



Community Forum Helps Voters Get to Know the Candidates

GRIN Staff
Gila River Indian News

Broadcast forum highlights transparency and voter engagement, while revealing limits of debate format

CHANDLER, Ariz. — The recent gubernatorial debate hosted by the Tribal Elections Department gave Community members a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the candidates seeking the Gila River Indian Community's highest elected office.

Broadcast live by the Gila River Broadcasting Corporation on community television and streamed on YouTube, the debate expanded access for voters across the Community and beyond, bringing greater visibility to the election process.

One of the debate's greatest strengths was its emphasis on transparency. By placing candidates on the same stage and asking them to address issues facing the Community, voters were able to compare leadership styles, priorities and visions for the future. The forum offered a rare side-by-side look at how each candidate approaches challenges and what



Governor campaign candidates Stephen Roe Lewis and Monica Antone, outline visions centered on fiscal responsibility, infrastructure investment and long-term planning. Emma Hughes/GRIN

solutions they believe are most important.

The broadcast format also broadened participation. Community members who could not attend in person were able to watch from home through local television or online platforms, making the discussion accessible to a wider audience. At a time when voter engagement remains critical, the debate served as a reminder of the importance of informed decision-making at the

ballot box.

Still, the debate reflected some of the limitations common to political forums. Candidates were often required to condense complex ideas into brief responses, leaving little room to fully explain how proposals would be implemented or funded. Issues such as economic development, housing, public safety and long-term planning rarely lend themselves to answers measured in minutes.

At times, the format appeared

to favor prepared talking points over deeper discussion. While voters gained insight into each candidate's priorities, some may have left wanting more detailed answers to pressing Community concerns. Additional follow-up questions or longer exchanges could have provided greater clarity on where candidates differed and how they would address key challenges.

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Meet the Candidates for Lieutenant Governor



Lieutenant governor candidates Amanda Mitchell and James De La Rosa, focus on economic diversification, transparency and cooperation among districts. Emma Hughes/GRIN

GRIN Staff
Gila River Indian News

CHANDLER, Ariz. — James De La Rosa enters the race for the second-highest executive office following legislative experience as a Community Council member representing District 5 (Casa Blanca). His platform focuses on fiscal responsibility, in-

frastructure growth, and departmental transparency.

During his time on Council, De La Rosa supported commercial developments, including the construction of the Sacaton Market, which created more than 80 local jobs. He also backed renewable energy initiatives, such as the Box Canyon solar project managed by the Gila River Indian Community Utility Authority.

If elected, De La Rosa plans to focus on economic sovereignty, director accountability, and cross-district cooperation.

Amanda Mitchell is running on a platform centered on institutional reform, social services, and civic transparency.

Mitchell's campaign proposes an overhaul of the tribe's

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Senator Mark Kelly joins GRIC Get Out the Vote Rally



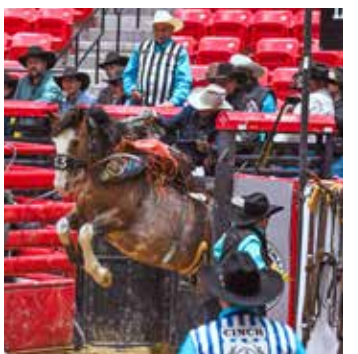
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Skyline Gila River Campus Expansion



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A Legacy of Tradition: Jaylyn Joaquin



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Softball Player Shines at Babe Ruth World Series



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WILD HORSE PASS



**TẤT CẢ HOẶC KHÔNG
LÀ GÌ CA**
SAT, OCT 24 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



THREE DOG NIGHT
FRI, OCT 30 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



JASON DERULO
THU, NOV 5 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**AN ACOUSTIC EVENING
WITH CHRIS YOUNG**
FRI, NOV 6 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



WAR
SAT, NOV 7 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**STRAIT OUTTA TEXAS:
TRIBUTE TO GEORGE STRAIT**
SUN, NOV 8 | 3PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**GARY NUMAN WITH SPECIAL
GUESTS FUTURE FIRES**
THU, NOV 12 | 8PM

WILD HORSE PASS



**FELIPE ESPARZA:
LAUGHTER WILL SAVE US**
SAT, NOV 14 | 7PM
SAT, NOV 14 | 10PM

VEE QUIVA



PRINCE AGAIN
SAT, NOV 21 | 8PM

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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
Nada Celaya
Alicia M. Ochoa
Amy Lynne Morago
Leah Williams

District 5
Donovan G. Kyyitan
James De La Rosa
Verna 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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 **INDIGENOUS**
Journalists Association

Senator Mark Kelly joins Gila River for Get Out the Vote Rally



Arizona Senator Mark Kelly joined the Gila River Indian Community as a guest speaker for a Get Out the Vote Rally held at the Governance Center on Oct. 20. Senator Mark Kelly encouraged voters in the Community to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming State General Election on Nov. 3. Zachary Redbird/CPAO



Former GRIC Gov. Thomas “Tommy” White greets Senator Mark Kelly at the Get Out the Vote Rally. Emma Hughes/GRIN



Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis presents Senator Mark Kelly with a Community “Sko Vote” T-shirt. Emma Hughes/GRIN



Gila River Indian Community

2026 GENERAL ELECTION SCHEDULE



Districts 1-7

November 2, 2026	ABSENTEE VOTING CLOS es for the General Election. All absentee ballots must be received no later than 5:00 p.m.
November 3, 2026	GRIC GENERAL ELECTION DAY Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7; ALL POLLING SITES OPEN 6:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.
November 6, 2026	DEADLINE TO PROTEST THE ELECTION: any registered voter can file a protest in writing to the Election Board Chairperson by 5:00 p.m.
December 2, 2026	Certification of the General Election results shall be conducted by the Community Council
January 1, 2027	Newly elected candidates for the Office of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Chief Judge and Associate Judges are sworn into office.



For questions regarding this schedule, call the Tribal Elections office at (520) 562-9735, 9758, or email at TEP@gric.nsn.us

Meet Makaila Kaufman our New Community Newsperson



We are excited to announce that Makaila Kaufman has joined us as a Community Newsperson for Gila River Indian News.

Makaila studied Film and Digital Arts at the University of New Mexico in 2025, where an Indigenous Documentary Arts course profoundly shaped her perspective on media and journalism. Through her studies, she learned that impactful documentary work extends far beyond cameras and digital media, it is rooted in diverse art forms, cultural, traditions, and sacred oral histories passed down through generations.

In her new role, Makaila will be actively writing and covering key news stories across the Community, ensuring local events, culture, and achievements are captured with care and detail. In an evolving media landscape, she is passionate about modernizing how stories are told while preserving the core values of respect, integrity, and reciprocity modeled by previous generations. She brings a deep commitment to thoughtful community reporting, aiming to center local perspectives, highlight meaningful milestones, and amplify voices that deserve to be heard.

Beyond reporting, Makaila is dedicated to being an active listener and lifelong learner, eager to collaborate closely with colleagues and Community members alike. As she steps into her new role, she looks forward to connecting with everyone across the Community.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity and the experience that Gila River Indian News has to offer. I’m eager to get to know everyone and be part of many more milestones for the Gila River Indian Community. I’m ready to listen, to learn from those around me, and to uplift more voices within the Community. Thank you.” Makaila Kaufman



Phoenix Indian Center’s future inspired Native American Leaders Youth Council
Makaila Kaufman/GRIN

42nd Annual NAC Parade: Voices That Shape Tomorrow

Makaila Kaufman
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX, Ariz. — An overcast Saturday, Oct. 10, provided the perfect backdrop for the 42nd Annual Native American Connections Parade, a celebration of Indigenous culture, resilience and community.

Tribes from across the Southwest, including the Gila River Indian Community, gathered at Third Street and Virginia Avenue, where the parade route began. Families and friends lined both sides of the street with chairs and cheers as 48 entries made their way to Indian Steele Park, where festivities continued with a powwow and art show until 9 p.m.

This year’s theme, “Voices That Shape To-

morrow,” highlighted the importance of the next generation. EMCC representatives Shawn Martinez and Melody Lewis, like many in attendance, expressed excitement about seeing young people participate in the event.

Martinez described the start of the parade as “the heartbeat of Mother Earth coming down the street” as the drums grew louder and the first entry approached Osborn Road, where judges were seated and the Gila River Broadcasting Corporation livestreamed the event.

The Gila River Indian Community was well represented throughout the celebration. Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis walked in the parade ahead of the upcoming November election, demonstrating his support

for the event. While addressing spectators, Lewis encouraged young Indigenous people to exercise their right to vote in the 2027 election.

The Gila River Indian Community Urban Members Association also participated in the festivities, carrying signs with messages such as “Our Youth, Our Elders, Our Voices” and “Fearless O’odham Woman” as members made their way along the parade route.

The energy, support and sense of community were evident throughout this year’s parade, particularly among the youth participants. They walked with confidence and pride, sharing their voices while being supported by elders walking beside them.

Chandler Unified School District adds Land Acknowledgment

Emma Hughes
Gila River Indian News

CHANDLER, Ariz. — The Chandler Unified School District (CUSD) Governing Board recently voted to formally include an Indigenous land acknowledgment, during their regular board meeting held on Sept. 9.

“Chandler Unified School District recognizes and respects the sovereignty, history, and contributions of Indigenous peoples and, alongside state and federal laws, acknowledges the importance of honoring the lands and communities where our students learn, grow, and build their futures,” said CUSD President Patti Serrano.

Last year, CUSD’s Indigenous Education Program put together a land acknowledgment video, which will now be used for the official land acknowledgment for every governing board meeting and graduation ceremonies moving forward.

Serrano added, “As a school district committed to creating a high-quality learning community that welcomes and connects all students to successful future pathways, the District will incorporate this Land Acknowledgment as a meaningful expression of

respect and recognition.”

Nearly 30 parents, students, and teachers spoke out during the boarding meeting on the land acknowledgment proposal, sharing both their concerns and support.

One parent, Ann Adams, expressed her concern and questioned, “Whether this land acknowledgment advances CUSD’s educational mission to simply become a politically charged platitude,” she said. “Every culture experiences hardship, injustice, sacrifice and triumph; no child should inherit guilt from any past wrongdoings.”

Others, like Ceyshe Napa, attended the meeting in full support of the land acknowledgment.

“I’m a current board member and the first Indigenous person elected to represent Phoenix Union High School District in its 131-year history,” Napa said. “I’m here tonight in my private capacity to ask you to vote yes on the land acknowledgment but don’t stop there, our native students deserve to see themselves in their education. They should not have to wait until college, as I did, to learn about Indigenous history and literature.”

The proposal to approve the land acknowledgment ultimately passed, with three board mem-

bers, Patti Serrano, Barb Mozden, and Claudia Mendoza voting yes, and Ryan Heap and Kurt Rohrs voting against.

“It has no real purpose in addressing our primary mission of improving academic performance for our students,” said Board Member Kurt Rohrs. “The statement is an empty performance gesture of woke-ness which really doesn’t accomplish anything and distracts from our core mission.”

Serrano stated, “This land acknowledgment was absolutely not singular. It was not led or driven by one person or myself, it was a community effort and I’m very proud to say that it was born out of our student voices.”

Gila River Indian Community member and student, Syndel Preston, was present to express his support, “I believe that implementing the land acknowledgment into more Chandler Unified events will spread further awareness to my peers and give validation to the Indigenous students already attending CUSD schools,”

Preston is a senior at Basha High School where he is also the president of the Indigenous Student Club and shared that while being part of CUSD for most of his teenage years,



Member from GRICUMA present at the 42nd NCA Annual Parade. Makaila Kaufman/GRIN

he initially struggled to feel comfortable or even acknowledged among the larger groups within CUSD.

“Perhaps a younger version of me or another Indigenous student right now who is struggling with their identity would greatly appreciate the brief mention of the land acknowl-

edgment at future events,” Preston said. “I don’t believe it is divisive to that for my community and those like me.”

Community Members Consider Different Vision for the Future

Continued From Front Page

Despite those shortcomings, the debate represented an important step in promoting civic engagement and accountability. By giving candidates, a public platform and providing voters direct access to their ideas, the event strengthened the democratic process within the Gila River Indian



Stephen Roe Lewis: Building on a Legacy of Leadership. Makaila Kaufman/GRIN

Community.

As Election Day approaches, the debate may ultimately be remembered not for

any single exchange but for its role in helping voters hear directly from those seeking to lead the Community into the future.

Gubernatorial Race Presents Voters With a Choice Between Experience and New Direction

As the Gila River Indian Community prepares for its next chapter in leadership, voters face a decision shaped by experience, vision and competing ideas about the community's future.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis enters the race with more than a decade of executive leadership and a record closely tied to the community's recent growth and development.

The son of the late Rodney B. Lewis, a prominent attorney and advocate for tribal rights, Lewis was raised in an environment where discussions about sovereignty, land and water rights were commonplace. Those influences helped shape his approach to leadership and public service.

Since taking office in January 2015, Lewis has overseen a period marked by economic growth, infrastructure improvements and continued efforts to strengthen the community's long-term financial stability. During his administration, the community expanded programs related to land acquisition, invested in utility infrastruc-

ture and continued initiatives tied to water resources and agricultural development.

Supporters point to continuity, experience and a track record of accomplishments as reasons to keep Lewis in office. They argue his leadership has helped position the community for sustained economic and governmental stability.

Challenger Monica Antone brings ex-



Monica Antone: A Campaign Built on Service and Representation Makaila Kaufman/GRIN

tensive government experience and a long-standing commitment to public service.

Antone previously served two terms as lieutenant governor, first from 2015

to 2017 and again from 2021 to 2023. Throughout her time in office, she played a role in addressing issues affecting the community during periods of social and public health challenges.

Her campaign also carries historic significance. Antone is seeking to become the second woman elected governor of the Gila River Indian Community, following the late Gov. Mary V. Thomas.

Supporters view Antone as a candidate who offers both experience and a different perspective on leadership. They point to her years of government service and her focus on representation, accountability and community engagement.

The race presents a contrast between an incumbent seeking to build on a record of established leadership and a challenger offering an alternative path forward. Regardless of the outcome, the election represents an important opportunity for community members to shape the direction of their government and the future of the Gila River Indian Community.

Decision Now Rests With Voters

As Election Day nears, voters will decide which vision best reflects the future they want for the Gila River Indian Community.

Candidates Share Their Vision for supporting Community Members and Families

Continued From Front Page

workforce recruitment processes, updated job descriptions, and streamlined access to housing and healthcare benefits across all seven districts. Her platform also prioritizes youth and vulnerable families by advocating for coordinated early intervention systems to address household instability, mental health challenges, and substance abuse. Mitchell has pledged to work with the next governor to protect sovereign wa-



Amanda Mitchell emphasizes accessibility, family support and government responsiveness. Makaila Kafuman/GRIN

ter rights while increasing grassroots engagement with tribal members.

During the recent lieutenant governor debate, Mitchell expanded on themes that have become central to her campaign, presenting herself as a candidate focused on strengthening the relationship between government and the people it serves.

Throughout the discussion, she em-

phasized that effective leadership begins with accessibility, arguing that Community members should not face unnecessary barriers when seeking assistance, information or essential services. Questions concerning housing, health care, workforce development and youth support provided Mitchell an opportunity to outline her vision for a more responsive and efficient tribal government.

Mitchell repeatedly stressed the importance of modernizing government operations to better serve a growing Community. She spoke about streamlining administrative processes, improving communication between departments and ensuring programs designed to assist families are easier to navigate.

Her message centered on the belief that government services should be accessible, transparent and accountable to the people they are intended to serve.

During several exchanges, Mitchell also focused on issues affecting younger generations. She advocated for expanding support systems for children and families facing challenges related to housing instability, behavioral health concerns and substance abuse.

According to her remarks, early intervention and prevention efforts can help strengthen families while reducing long-term social and economic challenges across the Community.

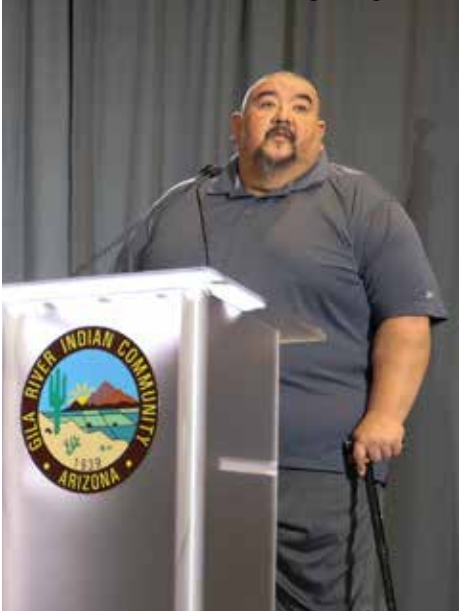
Mitchell further emphasized the importance of maintaining a strong voice on issues of tribal sovereignty, including the protection of water resources and other rights critical to the Community's future.

Throughout the debate, she presented herself as a collaborative leader prepared to work alongside the next governor while remaining connected to residents across all seven districts. As the campaign continues,

Mitchell's platform reflects a vision centered on transparency, accessibility

and a government that remains closely connected to the concerns of the people it serves.

Beyond his record on the Community Council, De La Rosa has sought to position



James De La Rosa highlights economic development, infrastructure and government transparency during candidate debate. Makaila Kafuman/GRIN

himself as a candidate focused on practical solutions and long-term planning. During the recent lieutenant governor debate, he repeatedly emphasized responsible financial management and the importance of ensuring economic growth translates into tangible benefits for Community members.

Rather than focusing solely on future proposals, De La Rosa highlighted initiatives he believes demonstrate a commitment to job creation, infrastructure improvements and strengthening the Community's economic foundation.

Throughout the debate, De La Rosa expanded on themes that have become central to his campaign, presenting himself as a candidate focused on practical gover-

nance and measurable results. Questions from moderators and community members addressed issues including housing, infrastructure, youth opportunities, economic diversification and government accountability, providing an opportunity for him to outline his priorities and leadership approach.

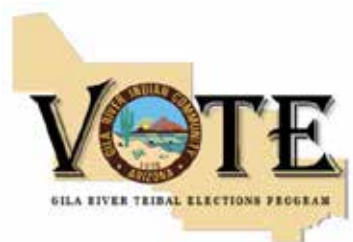
Drawing on his experience representing District 5, De La Rosa argued that future leaders must balance growth with responsible stewardship of Community resources. He emphasized the need to improve communication between elected officials and residents, stressing that transparency should remain a cornerstone of tribal government.

According to his remarks, economic success should not be measured solely by revenue generated through Community enterprises but also by the quality of life experienced by families throughout the districts.

Throughout the forum, he portrayed himself as a leader who values cooperation among districts and believes major decisions should reflect the interests of the entire Community rather than any single constituency.

Decision Now Rests With Voters

As Election Day nears, voters will decide which vision best reflects the future they want for the Gila River Indian Community.



Four O’odham Tribes travel to U.S./Mexico Border on the Tohono O’odham Nation

Emma Hughes
Gila River Indian News

Tribal leaders from the Ak-Chin Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, and the Tohono O’odham Nation gathered on Friday, Sept. 25, for a tour of the United States/Mexico border that crosses through the Tohono O’odham Nation.

Tohono O’odham Nation has been working to prevent the construction of a 30-foot border wall, in addition to current barriers that are placed along the border, which would further destroy natural re-



Barricades along the border on the west end of the Tohono O’odham Nation. Emma Hughes/GRIN

sources and sacred sites. Gila River Indian Community’s delegation included Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Council Representatives Duane Jackson Jr., Kristina Morago, and Joey Whitman, who were given a firsthand look of the land that is at risk.

The Tohono O’odham Nation is one of the largest reservations in the state with nearly 40,000 members, and its land covers 2.8 million acres including 62-miles of land that is divided by the U.S/Mexico border. It has spent millions of dollars each year assisting with border security and has maintained a longstanding relationship with the Department of

Homeland Security and Customs and Border Patrol, for several years to protect the border.

In 2025, President Donald Trump issued a memorandum that excludes Federal Indian Reservations from any border wall construction plans. On June 16, 2026, the Tohono O’odham Nation filed suit against the U.S. government to stop its plans to utilize the tribe’s land and water to construct the border wall.

“Their concerns about the proposed building of this wall, and to hear it and then to come out here and see it, it makes you understand why and what this means to them,” said Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community President Martin Harvier. “It’s beautiful out here, it really is and to see this land desecrated the way that they’re talking about and to hear what other archaeological sites, burial sites and everything else; I would just wish other people would imagine if that was their family, how would they feel.”

Many from the delegation shared their own connections to the Tohono



L-R: Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community President Martin Harvier, Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Verlon Jose, Gila River Indian Community Governor Stephen Roe Lewis, and Ak-Chin Indian Community Chairman Gabriel Lopez at the U.S./Mexico Border at the San Miguel gate on the Tohono O’odham Nation. Emma Hughes/GRIN

O’odham Nation, as they visited the Tadaí Meí camp, located at the San Miguel border gate, where tribal members have set up camp to closely monitor the activity on the border.

This particular area has been used for several years to allow O’odham to cross back and forth from Mexico to the Nation to visit family or receive essential services from the tribe. Many tribal members

also utilize this area for their annual pilgrimage to Magdalena de Kino, Mexico for St. Francis Day.

“We’re all connected to this area as O’odham. This is not about politics; this is about solidarity. This is about tribal sovereignty,” said Gila River Indian Community Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis.

“We’re here showing support from the from the Salt River Indian Com-

munity to the Nation and their efforts in opposing the building of the wall,” said Harvier.

Tohono O’odham Nation Vice-Chairwoman Carala Johnson stated, “Help us educate others out there, O’odham or not, we’re all in this together. Our voice is strong and our abilities to communicate to others what this means to us and why a border wall would not be good here.”

Skyline Gila River Campus Expansion in Chandler

PRESS RELEASE
Skyline Education

CHANDLER, Ariz. - Skyline Education proudly celebrated the groundbreaking of a major expansion project at its Skyline Gila River Campus on October 12, 2026. The project marks a significant investment in educational opportunities for students and families by adding a dedicated high school facility designed to support academic achievement, career readiness, and student engagement.

As a school serving the Gila River Community, Skyline Education recognizes the importance of providing educational opportunities that reflect and support the rich culture, tra-

ditions, and aspirations of Native American students. This expansion represents an investment in the future of the community by creating additional pathways to academic excellence, college enrollment, and workforce development.

The new high school building will include state-of-the-art learning spaces, featuring a STEM laboratory, art studio, student garden, and additional athletic fields. These enhancements are designed to provide students with hands-on learning experiences and expanded opportunities in academics, athletics, and the arts.

“This expansion reflects our commitment to growing opportunities for students and ensuring they



Groundbreaking ceremony for the Skyline Gila River Campus expansion on Oct. 12. Photo Courtesy of Skyline Gila River

have access to innovative educational programs and high-quality facilities,” said Swen Anderson, President, Skyline Education. “We are excited to continue serving families in the community and preparing students for success in college, careers, and life.”

The groundbreaking ceremony brought together community leaders, partners, educators, students, and families to celebrate this important milestone. Representative Teresa Martinez of Legislative District 16, Councilman O.D. Harris of the City of Chandler, Councilman Duane Jackson of Gila River Indian Community and Amanda

Pietre of Arizona Charter School Association joined Skyline Education in recognizing the impact this project will have on future generations of students.

Skyline Education also recognized the contributions of LGE Design Build, whose partnership has been instrumental in bringing the project from vision to reality.

About Skyline Education

Skyline Education operates multiple charter school campuses dedicated to providing students with a rigorous academic foundation, character development, and opportunities for success through

innovative educational programs. Skyline schools focus on college and career readiness while fostering

a supportive and engaging learning environment for all students.



Skyline Education President Swen Anderson shares remarks. Photo Courtesy of Skyline Gila River



Skyline Gila River students perform traditional dance during the groundbreaking ceremony. Photo Courtesy of Skyline Gila River

Gila River Rodeo Representatives Make Their Mark at the 50th Anniversary INFR

Devyn Dennison
Exclusive for Gila River
Indian News

LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The Indian National Finals Rodeo (INFR) celebrated 50 years of Indian rodeo at the South Point Hotel, Casino & Spa in Las Vegas, Nevada, October 13–17, 2026. The historic event brought together top competitors from across Indian Country, celebrating generations of rodeo tradition and the communities that continue to shape the sport.

Representing the Gila River Indian Community were saddle bronc rider Jalen Joaquin, breakaway roper Savannah Joe, and longtime rodeo secretary Penny Mix. Each made their mark during the milestone event, both inside and outside the arena.



Jalen Joaquin, in front of the INFR backdrop after his ride at the Southpoint Casino & Hotel. DD/CPAO



Jalen Joaquin, making a great saddle bronc ride during the 3rd go round performance at the INFR. Devyn Dennison/CPAO

Jalen Joaquin: Carrying on a Cowboy Legacy

A third-generation cowboy from Sacaton’s District 4, Jalen Joaquin is the son of Fay Yesk and Albert Joaquin, who is from the Santa Rosa District of the Tohono O’odham Nation. His family’s ranching and rodeo traditions have shaped his passion for saddle bronc riding and his pride in representing both tribal communities.

Jalen captured the INFR Saddle Bronc World Championship in 2017 and returned in 2026 for his seventh qualification. Throughout the season, he competed in five INFR-affiliated rodeos across Arizona, placing in four and earning a position among

the top 24 contestants in the tour standings.

For Jalen, competing at the INFR is an experience unlike any other.

“You have never lived until you’ve been in a packed house with people just screaming, wanting you to do your best. There’s no better feeling than that.”

Jalen finished eighth in the saddle bronc average standings at this year’s finals, expressing gratitude to his family and the rodeo fans who supported him.

Beyond his accomplishments, Jalen hopes to encourage the next generation of bronc riders in Sacaton. He credits his parents for instilling strong values and reminds young cowboys that learning from

others is part of becoming a better competitor.

“Don’t be afraid to ask for help. There’s a lot of opportunity in rodeo, as long as you love the sport.”

Penny Mix & Savannah Joe: A Mother-Daughter Duo

From the rodeo office to the breakaway roping box, Penny Mix and her daughter Savannah Joe

know how to stay busy. While Penny keeps rodeo operations moving behind the scenes, Savannah is horseback, chasing calves and making competitive runs.

Penny is the daughter of Gary Mix, a well-known cattleman from District 4. She has built her own reputation as a respected rodeo secretary, handling contestant entries, draws, judges’ sheets, records, and payouts at rodeos across the country.

With more than a decade of experience, Penny was selected to lead secretary training at the 2026 INFR, sharing her knowledge and encouraging others to become involved in the important work behind the sport.

Her daughter Savannah, known as “SJ,” grew up around rodeos, horses, and the competitors she admired. Now a third-generation cowgirl and four-time INFR qualifier, she continues to balance competing with helping her mother in the rodeo office.

“My mom has it down. She’s been doing it for 10 to 15 years,” Savannah shared. “I just go and compete and then go back to the office and assist in any way I can.”

Their busy season included rodeos throughout Arizona and trips to Calgary, Oklahoma, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Savannah secured her INFR qualification by winning the Ladies Breakaway Roping at Pine Ridge Rodeo in South Dakota.

At the finals, Savannah placed third in the short go-round and eighth in the average standings, adding another accomplishment to her growing rodeo career.

Whether handling payouts, chasing calves, or riding broncs, Jalen, Penny, and Savannah proudly represent the Gila River Indian Community. Their dedication reflects the family traditions, hard work, and community pride that continue to carry Indian rodeo into its next 50 years.



Savannah Joe and her horse Willa, before her performance at the INFR. Devyn Dennison/CPAO

Animal Control - Spay & Neuter Program

VACCINATION CLINIC

Must present proof of Gila River Indian Community Enrollment or Residence

October 20, 2026 - District 1 & 2

District 1 Service Center: 9am-2pm

District 2 Old Service Center: 9am-2pm

October 21, 2026 - District 3 & 4

District 3 Tribal Health Department: 9am-2pm

District 4 Red/Blue Ramada (Park): 9am - 2pm

October 27, 2026 - District 5 & 6

District 5 Service Center: 9am-2pm

District 6 Kalka Park (Behind Service Center): 9am-2pm

October 28, 2026 - District 7

District 7 Service Center: 9am-2pm

Contact Us

(520) 562 - 5177

*If line is busy, please leave a clear message with your name, number, and brief summary of your concern.

Please allow our staff 24 hours to return your call.

433 W Seed Farm Rd Sacaton, AZ 85147

OCTOBER 2026



Young Softball Player Shines at Babe Ruth World Series, Winning Championship

Emma Hughes
Gila River Indian News

Competing on a national stage is an accomplishment for any young athlete, but for Mireya Carpio, her recent participation in the Babe Ruth World Series in Alabama this Summer, provided an opportunity to showcase her talent, dedication, and determination while earning multiple titles, including the 2026 14U Championship.

The 14-year-old softball player represented the Gila River Indian Community with Na7ive Na7ions, the first-ever all Native American team to compete in the tournament since it first began 75 years ago.

The Babe Ruth World Series is a collection of annual youth baseball and softball national and international tournament championships organized by the Babe Ruth League, Inc.

Carpio competed against talented athletes from across the Country. The experience marked an important milestone in her athletic journey and allowed her to test her skills at a high level of competition.

Na7ive Na7ions is also a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering Native American youth through baseball and softball, founded by Major League Baseball player



Mireya Carpio competed in the Babe Ruth World Series in Florence, Alabama, where her team, Na7ive Na7ions won the championship. Photo Courtesy of Isabel Ruvalcaba

Daniel “D.J.” Carrasco. The team competed against Puerto Rico, winning 6-4 and going 9-1 throughout the tournament.

In July, Na7ive Na7ions held a national tournament in Prescott, Ariz., where athletes competed for the opportunity to be evaluated and considered for the Na7ive Na7ions Girls National Softball team.

Carpio was selected to join the team, along with 10 other young athletes from the Comanche Nation, Navajo Nation, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and the White Mountain Apache Tribe, all of whom were meeting for

the first time.

“I got put on a random team and just played the entire tournament for fun,” Carpio said. “I got a lot of new experiences, opportunities and met a lot of cool new people from different states. I really enjoyed it.”

“We didn’t know they were scouting the team out to go to the Babe Ruth World Series,” her mother, Isabel Ruvalcaba, explained. “She was selected one out of 12 to enter and be on the national team to travel.”

Her cousin, Reyes Ruvalcaba, was also selected to play for the boys’ baseball team for Na7ive Na7ions.

In addition to winning the championship in the Babe Ruth World Series, Carpio was awarded All-Defensive Player, All-Offensive Player, and Most Outstanding Player of the division and three-player of the games.

“When I got to represent my tribe on opening day, with my flag and traditional dress, I was the first person to represent my community,” said Carpio. “Getting that opportunity, it was great and honestly for the future generation – it felt really good to be able to be somebody to look up to and [become] proof that you can perform on a big stage as a Native American, and that we aren’t overlooked. So it was a really



Team Na7ive Na7ions wins the 2026 14U Championship. Photo Courtesy of Isabel Ruvalcaba

big honor to me.”

For Carpio, those achievements reflected the time and effort invested in developing her skills and preparing for competition. Her journey in sports began when she was only four years old, “I was coached by my mom and mostly my uncles,” she said.

Since then, she has continued to develop as a player, balancing practices, competition, and other responsibilities while working towards her goals.

Behind her success is a support system that includes her family, coaches, teammates, and Community. Their encouragement, along with her commitment to the sport, has helped her navigate the challenges that come with competitive athletics.

While most of the tournament expenses were covered, Carpio needed assistance with travel and received help from local sponsors in the Community: Akimel Smoke Shop, Gila River Telecommunications, Inc., and Gila River Indian Community Util-

ity Authority, REDRUM Motorcycle Club, and the Tribal Recreation & Wellness Department.

“We’re very thankful for them for allowing us the opportunity,” said Ruvalcaba.

Beyond the titles and recognition, the World Series experience also taught her valuable lessons about teamwork and personal growth. “This championship created visibility far beyond a final score,” Na7ive Na7ions stated. “It showed Native girls that they belong on national and international stages and demonstrated what becomes possible when athletes are given access, preparation, representation, and the opportunity to compete together.”

Carpio plans to finish high school and go on to college softball. When asked what she likes most about the sport, she said friendships.

“I also love how it can teach life lessons in and out of the sport, which also pushes me to be better,” she explained.

Vaccines: Trick or Treat Myth or Fact

Vaccines shouldn't be spooky. Here's what you need to know.

Myth: Vaccines cause autism or sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Fact: Vaccines are very safe. Any reaction from a vaccine is minor and temporary, the benefits greatly outweigh the risks.

Myth: It is better to let your child get sick rather than get a vaccine.

Fact: Vaccines stimulate the body's immune system to be able to fight the illness if/when exposed in real life, which can limit serious complications if a baby/child were to get sick without a vaccine.

Myth: Vaccines give you the disease and cause you to get sick.

Fact: Getting the disease from a vaccine is extremely unlikely. Most vaccines contain inactive (killed) organisms, which make it impossible. However, some vaccines contain live organisms where you may experience a mild case of the disease. This isn't harmful and can show that the vaccine is working.

Information from the American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology

Vaccines are safe and effective! Vaccines not only protect you, but can help protect those who cannot protect themselves like infants, elders and people with health conditions who may have a weaker immune system. Talk to your healthcare provider about your vaccination availability and status.

Tribal Health Department
Community Health Education Program
520-562-5100

2026 GRIC GENERAL ELECTION

ABSENTEE VOTING

(Districts 1 - 7)

Begins: October 8, 2026
Closes: November 2, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

If you are unable to make it to the polling site on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, contact your District Election Judge to request an Absentee Ballot or come into the Tribal Elections Office.

District 1 - Donette Lewis	(520) 610-0018
District 2 - Burdette Pablo	(520) 610-0631
District 3 - Kimberly Ramon	(520) 610-2934
District 4 - Eric Kisto	(520) 610-2935
District 5 - Pamela Vega	(520) 610-2940
District 6 - Andrea Jackson	(520) 610-2941
District 7 - Samantha Mercado	(520) 610-2818

Tribal Elections Program
291 W. Casa Blanca Road, Building #9
Sacaton, Arizona
(520) 562-9758/9735
TEP@gric.nsn.us

VOTE
GILA RIVER TRIBAL ELECTIONS PROGRAM

Women’s Beginner Golf Clinic Introduces Participants to the Game



Women from the Community learn the basics of golf during the clinic at the Whirlwind Golf Club at Wild Horse Pass. Emma Hughes/GRIN

Emma Hughes
Gila River Indian News

CHANDLER, Ariz. — The Gila River Health Initiative hosted a beginner’s golf clinic for women in the Gila River Indian Community at the Whirlwind Golf Club on Sept. 22

The clinic brought together a dozen women to learn the fundamentals of the game, build confidence and connect with others who are interested in golf.

Brandon Gordon, head golf professional, and Dan McCabe, assistant golf pro-

fessional with Whirlwind Golf Club taught participants the basic golf techniques and allowed them to practice their swings and gain hands-on experience in a welcoming environment.

“I had a lot of fun. I enjoyed learning the basics of golf and how to do a hit,” said Mary Elias, from District 6. “I feel like I got better throughout the time.”

Most of them women had very little to no experience in golf, but all agreed the event allowed them to step outside their

comfort zone, develop new skills and enjoy time on the course while connecting with fellow Community members.

“I loved it. I love the outdoors, I love the scenery,” said Georgia Salas. “I love the instructors. It was really nice. It was a very good experience.”

With the success of the event, Gila River Health Initiative is looking to plan similar clinics including a follow up to the beginner series to allow participants to advance their new skills.

To American Indian or Alaska Natives on AHCCCS, your coverage is not changing.

New AHCCCS rules will start in 2027. But if you are American Indian or Alaska Native, under federal law, these requirements do not apply to you, and your coverage will stay the same. To ensure no coverage gaps, AHCCCS needs information confirming you are American Indian or Alaskan Native – through information on an application, documents you’ve submitted, or electronic verification.

YOU MAY get a letter about these changes. Everyone with AHCCCS coverage gets one – it doesn’t mean anything has changed for you or your family. For more information, visit [KeepMyAHCCCS.com](#).

Talk to someone you trust. Your tribal health program or Community Health Representative can answer your questions. You can also call AHCCCS at (855) 220-0903.

Learn more at [KeepMyAHCCCS.com](#)



Cybersecurity Awareness Month



Securing our community begins at home with our families.

Within the Gila River Indian Community, true digital safety starts when we watch out for one another. Protecting our digital spaces isn’t just a job for tech experts—every member of our Community has a part to play.

Update software

Keep software updated on all family phones, tablets, and computers to patch up security gaps.

Enable multi-factor authentication

Turn on multi-factor authentication (MFA) on all personal, tribal, and family accounts to add an extra layer of protection.

You don’t need a background in IT to protect your loved ones from fraudsters and scammers. Simple habits can make a difference for our elders, parents, and youth.

Use strong passwords

Help your family set up strong, unique passwords or use a trusted password manager so accounts can’t be easily hacked.

Recognize & report scams

To report general online fraud, impostor scams, or deceptive shopping websites, file a complaint at [FTC ReportFraud](#). For identity theft, use the dedicated [FTC IdentityTheft](#) portal to establish a personal recovery plan. If you have experienced a significant cybercrime, hacking incident, or immediate financial loss, contact your bank, local police department, or the FBI right away.



DIGITAL CONNECT
an initiative of Gila River Telecommunications Inc.

E-Mail: digital-connect@gilarivertel.com • 520-796-3333

For professional and senior digital skills training, contact DCI Education Coordinator, **Amanda MacDonald**.



For one-on-one digital support including digital safety and awareness, contact DCI Digital Navigator, **Tyler Smith**.



Construction work continues to ramp up on I-10 between Phoenix and Casa Grande

Submitted By
Marcy McMacken
Outreach Manager/
Spokesperson
ADOT

Motorists traveling Interstate 10 south of Chandler will soon see an increase in construction activity along Interstate 10 in both directions, roughly from the Loop 202 Santan/South Mountain Freeway to the Gila River. The Arizona Department of Transportation continues to widen 26 miles of I-10 between the Phoenix area and the City of Casa Grande as part of the I-10 Wild Horse Pass Corridor Project.

Progress continues with active construction work under way on the third of four project segments, an 11-mile stretch of I-10 in both directions between the Loop 202 Santan/South Mountain Freeway and the Gila River bridges. As the closest segment to the Phoenix/Chandler area, this work includes adding an additional travel lane in both directions and constructing a new high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane between Loop 202 and Riggs Road. Other major work includes reconstructing the Queen Creek Road/State Route 347, Riggs Road, and Goodyear Road interchanges; constructing a new interchange at Koli Road between Wild Horse Pass Boulevard and Queen



Photo by: ADOT

Creek Road; and reconstructing and widening the Goodyear bridge over I-10. Crews began work on the first project segment in May 2024 with the replacement of the I-10 bridges over the Gila River. These bridges are expected to be completed in late October.

In January, construction work started on the second segment, a 10-mile stretch of I-10 in both directions from Gas Line Road to just north of Casa Grande. In this segment, crews are adding a third general-purpose lane, reconstructing the Pinal Avenue/State Route 387 interchange, constructing a new interchange at Seed Farm Road, and reconstructing and widening the Gas Line Road bridge. Crews will also remove the Dirk Lay Road bridge.

The final segment of the project, a 3-mile stretch of I-10 located between the

Gila River bridges and Gas Line Road, is expected to begin active construction in 2027 or early 2028, with a planned completion date of late 2029. Crews will add a third general-purpose lane, reconstruct the Casa Blanca Road/SR 587 interchange, and reconstruct and widen the Nelson Road bridge over I-10.

Once the overall project is completed, the entirety of I-10 between Phoenix and Casa Grande will expand to three lanes in each direction. The result will be a seamless, three-lane highway between Phoenix and Tucson, increasing capacity and safety on one of Arizona’s busiest stretches of highway.

The entire I-10 Wild Horse Pass Corridor Project is expected to be completed by late 2029. To learn more about this project, visit i10wildhorsepass-corridor.com.

Five new films to air on public television during Native American Heritage Month



Coming home from Shadowland to Spiritworld. Photo by Vision Maker Media

PRESS RELEASE Vision Maker Media

Two New Episodes of “First Peoples, First Stories” Series Also Debut in November

LINCOLN, NE – October 6, 2026 - - Vision Maker Media (VMM), the premier source of media by and about Native Americans since 1976, marks the annual November celebration of Native American Heritage Month with five new documentaries airing nationally on the PBS World channel, alongside two new episodes of FIRST PEOPLES, FIRST STORIES, the new series showcasing short films from young Native filmmakers that premiered in the spring.

“Each year Vision Maker Media presents the best of films for public television premieres during Native American Heritage Month,” says Vision Maker Media CEO and President Francene Blythe-Lewis. “This year’s lineup of films is no less robust on a variety of topics. You can expect heartfelt stories about reciprocity, recovery, and perseverance that inspire from the Pacific Northwest to the Southwest and Midwest - there is always something new to learn.”

Films premiering on PBS World in November include:

COMING HOME: FROM SHADOWLAND TO SPIRITWORLD from Daniel Golding and J. Mitchell Johnson. After sacred land goes up for sale following 170 years of dispossession brought on by the California genocide of Native peoples, Kashia Pomo Tribal elder (Otis Parrish) mentors a pair of young Tribal members (Martina Morgan and Jerry Pinola) on a journey seek-

ing coastal land return and self-recovery that inspires healing, spiritual revival, and a search for the truth about those Tribal members gone missing and murdered. COMING HOME: FROM SHADOWLAND TO SPIRITWORLD airs on PBS World on Wednesday, November 4 at 8:30 p.m. ET (check local listings). SHE CRIED THAT DAY from Amanda Erickson. Christine Means and her family have spent years questioning the circumstances surrounding her sister’s death. In 2019, a renewed sense of hope for justice places Christine at the center of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Relatives movement in New Mexico. Against all odds, this is a story of love, spirit, and the unwavering power of Indigenous women and allies who refuse to let their loved ones be forgotten. SHE CRIED THAT DAY airs on PBS World on Thursday, November 5 at 7 p.m. ET (check local listings).

RESERVATION REDEMPTION from Brenda Fisher and Blake Pickens. Follow the journey of “Chief” Marchand Rice — a Colville Citizen and Tribal member who has spent more than three decades in prison. His journey of redemption through his heritage has turned a once reckless teenager into a leader and teacher. His relationship with Tribal elder Francis Cullooyah has had a profound effect on him and will for the rest of his life. RESERVATION REDEMPTION airs on PBS World on Thursday, November 5 at 9 p.m. ET (check local listings).

MEDICINE BALL from Leya Hale and Minnesota PBS. Through basketball, Native athletes confront their campus’s boarding school legacy.

“Medicine Ball” follows Native college athletes Lexus Redthunder and Leroy Fairbanks IV as they navigate college life and basketball at the University of Minnesota Morris, located on the site of a former Native boarding school. Their journey reveals how basketball became a powerful symbol of resilience, hope, and cultural pride in Native communities. MEDICINE BALL airs on PBS World on Friday, November 13 at 9 p.m. ET (check local listings).

THE LAND RETURNS, from Margaret Jacobs, Kevin Abourezk, and Charles “Boots” Kennedy, chronicles a surprising new way that Indigenous nations are regaining their land: individual settlers, local governments, environmental organizations, and even corporations are returning stolen land to Indian nations as part of a growing grassroots movement of restitution and reconciliation. THE LAND RETURNS airs on PBS World on Thursday, November 19 at 7 p.m. ET (check local listings).

Finally, two new episodes of the Vision Maker Media series FIRST PEOPLES, FIRST STORIES air on PBS World on Saturday, November 21 at 7 and 7:30 p.m. ET (check local listings). The four short films featured in episodes three and four of the series explore the determination of Native women on their journeys toward healing, as well as the courage and strength of Native youth as they navigate their own paths forward.

CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAY

NOV. 5, 2026 10A-2P

GIFTCARD EVERY HOUR!

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Photo Booth

Building Tours

Power Town Demonstration

Games & More!

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GRICUA'S PARKING LOT: CHANDLER, AZ 85226

THE GRD BULLETIN



FEATURED STORIES



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GRD!

Another year of growth, connection, and opportunity! Gila River Development recently celebrated its birthday, and we want to thank our Community members, team members, guests, and partners who continue to be part of our journey. We're proud of what we've accomplished together and look forward to another year of creating opportunities and giving back to the Gila River Indian Community.



A FRESH LOOK AT RAWHIDE

Improvements are coming to the Rawhide Steakhouse! Remodeling is underway, including a makeover of the iconic saloon. The project is currently expected to be completed around December or January, giving this Rawhide favorite an updated look while continuing the Western experience guests know and love. Stay tuned for more updates as the work continues!



A GLOWING COMMUNITY NIGHT

It was great seeing so many GRIC members and families join us at Rawhide for Glowing Pumpkins Community Night! Community members were able to walk among thousands of carved and illuminated pumpkins while spending an evening together at the Riverwalk. Thank you to everyone who came out and helped make Community Night special. We hope to see you back at Rawhide again soon!



START YOUR ENGINES!

October is packed with action at Firebird Motorsports Park! Community members can come out for off-road racing, drag racing, and high-performance driving events throughout the month. The October calendar includes CORR NEXT off-road racing, Duct Tape Drags, Friday Night Drags, and multiple high-performance track events. There's something for every motorsports fan, so bring the family and experience the action right here in the Community. Be sure to check Firebird Motorsports Park's event calendar for upcoming events, tickets, and available Community discounts [www.racefirebird.com/events]

See you around the Community this fall! As always, thank you for supporting Gila River Development, its properties, and the many programs and opportunities that help strengthen our Community.

RAWHIDE EVENT CENTER

INDIAN FRYBREAD & ARTS FESTIVAL

NOV 21ST • 12pm-8pm

FOOD

FRYBREAD
CHILI
DESSERTS & SNACKS

LIVE ON THE MAIN STAGE

STELLA STANDINGBEAR
High-energy indigenous artist blending alt-rap, R&B, and pop

TRADITIONAL DANCE PERFORMANCES

Performer lineup to be announced

ACTIVITIES

CARNIVAL RIDES
INTERACTIVE ARTIST BOOTHS
ARTISANAL VENDORS

RAWHIDE.COM

Sonoran Lawn at Rawhide,
5244 S. 48th St., Chandler, AZ 85226



Announcements & Notices



Department of Land Use Planning and Zoning

PUBLIC HEARING
NOTICE

Project Name:Revel-Scannell Commercial Park

For:Zoning Change

Location:South Side of Loop 202 and 32nd Street

Date and Time of Public Hearing:November 14, 2026 at 9:00 AM

Place:District Six Learning Center

Notice is hereby given that the Gila River Indian Community’s Natural Resources Standing Committee on **Saturday, November 14, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.** in District Six at the Learning Center, 5230 St Johns Rd, Laveen Village, AZ 85339, will hold a public hearing to discuss and consider a Zoning Change Application submitted by Revel-Scannell for their Commercial Park site to be used for commercial and light industrial use.

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 and cc PlanningDevelopmentTeam@gric.nsn.us. Any questions may be directed to Corinna Ortiz, Project Manager at PlanningDevelopmentTeam@gric.nsn.us or at (520) 562-6003.



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

Announcements & Notices

IN THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT
STATE OF ARIZONA

VINCENT SCOTT CARL ,
Petitioner/Plaintiff

VS.

BERNARDINA SANCHEZ,
Respondent/Defendant

CASE Number: FM-2026-0059-PT

CIVIL
NOTICE OF HEARING

Please take notice that a(n) **Motion 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, December 14, 2026
at 9:30 AM in Courtroom I,
AKIMEL O'OTHAM LODITHA KUD KI,
721 West Seed Farm Road, Sacaton, AZ.

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

DATED this 21st day of September, 2026

/s/ Katherine Search
Clerk of the Gila River Indian Community Court

Copy of the foregoing served by

☐ 1st Class Mail ☐ Certified Mail

This 21st day of September, 2026 to:

Bernardina Sanchez
4801 W. Pecos Apt E-1
Laveen, AZ, 85339

IN THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT
STATE OF ARIZONA

JACOB APKAW SR ,
Petitioner/Plaintiff

VS.

DEBBY MARIE APKAW,
Respondent/Defendant

CASE Number: FM-2026-0072-DV

CIVIL
NOTICE OF HEARING

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, November 30, 2026
at 9:00 AM in Courtroom I,
AKIMEL O'OTHAM LODITHA KUD KI,
721 West Seed Farm Road, Sacaton, AZ.

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

DATED this 5th day of October, 2026

/s/ Katherine Search
Clerk of the Gila River Indian Community Court

Copy of the foregoing served by

☐ 1st Class Mail ☐ Certified Mail

This 5th day of October, 2026 to:

Debby Marie Apkaw
P.O. Box 1420
Sacaton, AZ, 85147

IN THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT
STATE OF ARIZONA

KELLY MARIE LAWS ,
Petitioner/Plaintiff

VS.

ROBERT LEE BLAINE,
Respondent/Defendant

CASE Number: FM-2026-0058-PT

CIVIL
NOTICE OF HEARING

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, November 2, 2026
at 9:00 AM in Courtroom I,
AKIMEL O'OTHAM LODITHA KUD KI,
721 West Seed Farm Road, Sacaton, AZ.

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

DATED this 10th day of August, 2026

/s/ Katherine Search
Clerk of the Gila River Indian Community Court

Copy of the foregoing served by

☒ 1st Class Mail ☐ Certified Mail

This 10th day of August, 2026 to:

Robert Lee Blaine
P.O. Box 1951
Sacaton, AZ, 85147



VETERANS DAY
NOVEMBER 11
District 1
Blackwater, AZ

D1 Veterans Hall / Annex

6:30 AM

WALK/RUN
REGISTRATION

7:00 AM

WALK/RUN BEGINS

8:30 AM

FLY OVER
MILITARY HONORS
FLAG RAISING
WREATH LAYING
21 GUNS SALUTE
TAPS

D1 Multi-Purpose Bldg.

10:00 AM

PROGRAM / MEAL
ENTERTAINMENT

CONTACT:

Darrell Whitman
(520) 610-0316

Renee Molina
(520) 484-4109

Cary Rodriguez
(602) 818-3370

Law Enforcement Seeks Help
Identifying Scottsdale John Doe

O’odham Action News
Issue: 01 October 2026
Edited by Deb Paddison, 9/20/2026

By Dalton Walker
O’odham Action News
dalton.walker@srpmic-nsn.gov

3 Takeaways:

- Area law enforcement is seeking the public’s help in identifying a male whose body was found two decades ago in a Scottsdale canal.
- A new rendering has been released in hopes of jump-starting the investigation.
- Testing revealed he is of Native American descent and may be from the SRPMIC or related populations.

Law enforcement officials in the Scottsdale area are working to identify a male whose body was found 21 years ago in a canal near the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

The body was found on May 20, 2005, and recent advancements in forensic genetic analysis have provided new potential leads. Advanced DNA testing and genetic genealogy revealed that he is of Native American descent and may be from the SRPMIC. However, his identity remains unknown.

Now, that analysis is renewing efforts to identify the man. A rendering by well-known forensic sketch artist Carl Koppelman was released earlier this year by the Ramapo College Investigative Genetic Genealogy Center, which is working with the Scottsdale Police Department and the Maricopa County Office of the Medical Examiner to identify the man. The rendering includes a wooden cross lanyard the man was wearing when his body was found.

The Salt River Police Department issued a press release in April along with the wooden cross, saying that the testing revealed genetic markers consistent with Pima descent. “This development suggests the possibility that the individual may have ties to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community or related populations,” the release read.

The man was between 19 and 34 years of age when he died. He was roughly 5 feet, 5 inches tall and weighed 130 pounds.

Anyone with relevant information or tips, no matter how small, is encouraged to call law enforcement. Scottsdale Police Detective Brady Bailey is the assigned investigator and can be reached directly at (480) 312-5762. Anonymous tips can be submitted by calling (480) 312-TIPS.



PEACE OF MIND, IN YOUR POCKET



GreatCall Lively Mobile

Stay independent. Stay connected. **GreatCall Lively Mobile** gives **eligible community members** an easy way to reach help when they need it, with the press of a button.

Learn more about the program through GRTI.



Gila River Telecommunications, Inc.
520-796-3334 | www.gilarivertel.com

**FOR MORE INFORMATION,
VISIT OUR WEBSITE
OR GIVE US A CALL TODAY!**

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2023 Kia K5 EX



STYLE & ECONOMY
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2023 GMC Sierra 1500



4X4 • 5.3L V-8 • TOW PKG. NICE TRUCK

2024 Hyundai Palisade XRT



MOON ROOF • 3RD ROW SEAT BEAUTIFUL AUTO
19 CITY • 26 HIGHWAY!

2024 Kia Sorento S 7-Pass



3RD ROW SEAT, STYLE AND ECONOMY
23 CITY • 31 HIGHWAY!

(2) Chevy Equinox 26/31 mpg
2016 Hyundai Tucson 25/30 mpg
2022 Hyundai Santa Fe

25/29 mpg

2025 Hyundai Elantra 30/39 mpg

2018 Mazda CX5 25/31 mpg

(2) Nissan Altima 28/39 mpg

2020 Dodge GR. Caravan

17/25 mpg

2023 Ford F-150 4x4 EcoBoost

2023 Chevy Malibu 27/31 mpg

2025 Kia K4 30/40 mpg

2024 Nissan Sentra 30/40 mpg

2019 Nissan Altima 28/39 mpg

(2) 2023 Kia Forte 28/39 mpg

(2) Ram 1500 4x4

(2) Nissan Rogue AWD

28/35 mpg

2020 Kia Rio 33/41 mpg

All published mileage based on EPA estimates. Your actual mileage may vary predicated by driving habits and other conditions.



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Gila River
HEALTH CARE

VISIT US ONLINE:
GRHC.ORG



Flu Shots Now Available

Walk-ins welcome or by appointment at any Gila River Health Care Primary Care Department. Available 8:00 AM - 5 PM.

Eligibility guidelines: Gila River Indian Community enrolled members and all federally recognized tribal members.



Medicare Open Enrollment 2026

October 15 - December 7 is the time to review your Medicare coverage. If you have questions or need assistance reviewing your options, Gila River Health Care Benefit Coordinators are here to help!

Contact Benefit Coordinators at (520) 562-3321 Ext. 1817 or 1204, Monday-Friday. Or email BenefitCoordinators@GRHC.ORG.



October Health Update Newsletter

Scan the QR code to view this month's issue. Articles include National Health Literacy Month, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, October recipes, and more!



SCAN ME



October 28th
8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

GRHC HALLOWEEN TREAT GIVEAWAY

Join us for this year's Halloween Treat Giveaway! All sites will host the event on Wednesday, October 28th from 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM.

PARTICIPATING
SITES

The Caring House
Red Tail Hawk Health Center
Komatke Health Center



FREE Coffee and Pastry on Tuesday, November 10, 2026 for ALL Military Veterans

As a thank you to all military Veterans, we invite you to stop by the Cafés at the following locations to receive a FREE coffee and pastry. Limit (1) coffee and (1) pastry per person. Gila River Health Care honors and thanks all who have served in our Nation's Armed Forces:

- Hau'pal (Red Tail Hawk) Health Center
- Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital
- Komatke Health Center

★ HONORING ALL WHO SERVED ★
VETERANS DAY
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE: CALL OR TEXT 988

Gila River Indian Community CRISIS HOTLINE: 1-800-259-3449