



WHAT'S NEW IN MESA, ARIZONA: FALL 2009/WINTER 2010
Updates on New Developments, Arts & Culture, Bureau Programs,
Noteworthy Events and More!
www.VisitMesa.com

Nov. 9, 2009 (MESA, Ariz.) – Unpack your sweaters – it's fall in Mesa, Arizona! And that means shorter days, cooler nights and myriad tourism updates as the year comes to an end. Located in the Valley of the Sun just minutes from Phoenix and Scottsdale, Mesa has long been revered as a winter haven offering premier accommodations, golf and an enviable location boasting a close proximity to Tonto National Forest showcasing Arizona's vast Sonoran Desert. Read on for more news about upcoming attractions, exclusively Mesa events and more.

WORLDWIDE BOXING LEGEND INVESTS IN MESA WITH FIRST-EVER CAMPEONES VENUE

Mesa has long been revered for its Hispanic heritage with influences prominent throughout the city. Opening November 10, legendary Mexican boxer **Julio César Chávez** will take Mesa to new heights with the first-ever **Campeones** (Champions) family entertainment venue. At 30,000 square feet, this one-of-a-kind attraction will feature an authentic Mexican restaurant with mariscos (seafood) and carne asada as its specialty, arcade games with children's play area, a state-of-the-art 30-foot sports bar with numerous HD television screens for viewing boxing and soccer matches from around the globe. In addition, the venue boasts the Bud Light Doce Events Center for concerts, boxing matches, quinceañeras, corporate and community events. The additional 10,000-square-foot events center will be able to accommodate 1,700 people with capacity for another 850 visitors in the restaurant, sports bar and arcade areas. The World Boxing Council satellite museum, Legends of Boxing, featuring memorabilia is also on-site. The \$4.5 million facility is being developed by Brian Weymouth, known for launching his first celebrity restaurant Coopers' Town with rock legend Alice Cooper. This new restaurant/entertainment concept for Mexico's renowned sports celebrity and icon, Julio César Chávez, is expected to rival the impact Hard Rock Café or the ESPNZone created with the American-Anglo community. Chávez's boxing career spanned 25 years. He is ranked as one of [ESPN's 50 greatest boxers of all time](#) and went 90 straight fights without a loss. Chávez retired from professional boxing in 2005. His two sons, Julio César Chávez Jr. and Omar Chávez, now carry on their father's legacy in the ring. For more information visit, www.JulioCesarChavez.net. For media information only, contact Cathy Keppel at 480-610-1500, cathy@juliocesarchavez.net.

SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB EMBARKS ON "PAY AND PLAY" PROGRAM

For the first time ever, the award-winning Superstition Mountain Golf and Country Club, located east of Mesa, will allow daily fee access to the club as an "Associate Member". Under new ownership, the club will alternate one course each day allowing non-member guests access to premium tee times at the private golf club. The operating schedule is similar to other private clubs in the Scottsdale-Phoenix metropolitan area that offer resort guests and non-members the chance to enjoy the amenities and pristine playing conditions that can be experienced at high-end residential golf clubs. Located at the base of the Superstition Mountains, the club boasts breathtaking views of the legendary mountain range and high Sonoran Desert terrain. Superstition Mountain Golf and Country Club is home to two Jack Nicklaus-designed courses and is renowned for their immaculate fairways and challenging layouts. The Prospector and Lost Gold Golf Courses have earned accolades from numerous professional golfers who play and reside in the Phoenix-metropolitan area and was most recently featured in *Golfweek* magazine's 2009 list of 100 best residential courses in the country. Non-Member Guest tee times are currently being offered with advance bookings available for up to 60 days from the reserved tee time. Superstition Mountain Golf and Country Club is a private facility and traditional golf dress codes and etiquette are required. For more information on Superstition Mountain Golf and Country Club, visit www.SuperstitionMtnGC.com or call 480-983-1411. For media information, contact Bill Mesa with OB Sports Golf Management at 602-478-0708 or bmesa@obsports.com.

FANS CELEBRATE CACTUS LEAGUE BASEBALL HISTORY AT MESA MUSEUM

The Arizona Museum for Youth will be the new home of *Play Ball: the Cactus League Experience*, set to open Feb. 26, 2010 kicking off the beginning of Arizona's spring training season. The interactive and educational exhibit will celebrate the long and colorful history of professional baseball in Arizona treating visitors to stories of the players, teams and ballparks. The expanded exhibit will be moved to an entirely new space specifically designed for the collection as part of Arizona Museum for Youth's renovations which are being completed in December. The exhibit's existing displays, including Arizona's original spa at Buckhorn Baths used for player conditioning and the popular Wii baseball game, will take center stage once again adding to even larger-than-life experiences. New additions include additional Wii stations, touch screen kiosks for added history content and historical photos, baseball art, and interactive activities including "design your own pennant," "make your own trading card." Youth will enjoy the 3-D stadium puzzles available, while adults can take in more audio visual elements with historical film montages, including Cubs legendary broadcaster Harry Carey and footage of spring training from the early 1950s. Also new is an installation describing the story of how former Arizona Governor Rose Mofford saved baseball for the state. This display will educate visitors on a momentous move that made baseball history and changed the Cactus League forever. Since Play Ball!'s debut in January 2009, the Mesa historical society has received incredible support from baseball fans across the nation wanting to contribute to the exhibit. Coveted items that date back decades have been collected and donated for display in the expanded exhibition including a rare glove, mask, and uniform from the early 1900s; Ernie Banks signed little league bat; Signed memorabilia from favorite Cactus League stars including Gaylord Perry, Reggie Jackson, Mark Grace, and Bob Feller; Seattle Pilots, Red Sox, and Orioles memorabilia from stadiums across Arizona. Baseball's ability to garner interest and followers that span generations will be key for the new exhibit. While housed at the Arizona Museum for Youth, adults can re-live their childhood dreams here as they view items dating back to the era of Ted Williams, Sandy Koufax and Willie McCovey. Extensive research and collecting is on-going for the exhibit which involves members of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) and a committee of civic leaders. The Arizona Museum for Youth is located less than a mile from HoHoKam Stadium where the Chicago Cubs train each March. *For more information, visit www.PlayBallExperience.com. For media information, call LaTonya Smith at 480-644-4129 or Latonya.Smith@mesaaz.gov.*

GET WELCOMED TO MESA IN A WHOLE NEW WAY WITH 'THE HOWDY!' THIS WINTER

Hollywood production company Miziker Entertainment Group will unveil a completely new, interactive and full-sensory experience with "The Howdy!" this November at Rockin' R Ranch in Mesa. Keeping with tradition of providing quality, Western-style hospitality and entertainment, Miziker will take the entire stage production to new heights beginning this November when it unveils "The Howdy! Dinner Show & Extravaganza." The experience includes pre-show entertainment with bar service at the Saloon followed by complete dinner served by wait staff in character, and a dinner show centered around the storytelling of a 1880s traveling troupe on a search for gold and new discoveries in the Wild West. Thousands of dollars in renovation were part of the overhaul which will be themed with new props, furniture and an enhanced menu of Western fare and all the "trimmings" with beer, wine and a specialty non-alcoholic beverage included in the \$34.95 ticket price. Entertainment will include a saloon-style performance where audience participation is encouraged. The plot and storyline takes a snapshot into life during the Gold Rush era of the 1800s sharing history of pioneers that is close to home for Mesa with so much of the legends and lore based just east of the city in the Superstition Mountain region. Miziker Entertainment Group specializes in design, production and the daily operations of themed shows, permanent attractions and events for parks, resorts and cities both nationally and internationally. For ticket prices, show times, group discounts and more information visit www.howdyshow.com. For media information only contact Ania Kubicki at 480-656-8388.

NEW NATURE CENTER OFFERS ARRAY OF ATYPICAL OPTIONS FOR DESERT DISCOVERY Sunrise yoga, scorpion hunts by blacklight, animal “hide and seek” walks, toddler cruises up miniature mountain tops and even edible adventures snacking on desert plants as you go are on the docket at the new **Nature Center at Usery Mountain Regional Park**. Operated by Maricopa County Parks, one of the largest regional park systems in the United States, the nature center is the newest offering for guests seeking insight into the Sonoran Desert. At Usery, guests will want to stop in before exploring the more than 29 miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding offered here. Inside, rangers are on hand to guide guests into the wonders of the Sonoran Desert before taking in some unique programming – everything from stargazing sessions, fitness hikes and “Find the Ranger” programs are offered year-round. Guests can purchase snacks and cold beverages, souvenirs and outdoor necessities like sunscreen, hats and water bottles before hitting the trail. The building itself adopted many of the principles set forth by the U.S. Green Building Council and is a fully functional, sustainable and energy efficient visitor’s center while minimizing the disturbance to the natural landscape and surroundings. Unique features of the Nature Center at Usery Mountain include a desert loop trail that extends from the visitor center’s back patio – a site for numerous educational outreach programs; an outdoor amphitheater for scheduled lectures and programming and a garden rooftop with 12 solar panels and native plant species that helps with insulation, retains rainwater, and reduces storm water runoff on the site. For current programming and information visit, <http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/usery/>. For media information, contact Jennifer Johnston at 480-984-0032, jenniferjohnston@mail.maricopa.gov.

DOWNTOWN MESA SEES FLURRY OF WINE BARS, WINE-RESTAURANTS

Arizona is a fertile ground for winemaking in the Southwest with more established vineyards gaining in popularity. Visitors seeking out a taste of the grape stuff can visit several new wine stops in Downtown Mesa. The newest offering is **The Cellar**, a wine bar located in the cellar of popular spirits store, **Sun Devil Liquors**. For more than two decades, the Eccles family has owned and managed the store offering more than 1,200 imported and domestic wines among other liquors. The Eccles family will continue their popular wine and beer pairings for Arizona and out-of-state vineyards and distributors in the renovated space. The basement also offers residents lockers, 135 total, to store their wine collections in proper storage conditions. Adorned with crimson red walls and ample comfortable sofas and chairs, the main attraction is the art space created for local artists and photographers on the walls. Artists, who are encouraged to show their work on consignment, are using The Cellar as a hip gallery extending downtown Mesa’s art district to the west. The Cellar will be a showcase to Arizona wines which are gaining in popularity. Guests visiting can view the daily offerings board, allowing a unique try-before-you-buy opportunity. *For more information, visit www.sdliquors.com. For media information, contact Lori Eccles at 480-834-5050.*

Many Mesa restaurants boast over-the-top wine lists but few can top the city’s newest wine bar and restaurant, **il Vinaio** which means “wine merchant” in Italian. Il Vinaio’s transformation was spearheaded by **Executive Chef Patrick Boll**. Boll, a graduate of Scottsdale Culinary Institute, worked under the tutelage of Chef Robert McGrath formerly of the Phoenician and Windows on the Green. At the young age of 28, Boll became the Chef de Cuisine for McGrath’s new restaurant Roaring Fork and stayed there for nine years. During that time, the restaurant was nominated four times and received The James Beard Award in 2003. Boll has continued to shape the Valley’s dining scene helping conceptualize his newest venture Geisha A Go-Go in Scottsdale. At **il Vinaio**, guests can enjoy traditional American breakfast and lunch dishes centered on home-cooked hearty favorites. Dinners promise an elegant yet casual affair with daily specials and entrees paired with boutique wines and micro-brews. The food reflects influences of Greek, Mediterranean and Italian with dishes such as bruschetta topped with creama, caramelized peaches and toasted pecans; pan-seared ribeye with locally-farmed tomatoes, mozzarella and bread salad; and buttered gnocchi with roasted chicken, zucchini, tomato and herb pan sauce. Growing in popularity is il Vinaio’s winemaker dinners and **Sippin Saturdays**, a regular series of wine tastings paired with live entertainment. The restaurant’s website even offers a thesaurus of wine terms. Guests that click on the *Winosaurus* link can select from more than a hundred terms related to wine and receive a general understanding of what it means, helping one to better understand wine labels and winemakers’ notes. *For more information, visit www.ilvinaio.com. For media information, contact Cindy Selogie at 480-649-6476 or cindy@ilvinaio.com.*

MACFEST RETURNS TO DOWNTOWN MESA WITH FARMERS MARKET & MORE ENTERTAINMENT

MacFest! has returned to Downtown Mesa and will begin its second season in October. This free arts and cultural festival held in downtown Mesa takes place every Saturday October through April and is held along Main Street from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Here, guests can purchase handmade creations from artists, food from local restaurants and enjoy live music and performing artists both along Main Street and on the Mesa Arts Center campus. MacFest! has also started a farmers market on McDonald as part of the free festival. Saturdays from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. visitors can stock up on the latest produce as well as unique items offered by Arizona vendors. *For exhibition listings and special event information at each location, visit www.MesaArtsCenter.com. For media information, contact Sarah Moran at 480-644-6620 or email at sarah.moran@mesaartscenter.com.*

OFF-ROAD TOURS USING BIODIESEL TO OFFSET EMISSIONS IN SONORAN DESERT

Hummer tour operator Stellar Adventures is powering their fleet of desert off-road vehicles with environmentally-friendly, locally-produced biodiesel. The company transitioned all their diesel-powered vehicles, including H1 Hummers and Military Blazers, to the new fuel in an effort to reduce their emissions and invest their fuel spending into Arizona's local economy. The transition makes Stellar Adventures the first Phoenix-based outdoor adventure company to use the new alternative fuel with expectations to use 15,000 to 20,000 gallons each year. The National Biodiesel Board reports a U.S. Department of Energy study showed that the production and use of biodiesel, compared to petroleum diesel, resulted in a 78% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. The National Biodiesel Board also cites a study that shows the fuel is returning more than four times the energy that it takes to make biodiesel. Stellar Adventures offer unique off-road tours for individuals and groups in a variety of vehicles. Tours can be custom-designed and incorporate photo hunts and wine tastings, astronomy tours and catered events. For more information on Stellar Adventures, visit www.stellaradventures.com. For media information, contact JJ Briles at 602-402-0584 or info@stellaradventures.com.

HOLLYWOOD-STYLE SOUNDSTAGES PROPOSED FOR MESA WITH GATEWAY STUDIOS

With promises of hour-long flights and short drives from Los Angeles, Mesa has been selected as the next home for a proposed Hollywood-style studio complex called Gateway Studios. Waiting approval from city officials to begin development, if green-lighted the project will be the first and only major soundstage complex in Arizona. The plans call for a \$70 million motion picture production complex whose design would center on green building practices. The site will be a 55-acre parcel developed in two phases. When complete, the campus is designed to include four soundstages ranging in size, facilities for feature production and post production, storage, auditorium and a large back-lot production area for street-size sets. Current plans don't expect completion of phase one until late 2012. To view preliminary architectural plans and learn more, visit www.GatewayStudios.com.

20 CITIES NOW SERVED WITH NON-STOP ALLEGIANT SERVICE TO PHOENIX-MESA GATEWAY AIRPORT

Low-cost airline, **Allegiant Air**, LLC, is gearing up for a banner winter tourism season adding five new markets to their already impressive roster of favorite small cities across America. The additions will make the grand total of 20 cities now served with non-stop air travel to Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The airline is the only commercial carrier flying into Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. The growth in service is expected to play an even larger role in relieving passenger traffic to Phoenix's Sky Harbor International Airport. Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport provides a convenient alternative for passengers flying in and out of the region and serves as a gateway to East Valley communities including Mesa, Gilbert, Gila River Indian Community, Queen Creek and Apache Junction. The airport boasts three expansive runways, convenient parking and on-site rental car service. This winter, the following cities will have non-stop, low-cost service to and from Mesa via Allegiant Air:

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| 1. Grand Forks, North Dakota (NEW!) | 6. Eugene, Oregon | 13. Missoula, Montana |
| 2. Grand Island, Nebraska (NEW!) | 7. Medford, Oregon | 14. Cedar Rapids, Iowa |
| 3. Grand Rapids, Michigan (NEW!) | 8. Redmond/Bend, Oregon | 15. Sioux Falls, South Dakota |
| 4. Pasco (Tri-Cities), Washington (NEW!) | 9. Springfield, Missouri | 16. Rapid City, South Dakota |
| 5. Wichita, Kansas (NEW!) | 10. Bismarck, North Dakota | 17. Bellingham, Washington |
| | 11. Billings, Montana | 18. Fargo, North Dakota |
| | 12. Great Falls, Montana | 19. Peoria, Illinois |
| | | 20. Rockford, Illinois |

For complete travel schedule information, visit www.allegiantair.com and www.phxmesagateway.org. For media information on Allegiant Airlines, contact Tyri Squyres, 702-851-7370 or tsquyres@allegiantair.com. For media information on Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, contact Brian Sexton at 480-988-7618 or bsexton@phxmesagateway.org.

MESA BUREAU HELPING TOUT TOURISM FOR SOUTHEAST TOWNS – VISITGATEWAY.COM

Mesa tourism officials are hoping to lure this season's out-of-state visitors to continue their experience south and east of the city when visiting this winter. In late August, the Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau was awarded grant funding for a new marketing partnership through the Arizona Office of Tourism. The grant monies are being used to form the **Gateway Regional Visitor Partnership**, an alignment between the Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau with the Chambers of Commerce in **Gilbert** and **Queen Creek** that will help market the region to potential visitors and tourists already staying in Mesa. Starting this month, the Mesa CVB will actively market the joint communities with the launch of a new travel website portal, www.VisitGateway.com where visitors can then get one-click access to more information offered by the communities established resource websites. A second website portal, www.FlyToGateway.com, will also be marketed intended to brand the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport with the Southeast communities. Additional marketing efforts, primarily in the form of targeted e-newsletter and online advertising are also currently underway. For more on VisitGateway, contact Michelle Streeter at 480-682-3638 or Michelle@visitmesa.com.

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About the Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau:

The Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau is responsible for marketing Mesa, Arizona as a leading vacation, small meeting and sports travel destination to regional and national target audiences, including travel agents and group tour operators, meeting planners, leisure visitors and media.

Editor's Note: Readers can request a complimentary 2009 Official Mesa Arizona Visitors Guide at VisitMesa.com or by calling 800-283-6372.