

# Valley of the Sun

## September 2008 Real Estate Update

### Another Chance to Shine!

As a residential real estate agent, one of the great joys of my work is helping people find a home they love—a place where they can live & grow with their families for many years to come. But even as we see the home prices coming down from the highs we reached a few years ago, the dream of home ownership remains out of the reach of countless families. The end of many federally supported down-payment assistance programs later this month will only make the challenge of buying a home greater.

While many of us take the joys of home for granted, there have always been many families that are simply not able to afford even a modest home. They sorely miss the physical comfort and emotional pride of having a place to call their own, and all too often they can not find a way to take the very large step to home ownership.

Habitat for Humanity was founded in 1976 in an effort to fight the cycle of poverty that keeps so many people from having a safe & stable place to call home. Working with the generous support of large & small contributors, the assistance of local and international governments, and the invaluable efforts of volunteer construction crews, Habitat has built homes for more than 1,000,000 people around the world. Habitat families are poor but hard-working, and all of them are required to contribute 400 hours of their own time to the construction process.

Habitat for Humanity is currently working on several projects here in the Valley, and they need

lots of volunteer labor. I organized a volunteer day with Habitat two years ago, and it was a great time for everyone. Because we had so much fun the last time, I have been trying to set up another opportunity for over a year, and we just got our chance. We are scheduled to work on a home site in Apache Junction on Saturday, October 11th, and I would like to invite you to come join us.

We will meet out there at 6:30 in the morning for an introduction to the site with the project foreman, and plan to work until the early afternoon. I will provide breakfast & lunch, and Habitat will take care of the rest of the event.

While Habitat has a constant need for volunteers, they can only handle a limited number of visitors on the site each day, and the weekend slots are the most popular. Please be in touch with me as soon as you can so I can hold a spot for you. Because of the short notice we got from Habitat this time, I need to hear back from you **no later than Friday, September 26th** to make sure we can keep our reservation and provide Habitat with the able bodies they need to keep their project on schedule.

No tools or experience are required (in fact, if you do have your own tools, Habitat prefers if you leave them at home.) All you need is a little time, and the desire to help a family enjoy the comforts of home that mean so much. If you have any questions about this opportunity, please give me a call. I think you will find that your day of hard work will be rewarded with memories that will last a lifetime, give you a real sense of pride in supporting your community, and help a deserving family get their own home. I look forward to hearing from you soon!



**Ken Mayer**  
REALTOR®

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## Recipe of the Month

### Apple Mushroom Turkey Burgers

Jill has been taking a more active role in our kitchen lately, and she whipped these up for the family the other night. The recipe is from a book called "Gourmet Nutrition" which we are slowly working through. They make a tasty, low-fat, high-protein option to regular burgers—and did I mention they were pretty tasty?

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1/2 Tbs butter                  | 1 tsp lemon juice                      |
| 1/2 small onion, finely chopped | 1 egg                                  |
| 1/2 apple, finely chopped       | 1/2 tsp salt                           |
| 5 mushrooms, finely chopped     | Garlic powder & black pepper, to taste |
| 1 lb Ground turkey breast       |  |

1. Melt the butter over medium heat in a wok or other pan, and fry the onions until brown (about 5 minutes.)
2. Add the apples and mushrooms and continue to stir-fry for another 4 minutes.
3. Place all ingredients in a large bowl & mix thoroughly. Form into 4 large patties.
4. Line a broiling pan with foil (for easy clean-up) and place the patties on the tray. Set your oven rack so the patties are about 4 inches from the heat. Broil for about 6 minutes on each side. They are done when the juices run clear after being pierced with a fork. Serves 4.

To complete your meal, serve with some fresh spinach and brown rice. Follow it up with some fresh seasonal fruit for dessert, and go to bed happy & healthy!

## Culture corner

**Movies:** Will Smith and Jason Bateman are two of my favorite actors, and they do a great job in **Hancock**. It's an interesting twist on the recent spate of super-hero movies. There's plenty of action, but it is mostly a surprisingly touching study on the perils (and rewards) of allowing yourself to be vulnerable, and of finding your true purpose in life. Not one for the kids, though.

**Food:** Some friends recently took me to a great lunch at **Capriotti's Sandwich Shop**, at 48th & Chandler in Ahwatukee. They've got a good assortment of subs, with juicy hunks of real meat, not processed slices, and fast & friendly service. And the portions are very generous—a half sandwich was enough for me. What's not to like?

**Books:** Walter Mosley's series of Easy Rawlins detective stories has always been as much about the internal struggles of his too-thoughtful hero as the crimes he is called upon to solve, and the latest, **Blonde Faith**, is true to form. But this time we also get some unexpected developments in Easy's personal life, and unsettled business that leads to a surprising ending. A great read.



## Ken, how much is my home worth?

**If you would like a free Current Market Analysis of your home, please fill out this form:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm not thinking of selling my home. I'm just curious about value. Please send me a complimentary current market analysis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I'm thinking about selling my home. Please send me a complimentary current market analysis plus a Home Seller's Handbook with information about Hunt Real Estate ERA, our "Easy Exit Commission Plan", "Aggressive Marketing Plan", and other tips.

### Home Description:

Stories: \_\_\_\_\_ Sqft: \_\_\_\_\_ Beds: \_\_\_\_\_ Baths: \_\_\_\_\_ Pool: \_\_\_\_\_ Garage Size: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other features and upgrades: \_\_\_\_\_ Condition of home: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send this form back:** fax: 480-603-3311 mail: 4040 W Ray Road, #8, Chandler, AZ, 85226 e-mail: [kmayer@huntrealestate.com](mailto:kmayer@huntrealestate.com)

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## On the Home Front



The kids keep cruising along, full speed ahead. Bryn is becoming quite a little lady, mixing in lots of “please” and “thank you” along with her squeals & shouts. She is also becoming Taran’s little shadow, trying to copy everything he does. Sometimes that means they will play together for a while, and sometimes it just seems like twice the chaos—although it can be hard to tell those things apart!

## BONUS TRAVEL NEWS!!

*While my newsletter is usually all about the joys of being at home, sometimes we all need to get away for a little while. My friend Jack Smith has years of experience as an innovator in the travel industry, so I thought you might like to hear his views from time to time. His goal is to provide you some great ways to not “just travel” but to “go in style for a fraction rather than a fortune, and have a blast doing it”. So grab your flip flops, throw on some Jimmy Buffett music, fire up the blender and enjoy this installment on "How To Survive Holiday Travel":*

With the kids back in school, Labor Day here and gone and even though it is still over 100 degrees in AZ, it is time to start thinking about holiday travel. And whether you are looking to visit family or find a fantastic diversion, here are our top three tips to help you survive and thrive this holiday season.

1 - Shop around – The latest trend in the travel industry is aggregator sites like [flipflopfun.com](http://flipflopfun.com) that let you search dozens and dozens of sites like Orbitz, Expedia and Travelocity at once for the lowest price with one click of a mouse. This allows you to find the lowest priced travel in minutes rather than searching multiple sites and spending hours comparison-shopping.

2 - Travel light - Packing light is always a good idea at peak travel times, but this year it could save you lots of money & hassles, as many airlines have decreased luggage weight allowances on domestic flights to 50 pounds per person and/or are charging for extra bags. If you are traveling to warm weather destinations, and won't be packing a lot of heavy clothes, consider packing light enough to fit all your stuff into a single carry-on. Finally, overhead bins are going to be full, and you could end up being forced to check excess bags at the door of the plane.

3- Leave early – During peak travel times, much of the trouble you'll face lies on this side of the security check-in, from traffic jams and full parking lots to absent shuttles and long lines. Rather than striving to "arrive at the airport early," you may want to try to "leave for the airport early" to anticipate all the peripheral delays you may encounter.

For more tips on "How To Survive Holiday Travel", visit [www.flipflopfun.com](http://www.flipflopfun.com) and click on “Free Reports” for the full version of our article. And if you have other travel-related questions, feel free to contact Jack at his office, 480-626-8726, or send him an email at [jack@flipflopfun.com](mailto:jack@flipflopfun.com). *Happy travels—and if you have home-based questions when you get back, call Ken!*



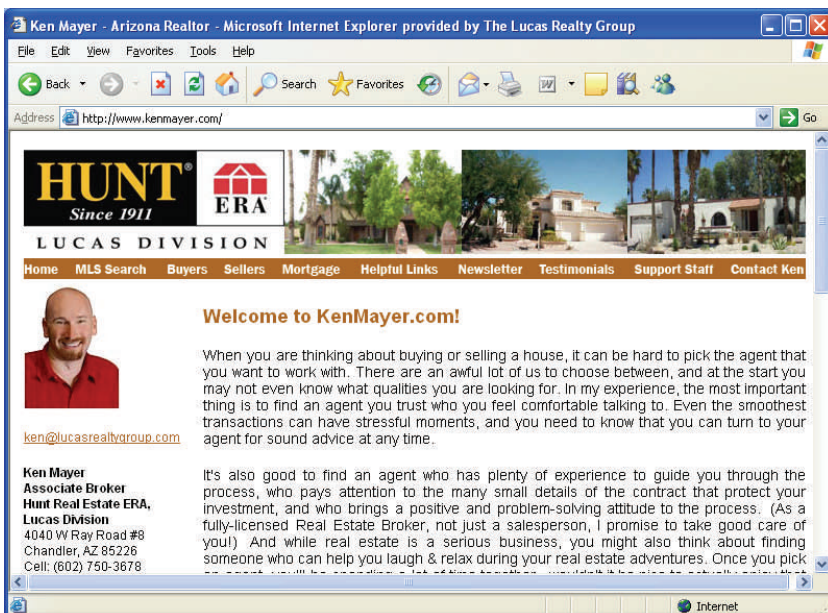


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