

Community

Domestic violence awareness healing vigil held; **2**

APACHE JUNCTION/GOLD CANYON
INDEPENDENT



Neighbors

City employee park professional of the year; **31**

November 2025 Volume 67 Issue 11 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

Providing food relief for weekends



257 AJUSD students from 3 schools in backpack program

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

More than 250 children at three Apache Junction Unified School District schools are given special backpacks twice a month on Fridays filled with nutritious food for the weekend or before school breaks.

The student backpack food program started in 2023 with a financial gift to the Superstition Community Food Bank, Executive Director Erik Arriola said.

"Many children in our community rely on school meal programs for breakfast and lunch, but weekends can be a different story. Food insecurity doesn't take a break, and for some families those two days can mean empty cupboards and hungry bellies. After thoughtful collaboration with the school district,

• See **Backpacks** on page **6**

Missionaries from the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recently volunteered to help fill backpacks with food from Superstition Community Food Bank for children in Apache Junction and Gold Canyon. Pictured are Sister Merkley, Elder Atwood, Elder Packard, Sister Parks, Elder Hoover, Superstition Community Food Bank Executive Director Erik Arriola, Elder Baggeley and Elder Kitchen. (Superstition Community Food Bank)

Central Arizona College sees campus crimes decline

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Four crimes were reported during 2024 at three of Central Arizona College's six campuses — down from six in 2023 and 11 in 2022, according to a federally mandated campus-security report released in October.

The Maricopa and Superstition Mountain campuses both had one stalking incident in 2024.

At the Signal Peak Campus, the only CAC campus that has residence halls, offenses in 2024 were one rape and one burglary on campus in residence halls.

The rape was investigated and determined unfounded, which the report defines as being investigated and found false or baseless.

The Central Arizona College Police Department takes all reports of sexual misconduct and stalking seriously, CACPD Chief Frank Alanis

• See **CAC** on page **20**

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Road closed for motorcycle vs. vehicle collision

Apache Junction Police Department investigated a two-vehicle crash at West Superstition Boulevard at North Delaware Drive.

AJPD and the Superstition Fire & Medical Rescue responded at about 2:36 p.m. Oct. 14 to reports of the crash.

Go to https://tinyurl.com/6w4d2xva

Vehicle swept away in Weekes Wash

A Chandler man's vehicle was swept into Weekes Wash due to fast-moving water and he was rescued by Apache Junction police.

At approximately 8:38 p.m. Oct. 13, the Apache Junction Police Department received a 911 call reporting that a vehicle had been swept into Weekes Wash near Fourth Avenue and Tomahawk Road due to fast-moving water, police said.

Go to https://tinyurl.com/4kndtjw9

Old West Highway project before state board

Rejecting all bids and re-advertising for a nearly 3-mile sidewalks and other roadwork project in Apache Junction was on the agenda for a meeting of the Arizona State Transportation Board.

Bids were opened Sept. 5 for the state-estimated $5.3 million project on Old West Highway, Idaho Road to Goldfield Road; and Winchester Road, Old West Highway to the Sixth Street alignment. W.W. Clyde & Co. had the lowest bid, $2,818,888.60, it states in the meeting's agenda.

https://tinyurl.com/2tees79z

Healing vigil marks Domestic Violence Awareness Month

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A community healing vigil recognizing Domestic Violence Awareness Month — to honor survivors, remember those who have been lost and to come together in healing — recently was held in Apache Junction.

There were few if any dry eyes from the more than 50 people attending the Saturday, Sept. 27, event following several presentations, including one by Shannon Mayfield who told a personal story of her sister, 43-year-old Christina "Tina" Lopez of Florence, who was murdered by her husband.

"She was a devoted mother to her three sons — the kind of mom who celebrated every achievement ... and cheered them on in everything they did. She was also a daughter, our sister and my best friend. But behind the smile she was living through abuse," Mayfield said. "Her estranged husband didn't use his fists, he used words, his control and his threats. He belittled her, manipulated her and tried to break her spirit with constant verbal abuse."

On April 11, 2024, she was stabbed 43 times and murdered by her husband, Mayfield said.

"Fourteen times to her head and neck, 11 times to her torso and 18 times to her arms, legs and hands. My sister fought him, begged for her life and tried to defend herself against his attack. In one final act of cruelty he dumped a 30-pound bag of dog food on her body in an attempt to strip her of her dignity even in death. All the while her son sat outside in the car hearing his mother scream," she said. "He didn't just take her life, he robbed her children of their mother, our parents of their daughter and us of our sister."



Sharon Stinard, co-founder of Community Alliance Against Family Abuse in Apache Junction, places a ribbon on a board during a recent healing vigil. Participants were asked to write a message to survivors of domestic violence on a ribbon and tie it to the board that was to later be displayed at the CAAFA building. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)

Other speakers at the healing vigil at the northeast area of Prospector Park, 3015 N. Idaho Road in Apache Junction, were Marin Lasater, Community Alliance Against Family Abuse community education coordinator; Dana Martinez, director of A New Leaf's domestic violence division; and Apache Junction Police Chief Michael Pooley.

"We just want to bring the community together so that we can work toward ending domestic violence together," Lasater said during the vigil. "We're looking forward to learning, sharing and healing with all of you."

Martinez said she was fortunate to never experience domestic violence but has several family members who have.

"It impacts every single one of us in some way, shape or form. I guarantee everyone here has either experienced it yourself or knows someone who has," she said. "If it were an actual physical health disease, it would be considered an endemic... It permeates all facets of our society."

• See **Vigil** on page **4**

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Martin Miramontes, a case manager at a Community Alliance Against Family Abuse shelter in Apache Junction, stands next to original art completed by clients at the shelter for the healing vigil. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)

Vigil

• From page **2**

Pooley said he was inspired by the number of people attending the vigil.

"People like you coming out to support not only a victim but a community to me is what inspires all of us to do better so we can bring hope to these victims of domestic violence. And I hope as we continue to go forward in this month we share this message, we listen with our hearts, we listen and we hear the cries," he said.

"I tell my staff and everybody the sirens — when you hear the sirens — it's sounds and cries of the city that you're in... And unfortunately all too often it's a domestic violence situation and unfortunately all too often there's kids involved who are watching this relationship deteriorate through violence. Our job is to make sure we can help all of the victims, and we know most victims won't ever come to something like this because they aren't allowed to and they won't know where to fund those resources," Chief Pooley said.

Lasater was encouraged by the number of people who attended the vigil, she said after the event.

"Anybody who comes is going to be impacted and hopefully take this home with them and make a bigger impact as well," she said. "I hope they are able to take this message home with them and maybe reach out to someone that they are thinking of, make that big impact — reaching

• See **Vigil** on page **5**

RESOURCES

National domestic violence hotline: Call 800-799-7233 or text BEGIN to 88788.

A New Leaf DV Hotline: Call 480-890-3039

Community Alliance Against Family Abuse, which is in Apache Junction: Call 480-982-0196

Against Abuse Inc. (Pinal County): Call 520-836-1239



Rosemary Summers Shearer

Rosemary Summers Shearer was born on March 1, 1938, in Malvern, Iowa. The Dust Bowl and Great Depression ended, and her parents, Frank N Summers and Rose Storm Summers, left their large family farmstead to move to town due to her father's ill health. Her father, aged 47, and mother, 38, added Rosemary to the family, along with her brother, Richard, 12, and sister, Phyllis, 10, as their father began a new career in farm management and the family settled in Ames, Iowa, in 1943. Rosemary attended Roosevelt grade school and Ames High, graduating in 1956. She married Larry L. Shearer in 1956, and they raised three children, Steven, Megan, and Katy in Ames and Des Moines.

Rosemary later became active in Republican politics at the city, county, state, and presidential level. She joined national and state environmental organizations, Planned Parenthood, and local ecology organizations both in Iowa and later in Arizona. She was the first woman to be named to an Iowa Department of Environmental Quality Commission by Republican Governor Bob Ray. She also served as the Iowa state co-chair for Presidential hopeful Howard Baker in 1978 while she lived in Des Moines and Windsor Heights. Her political and environmental activity continued until Larry retired from the Bell System in 1986.

They moved to Kings Ranch in the Superstition Mountains east of Apache Junction, Arizona, where they built their long-dreamed-of home on family-owned property, deeded to the Summers' family by Kings Ranch hoteliers, Julian and Lucy King. Lucy King's dying wish was that Rosemary turn Julian King's memoirs into an historical novel. Rosemary published "Sand In Our Shoes, Chasing the American Dream" in 2007.

Upon moving to Arizona, she returned to college and graduated as a paralegal in 1994. As booming development spread throughout the East Valley, she became active in local land use concerns. She co-founded ADOBE in 1989, (Association for the development of A Better Environment, a local citizen's group concerned with desert preservation and land use. The organization remains active in local issues in Gold Canyon, Arizona. She also co-founded the Superstition Area Land Trust (SALT) with artist Anne Coe in 1991.

She was also a co-founding member of the Gold Canyon Arts Council. She put her legal skills to work with local, state, and federal governments. During those years she helped raise federal funds for the Lost Goldmine Trail, which runs from Apache Junction along the front of the Superstition National Forest to Peralta Road. Working with the City of Apache Junction Parks and Recreation, the popular Silly Mountain Park and hiking trail was constructed.

When Toney Ranch, the first log cabin built in the Arizona territory, was about to be acquired by a local copper mining company which planned to destroy the property for its water rights she went to work with the SALT Land Trust to work with the federal government. This led to her testifying before U.S. Senator John McCain's subcommittee in Washington, D.C. The Land Trust now owns Toney Ranch. Saving public land and wildlife preservation were her primary public interests. She remained involved in politics, managing local elections and raising funds.

Larry and Rosemary were married for 68 years. Their children, Steven Shearer, his wife, Anne and son, Alex; Megan Shearer Morris and husband Jon, and Katy Washburne, eventually moved to the Phoenix area where they still remain. Rosemary was 87 years old.

Memorial services will be held November 20 at 10 am at the Superstition Mountain Museum Chapel.



Apache Junction Police Chief Michael Pooley speaks during the healing vigil for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)

Vigil

• From page 4

out and making a difference in someone's life and hopefully saving them."

Signs for healing that were placed on the grass or canopy near a ramada said things like "Survivors are strong," "Hope lives here," "Love means respect," "We believe you" and "You are not alone."

Original artwork was made for the healing vigil by clients at a Community Alliance Against Family Abuse shelter in Apache Junction.

"Our survivors — we call them guests at our shelter — we do artwork with them to heal. Art has the power to heal wounds what words cannot reach. At our shelter we use creativity to a path to hope," Martin Miramontes, a case manager, said after the healing vigil. "Every brush stroke, every color, every creation tells a story of courage and resilience."

The art was created over three weeks by six male and female guests of the shelter, he said.

Two artworks were of butterflies and one with open hands and the purple ribbon symbol of awareness for domestic violence, with all three including buttons that shined in the light of the day.

The buttons have meaning, Miramontes said.

"A button can fall and then they can put it back on. So it doesn't matter how many buttons you lose you can always replace it," he said. "It's reminding them that no matter how many times they lose a button they can put it back on. They can start from the beginning. No matter how hard their life is they can restart it over."

Richard H. Dyer can be reached at rdyer@iniusa.org, or on X @rhdyer. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines, https://www.yourvalley.net/civility-checklist/.

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FROM THE COVER

Backpacks

• From page **1**

we recognized a clear need — and the backpack program was born," he said.

The program is partially paid for by the city of Apache Junction through its health and human services funding with the rest from donations.

"Operating this program costs just over $40,000 annually. Thanks to the city of Apache Junction, we've received a $20,000 grant — but we still need community support to fully fund this vital service," Arriola said. "Together, we can ensure no child in Apache Junction goes hungry over the weekend."

Funds can be donated to the backpack program at the food bank's website https://superstitionfoodbank.org/ or at a November fundraiser. Proceeds from a 5:30-10 p.m. Nov. 5 casino night fundraiser hosted by the food bank and Superstition Mountain Rotary Club benefit the student backpack food program and other local youth initiatives. To purchase tickets or become a sponsor, email smrotary36@gmail.com. Go to https://superstitionfoodbank.org/event/casino-night/.



Missionaries from the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recently volunteered to help fill backpacks with food from Superstition Community Food Bank for children in Apache Junction and Gold Canyon. Pictured are Sister Blaisdell, Elder Christiansen and Elder McGinnis. (Superstition Community Food Bank)



Missionaries from the The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recently volunteered to help fill backpacks with food from Superstition Community Food Bank for children in Apache Junction and Gold Canyon. Pictured are Elder O'Neil, Elder Moss, Elder Baggeley, Elder Riddle. (Superstition Community Food Bank)

Twice a month distribution

Distribution frequency depends on

• See **Backpacks** on page **14**

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BUSINESS LICENSES

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

There were 40 business licenses issued in September 2025 in the city of Apache Junction.

The following business licenses are listed by name — including doing business as or dba; city; contact name; and North American Industry Classification System (code). For the full list, go to YourValley.net.

- Elite Civil Construction LLC; Phoenix; Jesus Jaramillo; Other Building Finishing Contractors (238390).
- Panda Mobile LLC; Bellevue, Washington; Brian Hasenmueller; Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (Except Satellite) (517112).
- Southwest Building Solutions LLC; Peoria; Andi Weniger; All Other Specialty Trade Contractors (238990).
- Belco Contracting LLC; Queen Creek; Niki Bell; All Other Specialty Trade Contractors (238990).
- Arizona Plumbing Pros LGS LLC dba Plumbing R Us; Mesa; Guilfred Sein; Plumbing, Heating, And Air-Conditioning Contractors (238220).
- Link2pump Corp.; Coconut Creek, Florida; Cristiana S Baas; Data Processing, Hosting, And Related Services (518210).
- Harvest Junction Ltd.; Apache Junction; Kristinya Matheson; Management, Scientific, And Technical Consulting Services (541600).
- Ah Illusions Inc.; Arizona; Anthony Hernandez; Independent Artists, Writers, And Performers (711510).
- Colantuono, Highsmith & Whatley PC; Grass Valley; Keelynn B Beutler; Legal Services (541100).
- Brown's Medical Imaging LLC; Omaha, Nebraska; Zach Brown;

• See **Business** on page **12**



The building will have facilities to accommodate events such as weddings with a bridal room and prep rooms. (Metro Creative)

Wedding, events center permit approved in Apache Junction

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Amplified outdoor sound is permitted during booked events ending no later than 10 p.m. for a planned 4,927-square-foot event center to be constructed at the southeast corner of Lost Dutchman Boulevard and North Apache Trail in Apache Junction.

The Apache Junction City Council recently voted unanimously to approve a conditional use permit for the development.

"Congratulations," Mayor Chip Wilson said after the vote.

The Apache Junction Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to recommend the city council approve a conditional-use permit for the venue on 5 acres with conditions.

The property is presently used for RV and boat storage. The west half will be replaced with the Apache Trail Superstition Events Center.

"The property is adjacent to commercial uses to the north and to the west across Apache Trail, as well as adjacent residential properties to the south," Senior Planner Nicholas Leftwich told the council.

The city received three emails with concerns of noise and traffic from the planned development, he said.

Dane Astle of Edifice Architecture is the applicant. Mohiuddin Mehmood Trust is the owner.

In addition to the building, an outdoor event patio is planned for open-air events, Astle wrote in a project narrative,

"The design of the event center will complement the surrounding area by maintaining a single-story design and by using materials matching the adjacent buildings. Apache Junction has a Western, agricultural and desert heritage, making the barn style an intentional nod to the local history," it states.

Richard H. Dyer can be reached at rdyer@iniusa.org, or on X @rhdyer. To voice your opinion on this story, connect with us at AzOpinions@iniusa.org.

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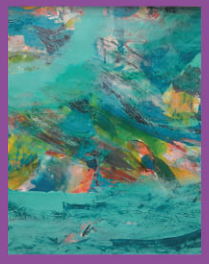
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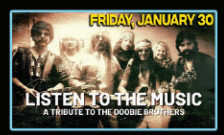










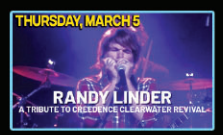


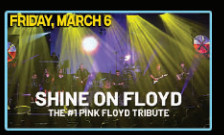
















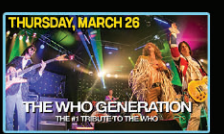


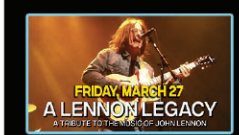


















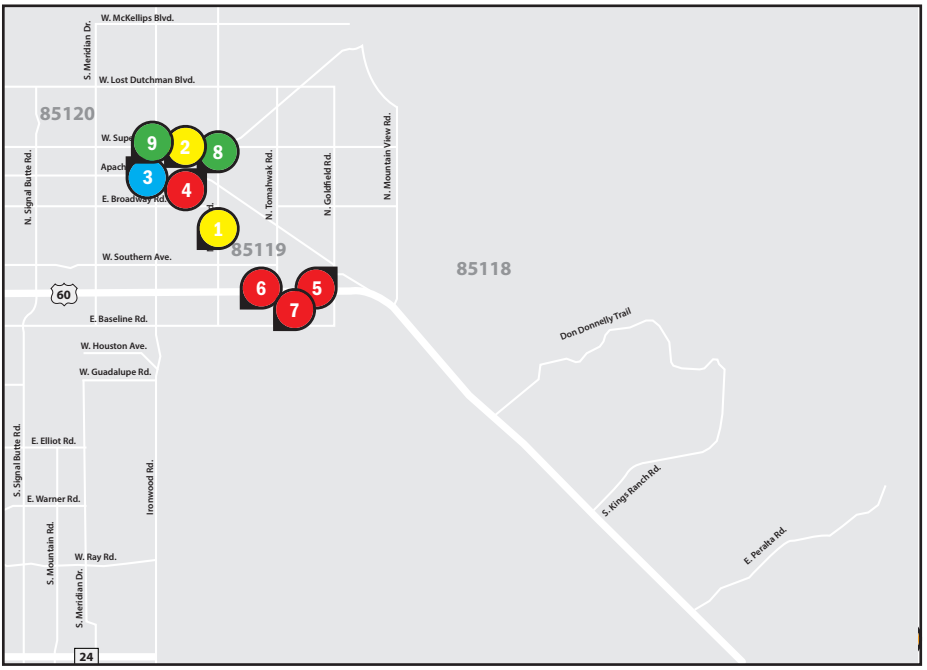


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BUSINESS MOVES



Map not to scale

Compiled by Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

LIQUOR LICENSES

1 The Apache Junction City Council recently considered an application for a permanent extension of premises for **F.O.E. No. 3850** at 2315 S. Coconino Drive in Apache Junction. It held a public hearing on the application and made a recommendation of approval to the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control.

2 The Apache Junction City Council recently considered an application for a new Series 12 restaurant liquor license for **Mickey D's Cafe** at 1408 W. Apache Trail in Apache Junction. It held a public hearing on the application and made a recommendation of approval to the Arizona Department of Liquor Licenses and Control.

NOW OPEN

3 **Axiom Care** was slated to have a grand opening in late October at its new Ocotillo Campus of Care Residential Treatment Center at 150 N. Ocotillo Drive in Apache Junction. Learn more about the addiction treatment center at https://axiomcareofaz.com.

COMING SOON

Plans on the city of Apache Junction's Geographic Information System map at https://www.apachejunctionaz.gov/472/Maps-GIS include:

4 • Apache Trails Retail, east of the northeast corner of North Apache Trail and Old West Highway in Apache Junction, is in the zoning review process. The development includes three drive-thru restaurant buildings ranging from 2,258 square feet to 2,473 square feet. The maximum height is to be 60 feet, it states in the site plan.

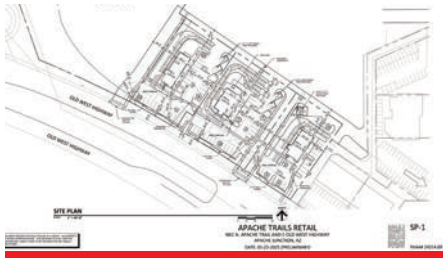
5 • A site plan approved for a proposed development on the southwest corner of East 28th Street and South Goldfield Road in Apache Junction shows a 5,040-square-foot, 26-foot-tall AM PM convenience store, a 2,400-square-foot car wash building, and eight gas pumps under a canopy.



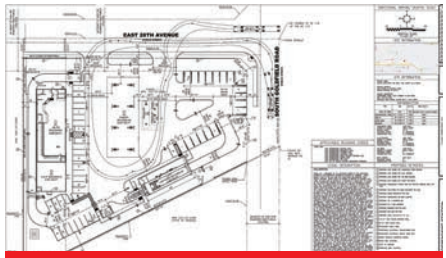
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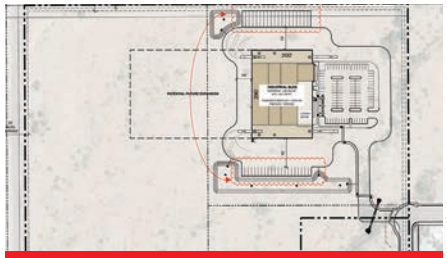
AXIOM CARE



APACHE TRAILS RETAIL



GOLDFIELD AND 28TH



SUNDT CONSTRUCTION



PHOENIX METRO TOWING

6 • A site plan and zoning has been approved for a 42-foot-tall **Sundt Construction Inc.** fabrication facility. The conceptual site plan shows a 58,340-square-foot industrial building east of the southeast corner of U.S. Highway 60 Superstition Freeway and South Royal Palm Road.

7 • A site plan and zoning has been approved for a **Phoenix Metro Towing** facility on East Baseline west of Tomahawk Road. The front two-story building will be approximately 11,811 square feet with two garage bays to house two heavy wrecker tow trucks. A service building with three bays will be behind the main building. Staff will park behind the main office building. Impound lot parking will be on a dust free surface of asphalt paving, decomposed granite or other stabilized surface material, it states in the site plan.

IN THE NEWS

The Apache Junction Area Chamber of Commerce, 567 W. Apache Trail, recently held ribbon-cutting ceremonies at two businesses:

8 • at **Independent Wellness Center**, 1000 W. Apache Trail Suite No. 108 in Apache Junction.

9 •**Open Door Thrift and More**, 2114 W. Apache Trail Suite No. 5 in Apache Junction.

Wondering where to dine in Apache Junction? One place to start looking is https://visitaj.com/listing_cat/dining/ with more than 50 listed from casual cafés to local hangouts. There is a separate page for shopping and arts — https://visitaj.com/shopping-and-arts/. The website is from the city of Apache Junction, 300 E. Superstition Blvd.



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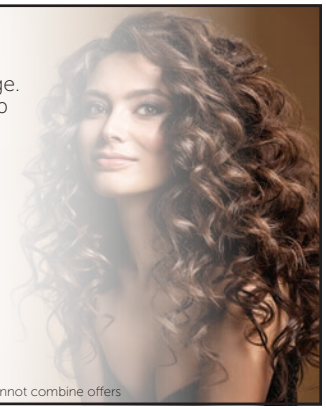
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Civility Checklist

How to engage in respectful, honest & civil dialogue about public issues.

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA
Celebrating & Connecting Our Communities

☐ **Take the high road.** Respond to the topic — not the person. Refrain from demonizing others for their opinions. Assume those you disagree with are, like you, genuinely interested in improving the community.

☐ **Be respectful.** Bullying, public humiliation, insults, name-calling, harassment and threats directed at another person — or that person's race, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc. — have no place in civil discussions. Find ways to respectfully disagree without questioning someone's character or motives.

☐ **Be truthful.** Base your opinions/arguments on facts. Value honesty. Make only accurate statements when making your point and avoid exaggeration and stereotypes. When appropriate, cite your sources of information that others may question.

☐ **Don't misrepresent.** Always identify your opinions as opinions (not stating opinions as facts). Never misrepresent the views of others or falsely claim your opinions represent someone else. If quoting the words of others, identify and credit the source.

☐ **Listen and learn.** It's both polite and respectful to listen to those we disagree with (as well as those we support) and be genuine in our attempts to understand their point of view. Expand your mind by thoughtfully seeking out views that don't agree with your own.

☐ **Look for common ground.** When disagreeing with others, look for even small areas of agreement — which can be the gateway to working together for the greater good.

☐ **Respect privacy.** Keep private things private — whether it involves your own information or those with whom you disagree. Revealing private information about someone else is rude, unethical, potentially harmful and, in many cases, illegal.

☐ **Set a good example.** Practice civil behavior online as well as in public and in your interaction with others. Encourage others to practice these civil behaviors. And it's OK to challenge disrespectful behavior — but be courteous, respectful and helpful in your approach.

Business

• From page **8**

Other Miscellaneous Nondurable Goods Merchant Wholesalers (424990).

• Newacunit.com; Chandler; Bodie Bryan; All Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers (Including Tobacco, Candle, And Trophy Shops) (453990).

• Renaissance Web Solutions LLC; Vernon, New Jersey; John Aluotto; Custom Computer Programming Services (541511).

• Integrity Tank Testing LLC; Indian Rocks Beach, Florida; Allison Young; All Other Professional, Scientific, And Technical Services (541990).

• Myrna E Vehr; Mesa; Myrna E Vehr; All Other Miscellaneous Schools And Instruction (611699).

• Premier Bookkeeping LLC; Apache Junction; Tim Kimble; Other Accounting Services (541219).

• Drake Software LLC dba Drake Software; Franklin, North Carolina; Jamie St Clair; Software Publishers (511210).

• Food Ventures North America Inc. dba Wild Fork Foods; Ahwatukee; Seylis Kaloyios; Supermarkets And Other Grocery Retailers (Except Convenience Retailers) (445110).

• Don's Barber Shop; Apache Junction; Donald E Smith; Barber Shops (812111).

• Deere Credit Inc.; Johnston, Iowa; Anthony Powers; Other Commercial And Industrial Machinery And Equipment Rental And Leasing (532490).

• John Deere Shared Services LLC; Moline, Illinois; Anthony Powers; Corporate, Subsidiary, And Regional Managing Offices (551114).

• Goertzen Dental PLLC dba Aspen Dental; Apache Junction; Karin Kurtz; Offices Of Dentists (621210).

• Caring4u Homecare LLC; Apache Junction; Kristine Topping; Services For The Elderly And Persons With Disabilities (624120).

• Green Nugget Mgmt LLC dba Green Nugget RV Storage; Apache Junction; Kathleen Cull; Other Warehousing And Storage (493190).

• Arrington Watkins Architects LLC; Phoenix; Matthew Gorman; Architectural Services (541310).

• Rise And Whisk Bake Co. LLC dba Cottage Bakery; Apache Junction; Megan Daciola; Retail Bakeries (311811).

• Outside Inside Decor; Apache Junction; Robert Lathrop; Independent Artists, Writers, And Performers (711510).

• Junction Boys Basketball Booster Club Inc.; Apache Junction; Kristy Martinez; Civic And Social Organizations (813410).

• COWAY USA Inc.; Los Angeles, California; Namiki Yoo; Other Miscellaneous Durable Goods Merchant Wholesalers (423990).

• Kinzler Construction Services Inc. dba Banker Insulation; Ankeny, Iowa; Jennifer Mclean; Drywall And Insulation Contractors (238310).



A business license is a license issued to a person conducting business activity within the city of Apache Junction or any person or business having a privilege tax or use tax license listing Apache Junction per city code. The fee for a business license is $50. An application must be approved along with the fee paid before a business may lawfully engage in business in the city of Apache Junction. For questions regarding business licenses, call 480-474-5050 or email the business license coordinator at businesslicense@apachejunctionaz.gov. Applications are at apachejunctionaz.gov/997/Business-License. (Metro Connection)

• Act Electric; Mesa; Jana Allred; Electrical Contractors And Other Wiring Installation Contractors (238210).

• OEG Inc.; Portland, Oregon; Melinda Sponsel; Electrical Contractors And Other Wiring Installation Contractors (238210).

• Shade Industries; Phoenix; Jarrod Olivarez; Other Foundation, Structure, And Building Exterior Contractors (238190).

• Taylor Merchantile Services LLC; Apache Junction; Alexander Taylor; Used Merchandise Retailers (459510).

• Confide Roofing LLC; Mesa; Rodger Bywater; Roofing Contractors (238160).

• J Wolf Mechanical LLC; Peoria; Grace Vandyke; Plumbing, Heating, And Air-Conditioning Contractors (238220).

• Mortimore Construction; Apple Valley, California; John Motimore; All Other Specialty Trade Contractors (238990).

• EMSL Analytical Inc.; Phoenix; Bonnie Fiorentino; Testing Laboratories (541380).

• AZ Shutter Co; Tempe; Stefan Brule; Window Treatment Stores (442291).

• Build-A-Bear Workshop Inc.; Scottsdale; Robert Neu; Doll, Toy, And Game Manufacturing (339930).

• Kelsey Schattnik; Wheaton, Illinois; Kelsey Schattnik; Other Management Consulting Services (541618)

Apache Junction/Gold Canyon
INDEPENDENT
Celebrating & Connecting Our Communities

Arizona Leadership

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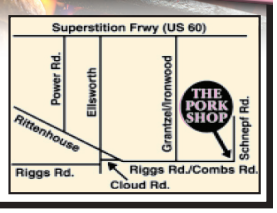
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Backpacks

• From page **6**

enrollment, but the food bank aims to provide backpacks at least twice a month — ideally every other Friday and before school breaks. The backpacks are filled with healthy, easy-to-prepare, kid-friendly meals to ensure children return to school on Monday nourished and ready to learn, Arriola said.

The backpacks typically include:

- Breakfast items like cereal, oatmeal or granola bars
- Simple meals such as mac and cheese, PB&J, ramen, tuna or chicken salad kit or canned soups
- Water, dry milk or juice
- Fresh or canned fruits and vegetables
- Snacks to keep kids fueled and focused

The backpack food program was launched in 2024 at Four Peaks Elementary School, 1785 N. Idaho Road in Apache Junction, enrolling 67 students. By 2025 it expanded to include Desert Vista Elementary School, 3701 E Broadway Ave. in Apache Junction, and total enrollment surged to 248 students, Arriola said.

"This school year, we've expanded once again to include Peralta Trail Elementary School and enrollment as you can guess has increased to 257," he said of the school at 10965 E. Peralta Road in Gold Canyon. "Children can enroll themselves or be signed up by a parent, guardian or school staff member."

Each school invites eligible families to participate and assists them with a brief application process required by the grant, said Karen Warhus, AJUSD director of food services.

"The backpack program helps bridge the gap for families who rely on school meals during the week by providing extra food to support them over the weekend. We're fortunate to partner with the Superstition Community Food Bank to make this resource available to our families," she said.

"Because participation is based on the number of students the food bank can serve, the program isn't broadly advertised, but rather coordinated directly through our schools to ensure it reaches those who need it most," Warhus said.

"No child should have to worry about being hungry. This partnership helps ensure our students are nourished, supported and ready to learn. We're incredibly thankful to the Superstition Community Food Bank for helping us care for kids beyond the classroom," she said.

The program continues when school is out in the summer, Arriola said.

"Though most programs pause during summer, we've proudly partnered with Apache Junction Parks & Recreation and the Boys & Girls Club-Superstition Branch to continue supporting youth through their summer programs," he said.

Superstition Community Food Bank, 575 N. Idaho Road Suite 701 in Apache Junction, offers assistance to individuals and families in northwest Pinal County and east Mesa. It has been in operation since 1983 and was previously known as Reach Out Food Bank. Go to https://superstitionfoodbank.org/.

Richard H. Dyer can be reached at rdyer@iniusa.org, or on X @rhdyer. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines, https://www.yourvalley.net/civility-checklist/.





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OPINION

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Yes, I will do my part to help my community become a safe place for people to engage in civil discourse about public issues. Visit iniusa.org/civility-pledge/ to take the pledge.

Your Opinion

Our opinions page is to provide an open forum for our readers. We hope to stimulate debate, not to dominate or control it. We reserve the right to edit our opinions, and we insist on civility. Please include your name and phone number, so we can contact you for clarification or confirmation. We welcome your photo. All opinions must be no more than 300 words.

Those that are judged as personal attacks or complaints about neighbors, businesses or other opinion writers will not be considered. No person may submit more than two opinions for publication during a calendar month. Two submissions in the same issue will not be published. The content of a submission is the responsibility of the person who submitted it.

Speak Up

We support the use of pen names. Too many people don't speak up because they fear intimidation or even danger to their families and/or careers. Pen names are an important part of our nation's history.

Corrections

We will promptly correct all factual errors. We offer a "right of reply" to the people about whom we write. Readers who disagree with a news story are welcome to respond with a letter.

LETTERS TO THE NEWSROOM

Traffic concerns possible at Kings Ranch Road, US60

The new Maverick convenience store in Gold Canyon at U.S. Highway 60 and Kings Ranch Road is getting close to opening. We're all happy to see that.

They now have two left-turn lanes open going from eastbound US60, turning onto the one, single lane on Kings Ranch Road. Can anyone foresee problems this may cause when the snowbirds arrive and the traffic quadruples — cars backed up across westbound US60 waiting for people to merge and squeezing into the one single lane on Kings Ranch and no other way through town? Good luck everyone.

Jim Graybill
Gold Canyon

Vote 'yes' on Prop. 493 to extend mayor term to 4 years

Proposition 493 proposes to extend the Apache Junction mayoral term from two years to four years, the same length of service currently held by city councilmembers. Voting "yes" supports greater continuity, cost-efficiency, and more effective local representation.

A two-year term limits the mayor's ability to focus on fulfilling his duties to the community. Instead, it forces a cycle of near-constant fundraising and campaigning, which distracts from representing Apache Junction's best interests. It also hinders progress on large scale initiatives such as infrastructure, economic development, and regional partnerships. An extended term would allow the mayor more time in office to assess problems, engage with residents, develop solutions, and measure outcomes.

A four-year term allows mayors to spend more time serving the community and less time preparing for reelection. It creates better alignment with council term lengths. This change also supports long-term relationship-building with regional councils and community stakeholders, all who are key in ensuring our city's voice remains strong across Arizona.

Extending the term will create alignment with the 18 other valley cities who already utilize a four-year term length, allowing for enhanced long-term relationships with our neighboring communities. A "yes" vote not only supports greater sustainability with these partnerships, but also in actualizing goals and progress on behalf of Apache Junction.

Equally important, is that accountability to voters would still remain intact. Residents will continue to elect their mayor at the same time intervals they do their councilmembers, and checks and balances for transparency, public meetings, and recall options would remain available.

A "yes" vote ensures more stable leadership, more effective representation, and a stronger foundation for our city's future.

As the current mayor, and on behalf of those who will serve in this office after me, I thank you for your support.

Chip Wilson
Apache Junction mayor

Please send your comments to AzOpinions@iniusa.org.
We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines.

SPEAK UP

Here are some comments about stories happening in your area:

WATER WELL TO BE DRILLED, CASED FOR $2.2M IN SOUTH APACHE JUNCTION

"There are too many people in this area and there is going to be a water shortage. You can drill all you want, doesn't mean the water will last for long. Two million dollars for water, over population needs to stop or we're going be in big trouble. Not to mention police, fire, and other first responders who are maxed out with current conditions." — **Michael S. via Nextdoor comment**

***

"So is the developer paying for it?" — **Ken Holland via Nextdoor comment**

WATER, DRAINAGE ISSUES ON 160 ACRES PART OF APACHE JUNCTION AGREEMENT WITH DEVELOPER

"Don't build on it." — **Ross McCulloch via Nextdoor comment**

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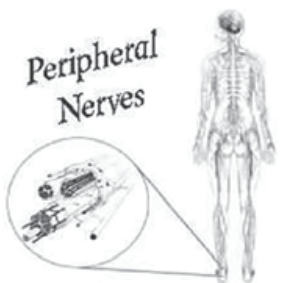
"I am so sick of watching this beautiful desert being destroyed by developers. All the country cares about is the tax money they will get. I am waiting to see what they are going to do when the water runs out.." — **Michael S. via Nextdoor comment**

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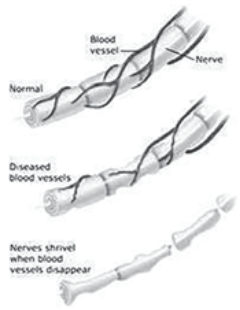
PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AND CHRONIC PAIN WARNING!

Mesa, AZ — The most common method your doctor will recommend to treat your chronic pain and/or neuropathy is with prescription drugs that may temporarily reduce your symptoms. These drugs have names such as Gabapentin, Lyrica, Cymbalta, and Neurontin, and are primarily antidepressant or anti-seizure drugs. These drugs may cause you to feel uncomfortable and have a variety of

Chronic pain and/or peripheral neuropathy is a result of damage to the nerves often causing weakness, pain, numbness, tingling, and the most debilitating balance problems. This damage is commonly caused by a hands and feet which causes the nerves to begin to degenerate due to lack of nutrient flow.



As you can see in Figure 2, as the blood vessels that surround the nerves become diseased they shrivel up which causes the nerves to not get the nutrients to continue to survive. When these nerves begin to "die" they cause you to have balance problems, pain, numbness, tingling, burning, and many additional symptoms. The main problem is that your doctor has told you



to just live with the problem or try the drugs which you don't like taking because they make you feel uncomfortable. There is now a facility right here in Mesa that offers you hope without taking those endless drugs with serious side effects.

(See the special neuropathy severity examination at the end of this article) neuropathy three factors must be determined.

1) What is the underlying cause?

2) How much nerve damage has been sustained.

NOTE: Once you have sustained 95% nerve loss, there is likely nothing that we can do for you.

3) How much treatment will your condition require?

The treatment that is provided at Aspen Medical has three main goals.

1) Increase blood flow

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3) Decrease brain-based pain

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THE GREAT NEWS IS THAT SANEXAS IS COVERED BY MOST INSURANCE! (Medicare restrictions apply) Depending on your coverage, your treatment could be little to no cost to you!

The amount of treatment needed to allow the nerves to fully recover varies from person to person and can only be determined after a detailed neurological and vascular evaluation. As long as you have not sustained at least 95% nerve damage there is hope!

Aspen Medical will do a chronic pain and neuropathy severity examination to determine the extent of the nerve damage as a public service to you and/or your family and friends. This neuropathy/pain severity examination will consist of a detailed sensory evaluation, extensive peripheral vascular testing, and a detailed analysis of the findings of your neuropathy.



Aspen Medical will be offering this chronic pain and neuropathy severity examination from now until November 30, 2025. Call 480-796-1136 to make an appointment to determine if your chronic pain and peripheral neuropathy can be successfully treated.

Due to our busy office schedule, we are limiting this FREE consultation to the first 15 callers. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO SUFFER ANOTHER MINUTE, CALL. Call 480-796-1136 … NOW!

We are extremely busy and if your call goes to our voicemail, please leave a message and we will get back to you asap.

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NOV. 1

Life Skills & Beyond

Youth ages 11–22 are invited to an inaugural Mesa West Rotary event 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 1, at Benedictine University Mesa, 225 E. Main St. Sessions include Pop the Hood (car maintenance), Street Smarts (self-defense) and Boss Mode (business basics), plus cooking, gardening, CPR and more. Interactive workshops. Breakfast, snacks and lunch are provided. Spots are limited. Sign up at https://tinyurl.com/MWRLifeSkills. Email kayla.mudge@gmail.com for more info.

NOV. 7-9

Studio tour art show

Artists of the Superstitions event showcases 59 juried artists displaying and selling a variety of artwork in various mediums from nine studio locations throughout Gold Canyon and Apache Junction.
9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday. Free maps are available.
www.artistsofthesuperstitions.com

NOV. 8

Car show

Superstition Classics show is to have food, a 50/50 raffle, vendors, T-shirts, a raffle and music. 10 a.m., with awards at 12 p.m. 5201 S. Kings Ranch Road in Gold Canyon.
Go to goldcanyonchamber.org/to register.

NOV. 11

Parade, Tribute

Annual Apache Junction All American Veterans Parade opening ceremony begins at 9:15 a.m. and the parade begins at 9:30 a.m. at Phelps Drive heading west on Apache Trail, turning south onto Gold Drive, then heading east onto Apache Trail and ending back at Phelps Drive. Pinal County Sheriff Ross Teeple is this year's grand marshal. 2025 Veterans Tribute will be held immediately following the parade at Flatiron Park, 100 N. Apache Trail.

NOV. 11, 13-15

Art exhibit

A military veterans art exhibit will be held the week of Veteran's Day sponsored by Lt. Col. Barry Rosenblatt and his wife, Susan, owners of Paige Artists Gallery.
10 a.m.-4 p.m. 300 W. Apache Trail Suite No. 106 in Apache Junction.



Quartetto Gelato perform at 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 21. (Gold Canyon Arts Council)

Canyon Sounds 2025-26 season starts in November

The Gold Canyon Arts Council will present five concerts this season, starting with Quartetto Gelato on Nov. 21 and ending with The Brothers Four on March 20.

The council's mission is arts education in East Valley schools providing in-school performing artist workshops, donation of musical instruments and lessons, visual arts education and school supplies.

All concerts are at the Gold Canyon United Methodist Church, 6640 S. Kings Ranch Road in Gold Canyon, just north of the intersection with U.S. Highway 60. Go to https://www.goldcanyonarts.org/ to purchase tickets by credit card, or to see other ticket locations.

• See **Sounds** on page **23**



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FROM THE COVER



At the Signal Peak Campus, the only CAC campus that has residence halls, offenses in 2024 were one rape and one burglary on campus in residence halls. (Metro Creative)

CAC

• From page **1**

said.

"Regarding the 2024 rape allegation in the residence halls, a thorough investigation was conducted in coordination with Title IX and appropriate external resources. The allegation was determined to be unfounded, meaning the investigation concluded that the reported offense did not occur as initially described or that credible evidence supported that no crime took place. This determination can only be made after a comprehensive review of all available evidence, interviews and corroborating information," he said.



CACPD Chief Frank Alanis

"In addition, several stalking incidents were reported in 2024. Each case was promptly investigated, and appropriate actions were taken to support the individuals involved and address any safety concerns," Alanis said.

CAC had 5,053 students enrolled in fall 2024 according to its 45th-day headcount reported to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, said Angela Askey, CAC's executive director of public relations and marketing.

A total of 5,131 students were enrolled in fall 2023 at CAC as of the 45th day headcount. Total enrollment at for 2021-22 was 8,285.

Central Arizona College has been in operation for more than 50 years. It offers associate's degrees that transfer to all three Arizona public universities. It recently received full approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer a bachelor of science in elementary education degree, according to centralaz.edu.

Statistics must be reported

The Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990, renamed The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security and Crime Statistics Act, was enacted by Congress and signed into law in November 1990. In 1992, 2000, 2008 and

• See **CAC** on page **21**

FROM THE COVER

CAC

• From page **20**

2013, Congress amended the law via the Higher Education Opportunity and Violence Against Women acts, which expanded the reporting criteria.

Jeanne Clery was 19 when she was raped and murdered in her college dormitory. Her parents, Connie and Howard Clery, did not know she might have been in danger as standards for campus crime reporting did not exist in 1986, according to clerycenter.org, the website for the nonprofit Clery Center.

"The Clery Act requires colleges and universities that receive federal funding to disseminate a public annual security report to employees and students every Oct. 1. This ASR must include statistics of campus crime for the preceding three calendar years, plus details about efforts taken to improve campus safety," according to the website.

Crimes that are required to be listed by the colleges are, according to the report:

- Murder/non-negligent manslaughter
- Negligent manslaughter
- Rape;
- Fondling
- Incest
- Statutory rape
- Robbery
- Aggravated assault
- Burglary
- Motor vehicle theft
- Arson
- Domestic violence
- Dating violence
- Stalking

It also includes crimes handled by local police, such as liquor, drug and weapon violations as well as hate crimes.

Central Arizona College's report can be downloaded at the annual security and fire report button at https://centralaz.edu/contact-us/cac-police-department/

Signal Peak Campus

At the Signal Peak Campus, 8470 N. Overfield Road in Coolidge, the only CAC campus that has residence halls, offenses were:

- In 2024, one rape on campus in residence halls and one burglary on campus in residence halls.
- 2023, two domestic violence incidents on campus in residence halls.
- 2022, two burglaries on campus, one domestic violence incident on campus and three stalking incidents on campus with two in residence halls.

• See **CAC** on page **22**

CAC CAMPUSES, CENTERS

The crime statistics for Central Arizona College are broken down into the following geographic areas:

- Aravaipa Campus, 80440 E. Aravaipa Road in Winkelman.
- Florence Center, 800 E. Butte in Florence.
- Maricopa Campus, 17945 N. Regent Drive in Maricopa.
- San Tan Campus, 3736 E. Bella Vista Road in San Tan Valley.
- Signal Peak Campus, 8470 N. Overfield Road in Coolidge.
- Superstition Mountain Campus, 805 S. Idaho Road in Apache Junction.

Source: Central Arizona College



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FROM THE COVER

CAC

• From page 21

The one rape in 2024 was determined to be unfounded. There were no hate crimes or hazing crimes reported n 2024.

No hate crimes, hazing crimes or unfounded crimes were reported in 2023 or 2022.

The number of arrests by police and campus authorities were:

- 2024, one liquor violation on campus in residence halls and one drug violation on public property adjacent to campus.
- 2023, one weapon violation on campus in residence halls.
- 2022, one liquor violation on campus in residence halls, one drug violation on campus in residence halls and one drug violation on public property adjacent to campus.

The numbers of disciplinary referrals with no arrest by police and campus authorities were:

- 2024, two liquor violations on campus, one of which was in a residence hall.
- 2023, one drug violation on campus.
- 2022, five liquor violations on campus at residence halls and one drug violation on campus at a residence hall.

San Tan Campus

At the San Tan Campus, 3736 E. Bella Vista Road in San Tan Valley, there were:

- 2024, no incidents.
- 2023, four fondling incidents on campus.
- 2022, no incidents.

No hate crimes, hazing crimes or unfounded crimes were reported and there were no arrests in 2024, 2023 or 2022.

There were no Disciplinary Referrals by Police & Campus Security Authorities for 2024 and 2023 and one for a liquor violation on campus in 2022.

Maricopa Campus

At the Maricopa Campus, 17945 N. Regent Drive in Maricopa, there were:

- 2024, one stalking incident on campus
- 2023, no incidents.
- 2022, no incidents.

No hate crimes, hazing crimes or unfounded crimes were reported and there were no arrests or disciplinary referrals in 2024, 2023 or 2022.

Superstition Mountain Campus

At the Superstition Mountain Campus, 805 S. Idaho Road in Apache Junction, there were:

- 2024, one stalking incident on campus.
- 2023, no incidents
- 2022, no incidents

No hate crimes, hazing crimes or unfounded crimes were reported and there were no arrests or disciplinary referrals in 2024, 2023 or 2022.

Aravaipa Campus

On the Aravaipa Campus, 80440 E. Aravaipa Road in Winkelman, there were:

- 2024, no incidents.
- 2023, no incidents.
- 2022, one burglary on campus.

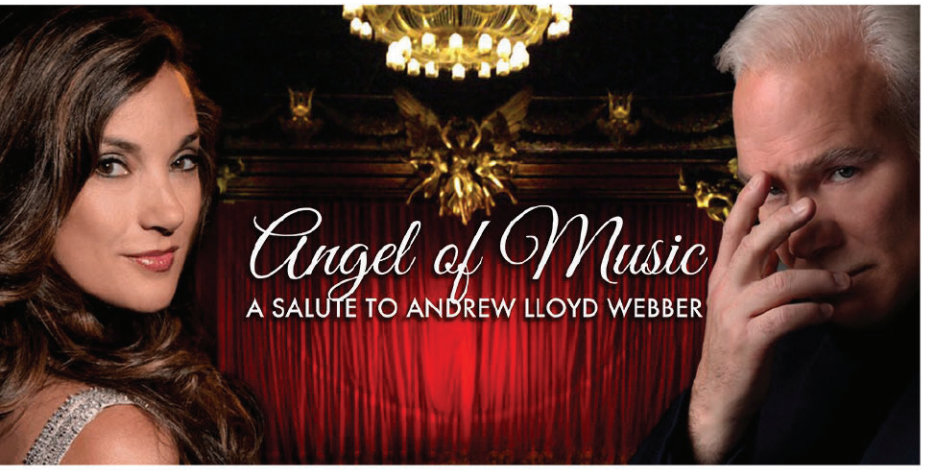
No hate crimes, hazing crimes or unfounded crimes were reported and there were no arrests or disciplinary referrals in 2024, 2023 or 2022.

Florence Center

At the Florence Center, 800 E. Butte, Florence, there were no incidents reported in 2024, 2023 or 2022.

No hate crimes, hazing crimes or unfounded crimes were reported and

• See CAC on page 24



Franc D'ambrosio and Glory Crampton perform at 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9, 2026. (Gold Canyon Arts Council)



The Face Vocal Band performs 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20, 2026. (Gold Canyon Arts Council)

Sounds

• From page 18

Concerts are:

• Quartetto Gelato, 7 p.m. Friday, Nov. 21: Virtuosic showpieces, romantic ballads and blazing gypsy tunes are all brought to life with multi-instrument mastery. Quartetto Gelato, from Canada, is a popular and highly unusual ensemble. The quartet has enchanted audiences and critics worldwide with its exotic blend of musical virtuosity, artistic passion and humor.

• Franc D'ambrosio and Glory Crampton, 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 9, 2026: These famed Broadway veterans celebrate the music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and his beloved musicals in the salute "Angel of Music" featuring songs from his most-acclaimed shows. Crampton, one of Broadway's leading ladies and a musical theatre veteran, is known for her roles in Phantom of the Opera, My Fair Lady and Carousel. D'Ambrosio is best known as the longest running

• See **Sounds** on page 24







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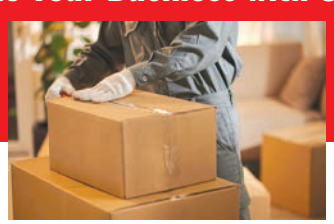


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FROM THE COVER

CAC

• From page **22**

there were no arrests or disciplinary referrals in 2024, 2023 or 2022.

Crime prevention

In response to the 2024 burglary — and liquor violation and drug violation incidents — the department has continued to strengthen proactive safety measures, he said, such as:

- Increased patrols and visibility in and around residence halls and public areas adjacent to campus.
- Enhanced security measures such as improved lighting, surveillance systems, and regular facility checks.
- Ongoing collaboration with Residence Life staff to provide education and awareness on crime prevention and responsible behavior.
- Student outreach and training, including safety presentations, alcohol and drug education programs, and theft prevention tips.
- Encouraging community reporting, reminding all members of the campus community to promptly report suspicious activity or safety concerns.

"While no community is completely immune from crime, our goal is to minimize risk through vigilance, education, and partnership. We remain dedicated to fostering a safe, respectful, and supportive campus environment for everyone," Alanis said.

CAC's police department is committed to prevention through education, awareness and strong partnerships with campus and community resources, Alanis said.

"Our priority is to foster a safe, respectful and supportive environment for all students and staff," he said.

To help keep the campus community safe, he said CAC encourages everyone to:

- Stay aware of your surroundings and trust your instincts.
- Look out for one another — if you see something concerning, say something.
- Travel with friends or in well-lit areas, especially at night.
- Take advantage of campus safety resources, such as emergency phones and safety escorts.
- Participate in prevention and awareness programs offered throughout the year.

Richard H. Dyer can be reached at rdyer@iniusa.org, or on X @rhdyer. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines, https://www.yourvalley.net/civility-checklist/.

Sounds

• From page **23**

Phantom of the Opera. His resume includes the Academy Award nominated Godfather III and Grammy, Emmy, and Tony award nominations.

- Face Vocal Band, 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 20, 2026: This internationally recognized a cappella all-vocal rock band comes from Boulder, Colorado. They are a rock-music phenomenon using only voices including a vocal drummer, mesmerizing audiences as they perform medleys (by Queen, Woodstock) and popular songs without instruments or special effects. They first appeared nationally in 2009 as one of eight original groups on NBC's premiere season of "The Sing-Off."

• See **Sounds** on page **26**

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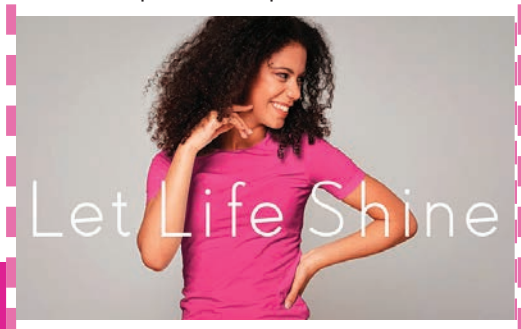


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The Encore Saxophone Quartet performs at 7 p.m. Friday, March 6, 2026. (Gold Canyon Arts Council)



The Brothers Four perform at 7 p.m. Friday, March 20, 2026. (Gold Canyon Arts Council)

Sounds

• From page **24**

• The Encore Saxophone Quartet, 7 p.m. Friday, March 6, 2026: Formed in 1984 by Douglas Masek, this ensemble of saxophone virtuosi has a wide-ranging repertoire from Hollywood, The Great American Songbook, Classic Sax and Jazz Sax. They were touted during their South African tour as "Masters of the Saxophone," impressing their listeners.

• The Brothers Four, 7 p.m. Friday, March 20, 2026: As pioneers in the "folk revival," The Brothers Four celebrate over 60 years of performing and recording with their trademark rich vocal harmony. Join for a nostalgic musical journey of their unforgettable million-sellers such as "Greenfields," "Yellow Bird," "Try To Remember," "Across The Wide Missouri" and their Oscar-nominated hit "The Green Leaves of Summer" from the motion picture The Alamo. Several of The Brothers Four were previous members of The Kingston Trio and The Limelighters.







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BUILDING PERMITS



A new single family home is to be constructed at 9131 S. Palo Verde Drive No. 1519. (Independent Newsmedia, Arianna Grainey)

97 building permits issued in September

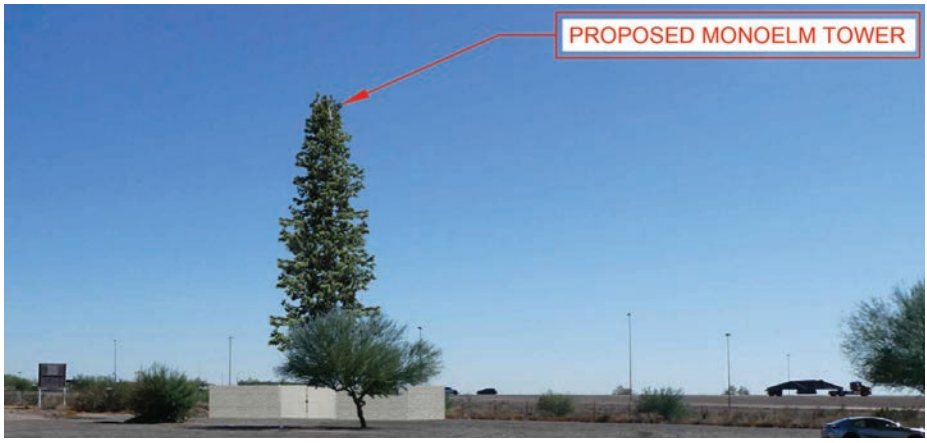
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Out of a total of 149 building permits listed in Apache Junction for September 2025, there were a total of 97 issued as of Oct. 14.

Examples of building permits filed, according to a website off of apachejunctionaz.gov/622/Permits, include:

- New single family home at 389 N. Ironwood Drive; submittal received Sept. 22; JW Builders - Josh Weeks; Apache Addition Acres.

• See **Permits** on page **30**



The Apache Junction Planning and Zoning Commission on Oct. 14 approved a conditional-use permit for the tower to be installed on the southeast portion of the parcel. (City of Apache Junction)

Verizon gets new Apache Junction tower to fill wireless gap

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A 65-foot-tall faux mono-elm tree cell tower is to placed near the southeast corner of 29th Avenue and Idaho Road to fill a gap in Verizon Wireless service in Apache Junction.

The Apache Junction Planning and Zoning Commission on Oct. 14

• See **Verizon** on page **30**

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Verizon

• From page **28**

approved a conditional-use permit for the tower to be installed on the southeast portion of the parcel.

The tower will be at least 300 feet from any residence, Planner Erika Hernandez told the commission.

"The 65-foot wireless cell tower is allowed outright with a conditional-use permit. The elm tree design with a full canopy is proposed. The branches do allow concealment of the antennas and radios," she said.

A neighborhood meeting was held Aug. 16 and no one attended, Hernandez said.

The applicant is Christine Tucker with Terra Consulting. The owner is VS Capital Group LLC.

Cityswitch is building the new wireless communications facility for the colocation of Verizon's equipment, it states in the permit application.

"This facility is intended to fill a significant gap in Verizon wireless service in this area of Apache Junction. Cityswitch and Verizon have been pursuing a site in this area for the last year," it states.

"This site is needed to provide residents and those working and/or traveling through the area with improved and reliable wireless service, enhanced call quality and data usage, which is currently poor," it states in the application.

The primary duties of the planning and zoning commission include community contact regarding items including a zoning change request, to an application from a developer for a shopping center development or housing project. Also included are conditional use permits with the final decision being handled at the planning and zoning commission level, according to the city's website.

Richard H. Dyer can be reached at rdyer@iniusa.org, or on X @rhdyer. Please submit comments at yourvalley.net/letters or email them to AzOpinions@iniusa.org. We are committed to publishing a wide variety of reader opinions, as long as they meet our Civility Guidelines, https://www.yourvalley.net/civility-checklist/.

Permits

• From page **28**

• New single family home at 9131 S. Palo Verde Drive No. 1519; permit issued Sept. 22; DR Horton East, Inc. — Jocelyn Mendoza; Superstition Vistas Phase 2b - Parcel 19.22

• In-ground swimming pool at 880 W. Golden Ore Pass; permit issued Sept. 8; Titan Pools — Matthew Farley; Blossom Rock Phase 1.

• Monument sign with electric at 10070 S. Canyon Trail; a 60-foot-tall flagpole with electrical light; Submittal received Sept. 2; Impact Sign and Graphics — David Garcia; Blossom Rock Phase 2.

• New cellular tower at 575 N. Idaho Road; Pinal County 5G tower — a new 40-foot-tall communications tower, cooling cabinet and modifications to existing electrical system; submittal received Sept. 10; Synectic Design, Inc. — Mike Martinez.

• New cellular tower at 1575 W. Southern Ave.; a new 40-foot-tall communications tower and modifications to existing electrical system; submittal received Sept. 3; Synectic Design Inc. — Mike Martinez.

• Install backup generator at residence at 2818 W. Ohio St.; battery only — no solar; permit issued Sept. 2; Vector Energy LLC dba Fusion Power Co.; Enchanted Acres Unit One.

• Shade structure at 1091 W. Southern Ave.; installation of new shade structure; permit issued Sept. 10; city of Apache Junction — David Butler.

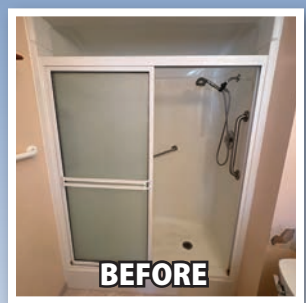
• Install awning at a park model at 1000 S. Idaho Road Space No. 1455; submittal received Sept. 29; J & S Construction LLC - Danielle Ipe; Roadhaven Resort Of Apache Junction - Phase I.

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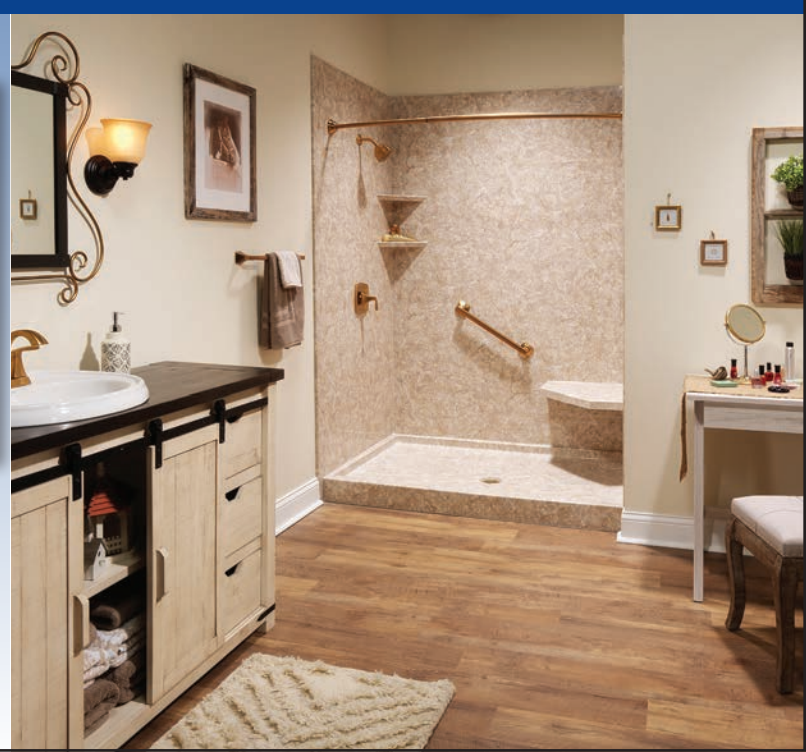
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Apache Junction Parks and Recreation receives statewide recognition

The Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department recently received two awards from the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association at its 75th Annual Conference and Awards Banquet.

During the ceremony, Painted Sky Park, the city's newest amenity-filled park facility, was honored with the 2025 Outstanding Facility for Populations 25,000-100,000 award, according to a release.

Developed by Brookfield Residential Land, the park is in the master-planned community of Blossom Rock. The park features the city's first catch-and-release fishing lake, Ruff Ranch dog park, the Miners Run adventure playground, games, and green space for the community to enjoy.

Designed and built with environmental stewardship in mind, Painted Sky Park serves as an example of how creative funding, thoughtful design, and cooperative operations can offer some of the best facilities to our community and residents, all elements that contributed to the selection of Painted Sky Park for this competitive award, the release states.

The city is also celebrating Parks Superintendent David Butler, who was awarded the 2025 Park Professional of the Year. This award recognizes one individual annually who demonstrated outstanding service to the field of parks and recreation.

Butler has been an integral part of the city for over 10 years during which time he has successfully overseen the development of Flatiron Community Park, Dutchman Dog Park and currently the renovation of the Rodeo Event Center, the release states.



Apache Junction Parks Superintendent David Butler was awarded the 2025 Park Professional of the Year. (City of Apache Junction)

In addition to leading a high-performing park maintenance team, he works cooperatively with the recreation division to deliver high-quality recreation programs and special events to the Apache Junction community, including the Fourth of July event and fireworks, Holiday Light Parade, and more, it states.

The conference was Aug. 25-27 at the Phoenix Convention Center. The APRA annual awards program honors communities throughout the state of Arizona in 21 categories. APRA

• See **Awards** on page **34**

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Apache Junction, Florence women win international pageant titles

Two women from Apache Junction and Florence representing the U.S. recently won international titles at the Mrs. International Global pageant in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Lindsey Roman-Murphy of Apache Junction was crowned Mrs. International Global 2025 at the Sept. 7 event.

"I'm extremely honored and humbled to be crowned Mrs. International Global 2025 and to have represented the United States of America in Malaysia. This title means so much to me as a new wife and long time pageant competitor," Roman-Murphy said in a release.

Florence resident Nancy-Ellen Martin won the Classic Mrs. International Universal 2025 title at the Sept. 7 event.

"I am truly honored to have been crowned Classic Mrs. International Universal. At nearly 54 years old, with almost 40 years in this industry, I have been blessed to hold many titles, but this one is especially meaningful. To be crowned on an international stage in Malaysia, surrounded by the genuine sisterhood of the Mrs. International Global organization, was an unforgettable experience," Martin said in the release.

The titleholders participated in several areas of competition to earn their crowns, including: evening gown, interview, swimsuit and national costume.

Both Roman-Murphy and Martin also took home additional awards for Best Talent in an optional competition.

In addition, Martin won the subtitle

• See **Pageant** on page **34**



Lindsey Roman-Murphy of Apache Junction was crowned Mrs. International Global 2025. (Mrs. International Global)



Florence resident Nancy-Ellen Martin won the Classic Mrs. International Universal 2025 title. (Mrs. International Global)

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Painted Sky Park, Apache Junction's newest amenity-filled park facility, was honored with the 2025 Outstanding Facility for Populations 25,000-100,000 award. (City of Apache Junction)

Awards

• From page 31

is a member-based, nonprofit association whose mission is to connect, educate, and inspire all who enhance the quality of life through the profession of parks, recreation, and the protection of natural resources.

Pageant

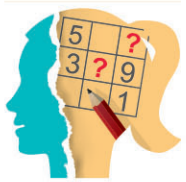
• From page 32

of Mrs. Popularity and Roman-Murphy won the subtitle of Mrs. Queen of Hearts.

Datin Sharin Too, CEO of MIG, and Evelyn Gan, COO of MIG, extended their heartfelt congratulations to Nancy-Ellen Martin and Lindsey Roman-Murphy.

"At the MMW Group of Pageant Management, our mission is to celebrate womanhood, uplift and empower married women, and amplify their voices and their personal advocacies," they said in the release.

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Wreaths Across America Remembrance Day Dec. 13

The national Wreaths Across America Remembrance Day will be held the morning of Dec. 13 at two Mesa locations this year, with ceremonies at Mariposa Gardens Memorial, 400 S. Power Road, and Mountain View Cemetery, 7900 E. Main St.

Both ceremonies are scheduled to begin at 10 a.m. followed by wreath laying at 10:30 a.m.

The free event requires support from the community. Mariposa Gardens will have approximately 500 wreaths, including two different sizes. Mountain View Cemetery contains 2,350 veteran graves. The goal is to sponsor a wreath for each grave with the assistance of volunteers, according to a release.

To contribute, visit www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/az0190p, or mail checks to Wreaths Across America %Nancy Fassbender, 4657 S. Desert Dawn, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118. Each sponsored wreath costs $17.

Volunteers are needed to help lay the donated wreaths. Register to volunteer by emailing nfass@hotmail.com. Donuts and coffee will be provided, and Texas Roadhouse will serve lunch to volunteers. Please specify which cemetery you prefer to volunteer at.

A total of 20 youth volunteers are needed this year. Children aged 7 to 14 who are interested in participating in the ceremonies are encouraged to contact Nancy Fassbender via email at nfass@hotmail.com.

For every wreath sponsored, Wreaths Across America donates $5 to benefit local veterans; these donations have supported initiatives such as service dogs, transportation, and housing. Sponsorship contributes to both commemorating interred veterans and supporting those in need.

Major sponsors for this year's event include American First, Crescent Crown,

• See **Wreaths** on page **38**



Gold Canyon resident Diane Godfrey and her granddaughter, 8-year-old Maddy Godfrey of Queen Creek, after placing a wreath at a military veteran's grave in 2022. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)



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FOOTBALL

AJHS 1975 championship football team to be honored



Led by Coach Jack Davis, the 1975 Prospectors brought home the school's first state title. If you were part of the team — or know someone who was — contact the AJUSD Communications Office at communications@goaj.org. (AJUSD, Kody Pudney)

Fifty years ago, the Apache Junction High School Prospectors made history by winning the 1975 state football championship.

This fall, the community will a chance to celebrate that milestone and honor the players, coaches and families who were part of that unforgettable season at the Nov. 29 state title game recognition.

The Arizona Interscholastic Association will honor the 1975 Prospectors during the 3A state title game on Friday, Nov. 29. The championship site and game time will be announced soon, but plans are already in place to recognize the team at halftime before a statewide audience, according to a release.

"The 1975 championship team left a lasting legacy at Apache Junction High School," AJHS Athletic Director Traston Yates said in the release. "Their dedication, teamwork and passion set the standard for what it means to be a Prospector. We're honored to celebrate them 50 years later and remind our current athletes what can be achieved when a team comes together for something bigger than themselves."

Led by Coach Jack Davis, the 1975 Prospectors brought home the school's first state title in one of the most memorable seasons in AJHS history. The district hopes to reconnect with as many players, coaches, and families from that season as possible.

• See **Football** on page **42**

Wreaths

• From page **36**

Guild Mortgage, Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 2560, VFW Post 9399 Auxiliary, Waste Management, Mountain View Cemetery, Bashas, and Texas RoadHouse in Mesa and Gilbert.

The national Wreaths Across America Remembrance Day is observed in local, state, and national cemeteries across all 50 states.

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2025-26 SALT Speakers Series begins Nov. 12

Charlie Goff, president of the Superstition Area Land Trust, will discuss issues with the sale of state trust land leading to the loss of views of the Superstition wilderness area and other interrelated conservation and ecosystem issues in a Nov. 12 presentation in Apache Junction.

He will also lay out SALT's goals and dreams in a way that makes both long-term economic and conservation sense for the public good at the presentation, "Conservation in the Superstitions Region: SALT's Goals, Approach and Dreams," held at 6:30 p.m. Nov. 12 in Room 117 at the Apache Junction Multigenerational Center, 1035 N. Idaho Road. All interested in this topic are urged to attend, it states in a release.

SALT is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to conserve the natural Sonora Desert open space surrounding the Superstition wilderness area.

Goff's presentation will be the first in SALT's 2025-26 SALT Speakers Series to be held monthly on the second Wednesday in collaboration with the Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department as a combined in-person and virtual format.

The southern border of the Superstition wilderness area from Apache Junction to well north of Florence Junction still remains open space as it has for many years — except for 1 mile on the north edge of Gold Canyon where development is immediately adjacent to the wilderness area.

That is 1 mile out of a total of well over 12 miles where the wilderness boundary directly borders Arizona State Trust Land. This land is in the viewshed of the views of the Superstitions. These views are threatened because all this foreground land is essentially available to the highest bidder because the state land department's mandate is to maximize the income for the beneficiaries, it states in the release.



Charlie Goff and his wife Becky Goff. (Becky Goff)

"Considerable development has already increased in these viewsheds from a number of different directions and locations. Is it in the best interest of the public to further erode these Superstition views?" it states.

Goff grew up a West Virginia hillbilly dairy farmer, trout fisherman and hunter, though life led him to a long career as a biology professor in cellular and molecular biology. In retirement he returned to his roots in nature and conservation, first in the southcentral Colorado mountains and for the last 14 years in the shadows of the Superstitions.

The next SALT speaker series presentation will be Dec. 10. It will discuss Dark Skies efforts locally, countywide and beyond.

Go to https://azsalt.org/.

Football

• From page **38**

If you were part of the team — or know someone who was — contact the AJUSD Communications Office at communications@goaj.org.

Apache Junction High School was slated to first honor the 1975 team during the AJHS homecoming game on Thursday, Oct. 24. Team members and their families were to be treated to a pre-game meal, receive free admission to the game, and be recognized on the field at halftime in front of the hometown crowd.

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