



## Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg Holds Tribal Leader Roundtable at Gila River Indian Community

*“It is important that we come together as O’otham and Pee-Posh leaders to discuss our common areas of interest and priorities;” - Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis*

### Press Release

Communications & Public Affairs Office

Sacaton, Arizona. – On March 5, Secretary Pete Buttigieg visited the Gila River Indian Community to discuss transportation and infrastructure projects with tribal leadership from the Community. The Roundtable was also attended by leadership from the Ak-Chin Indian Community, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, and the Tohono O’odham Nation.

The event was held at the Huhugam Heritage Center, where Secretary Buttigieg was greeted with a cultural performance by Keli Akimel Hua Modk Cudkdam (Gila River Basket Dancers).

Following the performance, Gov. Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina Antone provided a brief tour of the cultural items displayed at the Heritage Center and described the importance of the items in reflecting the history and culture of the Community.

Secretary Buttigieg then held a tribal leader roundtable to



Tribal leaders, the Keli Akimel Hua Modk Cudkdam (Gila River Basket Dancers), and Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg (center) at the Huhugam Heritage Center. Zachary Redbird/CPAO

hear from tribal leaders about the transportation and infrastructure needs within their tribal communities and the need for continued resources and engagement with the federal government.

Gov. Lewis highlighted Secretary Buttigieg’s commitment to visiting and hearing from Indian Country and prioritizing access for tribal governments into programs that were previously diffi-

cult for tribes to access. Gov. Lewis mentioned the recent grant award of \$95 million to widen a stretch of the I-10 that is located entirely within the GRIC and stated this project will

improve safety conditions, access and reliability of this stretch of the I-10 for Community members and others who travel through the Community.

In addition to Gov. Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina Antone, members of Community Council also attended the roundtable including Joseph Manuel, Jr. (District 3); Nada Celaya (District 4); Lalena Jackson (District 4).

In keeping with the theme of O’otham Unity announced at the 2024 Inauguration of Gov. Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina Antone, Chairman Robert Miguel from Ak-Chin Indian Community; Chairman Verlon Jose and Vice-Chairwoman Carla Johnson from the Tohono O’odham Nation; and Councilman Michael Dallas and Jacob Butler from the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community joined the roundtable and highlighted the transportation needs within their tribal communities.

In reflecting on the roundtable, Gov. Lewis stated, “It is

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## 2024 Gila River Royalty Pageant: Susanna Osife crowned Miss Gila River, Shayla Davis is Jr. Miss Gila River

### GRIN Staff

Gila River Indian News

Susanna Osife, District 2, the 21-year-old former Jr. Miss Gila River 2019-2020, was crowned Miss Gila River 2024-2025 at the Gila River Royalty Pageant on March 9, at the District 4 Multi-Purpose Building. Thalia Ayala, District 1, was named Miss Gila First Attendant.

“It is such an honor that I will be serving as your 2024-2025 Miss Gila River,” said Osife.

Shayla Davis, District 1, won the crown of Jr. Miss Gila River 2024-2025, joining Osife for a year-long reign as titleholder.

Davis also said she was honored and humbled to serve the Community as Jr. Miss Gila River.

“My friends, my family, they all pushed me to do this and I’m so glad I took this opportunity,” said Davis.

Bria Hutchinson, District 3, was named Jr. Miss Gila River First Attendant and Skye Dona-



Shayla Davis, District 1, is crowned Jr. Miss Gila River 2024-2025. CPAO Photo

hue, District 6, was named Jr. Miss Gila River Second Attendant.

The five contestants participated in introductions, a traditional talent and modern attire with impromptu questions.

The pageant followed a week of preparation leading up to the annual showcase for the contestants to demonstrate their knowl-

edge and skills and their ability to perform the duties of Miss Gila River.

A large audience witnessed the pageant in-person with supporters occupying all the available seats including bleachers. Gila River Broadcasting Corp. also broadcasted the pageant live

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Susanna Osife, District 2, is crowned Miss Gila River 2024-2025, during the Gila River Royalty Pageant held on March 9. CPAO Photo

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# 2024 UNITED STATES ELECTIONS

## Upcoming Election Dates

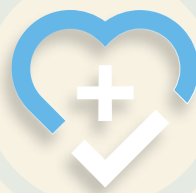
**July 30, 2024**  
**Primary Election**

**November 5, 2024**  
**General Election**

Check Your Status for the Upcoming Federal Elections at: [my.arizona.vote/WhereToVote](https://my.arizona.vote/WhereToVote) or scan the QR code:



**Questions? Call the Arizona Native Vote Election Protection Hotline at (888) 777-3831**



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[grhc.org](https://grhc.org)

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520-517-0693

#### COMMUNITY OUTREACH MOBILE UNIT SERVICES PLUS

MONDAY March 18, 2024	District 2 Service Center 9 am - 2 pm
TUESDAY March 19, 2024	District 3 Service Center 9 am - 2 pm
THURSDAY March 21, 2024	District 4 Service Center 9 am - 2 pm
MONDAY March 25, 2024	District 5 Service Center 9 am - 2 pm
TUESDAY March 26, 2024	District 6 Service Center 9 am - 2 pm
THURSDAY March 28, 2024	District 7 Service Center 9 am - 2 pm

Scan QR code to read the February Newsletter



Scan QR code to view the BHS Calendar







Governor  
**Stephen Roe Lewis**

Lt. Governor  
**Regina Antone**

Community Council  
Representatives

**District 1**  
Arzie Hogg  
Joey Whitman

**District 2**  
Ann M. Lucas

**District 3**  
Avery White  
Joseph Manuel Jr.

**District 4**  
Jennifer Allison  
Lalena Jackson  
Christopher Mendoza  
Nada Celaya

**District 5**  
Brian E. Davis, Sr.  
James De La Rosa  
Franklin Pablo Sr.  
Gordon Santos Jr.

**District 6**  
Anthony Villareal, Sr.  
Terrance B. Evans  
Charles Goldtooth

**District 7**  
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# 9th Annual Governor's Education Summit held at CBCS

**Velia Moncada**  
Gila River Indian News

On March 9, the Gila River Indian Community's (GRIC's) Tribal Education Department (TED) hosted the 9th Annual Governor's Education Summit at the Casa Blanca Community School (CBCS) in District 5. The theme was 'Education Through Culture' with an emphasis in language learning, preservation, and orthography.

"The purpose of the summit is to really profile and highlight the role and value, the language, and the culture, of our Community," said TED Director, Sherilyn Analla, District 6, GRIC member and Pueblo Laguna.

Approximately 200 registered for the summit including Community members, other tribal groups and tribal educators who participated in the foundational activities and perspectives covering the language and culture throughout GRIC. Some of the panels featured a discussion on

the O'otham language by elders, health and wellness activities by Gila River Health Care (GRHC), traditional food demonstrations, a GRIC orthography overview provided by the Huhugam Heritage Center (HHC), among others.

"A lot of knowledge being passed out here at the Summit," said Gov. Lewis.

"It shows a sense of inspiration...for the work ahead, on protecting and preserving our O'otham/Pee Posh culture/language. To really motivate us to take part in revitalizing our language and culture."

Lt. Gov. Regina Antone said there was a lot of interest in cultural presentations and valuable learning through workshops, which is among the administration's goals to preserve the language and culture of the Community through technology.

"I believe this is kick starting our interest into the future," Lt. Gov. Antone said.

"What I want to change here is, I want to actually see and later



**Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis during the Education Summit at the Casa Blanca Community School on March 9.** Velia Moncada/GRIN

in the future, to have people start using the language," expressed Community youth, Amelia James, District 5, granddaughter of Maria Garcia, D5 (Panelist in the Elder's Panel at the Summit).

Attendees of the Summit enjoyed breakfast and lunch, a free

GRIC Jansport Backpack, and a raffle entry for an Apple iPad for their participation. The summit ended following a cultural performance by the St. Peter Indian Mission School basket dancers and gourd singers.



**Elder's Panel at the Governor's Education Summit (L-R): Edmund Kyyitan, District 5, Robert Stone, District 5, Phyllis Antone, Tohono O'odham Nation, and Maria Garcia, District 5.** Velia Moncada/GRIN



**Community members create peanut butter protein balls with Mesquite powder at the 'Power of Mesquite' demonstration by Alyssa Dixon.** Velia Moncada/GRIN



**Community member wins an iPad as part of the raffle at the Education Summit.** Velia Moncada/GRIN



**St. Peter Indian Mission School Basket Dancers and Gourd Singers close the Governor's education summit with traditional songs and dancing.** Velia Moncada/GRIN



# Kwi I'ivakithak Mashath 2024



**Submitted by**  
Huhugam Heritage Center

The name for this month references the Kwi (Mesquite tree leafing out) and is nature's way of letting us know that spring has arrived. On March 19, 2024 the Vernal Equinox will mark this event. Night-time and daytime will be of equal length, until the days become longer and nights shorter.

During this time we celebrate our Community's Annual Celebration called Mul-Chu-Tha. The name originates from the O'otham root word "melch" (to run/race) and originally referred to footraces for men

and woman teams between villages. Another form of competitive races for men is called "shoŋgivil" (foot races with the kicking ball). Other traditional games included "thoka" (field hockey) for women teams, and "gi:ns" (gambling stick games) for individual men. As with all competition, O'otham set wagers and chose the winner of each match.

The Blackwater calendar stick for 1875-76 (Russell 1908:55) records that "For a short time the Pima were free from hostilities, and ventured into the mountains to gather mescal. While there, a race took place between a man

and a woman, in which the woman won. Later in the season there was a general gathering of the villages to witness a race with the kicking-ball."

When livestock were introduced into our community, O'otham readily adapted to the horses and cattle. One Elder stated: "We were not originally horse people, we adapted." Over time, new competitions were added to the rodeo events. Rodeo events were held throughout the community near certain villages in the wide open ranges. Livestock competition included visil vu:pda (calf roping), "tho:la cheggia" (bull fighting) and "chuchul be'be" (chicken-pull). Over time, the chuchul be'be was eliminated, due to being too dangerous for the riders.

In the early 1960's the original Mul-Chu-Tha combined several events,

such as a parade, free bar-b-que, rodeo, exhibit booths, food sales and a carnival. A Miss Pima Pageant had been initiated with teenaged girls and young adults. A complaint was issued from the Pee-Posh teenaged girls and young adults. The title of the Pageant was then changed to Miss Gila River. The overall goal of the Mul-Chu-Tha back then, was to construct a community swimming pool and recreation hall for youth. Since those early humble beginnings, we have most certainly, come a long way. This month's word match will test your knowledge of Tribal competition games. Speak with an Elder or Speaker and learn to say the competition events. The names and spelling may be slightly different between the villages.

*A special Thank You to community Elders. Whose*

## O'otham Games & Competition Word Match 2024

- gi:ns
- thoka
- shoŋgivil
- visil vu:p'da
- chuchul be'be
- tho:la cheggia
- e' vo:poichuth



Clip Art Courtesy Robert Johnson

*memories of the Mul-Chu-Tha over the years that made this article possible. Other sources related from the Gila River News Archives September 1964-*

### Solution on Pg. 11

*November 1969. The Pima Indians, Frank Russell, Re-edition 1975, The University of Arizona Press.*

## GRIC Leadership and Departments Travel for member Outreach

**Emma Hughes**  
Gila River Indian News

Gila River Indian Community leaders and several departments traveled to the United American Indian Involvement Community Center (UAI), located in Downtown Los Angeles, as part of an outreach for GRIC members living in the area to provide information and services on March 2.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis, District 3 Council Representative Joseph Manuel Jr., Chief Judge Anthony Hill, and the GRIC departments—Enrollment, Per Capita Office, Tribal Education, Veteran & Family Services, Land Use Planning & Zoning, Tribal Social Services, and Tribal Elections Office—were present for the event.

"It's these types of events we want to continue



**GRIC members in the Los Angeles area gather for services and information provided by GRIC departments at the United American Indian Involvement center. Emma Hughes/GRIN**

to foster and I hope that you take advantage of all the services here," said Gov. Lewis.

UAI serves the Native population in the Southern California area, providing quality education, physical and behavioral health, and social services. Most tribal members they serve are

from GRIC.

Gov. Lewis lauded UAI for all its work and relationship with the Community, "Here we are maintaining that connection. They've brought their group out during UNITY, they've come out to support our inauguration, and this is a new chapter that we want

to write here; we want to do it collaboratively, we want to come out again," said Gov. Lewis.

In January, UAI leadership traveled to the Community to attend the Inauguration of Gov. Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina Antone.

"I'm very interested and committed in providing

the highest quality services we can to your members and so I am a committed partner," said Charlene Harrison, CEO of UAI

GRIC member Omerlene Thompson, District 6, has lived in the Los Angeles area for several years and serves as UAI's Social Services Manager. She's also played a significant role in fostering the partnership between UAI and the Community.

"She [Thompson] is someone who has a heart for the community, whether it is here or back home in her community," said Hope Craig, UAI board chairperson.

"I want to thank everyone who came out, especially the departments," said Thompson. "I'm glad I have this relationship with the governor and lieutenant governor; they support everybody coming out be-

cause it's needed."

"They're [GRIC] very concerned for us in the urban communities because sometimes it's not always easy being out here," said GRIC member Antonia Osife, who grew up in L.A. County, Santa Monica, and Venice Beach. Her family is from District 5. Osife thanked the Community for all its assistance, especially in education and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The GRIC Enrollment department was able to provide services to 44 members. Those services included on-site tribal ID's, address updates, new enrollment applications and providing any information needed.

Gov. Lewis thanked the GRIC members who attended the event and UAI for hosting the tribal leaders and departments.

### From the Front Page

for TV viewers, which began promptly at 5 p.m. and ended at 7 p.m.

Tribal leadership attended the pageant, which included Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis, Lt. Gov. Regina Antone as well as representatives from Community Council.

"It was a packed house," said Gov. Lewis.

He said all the contestants were "talented," and that he recognized future leaders in the new court.

"The seeds of leadership are strong," said Gov. Lewis.

Lt. Gov. Antone said she was very impressed with the pageant and the

composure of all the candidates calling them "poised" and "experienced."

Pamela Thompson, former Miss Gila River 1981, was the MC for the event and gave special recognition to the several other former Miss Gila River titleholders on hand for the evening.

Thompson also recognized visiting royalty who congratulated this year's winners following the pageant.

Before passing on the crowns to the winners, former Miss Gila River Mavis Thomas and former Jr. Miss Gila River Eleanor Lynch each gave a farewell address and received special gifts for their reign as Gila River Royalty.

"As I embark on a new chapter in my life, I will carry along the lessons learned, the friendships forged and the love shared," said Thomas.

Lynch gave many thanks to her supporters and said she was ready to, "sashay away," in the words of RuPaul.

With an exciting year ahead, Osife said she is prepared for her upcoming reign with the entire royalty court.

"I know that this group of young ladies will make the biggest impact and I'm so proud that you get to experience that with us," said Osife.



**Thalia Ayala, District 1, demonstrates an O'otham game during the traditional talent portion of the pageant. CPAO Photo**



## CASA/GAL Volunteer Program imprints on the life of a Community member



Photo of Salvador De Luca

**Velia Moncada**

Gila River Indian News

The Court Appointed Special Advocates/Guardian Ad Litem (CASA/GAL) volunteer program allows everyday people whom a judge appoints to speak up for abused children in court.

It's also a program that Salvador De Luca, a GRIC urban member from District 1, strongly supports as a former ward of the state.

De Luca was pleased to hear about the program from a personal standpoint and as a court clerk with the Community's judicial office.

"I didn't get a caseworker till I was maybe 16 or 17. It wasn't something that I had throughout the wardship. When the caseworker came into play, they kind of brought up this program. I would be assigned an advocate," said De Luca.

De Luca was an infant when he was admitted into the Kern County Juvenile Wardship in the State of California off and on until the age of 18. While in foster homes, he never attended his own court trial hearings determining his residencies or given the opportunity to voice his opinion on where he would like to stay.

"When you're in the court system, you don't always get to speak," De Luca said.

It wasn't until De Luca

in his life, he finally experienced what it felt like to have a voice and someone in his corner.

"And then, you know, I aged out in the system and then that kind of ended. Like I said at first, I didn't think I needed one. It wasn't until after the fact, I kind of missed having somebody I could just talk to. I feel like that's all I really wanted at that point. Was just somebody to kind of talk to," said De Luca.

After being released from the Kern County Juvenile Court system at the age of 18, De Luca was no longer a ward of the state and was removed from the CASA/GAL Special Advocate program. However, Special Advocate Michael asked De Luca to keep in touch. Unfortunately, due to De Luca's big move from Bakersfield, Calif. to Arizona, De Luca lost that information and has yet to reconnect with his former special advocate.

"He was very supportive, very 'You could absolutely do it.' He gave me the kind of motivation and belief that I could do something apart from whatever happened in the past," said De Luca.

Now, at the age of 32, De Luca is a Judicial Court Clerk for the Community and is enrolled in an undergraduate law program at the University of Arizona. He studies law with aspirations to become a judge.

"I'm appreciative of the (CASA/GAL) experience, because it was the only time I felt like I had an input in my entire time in the court system. I think it's going to be very beneficial for the youth of the Community," concluded De Luca.

CASA/GAL's vision is for every child to be safe, nurtured, and granted the opportunity to grow in an environment that is well-suited to honoring their culture/tribal identity. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Sharon Banda, CASA/GAL Coordinator, at (520) 562-9860 or email Sharon.Banda.JUD@gric.nsn.us

was expelled from the Kern County Community School District for behavioral issues at the age of 17 that he was assigned to a CASA/GAL Special Advocate named Michael, who would meet with De Luca after school each week for the rest of the year until the end of De Luca's wardship.

"When I first met him, I just kind of, clammed up," said De Luca. "Then he starts asking me about my hobbies. What do I like to do?"

De Luca found a connection with Michael as a young ward of the state. They talked about music, sports, and anything else that came to mind. De Luca eventually felt more comfortable with Michale to discuss personal topics that concerned his court cases and his future.

"I think that was kind of like the connecting point because, it's not about what's going on at home or about the court case. It's not about, what I'm going to do. He's not pressuring me to, you know, decide what I'm going to do. It's just a casual, friendly conversation," De Luca stated.

This interaction continued throughout the final year of De Luca's wardship as he prepared for adulthood, which meant living a life without the involvement of the Kern County Juvenile Court system. De Luca explained that after years of not having a say

## Charter School Students Perform at State Capitol



Skyline Gila River High School basket dancers and gourd singers perform at the 2024 'Charters at the Capitol' at the Wesley Bolin Plaza on Feb. 27. Velia Moncada/GRIN

**Velia Moncada**

Gila River Indian News

Skyline Gila River High School (SGRHS) basket dancers and gourd singers represented the Gila River Indian Community as the opening performance for the 2024 Charters at the Capitol event hosted by the Arizona Charter Schools Association (ACSA) on Feb. 27, at Wesley Bolin Plaza in Phoenix.

Charters at the Capitol gives students the opportunity to meet legislators, showcase their schools, advocate on behalf of Arizona's charter school movement and discuss policy agenda.

"I am so proud of them," said Ella Barnett, District 5, who teaches the SGRHS basket dancers and gourd singers.

"It feels good to show my culture," said SGRHS first-year basket dancer Alai'Zia Davis, District 3. She said her favorite part about basket dancing is the opportunity to perform with others from the Community and learn more about the O'otham culture.

After the SGRHS basket dancers and gourd singers performed their traditional welcome song and neighbor song, they toured the legislative chambers with Jennifer Pawlik, the first woman and first Democrat to be elected to the House of Representatives from District 17 (Chandler, Sun Lakes and Gilbert).

"The most beautiful part of hosting the students on the floor of the Arizona House of Representatives was seeing them experience it for the first time," Pawlik

wrote in an email. She added that she could tell the students felt honored to be there by the smiles on their faces as they stepped into the chamber.

Pawlik was selected to give the tour to the SGRHS students because she is known for visiting schools in her district to learn about their special programs, such as the basket dancers and gourd singers.

"I enjoy sharing the work I do with community members, but sharing with students is really special because they are the next generation," Pawlik wrote. "They will soon be voters. It is so important that they understand their voices matter. One day one of them may be an elected official who represents the community in the Arizona House of Representatives!"



# GRIC Voter Registration

Community Council Elections, will take place on **Tuesday, May 7, 2024** for Districts 1, 4, 5 & 6.

If you are 18 or will be 18 by May 7<sup>th</sup> you may register to vote, last day to register or update your information is Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>

**DISTRICT 3**  
Saturday February 17<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 a.m. – Noon at  
Sacaton Post Office  
Parking Lot

**DISTRICT 3**  
Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup>  
MulChuTha Fair  
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**DISTRICT 5**  
Saturday March 2<sup>nd</sup>  
9:00 a.m. – Noon at  
Casa Blanca Chevron  
Parking Lot

**DISTRICT 6**  
Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 a.m. – Noon at  
Komatke Chevron  
Parking Lot

For more information please call Tribal Elections Office at (520) 562-9758 or email at [TEP@gric.nsn.us](mailto:TEP@gric.nsn.us)



# SAVE THE DATE!

Early Childhood Fair  
"Healthy Development"

April 27<sup>TH</sup>

Sacaton Boys & Girls Club, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Brought to you by **TRIBAL EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVE**



# ★ VETERANS ★ ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 48 Years on Tanks: GRIC Veteran Returns Home

Submitted by  
Joey R. Whitman

*Continued from the  
Previous Issue of the GRIN:*

In 1995, I retired from the Army. As I was getting my final out processing, I was told I was a Vietnam-era Veteran. I applied with General Dynamics to be an instructor to train Kuwait's Army on the M1A2 tank.

In 1996, I was accepted to be an instructor. I was trained on the M1A2 at Fort Knox, passed my certification, and then went to Kuwait. I was assigned an interpreter, and we trained soldiers until 1999. We trained the Kuwaiti Army to fight and defend their country. A soldier said, "Mr. Joey, if they come, you fight, I go south (Saudi Arabia). Here's the key to the tank."

In 1999, I was asked if I wanted to go to Fort Hood and train soldiers on the tanks. Soldiers were returning from Bosnia and they needed to be re-trained on tanks. This was the same as I did in the Army. Again, I would go to different Forts and National Guard Camps like Camp Shelby, Mississippi, and Camp Ripley, Minnesota, and train the Moroccan Army on the M1A1 tank. In Morocco. I would also learn other types of vehicles to teach the M104 Wolverine, a bridge laying vehicle, the Assault Breacher Vehicle, used to clear minefields,

In 2007, I was hired by the Department of Defense to do the same things as I did working for General Dynamics, but I would also be a lead instructor in charge of other instructors. I would also make lesson plans and coordinate with the units for training.

In 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, and Poland bought M1 tanks to defend their country. I was assigned to go to Poland to train their Army on the M1A2 tank. I reminded the Polish soldiers that Russian President Vladimir Putin said Poland is next, "You need to learn about this tank; the tank was designed to kill, a good crew makes the tank a killing machine, So Learn it to kill Russians, that's your job to kill," I said this to build their confidence in themselves and the tank. I also told them that I was trained to kill Polish



Photo Courtesy of Joey R. Whitman.

soldiers when I was young. The soldiers told me that they were under Russian rule, and they were told we were going to attack them; if we attacked, they would turn against Russia and help us fight Russia, and that they were glad our countries are friends. I learned the phrase "część i chwala bohaterom" ("respect and glory to heroes")

United States President Joe Biden announced that the U.S. will give Ukraine 31 M1 tanks. I was still in Poland, so I volunteered for this mission. I returned to Fort Hood for two weeks, then sent to Grafenwöhr, Germany, to train the Ukrainian army. Training the soldiers was an honor; the soldiers I noticed were old, a few young ones, and eager to learn. I learned a new phrase, "Slava Ukraini" (Glory to Ukraine), and the answer back was "Heroyam Slava" (Glory to Heroes). After my morning brief, I would yell, "Slava Ukraini!" and the soldiers yelled back, "Heroyam Slava!" I told a platoon leader that I listen to a song called "Slava Ukraini," the English version on YouTube, and I will always listen and sing along until the war is over... I would write down the words in Ukraine and have a soldier read the verse, and the soldiers would say the words back.

I would observe the training, and soldiers would come by and say, "THANK YOU, AMERICANS, THANK YOU!" or make other gestures and give a hug. A soldier looked my age (66). He sat by me, didn't say anything, and offered sunflower seeds, so we sat there for about 30 minutes eating sunflower seeds. He got up, shook my hand, and said, "AMERICA, AMERICA!!" and gave a thumbs up and walked away.

When the training was going on, I would watch and think after the training, "They're going straight into combat." I thought of the Battle of the 73 Easting, how will these soldiers do? Will the soldier I'm looking at now will be killed, or will he be wounded or maimed; will he suffer from PTSD. I felt like crying for them.

The training ended, and it was time for graduation; I told the soldiers I WAS PROUD OF THEM, and they gave a loud yell. The Regimental Commander was told by my supervisor that I was retiring. So, in front of all the soldiers, he shook my hand and said, "When you're sitting at home watching the news, you will see, we will kill many Russians and watch M1's roll into Moscow," then he presented me with a Ukraine Flag. A VERY PROUD MOMENT FOR

## Celebrating March as Women's History Month



Submitted by  
Veteran & Family Services  
Office

Army Soldier **Lori Ann Piestewa** was born Dec. 14, 1979 and died in Iraq on March 23, 2003 while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

A Hopi born in Tuba City, Piestewa was the first Native American woman to die in combat while serving in the United States military and the first female in the U.S. military killed in the Iraq War.

As her unit was ambushed, Piestewa drove her vehicle and passengers at high speed in an attempt to get to safety. They were hit by a rocket propelled grenade. Three soldiers died while Lori and 2 other female soldiers were taken as Prisoners of War. Lori succumbed to her injuries not long after.

PFC Piestewa posthumously received a Purple Heart, Prisoner of War Medal and was promoted to Specialist. Arizona's Pi-

estewa Peak in the Phoenix Mountains is named in her honor.

In 2018, she was one of the first inductees of the National Native American Hall of Fame.

**Opha May Johnson** was the first woman to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1918, at the age of 39 years old. She was a college graduate that filled a clerical role that would "Free A Man To Fight".

**Loretta Walsh** (Navy) was the first U.S. enlisted woman to join in 1917. The Navy authorized the enlistment of "qualified persons." Since men were slow to join, the hope was that more men would follow suit after the enlistment of the first woman.

Twins **Genevieve and Lucille Baker** (19 years old), and **Myrtle Hazard** were officially the first women in the Coast Guard. Women had served as civilians since the 1830's. The twins transferred from the Naval Coastal Defense Reserve. There is still debate on whether the twins or if Myrtle were first in the Coast Guard. Either way, Myrtle was the first to take the oath of enlistment for the Coast Guard.

**Esther Blake** was the first woman to serve in the U.S. Air Force. She was a widow and both of her sons were serving. One of her sons was piloting a B-17 in 1944, when he was shot down over Europe. In 1948, the newly formed Air Force authorized women to enlist. Blake enlisted within the first hour on the first day.

**Deborah Sampson** was an indentured servant that joined the Continental Army in 1782. Since women weren't allowed in the military, she disguised herself as a man and joined under the name of Robert Shurtleff. She was injured multiple times including a saber to the head and a gunshot wound to the thigh. Out of fear of being discovered, she let the doctor treat her head wound, but not the gunshot wound. She removed the musket ball from her thigh herself. Another time, she became gravely ill. The doctor discovered her gender, but didn't tell anyone. Eventually, the truth was revealed and General George Washington discharged her in 1783. The back of her tombstone reads, Deborah Sampson Gannett, Robert Shurtleff, The Female Soldier Service 1781-1783.

ME. To be HONORED BY THE UKRAINE ARMY.

I returned to Fort Hood; it was time to retire, time to go home for good, back home to Arizona. After 48 years of being on tanks, I could've stayed on the Abrams New Equipment Training Team, but I needed to do something else. I traveled to different states, to Germany six times, and to Korea four times. I have also been to France, Spain, Italy, Morocco, England, Kuwait, and Austria. I had a good life.

I'm glad I made the decision to join the Army, way back in 1975. I have a lot of memories some good and some bad, mostly good. I met a lot of good friends, and we did a lot; things that people wouldn't believe, only you and your friends believe it because you did it with them.

THE BEST FRIENDS, "BROTHERS", are the ones you met in the Army (military). The bad memories, my "MOM" (Jeanette) passed away in 1981,

and my "DAD" (Dayton) passed away in 2021. I would tell my friends about my mom and dad, and several of my friends would come home with me to meet them, see Arizona, and visit the Gila River Reservation. It made me feel good that my friends wanted to do that; several friends from Poland and Ukraine wanted to see the reservation and Arizona. I wished to see Mom and Dad.

Bartholomew Soban (Polish Soldier) wants to come here to have an American Thanksgiving; he has heard of Thanksgiving and wants to experience one. I hope he can. I'm going to try to help him make it.

And what I missed was I didn't get to see the birth of my daughter, "NATALIE", and watch her grow up to be a WONDERFUL DAUGHTER, NATALIE has a family of her own now.

As I write this, I relive and remember what happened 33 years ago every year at this time. I ain't

dead yet; I still got more to do... I plan to live past 100! (with God's help)

"THE END OF 48 YEARS OF MY LIFE ON TANKS"

My nephew, Darrell, asked me to write this. Darrell and his brother Joey also served with the 82nd Airborne in Afghanistan; I am VERY PROUD of them both. Darrell and Joey are the sons of Malcolm and Julie.

To the veterans of the Gila River Reservation, to me it would be an honor to read about your time in the military. We have all severed with HONOR, not only for our tribe and family but also for ourselves. Nobody will ever know of what we went through, or understand. Some will say he's bragging about himself. No, I believe for the veterans that this is also a way of talking to each other... I can relate to that what he did; maybe I should reach out... call a friend or a fellow veteran... talking always helps...





# **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION**

**DATE: April 19th, 2024**

**TIME: 10:00am - 2:00pm**

**LOCATION: 168 Skill Center Road  
Sacaton, AZ 85147**

[www.gricdeq.org](http://www.gricdeq.org)







# HEADLINES EXECUTIVE OFFICE



Stephen Roe Lewis  
Governor



Regina Antone  
Lt. Governor

## Gov. Lewis attends Phoenix Suns' last ORIGINATIV Night for the Season



On March 3, the Phoenix Suns hosted ORIGINATIV game night and the last one for the season as they near completion, during their game against Oklahoma City Thunder, who took the win 118-110, at the Footprint Center in Phoenix.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and other tribal leaders from the Colorado River Indian Tribes, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe, Tohono O'odham Nation, and Quechan Indian Tribe attended the event.



ORIGINATIV night showcases Tribal communities, leadership, athletes, and artists during halftime. Suns players also play in the 'City Edition' uniforms, which are designed to pay homage to Arizona's 22 federally recognized tribes, including the Gila River Indian Community. Both the uniforms and ORIGINATIV were introduced in 2022. Since then, the Suns have hosted 12 ORIGINATIV game nights and raised over \$220,000 for Arizona's tribal nations.

### From the Front Page

important that we come together as O'otham and Pee-Posh leaders to discuss our common areas of interest and priorities. While our priorities may differ slightly, what we have in common is a desire to improve the infrastructure on our homelands and to be part of the solution to the complex web of transportation systems that have grown up around, and through our Reservations."

Following the roundtable, Gov. Lewis commented that in addition to work starting on the Gila River Bridge on April 8th, he looks forward to working with Community Council to identify the next major road improvement projects needed on the Reservation in order to seek state, federal and local funding as set out in the 100-day plan at the start of the Lewis-Antone Administration.



Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis welcomes Secretary Pete Buttigieg to the Gila River Indian Community on March 5. Emma Hughes/GRIN



Lt. Gov. Regina Antone, Secretary Pete Buttigieg, and Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis during a tour of the Huhugam Heritage Center. Emma Hughes/GRIN

## Flag Breathing Ceremony for Ira H. Hayes & Kenneth Hayes



Relatives of the Hayes Family L-R: Wayne Allison, Shelly Jackson, Audrey Juan, Erin Allison, Dwayne Jackson Jr., Lance Corporal Adam Juan, Lorna Jackson, Leatrice Whittaker, Doug Juan, Yvonne Flores, Sheila Flores, and Leland Thomas. Emma Hughes/GRIN

Emma Hughes  
Gila River Indian News

Continued from the Previous Issue of the GRIN:

Doug Juan is a relative of the Hayes family from their paternal side and shared that he is glad that there are other family members on their maternal side, family that they didn't know before.

"I'm from Ira's dad's

side, so he would be something like my grandpa, because he was my grandpa's brother," said Juan. He said that he knew of Ira's passing when he was a young boy: "I was about five years old when he died. I still remember my grand folks and I were going to the store on the wagon, and we passed by the house, and there were a lot of cars there," said Juan.

Lancelot Lewis, U.S.

Army - Vietnam veteran, gave remarks during the flag breathing ceremony, sharing his experience in helping to develop the Matthew B. Juan - Ira H. Hayes Veterans Memorial Park in Sacaton, which features a monument dedicated to Ira H. Hayes and the Iwo Jima flag raising, with stones brought to the Community from Mt. Suribachi.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina

Antone were also present to share remarks. Gov. Lewis noted that Ira Hayes is perhaps one of the most well-known GRIC members.

Relatives of the Hayes family were also honored as Grand Marshalls for the local parade that celebrates the 79th anniversary of the Iwo Jima flag raising, held on Feb. 24.

Juan said it's quite an honor to have Post 84 recognize the family, "Some of us are elders, you know, and I know my cousin - she lost her sister, and they were one of the elders, so I'm glad that they got the family to be the Grand Marshalls," said Juan.

"Just seeing this today, it's truly an inspiration to our families; all of us here are family. I think a lot of us that are starting to come out and participate even more and really see it, see how it is today, I think it was one of the biggest events," said Wayne Allison, relative to the Hayes through their maternal side.

Yvonne Flores, a rela-

tive from the paternal side, shared that this was her first event honoring the Hayes brothers.

"It's very enlightening; it's good to see and be acknowledged for the things that our family has gone through and what they [Ira and Kenneth] have done," said Flores, "It's really heartening to see everybody who has come out to be involved in this with us."

U.S. Marine Lance Corporal Adam Juan, also a family member from the Hayes' maternal side, shared his thoughts on the

event and its meaning to him.

"Being here, wearing the uniform, the same one that Ira wore, it puts into perspective what he went through and how he carried on his tradition," said Adam Juan, "He did his time, and so now it's time for me to make my own legacy."

He added, "With the Community doing events for veterans and families of those veterans and everything else, they need to keep it going because there's not a whole lot of them."



Flags of Ira H. Hayes and Kenneth Hayes on display for the Flag Breathing Ceremony held at the Huhugam Heritage Center on Feb. 22. Emma Hughes/GRIN





# MMIP Response Team: KNOW THE CODES

**\*\*Excerpts from GRIC's Criminal Code\*\***

Facts on GRIC Codes involving:

**Interference (Custody, Law Enforcement), Contributing to the Delinquency  
Obstructing a Criminal Investigation, Refusing to Aid Law Enforcement**

## What does this mean?

The Missing and Murdered Indian People/Persons Response Team is sharing the following information for those who may be in contact with runaways or missing youth. These codes will be enforced if you are committing the following:

### 5.504. Interfering with Law Enforcement of Jail Employee. (abbr.)

A person commits the offense of interfering with a law enforcement officer or jail employee if he intentionally or knowingly engages in conduct with the intent to impair, obstruct, hinder, or prevent a law enforcement officer or jail employee from discharging his official duties...

### 5.505. Refusing to Aid Law Enforcement Officer. (abbr.)

A person commits the offense of refusing to aid a law enforcement officer if upon a reasonable command by a person reasonably known to be a law enforcement officer he intentionally or knowingly refuses to aid such law enforcement officer...

### 5.517. Obstructing a Criminal Investigation or Prosecution. (abbr.)

A person commits the offense of obstructing a criminal investigation or prosecution if he knowingly:

1. Bribes, misrepresents, intimidates, or forces or uses threats of force to obstruct, delay or prevent the communication of information or testimony relating to a violation of any criminal offense to a public officer, Community judge, prosecutor or Jury...

### 5.708. Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor. (abbr.)

A person commits the offense of contributing to the delinquency of a minor when he intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or negligently contributes, encourages or causes a minor...

### 5.709. Interference with Custody. (abbr.)

A person commits the offense of interference with custody if, with knowledge that he has no privilege or right to do so, he takes, entices, keeps from lawful custody, or harbors a minor child from the lawful custody of a parent, guardian or custodian, or incompetent entrusted by authority of law to the custody of another person or institution...



**SCAN FOR  
FULL CRIMINAL  
CODE**

**If you have any information regarding a missing child or person, please contact the Gila River Police Department at (520) 562-4511.**

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Rural Development

### Lone Butte Solar, LLC: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

**AGENCY:** Rural Utility Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

**ACTION:** Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service(RUS)has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to Lone Butte Solar, LLC for the construction of the Lone Butte Solar Project located in Districts 4 and 6 of the Gila River Indian Community in Maricopa County, Arizona.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** To obtain copies of the environmental assessment (EA) and FONSI, or for further information,contact: Alan Hachey at email:RUSPublicComments@usda.gov. The EA and FONSI are available for public review on the USDA Rural Development web site at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/lone-butte-solar-llc> and physical copies of the documents are available at the Gila River Indian Community District No. 6 Service Center located at 5230 West St. Johns Road, Laveen, Arizona 85339.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The proposed Project consists of a 50-megawatt (MW) solar photovoltaic (PV) generating facility interconnecting to the existing Lone Butte Substation on Community land. The proposed facility will cover approximately 355 acres of tribal trust land in portions of District 4 and District 6 of the Community in Maricopa County, Arizona. The Project will consist of solar PV arrays and the following components: perimeter fencing, a battery energy storage system (BESS), a substation, collector lines and inverters, a step-up transformer, an overhead transmission line, and access roads. The 50-MW BESS may be constructed in the future if it is determined to be necessary based on future needs and is included in the EA for analysis. The purpose of the overhead transmission line is to interconnect the solar energy facility to the central Arizona transmission grid at the proposed point of interconnection at the Lone Butte Substation. The Project is expected to operate for 35 years. Lone Butte Solar, LLC is in the process of being sold to the Gila River Indian Community Utility Authority (GRICUA), who will retain ownership and operation of the Project to serve the Community's energy needs.

Alternatives considered by RUS and Lone Butte Solar, LLC include No Action and the Proposed Action Alternative. The alternatives are discussed in the Lone Butte Solar Project EA. RUS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed Project.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the *Gila River Indian News* on February 15,2024. A14-day comment period was announced in the newspaper notice. The EA was available for public review at the USDA Rural Development web site at: <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/lone-butte-solar-llc> and a physical copy was made available at the Gila River Indian Community District No. 6 Service Center located at 5230 West St. Johns Road, Laveen, Arizona 85339. RUS received one comment on the EA from the Western Area Power Administration.

Based on the EA and mitigation commitments made by Lone Butte Solar, LLC, RUS has concluded that the Project will have no adverse effects to Indian Trust assets, wetlands, air quality, socioeconomic resources, noise, transportation, and human health and safety. The Project would have no significant adverse effects on land use, important farmlands, floodplains, water resources, biological resources, and aesthetics.

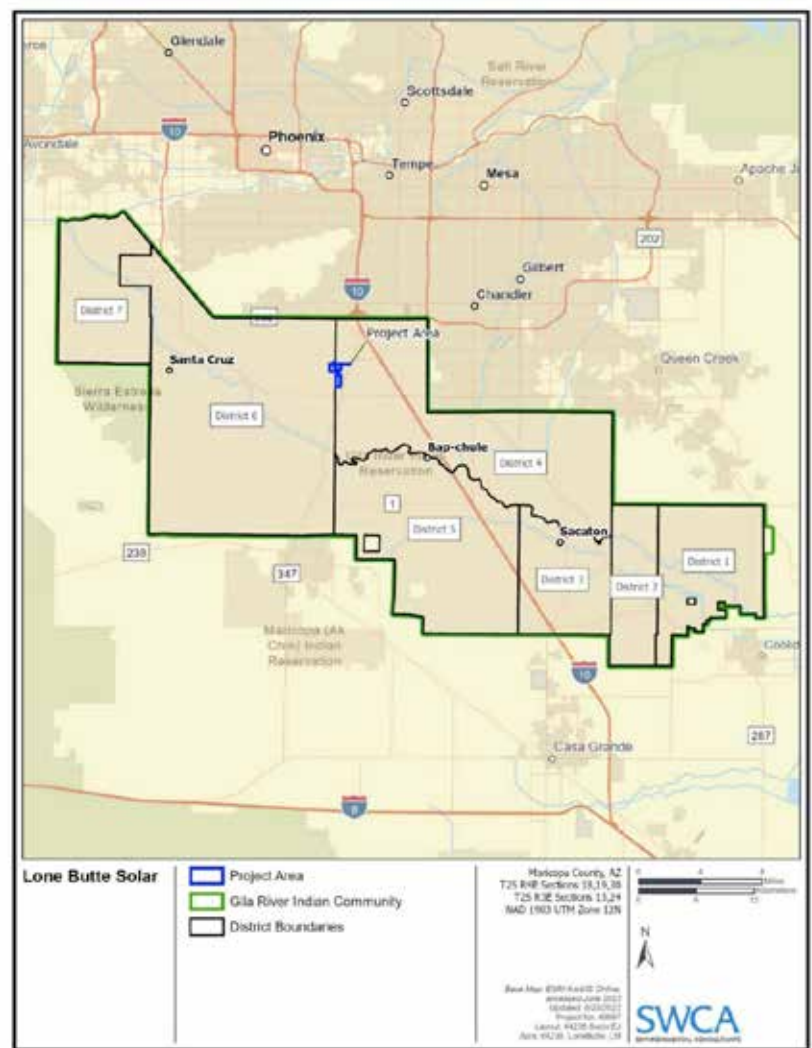
If implemented, the proposed Project will convert approximately 0.32 acre of floodplain for the construction of a proposed access road. The proposed Project will have no adverse effect on resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has concluded that the proposed Project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed Project would also not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed Project have been identified. Therefore, RUS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 United States Code §§ 4231–4347), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the Project.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed Project have been adequately addressed. RUS's potential federal action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such RUS will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed Project.

A general location map of the proposed Project is shown below (Figure 1).

Dated: March 2024





Announcements & Notices

**“T-Himdag, T-Ma:ciḡ, T-‘Elida”**  
**Maha’adam**  
**‘o ‘e-hemapa**  
**2nd Annual Potters Gathering**  
**Saturday, April 6, 2024**

TOHONO O’ODHAM CULTURAL CENTER & MUSEUM  
 – TOPAWA, ARIZONA  
 ONSITE REGISTRATION STARTS AT 9:00 A.M.

EVENT INCLUDES:  
 PRESENTATIONS, DEMONSTRATIONS,  
 COLLECTION TOURS, O’ODHAM ARTISTS  
 MARKET AND FOOD SALES

**FREE PUBLIC EVENT**  
**10AM - 4PM**

For more information contact Crystal Narcho at 520-383-0200 x 13008

Himdag Ki Tohono O’odham Nation Cultural Center & Museum along with any participating programs, vendors, or volunteers are not responsible for any illness, injuries/death, damages, stolen/lost items during this event.

**PIMA LEASING & FINANCING CORPORATION**

**WE ARE HIRING**

**Loan Officer**  
 Full-Time, Exempt  
 \$50,000 - \$70,000 Annually

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- Office Hours are 8:00 am - 5:00 pm Monday-Friday
- Paid Holidays, plus paid Sick and Personal Time Off
- Fun atmosphere, supportive work environment

See full job description at  
<https://www.facebook.com/PimaLeasingAndFinancing>

Submit your resume to [info@thepafc.com](mailto:info@thepafc.com)

Call our office with questions!  
 520-796-2454 Ext. #227

**Gila River Police Department Incident Logs**

Gila River Police Department  
**Blotter Report**  
 CRIME ANALYSIS UNIT

FOR: GILA RIVER INDIAN NEWS REPORTING DATE: 02/26/24 – 03/10/24

**INCIDENTS BY OFFENSE TYPE**

Offense Type	Count
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	10
ARSON	1
BURGLARY	2
DRUG VIOLATION	8
THEFT	19
MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT	2
SEXUAL ASSAULT	2
SIMPLE ASSAULT	22
WEAPONS OFFENSE	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>

**Incidents Related to Most Frequent Community Wide Crimes**  
 From February 26 – March 10, 2024 the most frequent crimes committed were Simple Assault (22), Theft (19), Aggravated Assault (10), Drug Violations (8), and Weapon Offenses (7).

**INCIDENTS BY DISTRICT**

District	Count
DISTRICT 1	7
DISTRICT 2	3
DISTRICT 3	16
DISTRICT 4	21
DISTRICT 5	12
DISTRICT 6	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>

**INCIDENTS BY DAY OF THE WEEK**

Day of the Week	Count
SUNDAY	10
MONDAY	9
TUESDAY	16
WEDNESDAY	9
THURSDAY	9
FRIDAY	13
SATURDAY	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>

**Incidents in Relation to District and Day of the Week**  
 From February 26th to March 10th, 2024 the district with the most reported crimes was District 4 (21). District 3 (16) is the district with the second highest reported crimes. District 7 did not have any reported crimes during this time.  
 From February 26th to March 10th, 2024 the day of the week with the highest reported crimes committed were on Tuesdays. Most crimes were reported to have occurred between the hours of 4 P.M. to 10 P.M.

**GRIC ORDER OF PROTECTION**

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

Order of Protection  
 Case No. CV-2024-0067-OP  
 County: PINAL/MARICOPA State: AZ

**PETITIONER/PLAINTIFF:**  
 DEBRA GARCIA  
 Date of Birth: 03/03/1968

And/or on behalf of minor family member(s):  
 Erlena Ramon

**VS.**

**RESPONDENT**  
 SHAELENE RENAE MANUEL  
 Relationship to Petitioner: Daughter

DOB: 07/05/2005	SEX: Female	SSN:	RACE:
EYES: Black	HAIR: Black	HT: 5'2	WT: 180
DRIVERS LICENSE #:	STATE:	EXP DATE:	

**THE COURT HEREBY FINDS:**  
 That it has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter.  
 There is reasonable cause to believe that the Respondent may commit an act of domestic violence or has committed an act of domestic violence.  
 Additional findings of this order are as set forth below.

**THE COURT HEREBY ORDERS:**  
 That the above named Respondent be restrained from committing further acts of abuse or threats of abuse.  
 That the above named Respondent be restrained from any contact (in person, by phone, in writing, by electronic mail or social media, fax or through unauthorized third parties) with the Petitioner.  
 Additional terms of this order are set forth below.  
 The terms of this Order shall be effective until February 25, 2025

**WARNINGS TO RESPONDENT:**  
 This order shall be enforced, even without registration, by the courts of any state, the District of Columbia, any U.S. Territory, and may be enforced on Tribal Lands (18 U.S.C. Section 2265). Crossing

state, territorial, or tribal boundaries to violate this order may result in federal imprisonment (18 U.S.C. Section 2262). Federal law provides penalties for possessing, transporting, shipping, or receiving any firearm or ammunition (18 U.S.C. Section 922(g) (8)). Only the Court, in writing, can change this order.

**THE COURT FURTHER ORDERS:**  
 **RESIDENCE:** The Petitioner is granted exclusive use and possession of the residence listed below.  
 **CUSTODY OF MINOR CHILDREN:** The Petitioner is granted custody of the minor children: \_\_\_\_\_  
 **DEBTS:** The Respondent shall pay the following debts: \_\_\_\_\_  
 **PROPERTY:** The Petitioner is granted possession of the following property: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROTECTED LOCATIONS:** Respondent shall not go to or near the Petitioner's or other Protected Person's:  
 **RESIDENCE:** Howie Rd #2, Sacaton  
 **WORKPLACE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 **SCHOOL/OTHER:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 **OTHER ORDERS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WARNING - See Gila River Indian Community Code Section 5.711(F)(13).**

This is an official Court order. If you disobey this order, you will be subject to arrest and prosecution for disobeying this order and any other crime you may have committed in disobeying this order. A copy of this order will be registered with the Gila River Police Department. See Gila River Indian Community Code Section 5.711 (G)(2).

**ADDITIONAL WARNING TO RESPONDENT:**  
 Violations of this order should be reported to a law enforcement agency, not the Court. Nothing the Petitioner does can change or undo this order without the Court's written approval. You must appear in Court to ask a judge to modify (change) or quash (dismiss) this order. Even if the Petitioner initiates contact, you could be arrested and prosecuted for violating this order. If you do not want the Petitioner to contact you, you have the right to request a Order of Protection against the Petitioner. However, orders are not automatically granted upon request.

February 27, 2024  
 Date  
 Sheri L Cassa  
 Judge's Printed Name





**United States Department of the Interior**

**BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS**

Pima Agency P.O. Box 8  
Sacaton, Arizona 85147

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
Branch of Real Estate Services

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING**

Environmental Assessment for Allotment 4520,  
Proposed in District 4 of the Gila River Indian Community

The U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Pima Agency and the Gila River Indian Community (Community) are releasing this notice in support of an environmental assessment for the proposed grant of right-of-way associated with Allotment 4520 in District 4 of the Community. The proposal includes the development of the allotment to improve drainage conditions at the existing Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway intersection and allow for the relocation of a traffic signal pole, installation of a new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramp, sidewalk construction, and general landscaping (Project).

This notice is intended to provide details about the proposed Project and to request your input.

**Proposed Action**

The Casino Expansion Owner’s Team (CEOT) anticipates pursuing a grant right-of-way through the BIA for Allotment 4520. The Project includes approximately 9.3 acres of allotted land within the Community located southeast of the Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway intersection. Key Project components would include the following:

- Construction of a stormwater ditch along Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway.
- Relocation of a traffic signal pole to the southeastern corner of the Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway intersection.
- Construction of a new ADA curb ramp on the southeastern corner of the Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway intersection.
- Extension of an 8-foot-wide concrete sidewalk along the east side of Gilbert Road.
- General landscaping improvements.

Vehicle access along Hunt Highway and Gilbert Road would be maintained throughout

construction; however, vehicle traffic could experience occasional short-term temporary delays. No transportation detours or changes in transportation access are anticipated as a result of Project development.

**Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the proposed Project is to improve drainage conditions and transportation access at the Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway intersection and adjacent to Community Trust Land by the construction of a new stormwater ditch, the relocation of a traffic signal, installation of a new ADA curb ramp, and the extension of sidewalk, respectively.

Overall, this Project will alleviate flooding which is impacting the Gilbert Road and Hunt Highway intersection and improve the pedestrian and vehicle access at the intersection. The Project would also generate payment to the allottee as part of the grant of right-of-way, representing a direct quality of life improvement.

**Scoping Period**

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act, federal agencies are required to consider the potential social and environmental impacts of proposed actions. This letter serves as the BIA’s invitation to you or your agency to submit comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding the proposed action. All comments received become part of the public record associated with the proposed action. Accordingly, your comments (including your name and address) will be available for review by any person that wishes to view the record. At your request, we will withhold your contact information to the extent allowed by the Freedom of Information Act. Please submit your comments within 30 days, to:

Rachael Larson, Superintendent  
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pima Agency  
P.O. Box 8 Sacaton, Arizona 85147  
Telephone: (520) 562-3543  
Email: [rachael.larson@bia.gov](mailto:rachael.larson@bia.gov)

Brady Kent, acting Environmental Specialist  
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Pima Agency  
P.O. Box 8 Sacaton, Arizona 85147  
Telephone: (206) 458-9975  
Email: [brady.kent@northwind.grp](mailto:brady.kent@northwind.grp)

**O’otham Games & Competition Word Match 2024 Solution**

**gi:ns**

**thoka**

**shoñgivil**

**visil vu:p’da**

**chuchul bebe**

**tho:la cheggia**

**e’ vo:poichuth**

**U.S. Department of Energy to Hold Tribal-Only Listening Sessions on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Activities in Support of Commercial HALEU Production**

DOE released a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluating the potential impacts of the Department’s proposed action to acquire high-assay low-enriched uranium (HALEU) for commercial nuclear energy use and demonstration projects and to establish domestic commercial HALEU production. DOE is hosting two virtual and one in-person Tribal-only listening sessions to explain the process used to analyze the proposed action and alternatives and seek oral comments and feedback from Tribes on the draft EIS.

Please see below for information on the tribal-only listening sessions. For anyone unable to attend, the virtual sessions will be recorded and made available on the project website.

All attendees must register to attend these tribal-only listening sessions. Please visit <https://www.energy.gov/ne/haleu-environmental-impact-statement> to register.

**Tribal-Only Virtual Listening Sessions:**

1. Wednesday, April 10, 2024, at 6:00 pm ET via Zoom.
2. Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 9:00 pm ET via Zoom.

**In-Person Tribal-Only Listening Session:**

1. Tuesday, April 16, 2024, in Chandler, AZ at 5:30 p.m. MST
- Upon registration, you will receive additional logistics and meeting details.

In addition to comments provided during the listening sessions, written comments may be submitted by mail or email now through April 22, 2024.

Written comments received through the mail must be postmarked by April 22, 2024, to ensure consideration. Comments can be submitted to the following addresses:

**Mail:**

Mr. James Lovejoy  
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Tribal comments and feedback will help DOE further refine its analysis, identify new information, and consider additional alternatives in preparation of the final EIS. Responses to comments and any associated revisions will be included in the final EIS.

For more information on the Tribal listening sessions and registration, and to access the draft EIS, please visit <https://www.energy.gov/ne/haleu-environmental-impact-statement>



# SAVE THE DATE

The Gila River Indian Community Court presents

## Law Day 2024

### May 1, 2024



For more information please contact Starsha Dosela  
[starsha.dosela.JUD@gric.nsn.us](mailto:starsha.dosela.JUD@gric.nsn.us)



# COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACTION SHEETS

Courtesy of the Community Council Secretary's Office • Feb. 21, 2024

## ACTION SHEET

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

## CALL TO ORDER

The Second Regular Monthly Meeting of the Community Council held Wednesday, February 21, 2024, in the Community Council Chambers at the Governance Center in Sacaton, Arizona and WebEx Platform was called to order by Lt. Governor Regina Antone at 9:07 a.m.

## INVOCATION

Provided by Councilman Joey Whitman

## ROLL CALL

Council Secretary Shannon White called the roll

Executive Officers Present:

Governor Stephen R. Lewis(9:28)

Lt. Governor Regina Antone

Council Members Present:

D1- Joey Whitman, Arzie Hogg; D2- Ann Lucas; D3- Avery White, Joseph Manuel, Jr.; D4- Christopher Mendoza, Jennifer Allison, Nada Celaya, Lalena Jackson; D5- James De La Rosa, Franklin Pablo, Sr., Brian Davis, Sr., Gordon Santos, Jr.; D6- Anthony Villareal, Sr.(9:11), Charles Goldtooth, Terrance Evans(9:16); D7- Devin Redbird(9:47)

## APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO TABLE REPORTS #1, #2, AND #4 FOR NON-SUBMITTAL OF MATERIAL

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #3, #5 THROUGH #11, ACCEPT AND APPROVE RESOLUTIONS #1, #2, AND #3, AND ACCEPT AND APPROVE NEW BUSINESS #3 AND #5 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE THE REGULAR AGENDA AS AMENDED

## PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS

### REPORTS

>1. Haskell Osife Antone Post 51 1st Quarter Report

Presenters: David Anderson, Belen Lawlor

TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2. Four Rivers Indian Legal Services 1st Quarter Report FY2024

Presenter: Sarah Youngblood

TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>3. Gila River Farms FY24 First Quarter Report

Presenters: Gila River Farms Board, Benito Alvarez, Jr., Kimberly Fisher

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. 2024 State and Federal Voter Engagement Plan

Presenters: Michael Preston, Roberto A. Jackson, Miyana Manus

TABLED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>5. Blackwater Community School Tribal Education Allocation Quarter 1 Report for SY2023-2024

Presenters: Jagdish Sharma, Lance Reyna

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>6. Sacaton Elementary School Tribal Education Allocation Quarter 1 Report for SY 2023-2024

Presenters: Stephanie Celis, Lance Reyna

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>7. Sacaton Middle School Tribal Education Allocation Quarter 1 Report for SY2023-2024

Presenters: Don Schopp, Lance Reyna

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>8. Casa Blanca Community School Tribal Education Allocation Quarter 1 Report for SY2023-2024

Presenters: Kim Franklin, Lance Reyna

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>9. Gila Crossing Community School Tribal Education Allocation Quarter 1 Report for SY2023-2024

Presenters: Jim Mosley, Lance Reyna

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>10. Tribal Education Department Hiring Dashboard

Presenter: TeriLynne Kisto

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>11. GRICUA's FY23 Q4 Report

Presenters: Ken Stock, Arnold Mejia, Andrew McBride, Chris Miller

ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION made and second to go into executive session

12. FY2024 Financial Activity Report ending January 31, 2024 (Executive Session)

Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix

HEARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT THE FY2024 FINANCIAL ACTIVITY REPORT ENDING JANUARY 31, 2024

## RESOLUTIONS

>1. A Resolution Authorizing And Approving The Gila River Indian Community Department Of Transportation To Submit And Receive Funding From A Grant Application To The Arizona Department Of Transportation For Rural Transportation Services, On Behalf Of The Gila River Indian Community (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda, NRSC concurs)

Presenters: Dawn M. Coomer, Steven W. Johnson

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>2. A Resolution Approving The Federal Transit Administration Drug And Alcohol Policy For Gila River Transit, A Program Of The Gila River Indian Community (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda, NRSC concurs)

Presenters: Dawn M. Coomer, Steven W. Johnson

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>3. A Resolution Authorizing And Approving The Memorandum Of Agreement Between The Inter Tribal Council Of Arizona, Inc. And The Gila River Indian Community Through The Tribal Health Department For The Centers For Disease Control And Prevention Good Health And Wellness In Indian Country Grant (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda, HSSC concurs)

Presenters: Shaine Boyd, Candalerian Preston

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

## ORDINANCES

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Feral Horse Management Plan (FHMP) – Status Update (NRSC forward to council as FYI)

Presenters: Feral Horse Management Plan Committee

ITEM HEARD

### NEW BUSINESS

1. Housing Advisory Committee Appointment – District One (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation to appoint Deanna Jackson to the Housing Advisory Committee)

Presenter: Derwin Cooper

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPOINT DEANNA JACKSON TO THE HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DISTRICT ONE

2. I-10 WHP Corridor Release of Environmental Study and Design Concept Report (G&MSC supports Arizona Department of Transportation's release of the I-10 (Wild Horse Pass Project's Environmental Assessment (EA), Design Concept Report (DCR), and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to the public, and refers the EA, DCR and FONSI to Community Council for concurrence consideration, NRSC concurs)

Presenter: Javier G. Ramos

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO RELEASE THE I-10 WHP CORRIDOR RELEASE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY AND DESIGN CONCEPT REPORT

>3. Requesting Approval to apply for the Reading is Fundamental – Book for Ownership Matching Grant (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda, ESC concurs)

Presenter: Anthony Gray

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. Concrete Blocks For Trespassing Deterrent (NRSC forwards to council as FYI)

Presenters: Kimberly Cooper, Ruperto Hernandez, Seaver

Fields

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE THE CONCRETE BLOCKS AND LUPZ WILL CONSIDER A PHASED PROJECT THAT WILL ENCOMPASS THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY'S OPEN RURAL BORDER AREAS

>5. Head Start Program Underenrollment Plan Update as of February 1, 2024 (ESC forwards to Council under New Business under the consent agenda)

Presenters: Michelle Tohtsoni, Lance Reyna

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

6. Gila River Tribal Court Assessment Report (Executive Session) (LSC forwards to the February 21, 2024 Council Meeting)

Presenters: Shannon Edwards, James T. Lambertus, Eric M. Mehnert

ITEM HEARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT THE REPORT

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

7. Court of Appeals Judge (Executive Session) (LSC forwards to Council under New Business in Executive Session with a

recommendation to schedule a Special Council meeting regarding this matter if necessary)

Presenter: Anthony J. Hill

ITEM HEARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO DISPENSE

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

8. Department of Public Works Report of Audit (Executive Session) (NRSC forwards to Council for possible action)

Presenter: Dena Thomas

ITEM HEARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION MADE AND SECOND PURSUANT TO ARTICLE XV, SECTION 1 (A) 9 OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY PURSUANT TO TITLE 1, THE GOVERNOR SHALL HAVE ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTION OVER PERSONNEL SUBJECT TO THE DIRECTION AND CONTROL OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL. I MOVE TO DIRECT THAT THE GOVERNOR AND HIS ADMINISTRATION TERMINATE MR. JESUS HARO AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS IMMEDIATELY

## MINUTES

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- DISTRICT 4 PUBLIC SAFETY OWNERS TEAM MEETING FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024 AT 8:00 A.M.

- FLAG BREATHING CEREMONY FOR IRA H. HAYES & KENNETH HAYES THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024 AT 5:00 P.M.

- WILD HORSE PASS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING WILL BE HELD THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024 AT 9:00 A.M.

- DISTRICT 3 ELDERS WILL BE HOLDING A MENU DO SALE ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2024

- GILA RIVER TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INC. BOARD MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024 AT 9:0 A.M.

- GOVERNOR WILL BE PROVIDING TESTIMONY ALONG WITH OTHER TRIBES IN SALT RIVER ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024

## ADJOURNMENT

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 12:44 P.M.

\* Denotes TABLED from previous meeting(s)

> Denotes a CONSENT AGENDA ITEM





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