



## Elders Day Marks 27 Years of Celebration

*A Celebration of Stories, Memory, Singers and Dancers Honor Elders Through Cultural Strength and Community*

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

CHANDLER, Ariz. — The 27th Annual Elders Day Event was held Jan. 16 at the Sheraton Grand, hosted by the Elders Concern Group. This year's theme, "I Remember When: Stories, Memories, and Wisdom of Our Elders," brought together more than 600 elders from all seven districts, the GRIC Urban Members Association, and Southern California.

Susanna Osife and Joseph Davis served as masters of ceremony. Former Lt. Gov. Robert Stone delivered the opening



**L-R: Jovita Mendoza, Imogene Jackson, and Elizabeth Dutton were among the elders 90 years old and up to be honored during the Elders Day event. Zachary Redbird/CPAO**

prayer. The Ira H. Hayes Post 84 Color Guard posted the colors, and Rebecca Rowe sang the national anthem. Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina An-

tone offered welcome remarks.

"I welcome everyone to this special event that honors our elders. I hope you enjoy yourself, have a good time, and be safe."

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## Updated Statement of Governor Stephen Roe Lewis on Enhanced Federal Immigration Enforcement

**PRESS RELEASE:**  
Gila River Indian Community

GILA RIVER INDIAN RESERVATION, Ariz. - The Community has received information and heard reports that tribal members in Arizona are being questioned and detained by federal immigration officials. So far, there has been one report that a Community member has been stopped by enhanced federal immigration enforcement in Chandler, AZ.

These stories of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids and detentions are concerning and may have created distress, especially for Community members who may not have Tribal IDs, or who live in urban areas. Community Departments and the Gila River Police Department continue to monitor and investigate these concerns and any possible impact to Community members.

In addition to carefully monitoring developments, the Community proactively took steps to understand the potential for problems and contacted ICE directly to ensure that any enforcement efforts remain respectful of tribal members.

Governor Lewis and Community Council members met

with DHS/ICE in September 2025. ICE heard the Community's request to honor tribal IDs as proof of U.S. citizenship, and to coordinate with GRPD on any ICE related activities on Reservation.

The Office of General Counsel has developed a protocol to track U.S. Immigration stops and detentions of Community members and the Community Council approved a plan to amend the Enrollment Department's Policies and Procedures to facilitate the availability of Tribal identification cards for minors.

We urge all members to remain calm in this time of uncertainty. As a reminder, please be careful, and if traveling, carry valid forms of identification such as a valid tribal enrollment card or Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB), valid Arizona driver license, or a valid U.S. federal, state, or local government issued identification.

In the meantime, if you do observe any federal officials on Reservation seeking to enforce the federal immigration law, please report it immediately to OGC at (520) 562-9765.

## Tribal Leaders Seek Consistent Recognition of Native IDs

*Tribal Members Face Questions Over Identity*

**Miguel Sallard**  
Managing Editor

The Gila River Indian Community is raising concerns after a series of encounters between tribal members in Arizona reported being questioned or briefly detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, incidents that Community leaders say reflect ongoing gaps in federal recognition of Tribal sovereignty despite being U.S. citizens.

For many residents, the issue is not abstract. It shows up in everyday moments: a young man detained on his way to work because his tribal ID was not accepted; a mother whose son was questioned at a mobile checkpoint; a veteran who recalls having to explain, yet again, that members of his community are U.S. citizens.

These stories circulate in the Tribal Nations, community centers, and conversations among neighbors. They are not told with fear, but with a mix of frustration and dignity. "We shouldn't have to prove who we are on our own land," said Verlon M. Jose, Charmain of the Tohono O'odham Nation, echoing a sentiment shared by many.

Tribal officials say the core problem lies in inconsistent recognition of tribal identification by some federal agents. Although tribal IDs are legally valid, they are not always accepted in the field, leading to temporary detentions, questioning and confusion that disrupt daily life for Native citizens.

For Tribal communities in Arizona, the issue is not only procedural but deeply personal, touching on sovereignty, identity and the long history of Native presence in the region. Even as national debates over immigration continue, community members say their message remains simple: they want to be recognized and respected in their own homeland.

In response, tribal departments have organized know-your-rights workshops, legal support sessions and direct communication with federal agencies. The goal, officials say, is not confrontation but protection. "We want our people to be informed, safe and respected," Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis said.

Despite the tension, the community's response remains grounded. Families continue their routines, students go to school, and elders share stories

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## District 4 Community Day



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## Indian Nations & Tribes Legislative Day



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## Skyline Gila River Coach Wins 100<sup>th</sup> Victory



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# COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

A COMMUNITY DISCUSSION ON CRIME IN YOUR DISTRICT

February 3:

District 1 Service Center Gymnasium 6:00pm-8:00pm

February 5:

District 2 Service Center Gymnasium 6:00pm-8:00pm

February 10:

District 3 Service Center Gymnasium 6:00pm-8:00pm

February 12:

District 4 Service Center Gymnasium 6:00pm-8:00pm

February 18:

District 5 Service Center Gymnasium 6:00pm-8:00pm

February 19:

District 6 Learning Center 6:00pm-8:00pm

February 24:

District 7 Service Center Gymnasium 6:00pm-8:00pm








Governor  
**Stephen Roe Lewis**  
Lt. Governor  
**Regina Antone**  
Community Council  
Representatives  
**District 1**  
Duane Jackson Jr.  
Joey Whitman  
**District 2**  
Ann M. Lucas  
**District 3**  
Kristina D. Morago  
Joseph Manuel Jr.  
**District 4**  
Jennifer Allison  
Nada Celaya  
Lalena Jackson  
Leah Williams  
**District 5**  
Donovan G. Kyyitan  
James De La Rosa  
Franklin Pablo Sr.  
Gordon Santos Jr.  
**District 6**  
Anthony Villareal, Sr.  
Terrance B. Evans  
Charles Goldtooth  
**District 7**  
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 **INDIGENOUS**  
Journalists Association

# Four Sister Tribes Youth Host O’odham Cu:dk and Waila Dance at UNITY Midyear Conference

**PRESS RELEASE**  
United National Indian Tribal Youth Inc.

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Youth leaders from the Four Sister Tribes hosted the O’odham Cu:dk and Waila (Chicken Scratch) Dance during the UNITY Mid-year Conference on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at the Sheraton Downtown Phoenix in Phoenix, Arizona.

UNITY is honored to host the annual O’odham Cu:dk, recognizing and celebrating the aboriginal lands, culture, and traditions of the O’odham people. The O’odham Cu:dk is the traditional round dance of the O’odham, featuring songs, stories, and dances that have been passed down through generations and continue to strengthen cultural identity and community connections.

This special cultural celebration is collaboratively planned by youth councils and partners representing the Four Sister Tribes,



Members from the Akimel O’odham/Pee Posh Youth Council join fellow youth councils in a traditional song. Apphia Shirley/CPAO

including the Ak-Chin Youth Council, Akimel O’odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council, Tohono O’odham Nation Youth Council,



L-R: Miss Gila River 2025-2026 Gabrielle Garcia and Evelyn Enos. Apphia Shirley/CPAO

Young River Peoples Council, Betty Fairfax High School Youth Council, Cesar Chavez High School Youth Council, and the Four Sister Tribes Royalty. The event takes place as part of the UNITY Midyear Conference, which is expected to welcome more than 800 Native youth leaders ages 14–24 from across the country. The conference provides immersive training focused on community organizing, leadership development, environmental stewardship, and cultural resilience, empowering

youth to return home prepared to lead positive change in their communities.

**About UNITY**  
Founded in 1976, United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) is the nation’s oldest and largest Native youth leadership network, representing more than 300 affiliated youth councils in 34 states. UNITY’s mission is to foster the spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian and Alaska Native youth.

## NARF Statement on Unlawful ICE Activity

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Native American Rights Fund (NARF)**

January 16, 2026

The Native American Rights Fund (NARF) condemns the unlawful actions of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). We stand with our neighbors – whatever their country of birth – who are getting ripped away from their families or violently apprehended for their lawful efforts to protect their communities. ICE’s ongoing campaign of violence marked by racial profiling, warrantless arrests, excessive force, and a total lack of accountability, must end now.

Native Americans—the first peoples of this land—are among those being abducted and detained. These arrests and detentions blatantly violate the treaty, as well as the constitutional and civil rights of the Native Americans being apprehended. These unconstitutional acts cannot stand and federal agencies must be held accountable for the trauma they’re inflicting in our communities.

“Across Indian Country, we are seeing Native American people illegally stopped, abused, or detained by ICE agents. It is hard to miss the irony of locking up the first people of this land in an immigration sweep,” said NARF Executive Director John Echohawk. “It’s indicative of the

racial profiling that is happening, and we refuse to stand by while the United States government abducts Native people.”

ICE agents are also endangering people exercising their rights under the U.S. Constitution to protest and peaceably assemble.

“People are being illegally detained and brutalized based on the color of their skin, their name, or their accent. Some are being terrorized for speaking out, protesting, or just observing federal agents. Native American rights are being trampled by federal agents, and there must be accountability for these actions,” said NARF Deputy Direct Matthew Campbell.

Resources for individuals and organizations approached by ICE agents are available at <https://narf.org/ice-resources-2026/>

If you are a Tribal Nation seeking training or support for your leadership, employees, or Tribal citizens, please contact the Native American Rights Fund.

If you are a Native American who has been questioned, stopped, arrested, or detained by ICE, please contact the Native American Rights Fund.

**CONTACT:**  
Native American Rights Fund: (303)447-8760  
[rfa@narf.org](mailto:rfa@narf.org)



# Elders Day

Continued From Front Page

She greeted attendees as they arrived. Osife, education coordinator for Rural Arizona Engagement (RAZE), introduced Gov. Lewis, who engaged the audience in a cheering contest. Each district cheered on his cue, with Districts 3 and 6 being the loudest. He acknowledged former and current elected officials in attendance and led a moment of silence for elders who passed away in 2025.

“This is your day to celebrate and share stories. Let’s be kind to each other. I wish everyone a blessed day,” Gov. Lewis said.

Davis then introduced former Lt. Gov. Robert “Bobby” Stone, whose keynote shifted the theme from “I Remember When” to “We Remember When,” emphasizing agriculture and language.

“My brothers and I walked to my grandmother’s farm. She grew traditional crops such as corn and squash. We helped her with farm chores. There were many cottonwood trees during that time,” Stone said. “After completing the farm chores, we made slingshots from the tongue of our leather shoe and tire tube.”

Stone discussed the Hu Hu Kam Canal System, traditional farming methods, and ancestral self sufficiency. He noted that if the Community can build successful casinos and resorts, it can also revitalize traditional agriculture.

He concluded with reflections on language and culture. Stone, a certified O’otham language instructor at Casa Blanca Community School, said, “The song and dance that I teach is truly immersion because they are repetitive. Our community has fewer than 10 certified language teachers. It took me some time to become a certified teacher.”

Stone and his second grade students



Over 600 Elders attend the 27th Annual Elders Day at the Sheraton Grand on Jan. 16. Jeston Morris/GRIN

honored the 90 year old elders by singing O’otham songs. The students are from Mrs. Cervantes’ class at Casa Blanca Community School. Honorary plaques were presented to each elder. Recipients included:

- District 1
- Suzanne Brown
  - Wilfred Paul Evans Sr.
  - Viola Katherine Jackson
  - Idella Faye Poocha
- District 3
- Edmond John Antone
  - Lorraine Elaine Kisto
  - Ethelene Lewis
  - Permelia Rhodes
  - Imogene Jackson
  - Yvonne D. Stovall
- District 4
- Eugenia Ann Apkaw
  - Rita Burnette

- Gloria Ludlow
  - Phillip Mendoza
  - Raymond M. Sabori
  - Jovita Mendoza
- District 5
- Janet Ruth Haskie
  - Irving Leon Johns Sr.
  - Katherine Lewis
- District 7
- Beryl Jane Stevens
  - Elizabeth Dutton

The morning film, “I Remember When,” featured Edena Antone, Jennifer Perchero, Urban Giff, Dallas Delowe, Donald “Donnie” Antone, and Connie Jackson, highlighting the importance of language immersion.

Precious Vicente, lead singer for the District 6 Basket Dancers, performed with her group to honor the elders. She began singing at age 16. “Singing and dancing

at an elders event is important because it connects all of us together,” she said. “The social dancing gets everyone involved and moving. Singing and dancing allows all of us to connect as a community.”

Aarick Mack, a lead singer from District 7 and Lehi, led a group of bird dancers. “My late grandfather, Ronald Mack, was an influential elder who was a native speaker and singer. He taught me the bird songs. It’s appropriate to sing those songs, especially to honor the elders,” he said. “The songs are Pee Posh. They are sung by tribes along the Colorado River.”

In the afternoon, the film “The Community Across Times of Change,” by Leonard Bruce was shown. Dancing through the decades and a survey concluded the event.



Casa Blanca Community School students and Robert Stone perform traditional songs . Zachary Redbird/CPAO



Yvonne D. Stovall and Idella Faye Poocha are honored during the event. Zachary Redbird/CPAO



Linda Andrews (left) receives an award for her outstanding work with the Elders Concerns Group. Zachary Redbird/CPAO



Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis greets Rita Burnette, who is recognized with elders who are 90 years old and up. Zachary Redbird/CPAO



# GRIC Members Enjoy the District 4 Community Day



Gertie & the T.O. Boyz perform in District 4 on Jan. 24. Jeston Morris/GRIN

### Jeston Morris Gila River Indian News

SANTAN, Ariz. — District 4 Recreation Department hosted a Community Day at the park on Jan. 24. Several hundred GRIC members attended the event that included horse-shoe tournament, car show, Waila entertainment and so much more.

Community Day event began at 1 p.m. at service center park. Arts and crafts vendors and exhibits were in the basketball court area. There were several food vendors located in various locations. Party Professionals setup inflatable structures for the youth on the park lawn. Tribal Image Car Club facilitated the car show on the south end of the park.

Danny who is a staff with Party Professional said, “Today we set up a couple of sport inflatable, incline challenge, and bounce houses. Slam Dunk is the most popular inflatable for the youth.”

The music entertainment stage and dance floor was under the large park ramada. Gertie and the T.O. Boyz draw a significant crowd of all ages. Community members love dancing to Waila. Some attendees simply enjoyed the live entertainment. They sat at tables, bleachers and on portable chairs to enjoy themselves.

Gertie Lopez and her band specialize in Waila. She has half dozen band members that plays bass, drums, guitar, saxophone and violin. Lopez plays the

accordion. The crowd loves Waila and dancing to it. They are an award-winning band that plays throughout Arizona, New Mexico, Minnesota, including boat cruise on the St. Croix River.

“Around 2000, we started playing Waila. We start getting a lot of music gig. Marlon ‘Hotch’ Felix, lead guitarist, suggest naming our band—Gertie and the T.O. Boyz, sadly, Felix passed away before our first album came out. I hold our band name deeply to my heart,” said Lopez.

“I love Gila River. I have a lot of friends and fans in this community,” she added.

Horseshoe tournament was facilitated by Mark J. Miguel who is the owner of Miguel Ranch in District 4.

# HIRING EVENT

FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 13, 2026  
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

In-Person & Virtual Interviews



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### IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS

Location: American Indian Student  
Support Services in Discovery Hall.  
250 E Lemon St, Tempe, AZ 85281

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### Any Questions, please reach out to:

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Gila River Indian Community



American Indian  
Student Support Services  
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Career Futures



Participants in the horseshoe tournament. Jeston Morris/GRIN

The tournament was held on the baseball field. Several teams played simultaneously. First, second and third place trophies were awarded to the winners. Miguel explained the scoring system, which is 3,2, 1. A ringer is 3 points, a leaner is 2 points, and a closes shoe is 1 point.

Miguel discussed the horseshoe tournament. “We used to be part of “Mul-Chu-Tha” fair. Currently, we hold our tournament at Miguel Ranch. There is a lot of interest in Horseshoe. Players come from Arizona, New Mexi-

co, Texas, California, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado. Several players called from New York about our tournament,” he said.

“We are not a sanctioned horseshoe tournament, but professional players come out. We are a horseshoe family,” he added.

The car show was exotic rare cars. Brandon Jackson, District 5 member, entered his 1988 black Chevy pickup truck into the car show. “Before my current show truck, I own a 1997 Chevy for six years. I pick up my Chevy truck nine months ago. It has a

5.7 V8 engine which is the original motor. I don’t drive my show truck that much. I mainly bring out to car show,” he said.

“I have always been a Chevy guy. My grandpas love Chevy. My mother and father own Chevy as well. I love Chevy,” he added.

The food vendors were setup throughout the event venue. One of the vendors was Gila River Frybread Popover. Brian Cooper, District 2 member, discussed the food menu. “The menu includes red chili beef with beans, red chili beef, beans, Indian tacos, and frybread,” said Cooper. “Our customers love the golden crispy frybread,” he added.

District 4 Recreation Department hosted an excellent community day event. The weather was nice. There was something for everyone. Some of the vendors had native design graphic t-shirts, crafts, and jewelry. Everyone had an exciting and fun day.

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**7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**  
  
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COMMUNITY  
SCHOOL**  
5297 W Nelson Rd, Bapchule, AZ 85121  
GRIC Tribal Education Department, 7050 W Allison Rd, Chandler, AZ 85226



Community members dance to live music by Gertie & the T.O. Boyz during the D4 Community Day event. Jeston Morris/GRIN



# Skyline Gila River Basketball Coach Earns 100<sup>th</sup> Victory



Coach Taylor encourages her players to communicate more on the court. Jeston Morris/GRIN

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

CHANDLER, Ariz. — The Skyline Gila River Lady Mustangs dominated the Arizona Cultural Academy Lady Wolves at the Skyline Gila River gymnasium on Jan. 20, a win that marked a major milestone for the program. The victory was the 100th in six years for head coach Daveda Taylor.

Fans from both schools packed the gym for the matchup, and Mustangs supporters celebrated the achievement with a post-game cake. The Lady Mustangs won the opening tipoff and never looked back, controlling the pace from the start. They headed into halftime with a 31-18 lead after Taylor emphasized the need for better communication during her locker room talk. The Mustangs pulled away in the second half for a 65-24 finish.

Reflecting on the milestone, Taylor credited her athletes for the program's rise.

"It's a surreal victory," Taylor said. "Without these girls' dedication and hard work throughout these

last six years, I wouldn't be here at the 100th win. It's not necessarily me; it's more of the girls who were really dedicated to this basketball program."

Taylor said seeing the success of her alumni was the highlight of the night.

"I'm just proud to see how well they're doing in life," she said. "The best part of it is just the success of my players."

Assistant coach Darius Turner called Taylor one of the best coaches he has worked with, describing her as a dedicated mentor to the young women on the team.

"She worked hard for it and she definitely earned this victory tonight," Turner said. Players echoed the sentiment, noting that while the game started slowly, their chemistry improved as the clock ran down.

"We actually communicated during the game," said center Monica Benally. "We were able to secure the 100th victory at the end."

Point guard Jazmyne Mendivil added that the team was determined to get the result for their coach. "We started off slow, but then we worked our way up. We finally got our 100th win for coach," she said.

Lucy Rivers, also a point guard, noted the shift in momentum during the first half. "Our energy level accelerated in the second quarter," Rivers said. "We really played well and communicated as a team."

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GILA RIVER CONNECTIONS:

A Celebration of Shared History

This community gathering will bring together Japanese American camp survivors, their descendants, members of the Gila River Indian Community, students, and allies to honor the intertwined history of Japanese American and Native American communities and the shared experience of displacement, resettlement and forced assimilation.

Sponsored by the Huhugam Heritage Center, the Arizona Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League and the Paston Community Alliance, the gathering will simultaneously honor the history of Japanese American incarcerated and the sovereignty of GRIC lands and provide opportunities for community-building and shared healing. The event is being made possible by the JACL National Legacy Grant Project, the Henri and Tamiye Takahashi Charitable Foundation, and JA Community Foundation.

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH 6:30PM-9:30PM

Screening of the short film, The Blue Jay, by Marlene Shigekawa, Executive Director of the Paston Community Alliance

Screening of the feature documentary Taking Our Place by Antonia Grace Glenn, which explores the intersections of Japanese American, African American and Native American communities during and after World War II

Panel featuring the filmmakers and community elders

Community reception

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH 1:00PM-4:00PM

Panel discussion featuring Japanese American and GRIC elders and community leaders

Lecture on baseball by Bill Staples, Jr., President of the JACL - Arizona Chapter

Lecture on Gila River Camp archeology by Koji Lau-Ozawa, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, UCLA

Community reception

Gathering attendees will be invited to participate in additional activities:

Saturday, February 21

Iwa Jima Flag Raising Event (honoring Ira H. Hayes of the Gila River Indian Community)

Saturday & Sunday, February 21-22

Arizona Matsuri, a Festival of Japan - Steele Indian School Park, Phoenix, AZ

For additional information, please visit <https://jaclaz.org/event/gila-river-connections/> or Email: [gilariverconnections@gmail.com](mailto:gilariverconnections@gmail.com)

A photograph of a basketball game in progress. A player in a white jersey with the number 6 is jumping to shoot the ball. A player in a dark jersey is jumping to block the shot. The background shows a crowd of spectators in the bleachers.

The Lady Mustangs and Lucy Rivers did not back down after gaining a big lead. Jeston Morris/GRIN





# Auppa I’ivakithak Mashath 2026, Sha:’i chu’ig jek’ked?

Our Hekiu O’otham understood the weather and named the different elements. We must remember that they had spent their day’s outdoors throughout the changing seasons. This is the time of year when we experience huge weather changes, as the cold weather systems passes through our community. The weather is something that we all have in common on a day to day basis. Many O’otham, such as linemen and archaeologists, work outdoors every day. They all dress for the cold weather and try to keep warm to ensure that they don’t become susceptible to weather related ailments. The inclement weather may cause them to change work schedules.

Before heading outside, it is helpful to ask someone to observe what the weather is like before we leave home. One way to do this in O’otham is by asking the question “Sha: ‘i chu’ig jek’ked?” which translates as (What is it like outside?) Knowing how much the weather changes this time of year, there is a whole list of possible responses including the following: “S-he:pith ‘o jek’ked.” (It’s cold outside). “Ju:k ‘o jek’ked.” (It’s raining outside). “Heved ‘o jek’ked.” (It’s windy outside). “S-chev’gig ‘o jek’ked.” (It’s cloudy outside).

This is also the time of year when we experience gevshp (frost/ice) and s-ku:bsig (fog). The high humidity freezes and causes frost to form on surfaces. Most notably, on our vehicle windshields and rooftops. Ground fog forms after heavy rainfall when the atmosphere is somewhat sta-

ble. The moist air and ambient temperature equalizes and creates a mist. As the day progresses, the frost melts and the fog banks lift, or blown away by the surface winds.

Let’s say, that we wanted to answer the question, by responding the weather is really strong in some aspect (really cold, or really raining). We can say this in O’otham by using the word i:vo within the statement. The word “i:vo” or “hi:vo” works like the words (very) or (really) in English and denotes importance to the action verb. I:vo (‘o) s-he:pith jek’ked. (It’s really cold outside). I:vo (‘o) ju:k jek’ked. (It’s really raining outside). I:vo (‘o) heved jek’ked. (It’s really windy outside). I:vo (‘o) chev-gig jek’ked. (‘o is the shortened version of i:vo/hi:vo).

In O’otham we can combine different weather elements into one response or observation. “Hevel ‘o s-he:pith jek’ked!” (The wind is really cold outside!). “Ju:k ‘o ge:sh jek’ked!” (The rain is really falling outside!). “S-ku:bsig ‘o jek’ked!” (It’s really foggy outside!). “Jeved ‘o gevshp jek’ked!” (The ground is really frosty outside!). A few statements often spoken by Elders is “Vath’o s-he:pj.”

Sha: ‘i chu’ig jek’ked 2026? Match the Weather Statement with its Picture!

Hevel ‘o s-he:pith jek’ked!

Ju:k ‘o ge:sh jek’ked!

S-chevgig ‘o jek’ked!

S-ku:bsig ‘o jek’ked

Jeved ‘o gevshp jek’ked!

Kut ‘g m hu s-hevhogim s’ap ‘o chickpanath!

Photographs Courtesy Robert Johnson



(It’s going to get real cold) and “Kut ‘g m hu s-hevhogim s’ap ‘o chickpanath!” (In cool weather we’ll work well!).

We encourage you to speak O’otham in your everyday lives and observe the weather around us. You can test how much you remember by completing this month’s word match. Responses and observations may be slightly different between the villages. Speak with an Elder or Speaker and ask what other weather observations are possible.

A special Thank You to Community Elders for sharing their knowledge of weather that made this article possible. Additional source related from Agriculture Handbook, Mark J. Schroeder & Charles C. Buck, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Government Printing Office,1970.



CAP

CONNECTS

Communities

Central Arizona Project delivers more tribal water than any other organization in the United States, connecting these communities with a vital water supply.

YOUR WATER. YOUR FUTURE.

Learn more at [KnowYourWaterNews.com](https://www.knowyourwaternews.com)



# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## WHAT TO DO IF MISTAKENLY STOPPED FOR QUESTIONING BY ICE OR FEDERAL AUTHORITIES FOR IMMIGRATION STATUS

- Remain calm and respectful. Don't run, argue, resist or engage in escalating behavior. Provide accurate and truthful information in response to any questions posed.
- Have your tribal ID, State-issued ID, or U.S. Passport on you to confirm your U.S. citizenship.
- Identify Yourself: Clearly state, "I am a U.S. citizen and a member of the Gila River Indian Community." Present your current Tribal ID or state-issued ID.
- If stopped, you can call Gila River Police Department non-Emergency line to verify your tribal enrollment at: **520-562-4511.**
- Right to ask: Before answering any questions or providing personal information, you can ask, "Am I being \_\_\_\_\_ detained?" **If they say no**, you have the right to leave. **If they say yes**, you may assert your right to remain silent.
- While it is not likely that you will be arrested after being stopped, if you are, you have rights that must be respected, including the right to be silent after you are arrested, State clearly: "I am exercising my right to remain silent." Tell ICE if you have medical issues or need to arrange for childcare.
- If you are arrested, do not resist. You have the right to a lawyer. You can contact the Office of Defense Services for assistance in finding representation to assist you at the following number 24/7: **520-562-5700.** The Native American rights Fund (NARF) can also assist you if you are detained: **303-447-8760.**
- If it is safe to do so, record the interaction or ask someone else to record it. Do not physically resist or obstruct the operation
- Do not consent to a search: If agents request to search your personal belongings, (e.g., car, phone, backpack), you have the right to refuse unless they have a valid warrant or probable cause to search. You can politely say, "I do not consent to a search."
- Remember the details and report them to the Office of General Counsel as soon as you can after the encounter by calling the following number 520-562-9765. Ask for the identification of the immigration or other law enforcement personnel who stopped you, and note the person's name, agency, and badge number, if possible, and include this information to OGC.
- Community members who believe ICE violated their rights, contact the Native American Rights Fund. Find more information at [narf.org/ice-resources-2026](http://narf.org/ice-resources-2026)
- Right to Refuse Entry: Immigration agents cannot enter your home or private property without a warrant signed by a judge. If they come to your home, you have the right to request to see the warrant and verify its authenticity.
- If you are driving and are pulled over, the officer can require you to show your license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance.

## IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY ICE AND YOU ARE A MINOR:

- Minors have the same protections as adults. You have the right to remain silent and not answer questions about:
  - Your immigration status or your parents' immigration status
  - Where you were born or your address
- Say : "I choose to remain silent. I want to speak to a lawyer."
- Minors are not legally required to carry identification unless operating a vehicle.
- Carry a copy of your Tribal ID, passport, or CDIB if necessary and with safeguards (e.g., in a sealed envelope labeled "Confidential: Legal Documents - Access Only by Guardian").
- If you and/or your parent are detained, you have the right to be near and in-touch with your parent





# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## PROTOCOL FOR FAMILY MEMBER IF A LOVED ONE IS DETAINED BY ICE

If a loved one is detained by ICE, use the ICE Detainee Locator to find them, gather important documents like their IDs, contact the specific detention facility for visitation/phone rules, and immediately seek legal counsel for guidance.

### Immediate Steps (After Detention)

1. Locate Your Loved One: Use the ICE Detainee Locator with their full name, date of birth, and country of birth ICE Detainer Locator: **locator.ice.gov/odls/#/search**
2. Gather Information: Collect important documents for potential legal help, including their IDs, medical records, stop and arrest details, and any criminal or immigration filings.
3. Contact the Facility: Once located, call the detention center directly for their specific rules on visitation, phone calls, and sending money.
4. Find Legal Help: Contact the Office of Defense Services for assistance in finding representation to assist you at the following number 24/7: **520-562-5700**. The Native American rights Fund (NARF) can also assist you if you are detained **303-447-8760**. Call the Office of General Counsel as soon as you can by calling the following number **520-562-9765**. Provide the details of the stop, the identification of the immigration or other law enforcement personnel who stopped or arrested your loved one, and provide the person's name, agency, and badge number, if possible, and include this information to OGC.
5. Contact Family/Friends: Inform trusted contacts and arrange for child/dependent care, as children's needs are a priority.

### Family Preparedness (Before an Incident)

- Create a Plan: Prepare a binder with documents (medical info, birth certificates, financial details) and share it with trusted family/friends.
- Designate Caregivers: Authorize specific people in writing to make decisions for your children or dependents if you're detained.
- Memorize Numbers: Key contacts and numbers should be memorized, not just stored digitally.

## HELPFUL RESOURCES AND NUMBERS

ICE Detainer Locator:  
**locator.ice.gov odls /#/search**

The Native American Rights Fund  
(NARF)  
**(303) 447-8760**  
narf.org/ice resource-2026

Office of Defense Services:  
(Available 24/7)  
**(520) 562-5700**

Gila River Police Department  
(Non Emergency line)  
**(520) 562-4511**

Office of General Counsel  
**(520) 562-9765**





## Department of the Interior Announces Record Graduation Rates for Bureau of Indian Education Students

*Interior-led reforms advance accountability and workforce readiness, delivering historic gains for Native students*

**PRESS RELEASE**  
U.S. Department of Interior

January 15, 2026

WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior today announced the Bureau of Indian Education reached its highest graduation rate in its history, reflecting sustained reforms and accountability measures.

Student graduation rates at Bureau of Indian Education-funded high schools increased from 51% in 2015 to 79% in 2025. These gains surpass pre-pandemic levels and continue despite national declines in student outcomes following the COVID-19 pandemic.

“These historic graduation gains reflect President Trump’s commitment to accountability, workforce readiness and ensuring American Indian and Alaska Native students have access to high-quality educational opportunities,” said Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs Billy Kirkland. “Under this administration, the Bureau of Indian Education strengthens instruction, uses data to drive decisions, and keeps student success at the center of every reform effort.”

The Bureau of Indian Education supports educational opportunities for more than 400,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students nationwide through a comprehensive

system of direct services and funding programs spanning early childhood through post-secondary education.

“This historic achievement reflects disciplined execution, strong instructional leadership and an unwavering focus on student outcomes,” said Bureau of Indian Education Director Tony L. Dearman. “We established clear expectations, strengthened accountability and equipped schools with the tools they need to support every student through graduation and into college or the workforce.”

Measurable improvements in academic performance support graduation gains. Bureau of Indian Education students have recorded a 9% increase in math proficiency and a 10% increase in English language arts proficiency since 2016.

These outcomes result from deliberate, system-wide reforms. The Bureau of Indian Education modernized its data systems, using technology to provide schools with pacing guides, instructional resources, real-time dashboards, and reporting tools that enable consistent instruction and early identification of student needs. Professional Learning Communities drive professional improvement, allowing educators to analyze assessment results, refine instructional strategies, and implement targeted interventions with

shared accountability for student progress.

The Bureau also strengthened professional development opportunities that emphasize data literacy and structured decision-making, as well as ongoing coaching and technical assistance to translate assessment results into effective classroom practice. Enhanced oversight, improved performance reporting and updated school report cards increase transparency and strengthen communication with tribes and families.

Collectively, this year-over-year growth in instructional capacity and student achievement reinforces the Trump administration’s commitment to ensuring Native students graduate prepared for college, careers and future leadership.

As graduation rates reach historic highs, the Bureau of Indian Education aims to sustain momentum through strong instructional practice, transparent reporting, and continued collaboration with tribes, educators, and families. Guided by the Trump administration’s emphasis on accountability and workforce readiness, the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Education continue to strengthen schools, expand opportunities and ensure students graduate prepared for success in higher education, the workforce and as community leaders.

## Interior Unveils Bureau of Indian Education Strategic Direction to Drive Student Success and Cultural Strength

**PRESS RELEASE**  
U.S. Department of Interior

January 20, 2026

WASHINGTON — The Department of the Interior today released a new Strategic Direction for the Bureau of Indian Education, establishing a performance-driven roadmap to improve student outcomes, strengthen Native language and culture and enhance operational effectiveness across Bureau-funded schools. The Strategic Direction reinforces tribal sovereignty and local control by prioritizing flexible, community-driven approaches rather than one-size-fits-all programming.

The plan builds on reforms initiated during President Donald J. Trump’s first term that led to historic gains in student achievement. High school graduation rates at Bureau-funded schools increased from 51 percent in 2015 to 79 percent in 2025, surpassing pre-pandemic levels. The Strategic Direction sets clear performance indicators to guide continued progress through 2030.

“The Bureau of Indian Education is delivering results that matter—higher graduation rates, stronger academic growth, and expanded access to education options,” said Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Billy Kirkland. “This renewed direction continues President Trump’s and Secretary Burgum’s

commitment to accountability and measurable progress, ensuring Native students are equipped with the skills and support they need to succeed at every stage of life.”

The Strategic Direction establishes ambitious, measurable goals across three priority areas — student success, cultural identity and language, and wellness and supportive learning environments. Key targets include:

- **Graduation rate:** Increase the high school graduation rate to 87 percent.
- **Academic growth:** Improve student progress by 5 percent each year in English and math, with every school setting goals and tracking performance.
- **College and career readiness:** Expand student participation in transition planning for college, career and military pathways.
- **Postsecondary success:** Increase persistence, retention, and graduation rates at Bureau-operated technical colleges and universities.
- **Cultural instruction:** Expand access to Native language and cultural instruction for students.
- **Early childhood partnerships:**

Increase partnerships with tribal, state and federal early childhood programs.

- **Wellness frameworks:** Expand implementation of comprehensive wellness frameworks and reduce chronic absenteeism by 10 percent.
- **Technology access:** Increase school-level use of Bureau of Indian Education technology planning tools.
- **Facilities management:** Improve school use of Bureau of Indian Education systems to manage repairs and resources.

“This Strategic Direction defines clear goals and holds us accountable for meeting them,” said Bureau of Indian Education Director Tony L. Dearman. “It strengthens our partnerships with tribal communities and ensures every student can succeed in an education system that respects their identity and supports their future.”

The Strategic Direction was shaped by input from more than 1,500 staff, stakeholders and students. Progress will be continuously evaluated through Bureau of Indian Education data systems, with schools reporting timely and accurate data to support transparency, responsiveness and accountability.

## Gov. Lewis Attends Senate Opening Day Ceremonies

**Emma Hughes**  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The Arizona State Senate held their opening day ceremonies on Monday, Jan. 12 at the State Capitol, where Gila River Indian Community Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes were invited guests of Senator Priya Sundareshan, the minority leader and representative for District 18. “I am honored again to have the Governor of the Gila River Indian Community, Governor Stephen Lewis,” said Sundareshan. “He is so knowledgeable, his expertise and engagement on water issues has been really critical.”

Gov Lewis said, “I was really honored to be the guest of Senator Sundareshan. We worked very positively and according to fashion in regards to water issues. Her leadership has been key to that.”



**Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Gov. Katie Hobbs at the Opening Day.** Emma Hughes/GRIN

He highlighted the partnership between tribal and state leaders, including Attorney General Mayes for her work and support on water conservation and State Treasurer Kimberly Yee and continuous work with the Community. “We have a great relationship; Treasurer Yee has been very supportive,”



**Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Senator Priya Sundareshan during the Opening Day Ceremonies.** Emma Hughes/GRIN

Gov. Lewis said. “She’s keen on resources for financial literacy, resources for our young tribal members – so that just shows all of the relationships that we have here at the state legislature.” Gov. Lewis was also present for Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs’ fourth State of the State address, where she

highlighted major accomplishments over the past year and outlined her plans to lower costs and protect Arizona’s water. “We’ve been working with Governor Hobbs’ office, and we’ve been supporting and working collaboratively in regards to the ongoing [water] negotiations,” said Gov. Lewis.



# Arizona Governor’s Office on Tribal Relations Celebrates State-Tribal Partnerships

*Annual legislative day convenes state and tribal leaders*

**PRESS RELEASE**  
Governor’s Office on Tribal Relations

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Today, the Governor’s Office on Tribal Relations welcomed Tribal, state, business, and community leaders to the Capitol to strengthen state-Tribal partnerships, promote dialogue, and honor the rich cultural heritage of the 22 Tribal Nations in Arizona.

Over 1,000 people attended the 31st Annual Indian Nations & Tribes Legislative Day, which began with a resource fair on the Capitol lawn that showcased over 70 exhibitors. The Dishchii’bikoh Apache crown dancers and Xuumar Akuuts, Quechan youth dancers shared cultural songs ahead of the joint protocol session hosted by the Arizona House of Representatives. The session opened with a traditional blessing from Robert Stone (Gila River Indian Community) and presentation of colors by the Tohono O’odham Women Veterans. The Fort Mojave Tribal Band performed the National Anthem, followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Miss Indian Arizona Sialik King (Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community).

Highlights from the session included opening remarks from Speaker of the House Steve Montenegro and Senate President Warren Petersen. Chairman Timothy Williams of the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe and Chairman Verlon Jose of the Tohono O’odham Nation delivered keynote addresses that focused on the importance of mutually beneficial partnerships between the state and Tribes. The session concluded with a poetry reading by the newly appointed state poet laureate, Dr. Laura Tohe (Diné).

Following the session, attendees gathered on the Capitol lawn for a community luncheon with entertainment by Gertie and the T.O. Boyz waila band from the Tohono O’odham Nation. In the afternoon, a coalition of Tribal youth councils hosted a workshop for Native youth about civic engagement.

“Congratulations to the Governor’s Office on Tribal Relations on 31 years of outstanding collaboration with Arizona’s Tribal Nations,” said Tonya Hamilton, the Governor’s Office of Youth, Faith and Family (GOYFF) Director and Tribal Liaison. “We are proud to sponsor this an-



**L-R: Gila River Indian Community Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis, Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Verlon Jose with T.O.N. Women Veterans, Tohono O’odham Nation Vice-Chairwoman Carla Johnson and Ak-Chin Indian Community Chairman Gabriel Lopez at the 31st annual Indian Nations & Tribal Legislative Day.** Emma Hughes/GRIN



**Akimel O’odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council members Devon Juan (left) and Shayla Davis (right) attend the event.** Emma Hughes/GRIN

nual gathering that creates space to come together, listen, and recognize the strength, leadership, and lived experiences of American Indian communities. These contributions continue to shape our shared future and strengthen the well-being of communities across not only the Grand Canyon State, but across the nation.”

“On behalf of all of us at Desert Diamond Casino — an enterprise of the Tohono O’odham Nation — we are proud



**Robert Stone and Miss Indian Arizona Sialik King listen to tribal leaders address during the 31st annual Indian Nations & Tribal Legislative Day.** Emma Hughes/GRIN

to support this unique event once again,” said Treena Parvello, Director of Government and Public Relations for the Tohono O’odham Gaming Enterprise. “It is an opportunity for tribal leaders and Arizona officials to work together to improve the quality of life in our state and preserve it for future generations to enjoy.”

## Governor Katie Hobbs 2026 State of the State Address to Inter Tribal Association of Arizona



**Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs delivers her State of the State address at the State Capitol on Jan. 12.** Emma Hughes/GRIN


PHOENIX, Ariz. — Governor Katie Hobbs delivered her third Tribal State of the State Address to Tribal leaders and representatives at the Inter Tribal Association of Arizona’s annual Tribal leaders’ breakfast on January 14, 2026. Governor Hobbs highlighted major accomplishments of the past year and outlined her plan to lower costs, protect Arizona’s water, make data centers pay their fair share, and invest in hardworking Arizonans.

“Last year, I made a promise to Arizonans ... the Arizona Promise. It represented the compact our state has always made to its citizens — that we would be a bastion of security, opportunity, and freedom for whoever is willing to come here, work hard, and make a good life for themselves and their families. Since day one of my administration, I have made it a priority to actively engage with Tribal leaders to ensure that this promise reaches every Arizonan, from Somerton to Supai and Kayenta to Bylas and everywhere in between.” — Governor Katie Hobbs

- Major achievements Governor Hobbs outlined in her address include:**
- Expanded access to traditional healing in Medicaid
  - Established itinerant offices in Tribal communities so that veterans can access claims support, benefits guidance, and program information
  - Allocated millions of dollars of State Housing Trust Funds to build affordable housing on Tribal lands
  - Launched the Turquoise Alert to help law enforcement and the public respond when vulnerable individuals go missing
  - Increased grant funding for Tribal law enforcement agencies, emergency medical services, and health departments by 30 percent



# 81<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Iwo Jima Flag Raising February 21, 2026



**Military Parade and  
Flyover to begin at 8:30 AM.  
Ceremonies to follow at the  
Mathew B. Juan, Ira H. Hayes  
Veterans Memorial Park in  
Sacaton, AZ.**

*All Public and Veterans Groups are Welcome*



Luncheon hosted by American Legion Auxiliary Unit No. 84 with St. Peters Church and School. Event sponsored by American Legion Ira H. Hayes Post No. 84 and Auxiliary Unit No. 84. Mailing Address: P.O. Box 186, Sacaton, AZ, 85147 / Phone: 520.562.8484 / Fax: 520.562.3297 / Email: [ihpost84@gilanet.net](mailto:ihpost84@gilanet.net)  
Web: [www.iraheyesp84.org](http://www.iraheyesp84.org)



# GRIC Market Says Farewell as WIC Services Prepare to Move to Sacaton Market



GRIC Market in Sacaton closed its doors on Jan. 27. Gila River Development

## PRESS RELEASE Gila River Development

The GRIC Market, the long-time store located in Sacaton, closed its doors for the final time on Jan. 27.

Gila River Development (GRD) announced the closure on the same day, with GRD thanking their valued customers on their Gila Gas & Goods Facebook page.

“We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our loyal customers who have supported us throughout our time at GRIC Market,” read the statement.

According to the statement, the closure of the store will allow Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC) services to be transferred to the Sacaton Market, which fully opened on Oct. 23, 2025.

It was also announced that the Sacaton Market now accepts Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT), the card system Arizona

uses to distribute benefits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

“In preparation for moving WIC services to the new Sacaton Market, and as we work through the final stages of activating WIC, we must first discontinue operations at GRIC Market.”

With SNAP now available at the Sacaton Market, GRD said that WIC will soon be available at the store as well.

Loyal customers and former employees commented on the post recalling fond memories of the store as a staple in Sacaton with many saying how “sad” they were to see it go.

“Thank you once again for supporting our market, and we look forward to seeing you at Sacaton Market, where we are committed to serving our Community,” said the statement.

For more information on the Sacaton Market follow [www.sacatonmarket.com](http://www.sacatonmarket.com).

## How to Recognize and Respond to a Natural Gas Leak

Natural gas lines can be buried anywhere, even where homes don't use natural gas. So it's important that EVERYONE knows how to recognize and respond to a natural gas leak.

### SIGNS OF A LEAK MAY INCLUDE:



**SMELL**

A distinct sulfur-like odor, similar to rotten eggs, even if it's faint or momentary.



**HEAR**

A hissing or roaring coming from the ground or above-ground pipeline.



**SEE**

Dirt or water blowing into the air, unexplained dead or dying plants or grass, or standing water continuously bubbling.

### IF YOU SUSPECT A NATURAL GAS LEAK:

**DO...**

- ✓ **LEAVE.** Evacuate the area and inform others to do the same, leaving doors open as you exit.
- ✓ **CALL.** From a safe location, call **911** and Southwest Gas at **877-860-6020**, day or night. A Southwest Gas representative will respond as soon as possible.

**DON'T...**

- ✗ Smoke or use matches/lighters.
- ✗ Turn electrical switches, thermostats, or appliance controls on or off.
- ✗ Start/stop engines or use automated garage doors.

For more information about natural gas safety, visit [swgas.com/safety](http://swgas.com/safety) or call 877-860-6020.



# Gila River Royalty

CALL FOR CONTESTANTS

Applications are now available at [gricroyalty.org](http://gricroyalty.org)

### Jr. Miss Gila River Eligibility Criteria

Young women between the ages of 13-17 years of age on or before February 13, 2026

- Enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community
- Have never before held the Title of Jr. Miss Gila River
- Must be a full-time student with a minimum 2.0 G.P.A.
- Must be single, never married, and have no children
- Must not be cohabitating (living) with an intimate companion
- Must be willing and able to uphold the image and leadership role of Jr. Miss Gila River throughout their reign



### Miss Gila River Eligibility Criteria

Young women between the ages of 18-24 years of age on or before February 13, 2026

- Enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community
- Have never before held the Title of Miss Gila River
- Must be a full-time high school or college student with a minimum 2.0 G.P.A. or employed full-time and in good standing with employer
- Must be single, never married, and have no children
- Must not be cohabitating (living) with an intimate companion
- Must be willing and able to uphold the image and leadership role of Miss Gila River throughout their reign





For more information email [missgilariver@gric.nsn.us](mailto:missgilariver@gric.nsn.us) or call (520) 562-9715



MISS GILA RIVER JR. MISS GILA RIVER

# PAGEANT

SAVE THE DATE

## Saturday March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026



For more information email [missgilariver@gric.nsn.us](mailto:missgilariver@gric.nsn.us) or call (520) 562-9715



***Sha: 'i chu'ig jek'ked 2026? Solution!***

*Hevel 'o s-he:pith jek'ked!*

*Ju:k 'o ge:sh jek'ked!*

*S-chevgig 'o jek'ked!*

*S-ku:bsig 'o jek'ked!*

*Jeved 'o gevshp jek'ked!*

*Kut 'g m hu s-hevhogim s'ap  
'o chickpanath!*

Photographs Courtesy Robert Johnson



Announcements & Notices

\*\*NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT\*\*

PROPOSED LEASE FOR

GILA RIVER GAMING ENTERPRISES, INC.

The Natural Resource Standing Committee (“NRSC”) will be considering the Environmental Assessment Form (“EAF”) from the Gila River Gaming Enterprises, Inc., regarding a proposed lease of approximately one hundred and fifty-nine one hundredth (159.100) acres of Community Trust land for the purposes of developing and operating a hotel, gaming, restaurant, spa facility and related uses in District 4 of the Gila River Indian Reservation, at their regular meeting on **February 24, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.**, located in Conference Room C of the Community Council Secretary’s Office. A copy of the EAF in its entirety is available for review at all District Service Centers and the Community Council Secretary’s Office.

If you are interested in providing comments to the EAF, please attend the scheduled NRSC meeting. You may also contact your Council representative or the NRSC Chairperson at (520) 562-9720. Written comments may be received until January 27, 2026 via email to Pima Leasing & Financing Corporation on behalf of the Natural Resources Standing Committee at [info@thepifc.com](mailto:info@thepifc.com) or mailed to Pima Leasing & Financing Corporation, 5350 N. 48th St., Suite #245, Chandler, AZ 85226.

IN THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT  
SACATON, ARIZONA  
CHARITY CRUZ MARQUEZ, Petitioner,  
vs.  
CHRISTIAN TAYLOR GOODIN Respondent.  
Case No. FM-2025-0081-PT  
NOTICE OF JUDICIAL DISQUALIFICATION

The undersigned Judge, having been assigned this case, gives notice that, after due consideration, disqualification from further action in this pending matter is appropriate or necessary for the reasons set forth below:

[ ] The Judge is related to [ ] plaintiff/petitioner [ ] defendant/respondent  
[ ] legal counsel [ ] other  
by blood or affinity within the third degree of kinship.

[X] The Judge has:  
[ ] a financial interest in the outcome of the case.  
[ ] a personal interest in the outcome of the case.  
[ ] personal knowledge of the facts or has been a material witness in the matter.  
[ ] a belief that s/he harbors a bias for or against a party.  
[X] a belief that circumstances exist that may create the appearance of impropriety:

As a result, the undersigned believes s/he cannot maintain impartiality in hearing this matter.

THEREFORE, good cause having been shown, the undersigned disqualifies herself/himself from further action in this matter and remands this case for reassignment.

DATED this 15<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

  
Judge of the Gila River Indian Community Court

Distribution of copies: [ ] Defendant/Respondent [ ] Def./Resp. Counsel [ ] Prosecutor [ ] Plaintiff/Petitioner  
[ ] Plaintiff/Pet. Counsel [ ] Assistant Ct. Administrator

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACTION SHEETS  
Courtesy of the Community Council Secretary’s Office • December 17, 2025

ACTION SHEET

Community Council; P.O. Box 2138; Sacaton, Arizona 85147; Phone (520) 562-9720; Fax (520) 562-9729

CALL TO ORDER

The Second Regular Monthly Meeting of the Community Council held Wednesday, December 17, 2025, in the Community Council Chambers at the Governance Center in Sacaton, Arizona was called to order by Lt. Governor Regina Antone at 9:05 a.m.

INVOCATION

Provided by Councilman Donovan Kyiitan

ROLL CALL

Council Secretary Shannon White called the roll  
Executive Officers Present:  
Lt. Governor Regina Antone  
Council Members Present:  
D1- Joey Whitman, Duane Jackson, Jr.; D2- Ann Lucas; D3- Kristina Morago; D4- Leah Williams, Jennifer Allison, Lalena Jackson; D5- Donovan Kyiitan; D6- Anthony Villareal, Sr., Charles Goldtooth(9:10); Terrance Evans; D7- Jeanette Blasingim  
Council Members Present via WebEx:  
D5- Franklin Pablo, Sr. (9:12)  
D5- Gordon Santos, Jr.  
Executive Officers Absent:  
Governor Stephen R. Lewis  
Council Members Absent:  
D3- Joseph Manuel, Jr. (Travel)  
D4- Nada Celaya (Travel)  
D5- James De La Rosa (Travel)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO TABLE REPORTS #3, #22, AND #26 FOR NON-SUBMITTAL OF MATERIAL, REMOVE REPORT #15 FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA AND DISPENSE WITH REPORTS #11 AND #15  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #1, #2, #4, #5, #6, AND #7, #12, #13, #14 AND #16 THROUGH #21, #23, #24 AND #25; ON THE CONSENT AGENDA  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE THE REGULAR AGENDA AS AMENDED

PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS

1. Christmas Caroling by the Head Start Children  
Presenters: Michelle Tohtsoni and Head Start Children  
CHRISTMAS CAROLS WERE SUNG BY THE DISTRICT 4 AND DISTRICT 5 HEAD START CHILDREN  
2. Request for Council Presentation – Superstition Fire and Medical District  
Presenter: Cheryl Pablo  
SUPERSTITION FIRE AND MEDICAL DISTRICT A RECIPIENT OF THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY STATE SHARED REVENUES FOR THE ACQUISITION OF A NEW AMBULANCE. THE AMBULANCE IS FULLY OPERATION AND READY TO SERVE THE APACHE JUNCTION COMMUNITY. THE SUPERSTITION FIRE AND MEDICAL DISTRICT THANK THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR THEIR GRATITUDE AND SHARE THE IMPACT THAT THIS EQUIPMENT WILL MAKE

TO THE COMMUNITY AREAS THEY SERVE. FIRE CHIEF WHITNEY PROVIDED A PRESENTATION ON THE OVERALL PROGRESS THE GRANT HAS ASSISTED THE ORGANIZATION WITH. THE AMBULANCE WAS AVAILABLE FOR THE COUNCIL TO VIEW. VARIOUS COUNCIL MEMBERS PROVIDED WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRE AND MEDICAL DISTRICT.  
[LT. GOVERNOR CALLED FOR A 10 MINUTE BREAK FOR PHOTOS; MEETING RECONVENED AT 9:54 A.M.]

REPORTS

>1. Department of Rehabilitation and Supervision FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Ron Lopez  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>2. Gila River Fire Department FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Kathy Garcia  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>3. FY2025 Judicial Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Anthony Hill  
TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>4. Gila River Police Department FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: William B. Lewis  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>5. Defense Services Office FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Claude Jackson, Jr.  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>6. Office of Emergency Management FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Bruce Harvey  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>7. Office of the Prosecutor FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Lynn Arouh  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
8. Office of the Community Manager – FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Suzanne Jones, Michael Preston, Jeffery Martin  
REPORT HEARD  
9. Department of Community Housing – FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Derwin Cooper, Trina Fasthorse  
REPORT HEARD  
10. FY 2025 Annual Report Tribal Projects (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Benny Dixon  
REPORT HEARD  
11. Facilities Maintenance Department – Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Henry Quintana  
DISPENSED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>12. FY2025 Annual Report – Veteran & Family Services Office (October 01, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Eric White, Michael Preston  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>13. Akimel O’Odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council

– FY2025 Annual Report – (October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Joseph Davis  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>14. DHD FY2025 Annual Report  
Presenter: Wayne M. Allison  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
[REPORT REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA]  
>15. FY2025 Annual Report – Information Technology Department (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Chris R. Cabanillas  
DISPENSED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>16. Human Resources Department – FY2025 Annual Report – (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: TeriLynne Kisto  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>17. Community Services Department – District One Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Maria Ramirez, Laura Aguirre, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>18. Community Services Department – District Two Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Ralph Grajiola, Alison Anderson, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>19. Community Services Department – District Three Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Joni Notah, Ashley Manuel, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>20. Community Services Department – District Four Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Sandra Thayer, Monique Boni, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>21. Community Services Department – District Five Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Erika Hernandez, Jasmine Reece, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>22. Community Services Department – District Six Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Rebecca Carpio, Rhonda Whempner, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>23. Community Services Department – District Seven Service Center FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Pamela Valdez, Valerie Rivera, Laurie Thomas  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>24. Quarterly and Year-End Report for Four Rivers Indian Legal Services  
Presenter: Sarah Youngblood  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>25. CPAO 2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Roberto Jackson  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>26. Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project FY2025

Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: David DeJong  
TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT THE REPORT  
27. FY2025 Financial Activity Report ending November 30, 2025 (Executive Session)  
Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
ACCEPTED  
RESOLUTIONS  
1. A Resolution Approving Modification No. 63 To The Gila River Indian Community Capital Projects Fund Budget For Fiscal Years 2026 Through 2030 (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval)  
Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
APPROVED

ORDINANCES  
UNFINISHED BUSINESS  
NEW BUSINESS

1. Town Hall Update (LSC forwards to Council for discussion under New Business)  
Presenters: Governor Stephen R. Lewis, Lt. Governor Regina Antone, Suzanne Jones, Michael Preston, Jeffery Martin, Claude Jackson  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO REQUEST THAT THE GOVERNOR STEPHEN R. LEWIS, LT. GOVERNOR REGINA ANTONE, AND THE OFFICE OF THE COMMUNITY MANAGER (OCM) HOLD A DISTRICT MEETING 1-7 IN THE NEXT 60 DAYS TO DISCUSS THE PUBLIC SAFETY TOWN HALL REPORT AND ANY POST REPORT UPDATES FROM THE GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT (GRPD), DEFENSE SERVICES OFFICE (DSO), OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR (OP), COMMUNITY COURT, AND THE COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE (CPAO)

MINUTES

1. November 19, 2025 (Regular)  
APPROVED  
2. December 3, 2025 (Regular)  
APPROVED

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- GOVERNMENT & MANAGEMENT WORK SESSION WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. AT THE GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
- THE URBAN ELDERS GROUP WILL BE HAVING THEIR MEETING AT THE SIVLIK GRILL ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.
- PRAYERS WERE REQUESTED FOR THE FAMILY OF MS. LAURENCITA ENOS
- PRAYERS WERE REQUESTED FOR THE FAMILY OF MS. PATRICIA MORGAN
- THE URBAN MEMBERS ASSOCIATION MONTHLY MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. IN PHOENIX

ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:57 A.M.  
\* Denotes TABLED from previous meeting(s)  
> Denotes a CONSENT AGENDA ITEM



COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACTION SHEETS

Courtesy of the Community Council Secretary’s Office • January 7, 2025

**ACTION SHEET**  
Community Council; P.O. Box 2138; Sacaton, Arizona 85147; Phone (520) 562-9720; Fax (520) 562-9729  
CALL TO ORDER  
The First Regular Monthly Meeting of the Community Council held Wednesday, January 7, 2026, in the Community Council Chambers at the Governance Center in Sacaton, Arizona was called to order by Lt. Governor Regina Antone at 9:05 a.m.

**INVOCATION**  
Provided by Councilman Joey Whitman

**ROLL CALL**  
Council Secretary Shannon White called the roll  
Executive Officers Present:  
Lt. Governor Regina Antone  
Council Members Present:  
D1- Joey Whitman, Duane Jackson, Jr.; D3- Kristina Morago(9:15), Joseph Manuel, Jr.; D4- Leah Williams, Jennifer Allison, Nada Celaya; D5- James De La Rosa(9:44), Donovan Kyyitan, Franklin Pablo, Sr., Gordon Santos, Jr.; D6- Anthony Villareal, Sr., Terrance Evans(9:15); D7- Jeanette Blasingim  
Executive Officers Absent:  
Governor Stephen R. Lewis  
Council Members Absent:  
D2- Ann Lucas (Bereavement)  
D4- Lalena Jackson (Medical)  
D6- Charles Goldtooth (Bereavement)

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO TABLE REPORTS #2, #26, AND #27 FOR NON-SUBMITTAL OF MATERIAL AND REMOVE REPORT #15 FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #1, #3 THROUGH #14, #16 THROUGH #25, #28, #29, AND #30: ACCEPT AND APPROVE RESOLUTIONS #1 THROUGH #8, ACCEPT AND APPROVE NEW BUSINESS #1, #2, AND #5 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE THE REGULAR AGENDA AS AMENDED

**PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS**  
1. Gila River Health Care Introduction of Kelsey Jones, Behavioral Health Services Medical Detox/ Crisis Stabilization Program Director  
Presenters: GRHC Board of Directors, Kerry Van Volkinburgh, Kelsey Jones, Dr. Anthony Santiago  
MR. KERRY VAN VOLKINBURGH INTRODUCED MS. KELSEY JONES, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES MEDICAL DETOX/CRISIS STABILIZATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR. MS. JONES SPECIALIZES IS MEDICAL DETOX, CRISIS STABILIZATION, AND ADVANCED CLINICAL SUPERVISION ACROSS A DIVERSE RANGE OF POPULATIONS. MS. JONES PRIOR EXPERIENCE INCLUDES GUILDED CLINICAL AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE FOR INPATIENT AND OUTPATIENT SERVICES. MS. JONES HOLDS A MASTER’S IN COUNSELING & GUIDANCE FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY, INFANT-FAMILY PRACTICE FROM ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY, AND HAS DUAL STATE LICENSURE AS AN LPC, CLINICAL SUPERVISOR, AND IS A CERTIFIED CLINICAL TRAUMA PROFESSIONAL. VARIOUS COUNCIL MEMBERS WELCOMED MS. JONES AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HER.  
2. Gila River Telecommunications Inc. Formal Introduction of Chief Executive Officer, Clarice Chiago-Jones  
Presenters: Clarice Chiago-Jones, GRTI Board of Directors  
COUNCILMAN ANTHONY VILLAREAL, SR. INTRODUCED MS. CLARICE CHIAGO-JONES, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE FOR GILA RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC. (“GRTI”). MS. CHIAGO-JONES IS A COMMUNITY MEMBER AND RESIDES IN DISTRICT 6 WITH HER FAMILY. MS. CHIAGO-JONES HAS 28 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO GRTI IN VARIOUS POSITIONS GIVING HER A DEEP HANDS-ON UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMPANY’S OPERATIONS, ITS CUSTOMERS, AND THE EVOLVING NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY. VARIOUS COUNCIL MEMBERS CONGRATULATED MS. CHIAGO-JONES ON HER POSITION AND PROVIDED WELL WISHES.

**REPORTS**  
>1. FY2025 Judicial Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Anthony Hill  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
\*2. Pima-Maricopa Irrigation Project FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: David DeJong  
TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>3. Department of Transportation FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Steven Johnson  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>4. Department of Land Use Planning and Zoning – FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Talia Apkaw  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>5. Gila River Indian Irrigation and Drainage District – FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Jessica Romo

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>6. Department of Environmental Quality FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Lisa Gover  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>7. Department of Public Works FY 2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Ron Grittmann  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>8. Community Services Department – Elderly Nutrition Program FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Mary Dixon, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>9. Community Services Department – Nutrition Assistance Program FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Mary Dixon, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>10. Community Services Department – FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>11. VSD – FY2025 Annual Report  
Presenters: Katherine Lewis, Crystal Shebola, Krystal Bergen-Tsosie  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
12. Community Services Department – Tribal Recreation & Wellness Program FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Sonja Luevano, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>13. Community Services Department – Elderly Services Program FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Lindsay Antone, Laurie Thomas, Joanne Brewer  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>14. Community Services Department – Elderly Services Program/Elders Concerns Group FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Carol Schurz, Joyce Eddie, Lynelle Blackwater  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
[REMOVED FROM CONSENT]  
>15. Tribal Health Department FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: James Tree  
REPORT HEARD  
>16. FY2025 TSS Annual Report  
Presenters: Carol Colmenero, Christina Lopez, Julian Garza, Curtis Slatina  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
17. Gila River Health Care Tobacco Tax Grant FY25 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: GRHC Board of Directors, Deborah Tinsley, Judith Roth, Max Haake, Owen Ayres, Susan Kelley, Dr. Viji Murugavel, Dr. Anthony Santiago, Carolyn Thompson, Kerry Van Volkinburgh  
REPORT HEARD  
>18. FY25 Employment & Training and TERO Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Lana Chanda, Mitchell Goodman II  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>19. Accessing Choices in Education (ACE) Program - FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 –September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Arlanna Jackson, Sherilyn Analla, Lance Reyna  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>20. K-12 Program FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Anastasia Russell, Sherilyn Analla, Lance Reyna  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>21. Child Development & Education Support Services (CDESS) Program - FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Tamara Thompson, Sherilyn Analla, Lance Reyna  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>22. Ira Hayes Library - FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Sherilyn Analla, Lance Reyna  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>23. Head Start Program - FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Michelle Tohtsoni, Sherilyn Analla, Lance Reyna  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>24. Culture & Language Program - FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024–September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Anthony Gray, Sherilyn Analla, Lance Reyna  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>25. Enrollment/Census Department FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Sara Duenez  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>26. Huhugam Heritage Center - FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Shirley Jackson  
TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>27. Cultural Resource Management Program FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)

Presenter: Linda Morgan  
TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>28. FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025) – Information Technology Department  
Presenter: Chris R. Cabanillas  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>29. Facilities Maintenance Department FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenter: Henry Quintana  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
>30. Tribal Historic Preservation Office FY2025 Annual Report (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)  
Presenters: Reylynne Williams, Larry Benallie, Jr., Darius Enos  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #31 AND #32  
31. Gila River Gaming Commission Department Report to the Community Council November 2025 (Executive Session)  
Presenters: Gila River Gaming Commission, Jerry Higginson  
ACCEPTED  
32. Gila River Gaming Enterprises, Inc. Monthly Report November 2025 (Executive Session)  
Presenters: Kenneth Manuel, Dominic Orozco, Blake Katsnelson, Tony DeMark, Majdi Kayyali, Interim Oversight & Planning Committee  
ACCEPTED  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO TAKE A 10 MINUTE BREAK; THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 11:18 A.M.  
RESOLUTIONS  
>1. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 912-A Located On Allotted Trust Land In District Five Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>2. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 1922 Located On Allotted Trust Land In District Two Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>3. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 1923 Located On Allotted Trust Land In District Two Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>4. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 2409 Located On Allotted Trust Land In District One Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>5. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 2756 Located On Allotted Trust Land In District Seven Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>6. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 4294 Located On Allotted Trust Land In District Six Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>7. A Resolution Consenting To A Non-Transferable Fifty Year Residential/Homesite Lease On Allotment 3621 Located On Allotted Trust Land In District Four Of The Gila River Indian Reservation (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; G&MSC concurs)  
Presenters: Talia Apkaw, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Javier Ramos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>8. A Resolution Confirming That The Community Will Assume Ownership, Operation And Maintenance Of The New Roadway And Associated Infrastructure

To Be Installed On “A” Street (A/K/A Edison Road) Within The Stotonic Presbyterian Subdivision (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; NRSC concurs)  
Presenter: Cheyenne Campbell  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**ORDINANCES UNFINISHED BUSINESS**  
1. Gila River Health Care Board of Directors Two (2) Appointments (Executive Session) (H&SSC forwards to Council Gila River Heath Care Board of Directors (2) Appointments under Unfinished Business in Executive Session) (H&SSC forwards to Council with a recommendation to appoint the two highest scoring individuals)  
Presenter: Shannon White  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPOINT THE TWO HIGHEST SCORING INDIVIDUALS, MS. PRISCILLA FOOTE AND MR. ROBERT PABLO TO THE GILA RIVER HEALTH CARE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**NEW BUSINESS**  
>1. Gila River Farms FY24 Audit (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation to accept and placement on the consent agenda)  
Presenters: Gila River Farm Board, Benito Alvarez, Jr., Kimberly Fisher  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
>2 Gila River Farms FY26 Initial Budget (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)  
Presenters: Gila River Farm Board, Benito Alvarez, Jr., Kimberly Fisher  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
3. Gila River Gaming Commissioner Declaration of Vacancies (3) (LSC forwards to Council under New Business to declare (3) vacancies and advertise for 60 days subject to a background check)  
Presenter: Shannon White  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO DECLARE THREE (3) GAMING COMMISSIONER VACANCIES, AND ADVERTISE FOR 60 DAYS SUBJECT TO THE BACKGROUND CHECK  
4. International Repatriation Invitation, THPO Report No. 2025-019 (CRSC forwards to Council for any interested Council member to attend utilizing Dues & Delegations)  
Presenters: Reylynne Williams, Darius Enos  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ALLOW ANY INTERESTED COUNCIL MEMBER TO ATTEND UTILIZING DUES & DELEGATIONS  
>5. AAIA 11th Annual Repatriation Conference – Virtual (CRSC forwards to Council as Information and placement on the consent agenda)  
Presenters: Reylynne Williams, Darius Enos  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

**MINUTES**  
1. November 1, 2025 (Special)  
APPROVED  
2. November 5, 2025 (Regular)  
APPROVED  
3. December 17, 2025 (Regular)  
APPROVED

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
• A MEETING WILL BE HELD TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026 AT 10:00 AM. AT THE BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS OFFICE TO ADDRESS THE FARMER’S CONCERNS  
• JANUARY 16-18, 2026 WILD HORSE PASS WILL BE HOSTING THE 15TH ANNUAL ARIZONA BALLOON CLASSIC  
• PRAYERS REQUESTED FOR THE FAMILIES OF COLBY MILDA, BRUCE BAREHAND, AND KEVIN DELOWE  
• SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 9, 2026 AT 9:00 A.M.  
• CONCERNS DISCUSSED REGARDING COMMUNICATION FROM GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO SUSPEND THE RULES TO ADD NEW BUSINESS #6 GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT IGAN’S  
[ADDENDUM TO AGENDA]

**NEW BUSINESS**  
+6. Gila River Police Department’s IGAN’s  
Presenters: Community Council  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO DIRECT OCM, THE ADMINISTRATION, AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE THE COUNCIL MEMBERS WITH IGAN’S WHEN THEY ARE RELEASED FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESPONDING TO CONSTITUENTS INQUIRIES, FURTHER, THAT THE IGAN’S WILL BE PROVIDED WITH THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: ANY DESCRIPTIVE JUVENILE INFORMATION IS NOT TO BE RELEASED TO THE COUNCIL. THE COUNCIL ARE RESTRICTED FROM FORWARDING IGAN’S

**ADJOURNMENT**

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:22 P.M.  
\* Denotes TABLED from previous meeting(s)  
> Denotes a CONSENT AGENDA ITEM





Department of Land Use Planning and Zoning

RESCHEDULED  
PUBLIC HEARING  
NOTICE

Project Name: Riggs Road Storage  
For: Zoning Change  
Location: East of Interstate 10 & North of Riggs Road  
Date and Time of Public Hearing: March 7, 2026 at 9:00 AM  
Place: District Four Service Center

Notice is hereby given that the Gila River Indian Community’s Natural Resources Standing Committee on **Saturday, March 7, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.** in District Four at the Service Center 1510 West Sesame Street Sacaton, AZ 85147, will hold a public hearing to discuss and consider a Zoning Change Application submitted by Riggs Road Storage LLC for a proposed retail store and outdoor storage site.

The public hearing is to solicit public comments on the proposed Zoning Change and allow the Natural Resources Standing Committee to review and verify that the proposed Zoning Change, as it is submitted, contains such requirements and safeguards as are necessary to protect adjoining property and the public’s health and safety.

Public comments can be submitted prior to the public hearing by emailing the Department of Land Use Planning and Zoning at [LUPZSupportGroup@gric.nsn.us](mailto:LUPZSupportGroup@gric.nsn.us) and cc [PlanningDevelopmentTeam@gric.nsn.us](mailto:PlanningDevelopmentTeam@gric.nsn.us). Any questions may be directed to Corinna Ortiz, Project Manager at [PlanningDevelopmentTeam@gric.nsn.us](mailto:PlanningDevelopmentTeam@gric.nsn.us) or (520) 562-6003.

**PUBLIC HEARING IS FOR MEMBERS OF THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY ONLY.**  
**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED.**



If you have any questions, please contact the Planning Development Team at the Department of Land Use Planning & Zoning (520) 562-6003 Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.





**MARCH 13-15, 2026**  
**SACATON, AZ**

**“CELEBRATING TRADITIONAL  
ARTISTRY ACROSS GENERATIONS”**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION: (520) 562 9715**

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# YOU BRING YOU. WE BRING THE VEGAS.



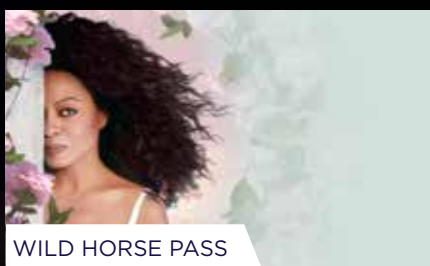
**BLUE ÖYSTER CULT**  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6 | 8PM



**ALFRED ROBLES**  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13 | 8PM



**ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK:  
THE LEGEND CONTINUES...**  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19 | 8PM



**DIANA ROSS**  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20 | 8PM  
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21 | 8PM

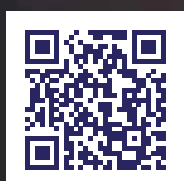


**THE BEACH BOYS**  
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 | 8PM

**MORE  
UPCOMING  
SHOWS**    MAR 6 | CHIPPENDALES  
                 MAR 14 | ANJELAH JOHNSON REYES - THE FAMILY REUNION TOUR  
                 MAR 27 | PIFF THE MAGIC DRAGON

**GILA RIVER**  
RESORTS & CASINOS

**THE VEGAS RESIDENCY**  
January-April 2026



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CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF TRIBAL SELF-GOVERNANCE



## Welcome to Gila River Health Care!

**OUR MISSION:** *To provide high-quality health care and improve the health of the Gila River Indian Community and other federally recognized tribes.*

### Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital



483 West Seed Farm Road  
Sacaton, Arizona 85147

**Main Number:**  
**(520) 562-3321**

### Komatke Health Center



17487 South Health Care Drive  
Laveen, Arizona 85339

**Main Number:**  
**(520) 550-6000**

### Hau'pal (Red Tail Hawk) Health Center



3042 West Queen Creek Road  
Chandler, Arizona 85286

**Main Number:**  
**(520) 796-2600**

## AVAILABLE CLINICAL SERVICES:

### Alternative Therapies Program

Audiology

Dental

Dialysis

Emergency Department

Inpatient

Laboratory

Life Center

(Diabetes, Endocrinology & Wellness)

### Medical Imaging

Optometry

Pharmacy

Physical Therapy

Podiatry

Primary Care

(Family Medicine, Orthopedics, Rheumatology, Cardiology, Pediatrics, and Internal Medicine)

**Women's Health Clinic**

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