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Lori Piestewa Games
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Pages 10-11



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AUGUST 7, 2025

Young River People's Council Recognized as 2025 Youth Council of the Year



Young River People's Council was recognized for their outstanding work at UNITY in San Diego. Photos courtesy of Young River People's Council.

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Cruz Lasiloo and Tizoc Lopez Travel to Japan



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Photo courtesy Cruz Lasiloo

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Tate Sisters Reach Beyond the Stars

Johanna Tate Graduates From
Youth Indian Police Academy



Rianna Tate Wins Third Straight
IBJJF National Title

Read more about the Tate sisters on page 3

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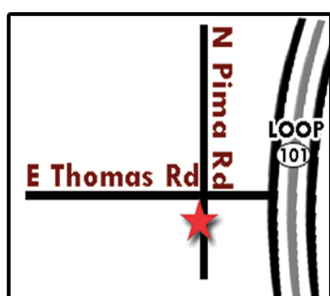
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Johanna Tate holds her BIA Youth Indian Police Academy diploma next to BIA Officer Suina. Photo courtesy Johanna Tate.

Johanna Tate Graduates From Youth Indian Police Academy



Johanna Tate climbs a rope as a part of her BIA Youth Indian Police Academy training. Photo courtesy Johanna Tate.

BY CHRIS PICCIUOLO
O’odham Action News
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Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community member Johanna Tate was one of only 28 Native youths from across the United States, out of 100-plus applicants, selected for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Office of Justice Services (OJS) Youth Indian Police Academy (YIPA) program this summer.

Tate submitted a five-paragraph essay to qualify for the academy, which took place in Anadarko, Oklahoma, for two weeks at the Riverside Indian Boarding School. She began on June 15 and graduated on June 27.

Her end goal? To be a Salt River police officer after taking Arizona State University’s criminal justice program.

Tate is entering her junior year of high school and once she graduates, she has a few other options to consider, such as becoming a correctional officer at the age of 18 or joining the military as a military police officer.

“What inspired me to get into law enforcement was from the stories my dad would tell me while he was working as a tribal police officer and as an officer at the juvenile detention center for Native youth,” Tate reflected.

“It made an impact on me to want to do what he did by helping my Native people, especially [during] the [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples] crisis.”

She continued, “This is a topic that is very important to me, [and] it holds a huge place in my heart and mind because I want to do everything in my ability to prevent this and to bring our people together and make our Indigenous people reunite with their loved ones.”

Tate comes from a family of mixed martial artists (MMA), which includes

her dad, Joe “Tomahawk” Tate, and her older sister, Rianna Tate, who competes regularly. Johanna is skilled in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and understands that it will help her in her law enforcement career.

“My interest in the law enforcement career is to help guide the Native youth by teaching them self-defense and safety measures and going after the dangerous people and to work to put them away so they don’t harm our people,” she said.

The training she experienced at the YIPA included nightly team-building events and hands-on scenarios, such as tactical training exercises, accident investigations, crime scene labs, driving under the influence simulations, special weapons and tactics demonstrations, emergency medical services certifications, K-9 demonstrations and field trips for complete immersion learning.

“These issues made me strive to help others more and to be someone that they can call when they need support in their lives. I want to keep our Native youth and Native communities safe,” Tate said.

“I want the Community to know that I care for them and that whatever happens, to always stay positive and don’t be afraid to reach out to the police officers because they’re there to help you and to keep you safe.”

Tate said that she and her family have been through some difficult times, but she aspires to excel in her career and be a first generation high school graduate.

“My main motivation comes from my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Without him this wouldn’t have been possible,” Tate said.

“He gave me strength and motivation to keep on going and my love for my career. I know he will keep me safe throughout my life and when I’m a police officer.”

Tate Sisters Reach Beyond the Stars:

Leading by Example with Strength, Discipline and Heart

Rianna Tate Wins Third Straight IBJJF National Title



Rianna Tate proudly stands on top of the number 1 after she won the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) No-Gi title for the third consecutive year, on June 27. Photo courtesy Tyy Withrow photography.

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

Rianna Tate continued her success on the mat by winning the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) No-Gi title for the third consecutive year on June 27 at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Tate had two fights and came out on top with two submissions. She faced the No. 1 seed in her bracket in the first match.

“I played smart and got the submission [with a] triangle finish,” Tate said with confidence.

“[In my] second match [in the finals] I again played smart and won the national title by an armbar finish. I didn’t

break a sweat in these matches at all.”

Tate felt that her preparation going into nationals was great.

“I wanted to work my top position right to a submission since most girls in jiu jitsu play guard.”

This was her first official competition at the adult level and her last blue-belt tournament, as she earned her purple-belt just a week later at 17 years old. Soon, she will make her purple-belt competition debut and compete locally in Arizona, preparing for big competitions like the IBJJF Worlds at the end of the year.

“Higher level, new competition. Super excited,” Tate said.

Following the title win, Tate participated in the Rocky Mountain Nationals (RMN), a wrestling tournament at the same convention center. Her first match was against one of California’s state champs.

“I ended up losing by one point. It was a super great match. I was happy with my performance,” said Tate.

In her second match, Tate won by “tech,” or technical fall, winning 10-0 by scoring takedowns on her opponent.

Tate won her third match for third place overall by a pin in under a minute with her favorite judo throw, called an “uchi mata,” right into a pin.

“I was grateful for the matches that I had because I get to look at what I did right and what I did wrong and what to get better at.”

Tate is supported by her dad and MMA fighter Joe “Tomahawk” Tate, mom, siblings, as well as her strength and conditioning coach, George Castro, and his wife Kim, who is Tate’s nutritional coach.

“Thank you to everyone who supports me and helps me, all my coaches, my parents, my sponsors and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community,” said Tate.

“[I’m] always grateful for the support and love I have from my people. I do it for them.”



Joe “Tomahawk” Tate congratulates his daughter Rianna Tate after she won her third consecutive IBJJF title on June 27. Photo courtesy Rianna Tate.

O’odham Action News Welcomes New Reporter



BY ZOE HERNANDEZ
O’odham Action News
Zoe.hernandez@srpmic-nsn.gov

Ske:g Tas! Sapai cui’ig? Añi an ap
ce:gig Zoe Hernandez Masad Ali.
Kamuuduushthik? Nyaa Zoe Hernan-
dez ‘iim mulyk. Nyaa mataam-shaxukk-
mayk-xamxmokk. Nyip Nthaysh Felicia
Ramos thlyxoxm, Nyip Nykewsh Joni
Ramos duum. Arizona State University
yaak. Va Shly’ay ilynyavayk aanyii pi-
ipayk aanyii kmank. Aanysh Dothm.

Good day! How are you? My name
is Zoe Hernandez. I am Onk Akimel
O’odham, and I am the 19-year-old
daughter of the late Felicia Ramos. My
maternal grandmother is Joni Ramos, and
my great grandmother is Hazel Thomas. I
am a student at Arizona State University
where I am pursuing my Bachelor of Sci-
ences in American Indian Studies. In the
future I hope to pursue a Bachelor’s in
communications and double major. I re-
side within the Salt River Pima-Maricopa
Indian Community boundaries and have
lived here my whole life.

My interests include baking, play-
ing the viola, learning new languages,

traditional dancing and going to concerts.
Recently, I’ve been exploring my tradi-
tional values and have become engrossed
in them. This past year I have started to
learn simple phrases and the orthogra-
phies of both the Onk Akimel O’odham
and the Xalychidom Piipaash. I have
been extremely fortunate to partake in a
program where I was able to learn both
traditional O’odham dances and chiyer,
better known as bird dancing. I have
found myself dancing with a big smile
whenever I have the chance. I also enjoy
dancing cumbias and having fun with my
friends on the dance floor. I try to attend
concerts as often as possible and will
often attend one close to every month.

I am overly excited to work with
O’odham Action News. I have always
seen the O’odham Action News team
around the Community with their camer-
as and thought they looked so cool. I feel
very fortunate to gain this experience. I
am excited to see not only our Salt River
Community members, but everyone
around the Community. I hope to meet
new faces and familiar ones. I can’t wait
to see where this journey takes me! Sape!

SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY SENIORS MEETING

MONDAY, AUGUST 11, 2025

Salt River Community Building

Dinner 5:00 P.M. | Meeting 6:00 P.M.

**THIS MEETING IS FOR
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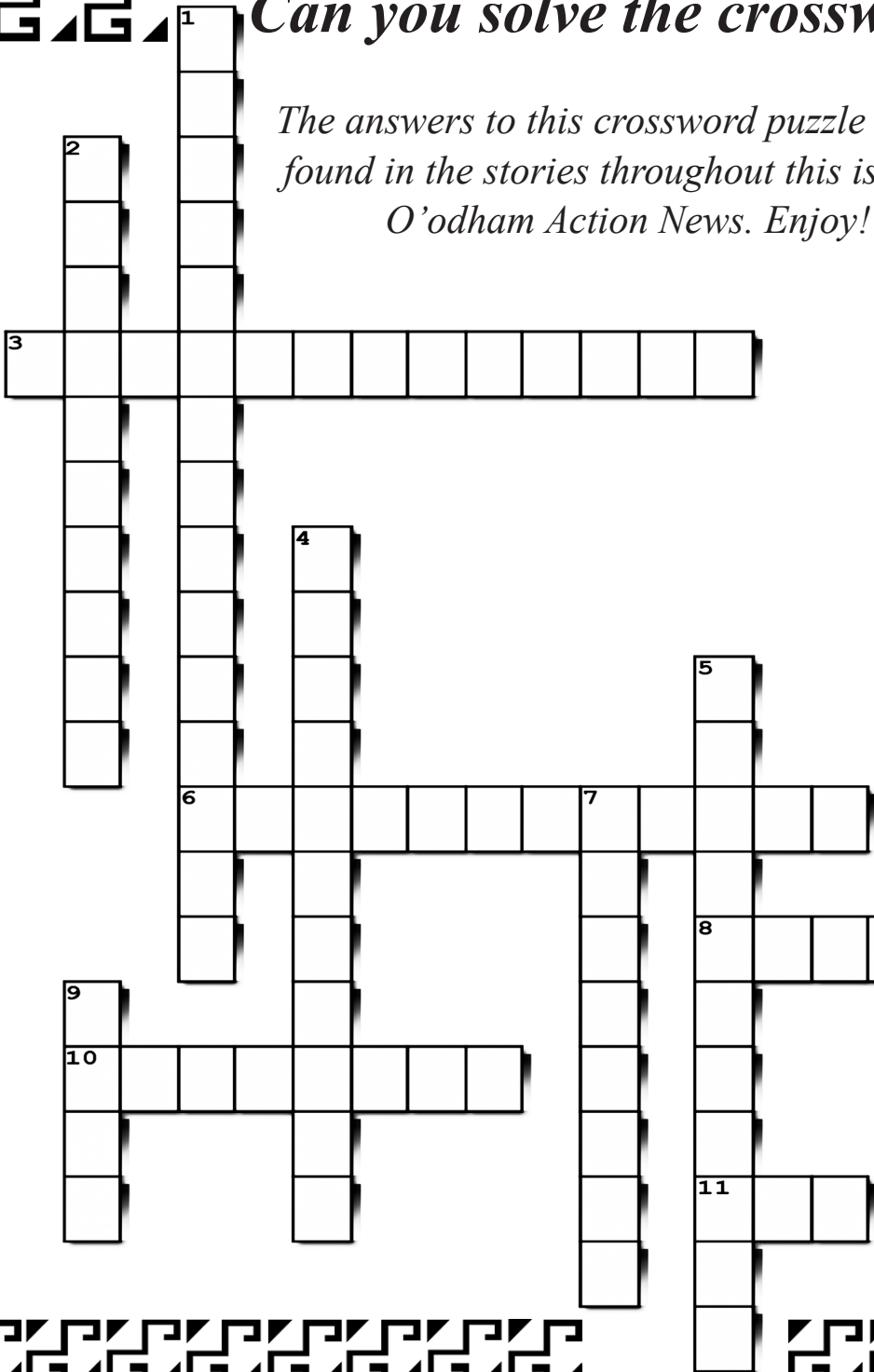


Benjamin Anton
480.225.1429
BenjaminAnton@WestUSA.com



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

- 3. The name of the person who taught the historical O'odham art of shell etching at Skeg Himdag Ki:.
- 6. The name of the college Zoe Hernandez currently attends.
- 8. The city in Oklahoma that hosted the Youth Indian Police Academy.
- 10. The name of Rianna Tate's favorite judo throw.
- 11. The number of graduates in this year's SRPMIC's Early Enrichment Program.

Down

- 1. The full name of the individual who will be voted on to become the new U.S. Department of the Interior Secretary for Indian Affairs.
- 2. FMD superstar basketball athlete and recent high school graduate who played in this year's Piستewa Games.
- 4. SRPMIC Museum Specialist who helped facilitate the Tortilla Camp in July with Candice Manuel.
- 5. The full name of the castle that Tizoc Lopez said was, 'really big and cool.'
- 7. The name of the city that hosted the annual UNITY Conference.
- 9. The month the new SRPMIC website debuted.



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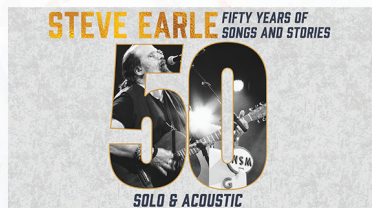
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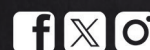
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Young River People's Council Recognized as 2025 Youth Council of the Year

Continued from front page

BY KARI HAAHR
O'odham Action News
kari.haahr@srpmic-nsn.gov

UNITY (United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc.) is the largest Native youth leadership gathering in the country, and this year saw over 3,000 Native youth traveling across the nation to San Diego, California. The annual gathering is a place of sharing: sharing resources, knowledge, connections, and on the final day, sharing in celebration as awards and scholarships are presented to this generation of leaders.

It's always an exciting time for youth, and this year's event led to even more excitement as Salt River's own Young River People's Council won the UNITY 2025 Youth Council of the Year award.

YRPC stood out among dozens of youth councils nationwide for its "year-round efforts in civic engagement and cultural revitalization," according to event organizers. "Their work reflects the core pillars of UNITY, especially mental and social wellness," said a presenter at the awards gala. Then, the screens overhead filled with young O'odham and Piipaash faces as they called YRPC to the stage.

As YRPC members gathered under the spotlight, Youth Services Supervisor, Janyse Salinas, expressed her pride and admitted it was hard to not be emotional.

"It's unexpected, but I want to give a huge shout-out to these kids because they are doing the work on the ground to heal and to help their community in every way possible," Salinas said. "They're doing the work, and I'm just

so proud of them."

This win marks the second time YRPC has received the national award – the first was in 2018, also in San Diego. Back on the stage to accept the award, the new Young River People's Council carried the same pride as their predecessors in representing emerging leaders and voices in the Community.

In a statement shared online following the announcement, the council wrote:

"This recognition reflects the incredible dedication, leadership, and heart our young leaders have poured into our community. From cultural preservation to youth advocacy, community service, and personal growth, these teens have shown up with heart, purpose, and power."

All youth councils attending the UNITY Conference submit a yearly

report presenting their activities and outreach efforts in their communities. The YRPC report highlighted initiatives relating to the four elements of the UNITY logo: spiritual, mental, physical and social. Events in 2025 included the Be The Change Youth Summit, Pickle Slushies for the Polls, Get Out the Vote efforts, and the Native Youth Identity Conference.

The Young River People's Council currently has 23 members, ages 13 to 21. Membership is open to enrolled members of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. For more information or to apply, visit srpmic-nsn.gov/government/yrpc or call (480) 362-6390.

Follow YRPC on Instagram and Facebook to keep up with the latest activities.

Photos above and below from their annual report show the Young River People's Council activities and outreach efforts, including the Be The Change Youth Summit, Pickle Slushies for the Polls, Get Out the Vote efforts, and the Native Youth Identity Conference. All photos courtesy of Young River People's Council.



Cruz Lasiloo and Tizoc Lopez Travel to JAPAN

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

For 10 days in June, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community members Cruz Lasiloo and Tizoc Lopez traveled across six different cities in Japan as a part of the curriculum for their Japanese class at Saguaro High School in Scottsdale.

This was their first time traveling internationally for both Lasiloo and Lopez, who endured two 13-hour flights across the Pacific Ocean from Los Angeles to Tokyo, to Osaka and back. Other stops while in Japan were Kyoto, Takayama, Shirakawago and Kanazawa.

The two 15-year-olds traveled with a group of about 30 other people, all of them taking some level of Japanese at the high school.

Before traveling to Japan, Lopez reviewed some basic Japanese vocabulary and letters so he wouldn't forget.

"I really like my Japanese class, and I was thankful for the opportunity [to go to Japan]," Lopez said.

Lasiloo has been studying Japanese for a few years now, so he claims to be able to hold a decent conversation in the language.

"We don't just study the language; we also learn about the cultures and customs of Japan."

On the flight from Tokyo to Osaka, Lasiloo had his first chance to speak some Japanese to the locals.

"However, I was still pretty nervous, so all I could muster up to say were simple phrases like 'water, please,' 'thank you,' and 'excuse me,'" said Lasiloo.

When they landed in Osaka, they retrieved their bags and met their tour guide, Shoukō-san.

"She was very nice and extremely helpful in helping us manage through the city and telling us different facts and history about the different cities we were visiting," Lasiloo said.

"Man, was [Osaka] huge. Huge buildings, tons of people, all stretching for miles on end."

After settling at their hotel, they stopped by a convenience store with "a much larger and cooler selection of things you can buy," Lasiloo said, comparing it to the stores in the U.S. That first night, Lasiloo and Lopez ate their first authentic Japanese meal.

"I got some shrimp and fish tempura with rice. It was pretty good. It was very crispy and full of flavor," said Lasiloo.

While out and about, Lopez noticed that there wasn't a lot of trash in public or trash cans.

"People [in Japan] don't usually eat while walking," said Lopez.

The group visited Osaka's markets, shrines and castles, and Lasiloo enjoyed "probably the best ice cream I have ever had" out of a bag from a vending machine.

Osaka was one of the more memorable stops for the two of them. Lopez said the Osaka Castle "was really big and cool."

Lasiloo noted some similarities and differences in culture when comparing Japan to the customs of the O'odham, Piipaash and the United States.

"I noticed that respect is a big thing and walking on the left instead of the right [side of the street]. You're not supposed to hand people money directly. It is a very quiet country, so if you are loud, you are seen as sort of obnoxious," Lasiloo said.

Lasiloo said he noticed that the native religion in the region, Shinto, has many spirits or gods represented as the natural world.

"People believe that these spirits are things like mountains or trees, and that's why they have shrines generally in the same area as them," he said.

Osaka's hotspot for tourists, Dotonbori, included the Pokémon Center, which made Lasiloo reminisce and become reacquainted

ABOVE RIGHT: SRPMIC members Cruz Lasiloo, Tizoc Lopez and their Japanese class from Saguaro High School pose for a group shot in Japan.

BELOW RIGHT: Lasiloo and Lopez head out sight-seeing, photograph the buildings and landmarks they come across and fly kites. Photos courtesy of Cruz Lasiloo.

with playing Pokémon.

The next stop was the old capital of Kyoto, which Lasiloo said offered a good balance between modern and traditional elements. After sightseeing at the Fushimi Inari Shrine, a trip to McDonald's across the street was a homesick must.

It was Lasiloo's birthday, and he and Lopez got some fortunes and ice cream from a vending machine. After singing "happy birthday," the group explored the underground mall and walked through the night market.

"The scale of everything blew me away, and it was so cool seeing the nightlife and what the city has to offer," Lasiloo said. "I am confident that it was the best birthday of my entire life."

The next day, the group headed to the new city of Takayama. The first stop was at a Zen temple for meditation, where a monk gave advice to Lasiloo and Lopez.

"One thing I remember him saying was, 'The only time you can focus on your brain is when you are doing nothing.'" Lasiloo said.

Shirokawago was the next destination the group visited. It's one of Japan's oldest villages, featuring traditional houses. The group didn't stay long; they had to travel to Kanazawa, located on the far western side of the main island. Here, the youth enjoyed gold-covered ice cream, arcades, and bantered in Japanese with locals.

A bullet train awaited the two Community members on the last leg of their journey: Tokyo! Both Lasiloo and Lopez especially enjoyed the iconic pedestrian crossing at Shibuya. The group ate some "OK" pizza while embracing the bright lights, electronics and anime at Akihabara, a district of Tokyo.

The two blinked and it was time to fly back home, each with a piece of Japan to carry with them.

"I brought back matcha powder for my family and also custom gold chopsticks," said Lopez.

Lasiloo also picked out souvenirs for his friends and family and bought himself a few things.

"I brought back a lot of clothes, some action figures, a lot of Pokémon cards, some snacks, some incense, and a ton of keychains," he said.

He has advice for young Community members who want to travel to Japan one day.

"Just take it all in and just be in the present moment. Take each day as it comes, because you may never get this chance ever again and you don't want to have that regret of not doing everything you wanted to while you were there. And try to at least learn some basic phrases in Japanese, as it goes a long way," said Lasiloo.

"Just know that if you go once, you'll get hooked and want to keep going over and over again."

Lopez is grateful for the trip and would want to go again in the future, but for now, he is glad to be home.



ABOVE LEFT: Lopez (left) and Lasiloo (right) go shopping and try the local food and beverages. ABOVE RIGHT: Lopez shows off his golden pipes, gracing the room with his karaoke prowess. BELOW: Scenic photographs from Japan taken by Lopez.



SRPMIC Wins Big in Lori Piestewa Games

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

In 1986, when Lori Piestewa was seven years old, her softball team made it to the Tuba City Little League softball championships. The day before the game, she was practicing ground balls while playing shortstop and a softball hit her in the face, breaking her nose.

Her family insisted she sit out the championship game and recover, however, Piestewa decided to play.

That determination was apparent during this year's games, the annual tournament that honors her courageous life and legacy. Piestewa was a U.S. Army soldier in 2003 when she died in the Iraq War. The Hopi mother was only 23 and was the first Native woman to die in combat while serving in the U.S. military.

Once known as the Grand Canyon State Games, the tournament changed its name in 2003 to the Lori Piestewa National Native American Games, which celebrated its 22nd year this July, showcasing the brightest rising athletes from Indian Country.

This year's tournament was held at the Arizona Athletic Grounds, starting on July 11, and featured several basketball and baseball teams from the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. Throughout the tournament, the superstar athletes from SRPMIC proved they were primed for success at the next level as the Community brought home championship victories in both basketball and baseball.

Basketball
This year, if you wanted to win it all, you had to battle against Jacob Smith and his teammates from Fort McDowell (FMD). Their mighty defense, combined with their team-oriented, fast-paced offense, allowed them to easily cruise to victories on Friday and Saturday in the boys' varsity division.

Smith and company went 3-0 in pool play; however, they had to defeat a fellow SRPMIC team The River, 42-32, during Sunday's playoff semifinal. They defeated Whitehillz 72-41 and advanced to the championship game, where it would be an Arizona hoops battle as FMD defeated AZ Warriors, 51-32.

Native Clash, the SRPMIC team in the boys sixth-grade division, continued to develop their skillsets on the court while learning how to win and lose as a team. They lost to fierce competition during the tournament, coming up just short against the East Fort Apaches and the NAZ Wolfpack.

Ba'ag 2028 dominated 4 Corners Elite in their first game, winning 82-8. With Coach Rito Lopez walking the sidelines, Ba'ag 2028 made easy work of most of the competition in the boys JV division. They continued to make it look easy on the hardwood, defeating the RezBro's 55-39 and AZ Nations, 48-38. In their semi-final game against 1-Ocean, Ba'ag 2028 came up short, losing 36-33.

In the girls JV division, Natives With Talent (NWT) began dominating the tournament with victories against Lady Hoopsters and Shiprock Lady Dream. They advanced to the semifinals and beat Northern Stars, 48-32.

The win advanced NWT into the final four, however, they would come up three points shy of advancing to the finals, losing to the Lady Lobos, 30-27.

The Salt River Renegades, comprised of girls in the third and fourth grades, showed their finest efforts on the court to many fans who sat and cheered for them from the bleachers. The Lady Braves bested the SR Renegades by six points in their first game; however, they bounced back with ease, defeating the Huskies 14-5. Advancing to the championship game but coming up short, the Stingers stung the SR Renegades, 29-4.

Baseball
Led by coach Arnold Thomas, the AZ Sons proved why they're one of the finest baseball teams in the country as they looked to repeat as champions in the single-A (ages 9-12) baseball division. They defeated the Flagstaff Underdogs, 11-1, and shut out the Outsiders 10-0. In the unofficial "World Series of Salt River," AZ Sons defeated the Desert Dingers 12-1, which advanced them to Sunday's championship round. The AZ Sons beat the Chinle Jayhawks, a team known for having many traveling fans, 3-0. Coach Thomas and company proved to be the real greats as they dominated The GOAT in the championship game, 13-3, repeating once again as single-A champions.

Desert Dingers Coach Whitney Grey ensures that his players representing the SRPMIC showcased textbook baseball fundamentals during this year's Piestewa games. The Desert Dingers from single-, double-, and triple-A traveled to the AAG for some summertime baseball underneath the scorching 109-degree sun. Thankfully, ample water breaks were provided.

The single-A Desert Dingers went 1-2 in this year's Piestewa games. They suffered an early loss to AZ Stronghold, 2-4, but quickly bounced back for an entertaining victory against TC Kingz, 8-5. Officially, the single-A Desert Dingers placed 8th out of 12 single-A teams.

The double-A Desert Dingers went 3-0 in pool play, making easy work of the Chinle Jayhawks, Sluggerz and Salaadas. In both of their Saturday games during pool play, the Dingers boasted scores of 10-2 and 14-2, proving the heat was not a factor for them on the baseball diamond. They advanced to the championship game against the San Carlos Apaches, but lost in a heartbreaker, 6-4.

Comprised of high school student-athletes, the triple-A Desert Dingers battled against some of the rising stars in Arizona. In their game against Maricopa, which featured a few athletes from the Ak-Chin Indian Community, the Dingers lost 8-5. Redemption soon followed on Saturday as they defeated the Hopi Hitters 2-0, but lost to the Apache Choppers in an 8-4 slugfest. They advanced to the championship silver round, but lost to Naabaahi B, 7-4.

The Lori Piestewa games also featured an overnight softball tournament, allowing the next generation of softball superstars to compete under the moonlight and avoid the scorching summer sun. Additionally, the tournament games--unofficially called 'The P-Games' by the people--hosted a wrestling competition in which many athletes competed for the gold.

For the complete list of participating teams and winners, visit the official website at www.piestewagames.com for more information.



'If it's burning, it's smoking' at the Teen Tortilla Camp

BY ZOE HERNANDEZ
O'odham Action News
Zoe.hernandez@srpmic-nsn.gov

"If it's burning, it's smoking," Debbie James reminded the workshop class. It was great advice as the Huhugam Ki: Museum kicked off their teen tortilla camp on July 14 for a week full of fun.

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community youth ages 15 to 17 signed up to learn how to make tortillas, or cemait in O'odham, from the Huhugam Ki: Museum and Cultural Resources staff. Museum Specialist James and Museum Assistant Candice Manuel led the workshop with assistance from Multimedia Specialist Tasha Silverhorn and Cultural Resources Secretary Raina Thomas.

Students were provided with ingredients to make the dough and asked to bring trays and bowls from home. Students arrived early at 6 a.m. on a cloudy morning, eager to learn. Students followed directions closely, preparing their dough and allowing it time to rest. Students began flattening the dough into a circular shape to form a cemait. James expressed, "If they ask, we'll help," ensuring all the students felt supported and confident throughout

the workshop sessions, as they were all beginners.

Each student worked at their own pace and with a smile. After the students finished cooking, cleaning their areas, along with washing their dishes, they were able to have a seat and chat. Workshop leaders James and Manuel asked the students what was the most exciting part of the process. Their answers included, "Making the dough and cooking it" to "Being able to taste the final product." After they were done for the day, the students were allowed to take home their cemait to their families.

At the end of the workshop the students received a certificate for their hard work, dedication, and commitment to learning and participating in the camp.



Shell Etching at Ske:g Himdag Ki:



A participant sketches out their design before beginning the shell etching process.

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

Jonathon Curry, a Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community member, taught the ancestral O'odham art of shell etching at Skeg Himdag Ki: on July 8 and 10.

For two hours each day, Community members who signed up learned the history of shell etching and a modern method for creating and designing their unique shells. Curry taught this class just weeks after leading another workshop with harvesting baidaj, or saguaro fruit.

On day one of this two-day workshop, Curry utilized that time to provide participants with a cultural overview of the history of shell etching, including the cultural and religious beliefs and photo references of both historic and modern-day etched shells.

shells have been found in the southwestern region, all of them located within the Phoenix Valley, and the Santa Cruz Valley.

By the second day of the workshop, participants selected their shells to begin creating their own



"I've done a number of workshops now at this point where I feel like it's important to have a basis of understanding because from my experience, these things are not talked about, these things are not openly shared, you have to really search out this information from various people to learn," Curry explained.

He went into detail how the shells were gathered and where prehistoric etched shells have been found throughout Arizona. Curry explained that only about 40 etched



Jonathan Curry presenting a laevicardium shell which was traditionally used while shell etching.

designs. In front of the classroom, a table was filled with shells. Some were etched, and some were plain; the Salt River Tribal Library provided the plain ones, which were hosting the class and had invited Curry to teach.

From there, participants were handed a plate, nail polish, paint brushes and a small cup to begin the process of shell etching. "To do these things, you have to have a lot of patience. This isn't something you get instant gratification from," said Curry. "And that's kind of how I imagined our ancestors worked, that's why they made...beautiful things, because they had the patience and the time to really focus and put their energy into it," Curry said as participants began their process of creating etched shells.

As the class ended, many of the participants took their unfinished shells home, while others chose to leave them with Curry to finish the process and will hand them back at a later time.

LEFT: Shells were provided for participants who were able to choose one from the bunch.

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RISE IN LEGAL IMPERSONATION SCAMS

TARGETING SRPMIC MEMBERS

Scammers are increasingly impersonating law firms and process servers in an effort to deceive members of our community. The Legal Services Office has seen a noticeable uptick in these fraudulent calls. These scammers are specifically targeting local residents, exploiting fear and confusion to steal sensitive information.

Here's what to watch out for:

- ✓ A caller claims you're about to be served with legal documents
- ✓ They cite a phony case number and name a nonexistent law firm.
- ✓ The scam often references unpaid car loans or repossession fees, threatening a lawsuit for a large amount.
- ✓ They create urgency by saying service will happen within hours.
- ✓ You may be told to call an 833 or 800 number that supposedly belongs to the law firm.

GOAL: To trick you into sharing private information such as your Social Security number, bank details, or home address.

What you should do:

- ✗ Do **NOT** share any personal or financial details.
- ✗ Hang up immediately.
- ✗ Spread the word—protect yourself and your neighbors. These scams thrive on silence, so let's keep our community informed and safe.



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The Pavilions at Talking Stick is your ultimate playground for summer fun!



Located in the heart of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's Entertainment District, The Pavilions at Talking Stick is a must-visit destination for families, foodies, and thrill-seekers alike.

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Please call the Church ahead of time to confirm information.
Information was correct at the time of print, however, services may have changed since then.

News and Events In and Around Indian Country

BY DALTON WALKER
O’odham Action News
dalton.walker@srpmic-nsn.gov

Arizona Launches Turquoise Alert

Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs signed the new Turquoise Alert System bill into law in May and officially announced the system’s launch on July 10.

The tool will assist the Arizona Department of Public Safety and law enforcement officers across the state in responding to statewide alerts for missing Indigenous and endangered persons.

An alert will be activated when someone under 65 goes missing under unexplained or suspicious circumstanc-es and is believed to be endangered.

Arizona Congressional District 7 Election Set

Voters will determine the Congres-sional seat left by the death of Raúl Gri-jalva in September. Grijalva, a longtime Democrat, died in March.

Grijalva’s daughter, Adelita, won the Democratic primary in July and ad-vanced to September’s general election. She’ll face Republican Daniel Butierez on September 23. At least three other candidates are campaigning as write-ins.

Adelita Grijalva has a strong chance at winning the seat, as the district is heavily registered as Democratic. Her father held the southern Arizona seat for 22 years.

Senate Committee on Indian Affairs Examines Key Nominee

William “Billy” Kirkland is an-other step closer to becoming the U.S. Department of the Interior’s assistant secretary for Indian Affairs.

On July 17, the U.S. Senate Commit-tee on Indian Affairs held a confirma-tion hearing to consider the nomination of Kirkland, who is Navajo. President Donald Trump nominated Kirkland for the role in February.

If approved, Kirkland’s nomination will be considered by the full Senate.

Arizona Transportation Department Collaborates with Tohono O’odham Community College

The O’odham language can be heard as part of an Arizona Department of Transportation campaign.

The state has been working with the Tohono O’odham Community Col-lege to share information on several road projects in southern Arizona. The O’odham Language Center assisted in creating audio translations of infor-mation on several current and future ADOT road projects.

The audio recordings were embed-ded as scannable QR codes on project information fliers and broadcast on the Tohono O’odham Nation-owned radio station, KOHN. You can also listen to the campaign on ADOT’s social media pages.

Native Leadership Awards Nominations Open

The 2025 Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Awards are accepting nominations through August 22.

This is the 42nd year the Phoenix Indian Center has hosted the awards program, which includes eight catego-ries for nominees who demonstrate dedication, leadership and commitment to the advancing the Native community.

To nominate, check the Phoenix Indian Center website. The awards program is scheduled for November 19 at the Heard Museum in Phoenix.

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PUBLIC WORKS NOTICE

SRPMIC Council has approved the nightly closures of the Salt River and Lehi Cemeteries due to continued vandalism.

The Salt River and Lehi Cemeteries will be closed from 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.

**If you have any questions, please contact Memorial Services at
(480) 278-7050**

JUVENILE COURT

JURISDICTION: SALT RIVER PIMA MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT

ADDRESS: 10040 EAST OSBORN RD. SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85256

CONTACT: (480) 362-6315

ALL JUVENILE COURT CASES REPORT TO COURTROOM #3 ON THE 1ST FLOOR.

FAILURE TO APPEAR CAN AFFECT YOUR RIGHTS

Deloney Sr., Jayce Phillip – Initial Guardianship Hearing Case: J-23-0049 Court Date: August 19, 2025 at 11 a.m.

CIVIL COURT

JURISDICTION: SALT RIVER PIMA MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT

ADDRESS: 10040 EAST OSBORN RD. SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85256

CONTACT: (480) 362-6315

CIVIL COURT CASES REPORT TO COURTROOM #1/ #2 ON THE 1ST FLOOR.

FAILURE TO APPEAR CAN AFFECT YOUR RIGHTS

Careaga, Michelle Yvette - Evidentiary Guardianship Hearing Case: CV-25-0822 Court Date: September 4, 2025 at 10 AM

DEFAULT NOTICES

DELONEY SR., JAYCE PHILLIP
J-23-0049

SUMMONS FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN S.R.P.M.I.C. §§ 10-114 THRU 10-126

In the Matter Of: J. D. JR. D.O.B. 01/21/2021

TO: Jayce Phillip Deloney Sr. / 655 S. Mesa Dr. Apt. 2009, Mesa, AZ 85210

A Petition for Appointment of Guardian of Minor has been filed in this Court in which it is represented that you are a parent or legal guardian of the child(ren) named above. The Petition includes a request for the Court to appoint proposed person(s) as guardian(s) for the child(ren) named above. Your rights may be affected.

Within 30 calendar days after receiving this Summons and the Petition for Appointment of Guardian of Minor, you must file a written response. If you fail to attend the hearing or to defend by filing a written response, the Court may enter a default guardianship order appointing the proposed person(s) as legal guardian(s) and take any other action that is authorized by law.

THEREFORE YOU ARE ORDERED to APPEAR for an Initial Guardianship Hearing before the Honorable Judge Matha, Salt River Juvenile Court on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, at 11:00 PM, in Court Room #3.

Pursuant to Administrative Order No. 14-0004, effective

August 4, 2014, legal counsel, parties, and their respective witnesses shall be present in the courthouse at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to any proceeding.

NOTICE: Violation of this Order is Subject to Proceedings for Contempt of Court Pursuant to Salt River Community Code Section 6-42. The Court May Find the Parent, Guardian or Custodian in Contempt for Failure to Appear at a Court Hearing or For Failure to Follow Court Orders.

COURT CLERK - SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY TRIBAL COURT

LEWIS, ROXANNE
CV-25-0784

NOTICE OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT:

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Court, State of Arizona, Maricopa County original jurisdiction court case number CV-25-0784

Notice of Default Judgment is hereby given ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that default judgment against Respondent, Roxanne Lewis, is hereby ENTERED. It is further, ORDERED AND ADJUDGED, that Respondent, Roxanne Lewis shall pay \$19,397.40 to Petitioner, Country Club Cars. Payment shall be made to Petitioner within thirty (30) days of this Order. This order is final and shall be served on Respondent in

Carlos, Laila Athena - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-3178 Court Date: August 28, 2025 at 9 AM

Enos, Sahlene Candice - Order to Show Cause/Bond Forfeiture Hearing Case: CR-20-0462, CR-22-0160, CR-23-0114 Court Date: September 3, 2025 at 10 AM

Goodwin, Heather - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-0900 Court Date: August 12, 2025 at 9:30 AM

Goodwin, Heather - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-1968 Court Date: August 26, 2025 at 9:30 AM

Lewis, Maria Ernestina - Entry of Default Judgement Case: CV-25-0782 Court Date: August 18, 2025 at 9:30 AM

Phillips, Alexander Demetrius Will - Initial/Evidentiary Paternity Hearing Case: CV-25-3064 Court Date: August 13, 2025 at 9 AM

Thomas, Elijah - Order of Protection Hearing Case: CV-25-3768 Court Date: August 26, 2025 at 11:30 AM

Washington, Edward Lynn - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-3181 Court Date: August 28, 2025 at 9:00 AM

MANUEL, MORNING STAR
NOTICE OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT:

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Court, State of Arizona, Maricopa County original jurisdiction court case number CV-24-5855

Notice of Default Judgment is hereby given ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that default judgment against Respondent, Morning Star Manuel, is hereby ENTERED. It is further, ORDERED AND ADJUDGED, that Respondent, Morning Star Manuel shall pay \$11,351.84 to Petitioner, Country Club Cars. Payment shall be made to Petitioner within thirty (30) days of this Order. This order is final and shall be served on Respondent in accordance to Rule 5-20(c).

PARCHCORN SR., ELLIS J.
CV-24-5858

NOTICE OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT:

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Court, State of Arizona, Maricopa County original jurisdiction court case number CV-24-5858

Notice of Default Judgment is hereby given ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that default judgment against Respondent, Ellis J. Parchcorn Sr. is hereby ENTERED. It is further, ORDERED AND ADJUDGED, that Respondent, Ellis J. Parchcorn Sr. shall pay \$3,268.59 to Petitioner, Country Club Cars. Payment shall be made to Petitioner within thirty (30) days of this Order. This order is final and shall be served on Respondent in accordance to Rule 5-20(c).

PARCHCORN JR., ELLIS J.
NOTICE OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT:

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Court, State of Arizona, Maricopa County original jurisdiction court case number: CV-25-0899

Notice of Default Judgment is hereby given ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that default judgment against Respondents, Parchcorn, Ellis J. Jr, is hereby ENTERED. It is further, ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that Respondents, Parchcorn, Ellis J. Jr, shall pay Petitioner, Baptisto, Michelle Dyan. Payment shall be made to Petitioner within thirty (30) days of this Order. This order is final and shall be served on Respondent in accordance to Rule 5-20(c). For a copy of this Order please contact the court at 480-362-6315.

SOUNDEST, JULIE ISABELLE HILL
NOTICE OF DEFAULT JUDGMENT:

Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community Court, State of Arizona, Maricopa County original jurisdiction court case number CV-25-0604

Notice of Default Judgment is hereby given ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that default judgment against Respondent, Julie Isabelle Hill Sundust., is hereby ENTERED. It is further, ORDERED AND ADJUDGED, that Respondent, , Julie Isabelle Hill Sundust shall pay \$18,771.23 to Petitioner, Country Club Cars. Payment shall be made to Petitioner within thirty (30) days of this Order. This order is final and shall be served on Respondent in accordance to Rule 5-20(c).

Public Comments on Proposed Amendments to the Workers’ Compensation Ordinance

Comment Period: July 9, 2025 – October 10, 2025

On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, the SRPMIC Council authorized a ninety (90) day public comment period for the proposed amendments to the Community’s Workers’ Compensation Ordinance. The draft ordinance does the following:

These amendments contain three (3) separate provisions with the primary purpose of providing additional workers’ compensation benefits to Firefighters and other first responders focusing on cancer diagnoses, heart issues and mental health counseling after exposure to traumatic events. The amendments are as follows:

Option 1: A presumption would be added to the law allowing firefighters to qualify for workers’ compensation benefits when they are diagnosed with certain cancers that result in disability or death. Certain criteria must be met in order to prove it is a work-related injury.

Option 2: A heart or perivascular injury is presumed to be an occupational disease and is deemed to arise out of employment for first responders only if it can be fairly traced to the employment as the proximate cause.

Option 3: A program would be established to provide first responders who are exposed to a traumatic event while in the course of duty up to twelve (12) visits of licensed counseling fully paid by the Community. Additionally, there would be no loss of pay and benefits to the employee if a licensed mental health professional determines the employee is not fit for duty. The employee would not be required to use leave for these counseling sessions. You can find the full text of proposed ordinance amendments and presentation materials at: <https://www.srpmic-nsn.gov/government/ogc/proposed-ordinances/>

Please submit all comments in writing either to the Community’s intranet “Ordinance Public Comment” page, or via standard mail or email to the following:

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
The Office of the General Counsel
10,005 East Osborn Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85256
OrdPublicComment@srpmic-nsn.gov
Jeff.Harmon@srpmic-nsn.gov

Public Comments on Proposed Amendments to the Guardianship/Conservatorship Ordinance

Comment Period: July 9, 2025 – October 10, 2025

On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, the SRPMIC Council authorized a ninety (90) day public comment period for the proposed amendments to the Community’s Guardianship / Conservatorship Ordinance. The draft ordinance does the following:

These amendments are fairly minor and the primary purpose of the amendments are to change the government department that manages the guardianship program. The specific amendments are as follows:

Changes the “Health and Human Services Department” to the “Social Services Department” with respect to the government department that manages the Guardianship Division. The reason for this change is because the Health and Human Services Department is primarily focused on health services and public health initiatives whereas the Social Services Department is best suited to handle case management type of services. The Guardianship Division is primarily a case management function. A guardian provides for the daily needs of vulnerable adults including but limited to: food assistance, housing assistance, life skills training, scheduling medical care, and providing transportation for various needs.

Please submit all comments in writing either to the Community’s intranet “Ordinance Public Comment” page, or via standard mail or email to the following:

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
The Office of the General Counsel
10,005 East Osborn Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85256
OrdPublicComment@srpmic-nsn.gov
Jeff.Harmon@srpmic-nsn.gov

Currently the code mandates that the director of the Health and Human Services Department and the director of the Finance Department are solely responsible for managing the Guardianship Division and the Conservatorship Division. These code amendments will add language of “or his/her designee” as it relates to these directors. This change will allow those respective directors to delegate the duty to one of their employees which will allow for flexibility and better service to Community members.

Currently the code requires that an audit be conducted every year for the Conservatorship Division. These code amendments would change that requirement to every other year which gives the government more flexibility and aligns with the current practice of the government wide external audits which occur every other year.

You can find the full text of proposed ordinance amendments and presentation materials at <https://www.srpmic-nsn.gov/government/ogc/proposed-ordinances/>

Salt River Public Works Department

Memorial Services & Cemeteries

“Providing a hospitable place to honor loved ones at the end of life’s journey.”

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
8:00AM – 5:00PM

Main Office Located at:
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9849 East Earll Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85256

For Any Questions Call:
(480) 278-7050

CONTRACTED MORTUARIES

Bunker Family Funerals & Cremation (480) 964-8686

Whitney & Murphy Funeral Home (602) 840-5600

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CARTIQUE ENTERTAINMENT VENUE
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, 24-CUP-15 & 25-CUP-01 AND USE VARIANCE, 25-UV-02

The Applicant, Vibe Lot 6, LLC has requested two Conditional Use Permits (CUP) and a Use Variance (UV) to develop an 81,198 square foot entertainment venue branded as “Cartique” on a 20.86 acre lot within the Riverwalk Master Development. This project is to house a museum-style entertainment venue featuring auto-themed art. The proposed facility will include virtual racing arcade simulators, a restaurant, a speakeasy, a bar, and an event space. A small portion of the art and automobiles on display will be available for purchase by patrons. Proposed events will include corporate and private events, public car clubs, car launch conventions, and auctions.

DATE: WEDNESDAY, August 27, 2025
TIME: 5:00 P.M.
LOCATION: SRPMIC COUNCIL CHAMBERS 10091 East Osborn Road Scottsdale, AZ 85256
You may view the recorded presentation starting Thursday, August 28, 2025. To view the video, please visit: <https://www.srpmic-nsn.gov/government/1879-phc/> Public comments can be made by email at public_hearing_comments@srpmic-nsn.gov, by phone at (480) 362-7470, by text at (623) 282-5757, by survey (follow web link above), or by mail to CDD, Attn: Public Comments, 10005 E. Osborn Rd, Scottsdale AZ 85256.

For more information about the project, contact Noah Katt, CDD Planner II at (480) 362-3269.



Cartique CUPs and Use Variance Context Aerial Location Map
Figure 1

Notice of Public Hearing – Request to Rescind Exclusion Order Against Raynaldo Galindo, Jr.

Mr. Galindo was excluded from the Community by Council decision through Resolution SR-3131-2013 on February 6, 2013. Mr. Galindo was informed at the time of his exclusion that he may request to rescind the exclusion decision if after a number of years he remains law abiding. On June 1, 2025, Mr. Galindo submitted a written request to rescind the original exclusion order. The Council has scheduled this request for a public hearing on August 13, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. located at the Council Chambers during the regularly scheduled Council session. Mr. Galindo will have a brief amount of time to present his request orally. Council will consider input from Community members through written comment.

Any interested Community member should submit their support or opposition in writing to the Office of the General Counsel, Attn: Jeffery Harmon, 10005 East Osborn Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85256 or via email at: Jeff.Harmon@srpmic-nsn.gov. Please contact the Office of the General Counsel if you have any questions.

O'ODHAM ACTION NEWS DEADLINES

ISSUE DEADLINE AT NOON

AUGUST 21
SEPTEMBER 4

AUGUST 8
AUGUST 22

SEND INFORMATION TO O’ODHAM ACTION NEWS
at oodhamactionnews@srpmic-nsn.gov
For more information please call (480) 362-7750.

Early Enrichment Graduates Celebrated at Ske:g Himdag Ki

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

The next generation of stellar students has arrived. On July 11, 10 tiny students enrolled in the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Early Enrichment Program received their diplomas. They will embark on their scholastic journey with kindergarten now on the horizon.

The graduation celebration was held inside room 56 in the Ske:g Himdag Ki, which was nearly filled with family members and loved ones celebrating their graduate. Attendees were also served refreshments and a light meal.

Before the graduates received their certificates, Kristy White, youth development specialist for the Early Enrichment Program, offered a moment of appreciation for the staff and faculty who helped teach the young kiddos traditional songs, dances and more. “They spent time with Mr. Isaac (Lopez),” began White to the families. “They learned their body parts, numbers and more. If you ever hear them talking in O’odham, that’s because of Mr. Isaac,” Lopez shared with a smile.

Later, Cody Achin, outreach coordinator for the O’odham Piipaash Language Program, shared two songs, The Kakaicu and Going Home songs. “Don’t worry, running around is part of the Kakaicu song, they’ll run around and chase each other,” shared Achin as the students got into their places.

After Achin performed the songs, it was time to celebrate the graduates. In all, 10 graduates received certificates, acknowledging their hard work and achievements throughout the year. With kindergarten officially on the way, the staff from the Early Enrichment Program wanted to provide the graduates an extra special award to celebrate the ceremony.

As a result, each graduate received a special award while all their names were read aloud to roaring rounds of applause.

This year’s graduates were:

- Christalynn Ray, recipient of the kindness award.
- Julian Gonzales, recipient of the fabulous friend award
- Avery Smith, recipient of the friendship award
- Marcello Flores, recipient of the awesome artist award
- Zuna Thomas, recipient of the good vibes award
- Charlie Hillan, recipient of the sunshine award
- Azariah Miller, recipient of the O’odham/Piipaash Language award
- Mateo Flores, recipient of the best builder award
- Celestia Avalos, recipient of the best dancer award
- Richard Billie, recipient of the track star award

Following the distribution of certificates, the graduates were showered with additional gifts from various departments in the Community as staff continued to share their appreciation with the parents, families and loved ones of the graduates.

Tori Paukgana, Youth Services director, brought the ceremony to a close by providing heartfelt remarks about the grads.

“No matter what kind of day it is, [the students] always come in with a smile and a hug. There’s no negativity for them, which is awesome,” Paukgana said.

She continued, “It is true that it does take a community to raise a

child, this definitely has shown the work that we put in to make sure they move on to be successful in whatever they choose to do. But most importantly, thank you to the parents and families for all that you contribute to our program and for all you do.”



Meet the New Principals at Salt River Elementary School

SUBMITTED BY SALT RIVER SCHOOLS

Salt River Elementary School is excited to welcome two new leaders beginning the 2025-2026 school year!

Don Schopp, Principal

Don Schopp was hired as the new principal (his last name is pronounced with a “shh” in front, a long “o” - and rhymes with rope). Schopp is Sicangu Lakota from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe in South Dakota and says he grew up mostly in Wyoming. He most recently served as principal of Sacaton Middle School. Schopp earned his master’s degree in education leadership (including a Principal’s Certificate) from Northern Arizona University. Schopp successfully completed the Buckeye Union High

School District Superintendent’s Aspiring Administrator’s Academy, as well as the Arizona Department of Education Principal’s Academy.

Prior to working at Sacaton Middle School, Schopp was the department chair for math at Youngker High School in Buckeye, Arizona, where he oversaw 22 math teachers. Youngker went from earning a “B” letter grade to earning an “A” letter grade in back-to-back years. He taught AP statistics and college algebra at Youngker.

More to come about Mr. Schopp!



LEFT: New Salt River Principal Don Schopp met with families and students during the official ‘Meet the Principal’ event at SRES on July 31. Photo by Juan Ysaguirre.

Jacki Stroup Assistant Principal

Jacki Stroup is the new assistant principal at SRES! Stroup wrote this message for students and families:

I grew up in a small reservation town in South Dakota, where education was a big part of my life—my dad and grandpa were both school leaders, and they inspired me to follow in their footsteps. I first moved to Arizona in 2008, and I absolutely love it here—even the hot summers! I enjoy spending time outdoors, soaking up the sunshine, and exploring all the beautiful places this state has to offer.

I’ve always loved learning and helping others learn, too! I earned my bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Dakota State University. I completed my master’s degree in educational administration from Sinte Gleska University. I also have certifications in K-12 Educational Technology and Reading Recovery, which means I love using technology to help kids learn and helping students become strong readers!

Over the years, I’ve worn many hats in education:

- Assistant Principal
- Instructional Coach
- Classroom Teacher
- Afterschool Program Teacher
- Basketball Coach (girls and boys!)
- Volleyball Coach

Each role has helped me grow and reminded me how amazing students are when they’re supported and encouraged.

As a proud member of the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe (Sicangu Lakota), I understand how important it is to honor and preserve Native culture and language. That’s one of the big reasons I wanted to be part of this school and Community. I’m excited to learn more about the O’odham and Piipaash cultures and to support our students in keeping their traditions and languages alive.

Here are a few of the short-term goals I’m focused on as we grow together during this first year at Salt River Elementary School:

- Build strong relationships with students, families, and staff.
- Support educators in creating fun and meaningful learning experiences.
- Make sure every student feels safe, valued, and excited to come to school.
- Looking ahead, here are a few of my long-term goals for our great school.
- Help every child discover how they learn best and overcome challenges.
- Strengthen our connections to culture, language, and Community.
- Create a school environment where the whole child—mind, body, and spirit—can thrive!
- I believe every child can learn and succeed, and I’m here to help make that happen. I can’t wait to meet all of you and be part of this amazing Salt River community! Let’s make this a fantastic year together!

Anthony Wilhelms Retires From Salt River Fire Department



Firefighter Anthony Wilhelms (left) stands next to Deputy Chief Nelson Wood as Wilhelms receives a gift from the Salt River Fire Department for his 25 years of service to the Community.

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

For 25 years, Firefighter Anthony Wilhelms served with honor at the Salt River Fire Department and has now retired. The department held a retirement luncheon and celebration for him on June 27 at Station 294. His family and fellow SRFD crew, past and present, dropped by to show their support. Former SRFD firefighter, Odie Toney, returned home to serve as grill master for the backyard barbecue with his buddies that Wilhelms had requested. “Anthony came on a year before I did, and he was one of my mentors

coming up,” shared Deputy Chief Mike Mink. “It’s kind of bittersweet standing before [Wilhelms] today, watching the amazing career that you did have. I’m sure you’re going to have a fantastic retirement.” As a part of the retirement, Wilhelms was presented with a ceremonial axe engraved with his name. Then the echo of radio sounds and beeps began as congratulations from staff rolled in. “Congratulations on your retirement. I wish you luck in your future endeavors,” a voice said over the radio during Wilhelms’ traditional last call. Wilhelms stood with Mink, who was holding the radio up to a microphone for attendees to hear as well wishes continued over the airwaves, one after another.

SRPMIC PURPLE HEART RECIPIENTS			
Cameron Grey Sr. Wallace Anton Wesly M. Bernard Clarence Chiago Gregory Chiago Gordon F. Enos Leonard A. Enos Alfred Ferguson	Dean Jackson Frederick James Sr. Herman C. Juan Matthew B. Juan Simon Kavoka Phillip D. Largo David Lewis Delmar R. Manuel	Sullivan R. Manuel Lemuel Miguel Abbott Moore Percy Osif Alfred Perkins Verton Ray Roderick R. Shaw Everett Rhoades	Harry Smith Roger R. Smith Sr. Willard Smith Ansel Thomas Joseph C. Thomas Leonard P. Thomas Fred Washington

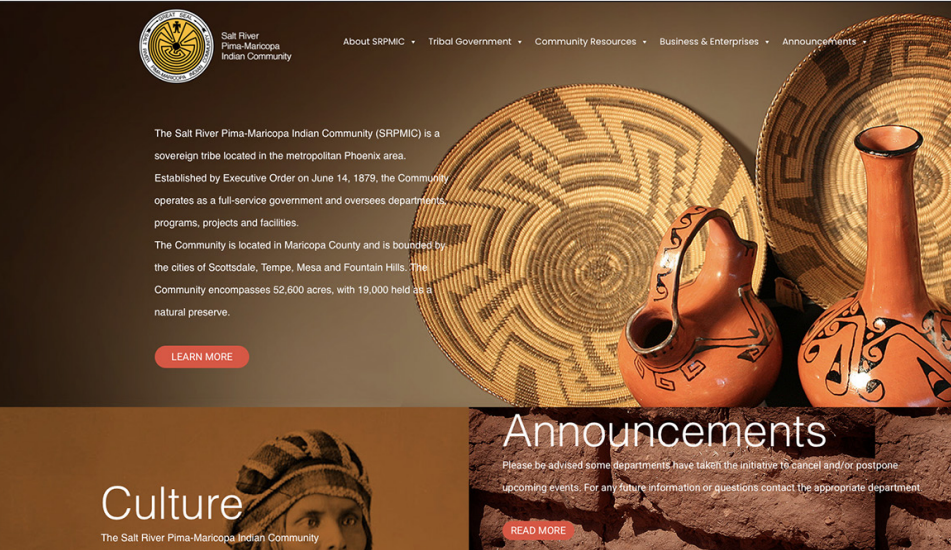
Honoring Our SRPMIC Purple Heart Recipients

SUBMITTED BY VETERANS SERVICES

In the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, we are proud to recognize and honor the 31 brave warriors who are Purple Heart recipients. Of those 31, nine were personally awarded the Purple Heart for being wounded in action. In contrast, others are remembered and honored as KIA (Killed in Action), POW (Prisoner of War) and MIA (Missing in Action). Each one of them carries a legacy of sacrifice, courage, and deep service to our Community and this country.

Since 2022, our Community has held the distinct honor of being the first southern tribe in Arizona to be officially designated a Purple

Heart Community. To represent this recognition and to keep their memory alive, we have proudly placed 18 Purple Heart road signs throughout the Community — so that everyone who enters our lands knows they are stepping into a place that deeply respects and remembers its warriors. We also want to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined our Virtual Purple Heart Walk/Run — your participation helps us carry forward this legacy of remembrance. We hope to see many of you proudly wearing your 2025 Purple Heart T-shirts on August 7, which is National Purple Heart Day — a day set aside to honor those who were wounded or lost in service to our country. Let’s continue to uplift and remember every single one of our Purple Heart recipients — not just on August 7, but every day. Their sacrifice is the foundation of our freedom.



The old version of the SRPMIC website.

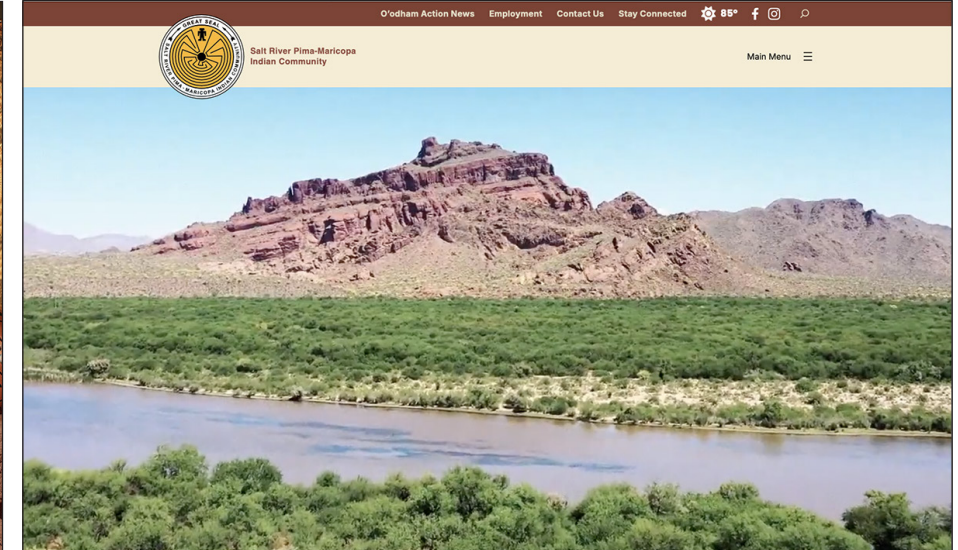
SRPMIC Unveils New Website

The SRPMIC officially debuts an all-new and improved website featuring fresh designs with dynamic content

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

Have you seen the new Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community website? Though the website address remains the same, the entire SRPMIC website has undergone upgrades. The new website arrived after months of planning from directors, managers and staff. The official debut of the new website took place on June 18 and is constantly maintained and updated by staff in the Community Relations Office. Now on the front page, website visitors will immediately see videos showcasing traditional basket dancers, gourd singers, baidaj harvesting, as well as drone footage of the river near Red Mountain and of the Community itself. These additions were made to showcase the traditions and cultures of

both the O’odham and Piipaash. Another addition to the website is a high-quality image of Red Mountain, which serves as the website’s footer, as well as traditional designs along the sides of the website. Every page of www.srpmic-nsn.gov has been revamped and refined to provide the Community with the latest up-to-date information, which includes additions received via feedback from the Community. Gone are the block categories from the previous website design’s home page. In its place, a revamped and more organized main menu. Now, the new website contains five main categories which include events, Community resources, tribal government, economic development and a more in-depth page detailing the history of the Community. From the main menu, website visitors can find the appropri-



The all-new and improved website, currently active and online.

ate information they need using a more precise directory. To further enhance the visitor’s experience while browsing the new website, website visitors can now utilize the all-new search button feature. The feature allows for a deep dive into the website, utilizing keywords to help locate the appropriate information, similar to a Google search, but specifically tailored for only SRPMIC-related information. The addition arrives after ample feedback was received from the Community regarding the need for a more user-friendly website with easier navigation. This is in addition to the recently updated and extensive phone directory, which lists all departments within the Community. The site also allows visitors to sign up for email notifications by providing their email address. Additionally, due to popular demand, a new weather-alert feature has been added to the upper-right-hand corner of the Community’s website page, showcasing the up-to-the-minute outdoor temperature for those warm

nights and chilly mornings throughout the year. Furthermore, the top of the page also contains the official link to the O’odham Action News website, which received an upgrade last year. Additional links at the bottom of the newly redesigned website will continue to direct visitors to SRPMIC’s external social media pages, government services employment portal, and more. Interested individuals can visit the all-new website at any time to find the appropriate and necessary information they need for all things related to the SRPMIC. Open your mobile phone/tablet and scan the QR code with your camera for more information.





An aerial view shows progress on McKellips Road within the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. Photo courtesy Maricopa County Department of Transportation.

McKellips Road Project Construction Update

SUBMITTED BY MARICOPA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) reopened McKellips Road between Alma School Road and 92nd Street on July 3, marking a key milestone in the McKellips Road improvement project, a major roadway on the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

The full closure of McKellips Road allowed work crews to install a reinforced concrete box culvert across the roadway between Dobson Road and 92nd Street. During installation, a large area of McKellips Road was excavated by crews to allow for the box culvert installation. This structure will allow water to flow under the road and provide improved drainage to reduce flooding during weather events.

Construction crews continue to work nights and weekends on Phase Two of the project. This phase

includes building new curbs and gutters, sidewalks and roadway medians, as well as adding new asphalt pavement to McKellips Road. Completion of the second phase is expected in early 2026.

MCDOT anticipates that future closures can be expected to take place along McKellips Road and adjacent local streets as the project progresses. Closures are put in place in active work zones for the safety of community members, construction crews and for the travelling public. Short-term closures provide a secure work zone for crews to complete the work quickly and efficiently.

MCDOT and SRPMIC leaders are committed to public safety and appreciate your patience while construction is underway.

For more information on the project and the latest travel restrictions, please visit the project website at <https://www.maricopa.gov/5938/McKellips-Road>.

For additional project information, please contact MCDOT at MCDOTProjects@maricopa.gov or call (602) 506-3342.



Scan the QR Code to view the latest information and updates on McKellips Road improvements.



Free Animal Health Event

Salt River Ballfields
1839 N Longmore Rd

Wellness Clinic
Saturday, 8/16

Exams, Vaccines, Flea/Tick Treatment,
Microchipping, Heartworm Prevention,
Health Screening, Medical Concerns



Reminder

ALL VISITS NOW BY APPOINTMENT!

Learn more about this event
and schedule your pets at:

nagifoundation.org/programs

Clinics are open to all SRPMIC members and residents,
with Tribal ID or proof of residency.



SUMMER CELEBRATION

Enrolled Salt River members 55+ who reside in the community, this is your **final opportunity to participate in our Title VI needs assessment survey!** Prize for participation. We will have several staff on hand to help you complete your assessment. **Appointments encouraged, 480.362.6350.**

Those who are not qualified or have already completed their assessment are not eligible for the survey incentive, but there will be plenty of raffle prizes and other fun, so **please join us!**

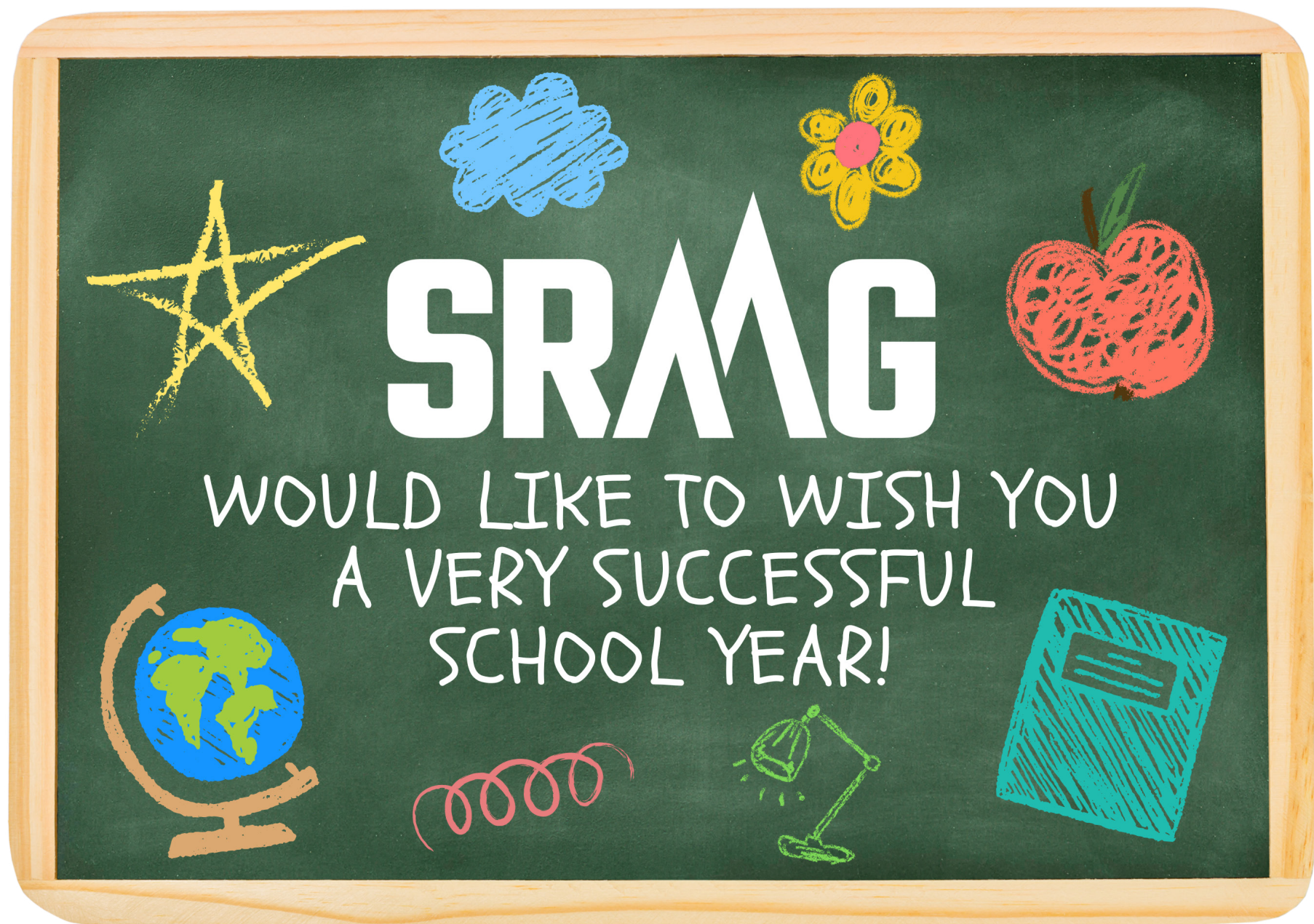
Food, Fun, Entertainment & Prizes!

All seniors welcome!

Fri. Aug. 8 | 10 am-1 pm
Salt River Community Building



To schedule an assessment and for questions, call 480.362.6350.



Check us out at . . .
www.srmaterials.com



Exceptional People...Exceptional Benefits...Exceptional Company
Phoenix Cement Company and Salt River Sand & Rock,
dba Salt River Materials Group,
both divisions of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

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 Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m., at the Tribal Library, 2nd floor of the Ske:g Himdag Ki (WOLF). For seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs.

TAI CHI FOR SENIORS, Tuesdays, 9-10 a.m., and Thursdays, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Senior Room of Ske:g Himdag Ki (WOLF). This ancient Chinese martial art uses slow and continuous movements to improve the mind and body. For seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs.

YOGA FOR FALL PREVENTION, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays, 1-2 p.m., Senior Room of Ske:g Himdag Ki (WOLF). Standing or chair options available. Guided movements improve strength, balance and flexibility. For seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs.

SENIOR AQUATIC FITNESS, Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m., pool at the of Ske:g Himdag Ki (WOLF). Guided exercises in water improve strength with less stress on joints. Bring a towel and wear comfortable swim attire. For seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs.

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.

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8 SENIOR SERVICES TITLE VI SUMMER CELEBRATION, 10 am-1 pm at Salt River Community Building. Enrolled Salt River members 55+ who reside in the community, this is your final opportunity to participate in the Senior Services Title VI needs assessment survey! Prize for participation. We will have several staff on hand to help you complete your assessment. Appointments encouraged, 480.362.6350. Those who are not qualified or have already completed their assessment are not eligible for the survey incentive, but there will be plenty of raffle prizes and other fun, so please join us! Food, Fun, Entertainment & Prizes! All seniors welcome! To schedule an assessment and for questions, call 480.362.6350.

11 COMMUNITY SENIORS MEETING, 5 pm at Salt River Community Building. This meeting is for enrolled SRPMIC Community Member Seniors (55+ years). Dinner begins at 5:00PM - Meeting at 6:00PM. Salt River Tribal ID will be Required. (Office of Membership Services will check IDs) Contact Senior Services in advance, if transportation is needed at (480)362-5672. For other meeting questions contact the SRPMIC Council Secretaries at (480)362-7469.

12 THRIVING WITH DIABETES, 5:30 pm -

6:30 pm at RPHC Teaching Kitchen. Do you or a loved one have diabetes? Join us for "Thriving with Diabetes" - a FREE 4-session workshop designed to help you live a healthier, more empowered life! Learn how to: Lower your risks; Understand medications; Manage your emotions; Make healthy food choices; Decode lab results; Stay active & much more! Virtual options are available. Call 480-362-3355 to register. Spaces are limited!

14 THRIVING WITH DIABETES, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm at RPHC Teaching Kitchen. Do you or a loved one have diabetes? Join us for "Thriving with Diabetes" - a FREE 4-session workshop designed to help you live a healthier, more empowered life! Learn how to: Lower your risks; Understand medications; Manage your emotions; Make healthy food choices; Decode lab results; Stay active & much more! Virtual options are available. Call 480-362-3355 to register. Spaces are limited!

15 CHRISTMAS ANGELS BAKE SALE, Roundhouse Cafe 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Join us for a sweet way to give back! The Legal Services Office is hosting a Bake Sale to support this year's Christmas Angel Program, which helps bring holiday joy to SRPMIC children and families in need. Stop by to purchase delicious baked goods, made with care by staff and volunteers. Every treat sold helps support a great cause! All proceeds go directly to the SRPMIC Christmas Angel Program. Come early, support the cause, and spread the cheer!

16 CM ANTONTE DISTRICT B MEETING, 9 a.m. at SRPMIC Council Chambers. For the district meeting agenda, please visit the SRPMIC Council District Meeting information website: <https://tinyurl.com/SRPMICDMs>

18 CM FULWILDER DISTRICT D MEETING, 6 p.m. at ALA Lecture Hall. For the district

meeting agenda, please visit the SRPMIC Council District Meeting information website: <https://tinyurl.com/SRPMICDMs>

19 CM SCABBY/ CM DALLAS DISTRICT F&G MEETING, 6 p.m. at Lehi Community Building. For the district meeting agenda, please visit the SRPMIC Council District Meeting information website: <https://tinyurl.com/SRPMICDMs>

19 THRIVING WITH DIABETES, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm at RPHC Teaching Kitchen. Do you or a loved one have diabetes? Join us for "Thriving with Diabetes" - a FREE 4-session workshop designed to help you live a healthier, more empowered life! Learn how to: Lower your risks; Understand medications; Manage your emotions; Make healthy food choices; Decode lab results; Stay active & much more! Virtual options are available. Call 480-362-3355 to register. Spaces are limited!

21 THRIVING WITH DIABETES, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm at RPHC Teaching Kitchen. Do you or a loved one have diabetes? Join us for "Thriving with Diabetes" - a FREE 4-session workshop designed to help you live a healthier, more empowered life! Learn how to: Lower your risks; Understand medications; Manage your emotions; Make healthy food choices; Decode lab results; Stay active & much more! Virtual options are available. Call 480-362-3355 to register. Spaces are limited!

21 ADULT WIOA ORIENTATION, 9 a.m. - 10 a.m. at Two Waters Building B Room B102 - X'aa (Cottonwood). Connect with Us! Learn about WIOA eligibility requirements; program services for enrolled participants; guidance toward obtaining career goals through education & training. Contact Salt River WIOA Program @ (480) 362-7950