



7th Annual Governor’s Education Summit Held in Advance of In-Person Schooling

Christopher Lomahquahu
Gila River Indian News

Continuing to make education a priority despite challenges brought on by the pandemic, the Gila River Indian Community and its Tribal Education Summit hosted the 7th Annual Governors Education Summit on Feb. 12.

The summit was accessible to Community members via Zoom, the Gila River Broadcasting Corporation’s Facebook page and the Community’s low-power TV station on channel 29.1.

This year’s theme was “Fostering Wholeness, Reclaiming our Future,” which focused on the impact of COVID-19 on education in the Community. Administrators from each of the Community’s three public schools and St. Peter Indian Mission School presented on academic disruption and recovery, student emotional wellness and returning to school.

“The difficult period of virtual learning has not been without its struggles,” said Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis. “It has been challenging in so many ways. We’ve seen true academic progress in the virtual world, feeling isolated from classmates and colleagues, worrying about falling behind and the anxiety about the health of your family and friends.”

Gov. Lewis said students have adapted to the virtual learning environment with the help of parents, guardians and teachers, who have reached out to them when they were in need of assistance.

“You have become true partners with our teachers, to ensure our students had the in-home help to continue learning during the pandemic,” Gov. Lewis told viewers.

Gov. Lewis emphasized that the Community made Internet access widely available to students by working with Gila River Telecommunications Inc. on installing wifi hot spots and installing more fiber optic cable to Community homes. He said education will continue to be a high priority as the Community assesses how to provide more in-home learning resources to students.

Anthony Grey, TED Cultural Language Coordinator, and Lance Reyna, TED K-12 Manager, facilitated the “Academic Disruption and Recovery” portion of the agenda, which explored how Community schools are meeting the challenges of virtual learning.

“This morning we are going to share with you a lot about the academic portion and some of the impact COVID-19 has had on our students,” said Grey. “We’ve been orally taught; it’s passed down from generation to generation, from family member to family member. To do it virtually has definitely been a challenge that is unique to the cultural teachers.”

Reyna said, “We definitely want to focus on the impacts of virtual learning. We all know that it has had some noticeably negative impacts from student learning to teacher delivery. We also want to highlight some of the positives that came from the pandemic — almost like blessings in disguise.”

“We have to be positive about what (we have) been faced with under the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Lt. Gov. Monica Antone. She remarked how resilient GRIC members have been in the face of this global crisis.

Blackwater Community School, Sacaton Elementary/Middle School, Casa Blanca Community,



Gov. Lewis addresses the 7th Annual Governor’s Education Summit attendees, during a pre-recorded video message on Feb. 12. Zachary Redbird/CPAO

St. Peter Indian Mission School and Gila Crossing Community all presented their challenges with virtual learning. Each mentioned “manipulatives,” or visual teaching aides teachers use in their virtual learning curriculum.

Each of the school administrators also stressed reading proficiency could be improved through in-person learning.

Lt. Gov. Antone remarked, “Part of my participation in today’s education summit is to listen and understand what we are faced with as a community and what resources I can support through my efforts.”

In addition to supporting students facing challenges with virtual learning, Antone added that their mental health also needs attention. “I am grateful for the topics presented today, which includes promoting a healthy lifestyle and mental well-being, which I am an advocate for the services around this important topic,” she said.

The “Student Emotional Wellness” phase of the conference discussed topics such as emotional and social learning, resources and encouraging students experiencing mental health challenges to talk about it.

During the conference, Education Case Management Coordinator Nadia Huff polled attendees in the Zoom chat on the state of emotional health among students. Results showed students are stressed by outside influences, miss being around their friends, and would like to learn new things. Some simply want to live a normal life.

“We want to know how satisfied (you are) with your child’s school’s response to your families’ emotional needs,” said Huff. She encouraged the parents to think about how useful their child’s school resources have been and if they meet their needs, including the social and emotional needs of families.

Towards the end of the summit, Gov. Lewis addressed the return to in-person learning. “As we plan to resume in-person learning, I know that you are excited to be back in the classroom. I also know that the return is also going to come with its own difficulties, some of which we can anticipate and some of which we can’t until you return to the classroom,” he said.

Gov. Lewis reassured viewers, stating that his administration is committed to working with all the schools to make sure there’s an opportunity to provide students the resources to catch up and not get left behind in their progress.

Lt. Gov. Antone said, “The information presented during (this) summit is also meant to empower you, the students and parents, to be good learners in your education. You are the future and will be the ones to take over when it’s our time to step down, (and) we pass the baton over to you.”

Governor Lewis Elected Secretary of National Congress of American Indians

Submitted by
Executive Office

On Wednesday, February 2, 2022, Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis was elected Secretary of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), during a special election to fill a vacancy for the position.

After being sworn in as Secretary, Gov. Lewis said of his

appointment: “I am honored to be elected to serve as Secretary of the National Congress of American Indians.”

About the impact NCAI has on tribal communities he said, “NCAI holds a special place for me as the history of NCAI is intertwined with [our] growth as Tribal Nations across Indian Country to find ways to unify and strengthen our collective voice

in ways that elevate our relationship with our federal partners.”

NCAI is the oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native organization in the United States. NCAI’s mission is to advocate on behalf of tribal governments and tribal communities to promote strong government-to-government policies.

Gov. Lewis was elected to the

NCAI Board to serve as Area Vice President for the Western Region during the virtual Annual Meeting last October. When the vacancy occurred, Gov. Lewis was asked by other tribal leaders to consider running for the Secretary position and he was unanimously elected to the post, which will run through October of 2023.

In looking at what the new

position means, “After watching NCAI’s recent growth and rebuilding, I decided that I wanted to be part of the strong and committed board and know that, by working together, we will advance tribal sovereignty and usher in a new era of self-determination,” said Gov. Lewis.

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GRIC member creates art mural in Downtown Phoenix, page 4

Student club donates to teens and families, page 5



Healthy Kids & Families

**GRHC COVID-19 HOTLINE**
(520) 550-6079

**GRHC.ORG/HUB**

COVID TESTING, COVID & FLU VACCINES AVAILABLE

2/21	District 5 Service Center	9 am - 3 pm
2/22	District 5 Service Center	11 am - 6 pm
2/23	District 2 Service Center	9 am - 3 pm
2/24	District 2 Service Center	9 am - 3 pm



Scan for Vaccine Eligibility

You may also visit a GRHC Primary Care Department for vaccines.
Walk-in or schedule an appointment by calling (602) 528-1482.

Share this information and encourage others to be healthy.

GRIC Enrolled Members regardless of Place of Residence

39.3%

8,428 out of 21,448 have received at least 2-doses of Moderna or Pfizer

13%

2,790 out of 21,448 have received at least 3-doses of Moderna or Pfizer

GRIC Patients (Adults)

14.4%

Hospitalized

Adults in AZ: 5% Hospitalized

3.3%

Fatalities

Adults in AZ: 1.2% Fatalities

Of the 237 Adult Fatalities from COVID, 9 (3.8%) were vaccinated with at least 2-doses

96.2% of our Adult Fatalities from COVID were unvaccinated.


Residents of Districts 1 - 7

35.9%

7,709 out of 21,485 have received at least 2-doses of Moderna or Pfizer

11.8%

2,543 out of 21,485 have received at least 3-doses of Moderna or Pfizer



1,039 out of 7,218 known outcomes have been hospitalized

14.4%


0.84%

2 out of 237 deaths were in those who received 3-doses

99.16% of the Adult Deaths were in those who have received less than 3-doses.


National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

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




Coming soon: a better Valley.

ADOT's I-10 Broadway Curve improvement project is in the works. When complete it will improve access to Sky Harbor, improve travel time and help support our growing economy. Stay #AheadOfTheCurve with traffic updates at i10BroadwayCurve.com or download "The Curve" app for your phone.

**ADOT**

An eleven-mile stretch of Interstate 10 between Loop 202 and I-17.



Existing Freeway

2 HOV Lanes
+6 General Purpose Lanes
+Auxiliary Lanes

1 HOV Lane
+4 General Purpose Lanes
+Auxiliary Lanes

New Collector-Distributor Roads:
EB 48th St to Baseline Rd
WB Baseline Rd to SR143 & 40th St

New Lanes on SR 143 & US 60
(to connect to I-10 improvements)

New Pedestrian Bridges

Improved Sun Circle Trail Connection



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Stephen Roe Lewis

Lt. Governor
Monica Antone

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Joey Whitman

District 2
Carol Schurz

District 3
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NAJA
Native American Journalists Association

“Examining COVID-19 with Dr. Santiago” Takes Community Members Inside the Pandemic

Kyle Knox
Gila River Indian News

Beginning Jan. 13, Gila River Health Care launched a new broadcast initiative, “Examining COVID-19 with Dr. Santiago,” to discuss the effects of the pandemic over the past two years. The one-hour segment features GRHC’s Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Anthony Santiago, with guests who address the many facets of COVID-19 and its effects. Additionally, each episode breaks down the COVID-19 data in the Community, its impacts, and vaccine facts in an informative and easily digestible manner.

“The fact is that we got the medical science right, we were able to quickly identify and track the virus, and we were able to coordinate and create a highly effective vaccine,” said Dr. Santiago of where the U.S. stands at present in relationship to the pandemic. “But what we did not get right, and still haven’t gotten right, is the social

science, understanding people and how they react to these types of crises.”

While medical science is a main discussion topic, Santiago and his guests also discuss the social impacts of COVID-19. These include the shutdown of schools and work, panic and fear of the virus, lack of social relations for families and children, and its effects on the Community’s culture and traditions.

“For the past two years, it has been a world of fear and feeling devastated because (of everything) we have gone through,” said Carol Schurz, District 2 Community Council Representative. “It breaks my heart.”

Councilwoman Schurz served as a guest in Episode Two, which first aired on Feb 10. She shared her own experiences during the pandemic and the concerns from the Community she regularly hears. In addition, the Councilwoman shared how children have been effected by virtual schooling, the

decline in in-person interactions, and breakthrough cases among vaccinated individuals.

Using a rainstorm as an analogy, Dr. Santiago compared a vaccinated person to someone caught in a storm with a raincoat and umbrella to shield them from the rain. An unvaccinated person would have neither source of protection, he explained. He went on to explain that being vaccinated does not turn off the rain, but it does provides better rain protection. In the case of COVID, as he put it, a vaccine will not turn away the virus but instead prevent a person from being hospitalized or dying from the virus.

Isaac Salcido, Director of the GRIC Tribal Education Dept., also served as a guest for Episode Two. He discussed a recent survey of school-aged children that showed how much youngsters have missed in-person schooling, being around their friends, and seeing their teachers.

Salcido also mentioned some

positives that have developed during the pandemic. He noted that many teachers and administration staff have learned to utilize technology in ways they never had before. He believes this will lead to innovative teaching strategies when in-person classes resume. Additionally, parental involvement has grown significantly compared to before the pandemic.

With returning to in-person schooling imminent, Salcido says he will work to ensure that every school does everything possible to provide a safe learning environment. Requiring school staff and children to be vaccinated to return to school is the Community’s chosen step as part of the plan.

“Examining COVID-19” will continue to air once a month to address the concerns and impacts of COVID-19 in the Community. Episodes air live on the GRBC Facebook page and local low-powered channel 29.1.

Proposed Revisions to Decriminalize Marijuana on the Community

Emma Hughes
Gila River Indian News

In November 2020, Arizona voters passed Proposition 207, the Smart and Safe Arizona Act which legalized recreational marijuana for adults 21 years and older to use, possess and cultivate.

Subsequently, the Community’s Office of General Counsel (OGC) presented a memorandum outlining provisions in the new law to the Gila River Indian Community Council in December 2020.

Community Council referred the memorandum to the Legislative Standing Committee (LSC) to begin reviewing the GRIC code to decriminalize marijuana.

On Nov. 9, 2021 draft changes to the code were approved. OGC presented the proposed amendments for public comment on Saturday, Feb. 5, during two consecutive virtual meetings via WebEx, presented by Casaundra Wallace, Senior Assistant General Counsel.

that they did not apply to GRIC’s intentions in decriminalizing and allowing marijuana.

Under Arizona law, medical marijuana users must possess a registry identification card issued by the Arizona Department of Health Services in order to use medical marijuana. No more than the currently permitted amount of 2.5 ounces of medical marijuana can be possessed at a time.

Medical marijuana is defined to include both dried-leaf/flower form and extracted resin, which could be used to treat chronic or debilitating diseases or medical conditions such as cancer, glaucoma, severe and chronic pain, severe nausea, Crohn’s disease, severe persistent muscle spasms and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The proposed revisions to GRIC Code Title 5 concerning recreational marijuana would allow adults 21 years and older to consume, possess, process, manufacture, or transport one ounce or less of marijuana and no more than five grams of marijuana concentrate, without consequence, similar to the state law.



The Gila River Indian Community is considering proposed revisions to GRIC Code Title 5, to decriminalize marijuana in the Community, but seeks tribal member input on the matter. Getty Images

past marijuana criminal cases in the Community.

A copy of the proposed revisions to Title 5 of the GRIC Code is available for review at each District Service Center, the Community Council Secretary’s Office, or by contacting the Office of General Counsel.

Because marijuana remains illegal under federal law, federal funding could be lost if the Community accepts it into the code. However, it appears that other tribes who have legalized it have not had any issues, explained Wallace.

GRHC operates under federal contract and cannot issue medical licenses. The facility and staff will be subject to restrictions.

Gila River Police Department’s Chief Timothy Chavez shared concerns about possible increase in DUIs, property crimes and the theft of personal marijuana.

“Those are things we could see,” said Chief Chavez, who explained that similar incidents have been experienced in surrounding areas due to state legalization. He said that GRPD

Officers will require additional training on the changes to Title 5 and may need additional equipment, should the GRIC Code be amended.

“I think the medical marijuana use could be something that could work here, for those who would need it, however, the recreational use, I totally object to.” Said another member, while others inquired about the education on marijuana and the funding for those resources.

All questions and comments will be summarized and presented to Community Council.

If you are interested in providing comments on the proposed revision of Title 5 of the GRIC Code, LSC will hold its regular meeting on March 29, and welcomes you to attend.

You may also contact your Council representative or the LSC Chairperson at (520) 562-9720, or provide written comments by email to OGC.HelpDesk@gric.nsn.us or by mail to the Office of the General Counsel, P.O. Box 97, Sacaton, AZ 85147, Attn: Casaundra Wallace.

Culture Corner

Auppa Hiosig Mashath, Haichu Thothakam

Submitted by
Huhugam Heritage
Center

Every day, we are provided opportunities, to take into perspective the activities taking place around us. Sometimes we often take for granted the wild animals that live on our community. Our Hekiu O’otham have named all the animals that live with us since time immemorial. Many are mentioned in our Creation Stories and are intertwined within our Culture. We can learn many things about the different animals by describing their color, where they live and a physical characteristic of their bodies. All the marking aid in hiding from predators.

One important animal to O’otham and Pee-Posh is Ban (Coyote), who represents Clan membership of the Ban O’otham. Ban is featured in many O’otham children’s stories, which are meant to educate the youth on proper behavior. A few descriptions about Ban are, “Ban ‘o s-ko:mag.” (Coyote is gray/tan colored.) this sentence describes the colors of Ban’s fur. Another is, “Ban ‘o jeved vecho ki:” (Coyote lives underground.) We often hear the cries of

Ba:ban (pl.) when an emergency vehicles passes by on the roads next to our homes. Shelik (Ground Squirrel) are small and move around very quickly. “Shelik ‘o sna:k heg vihog.” (the Ground Squirrel likes to eat mesquite bean pods). We can also observe that, “Shesh’lik (pl.) ‘o jeved vecho ki:” (The Ground Squirrels live underground. Shesh’lik hibernate in the winter and emerge when the daytime temperatures rise.

Tho:b (Cotton-tail rabbit) live with us year-round and can often be seen scurrying along field edges and brush stands. “Go s-thoa bahij heg Tho:b.” (The Cotton-tail has a white tail.) Thothob (pl.) ‘o sna:k keg vashai.” (The Cotton-tail’s like to eat grass.) Thothob (pl.) can be observed foraging on grasses and leaves in the early mornings and late evenings. Chu:v (Jackrabbit) are larger than Tho:b and can run long distances to evade predators. It could be said about Chu:v’s ears, “Go che’echev na:nk heg Chu:v.” (The Jackrabbit has long ears). “Chu:v ‘o am tho’othonk tha:m oimed” (The Jackrabbit travels on the foothills.) Chu:v is usually solitary and roam

within a few square miles to forage on leaves and twigs.

Gevho (Bobcat) is a predator who feeds on rodents and other animals. They are well camouflaged with a large white spot behind each ear and have a short stubby-tail. “Ivo ge’eged thathad heg Gevho.” (The Bobcat has big feet/paws). Geg’gevo (pl.) ‘o oipo am s-aupaak ed.” (The Bobcats roam in the Cottonwood grove). Gevho are nocturnal, hunt at night and sleep under the cover of brush during the day. Kaso (Kit Fox) are about the size of a house cat, they too are predators and hunt at night. Their prey consists of rodents and other small animals, which they see with their night vision. It could be said about Kaso’s ears, “Ivo ‘o ge’eged na:nk heg Kaso.” (The Kit Fox has large ears). Some nocturnal animals observed only early in the day.

We encourage you to learn to say the animal names, speak with an Elder or Speaker to learn more things about the animals. Keep in mind, that all animals are wild and its best to keep a safe distance from them. A special Thank You to Community Elders for



Auppa Hiosig Mashath, Haichu Thothakam: Match the O’otham phrase with its animal!

“Shelik ‘o jeved vecho ki:.”

“Ivo ge’eged thathad heg Gevho.”

“Ban ‘o s-ko:mag.”

“Ivo ‘o ge’eged na:nk heg Kaso.”

“Go s-thoa bahij heg Tho:b.”

“Go che’echev na:nk heg Chu:v.”



Photos Courtesy US Fish & Wildlife Service

sharing their knowledge about animals that made this article possible. Additional source related from Folk Mammalogy of the Northern Pimans, Amadeo Rea, University of Arizona Press, 1998. Answers to word search puzzle on page 9.

Arts & Entertainment

GRIC Artist’s Mural Debuts in Phoenix’s Historic Roosevelt Row District

Kyle Knox
Gila River Indian News

Community artist Chadwick Pasqual, District 3, debuted his newest and most significant work, “Art Til Death,” on Feb. 12, in downtown Phoenix.

Pasqual’s mural will be displayed through Apr. 22 as part of the “Uncontained” project in Phoenix’s historic Roosevelt Row Arts District at 2nd Street and Roosevelt Street on a modified shipping container. Pasqual is one of four artists to be featured at this space seasonally throughout the year.

“Art Til Death is kind of like a self-portrait of me and where I’m from, and it has the reservation in the background and the outline of the Community incorporated, too,” said Pasqual. He wants his mural to reflect his identity and passion for the arts. He also hopes viewers will reconnect with the fact that Phoenix is the ancestral homeland of the Akimel O’otham and Pee-Posh.

The “Uncontained” mural project is sponsored by Cahokia SocialTech + Art



District 3 artist Chadwick Pasqual stands before his completed mural, “Art Til Death,” at the unveiling event on Sat. Feb. 12 as part of the seasonal “Uncontained” mural project. Kyle Knox/GRIN

Space, in collaboration with Roosevelt Row Community Development Corporation (RRCDC) and Xico Arte y Cultura. Through the partnership, Cahokia will provide each muralist a stipend to produce their work, Xico will provide art supplies, and RRCDC hosts the container itself.

This is the second large-scale mural for Pasqual, who was eager to showcase his work in such a public setting. The centerpiece features a large skull with a “headdress” adorned with art supplies divided by a ruler separating the day and nighttime scenes of his vision of the GRIC.

“When I got the call, I was speechless and excited just to do another mural, and it felt great,” said Pasqual. The work took just over a week to complete until its unveiling.

The call for artists began in January and the four chosen artists were announced on Feb 10.

Other artists creating work for “Uncontained,” will be on display in the following order throughout the year: Liv Barney (Diné) May 1 to July 22, Angelo Cortez (Akimel O’otham and Chicano) Aug. 1 to Oct. 21, and Chelsie Begody (Diné) Oct. 31 to Jan. 20, 2023.

“We want to

amplify artists’ visual stories and encourage creative activation and entrepreneurship,” Cahokia cofounder Eunique Yazzie said in a press release. “It’s important to keep the social fabric of our art spaces dynamic and accessible for future generations.”

HealthCorps Teens Support Families in Need in the East Valley and GRIC



Left to right: Amethyst Jones, Caiden Lewis, Ariana Blackwater, Sineca Jackson sorted and packed donations to include new socks, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, soap, wipes and bath towels. Photo courtesy of Taneesha Watson/HealthCorps

Christopher Lomahquahu
Gila River Indian News

As part of their Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, teens from the Gila River Indian Community recently held a donation drive for East Valley and Community families in need through HealthCorps’ Teens Make Health Happen (TMHH) club.

“HealthCorps is a national non-profit organization, and one of our primary goals is to give teens

the educational tools to take control of their health and address the health inequities in their communities,” said Taneesha Watson, Regional Program Manager for HealthCorps. “Our work is supported by the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona.”

Currently, six GRIC students are involved in the Gila River Youth Digital Club. Watson said the GRIC students have prior knowledge of community service from their participation in the Gila River Akimel O’otham/Pee

Posh Youth Council. The Gila River Club is one of five TMHH clubs in Arizona.

According to Watson, the TMHH club provides educational leadership, programming and service learning for teens based on physical activity, nutrition, mental resilience and community engagement. “Our clubs are open to students across the state in grades 6 through 12,” said Watson. “Part of HealthCorps’ mission is to empower teens to make a difference in their



Taneesha Watson, Regional Program Manager for HealthCorps (at right) presented the GRIC Residential Program for Youth staff, Devin Jackson, Youth Services Coordinator (at left) and Mark Miller, Youth Services Coordinator (middle) with the donations collected by the TMHH students. Christopher Lomahquahu/GRIN

communities, schools and families by educating them on the benefits of engaging in service that’s meaningful to both our students and our communities.”

The club’s students contacted local businesses to seek donations and explained how the items were vital to families in need. “We were able to receive funding through outreach to local businesses across the Valley, including gift cards from Chandler Costco and two Target locations,” Watson said. “Those contributions were used to purchase high-demand items including new socks, underwear, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, deodorant, bath towels, baby wipes and sanitizing wipes.”

Part of the club’s goal is to develop a health initiative focused on a community project students would like to implement. By looking at local resource centers, the TMHH students identified

the Fans Across America Charitable Foundation in Chandler and GRIC Residential Program for Youth as the focus of their project.

According to Watson, the club’s initiative is part of several TMHH projects throughout the year, including regional and national activities. The TMHH students also will submit a proposal for inclusion in the HealthCorps’ National Project Health Showcase. Students from across the nation in May will present ideas and projects to combat health inequities in their communities. The student led projects are eligible for up to \$5,000 in grants.

“Its much appreciated to have them reach out to us for this basic needs drive and working with Taneesha to bring these much needed items to the kids,” said Mark Miller, RPY Youth Services Program Coordinator.

He said RPY welcomes donations, especially with clothing. “We do have plenty of youth clothes, but we are accepting teenage age clothing, which includes hygiene products and socks and shoes.”

Watson said despite the COVID-19 pandemic, TMHH students were able to continue their work and secure donations. She added, “This is just an example of what you can achieve when you’re focused on finding a solution to a challenging situation.”

Miller said for organizations, that are interested in donating items, can contact the RPY at 520-562-3437.

The TMHH clubs are free to join and open to all Arizona students in grades 6 through 12. Those interested should contact Taneesha at Taneesha.Watson@healthcorps.org by March 4.

Text-alert Service Keeps GRIC Members Informed, Speeds Up Emergency Response Times

Emma Hughes
Gila River Indian News

The Gila River Indian Community has been keeping its members, residents and employees informed and up-to-date using mail-outs, flyers, mygilariver.com, social media platforms and, most recently, with mobile text-alerts regarding important information on what’s happening in the Community.

“We needed a way to communicate with Community members quickly, especially to those who do not have social media and in our research, this is one of the best options,” according to Shannon Redbird, Community Relations Specialist for the Communications and Public Affairs Office (CPAO).

The free text alert ser-

vice began at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to send out urgent information on COVID-19 data, testing and vaccination clinic dates and reminders, including the most recent Community executive orders and updates.

Nearly 1,600 individuals and counting have signed up to receive the alerts. The service ensures that announcements are delivered immediately, including public safety updates and links to additional services and information.

The texts also provide crucial mass communication from departments like the Office of Emergency Management, Community (OEM), Services Department (CSD), Tribal Health Department (THD) and Gila River Health Care (GRHC).

“Communication is

critical in an emergency and getting the necessary information out in a timely manner allows for consistency, reliability, uniformity and dependability,” said Bruce Harvey, director of the Office of Emergency Management.

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, such as the severe storms the Community experienced last monsoon season that left several residents without power for nearly three days, notifications were sent out immediately with updates on shelter and power restoration notices.

“The text alert is a welcome and vital addition to our emergency notification system,” said Harvey.

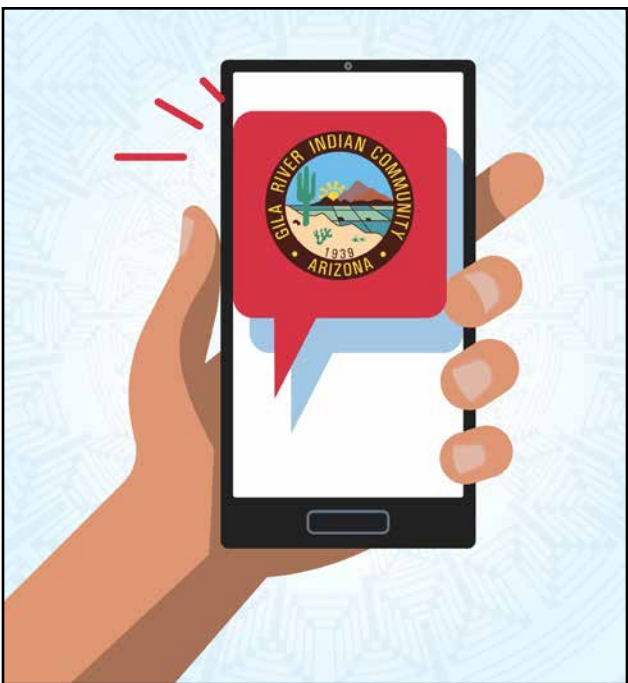
District Service Centers have also used the service to send out notices on building closures and contact infor-

mation during emergency events. It was also used to promote the mobile vaccination unit (MVU) events and most recently to aid in the Community’s distribution of at-home COVID-19 test kits.

During a virtual Elders Concerns meeting on Feb. 9, CPAO, GRHC and CSD promoted and presented updates on the text-alert service and provided steps on how to sign up.

Elders who have already subscribed for the alerts said they’ve shared information with other Community members, according to Laurie Thomas, director of the Community Services Department.

The elders have expressed confidence in the service as a “reliable source of information and support the awareness concerns and



alerts for the Community,” said Thomas.

To stay informed with GRIC updates, text the keyword “GRIC” to 855-202-9116 and you will receive

a message confirming your subscription. Standard data rates and usage will apply and subscribers may opt out at any time.

GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY
☆☆ VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT ☆☆

The Gila River Indian Community Council has declared the following Board vacancy:

Board/Committee	Number of Vacancies	Deadline
Gila River Health Care Board of Directors	One (1)	March 4, 2022 12:00 pm

Community members interested in serving on the Gila River Health Care Board of Directors, must submit one original copy of a Letter of Interest, a Résumé, an Application/Affidavit, and Financial Disclosure Statement to the Community Council Secretary's Office by the deadline date, *(include your address and phone number on your résumé)*. Community Council Secretary's Office is located at the Governance Center, 525 West Gu u Ki, mailing address P.O. Box 2138, Sacaton, AZ 85147; Phone (520) 562-9720.

Pursuant to GRIC 2011 Code of Conduct, Chapter 6, Section 1.601.C.4: All individuals who apply for a vacancy shall submit to the Community Council Secretary a letter of interest, resume, an application and financial disclosure statement in a form as may be prescribed by the Community Council from time to time and an affidavit attesting that he/she has not been or is not: a) convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude, as defined in Title 1, chapter 2, Section 1.201.B, in the preceding five years; b) removed from office pursuant to this title in any of the preceding five years; c) currently delinquent with respect to a debt owed to the Community; d) able to meet any other condition imposed by the office in questions.

The GRIC 2011 Code of Conduct, application, financial disclosure, and affidavit can be obtained from the Community Council Secretary's Office.

Pursuant to GRIC 2011 Code of Conduct, Chapter 6, Section 1.601.F. Community Employees: A Community Employee may sit on a Community enterprise board subject to the Community's Employee Policies and Procedures Reference Guide. A copy of the specified job description can be obtained from the Community Council Secretary's Office.

Pursuant to GRIC 2010 Code of Conduct, Chapter 6, Section 1.601.G. Duties of Community Enterprise Boards: Community enterprise boards and their members shall follow a standard of care requiring that any decision of, or action taken by, the Community enterprise board members shall be one that would be made with the degree of care that would be exercised by a reasonably prudent and competent person seeking a reasonable return on investment and preservation of financial resources. A copy of the specified board position description can be obtained from the Community Council Secretary's Office.

Gila River Royalty



Call for Contestants

The pageant will be held virtually. Applications are now available at gricroyalty.org

Jr. Miss Gila River Eligibility Criteria

Young women between the ages of 14-17 years of age on or before February 29, 2022

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

Miss Gila River Eligibility Criteria

Young women between the ages of 18-24 years of age on or before February 29, 2022

- Enrolled member of the Gila River Indian Community
- Have never before held the Title of Miss Gila River
- Must be a full-time high school or college student with a minimum 2.5 G.P.A. or employed full-time and in good standing with employer
- Must be single, never married, and have no children
- Must not be cohabitating (living) with an intimate companion
- Must be willing and able to uphold the image and leadership role of Miss Gila River through out the twelve-month reign

Deadline to apply is February 25, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

Applications can be emailed to missgilariver@gric.nsn.us or dropped off at the Communications & Public Affairs Office located in the Governance Center.

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



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Phase Approach



The GRIC Tribal Government Departments are utilizing a phased approach to transition between phases based upon changing conditions regarding the risk of COVID-19 transmission in the Community. Changes will be determined by the Tribal Health Department based on bi-weekly data reports and reviewed by the COVID-19 Taskforce and Leadership. Benchmarks are identified in the Tribal Health Department’s COVID-19 Guidance for GRIC Departments, Entities, and Organizations. For data on Community Cases, review GRIC’s Emergency Operations Center site at <https://www.gric-eoc.org/> for case rates and guidance document.

• Current Status as of February 11, 2022:

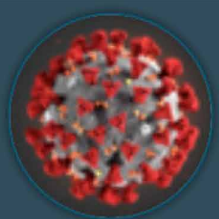
The Tribal Government is in

Phase I

- This phase is in accordance with the Tribal Governments Return to Work Plan. Departments should relay their current workforce plan and needs to their employees.
- For Tribal Government Departments, 75% of its workforce will continue to telework until February 26, 2022.
- Departments must follow Comprehensive Executive Order No. 13.
- During Phase I, employees will continue COVID-19 surveillance testing, regardless of vaccination status.
- Employees should contact their Supervisor/Manager/Director if they have any questions regarding their Department’s, Entity’s or Organization’s plan.

• Planning Ahead

The Tribal Health Department, COVID-19 Taskforce and Leadership will continue to monitor the risk of COVID-19 transmissibility and make necessary adjustments if required.



If you have any questions, please contact your Department Director.

Submissions & Notices

Auppa Hiosig Mashath, Haichu Thothakam: SOLUTION!

“Shelik ‘o jeved vecho ki:.”


“Ivo ge’eged thathad heg Gevho.”

“Ban ‘o s-ko:mag.”

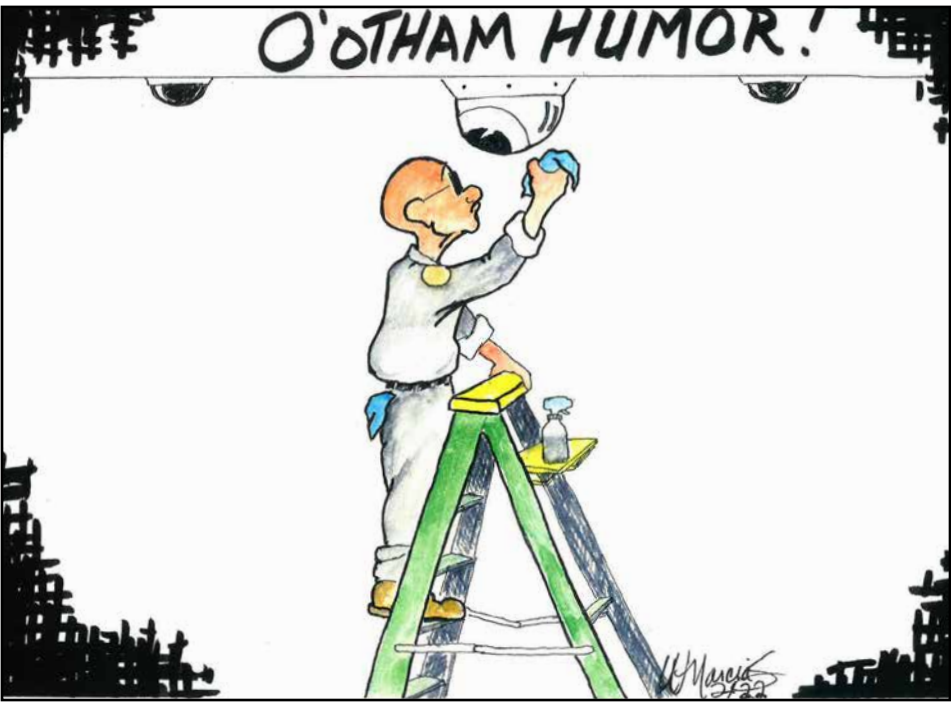
“Ivo ‘o ge’eged na:nk heg Kaso.”

“Go s-thoa bahij heg Tho:b.”

“Go che’echev na:nk heg Chu:v.”



Photos Courtesy US Fish & Wildlife Service



Artwork by Wayne Narcia, D6 member

REVISIONS TO TITLE 5, CRIMINAL CODE, TO DECRIMINALIZE MARIJUANA AND TO ALLOW MEDICAL MARIJUANA ON THE GILA RIVER INDIAN RESERVATION


Press Release
Office of General Council

The Legislative Standing Committee (“LSC”) will be considering proposed revisions to Title 5 of the GRIC Code to decriminalize marijuana and allow medical marijuana on the Reservation at their regular meeting on March 29, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.. A copy

of the proposed revisions to Title 5 of the GRIC Code in their entirety is available for review at each District Service Center, the Community Council Secretary’s Office, or by contacting the Office of General Counsel at OGC. HelpDesk@gric.nsn.us.

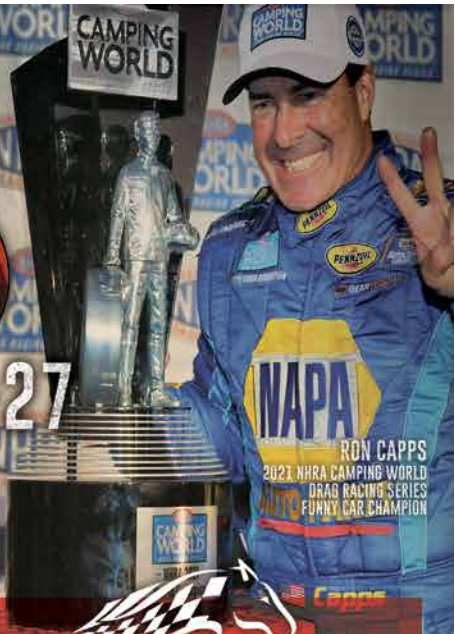
If you are interested in providing comments on the proposed revision of Title 5 of the GRIC Code,

you may attend the scheduled LSC meeting, contact your Council representative or the LSC Chairperson at (520) 562-9720, or provide written comments by email to the Office of General Counsel at OGC. HelpDesk@gric.nsn.us or by mail to the Office of the General Counsel, P.O. Box 97, Sacaton, AZ 85147, Attn: Casaundra Wallace.




ARIZONA NATIONALS

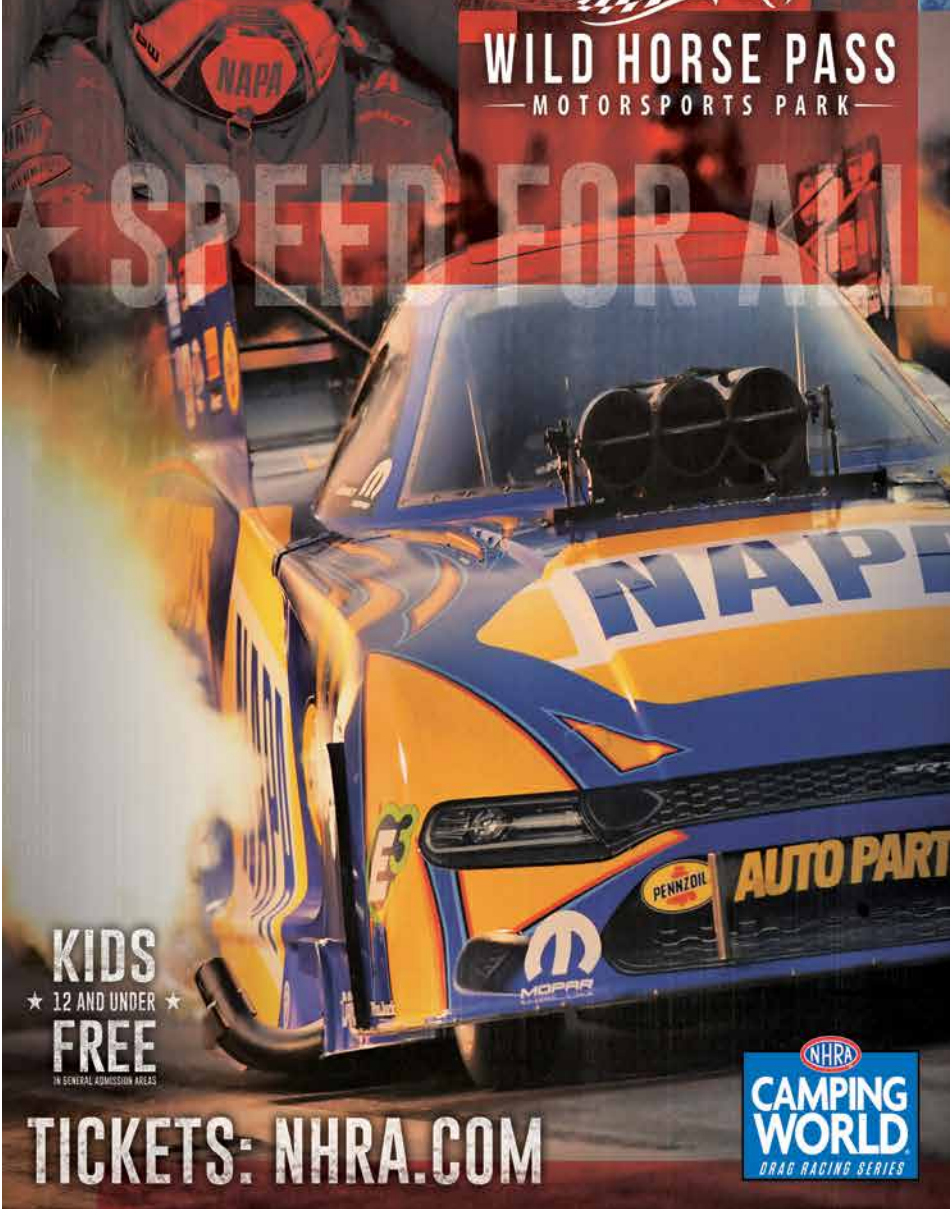
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A LEAK MAY BE PRESENT IF YOU:



SMELL:

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



HEAR:

a hissing or roaring coming from the ground, above-ground pipeline, or natural gas appliance.



SEE:

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

IF YOU SUSPECT A LEAK

- **Exit the area or building immediately.** Tell others to evacuate and leave doors open.
- From a safe place, call 911 and Southwest Gas at **877-860-6020**, day or night, whether you’re a customer or not. A Southwest Gas representative will be there as soon as possible.
- Don’t smoke or use matches or lighters.
- Don’t turn on or off electrical switches, thermostats, or appliance controls; or do anything that could cause a spark.
- Don’t start or stop an engine, or use automated (garage) doors.

For more information about natural gas safety visit

swgas.com/safety

or call **877-860-6020**



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- Physically harm you or force you to have sex?
- Keep you from your Native culture or spirituality?

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This project is supported by Grant Number 90EV0459--01-01 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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SUN, MAR 20 | 3PM

TRIBUTE TO ARETHA FRANKLIN

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