

# On Golden Ponds

*Lakefront dwellers get  
'best of all worlds'*

by Cynthia Scanlon

**W**ith the number of new lakefront communities cropping up all over the Valley, waterfront living is becoming increasingly desirable. Developments that include lakes and ponds are popular not only with boaters, windsurfers and fishermen, but also with homeowners who enjoy a prestigious location, spectacular views and the romance that surrounds lakeside living.

Says Scott Liem, vice president of sales and marketing at Global Village in Gilbert: "There's a mystique in an arid climate about living on water."

Residents rhapsodize about the soothing sounds of waterfalls and water running over rocks and boulders, especially at night. In addition to the sight and sound advantages, says Liem, lakefront communities are master-planned, so there is little chance they will become overdeveloped or congested.

Because owning a home near water is a novelty in an arid climate, prices for lakefront properties are \$35,000 to \$100,000 more than comparable homes not on water. But there is a bright side. According to Liem, the controversy over using mass quantities of water to fill man-made lakes could make lakefront communities an endangered species and significantly enlarge the appreciation potential of existing developments.

Robert Long, owner of Robert Long Development, agrees that lakefront homes will become increasingly valuable. "Because there's limited land out there," he says, "we're going to see homes that were selling for \$200,000 or \$300,000 sell for \$600,000 or \$700,000 in the not too distant future."

According to Long, the majority of people who own homes in his Mountainview Lake Estates in Scottsdale are "empty-nesters." "Their children are grown and gone and they don't need that much space anymore," he says. "They want to start living their own life and paying themselves back for all the sacrifices they made when raising a family."

Along with the advantages, Long says, wise home buyers should consider several problem areas before selecting a home on the water. "If developers haven't designed the lakes properly, they actually become stagnant ponds," Long says. "Then, they have to dye the water to make it look presentable. [After the lakes are dyed,] they actually look green. That means they're dead lakes."

Long says that a lake should be at least 10 to 12 feet deep, so that the sun cannot penetrate the water and create an algae buildup.

The lake also should have a gradual entrance so that if small children fell in, they could walk or crawl out.

Other problems that might come with living on lakefront property are increased humidity, bugs and mosquitoes. Long notes, however, that many developers have stocked their lakes with fish that help to keep the water clean and the bug and mosquito population under control.

Overall, most lakefront homeowners agree that the advantages of living near water far outweigh the disadvantages, concludes Long. He says they believe they get the best of all worlds: lush greenery, soothing water and the casual desert lifestyle for which Arizona is famous.

The following is a partial list of newer lakeside communities in the Valley. Homebuilders, builders' telephone numbers and developments with new homes available also are listed. Some developments offer homes on the waterfront, others have lake views and/or access to the nearby lake.

**Desert Harbor**, 91st Avenue and Thunderbird Road, Peoria. 45-acre lake. J.M. Martin Development, 998-1140, "Lake Point."

**The Islands**, Elliot and McQueen roads, Gilbert. 82-acre lake. American Discovery Homes, 998-3057, "Charter Point." Coral De-

*continued on page 128*