



SRPMIC Seniors, Membership and Staff Conduct Eagle Bandings

BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE
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A team comprised of SRPMIC Seniors, management, staff, wildlife biologists, environmental specialists and others collaborated on March 12 in the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community to conduct an eagle banding.

In the United States, bird banding was established in 1920. During that time, most species like ducks and geese were given a federal band.

These bands collect data in four key categories: tracking movement, population monitoring, identifying threats in the surrounding area in addition to monitoring behavior.

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Springtime Piipaash Matasheevm Honors the People

BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE
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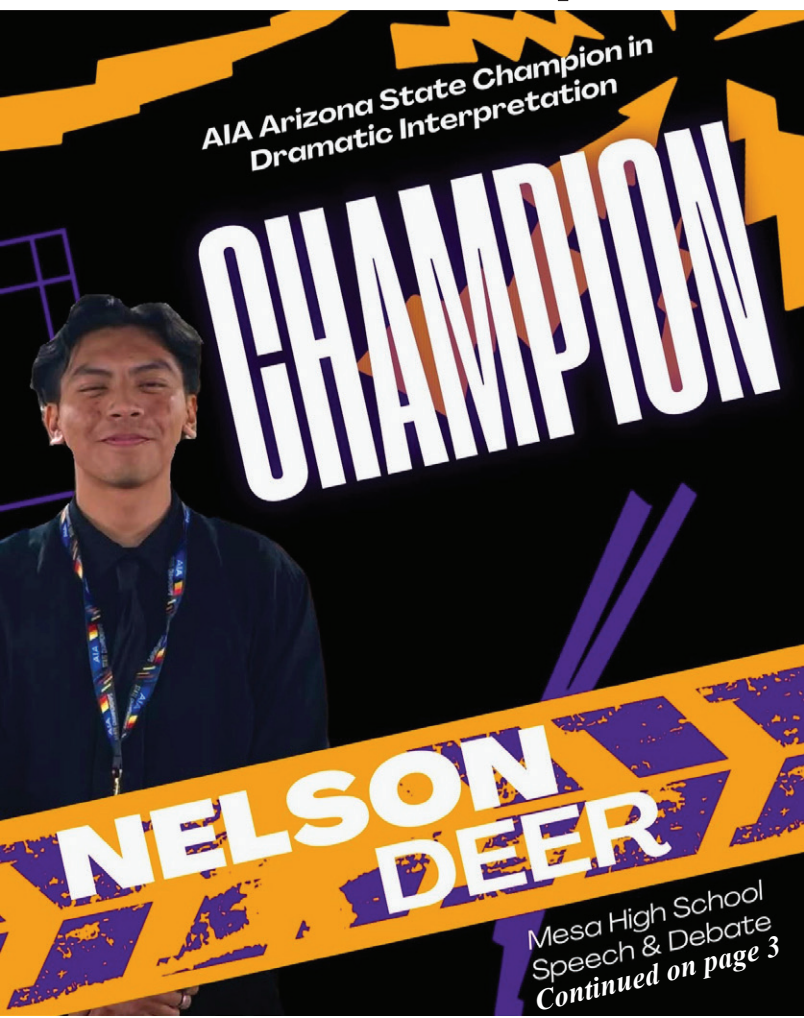
In the heart of Lehi, also known by the people as God's Country, the springtime Piipaash Matasheevm (People's Gathering) was a two-day celebration held on April 4 and 5 that saw many singers, dancers, and royalty from Indian Country help celebrate Piipaash culture and traditions.

The annual gathering of Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community membership in the Lehi district meets twice a year, in spring and the fall seasons, usually in April and October. The event was put together by the Piipaash Matasheevm Committee (PMC). Additionally, the PMC receives *Continued on page 9*



Earl Stacey (LEFT) and Carolyn Stacey were honored by the Piipaash Matasheevm Committee while Sheila Romero (RIGHT) spoke on behalf of her grandparents.

The Power of Speech



Brady Enos Wins Best Chicken Awards



SRPMIC member Brady Enos wins the Kerr AG Poultry Show Westwood Region Championship first place belt buckle for his Rhode Island Red chicken named Nugget.

BY CHRIS PICCIUOLO
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Students at the Kerr Center for Agriscience, a public school in Mesa, have a chance to learn hands-on skills in the agriscience and environmental sustainability fields through outdoor land lab lessons.

One of the school's programs allows for students to take care of an animal of their choice in preparation to show it off at the Maricopa County Fair.

On March 26, students participated in the Westwood Regional Show, which included presenting their chickens to a judge who walked down one end of a table to the other, critiquing the chickens, the way the student holds the chicken and the way the student maintains eye contact with the judge.

Three Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community member students participated in the show, Meilani Patrick, Clarissa Coron and Brady Enos.

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Towing Safety: A Beginner's Guide to Safely Towing a Trailer

SUBMITTED BY BRIAN GEWECKE
Senior Environmental Specialist (Range Management)

Towing a trailer can be intimidating for beginners, but understanding the key components and proper procedures will help ensure a safe and smooth experience. Whether you're new to towing or an experienced driver, these safety tips will guide you through the basics.

Key Towing Components

1. Receiver & Insert: The insert slides into the truck's receiver, which holds the hitch ball. The hitch ball connects the truck to the trailer's hitch.
2. Hitch Ball: This round ball attaches to the trailer hitch. It comes in various sizes and is used to connect the truck to the trailer.
3. Trailer Jack: Located at the front of the trailer, it raises and lowers the trailer to hitch it to the truck.
4. Insert Pin: Keeps the hitch insert securely in place inside the receiver.

Choosing the Right Tow Equipment

It's crucial to use the correct towing setup to avoid damage to your vehicle. For safety, avoid towing with a bumper hitch unless it's for small, lightweight trailers. Most trucks require a professional towing package with a receiver welded to the truck frame for heavy-duty towing.

Know Your Towing Limits

Before towing, check the weight ratings for your truck, hitch ball, and trailer:

1. Truck's Towing Capacity: This is typically found on the information tag inside the driver's side door or in the owner's manual. It's called the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR).

2. Hitch Ball: The hitch ball will have two key numbers: its strength rating (typically between 2,000 and 20,000 lbs) and its diameter size (commonly 1-7/8 inches, 2 inches, or 2-5/16 inches). The ball's size must match the trailer's hitch.

3. Maximum Weight: Never exceed the weight limits of your truck, hitch, or trailer. Overloading can lead to serious mechanical problems and unsafe driving conditions.

Types of Hitches

1. Bumper Hitch: The most common type, it's mounted to the truck's rear bumper and is suitable for smaller trailers.
2. Gooseneck Hitch: Mounted in the bed of the truck, this hitch distributes the weight across the truck frame and axle, allowing for heavier loads.
3. Pintle Hitch: Used for heavy-duty towing on rough terrain, often seen on farm vehicles.
4. Fifth Wheel Hitch: Typically found on semi-trucks, but also available for heavy-duty trucks.

Hitching the Trailer

- To properly hitch a trailer:
1. Position the Truck: Line up the truck's receiver with the trailer's hitch. It's easier if you have a spotter to guide you.
 2. Raise the Trailer: Use the trailer jack to lift the trailer and align it with the hitch ball. Once aligned, lower the trailer onto the hitch ball.
 3. Secure the Hitch: After the trailer is in place, secure it with the hitch lock pin and safety chains. Always check that the coupler is firmly attached.
 4. Check Lights & Brakes: Ensure the trailer brake and light connectors

are properly connected, and the trailer's emergency brake cable is in place.

Loading the Trailer

Load the trailer evenly to ensure a safe and stable tow. Place the heaviest items over the axles to prevent the trailer from becoming too nose- or tail-heavy. After loading, check the truck and trailer's alignment. Both should be level to avoid sway while driving.

Driving with a Trailer

Driving with a trailer requires extra caution and preparation:

1. Tow-Haul Mode: Many trucks have an Overdrive/Tow-Haul button, which switches the transmission to a more appropriate setting for towing. Avoid towing in Overdrive as it can damage your transmission.
2. Start and Stop Slowly: Sudden starts or stops can cause instability in the trailer, potentially shifting the load or causing damage. Always accelerate and brake gently.
3. Turning: When making turns, take them wide to avoid clipping the curb or damaging the trailer. Always signal early and watch for blind spots, especially on the right side.
4. Watch for Other Drivers: Some drivers may not understand the challenges of towing, such as needing extra space to turn or slower acceleration. Stay aware of other vehicles and give yourself plenty of room.

Backing Up

Backing up with a trailer can be tricky. Here's a simple tip: place your hand at the bottom of the steering wheel. Move your hand in the direction you want the trailer to go. If the trailer starts to jackknife, pull forward to realign the truck and trailer.

Towing on Hills

Going Uphill: Towing a heavy load uphill requires more power. If you're driving slower than the posted speed limit, pull to the right to let faster vehicles pass, and turn on your flashers if necessary.

Going Downhill: Towing downhill can be challenging since the trailer will push the truck, making it harder to control speed. Use engine braking by shifting to a lower gear to help slow down. Apply the brakes in short bursts allowing them to cool in between, to avoid overheating.

Final Safety Tips

- Tongue Weight: The weight the trailer applies to the truck's hitch ball, called tongue weight, should be 10-15% of the trailer's total weight. Proper tongue weight helps maintain stability during towing.
- Safety Chains: Always attach safety chains between the trailer and the truck. These serve as a backup in case the trailer becomes detached.
- Emergency Brake Cable: This should be connected between the trailer and truck. If the trailer becomes disconnected, the emergency brake cable will apply the trailer's brakes to prevent it from rolling away.

Conclusion

Towing a trailer safely requires knowledge, preparation, and practice. Understanding your vehicle's towing capacity, selecting the right hitch, loading the trailer correctly, and practicing safe driving habits are crucial for a smooth and accident-free experience. Like any new skill, it gets easier the more you do it, so take your time, stay cautious, and always prioritize safety.

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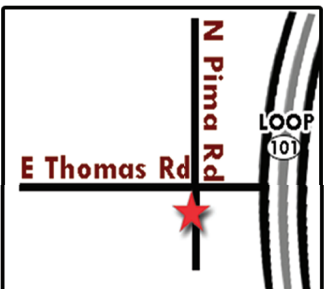
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The Power of Speech



Nelson Deer (left) with fellow students. Photo courtesy of Deer family.

BY NALANI LOPEZ
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“Most people think of speech and debate as just the movie scenes of students arguing a topic,” said Nelson Deer. “But people forget there’s also a speech aspect. That’s what I do.”

Deer, a Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community member and senior at Mesa High School took first place at the Arizona State Speech and Debate Championship in Dramatic Interpretation this past March.

His winning piece, based on Native American author Sherman Alexie’s autobiographical essay “Superman and

Me,” explores literacy, identity and life growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation in northeastern Washington.

“When I read it for my English class, I could just see the words come alive,” Deer said. “I knew I had to bring it to the stage.”

In speech competitions, students recite dialogues from either original or published materials. The student’s content, delivery and flow are judged to find the most skilled speaker.

Deer explained most speech students find their competition piece the summer before the school year, but he was still searching for his. By September, he unexpectedly came across his competition piece during a reading assignment. At first, Deer’s mentors were skeptical of his choice of literature. Despite it, he knew he had gold.

“What? This is sick, I love this,” Deer told his mentors.

In Dramatic Interpretation events, Deer says students often select pieces that involve exaggerated performances of crying or shouting.

However, the Alexie piece stood out to him because it wasn’t just a dramatic piece, it was layered.

“There’s humor, hope, passion, sad-

ness, fear, anger, and resolution,” he said. “It feels like a 10-minute movie.”

During this fourth time of performing this piece, he won state.

Prior to his winning piece, Deer’s journey in speech and debate began with a desire to act.

“I told my mom I wanted acting classes, so she said I had to prove I was serious first,” he said “So, I signed up for speech and debate classes my freshman year.”

At first, he started casually, but by sophomore year, Deer’s passion for storytelling took off.

He explored the variety of speech competitions categories such as impromptu speaking, original oratory, duo interpretation and dramatic interpretation.

His duo interpretation of a scene from “Marriage Story” (2019) gave him a taste of storytelling on stage, but it was “Superman and Me” that demonstrated his range of emotions.

Deer draws inspiration from his favorite actors Cillian Murphy and Ryan Gosling.

The more he observed other actors, speakers and performers, Deer realized the importance of connecting to his audience.

“I’ve found it’s really important for me to stay in touch with my emotions,” he said. “Especially with someone like Sherman Alexie, who’s passionate about letting people know there are smart Native kids on the reservation.”

To immerse himself in his perfor-

mances, preparation begins with hours of studying, watching character videos and rehearsing in front of mentors.

He credits his growth in realism to his acting coach, Cara Alvey.

“She told me, ‘When I see you act, I don’t want to watch a movie-I want to see a story.’”

Deer also draws from the teachings of his parents.

His mother, who is a musician, instilled an appreciation for the arts to Deer and his brothers. Here, he found his passion for saxophone playing.

And from his father, he found his love for storytelling.

“People felt good whenever they hear from him,” said Deer. “It’s something I’ve grown up loving and admiring about him. He can engage a whole audience.”

Especially when competition nerves are at an all-time-high, Deer recalls his father’s mindful words.

“It’s not nervousness--it’s excitement, you’re excited to perform the piece,”” said Melvin. “When they call your name, stand proudly, smile, and greet the judges. That confidence makes a difference.”

With graduation around the corner, Deer plans to take acting more seriously, continue attending workshops and giving his all into his auditions.

With confidence, and the right words up his sleeve, the future for Deer’s interest in speech and acting looks bright.

“Put yourself in a room with competitive people, spot the best competitor, then do better than them,” said Deer. “Just don’t be that guy that doesn’t know when to turn off competition mode.”

The Ins and Outs of Self-Empowerment

BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE
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“We are in control of our own attitude,” began Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Health and Human Services Prevention and Intervention Health Educator Melanie Nosie, LMSW. On March 25, Nosie facilitated a webinar regarding a topic we all can work on, self-empowerment.

Recently, the Community Health webinars have seen an increase in both attendance and especially the participation. Attributing it to the Community’s feedback to the webinars, Nosie reiterated that the classes are meant for everyone involved, including herself, to “just have a conversation.”

In fact, the self-empowerment webinar came to be a reality due to a suggestion Nosie received from a class attendee. Continuing to build genuine connections in the Community, Nosie had no problem conducting research regarding self-empowerment, stating, “I think we all could use a little bit of self-empowerment.”

Self-empowerment relies on our ability to self-heal. It acts as the foundation on which you can build a fulfilling life. Essentially, self-empowerment helps by keeping you move forward.

Without self-empowerment, our physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing are negatively impacted. By taking control of our lives and building a healthy mindset, we are able to commit to growing, learning and embracing our own unique individuality.

When Nosie asked the webinar par-

ticipants what self-empowerment looks like to them, the answers showcased a variety of the different ways we all implement. Answers such as: staying positive, keeping myself accountable, setting boundaries, practicing meditation, and more began to pour into the webinar’s chat discussion.

Knowing our true selves is essential towards improving our ability to self-empower. “When we complain, we don’t get anywhere,” said Nosie. “We don’t come up with solutions. If anything, we just stay frustrated. Building a positive mindset is up to us and helps us become more open to change.”

Though this may be easier said than done, Nosie suggested building a more positive mindset by creating smaller steps to achieve goals over time. Nosie compared it to running a marathon.

“When someone has a goal of completing a marathon, you set a goal of running 1 mile, and then 5, and soon 8. Several weeks later, you’ll be ready for that marathon. When we break things up into small steps and achieve them one by one, it’s exhilarating, and we push ourselves a little further. Later, we might look back and say, ‘That wasn’t so tough, I can do more.’”

As the webinar wrapped up, Nosie reassured attendees that improving our ability to self-empower is a journey and not something that is to be taken lightly. “All we have is the ability to control ourselves. We can’t make anybody else think this or do that. They don’t have power over you, it’s up to us as individuals. We have to be in control of our minds and hearts.”



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SRPMIC Seniors, Membership and Staff Conduct Eagle Bandings

Continued from cover

The eagle banding process has been an ongoing process in the SRPMIC since 1987 when it was established to monitor population changes and effects of management efforts.

An important note to include when discussing any bird banding: all eagles/eaglets are banded by trained individuals under the appropriate, required federal banding permits.

Kenneth “Tuk” Jacobson, Raptor Management coordinator for the Arizona Game and Fish Department and Arizona Falconers Association was on site to ensure the proper protocols were followed. Jacobson also assisted during the April 2022 eagle banding in the Community.

Additional individuals who also assisted with the 2025 eagle banding process were: Lynwood and Annette Vest, SRPMIC Outreach Coordinator Cody Achin, SRPMIC Environmental Specialist Emerson Milam, Victoria Olmstead, SRPMIC Senior Environmental specialist and personnel from the SRPMIC Police and Security departments.

When it was time to officially begin, Kyle M. McCarty, Fields Operations

manager for the Arizona Game and Fish, went up towards the eagle’s nest the old-fashioned way, by climbing up the tree himself without the assistance of a ladder.

Both Jacobson and McCarty lead the bandings when they occur in the SRPMIC.

Sporting safety braces with specialized shoes, McCarty would spend the entire afternoon high up in the tree’s branches until the banding was complete. Once McCarty successfully placed the eaglets into a canvas sack and roped them down gently onto the ground, Jacobson was there to begin the banding process.

Lynwood and Annette Vest were the Community Seniors selected to hold the eaglets as Jacobson banded the eaglets.

Officially banding two female eaglets around 5 weeks old, the process took about an hour each to complete. A tiny leather cap covered their eyes to protect the eaglet’s eyes from the sun and to help keep them calm. While each eaglet received their bands, the mama eagle could be seen soaring high above in the sky, letting everyone know of her presence.

“Once an eagle has been banded, the eagle is identifiable as an individual; it’s like giving the eagle a name,” shared Olmstead. “Within the Community, the eagles are also given an auxiliary band that can be read using binoculars or a spotting scope.”

An auxiliary band is what can be read on an eagle once banded. Neither band harms or affects the birds. The bands are sized appropriately to allow space between the birds’ leg and the band.

Olmstead continued, “If the auxiliary band information (type of bird, band color, code and code color) is collected, the information can be reported to www.reportband.gov. Anyone who reports band information will receive a certificate telling them where the bird was banded, the age it was banded and by who.”

What’s next for the recently banded eaglets? Learning how to hunt, fly and become stronger. “Then they’re off to explore the world with annual visits back to the Community until they’re fully adults and ready

to have young of their own,” finished Olmstead.

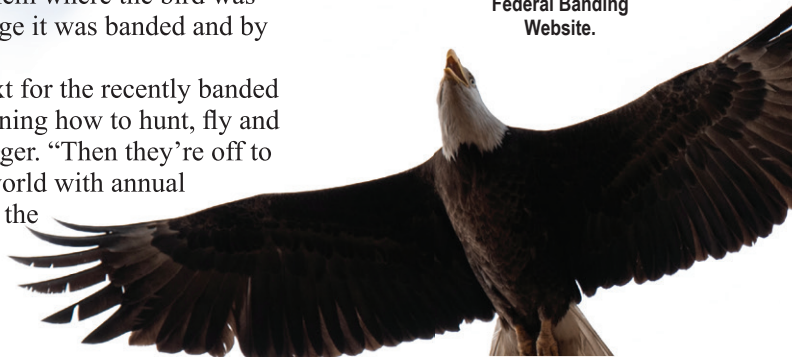
Since 1987, the SRPMIC has officially banded 85 eaglets.

OAN reporter Nalani Lopez contributed to this article.

Open your camera on your mobile phone/tablet to scan the QR code below for additional information.



Federal Banding Website.



As SRPMIC banded 2 eaglets, the mama eagle remained close by, reminding all of her presence.



An eagle egg was found in the nest.



Kyle McCarty climbed up the tree using his own two feet and professional ropes.



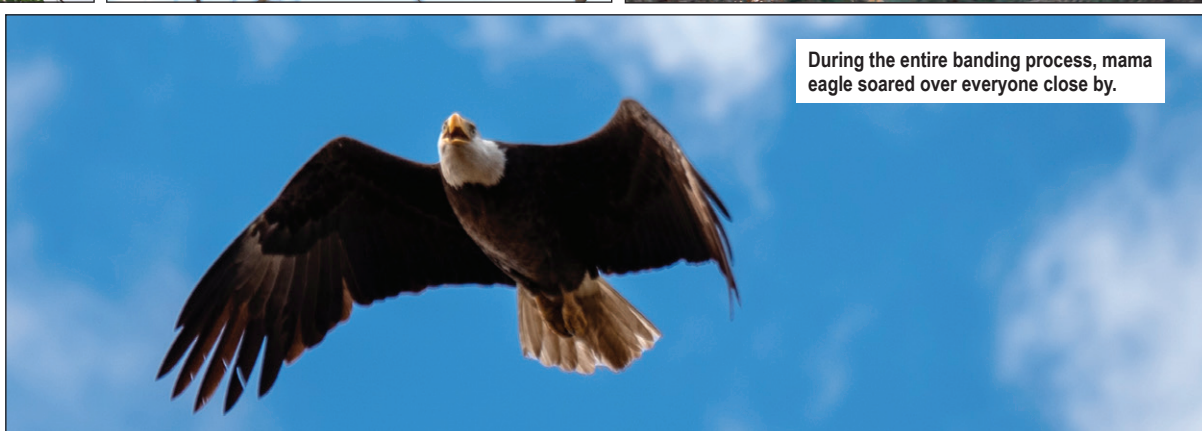
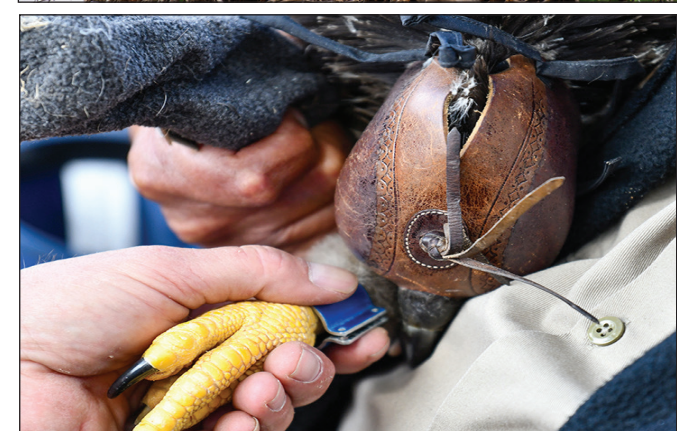
Annette and Lynwood Vest were selected to hold the eaglets as they were banded by Arizona Game and Fish staff.



Both eaglets were safely and carefully roped down from their nest for banding.



Kenneth Jacobson and Kyle McCarty arrived to the SRPMIC prepared and ready for the banding process.



During the entire banding process, mama eagle soared over everyone close by.

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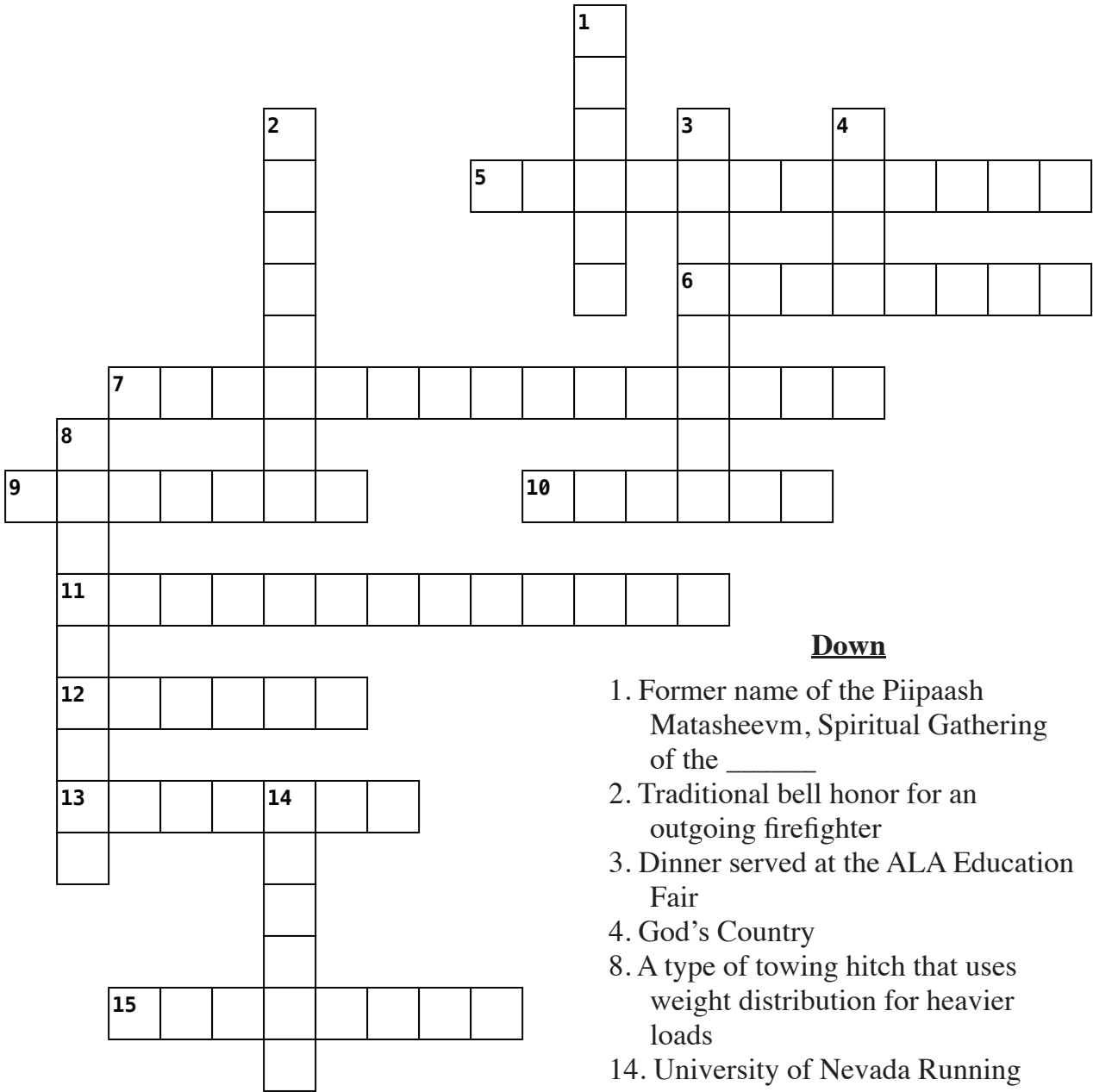
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Can you solve the crossword puzzle?



The answers to this crossword puzzle can be found in the stories throughout this issue of O’odham Action News.

Enjoy!

Across

- 5. Tempe High school where the Indigenous athletes showcase was held
- 6. Community college district named for the Piipaash
- 7. NAEP Liaison at Westwood who helped organize the powwow
- 9. Ce:mait in Piipaash
- 10. Development group that partnered with SRPMIC to purchase the pavilions
- 11. Source for Nelson Deer’s award winning speech
- 12. Name of Brady Enos’s award winning chicken
- 13. Name of Coach Sampson’s team that made it to the Final Four
- 15. Glacier known as the “doomsday iceberg”

Down

- 1. Former name of the Piipaash Matasheevm, Spiritual Gathering of the _____
- 2. Traditional bell honor for an outgoing firefighter
- 3. Dinner served at the ALA Education Fair
- 4. God’s Country
- 8. A type of towing hitch that uses weight distribution for heavier loads
- 14. University of Nevada Running Rebels senior offensive lineman



News and Events In and Around Indian Country

BY DALTON WALKER
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Operation Not Forgotten Update

The U.S. Justice Department will surge FBI assets across the country to address unresolved violent crimes in Indian Country, including crimes relating to missing and murdered Indigenous persons.

FBI will send 60 personnel, rotating in 90-day temporary duty assignments over a six-month period, according to a news release. FBI personnel will support field offices at multiple locations across the country, including Phoenix.

The FBI will work in partnership with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and tribal law enforcement agencies across jurisdictions.

Gila River Extends Youth Curfew

A February curfew implemented in the Gila River Indian Community has been extended.

A 7 p.m. curfew for youth is expected to end on May 1, according to an executive order issued by Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis.

The February emergency declaration cited public safety reasons for implementing a curfew for people under 18 without adult supervision.

Top 2025 Indigenous Experiences

The top tribal destination this year is Apache land in New Mexico.

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association announced its top 10 Indigenous experiences of 2025.

Inn of the Mountain Gods Resort and Casino on the Mescalero Apache Reservation in southern New Mexico is the top destination.

For a full list of experiences, check out the tourism association’s website.

Indian Gaming Association Announces Familiar Chairman

Ernie Stevens Jr. has been re-elected to serve his 12th term as Indian Gaming Association chairman.

Stevens is a former council member for the Oneida Nation in Wisconsin.

Elections were held on the final day of the membership meeting during April’s 2025 Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention in San Diego, California.

The conference celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Indian Gaming Association.

Native College Basketball Coach Reaches Final Four

Houston Cougars coach Kelvin Sampson has another Final Four under his belt.

Sampson is a citizen of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina and longtime college basketball coach.

The Cougars fell in the championship game to the Florida Gators, 65-63, on April 7 in San Antonio, Texas. It was the school’s first trip to the final since 1984.

Sampson is believed to be the only Native head coach of a NCAA Division I men’s basketball team.

FBI Phoenix Accepting Applications for Teen Academy

The FBI Phoenix division is inviting interested Arizona high school upcoming juniors and seniors to apply to the FBI Phoenix Teen Academy.

Class will be held on June 12, for Phoenix students and June 10, for Tucson students from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The free program provides an opportunity for students to learn what the FBI is doing to protect communities, different career opportunities, and actively engage with FBI agents to learn about crime prevention, evidence gathering and investigative techniques.

Applications are due by May 16 and can be found on the FBI website.

Correction

In the previous edition of O’odham Action News, the photo below was incorrectly captioned, misidentifying one of the individuals. The photo depicts Myles Francis Antone and his mother.

Online editions have been corrected, and O’odham Action News sincerely apologizes for the error.



Brady Enos Wins Best Chicken Awards



Brady Enos holds his chicken, Nugget, after he won a first place ribbon at the Maricopa County Fair. Photo courtesy Cheyenne Enos

After a tough competition, Enos won not only his Rhode Island red chicken's category, but also for best overall chicken in the contest. He named his chicken "Nugget." Enos, an eighth-grade student, was awarded a special belt buckle for the final win.

"[The wins] felt amazing. This is my passion to [take care of] chickens and do chicken shows," Enos said with a big grin.

Enos held his composure while grasping the chicken. Many of the other participants had difficulties holding the animals because of their feisty nature.

"If you're not calm, the chicken's not going to stay calm," he said.

During the event, Enos and Patrick qualified for the Maricopa County Fair's livestock and small stock com-



Brady Enos receives his first place ribbons and belt buckle at the Westwood Regionals at Kerr Elementary.

petitions during its opening week on April 4. They were judged by how the chicken was presented in its cage. Both came home with first place ribbons for their chickens.

Enos participated in the fair's small stock auction of the animals on April 11. He entered the ring with his chicken and showed it off while the auctioneer began the bidding. Nugget was sold for \$600.

Kerr Show Team Advisor, and second grade teacher Cheyenne Enos was emotional about Enos' wins. Brady is her son, and she is very proud of him. She lives in the SRPMIC and is married to Community member Logan Enos.

"[Brady's] been showing chickens for four years. The first year he did this, I just about threw up for nerves for him," said Cheyenne Enos, who is in her second year at Kerr and previously taught at Salt River Schools for 16 years. "It's been amazing to watch him grow. Now, he just does this like it's natural."



(ABOVE) Brady Enos holds up his belt buckle that he won at the Kerr AG Poultry Show Westwood Region. (TOP RIGHT) Clarissa Corona and family pose for a photo outside of the barn at the Kerr Elementary event.

When he has time out of the classroom, Enos likes to work with his chicken. He gets to school early and checks for eggs. Any free time he gets, you find him in the barn.



(ABOVE) Meilani Patrick and family pose for a photo, as Meilani holds up her ribbon that she won at Kerr.



(ABOVE) Meilani Patrick and family pose for a photo, as Meilani holds up her ribbon that she won at Kerr.



(RIGHT) Meilani Patrick smiles and holds the chicken that she competed with at the Maricopa County Fair. Photo courtesy Cheyenne Enos

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Westwood Powwow Continues to Grow While Staying Connected to Community



Bird Singing and Dancing by the River was joined by students from Westwood's NAEP program for a performance.



The performance followed dedicated practices led by Community member Annette Vest and her husband Lynwood, who volunteered time and energy by holding practice sessions during lunch at the school.

BY KARI HAAHR
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Now in its 19th year, the Westwood Powwow in Mesa continues to improve with age. The event is organized by the Native American Education Program (NAEP) in collaboration with the Native American Club at Westwood.

The gathering took place Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28 on the high school campus soccer field and saw a massive turnout this year. Over 100 vendors came through to share jewelry, clothing, food and other artisan crafts with prospective buyers and visitors.

This year's powwow held special connection to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community as students from Westwood's Native American Club joined Bird Singing and Dancing by the River for a special dance on Saturday before breaking for supper.

The performance followed dedicated practices led by Community member Annette Vest and her husband Lynwood, who volunteered time and energy by holding practice sessions during lunch at the school. The sessions were significant for the students who participated, many of whom were beginning dancers or had danced before and were looking to reconnect in that way.

Aarick Mack said a few words at the microphone during the performance, explaining the significance of the dances they shared and how the group originally formed, as a means of keeping the Community's youth connected to their culture and to each other in a traditional and consistent way as outside influences threatened their mental and spiritual well-being.

The idea for the students to join and perform the dance came from the desire to leave no one feeling left out as many students face greater barriers to connecting to culture.

"I come from a family who doesn't powwow as much as me, and I wanted to include everyone in our celebration within the community," said NAEP Liaison Renae Blackwater (Akimel O'odham). She shared that it was

important to create these opportunities through the dance lessons as well as other activities like ribbon skirt making, ce:mait classes, and blue corn workshops. These are especially important for students who "don't have access to this knowledge at home, or don't know where to begin," she said.

Blackwater also shared that although she has had her own journey through powwow, this was her first time coordinating the powwow alongside her fellow Westwood NAEP Liaison, Jaden Bird. She emphasized that it wouldn't

have been possible without the vast network of support from the school and the community. Blackwater shared the following:

"I would like to shout out our Club Teacher Sponsor, Kristen Lee, our other Westwood Liaison, Jaden Bird and his family, Yvonne Dinehdeal and Chris Dinehdeal, Shayna Blackwater, Geri and Errol Blackwater, Harlie Mitchell, Aliyah Mitchell, Sadiyah Yazzie and family, Alyssa Thomas and family, Kellen Little and family, Aaron Canez and family, Trent Tu'tsi and family, Victoria Thomas, Aarick Mack, Annette Vest, Zoe Hernandez and the entire Singing and Dancing by the River group and the entire Westwood Administration-Principal Gilmore, Mr. Pong, Ms. Sigler, Ms. Dewey and our Westwood Security, Janitors and Police Officers for having a helping hand in ensuring a safe and smooth celebration! It makes me happy to see how much our community loved it, and the Native American Club and I are anticipating next year's celebration!"





Springtime Piipaash Matasheevm Honors the People

Continued from cover

support from Community volunteers, SRPMIC departments and employees, enterprises, Community owned businesses, as well as Council to ensure a wonderful time for all who attend the celebration.

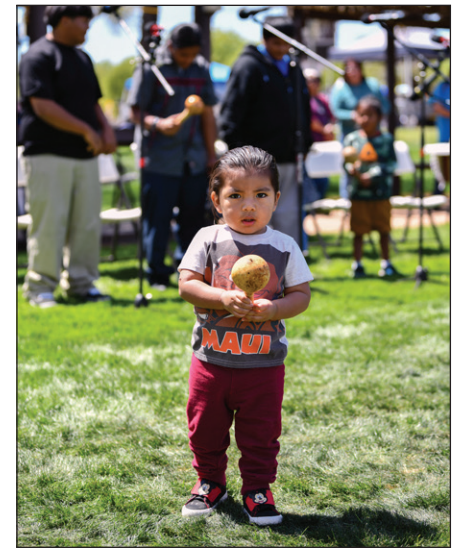
Friday - Piipaash Matasheevm

On the first day of Piipaash Matasheevm, SRPMIC Council member Deanna Scabby welcomed all in attendance and shared her appreciation to the PMC for their hard work in putting together the celebration. “I just wanted to acknowledge each and every one of you for being here because this is a special day. It’s a time we can celebrate as a people, relatives and family.”

Scabby shared that one of her favorite moments during Piipaash Matasheevm is to hear the songs performed throughout the celebration. “These songs are so powerful, they are grounded in the roots of where we come from and who we are,” she said.

Council member Michael Dallas Sr. was absent and excused from the day one festivities, as he tended to an unexpected family emergency. Scabby asked for blessings to be provided to him and his family. Dallas was present for Saturday’s day-long celebration.

This year’s Piipaash Matasheevm saw emcee duties shared by Jeremiah Shaw and Tyrone Emerson, Jr. Garfield Nish, a mainstay of every Piipaash Matasheevm, usually serves as emcee for the event, along with Pacer Reina. Unfortunately, Nish was not in attendance for the springtime Piipaash Matasheevm as he was under the weather and needed time to rest. Reina would join Shaw and Emerson throughout the springtime Piipaash Matasheevm, with the trio sharing their fair share of humorous jokes across both days.



“How come a cow wears a bell?” asked Shaw to Emerson. After he shrugged and asked why, Shaw revealed the punchline. “Because their horns don’t work,” he said as the crowd let out a collective laugh.

Throughout the Friday night festivities, Shaw would describe how impactful being around relatives means to him. “Every year, I look forward to coming here to share songs and see people I haven’t seen in either many months or many years,” he said. “It’s always a great feeling. Just to be here and to see that everyone’s okay, fine, healthy and they’re living life. It makes you proud to be who you are.”

In between his emcee duties, Shaw would in fact see many relatives from near and far and provided each with giant hugs.

Friday’s performances of singing and dancing went on through the night at the Lehi Gathering Area. Jr. Miss and Miss SRPMIC royalties were in attendance and made sure to greet everyone following dinner. Friday night’s Piipaash Matasheevm also saw Miss Salt River First Attendant Zoe Hernandez share a new skill she recently learned.

A student at Arizona State University, Hernandez smiled from ear to ear as she detailed her new skill, speaking in Piipaash. “I have recently learned how to do my introduction in Piipaash, this is one of the first times I get to share it in the Community,” she said. Moments later, Hernandez received a rousing round of applause from the people.

Saturday - Piipaash Matasheevm

On day two, the Piipaash Matasheevm began with a community walk which started at the intersection of Stapley and Oak streets. Members of the Young River People Council were in attendance to host the morning event.

After everyone completed the morning walk, Miss Salt River Royalty hosted the Tiny Tots special as well as O’odham songs and dancing.

This year’s singers and performers contained many favorites. The roster included: Aarick Mack, Roland Golding, Alonso Pesado, Lynwood Vest, and many more. When it was time for Golding to perform, Jeremiah Shaw introduced him as “the Golden standard.”

Then, it was time to honor the Community elders who have paved the way for all in the Community to continue to share songs and dance with one another. This year’s Piipaash Matasheevm

elder honorees were Earl and Carolyn Stacey, the original founders of the “Spiritual Gathering of the Gourds” which was held at the Lehi ball field starting in 1998.

“We just wanted to honor them with this and to thank them for all they’ve done,” said Council member Dallas before the honoring.

Shiela Romero served as the official

spokesperson for Earl and Carolyn Stacey and recited words from a prepared speech. Carolyn Stacey is Romero’s grandmother.

“She was instrumental in making tribal per capita a reality,” said Romero. “She helped pass the petitions along with her reform group. She and Earl also assisted with AA (alcoholics anonymous) meetings.”

Romero then mentioned a fan favorite event that Stacey helped create, Midnight Madness, a Community-wide yard sale which featured chicken scratch music, food vendor booths and more. As soon as Romero mentioned Midnight Madness, loud cheers from the people were heard as many recalled the event.

As she neared the end of her speech, Romero reiterated that she and her family are appreciative that SRPMIC has continued to hold gatherings in Lehi. “This is a safe space for you and your families to come, there should be no complications here.”

Earl Stacey was then showered with commemorative gifts as he posed for photos and received hugs from family members, as well as from SRPMIC tribal council.

Afterwards, Earl and Carolyn Stacey were honored as Bird singers performed a ceremonial song. “Hearing everyone sing, honoring Earl and Carolyn and how it falls into what we all have today, this makes me happy,” said Shaw as he and the singers got into their respective places to sing the honoring song.

The honors continued as the Piipaash Matasheevm Committee also commemorated and honored four Community Veterans. Burnett Gates, Denette Washington, Duane Washington and Gordon Wood were recognized and celebrated for their service to our country and to their Community.

Family members of all four servicemen gathered in the Lehi Gathering Area as each family sent a designated speaker to share the family’s appreciation.

Burnett Gates

Davonna Gates, daughter to Burnett, spoke on behalf of her father and family. “My sisters and I would like to thank the Piipaash Matasheevm Committee for honoring our father in this year’s Veteran recognition. It is truly an honor,” she said as she shared heartfelt memories of her father. “As kids, he would start to crease our clothes and also taught us how to spit shine our shoes,” she said with a smile.

Denette and Duane Washington

Dean Washington, grandson of Denette Washington, spoke on behalf of his grandfather. “I remember him being there at countless baseball games of mine, and him being at the games for my sisters,” he began. “I remember he’d pick me up from school on Friday’s and made sure I ate,” said Washington. “I really do thank that man for being the foundation of the Washington family.”

Duane Washington’s son in law, Rory Thomas, showed heartfelt emotions as he accepted the award on Duane’s behalf. “Denette and Duane

were brothers,” he said. “I knew that from being married to my wife, Deana. We spent 43 years together, then I came to understand why he [Duane] didn’t like me. I took away his little girl,” he said, fighting back tears.

Sadly, Deana passed away days after the Piipaash Matasheevm Committee asked her if she would be willing to accept the award on behalf of her late father.

Gordon Wood

Emily King then spoke a few words regarding Gordon Wood. “I’m one of the foster children of Gordon Wallace Wood. I stand before you on behalf of the family.”

Direct members of the Wood family were not in attendance due to a family emergency. King asked for blessings to be provided to the family.

“Family is so important, if it wasn’t for family, who would we be?” she asked. “I am very proud to call him dad and to know he went and served,” said King, fighting back emotions.

The honoring’s concluded as the four families were then provided a ceremonial song.

The songs, dances, and performances held during this year’s two-day Piipaash Matasheevm were truly a delight to all the senses. The emotionally charged honoring’s of Community Veterans and Elders provided all attendees with a closer sense of Community during these amplified times of uncertainty.

The celebration was almost forced to end early Saturday night due to a massive dust storm, however, the storm passed, and the singing and dancing continued until the midnight hour. A late-night arrival by 2024-2025 Miss Indian World, Kassie John (Diné), added to the nights festive end.

While the Piipaash Matasheevm has come to a close, plans are already underway for October’s Community Social, which will continue to celebrate the culture, language and histories of the Piipaash peoples.

Piipaash Matasheevm Committee Thank You’s	
Council	Dallas Construction
Administration	SR Landfill
Public Works	DEVCO
Miss Salt River	Saddleback
& Pageant Committee	Talking Stick Golf
Young River	Marriott
People’s Council	On Auk Mor
Community	Pima Awards
Relations	Pipaash Shell
Veterans Program	Au’Aauthum Ki
Day Work Program	David Begaye
Police & Fire	Piipaash
Cultural Resources	Matasheevm
Transportation	Attendees
Health & Human	Bird Singers &
Services	Dancers
Economic	Vendors
Development	Elevate Parking
Finance	Staybridge Suites
SRMG	Any others we may have missed...

The History Behind the Pavilions at Talking Stick

BY CHRIS PICCIUOLO
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Earlier this year, *O'odham Action News* reported on the joint venture between the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and De Rito Partners, Pavilions SRPMIC De Rito JV, LLC, to acquire the Pavilions at Talking Stick shopping center, located within the Talking Stick Entertainment District.

The SRPMIC felt that the financial returns of the investment were positive and closed on the transaction on January 16, allowing for the Community to control the future of the Pavilions, which was the first retail power center to be built in Indian Country.

From the original planning phase – to the opening of the Pavilions – to the many events since then, there are stories within stories to tell.

Let's take a deep dive into the modern history of the land, landowners and

the people involved in the construction and operation of the Pavilions at Talking Stick.

A ground-breaking feat
Planning for the development of the Pavilions began in January 1986 with the Vestar Development Company. A ground lease was established in July 1987, and approvals were obtained in February 1988.

The Pavilions were built in two phases from 1989 to 1991.

If you're too young to know, or if you might recall, this is around the time when Fountain Hills was incorporated, and the annual Ostrich Festival began in Chandler. The starting lineup during the Phoenix Suns' 1988-1989 playoff run was Chambers, Corbin, Hornacek, Johnson and West.

Until 1989, Vestar operated as the commercial and industrial development division of the Estes Company, a diversified builder and developer. In 1989, senior management of the division, in conjunction with a Midwest-based pension fund, led a buyout of the division, resulting in the company Vestar.

The design architect for the Pavilions was Camdi International Design and Marketing in Montreal, Canada, and the executive architect of the project was Leo A. Daly Architects and Planners.

According to a project reference file released by the Urban Land Institute in 1994, the Pavilions project was initiated at the instigation of two of Vestar's retail clients, Target and Home Depot, who were interested in entering the Scottsdale market.

With a Council action in March 1988, SRPMIC President Gerald Anton executed the commitment letter to Target to allow them to locate to the Community.

The two companies remain anchor stores of the Pavilions to this day.

The ceremonial groundbreaking for the Pavilions was held on May 5, 1988. On the way to the ceremony with your FM radio dial turned up, you might have heard the number one song on the music charts that day, "Wishing Well" by Terence Trent D'Arby.

At the groundbreaking, Anton and Estes Company CEO Bill Estes, along with Dick Brooks, regional director of real estate for Target and Bill Gurden, regional vice president of Target, all said a few words about the development.

"...it has been said we live in two worlds, yet I believe that this development clearly demonstrates that we can work successfully with all who are fair and who respect our Indian heritage and culture for the benefit of everyone concerned," said Anton, at the event.

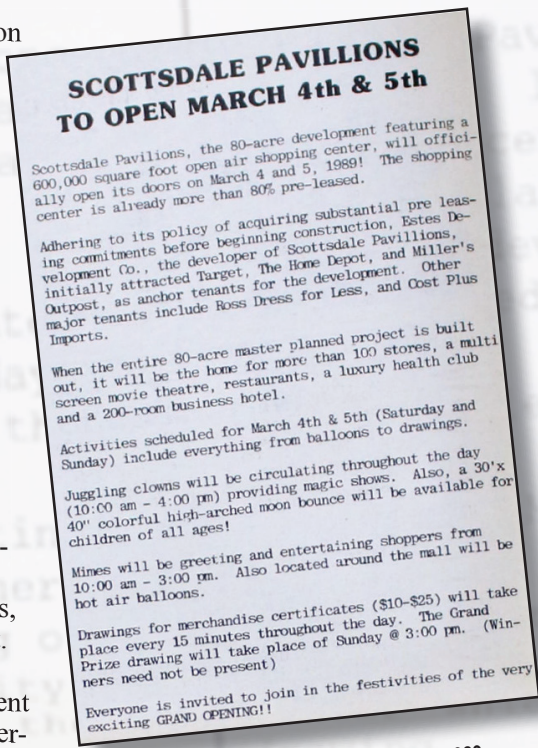
Estes expressed his enthusiasm and confidence in the future success of the development.

"[The Pavilions] will be an innovative pedestrian environment that will influence retailing trends throughout the valley. We're combining the quality and drawing power [of a] regional mall with the high tenant exposure of a traditional Community center."

Estes and Anton broke ground using two over-sized 8-foot shovels, emphasizing the "big deal" theme of the event.

ABOVE LEFT: Front page of the May 1988 issue of *O'odham Action News* [Au-Authm Action News] is dedicated to the groundbreaking of the Pavilions site. SRPMIC landowners were photographed enjoying breakfast. President Gerald Anton and Bill Estes Jr. of The Estes Company broke ground with large shovels.

LEFT: Front page of the March/April 1989 issue of *O'odham Action News* goes in-depth about the Pavilions grand opening.



Pavilions opening announcement ad, Feb 1989 issue of *O'odham Action News*.

Some of the landowners in attendance for the groundbreaking included Rosemary Soos, Ruth Clark, Lorna Menson Klose, Janice Mooney and Margo Menson.



The Menson-Klose family roughly 1991. The family has many of the original landowners of the Pavilions development. Photo provided by SRPMIC Member Hans Klose

The grand opening

The grand opening ceremony was held at a "beautiful, tiered water fountain" on March 4, 1989, according to an article in the March/April 1989 issue of *O'odham Action News*. At this moment in time the editor of *O'odham Action News* was Mary M. Andrews.

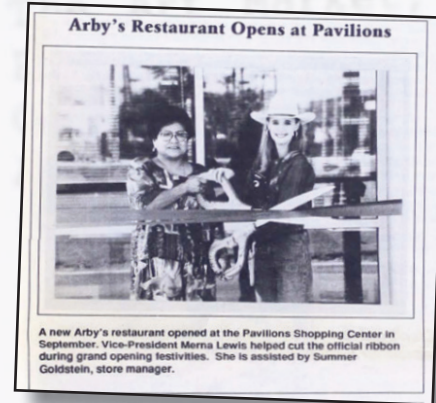
The unnamed author explained, "This was a significant day for the landowners, and the Community as a whole, as it represents the type of development that we have been seeking for many years."

A large red ribbon was wrapped around the fountain, and Estes cut the ribbon. President Anton and Vice-President Alfretta M. Antone released thousands of aqua-colored balloons with the Pavilions logo into the air. The crowd was astonished by the sight of the send-off.

Estes posed for a photo with Anton and Antone as they held up t-shirts with the Pavilions logo on it. Miss Salt River Davonna Gates also graced the crowd with her royal presence.

The festivities included mimes strolling through the crowd and a large bounce house for kids called the Moonwalk. The stores had been open for business for a few days before the

grand opening, so attendees also shopped at the Pavilions' businesses. There was even a grand opening drawing to win a trip to Hawai'i.



Arby's Restaurant opens at the Pavilions, October 1995 issue of *O'odham Action News*.

A big deal for landowners

It was a big deal then, and 37 years later it's still a big deal to the original landowners, their families, Community members and the region's consumers.

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community member Hans Klose said in a recent interview that his mother Lorna (daughter of Lawrence Menson) was a landowner spokesperson who, along with tribal attorney Richard Wilks and President Anton, worked with developer lead Ralph Horlacher to execute the original Pavilions lease.

"Lawrence, Robert, and Ruth Menson were the only children of original allottee Luther Menson to survive to adulthood with three other children dying during the 1918 influenza epidemic," Klose told *O'odham Action News* in February. "By the time the Pavilions was conceived, Lawrence and Robert had passed, and Ruth was not overly interested in organizing the families representing the landownership of the site, so my mom took the lead."

Lorna's two sisters Janice Menson Mooney (1949-2023) and Margo Menson (1956-2019) were also original landowners.

"My brother Lawrence Klose (1973-2024) [...] was a landowner after he inherited half of my mom's interest," said Klose. His "Uncle" Herman Emerson Lopez is still a living landowner within the south Pavilions leasehold.

At the time of development of the site, the allotted land parcels were owned individually by 47 Native

Americans. Klose estimates that due to fractionation, the total number of landowners within the Pavilions land area is about 100.

Fractionation refers to the increasing division of ownership in allotted lands as they are inherited across generations.

The Pavilions lease is unitized, meaning it is a combination of two or more leases for joint development. Regardless of what is built where within each lease, landowners share the rents paid for that lease based on their overall ownership interest in the lease.

The unitized lease contains land on the north side of Talking Stick Way, as well as the land on the south side.

For the north side, the original lease was created in 1984 and amended and reinstated in 1987. For the south side, the lease was created in 1988. Three of the allotments on the south side were formerly a part of Indian Trails Horse and Country Club. Attorney Ira Levee assigned almost all the lease to the Horlacher family.

Vestar originally conceived the Pavilions as a 400,000 to 600,000 square-foot center, to be developed on the north side of Indian Bend Road, now known as Talking Stick Way on the SRPMIC side of Scottsdale. Based on this concept, the center was designed to resemble a racetrack oval parallel to the road, with a crossroad running through the center. Those roads were finalized when ADOT built Loop 101.

In 2008, Marty De Rito with De Rito Partners Development, Inc. bought the Pavilions from the Horlacher Family for \$88 million and announced an investment of \$25 million in upgrades. Then, the Global Financial Crisis happened and the Pavilions experienced vacancies.

The Horlachers had a valuable relationship with the landowners and the SRPMIC throughout the development of the lease. De Rito Partners extended this relationship and worked hard to successfully bring the development through the economic downturn, redeveloping the Pavilions into an entertainment destination within the Talking Stick Entertainment District.

The upgrades, which included the draining of man-made lakes for future development, resurfacing parking areas and other repairs, helped to secure the renewal of leases with anchor tenants, Target and Home Depot.

"When we bought the Pavilions, it wasn't really a good place, and the temptation for many tenants to move was great," De Rito president Chuck Carlisle said in 2009. "But with us doing all we've done to upgrade, then the market turning as it has, the tenants are more willing to stay. They're seeing we're backing up our words with actions."

The Pavilions recovered and thrived as new businesses moved in, and the economy improved.

Thank you to the Huhugam Ki: Museum and the Cultural Resources Repository in searching for important information for this article. We look forward to their future plans of providing accessibility of certain archived materials for Community members and Tribal departments.



An ad for a carnival at the Pavilions, September 1991 issue of *O'odham Action News*.

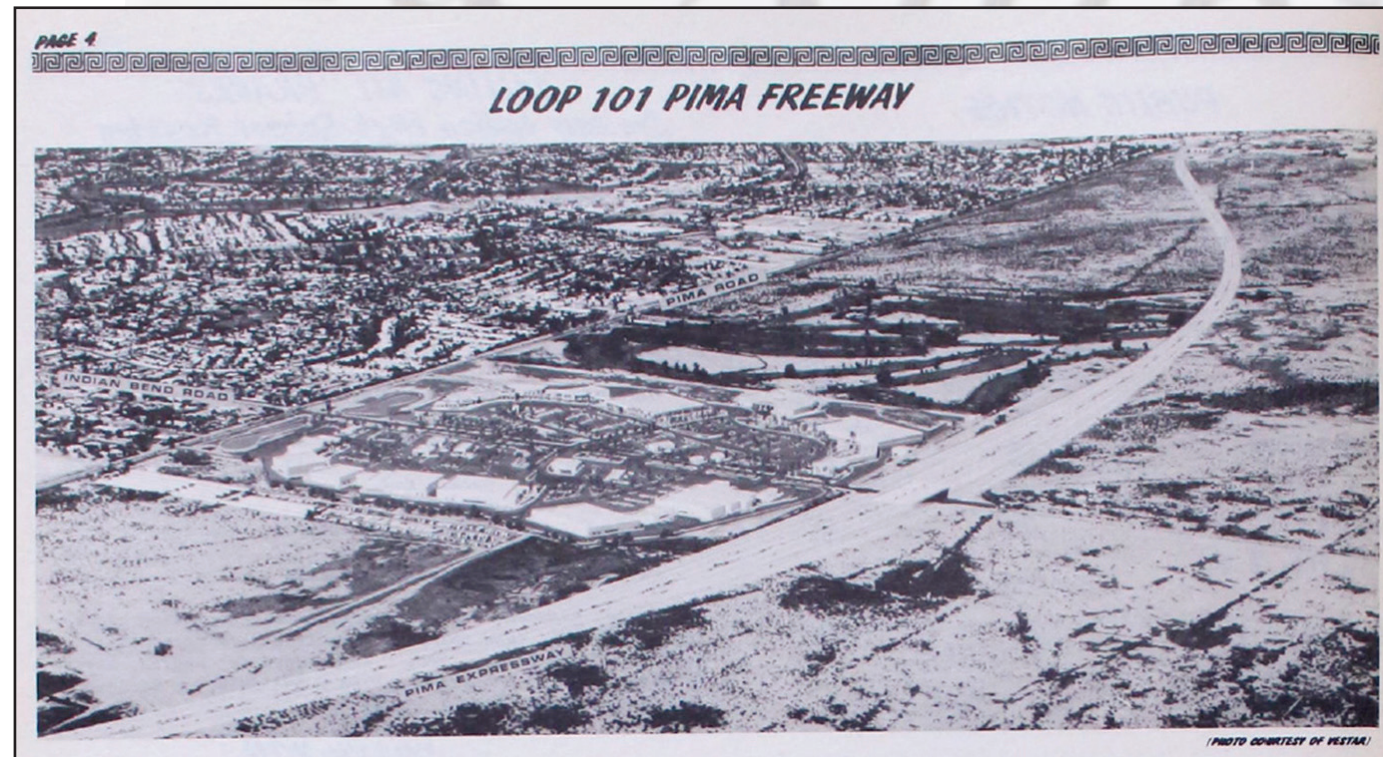


Headstart children become carolers at Pavilions shopping center, a short article from the January 1993 issue of *O'odham Action News*.

Since the Pavilions opened, events like the three-day Desert Festival in March 1992, which was sponsored by the Pavilions Merchants Association, attracted non-Community member consumers and SRPMIC members alike. The festival's Red Mountain Desert Fashion Show was a big hit. It was established for young people to present their cultural heritage and present a sense of pride and confidence in themselves as individuals. The show was directed by Fawn Loring and narrated by Dale Waters. According to an April 1992 *O'odham Action News* article, the fashion show participants were Vanessa Palmer, Monique Loring, Alena Lopez, Lillian Loring, Tori Paukgana, Carlos Dash, Stacey Loring, Sonya Baptisto, Melissa Thomas, Wi-Bwa Grey, Donovan Santo, Theresa Loring, Brandi Enos, Bianca Miller and Mackenzie Greeyes.

A variety of other events are held throughout the year and on weekends, which includes the popular Rock N' Roll Car Show and the Native Art Market.

For more information about the Pavilions at Talking Stick, head to the official website at <https://thepavilion-sattalkingstick.com/>.



The Loop 101 Pima Freeway photo provided by Vestar in the September - October 1990 issue of *O'odham Action News*. The freeway was to begin construction that fall, and the photo was a part of an article about the groundbreaking of the freeway. SRPMIC President Ivan Makl took part in the groundbreaking and traditional & spiritual advisor Joseph Enos provided a blessing. In the photo, you can see the Pavilions in the middle.

GLOBAL WARMING



BY ELIZA CARLOS
Submitted by Salt River Schools

Do you think people should take global warming more seriously? Since the industrial revolution, the earth's temperature has increased by more than 1 degree Celsius or about 2 degrees Fahrenheit. This means, our planet is warming up dangerously fast and causing it die faster. Between 1850 and 1980, it rose an average of 0.07 degrees Celsius every 10 years. However, since 1981 the rate increased and has doubled for the last 40 years by an annual temperature of 0.2 degrees Celsius or 0.36 degrees Fahrenheit per decade! (nrdc.org, 2024) Global warming is happening at an alarming rate and should be taken seriously, because it damages the planet, increases the

spread of diseases, and contributes to the melting of ice caps with rising sea levels. It is scary information to learn that our planet is in trouble.

Global warming can cause extreme changes in the weather. For example, when the earth's atmosphere heats up, it holds more water. This changes weather patterns and causes more intense rainfall occurrences. In dry weather, the warmer air causes more evaporation, which, in turn, leads to more severe and intense droughts and heat waves. The consequences of changes in weather patterns causes disaster across the world. Furthermore, the shifting rain patterns are contributing to the spread of infectious, vector-borne diseases, such as dengue fever, malaria, Zika, and Lyme disease. (yehya, 2024) As winters become shorter and warmer, and summers longer, vector-borne diseases have risen. The effect of these diseases could cause more deaths and put our planet in another pandemic. It can also affect poor countries that need better health-care. Diseases that normally occur only in summer are now occurring in the winter, too. Vector-borne diseases are also being found farther west and north than previously. The changing weather patterns are causing migration of the vectors themselves, such as mosquitoes, fleas, and ticks.

Another effect of global warming is the rising sea levels. In Italy, the city of Venice has been sinking for centuries, but because of rampant industrial-

ization, the 20th century is witnessing more and more rising sea levels and scientists predict Venice will be underwater by 2150. Venice has tried to slow the sinking process by building more flood barriers in Venice's lagoon, but it won't protect long from the continuous rising sea levels. The rising sea levels are a huge concern for countries, islands, and cities near the ocean. Many places are experiencing beaches that shrink and maybe disappear entirely. It is very serious, including the fact that Antarctica is melting and causing the rising sea levels faster. It is very dangerous for the planet, and it affects ecosystems too, making them close to extinction. The Thwaites Glacier also known as the "Doomsday iceberg" is the size of Florida. It is the world's fastest melting glacier. It's melting faster from the causes of global warming, which is causing concern for scientists. Since 1880, sea levels have risen more than 9 inches and sudden increase could be damaging for coastal cities and islands. (Grist, 2024) Knowing all of the important issues

with rising sea levels, if the government doesn't do anything, then we're going to have more consequences. The current president has signed out of the Paris agreement! With how our current president still wants to keep drilling and using more of our fossil fuels, it can get a lot worse! As far as our climate clock goes, we only have 4 years to change it, but if we don't then it's going to cause irreversible damage to the planet.

Finally, after providing important information and issues on global warming, I hope this has helped to explain how important it is to take it seriously. Without the signing of the Paris Agreement, the issues with rising sea levels, faster spread of diseases, sinking cities and endangering ecosystems may result even in extinction. Scientists always warn us and tell us the dangers of global warming and people need to listen to them. Some say it's fake, but it's very real. Everything we know could change for the worse if we can't take it seriously and change our ways.

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Salt River Steps Up to Host Native American Convocation for Maricopa County Community College District Graduates

BY DALTON WALKER
AND JUAN YSAGUIRRE
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The Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community will host a Native American convocation on May 2 for graduates of Maricopa County Community Colleges.

SRPMIC President Martin Harvier made the announcement on Wednesday, March 26, just weeks after the college district decided to cancel Native convocations to comply with orders handed down by the Trump administration.

"This action came quickly and without any consultation with any local tribe or other minority organization. Being that Scottsdale Community College is located in Salt River, and so many of our members receive their education from SCC, we knew we had to do something to address this issue," Harvier said.

He shared that SRPMIC Council has agreed to host all 2025 Native American college district graduates because "honoring all Native American students for their accomplishment is the right thing to do."

The announcement came in a social media video update to the Community after a meeting with leaders of the college district governing board.

In late February, with federal funding at risk, the college district started removing a variety of diversity, equity and inclusion, or DEI, initiatives due

to President Donald Trump's executive orders set by the U.S. Department's Office of Civil Rights. This included cancelling planned convocations, which are usually smaller events held to celebrate specific groups of students in addition to the large graduation ceremony.

The college district is one of the largest in the country and oversees 10 community colleges, including SCC, which is located along Chaparral Road on the western edge of the Community. Most of the 10 colleges have some sort of Indigenous-led student club and at least three have a Native American student center, program or institute. Native students make up about 2% of the nearly 89,000 student population, according to the college district.

Maricopa County Community College District Thanks SRPMIC

In the days following the announcement that SRPMIC will host the convocation, Arizona tribal leaders, MCCCCD staff, and impacted families and their loved ones shared their utmost appreciation to the SRPMIC for stepping up.

On March 26, Lindsey Wilson, chief marketing and communications officer for MCCCCD, provided a statement.

"Maricopa Community Colleges is deeply grateful to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) for their leadership in making this celebration possible. Their commitment to honoring American Indian students across all tribes speaks to their unwavering dedication to education, cultural

heritage, and student success. We are proud of our relationship with SRPMIC and remain steadfast in supporting American Indian students throughout their educational journeys."

Since he took office, the Trump's executive orders have called for the cancellation of many collegiate Native American clubs, committees and opportunities under the incorrect guise of being labeled as DEI. As graduation season approaches, it remains to be seen if those opportunities will return next school year.

According to a March 26 interview published in the *AZ Mirror*, Mesa Community College faculty member Mona Scott Figueroa said she was "elated" when she learned that SRPMIC will host this year's convocation. "They are coming through for all 10 colleges," she said.

On March 28, the SRPMIC issued a press release where President Harvier reiterated that hosting the graduation ceremony is the right thing to do. "While we are deeply disappointed by the cancellation of convocation ceremonies for minority students, we believe it is important to come together as a community to honor our graduates and their families."

The 2025 Native American convocation ceremony will be held on May 2 at 6 p.m. at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick.

By hosting the Native American convocation this May, the SRPMIC have provided relief and support to all graduating Indigenous students enrolled in Maricopa County Community Colleges and their families during these uncertain times.

Graduates who are Native American and will be graduating from a Maricopa Community College District school this semester can receive further information regarding the May 2 ceremony by

emailing 2025convocation@srpmic-nsn.gov.

O'odham Action News will continue to monitor this story.

Open your camera on your mobile phone/tablet to scan the QR codes below for additional information.

President Harvier addresses the SRPMIC (VIDEO).



SRPMIC Convocation Registration Link:



Join the Mesa Public Schools Native American Education Program's Parent Advisory Committee

BY CHRIS PICCIUOLO
O'dham Action News
chris.picciuolo@srpmic-nsn.gov

Loriann Zambrano is the new president/chairperson for the Mesa Public Schools Native American Education Program's (NAEP) Parent Advisory Committee, a group that represents Native families who have students in the Mesa Public Schools system.

The committee assists in planning cultural activities, provides cultural support and insight and assists in implementing grant goals.

Since the end of 2024, Zambrano has been looking for more Native parent involvement, especially from Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community parents and guardians.

Her significant other and high school sweetheart, Jesus Salazar Jr., is an enrolled member of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

Zambrano, who has a child enrolled at Kerr Center for Agriscience, is looking at a list of scholarships, grants, classes and internships for Native students to help aid their education journey.

"As the president of the committee, I'd love to promote farming and living off the land," she said. Zambrano also wants to work in sewing lessons, among other life skill education opportunities, for students and parents.

Zambrano began a new Facebook group called MPS Native American Parent Committee for committee members to stay active.

You can find the group and join it here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/695596676151634/>.

Currently, there isn't much involvement in the committee, something that Zambrano is hoping to turn around for the next school year. She believes that one of the main reasons for the drop in activity is that many who were involved previously have kids who have graduated from the schools.

The committee has set up monthly meetings with activities like bingo and prize opportunities. Snacks and refreshments are typically provided. Most recently Zambrano hosted a pizza night and a paint night.

"Our events for the rest of this school year are mostly going to consist of food and planning of next year's events, so if you'd like to attend and help us out with some fun ideas or collaborations, please come on out and attend," said Zambrano. "Our events are for Native American students enrolled in Mesa Public Schools and their families. If you want to participate and collaborate, please reach out and we'll make that happen."

To get in touch with Zambrano about the committee, you can text her at (480) 853-1773.

For more information on the committee, upcoming events and how to become involved in your child's school as a committee member in the Mesa Public Schools system, you can email naep@mpsaz.org or call (480) 472-0500.



2025 MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

American Indian Convocation

Friday, May 2, 2025 | 6pm - 8pm

Salt River Fields at Talking Stick

7555 N Pima Rd.



American Indian MCCD students must

RSVP by April 25, 2025: tinyurl.com/MCCAIC2025

For more information, please contact
2025convocation@srpmic-nsn.gov



SCAN TO RSVP

Proudly hosted by the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community



Salt River Schools Host Career And Education Fair

STAFF REPORTS
O'dham Action News

Salt River Schools held its annual Career and Education Fair on April 3 at the Accelerated Learning Academy Gym.

The event featured two main segments. The first part of the day was dedicated to a career fair where those interested in job openings could meet with recruiters. Professional portraits were also offered to attendees.

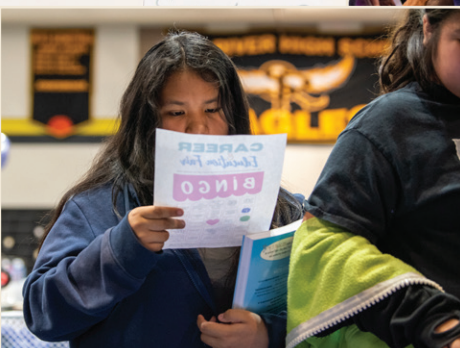
Afterwards, more than 50 education, tribal government and business

partners showcased resources and activities throughout the evening. This part of the event was catered to students and families.

Prizes were awarded to youth participants of "Career Bingo" and "Career Cosplay." Those over 18 also got prizes for sharing their best 30-second elevator speech.

A Soam Bavi bowl was available for dinner in the ALA cafeteria.

For the latest education happenings, be sure to visit www.SaltRiverSchools.org.



Now it is important to teach our younger generations to learn the language before we lose it. It is also very important because there are only 100 Speakers who know the language, only 15 being fluent.



"Salt River Bingo Night - With Prizes!"

-OAN Education Fair Headline Contest winner Jeremiah Carmona.

Heaven Sepulveda Completes Her Thesis, Shows Her Appreciation To Her Community



Heaven Sepulveda (left) was continuously praised for her hard work and achievements. Surrounded by her mother, aunt, sister and many loved ones, Sepulveda thanked her village of supporters who helped her on her journey.



BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE
O’odham Action News
juan.ysaguirre@srpmic-nsn.gov

As one journey completes, another has just begun for Heaven Sepulveda, recent doctoral graduate from Arizona State University’s May Lou Fulton Teachers College and Salt River Pima-Maricopa Community member.

Her thesis, “From Community to Classroom,” was a one-day bus tour of the SRPMIC that took place on August 17 of last year. O’odham Action News published her doctoral thesis summary online in October.

The event featured over 25 people from the SRPMIC and included staff from Salt River Schools for a day-long field trip to further immerse non-Indigenous staff with the cultures and traditions of the Community.

The trip featured stops at Round House Café for breakfast, Red Mountain, the Talking Stick Entertainment District, the Way of Life Facility and more.

After completing her doctorate, it was time for Sepulveda to officially thank her village of family, friends, loved ones and colleagues who have helped her academic journey.

On March 24, Sepulveda showed her utmost appreciation to her community by hosting a thank you ceremony in the Eagle Mark Event Center Ballroom at the Courtyard Marriott. Nearly all guests who participated in the August tour were present to congratulate Sepulveda for her wonderful accom-

plishment. Guests included SRPMIC Council, Community seniors, Salt River Schools staff, SRPMIC department managers and other distinguished guests.

“I wanted to have a gathering of all of us together so I could thank you all personally,” said Sepulveda during her welcoming and introductions. Joined by her mom, aunt, sister, and two children, Sepulveda was filled with emotions throughout the gathering as she was continuously showered with hugs and congratulations from all.

To further showcase the importance of all who helped her succeed, Sepulveda handed out thank you gifts in the shape of a puzzle piece, symbolizing those who helped her as she worked towards her academic achievement. “Although, it is my work, it was definitely a community effort,” said Sepulveda.

Sepulveda said that she has been called “successful” by many people since earning her doctorate degree. Though she is appreciative to their congratulations, she stated feels the word has different meanings to everyone. “For me, it’s not always about academic success,” she said. “[Being called successful] could be someone who is a good Community member or student.”

She added she hopes the Community bus tour can turn into a more frequent occurrence in the future. “I know we focus a lot on what the kiddos could do in the schools, but I would love to see it for police, Social Services, and all the other departments we have in the

Community to do the tour.”

During the gathering, Chris Coffman, founder and executive officer of Helping Hands for Single Moms, provided a few words regarding Sepulveda being a recipient of the organization’s scholarship services program. “We help low-income single moms go to college,” explained Coffman. “A few years ago, the staff member that oversees the scholarship intake program came to me and told me, ‘I got a dilemma. We have this incredible person that’s applied for our scholarship, but we don’t do doctoral programs. What are we going to do?’” said Coffman.

The result? The organization worked out a plan which allowed for Sepulveda to join the organization as a paid intern. “Where there’s a will, there’s a way,” added Coffman as he gave Sepulveda a hug following his remarks.

Later, Emily King provided additional words. “We’re all different ages in this room. All of us took the opportunity and time, thought, love and kindness to encourage her to be what she wanted to be and to ensure it with two beautiful, loving children,” she said.

She added, “Family is what is important and that’s what we all are here, family. Through her and the education, I believe our Community is going to be stronger.”

As the gathering neared its end, Kelly Washington, Cultural Resources director, shared how the impacts of

implementing O’odham and Piipaash traditions in today’s digital age is not only a real possibility, but crucial for the future of the SRPMIC.

“In my upbringing, I never had anyone that went to college. So, it wasn’t my reality. I just got to work, like my dad,” said Washington. “I always did like school, but at a certain point, my generation, it seems like, was presented with a false dichotomy, the modernists versus the traditionalists. It always seemed like there was a split.”

Washington explained how the Community traditionalists who did not go to college were often looked over for Community management and director positions.

“Those who went to modern education, didn’t place a lot of value on the traditional ways, they thought they were old and felt we [the Community] needed to ‘get with the times.’ I went the way I had to go, the more traditional way, it wasn’t until I was older, I realized, I could’ve had it all.”

He added, “From that point forward, I try to always let the kids know now that they can have it all. Heaven was already going down that road. I’m thankful to be a part of something like that. Bringing those worlds together can be a powerful thing for individuals and our Community. I’m glad we have role models now. She placed the emphasis on the culture and proved, you can have it all.”



Dawn Burstyn-Meyers walked into the banquet conference room wearing commemorative cartoon cutouts of Sepulveda.



Kelly Washington provided insight as to how community membership can truly live in both worlds of traditional and modern cultures.



The banquet hall featured many distinguished guests from across the SRPMIC, which included council, department directors, managers, administrative and more.

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Information was correct at the time of print, however, services may have changed since then.

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Lewis , Robi – Review Hearing Case: J-23-0026 Court Date: April 21, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.		Carlisle , Andrew–Restraining Order Hearing Case: CV-25-2295 Court Date: May 15, 2025 at 11:30 AM	
Schurz , Passion – Initial Guardianship Hearing Case: J-21-0126/0127 Court Date: May 5,20205 at 10 a.m.		Chiago Marrufo , Judy Buck–Order to Show Cause Hearing Case: CV-24-4198 Court Date: May 5, 2025 at 10 AM	
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		Ludlow , Ryan–Child Support Modification Hearing Case: CFCS-20-0024 Court Date: May 15, 2025 at 10:30 AM	
		Martinez Sr. , Mario Ruben James–Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-0853 Court Date: April 24, 2025 at 9 AM	
		Miles , James Spotted Hawk–Order of Protection Hearing Case: CV-25-2081 Court Date: April 24, 2025 at 11 AM	
		Mix , Prendy–Evidentiary Custody Hearing Case: CV-25-1601 Court Date: May 22, 2025 at 10 AM	
		Mix , Prendy–Evidentiary Paternity Hearing Case: CV-25-1601 Court Date: May 22, 2025 at 10 AM	
		Nahsonhoya , Damien- Probate Status Hearing Case: P-21-0007 Court Date: May 16, 2025 at 2:30PM	
		Parchcorn , Ellis J Sr–Entry of Default Judgement Case: CV-24-5858 Court Date: May 19, 2025 at 9 AM	
		Ray , Calvin Evans–Entry of Default Judgement/OTSC Hearings Case: CV-25-0854 Court Date: May 7, 2025	
		at 9:30 AM	
		Santo , Charnele Marie–Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-0853 Court Date: April 24, 2025 at 9 AM	
		Smith , Tracy Serina AKA Tracy French- Annual Guardianship Review/Order to Show Cause Case: CF-22-0073 Court Date: May 20, 2025 at 10 AM	
		Vasquez , Rosalina Maria–Order to Show Cause Hearing Case: CIVAC-23-1736 Court Date: May 16, 2025 at 1:30 PM I court room #5.	
		Williams , Bryann Lynn- Probate Status Hearing Case: P-21-0007 Court Date: May 16, 2025 at 2:30 PM	
		Williams , Craig Sterling Probate Status Hearing Case: P-21-0007 Court Date: May 16, 2025 at 2:30 PM	
		Ybarra , Carlos Alejandr–Probate Hearing Case: CV-25-1511 Court Date: May 13, 2025 at 10:30 AM	
		Zotigh Jeremiah Jimmy Taylor–Annual Guardianship Review Case: CF-23-0054 Court Date: May 22, 2025 at 9 AM	
		Zotigh , Sosha–Annual Guardianship Review Case: CF-23-0054 Court Date: May 22, 2025 at 9 AM	

DEFAULT NOTICES			
ALVAREZ-GAGE, ANALISHA CV-25-0597 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Analisha Alvarez-Gage To: Analisha Alvarez-Gage, RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response, and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted. 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATE: 13th day of March 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT		HILL SUNDUST, JULIE ISABELLE HILL CV-25-0604 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Julie Isabelle Hill Sundust To: Julie Isabelle Hill Sundust, RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 25th of February 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT	
ALVAREZ-GAGE, ANALISHA CV-25-0854 ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Analisha Alvarez-Gage TO: Analisha Alvarez-Gage YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED to appear before the above-entitled court on the 12th day of May 2025 at 9:00 AM, in Court Room #1, and show cause why you should not be held in contempt for failing to appear for a Civil Complaint Hearing that was heard on March 13, 2025 at 10:00 AM after being duly notice. FAILURE TO APPEAR will result in a Bench Warrant issued for your arrest for Contempt of Court from (§6-41) of the Code or Ordinances. ORDERED this 13th day of March 2025. JUDGE ARISTA SANCHEZ - SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY TRIBAL COURT		KASEY, MAGGIE MAUREEN CV-25-0788 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Maggie Maureen Kasey To: Maggie Maureen Kasey RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 4th of March 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT	
CARLOS III, JUSTIN CV-25-0598 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Justin Carlos III, To: Justin Carlos III, RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 19th of February 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT		LEWIS, MARIA ERNESTINA CV-25-0782 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Maria Ernestina Lewis To: Maria Ernestina Lewis, RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 13th day of March 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT	
MARRUFO, JUDY CV-24-4198 ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Judy Marrufo TO: Judy Marrufo YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED to appear before the above-entitled court on the 5th day of May 2025 at 10:00am, in Court Room #2, and show cause why you should not be held in contempt for failing to obey a Default Judgment Ordered on January 6, 2025. FAILURE TO APPEAR will result in a Bench Warrant issued for your arrest for Contempt of Court from (§6-41) of the Code or Ordinances. ORDERED: April 8, 2025. JUDGE ANTHONY LITTLE - SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY TRIBAL COURT		RAY, CALVIN EVANS CV-25-0854 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Calvin Evans Ray To: Calvin Evans Ray, RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 19th of February 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT	
RAY, CALVIN EVANS CV-25-0854 DEFAULT NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Calvin Evans Ray To: Calvin Evans Ray, RESPONDENT 1. A Complaint has been filed against you in this Court and your immediate attention to this fact is urgent if you do not want judgment entered against you. 2. The Court record reflects that you have failed to respond to defend by filing an answer, motion to dismiss, request for extension of time or other responsive pleading and you have failed to attend hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 19th of February 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT		RAY, CALVIN EVANS CV-25-0854 ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE NOTICE (AMENDED) Country Club Cars v. Ray, Calvin Evans TO: Ray, Calvin Evans YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED to appear for Order to Show Cause Hearing on the 7th day of May 2025 at 9:30 AM, in Court Room #1, and show cause why you should not be held in contempt for failing to appear for Civil Complaint Hearing on March 24, 2025 after being duly noticed. FAILURE TO APPEAR will result in a Bench Warrant issued for your arrest for Contempt of Court from (§6-41) of the Code or Ordinances. You are entitled to subpoena witnesses on your behalf and to be represented by counsel.ORDERED this 24th day of March 2025. JUDGE JANAYA L. JOHNSON - SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY TRIBAL COURT	
SMITH AKA TRACY FRENCH, TRACY CF-22-0073 ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE NOTICE Country Club Cars v. Tracy Smith AKA Tracy French TO: Tracy Smith AKA Tracy French P.O. Box 682 135 N. Center St. Mesa, AZ 85211 YOU ARE HEREBY ORDERED to appear before the above-entitled court on the 20th day of May, 2025 at 10:00 AM, in Court Room #1, and show cause why you should not be held in contempt for failing to appear for a Annual Guardianship Review Hearing that was heard on March 27, 2025 at 10:00 AM after being duly notice. FAILURE TO APPEAR will result in a Bench Warrant issued for your arrest for Contempt of Court from (§6-41) of the Code or Ordinances. ORDERED this 27th day of March, 2025. JUDGE JANAYA L. JOHNSON - SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY TRIBAL COURT		hearings at the Court called for this matter. 3. If you do not defend against this suit within Thirty (30) days from the date the Process Server hands you this or you are served with it otherwise as permitted under the Community Code, the Court may enter default judgment against you. 4. A default judgment may have serious, adverse, and irreversible consequences against you. 5. If you want to defend against the claim and avoid default judgment entered against you, you must file a written answer, motion to dismiss or other responsive pleading within thirty (30) days from when you are served with this Notice. The Court will not extend time for your response, and you must make your response in writing, no oral responses will be accepted. 6. If you do nothing, the Court may give Judgment for what the Complaint demands. (Section 5-16.1, Judgment by Default) DATED: 24th day of March 2025 CLERK OF THE SRPMIC TRIBAL COURT	

Public Input Requested on Roads Program

The Community has a Tribal Transportation Improvement Program (TTIP) showing the road projects planned over the next 5 years. The plan includes new roadway construction, reconstruction, safety improvements, pedestrian facilities, pavement rehabilitation and road maintenance. A copy of the TTIP can be found on the Community’s website at <https://www.srpmic-nsn.gov/government/public-works/roads/#Planning>. A hardcopy is also available for pick up at the Public Works Utilities and Roads office located at 9010 East Osborn Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85256. Please contact Jennifer Jack, Public Works Department, Roads Section Manager, with any questions at 480-362-7747 or jennifer.jack@srpmic-nsn.gov. Comments may be submitted at the address or email indicated above. The deadline for comments is May 2, 2025.

Indigenous Athletes Showcase Talent



Around 60+ Indigenous athletes came out to showcase their talents and receive insight from the Valley's finest athletic coaches.

BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE
O'odham Action News
juan.ysaguirre@srpmic-nsn.gov

In November last year, the Phoenix Indian Center hosted its free Indigenous Spring ball showcase at the Accelerated Learning Academy in the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. *O'odham Action News* was at the scene for November's baseball and softball showcase which saw many

student-athletes receive training from coaches and trained staff from throughout the Valley.

As they continue to provide community outreach for Indigenous student-athletes throughout the school year, on March 22, the Phoenix Indian Center hosted its free Indigenous Fall Ball showcase at Marcos De Niza High School in Tempe, this time with an emphasis on football and volleyball.

Football

The football student-athletes were provided expertise from football coaches from throughout the Valley, including Marcos De Niza. Additionally, the participants were also coached by fellow Indigenous student-athletes that have made the leap from the high school sports to the collegiate level.

"I know my grandma, or my Nelly, she always wanted me to help out with our Native community," said Jayden Ahboah, senior and offensive lineman for the University of Nevada Running Rebels. Ahboah was born in Tuba City and is Navajo and Kiowa. He graduated from Desert Edge High School in Goodyear, Arizona.

During the showcase, Ahboah made it a point to inform the student-athletes that their efforts and dedication they

put towards themselves, both inside and outside of the classroom, will result in positive accomplishments. "Give 100% in everything you do, let's be great," said Ahboah as he gathered the student-athletes all for a team huddle in between drills.

Athletes were timed on their 40-yard dash sprints, as well as performed cone exercises and distance jumping drills which showcased their talents. Each of the participating athletes were provided with commemorative shirts which denoted if they were an offensive or defensive specialist. Additionally, Phoenix Indian Center staff and volunteers ensured all athletes had ample water to drink as they practiced out on the football field underneath the warm Saturday morning sun.

Volleyball

In the Marcos De Niza gymnasium, the next generation of superstar student-volleyball athletes received training from Chrissy Gust, head coach of Justice University in Chandler, Arizona. "I'm here to help get them to the next level," said Gust. A Christian-college, Justice University boasts a state-of-the-art athletic facility in addition to student housing.

Gust also helped refine each of the participating student-athletes skill-sets on both sides of the net. Athletes were instructed how to perform proper serves, passing, digging and blocking.

As part of the volleyball showcase, all participating athletes and their information will be submitted to local colleges and universities on behalf of Gust. Throughout the volleyball show-

case, Gust also provided the athletes with an overview of the recruitment process.

One of the volleyball coaches in attendance to the showcase was Corona Del Sol student-athlete and future member of the University of Washington Huskies volleyball team, Hayden Conner. "It's great being out here," said Conner, who has accepted a scholarship to Washington following her high school graduation in 2026.

Standing at 6 feet 3 inches, Conner is a middle blocker/pin hitter and is widely known for her power. Conner is also from the Navajo Nation.

"If you asked me 1 year ago where I would go [to play college volleyball], I would never have said Washington. But, once I got to know the coaches, they seemed like great people," shared Conner.

Much like Ahboah, being a student-athlete who is also Indigenous provides Connor an impactful connection of community.

"I just wanted to give back," shared Conner.

Giving back is just one of the cornerstone ways the Phoenix Indian Center has continued to build along with local tribal nations in Arizona to help provide opportunities to the next generation of superstar student-athletes who just so happen to be Indigenous.

For more information on upcoming events the Phoenix Indian Center's Youth Programs, interested individuals can email youthprograms@phxindcenter.org or call them directly at (602) 264-6768.

SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY

MISSING & MURDERED
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AWARENESS DAY

A day to honor, remember, and raise awareness for Missing & Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP)

MAY 5,
2025

Wear Red Day:
Show you care by
wearing red or
traditional attire.

TWO WATERS
AMPHITHEATER RED WRAP
8:30AM - 10:30AM

Wrapped in Red
Join us to help wrap the Two Waters Amphitheater in red. Please bring your photos/or other remembrances to the Amphitheater in memory and acknowledging MMIP loved ones.

MMIP Red Handprint Wall
Add your handprint to the back wall of the amphitheater to bring awareness.

All members of the community & employees are invited to attend, extending a warm welcome to families affected by these tragedies.

This is an Alcohol/Drug/Gang and Tobacco Free Event. NO Pets, Firearms or Outside Ice Chests/Glass Allowed

COMMUNITY RELATIONS-EVENTS | 480-362-7740 | SRPMIC | SALTRIVERINDIANCOMMUNITY

LIGHT UP THE NIGHT:
A NIGHT OF HOPE & HEALING
6:00PM | ALA FOOTBALL FIELD

Walk & Luminarias: Participate in a walk of remembrance illuminated by luminarias in honor of those lost. Set up tables adorned with pictures and information about loved ones or bring banners and signs. *Light dinner provided.*

T-shirts to registered participants while supplies last. Register here:
<https://tinyurl.com/MMIP2025>

Capt. Steve Wood Retires

ABOVE: Capt. Steve Wood (MIDDLE) holds a ceremonial axe gifted to him for his service; also pictured is SRFD Chief Tsosie Wood (LEFT) and SRPD Lt. Forest Wood (RIGHT).
INSET: The SRFD Honor Guard raised a flag and provided a ceremonial flag to Capt. Steve Wood for his service. Photos courtesy SRFD

BY CHRIS PICCIUOLO
O'odham Action News
chris.picciuolo@srpmic-nsn.gov

Salt River Fire Department Capt. Steve Wood officially retired on February 21 after 36 years of service to the fire department.

Wood began with the SRFD on December 28, 1989, and held the captain title since July 2002.

The SRFD held a luncheon for Wood at Station 294, at which Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Council members, Executive Admin team members and current and past Salt River Fire Department staff came to wish him good luck in his next chapter.

In honor of his service, the SRFD Honor Guard raised a flag for him and then provided him with a ceremonial flag. He was also presented with a ceremonial ax with his name inscribed on it.

The SRFD Pipes and Drums group performed before the department took a moment to remember Wood's service with a "last call," a traditional bell service for honoring a firefighter.

HUHUGAM KI: MUSEUM CELEBRATES TORTILLA FESTIVAL

BY ANDREEA MIGUEL
AND GARY OWENS
O'odham Action News
Andreea.miguel@srpmic-nsn.gov

Tortillas, or in the O'odham language, *cemait*, and in Piipaash, *modiily*, is a traditional food to many Indigenous tribes in southern Arizona. Over the years, many families have added their own twist on how *cemait/modiily* is made. These recipes have been passed down for many years, and the art of tortilla making is celebrated every year in the Salt River Pima-Mari-copa Indian Community.

On the morning of March 22, the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Fire Department members Dustin Zamboni, Bobby Scabby Jr. and Clifford Lopez ran down Longmore Road in a "Lighting of the Fires Relay Run." From the Repository to the Huhugam Ki: Museum, members of the fire department ran a burning torch that was used to start the fires that would make the tortillas.

The event was livestreamed by the Cultural Resources Department (CRD), while people and police cars with their lights swirling, parked along the route and greeted the runners with cheers and a warm welcome. The sound of the techno-vaila version of "Chariots of Fire" was blaring from the pacing golf-cart, as it encouraged the enthused runners.

The smell of firewood filled the air outside of the museum as tortilla makers prepared for this annual festival just outside the museum's doors and parking lot. Over 600 visitors gathered on the museum grounds throughout the day where three outdoor cooking areas were in full swing with making tortillas, selling tortillas or handing out free samples.



A large dancing cemait showing off his tortilla cumbia for the audience.

The *Good Morning Arizona* news team were there in the wee hours of 6 and 7 a.m. and did two live feeds for the home viewers. Candice Manuel and Kasheen Walker were on camera talking about how tortilla making is an important component to the cultural life of the people.

A popular event at the festival was the tortilla making classes. Led by Manuel and Debbie James, the public was offered the opportunity to learn how to make *cemait/modiily* from start to finish. Four different community instructors taught them how to measure ingredients, mix just the right amount of water and knead that dough. Then it was over to the 52-inch *komal*, and they were able to make and enjoy the finished product. The classes were open to everyone, and demand was great, so a fifth class was added.

The day was filled with games and nonstop fun for all who attended. Tortilla makers from the four sibling tribes of Arizona; Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, Ak-Chin Indian Community and Tohono O'odham Nation showcased their talents as many demonstrated their own special ways of making *cemait/modiily*. Games that were tortilla themed were available to play under the vato and were run by staff from CRD.

If you did not get a chance to go to the tortilla making classes, you at least got the opportunity to make your own tortilla. A group of women from the Community had dough balls available and helped the enthused crowd in flapping and stretching the dough to lay on the tractor disc for cooking. And of course, a tub of butter was nearby for that final touch.

Not too far from the *vato*, the Cultural Resources Department provided samples of cultural foods which included chia seed pudding that was topped off with goji berries and raw pumpkin seeds, Mesquite cake topped with yogurt, and two different stews, rabbit and quail, that were both, mixed with tepary beans. During the afternoon, on the west end of the museum grounds, a demonstration was done on how to season a tractor disc and get it ready for cooking tortillas.

Vaila style music was heard as Two Rivers chicken scratch band performed and attendees were able to visit different vendors that sold kitchenware along with various food vendors. Their menus included breakfast burritos, goodies, popovers and lemonade infused drinks. Beginning at 11 a.m., on the hour, the audience favorite, the large dancing *cemait/modiily* was out there doing his tortilla cumbia for the adoring crowd.



Kasheen Walker is all smiles when it comes to making tortillas.

Another event that wowed the crowd was the tortilla Olympics, games that showcased the tortilla makers skills such as flapping out the biggest dough and blindfolded flapping. A favorite was the burrito races, where tortilla looking cloth was wrapped around the participants and the teams took turns running down a track to win. Prizes were donated by Discover Salt River and Schuuk Designs

By 2 p.m., all visitors and participants were happy and tired as they left with prizes, giveaways, recipes and tortillas. The Huhugam Ki: had another successful event and is looking forward to next year's festival in a new location.

Museum Manager Gary Owens remarked, "This year's event was huge; it covered the entire museum grounds, people everywhere and we look forward to making this an event for Salt River, where everyone comes out to help and enjoy the tortilla history of the Community."



Tammy Walker assists a participant in kneading the dough together during one of the many tortilla making classes.



Games that were centered around tortillas were available to play under the vato.

March Madness Fun at Friendship Park

BY ANDREEA MIGUEL
O'odham Action News
Andreea.miguel@srpmic-nsn.gov

The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's WellPath program held its annual March Madness games at Friendship Park. Throughout March, SRP-MIC employees could participate in activities against other departments.

Games included cornhole, knock out, giant pong, ultimate Frisbee, cup stacking and minute to win it. Participants battled each other in hopes of moving up brackets to win either gold, silver or bronze medals.

Before the March Madness games, basketball was the lone option for tribal government employees, however basketball is a full contact sport that often leads to injuries, and not everyone plays the game, Andrew Weiler, Wellness Program supervisor explained, "We decided on the Olympic Games Parody made up of a wide variety of games that could help build team morale in various departments. We envision a March Madness games where every department and the enterprises all have teams."



Teams battle in the Minute-to-Win It games by solving word puzzles and more.

This year, full court basketball games still took place at the Way of Life Facility. Over the years, WellPath has developed a partnership with Benefits, Community Relations, Round House Café, Community Recreation Services and Public Works due to an increase in participation. "It's now too big for WellPath alone," said Weiler. "WellPath envisions MMGs to be a month-long corporate picnic run at lunchtime from the beginning of March and culminating on National Benefits Day each year. We hope all departments will want to have teams and compete against one another for the overall championship," he said.

The games concluded with a free barbeque-style picnic with help from the Round House and medals and a trophy were presented to department participants.



ABOVE: Community Relations Department cheering on their team during Corn Hole games.



Team members celebrate their win during the Ultimate Frisbee battle.

Proposed Changes to the Code of Ordinances Section 4-4

The proposed change to 4-4 aims to expand the scope of legal practice by attorneys in the Community Court to include civil cases. Attorneys are already authorized to represent clients in cases involving juvenile dependency, juvenile delinquency, criminal and mental health cases within Community Court. By amending 4-4 to allow attorneys to practice in civil matters, the law will increase access to legal representation and further strengthen the practice within Community Court. To address concerns that have been voiced, two versions of the proposed change are being offered, taking into consideration varying opinions while remaining mindful of the diverse needs of the Community.

The Council wanted to solicit Community member input prior to making any decisions on this proposed code change.

You can review a presentation and the various proposed code changes at:

<https://www.srpmic-nsn.gov/government/ogc/proposed-ordinances/>

Scan the QR code to view:



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Contact Newspaper Assistant Kari Haahr at (480) 362-2698 or kari.haahr@srpmic-nsn.gov Leave your name, number and message and they will get back to you.

GOT A STORY IDEA?

Email us at oodhamactionnews@srpmic-nsn.gov or call (480) 362-7750

MARICOPA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION

ROAD CLOSURE



MCKELLIPS ROAD, CLOSED BETWEEN 92ND STREET AND LONGMORE ROAD

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) continues construction of the Mckellips Road improvement project located within the Salt River-Pima Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC). The project necessitates a full closure of Mckellips Road between 92nd Street and Longmore Road starting at 5 a.m. Monday, March 24, 2025, continuously for sixty (60) days until Friday, May 23, 2025 at 5 p.m. to accommodate a box culvert installation on both sides of Mckellips Road.

Alternative travel around the Mckellips Road closure will be provided via detours in the area. Detour signage will be in place to direct travel in the area. Access to Dobson and Longmore Roads from Mckellips will be closed. Local access to Dobson Road and Longmore Road will be open from McDowell Road as shown in the map above. Motorists are encouraged to find alternate routes to their destinations.

Please watch for work crews, obey all traffic control signs and follow reduced speeds in the work zone. For more information on the project and the latest on travel restrictions, please visit the project website at: <https://www.maricopa.gov/5938/Mckellips-Road>.

Participating Agencies



WORK SCHEDULE:

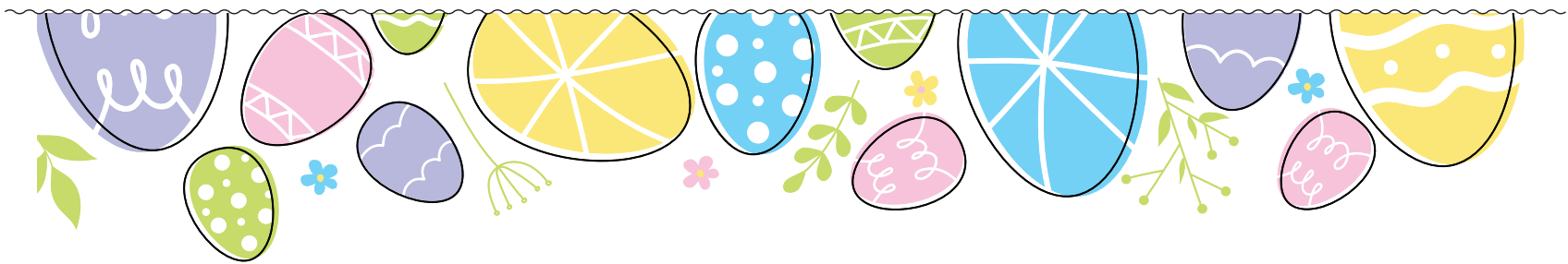
Where: Mckellips Road from Alma School Road to the SR101L.
When: Monday, March 24, 2025, through Friday, May 23, 2025.
Weekdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Occasional weekend or holiday work may occur if required.

Questions: ☎ 602.506.3342 ✉ MCDOTprojects@maricopa.gov

Schedule is subject to change for reasons beyond MCDOT's control, including: weather, equipment failure, illness or other circumstances.

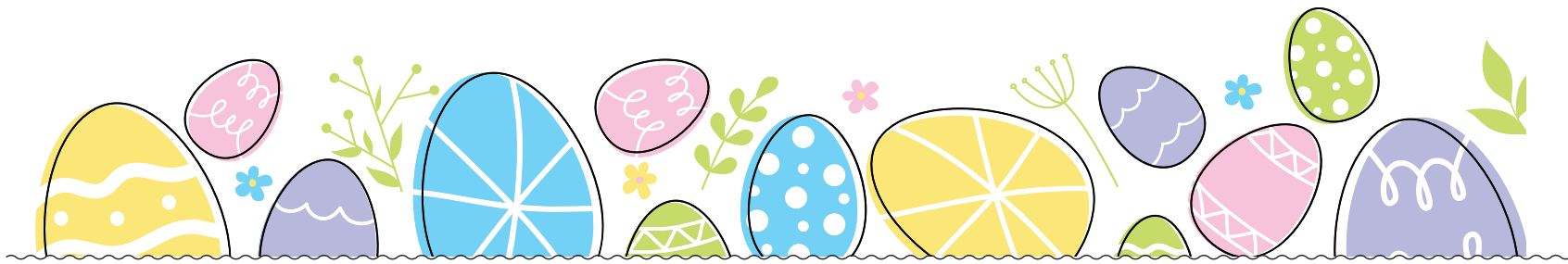


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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ONGOING

DIABETES SUPPORT GROUP, 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. in room 3104 (Cloud), 3rd floor of RPHC. This free, confidential, and safe group of individuals support one another by utilizing their collective experiences and learned wisdom. This gathering is for adults diagnosed with diabetes. For more information, contact (480) 362-3355

SENIOR BOOK CLUB, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30 at the Tribal Library at WOLF.

TAI CHI FOR SENIORS, Tuesdays 9-10 a.m. at WOLF Senior Room and Thursdays 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. at Senior Services North Annex. Join Senior Services for tai chi, an ancient Chinese martial art used today as an effective moving meditation that improves the health of the mind and body. All abilities and fitness levels are welcome. For community seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs. Questions? Call 480.362.6350.

YOGA FOR FALL PREVENTION, Mondays 9 a.m. – 10 a.m. at WOLF Senior Room. All Fitness Levels Welcome! Sign up with Ce-linda Joe at (480) 876-7180 and request transportation if needed.

YOGA FOR FALL PREVENTION, Fridays 1 p.m. – 2 p.m. at WOLF Senior Room. All Fitness Levels Welcome! Sign up with Ce-linda Joe at (480) 876-7180 and request transportation if needed. **Last Fridays of Each Month are YOGA BINGO with prizes!

WATER AEROBICS AT WAY OF LIFE FACILITY POOL, 45-minute sessions on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 10 a.m., 12 p.m., and 1 p.m. No registration required. Questions? Call (480) 362-6310

NAMI FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP, First and Third Wednesdays of each month from 12 p.m. – 1 p.m. at RPHC 3rd Floor, Room 3104. Contact (480) 362-6948 for more information.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT GROUP, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. at RPHC. Women's meetings held on Tuesdays, men's meetings held Wednesdays.

WELLBRIETY 12 STEP AND MEDICINE WHEEL, Wednesdays and Fridays 9:30 a.m. – 11 a.m. Wellbriety is a Native American recovery fellowship that blends spiritual practice with the 12-Step program. Its approach to recovery focuses on healing and is rooted in the Teachings of the Medicine Wheel, the Cycle of Life, and the Four Laws of Change. Wellbriety emphasizes creating new thought patterns, attitudes, and feelings about sobriety based on traditional concepts and Native American teachings.

TALKING CIRCLE FOLLOWING WELLBRIETY, Wednesdays and Fridays 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Following the Wellbriety session, participants are invited to join the Talking Circle to share insights and experiences related to living in recovery and honoring traditional practices, including fellowship, community, and connection. Talking Circle sessions also take place every Wednesday and Friday, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

WARRIOR'S SUPPORT CIRCLE, 2nd Thursday Warrior's Support Circle is a talking circle aimed at offering our Veterans a safe space to meet and share their life experiences, challenges, and successes. The circle offers a free, confidential space for members to take steps towards recovery by gaining insight from others and learning more about PTSD, adjustment issues after reintegration into the civilian world, and to discuss general challenges that accompany service in the military.

CRAFT COMMUNITY REINFORCEMENT AND FAMILY TRAINING, Support group for families of loved ones battling substance abuse/addiction/dependence. Fridays 4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. at RPHC Room 3106 (3rd Floor) For More Information please contact Shea Hinton at (480) 362-2739

SALT RIVER VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ORIENTATION, Bi-weekly on Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Human Resources, Two Waters Building B. Walk-ins welcomed! Contact (480) 362-2650 for more information.

PRESBY PICKINS' FLEA MARKETS, 1st Saturday of Nov, Dec, and Feb – April from 8am-2pm at Fountain Hills Presbyterian Church, 13001 Fountain Hills Blvd. 50+ vendors, food carts, & music. Shop for toys, collectibles, household items, jewelry, art, crafts, & more! Visit www.fhpresbyterian.info/fleamarket, call 480-779-8115.

MEDICARE ADVANTAGE OPEN ENROLLMENT, through March 31. Are you considering a change to your Medicare plan? Need help navigating your options? Call River People Health Center at (480) 362-6880 for more information.

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APRIL

18 GOOD FRIDAY, SRPMIC Offices Closed. Please plan accordingly.

19 CM ANTONE DISTRICT B MEETING, 9 a.m. at Salt River Council Chambers. For questions, please contact council secretaries at 480-362-7469.

19 COMMUNITY EASTER PROGRAM, 9 a.m. at Salt River Ballfield. See ad on page 4 for more information!

20 EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

22 CM CARLOS DISTRICT E MEETING, 6 p.m. at Way of Life Facility. For questions, please contact council secretaries at 480-362-7469.

24 CM BUTLER DISTRICT A MEETING, 6 p.m. at Council Chambers. For questions, please contact council secretaries at 480-362-7469.

24 50% OFF AT HELPING HANDS

25 50% OFF AT HELPING HANDS

28 SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE MMIP WEEK, Prayer & Artie's MMIP Awareness Walk at 9 a.m. at ICC Gathering Space at Scottsdale Community College. Documentary screening "Silent No More" 11:30 -12:30 at ICC 216/217

29 SALT RIVER REVIVAL: NIGHT OF MIRACLES, Featuring evangelist Tim Rabara. Doors open at 6 p.m. 4827 N Country Club Dr Scottsdale 85256. For questions, call 480-427-4678.

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MAY

1 LAW DAY AT SRPMIC JUSTICE CENTER, 4pm - 6pm at Justice Center. Celebrate the importance of law in our community at this special event!

1 NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER, 8:30 a.m. at Two Waters Courtyard

2 SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE MMIP WEEK, Closing Prayer and Artie's MMIP Awareness Walk. 9 a.m. at ICC Gathering Space.

2 AMERICAN INDIAN CONVOCATION FOR MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES, See ad on page 13 for full details and how to register!

3 BRIDGE TO WELLNESS, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. at Salt River Ballfield. Be part of an empowering community health event! The River People Health Center, in collaboration with Diabetes Prevention, invites you to a day filled with fun, education, and community engagement. For more information, contact Judy Santeo at 480-274-7982 or judy.santeo@srpmic-nsn.gov

5 MMIP AWARENESS DAY, Join the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community as we come together to honor and remember Missing & Murdered Indigenous People.

This meaningful day is about raising awareness, standing in solidarity, and seeking justice for our loved ones. For complete details, see ad on page 17.

13 COMPUTER CLASSES FOR SENIORS, held at Salt River Senior Services. Community Seniors 55+ are welcome to attend the computer basic classess provided by SRPMIC Information Technology Department - Customer Care Division. Classes are held once a month from 9:00AM - 11:00AM. No computer experience is required. We will see YOU there! You can contact the Senior Services Department for transportation to the Two Waters class at: (480) 362-6350

15 HIGHER EDUCATION ORIENTATION PROGRAM, 4p.m.-5 p.m. at Salt River Schools Education Board Room. THe Salt River Higher Education Program offers early college outreach, financial assistance, and education and career advising to enrolled SRPMIC members. Questions? Call 480-362-2547 or email HigherEducation@saltiverschools.org

20 COMPUTER CLASSES FOR SENIORS, held at Two Waters Building A - Red Mountain Computer Lab. Community Seniors 55+ are welcome to attend the computer basic classess provided by SRPMIC Information Technology Department - Customer Care Division. Classes are held once a month from 9:00AM - 11:00AM. No computer experience is required. We will see YOU there! You can contact the Senior Services Department for transportation to the Two Waters class at: (480) 362-6350