



## Meet Your Newly Elected and Re-Elected Council Representatives



Council Representatives from L-R. James De La Rosa D5, Verna M. Sunna D5, Alicia M. Ochoa D4, Joseph Manuel Jr. D3, Chief Judge Anothly Hill, Terrance B. Evans D6, Amy Lynne Morago D4, and Joey Whitman D1. Ready to serve your District for the next three years. Photo submitted by: CCSO

### GRIN Staff Gila River Indian News

Sacaton, Ariz - On June 5,

the official appointment and swearing-in ceremony was held for both new and re-elected district representatives. These members will represent their

respective communities for the next three years. Throughout the election, the community closely followed the results, especially in several districts

where the vote counts were incredibly close.

This new term carries a profound responsibility, as each representative takes on the commitment to work actively toward finding solutions to local issues. Key priorities for this period will include enhancing public safety, improving healthcare and wellness, and strengthening education. A special emphasis will be placed on supporting our youth and, above all, caring for our elderly, ensuring that every member of our community is supported.

We would like to congratulate all the representatives and thank the community members who cast their ballots.

We invite everyone to attend the next council meeting to meet your representatives in person and share your ideas for the future of our districts.

**See Council Representatives on Page 8**

## Women in Law Enforcement



**Gila River Police Department Hosts Informational Session**  
*See Page 3*

## NABI Tournament To Bring 144 Teams to Arizona

*More on Page 7*

## 'Your Vote Matters' Campaign Boosts Voter Registration Across Gila River Indian Community

Our Community recently hosted the 'Your Vote Matters' campaign, bringing local leaders and registration offices from Pinal and Maricopa county's together

### Miguel Sallard Gila River Indian News

The 'Your Vote Matters' outreach, a civic engagement initiative, was hosted in our Community over the past few weekends. Local leaders were present to emphasize the critical importance of registering to vote. Representatives from the Pinal and Maricopa County election offices were on hand to help make the process

**Your Vote Matters**  
**Continued on Page 5**



Several Community members attended the events "Your Vote Matters" held on May 30th and June 6th to update their voter registration, with participation of state representatives and representatives from Pinal and Maricopa counties. Apphia Shirley/CPAO



**Mural paint by Rusell Blackwater**

On Fathers' Day, we celebrate the love of those dads whose hands smell of worked soil, crops, and firewood. They are the men who, through daily example, teach us the value of our roots and a deep respect for everything around us.

Being a father in our communities goes beyond upbringing; it means sitting by the fire to share our grandparents' stories. It is teaching us to speak our language with pride and to walk the land with our heads held high. Their wrinkles and smiles hold the living memory of our people. Thank you, Dad, for your quiet guidance, your strength during difficult days, and for supporting our home with such dignity. Your love is the seed that keeps us standing.

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# UPCOMING SHOWS

WILD HORSE PASS



**ROCK REVISITED | WHEN ROCK RULED THE AIRWAVES**  
FRI, JUNE 19 | 8PM

VEE QUIVA



**YACHTZILLA**  
SAT, JUNE 20 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**EDDIE GRIFFIN**  
SAT, JUNE 27 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**OASIS POOL PARTY  
KAI WACHI**  
SAT, JUNE 20 | 5PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**OASIS POOL PARTY  
MEDUZA**  
SAT, JULY 4 | 7PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**ROBBY HOFFMAN**  
SAT, JUNE 20 | 8PM

VEE QUIVA



**ABBAFAB - THE PREMIER  
ABBA TRIBUTE**  
SAT, JULY 18 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS

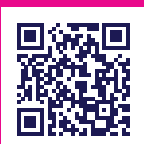


**VEGAS MATT EXPERIENCE**  
SUN, JUNE 21 | 3PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**JO KOY LIVE**  
SUN, AUGUST 2 | 8PM



**TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE!**  
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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**Alicia M. Ochoa  
Amy Lynne Morago  
Nada Celaya  
Leah Williams**District 5**Donovan G. Kyyitan  
James De La Rosa  
Vernna M. Sunna  
Gordon Santos Jr.**District 6**Anthony Villareal, Sr.  
Terrance B. Evans  
Charles Goldtooth**District 7**

Jeanette Blasingim

Gary Mix, Community Treasurer  
Shannon White,  
Community Council Secretary

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Published letters or columns do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Editor or Gila River Indian Community.

LETTERS POLICY: GRIN welcomes letters and columns from readers. Letters should be limited to 200 words and be in good taste. Material that could be libelous or slanderous is not acceptable. All letters or columns should be signed with the writer's true name, address and telephone number in the event GRIN may need to contact the writer. Only the name of the writer will be printed in the paper. Letters or columns without a complete signature, name, address or phone number will not be acceptable to GRIN for publication. GRIN reserves the right to edit submitted materials for grammar, spelling, and content.

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www.gricnews.org

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## Gila River Police Department Hosts Informational Session Highlighting Women in Law Enforcement

Detectives from Gila River Police Department hosted a Community meet-and-greet in Sacaton to inspire and educate young women considering careers in public safety

**Emma Hughes**  
Gila River Indian News

Community members had the opportunity to hear firsthand from women of the Gila River Police Department during an informational session designed to inspire, educate, and connect residents with the women in law enforcement held on June 3 at the GRPD Headquarters in Sacaton.

The event brought together Det. Bailey, Det. Hatley, Det. Rodriguez and Det. Poolaw from the GRPD, who discussed the police testing process, academy experience, and how to begin a career in law enforcement. Attendees were able to engage in open conversations, ask questions, and gain insight into the many opportunities available within the department.

Throughout the session, participants learned about the diverse roles women fill in law enforcement, from patrol and investigations to dispatch and specialized units. Speakers discussed the importance of perseverance and continuous learning as they navigated careers in a field that has



Gila River Police Department Detectives Baily, Hatley, Rodriguez and Poolaw meet and greet with Community members during an informational session at GRPD Headquarters. Emma Hughes/GRIN

been male-dominated. They also shared stories about their career paths, challenges, achievements, and the rewarding experience that comes with serving the public.

Many of the presenters reflected on the experiences that helped shape their careers while also encouraging young women to consider a career in public safety. They emphasized that law enforcement offers a variety of pathways for individuals who are passionate about helping others, solving problems, and making a positive impact in their communities. In addition to sharing professional experiences, the women

spoke about balancing the demands of their careers with family life, personal goals, and community involvement. Their stories highlighted the dedication and commitment required to serve.

Attendees left the event with a greater understanding of the realities of law enforcement and a deeper appreciation for the women who serve in these important roles. Through honest conversations and personal storytelling, the meet-and-greet offered a meaningful opportunity to learn, connect, and celebrate the achievements of women in law enforcement.



GRPD women tell stories of service, challenge and success  
Emma Hughes/GRIN

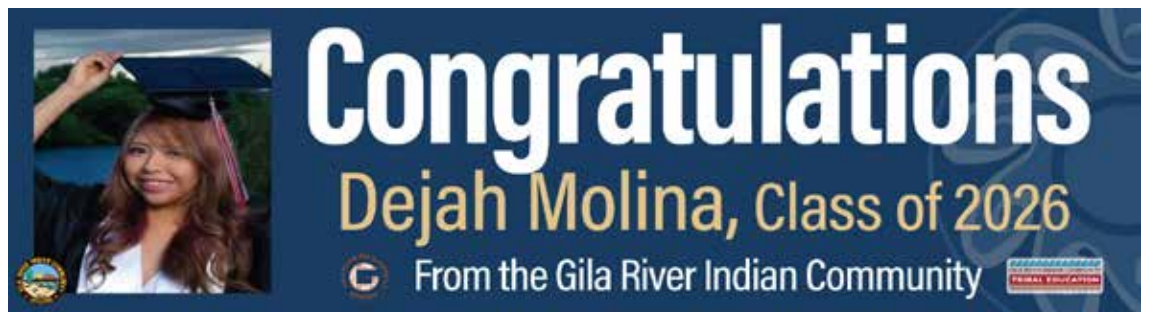
## Billboard Campaign Honors GRIC High School and Higher Education Graduates

**Submitted By**  
Gila River Development

Graduates from the Gila River Indian Community are receiving extra recognition thanks to a collaboration between Gila River Outdoor and the Tribal Education Department. Gila River Outdoor (formerly Gila River Displays), the billboard company under Gila River Development, approached TED in February with the idea of using available digital billboard space to feature GRIC high school and higher education graduates during the month of May. From there, the two groups collaborated to finalize the campaign process, design, and duration, bringing the vision of highlighting GRIC graduates on their own billboard to life.

"We are happy to support, encourage, and acknowledge the hard work of these graduates by sharing the pride of their accomplishments with the community," said Denise Goetter, Gila River Outdoor Manager.

GRD announced the campaign on April 14, along with a link for students to upload their information and a photo. The submission deadline was May 4. Of approximately 250 GRIC graduates, 58 students submitted



requests to be featured on GRO's digital billboard, located on the Loop 202 freeway at Kyrene Road near Gila River Resorts & Casinos – Lone Butte.

Tribal Education Department Acting Director Lance Reyna said it was a great experience working with Gila River Outdoor and that one of the key goals was to celebrate GRIC graduates as role models for younger students.

"The opportunity to have students recognized and celebrated on a large platform such as a billboard is a huge step in accom-

plishing our goal," Reyna said.

The billboards will be displayed from May 23 through June 13.

"Seeing this project come to life shows the strong support our students have throughout the community. TED looks forward to future collaborations like this," Reyna said.

Locally, Arizona State University features graduates on its digital billboards, and GRO and TED aim to continue and expand their own campaign in the future.

"We will continue to hon-

or our graduates by sharing this milestone with the community," said Goetter.

Gila River Development General Manager Duncan Wiston said the campaign was a successful way to recognize GRIC members.

"It was great to see GRO step up alongside Tribal Education to honor GRIC graduates. Earning a diploma, degree, or certificate is a major achievement, and now thousands of people will see their billboard every day," Wiston said.



Class of

# 2026

Deadline to  
Submit:  
June 19, 2026

## RECOGNIZING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF 2026 GRIC GRADUATES

Congratulations On Your Achievement In Education!

Be on the lookout for a GRIN Special Edition recognizing all of the students who have graduated, promoted, or gained a certificate.

If you haven't received a 2026 Graduate Information Form, contact the Tribal Education Department or the GRIN so we can highlight your accomplishment in the upcoming Special Edition.

- Preschool to Kindergarten
- Kindergarten To First Grade
- 8th Grade to High School
- High School or GED
- College, University, Trade School, or Post High School Programs

Contact information: [grin@gric.nsn.us](mailto:grin@gric.nsn.us) or the Tribal Education Department 520-562-3662 / Email: [TEDEvents@gric.nsn.us](mailto:TEDEvents@gric.nsn.us)

*BA Disaster News Release – SBA Relief Still Available to Arizona Small Businesses and Private Nonprofits Affected by the Gila County Flooding Event Deadline to apply for economic injury loans approaching*

### PRESS RELEASE

June 6, 2026

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is reminding small businesses and private nonprofit organizations in Arizona and the tribal nations of Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community and San Carlos Apache Tribe of the July 10 deadline to apply for low interest federal disaster loans to offset economic losses caused by the Gila County Flooding Event occurring Sept. 25 – 27, 2025. The disaster declaration covers the Arizona counties of Coconino, Gila, Graham, Maricopa, Navajo, Pinal, and Yavapai, and the tribal nations located within those counties.

Under this declaration, SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program is available to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, and private nonprofit organizations including faith-based organizations impacted by financial losses directly related to the disaster. The SBA is unable to provide disaster loans to agricultural producers, farmers, or ranchers, except for small aquaculture enterprises.

EIDLs are available for working capital needs caused by the disaster and are available even if the small business did not suffer any physical damage. The loans may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other bills not paid due to the disaster.

"SBA loans help eligible small businesses and private nonprofits cover operating expenses after a disaster, which is

crucial for their recovery," said Chris Stallings, Associate Administrator of the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience at the SBA. "These loans not only help business owners get back on their feet but also play a key role in sustaining local economies in the aftermath of a disaster."

The loan amount can be up to \$2 million with interest rates as low as 4% for businesses and 3.625% for private nonprofits with terms up to 30 years. Interest does not accrue, and payments are not due until 12 months from the date of the first loan disbursement. The SBA sets loan amounts and terms based on each applicant's financial condition.

To apply online, visit [sba.gov/disaster](http://sba.gov/disaster). Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) for more information on SBA disaster assistance. For people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, please dial 7-1-1 to access telecommunications relay services.

Submit completed loan applications to the SBA no later than July 10. However, after the deadline has passed, there is a 60-day grace period in which SBA will accept applications.

About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration helps power the American dream of business ownership. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start, grow, expand their businesses, or recover from a declared disaster. It delivers services through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit <http://www.sba.gov>.




## 2026 Elder Prom

June 19, 2026 5PM-7:30 PM

# Sonoran Sunset

District 1 Service Center

Must be 55+  
Enrolled in a federally recognized tribe,  
living within  
The Gila River Indian Community  
or a GRIC Urban Member



Registration opens  
April 09, 2026  
Until Full  
For the first 250

To register call  
Elderly Nutrition Program  
520-562-9696

### Your Vote Matters From Front Page

easier, offering specific assistance to help elders and other residents register efficiently. As the elections approach, Community organizers stress that continued active public participation is vital to influencing the region's future.

#### The Future on the Ballot: Why our Vote is a Matter of Survival.

The budget number of a country has a family dinner table behind it. Behind every grant or federal fund accepted in a distant office is a rural clinic that can stay open, a school bus that arrives on time, or a workshop where a grandfather teaches is home tongue to his grandkids.

A budget is not merely money. It is the backbone of a day-to-day living. That's why when elections come around, the ballot is not just a bureaucratic errand you see on TV. It becomes something human. The tool we must preserve what we love or to let others take it apart.

#### Federal Grants and the Ground Reality.

For Indigenous communities, voting is not some abstract exercise in political science, it is an act of self-defense. Much of the territories' autonomy, health care services and infrastructure projects are underpinned directly by federal grants and subsidies. These resources are not given by default, nor are they forever guaranteed. They are earned and guarded by demonstrating a genuine presence. If a Community does not vote, it becomes politically invisible by its silence. Not voting means letting someone who has never set foot on your land determine if you Community is worthy of that money or if it is easier to cut

it. Voting means that actual human needs will have a voice where the future is being carved apart.

#### The Fine Print. Getting to know the Candidates and State Propositions.

We make the mistake all too frequently of looking solely at the familiar faces running for president or governor and disregarding the rest of the page. But the most immediate influence is often buried in the fine print, state proposals and local campaigns. Propositions are legislation that voters vote on directly. Such a project may involve changes in the conditions for social support, amend environmental protection legislation on Community lands, or change the management of local resources. Going into the voting booth without

knowledge is like signing a contract in the dark. Knowing local politicians and studying the ballot in advance is the shield that keeps state legislation from ensnaring the most vulnerable.

#### The Generation Shift. Pass the baton to the youth.

The real engine of change in this election is among young people, a generation that typically remains on the sidelines because they feel politics speaks a strange, old-fashioned language. The story has to adapt to reach them: voting isn't a dull duty; it's the most direct lever they have to influence the world they're going to inherit. The concerns that keep young people up at night, from the availability of good employment and tech education to the climate

crisis that threatens their environments, are determined at the vote box. A good way to get the young adults, even children's, is to give them an active role: make them the information bridge that helps parents and grandparents traverse ballots or voting technology, marrying their energy to the wisdom of their elders.



"When you register to vote, you bring the voice of your Community" Lt. Governor Regina Antone at the Your Vote Matters outreach. Apphia Shirley/CPAO

#### The Vote as a Bridge Across Time.

Elections don't stop with the close of a term of office, but their repercussions are felt for decades. The vote that you cast today is really a bridge toward tomorrow. For Indigenous people, each ballot is a promise that future generations will have a valued culture, a protected land, and the possibilities to flourish without sacrificing their identity. It's a long-term harvest. If we do not engage, we leave the field wide open for other to plant a tomorrow in which our communities have no place.

Voting in these times is about much more than choosing a name. It is an act of resistance, of remembrance and of genuine community empathy. When a Community, propelled by the might of its youth, reasserts its strength on the ballot, it is not merely choosing an option: it is penning the destiny of its own history.



Young leaders from the Akimel O'odham Pee Posh Youth Council (L-R), Landon Martinez, Philbert Jackson, Blake Morago and Devon Juan. Empowering and encouraging the next generation to not stay on the sidelines anymore. Apphia Shirley/CPAO

# GILA RIVER HEAD START

## ENROLLMENT ROUND UP

**Documentation Needed**

- Birth Certificate
- Tribal CDIB/ID (Parent, child, Household member)
- Up to date immunizations
- Public assistance documents (if applicable)
- Legal documents (if applicable)
- NO INCOME INFORMATION REQUIRED!!

Don't miss this! Scan the QR code for a Pre-Application if you're not ready to enroll!

<p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>DISTRICT 6 KOMATKE</b>  <b>JUNE 3, 2026</b>                  11AM-5:30PM                  16675 St. Johns Rd.                  Laveen, AZ 85339                  (520) 550-2434</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>DISTRICT 5 VAH-KI</b>  <b>JUNE 17, 2026</b>                  10AM-1PM                  3441 W. Casa Blanca Rd                  Casa Blanca, AZ 85221                  (520) 35-3636/2795</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p><b>DISTRICT 4 SANTAN</b>  <b>JUNE 24, 2026</b>                  10AM-1:30PM                  1467 W. Santan Rd                  Sacaton, AZ 85147                  (520) 418-3471</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p><b>DISTRICT 3 SACATON</b>  <b>JUNE 10, 2026</b>                  10AM-2PM                  112 W. Seed Farm Rd.                  Sacaton, AZ 85147                  (520) 562-6901/3423</p>

Join us at one of our centers to start your child's educational journey in:  
 Early head start (ages 0-3)  
 Head Start (ages 3-5)

## State Route 347 Improvement Project: Interstate 10 to the City of Maricopa

### Please Join Us for an Open House on June 17

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), in partnership with the Gila River Indian Community, Maricopa Association of Governments, the City of Maricopa, and Pinal County, invite you to attend an open house to learn about the first phase of the SR 347 Improvement Project, including:

- Construction schedule and timeline
- Plans for keeping traffic flowing during peak times
- How to stay informed about construction activities

### Open House

**Wednesday, June 17, 2026**  
 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Presentation 5:45 p.m. & 6:45 p.m. (same presentation)

**City of Maricopa, City Hall**  
 39700 W. Civic Center Plaza  
 Maricopa, AZ 85138

For those not able to attend the open house in person, the City of Maricopa will offer a live stream of the meeting presentations through these two links:

<https://www.facebook.com/CityOfMaricopaAZ>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@myMaricopa20>

For more information or to sign up for traffic alerts and project updates, visit [azdot.gov/sr347](https://azdot.gov/sr347).

Meeting materials and a recording of the presentation will be available on the project website after the open house.

### About:

The SR 347 Improvement Project will improve a 14-mile section of SR 347 between I-10 and the City of Maricopa. The first phase of this three-and-a-half year project will be to rehabilitate the existing travel lanes and shoulders along SR 347 between I-10 and the City of Maricopa. This work will provide a smoother driving surface for motorists while preparing the roadway for later project phases expected to begin this winter.

In addition to the work in the first phase, the project includes:

- Adding a new third lane in each direction from I-10 to the City of Maricopa and constructing concrete median barrier to physically separate the directions of travel
- Constructing new grade-separated interchanges at Riggs Road and Mammoth Way
- Adding turn lanes and other intersection improvements at Casa Blanca Road and Maricopa Road

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other nondiscrimination laws and authorities, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Persons who require a reasonable accommodation based on language or disability should contact Laura Douglas at 855.712.8530 or [ldouglas@azdot.gov](mailto:ldouglas@azdot.gov). Requests should be made as early as possible to ensure the State has an opportunity to address the accommodation.

## Haskell Indian Nations University and Indian Health Service Sign Landmark Agreement to Expand Health and Educational Opportunities

### Department of The Interior PRESS RELEASE:

June 1, 2026

Lawrence, Kansas — Haskell Indian Nations University and the Indian Health Service, in partnership with the Haskell Indian Health Center, have signed an agreement to support the construction of a new, state-of-the-art health care facility on Haskell's campus. This collaboration will strengthen health care access for the Lawrence community while creating expanded educational and workforce training opportunities for Native students.

The agreement allows Indian Health Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to construct a new clinic on 4.4 acres of Haskell land while ensuring uninterrupted health care services during construction. Once the new facility is complete, the current clinic will be returned to Haskell for future academic and training use — expanding the university's capacity to support students pursuing careers in health and public service. The Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Education operates and manages Haskell Indian Nations University as a federally funded higher education institution serving Native American and Alaska Native students from across the United States.

The new Indian Health Services facility on campus will provide Haskell students with a unique opportunity to gain firsthand experience in a modern clinical environment. Students will be able to complete training, observational learning, and other professional preparation activities directly alongside Indian Health Services providers. This partnership strengthens the pipeline of future Native doctors, nurses, public health workers, and allied health professionals ready to serve in Indian Country.

The new facility will increase the capacity of Indian Health Service to deliver high quality, culturally informed health care. These expanded services will support the growing needs of the Lawrence community, while offering Haskell students

more pathways to engage with clinical practice, preventive health, and community wellness programs.

"This partnership reflects our commitment to giving Native students more opportunities to learn, lead and serve in their own communities," said Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum. "Expanding Haskell's campus resources while improving access to modern health care services is a practical investment in the future of Indian Country and in the long-term strength of tribal communities."

"For generations, Haskell has helped develop Native leaders who strengthen their communities and serve this country," said Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. "My father visited Haskell in 1968 because he understood the importance of investing in Native students and tribal communities. This partnership carries that mission forward by expanding access to healthcare, strengthening tribal health systems, and preparing the next generation of Native health professionals."

The agreement reflects a shared commitment to tribal self-determination, interagency collaboration, and long-term community well-being. It also ensures compliance with all applicable federal preservation and environmental laws, including the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the National Environmental Policy Act, underscoring both agencies' dedication to cultural stewardship and sustainability.

Haskell is a federally operated, fully accredited higher education institution located in Lawrence, Kansas. It serves the educational needs of Native American and Alaska Native students. The federal government established Haskell in 1884 to partially fulfill the United States' treaty and trust obligations to educate Native American Indians.

The Indian Health Service, an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.8 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to 575 federally recognized tribes in 37 states.

Country. Interagency cooperation is essential to strengthening public safety."

Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum signed a Secretary's Order last month to strengthen criminal investigations, increase deployments of mobile enforcement teams and enhance opioid enforcement efforts in Indian Country.

"We are incredibly proud of the swift, decisive actions taken by our BIA OJS Drug Enforcement K-9 teams," said Indian Affairs Principal Director for Justice Services and Law Enforcement Charles Addington. "Our efforts to increase our drug enforcement operations in Indian Country are delivering results. This case is an example of how enhanced enforcement efforts with our local partners are helping to dismantle illegal drug organizations and prevent dangerous substances like fentanyl from reaching our communities."

Federal charges are being pursued through the U.S. Attorney's Office in Phoenix.

## NOTICE OF COMPLETED LEGISLATION

TITLE 8

CIVIL CODE

Chapter 4. Dances

8.401. Definitions.  
8.402. Purpose and Applicability.  
8.403. Dance Permits Required; Notice Requirements; Cancellations; Refunds.  
8.404. Dance Regulations.  
8.405. Chaperones Required.  
8.406. Presence of Police Officers.  
8.407. Penalties for Violation.  
8.408. Dance Violation Actions  
8.409. Time Limitation  
8.410. Severability.  
8.411. No Waiver of Sovereign Immunity.  
8.412. Rules and Regulations.  
8.413. Effective Date.

CHAPTER 4.

DANCES

### 8.401. Definitions.

Whenever used in this chapter, the terms listed below have the meaning indicated which are applicable to both the singular and plural thereof. Said terms will be capitalized.

A. *Amplified music system* means a mechanical or electrical musical instrument, or music-producing device, equipped with an electrical amplifier or loudspeaker.

B. *Code* means the GRIC Code.

C. *Community* means the Gila River Indian Community and its lands as established and geographically defined under the laws of the United States, encompassing all territory within its exterior boundaries as now or hereafter prescribed or ascertained, including fee patented and allotted lands used or claimed by any person, without regard to such person's membership in the Gila River Indian Community.

D. *Community Member* means an enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community.

E. *Community Treasurer* means the Treasurer of the Gila River Indian Community or such person as the Council designates to carry out the duties of the Community Treasurer, and may include such subordinate official(s) as the Community Treasurer designates to carry out any provisions of this chapter.

F. *Dance* means a social event occurring after 7:00 p.m. where live or amplified music is provided for the attendees to encourage or induce the attendees to dance

**A copy of this ordinance in its entirety is on file and available for review at all District Service Center coordinators' offices and the Community Council Secretary's office.**

## BIA OJS K-9 Unit Seizes More Than \$621,000 in Fentanyl During Arizona Traffic Stop

### Department of The Interior PRESS RELEASE:

June 1, 2026

Fort McDowell, Arizona — Thursday night, a Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services Drug Enforcement K-9 unit seized approximately 4 kilograms (9.4 pounds) of fentanyl powder during a traffic stop on the Fort McDowell reservation in Arizona. The illegal narcotics have an estimated street value exceeding \$621,000.

"We're seeing the results of President Trump's renewed focus on drug enforcement coordination to strengthen law enforcement's ability to take action, protect families in tribal communities, and crack down on violent crime and drug activity," said Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Billy Kirkland. "I thank the Fort McDowell Tribal Police for their coordination on this operation, reflecting the strong partnerships we rely on every day across Indian

Country. Interagency cooperation is essential to strengthening public safety."

Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum signed a Secretary's Order last month to strengthen criminal investigations, increase deployments of mobile enforcement teams and enhance opioid enforcement efforts in Indian Country.

"We are incredibly proud of the swift, decisive actions taken by our BIA OJS Drug Enforcement K-9 teams," said Indian Affairs Principal Director for Justice Services and Law Enforcement Charles Addington. "Our efforts to increase our drug enforcement operations in Indian Country are delivering results. This case is an example of how enhanced enforcement efforts with our local partners are helping to dismantle illegal drug organizations and prevent dangerous substances like fentanyl from reaching our communities."

Federal charges are being pursued through the U.S. Attorney's Office in Phoenix.

AKIMEL O'ODHAM PEE-POSH YOUTH COUNCIL & GILA RIVER HEALTH INITIATIVE PRESENTS

# O'OTHAM NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

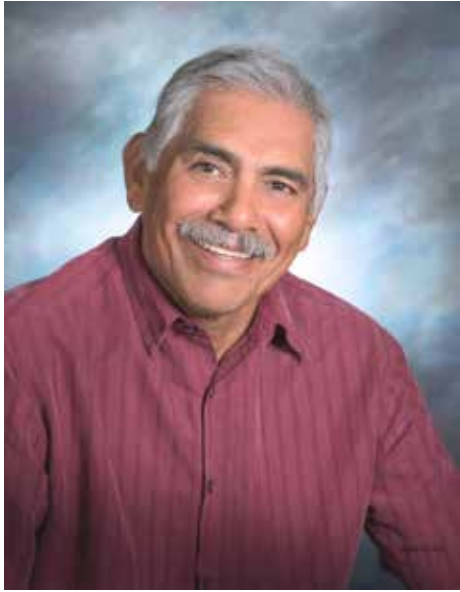


**JUNE 27, 2026**  
**7:00PM - MIDNIGHT**  
**HUHUGAM HERITAGE CENTER**

SINGERS | DANCERS | GIVEAWAYS | MEAL TICKET FOR FIRST 300

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
(520) 562-9713 OR SPECIAL.EVENTS@GRIC.NSN.US

# A'AGA: Something to be Told or Talked About



Submitted By  
Bill Allen

Imagine life without ce:mait! Pilkan/wheat came to our jeved/land with the Spaniards. It could be planted in the winter and quickly became a "traditional" O'otham food crop. Pilkan became an O'otham necessity and for others. Bluebird flour. (I don't know if cabbage is an O'otham necessity, but maybe there were some "Cabbage Patch Kids" back then, read on.)

Less than 100 years after the introduction of pilkan, Juan Bautista de Anza came to our akimel in 1774 and saw, "fields of wheat... so large that, standing in the middle of them, one cannot see the ends." After all, Se'ehe/Elder Brother told O'otham to lay out ditches, fields by working together. Such community labor taught O'otham to get along.

O'otham found themselves in an ideal location for trading and would soon enter the monetary realm. Scholars of today (props to David H. DeJong) who highlight our farming background.

Around the 1860s, O'odham supplied

roughly 1 million pounds of grain for the U.S. But that "hay day" got cancelled because when non-O'otham settlements upstream were diverted water, our akimel began to disappear. The community experienced "Forty years of Famine." Near the turn of the century a five-year drought reduced our river to one of sand. It seemed like O'otham were looking at "the end of the trail."

What options existed for tribal leadership? Take up arms against the American settlements surrounding us, dig out a treaty, move to an area with more water? With the help of Reverend Charles Cook, the Indian Rights Association, and others from 1899 to 1912, O'otham sent 20 petitions to the Indian Office, Interior Department and the White House objecting to the loss of water. O'otham in the Sonoran region had been writing treaties and petitions long before the Americans arrived. (In 1716, a petition was given to the Spanish objecting to their livestock damaging O'otham fields and wanted compensation.)

History records that when the first non-Indians appeared and began using our akimel as a pathway west, we helped them. (The Gila River Reservation was created in 1859.) A combined O'odham and Piipaash fighting force helped the American military before and following the Civil War. O'otham and Piipaash helped make southern Arizona safe for westward expansion. As settlers and settlements began to appear, Antonio Azul and 13 headmen realized the world was changing and wanted O'otham to become active participants in this changing world. Leadership went to talk and listen to the villages for advice. It was a democratic ideal of cooperation and consensus. After all, our creation stories tell about overcoming and making the best of a situation.

A 1900 petition sent to government officials asked, "We want all those things that you think that is good," i.e. shovels, plows,

and farming equipment. Harry Azul, the grandson of Antonio Azul, helped translate between the speakers and writers, bridging the gap between schooled and non-schooled elders. At the bottom of this particular petition, it was written, "Some of our people are not at home ... They are gone away to find something to eat." O'otham felt the time had come for the US to pay a debt. We helped you, now you help us. Acim ac m-ventm, apim ap 'o 'e ventm.

In 1905, the US Indian Office decided to help O'otham become once again self-sufficient, as we had been before our river was taken. The plan was to allot 5 acres of land to O'otham head of households and sell the remaining 175,000 acres. The US Indian Office did not realize the kui/mesquite groves, away from established villages were necessary. Mesquite provided pasture for livestock, it provided food, kept home fires burning, and were essential in building homes, ramadas, and corrals. Tools/weapons were also made from kui.

Antonio Azul and village headmen challenged this plan. They did not want our land to be sold and the money to fund an electrical plant to power drilling water wells. Especially disturbing was the idea that 5 acres would be enough for a family to survive.

#### Azul wrote:

"If our surplus land is sold and only five acres a family reserved for us, what will our future generations do?... You are educating them [children] to do more and to know more than we do. Can they do it on the five acres?"

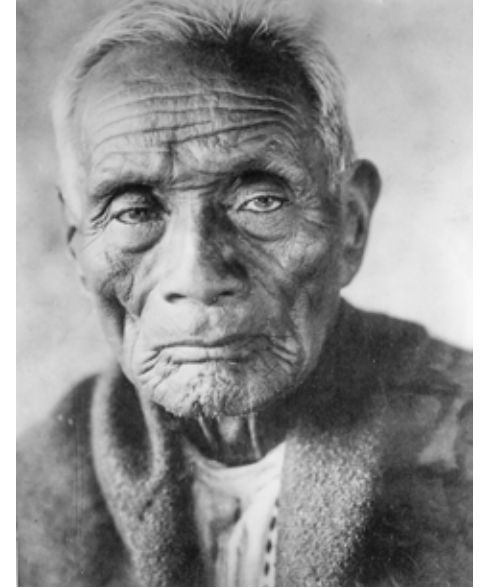
If our surplus land is sold and five acres allotted to us as we understand, where will our cattle graze, in our cabbage patch...?"

The O'otham petition was heard, their voices respected. The land sale plan was scrapped.

A 1906 letter sent to government offi-

cialists stated, "We are not paupers... we are workers and farmers. Our forefathers have farmed and made their living on this reservation before any white man settled in America."

These letters show the character of Akimel and Piipaash people. Anger or force is not necessarily the best option, look for options. (We were given an "opportunity" to move to Indian Territory once but we refused.) Did the leaders of



Antonio C. Azul

yesteryear make the right choices? Yes, we are AKIMEL o'otham without a running akimel, but our fields are still cultivated, our sky is still blue and clear, as are the recollections of most of our elders. A century later, I'm thankful for the leadership of our ancestor headmen.

Information was taken from "The Right to More than a Cabbage Patch: Akimel O'odham Sacred Stories and the Form and Content of Petitions to the Federal Government, 1899-1912." Jennifer Bess, Ethnohistory, vol. 63, no. 1, 2016, pp. 119-142.

## NABI Tournament To Bring 144 Native American Basketball Teams To Arizona In July

GRIN Staff  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX — The squeak of sneakers on the hardwood and the roar of the stands will once again reignite the heart of Arizona. The Native American Basketball Invitational (NABI), North America's most prestigious Indigenous youth sporting event, will celebrate the talent, culture and dreams of hundreds of athletes, July 14-18, in Phoenix.

This year's men's division will include 80 teams from a number of Native nations. The host state will be very well represented with 30 local teams ready to fight for their home turf. In the women's category, the matches are just as fierce and passionate, with 64 teams from all

over the country — 28 of those teams proudly representing Arizona's Indigenous communities.

Beyond the numbers on the scoreboard, NABI is a platform for visibility and empowerment. For many of these young athletes, the tournament is a chance to get noticed by college scouts and open a door to higher education through sports. The courts will see not only tactical plays and spectacular baskets, but the reunion of traditions and the bonding of communities that share a common identity.

The excitement will peak with the championship games on July 18 at Phoenix College where new champions will be crowned. But the real victory at NABI is the resilience of a youth who runs, shoots and lifts the name of their roots with pride.



# Re-Elected Council Representative Joey Whitman. District 1

Our Resilience & Our Future. We have faced significant hardships in our past—from water rights struggles to limited resources—but we are growing stronger because of them. When we lift each other up and hold one another in prayer, there is no limit to what we can achieve. I see this strength every day in our Community members. I am especially inspired by our youth, who are pursuing careers in healthcare, law, and education. They are the proof that we are capable of greatness.

Key Priorities & Proven Advocacy. While we have made progress, many challenges remain. My primary focus continues to be the mental health and wellbeing of our Community. Over the past several years,

I have been a steadfast advocate for:  
Veterans' Services: Ensuring those who served receive the respect and care they deserve.  
Suicide Prevention: Implementing proactive measures to support those in crisis.  
Autism & Disabilities: Championing inclusive resources for all families.  
District 1 infrastructure: Water, roads and electricity.  
My years of service are a testimony to my commitment. We can continue building a better, healthier future together.



# New Elected Council Representative Alicia M. Ochoa. District 4

Community service remains at the heart of my work. My career with the Gila River Indian Community began over 20 years ago at the District Four Service Center. Through dedication, perseverance, and continued education, I have had the opportunity to grow professionally while serving in several departments, including Contracts Management, Tribal Projects, Human Resources, Em-

ployment and Training, Education, and the Office of the Community Manager. While working as an Administrative Assistant in the Office of the Community Manager, I also served as Secretary for the Housing Owners Team, where I gained valuable experience in addressing housing needs in the community.

I later served as Coordinator for the District Four Service Center during a very crucial time in our lives, working closely with community members to ensure they had access to essential programs and services. During COVID-19 pandemic, I, along with our D4 team, was an active role in organizing large-scale food distributions, personally delivering food, water, and household supplies to families in quarantine. Assisted residents during the Aerodyne Fire by providing resources and assistance to community members during their time of need.

I have developed extensive knowledge of internal systems, including resolution processes, reporting procedures, and key infrastructure services such as water systems, transfer stations, and service areas.

I am committed to addressing community needs, including improving customer service and ensuring that all

projects and services progress efficiently and effectively throughout District 4 and the Community.

Education has always been a priority in my life. I hold a Certification in Business Technology, an Associate's Degree in Business Administration, a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, and a Master's Degree in Business Administration and Management from Grand Canyon University, along with a Graduate Certificate in Project Management. I continue to seek opportunities to grow and learn, so I can better serve our community.

I have also volunteered with the Gila River Fire Department Crisis Response Team, assisting families across all districts during emergencies. I have supported events such as the Veterans Parade, participated in Youth Council clean-up efforts and meetings, and completed the Gila River Police Department's Citizens Academy. My family and I also actively participate in O'otham language classes to help preserve and strengthen our cultural traditions.

I am honored to be serving a second 3-year term on the District Four Executive Committee, collaboratively working to support initiatives that promote the overall well-being of our community.

# New Elected Council Representative Amy Lynne Morago. District 4

A Proven Leader Committed to Serving the People With over 21 years of dedicated service to the Gila River Indian Community, I bring experience, commitment, and a deep understanding of our community's needs to this campaign.

Throughout my career, I have served in multiple capacities across GRIC departments, including the Community Council Secretary's Office, District Four Service Center, Pension Administration, and currently within the Department of Housing Development. These roles have given me firsthand knowledge of community processes and the challenges our people face when seeking services.

Beyond my professional service, I have remained actively involved in the community. As a member of the Akimel O'odham Pee-Posh Youth Council, a former Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year (Sacaton Branch), a par-

ticipant in the District Four Recreation Committee, and an election official, I have always been committed to leadership, civic engagement, and youth development.

I am proud to come from a family deeply rooted in our Community. I was raised with the teachings of my grandparents—Cecil Rovie, Gloria Ludlow, Bill Morago, and Ruth Morago—and supported by my parents, Burdette Morago and Linda Andrews. Their guidance instilled in me the values of service, respect, and responsibility that continue to guide my work today.

A Platform Centered on Accountability and Accessibility.

With a strong understanding of district operations, I am ready to sit down with community members, listen to your concerns, and provide the guidance and advocacy you deserve.



Re-Elected Council Representative.  
Joseph Manuel Jr. District 3

Re-Elected Council Representative.  
James De La Rosa. District 5

# New Elected Council Representative Verna M. Sunna. District 5

Hi Everyone,  
 I'm Verna M. Sunna, proud District 5 resident of Vah-Ki and daughter of Vernon and Gloria Sunna.  
 I just want to say a big thank you to all of you for trusting me to be your new District Five Council Representative. I am so excited to get to work for our community and I am truly honored by your support.  
 I want to bring District 5 the strong, honest and dedicated representation it deserves. As someone who has worked for over 11 years in Community Service, Housing, Tribal Elections and Land Planning, I know what our neighborhood needs and how policy impacts our daily lives.

I'm ready to jump in and work through our challenges together. "Working hard to support our neighborhood watch programs, bring in better crime prevention tools and team up with other council members to push our district's big master plan projects across the finish line" is what I'll be working on.  
 Thanks again for the great opportunity. Let's work together to make District 5 stronger and more vibrant than ever!  
 With best wishes,  
 Verna M. Sunna District 5 Council Representative



# Re-Elected Council Representative Terrance B. Evans District 6

Thank you for the trust and support you have shown me over the many years. I am proud of the progress we have made so far, from new housing developments to a new school facility to improved road safety and enhanced public transportation services through Valley Metro bus service  
 Alongside my fellow District 6 Council members, we have several significant projects underway, including: Development plans for a new District 6 Service Center, Park, and Metal Shed facility - Construction of a new apartment complex to accommodate families and individuals - Completion of the Street Lighting project along 51st Ave to our northern boundary - Installation of fencing in all District 6 cemeteries - Building a new waste water facility and decommissioning the outdated lagoon - Upgrading our water delivery system for the community  
 While celebrating our achievements, we must also address ongoing issues, particularly the protection of our water rights, which remains a priority. I am dedicated to

tackling these challenges and more, emphasizing the importance of investing in our people, infrastructure, and community for a prosperous future.  
 Collaboration and unity are key values I hold dear, having worked closely with various individuals, organizations, and neighboring city officials, including Maricopa County and Salt River Project. Our district thrives on diverse voices and perspectives, and I believe that by working together, we can achieve our common objectives.  
 I am committed to listening to all viewpoints and finding common ground to propel our community forward.  
 I understand that trust is earned through years of hard work and dedication. I am confident that by uniting our efforts, we can create a brighter future for everyone. Thank you for your consideration, and I respectfully ask for your vote and support in the upcoming election.  
 Sincerely, Terrance B Evans



**District 6 Learning Center  
CAREER FAIR**

Wednesday, June 24th from 10am - 1pm

5230 WEST ST. JOHNS ROAD  
LAVEN VILLAGE, AZ 85339

Featuring:

- ✓ On-the-Spot Interviews
- ✓ Second Chance Opportunities
- ✓ GRIC Departments, Local Employers and Training Programs

Join the Pre-Fair RESUME WRITING WORKSHOP!  
 Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00am - 12:00pm  
 Resume Workshop to help you improve and prepare your resume for the Career Fair. Build confidence & readiness for on-the-spot interviews.

GRICTraining.org (520)610-8678 Elvira.James@GRIC.nsn.us

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/PROGRAM. AUXILIARY AIDS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TTY/TDD: 7-1-1

**Elders Concerns Group & Elderly Services Program**

**Informational Meeting: Preparing for Monsoon Season & Understanding how to use a Solar Oven.**

**Presentations Provided by Bruce Harvey, Office of Emergency Management & Lisa Gover, Department of Environmental Quality**

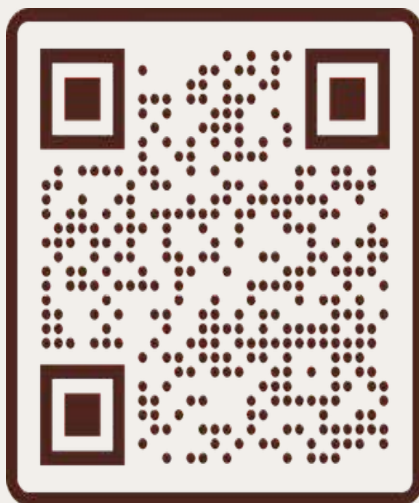
**Date & Time: Wednesday, June 24, 2026  
9:00 AM- Noon**

**Location: District 1 Service Center Gym  
Call the Elderly Services Program for More Info @ 520-562-5232  
Breakfast & Lunch will be provided**

# Gila River Indian Community Department of Environmental Quality Public Notice

Pursuant to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §58.10 Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Air Quality Program (AQP) will make its annual monitoring network plan available for public inspection prior to submission to the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The Annual Ambient Monitoring Network Review and Data Summary present changes to and data collected from the air quality monitoring network during calendar year 2025. This document will be available for review at the GRIC DEQ office located at 124 Skill Center Dr., Sacaton, AZ 85147, and on the AQP website at [www.gricdeq.org](http://www.gricdeq.org) under Public Notices.

Public comments may be submitted in writing to GRIC DEQ Air Quality, P.O. Box 2139, Sacaton, Arizona, 85147. For additional information, please contact Jay Johnson at 520-796-3783 or email [air@gric.nsn.us](mailto:air@gric.nsn.us).



# THE GRD BULLETIN



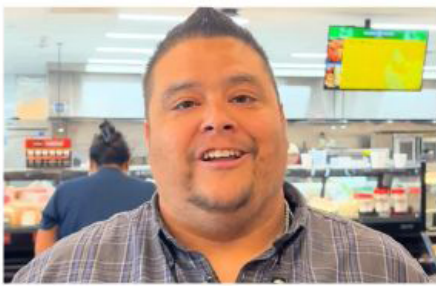
JUNE ISSUE 2026

## FEATURED STORIES

### MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER DUNCAN WISTON



Hello everyone,  
Thank you for keeping up with GRD through our newsletter, "The Bulletin," and other platforms. We are always open to connecting with Community members and hearing directly from you. As we move into the summertime, our work does not slow down. Our team continues planning for the months ahead while still hosting events at places like Firebird Motorsports Park and Rawhide.  
We also want to congratulate all our graduates. Thank you for participating in our billboard campaign in partnership with Gila River Outdoors and the Tribal Education Department. We look forward to more partnerships with GRIC entities as we highlight the many opportunities taking place in the Community. Have a safe summer and stay cool.



### NEW FRESH FOODS MANAGER AT SACATON MARKET

Sacaton Market recently introduced its Fresh Foods Manager, Aaron Paddock. Aaron can often be found behind the deli counter, helping wherever he is needed. He brings a wealth of experience to Sacaton Market and is looking forward to improving services for all customers. Aaron is a Community member from District 1 and is already developing great ideas to help streamline operations. If you see him, do not forget to say hello.



### ARTS & CRAFTS CENTER OPEN HOUSE

Gila River Development recently held an open house in District 5 on May 27 to discuss a potential Arts & Crafts Center project. The event included merchandise from the old site, along with photos and images from the Huhugam Heritage Center archives. Approximately 40 Community members attended the presentation and completed a survey to help guide our planning efforts. GRD is currently in the feasibility and data collection phase, and we look forward to sharing more updates at our next open house.



### BILLBOARDS

Look up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, no it's a digital billboard for GRIC graduates! The billboards have been displayed along the Loop 202 near Lone Butte Casino, and we want to thank all the families who signed up their graduates. It is well deserved. Thank you to the Tribal Education Department for helping us recognize those who earned a diploma, degree, or certificate. To the Class of 2027, keep working hard. We look forward to your submissions next year.



### ARTISAN MARKET

We are bringing back the Artisan Market. Sacaton Market is inviting vendors once again to showcase their artwork and crafts in the Community. We had about 12 vendors last month, and we hope even more will sign up this time. If you are looking for the perfect gift for yourself or your family, join us on Saturday, June 13, starting at 7 a.m. to support our local vendors.



### SAY HI-YA TO KAIA

Our team is growing for the summer. Please welcome Kaia Murphy from District 7 to our marketing team. Kaia is currently a student at Arizona State University and studies at the W. P. Carey School of Business. She is a great addition to our team and will be with us through August. If you would like more information about working for GRD now or in the future, please reach out to us at [hr@gilariverdev.com](mailto:hr@gilariverdev.com).



### NEWSLETTER SIGN UP

Since launching this newsletter in March, our top priority has been providing information directly to GRIC members. Now we are expanding digitally through our website. Stay tuned for news on how to join our digital newsletter to stay connected with GRD and receive early access to event announcements, special offers, and updates across our properties.



**COME ONE, COME ALL!**  
VETERANS, FAMILY MEMBERS & CAREGIVERS

**JUNE 26, 2026 | 12 PM - 2 PM**

**DISTRICT 4 MULTI-PURPOSE CENTER**  
2230 N. HOMERUN DRIVE, SACATON AZ 85147


**VETERAN & FAMILY ROUND TABLE**

**JOIN US!**

- OFFICE UPDATES
- UPCOMING EVENTS
- MEAL PROVIDED

**FOR MORE INFO:**  
Darrell Whitman (520) 610-0316  
Wesley Rhodes (520) 610-4384  
Kim Skelton 520-610-7644





**MEN'S HEALTH**

**Take Charge of Your Health**

**Small Steps for a Longer, Healthier Life**  
According to the CDC, roughly 14% of men aged 18 and older are in fair or poor health. Many chronic conditions are preventable with the right tools, active screening, and healthy everyday choices.

**The Hard Numbers**

- 50% of men aged 18+ diagnosed with hypertension or taking high blood pressure medication
- 39% of men aged 20+ are currently living with obesity
- 37% of American men are currently living with prediabetes

**Your Checklist for Preventative Care**

**Heart & Blood Pressure**

- Track your numbers: High blood pressure is a leading driver of cardiovascular risk.
- Action: Get checked at every routine clinic visit.

**Type 2 Diabetes Prevention**

- Assess your risk: Men face higher baseline statistical rate of type 2 diabetes than women.
- Action: Ask your doctor for an A1C blood test.

**Age-Appropriate Cancer Screenings**

- Prostate Health: Talk to your physician about the distinct benefits and limitations of screening.
- Colorectal Health: Regular testing is recommended starting at age 45.


**Daily Actions for Lifelong Wellness**

**Move more:** Aim to meet the CDC Physical Activity Guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity weekly paired with muscle strengthening. Only 28% of men currently meet this goal.

**Quit Tobacco:** Cigarette use and vaping significantly accelerate heart disease risks.

**Schedule an Exam:** Use annual doctor visits to map out personal health timelines, family medical histories, and metabolic changes with your primary care provider.

**Tribal Health Department | Community Health Education Program**  
**520-562-5100 or visit [gricthd.org](http://gricthd.org)**



cdc.gov



**SAVE THE DATE!**

**AUGUST**

★ ★ ★ **7** ★ ★ ★

**2026**

**PURPLE HEART DAY**



For More Information, Contact  
Our Office at: (520) 562-5148

# COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACTION SHEETS

## Courtesy of the Community Council Secretary's Office • May 20, 2026

### ACTION SHEET

Community Council; P.O. Box 2138; Sacaton, Arizona 85147; Phone (520) 562-9720; Fax (520) 562-9729  
 COUNCIL SECRETARY SHANNON WHITE INFORMED THE COUNCIL THAT WE ARE WITHOUT A CHAIRPERSON AND OPENED THE FLOOR FOR NOMINATIONS.  
 A NOMINATION WAS MADE FOR COUNCILWOMAN ANN LUCAS, THERE WERE NO OTHER NOMINATIONS; THE FLOOR WAS CLOSED.  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPOINT COUNCILWOMAN ANN LUCAS AS CHAIRWOMAN FOR THIS MEETING

### CALL TO ORDER

The Second Regular Monthly Meeting of the Community Council held Wednesday, May 20, 2026, in the Community Council Chambers at the Governance Center in Sacaton, Arizona was called to order by Chairwoman Ann Lucas at 9:06 a.m.

### INVOCATION

Provided by Councilwoman Nada Celaya

### ROLL CALL

Council Secretary Shannon White called the roll  
 Executive Officers Present:  
 Governor Stephen R. Lewis (10:58)  
 Council Members Present:  
 D1- Joey Whitman, Duane Jackson, Jr.; D2- Ann Lucas; D3- Joseph Manuel, Jr., Kristina Morago; D4- Jennifer Allison, Nada Celaya, Lalena Jackson; D5- James De La Rosa, Franklin Pablo, Sr., Donovan Kyuyan, Gordon Santos, Jr.; D6- Anthony Villareal, Sr.(9:15), Terrance Evans; D7- Jeanette Blasingim  
 Executive Officers Absent:  
 Lt. Governor Regina Antone  
 Council Members Absent:  
 D4- Leah Williams (Previous Engagement)  
 D6- Charles Goldtooth (Medical)

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #1, #2, #3; ACCEPT AND APPROVE RESOLUTIONS #1 AND #4 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE THE REGULAR AGENDA AS PRESENTED

### PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS

1. Introduction 2026-2027 Gila River Royalty Court  
 Presenters: Apphia Shirley, Miguel Sallard  
 MS. APPIA SHIRLEY, MARKETING SPECIALIST FOR THE COMMUNICATION & PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE INTRODUCED THE NEWLY CROWNED GILA RIVER ROYALTY COURT. THE MISS GILA RIVER PAGEANT WAS HELD ON MARCH 7, 2026 AT THE CASA BLANCA COMMUNITY SCHOOL.  
 MISS GILA RIVER: ELIANA RHODES WHO IS 21 YEARS OLD AND IS FROM DISTRICT 6, KOMATKE  
 JR. MISS GILA RIVER: AUBREY GAITAN WHO IS 17 YEARS OLD AND IS FROM DISTRICT 6, KOMATKE  
 JR. MISS GILA RIVER 1ST ATTENDANT: IVORY SOKE WHO IS 13 YEARS OLD AND IS FROM DISTRICT 6, GILA CROSSING  
 JR. MISS GILA RIVER 2ND ATTENDANT: JULIA PARRA WHO IS 13 YEARS OLD AND IS FROM DISTRICT 7, MARICOPA COLONY  
 THE COUNCIL CONGRATULATED THE ROYALTY COURT AND OFFERED WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT.  
 CHAIRWOMAN ANN LUCAS CALLED FOR A 15 MINUTE BREAK; THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 10:52 A.M.  
 2. Introduction - Office of the Prosecutor Chief Prosecutor Janee Pousson-Garcia  
 Presenters: Jeffery Martin, Janee Pousson-Garcia

MS. JANEY POUSSON-GARCIA GRADUATED FROM NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY AND GRADUATED FROM LAW SCHOOL IN 2008. MS. GARCIA HAS WORKED FOR THE SALT RIVER PIMA-MARICOPA INDIAN COMMUNITY, YAVAPAI COUNTY AS A DEPUTY COUNTY ATTORNEY, THE YAVAPAI-APACHE NATION AS A DEPUTY PROSECUTOR, AND THE MARICOPA COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE. MS. GARCIA BRINGS A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE AND A CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO JUSTICE AND SAFETY TO THE COMMUNITY. MS. GARCIA IS HONORED TO HAVE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY. THE COUNCIL CONGRATULATED MS. GARCIA ON HER NEW POSITION AND LOOKS FORWARD TO WORKING WITH HER.  
 COUNCILWOMAN ANN LUCAS TURNED THE MEETING OVER TO GOVERNOR STEPHEN R. LEWIS AT 10:58 A.M.

### REPORTS

\*1. Community Technology Center FY 2025/2026 2nd Quarter Report  
 Presenter: Connie Jackson  
 ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
 >2. Quarterly Report for Four Rivers Indian Legal Services  
 Presenter: Sarah Youngblood  
 ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
 >3. Gila River Telecommunications Inc. and Subsidiaries FY2026 First Quarter Report  
 Presenters: Clarice Chiago-Jones, Craig Baumgartner, Max Polk  
 ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
 4. GRIC Homeowners Assistance Program Report  
 Presenters: Treasurer Gary T. Mix, Martha Notah  
 REPORT HEARD  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #5 AND #6  
 5. FY2026 Schedule of Investments ending March 31, 2026 (Executive Session)  
 Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
 ACCEPTED  
 6. FY2026 Financial Activity Report ending April 30, 2026 (Executive Session)  
 Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
 ACCEPTED

### RESOLUTIONS

\*1. A Resolution Authorizing The Signing And Execution Of A Public Law (P.L.) 93-638, Title V Construction Project Agreement With The Indian Health Service (Project No. PH-24-G06, HIS Identification No. DES-26-V-0002) For The Installation Of Sewer And Water Services For 113 Houses Throughout The Community (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; NRSC & H&SSC concurs)  
 Presenter: Ronald Gritman  
 ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
 \*2. A Resolution Approving The Petition For Membership For Quincy Roy Parrales Into The Gila River Indian Community (LSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval)  
 Presenter: Sara Duenez  
 APPROVED  
 3. A Resolution Approving The Attached Attorney Contract For A Chief Prosecutor (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval; LSC concurs)  
 Presenters: Jeffery Martin, Janee Pousson-Garcia  
 APPROVED  
 >4. A Resolution Approving Amendments To The Gila River Indian Community Leasing Regulations Of 2015 Pursuant To The Helping Expedite And Advance Responsible Tribal Home Ownership Act And Amending Resolutions GR-174-15 And GR-066-23 (NRSC forwards to Council with

a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; EDSC concurs)  
 Presenters: John M. Martin, Teresa Mandelin, Lorenzo Sierra, IV, Todd J. Araujo  
 ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

### ORDINANCES

1. The Gila River Indian Community Council Hereby Rescinds GR-01-24 Placing A Moratorium On All Dances Within The Community And GR-001-24A Codifying The Moratorium And Enacts The Amendments To Title 8, Chapter 4, Dances Ordinances Of The Gila River Indian Community Code (LSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval with amendments to group Districts 1 - 4 together for one dance permit and Districts 5-7 together for the other dance permit)  
 Presenter: Michael La Valley  
 APPROVED

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Gila River Gaming Commission Three (3) Gaming Commissioner Appointments (two full terms and one unexpired term)  
 Presenter: Community Council  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY AND APPOINT JULIA JONES TO THE GAMING COMMISSION FOR A THREE (3) YEAR TERM  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY AND APPOINT JACQUELINE STEVENS TO THE GAMING COMMISSION FOR A THREE (3) YEAR TERM  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY AND APPOINT DENISE MILDA TO AN UNEXPIRED TERM ENDING APRIL 2027

### NEW BUSINESS

1. Gila River Farms Board Member Vacancy Declaration (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business to declare the (2) vacancies and appoint at the June 3, 2026 Council Meeting)  
 Presenters: Gila River Farm Board  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO DECLARE THE (2) VACANCIES AND APPOINT AT THE JUNE 3, 2026 COUNCIL MEETING  
 2. Gila River Telecommunications Inc. and Subsidiaries FY2024 Independent Auditor's Report (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation to accept; EDSC concurs)  
 Presenters: Clarice Chiago-Jones, Craig Baumgartner, Max Polk  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT THE AUDIT  
 3. FY2027 Operating Budget Work Session (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business for any interested Council member to attend utilizing Dues & Delegations)  
 Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND FOR ANY INTERESTED COUNCIL MEMBER TO ATTEND UTILIZING DUES & DELEGATIONS  
 4. Gila River Health Care Board of Director's Notice of Resignation (H&SSC forwards to Council with a recommendation to accept)  
 Presenter: Robert Pablo  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION  
 5. Gila River Health Care Board of Director's Notice of One (1) Vacancy (H&SSC forwards to Council with a recommendation to declare (1) unexpired vacancy and advertise for 60 days subject to a background check)  
 Presenter: Robert Pablo  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO DECLARE (1) UNEXPIRED VACANCY AND ADVERTISE FOR 60 DAYS SUBJECT TO A BACKGROUND CHECK  
 6. Certification of the Gila River Indian Community 2026 Community Council Election Results (LSC forwards to

Council with a recommendation to certify the Gila River Indian Community 2026 Community Council Election Results)

Presenters: Shannon White, Audrey Evans  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO VACATE THE THREE (3) PROTESTS TO THE 2026 COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY JOEY WHITMAN FOR DISTRICT 1  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY JOSEPH MANUEL, JR. FOR DISTRICT 3  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY AMY LYNNE MORAGO FOR DISTRICT 4  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY ALICIA M. OCHOA FOR DISTRICT 4  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY JAMES DE LA ROSA FOR DISTRICT 5  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY VERNA M. SUNNA FOR DISTRICT 5  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO CERTIFY THE ELECTION RESULTS AND CERTIFY TERRANCE B. EVANS FOR DISTRICT 6  
 7. Sovereign Immunity Certification (Executive Session) (LSC forwards to Council under New Business in Executive Session with a recommendation to assert sovereign immunity)  
 Presenter: Shannon White  
 MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ASSERT THE COMMUNITY'S SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY AS TO ALL CLAIMS, INCLUDING ANY CLAIMS OR DISCOVERY REQUESTS THAT MAY BE PENDING OR LATER SOUGHT IN THIS MATTER, RELATING TO THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY, THE GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT AND GRPD OFFICER MICHAEL PENDERGRAFT, AND THE COMMUNITY COURT DISMISS THIS ACTION WITH PREJUDICE AS TO THE COMMUNITY AND THOSE NAMED DEFENDANTS. ALSO THAT THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL ASSERT THE COMMUNITY'S SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY AS TO THE CLAIMS AND DISCOVERY REQUESTS RELATING TO GRGE TO THE FULLEST EXTENT ALLOWED UNDER THE LAW AND THE GAMING COMPACT

### MINUTES

1. April 15, 2026 (Regular)  
 APPROVED  
 2. May 6, 2026 (Regular)  
 APPROVED

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- YOUTH COUNCIL EVENT FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2026 AT DEQ AT 4:30 P.M.
- NEW COUNCIL ORIENTATION WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2026
- WORDS OF APPRECIATION FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS TO THE OUTGOING COUNCIL
- THE MEET AND GREET WITH THE CHIEF OF POLICE APPLICANTS HAS BEEN MOVED FROM DISTRICT 4 TO DISTRICT 5
- CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL 2026 GRADUATES

### ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:45 A.M.  
 \* Denotes TABLED from previous meeting(s)  
 > Denotes a CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

## Announcements & Notices

**IN THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT  
STATE OF ARIZONA**

<b>MYRA A DIAZ,</b> Petitioner/Plaintiff	CASE Number: FM-2026-0032-DV
<b>VS.</b>	CIVIL NOTICE OF HEARING
<b>JESSE MANUEL DIAZ,</b> Respondent/Defendant	

Please take notice that a(n) **Answer/Response Hearing** has been scheduled in the Gila River Indian Community Court.

**This matter has been scheduled at the place and time set forth below:**

**Monday, June 15, 2026**  
 at 10:30 AM in Courtroom VII,  
 Westend Judicial Center,  
 4751 West Pecos Road, Sacaton, AZ.

GIVEN under my hand and the seal of the Gila River Indian Community in the State of Arizona.

DATED this 6th day of May, 2026

/s/ Danielle Lewis  
 Clerk of the Gila River Indian Community Court

Copy of the foregoing served by  
 ☐ The GRIN, Gila River Indian Newspaper Publication  
 This 6th day of May, 2026 to:

Jesse Manuel Diaz  
 Jesse M Diaz, G176983  
 Maricopa County Jail 4th Avenue Jail  
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 Phoenix, AZ, 85003



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**2018 Mazda CX5 25/31 mpg**

**(3) Nissan Altima 26/34 mpg**

**(2) Toyota Camry 28/34 mpg**

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**2021 Nissan Kicks  
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### Community Health Representative

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