

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Georgia Lacy,
Geo Advertising & Marketing
(520) 323-3221

RANCHO SAHUARITA: ARIZONA'S BRIGHT SPOT

Sahuarita, AZ (Jan. 25, 2010) – The community of Rancho Sahuarita is truly a community that continues to shine. Although an unsteady housing market has made prospective home buyers insecure and confused about what exactly a good housing deal is today, there is one place in Arizona that at least some home buyers feel may be their economic safe haven. With an average of almost one home sold every day during 2009, it appears that Rancho Sahuarita's small-town, friendly lifestyle reassures residents that choosing to live in a "true" master planned community is the correct financial and emotional decision for their family.

A little over one year ago, ABC Nightline correspondent John Donovan questioned in a news piece whether or not the master planned community of Rancho Sahuarita, situated just south of Tucson, Arizona, was "the last American boomtown." The national broadcaster wondered whether Rancho Sahuarita's extensive amenities and family oriented lifestyle would offer "the magic formula to survive the slowdown" and concluded by saying "maybe there aren't any boomtowns left anywhere."

However, time may be proving the ABC News analysis prophetic. Considering that Tucson's housing starts were down in 2009 by over 80% from their peak in 2005, Rancho Sahuarita was still able to maintain its "boomtown" status as Arizona's best-selling master-planned community. Ben Sage, Director of Metrostudy's Arizona Region, recently said that "Rancho Sahuarita started and closed more homes than any other community in Arizona."

Bob Sharpe, the founder of Rancho Sahuarita, feels that Rancho Sahuarita's success is a direct result of the community's continual introduction of new amenities and events. He said, "This real estate downturn has proven to be an opportunity for Rancho Sahuarita to seize market share from those communities that never invested in providing lifestyle experiences for their residents." For our customers, it's all about value and values."

Renowned real estate consulting firm, Robert Charles Lesser, ranked Rancho Sahuarita #5 in its list of the 10 best-selling master planned communities in the nation, based on total number of new homes sold in 2008. Although the rankings aren't out for 2009, 358 homes were sold through 2009 in Rancho Sahuarita, making it Arizona's top selling community for two consecutive years. On a local level, Rancho Sahuarita continued to dominate Tucson's new home sales, with its overall market share more than doubling over the last few years. Rancho Sahuarita's share of all new home closings increased to about 16% last year, up from about 7% in 2005.

Sharpe believes that there is a "flight to quality and financial security" by home buyers and attributes his community's rapid home sales pace to one thing – "We are delivering on our promises of value which increases the community's appeal to home buyers, especially during these uncertain times.

In general, existing home sales are up from the low levels of 2008 and the inventory of homes listed for sale is down. Although experts feel that the much touted recovery is fragile, Rancho Sahuarita appears to be benefiting economically more than other communities by appealing to both first-time buyers and investors, who are seeking features, like being near jobs, decent schools, and family oriented amenities.

Since Rancho Sahuarita's opening in July 2001, builders have sold almost 5,000 homes. According to Sharpe, he always felt that Rancho Sahuarita's branded lifestyle would differentiate it from the competition, both in good times, and bad. Sharpe said, "The value of living in Rancho Sahuarita is more than how big a house you have, it is the sense of community and family experiences that make it a place that almost one in six new home buyers decided to call home last year."

Commercial amenities are also a growing part of the Rancho Sahuarita master plan with the opening of the area's first 108,000 sq. ft. Fry's Marketplace. Together with 35,000 sq. ft. of adjacent retail space, including a Chase bank, the Rancho Sahuarita Marketplace is one of Southern Arizona's premier shopping, dining and health care destinations.

Although Rancho Sahuarita has also struggled against the housing industry's downward spiral, maybe it is just possible that ABC's news story, about an ideal community, with a magical vision of satisfied homeowners enjoying their lake, trails, parks, pools and clubs, will have a happy ending.

Visitors are welcome to invite friends and family to experience the Rancho Sahuarita community. In addition, visitors can learn more about Rancho Sahuarita or receive a free brochure in the mail by visiting www.ranchosahuarita.com or calling the Greeting Center at (520) 207-7730.

About Rancho Sahuarita

Situated just south of Tucson, Rancho Sahuarita is known as Southern Arizona's best master-planned community. Since opening in the second half of 2001, Rancho Sahuarita has maintained its status as one of the fastest selling master planned communities in the country. It features a 15-acre lake park, miles of paved trails, neighborhood parks with pools and other attractions, and Club Rancho Sahuarita, with the largest private splash park in the metro area. Surrounded by pristine desert, mountain ranges and pecan groves, Rancho Sahuarita offers many neighborhoods by national home builders, like KB Home, Richmond American Homes, Pulte Homes, Maracay Homes and D.R. Horton Homes, with homes priced from the 140's.

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