Massive Storm Strikes GRIC, Leads to 24-7 Effort To Restore Power and Protect Public Health

Utility Crews Worked Round the Clock Across the Community to Repair Storm Damaged Electrical Grid

GRIN Staff

The Gila River Indian Community was hit by high winds and heavy rains, as a massive monsoon storm laid a path of destruction to GRIC’s power grid, leaving many Community members without power for several days. The July 9 storm’s effects were felt throughout the weekend, as utility crews, emergency responders, healthcare professionals and elected leaders worked 24/7 to restore power and keep Community members safe from sweltering temperatures.

“I have been on emergency calls with our incident command, Community Council, Gila River Utility Authority and all those first responders who have been working around the clock to restore the power outages as soon as possible,” said Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis in a video address delivered on July 11.

In response to the devastation left by the storm, Gov. Lewis declared a state of emergency to activate many of the Community’s emergency resources, including emergency housing options and meals provided by the Salvation Army.

“The immediate need was to make sure our families received shelter, which is why we opened up the District service centers,” said Gov. Lewis. “We also arranged rooms at the Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass and other hotels for many of our elders and those with disabilities and health conditions. With dozens of power poles down and transmission stations and substations out of action, Gila River Utility Authority crews deployed across the Community to repair the damage and restore electricity. The Community’s Office of Emergency Management and other GRIC departments worked through the weekend and July 12 to get power fully restored across GRIC.

“I feel your frustration regarding the uncertainty this severe storm has caused, but please be assured that every department,

Gov. Lewis, Tribal Leaders Meet with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg on Road Needs

Christopher Lomahquahu
Gila River Indian News

Gila River Indian Community Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and tribal leaders from across the state met for a roundtable discussion with Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg on July 15. The event, organized by the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona in coordination with the U.S. Department of Transportation, was held at the Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass.

The meeting was Buttigieg’s final stop in his visit to Arizona, which focused on the infrastructure needs of the state’s tribal communities. “We want to know the who, what where, when and how,’and also share our concerns around transportation on your reservations,” said Arlando Teller, Assistant Secretary of Tribal Affairs with the U.S. Department of Transportation. “We want to encourage your communities to voice your concerns, which is sincerely appreciated by [us] and Secretary Buttigieg.”

Secretary Buttigieg said he looked forward to working together with tribal communities during the session and in the future. “I want to thank the Gila River Indian Community for having me. I am very fortunate to have a conversation like this,” said Buttigieg.

Buttigieg’s visit is part of the Biden Administration’s commitment to visit states across the nation and meet with tribal nations, offering them an opportunity to voice concerns regarding infrastructure in Indian Country.

Gov. Lewis and Lt. Gov. Antone meet with Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg on July 15. Christopher Lomahquahu/GRIN

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More on Page 4

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ALL PATIENTS AND VISITORS AGES 2 YRS AND ABOVE ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A FACE MASK.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING
6ft. Apart

No Mask
No Entry

COVID-19 VACCINE AVAILABILITY

JULY 2021 SCHEDULE

DATE: LOCATION:

July 21 ...D3 Boys & Girls Club

July 28 ...D3 Boys & Girls Club

9am - 4pm

Vaccines are also available at GRHC Primary Care Department, please call (602) 528-1482 to schedule an appointment.

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Judge Jay Pedro Retires After 35 Years of Service to GRIC

Kyle Knox
Gila River Indian News

After honorably serving the Community as a Children’s Court Judge for 30 years, the Honorable Judge Jay Pedro, District 3, concluded his career with the Gila River Indian Community on June 30. Judge Pedro appointed in February 1991, faithfully served the Community during a tenure that would last for seven consecutive GRIC Community Council terms, a time where he saw the Tribal Court “grow by leaps and bounds.”

On July 1, Judge Pedro’s retirement ceremony at the Skyline Building at Wild Horse Pass saw him showered with gifts and congratulatory praise from family, friends, and professional colleagues. “Judge Pedro has been a centering, calm presence who brought respect and integrity during these last 30 years, and he leaves a foundation for our court system that will carry us forward in the future,” said Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis.

Gov. Lewis presented Pedro with a traditional O’otham warriors club symbolizing his “long-term legacy defending and protecting the Community’s laws, sovereignty, and children.” Lt. Gov. Monica Antone commended Judge Pedro’s dedication to Community youth both in and outside the courtroom. “Jay’s fatherly absence will be felt because there will never be another Jay Pedro. We thank you for the 30 years you gave us, and in retirement, I hope you enjoy yourself, and I hope you will be at peace with whatever you do.”

Lt. Gov. Antone presented the judge with an O’otham basket adorned with kokopelli signifying his leadership. Judge Pedro’s 30 years had an immeasurable impact on the Community and the tribal court staff. Judge Pedro recalled his early days sharing one courtroom among three judges, including a small 9-foot-by-12-foot office for legal hearings. With the Court having grown to eight Judges, six courtrooms, and a newly established 60+ – plus the new GRIC Judicial Center – Pedro says he finds the progress remarkable. “Our goal is simple and yet complex,” the Judge explained. “We strive to provide services to children and families so that they may share a life of stability, nurturance, and wellness.”

Judge Pedro called ensuring each child’s welfare critical to his work, saying his goal was always “to keep families together and provide opportunities for children to experience better futures.”

Judge Pedro described his career as a mix of challenges and many fond memories. “I have some successes here because there have been times that adults approach me in public and thank me for helping them through some tough times during their childhood and even introduce me to their children. It is incidents like this that make me feel like all the hard work I put forth as a Judge was well worth it.”

Judge Pedro credited his parents and grandparents for their supportive parenting. “I have been especially inspired by my late mother, Henrietta Pablo, who raised six children but still made time to go back to school and eventually get her teaching degree at Arizona State University,” said Pedro.

His late mother’s tenacity also bestowed invaluable teaching that carried him to this point in his life, he explained. “She taught me to respect others, to respect your family, to respect yourself, to respect your Community and traditions, and also that hard work will get you far in your life.”

The extent to which those values and teachings carried over into his courtroom and among court staff was evident during a retirement luau held on June 30. The Judge spoke to his colleagues, many of whom sniffled and had tears in their eyes. At the close of his remarks, in his court, the court bailiff called out to everyone seated on the courtroom benches, “All rise for the Honorable Judge Pedro” one last time.

“It does not feel like 30 years,” Pedro told the courtroom. “It has been a journey. And if I had to do it all over again, I would, because I hope that people will see that my career had some merit.”

From front page

the Community, Lt. Governor, and I will continue to work around the clock until this emergency is done,” said Gov. Lewis, who praised Community members for looking out for each other, and for checking on the elderly and homebound affected by the storm.

Both Gov. Lewis and Lt. Gov. Monica Antone expressed concerns about how the storm would impact Community members financially, and financial assistance program – the Community Temporary Emergency Relief Program – was immediately set up to reimburse families for out-of-pocket costs for hotel rooms and the replacement of perishable food items.

For families with one to four members, a one-time $150 payment will be issued to the head of household to replace perishable food items for households with 5 or more members.

“It’s for each head of household for each of the districts that were impacted by the power outage,” said Lt. Gov. Antone. “I know it has been a stressful past couple of days for all of us, but I want to thank the workers behind the scenes for putting the process together.”

Lt. Gov. Antone said a check will be disbursed within 24 hours. The application has been submitted along with necessary proof. She also talked about the lessons imparted by the storms.

“Our ‘Hindag’ is to work together,” said Lt. Gov. Antone.

*GRICUA crews worked to repair damaged power lines along Highway 587 in District 5. Kyle Knox/GRIN*

*Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis (right) presented Judge Pedro with a parting gift in appreciation for his years of service. Kyle Knox/GRIN*

Lt. Gov. Antone (far right) presented a traditional O’otham basket featuring a Kokopelli design to Judge Pedro. Kyle Knox/GRIN

**Additional photo on page 12**

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NABI Brings Native Basketball Talent Together For Tournament Including More Than 120 Teams

GRIN Staff

The Native American Basketball Invitational returned for 2021 after being cancelled in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The familiar sights and sounds of cheering families took over gymnasiums across the Valley, as 124 teams competed in this year’s NABI tournament from July 12-17.

The annual invitational has become a major event for Native youth basketball players. While last year’s event was sidelined for public health reasons, this year’s return was marked by all involved adhering to guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 is simple. It’s really good to be back out on the court playing basketball. I know we’ve been looking forward to the tournament,” said Ronnie Lyons, Head coach for the 21st Natives boys’ basketball team. He said due to the COVID-19 restrictions on social gatherings, the team was able to formally get together only a few weeks before the tournament. “The team we have now is all new, with the exception of two, so we are working with this fresh group as we go along.”

Lyons said his focus is on giving his team experience playing different groups from visiting tribes and getting as a unit. “We’ve always had players who are new to the tournament. For some it’s their first time playing here, so we want them to get used of the pace of things,” said Lyons, who added that the team will be looking to compete in future tournaments after NABI to gain back and the Community

A player from the Snaketown boys basketball team makes a drive to the basket, during a game against Apache Boyz team on July 13. Christopher Lomahquahu/GRIN

A player from the Snaketown boys basketball team makes a free throw during championship game against Northern Thunder on July 12. Christopher Lomahquahu/GRIN

Buttigieg added that to get to know each other. “Twenty miles (of the major throughways intersection and pass through the Community.”

What is special about today, is that I am literally able to be at the table with tribal leaders and literally come out and ‘kick the dust’ on the physical needs,” said Buttigieg.

Gov. Lewis stressed the importance of Interstate 10. “Several communities have partnerships with the Federal Highway Administration, the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Maricopa Association of Governments on solving transportation issues. Lewis added that I-10 represents a critical element not only for the Community but for the state and for interstate economic activity.

“Twenty miles of the I-10 go right through the Community and you can see there are two lanes on both sides,” said Lewis. “This is one of the last stretches of the I-10 to be developed.”

He said I-10, like many of the major throughways on the Community, need improvements in order to make them safe for all travelers, both from and to the Community.

Gov. Lewis speaks with Secretary Buttigieg at the intersection of Highway 347 and Riggs Road, which is one of the many busy roadways on the Community. Christopher Lomahquahu/GRIN

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From front page

Country. Roads across tribal communities are in disrepair and need major improvements, a situation that has long plagued tribes across the U.S.

Gov. Lewis impressed upon Buttigieg the need to expand federal funding for use to build transportation and road improvement projects. “I know [you] have been a champion for inclusion of Tribal things in infrastructure packages that will be considered before Congress,” said Gov. Lewis. “My request to you and President Biden is simple. Allow tribes to utilize the American Rescue Plan Act funding to invest in the range of infrastructure needs due to the pandemic and to prevent future emergency events.”

Gov. Lewis urged

Riggs Road, which is one of the many busy roadways on the Community.
By Billy Allen

Being cooped up during this pandemic gave me lots of time to read. An enjoyable and very informative way to pass the time.

We Had a Little Real Estate Problem, The Unheralded Story of Native Americans & Comedy by Kliph Nesteroff. Native Onesida comic Charlie Hill had this go-to joke: “My people are from Wisconsin. We used to be from New York. We had a little real estate problem.”

All tribes have “had a little real estate problem.” Humor is one way to handle setbacks so comedians can help smooth out rough spots. The observations of these O’odham are “kinda good.”

Multitalented Teresa Choyghhua has made us laugh as a mistress of ceremonies, comedienne, actress, and podcaster. “Kekel (elders) spots. The observations of my people are from the south carrying a high sound like pebbles dropping by pattering on our roofs. We can expect to witness the arrival of the summer rainy moon’ and refers to the month that translates to ‘the arrival of the summer rainy season.’”

Teresa shares an insight about the creative process. “I’ll have a concept and just use it. Maybe it will work and maybe it won’t. I may have to modify it and/or build upon it, whether it’s the delivery or content. My family used to critique my work in the early days. I just spoke with the ‘Ladies,’ we have an upcoming virtual show and we just agreed to meet and run through our material, we never really know exactly what I’ll be doing when the storm has past, so the temperature might blow away in the fast approaching strong hevel (winds).”

We can often hear mo’ am hehbetz, which is the sound of thunder off in the distance accompanied by vep’gi, which is relighting observed with the thunder. We know when the juck is upon us by the very loud thathañk, which is a thunder clap directly overhead that makes us jump. With the thathañk we can expect to witness wick’ham, which is bright, white lightning directly overhead that causes something and is considered very dangerous. The juck then announces its arrival by patterning on our roofs. Sometimes we hear a loud sound like pebbles dropping on our roofs and we know its cha’ (thail). We all know when the storm has past since the hevel will slow down and the rain turns into si:bañ (light drizzle). If the sun is still up after the juck has passed, we might be able to see a kiobod (red rainbow). Children get happy when the temperature drops 25 degrees and they go out and play in the rain puddles. After the first drops 25 degrees and they go out and play in the rain puddles. After the first

A 5th grade talent show with extra credit offered lured this O’odham comedian on the comedy block. “I wasn’t the best student in the classroom, lol,” admits Tony Davis. But that extra credit was like gold, so on stage he went. “People knew me to be a class clown, so I don’t think it was a surprised to see them seeing me become a ‘performer.’” A respected D5 elder bestowed “Gohk” upon Tony. Later that elder would explain to Gohk, O’odham like to joke fun at each other—all the time! His debut performance was during the Ge’e Ki O’odham Thash (District 3 Indian Day) Celebration, “I can’t remember exactly what I said, but I know I utilized my whole body to tell the story especially my chin (lips).” It felt amazing to hear the laughter of a gym full of people. I don’t know if it was a packed house.” Gohk began sharing his humorous stories with “O’odham communities. Because for me it’s a really natural and unique style of comedy. You’re on stage and you want to make people laugh and have a good time, everything feels much more intense.” To someone interested in performing, Gohk offers some advice, “stage fright is real, it can be frightening,” and becoming really nervous is “very natural when you are going to be on a stage in front of a microphone.”

Experience has made Gohk aware of nuances within O’odham humor. Using local slang and happenings for different locations is a plus. “Districts vary in the use of slang and expressions, including the names of their districts and areas,” he has noticed. “Kids from Kuiva (West End) would have to go home earlier when the sun went down because they were close to Komkat (Thick Mountain bka Estrella Mountain). It’s like a different time zone over there.” Gohk goes on to explain about what O’odham is spoken very slowly at the east end, while at the west end, it is spoken very fast, but, “in Vah Ki’ Casa Blanca we speak perfect and very smooth sounding.... Ha’o. Pegi. Heu’u.”

Gohk is not standing still, “I think some topics could be relatable and funny within Natives universally. For example, Charlie Hill would have a lot of jokes that I thought were funny when he joked about treaty rights and ‘real estate’ problems amongst the Eastern Native Tribes. Folks were surprised when the videos came out. I always keep the audience in mind, because I know... all ages watch our video or they are present at the events that I am hosting/ MC’ing. I am looking to expand and do a little bit more material, nothing really crazy or raunchy, but in my opinion I think in some circumstances swear/curse words are necessary. I was able to do a virtual open mic with various Native Comedians via Instagram during the pandemic, probably the biggest platform that I performed on. I have been wanting to challenge myself with developing new material especially during the pandemic to provide comic relief.”

The pandemic “isolated” us to avoid being around contagious individuals, it was a rough spot. From A Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickens, this line really fits in with O’odham thought, “there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good humor.”

O’odham please continue to share their knowledge of Jegos Haichi’ Neo’ok. Answers to word match puzzle can be found on page 11.
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING
NON-EMERGENCY RESOURCES

Public Health Nursing Main Line:  
(520) 550-6042

Rema Metts, Director  
(520) 610-9528

Erica Kalis, Program Manager  
(520) 610-5239

Veronica Rivers, Office Coordinator  
(520) 610-2131

EMERGENCY RESOURCES

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DISTRICT 3 - (520) 610-1331  
DISTRICT 4 - (520) 610-8456  
DISTRICT 5 - (520) 610-1339  
DISTRICT 6 - (520) 610-4110  
DISTRICT 7 - (520) 610-6180

PUBLIC HEALTH: (520) 550-6042  
ANIMAL CONTROL: (520) 610-0657
Christopher Lomahquahu
Gila River Indian News

As the Gila River Indian Community continues its fight against COVID-19, the Mobile Vaccine Unit program continues to gain momentum as a key resource for those not yet vaccinated. During a June 27 vaccination event in District 4, 38 Community members received a COVID-19 vaccine.

The MVU stops have helped hundreds of Community members age 12 and up get vaccinated over the past several months. With the new Delta variant sweeping across the U.S., the Community continues to promote its efforts to make vaccines accessible to GRIC members – including through a social media campaign called “What’s Your Why?” and by giving away prizes to bring more people to each MVU event.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis highlighted the GRIC vaccination rates and concerns over the Delta variant in a recent video address.

"Together … we kept our community from becoming a hotspot despite what was occurring across the state and nation,” said Gov. Lewis. “Six months into our vax program, we are at a 41 percent vaccination rate for our community.”

Gov. Lewis thanked Community members and GRIC employees for getting the COVID-19 vaccine, in turn allowing GRIC to relax certain COVID-19 restrictions and allowing many tribal workers to return to work. Gov. Lewis said that although the Community’s 41 percent vaccination rate is good, there needs to be an ongoing effort to get every Community member fully vaccinated.

The Community’s vaccination efforts have been hailed as an example by local and federal partners, including Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego, First Lady Jill Biden and Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff, said Gov. Lewis. The President’s wife and the Vice President’s husband both encouraged Community members to get the vaccine, with an emphasis on the youth population.

While the COVID-19 vaccine is highly effective against the Delta variant, said Lewis, he explained that this form of COVID-19 is 60 percent more transmissible and highly contagious for individuals who have not received a vaccine or their booster shot. Lewis urged young people about to return to school to get vaccinated.

"As we plan for in person learning in our Community schools, my personal plea to our members is to make a plan to get vaccinated,” said Gov. Lewis. "As you can see there are vaccination events being planned in the Community and our mobile units are still out in the Community.”

Gov. Lewis also promoted the "What’s Your Why?” campaign, encouraging Community members to think about their "why" to get vaccinated.

"My own ‘why’ is to protect our Community,” said Lewis. "It’s been a long and difficult pandemic and I am eager to see each of us gathering together at events throughout our community.”

Gemini Valenzuela, a District 4 resident, came to get her booster shot along with her sister. She cited her grandmother as her reason for getting the shot.

"I wanted to visit her … but I wanted to be safe for her and the whole family,” said Valenzuela, who pleaded with others to get vaccinated. "I encourage everyone to come out and get their vaccine. Especially for those going off to school, you will do a lot of good for yourself and the family.”

District 4 member Landen Martinez said the vaccine provides protection against others who may not be following social distancing protocols and not wearing a mask while in school. "I’m glad I got it,” said Martinez, a student at Mountain Pointe High School. "I am going to be back to school and I feel great, because I know I’ll have protection against the virus and for everyone around me.”

Natalie Juan, a Coolidge High School student, who lives in District 3, said her "why” centers on playing sports and helping protect her friends against COVID-19.

"I feel a lot better getting vaccinated,” said Juan. "I think about being able to hang out with my friends, but also playing softball, because it can get hot wearing a mask and it’ll be easier to breathe.”

GRIC youth Landen Martinez came out to the MVU stop in District 4 on June 27. Zachary Redbird/CPAO

Natalia Juan a Community youth, came out to get her vaccination. Zachary Redbird/CPAO

MVU Events Help Community Members Get Vaccines, as Cases of Delta Variants Rise in U.S.
COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACTION SHEETS

Continued on Page 10
within Community Lands (NSRC forwards to Council for recommendation and for approval and for placement on the consent agenda; LSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval)

Presenters: Willard Antone III; Naomi Bebo; Ian Shavit

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE

Gila River Indian Community Department of Tribal Programs and Administration Audit Report Packaging ending September 30, 2021 (Executive Session) (GMSF forwards to Council in Executive Session with a recommendation to accept) Presenters: Treasurer Robert Kelley, Tylor Hyten, Venley Benally, Elizabeth Buhnee, Mike Jacobs

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE

Gila River Health Care & The Caring House FY20 External Audit Report (Executive Session) (GMSF forwards to Council in Executive Session with a recommendation to accept; HSSC concurs

Submission

LOCAL STUDENT EVELYN J. ENOS RECEIVES NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

Desert View High School student recognized for superior academic achievement by The National Society of High School Scholars

ATLANTA, GA-June 28, 2021 — The National Society of High School Scholars (NSHS) announces that student Evelyn J. Enos from Sacaton, AZ has been selected to become a member of the esteemed organization. The student was chosen from 175,000 high school members who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, scholarship and community commitment. The scholarship is made by NSHS Co-founder and President James W. Lewis.

"On behalf of NSHS, I want to recognize Evelyn for her academic excellence at Desert View High School. Ms. Enos is a perfect example of students who have the ability to maintain emotional calm while facing challenges and are able to inspire others in their community," stated Lewis. "We help students like Evelyn build on their academic success by connecting them with learning experiences. Congratulations to Evelyn on preparing herself for college and meaningfully giving back to her community. NSHS members automatically become lifetime members at the time of their initial membership. Each step along the way—from high school to college to career—NSHS connects outstanding young scholars with the resources they need to develop their strengths and pursue their passions.

Formed in 2002 by James W. Lewis, founder of the National Society of High School Scholars recognizes academic excellence at the high school level and helps to advance the goals and aspirations of aspiring high school students through unique learning experiences, scholarships, internships, international trips and peer engagement. There are more than 1,700,000 NSHS members in over 175 countries, help us fulfill our goals that students with continued opportunity, please acknowledge NSHS in any cross media releases by providing us a resource link to www.rats.org. For more information about NSHS visit a resource link to www.nshss.org.

Amira has gone from 4th grade to continuing to 9th grade at AVA. Amira is interested in engineering for her future. She’s been her learning coach along side for four years. And I am going to be back to school.

Evelyn is now a member of a unique national society of high school scholars. The National Society of High School Scholars (NSHS) recognizes top scholars from high schools who have demonstrated outstanding achievement by connecting them with learning experiences and educational opportunities to prepare them for college and meaningful giving back to their communities. NSHS members automatically become lifetime members at the time of their initial membership. Each step along the way—from high school to college to career—NSHS connects outstanding young scholars with the resources they need to develop their strengths and pursue their passions.

In 1984, the National Society of High School Scholars was founded by Claes Nobel, a member of the Nobel family, and former publications editor for the Nobel Foundation. In 1990, the Nobel Foundation awarded the organization a $1 million grant to develop a system for identifying the nation’s most promising young students and to develop programs for their recognition and support.

The National Society of High School Scholars provides an opportunity for high school students to join their esteemed organization. Each member of the society is an outstanding student who demonstrates high levels of scholarship, leadership and community service. NSHS members automatically become lifetime members at the time of their initial membership. Each step along the way—from high school to college to career—NSHS connects outstanding young scholars with the resources they need to develop their strengths and pursue their passions.

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Food Safety after Power Outage

- Never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) after 4 hours without power or a cold source like dry ice. Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color, or texture.
- Check temperatures of food kept in coolers or your refrigerator with an added cold source. Throw out food above 40°.
- If you have an appliance thermometer in your freezer, check to see if it is still at 40 °F or below.
- You can safely cook thawed frozen food that still contains ice crystals or is at 40 °F or below.

For more information please contact Environmental Health Services at (520) 362-5100

433 West Seedfarm Road, Sacaton, Arizona 85147

District 6 Member Organizes Sock Drive for Homeless Population

Kyle Knox
Gila River Indian News

While most of us put our socks on one foot at a time, many homeless people and transients throughout Phoenix have no socks at all. Thanks to the efforts of the Community’s Danielle Mercado, District 6, many of those in need will receive socks this summer as beneficaries of her annual Sock Drive. During Mercado’s inaugural sock drive, she collected over 1,030 pairs of sock donations. This year, she has her goal set at 2,000 or more pairs.

“People are people, we are all the same, and we should all be treated with human kindness regardless of our circumstances,” said Mercado when asked about her philanthropic venture.

The donation drive is also part of her desire to instill goodwill to the less fortunate throughout the year rather than mainly during the winter holidays. For Mercado, summer giving only makes sense given the harsh heat of the Valley’s summers.

Born and raised in a mud house in District 6 for most of her life, today Mercado is an urban member residing in Phoenix. Outside of work, she continuously shares her time among Phoenix’s homeless population, regularly volunteering at the Andre House, where many Native Americans receive services.

Mercado’s sock drive grew organically from her love of running. Passionate about her health, she runs daily. During her runs throughout Phoenix, she became familiar with the city’s less fortunate residents.

“During my summer runs, I realized that my socks matter because my feet would get hot,” said Mercado. “I would get blisters, but I am fortunate enough to go home to an A/C and a shower, rest my feet and mend. But the people I pass do not have that luxury. Instead, they have to live on that hot street and sleep on the pavement year-round.”

This realization led Mercado to the concept of donated socks. Her volunteer work had taught her that most donations for the homeless are older used items people want to throw out. However, socks are affordable items that many can donate new, clean and packaged.

Mercado organized her inaugural sock drive in 2019 with an initial goal of 300 pairs. She quickly found support among her network. Through social media, additional donations soon followed thanks to marketing support from her colleague Kevin Nunez, Taino from New York City.

“I thought that 300 pairs were a lot, but before I knew it, I had over 1,000 pairs donated,” said Mercado. She hopes to build upon that success and reach or exceed her goal of 2,000 pairs this year. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, she could not organize the sock drive last year, so she is excited for what is to come this year.

If you’re interested in donating new, packaged male and female adult socks to Danielle’s sock drive, you can do so by e-mailing her at danielle7mercado@gmail.com. She is collecting socks and accepting cash payments to go towards the purchase of socks. Donations will be accepted online until July 31. All socks will be purchased and donated to the Andre House in Phoenix by Aug 7.

Danielle Mercado holds a bundle of socks from her donation drive, that started in July of this year. Kyle Knox/GRIN

In 2019, Mercado delivered over a 1,000 socks during that year’s sock donation drive. This year, she plans donate 2,000 pairs of socks. Photo courtesy of Danielle Mercado

Kyle Knox
Gila River Indian News

WIOA Adult Program

Virtual Orientation

Kick Start Your Career!

Now offering Virtual Services:
- Job Search
- Career Assessment
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- Job Referrals
- Career Planning
- Internships
- Online Training
- Work Experience
- Work Readiness Training
- Self Employment Assistance
- Veterans Services
- English/ESL Learning Aid Services
- General Education Development Program, Wagner-Heurner Services

Call to sign up for Orientation
Employment & Training Dept. (520) 562-3385/86
Iyanna Gomez, a Community member signed-on to play for Feather River College in Quincy, California. Photo courtesy of Melissa Gomez

Submitted by
Marv Bradley

GRIC High School Basketball Player from Reno, NV Signs with Feather River College

Iyanna Destahle Gomez is an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community along with her mother, Melissa Bradley Gomez, and her grandmother, Jacque (McMillen) Bradley. She is also part Navajo and Hispanic. She was born and lived in Mesa, AZ until 2017 when her family moved to Reno, Nevada. She attended Sal River Elementary School on the SRPMIC, Pine Grove Junior High School in Mesa, then McQueen High School in Reno where she graduated in June with a 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 system. McQueen High School is a Nevada 4a division high school in sports, equivalent to the Arizona 4a division.

Iyanna was recruited by the women's basketball coach, Keshawn Johnson, at Feather River College in Quincy, CA, and she committed. His coach is very excited to have her on his team at the shooting guard and point guard positions. Iyanna did not play for him. She was a starter in all her years at McQueen High School and with the Reno AAU Elite travel teams at the shooting guard and point guard positions. Iyanna did not get an opportunity to play basketball during her senior year because Nevada cancelled all winter sports.

Her coach is very excited to have her. She was a starter in all her years at McQueen High School.

Iyanna had generated much interest nationwide because of her outstanding high school basketball career. AAU basketball tournaments, and having profiles with AAU CaptainU recruiting and National College Student Athlete recruiting. Her basketball awards started when she played for SRPRIC High School JV team as a Soph Gilder earning the MIP award. In her sophomore year, she received the Best Offensive Player Award. In her junior year, she made first team all-tourney in a California high school tournament.

Academically, Iyanna had always been involved in sports her whole life, this type of major. Then since she had been involved in sports her whole life, she decided that she would major in Sports Medicine and then eventually get involved in physical therapy. She is very excited to get the opportunity to advance her education and basketball to the next level.

Iyanna's family is very proud of all her accomplishments. She is a very intelligent, athletic, and beautiful young lady who will succeed in all her efforts.

Judge Pedro was joined family members during his retirement luncheon held in his honor. Kyle Knox/GRIN

Jākbłt Mac̓k̓elen: SOLUTION!

Jukbig ḥa:k̓̓ ʼep̓ ʼep̓ ʼp̓ ʼj̓ ʼ

Gila River Indian News July 16, 2021

Gila River Indian Community
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR & LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

STEPHEN ROE LEWIS
GOVERNOR

MONICA LYN ANTONIO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

July 13, 2021

Gila River Indian Community

The quarterly per capita income has been calculated by the Office of the Treasurer and approved by the Community Treasurer and the Governor. The following are the distribution levels from Thursday, August 2, 2021, (July 31, 2021) tabs on Saturday, the quarter ending June 30, 2021.

Mixer Trust $457.54

Adult Per Capita $462.76

The following is an overview of the sums used in calculating the per capita amounts:

1. 11% of net gaming revenues.
2. Less administrative costs for:
   a. Tribal General Fund Trust Administration
   b. Tribal Pots & Vessels (Pots & Vessels Trust Administration)
   c. Office of the Recorder (e.g. Check cashing, garage, creek repair, etc.)
   d. Pledging adjustments (e.g. Impaired total on Cash Bond deposits)
3. Divided by eligible counties (adults & children)
4. Equal per capita amount.

There will be no check disbursements for Per Capita Distribution; all checks will be mailed.

If you have any questions, please contact the Per Capita Office (520) 562-5122.

Gila River Indian Community

525 WEST GUARDIAN LN - PO BOX 97 - LACONIA, AZ 85437
TELEPHONE: 520-562-5841 FAX: 520-562-9124 EMAIL: EXECUVEHUL@GRC.NUNI

How Are You Feeling Today?

A five-minute break can make a difference and prevent burnouts.

1. Acknowledge how you’re feeling
2. Exercise at least 10 minutes a day and create healthy eating habits
3. Create a daily routine to increase feelings of control
4. Take breaks
5. Seek help from a professional if you are feeling overwhelmed

During COVID-19, there have been more and more who have dealt with grief from losing a loved one or dealing with stress from social isolation or even financial problems. Many behaviors and emotional issues have increased since the beginning of 2020 due to the isolation, financial issues, and anxiety. But how have you been feeling? Here are some ways to help you live a healthy lifestyle, mind and body.

A five-minute break can make a difference and prevent burnouts.
GRIC Launches ‘What’s Your Why’ Campaign

As the Community continues to work towards getting everyone vaccinated against COVID-19, a new marketing campaign – ‘What’s Your Why?’ – is encouraging members to think through the benefits of vaccinations and how they can make a difference personally and for others.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis unveiled the campaign – launched by the GRIC Communication and Public Affairs Office – in a video message last week.

“Each Community member who’s vaccinated gets us one step closer to getting back to our prior activities, cultural events, our ceremonies and our celebrations,” said Gov. Lewis, who challenged members to “think about what’s your why?” in regards to getting a vaccine.

The goal of the campaign is to bring the pandemic back to a personal level rather than dwelling on the sickness and death that have been part of many messages and news stories. Instead, the campaign allows everyone to consider their stake in the fight against COVID and how they can help protect the Community.

At every Mobile Vaccination Unit event, individuals have been asked that question: What’s your why? While responses vary, many include attending music festivals, traveling, holding family gatherings, parties, or even holding a traditional funeral without limiting attendees. Currently, the Community’s vaccination rate stands at 41 percent, according to health statistics. “Community immunity” will be achieved when enough adults and children are vaccinated to stop or slow the spread of COVID-19. According to health care officials, group immunity at this level would also protect those who cannot be vaccinated, such as newborns, some elders, youth 11 years and younger, and those with medical conditions.

In order to reach Community Immunity, 70% of the GRIC population must be vaccinated.

During the initial phases of the vaccination rollout, many Community members reported getting their vaccinations to protect themselves and family members. However, with public spaces reopening and many members still reluctant to get the vaccine, the risk of spreading COVID-19 remains, especially among the unvaccinated.

According to GRIC leaders and public health officials, until Community Immunity has been reached and infections decrease, restrictions will remain in place. This includes the cancellation of annual hallmark events like graduation and promotions, the Five Tribes Treaty of Peace Celebration, O’otham New Year Celebration, and the holiday gatherings each district hosts annually.

For vaccination information and MVU scheduling, please visit http://www.mygilariver.com/index.php/vaccine-information or call the GRIC COVID Hotline at (520) 550-6079 or visit mygilariver.com for regular COVID-19 updates.

Keep Your Pet Safe and Healthy

Keeping your dogs within a confined area and walking your dog on a leash prevents your dog from wondering and keeps them safe. Pet owners should be aware of viruses such as distemper and parvo that causes illness.

What’s Canine Parvovirus and Canine Distemper?

Canine parvovirus (CPV), also known as parvo, is a very contagious and serious infectious virus that affects the gastrointestinal tract. Canine distemper virus (CDV) also causes gastrointestinal and respiratory illness, and affects the neurological system. Both viruses can be preventable through a series of core vaccines which need to be updated every year.

Symptoms and how the viruses are spread

Canine parvovirus spreads through contact with contaminated feces or contact with an infected dog. The virus can live in the ground, surfaces, peoples’ hands, clothing and shoes. Animals can carry the virus on their fur or paws. The virus can live in the environment for months if areas are not disinfected. Oiling bleach with water will help kill the virus. Some signs of parvovirus include lethargy, loss of appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea. Canine distemper is spread through contact with contaminated feces or contact with an infected dog. The virus can live in the ground, surfaces, peoples’ hands, clothing and shoes. Animals can carry the virus on their fur or paws. The virus can live in the environment for months if areas are not disinfected. Oiling bleach with water will help kill the virus. Some signs of distemper include coughing, sneezing, and diarrhea.

Diagnosis and treatment

Veterinarians diagnose canine distemper and parvo through clinical appearance and laboratory testing. Treatment typically consists of supportive care and efforts to prevent secondary infections. Dogs infected should be isolated from other dogs to minimize the risk of further infection. Infected dogs should be kept isolated.

Vaccination and good hygiene are the best methods to prevent


COVID-19 in Animals

Primary diagnostic tools that have been diagnosed with SARS-CoV-2 are dogs and cats when the virus is transmitted via close contact with a COVID-19-positive person. It should be noted that these species are not easily infected under natural conditions, and there is no evidence that infected cats or dogs spread the virus to other animals or to people.

A small number of blue recycling bins have “trash” in white lettering written on the top and side of the bin. Those may be used as a trash receptacle only if the lettering is present!

Questions?

Contact the Department of Public Works at (520) 562-3443 or the Department of Environmental Quality at (520) 562-2234.

Please

Use the correct color bin for recycling and trash on the designated day. If a blue bin is set out on trash day or vice versa, the bin will not be collected and emptied. It is crucial to keep the materials separate in their recycling and trash on the designated day. If a blue bin is set out on trash day or vice versa, the bin will not be collected and emptied. It is crucial to keep the materials separate in their recycling and trash on the designated day.
STAY INFORMED!

Sign up today for text message alerts from the Gila River Indian Community!

Text GILARIVER to 797979 for notices and announcements including important information regarding COVID-19 Coronavirus.

To subscribe, follow these steps:

1. Text GILARIVER to 797979
2. You will receive a text message confirming your subscription. You can opt out at any time.
3. You will start receiving important updates from GRIC

Stay tuned for notices & announcements
Data rate usage may apply

For more information, call the Communications & Public Affairs Office
520-562-9715
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$325/mo 2018 Kia Niro LX
$289/mo 2018 Chevy Trax
$265/mo 2018 Nissan Altima
$279/mo 2019 Nissan Kicks
$335/mo 2019 Honda Civic LX
$335/mo 2018 Dodge Challenger

No Payments Until October*

Wont’ Last! Blowout Pricing!

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TURN THE PAGE
7.17.21
8PM

THE MUSIC OF BILLY JOEL & ELTON JOHN
THE PIANO MEN
7.31.21
8PM

ULTIMATE TRIBUTE TO THE EAGLES
ONE OF THESE NIGHTS
8.14.21
8PM

TRIBUTE TO ABBA
ABBFAB
8.21.21
8PM

AT WILD HORSE PASS