



Medicare Open Enrollment lasts from October 15th to December 7th.

With its many parts, enrollment can be a challenge.

Aster has resources to help you navigate this process with confidence.

Read more on page 2.

IN THIS ISSUE

Lunch Menu	1
Aster Social Services	2
Health Literacy Month	3
October Activities	5
Center Movies	8
Health Corner	9
Puzzle	10

OCTOBER MENU

For next day reservations (lunch is served at 11:30 am), call [480-962-5612](tel:480-962-5612) (Mesa Downtown) or [480-218-2221](tel:480-218-2221) (Red Mt).
The Suggested Contribution for participants age 60+ is \$4.00.
Items with ** contain pork or pork products. Menu items subject to change due to availability.

MONDAY

Items with **contain pork or pork products.

Menu subject to change due to availability.

TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY

1

Honey garlic chicken with Asian mix vegetables, edamame, brown rice, and tropical fruit.

FRIDAY

2

Cod fillet with Brussels sprouts, corn, brown rice, and apricot slices.

5

Chicken stuffed with broccoli and cheese, cauliflower, baby carrots, a whole wheat dinner roll, a pear, and fig newtons.

6

Salisbury steak with gravy, cubed roasted potatoes, spinach, a whole wheat biscuit, and an apple.

7

Ham** and cheese sandwich with lettuce, tomatoes, and onion slices on a whole wheat hoagie roll, a chopped vegetable side salad, and an orange.

8

Tuna salad sandwich on whole wheat bread with baby carrots, a 3-bean salad, and Mandarin oranges.

9

Chicken enchilada with sweet corn and black beans on a whole wheat tortilla, and grapes.

12

Meatloaf with gravy, mashed potatoes, green beans, a whole wheat dinner roll, mixed tropical fruit, and graham crackers.

13

Crispy chicken sandwich on a whole wheat bun with potato wedges, corn, and fruit salad.

14

Shrimp Alfredo with asparagus and cauliflower on a bed of whole wheat linguine pasta, and sliced peaches.

15

Teriyaki chicken bowl with stir fry vegetables and brown rice, edamame, fortune cookies, and apple slices.

16

Philly cheese steak with onion on a whole wheat hoagie roll, green beans, broccoli, and mixed fruit.

19

Chicken kiev with grilled vegetables, wax beans, brown rice, and an orange.

20

Pot roast with potatoes, carrots, celery, and gravy, a side of broccoli, a whole wheat dinner roll, and a banana.

21

Chicken tacos on whole wheat tortilla with roasted corn, refried beans, and Mandarin oranges.

22

Spaghetti and meatballs with Italian green beans, a side salad, a whole wheat breadstick, and an apple crisp with oatmeal.

23

Pork** loin with potato wedges, coleslaw, a whole wheat biscuit, and mixed berries.

26

Clam chowder with potatoes and corn, Brussels sprouts, roasted broccoli, a whole wheat dinner roll, and apricot slices.

27

Veggie lasagna with cubed roasted potatoes, spinach, a whole wheat biscuit, and an apple.

28

Roast turkey with gravy, mashed potatoes, cauliflower, a whole wheat dinner roll, mixed fruit salad, and fig newtons.

29

Chili con carne, sauteed yellow squash, green side salad, cornbread, and mixed berries.

30

Swedish pork** meatballs on a bed of egg noodles and butter with green beans, a whole wheat dinner roll, and peaches.

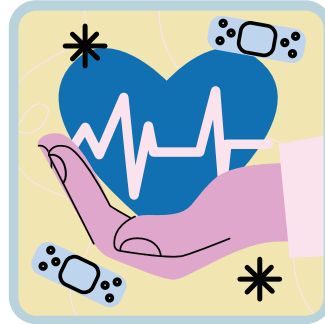
ASTER AGING

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KNOWING MEDICARE

The weather turning cooler signals the onset of Medicare Open Enrollment. Open Enrollment for 2027 runs from October 15 to December 7, 2026.



For many of us, understanding Medicare options and making decisions about coverage can be challenging.

To help, Aster is collaborating with Area Agency on Aging on the SHIP program. SHIP, the State Health Insurance Assistance Program, provides unbiased help to Medicare beneficiaries, their families, and caregivers.

A certified SHIP counselor can give you one-on-one guidance based on your unique situation and needs.

SHIP is here to help with:

- How to enroll
- Plan comparison
- Coverage and costs
- Submitting appeals
- Open Enrollment and more!

SHIP counselors will have open office hours, alternating between the Centers, each Thursday. Contact our Outreach staff at **480-634-1659** or **socialservices@asteraz.org** for any program questions or to schedule your appointment.

You can also learn more about Medicare parts, which is right for you, and have your questions answered by Aster's dedicated team of Social Service Specialists. Get in touch today to learn more.



ASTER OUTREACH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Ramoncita Cocova, Director of Social Services

Email: rcocova@asteraz.org | **Phone:** 480-634-1659

PROGRAMS FOR YOU

We support and empower East Valley older adults and their families to remain independent and engaged in our communities through:



CENTER-BASED SERVICES

Our Centers are social hubs, with lunchtime meals, education programs, and social activities.



MEALS ON WHEELS

Providing nutritious meals and essential wellness checks, with both short and long-term plans, to meet your unique needs.



IN-HOME SUPPORT

Supporting isolated adults with transportation, grocery shopping, well visits, respite, personal care, and housekeeping.



SOCIAL SERVICES

Helping navigate and access services and health resources, as well as being the NCOA Benefits Enrollment Center for the East Valley.

ASTER AGING

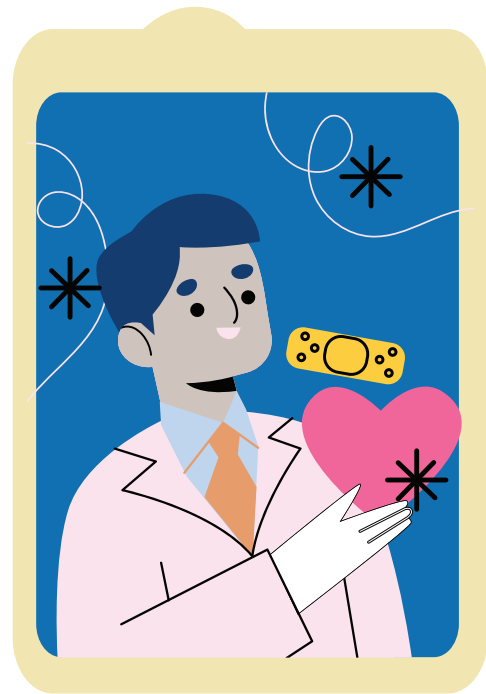
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HEALTH LITERACY MONTH

In October, we recognize Health Literacy Month, a time to focus on understanding and using health information to take care of yourself. As we age, keeping track of medications, appointments, and health instructions can sometimes feel overwhelming. Having the right tools and knowledge helps prevent mistakes, ensures timely care, and supports independence.

Aster is committed to helping older adults feel confident in managing their health and communicating with doctors and care providers. Clear health information is key to making informed choices and maintaining your quality of life. Our Outreach and Social Services team is here to help you navigate Medicare, Medicaid, and other community health programs through free, private, and unbiased consultations.

Learn more about Health Literacy Month at odphp.health.gov.



COMMUNITY EXPO

Meet Aster's team and learn more about resources available to you.

Lovin' Life Expo Mesa -

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Mesa Convention Center - 293 N
Center Street, Mesa, AZ, 85201



HEALTH WORKSHOP

**Presented by Students from the University of
Arizona College of Nursing**

Join us every Wednesday morning from 10:00
to 11:00 am at the Mesa Downtown Senior
Center for a fun and informative lecture on
various health topics.

RSVP:

480-962-5612 | CBS@asteraz.org | In-Person



HALLOWEEN LUNCH PARTIES

Friday, Oct 30 | Both Centers | 10:30 am

Come in costume to celebrate
the spooky season with us!

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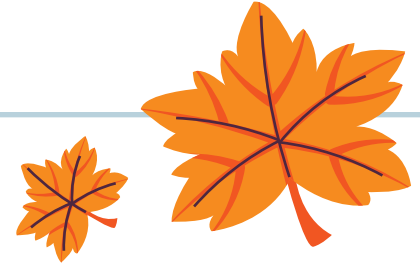
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ASTER ACTIVITIES

STAY IN TOUCH WITH ASTER TO READ MORE NEWS

Website: AsterAZ.org | Social Media: @AsterArizona
Email Development@asteraz.org for a chance to have your photo featured in the newsletter!



Pictured above: Participants from the Mesa Downtown Senior Center enjoy an excursion to the museum.



Pictured above: Volunteers serve lunch and smiles at the Mesa Downtown Senior Center.



Pictured above: Participants enjoy lunch and good company at the Red Mountain Senior Center.



Pictured above: Red Mountain Senior Center participants enjoy a friendly afternoon game of mahjong.

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ASTER SENIOR CENTERS

Activities with an * have fees and require pre-registration.



MESA DOWNTOWN EVENTS

To RSVP for an activity, call the Senior Center at 480-962-5612, email cbs@asteraz.org, or sign up in-person.

October 15 | 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

AARP SAFE DRIVER*

Learn tips and tricks on how to navigate the road - contact your insurer to see if you qualify for a discount upon completion of the course. **Cost: \$20/AARP Member \$25/Non Member | RSVP to Barbara Skinner: barbaraarp@gmail.com, 480-383-9187**

October 16 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

INTRO TO BUDGETING

Presented by Navy Federal Credit Union

Learn the basics of budgeting on a fixed income with the experts at Navy Federal Credit Union.

October 27 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

MESA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Learn from the experts at the Mesa Fire Department how to avoid falls, keep your home safe, and manage medication.

October 29 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

YOUR BEST YEARS TOBACCO FREE

Presented by Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Learn about the impact of tobacco on your health, what your rights are as a non-smoker, and much more. There will be prizes!



Tuesdays, Wednesdays | 8:15 - 9:15 am | Mesa Downtown
MORNING MOVEMENT*

Get your day moving with indoor exercise! **\$2/person.**



Mondays | 1:30 - 2:30 pm | Mesa Downtown
Thursdays | 1:00 - 2:00 pm | Red Mountain

LINE DANCING*

Join us for live music and lots of fun every week! **\$5/person.**



Tuesdays | 2:00 - 3:00 pm | Mesa Downtown
WORLD HISTORY CLASS

Learn about remarkable events through history.



Monday, Thursday | 8:30 - 11:00 am | Mesa Downtown
ADVANCED & BEGINNERS TAI CHI CLASSES*

Beginner (10:00 am) Advanced (8:30 am). **Cost varies.**



Mondays | 12:30 - 1:30 pm | Mesa Downtown
September 2 | 10:30 - 11:30 am | Red Mountain
KARAOKE

Have fun singing golden-oldies in this judgement-free zone



Mondays | 2:00 - 3:00 pm | Mesa Downtown
SENIOR PLAYERS

No experience needed for this fun-loving theater group!



Monday, Thursday | 12:30 - 3:00 pm | Red Mountain
Mondays | 9:00 - 11:00 am | Mesa Downtown
DIAMOND ART*

Create amazing and dazzling art pieces. Bring your own project to work on. **Cost: Supplies**



Wednesdays | 9:00 - 10:00 am | Mesa Downtown
HALL OF FAME

Learn about all things baseball with volunteer Art.



Tuesdays | 8:00 am - 12:00 pm | Red Mountain
Tuesdays | 9:00 - 11:00 am | Mesa Downtown
STITCH & CHAT

Enjoy good company while crafting creative pieces.



Tuesday & Friday | 1:00 - 2:00 pm | Mesa Downtown
GERI FIT Facilitated by Area Agency on Aging

Enjoy a great workout using bands, weights, and more!



Thursdays | 10:00 - 11:00 am | Mesa Downtown
CHAIR YOGA*

Calm your mind with chair yoga. **\$3/person**

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Visit our online calendar at asteraz.org for more details.



Thursdays | 9:30 - 10:30 am | Mesa Downtown
Wednesdays | 9:00 - 10:00 am | Red Mountain
BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

Learn your numbers to better manage your health!



Wednesdays | 1:00 - 2:00 pm | Mesa Downtown
Fridays | 10:00 - 11:00 am | Red Mountain
GRIEF & LOSS SUPPORT Facilitated by EMPACT

A bereavement support group for seniors.



Thursdays | 8:00 am - 1:30 pm | Mesa Downtown
Fridays | 8:30 - 11:00 am | Red Mountain
ART STUDIO*

Enjoy Open Art Studio Thursdays and Portrait Painting with a live model on Fridays. **Bring your own supplies.**



Fridays | 9:30 - 10:30 am | Mesa Downtown
WRITER'S GUILD

Come to share, learn and spark your creative juices.



1st Monday | 8:30 am | Mesa Downtown
2nd Friday | 9:00 - 10:00 am | Red Mountain
VETERANS' SOCIAL

Enjoy coffee & donuts each month with fellow veterans.



October 21 | 11:30 - 12:00 pm | Both Centers
OCTOBER BIRTHDAY PARTY

Come celebrate the birthdays of those born this month with cake.



Wednesdays | 10:00 - 11:00 am | Mesa Downtown
1st Friday | 10:00 - 11:00 am | Red Mountain
BOOK CLUB Facilitated by New Frontiers of MCC

Join us & discuss a shared love of reading.



Tuesdays | 9:30 - 10:30 am | Mesa Downtown
ART IN ACTION

Discuss art history from all eras and parts of the world.



Thursdays | 10:00 am - 12:00 pm | Mesa Downtown
VETERAN'S ART

Presented by the Mesa Art League

Join us every Thursday to make art with fellow Veterans.



Fridays | 1:00 - 2:00 pm | Red Mountain
MOVIN' FORWARD Facilitated by EMPACT

A group for those who have already gone through a loss and wish to make new friends.



Wednesdays | 1:00 - 3:00 pm | Red Mountain
WEDNESDAY DANCE

Cut a rug every Wednesday at the Senior Center



RED MOUNTAIN EVENTS

To RSVP for an activity, call the Senior Center at 480-218-2221, email cbs@asteraz.org, or sign up in-person.

October 5 | 1:00 - 3:30 pm

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP

Presented by The Muhammad Ali Parkinson Center

For those living with Parkinson's Disease and their loved ones.

October 8 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

YOUR BEST YEARS TOBACCO FREE

Presented by Maricopa County Department of Public Health

Learn about the impact of tobacco on your health, what your rights are as a non-smoker, and much more. There will be prizes!

October 15 | 9:00 - 11:00 am

DIABETES EMPOWERMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Presented by Dignity Health

This 5-week workshop series helps you understand and plan to live your best life with Diabetes. Attend the first session to join for the full series.

October 20 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

MESA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Learn from the experts at the Mesa Fire Department how to avoid falls, keep your home safe, and manage medication.

October 22 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

INTRO TO BUDGETING

Presented by Navy Federal Credit Union

Learn the basics of budgeting on a fixed income with the experts at Navy Federal Credit Union.

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EXCURSIONS

Must be a registered participant and RSVP in advance to join.



Mesa Downtown

MESA'S HAUNTED MUSEUM

October 13 | 1:00 - 3:30 pm

Explore Mesa's Haunted Museum, a one-of-a-kind paranormal experience in the heart of Downtown Mesa.

Cost: \$10/person

Bus Pickup: 12:30 pm
Space Limited, 10 seats per trip
RSVP: In-Person at the Mesa Downtown Senior Center



Red Mountain

ARIZONA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

October 26 | 9:15 - 11:30 am

Come see dinosaurs and explore the natural history of ancient Arizona at this dynamic and expansive museum.

Cost: \$12/person

Bus Pickup: 8:50 am
Space Limited, 10 seats per trip
RSVP: In-Person at the Red Mountain Senior Center



SPECIAL PERFORMANCE

Enjoy the sounds of classical music at a FREE live concert presented by the Mesa Performing Arts Center, held at the Red Mountain Senior Center.

October 28, 2026 | 10:00 - 11:00 am

RSVP: cbs@asteraz.org | 480-218-2221 or in-person at the senior center



CENTER GAMES

Drop by or email CBS@asteraz.org to save your spot.

MESA DOWNTOWN



FUN & GAMES

Tues & Thurs | 9:30 - 10:30 am



PINOCHLE

Tues & Thurs | 12:30 - 3:00 pm



BINGO!

FOR FUN: Weds | 12:30 - 3:00 pm
MONEY: Fri | 1:00 - 3:30 pm

RED MOUNTAIN



MAHJONG

Mon | 12:30 - 3:00 pm
Beginner's: Mon | 9:30 - 12:00 pm



PINOCHLE

Tues & Thurs | 12:30 - 3:00 pm
Beginner's: Mon | 1:00 - 3:00 pm



WHATEVER GAMES WE PLAY

Weds | 12:30 - 3:00 pm



CANASTA

Weds & Fri | 12:00 - 3:00 pm
Beginner's: Mon | 12:00 - 2:30 pm



MEXICAN TRAIN DOMINOES

Thurs | 12:30 - 3:00 pm



CHESS

Thurs | 12:30 - 3:00 pm



BINGO! FOR FUN

Tues & Fri | 12:30 - 2:00 pm



WII SPORTS

Thurs | 9:00 - 11:00 am

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NOW SHOWING



Aster's Senior Centers each host **FREE weekly movies starting at **12:30 pm**.**

Popcorn is provided at all showings!

Downtown Senior Center movies are on Thursday, and Red Mountain Senior Center movies are on Monday. RSVP online, by phone/email or in person to secure your seat!



MESA DOWNTOWN (Thursdays)

October 1 | Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire | 2024 | PG-13

The Spengler family teams up with the original Ghostbusters to battle a new supernatural threat.

October 8 | Beetlejuice Beetlejuice | 2024 | PG-13

Lydia's teenage daughter accidentally opens the portal to the Afterlife in this belated sequel.

October 15 | Gremlins | 1984 | PG

A man breaks the rules of caring for his new pet, spawning a horde of mischievous, destructive creatures in this iconic 80's classic.

October 22 | The Addams Family | 1991 | PG-13

The eccentric family welcomes a man claiming to be Gomez's long-lost brother, unaware he's an impostor after their fortune.

October 29 | Good Boy | 2026 | PG-13

A loyal dog must protect his owner from supernatural forces lurking in their new rural home.



RED MOUNTAIN (Mondays)

October 12 | Top Gun: Maverick | 2022 | PG-13

When Navy Captain Pete "Maverick" is sent to train a new squad of graduates for a dangerous mission, he must push himself to the limit.

October 19 | Knives Out | 2019 | PG-13

When a wealthy crime novelist is found dead at his family estate the day after his 85th birthday, a brilliant detective is brought in to untangle the web of lies.

October 26 | Hocus Pocus | 1993 | PG

On Halloween night in Salem, Massachusetts, three centuries-old witches are accidentally resurrected by a group of curious teenagers, who must find a way to stop them before sunrise, or the witches will become immortal.

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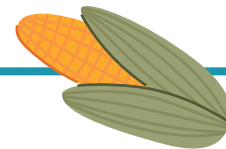
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GUARDIAN



BUTTERNUT SQUASH & WHITE BEAN SOUP

This roasted sweet potato and white bean bowl uses just one pan, so cleanup is minimal, and the soft, mashable texture makes it easy to eat for anyone dealing with chewing difficulty. It's a warm, fiber-rich fall meal that pairs naturally with the "fill half your plate with vegetables" approach.

Ingredients

- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 can (15 oz) white beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups pre-washed baby spinach
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 pinch salt and black pepper

Directions

- 1. Prep:** Wash hands. Preheat oven to 400°F. Wash and cube sweet potatoes.
- 2. Roast:** Toss sweet potato cubes with olive oil, cinnamon, salt, and pepper on a baking sheet. Roast 25–30 minutes, stirring once, until fork-tender.
- 3. Assemble:** In a bowl, layer spinach, roasted sweet potatoes, and white beans while still warm — the heat will gently wilt the spinach.
- 4. Serve:** Eat warm, or refrigerate up to 4 days for grab-and-go meals.

SEASONAL PRODUCE GUIDE

Adapted from the USDA's MyPlate Seasonal Produce Guide and SNAP-Ed Connection, via the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Fall doesn't just change the weather — it changes what's cheapest, freshest, and most nutrient-packed at the grocery store. October's harvest happens to line up well with what older adults need more of: fiber, potassium, and vitamin A, often at a lower price than out-of-season produce.

What's actually in season right now? Winter squash (butternut, acorn, spaghetti), sweet potatoes, pumpkin, apples, pears, and dark leafy greens like kale and Swiss chard are all at their peak in October. Buying produce in season typically means better flavor, better nutrition, and a lower price tag, since it doesn't have to travel as far or sit in storage as long.

Why do squash and sweet potatoes get so much attention?

Both are excellent sources of vitamin A and fiber, and both are naturally soft once cooked — roasted, mashed, or pureed into soup — which makes them easier to manage for anyone dealing with chewing difficulty. A baked sweet potato or a bowl of butternut squash soup delivers a lot of nutrition without a lot of effort.

What about apples and pears? Both are high in fiber, particularly when the skin is left on, which supports the kind of steady digestion that becomes more of a concern with age. For anyone who finds raw fruit harder to eat, stewing or baking apples and pears softens them while keeping most of the nutritional value intact.

Do leafy greens fit into fall eating too? Yes — kale, chard, and other cooking greens are in season through fall and hold up well simmered into soups, stews, or sautéed as a side. Cooking them down also makes them easier to eat than a raw salad.

A practical starting point: build a meal around one seasonal vegetable (roasted squash, a sweet potato, or sautéed greens), add a lean protein, and round it out with a piece of fall fruit. It's an easy way to eat with the season instead of against it — and often a cheaper one.

Aster Aging can also help you connect with resources that make groceries more affordable, including SNAP benefits. **Contact Ramoncita Cocova, Aster's Director of Social Services, at rcocova@asteraz.org or (480) 634-1659 for more info.**

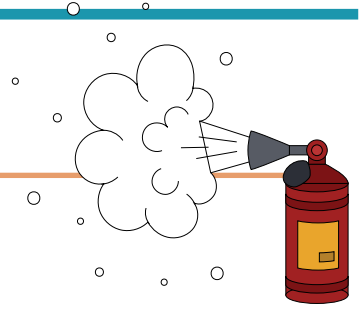
VISIT MYPLATE.GOV FOR MORE HEALTH TIPS

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PUZZLE



MIXED-UP FIREFIGHTER

Unscramble the letters to reveal words associated with a firefighter.

1. YDRAHTN _____
2. PAANTCI _____
3. METELH _____
4. ESXREGTIUIHN _____
5. CRUGAOE _____
6. REFOHUSEI _____
7. NEGENI _____
8. ELARDD _____
9. EOTNVELRU _____
10. READGIB _____



ANSWERS: 1. hydrant 2. captain 3. helmet 4. extinguisher 5. courage 6. firehouse
7. engine 8. ladder 9. volunteer 10. brigade

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CONTACT

Administrative Offices

45 W University Dr, Ste A,
480-964-9014 p

Mesa Downtown Senior Center

247 N Macdonald St,
480-962-5612 p

Red Mountain Senior Center

7550 E Adobe St,
480-218-2221 p

ASTER'S MISSION

Our mission is to empower and support East Valley older adults to remain independent and engaged in our communities.

ASTER'S VISION

Our vision is for Aster Aging to be a leader in providing direct services and mobilizing resources that support the changing needs of our older adult population.



BE THE FIRST TO KNOW

Read the newsletter early every month by receiving it in your email inbox or reading it right on our website!

Email **development@asteraz.org** to learn more.



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