

NEW HOMES ARIZONA

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Shopping for a home can be entertaining for kids, too

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What will the northwest Valley look like in 10 years?

Randy Bury, President and CEO
Randall Martin Home



The northwest Valley has experienced explosive population growth from 1990 through 2005. Cities like Peoria, Glendale and Surprise are now home to premier masterplanned communities, new schools and state-of-the-art sports and entertainment facilities for both the Cardinals and Coyotes. Ten years from now, we will see the fruition of this growth. The northwest Valley will not only thrive, it will continue to offer some of the most desirable areas to live and attract more and more tourists as a destination that offers a wide variety of entertainment, dining, shopping, recreation and resorts.

Mark Hammons, Senior Vice President
Sunbelt Holdings/Vistancia



What we're going to see is a totally sustainable sub-market of Phoenix. With the land and transportation planning that is currently being done, residential and commercial land uses have been properly planned and will be designed and executed with an eye toward the future. Within 10 years we'll begin seeing the northwest Valley contributing a balance of housing, employment and recreation that will enable it to hold its own against any other established part of the metro area.

John Keegan
Mayor of Peoria



By the year 2016, the northwest Valley will have fully emerged as the location of choice for homeowners and businesses in central Arizona. The mountain view luxury home sites in northern Peoria, combined with the business corridors along the 101, 303, 505 and US 60 highways will capitalize on the planning lessons of other communities and the natural beauty of the terrain. Attention to detail in land planning will be the hallmark of the northwest Valley.

Hal Looney, Area President
Shea Homes-Trilogy



The northwest Valley will be one of the most sought-after places to live and work in the Phoenix area — a replacement for the north Scottsdale buyer looking for new-home construction. This area, ripe with potential, is positioned to provide thousands of homeowners with the perfect lifestyle trifecta — a prime residential location with brand new community amenities, a diverse selection of quality new-home choices and connectivity to retail and business centers with the completion of Loop 303

Greg Williams, President, Phoenix Division
KB Home



The northwest Valley will continue to flourish and will remain a major factor of growth in the next 10 years. The recent additions of new sporting venues, outdoor recreation areas and attractions have added to the appeal and excitement of this unique atmosphere of this part of the Valley. This region will continue to provide a haven for affordable quality housing as well as a sanctuary for excellent active-adult living.

New Homes Arizona has gone weekly!

Enjoy four consecutive weeks of coverage on home building and development, with each issue focusing on a different section of the Valley.

Friday, September 15: Northeast Valley
Friday, September 22: Southeast Valley
Friday, September 29: Southwest Valley
TODAY: Northwest Valley

Monthly publication of New Homes Arizona will resume on Friday, October 20.



Jack Kurtz/The Arizona Republic

Streets and neighborhoods of framed houses are familiar sights in the growing northwest Valley. Surprise and north Peoria are home to a majority of the development in the area.

The 'new Scottsdale' or just an image?

The northwest Valley grows up

By Patricia Bathurst

It's "the new Scottsdale." That's what area home builders, developers, real estate and housing experts have all dubbed the northwest Valley.

"We think the new Scottsdale really means around Lake Pleasant and north Peoria," said RL Brown, a Phoenix-based housing expert.

A simple fact of geography is at the heart of the assessment. As Brown said, "The king always lives at the top of the hill."

With new developments extending into the foothills of the Bradshaw Mountains, there are plenty of hills for lots of kings.

Bustling area

"The social infrastructure of the northwest Valley has changed entirely," said Sam Colgan, president of Pulte Homes' West Valley division. "You have real shopping, entertainment and sports opportunities. There's an economic base, commercial and retail jobs, and there could be enough to allow people to not have to engage in big commutes. And the cities have standards in place that insist on a better level of development than mere subdivisions."

That combination of geography and city commitment gives the West Valley great potential, "more than any other part of the entire Valley," said Curt Smith, chief operating officer for Sunbelt Holdings, a real estate development, management and investment company based in Scottsdale. "The northwest has more amenities, including the character of the land."

Potential seems to be the operative word when experts talk about the area.

"There's a great transportation plan for the northwest — at least, there is on the books. The area has great potential," said Eneas Kane, chief operating officer for DMB Associates, the Scottsdale-based developer of such master plans as DC Ranch, Verrado and Marley Park.

"The entire northwest Valley is such an amenity rich area...it really could be the new Scottsdale," said Mark Hancock, president of Scottsdale-based luxury-home



Michael Ging/The Arizona Republic

Vistancia Elementary School opened this year. Many new master plans have proposed on-site schools.



Emmanuel Lozano/The Arizona Republic

Many northwest Valley active-adult communities offer recreation programs for residents.

builder Camelot Homes. "The beautiful desert foothills combined with the amenities and freeway access...with Verrado in the south and Vistancia in the north, the West Valley is just ready to grow."

Peoria prepared

It was geography and natural resources that initially drove Peoria's "Vision 2020," released in 1990, said Mayor John Keegan, who helped write the long-range planning effort. The city not only has put several of the plan's proposals into effect, but also is updating the plan to take more growth into consideration.

"We're kind of a long, thin city, with two rivers (Agua Fria and New rivers) and a lake (Lake Pleasant)," he said. "When we first wrote this, talk of a stadium was all rather nebulous."

Peoria made a conscious decision to focus on its natural resources, taking advantage of them and creating an emphasis on parks and recreation.

"We can build on this to create other amenities," Keegan said, "and to project ourselves as 'we want to be your small town.' We want people to live and play in Peoria — and to locate their businesses here. I believe we've made some major strides, in part because we do have a tremendous

— See **NORTHWEST**, Page NHA2

More construction ahead

Loop 303 is now open for nearly 25 miles between Interstate 10 and Lake Pleasant Road. There's also a two-lane roadway extending 107th Avenue from Williams Road to the completed portion of Loop 303. Construction of Loop 303 between Interstate 17 and Happy Valley Road is scheduled for 2008.



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GRAND OPENINGS

Date / Event	Community / Home Builder	Price / Sq. Footage	Number of Floor Plans	Builder-Operated Design Center	Builder-Owned Mortgage Co.	Homeowners' Assoc.	Parks and Trails
August Models opened	Bailey Commons Pulte Homes 83rd Avenue and Encanto Boulevard Phoenix (602) 253-8589 www.pulte.com	\$190s 1,304 - 1,870	5	•	•	•	•
August Model opened	Montana Tierra Pulte Homes Norterra Parkway and 24th Lane Phoenix (623) 516-4795 www.pulte.com	\$200s 1,490 - 2,282	12	•	•	•	•
August Models opened	Morningstar Estates Brown Family Communities Glendale Road, east of 75th Avenue Glendale (623) 455-3453 www.homebfc.com	\$280s - \$440s 1,657 - 4,046	15	•	•	•	•
Aug. 19 Grand opening	Legacy at Stetson Valley US Home 55th Avenue and Happy Valley Road Glendale (623) 434-0678 www.ushomephoenix.com	\$560s - \$690s 2,733 - 4,898	5	•	•	•	•
Aug. 27 Sales opened	Crescentviews Maracay Homes 67th Avenue, north of Jomax Road Peoria (623) 566-0818 www.maracayhomes.com	\$270s - \$340s 1,166 - 2,518	11	•	•	•	•
September Grand opening	Canter Run at Cortessa Pulte Homes Olive Avenue and Citrus Road Waddell (623) 536-1055 www.pulte.com	\$230s - \$270s 1,525 - 2,368	3	•	•	•	•
September Grand opening	Harmony at Stetson Valley Pulte Homes 55th Avenue and Happy Valley Road Glendale (480) 226-5168 www.pulte.com	\$230s 1,304 - 1,870	5	•	•	•	•
Sept. 16 Grand opening	Surprise Farms Richmond American Homes Greenway Road, west of Loop 303 Surprise (480) 624-0244 www.richmondamerican.com	\$200s - \$300s 1,682 - 5,258	21	•	•	•	•
October Model opened	White Tank Foothills Pulte Homes Olive Avenue and Citrus Road Waddell (623) 518-4301 www.pulte.com	\$250s - \$470s 1,769 - 4,223	15	•	•	•	•
Oct. 1 Grand opening	Aria at Vistancia Cachet Homes Happy Valley Road and 99th Avenue Peoria (623) 322-2199 www.cachethomes.net	\$570s - \$670s 3,150 - 4,828	5	•	•	•	•
Oct. 1 Lot release	Cachet Homes at Blackstone Cachet Homes 99th Avenue and Happy Valley Road Peoria (623) 518-9789 www.cachethomes.net	\$900s - \$1 million 3,984 - 4,490	4	•	•	•	•
Oct. 6 Sales opened	Village at Canyon Ridge West Richmond American Homes 115th Avenue and Bell Road Surprise (480) 624-0244 www.richmondamerican.com	n/a 1,564 - 1,849	5	•	•	•	•

NEW HOMES ARIZONA

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E-mail us at newhomes@pni.com. We'll forward selected questions to Valley home builders, so you can get expert advice straight from the source.

Can anything stop regional growth?

Builders, developers and regional housing and development experts agree: If anything could slow regional housing development and growth, it would be a combination of several factors.

Transportation, economic development, energy and water all play a role in regional development and all currently have what could be termed built-in hazards.

"We've traditionally been reactive rather than proactive about air quality, water use and transportation development," said Steve Betts, president and CEO of Tempe-based SunCor development. "We need to get smart about this. Too often, we lapse into expediency."

Frank Gray, general manager of Scottsdale's planning and



Jack Kurtz / The Arizona Republic
 Jobs, transportation and utilities are all factors in the success of ongoing housing development.

development services, echoed Betts. "We have got to get smart about this! We need to think carefully about water, utilities, energy — and sustainable economic development."

"Sure, we're still growing," said Jay Butler, director of Arizona State University's Real Estate Center. "But it's housing and people! Is that the best way to build an economy?"

"There's no question that housing development has long driven our economy," said Rob Melnick, director of the Morrison Institute and associate vice president for economic affairs and public policy at ASU. "Growth has been its own economic development engine here for a long time. A big concern

is that we are, economically, bifurcating this community. We have a sort of standing myth that Arizona doesn't have high-wage jobs. In truth, we have the same percentage as all other regions. The issue is that we have a disproportionate number of low-wage jobs. So the big question here is whether we can create good middle-class jobs."

More optimistically, Eneas Kane, chief operating officer for Scottsdale-based DMB Associates, said, "Arizona will remain an incredible place to live, with affordability. We've made great decisions over the last 25 years, in transportation and mass transit, and we're making great progress in employment"

—Patricia Bathurst

Desert included in master plans

— NORTHWEST, from Page NHA1

emphasis on long-range planning and have created tools for development. Our master land use plan, hillside development plan and our environmental use plans have served as models for state-wide policies and planning documents."

Natural attractions

Using the rivers and natural water courses as the base for parks planning, Peoria is establishing hiking, biking and equestrian trails, endeavoring over time to create what the city hopes will become state-wide recreation attractions. The parks and trails are still in early stages of development, and the city is working with all current developers to establish and extend them.

"We're ready to put more emphasis on job creation," Keegan said. "Ten years ago, most of our job creation was based in retail. While we now have some office, professional and light industrial, we're seeking more. We're also placing more emphasis on the hospitality industry. The area around 83rd Avenue and Bell Road, with the Cardinals' stadium and the hockey arena, has real potential."

Peoria's not looking to expand its planning area in any possible way, Keegan said, although the city is still interested in avoiding a "patchwork quilt effect" around any boundary.

The city's acutely aware of the comparisons to north Scottsdale, which has both a positive and a dubious effect. "We are watching very closely what's happened in Scottsdale," he said. "Over the last few years, people have been forced to the fringes. We don't want to leave anyone in our community behind."

Keegan said the city would be seeking developers for infill projects that could include smaller single family or patio homes that would be more affordable or obtainable so that the city's police, firefighters, health care workers, teachers and public

employees could continue to find housing within the city.

"There are also some service issues we need to address," he said. "Right now, I can say with certainty there will be a major regional health care center established in Peoria within the next few years. We're also working with several post-secondary educational institutions, many of which offer classes for a range of ages. We're looking to establish a little softer feel than some other cities have done. We want to be a city that makes people say, 'Someday, I really hope we can live in Peoria.'"

Surprise! Really a growing town

As one developer put it, "Surprise is simply astonishing." He may have been referring to some of the less developed parts of the city's streetscape, but chances are, it was a more general observation.

Residential growth in Surprise is fast and furious (with some of the city considerations and wait periods, furious is often used in a different context — just as in other West Valley cities).

Just about half the planning area of Buckeye, at 300 or so square miles, the city of Surprise is taking a measured — but aggressive — stance toward development. They're demanding active collaboration with developers and builders, and they are attempting to anticipate eventual development as a metropolitan area with four distinct business and entertainment cores.

It's a tall order, especially in a city that can count, along its current fringe, what some call "areas populated with a combination of desert rats and millionaires."

But there will be. The city is currently revising its general plan, and the intent is to "plan for an eventual million residents," said Scott R. Chesney, the city's planning and community development director.



Blackstone
 The Hacienda will be the centerpiece of Blackstone Country Club at Vistancia.

NW VALLEY POPULATION HOW CITIES WILL GROW

	2000	2010	2020	2025
El Mirage	8,700	29,700	31,400	32,200
Peoria	114,100	160,800	206,600	232,200
Surprise	37,700	115,200	213,300	312,300

*Source: Maricopa Association of Governments - July 1, 2000 and interim projections

"We'll be establishing standards that will help us avoid simply adding subdivisions — we need to build neighborhoods," he said. "We're no longer a fast-growing bedroom community."

Jeanine Jerkovic, economic development manager, said the goal is to blend neighborhoods that offer opportunities for work and education. The city is actively working with Maricopa Community Colleges, as well as a number of private higher education and vocational institutions, to extend learning opportunities for residents. They'll look to Burlington Northern to become an economic foundation, she said, with the potential to "spin out" other industries on the rail lines 800-some acres within the city.

"The rail lines are there," Chesney said. "So there's potential to eventually — OK, within 15 years — but, eventually, to develop a reverse commute."

The city is developing an economic repositioning study that Chesney and Jerkovic said will help the city consider how to

target development and to develop additional opportunities for industrial growth.

Transportation is also a critical issue for Surprise. As other cities in the West Valley, active cooperation with Maricopa County and Arizona's Department of Transportation is increasingly emphasized.

With the city's population expected to grow by more than 100,000 by 2020, the city is also working to figure out how to maintain and expand city services, from street repair to garbage collection.

"We have to remember, we're essentially in the business of providing public services," said city manager Jim Rumpeltes. "And as we're planning, we have to remember that the development money won't be here forever."

"But it's a great opportunity," said Kathy Rice, assistant city manager. "We're new, and we're designing a new community."

Chesney said, "Everyone has a vision. Reaching it is an issue."

Hey, what's a 'vistancia'?

There's a lot riding on the name of a development. The right name, said Dino Paul, of Dino Design in Phoenix, sets a tone, a theme and ultimately can help market the development. Paul, who's spent more than 20 years helping developers and builders come up with just the right tags for their products, said there are a number of things that are considered.

"Ideally, it should embody the project, the style, the architecture and express the characteristics that are most important," he said. "You also want something that can potentially add value to the development, so it's important to consider if it can have some longevity, and whether it will need to be trademarked."

Admitting that sometimes the names "mean nothing — but they sound good," he pointed out that Starbucks is probably the best example of a company that consistently comes up with "great names that only mean something in Starbucks' context."

Using foreign or foreign-sounding words can add cachet to a development, as long as the word doesn't have a negative or other unfortunate connotation in the other language.

Developers and builders sometimes try to avoid that by combining words. Vistancia, for instance, combines "vistas" with a Spanish-language suffix "ancia" — and it might mean the views possible from the home sites. Maybe.

So how do they come up with those names? "Sometimes we just make them up."

— Patricia Bathurst

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Sonoran Mountain Ranch

Relief from concrete

Home buyers enjoy open spaces in masterplanned communities

By Kathy King

As the northwest Valley grows, acres of farmland and desert are being cultivated into communities. Homes, schools, businesses and other services crop up to serve the influx of new residents. Yet, instead of just focusing on constructing buildings and roads, developers are creating masterplanned communities that offer a breath of fresh air. Trails, parks and tree-lined streets are a welcomed respite for those weary of concrete surroundings.

"It's about how you feel at the end of the day," said Dan Kelly, general manager of Marley Park in Surprise. "To design a community with extensive, usable open space is more complicated, but it's far more rewarding."

In some cases, masterplanned communities are eased into their natural surroundings, as was the case with DMB's DC Ranch in Scottsdale and Sunbelt Holdings' Vistancia in Peoria, among others. "The natural desert environment was integrated with the master plans," said Curt Smith, Sunbelt Holdings' chief operating officer.

Vistancia

Throughout Vistancia, each trail was carefully carved through the natural wash by a small bulldozer as it followed a site planner, walking along the meandering paths. Those washes

then became habitats. "Many of the wash corridors attract more wildlife to the area after construction," Smith said. Vistancia's washes also helped define the neighborhoods, as the streets were curved around them and parks were nuzzled in. "And they make fabulous trails."

Vistancia's 3.5-mile Discovery Trail serves as the community's connector. Beginning at the entrance, this pedestrian path, bordered by wide swaths of natural desert, wanders throughout the community. Walkers, bikers and hikers can pass by neighborhoods, parks, small lakes, recreation centers, schools and even a "solar garden" for stargazing. As Vistancia expands, the trail is expected to eventually cover seven miles.

Marley Park

Marley Park started with more of a blank slate, having been built on a flat expanse of land that was once a rose farm. Understanding the value of open spaces for residents to enjoy, DMB designed the outdoor amenities before the engineering plans, rather than as an afterthought. A few parks also function as retention basins, yet those would be difficult to discern. "We carefully crafted the open spaces, keeping recreation as our first priority," Kelly said. "It adds to the quality of life."

Marley Park's pedestrian-friendly Evergreen Elm-lined Arbor Walk connects nine



Ashton Woods Homes



Vistancia

Vistancia's 3.5-mile Discovery Trail winds throughout the community and is surrounded by natural desert vegetation. Builders design homes that include extra windows to provide views of the outdoors.

themed parks, neighborhoods and schools. At the community's heart is the 25-acre Heritage Park, which includes ball fields, an adventure playground, an amphitheater, an event plaza and a rose garden in tribute to the land's original use.

Each of the remaining eight parks provides unique opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Collectively, they offer shaded play and picnic areas, flower gardens, paths and special features, such as a splash-play fountain and a simulated sunken ship.

The parks are strategically placed throughout the community, each within a brief walk

from nearby homes. They are built above street level, making them easy to see from the community's signature front porches. "I'm amazed at the number of families I see using the parks, even in the heat of summer," Kelly said. "I'm very pleased that the intent of our ideas and concepts are being realized."

At home with nature

Builders continue the developers' theme of harmonizing with nature. "The park-like setting was a perfect match for our architecturally distinct homes," said Robert Nunes, vice president of sales and market-

ing for Ashton Woods Homes. "Homeowners love how different the neighborhood looks, and the acres of open spaces to enjoy and meet their neighbors."

In keeping with Marley Park's character, Ashton Woods offers front porches, side courtyards, rear-entry garages and plenty of windows from which to enjoy the park setting.

The site for Trilogi at Vistancia, which was developed by Shea Homes and Sunbelt Holdings, was selected specifically for its natural setting. It is one of eight Trilogi communities nationwide, all meticulously placed. "The pristine Sonoran



Vistancia

Take a stroll

See for yourself the difference open space can make

Marley Park Welcome Center

Reems Road and Sweetwater Avenue
Surprise
(623) 466-8800
www.marleypark.com

Trilogi at Vistancia

Happy Valley Parkway,
west of Lake Pleasant Road
Peoria
(800) 685-6494
www.trilogylife.com

Vistancia Discovery Center

Happy Valley Parkway,
west of Lake Pleasant Road
Peoria
(623) 933-6233
www.vistancia.com

Desert offers our members a sense of escape from the rat race of suburbia," said Sharon Baker, general manager of Trilogi at Vistancia. "Connection to nature is important to our members, and this Trilogi location offers magnificent desert vistas, the Discovery Trail system, wide-open skies and terrific stargazing."

Trilogi's homes are designed to bring the outdoors in, with patios, courtyards and interior sight lines that maximize views. The community offers an array of opportunities to commune with nature and neighbors. "Trilogi is all about living, and natural settings are a big part of our appeal."

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Sterling NEW PHASE NOW OPEN
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623-546-0677
The Summit Collection
From the mid \$300s
623-518-2604

LAVEN MEADOWS – Phoenix

67th Ave & Baseline Rd
The Preserve
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602-237-0300
The Legacy Collection
From the mid \$200s
602-237-3340

COPLEN ESTATES – Phoenix

47th Ave, south of Dobbins Rd
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From the mid \$400s
602-237-2002

SHAMROCK ESTATES – Gilbert

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480-802-5620
The Voyage Collection
From the mid \$300s
480-821-0655
The Summit Collection
From the mid \$400s
480-857-2228

LAREDO RANCH – Pinal County

Schnepf Rd, north of Combs Rd
The Journey Collection NEW PLANS
From the high \$100s
480-987-2699
The Voyage Collection
From the low \$200s
480-987-2699

CIRCLE CROSS RANCH – Pinal County

Gary Rd, north of Hunt Hwy
The Journey Collection MODELS NOW OPEN
From the high \$100s
480-677-3055

CRESTFIELD MANOR – Pinal County

Felix Rd, south of Arizona Farms Rd
The Voyage Collection
From the mid \$200s
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A family affair

Home shopping with children doesn't have to be a challenge

By Paula Hubbs Cohen

When it comes time to look for a new home for the family, one big question is always: "Should the kids tag along?"

The answer, according to our experts, is often yes.

Mozan Shawaludin, Welcome Center manager at Marley Park in Surprise, has three children of his own, ages 2, 5 and 10, and sees a lot of kids visiting Marley Park's models, especially when school is out or on the weekends.

"Our consultants encourage kids to get involved in the process, since their parents are looking for a place for their entire family," Shawaludin said. "We might ask them about their interests and tell them about a specific model that might appeal to them."

Kid-friendly

To help make new-home shopping a positive experience for everyone, Marley Park's Welcome Center has a "Character Counts" play area, with puzzles, games, coloring books and other fidget-friendly activities so that mom and dad can do their grown-up thing in the Welcome Center while the little ones keep busy.

"We also have a computer, but what's really neat is that our Welcome Center has a very inviting wraparound porch and an adjacent lawn area, so if the kids are a little older and you're comfortable with it, they can roam around a bit, but still be close by," he said.

Something for everyone

Shawaludin said that many of the models in Marley Park have at least one child-themed room, a concept that plays out across the northwest Valley. At WestWing Mountain in Peoria, one such family-friendly builder is Camelot Homes.

"We want to make looking at model homes memorable and fun, and to do that, we try to give the kids something to look at as well as the parents," said Cammie Hancock Gasser, director of marketing for Camelot. "We always put a lot of emphasis on things that kids will remember. For example, in some models, we have decorated rooms specifically for little boys with a basketball theme with a brick wall that's like a backboard. We put nets there, and that hopefully helps them embrace the experience."

Camelot Homes uses one



Marley Park



Camelot Homes

Three princesses play outside their castle at Altamont at WestWing Mountain. Left: Many developments have tot lots or playgrounds near their model home complexes.

EYI

Experts offer these tips for planning a model home touring day with children:

- ◆ Call ahead of time and ask whether the models are child-friendly. How many models are there? Can you bring a stroller? Water? Snacks?
- ◆ If appropriate and allowable, bring a stroller or wagon, just like you're going to an event like a parade.
- ◆ Everyone should wear comfortable clothes and shoes.
- ◆ Not all model homes have working restrooms, so inquire with the sales agent and plan ahead.
- ◆ Know your child's schedule: You really don't want to be model home shopping with a 2-year-old who missed his nap or a pre-teen who stayed up all night at a sleepover. And neither does anyone else.
- ◆ If your young child is used to playing outside in the mid-morning, plan an activity during your tours. Stop at an indoor play center and burn off some energy. At Marley Park, which has 21 models, mid-tour picnicking in the playground park is a common occurrence.
- ◆ Bring treats and water, but make sure kids eat before you leave the house. You may think you're only going to be there for a "few minutes," but looking at homes is an involved process that can easily turn into more time than you planned.
- ◆ If it's too much for everyone, relax, hire a sitter and come back alone. Everyone will be happier and you can make a better, more informed home-buying decision.



Marley Park

particularly interesting method to appeal to the younger crowd that visits its WestWing models — a whimsical, fairytale playhouse.

"For the past three or four years, we've built a playhouse for the annual homebuilder

association playhouse competition. This event raises money for charities like the Ronald McDonald house and other organizations like that," Gasser said.

"Last year, we built and donated a fabulous playhouse and then ended up buying it back."

Marley Park's Welcome Center has an indoor play area with games and a large park outside. The development's model homes surround the park.

people can actually choose for their home," Gasser said. "It's adorable. It's actually a little house with a TV that kids can use to play games, DVDs, et cetera, all while their parents are looking at the same little house to choose things like the color of tile they want."

Family interaction

While it's not unusual for many home builders to have at least one bedroom or game room that appeals to kids to help them envision themselves in a new setting, parents can help keep the younger crowd involved in the process by engaging the entire family in interactive conversation.

Shawaludin suggests open-ended questions. What's your favorite part of this bedroom? How do you think your desk would look in this corner? Children will have to use their imagination to process an answer.

The bottom line is that it doesn't take a rocket scientist to realize that when it comes to model home shopping with kids, it's similar to many other facets of parenting young children. Basically, it all boils down to this: keep 'em fed, keep 'em rested, keep 'em interested, and keep 'em moving.

And be sure you know exactly where the next working bathroom is.

Vistancia celebrates Fall Opening

Compiled by Cara LaBrie

Vistancia in north Peoria is welcoming the arrival of autumn with the debut of five new neighborhoods and the chance to win a Disney vacation.

The award-winning community's Fall Opening is slated for 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 7-8. Vistancia is northwest of Lake Pleasant Road and Happy Valley Parkway.

The event, which is free and open to the public, showcases nearly three dozen models from eight builders, including new builders Trend Homes and Rosewood Homes. While touring the model home gallery, visitors can register at each model information office for a chance to win the Disney vacation.

Trend Homes will unveil two new offerings, Acacia Grove and Primrose Estate, featuring three- to-four bedroom homes sized from 1,618 to 2,544 square feet. Homes in each of the neighborhoods will feature separate living and dining rooms, and spacious lofts.

Rosewood Homes, a new home builder in the Valley, will begin sales for Mountain Gate, its first community in Vistancia. Mountain Gate will consist of an enclave of 65 homes ranging from 1,846 to 3,028 square feet featuring gourmet kitchens, courtyards, front porches and private loggias. Prices begin in the mid-\$300s.

Ashton Woods Homes will debut the Eagle Ridge community, consisting of spacious homes sized from 1,585 to 2,767 square feet with large great rooms, up to four bedrooms and two to three baths. Prices start in the high \$200s.

T.W. Lewis will showcase its Alta Vista neighborhood during the Fall Opening with spacious floor plans that range from 2,741 to 4,008 square feet. Home buyers have the choice of three to five bedrooms and two to three baths.

Since opening in 2004, more than 2,100 homes have been sold at Vistancia, which also consists of the age-qualified Trilogy at Vistancia and the private Blackstone Country Club. The fire station and Peoria Unified School District

— See **BUILDER BUZZ**, Page NHA6





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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Skyline Ranch (from the \$160's) Hunt Highway, S of Gary Rd, Queen Creek ▶ Power Ranch (from the \$220's) Germann Rd, W of Power Rd, Gilbert ▶ Shamrock Estates (from the \$360's) S Higley Rd, N of Chandler Heights Rd, Gilbert ▶ Marley Park (from the \$330's) SE Corner of Waddell Rd & Reems Rd, Surprise ▶ Sonoran Mountain Ranch (from the \$290's) NW of Pyramid Peak Pkwy on Sonoran Mtn Ranch Rd, Peoria 	<p>480/655-5800 (1177-3109 sq. ft.)</p> <p>480/457-8760 (1340-2613 sq. ft.)</p> <p>480/840-6833 (2320-4269 sq. ft.)</p> <p>623/792-7130 (2109-3414 sq. ft.)</p> <p>623/362-2882 (1636-2798 sq. ft.)</p>
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