

# RECOM

Retired Employees City of Mesa

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RECOM Executive Board

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

**Summer Heartbreak**  
by Lin Adams, RECOM Secretary

"I Remember it Well." In the movie, Gigi," actor/singer Maurice Chevalier "remembers" a first date differently than the lady who was his date remembers it. And that's oftentimes how life is – different people remember different things. So, while some of you might remember the summer of 1993 for the movie, "Jurassic Park," Ken Griffey, Jr. hitting his 100<sup>th</sup> career home run, or when the singer Prince changed his name to a symbol, I remember it for a summer love and heartbreak – in the form of basketball...yes, basketball!!

For a better explanation, I need to go back to May 11, 1992, and the "Mad House on McDowell" (the Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum), as this is where my basketball life began. It was my daughter's 14<sup>th</sup> birthday, and as a family tradition, we always went to dinner; but on this birthday, she had gotten four tickets to the Phoenix Suns playoff game against the Portland Trailblazers. I didn't particularly like sports and had never even watched a basketball game on TV, let alone attended one! But, this was my daughter's birthday, and she wanted to go to the game; so, reluctantly, I went to the game, with my goal being to try to stay awake

until we could go to dinner after the game...that game that ultimately went into triple overtime before the Blazers came out the victors and proceeded to the NBA Finals (only to get eliminated by the Chicago Bulls). When the game ended around 11 PM, we headed back to Mesa for my daughter's birthday dinner at T.G.I. Friday's on S. Longmore – which was about the only decent restaurant open at that time! We celebrated my daughter's birthday, but really nobody was in a celebratory mood, since the Suns had just lost such a big game!

But, this isn't about where we ate dinner; it's about summer love and heartbreak – love of the game of basketball and heartbreak when your hope is stolen!! For those of you who don't recall, the Blazers' star player was Clyde "The Glide" Drexler. He was a great basketball player, but oh how I hated him that night; and when it was over, he was one of the big reasons the Suns were eliminated in the Playoffs that year! Surprising everyone, I yelled my heart out that night for the Suns, a basketball team I had never seen before – and somewhere in that process, I became an avid basketball fan.

After that initial game on May 11, I watched every Playoff game in the Eastern and Western Conferences and was glued to the TV during the NBA Finals, cheering on my favorite player – Clyde Drexler!! Yes, the Suns were then "old news" and I had moved on. I can't tell you exactly why I liked Drexler so much, but I did – to the extent that I

actually signed up to buy Suns season tickets, so I could be assured of seeing Drexler when the Blazers played the Suns! In 1992, Suns games were always sellouts, so the only way I knew to get tickets was to buy season tickets. Remember, I was new to basketball, so didn't know about ticket agencies or realize there were always ticket "scalpers" outside the arena.

During the summer of 1992, the Suns moved to a new arena, then-named America West Arena (which ultimately became better known as "The Purple Palace.") After considerable thought (and I do mean considerable!), common sense prevailed, and I decided not to take a second mortgage on my house to buy tickets in the club seat section for about \$5,500 a season!! Instead, I opted to pay \$1,672 for two season tickets (a mere \$19 per seat in row 14 of the upper concourse area.) Row 14 is the highest row you can sit in and still be in the building! I was on "cloud nine," because I was going to see Clyde Drexler when he came to Phoenix!!

About a week after I ordered my season tickets, there was a lot of commotion on the Suns scene; as I recall the talk, the Suns traded beloved Jeff Hornacek and a couple other players for some guy that had "spit on a kid." I heard the talk, but it didn't matter to me, because I didn't care about the Suns anyway – I was just going to attend Suns games to see Clyde when the Blazers came to town!

In preparation, before the beginning of basketball season that year, my daughter and I flew to Portland for a shopping spree at the Blazers Team Shop. I don't know if Internet shopping was available, but I sure didn't know about it, so it made perfect sense to fly to Portland to buy a few essentials! I don't recall everything we bought, but I know my daughter got a Blazers duffle bag and some Blazers clothes; I got a Blazers coffee cup, a miniature basketball and hoop set for my desk.

I also bought a life-sized growth chart-type poster of Clyde Drexler (all 6'7" of him), which I proudly hung in my office in the Criminal Investigations Division of the Mesa Police Department!!

By the time the Blazers played in Phoenix for the first time that season, I had become a big Suns fan; but I was still a big Drexler fan, too; also by then, I had learned about buying tickets, so I bought tickets from a "scalper" and got seats in row 11 behind the Suns bench, so I could have a better view of Drexler!

Unbeknownst to me, I was sitting in the section where Suns family members sat, so every time I cheered Drexler, everyone around me looked at me as if I were crazy! The Suns' new kid on the block, that player who "spit on kids," was the infamous Charles Barkley – the one player after Drexler who was most responsible for my becoming a basketball "nut" for years to come.

Something happened to me that year; I ate and breathed the Suns, and after being introduced to Barkley's entertaining play and unpredictable persona, he had won my basketball heart! I still liked Clyde, but Charles was now "the man"!! I bought Suns clothes, wore Suns colors to work on game days, had a Suns license plate holder, flew a Suns flag on my home, and attended every home Suns game that season.

When the Playoffs began, and the Suns lost the first two home games to the #\*\*%\*@\*! Lakers, I got physically sick over it! But, as Suns followers will recall, Suns Coach Paul Westphal said the Suns would beat the Lakers in L.A., come back, and win the series – and they did!!



Within a couple weeks, the Suns were playing the Chicago Bulls in the NBA Finals, and I flew to Chicago, attended the game dressed in purple and orange, and cheered the Suns to a victory there in Game 5!!

Then came Game 6 in Phoenix and John Paxson's shot – and in a heartbeat, the Suns' season was over, and fans were left with only their memories and a huge parade in Phoenix. The '92-'93 Suns season – it was a great run, and I loved it, heartbreak and all!!



Lin at the Suns v. Bulls game - Chicago, June, 1993

Now, 17 years later, so much has changed – new owners, new coaches, new players, and a new arena name; yet, much is the same – the Suns still have not made it back to the NBA Finals, and although they got close this year, once again, it wasn't close enough!

I still have my Suns season tickets, but don't sit in my seats, because I now have a contract job with the NBA (who would have ever seen that coming!!). In 1998, I was offered a position as the WNBA Security Representative assigned to the Phoenix Mercury (you know, that women's basketball team that nobody seems to know or care about – even though they are the only team in town that has won TWO CHAMPIONSHIPS!!).

Shortly after, I became the Alternate NBA Security Representative, assigned to the Phoenix Suns!! So, I now attend all home Suns games and get paid for it!! But, here is the rub – even though I am still a Suns

season-ticket-holder, since I work for the League, I have to be impartial and can't cheer for the Suns! So, as much as I dislike the Lakers – and Suns fans know how easy it is to dislike the Lakers – when they beat the Suns in the Western Conference Finals a couple weeks ago in Phoenix, I had to act as if I didn't care, while in my mind, I was cussing out several Lakers players!!

Once again it's summer – time for basketball summer heartbreak!!

## Speaker

Rosie Romero or Every Homeowner's Best Friend, as he likes to be thought of was the guest speaker at the May membership meeting. Rosie's popular radio show, Rosie on the House, airs Saturday mornings.

Rosie is a down-to-earth guy who sincerely wants to help homeowners. Here are some of the tips he shared on how to make your home more secure and energy efficient.

On the security topic, he stressed the importance of making your home look less appealing to burglars than other homes.

Since most home burglaries occur during the day with access through the front door, it's important that your front door is visible from the street so the burglar can be seen. Security doors are a great deterrent. Rosie also suggested replacing door locks with 'bump proof' locks. A 'bump proof' lock is one that is not easily be picked or opened by a 'bump key' which can be easily obtained on the internet. The lock can be strengthened by replacing the strike (the metal plate that's mounted on the doorjamb and into which the lock bolt slides) with a box strike. Another inexpensive way to enhance your current door lock is to replace the typical short mounting screws with 4-inch-long ones. They will penetrate the doorjamb and go into the studs, providing more resistance to forced entry.

Sliding glass patio doors are another mode of entry. Some are even installed backwards. This makes it easy to remove the door from the outside. Using a sliding door lock with pins or

placing sheet metal screws in the top of the door frame to prevent the door from being lifted will also make entry difficult.

Many of us have lovely little pets which like to go in and out through a doggy door. However, this is another popular way to get into homes. Children are used to go through the doggy door and open the home's front door.

He also suggested that the pull cord on garage door openers be removed. Burglars have a method of reaching them through the top of the garage door. Instead he showed how a long wooden dowel with a cup hook on the end could be used to manually open the garage door. And always lock the door leading from the garage to the house. No sense in making it easy for the burglar.

Exterior lighting of the home at night is another deterrent. Motion detectors are also good. It prevents burglars from being able to hide in the dark.

Another tool used by thieves is traveler's luggage name tags. Travelers are not going to be at home so their home is an easy target. It was suggested to not put the home address on the tag. Name and phone number should be sufficient. With addresses readily available on the internet from telephone numbers, a business or cell phone number would be better.

After a break for refreshments Rosie shared some tips on improving the energy efficiency of homes.

Caulking around junction boxes and window frames to seal them are easy and inexpensive steps which can be taken to improve energy efficiency.

Home energy audits are a diagnostic test to determine its energy consumption patterns and provides recommendations for the most appropriate energy efficiency improvements.

REEis is a firm located in Scottsdale recommended by Rosie who performs home energy audits for \$100. They also take care of a lot of the paperwork required for the many available government rebates.

Rosie answered many questions from the members and helped in selecting the winners of the door prizes. The six members who won the gift certificates to Ace Hardware or Home Depot left the meeting pleasantly surprised.

Check out Rosie's website  
<http://www.rosieonthehouse.com/>

## Reports

### Membership:

The Annual Membership Drive has begun. Dues are due July 1. Members are encouraged to renew on-line. Members with e-mail addresses will receive their reminder notices by e-mail to keep mailing costs down.

### Employee Benefits Task Force:

Any dependent children who are currently enrolled but who lose eligibility prior to January 1, 2011 will be disenrolled, and may be re-enrolled for a January 1, 2011 effective date. These children will be eligible for continuation coverage through COBRA and will receive information about that coverage once their coverage as a dependent child has been terminated.

The Benefits Office will provide more information about those rules and requirements prior to the normal Open Enrollment period, which will begin during the last week in October. If you have any questions, contact the Employee Benefits Office.

Insurance premium costs will go up, but the specific changes will not be known until September. Remember, it is important to be wise consumers and use "in network" providers whenever possible. Doing so will save both you and the City money.

## Upcoming Meetings

**June 16 – Mike Foley, Manager of Trail Experiences at the Phoenix Zoo**

**July 21 – Mark Salem of Salem Boys Automotive**

**August 18 - Speaker to be announced**

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month at 9:00AM in the community room of the fire station at Mesa Dr. and 1<sup>st</sup> Street.