



Play Ball!

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Celebrates Spring Training's Opening Day



Photos by OAN Staff.

3 Takeaways:

- For 15 years, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community has hosted the spring training home opener at Salt River Fields.
- Community royalty, artists, dancers, performers and singers participated in the pregame ceremonies for this year's home opener on Feb. 20.
- The Arizona Diamondbacks defeated the co-host of Salt River Fields, the Colorado Rockies, 3-2.

BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE

O'odham Action News

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The first official crack of a baseball bat was heard on Feb. 20, signifying the return of everyone's favorite sport, baseball.

As has been the tradition for 15 years now, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community hosted

Continued on centerspread pages 10-11

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Ninth Annual Native Youth Identity Conference



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SRPMIC Injury Prevention Program and TIPCAP Team Receive National Award



SRPMIC Health and Human Services—Public Health Services Injury Prevention Coordinator Monte Yazzie stands in front of Injury Prevention signage at his office. As the lone Injury Prevention employee at SRPMIC, Yazzie's IHS TIPCAP team was recognized for the program's work in keeping the Community safe, receiving the 2024 National IHS Director's Award.

BY CHRIS PICCIUOLO

O'odham Action News

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The Indian Health Service (IHS) Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Program (TIPCAP), which includes the SRPMIC Public Health Injury Prevention Program, received the 2024 National IHS Director's Award.

SRPMIC Health and Human Services—Public Health Services Injury Prevention Coordinator Monte Yazzie was part of the team that was recognized. Also recognized was IHS Area Injury Prevention Program Manager Robert Morones.

The IHS Director's Award recognizes service that has significantly advanced its mission and vision through work focused on the goals and objectives in the IHS Strategic Plan. These goals and objectives are access, quality and management operations with particular emphasis on quality-improvement activities.

"We are a part of that plan as being a recipient of the TIPCAP grant," said Yazzie, referring to the SRPMIC Injury Prevention Program.

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SRPMIC Approves Construction of New Housing Community



The all-new housing development will feature 80-plus homes at the northwest corner of Chaparral Road and Dobson Road, near Scottsdale Community College.

BY JUAN YSAGUIRRE

O'odham Action News

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The new Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community housing development will offer builder-grade homes for sale and new rentals at Chaparral and Dobson.

In 2024, the Community revealed its Mesquite Trails and Lonely Cactus townhome communities. Those were in addition to last year's transitional housing community that the Community opened.

On Dec. 11, 2025, the SRPMIC Council approved plans to construct 80+ new homes at the northwest corner of Chaparral and Dobson Roads, east of Scottsdale Community College.

The subdivision's site will have homes built in phases, each

3 Takeaways:

- On Dec. 11, 2025, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Council approved plans to establish a new neighborhood of homes in the Community.
- Three styles of homes are available for SRPMIC members to purchase.
- Community members can help name the neighborhood.

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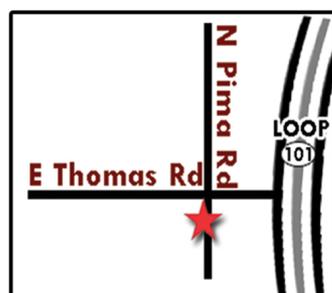
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Injury Prevention and TIPCAP Team Receive National Award

“This grant provides us with five years to integrate community-specific goals surrounding public health, and specifically injury prevention.”

TIPCAP is a national IHS program that provides grants to support injury prevention activities in tribal communities across the nation.

As for why the SRPMIC program was recognized, Yazzie cites the work that the program has done, which includes transportation safety for children and teens, opioid abuse prevention, and providing lockboxes and medication disposal bags.

“We do yoga, tai chi, home assessments and fall risk assessments for clients as well,” said Yazzie, who does it all by himself as the only Injury Prevention employee for the Community.

“That capacity to bring in the different opportunities to help advance the health status and decrease injuries for the communities, it’s really been the mission of the Injury Prevention Program and TIPCAP program.”

Yazzie has been the coordinator in this position for about 10 years. But he tells people the Injury Prevention Program can’t do the job by itself. Yazzie has a lot of great partners, he said.

“In recognition of this award, there are so many different people we have to bring into the conversation, [including] our Public Health leadership team, who’ve been very supportive of our efforts. Also, our Environmental Health team, our Diabetes Preven-

3 Takeaways:

- The SRPMIC Injury Prevention Program under Monte Yazzie was recognized along with TIPCAP for the 2024 National Indian Health Service (IHS) Director’s Award.
- The award recognizes service that has significantly advanced the health system’s mission and vision through the IHS Strategic Plan.
- A ceremony will be held on March 27 in Rockville, Maryland.

tion team, our WIC team, our disease investigators and our Community Health Nursing team have all been so beneficial as a team to have available to help with different efforts.”

Yazzie is also grateful for the close partnerships with the Early Childhood Education Center, Social Services, the Salt River Police Department and the Salt River Fire Department.

“Congratulations Monte for your great work preventing injury and promoting health and wellness through your work with the SRPMIC,” said SRPMIC Chief Public Health Officer Nancy Mangieri in a statement.

The IHS National Director’s Awards Ceremony will be held on March 27 at the IHS Headquarters in Rockville, Maryland.

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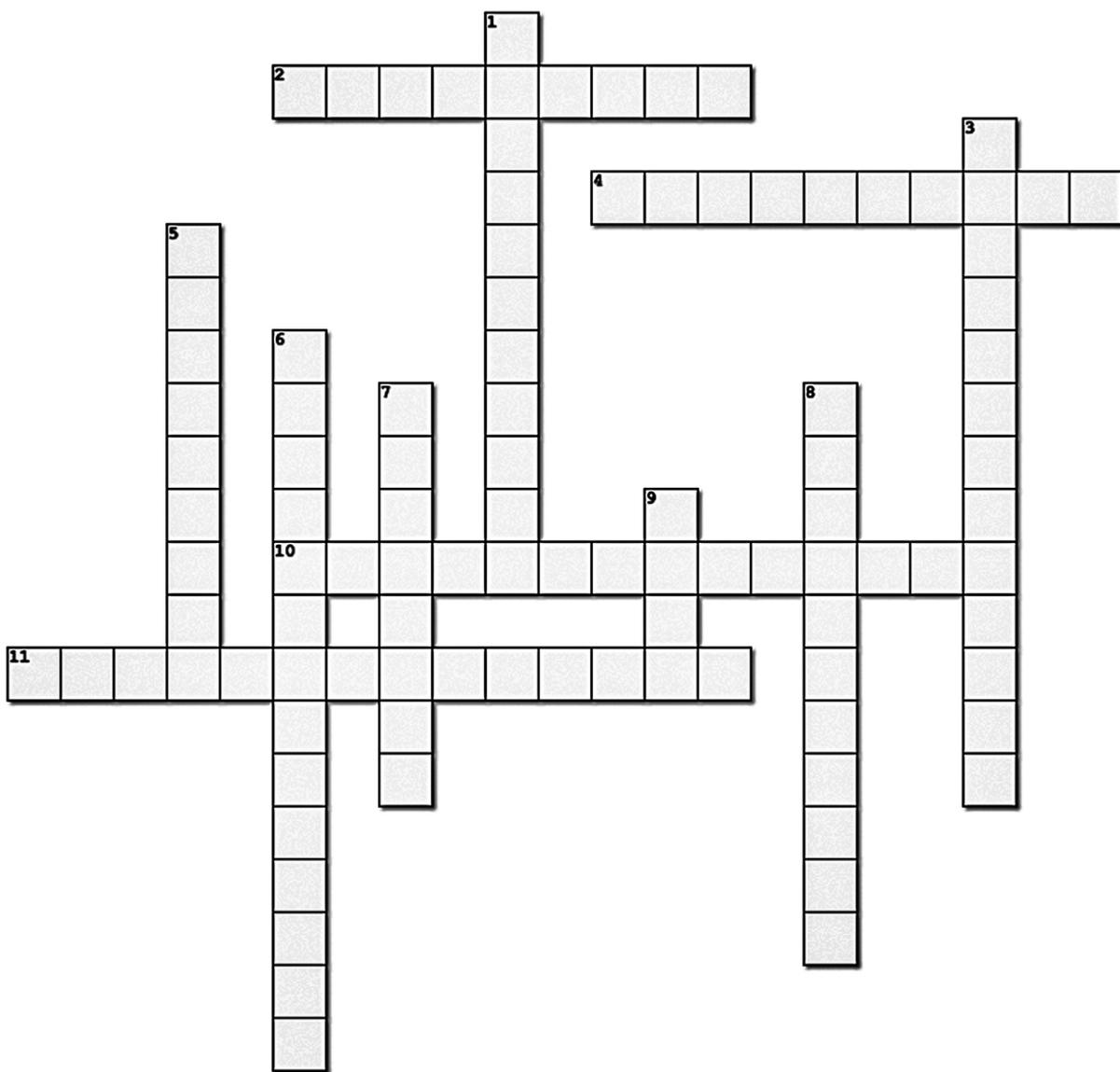
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Can you solve the crossword puzzle?

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

Enjoy!



Across

- 2. Cultural Resources Outreach Coordinator.
- 4. Colorado Rockies vice-president of community and retail operations.
- 10. Culture Teacher who was at the Traditional Storytelling Night.
- 11. Community Relations Office Communications and Marketing Specialist.

Down

- 1. SRPMIC Recreation Division Athletic Program Manager.
- 3. The instructor for 'Smart Tools for the Future: Using AI for Resumes and Scholarships' during the Youth Identity Conference.
- 5. The city in Maryland that will host the IHS National Director's Award Ceremony in March.
- 6. The first Tempe Union high school offering the Circle of Nations Pathway Program.
- 7. This month is also known as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.
- 8. Culture Specialist who was also at the Traditional Storytelling Night.
- 9. Gathering Of Native Americans acronym.

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Salt River Schools Hosts Traditional Storytelling Night



SRES Culture Teacher Hilary Smith (right) tells the story "Xathlyway and the Fat Xma" while students act out the storyline.

BY ANDREEA MIGUEL
O'odham Action News
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A special performance took place at Salt River Schools in February. On Feb. 5, the Education Native Language and Cultural team hosted a night of traditional storytelling at the Accelerated Learning Academy lecture hall. Stories were told by Culture Teacher Teresa Gonzales and Culture Specialist Hilary Smith. Before the storytelling began, guests were invited into the cafeteria for a light meal. As the food was being served, the cafeteria filled with families and friends eager for the special performance that was about to begin. Girl Scout cookies were also available for sale outside the auditorium.

In the lecture hall, Salt River Elementary School students were preparing for their roles in the stories. This year, Smith shared the Piipaash story "Xathlyway and the Fat Xma," narrating as students acted it out. After the first story was shared, the process continued as Gonzales narrated "Why Ban is the Color of Sand." The student actors received special recognition not only for their acting talents but also for their hard work and dedication that went into the staging and costumes. The night ended with flowers and congratulations from families, friends and supporters.



Lezarus Benally plays his role as Soam Ban (Brown Coyote) in the O'odham Legend 'Why Ban is the Color of Sand'.



Actors play their roles as Xma (Quail in Piipaash).



Families wait in the cafeteria for the show to start at the Accelerated Learning Academy.



Ariana Waatsa as Scedag Ban (Blue Ban) in 'Why Ban is the Color of Sand'.



Lennox Losey as Xathlyway (Coyote).



Celestina Rivers plays her role as Xma Shay (Fat Quail) in the Piipaash story 'Xathlyway and the Fat Xma'.

ROCKSTAR SRPMIC EMPLOYEES HONORED AT QUARTERLY RECOGNITION

BY ZOE HERNANDEZ
O'odham Action News
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What better way to start off the 2026 fiscal year than with a recognition breakfast? On Jan. 21, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Human Resources hosted the first-quarter employee recognition event at the Great Wolf Lodge. "Why are you here? Because you got recognized by somebody in your department for something you did really well," began Steve Haydukovich, SRPMIC Human Resources director. Each quarter, employees from different departments are recognized for their dedication to the Community and the services they provide to our people. Haydukovich believes that regardless of the job, everyone's work matters and contributes to the greater whole of the organization. "When your work matters, it means you matter, and so I think it's important to recognize everything

that you do matters, even as insignificant as you think it might be. That really gives meaning to your service to the Community," said Haydukovich. Community Relations Office Communications and Marketing Specialist Katerina Thomas was very honored to be recognized. She said, "At just 10 months into my time with the Community, I'm grateful for the opportunity to contribute to meaningful work and support initiatives that strengthen communication and engagement." Thomas also expressed her thanks and plans within the Community. "I'm thankful for the guidance and support of my leadership team and colleagues, and I look forward to continuing to grow in my position and take on new opportunities," she said. SRPMIC President Martin Harvier and Vice-President Ricardo Leonard attended the morning celebration. Harvier discussed how to view the work you do in a positive way. He said, "I think people ask you to do things a lot of

the time because they know it's going to get done and it's going to get done right. So, when somebody asks me to do something, I look at it almost as an honor that they are asking me to do it, and I do the best I can." Leonard thanked SRPMIC employees and mentioned how proud he was. He began, "It's always a pleasure to be here and to recognize all of you that have worked tirelessly. In my opinion, you are some of the very best in Arizona working for us. I appreciate all the work you do." Community Manager Bryan Meyers closed out the morning recognition with a few words. "It's too easy in life to hear about the negative things and it's just too easy to take things for granted. One of the things that I love about this Community is that they don't take [their employees] for granted and they try to put things in action to continuously demonstrate appreciation for our employees."

- First-Quarter Employee Recognition Awards**
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 - Rachel Mendoza
 - Jennave Munoz
- Human Resources Department**
- Marie Clark
 - Delaine Johnson
 - Eli Johnson
 - Jose Nava
 - John Oliver
 - Carmella Ramos
 - Heather Silversmith
- Salt River Police Department**
- Orlando Calzadillas
 - Lawrence DiCarlo
 - Carlos Soto
- Community Relations Office**
- Jessica Joaquin
 - Katerina Thomas
 - Juan Ysaguirre



Colorado Rockies Continue Giving Back

BY ANDREEA MIGUEL
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The Colorado Rockies are one of many Major League Baseball teams that travel to Arizona for Cactus League spring training. In fact, the Rockies and the Arizona Diamondbacks share the award-winning Salt River Fields at Talking Stick, which is located on tribal land.

Every year, the Rockies, in collaboration with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Recreation Department, host an annual youth baseball

clinic. This year the clinic was held on Feb. 17 at the Ske:g Himdag Ki: with more than 50 youth ages 6 to 17 in attendance.

The clinic gives kids the opportunity to learn and practice drills that test speed, agility, pitching, batting and fielding, key components that make a great baseball player. Participants were divided into five groups and dispersed to different areas of the field where skill stations were set up and run by Rockies staff and players. Rockies mascot Dinger the Dinosaur motivated and interacted with participants, keeping the atmosphere fun.

“We see some of the same kids year after year that are coming back. We watch them grow up every year, but also their baseball skills are getting better and they are improving,” said Jim Kellogg, Rockies vice-president of community and retail operations. “It’s nice to know that we’re making a little impact and they’re having fun on a Tuesday night in February.”

At the end of the clinic, each child received a foam bat and ball from the Rockies so they can continue to practice the new skills they learned and have something to remember the night.

A pitching/throwing station was set up in left field.



Stations to help speed and agility utilized ladders to enhance players skills.



Dinger the Dinosaur motivated participants at the hitting station located in right field.



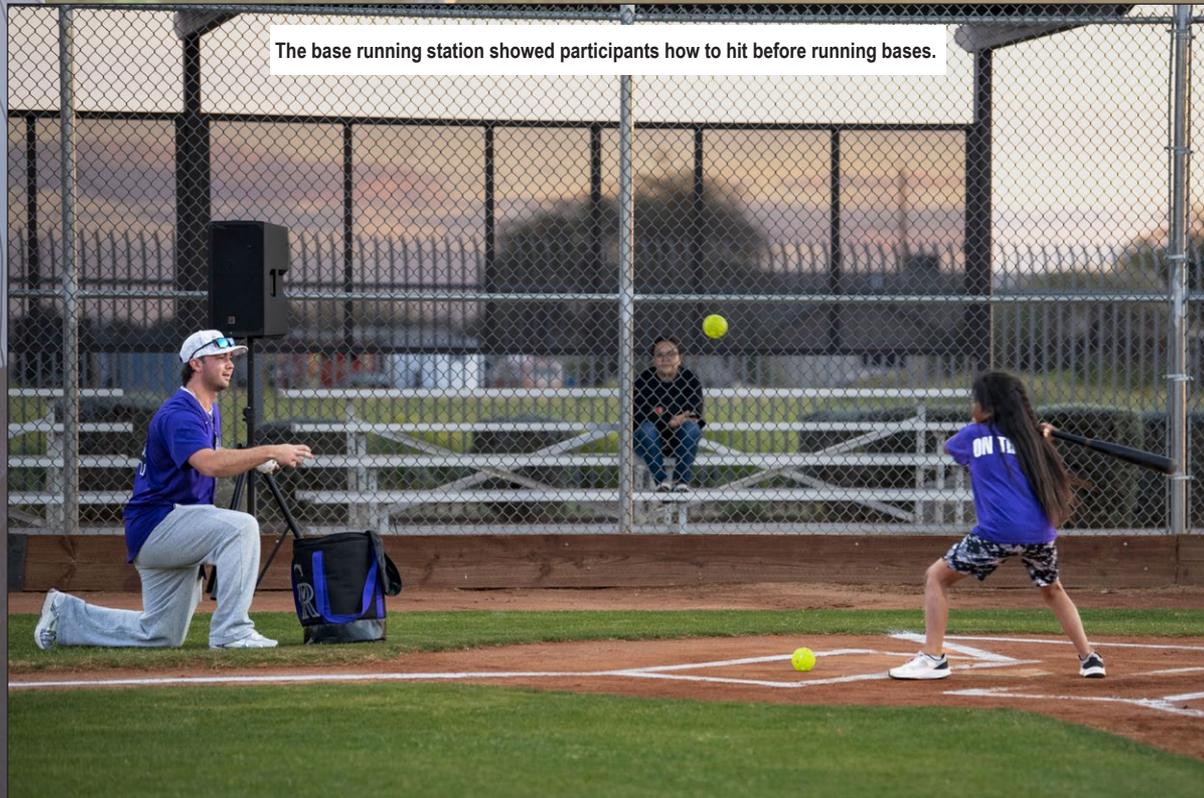
Rockies players engaged with participants by asking questions.



Rockies players taught different drills at the Rockies Youth Clinic at the Ske:g Himdag Ki:.



Dinger the Dinosaur interacted with participants keeping the atmosphere alive.



The base running station showed participants how to hit before running bases.

Play Ball!

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Celebrates Spring Training's Opening Day

Photos by OAN Staff

The annual spring training season opener at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick. The game showcased the two host teams, the Arizona Diamondbacks and the Colorado Rockies, and opening-day festivities featured a who's who of Community artists, performers, singers and dancers.

Before Diamondbacks pitcher Thomas Hatch took the mound, fans had the opportunity to meet Community artists Raeann Brown, Alice Manuel, Gabriel Martinez and August Wood; Jr. Miss Salt River Tiaré Begay-Smith; tribal elected officials; and many more representatives from the SRPMIC.

Additionally, staff members from the Discover Salt River team were stationed at the front entrance, helping to educate both locals and out-of-town visitors about the cultures, traditions and enterprises that make up the Community.

Brown, Manuel, Martinez and Wood had booths with their artwork at the front entrance of Salt River Fields. While the mother-and-daughter duo of Brown and Manuel worked on their baskets, Martinez demonstrated his leatherworking at the next table over. Wood was also posted nearby working on his various projects.

"I've been out here several times," said Wood as he worked on his latest pottery piece. "It's always a good time to come out to share some of our traditional art with the people that are coming here and show them [that] we are still producing traditional pieces."

Wood is no stranger to displaying his work; he was recently selected as the featured artist at the 2025 S'edav Va'aki Museum Indian Market.

"It's always good to be a part of this," he added.

Field Festivities

The SRPMIC Basket Dancers performed on the field. Following their performance, the group Bird Singing and Dancing by the River also made an appearance, performing behind home plate. Afterward, members of the Salt River Police Department presented the colors.

With only moments to prepare due to an unexpected last-minute change with the originally scheduled singer, Community member Bryce McGert was selected to sing the national anthem. He rose to the occasion. "I had about an hour to prepare, but it was really cool to help out where it was needed," he said.

As the start of the game inched closer, Begay-Smith and SRPMIC Council member Su:k Fulwilder threw out the ceremonial first pitches, one to each team. The two received rousing applause as they made their way to the pitcher's mound.

As far as the pitches? Of course, each one made its way across home plate for a strike and landed in the gloves of Rockies and Diamondbacks players.

Begay-Smith showed zero nerves while out on the pitcher's mound. "It was really cool," she said post-pitch. The moment served as the first time Begay-Smith had ever thrown out a ceremonial first pitch at a baseball game. Her father, Whitney Grey Jr., a renowned baseball expert and coach himself, smiled like a proud dad after his daughter threw a textbook strike from the mound in front of the stadium's crowd.

Additional Community showcasing included the sports photography debut of Rayann Johnson, a sixth-grader at Salt River Schools and a member of Salt River Elementary School's Eagles Club photography group.

After some collaborative help from *O'odham Action News* and Salt River Schools, Johnson received exclusive on-field access for all the pregame festivities to capture moments with her camera from her perspective. She also spent time in the media green room, soaking up the atmosphere and the experience of working behind the scenes at a Diamondbacks game with fellow media entities such as KPNX-TV channel 12 and the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

Salt River Schools staff member Hannah Lewis was Johnson's chaperone and ensured she was always safe. Lewis also helps teach the Eagles Club. Johnson and Lewis ended their day and celebrated a job well done with some sweet snacks from the concessions.

To put the cherry on top of the day at Salt River Fields, the Diamondbacks took the first round and beat the Rockies to the tune of 3-2.



Raeann Brown and Alice Manuel demonstrate traditional basket-weaving.



Gabriel Martinez shares O'odham leatherworking.



August Wood is renowned for his skills crafting Piipaash pottery.



Salt River Fields brought the vibes and the aesthetic.



Bird Singing and Dancing by the River brought the energy during the pregame celebrations.



The whole stadium moved as they took over home plate.



Salt River Fields Board representatives were recognized on the field during the pre-game celebrations.



Salt River Elementary student Rayann Johnson photographed Council member Su:k Fulwilder and Jr. Miss Salt River Tiaré Begay-Smith after they threw out the ceremonial first pitch.



The moment captured by Rayann Johnson.



Bryce McGert was able to sing the national anthem after a last minute schedule change.



O'odham songs filled the loudspeakers from the multi-generational singers on the field.



Spirits were warmed by songs and the sun alike.



Batter up!



SRPD Color Guard presented flags before the national anthem.



One of the many smiles seen at Salt River Fields for Opening Day.



Let's do it again next year!

Ninth Annual Native Youth Identity Conference

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

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Youth Services and the Young River People's Council brought a day of fun to the Ske:g Himdag Ki: on Feb. 7. Community students in grades 7 to 12 gathered for the ninth annual Native Youth Identity Conference.

The youth council kicked off the morning with a welcome from YRPC Vice-President Cruz Lasiloo, along with Miss Salt River Emma Scabby and a prayer by Jr. Miss Salt River Tiaré Begay-Smith. The focus for the day was cultural identity, self-expression, leadership and personal growth.

"Most importantly, be yourself! This is a youth-centered space and your voice matters here," said Lasiloo. Over the course of the day, students had the option to choose from different workshops being presented in four blocks. The opening was a physical session while the following workshop blocks were Traditional, Future and Modern, and were focused on culture and success for emerging leaders.

To get the blood flowing and the minds moving, students first participated in a physical wellness session, which consisted of stretching and both male and female traditional games. After some fun in the sun, students enjoyed a familiar meal for lunch: green chili pork with lazy bread, beans, and squash and cheese.

The Traditional workshop block was next, in which students had four different workshops to choose from. Natasha Martinez led the "Etched in Tradition: O'odham Shell Etching" workshop. Students were provided shells and were introduced to the blending of modern and historical etching techniques. Isaac Lopez led "Say It in O'odham: Learning to Introduce Yourself." The focus of this workshop was for students to become more comfortable speaking with others by practicing introducing themselves in a supportive and welcoming environment. The YRPC girls offered a workshop titled "O'odham Shell Necklace Making." Students were educated about the significance of shells in O'odham culture and made their own necklaces to take home. Rounding out the choices among the Traditional workshops was a hands-on lesson on how to make cemit (tortillas) with Alyssa Rodriguez.

Next up was the Future block, which consisted of life skills and leadership workshops. Vurlene Notsinneh-Bowekaty shared tips in a workshop titled "Healthy Relationships: Understanding Teen Dating Violence." She focused on learning the signs of teen dating violence and how to build healthy relationships. John Paul Saspe hosted "Smart Tools for the Future: Using AI for Resumes and Scholarships." In this workshop, students learned how they can use artificial intelligence to build resumes and explore scholarships. Crystal Banuelos shared how to start a career pathway using the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in her "Pathways to Your Future: Careers and WIOA Opportunities" workshop.

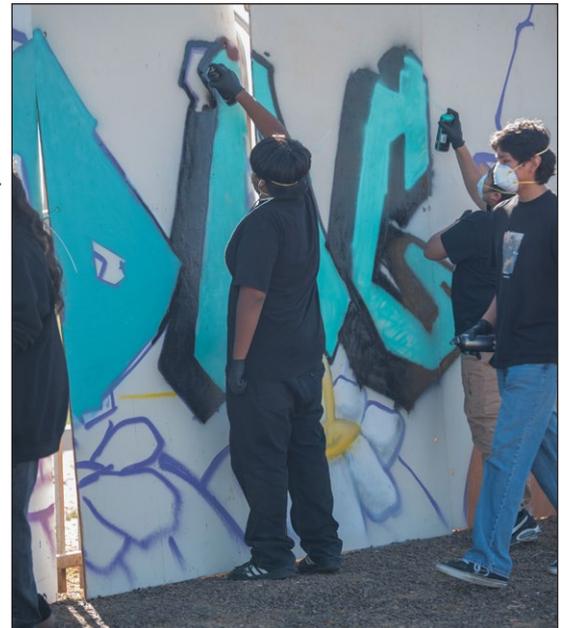
After that, the Modern workshop block focused on creativity and expression. "Color Your Culture: Spray Paint Mural" was hosted by Natasha Martinez to teach students basic spray-painting skills while using collaborations to express creativity in community and culture. Saspe led "Wear Your Art: T-Shirt Design," where students learned how to turn their own artistic ideas into wearable clothing. Council member Su:k Fulwilder shared her experiences with expressing herself through poetry in her "Finding Your Voice: Poetry and Self-Expression" workshop.

At the end of the day, YRPC members shared their closing remarks. Council member Su:k Fulwilder was the keynote speaker for the event. She began, "You know this conference is about Native identity, and I want you to take that home with you. Always be proud of who you are and where you come from; it does not matter the tribes you are. I know some of you probably have other tribes, like myself; you might be mixed with other nationalities, and that's okay."

Fulwilder wanted the students to cherish themselves. "What defines you as a Native person isn't your blood quantum or what skin tone you are. What qualifies you is just how much heart you have and how much you love yourself and how much you love your people," she said.

The day concluded with the O'odham Going Home Song performed by YRPC members.

To learn more about SRPMIC Youth Services and the Young River People's Council, call (480) 362-6390.





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*** SAT., APRIL 4, 2026 · 9-11AM ***

**EGG HUNT CONTEST
DRESS PARADE
GAMES**

9:15AM EGG HUNT (2-3 YRS)
9:30AM EGG HUNT (4-6 YRS, 7-9 YRS & 10-14 YRS)

SALT RIVER BALLFIELD

1897 N. LONGMORE RD. SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85256

9:50AM EASTER DRESS PARADE (0-1 YRS & 2-3 YRS BOY & GIRL)
10:00AM FIELD GAMES
10:30AM EGG EATING CONTEST (FIRST 10 ADULTS)

This is an NO Alcohol/Drug/Gang & Tobacco/Vaping Event. NO Pets, Firearms/Weapons or Outside Ice Chests/ Grills/Food/Glass Allowed. Bags Subject to Search.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS - EVENTS · 480.362.7740 · SRPMIC · SALTRIVERINDIANCOMMUNITY

Cultural Awareness Program Informs Seasonal Employees Before Spring Training



Cultural Resources Department Outreach Coordinator Cody Achin introduces the Cultural Awareness Program to front-of-the-house seasonal employees at Salt River Fields at Talking Stick on Feb. 10.

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

"Let's take a little time to all learn together, all right?" Cultural Resources Department Outreach Coordinator Cody Achin asked a group of seasonal spring training employees at Salt River Fields on Feb. 10.

Achin led a call-and-response. "Start with that first word," he said, pointing to the greeting displayed on the screen. "Ske:g."

The group followed his cue. "Ske:g," a few voices echoed. "O'odham speakers—every one of you already," Achin joked.

Two groups of front-of-the-house seasonal employees gathered at different times for the Cultural Awareness Program led by Achin to learn about the history, culture and language of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community ahead of the spring training season.

As front-facing staff, they are often the first people who greet Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community members and their relatives attending baseball games.

3 Takeaways:

- Seasonal front-of-the-house employees learned about the history and culture of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.
- The Cultural Awareness Program is led jointly by Discover Salt River and the SRPMIC Cultural Resources Department.
- Cody Achin taught the employees about the Community's greetings and languages and the experiences Community members faced in boarding schools, among other topics.

The greetings the employees learned were Ske:g Taş ("good day" in O'odham) and Kamduum? ("how are you?" in Piipaash).

The Cultural Awareness Program, also known as CAP, began two years ago as a joint initiative between the SRPMIC Community Development Department's tourism division, Discover Salt River, and the Cultural Resources Department.

The program has worked with a variety of businesses within tribal boundaries to provide an educational space for employees, business owners and business partners to learn about the Community's history, culture and language, said Salt River Tourism Supervisor Jessica Sepulveda.

"We believe the Cultural Awareness Program is vital in sharing the message that while we technically have a 'Scottsdale' address, we are the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community," said Sepulveda.

"The language presentation given today by Cody Achin was an invitation to Salt River Fields staff to use our language and welcome guests to Salt River Fields during the upcoming spring training season."

Achin gave the group "a firsthand okay" to say the greetings in the Community's languages.

"We're giving you that space," Achin told the employees.

"We're giving you that time to make mistakes, and it's okay if you are not perfect at it. We're only asking as a community that you at least try."

As employees practiced the words, some pulled out their phones to record the pronunciations of the greetings.

But greetings weren't the only topic. Achin also touched upon the history of Native American boarding schools and the generational trauma and damage that the schools have caused.

"These kids were often taken from their families as young as 2 or 3 years old, placed and housed [in boarding schools] until they graduated between the ages of 18 and 26, depending on when [school leaders] deemed them [fully assimilated]," Achin informed the group, before going into more graphic detail of what the children went through.

Achin shared with the group that many of those students eventually became parents who taught their own children to speak English only, in an effort to protect them from enduring the same suffering they had.

He tied the boarding schools lesson to the Community's greetings, reminding them how even the simple gesture of using greetings in O'odham and Piipaash can make a big and lasting impact on Community members and the general population.

"It wasn't that long ago that our parents and grandparents were in these schools, and so even though those schools are shut down, and even though these atrocities aren't happening anymore, the effect of these boarding schools is still being felt today," said Achin.

"It's a big reason why we don't have as many speakers as we could, and why we're still trying to pick up the pieces just teaching people the basics."

Armed with a deeper cultural understanding of the Community on which Salt River Fields is located, the employees are now ready to greet the Community throughout the upcoming spring training season.

"The feedback we received from the Salt River Fields staff that attended the presentation was incredible, and they are all very eager to greet guests in our languages," said Sepulveda.

"We are looking forward to hearing it this season and for the greetings to continue in future seasons."

MARCH 21: 8AM-2PM

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Location: | Ske:g Himdag Ki:

MORE INFORMATION (480) 362 - 6390 YOUTH SERVICES FRONT DESK

2nd Annual

COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

MARCH 20, 2026 | 5PM-7:30PM | Ske:g Himdag Ki:

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ARTS & CRAFTS TABLES

ART VENDORS

RESOURCE BOOTHS

MEAL PROVIDED

(WHILE SUPPLIES LAST)



MORE INFORMATION (480) 362 - 6390 YOUTH SERVICES FRONT DESK

IMPORTANT NOTICE

FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS IF CONTACTED BY ICE

- Stay Calm
- Be respectful
- Do not argue or resist

IF APPROACHED OR DETAINED

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- Do not sign anything
- Ask for a lawyer

You do not have to answer questions. You may say:

"I am a U.S. Citizen and a member of a federally recognized tribe. I choose to remain silent and request legal counsel."

Do not consent to searches. You may say:

"I do not consent to any searches."

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LEHI CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
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FERGUSON MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH
1512 E. McDowell Rd. Mesa, AZ 85203 Pastor Neil Price (480) 278-0750 SERVICES: Sunday Worship Service, 10 a.m. Now available through the Zoom app. Call church for Zoom ID.

LEHI PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1342 E. Oak Mesa, AZ 85203 Pastor Annette Lewis annette.f.lewis@gmail.com (480) 404-3284 SERVICES: Sunday Services 10 a.m., Communion First Sundays at 10 a.m. Birthday Sunday Potluck- Last Sunday of the Month, after services. Youth Devotion/Music (bring your instruments!) last 2 Saturdays of the month at 4 p.m.

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST PAPAGO WARD
2056 N. Extension Rd. Scottsdale AZ, 85256 (480) 947-1084 SERVICES: Sunday service begins at 10 a.m.

PIMA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
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SALT RIVER ASSEMBLY OF GOD
10657 E. Virginia Ave. Scottsdale, AZ 85256 Rev. WinterElk Valencia (480) 947-5278 saltriveragchurch.com SERVICES: Sunday Morning Prayer 10 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., Thursday Bible Study 6pm

SALT RIVER CHURCH OF CHRIST
430 N. Dobson Rd. Suite 105 Mesa, AZ 85201 (720) 626-2171, Josh Austin SaltRiverChurchofChrist.com SERVICES: Bible Class 9:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Sunday Bible Class 6 p.m., Bible Study Wednesdays 7 p.m. Local transportation available, please call phone number above

SALT RIVER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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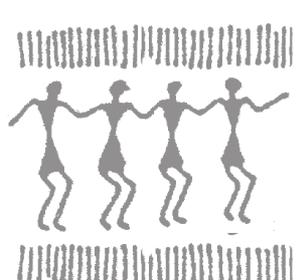
VICTORY CENTER
1231 E Oak St. Mesa, AZ 85203 Senior Pastor Danny Cruz 480-427-4678 SERVICES: First and Third Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. Follow us @vomsrvictorycenter on instagram

VICTORY OUTREACH CHURCH MESA
5610 E. Main St. Mesa, AZ 85205 Senior Pastor Danny Cruz SERVICES: Sunday 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Wednesday 7 p.m., Youth Nights Tuesday at 7 p.m. visit vomesa.org for more service times, life group locations, and events Follow us @vomesachurch on Instagram

MORNINGSTAR APOSTOLIC CHURCH
3263 E Guadalupe Rd, Gilbert, Arizona 85234

Bishop Daniel Lizarraga and Pastor Jason Lizarraga SERVICES: Sunday 2:30 p.m., Wednesday 8-11 a.m., Bible classes Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Visit msacruth.com for more Follow us @morningstarapostolic on Instagram and on Facebook at facebook.com/msacruth

REDEEMER APOSTOLIC CHURCH
200 E First St Mesa, AZ 85201 Pastors Santos and Andrea Navarrete https://www.redeemerministries.com/ SERVICES: Sunday 11 a.m. English, 1:30 p.m. Spanish, Wednesday 7 p.m.



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

Hoop Dancer Captures Third World Championship

Josiah Enriquez (Navajo/Pojoaque Pueblo/Isleta Pueblo) took first place in the adult division of the World Championship Hoop Dance Contest in February hosted by Phoenix's Heard Museum. Enriquez is now a three-time champion.

Terry Goedel (Yakama/Tulalip) won first place in the senior division, Mateo Ulibarri (Pojoaque Pueblo/Santa Clara Pueblo) won the teen division and Victor Duncan (Plains Cree/Taino/Apache/Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara) was the youth division champion.

The popular contest was held over the Feb. 14 weekend. For full results and highlights, check the Heard Museum's website.

Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Swears In New Leadership

The Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation in southern Arizona held an election in January and a swearing-in ceremony in February.

Paul J. Russell was sworn in again as vice president, Verlene Baptisto was sworn in as secretary for another term, and former tribal president Bernadine Burnette was sworn in as a tribal council member.

For photos of the swearing-in ceremony, check the tribe's Facebook page.

NCAI Releases Final Resolutions

The National Congress of American Indians held its annual Executive Council Winter Session February 9-12 in Washington, D.C.

Ten resolutions were submitted for consideration and four were adopted by NCAI's Executive Committee. The resolution is a policy mechanism utilized by NCAI that reflects its member tribal nations' consensus opinions on policy.

To learn more about each resolution, check NCAI's website.

Project DreamCatcher Program Applications Sought

The deadline to apply for Project DreamCatcher is March 22. The business development program is free to Native American women entrepreneurs.

The Freeport-McMoRan Foundation created the program in partnership with Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University.

Eligible participants must be an enrolled member of the Hualapai Tribe, Navajo Nation, San Carlos Apache Tribe, White Mountain Apache Tribe or Tohono O'odham Nation. While priority will be given to participants from these five tribes, enrolled members of other tribes in Arizona, including the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, also may apply.

The program is set for the week of May 3. Application materials can be found on the Thunderbird School of Global Management website.

'Dark Winds' Is Back with New Season

The fourth season of the popular "Dark Winds" TV series premiered in February.

The show is set in 1973 on the Navajo Nation and follows tribal police officers, including actor Zahn McClarnon as Lt. Joe Leaphorn. The gritty series is based on a novel series.

The new season consists of eight hour-long episodes and can be watched on cable channel AMC. Reports are already indicating that season 5 filming is set to start later this year.

Native American Science and Engineering Summer Program

The University of Arizona in Tucson is hosting the Native American Science and Engineering Program June 7-13.

The free program is designed to provide Native high school students with tools to pursue a career in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Native students entering 11th or 12th grade are eligible to apply. The priority deadline is March 13. More details can be found at nasep.arizona.edu.

If we CANNOT contact you by phone or email, your business will be removed from the listing. Call O'odham Action News at (480) 362-7750 to have your business put back on the listing.



SALT RIVER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT HOLIDAY TRASH & RECYCLE COLLECTION SCHEDULE

Residential containers **WILL BE SERVICED** as regularly scheduled on these holidays:

- ☑ **New Year's Day**
- ☑ **MLK Day**
- ☑ **President's Day**
- ☑ **Good Friday**
- ☑ **Memorial Day**
- ☑ **SRPMIC Day**
- ☑ **Juneteenth**
- ☑ **Independence Day**
- ☑ **Labor Day**
- ☑ **Native American Recognition Day**
- ☑ **Veteran's Day**

*and any other council proclamations that may occur

The SR Public Works Department will be **closed** on Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

Please contact PW Customer Service for their schedules.

☎ 480-362-5600 ✉ PWCustomerService@srpmic-nsn.gov

LEGAL NOTICES

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

Baptisto Sr., Angelo Terry - Adjudication Hearing Case: JV-26-0027 Court Date: April 27, 2026 at 11 AM

Hinojosa, Mary Jane Azule - Truancy Disposition Hearing Case: JV-26-0036 Court Date: April 16, 2026 at 3 PM

Gonzalez, Denise Michelle - Initial Termination of Parental Rights Hearing, Case: JV-26-0025, Date: April 15, 2026, at 9 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

Andrews, Elijah Wade - Entry of Default Judgement/ Order to Show Cause Case: CV-25-4582 Court Date: March 23, 2026 at 9 AM

Casias, Lisa Anne - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-26-0675 Court Date: March 26, 2026 at 10 AM

Gonzalez, Cherysh - Motion Hearing Case: CV-25-4184 Court Date: April 7, 2026 at 10 AM

Lewis, Roxanne Christina - Entry of Default Judgement Case: CF-11-0001/ CF-11-0127 Court Date: April 2, 2026 at 10:30 AM

Leonard, Rose - Evidentiary Guardianship Hearing Case: CF-22-0048 Court Date: April 8, 2026 at 9:30 AM

Lewis, Roxanne - Evidentiary Support Modification Case: CF-11-0089 Court Date: April 7, 2026 at 10 AM

Ludlow II, Samuel - Initial Guardianship Hearing (1 Hr) Case: CV-26-0374 Court Date: March 10, 2026 at 11 AM

Pesis, Neaveh - Evidentiary Guardianship Hearing Case: CV-25-4580/CV-25-4505 Court Date: March 17, 2026 at 10:30 AM

Robles, Connie Lorene - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-25-4927 Court Date: March 12, 2026 at 11 AM

Thomas, Elizabeth - Civil Complaint Hearing Case: CV-26-0669 Court Date: March 24, 2026 at 9:30 AM

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

Salt River Public Works Department Memorial Services & Cemeteries

"Providing a hospitable place to honor loved ones at the end of life's journey."

MAIN OFFICE LOCATED AT Memorial Hall
9849 East Earll Drive
Scottsdale, AZ 85256
Monday-Friday
8 AM- 5 PM

CONTRACTED MORTUARIES
Bunker Family Funerals & Cremation
(480) 964-8686

Whitney & Murphy Funeral Home
(602) 840-5600

For Any Questions Call: (480) 278-7050

DEFAULT NOTICES

BAPTISTO SR., ANGELO SUMMONS JV-26-0027

In The Matter of: John Doe (D.O.B.: 7/26/2012)

TO: Angelo Baptisto Sr., parent

A Dependency Petition has been filed in this Court alleging that you neglected or abused a child or that the child is otherwise a dependent child.

THEREFORE YOU ARE ORDERED to APPEAR for a dependency Adjudication Hearing and respond to the allegations in the Petition before the Honorable Judge Heath, the Salt River Juvenile Court on Monday, April 27, 2026, at 11:00 AM, 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.

WARNING: Failure to attend any hearing without good cause shown may result in a finding that you have waived your legal rights to be present and defend against the allegation(s) in the petition. The hearing may go forward without you and may result in a finding of dependency, and the Court could make permanent orders by motion. Further, failure to appear at Court

hearings or to participate in services may result in the termination of your parental rights or the establishment of a permanent guardianship.

Failure to appear at any Court hearing after receiving notice of the hearing may result in a bench warrant being issued for parent's/guardian's/custodian's immediate arrest.

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 OF THE SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT

LEWIS, ROXANNE DEFAULT NOTICE

CF-11-0001/CF-11-0217

YVONNE WASHINGTON V. ROXANNE LEWIS

To: Roxanne Lewis, RESPONDENT

1. A Civil 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: February 3, 2026

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

O'dham Action News is published bi-weekly by the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. Editorials and articles are the sole responsibility of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion, attitude or philosophy of O'dham Action News or the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

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 (Leave a message with your name and number and we will return your call)

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 (480) 362-2698 / www.oodhamnews.org

Home Care Assistance
For safety and independence

Our compassionate, professional team offers three levels of in-home care for qualified community seniors and adaptive adults to help them remain comfortable, safe, and independent in their own homes.

To learn more, and to schedule a free intake assessment, call

480.362.7990

I am glad that Senior Services has this program for us seniors who can't manage everything for ourselves... They are a great asset to us.

- Wanda White Eyes



SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

PRESIDENT Martin Harvier
VICE-PRESIDENT Ricardo Leonard

DISTRICT A COUNCIL MEMBER Jacob Butler
DISTRICT E COUNCIL MEMBER Mikah Carlos

DISTRICT B COUNCIL MEMBER David Antone
LEHI DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBER Deanna Scabby

DISTRICT C COUNCIL MEMBER Cheryl Doka
LEHI DISTRICT COUNCIL MEMBER Michael Dallas, Sr.

DISTRICT D COUNCIL MEMBER Su:k Fulwilder

4th Quarter 2025 ELIGIBILITY DEADLINE: March 31, 2026

Must be eighteen (18) years old, enrolled, and living to be eligible for the April 2026 Per Capita Payment.

DEADLINES FOR CHANGES

Direct Deposit Start-Ups and Changes: Friday, March 31 at 5:00 PM. This deadline is for new start-ups for direct deposit or changes to existing information. All forms MUST be submitted with a "VOIDED" check or statement from the bank with the Routing and Account Numbers.

Forms received by this date will be effective for the **APRIL 2026** payout. Forms received after this date will not be effective until the **JULY 2026** payout.

Discontinue Direct Deposits: Friday, March 31 at 5:00 PM. This deadline is to discontinue an existing direct deposit.

***Failing to notify the Per Capita department when an account is closed may delay your Per Capita payment.

Per Capita Eligibility: Tuesday, April 21 at 5:00PM. This deadline is for submitting the Adult SRP-MIC Member's Per Capita Information Certificate. Forms received by this date will be effective for the April 2026 payout. Forms received after this date will not be processed until the first week of May 2026.

Tax Withholding Changes: Tuesday, April 21 at 5:00 PM. This deadline is for making changes to "Additional" tax withholding percentage or amount.

Tax forms are available on the Finance Per Capita Intranet Site and can also be requested by e-mailing FINPERCAP1@srpmic-nsn.gov.

If you have any questions regarding:

- Tribal ID, Eligibility & Change Forms: Membership Services @ (480) 362-7600
- Tax Withholding & Direct Deposits: Finance-Per Capita @ (480) 362-7710

O'ODHAM ACTION NEWS

DO YOU NEED TO UPDATE YOUR NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION?

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**

O'ODHAM ACTION NEWS DEADLINES

ISSUE	DEADLINE AT NOON
MARCH 19	MARCH 6
APRIL 2	MARCH 20

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



FAC Explores Relationship Red Flags with 'Twisted Twilight' Teen Dating Violence Prevention



Teens from SRPMIC Youth Services and Boys & Girls Club youth in grades 7 to 12 participated in Twisted Twilight, which was a showing of the movie Twilight, but with a "twist." The teens explored red flag relationship situations while watching the movie.

- 3 Takeaways:**
- The Family Advocacy Center raised awareness about Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month in February with a series of events.
 - Teens participated in "Twisted Twilight," a special screening of the movie "Twilight" that focused on red flags in relationships.
 - Wear Orange Day and Gathering of Native Americans continued raising awareness for Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

a lack of trust and communication, being dishonest or disrespectful, trying to take control and only spending time together. Abusive relationships can involve threatening or harmful communication, physical and/or emotional mistreatment, accusations, gaslighting, controlling and social isolation.

The teens were treated to buttered popcorn and movie theater candy while they watched the movie. They were provided with actual red flags to wave whenever they noticed a "red flag" relationship situation on screen.

Relationship red flags to look out for include constant checking, calling or tracking; jealousy; controlling decisions; and verbal insults, threats or intimidation.

Other Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month events included a Wear Orange Day at the Round House Café



Physical red flags were available for participants to wave when they saw a "red flag" situation example in the movie Twilight.

on Feb. 11 and the Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) at the Accelerated Learning Academy on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14.

On Wear Orange Day there was a table at the café for people to stop by and pledge to end dating violence. Pledgers received an orange shirt or bandana from FAC.

GONA was a culture-based collaboration between FAC and the Phoenix nonprofit Native Health set in a talking circle where Community members gathered to address community-identified issues and reflected on mental health, suicide prevention, relationships, substance abuse and more.

To report a crime within SRPMIC: Call 911 or Salt River Dispatch at 480-850-9230

To report harm to a child: Salt River Child Protective Services (CPS): 480-362-2600 After hours: 480-362-7995

National Child Abuse Hotline: Call or text tel:1-800-422-4453

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (1800-799-7233)

24-hour Emergency Shelter Hotline: 1-800-799-7739

Maricopa County Domestic Violence Shelter Hotline: 480-890-3039

Crime Victims' Legal Assistance Project: 480-600-2661

National Center for Victims of Crime: 1-855-4-VICTIM (1-855-484-2846)

Scan the QR Code to Create a Personal Teen Dating Safety Plan:



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

which explored red flags in relationships.

"Maybe you're not in this type of relationship, but you might know somebody who is. You may know [it's] your next-door neighbors, your schoolmates, maybe your best friends. Or sometimes you may not know you're in a relationship that may not be healthy," FAC director Nagisa Kondo said to the teens before the movie screening.

"Hopefully we can try to raise awareness [about] what unhealthy relationships look like in the movies."

Twisted Twilight was sponsored by the FAC, Youth Services and Native Health.

Before the screening, FAC staff gave an overview of the spectrum of relationships from healthy to unhealthy to abusive.

Characteristics of a healthy relationship include respect, equality, honesty, communication, trust and independence. Unhealthy relationships involve

February was Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

All month long, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community's Family Advocacy Center (FAC) raised awareness by collaborating with other agencies and departments to host events in the Community that spotlighted teen dating violence awareness.

The FAC is designed to bring different SRPMIC departments together to conduct child crime investigations more effectively through mandated collaboration.

A screening of the teen vampire movie "Twilight" at the Salt River Community Building kicked off the awareness activities on Feb. 6. SRPMIC Youth Services and Boys & Girls Club youth in grades 7 to 12 participated in Twisted Twilight, a program

Healthy Relationships and Healing at the Gathering of Native Americans

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

The talking circle at the Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) at Salt River Schools' Accelerated Learning Academy on Feb. 14 might as well have been in the shape of a heart. It was Valentine's Day, after all. But it was also Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month.

This one-day GONA at the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community had one very specific focus: healthy relationships.

The event was a partnership between the SRPMIC Family Advocacy Center and the Phoenix nonprofit Native Health.

"We're trying to emphasize how healthy relationships impact recovery and wellness in the Community," said SRPMIC Behavioral Health Clinical Administrator Jessica Hunter, who helped facilitate the event.

Since it was developed in 1992, the GONA has been recognized as an effective culture-based intervention. A GONA is a gathering space for tribal members to address community-identified issues. It uses an interactive approach that empowers and supports American Indian and Alaska Native cultural values, traditions and spiritual practices.

One of the main themes of a GONA is promoting the sense of belonging. Belonging ensures that everyone feels welcomed in an inclusive, open, safe and trusting environment.

Throughout the day, participants of different ages and stages in their personal journeys acted out culture-based scenarios and shared their experiences in a safe environment in their chairs and inside the circle.

Edison Andrews, an SRPMIC member from Lehi, said that he participated in the GONA not only for himself, but for future generations. He looks forward to more children being involved in the Community's culture and traditions, something that he said wasn't



Participants learn about healthy relationships and healing at the Gathering of Native Americans talking circle at ALA on Valentine's Day.

always available to him when he was a child.

"I have four beautiful girls, and I'm hoping that future generations learn and live by our culture and the things that we believe in and push for togetherness, mindfulness and just learn how to be a community again," said Andrews.

"We need to learn healthy relationships and togetherness."

Andrews' spiritual journey was positively impacted by simply being around other people in the GONA talking circle, he said.

"I struggle with a lot of things, as we all do on the reservation," said Andrews. "We're trying to figure out our generational traumas and learn about ourselves a little more."

Henry McCabe said that he attended GONA to be a beacon of light and "spread flavor on peoples' lives." What he gained and understood from his experience is that trust and belonging are two key components to sobriety.

"In sobriety, when you can trust and you can have that confidentiality with somebody, it's easier to be vulnerable," said McCabe.

"When you're vulnerable, you can let out the things that are hard to see. You can identify things inside of yourself because you know that somebody else is going through it."

Amber Means is five years into recovery and feels like she is in a place where she needs to know what healthy relationships are like.

"Right now, it's about healthy relationships all around—not just romantically, but with my family, with my daughter, [and] other people," said Means.

At the GONA, Means learned the value of "self" and how different cultures and ceremonies have an important role in understanding that.

"Even though in relationships you think about other people, I think today is about yourself."

A previous GONA at the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe of the Chemehuevi Reservation was a spiritual experience for Grant Lomayaktewa. He learned to honor himself and where he came from at his second GONA at SRPMIC.

"I am very much in a big crowd of people coming out of my comfort zone to interact with people and learn about everybody's spiritual beliefs," said Lomayaktewa.

"I'm hoping to be open to learn something and to be teachable to myself so that I can be teachable to others as well."

The technical approach of a GONA is built upon the Indigenous theoretical framework of vision: acknowledging the effects of historical trauma, honoring cultural values and developing a vision of success.

Another part of this framework is building quality and authentic relationships for effective work through circles of relationships.

Community-based trainers and expert consultants facilitate the GONA by following its guiding principles.

SRPMIC Approves Construction of New Housing Community



An aerial view of the new construction site. Photo courtesy of Jerrod Glaser.

phase will have site amenities such as picnic ramadas, grass, and areas for playgrounds and sport courts. A walking trail is also expected to be constructed around the new housing community.

Three builder-grade homes will be available for members called Move-in Ready (MIR). Move-In Ready homes are homes that are built to a specification and delivered turnkey to the future buyer. Colors and Material Selection will be curated by the architect and Landscape Architect to create a complementary and attractive subdivision.

MIR Entry level—Featuring three bedrooms and two bathrooms, the Entry-level homes have 1,100 square feet of living space and outdoor patio connected to an one-car carport. There will be 34 units available.

MIR Intermediate—The Intermediate homes are slightly larger, with a two-car carport and 1,300 to 1,500 square feet of living space. Like the entry-level plans, the intermediate homes feature three bedrooms and two bathrooms. There will be 24 units available.

MIR Prime—For buyers who require a bit more space, the Prime homes feature four bedrooms and two bathrooms. They have 1,600 to 1,800 square feet and a two-car garage. There will be 28 prime units available.

Both the Intermediate and Prime homes have lot minimums of 103 by 71 feet.

The location was selected after survey results from members revealed that this area is the most requested location within the community for new homes to be constructed. Its location is ideal, as it is close to Scottsdale Community College, shopping, and Loop 101.

Official home prices and the steps required to purchase a unit will be shared with members once construction plans are finalized.

Naming Contest

From Feb. 20 to March 20, 2026, Community members can enter a contest to help name the new subdivision. Each person will receive one entry and can submit up to four names. Entrants must be at least 16 to participate. Entries will be judged by a

Community member committee who will choose the grand winner of the contest. The winner will receive a movie-viewing party at RoadHouse for up to 20 guests.

The first 200 entrants will receive two tickets to RoadHouse Cinemas at The Pavilions at Talking Stick.

Winners will be notified by the Community Relations Office with details on how to pick up their prize. Additional information will be provided in the website under Tribal Housing.

Interested individuals can submit their name suggestions using the online form.

Any questions concerning this new subdivision please connect Construction Managers at WelcomeHome@srpmic-nsn.gov.

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

SALT RIVER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

NOTICE

ROAD CLOSURE

LONGMORE ROAD AT MCDOWELL ROAD

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23 TO MID-APRIL 2026

TRAFFIC CONTROL NOTICE

Dallas Construction will be implementing traffic control beginning Monday, February 23rd, for ongoing Longmore Water Line Improvements.

The Community will be advised of upcoming road restriction as construction progresses.

What to expect during this phase:

- Local access to homes and businesses will be maintained.
- Northbound and Southbound lanes on Longmore Rd will be closed at the south side of the McDowell Rd intersection
- No through access on the south side of the intersection
- Detour routes will utilize Lehi Road and Belleview Street
- Traffic control signage will be in place

We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we complete these improvements.

For questions, please contact:

Dallas Construction Contact Clay Tower 602-550-7426 ctower@dallasconstructionllc.com	SRPMIC Public Works Contact Mike Jensen 480-362-3507 michael.jensen@srpmic-nsn.gov
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SALT RIVER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
480-362-5600 | PWCustomerService@srpmic-nsn.gov

Help Name Our Newest Subdivision!

A new housing development is coming to Chaparral and Dobson. We want you to name it!

Enrolled Community Members ages 16+ are encouraged to submit ideas beginning **February 20 - March 20, 2026**

Theme Expectations:

We want a name that shows our lasting bond with water, soil, and the crops that have supported us for generations.

First 200 submissions will receive two Roadhouse Cinemas tickets.

One grand prize winner will receive a movie party for up to 20 guests.

Scan QR code to enter your name idea(s)!

www.tinyurl.com/HousingNameContest

Questions? Please call 480-362-6960 or email WelcomeHome@srpmic-nsn.gov

Free Positive Coaching Alliance Classes Arrive in SRPMIC

The free workshops help parents/guardians in the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community learn how to positively encourage youth athletes on and off the field.

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

A superstar athlete in any sport needs the support of their head coach. The Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community works to ensure that its youth are supported in the many activities they are involved in, especially sports.

Positive Coaching Alliance is an organization composed of athletic coaches, trainers, leaders and administrators whose goal is to positively encourage and motivate young athletes across the country in various leagues, tournaments and games all year long.

Organizations such as Major League Baseball, the Jr. NBA and the Curry brand from basketball star Stephen Curry utilize Positive Coaching Alliance's courses and workshop classes in their leagues and tournaments.

The Community can host Positive Coaching Alliance workshops and classes thanks to a sponsorship from the Notah Begay III Foundation (NB3), a national nonprofit that works to help Indigenous youth achieve their full potential by advancing Indigenous cultures and community health.

So far, the SRPMIC has hosted four Positive Coaching Alliance workshops and classes for parents/guardians in the Community. The most recent one was held at the Ske:g Himdag Ki: on Feb. 4. More than 70 Community parents/guardians have attended so far.

SRPMIC Recreation Division Athletic Program Manager David Willis said that young athletes, though they may show the potential to make it to the

3 Takeaways:

- Positive Coaching Alliance offers coaches tools to build meaningful connections among their athletes and teams.
- Four workshops have been hosted recently.
- The MLB, Jr. NBA and the Curry Brand from Stephen Curry utilize Positive Coaching Alliance workshops.

professional leagues one day, are only at the beginning of their athletic careers. Therefore, it's important they remain supported, with positive guidance leading the way.

"There will be mistakes, and that's okay. That's what the classes are about, to teach everyone that mistakes happen and are okay," Willis said.

He added, "We're here to support them in a healthy way. Our goal is inclusion; that's the key."

Willis said that the parents and guardians who attend the classes also learn tips for building success in their personal lives when they're not coaching.

The free Positive Coaching Alliance workshop classes are a requirement before any coach can participate in the Friendship Youth Sports League games here in the Community.

"The classes are trauma informed," Willis said. "We use it for our coaches, mandatory wise, just so they can meet our players where they're at. We want everyone to be aware that it's more than just sports."

Plans are underway for the Ske:g Himdag Ki: to host another Positive Coaching class in April.

To stay up to date on all the events happening at the Ske:g Himdag Ki:, call (480) 362-6800.



Community Recreational Services
Salt River Tribal Library



Rez Readers Book Club

Salt River Tribal Library
3rd Thursdays, 5:30 - 7:00PM

Book

Selections:

February 19

THE EL: A NOVEL
BY THEODORE C. VAN ALST, JR.



March 19

WHISKEY TENDER: A MEMOIR
BY DEBORAH JACKSON TAFFA



April 16

CEREMONY
BY LESLIE MARMON SILKO



OPEN TO SRPMIC & SKE:G HIMDAG KI: MEMBERS
Books Available for Checkout

480-362-6600 | TribalLibrary@SRPMIC-nsn.gov

Circle of Nations Pathway Program Seeks New Students to Enroll

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

There is a new student pathway program coming soon to the Tempe Union High School District.

The Circle of Nations Pathway Program will officially launch in the 2025-2026 school year at Mountain Pointe. More schools, including Marcos De Niza, will offer the program soon.

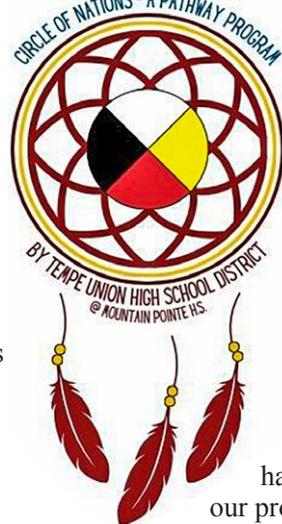
The Circle of Nations program will support and provide resources to students as they decide on attending college, enrolling in the military or joining the workforce after high school graduation.

Initially, the program was a four-week summer program offered to students to catch up on their school curriculum credits to graduate from high school. Now, the program will expand to a yearlong class with eight teachers helping assist students with their core classes, such as math, science, social studies and English.

"This [program] started years ago with Valerie Molina," shared Director of Federal Programs Charlotte Windsor. Molina is the Native American Program lead for Circle of Nations and is from the Pascua Yaqui Tribe.

"She's been running the program for 10 years, which has always been fully funded by the Pascua Yaqui Tribe. It's been open to all Native high school students to either recover credits or receive advanced credits to graduate and pursue their postsecondary goals," Windsor shared.

The Circle of Nations team, which also includes Chief of Staff and Strategic Partnerships Megan Sterling, has also been conducting research on how to build a team of faculty members who are able to connect with students.



3 Takeaways:

- The Circle of Nations Pathway Program originally was a four-week summer program and has now expanded to a yearlong class.
- Circle of Nations will officially launch in the 2025-2026 school year at Tempe's Mountain Pointe school.
- The pathway program will expand to additional schools soon, including Marcos De Niza in Tempe.

"I look for staff that students recommend," said Windsor. "Every staff [member] that has been hired for our program has come from a student recommendation."

Furthermore, there is a physical education teacher on staff as well as paraprofessional staff member help students with special needs.

"It started off as a small program and now has just grown," shared Molina.

The program expansion comes after recent statistics last year showed that Indigenous students have the lowest high school graduation rate of any racial or ethnic group in the United States. For Indigenous students, in 2025, only 69% of students graduated, compared to the national average of 81%.

Windsor added, "A teacher is in the classroom with our students, in case they get stuck on a question or need assistance. They're free to watch videos and hang out with us as well. We found some students still want to come into our class even if they are all caught up on their classwork. We also provide them with a meal."

Furthermore, the program helps enroll high school students in either South Mountain Community College or Tohono O'odham Community College after graduation. Tohono O'odham Community College offers free tuition

for all Indigenous students.

This past summer, 265 students participated in the four-week program and recovered 516 half-credits. "Thirteen of those kids were not on track to graduate, and they graduated within those four weeks," said Windsor.

graduated within those four weeks," said Windsor.

"Next year, we will be expanding to Marcos De Niza," said Molina. "This is to make the location a bit closer for Salt River students."

"This program is for all tribal students, as well as anyone who is a descendant, so you don't have to be an enrolled member of a tribe to participate," shared Molina.

In the Coming Months

Tempe Union High School guidance counselors have already been searching for students who could benefit from enrolling in the Circle of Nations Pathway Program. "They're making a list of students they would like to recommend for our program," said Windsor. "We take those students and enroll them into the program."

Windsor noted that since last October, students have been asking her about the program's upcoming sessions. She added, "They want to be one of the first 300 students to participate in this program."

The Circle of Nations team is also currently planning field trips for the participating students. Windsor said that one of the field trips will be a trip to the Heard Museum in Phoenix.

There will also be space for tribal community members to come in and speak with the students.

"Having tribal elders come in to speak with them and show them different skills to give them different opportunities that they don't get from a

traditional school, that is a cornerstone of this project," shared Windsor.

Earlier this year, the Circle of Nations team met with staff from Salt River Schools to get further insight as to how the program can help Community students.

"We're going to walk the walk and not just talk about it," said Molina. "I know there's a lot of distrust in educational institutions, but we've taken the time to create this program and not just throw it together quickly. We're honoring and respecting each community that comes in."

Molina added, "We're willing to go to the students. We're willing to shuttle the students; we're willing to be at community events in Salt River. We want to be able to help the students with whatever they need. We want to do what's best."

Windsor said that the Circle of Nations Pathway Program will be hosting cultural competency classes for all staff, from teachers to security guards as well as the cafeteria staff. "We're getting the knowledge out there that we as staff need to act differently. Quietness is not a sign of apathy, but a cultural norm. We need to learn that the dominant culture views Native American culture in a way that is often misinterpreted. We need to be aware of that and be literate, so we can serve the students the way they should be."

The Circle of Nations team will be hosting an O'odham and Piipaash Day at Mountain Pointe High School on Feb. 27 for families, students and Community members. The event is a collaboration between Salt River Schools, the Education Native Language Culture Department at Salt River Schools and the Gila River Indian Community. Dinner will be provided by Ernie's Catering.

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



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOR THE COMPLETE SRPMIC CALENDAR, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW:



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.

REZ READERS, Third Thursdays through April. Looking for a good book and a nice place to talk about it? Then come join Community Recreational Services and Salt River Tribal Library for the new Rez Readers Book Club. A club where we will focus on native authors and themes for fiction to some non-fiction reads and engage in some great conversations a we all share our insight, thoughts and experiences throughout each book. Starting February 19th, Rez Readers will meet every 3rd Thursdays, February - April from 5:30pm to 7:00pm. Copies of the books will be available for check out (while supplies last). Questions Contact 480-362-6600/TribalLibrary@SRPMIC-nsn.gov

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

LOVE AND HARMONY COUPLES GROUP, Tuesdays | 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM | Behavioral Health Services, River People Health Center. Ready to strengthen your relationship and build deeper connection? Join our Couples Group, based on Dr. John Gottman's The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work. Learn practical tools to: Improve communication; Resolve conflicts; Deepen intimacy; Navigate challenges around family, work, and more. Call (480) 362-5707 to learn more or sign up today.

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.

WELLBRIETY 12 STEP AND MEDICINE WHEEL, Wednesdays and Fridays 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. at RPHC. 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.

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.

HELPING HANDS HALF OFF FOR SRPMIC MEMBERS, Every Friday Community members get 50% off at Helping Hands.

Open 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., closed 12 p.m. - 1 p.m. for lunch at 10213 E. Osborn Rd. Call 480-362-5625 for more information.

BEADING CIRCLE, Wednesdays 5:30 p.m. - 8 p.m. at Salt River Tribal Library inside Ske:g Himdag Ki: Open to enrolled SRPMIC members and Ske:g Himdag Ki: members. Call 480-362-6600 for more information.

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP, Every 1st Thursday of the Month, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. at Lehi Community Building Room 109. This Group provides a creative environment to learn and explore prompt writing, literary discussion, and guest writers/authors. All genres and levels welcome. Open to adult Community Members and Ske:g Himdag Ki: members. For more information, call 480 362-6600.

ELEVATING ELDERS, Thursdays, 9-10 a.m., Ske:g Himdag Ki: Senior Room. Physical Fitness Specialist Nevelle Howard leads a fun, energizing class that boosts strength using body weight and light dumbbells. For seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs.

YOGA FOR FALL PREVENTION, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays, 9-10 a.m., Ske:g Himdag Ki: Senior Room. Standing or chair options available. Guided movements improve strength, balance and flexibility. For seniors 55+ and adults with adaptive needs.

KUI 'I'IVAGIDAG MAŞAD XLY'A XMOK MARCH

7 2ND ANNUAL BRIDGE TO WELLNESS, Event is back on Saturday, March 7, 2026, from 11 AM-3 PM at the ALA Football Field. Bring your family, invite a friend, and enjoy activities, local vendors, and resources for all ages. We would love to see you there!

14 WALK FOR THE LUCK OF IT 5K, Feeling lucky? Join Community Recreational Services Athletics Division for the Walk for the Luck of It 5K on March 14. Start your morning with movement, community, and a little St. Patrick's spirit at the brand-new

track at ALA. Bring your family and friends for a fun, high-energy event for all fitness levels. On-site registration opens at 6:30 AM Walk/Run begins at 7:00 AM The first 150 participants will receive an event shirt, so be sure to arrive early. Whether you're walking for fitness, fun, or simply to enjoy a great morning with the community, this 5K is the perfect way to start your day strong. Bring your crew, wear your green, and let's make it a lucky one. For questions or more information, please contact CRS Athletics at (480) 362-6365.

18-19 YOUTH SERVICES ECHOES OF THE AKIMEL MURAL FESTIVAL, Join us this Spring Break from 8am-1pm both days for 2 Days of Youth Art Camps for those age 11-18 spray painting murals with guest artists across the Salt River Community. Registration begins Now!—don't miss out! Stay tuned for more details, and let's make art together! For More Information (480) 362 - 6390 Youth Services Front Desk

19 CHILD FIND WITH SOUTHWEST AUTISM RESEARCH & RESOURCE CENTER ON THURSDAY, from 5:30-7 p.m. held in the Gathering Place at the Early Childhood Education Center for an informative session about Autism Spectrum Disorder in young children and the diversity of the diagnosis. We'll discuss the latest research on evidence-based practices for individuals with autism, along with helpful resources. A light meal will be served at 5:30 p.m. The presentation will begin at 6 p.m. Call 480-362-2257 or email childfind@saltriversschools.org to ask questions and register. Childcare is available with advanced registration

20 FAMILY ART FESTIVAL TO WRAP UP ECHOES OF THE AKIMEL, 5pm-7:30 pm at Ske:g Himdag Ki:

21 ANNUAL TORTILLA FESTIVAL, Come celebrate all things cemitai and modiiily with us from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Huhugam Ki: Museum. Contact the museum for more information at 480-362-6320

KUI HIOSIG MAŞAD XLY'A CHMPAP APRIL

2 SALT RIVER EDUCATION FAIR, 5 - 7:30 p.m. at ALA Gymnasium. Explore and engage with 40+ resource and activity tables! The highlight of the event will be student science fair demonstrations and contests, plus a tradish-ish O'odham dinner and dessert by award-winning Chef Shannon Reina! Visit saltriversschools.org for more information.

3 GOOD FRIDAY - OFFICES CLOSED, Please plan accordingly.

4 SPRING PIIPAASH MATASHEEVN, to be held at the Lehi Gathering Area. Save the date, more details to come!

4 COMMUNITY EASTER CELEBRATION AND EGG HUNT, Join us for a fun-filled Easter Egg Hunt at the Salt River Ballfield! See flyer on page 13 for complete details!

10-12 CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY, an opportunity for participants 18 and older to get a deeper understanding of policing today. See flyer on page 13 for full details!

26 THE BREAKTHROUGH WITH SRPD, 5:30PM at Ske:g Himdag Ki: classroom #56

FOR THE LATEST DISTRICT MEETINGS SCHEDULE, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW:

