission is free

PARKING: Privately managed parking and transportation will be available to the general public for a small fee at nearby off-base areas. On-base parking will be available only to handicapped individuals and parking pass holders.

***Be advised traffic will be heavy in areas surrounding the base on both days. There will be limited access between Camelback Rd. & Olive Avenue and between Reems Rd. & Route 101.

FOOD & DRINK: Cooler stations with free water will be located throughout the area. Concession stands featuring food & drink for purchase will be available. Outside food is prohibited.

Sean Rohde: Featured in the Artist-in-Residence Gallery

Many things come to mind when hearing the word "expired". Death may be first and foremost for some,

while others may think of milk. Expiration is inevitable for all things, living or not. Disorder comes from order,

and nothing lasts forever. The American Southwest has a particularly unfriendly attitude towards so-called

permanence. Extreme temperatures (sometimes low as well as high in a 24 hour period), a baking sun, dry desert winds, insects, animals... you name it, it exists here to tear down all things. As well, the Southwest is an odd mix of old, somewhat old, and the fastest-growing "new" in the country. Humans destroy the old at a rate tenfold what nature can do, and replace it with an often bland newness. Expiration is all around us, in the bare mountains, the dry desert plains, the decay of man-made and natural forms, the sun-baked storefronts with warped wood and peeling paint, the rotting automobile carcasses, and the near empty towns scat-



Artist Sean Rohde explores death.



Sean Rohde captures death and expiration on multiple levels.

MORE ROHDE ON 11

Third Thursday to host fiery entertainment in March

This Third Thursday, March 17, El Mirage's monthly art walk and festival will welcome artist troupe MourningFyre to its calendar of events! Trained with the utmost highest professional standards of fire performance, MourningFyre are prepared to ensnare the senses and entice the fire gazer in us all. Their shared years of experience with crowd pleasers such as hoops, fans, snakes, fire torches, and fire breathing are a spectacle not to be missed!!

Third Thursday performances are shown in the outdoor

square adjacent to the El Mirage Artist in Residence and Creative Industries Incubator galleries at 14010 N. El Mirage Road, in El Mirage

For more information about how to get your group involved in performing at Third Thursday, please contact Thomas Schultz at Thomas@thomasschultzphotography.com or call the studio at 623.876.4221. For interest in vending as an artist at a Third Thursday event, contact gjanlieshout@gmail.com.

City of El Mirage
12145 NW Grand Ave.
El Mirage, AZ 85335

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Message from Mayor Lana Mook: Luke AFB

Many of you have had some type of experience in the past with a “bad” neighbor. Perhaps it started with something small and irritating but for some reason, you found yourself engaged in negative relationship with a neighbor that just seemed to keep escalating. Maybe they played loud music and you complained and the next thing you know, the music just got louder. Whatever the reason that relationship seemed to grow worse with time and communication between the two of you broke down.

I believe that the key to any successful relationship, whether it is business, personal or political, is honest and open communication. I campaigned by knocking on hundreds and hundreds of residents’ doors and listening to many of your concerns and priorities. You and I engaged in honest and open communication, where mutual respect was displayed and honest information was exchanged. As this City moves forward, we need more of this – among our neighbors, among our community leaders, and with other leaders and organizations impacting El Mirage, such as Luke.

On February 24, 2011, the El Mirage City Council was pleased to welcome Brigadier General Jerry D. Harris at its regularly-scheduled Council meeting. General Harris’ visit marked the first time in recent years a top-ranking member of Luke Air Force Base visited the City in an official capacity, signaling a new, more positive and cooperative relationship between

our City and the base.

Brigadier General Harris took time out of his very busy schedule to visit with the City Council and provide a current mission overview and update regarding Luke AFB and its related missions. This type of communication is important in facilitating the flow of information so we can continue to develop and maintain a successful relationship with the base. As your Mayor, I am committed to doing what I can to develop honest and open communications with Luke AFB and with our residents. While the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process regarding the proposed F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Jet mission continues to unfold, I will be working with base officials to obtain and relay any available information to our residents. All of us need to stay fully informed and educated on the developments before racing to make any assumptions or engage in political posturing. In the meantime, we don’t want a “nasty neighbor” relationship with Luke AFB. We want to be positive neighbors who can work together.

Building a positive relationship with Luke Air Force Base is important for El Mirage, not only because many of its personnel call our City home, but also because Luke holds a greater significance to our State and to our Nation. I invite all of you to attend the free Luke AFB Open House and Air Show to be held later this month and learn more about the base and its contribution to our community and state.

Council Corner: The City of El Mirage needs you

CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES BEING CREATED

In keeping with its pledge to create a more open and citizen-oriented local government, the El Mirage City Council recently announced that Citizen Advisory Committees are being formed and resident volunteers are needed! “We are small community but we can still accomplish great things,” stated Mayor Lana Mook. “By banding together and working together in a volunteer capacity, we can really impact our City in a meaningful way.” Councilman Roy Delgado agrees. “Our residents are our resources. Just think of all of the skills and knowledge our residents have, that they can put to work on be-

half of our entire community.”

Initial committees being formed are:

a. Home Improvement – volunteering to work with homeowners to improve their homes such as painting, yard cleanup, landscaping, fence repair, etc.

b. Parks & Recreation – working on the organization of community events at either Gentry Park or Gateway Park; may include events such as Fiesta del la Gente, Easter activities, Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting, a celebration of the City’s 60th Birthday, etc.

c. Public Safety – volunteering on various projects within the police, fire or court departments such as graffiti removal and other

duties as assigned by the chiefs and/or court supervisor.

d. Senior Center – assisting with various activities for the Senior Center

e. Water & Energy Conservation – researching cost-saving and/or environmentally conscious recommendations (i.e. solar power) and other ways for the City or residents to be energy conscious

Vice Mayor David Shapera invites residents to volunteer. “I have always believed in the power of citizen involvement. This is the type of community where even just one person can make a tremendous difference,” he stated. “I hope residents will seriously consider volunteering for one of these important committees.”

Committee application forms are being prepared and will be available soon through the City Clerk’s office or online. Stay tuned and check the City’s website www.cityofelmirage.org for updated information. Councilman Jack Palladino emphasized the rewards of volunteering on a Citizen Advisory Committee. “This is a great and meaningful way for El Mirage residents to actively participate in our community, have fun in the process and make a difference in the lives of our neighbors and the appearance of our City,” he stated.

PLANNING & ZONING SEATS

The El Mirage City Council considers resident involvement in our local government to be a

MORE COUNCIL ON 9

Attention: Nomination Process Now Open for El Mirage Citizen of the Year

It’s that time of year again! The El Mirage City Council has been asked by the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce to submit an outstanding El Mirage resident for the 2010 Spirit of Community Award – Citizen of the Year. After council selection, the nominee will be announced at the Copper Sun Awards Banquet on April 29, 2011.

The public is invited to submit nominations of individuals who have provided leadership and service to the benefit of the City and whose actions have left a positive impact on the City of El Mirage and its residents. Nominees must have lived in El Mirage for at least three years. Nomination forms are available online at www.cityofelmirage.org or at City Hall, located at 12145 NW Grand Avenue. All nomination forms must be received online or by the El Mirage City Clerk’s office no later than 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 3 2011.

A Citizen Advisory Subcommittee of the City Council will review all nominations and make its recommendation to the El Mirage City Council on Thursday, March 10. After council action, the City Clerk will submit the Council’s selection to the Surprise Regional Chamber of Commerce on March 17, 2011 and the nominee will be announced at the awards banquet on April 29, 2011.

This is your chance to bring to light the good deeds and hard work of our community leaders. The window of opportunity is short so be sure to submit your nomination before March 3rd!

THE BLUE BYLINE



News from the El Mirage Police Department

14405 N. Palm St. • 623-933-1341 • www.cityofelmirage.org/police

Follow us on Facebook. Sign up for emergency notifications at www.nixle.com

Farewell Chief Frazier, Welcome to Interim Chief Steve Campbell

Feb. 11 marked the end of an era at the El Mirage Police Department, as Chief Michael Frazier departed El Mirage to take over the helm at the Surprise Police Department. Since October 2, 2007, Chief Michael Frazier served as Chief of the El Mirage Police Department, where he actively and successfully worked to elevate the department to the professional and responsive agency it is today. Frazier, who received numerous professional and media accolades for his outstanding work with the City of Phoenix Police Department and his more recent accomplishments in El Mirage, was honored by El Mirage at a reception held February 10, 2011. When asked what



Departing Chief Mike Frazier at an Appreciation Reception, with new Acting Police Chief Steve Campbell.

challenges he might face in Surprise, Frazier responded that he sees opportunities rather than challenges.

After Frazier's departure, Assistant Chief Steve Campbell assumed the Chief of Police position for the El Mirage Police Depart-

ment on an interim basis. Campbell, who credits Frazier with rejuvenating the department, stated "It'll be some big shoes to fill." He added that an immediate issue facing the City and its police force will be sustaining current levels of service

despite expected budget cuts. "Budget tightening will force department officials to strive for greater efficiency and work smarter, not harder," Campbell said.

El Mirage officer nominated for MADD Officer of the Year

Officer Chris Culp with the El Mirage Police Department was nominated for the Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) DUI Officer of the Year. In 2010, Officer Culp accounted for 27% of all El Mirage DUI arrests and more than 70% of the total arrests were made by officers on his particular squad. During the last two and a half years, Officer Culp has received 60 DUI Convictions in both City and Superior Court. Culp and other nominees were honored at the MADD Awards Banquet on February 11, 2011. Congratulations Officer Culp.



Acting Police Chief Steve Campbell with Officer Chris Culp,

MARCH 5TH, 2011 VIN ETCHING EVENT

The El Mirage Police Department will host their first Auto Theft Prevention & Free VIN Etching event on Saturday, March 5th, 2011. The event will take place at the El Mirage Police Department located at 14405 N. Palm Street from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm. VIN etching will be done by appointment only and the first 10 participants will receive a free steering wheel lock.

VIN etching is the process of permanently etching the vehicle's 17 digit Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) on each piece of window glass in the vehicle and helps to deter auto theft. This process will not damage your windows and

takes approximately ten minutes to complete the process. Vehicles will also be enrolled in the state's Watch Your Car program.

The vehicle owner must show proof of vehicle ownership, current registration and complete a consent form provided by the El Mirage Police Department. For more information about VIN etching, please visit www.azwatchyourcar.com. To schedule an appointment, call El Mirage Officer Monica Rios at 623-433-9536. Appointments are limited, so call early.

MORE THE BLUE BYLINE ON 4

Shred-A-Thon shreds 23,000 pounds of paper

The El Mirage Police Department, in partnership with the Maricopa County Attorney's Office held a successful shred-a-thon on February 9, 2011 at Gateway Park. The shred-a-thon was an opportunity for El Mirage residents to eliminate sources of potential identity theft, including old tax returns, bank & credit card statements and other items with personal information that can be used by

criminals if not properly destroyed. So, how much shredding can a shred-a-thon shred? The Maricopa County Attorney's Office provided on-site shredding and 23,000 pounds of paper were destroyed.

Along with documents, citizens were also able to turn in old electronic equipment for destruction. A truck full of old computers, TV's, radios, VCR's, and cell phones was received and will be destroyed. De-

struction in the appropriate manner keeps our landfills free from chemicals.

Thanks to all that participated and helped make this one of the larger events the Maricopa County Attorney's Office has recently held.

Crime down by nearly 12% in 2010

Crime is down in El Mirage, as reflected in 2010 crime statistics. A total of 937 violent (homicide, rape, aggravated assault, and robbery) and property (burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson) crimes were reported, which represents an 11.9% decrease over calendar year 2009 (1064 crimes reported). The crime rate for El Mirage was 27.9 crimes per 1,000 residents, which is also a decrease over from the 31.7 crimes reported in 2009.

Examining violent and property crime independently also illustrates a decrease in crime. There were 82 violent crimes reported in El Mirage in 2010, an 18% decrease over 2009, during which 100 crimes were reported. In addition, the clearance rate, or percentage of cases cleared (usually through an arrest), totaled 51% in 2010 – up from the 44% cleared in 2009. Property crime also decreased, with 855 reported property crimes in 2010 compared to 964 in 2009, equaling an 11.3% decrease. The clearance rate for property crimes was 14%, which is a 2.1% increase over 2009's 12% rate.

The El Mirage Police Department is committed to working to keep our city safe. You can assist by reporting criminal or suspicious activity in your neighborhood and by securing your property. Ensuring that your residence and vehicle windows and doors are locked decreases your chances of becoming a victim. Remember to remove all valuables from your vehicle and park in your garage. For further information about crime statistics or safety tips, contact the El Mirage Police Department.

Woman targeting vulnerable adults charged with fraud

On Thursday, February 10, 2011, Detectives with the El Mirage Police Department arrested and charged 47 year old Jacquie Snowden of El Mirage with multiple counts of fraud, identity theft and fraudulent use of a credit card.

Ms. Snowden would befriend elderly adults while in an adult care capacity. The victims were targeted due to their vulnerability caused by medical limitations. The suspect would obtain credit cards and other bank account information to pay her personal bills or make purchases over



Jacquie Snowden

the internet using the victim's money or credit cards. The victims entrusted the suspect with their information while under the pretense Snowden was paying their bills.

Detectives served a search warrant at Snowden's residence and recovered evidence that indicate there may be additional victims in the Phoenix Metropolitan area. Anyone that has additional information or thinks they may have been a victim of Snowden's actions is encouraged to contact the El Mirage Police Department's Investigations Unit at 623-433-9518.

For information concerning this release, contact Detective Robert Peoples at 623-433-9576 or Steve Campbell, Assistant Police Chief, at 623-433-9511.

FOCUS ON THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Dept. Teaches CPR to Local 7th Graders

When a person is choking, stops breathing, or their heart stops seconds literally do count. According to the American Heart Association, a patient's best chance of survival is someone calling "911" and beginning CPR early on.

Most families today have both parents working outside of the home just to make ends meet, meaning that quite often the older children are caring for their

MORE FIRE ON 9

Firefighter Brandon Oller looks on as a student practices adult CPR.





El Mirage Fire Crews At Luke AFB Exercise.

Crews participate in mass casualty exercise

El Mirage Fire Crews participated in a Multi Agency Mass Casualty Exercise on Luke AFB recently. The exercise, which was planned several months in advance, simulated a mass shooting on base with approximately 20 victims. In addition to the El Mirage Fire Department, fire/EMS crews from Luke AFB, Glendale, Surprise, Southwest Ambulance and Air Evac also participated. Multi-agency drills such as this allow participants to identify in a training scenario the best practices and in some cases deficiencies or incompatibilities in procedures and equipment. This in turn enables fire crews to make corrections in planning and responding in anticipation of a real-life event.



EMFD Conducts Regional Training on Solar Panels.

Fire Dept. hosts Solar Panel Training

Last month, the El Mirage Fire Department hosted training for fire crews from Surprise, Glendale, Peoria, and Sun City at the El Mirage Wal-Mart Store. The training covered the operation and hazards associated with the recent installation of the solar power system located on the roof of Wal-Mart.

This new system is the first on a Wal-Mart in the State of Arizona. It is also the first large commercial building to implement solar power in the City of El Mi-

rage. Approximately 2150 solar panels were installed and are being utilized to

MORE FIRE ON 9

Analysis of incidents for 1/14/11 - 2/14/11:

Fires - 5	1 - vehicle lock out	1 - Alarm malfunction
2 - building fires (\$55,000 loss)	2 - check smoke odor	8 - Smoke detectors with low battery alarm
1 - Cooking Fire	9 - check welfare	2 - other
1 - Brush fire	1 - assist Police	Special Incident - 3
1 - other	2 - Assist an invalid	
Emergency Medical - 155	2 - Other	
124 - EMS calls	Good Intent Calls - 16	Total Count = 226
15 - Auto Aid received	9 - Cancelled en route	Average Response Times: 00:05:09
10 - motor vehicle accidents	5 - no emergency found	Percentage of calls with 1st unit on scene within 5 minutes or less = 46.93%
4 - medical assist	1 - Steam or vapor thought to be smoke	Percentage of calls with Full response (all units) on scene within 9 minutes = 71.42%
2 - other	1 - smoke from BBQ	
Hazardous Condition - 1	False Alarm - 14	
Service Calls - 20	3 - Smoke detector activation	
1 - person in distress		

Clay Artist and Muralist, Connie Whitlock, Featured WHAM Artist for March

Inspiration for Connie's work comes from an inner philosophy that 'Life is good—be happy!'

Raised in the Midwest on a farm gave her the basic love of working with her hands and enjoying nature. Blessed with a large extended family she shared joy, excitement and pain which manifested into a personal visual dialogue in her work expressing pleasure, peace, love, and nature's simplicity.

She utilizes multiple clay types within; stoneware and earthenware, along with various high and low fire glazes to expose each piece's personality. Generally, she applies color and texture that relates to realistic forms, her abstract work allows the

freedom to convey total emotional expression. Connie's style; whether wheel-thrown, coiled, hand-built, or mosaics range from realism to whimsical.

Connie also teaches clay classes to both youth and adults. She has had the opportunity to design and create a number of, site-specific, 'Public Art' tile murals. Her work covers a wide range of materials and imagery, thus allowing design decisions to apply specifically for the unique requirements of each undertaking. Connie often encourages the community to participate in the actual construction of the mural.

Connie started an art organization, WHAM (What's Happen'n

Art Movement), to promote art awareness and participation in the Northwest Valley of Phoenix. WHAM's website: www.WHAM-art.org. WHAM has 56 members of all visual art mediums. WHAM provides our art work in galleries, shows and exhibits but WHAM works in the community to stimulate art culture with public art and art classes.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS - MARCH 2011

2011 Multicultural Music Festival - A Celebration of Arts, History & More!

El Mirage Gateway Park Feb. 26-27, 11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

This festival has been voted by New Times "Best" in the valley for its unique blend of quality artistry and service to the community. Over 6,000 attendees are expected to attend the two-day festival.

The event includes performances by national recording artists: Fel Davis of Public Announcement, Elaine Stepter, lead singer for award winning 70's group Rolls Royce, Showtime at the Apollo winner Candice and Blues legend Bobby Rush. Local favorites from Riddle Entertainment, Rocket 88s, New Creation, Royce Murray Band, artists from Backbone Records and others.

For more information contact: NBHC at (623) 204-0959.

American Legion Pancake Breakfast

– Tuesday, March 8

The American Legion, Post 94 Sun City West is hosting a pancake breakfast at the Sun City West Foundation Building on Tuesday, March 8, 2011 from 7-11:00 a.m. The building is located on the corner of R.H. Johnson Blvd. and Stardust Blvd. Donations of \$4 per person will be accepted. For more information and tickets, please call Harold Stern at 623-546-8165. Pancakes, sausage, coffee and orange juice will be served!

SENIOR CENTER 14010 N. El Mirage Rd.

At the El Mirage Senior Center, we believe no one should ever feel lonely or bored. We have created a warm and welcoming environment for all El Mirage seniors to come

MORE CALENDAR ON 8

'Art of Collage'

A Free Workshop by Artist Kathleen D. Cone will be given in a four 4-hour classroom sessions.

The class will be once a month, and dates/times to be announced. Open to residents of El Mirage & the West Valley only

What sets apart Kathleen's work is to intuitively perceive and create a continuum of seemingly unrelated images into multiple realities that take on meaning not otherwise held individually. In doing this, she captures the essence of what it truly means to be alive, human and mortal.



Artist Kathleen Cone illustrates the art of collage.

Arts Informative Businesses, Contacts and Links

For more information on the Arts in El Mirage please contact the following organizations and individuals:
 For Incubator studio/gallery space availability, leasing & rental, contact Kristi Vater, phone: 602.790.8133, or email: divineartconnections@live.com
 Third Thursday vendor information, email: gjvanlieshout@gmail.com
 Artist in Residence Gallery showings, Third Thursday Event entertainment coordination, Thomas Schultz, 14030 N. El Mirage Road, phone: 623.876.4221; email: thomas@thomasschultzphotography.com & thomasschultzphotography.com
 El Mirage Arts Group (EMAG), available on facebook and on the web at www.emag-az.org. Meetings every 2nd Tuesday at 6:30 pm at the Artist in Residence Gallery/Thomas Schultz Photography. Meetings open to members and to the public.

Upcoming at the Senior Center

Exciting things are happening at the Senior Center in March and April!!

Cooking with Julia

An EMAG (El Mirage Arts Group) sponsored event, Cooking with Julia is conducted by Janet Mueller Galto Kubat. It will begin again starting the 3rd Wednesday in March.

For other dates and times, please refer to the EMAG website: emag-az.org. EMAG can also be found on facebook.

Stories of Our Lives

This art exhibit will be completed in March or April of 2011 and shown in the Senior Center. The planned event will bring photographic representations of our local senior citizens together with their biographical stories, an-

ecdotes, and life experiences sure to warm the heart and inform different times in history. The event includes exhibit, reception ceremony, and silent auction of framed prints, all beautifully executed by Thomas Schultz, El Mirage's Artist in Residence. Dates and times to be announced.

Open Gallery

The El Mirage Gallery and Thomas Schultz Photography Studio, adjacent to the Senior Center, has a private viewing for seniors only every Wednesday at 10:30. Coffee is served, and seniors are given a full tour and explanation of the current exhibit every month. Come on in and join the fun! Thomas himself is knowledgeable in both the arts and his artists' visions, as well as an insightful and fun individual.

Couturier Reception March 11

Corey Couturier is a local Phoenix artist who believes in the power of a positive message. As a child, Corey was constantly active and involved in multiple projects. Growing up on a farm in Northern Montana, he was full of energy, enthusiasm and saw every day as an adventure. Corey studied art for 1 year at the University of Idaho before dropping out to join the National Guards. Moving to Phoenix in 1986, he worked as a caregiver and served in the ministry for 7 1/2 years. It wasn't until he was released from the hospital after nearly losing his life to two bleeding ulcers that he got seri-



Above: "The Healing of the Leper;" Left: "Erratic Calm"

ous about painting. Corey sees painting as an outlet for his creativity, and an outlet for the joy and praise he has for life. He feels his art is a counterculture to the counterculture, and his optimism is reflected in all of his pieces. Divine Art Connections, LLC gallery will be hosting an artist reception for Corey Couturier featuring his work March 11, 7 p.m. at the Creative Industries Incubator at 14010 N. El Mirage Rd., For more information contact Kristi Vater at divineartconnections@live.com or phone at 602-790-8133.

CALENDAR: March 2011 events

spend their time. When you come to the center, we will welcome you with open arms. You will come as a stranger, but leave as family. Come visit and see what the center has to offer you. For more information on the Senior Center Program call, 623-876-4232.

AARP TAX-AIDE - FREE TAX HELP!

FEBRUARY 5th - APRIL 9th - Saturdays only from 8:30 a.m. - 11:30a.m.

For taxpayers with low - and moderate - income, with special attention to those age 60 and older.

- BRING LAST YEARS TAX RETURN
- BRING AMOUNT OF ECO-

NOMIC RECOVERY REBATE
• BRING AMOUNT OF REAL ESTATE TAXES PAID
• SOCIAL SECURITY I.D. CARDS, 1099's, W-2's
• CHECK REGISTER
AARP Tax-Aide is a program of the AARP Foundation, offered in conjunction with the IRS. For more information please call (623) 975-0975.

HOME BUYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Tuesday, March 8
Need help purchasing a home? This federally funded program provides down payment and/or closing costs assistance to purchase a house in El Mirage.

A homebuyer may qualify if all of the following conditions are met:

- Applicant hasn't owned a home in the last 3 years
- Applicant intends to occupy the home as the primary residence
- Applicant's annual household income is not over 80% of the area medium income based on family size (example: \$48,000 for a family of three)
- Applicant has the financial ability to obtain a mortgage loan
- Must contribute a minimum of \$1,000 towards down payment and/or closing costs

Applications are available at El Mirage City Hall at 12145 NW Grand Ave. Currently, there is NOT a waiting list. It is on a first come, first serve basis. Therefore, don't delay, apply today!

Monthly homebuyer assistance informational seminars are held the second Tuesday of each month at 6 pm in the El Mirage Senior Center, 14010 N El Mirage Road, El Mirage. The next three seminars are scheduled for March 8, 2011, April 12, 2011 and May 10, 2011. Seating is limited, call 623-876-2959 to reserve a seat.

EL MIRAGE BRANCH LIBRARY
14011 N. 1st Avenue, El Mirage, AZ 85335 ; (602) 652-3000

CHILDREN

SKIP ALONG STORY TIME
March 1, 8, 22, 29 (Tuesdays) 10 a.m.

Ages 1-5 and their caregivers. Join us for fun books and silly songs. Community Room. Maricopa County Library District's El Mirage Branch Library, 14011 N. 1st Ave., El Mirage,

602.652.3000 www.mcladaz.org .

CREATING WITH JUNK: FEATURES SHARI KEITH

March 10 3:30 p.m.
Ages 8 +. Join the Junk Lady, Shari Keith, in a workshop where you will choose from a treasure trove of discarded items to create a small work of art that is exciting to look at and friendly to the environment. All supplies provided. Registration needed and begins February 10. Community Room. Maricopa County Library District's El Mirage Branch Library, 14011 N. 1st Ave., El Mirage, 602.652.3000 www.mcladaz.org.

TWEENS & TEENS

BOOK DISCUSSION: FLIPPED - March 24 (Thursday) 3:30 p.m.

Ages 10 +. Pick up the book FLIPPED after March 1 at the library, read it, and come to the book discussion! Come see the movie the following week. Snacks provided. Community Room. Maricopa County Library District's El Mirage Branch Library, 14011 N. 1st Ave., El Mirage, 602.652.3000 www.mcladaz.org

MOVIE BASED ON BOOK DISCUSSION

March 31 3:30 p.m.
Based on the book by Wendelin Van Draanen, this comedy/romance is about two eighth graders who start to have feelings for each other despite being total opposites. Snacks provided. Community Room. Maricopa County Library District's El Mirage Branch Library, 14011 N. 1st Ave., El Mirage, 602.652.3000 www.mcladaz.org.

ADULTS

FRIENDS OF THE EL MIRAGE LIBRARY - March 22 (Tuesday) 1:30 p.m.

Join the Friends and help support your library. New members welcome! Community Room. Maricopa County Library District's El Mirage Branch Library, 14011 N. 1st Ave., El Mirage, 602.652.3000 www.mcladaz.org.

DYSART COMMUNITY CENTER
14414 N. El Mirage Rd., El Mirage, AZ 85335 623-974-4156

Youth Afterschool Programming: \$5/month per participant for ages: 6-15

Mondays, 2 - 7 p.m.
Tuesday - Friday 3 - 7 p.m.,
School Vacation Days 12 - 6 p.m.
To register, please call Priscilla at 623-583-2137

Adult Courses

E.S.L. - (English as a Second Language) Classes - Class registration is closed until September 7, 2011, however, a waiting list is being taken.

- Classes for ESL are given in one-on-one basis and in group sessions
- ESL classes for students are offered in Level 1 through Level 4
- There is a reading class also offered for students to improve their reading skills
- A computer lab is available for students use and with the Rosetta Stone program installed for students to learn English
- Classes are offered during various times, days and evenings throughout the week.

GED Courses

Contact Susie Ratley at 623-974-4156 if you are interested.

Youth & Adult Sports

Coed, Men & Women Slow-Pitch Softball League

The City of El Mirage and NSA is currently seeking Men, Coed and Women teams for play during the Spring Season for Friday and/or Sunday nights.

Teams interested should contact Chris Franciscus by email at chris@playnsaaz.com or by phone at 412-874-4074.

Over 30 - Coed Adult Soccer

West Valley's premier Adult Coed Soccer League. We've created a place where you can go to play the sport your body needs, without the usual hustle and bustle of a traditional Fitness Center and Health Club.

For league information please go to www.azcoedsoccer.com or call 1-800-BSA-0886.

White Tanks Little League

Registering Now for 2011 Spring Season!

The City is continuing to work with the newly-established White Tanks Little League with their new home beginning in El Mirage. White Tanks Little League is accepting registrations now through late February. Please stay posted by visiting www.eteamz.com/whitetankssl.

Volunteer Board Members are also needed for the spring season! If you are interested and able to be part of the established White Tanks Little League Board, please contact WTLI directly at 623-241-4602 or whitetankssl@msn.com

Benfica Youth Soccer League Benfica Youth Soccer Academy

This on-going academy will use soccer education to bring out greatness in the youth and families of our community. Beginning in March of 2009, the academy provides the highest success rate of youth soccer players in order to further their personal goals and aspirations. We are proud to provide year round developmental soccer in a festive environment for the whole family.

Registered participants in the Monday - Thursday (6:00 pm - 8:30 pm) academy will be taught the sport of soccer by professional trainers and coaches. Youth will develop discipline while learning soccer skills to improve precision and technique. Youth will receive trainings through a progressive and balanced process while learning in a fun and developmental environment with respect for the spirit of the sport.

For more information regarding upcoming soccer programs please call 1-800-BSA-0886 or go to www.azbenfica.org

El Mirage Martial Arts Academy

The City of El Mirage Martial Arts Academy is enrolling for Okinawa Karate classes to all ages at the El Mirage Senior Center - 14010 N. El Mirage Rd.

Kids ages 6 to 12 are taught in a traditional, structured setting, without forgetting that Karate can be very fun! Students learn effective self-defense skills through diligent training. More importantly, students routinely learn life skills. Honesty, integrity, courtesy, respect, and work ethic are examples of the character-building exercises shared with students nightly, with special emphasis on the philosophy of stranger danger. Each class is available for a \$45 monthly fee.

Adults age 13 and up train at their own speed. Students work to develop into healthy, well-conditioned individuals, both physically and mentally. They train so that they may master the art of weaponless defense. Students challenge themselves rather than compete with other students. These martial art classes are great for the whole body and mind.

Monday & Wednesday Evenings
6:00 - 7:00 p.m. - (Ages 6 - 12)
7:00 - 8:30 p.m. - (Ages 13 - Up)

For more information, please call Martial Arts Instructor Richard Gutkosay at (623) 628-6725 or (602) 721-4587.

Ladies Fitness Boot Camp

Ladies Fitness Boot Camp has landed in the El Mirage. Participants can join classes on any Monday, as long as space is available. The classes run three days a week for four weeks from 1 to 1.5 hours. Monday, Wednesday and Friday classes take place from 5:00 a.m. - 6:10 a.m. and evening classes will take place on Tuesday & Fridays from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

All El Mirage Residents get a 50% off for their first month. This is a \$100 value! To get started go to www.ladiesfitnessbootcamp.com and fill out the registration form:

- Place El Mirage in the discount area
- Submit and on the payment page go down to the "DEPOSIT" button and pay the \$30 deposit to hold your spot
- You are done with saving your spot and now ready to get the "Rockin' Body you desire
- The remainder of the payment can be paid to the trainer on your first day of class

You can find additional information and more about the camp at www.ladiesfitnessbootcamp.com or contact Tracey at 623-252-1FIT (1348).

MESSAGE FROM PUBLIC WORKS:

Bulk Trash Event March 19

The City of El Mirage has moved to a new program for our annual Bulk Trash events. In an effort to save money for the City, the Glendale Landfill has agreed to allow residents of the City of El Mirage to dispose of their bulk trash items and/or household hazardous waste materials directly at the landfill at no cost on Saturday, March 19, 2011 from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Normal disposal fees will be charged on any other date or time. The first Bulk Trash event, in which

residents hauled their bulk trash directly to the Glendale Landfill, was held September 2010, with a good turnout and cost savings to the City and residents.

In order to dispose of their items for free, El Mirage residents are required to show one (1) form of picture identification and a water or electric bill verifying they live in El Mirage. In addition, residents must also bring **THE FLYER THEY RECEIVED IN THE MAIL** from Public Works regarding this Bulk Trash event.

Save energy with Compact Fluorescent Light (CFL) Bulb Exchange

Switch your inefficient incandescent light bulbs to new energy-saving CFL's at NO COST to El Mirage residents. To help our residents become more energy efficient the City of El Mirage



has partnered with Arizona Public Service (APS), Costco and the State of Arizona Department of Commerce Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program to offer compact fluorescent lamps (CFL's) to City of El Mirage residents for free!

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), CFL's use 75% less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer, while still offering the same warm, soft light. Lance Calvert, Director of Public Works, stated that "A single CFL will save about \$30 over its life in electricity costs."

El Mirage residents need to provide identification to verify residency and drop off two (2) incandescent bulbs to receive a four pack of CFL bulbs. Stop by the Customer Service Counter at City Hall located at 12145 NW Grand Avenue during normal business hours to exchange your old light bulbs for the new CFL's. Supplies are limited, so come early while supplies last. The CFL Bulb Exchange Program is fully funded by a federal grant with no local cost.

COUNCIL: City needs you, From 2

key component toward creating a better, brighter and more successful future for the City of El Mirage. Councilman Joe Ramirez stated "By becoming more informed and involved, citizens can then become more effective in voicing their priorities and concerns to us. This is a good thing for everyone." He added "We have three Planning & Zoning Commission seats expiring this June – now is a great time for residents who have not been involved with the City to get engaged and get informed." The Planning & Zoning Commission (P & Z) is a five-member board appointed by City Council to hear and recommend action on plan amendments, rezoning, site plans, conditional uses and preliminary plats. P&Z meetings are held monthly and the terms of office begin in July, 2011. "We need good, sincere individuals to volunteer to serve in this capacity," said Councilman Lynn Selby. "The Council relies on the input from P&Z Commissioners on a number of important issues."

Residents interested in serving a two year term on the P&Z Commission are encouraged to complete and submit an application form, which

will be available through the City Clerk's office (12145 NW Grand Ave.) and online in mid-April. Applications are due to the Clerk by 5:00 pm on May 13. "We are asking all residents who want to have input into shaping our City's future to apply," stated Councilman James McPhetres. "This is also an excellent way for interested residents to learn more about how our local government operates," he added.

A Review Committee consisting of Council Members Delgado, Ramirez and Palladino was established at the 2/10/11 Council Meeting in order to interview all applicants and to recommend to the full council three members of the city to serve on the Commission. The council subcommittee will schedule interviews and make recommendations to the full council before the end of June, 2011. Councilman Jack Palladino will serve as Chair of the Review Committee. "I am optimistic we will have a number of qualified applicants from which to choose," he said. Councilman McPhetres added that "Now is definitely the time for the leaders of our community to step up." For more information, contact Bill Pupo at bpupo@cityofelmirage.org.

FIRE: Teaches CPR From 4

younger siblings after school. This is why the Thompson Ranch Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) and the El Mirage Fire Department have teamed up to teach cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to the entire 7th grade class at Thompson Ranch Elementary.

"As a long-time educator, I know the importance of offering CPR and other life necessities to our students so they can have the information necessary for adulthood. Students become more responsible for their siblings and family members as time goes on and this service offered by the El Mirage Fire Department will assist if an emergency occurs. Our

seventh grade students have accepted the responsibility to acquire the skills necessary to be certified," said Vice Mayor David Shapera.

The 40-hour course is being offered as part of the student's health and physical education curriculum. Each student receives classroom instruction, hands-on training in adult, child, and infant CPR, and they must pass a written and practical exam.

The fire department offers community CPR classes on a quarterly basis. The next community CPR class is scheduled for March 26, 2011. Register early because space is limited. To register call, 623-583-7968.

FIRE: Solar panel From 5

generate more than 500 kilowatts of energy, supplying 30-40% of the store's energy needs.

The utilization of solar power poses a unique hazard to fire fighting operations. As long as the sun is shining power is being generated – a very good thing unless there is a fire-related incident involving the panels. De-energizing the power from the roof-mounted solar panels down to the ground is extremely difficult during daylight hours.

Each fire fighter receives 20 hours of training per month on various fire fighting topics such as this to remain up to date on modern fire fighting technology and practices.

Dysart Community Center Hires New Executive Director

Dysart Community Center is excited to announce a new beginning! The Center has recently hired Jessie Singer to be the new Executive Director of the Dysart Community Center. Jessie comes from Marley Park, a community in Surprise where she worked extensively to build and expand community partnerships. Ms. Singer volunteered with the Dysart Community Center by serving on the Board of Directors for more than a year, demonstrating her leadership already by working to expand program-

ming, implementing strategic measurements to ensure Center success, and expanding local community partnerships across the valley.

Jessie is excited to be working in the City of El Mirage and at the Dysart Community Center, assisting the many residents of El Mirage to build a successful future. Jessie grew up in the northwest suburbs of Chicago before attending the University of Arizona to obtain her undergraduate degree in Spanish



Jessie Singer

Literature. She completed her master's degree in Business

Administration and is currently pursuing her Doctorate of Organizational Leadership.

Join us in welcoming Jessie Singer to the Dysart Community Center. She brings a wealth of new knowledge and information to the Center. For more information or to simply introduce yourself, Jessie can be reached at jsinger@dysartcommunitycenter.org or by calling 623-583-0016. You can also visit us online at www.dysartcommunitycenter.org.

AZ Game & Fish Hunter Education Class begins in April

The Arizona Game and Fish Hunter Education Class will be held in El Mirage during the month of April. The class, which will be held each Saturday during April, is recognized nationally and internationally and the only one of its kind conducted on the weekend during a four week period. The class is offered in part as a community service, therefore the charge for the four-week long course is only \$8.00 not including food or transportation. Led by Bob Bond, the course consists of nine chapters typically taught by instructors with specialized experience in that particular course topic. The class is designed to stress the safe, ethical, respectful and knowledgeable use of the outdoors; instructors will attempt to teach the safe use of archery equipment, muzzle loading firearms, and regular firearms. Sign up will be accepted beginning March 9th and spaces are limited. Contact Bob Bond at 602-938-5235 for more information.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

This is a reminder that the El Mirage City Council is committed to providing an open and transparent local government. All residents are invited to attend council meetings, conducted during the evening on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month. Council meetings are held in the Council Chambers, located at 14010 North El Mirage Road. At each council meeting, agendas are available for public review and members of the public are able to sign in to speak to the Council on agenda items.

On occasion, the Council must adjourn to what is known as "Executive Session" where they can discuss legal, personnel and/or other issues that must remain confidential. When these occasions arise, the Council adjourns to executive session to protect the confidentiality of these discussions as allowed by state law. There are seven authorized topics for executive sessions:

1. Personnel (must provide

24 hours written notice to employees.

2. Discussion or consideration of records exempt by law from public inspection.

3. Legal advice – with public body's own lawyer(s).

4. Discussion or consultation with public body's lawyer(s) to consider pending or contemplated litigation, settlement discussions, negotiated contracts.

5. Discuss and instruct its representative regarding labor negotiations.

6. Discuss international, interstate, and tribal negotiations.

7. Purchase, sale, or lease of real property.

The El Mirage Council appreciates the public's understanding of the need to adjourn to executive session from time to time. We will continue to work closely with residents to discuss important issues and work together to move our community forward in a positive direction.

New restaurant comes to El Mirage

S.O.G. #1 recently opened in the downtown area of El Mirage. Located at 12006 W. Thunderbird Rd., the new restaurant is a family-owned and operated venture featuring casual, inexpensive dine-in or take-

out food options. The menu currently features chicken, catfish, burgers and hot and cold deli sandwiches along with corn dogs, chili dogs and chili cheese fries. Virtually all menu items are under \$4.00.

Two brothers, Malcolm and Rashid Sterling, along with their wives Leoshie and Tyesha, opened the restaurant in El Mirage because they believed the community needed a local eatery featuring casual and

down home-style food that was affordable. "We have a real crowd pleaser with our fried broccoli – it's just something you have to try and once you do, you'll be hooked" said Malcolm. In addition to the current menu, S.O.G. #1 will also be offering fried zucchini, world-famous Philly cheese fries, hot links and "Rib Sundays" boasting BBQ Spareribs made with a third-generation recipe.

ROHDE: Featured in art gallery From Page 1

tered throughout the region.

We often strive to preserve which will eventually be no more, those expired objects that surround us, and photography is one method of preservation, to create an image of what is and what was, or may soon be no more. Sean Rohde chooses to preserve the concept of expired in the Southwest with film that is also expired. More specifically, expired Polaroid instant film. Using fully manual, vintage Polaroid cameras from the 1960s and 1970s (more specifically the 180, 190, 195 and Color-pack III), he explores the deserts and towns of Arizona, California and Utah to record and preserve images of objects and places that are often gone six months after. The film he chooses includes Type 669, Type 690, and ID-UV, all color films, all expired anywhere from 1995 to 2008. Polaroid film itself is a virtually expired medium. There are those that continue in the spirit of Polaroid, but these specific Polaroid films will soon be long gone.

Sean Rohde shoots what he sees, making no changes to the environment, yet the images often display the essence of the Southwest rather than being straight shots

of what is in front of the camera... a combination of film and camera choice, technique and photographic eye. The colors of red, orange and blue are present throughout the Southwest as shown in these photographs, and the colors often seem burned by our desert sun. The prints themselves are sometimes ragged and faded, which only serves to enhance the subject matter. The prints are expired objects, presenting images of expired objects, and it is worth noting that they will not last forever. They will crack and peel, curl and fade. These Polaroid prints are literal, tactile representations of the "expired" theme that is presented in the photographs. These are here to look at, these expressions of expiration... for now.

Sean Rohde has lived in Phoenix since June of 1997, having spent 27 years of his life previously in northern Indiana. Working as a registered nurse, he spends his free time shooting many analog film formats with vintage cameras. More of his work may be seen at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sjrohde> and you may read his ramblings about film and camera reviews/modifications at <http://moominsean.blogspot.com>.