



# FOOTNOTES Newsletter

CATALINA FOOTHILLS ESTATES No. 7 ASSOCIATION

www.CFE7.org

P.O.Box 64173, Tucson, AZ 85728-4173

520-323-9299

Nov 2012



## Welcome Our New Neighbors

Paul and Ting Turney  
1625 E Entrada Diez

Mark & Audrey Erman  
5122 Soledad Primera

Sheryl Clark  
1845 E Camino Cresta

Karen Smith  
1300 E. Via Entrada

David Thomas  
Mary Beeching  
5221 N Foothills Dr.

Sheldon Goldstein  
Michele Scopellite  
5201 N Foothills Dr.

E. Bartz  
5131 N Soledad Primera

Jonathan & Mary Schatz  
5535 N Entrada Quince

Daniel Magee  
Lisa Coyner  
1515 E Entrada Segunda

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## Golder Ranch Fire District Board Approves Proposed Foothills Annexation

by Susan & Stacy Litvak

Golder Ranch Fire District ("GRFD") is proposing to annex approximately 10 square miles of unincorporated Pima County that covers most of the Catalina Foothills Estates, including CFE#7. After a public hearing on October 22, 2012 at Westward Look Resort, the GRFD Board voted to proceed with the annexation process and also approved the purchase of the residence at 1795 East Camino Cielo for use as a temporary fire station.



GRFD's next step will be circulation of petitions, which will probably begin sometime after the first of the year. **THERE IS NO VOTE ON THIS MATTER.** If you sign the petition, you are APPROVING annexation. **DO NOT** sign this petition if you **DO NOT** want to be annexed by GRFD. The Notice Of Proposed Change In The Golder Ranch Fire District Boundaries, which was mailed to you in October, states annexation is approved if there is "...support from the majority (more than 50%) of the property owners and valuation....".

If the annexation is approved, we will change from Rural/Metro's private, subscription-based service with fee tiers calculated from square footage to a public, tax-based service with fees based on assessed value and mil rates. According to the GRFD Boundary Change Impact Statement, charges will total \$1.75 per hundred dollars of secondary assessed value. You can determine secondary assessed value for your home by looking at your property tax bill or checking the County Assessor's web site ([gis.pima.gov/maps/landbase/parsrch.htm](http://gis.pima.gov/maps/landbase/parsrch.htm)).

Annexation may result in changes to how much you are paying for fire/emergency services. Since rates/fees may vary widely depending on the real estate market, home location, and home condition and characteristics, each homeowner should make his/her own calculation. As an example, a home and 2-car garage totaling ap-

proximately 2,700 square feet with a secondary assessed value of about \$30,050 is currently paying Rural/Metro \$495/year. This same home would pay \$526 (300.50 X 1.75) if annexed by GRFD. A second example is a property with approximately 3,425 square feet including a 3-car garage with a secondary assessed value of \$37,510 currently paying Rural/Metro \$636/yr. This same home would pay \$656 (375.10 X 1.75) if annexed by GRFD.

Homeowners should compare the services offered by Rural/Metro and GRFD. In addition, costs for either service will almost certainly change in the future. Rural/Metro has increased the cost per square foot over the years, and GRFD fees will change as your home's assessed value and/or the mil rate change. Additionally, your home's assessed value depends on the housing market, location, and characteristics/condition but your square footage typically remains constant. GRFD documents related to the annexation can be found on its website ([golderranchfire.org](http://golderranchfire.org)). Click on "Foothills Annexation Information" in the lower right hand corner of the web page. GRFD financial information can be accessed on their website by clicking on "About Your Fire District", then "Administration", then "Finance".

**The Catalina Foothills Association is hosting a Public Forum to provide information to constituents in Areas 1-9 on the proposed GRFD annexation. It will be held on Wednesday, November 14 at 7pm in The Murphey Gallery at St. Philip's in the Hills Church.** Rural/Metro and GRFD will be making presentations and providing more details about their services. Citizen groups for and against the annexation have also been invited.

This annexation will affect the fire/emergency services you receive and how much you pay for them. We **strongly** urge you to attend the Public Forum on November 14, 2012.

# CATALINA FOOTHILLS ESTATES NO. 7

## Mission Statement

The Catalina Foothills Estates No. 7 Homeowners Association (HOA), a Board-managed HOA, shall promote maintaining area No. 7 in the spirit of the Protective Covenants. This shall be accomplished through various programs that help support our natural environment and a clean, crime-free area, while maintaining the aesthetic character of the neighborhood.

## Board Goals

The goals of the HOA Board are serving our members by keeping them informed of the Protective Covenants, regulations, and membership activities; being a resource for information about our community; providing news and announcements of local events; and providing our members the opportunity to have an active role in our community.

2012

## Board of Directors

<b>President@cfe7.org</b>	Jeff Mundt	299-5194
<b>Vicepresident@cfe7.org</b>	John Bowers	529-3099
<b>Treasurer@cfe7.org</b>	Susan Litvak	
<b>Secretary@cfe7.org</b>	Jane Hoffmann	323-9299
	P.O.Box 64173, Tucson,AZ 85728-4173	

<b>Architectural Review Committee</b>	archreview@cfe7.org	
<b>Chairperson</b>	Phil Matthews	299-8886
	John Bowers	529-3099
	Tom Hicks	
(Res.)	Jerry Bishop	

<b>Covenants Committee</b>	covenants@cfe7.org	
<b>Chairperson</b>	Bob Sommerfeld	
	Joel Henness	204-1513
	Yale Palchick	591-8050

<b>Welcome Committee</b>	welcome@cfe7.org	
	Susan Litvak	
	Jeff Mundt	299-5194

<b>Nominating Committee</b>	nominating@cfe7.org	
	Joel Henness	204-1513
	Tom Hicks	

<b>Landscape Committee</b>	landscape@cfe7.org	
	Jeff Mundt	299-5194
(Res.)	Dave Elwood	299-4393

<b>Media Committee</b>	media@cfe7.org	
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<b>Newsletter</b>	cfe7news@msn.com	
(Res.)	June LeClair-Bucko	577-0989

<b>Web</b>	www.cfe7.org	
	Tom Hicks	webmaster@cfe7.org

<b>Neighborhood Watch</b>	CFE7NW@msn.com	
<b>Area Leader</b>	June LeClair-Bucko	577-0989

## Open Board Meetings

The Board generally meets at 7 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month ( Jan. 4th, Feb. 1st, Mar. 7th, Apr. 4th, May 2nd, June 6th, July/Aug. *no meetings*, Sept. 5th, Oct 3rd, Nov.7th, Dec.5th, 2012, Jan 2nd, 2013)

Holidays and vacation schedules sometimes result in the re-scheduling or cancellation of a particular meeting, so please check with the secretary, 323-9299, to confirm a meeting time.

At the beginning of our meetings, we allow a ten minute period for "Resident Related Issues" – these must be scheduled with the secretary two weeks before the meeting.

Articles for the newsletter are welcomed and should be mailed to:

Catalina Foothills Estates #7 Association  
P.O. Box 64173, Tucson, AZ, 85728-4173  
or e-mail to [CFE7News@msn.com](mailto:CFE7News@msn.com).

**Board Members and positions change February of each year. Information can be verified on-line at [www.CFE7.org](http://www.CFE7.org).**

*Has your telephone number and/or e-mail address changed?  
Please let us know by phone (323-9299) or e-mail  
(Secretary@cfe7.org) to update your information.*

## Your Homeowners Association Board

*By Robert Sommerfeld  
Covenants Enforcement Committee Chairman*

The leading response we hear from new homeowners who move into CFE#7 is they moved here due to the beauty of the area. Residents comment on the natural vegetation, wildlife, how each house has a personality (unlike a "cookie-cutter subdivision house") and how well kept up the neighborhood is.

Your Homeowners Association Board is a volunteer board tasked with enforcing the Protective Covenants that promote these attributes of our area. During my tenure on the board I have heard many misconceptions about enforcement of our protective covenants. They have ranged from the Board having aircraft fly over residences to see the color of the roof to Board members on patrol looking for violations. The Board cannot ignore a violation they observe but very few of the violations the Board investigates are due to a complaint originating from a Board member. To date for 2012, 64% of the violations investigated were brought to the attention of the Board by fellow residents. The top 3 violations are: white roofs, visible garbage cans and the removal of native vegetation.

The CFE#7 Board would rather engage in dialog and provide guidance for homeowners before a violation occurs. I encourage every homeowner to contact the Board before they take any action that affects the appearance to the exterior of their home and property. By doing this you can be assured that the approval of any action has the approval of the Board and is in compliance with the Protective Covenants.



## Catalina Foothills Association Public Forum

**Wednesday November 14<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm**

St Philip's in the Hills Church, Murphey Gallery  
Proposed Annexation of the Catalina Foothills  
west of Campbell Ave.

Golder Ranch Fire District.

Presentations from

*Golder Ranch FD and Rural Metro*

moderated by *The League of Woman Voters*

## Annual CFE 7 Clean-up Day Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 8am

The Community Clean-up Day will take place this year on Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup> 2013. This event not only helps keep our community attractive but a fun day to meet your neighbors! It is our fourth year coordinating this community event, so please join us at the corner of Via Entrada and Foothills Drive where we will coordinate the coverage of our streets and washes. Trash bags will be provided, wear good shoes, bring a hat and gloves and don't forget the sun screen. We thank all our past volunteers and Jeff Mundt for coordinating the event. Mark your calendar and come join us.....

## Pedestrian Safety

by John Bowers

Last month a 93-year old lady (not a CFE#7 resident) was driving along Via Entrada just north of Calle del Cielo when she experienced some sort of medical emergency. Her vehicle went off the roadway into the deep wash in the median and she later had no recollection of how she got there. She was taken to a hospital for observation but fortunately appeared to have no serious injuries from her ride into the wash. Her vehicle was relatively undamaged but had to be removed from the median by a tow truck. While talking to a responding Deputy Sheriff about this, we agreed that it was a good thing that no pedestrians were nearby when the lady lost control of her vehicle.

This incident points up how important it is that walkers always remain vigilant. At a minimum, this means to walk facing oncoming traffic. The threat from vehicles is not always from one being driven recklessly; the threat might arise from a medical problem that affects the driver. Anyone who walks with his back to oncoming traffic is placing himself at unnecessary risk. Remember that author Stephen King was very nearly killed while walking when he was struck from the rear by a vehicle.

If you're walking with someone else, it's advisable to walk along the edge of the roadway in single file to allow vehicles to pass. Ensure that you are visible to oncoming traffic and that, if necessary, you step off the roadway to allow vehicles to pass safely. Trust all of your senses to detect oncoming traffic even if that means turning down the volume on your iPod.

CFE#7 is a great place to walk, especially now that our weather has cooled a bit. Please just remember that we non-bionic folks are sharing the roadways with machines that are bigger, stronger and faster than we are and that their operators may not always be in full control. Our roadways are public and not every vehicle is being driven by a conscientious CFE#7 resident. There's no need to assert your "right" of way. You can be just as dead right as you can be dead wrong. You are responsible for your own safety.



## Greetings neighbors!

As this newsletter reaches you, our country may have just elected its President and other representatives, and we may have decided many issues put before us in the form of propositions. If this letter reaches you before November 6, I implore you to mark your ballot and play an active part in our country's future.

As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, our work is not done. Please take the time to read about the Golder Ranch Fire District's bid to annex a significant portion of the Foothills area, including our own Catalina Foothills Estates #7. In the past our neighborhood has investigated different emergency and fire district options, and adjacent communities have even formed a coalition to address its fire and emergency services interests. Please carefully consider the proposed annexation by Golder Ranch Fire District and the service currently provided by Rural/Metro Fire Department before signing any petition presented to you by Golder Ranch Fire District. If you do not want to change your fire/emergency service from Rural/Metro to Golder Ranch Fire District, do not sign the petition. There will be no vote on this issue.

On Wednesday, November 14 the Catalina Foothills Association will host a public forum for its constituents (areas 1-9) to provide information presented by both Golder Ranch Fire District and Rural/Metro Fire Department. This forum will be held in The Murphey Gallery of St. Philip's in the Foothills Church at 7 pm. By now you should have received a postcard from Catalina Foothills Association announcing this date and a letter from Rural/Metro addressing its position as well.

May all your decisions be informed and bring you the peace of mind of a job well-done!

Warm regards (and cool days!),

**Jeff Mundt, President**

## Annual CFE 7 HOA Meeting Tuesday Feb 5<sup>th</sup> 2013 7pm

St Philip's in the Hills Church  
East Murphey Gallery

Our Guest Speaker will be Ann Audrey, who will be providing an overview of water harvesting principles and techniques for capturing rainwater in tanks ("active" water harvesting) and for capturing rainwater directly in the soil ("passive" water harvesting). She will also briefly address Tucson Water's water harvesting rebate program benefits and requirements.

# Committee Reports



## Architectural Committee

All residents must obtain approval from the Architectural Committee **prior** to any construction, modifications, or building alterations.

**This includes Solar and Water Harvesting Installations.**

*It is suggested that residents not make any down payments with contractors until the project is approved.*

*Forms and/or any information can be obtained from the Architectural Committee or Office Secretary or our web site ([www.CFE7.org](http://www.CFE7.org)).*

*The committee works diligently to review your request and enable you to complete your work project in a reasonable, timely fashion.*

### Architectural Review March 2012 to Nov 2012

	Approved	Pending	Comp.	Disa.
Addition	3	3	1	1
Building	1	1		
Driveway	1	1		
Gate	1	1		
Harvest tank	1	1	1	
Painting	5	5	4	
Pool	1	1	1	
Replace Door/Windows	5	5	3	
Remodel	2	2	2	
Roof Work	6	6	5	
Screening	1	1		
Solar	2	2	1	2
Wall/Fence	1	1	1	

### Covenant Review March 2012 to Nov 2012

	Review	Pending	Rectified	Red Tag
Debris	2		2	
Mailbox	3	2	1	
Home Busi	1		1	
Fence	1	1		
RV	1		1	
Signs	2		2	
Solar	1	1		1
Trash Containers	6	1	5	
White Roof	2	1	1	
Unapprov. Const.	1	1		
Vegetation	4	1	2	1
Trailer	2		2	
Misc	3	1	2	

## Importance of Native Vegetation

Residents of the Foothills live in this unique area because it preserves the character of the foothills desert in a suburban neighborhood. From the inception of the Catalina Foothill Communities, residents have worked diligently to retain this essence.

New residents often remove **Bursage** groundcover, entire prickly pear & Chola plants, and Palo Verde trees. In doing so, one destroys the fragile character of the desert. Additionally, removal of the native vegetation opens our ecosystem to invasion by many opportunistic non-native plant intruders. Native plants help each other in seedling growth and the sharing of moisture, where invasive plants do not.

Often times, landscapers come to clean a lot without close supervision. These contractors may "Clear cut/blade grade" the property within hours-leaving the neighborhood with a scar that will take years to re-vegetate, if ever. Homeowners must make contractors aware of the difference in pruning and removal, and be mutually clear as to which plants may be touched and which must be left alone.

**No Clear Cutting**

## Got Water Pressure?

by Jerry Bishop

Unbeknownst to many of us who live in the Foothills is the fact that Tucson Water Department delivers water from its mains to our homes at a very high pressure, approximately 120 pounds per square inch (psi). The domestic water delivery system within our homes is designed to operate at around 60 psi. It is therefore necessary to have a valve on the house side of the water meter to reduce the pressure and protect your home plumbing system and appliances.

The homeowner needs to be aware of the existence of this pressure reducing valve (prv) as it needs to be serviced on a regular basis and replaced if the water pressure in the home gets too high (over 80 psi). Often the valve is not exposed to view. If you do not see the valve above ground, either by the water meter or where the main water line enters the house, it means that the valve is buried and will require some digging to expose it. The first place to dig is right behind (house side) of the water meter. Should this fail, next try digging next to the house where the water pipe enters the exterior wall of your home.

Should you start experiencing plumbing problems such as dripping faucets, low flow shower heads that equal Niagara Falls in volume or a flushing toilet that sounds like a jumbo jet taking off, your pressure reducing valve has probably failed. If so, contact Tucson Waters' Customer Support Unit. They will come to your home and run a test of your water pressure. If it turns out that the pressure is high, the next step is to adjust the pressure at the valve. Should that measure prove unsuccessful, your prv will have to be replaced, a job which should not be delayed as the high pressure could result in a burst pipe or fitting.

## Home Sales in CFE 7

April 2012 to Oct 2012

Active - 3

Active Contingent - 1

Sold - 4

Avg Selling Price 399k



Brought to you by Scott Knight at Long Realty

# Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch areas are created by residents who wish to prevent crime or effectively minimize crime in their neighborhoods. We organized our efforts back in 2005 and have been very successful through the years in keeping crime on a downward trend until last year when we experienced a spike in crime.

We have approximately 25 Neighborhood Watch block groups. Most of the groups are neighbors that are in close proximity to each others homes. This is intentional so neighbors become accustomed to the coming and goings of residents and service providers in their groups. They share contact information and usually have a good neighbor looking out for their homes while away. No one knows better the activity on their street or neighborhood than those that live there. This is the basic concept for being a proactive, preventive neighborhood watch. We are aware of our neighborhoods and when things don't seem right or feel right while observing an individual or vehicle we call it into 911. *This is preventive.....*

*Prevention starts with you.* Most crimes that afflict the foothills are crimes of opportunity. This means the person committing the offense sees a quick and easy way to access your home or vehicle and feels no one will see them do it. So using any kind of deterrent and using them all the time does help. Most criminals want a quick in and out with little to no obstacles.

Also be aware who you let into your home. Secure valuables. *Unknown* service people are not usually a problem, but do you really know for sure?

When there is an up tick in any given area of our community, our block leaders are great in getting their groups together and review and reinforce crime prevention. Our block leaders also receive crime information from other neighboring areas which they pass along to our participants. We know that a crime trend effecting one of our neighboring communities could possibly effect ours. There are sixteen Neighborhood Area Leaders who share crime information in the Foothills. ( Just west of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave to Hacienda del sol, River Rd to the north of Ina) The Area Leaders meet annually to share information and keep our efforts effective.

Our CFE 7 NW Annual Meeting is coming up in February. This is a mandatory meeting to keep our NW active. This means all participants and leaders must attend and sign in on the appropriate NW sheet which is turned in to the Sheriff's Dept. It is usually a short meeting prior to the annual HOA meeting. It is an opportunity to reacquaint with neighbors, NW leaders and local law enforcement. It allows us to be informed on the crime trends and the opportunity to share information on how we can better prevent any upward crime incidents.

Our meetings are open to everyone in the community even if you are not a participant. Please come and join us and invite your neighbors. Perhaps you will also join us in our efforts.

I want to thank all our Block Leaders for their work and all our participants who actively participate in keeping crime on a downward trend in our community.....

***Be Aware, Be Safe.....June***



**Annual Neighborhood Watch Meeting  
Tuesday Feb 5<sup>th</sup> 2013 6pm  
St Philip's in the Hills Church, East Murphey Gallery**

***Crime Prevention Starts with You.***

Come meet your neighbors, and Neighborhood Watch Leaders  
and Sheriff Dept Officers.  
Social at 6pm, meeting at 6:30pm

## *Helpful info.....*

**Catalina Foothills Est. #7**  
323-9299

**Web**  
[www.CFE7.org](http://www.CFE7.org)

**CFE 7 News**  
[cfe7news@msn.com](mailto:cfe7news@msn.com)

**CFE 7 Neighborhood Watch**  
[cfe7NW@msn.com](mailto:cfe7NW@msn.com)

**Catalina Foothills Association**  
327-9693  
[www.CFAtucson.org](http://www.CFAtucson.org)

**Pima County Sheriff Dept.**  
911

[www.pimasheriff.org](http://www.pimasheriff.org)

**Shannon Station**  
351-6311

**Community Svc**  
351-4900

**Crime Map**  
[www.Crimereports.com](http://www.Crimereports.com)

**Dept Dev. Svc.**  
[www.pimaxpress.com](http://www.pimaxpress.com)

**Build Codes**  
740-6441

**Permits**  
740-6490

**Barking Dogs**  
743-7550

**AZ Wildlife**  
628-5376  
[www.azgfd.gov](http://www.azgfd.gov)

**Postal Svc**  
[www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)  
**Postal Inspector**  
[www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov](http://www.postalinspectors.uspis.gov)

**Recycling**  
[www.tucsoncleanandbeautiful.org](http://www.tucsoncleanandbeautiful.org)

## **Dispose-a-Med**

Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 2012  
6900 E Sunrise Dr (Basha's)  
8am to 12pm

*Visit the Pima Sheriff's Website for details*

## Garage Door Security

by Megan Wood

Of all your exterior doors your garage door is likely to be the most vulnerable. It is the door most likely to be left unlocked and even left open. If you have an attached garage with a door through to the rest of the house, this is a double security risk. Once inside your garage the thief can work unseen on breaking through that connecting access door.

### Safety Tips

- The garage access door should be as secure as your front door.
  - Always lock the door from your garage into your home.
  - Most new automatic garage door systems have a lock. Use it, and unplug your system, when on vacation.
  - Do not leave the garage door remote in your vehicle.
  - Consider purchasing a key-chain remote compatible with your system.
  - Tape down the emergency release lever cord. Thieves can use a clothes hanger, from the outside, to pull the lever down and open the garage door.
- Check out this You Tube video to see how easy it is:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMz1tXBVT1s>.
- Install a wireless keypad to operate the garage door.

Garage doors get a lot of use. Eventually they will show signs of wear and tear. It pays to regularly check the condition of the door and frame. Check for any sign of rot or corrosion.

Look with the eyes of a burglar; how would you break in to your garage? Are the doors constructed out of a single sheet of metal or fiberglass? If so, is it possible a burglar could gain leverage and bend them enough to get inside? He or she could not easily do so with reinforced steel or solid core wood.



## Recycling Cell Phones

When you send your cell phone off for recycling, there's one step you might forget to take—erasing your personal data. In a recent survey by a major cell phone recycler, 99% of cell phones tested still contained sensitive private information that previous owners most certainly wouldn't want to get into the hands of new users.

Here are simple steps to erase the data from your cell phone in preparation for sending it in for recycling or resell.

Remove your SIM card. This is the tiny card inside your phone, and it contains data stored in your phone. If you aren't sure how to remove it, check your phone's manual or take it to a wireless store for assistance.

Now it's time to erase all the history from your phone. This is done through a hard reset. Instructions for how to conduct a hard reset on your phone can be found in your user's manual.

Finally, double check with the cell phone recycler to which you're sending your phone that they clear out the cell phones' data before putting them back into the consumer stream.

## The Sky Is Not Falling...Anymore

### Local Real Estate: Main Market and Foothills

Yes, homes really are selling again. The big news is that the Tucson main market has seen a 26% decrease in inventory since September of 2011 and a 12% decrease in the Foothills. The main market currently has 4.2 months of inventory as compared to 6.4 months in the Foothills. Typically, 6 months of inventory is neither a buyer nor a sellers market and 3 months is a sellers market. Yeah! Prices are going up. The median sale price has increased by 25% in the main market and by 2% in the Foothills market.

Even the luxury home market seems to have turned the corner with increases in homes under contract for 4 months in a row. September had 62% more homes under contract than 1 year ago. Current inventory is down to 16.6 months from 39.2 months in September 2011. Unfortunately, the median sale price is also down by 6% from a year ago but sale prices have increased 3 out of the last 4 months.

Low supply and increased demand is beginning to stabilize the local housing market. Sale prices are increasing by varying degrees depending on the neighborhood, the inventory and the price range. Assuming inventory continues to decrease in the Foothills, the median sale price will likely trend upwards.

In September, the Wall Street Journal reported that Tucson is among the 99 markets that is beating the housing bust. The FHFA reported that the average sale price in the second quarter of 2012 (year over year) rose more in Arizona than any other state in the country. I cannot speak for all realtors out there, but my business has picked up significantly!

### Cat 7 Real Estate:

Our beautiful neighborhood market seems to finally be gaining some stability. Inventory is down somewhat and the median sale price is up slightly over the last year to \$355,000. A more significant number is the days on market for closed homes which has dropped every 6 month period over the last two years from 151 days on market to the current 75 days on market. This means if you list your home at a reasonable sale price and in good condition, you are likely to sell your home in 2.5 months. The most recent sale in the Cat 7 went under contract and sold in 5 days for \$5,000 over list price. I personally think that the days of purchasing homes in the mid 300's in Cat 7 are numbered, by this time next year it will all be a bad memory.

### National Real Estate:

According to the S&P/Case-Shiller Report released in August as of the second quarter of 2012, home prices increased by 6.9% from the first to the second quarter of 2012 in the targeted 20 major cities. The report claims that the housing market seems to be stabilizing, and it has predicted a 5% increase in sale prices between 2013 and 2014. Currently inventory is down and the average home prices across the United States are back to their early 2003 levels.

*Scott Knight is a CFE#7 resident and a local realtor.*

# Wildlife & Plants

## The Wildlife-friendly Garden

Whether you are making an existing yard more wildlife-friendly or planting a new garden from scratch, guarantee success by following a few simple guidelines. The basic needs of all animals are food, water and shelter arranged so the animal can safely get to them when necessary.

**Food:** Birds, mammals and reptiles eat seeds, fruit, insects and nectar. Consider including a range of plants to provide a variety of food types. Keep in mind that attracting prey mammals like rabbits may in turn bring their predators, so it is best to invite these animals to areas away from the home and walkways or patios.

**Water:** It attracts desert animals and birds. Place water in an open area, preferably where people can observe animals without disturbing them. If predators (such as cats) and javelina are excluded from the area, then provide water on the ground, with perches nearby for birds. If the area is open to predators, then move the water up beyond their reach. Remember to change water at least every two days; watch out for still water in which mosquitoes could breed; and remove algae with a scrub brush rather than chemicals. Let the basin dry in the sun between fillings to prevent diseases from spreading.

**Shelter:** The landscape must provide plenty of escape cover if quail, lizards, ground squirrels and other small animals are to survive. The natural, mounded shape of most desert shrubs allows prey to disappear from sight as soon as it reaches the bush. It also makes it difficult for a larger predator to follow. Keep in mind that dense brush can also provide cover for predators and rattlesnakes, so place these away from areas where people walk or children play

**Variety:** Some birds perch high in the treetops, while others forage under shrubs. When planning a diverse landscape, choose plants that will grow to different heights. By varying the height of plants provided, a landscape provides nesting, roosting and preening opportunities for more types of birds.

**Plant choice:** Hundreds of plants from other dry regions of the planet are sold in Arizona nurseries and home stores. Unfortunately, some have escaped from managed landscapes to invade Arizona's natural areas. These pests grow and spread aggressively, crowding out native plants and competing for limited resources. Some of these invasive plants, like fountain grass (*Pennisetum setaceum*) and buffelgrass (*Pennisetum ciliare*), fuel desert fires. When purchasing plants, it's perfectly all right to ask whether the plant is native to your area. For more information, consult the Arizona Native Plant Society's information page about invasive non-native landscape plants, [aznps.org/html/invasives.html](http://aznps.org/html/invasives.html).

**Gravel:** Gravel is a popular mulch. However, if it is deep enough to provide effective weed control, crawling insects can use it to escape from birds and lizards. Seeds tend to fall down into the crevices and out of the reach of birds. Limiting gravel to selected open spaces is a big help to wildlife.

### Wildlife-friendly maintenance:

- Allow plants to go to seed. Avoid trimming off flowers and berries.
- Be tolerant of insects. They are an important wildlife food source, especially for birds and lizards.
- Use organic gardening methods and non-toxic pest and weed control
- Avoid using poisons or sticky traps to remove rodents, insects or other pests. Poisons can affect predators like hawks, owls and bobcats, and sticky traps can catch birds and other unintended victims.
- Let the lower branches of shrubs extend to the ground as escape cover for small animals.
- Near walkways, however, keep shrubs trimmed up so you can see rattlesnakes.
- Leave fallen leaves and mesquite pods on the ground to create a natural mulch and provide habitat for insects. Birds will dig through the mulch and eat the insects.

Visit AZ Game & Fish website for a plant list and descriptions for your planning purposes. ([http://www.azgfd.gov/w\\_c/landscaping\\_planning.shtml](http://www.azgfd.gov/w_c/landscaping_planning.shtml))

## Tucson's Lizards



Ornate Tree Lizard ( *Urosaurus ornatus*)  
This is the most common lizard found in Tucson yards; it is often found in trees, but also commonly found on walls and fences. Homeowner's can potentially increase tree lizard abundance by placing rock piles in the garden and planting shaggy barked trees like the Velvet Mesquite, which they will utilize as a basking and foraging site.

Regal Horned Lizard ( *Phrynosoma solare*) These lizards feed almost exclusively on harvester ants. Because of the ant's painful sting, many homeowner's consider ants to be pests and choose to use ant poison to kill them. Unfortunately, by killing the ants, homeowners also eliminate the Horned lizard's main food source.

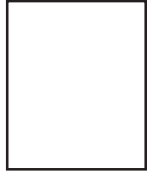


Tiger Whiptail ( *Aspidoscelis tigris*)  
This is a very active lizard that is always on the move. It is often seen digging through leaf litter looking for a meal during the heat of the day. Unlike Tree lizards, Whiptail lizards don't climb well, and do best in large open yards with chainlink or no fences.

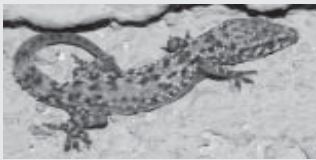
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# CATALINA FOOTHILLS ESTATES No. 7 ASSOCIATION

P. O. Box 64173  
Tucson, Az 85728-4173



## *Tucson's Lizards con't*



Mediterranean House Gecko ( Hemidactylus turcicus) Although this lizard is not native to the U.S., it is commonly seen at night on the walls of our houses, usually near lights, where it hunts insects. It looks much like our native Banded gecko, but due to the presence of cats and other predators, Banded geckos are rarely found in the urban area.



Desert Spiny Lizard ( Sceloporus magister) Considered a semi-arboreal, or tree-dwelling, lizard, the Desert Spiny lizard can be found in areas with lots of cover like rock piles, log piles and dense vegetation. Because of its large size, it eats larger insects like cockroaches and beetles.

Taken from a brochure by Heidi Flugstad & Dennis Caldwell. Photos by Dennis Caldwell.

*Mark your calendar and come join us...*

### **Catalina Foothills Association Public Forum**

**Wednesday November 14<sup>th</sup> 7 pm**

St Philip's in the Hills Church, Murphey Gallery  
Proposed Annexation of the Catalina Foothills  
Golder Ranch Fire District.

### **Annual CFE 7 Neighborhood Watch Meeting**

**Tuesday Feb 5<sup>th</sup> 2013 6 pm**

St Philip's in the Hills Church East Murphey Gallery  
*Crime prevention starts with you.*  
Social 6pm - Meeting 6:30pm

### **Annual CFE 7 HOA Meeting**

**Tuesday Feb 5<sup>th</sup> 2013 7 pm**

St Philip's in the Hills Church East Murphey Gallery  
Our Guest Speaker will be Ann Audrey

### **CFE 7 Community Clean-up Day**

**Saturday, Feb 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 8 am**

the corner of Via Entrada and Foothills Drive