

Community

Video released on officer-involved shooting; **4**



APACHE JUNCTION/GOLD CANYON INDEPENDENT



Neighbors

Man plans to make world's longest wood chain; **26**

May 2026 Volume 68 Issue 5 Your Nonpartisan Community Newspaper • YourValley.net

Council seeks to increase its pay

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

City staff have been directed to draft an ordinance to increase the compensation for Apache Junction City Council members for the first time since 2004.

The council on April 21 voted 6-0 — with Councilmember Tess Nesser absent — for the ordinance to adjust the council, vice mayor and mayor salaries consistent with what was discussed at an April 7 meeting, and to include a cost-of-living or base-wage-increase provision.

Pursuant to state law, any approved change would not take effect immediately. Instead, revised compensation would become effective following the next election and the swearing-in of four elected officials in January 2027 and three others in January 2029, Human Resources Director Anna McCray told the council April 7.

A council member asked for city staff to compare present salaries with other cities. That study followed on the heels of a broader city classification and compensation study and process, she said.

• See **Salaries** on page 6



Dishing out the food April 11 were, from left, Sally Steiner, kitchen leader for the community feast, and volunteer Sandy Fisher. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)

Saturday meal a longtime ministry at Desert Chapel UMC

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A church ministry to feed Apache Junction's underprivileged one day a week is staffed by a cadre of volunteers at various stations.

Many arriving April 11 for the community feast held noon-2 p.m. every Saturday at Desert Chapel United Methodist Church, 462 N. Palo Verde Drive in Apache Junction, were on foot or riding a bicycle. They stood quietly outside before doors were opened, first being directed to a table with hygiene items and tables pushed

end-to-end teeming with canned and boxed foodstuffs, then to a line for two freshly dished-up packed hot meals.

The number of people getting the church's free meal on Saturdays has increased during the first quarter of 2026 over each of the previous four quarters of 2025, but drops off during summer.

The drop in the summer is expected as many of Apache Junction's unhoused leave for cooler climates, said Sally Steiner, kitchen leader for the community feast.

"In the summertime, a lot of the homeless go up to

• See **Dinner** on page 12

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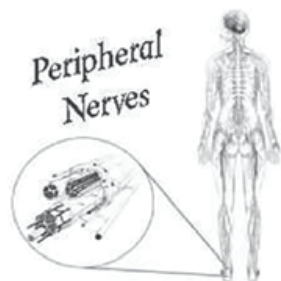
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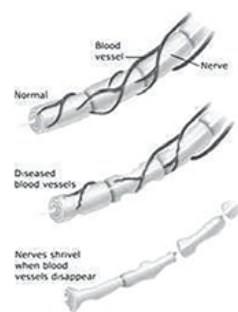
PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY AND CHRONIC PAIN WARNING!

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 harmful side effects

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) In order to effectively treat your 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?

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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 June 30, 2026. Call 480-796-1136 to make an appointment to determine if your chronic pain and peripheral neuropathy can be successfully treated.

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ON YOURVALLEY.NET

City seeks artists for 3D artwork on roundabout

The city of Apache Junction is seeking a qualified public artist to design, fabricate and install public art within the center of the roundabout at State Route 88 Apache Trail and Superstition Boulevard. The project budget is \$250,000.

GO TO

<https://tinyurl.com/mr45pe3a>

County warns of planning and zoning process scam

Pinal County has been made aware of a sophisticated scam targeting applicants who are currently working through the planning and zoning process with Development Services.

GO TO

<https://tinyurl.com/yszumej2>

Republic Waste contract amendments topic of council executive session

Potential amendments to contracts involving Republic Waste and its vendor agreement and landfill facilities were topics at a recent Apache Junction City Council closed-door executive session.

GO TO

<https://tinyurl.com/2kw9p36a>

City looking at increasing parks fees

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Fees are being drafted for the use of the Apache Junction Rodeo and Event Center's renovated facilities, such as a large pavilion, vendor electricity and RV hook-ups as part of a regular look at offsetting operation and maintenance costs.

The city's fees were last addressed in 2021. Fee changes, if later accepted by the council, would begin in January 2027, Parks and Recreation Management Analyst Riley King said during the council's April 7 meeting.

"State law requires us to review our fees every five years to see where we are at within our market, and this includes our programs, memberships,



For the rodeo and event center, 1590 E. Lost Dutchman Blvd., fees were compared with Payson, Queen Creek, Tucson, Cave Creek and Gila Bend. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)

reservations and equipment fees... Fees are just one component that helps offset operation and maintenance of our facilities and programs," she said.

• See **Government** on page 5

Video released on fatal officer-involved shooting

The Apache Junction Police Department has released a critical incident community briefing video regarding an officer-involved shooting that occurred in February.

At approximately 7:25 p.m. Feb. 14, Apache Junction officers were dispatched to a domestic violence call in the area of Ironwood Drive and Shiprock Road. Prior to officers arriving, the call was updated with a specific address, and the reporting party stated they could hear a woman yelling inside the residence, according to a release.



Body-worn camera footage from the responding officers is included in the department's critical incident community briefing video. (AJPD)

Three patrol officers in fully marked uniforms responded to the location and observed that the residence was surrounded by a fenced

yard with a locked gate. Officers attempted to make contact with the resident from outside the yard.

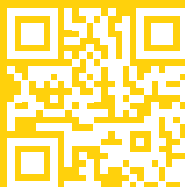
A male exited the residence holding what appeared to be a handgun. Officers identified themselves as police and ordered him to drop the weapon. The man raised the gun toward the officers, and an officer-involved shooting occurred, the release states.

Officers entered the yard and began providing medical aid until fire

• See **Shooting** on page 5

your news your way

One price, endless news



Government

• From page 4

“The money goes back into our general revenue account, then those fees go back to the general fund to help pay for the maintenance and the supplies for the programs — all that,” King said later.

For the rodeo and event center, 1590 E. Lost Dutchman Blvd., fees were compared with Payson, Queen Creek, Tucson, Cave Creek and Gila Bend.

“Not one rodeo and event center is the same so it is very hard to compare. Queen Creek is double our size, Payson is smaller than us, but

we still wanted to see what other event centers were charging,” King said.

Current Apache Junction Rodeo and Event Center amenities listed with benchmark average and current fee per hour include:

- ♦ Rodeo park arena or multiuse area, not applicable, \$8
- ♦ Rodeo park arena with lights (Gila Bend and Payson only), \$30, \$17
- ♦ Rodeo park PA system (only Payson has this fee): \$65, \$50
- ♦ Rodeo park prep: not applicable, \$50
- ♦ Tractor/water truck operator: \$40-\$400, \$55

“As we are updating the rodeo grounds, we have new amenities that we are considering adding fees for,” King said.

New Apache Junction Rodeo and Event Center amenities to consider with benchmark range include:

- ♦ Dry camp fee (no amenities): \$3-\$20 per day
 - ♦ RV spaces (electrical hook up): \$40 per day
 - ♦ Portable stalls: \$15-\$35 per day
 - ♦ Pavilion: \$45-\$75 per day
- Fees are waived for partnered events such as Lost Dutchman Days, King said.

Other fees to be examined include recreation center and aquatics passes, recreation and aquatics center facility rentals; program fees, such as for youth break camps and youth sports leagues; and park rental fees.

“It’s mandated that we have to look at them,” King said. “We don’t have a goal set out to hit the benchmark average, be under or above it. We just have to look at them and so it is a good way for us to see where we sit... (W)e can also see where our income lies with these comparator cities.”

The item was for discussion only at the April 7 meeting.

Shooting

• From page 4

personnel arrived. The man was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Charles Back, 69, was identified as the man killed Feb. 14 after the

shooting involving Apache Junction police officers.

Officers later located what was determined to be a Sig Sauer BB gun, a realistic replica of a Sig Sauer handgun, next to him.

The Mesa Police Department

is investigating as part of the East Valley Critical Incident Response Team. EVCIRT includes investigators from Apache Junction, Chandler, Gilbert, Mesa, Paradise Valley, Queen Creek, Scottsdale, and Tempe police departments.

This structure ensures the involved agency does not conduct the criminal investigation.

Body-worn camera footage from the responding officers is included in the department’s critical incident community briefing video.



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FROM THE COVER

Salaries

• From page 1

"It is important to note that the city council's compensation has not been adjusted since 2004 — in over two decades — since Ordinance No. 1215 was passed on Sept. 21, 2004. That being the case it should not come as a surprise that Apache Junction's elected officials' salaries are substantially below the prevailing market benchmarks. When compared to peer cities and towns the market averages are significantly higher," McCray said.

Council members are paid \$9,600 annually. The vice mayor is paid \$10,800 and the mayor is paid \$12,000, she said.

The market average is \$20,880 for council members, \$23,595 for vice mayor and \$36,367 for mayor, McCray said,

"If a change in compensation is desired, council may wish to incorporate a cost-of-living adjustment into the code to ensure compensation aligns with market conditions well into the future," McCray said.

A cost-of-living adjustment is needed, Mayor Chip Wilson said at the April 7 meeting.

"When the last one was approved, there was no including of the cost-of-living rate ... you could adjust. And putting it off for 22 years suddenly puts you into this situation. And if we don't address that coming up, we're going to have the same problem 20 years into the future," he said.

Increasing the amount of money the council and mayor receive may encourage more people to run for council, Councilmember Bambi Johnson said.

Three individuals are running for three open council seats and one person is running for mayor.

"I noticed seeing different things on social media that people had issues about the fact there weren't that many people running for office. There's a lot of younger people that are raising their families that may need to really think about the fact that they may have to take time off of a paid job to do the work of the city. And when it is so low that they are actually taking food off the table at their own houses it can make a difference," Johnson said. "I'd rather see that there is competition because they want to do it and will not negatively affect their family home life.... (I)f you want more competition then you have to be more competitive."

Pinal County supervisor appointed to water board

Pinal County District 3 Supervisor Stephen Q. Miller was recently appointed to the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority of Arizona Board.

WIFA is an independent state authority authorized to finance the construction, rehabilitation, acquisition and improvement of water infrastructure throughout Arizona. WIFA is governed by its board consisting of nine voting members appointed by the governor

and legislative leadership and nine non-voting ex-officio members representing legislative leadership and relevant agency heads, it states at <https://www.azwifa.gov/about/wifa>.

The authority administers several federal and state-capitalized programs, including the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and the Water Supply Development Fund.

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BUSINESS LICENSES

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

There were 46 business licenses issued in March 2026 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.

- Uproot Yard Co.; Apache Junction; Michael Hubbard; Landscaping Services (561730).

- Amanda E. Frantz LLC; Apache Junction; Arizona; Amanda Frantz; Other Accounting Services (541219).

- Molinas Spicy Treats; Apache Junction; Hector E Rodriguez Molina; Mobile Food Services (722330).

- Treasures Galore; Apache Junction

- See **Business** on page 9

BUILD-TO-RENT

Verge hosts grand opening

Elected leaders, stakeholders and staff from the city of Apache Junction joined 29th Street Living at the grand opening of Verge — its new build-to-rent community — with a ribbon cutting and private celebration.

The new community is having strong early leasing activity, with all residential buildings now complete and open to residents, according to a release.

Verge, a 201-unit build-to-rent community, introduces a new rental option to the East Valley, offering homes paired with amenities that emphasize connection, flexibility and modern living.

“This is a big moment for our team,” said Beric Wessley, director of lease up operations. “Verge represents the culmination of a tremendous



Verge is at 1297 E. Broadway Ave. in Apache Junction, at the southwest corner of Broadway Avenue and Tomahawk Road. (Verge)

amount of effort, and it’s rewarding to see residents responding so quickly. The pace of leasing in Apache Junction confirms what we believed from the start, there is strong demand for this type of housing in the market.”

Verge is at 1297 E. Broadway Ave. in Apache Junction, at the southwest corner of Broadway Avenue and Tomahawk Road.

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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)

Business

• From page 8

tion; Roy Montgomery; Gift, Novelty, And Souvenir Retailers (459420).

• L&C Auto Rental; Apache Junction; Larry W Stover; Passenger Car Rental (532111).

• Az Wildflower Esthetics; Apache Junction; Stacie Smith; Beauty Salons (812112).

• Ironwood And Broadway 7 LLC dba Arco Ampm; Apache Junction; Zuhair Alhaig; Gasoline Stations With Convenience Stores (457110).

• Action Auto Group dba Doug's Transmissions; Apache Junction; Darren Schiller; Automotive Transmission Repair (811113).

• Destiny Ranch AZ; Apache Junction; Thomas Woods; Luggage And Leather Goods Retailers (458320).

• Solon Corp.; Tucson; Heather Guillom; All Other Specialty Trade Contractors (238990).

• Parlor Games LLC; Grand Junction, Colorado; Ashley Brunell; Other Miscellaneous Nondurable Goods Merchant Wholesalers (424990).

• MAK Construction Enterprises Inc.; Phoenix; Mark Doerflein; New Single-Family Housing Construction

(Except For-Sale Builders) (236115).

• West Blue LLC dba West Blue Tcg; Apache Junction; Layne Watson; Used Merchandise Retailers (459510).

• Ni De Aqui Ni De Alla LLC; Phoenix; Lorenzo Santillan; Mobile Food Services (722330).

• The Dog Father Gourmet Hot Dogs And More; Phoenix; Kris Gonzalez; Mobile Food Services (722330).

• Emovere Psychology Consulting LLC; Gilbert; Stephanie Salisbury; Offices Of Mental Health Practitioners (Except Physicians) (621330).

• Fat Strawz LLC dba The Blistered Tortilla; Buckeye; Amy Or Tom Jury; Mobile Food Services (722330).

• K-9 Cardio; Gold Canyon; Kim Eagington; All Other Personal Services (812990).

• Cubic ITS Inc.; Sugar Land, Texas; Contracts Department; Other Communications Equipment Manufacturing (334290).

• AJ Shadow And Shears LLC; Apache Junction; Heather Lujan; Beauty Salons (812112).

• Associated Contracting Resources LLC; Tempe; Brad Roth; Con-

• See **Business** on page 21

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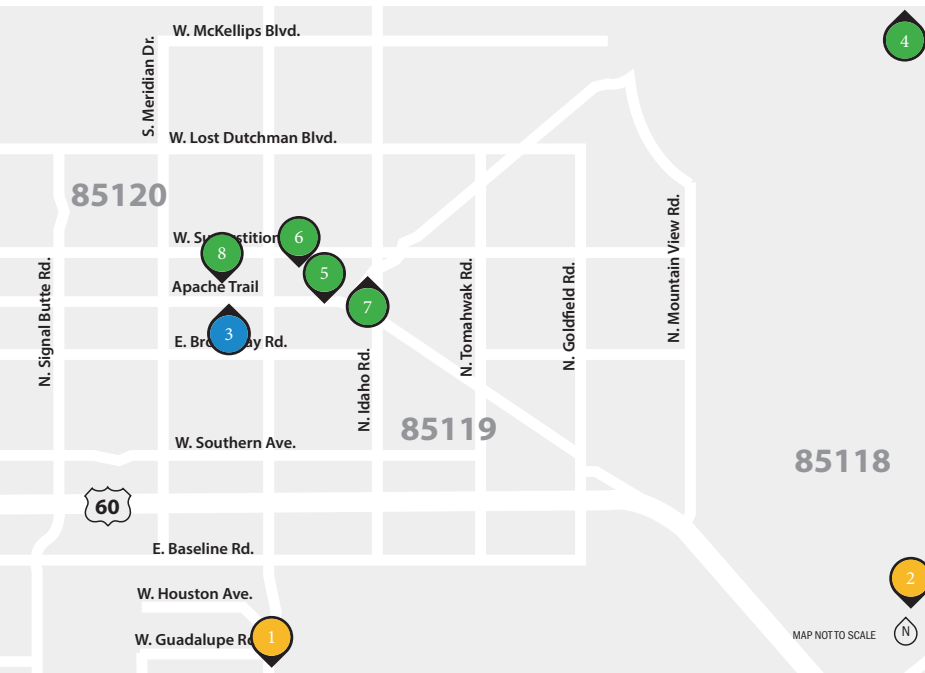
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BUSINESS MOVES



Compiled by Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

LIQUOR LICENSES

1 The Apache Junction City Council on April 21 considered an application for a new series 10 beer and wine store liquor license for **Circle K Store No. 9288** at 10351 S. Ironwood Drive in Apache Junction. Correspondence related to inspections of the premises for safety and code compliant matters were received from the Apache Junction Police Department, Building and Safety Division, Planning and Zoning Department, and the Superstition Fire and Medical District.

2 The Pinal County Board of Supervisors on April 22 considered a special event liquor license application of Roger C. Biede for the Friends of Kids First Foundation Golf Tournament Event to be held at the **Queen Valley Golf Course**, 600 N. Fairway Drive in Queen Valley 6:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Friday, May 8.

OPENINGS

3 **Spud Happens** held its grand opening April 18-19 at 1985 W.

Apache Trail No. 3 in Apache Junction. Open 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Menu items include “twisted spud,” a spiral sliced potato fried and then dusted with garlic Parmesan; “classic baker,” a baked and fried potato topped with shredded cheese and seasoned with salt and pepper; and “BBQ chicken sliders,” two shredded BBQ chicken sliders served on toasted potato buns with fresh cut fries on the side. Search for Spud Happens on Facebook.

IN THE NEWS

4 The April networking mixer for the Apache Junction Area Chamber of Commerce was at **Dolly’s Steamboat**, 16802 AZ-88 in Apache Junction.

5 The **Apache Junction Area Chamber of Commerce**, 567 W. Apache Trail, is hosting its annual Shop Local program May 1-Oct. 31, a benefit of being a member. The Shop Local program supports local businesses by encouraging residents to “Shop Local” in Apache Junction, Gold Canyon and East Mesa. Go to ajchamber.com.

6 Apache Junction Police Department on April 8 held Coffee With a Cop at **Coffee Corner**, 300 W. Apache Trail in Apache Junction.

7 Superstition Fire and Medical District and Apache Junction Police Department are hosting Coffee With Your First Responders 8-9 a.m. Monday, May 4, at **Aerial Coffee**, 185 N. Apache Trail in Apache Junction. “Help us celebrate International Firefighters’ Day & Star Wars Day. Bring the kiddos to check out the vehicles and visit with officers and firefighters,” it states at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1366678669003767>.

8 **Arizona Financial Credit Union**, which doesn’t have a site in the area, recently kicked off its 90th anniversary year with a valley-wide day of service, bringing together more than 100 employees, family members and community partners to support Apache Junction and Glendale nonprofit organizations through volunteer projects. In partnership with HandsOn Greater Phoenix and Arizona Financial Foundation, credit union volunteers dedicated the morning of April 14 to beautification and improvement efforts at the YWCA in Glendale and a domestic violence shelter operated by **A New Leaf**, 2066 W. Apache Trail No. 101 in Apache Junction. The initiative reflects Arizona Financial Credit Union’s commitment to strengthening Arizona communities through volunteerism, nonprofit partnerships and charitable giving, according to a release. In Apache Junction, volunteers supported a domestic violence shelter, **Community Action Against Family Abuse**, now operated by A New Leaf, completing beautification projects, all to help create a safe and uplifting space for families living there. Go to ArizonaFinancial.org.

If you have a new business that has just opened, is under construction or is celebrating an anniversary, please email rdyer@iniusa.org



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FROM THE COVER

Dinner

• From page 1

Prescott or cooler places and then they come back in the fall. But we still serve around 150 to 200 meals," she said. "A lot of people — older people — on limited budgets, they come in on Saturday but they usually give a donation for it... They donate goods and they also socialize with the people."

Volunteer Ric Kayer said the Saturday feast began in the 1980s.

"I wasn't a member of the church back then... It was for the homeless who didn't have a place to eat. Something the Methodist church does a lot," he said. "The hours are varied depending on how many volunteers we can get and so forth. Since I've been here — seven years — we've had enough volunteers and been able to keep it open."

Steiner has been the kitchen lead-

er since the beginning of the year and volunteered for three years in other areas of the community feast before that.

Food comes from the Salvation Army, Midwest Distributors, the food bank in Gold Canyon, donations and a budget of church funds, she said.

Individuals who come for the community feast are usually given two meals each.

"They take either two meals to go or eat one here and take one with them; and they eat it cold or however," Steiner said. "Most of them don't have houses... Some of them don't like to eat in front of other people so they'll take it and go out.... Sometimes they have a hard time eating, they don't have any teeth or different things like that."

Being the kitchen leader is rewarding, Steiner said.

• See **Dinner** on page 20



Volunteers at the community feast included, from left, Margee "Rose" Korrell, Karenanne Mathews and Vivian Patrick-Thomas. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)



April 11 was the first day of volunteering at the community feast for, from left, Debbie Skutnik and Nancy Cline. (Independent Newsmedia, Richard H. Dyer)

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EDUCATION

AJUSD receives 4 grants totaling more than \$1.1M

Apache Junction Unified School District has been awarded four competitive grants totaling more than \$1.1 million that will expand student support services, strengthen academic success and enhance campus safety across the district.

The newly awarded funding includes:

- \$50,000 for a direct student services grant to provide additional tutoring opportunities for students while also supporting professional development for staff, helping strengthen instruction and student outcomes, it states in a release.

- \$127,500 for the 9th Grade Student Success Initiative. In partnership with the Center for High School Success, AJUSD will implement a focused ninth-grade success model. Research consistently shows that a strong freshman year is a key predictor of long-term academic achievement and increased graduation rates.

- \$120,000 for the 21st Century Community Learning Center. This funding will support the expansion of the district's high school Reserve Officers' Training Corps program through after-school and summer enrichment opportunities, giving students additional pathways to build leadership skills and stay engaged beyond the school day.

- \$877,863.46 for a school safety grant. The district has also secured funding to provide a resource officer at each campus, with the exception of Classical Academy at Superstition Mountain. In addition, AJUSD is working to secure a counselor or social worker to serve each school site,



One of the grants is providing \$50,000 for additional tutoring opportunities for students while also supporting professional development for staff. (Kody Pudney, AJUSD)

further strengthening student support systems.

"This is about doing the work that actually moves the needle for kids. It means supporting them early, keeping them engaged and making sure they feel safe at school. These grants give us the ability to do more of that, faster," Superintendent Dr. Robert Pappalardo said in the release.

AJUSD credits the continued success of its grant efforts to Grants Coordinator LisaMarie Rudolph, whose work has brought significant additional resources into the district. Rudolph continues to actively pursue new funding opportunities that benefit both students and staff, the release states.

With these new grants in place, AJUSD will continue expanding opportunities for students while ensuring safe, supportive, and high-quality learning environments across all schools, it states in the release.

EDUCATION

Radio-control helicopter group offers scholarships for CAC students

The Central Arizona College Foundation recently received a donation of \$2,500 from the Superstition Radio Control Helicopter Association, providing ongoing scholarship funding for students in CAC's drone program.

Each year SRCHA conducts a raffle to raise scholarship funds during the Southwest Heli Rodeo at CAC's Signal Peak Campus, which is now a SRCHA Academy of Model Aeronautics affiliated field. The event showcases their dedication to the hobby but also a commitment to giving back.

SRCHA hosts monthly fly days

at the CAC Signal Peak Campus, and the 20th Annual Southwest Heli Rodeo will return to the campus in November 2026. Community members are invited to attend, support the club's initiatives and witness their passion for the hobby.

For information about the club, visit <https://srcha.fun> or email info@srcha.fun. To learn more about the RC world of aviation, visit the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) website at www.modelaircraft.org.

Tax-deductible contributions can be made at www.centralaz.edu/give to support this and other CAC scholarships.



From left are Mike Weatherly, SRCHA president; Frank Alanis, CACPD chief; and Craig Kurtz, executive director institutional development. (Amanda Lujan-Rodriguez, CAC public relations assistant)

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OPINION

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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.

Here are some comments about stories happening in your area:

'No kings' protest Saturday in Apache Junction

"Those who believe in this stuff would be better served to go give their time where it will do some good, like a shelter, food bank, etc." — Daniel K.

"I mean, no kings since 1776 so they must be doing something right." — Sean S.

Commission recommends council approve 155-unit housing subdivision at SR24, Meridian

"Are you kidding? Has anyone thought of the amount of traffic this is going to generate? What is happening here?" — Pamela T.

Eight running for STV's first elected town council

"Yes, let's do the primary election in the middle of summer when barely anyone will vote. You know, just like you did the incorporation vote to guarantee the results that you wanted." — Andrew J.

129-lot Diamante Homes townhome subdivision planned in Apache Junction

"Ooh, this looks nice." — Amy B.

"More pollution, traffic and noise, with less water to go around. Turning wilderness into suburbia." — Michael S.

"I do not like any high density growth in rural areas." — Brian E.

"I think this is great, we need more high quality developments like this in AJ." — Mike H.

"Apache Junction is done, property values are

going to plummet. So old story the municipality is letting this happen to our town we should vote them out and start over before it's too late which is probably is." — John S.

"John, agree. This bunch is not representing the majority of AJ residents. It's representing big developers who are using up our water resources and infrastructure. We residents are paying a big price in taxes to provide more for them while we stand by and watch them destroy our local way of life." — Connie H.

Annual Easter egg hunt in Apache Junction

"Wish there were more family events like this during spring temps. Maybe town-wide scavenger hunts?" — Pauline L.

US60 study to focus on Ironwood Drive to Kings Ranch Road

"They definitely need to add an extra lane from Signal Butte to Idaho. That seems to be the worst bottleneck both ways." — Dusty S.

"I agree that the 60 needs three lanes each way but it should be planned all the way to Peralta because by the time the work gets done Gold Canyon will be even more backed up. Also should add to the key exits south of the 60 so they go further south to all of the new subdivisions south of the 60 so their only exit to and from the 60 isn't Ironwood." — Lonna G.

"Roads are a joke in Arizona. Have always been 20 years behind and not going to change. 'Reviewing?' Yep. For another 10 years." — Bill H.

"Longer left-turn lanes at all 3 Gold Canyon red lights, Superstition, Mt. Br. And Kings Ranch because at rush hour they back up into the lanes of the 60 and will cause an accident." — Joe K.

"The bypass so people can bypass Gold Canyon. I'm tired of people complaining and people going in a 55 mph zone going 85 mph. Please get this done ASAP." — Debbie F.

"Well, it's not the 60. We need a new road just for the Renaissance Fair." — Kevin c.

"Kevin, they need to move it out to Florence I

think." — Bill H.

"Bill, right idea, but down off US10 around Pica cho where the highway has three lanes, plenty of exits and long frontage roads to get traffic off the highway." — Brian E.

"We need a by-pass so only local traffic uses the current US60 between Ironwood and Kings Ranch Road." — Sam N.

"It would be better to bypass Apache Junction and Gold Canyon by extending 24. Exhaust on the freeway will back up against the Superstitions and the noise will extend into our quiet communities." — Peggy M.

"Since money seems to be such a problem, one thing that might not cost that much and could be done sooner rather than later would be to extend the diamond lanes to Goldfield. No overpasses would have to be widened and no on-ramps or off-ramps would have to be realigned." — Dan H.

"Thru traffic on the right between Silly Mountain and Peralta since many in the left lanes are trying to make left hand turns into their subdivisions and dodging speeding bullets as they do! At least until a better plan is implemented." — Beverly W.

Kenadie 'Kenna' Fleming, 17, missing from Apache Junction, police say

"So many missing. Praying for her." — Joan C.

Increasing pay of Apache Junction council, mayor to be discussed tonight

"Before they get a raise, they should give the police and fire a raise. They put their lives on the line every day." — Linda

"They just received a billion dollars to do street maintenance; now they're going to give yourself a big raise." — Jeffrey J.

2 thefts, 1 burglary reported in Apache Junction to AJPD

"Yea, OK. What are they going to do?" — Sharon B.



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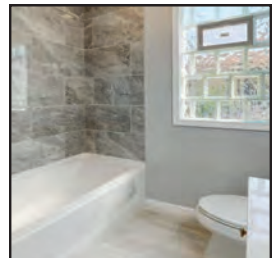
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Memberships





MAY 8-10

'Riverdance 30 – The New Generation'

The Grammy Award-winning music and the infectious energy of its mesmerizing choreography and breathtaking performances has left audiences in awe. To celebrate this incredible 30th year milestone, Riverdance will embark on a special anniversary tour, bringing its magic to Mesa Arts Center, 1. E. Main St.. Get tickets at mesaartscenter.com.

MAY 11

Red, white and BBQ

Chef Shaun O'Neale from Dutchman's Country BBQ in Apache Junction—Season 7 champion of Fox's MasterChef — is teaching tips and techniques for backyard grillers to create their best BBQ experience.

Create your own spice rub to take and design your perfect BBQ apron to keep 6-7 p.m. at the Apache Junction Public Library, 1177 N Idaho Road. For ages 18 and older. <https://www.ajpl.org>.

• See **Calendar** on page 19

THINGS TO DO

Salt River Tubing open seven days a week

Salt River Tubing is open on the Lower Salt River seven days a week through Monday, Sept. 7, weather and water-flow conditions permitting.

Note: Beginning Tuesday, Sept. 8, it is open Friday-Sunday through Sept. 27, according to <https://www.saltrivertubing.com/>

Salt River Tubing is seven minutes from Loop 202 East on North Power Road in Mesa. Salt River Tubing operates under permit of the USDA Forest Service in Tonto National Forest.

Salt River Tubing is open at 8 a.m. and last tube rental is 2 p.m. The cost is \$28 per person or tube, which includes tube rental, a shuttle bus ride

• See **Tubing** on page 19



The annual Super Heroes Splashdown event at Salt River Tubing is Saturday, June 27. (File photo, from Salt River Tubing)

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FLETCHER
music centers



The annual Salt River Pirates event at Salt River Tubing is Saturday, June 13. (File photo, from Salt River Tubing)

Tubing

• From page 18

to and from the parking lot, and parking. The cost for a shuttle pass for a customer bringing their own tube is \$22.

A tubing trip down the Salt River

in Arizona is a fun and relaxing way to spend a summer day. The Salt River is a gentle, meandering waterway that winds its way through the scenic Tonto National Forest. The water is usually cool and clear, providing a refreshing respite from the hot desert sun, according to a release.

The Salt River is one of the most popular spots for tubing in Arizona, so you'll be floating alongside other groups of tubers. The scenery along the river is beautiful, with towering saguaro cacti, lush greenery, and the

• See **Tubing** on page 22

Calendar

• From page 18

MAY 16

National Kids to Parks Day

Apache Junction Parks & Recreation will be hosting a celebration event 9-11 a.m. at Flatiron Community Park, 100 N Apache Trail with games, crafts, and other fun activities for kids and families, all for free.

Contact the Apache Junction Multi-Generational Center at 480-474-5240 or go to apachejunctionaz.gov.

MAY 28

'Lilo & Stitch' dive-in movie

The show, presented by SRP, starts at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 30, at the aquatic center, 1091 W. Southern Ave. in Apache Junction. Bring a beach blanket or lawn chair. Entry fee is \$3 per person at the gate. No pre-registration. All children age 7 and under must be within arms reach of an adult at all times. All flotation devices must be U.S. Coast Guard approved and no glass will be allowed.

In the event of bad weather prior to movie time, the program could possibly be moved to the Apache Junction Multi-Generational Center. Call the Parks and Recreation Department at 480-983-2181 or go to <https://www.apachejunctionaz.gov/111/Parks-Recreation>



StandUP AJ and the Youth Advisory Council for AJ Parks and Rec teamed up for a youth led marketing program. This is one of the impressive results! Stay tuned for more in the coming months! Contact StandUP AJ if you'd like a free glossy poster, bookmark or coloring page! Director@standupaj.org



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FROM THE COVER

Dinner

• From page 12

"I feel like I'm helping out people. I feel rewarded for that. You see a lot of sad stories. Some of them are capable of getting a job but they don't want to get a job. But that's their life," she said. "And you get to know the homeless. A lot of them, you see them improve their way. They had a struggle, but they're getting help.... One guy just found a trailer now so he's living in a trailer, but he was out on the street. He works part-time jobs — just rewarding."

Eight or nine volunteers are needed on Saturdays to do a variety of jobs, Steiner said.

"Some come in to serve and then leave. There are four or five of us who come in Fridays and then come and work on Saturday and serve to the end and do dishes. We have a few volunteers who come in and work over the noon hour," she said.

Others hand out cans or boxes of food and hygiene items.

"They get a plastic bag and just go down the line," Steiner said.

Volunteer Margee "Rose" Korrell staffed the hygiene items table, separating items from larger boxes.

"We try to provide soap, shampoo and conditioner, and just different things to help. Toothbrushes. Things to give them," she said. "People donate this stuff and then we have to distribute it out there and try to be fair with everybody so somebody don't come

COMMUNITY FEAST TOTALS

Total number of people and total meals served quarterly for 2025 and so far this year at the community feast:

• January-March 2025: 1,108 people, with 2,288 meals served.

• April-June 2025: 1,090 people, with 2,231 meals served.

• July-September 2025: 1,098 people, with 2,225 meals served.

• October-December 2025: 1,248 people, with 2,464 meals served.

• January-March 2026: 1,440 people, with 2,160 meals served.

Source: Desert Chapel UMC

over and grab it all and then one person don't get it.

"I volunteer because I enjoy helping other people," Korrell said.

Winter resident Barb Fluth of Gilbert has volunteered at the community feast for four years, primarily handing out meals.

"Mostly I work up there and I'm the one who asks people how much food and I get the food. I'm the go-between... That's what I've been doing," she said.

"First somebody goes out and prays with them and then they come in and they have to go around the back and come down this table," she said of the

hygiene and canned food tables. "So they come down the line and then ... we just ask them 'Do you want one to go or for here?' and they can have two meals."

She enjoys volunteering and giving back to the community.

"God's just gifted us — my husband and I. We started out being poor school teachers and didn't have much... So we just feel, what can we do? We look around and say, 'What can we do to help out?' And we met another couple at our church out in Gilbert who was helping here," Fluth said.

"There's a lot of people who are genuinely appreciative, and I love that," she said of the people seeking meals.

This is the second year Vivian Patrick-Thomas has volunteered at the community feast, most recently at the tables of canned and boxed food items.

"I want to help the poor — I think they need it," she said.

Karenanne Mathews is a longtime volunteer at the community feast and clothing closet, helping out at various stations.

"Since Feb. 14, 2009 — so over 17 years. I like to help other people and it makes me happy," she said.

April 11 was the first day of volunteering at the community feast for Nancy Cline and Debbie Skutnik.

"I'm just so blessed I want to try to help others, I want to give back," Cline of Gold Canyon said.

"I feel so blessed. I feel like I have so much and I want to help out. I take

so many things for granted, like taking a shower every day and having food every day that I want to do what I can to help," Skutnik of Apache Junction said,

Church missions

In addition to the Saturday community feast, Desert Chapel has other missions and ministries, such as a clothing closet also open Saturdays, with clothing, shoes, bedding and personal hygiene products for those in need.

Melissa McKinney, in charge of communications for the church, said people have been coming recently to the clothing closet for work clothes to help with job interviews.

Other ministries of the church include a school supply drive for Avalon Elementary School, donating turkey boxes in November for families at Avalon, and hosting a water hydration drive, she said.

It also has a five-person congregational care team for church members who need support or need to talk to someone, McKinney said.

"Maybe they need someone to pray with them, maybe they need someone to meet them," she said.

Go to <https://www.desertchapelumc.org/ministries/outreach>.

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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Business

• From page 9

struction (230000).

• Skyline Electric Co.; West Valley, Utah; Bridget Martinez; Electrical Contractors And Other Wiring Installation Contractors (238210).

• VB Cosmetics; Chandler; Jessica Musanto; Toilet Preparation Manufacturing (325620).

• Front Row Edge; Apache Junction; Sharon M Uhlig; Administrative Management And General Management Consulting Services (541611).

• Wildflowers and Grace LLC dba Wildflowers Grace LLC; Gold Canyon; Shanna Vickrey; Clothing And Clothing Accessories Retailers (458110).

• LPL Financial dba Three Feather Financial; Apache Junction; Maggie Berizzi; Portfolio Management And Investment Advice (523940).

• United Civil Group Corp.; Phoe-

nix; Sarah Simpson; Architectural, Engineering, And Related Services (541300).

• Golden Sunshine Massage Spa LLC; Apache Junction; Xiaoxia Liu; Other Personal Care Services (812199).

• Industrial Safety Shoe Co. dba Industrial Shoeworks; Phoenix; Bill Cummings; Shoe Stores (448210).

• A And D Engineering Inc.; Ann Arbor, Michigan; Steve Smith; Other Miscellaneous Nondurable Goods Merchant Wholesalers (424990).

• BFL Construction Co. Inc.; Tucson; Vicki Misa; Commercial And Institutional Building Construction (236220).

• Pabco Building Products LLC; Rancho Cordova; Ca; Brandy Hudson; Other Construction Material Merchant Wholesalers (423390).

• Tater Me Home Co. dba Spud Happens; Apache Junction; Jessica Knowles; Limited-Service Restaurants (From 722211) (722513).

• Cicely Snowden dba The Sparkling Diva; San Tan Valley; Cicely Snowden; Jewelry, Watch, Precious Stone, And Precious Metal Merchant Wholesalers (423940).

• R B Wholesale Dist. LLC; Ontario, California; Jennifer A Roque; Household Appliances, Electric Housewares, And Consumer Electronics Merchant Wholesalers (423620).

• Ironstone Construction; Chandler; Joanne Valdez; New Single-Family Housing Construction (Except For-Sale Builders) (236115).

• Northwestern Builders LLC dba North West Roofing Az; Denver; Co; Alicia Raben; Roofing Contractors (238160).

• Pollack Peacebuilding Systems LLC; Miami Beach, Florida; Sara Jeckovich; Human Resources Consulting Services (541612).

• Cristales Kool LLC; Phoenix; Cynthia Cristales; Mobile Food Services (722330).

• The Little House In The Desert LLC; Apache Junction; Grady Donohoe; Toilet Preparation Manufacturing (325620).

• Rocks; San Tan Valley; Jerry Felten; Hobby, Toy, And Game Retailers (459120).

• G And J Development Inc.; Tucson; Brandi Cunningham; Commercial And Institutional Building Construction (236220).

• JP Vending dba Superstition Express Laundry; Apache Junction; Paula Brown; Coin-Operated Laundries And Drycleaners (812310).

• Hofrenning Construction LLC; Scottsdale; Ritch Defreites; Residential Remodelers (236118).

• Prospector Pride Football Boosters; Apache Junction; Jill Bright; Civic And Social Organizations (813410).

• GHG Consulting LLC dba Libertas Processing; Apache Junction; Alex Gomez; Administrative Management And General Management Consulting Services (541611)

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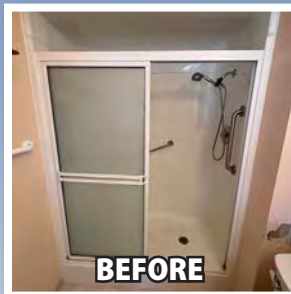


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Tubing

• From page 19

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- Mega Hawaiian Hula: Saturday, Aug. 1,
- Weekends only (September): Fridays-Sundays starting Sept 8
- National Public Lands Day: Saturday, Sept. 26

Source: Salt River Tubing, <https://www.saltrivertubing.com/>



Salt River Tubing is seven minutes from Loop 202 East on North Power Road in Mesa. It operates under permit of the USDA Forest Service in Tonto National Forest. (File photo, from Salt River Tubing)

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BUSINESS

CAC breaks ground on \$102M cultural, performing arts center



The groundbreaking ceremony brought together college leadership, elected officials and community stakeholders, including Governing Board President Gilbert Lopez, Governing Board Member Evelyn Casuga, Governing Board Member David Odiorne, Coolidge Mayor John Thompson; and Casa Grande Mayor Lisa Navarro Fitzgibbons. (O'Shea Tometi)

Central Arizona College recently broke ground on a 91,000-square-foot cultural and performing arts center at its Signal Peak Campus in Coolidge.

The \$102 million, ground-up facility is designed to restore and expand performing arts opportunities for students and the surrounding community following the 2023 collapse of the Pence Center auditorium roof, according to a release.

The March 31 groundbreaking ceremony brought together college leadership, elected officials and community stakeholders, including Governing Board President Gilbert Lopez, Governing Board Member Evelyn Casuga, Governing Board Member David Odiorne, Coolidge Mayor John Thompson; and Casa

Grande Mayor Lisa Navarro Fitzgibbons.

Located at 8470 N. Overfield Road, the new center is expected to be completed in fall 2027 and will serve as a cultural hub for Pinal County, blending performance, education and community engagement in a single, state-of-the-art destination, it states in the release.

"Today is about more than breaking ground on a building; it is about restoring a vital cultural and educational cornerstone for our college and the communities we serve," Dr. Jackie Elliott, president and chief executive officer of Central Arizona College, said during the groundbreaking event. "In the wake of the Pence

• See CAC on page 24



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CAC

• From page 23

Center loss, we saw an opportunity to reimagine what a performing arts facility could be. This new center will not only bring performances back to campus, but will expand access, elevate programming, and create a space where creativity, collaboration and connection can thrive for generations."

The facility's south half will be anchored by a 1,000-seat theater designed to support professional-level productions. The venue will include a 95-foot-tall fly tower to allow scenery, curtains and lighting to be lifted and stored above the stage for rapid transitions and complex performances. A gridiron above the stage will support advanced rigging systems, while a 26-foot proscenium opening will frame performances for optimal audience experience.

Additional theater features include

a dedicated control room, accessible catwalks for lighting and technical operations, dressing rooms, private STAR rooms for lead performers, a green room and a large scene shop for set construction. The venue is also designed to accommodate touring productions, with loading areas that allow semitrailers to connect directly to built-in power systems for efficient setup. Guests will be welcomed by a dramatic glass curtain wall entrance, as well as amenities including a concessions bar, box office and a state-of-the-art acoustical system.

"The scale and sophistication of this project reflects Central Arizona College's commitment to creating a facility that rivals professional venues while remaining deeply rooted in community access and student success," Barry Chasse, founder of CHASSE Building Team, said in the release.

Designed by Architekton and constructed by CHASSE Building Team, the center extends far beyond perfor-

• See **CAC** on page 27

COMMUNITY

1 candidate for council had expenses in 2026

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

Only one candidate running for Apache Junction City Council spent money Jan. 1-March 31, according to campaign finance reports that were due April 15.

Three Apache Junction residents are vying for three open seats on the City Council in the July 21 Primary Election and one is running for mayor, all for four-year terms. They are:

- For mayor: Robert Schroeder
- For council: Darryl Cross, Sandra Mykland and Bryan Soller

The Committee to Elect Sandra Mykland for Apache Junction City Council has spent \$110.70 for disbursements for operating expenses and has \$1,820.83 as a balance at the close of the reporting period, according to the document signed April 12 by Jen-

nifer Shifler, committee treasurer.

The committee Darryl Cross for City Council has spent no money and has a balance of zero dollars, according to the document signed April 14 by Cross.

The committee Bryan Soller for City Council has spent no money and has a balance of zero dollars, according to the document signed April 11 by Nita Soller, committee treasurer.

The committee Robert Schroeder for Apache Junction Mayor has had no financial activity during the reporting period, according to the document signed April 13 by Schroeder.

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DEVELOPMENT



Spanish-style residences are to incorporate traditional elements such as arches and articulated porch and garage openings. Craftsman and Farmhouse styles are to use increased column sizes, expressive roof forms, accent materials and decorative features including corbels, shutters, and wainscot treatments (City of Mesa)

155-unit 'Haven at Destination' housing subdivision planned

By Richard H. Dyer
INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A 155-unit, single-residence development called Haven at Destination is to be constructed on 28 acres at the northwest corner of South Meridian Road and State Route 24 in Mesa adjacent to the city of Apache Junction.

The Mesa Planning and Zoning Board on March 25 voted 6-0 on two items to recommend the Mesa City Council approve the development. Boardmember Genessee Montes was absent.

The board voted on a major general plan amendment to change the placetype from urban center to mixed residential for the property and also on rezoning the land from general industrial to small-lot single residence 2.5 with a planned-area development overlay and approval of a residential

product.

The development is to be accessed from Meridian Road on the north side of the site. Secondary emergency access from Meridian Road is in the approximate center of the site, and a network of pedestrian paths and sidewalks are to connect the lots to community open spaces, amenities and Meridian Road, Senior Planner Mallory Ress wrote in a staff report.

There are to be 310 private garage spaces. The driveway provided at each lot is large enough to fit two vehicles, providing residents with additional off-street parking options, it states.

Four two-story product types are proposed for 39-foot-wide lots, each with three different elevations. Two single-story product types are pro-

• See **Housing** on page 28



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Sun City West • October 28, 2026 • SCW Foundation Center

Mesa • November 13, 2026 • Mesa Marketplace Swap Meet

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NEIGHBORS

Local man plans to make world's longest wood chain

Carl Myers, 88, of Apache Junction wakes up before sunrise six days a week with a goal in mind — building what he hopes will become the longest wooden chain in the world.

Myers, who spent many years working in wood factories in Jamestown, New York, has always enjoyed working with his hands and creating unique craftsmanship. Three years ago, he began carving a wooden chain link by link in a small shed behind his home, his daughter, Cheryl Jones, said in a release.

Each day, he begins working around 5:30 a.m., often continuing even as desert temperatures climb past 110 degrees. Despite the heat, he remains determined to finish what he started.

Woodworking has been a lifelong passion for him. Over the years he has created and given away many handmade pieces to family and friends, including smaller wooden chains and crafted wishing wells that now sit in homes and yards across Arizona, New York, North Carolina, Minnesota and beyond.

Now his focus is on completing his most ambitious project yet —



Carl Myers of Apache Junction with some of the 500 feet of wood chain he has made in the last three years. (Meghan OHotto)

a massive wooden chain he hopes will qualify for recognition by Guinness World Records.

His daughter says his determination is inspiring to everyone who knows him.



Some of the wood chain Carl Myers of Apache Junction has made. (Cheryl Jones)

“He starts working at 5:30 every morning and doesn’t give up, even in the Arizona heat,” Cheryl Jones said in the release. “He’s a man who is determined to reach his goal, and I’m so proud of him.”

Name: Carl Myers

Age: 88

Occupation: Retired

Hometown: Shipperville, Pennsylvania

Family: Married and three children — Debra, Carl Jr. and Cheryl.

When did you move to Apache Junction and why? 2019, I thought moving here would help me with my COPD

What do you like most about working with wood? Easy to form

and shape

Where did you learn to work with wood? Jamestown, New York. I worked in a furniture factory and operated machinery to make the furniture and learned to love working with wood.

How long have you been working on the wood chain and why? Three years so far. I want to get into the Guinness World Records some day for making the longest wooden handmade crafted chain.

The Guinness Book of World Records says the longest wooden chain measures 254.69 meters (835 feet 7 inches) and was made from one single piece of wood. It was created by Peter Gwerder in Schwyz, Switzerland, on July 12, 2012. How do you plan to beat the record? I now have 500 feet completely finished and am continuing to craft each piece individually by hand until I reach 900 feet in length. I sand every piece by hand. Each piece measures to be 1 inch in length and is interlocked with each other. My daily goal is to complete 2 feet each day which takes me five hours to do. I do not craft any pieces on Sundays.

• See **Chain** on page 27



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Wood

• From page 26

What is your favorite memory in woodworking? I really like working with wood. When I go into the Lowes wood department I feel like I'm a kid in a candy store. I enjoy making sure that I get the right piece of wood, it has to be the perfect weight, no sap in the wood and it has to have the perfect dryness. I enjoy seeing the finished product each day and can't wait to see what the final project will look like.

What advice do you have for woodworkers? Always wear eye protection, I have had instances where the wood will come back into my face and could have hurt myself so I always advocate to wear eye protection.

What is something many people don't know about you? I am a determined person; I am deter-

mined to complete the 900-foot chain and will get it done. I don't give up on things that I start.

How are you involved in the local community? I am not very involved with the community but do enjoy time with some neighbors.

What drew you to your community? My wife (of 67 years) and I moved to Apache Junction from New York six years ago because my daughter Dedra lives in the area along with my two grandkids.

What do you most cherish from your childhood? I grew up with five brothers in Pennsylvania and then moved to New York.

What is your most quirky talent? Ability for exactness. I like perfection and with this project that is exactly what is needed. Each piece has to be measured, cut and sanded to perfection for each piece to be interlocked with one another.

CAC

• From page 24

mance. Integrated classrooms and labs will support programs in entertainment industry technology, as well as ceramics and kiln operations, metals and welding, hospitality training and culinary arts.

A professional teaching kitchen will anchor the culinary program and support a second-floor banquet facility designed to host community events, meetings and private functions, creating a potential revenue-generating asset for the college.

An interior courtyard was designed as a welcoming gathering space with cast-in-place seating, string lighting and shaded areas for students and visitors. Steel pedestrian bridges will connect the facility across landscaped portions of campus, further integrat-

ing the center into the broader Signal Peak environment.

"From day one, our vision has been to create a space that belongs to the entire community," said Elliott, CAC president and CEO. "This center will be a place where people come together to learn, perform, celebrate and be inspired, building pride and connection across Pinal County."

With five full-service campuses throughout the region, Central Arizona College offers more than 90 academic degrees and certificates, along with career training, personal enrichment, online and university transfer courses. Continuing education classes, workshops and community events further extend the college's mission to provide accessible educational, cultural and personal growth opportunities for individuals of all ages. Go to <https://centralaz.edu>.

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Civility Checklist

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

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- ❑ **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 & 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.



Now that you've read the checklist, take the Civility Pledge at yourvalley.net/civility-pledge.

Housing

• From page 25

posed for 50-foot-wide lots, each with six different elevations, it states in the staff report.

"The two-story product includes front porches, a covered rear patio, three or four bedrooms and a two-car garage. The single-story product includes covered front entries, a covered rear patio, three bedrooms and a two-car garage," Ress wrote in the staff report. "The two-story product will have the ability to be placed at the front setback or 3 feet behind it, allowing for variation in home placement along the street. The single-story product will need to be placed at

the front setback line; however, the single-story lots are not adjacent to each other so their uniformity in placement will not be noticeable."

Sean Lake of Pew and Lake PLC is the applicant. The Cubes at Meridian 24 LLC is the owner.

Homes are to be designed in Spanish, craftsman and farmhouse styles, it states in a written project narrative.

"Spanish-style residences incorporate traditional elements such as arches and articulated porch and garage openings. Craftsman and Farmhouse styles utilize increased column sizes, expressive roof forms, accent materials and decorative features including corbels, shutters, and wainscot treatments," it states.

129-lot gated townhome subdivision OK'd by council

By Richard H. Dyer

INDEPENDENT NEWSMEDIA

A 129-lot gated townhome subdivision with a homeowners association is to be constructed at the northeast corner of South Acacia Road and East Southern Avenue in Apache Junction.

The Apache Junction City Council on April 21 voted 6-0 with Councilmember Tess Nesser absent to approve rezoning the property and a minor general plan amendment to modify a commercial land use designation to high-density residential. It included a stipulation that it include a site plan approved by the city's planning commission with the addition of directional signs.

The city's planning and zoning commission on March 24 voted 4-3 to recommend council approve rezoning the property and the minor general plan amendment. It directed city staff to work with the developer to examine changing an entrance/exit point from Acacia to Starr Road. Dissenting were Commissioners Ari Kalan, Jesse Gage and Roy Starr.

"I'm going to vote 'yes,' but I do have concerns with traffic," Chair Dave Hantzsche said in voting.

"I also have concerns with traffic but I do think that the development has great possibilities, so 'yes,'" Vice Chair Robin Barker said in voting.

"'Yes,' because I am confident that they will work well with the city and the changes," Commissioner Sandra Mykland said in voting.

Brennan Ray of Ray Law Firm, representing Diamante Homes Inc. asked for the rezoning from high-density multiple-family residential by planned development, general commercial and general rural low-density single-family detached residential to high-density multiple-family residential by planned development with a new planned development overlay to authorize the development.

Three color schemes and a couple different elevation types are planned on the 7.96-acre property just west of Goldfield Road, Principal Planner Nicholas Leftwich told the commission.

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 if it sounds too good to
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Announcement



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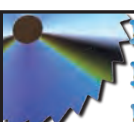
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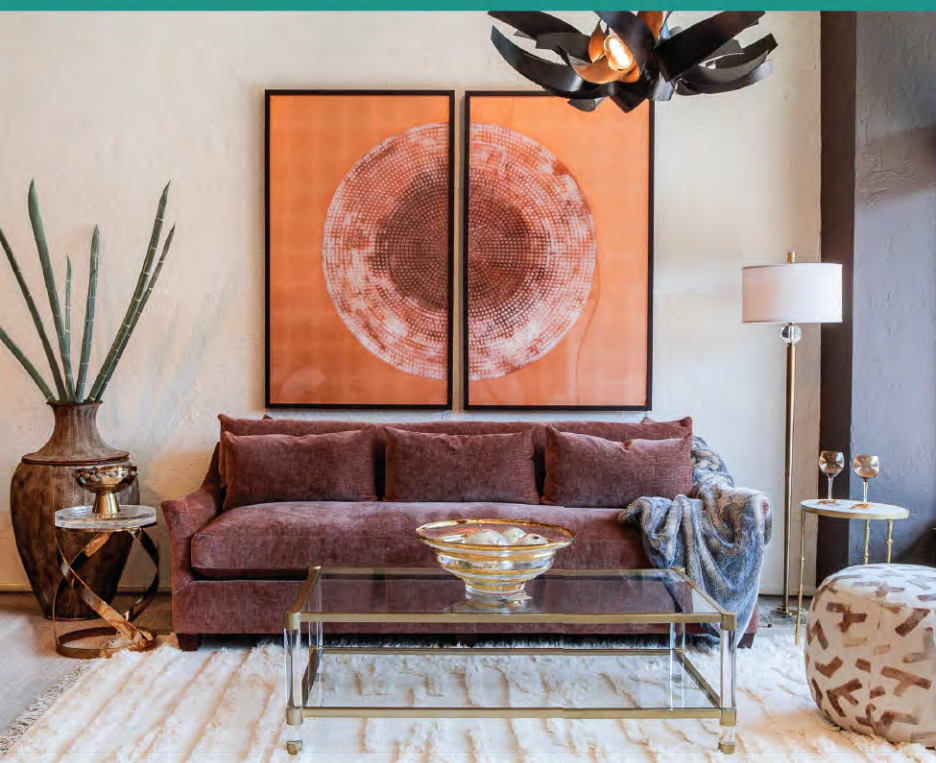
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