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SPOTLIGHT

Ahwatukee house inspector marks 20 years of scrutiny

By Paul Maryniak, AFN Executive Editor Jan 25, 2017



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Tim O'Neall of Ahwatukee is a self-confessed "do-it-yourselfer" who has made a living judging what others did.

The owner of AZ Property Inspections, he inspects new and existing homes on behalf of prospective buyers and their agents, spending an average three hours with every house he scrutinizes.

Recently, the American Society of Home Inspectors honored O'Neall for marking his 20th years as one of their own.

Over those two decades, he has conducted more than 13,000 inspections. He currently supervises three other inspectors, works for the state Department of Real Estate and teaches both Realtors and future inspectors on the fine art of examining every nook and cranny of a house.

Before moving here in 1996, O'Neal was a sales director in New York City for an environmental consulting firm who was involved in commercial real estate and building restoration projects.

"On the weekends, I loved doing 'do-it-yourself' projects on the suburban home that my wife and I bought as newlyweds," he recalled.

And "though I loved the fast-paced corporate culture of New York City," O'Neall said, "I always dreamed of becoming an entrepreneur. Unfortunately, that dream was hard to attain when I was in the daily grind, commuting two hours each way in and out of New York City every business day for more than a decade."

When wife Liz was offered a job in Arizona, O'Neall said, "I saw it as a sign that my dream of entrepreneurship could be a reality, so I took the leap of faith by leaving the corporate world and New York behind to fulfill that dream."

He and Liz also settled on Ahwatukee “after we visited all the other communities around the Valley.”

“We were totally drawn to South Mountain with its beautiful foothills and the promise of a great school district for the children we were planning to have.”

He said his “passion for real estate and the things I learned doing all those do-it-yourself home projects” led him into home inspections.

These days O’Neill said he and his crew at his company, AZ Property Inspections, have been busier than usual.

“It’s only the beginning of the year and we are already seeing an uptick over last year, which was our company’s best year ever,” he said, noting that the Phoenix metro market is projected to be the hottest home market in the country in 2017.

But in some ways, his job may be a bit easier than it used to be because he has seen an uptick in the way homes are built.

“The quality of newly built homes seems better to me than when I started in the business in the mid-90s,” O’Neill observed.

“I really think that is due to the licensure of home inspectors in our state in 2002. Builders know that now more than ever before that there are other professionals coming in to check their work,” he added, warning buyers nonetheless:

“But even with that said, we find a fair amount of issues with brand new and never-lived-in homes.”

Information: 480-283-5642 or InspectionsAZ.com.