

Ak-Chin Centenarian Virginia Thomas - 2023 Masik Tas Light Parade Grand Marshall



Above, Ak-Chin's eldest and wisest Community member, Virginia Thomas, gets ready to ride in the 2023 Masik Tas Light Parade, as Grand Marshall. Holding her banner are granddaughters, Michelle Justin and Candida Upton. (Photo submitted)

Story by Ashley Vincent, photos by Runner Staff

On Saturday, December 9th, Ak-Chin featured its 2023 Masik Tas Light Parade.

This year's Grand Marshall was Ak-Chin's wisest elder, Mrs. Virginia Thomas, who just turned 100 in August.

A number of Virginia's

grandchildren and great-grandchildren joined her in the parade to help carry her banner and pass out candy.

The parade had over 15 entries ranging from community departments, traditional dance groups, royalty from different tribes, including Miss Indian

Arizona, Laney Lupe, and Santa himself. A handful of vendors were also selling food, desserts, light up toys and custom t-shirts along the parade route.

"The light parade has become an event to attend and it was wonderful to see a number



2023 Christmas in the Village

Story and photos by Ashley Vincent

Christmas in the village had a number of craft tables available to community members and employees. Each were overseen by members of the Him-Dak and Cultural Resources Department.

All who attended were able to decorate fresh sugar cookies, and work on different crafts

such as making 3-D paper Christmas trees and coloring a Christmas paper headband.

A few added bonuses to the night were, the hayride driven by Mr. Waylon, some delicious hot cocoa, and beautiful Christmas music sung by Lawrence and Sally Antone.

More photos on page 5

Ak-Chin Students Perform in Winter Dance Concert "Seasons"



(L to R) Alana Oliver, Aleah Oliver, Mylauni Antone, Alexa Norris, Doyleen Pablo and Olivia Andaverde

Story and photos by Tyaun Marshburn

On Thursday November 30th, Maricopa High School held their Winter Dance Concert, "Seasons" under the direction of Artistic Director Ms. Lindsey Skomro.

All students who performed in the Winter Dance Concert are taking Dance at MHS. There are 4 different levels; Dance 1, Dance 2, Dance 3, and Dance Company and the performance counts towards their class final.

There were six Community members participating in the "Seasons" dance concert; Mylauni Antone, Alexa Norris, Alana Oliver, Aleah Oliver, Olivia Andaverde and Doyleen Pablo.

Seniors Mylauni Antone and Alexa Norris are in Dance Level 3. They performed "Is school out yet?" and "Frostbite".

Mylauni's mom, Melanie Antone says, "Mylauni has a

passion for dancing, her main interest right now is K-pop and BTS of course. She also juggles basketball and youth council (she holds the seat of secretary) on top of school and just recently won in 2 categories at the Masik Tas Dance competition this year; Chote and Cumbia."

Alexa's hobbies include dancing, knotting, reading and making her own bracelets. After graduation Alexa plans to take a small break before resuming her education.

According to Dad Silas Norris, Alexa struggled her first 2 years of high school, but as time went on, she began to progress. "I am very proud of Alexa; she may have struggled but with help and dedication she overcame those obstacles." Dad shared. "I'm excited for her next performance in May."

Dance 2 featured Junior Alana Oliver. Alana Oliver has been dancing since middle school.

Her hobbies are hanging out with her friends and playing basketball. They performed "Until We Meet Again".

Aleah Oliver and Olivia Andaverde are freshmen at MHS, they are in Dance 1, 1st hr. They performed "Just One Bite!"

Aleah Oliver has been dancing since elementary school, her hobbies are spending time with her friends, she also enjoys going to school and being in cheer.

Proud mom to Alana and Aleah, Yvette Oliver shared, "The whole dance performance was great."

Olivia's mom, Priscilla Andaverde shared, "(Olivia) loves dancing, being on her phone, and hanging with her friends. Her favorite part of this year's performance was dancing in 'The Apple Dance'." Olivia has been dancing since 8th grade at

MHS Dance continues to page 5



Ms. Dora Hernandez Celebrated with Retirement Party

Story by Raychel Peters, photos by Tyaun Marshburn

After 21 years and 10 months of dedicated service to the Ak-Chin Indian Community, Ms. Dora Hernandez will take her well-deserved retirement.

Dora was surprised with a retirement party planned by her coworkers and departments she worked with on Friday, December 8, at Ak-Chin Service Center.

Dora was showered with flowers, gifts and a plaque of appreciation from the Ak-Chin Indian Community, presented by Vice Chairman Lemuel Vincent. Vice Chairman Vincent went on to talk about how great of a person Ms.

Dora is on a professional and personal level

Michelle "Missy" Justin, Custodial Supervisor took the group down memory lane as she spoke about working with Dora in the early year of their career. "I can recall us working trying to finish jobs before the street lights came on and having lunch at my mom's house."

Dora started working with Ak-Chin in February 2002, as a part-time janitor. She was one of the first hires in the custodial department, working alongside with Armida Mattia (bad), Sammy Padilla and

Dora's Retirement continues to page 5

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2023 Masik Tas Elder Chair Volleyball draws big crowd



Ak-Chin Council members Gabriel Lopez (far left) and Cecil Peters (far right) stand with 2023 Masik Tas Elder Chair Volleyball Champions, Jackrabbits 1 from Gila River.

Story submitted by Ak-Chin Recreation, photos by Runner Staff

The 2023 Masik Tas Celebration kicked off with an elder chair volleyball tournament on December 6th, at the Ak-Chin Recreation center.

Thirty-eight teams came out dressed in matching shirts to claim the title of 2023 elder chair volley champions.

Over 300 elders from tribes across Arizona and even California visited Ak-Chin Indian Community for this year's Masik Tas Elder Chair Volleyball Tournament. The turnout this year was the biggest elder's event post-covid we have had yet.

All teams had a great time competing and cheering for each other throughout the tournament. We had teams

that had been here for prior tournaments and new teams that we haven't seen yet, but have already stated that they will be back. We saw some great saves and plays throughout with many great games coming down to the last point throughout the entire tournament.

Jordan Gusse, Ak-Chin Recreation Program Coordinator says, "Our championship match drew a big crowd as we saw many spectators pull up a chair around the court to watch a thrilling game.

Jackrabbits 1 from Gila River ended up winning the hard-fought championship match and placed 1st. Once Wild, from Ft. Yuma taking 2nd Place and Ft. McDowell

Firebirds coming in 3rd Place.

Thank you to all our volunteers; Mickey Moull, Casey Turgeon, Martina Guy-Peters, Marc Matteson, Vanessa Soliz, Velacita Lopez, Lerline Peters, Wilma Antone, Raychel Peters, Tribal Council Members Cecil Peters and Gabriel Lopez. Also, a thank you to Vekol, Health Education, Gordon's Treats and Harrah's for helping make this event a success.

A big thank you to Sonja White for preparing the traditional meal for lunch.

We look forward to seeing all these teams back in the Ak-Chin Indian Community for our Valentine's Elder Chair Volleyball Tournament.



2nd Place - Once Wild, Always Wild, from Fort Yuma.



3rd Place - Ft. McDowell Firebirds



Two teams represented Ak-Chin in the Elder Chair Volleyball; Ak-Chin S-vepeg U'uhig (above) and Tohono O'odham (below). Tohono O'odham made it pretty far, eventually losing 11-2 to Fort McDowell Firebirds.



Ak-Chin Elder Christmas Luncheon

Submitted by Ak-Chin Elder Center, photos by Runner Staff

The Ak-Chin Elder Center hosted the annual elder Christmas luncheon on Friday, December 8th, at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Elements Event Center.

The event proved to be a success with an impressive turnout of seventy-seven elders and their cherished guests.

The festive atmosphere at the luncheon was nostalgic, as families and friends gathered to share in the joy of the season.

"We don't get to see all the elders in the community as often as we would like," remarked Director Leslie Carlyle-Burnett. "This time of year, provides us with the invaluable opportunity to connect with and appreciate

the presence of our elders. It is truly a blessing and a gift to see them all."

The highlight of the luncheon was undoubtedly the presence of Santa Claus, who took a break from his busy schedule at the North Pole to join in the festivities.

Despite the warmth of his suit, Santa delighted in walking around, interacting with everyone, and spreading holiday cheer.

Special appreciation to the Runner for generously distributing gifts to the elders and providing individual photos for everyone at the luncheon.

The Language Department, Preschool, and Museum also played a significant role by

contributing thoughtful gifts that added an extra layer of fun to the party.

Director Leslie Carlyle-Burnett expressed gratitude, saying, "Special thanks to the elder staff for all their planning and hard work and the departments that provided gifts. These great times don't happen without the departments contributing to this luncheon."

The event not only brought joy to the elders but also emphasized the significance of community and togetherness during the holiday season.

The Elder Center staff extends warm wishes to the Ak-Chin Indian Community for a Blessed and Merry Christmas.



At left, Ms. Jeannie Stephens receives her gift from Santa.

Below, elders and guests mingle and enjoy conversation during the Christmas luncheon.



Christmas in the Village continued from Front page

DECEMBER ELDER MENU

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

15 MASIK TAS; CENTER CLOSED	Fruit / Tamales, Rice, Beans, Mexican Sweet Bread
18 CENTER CLOSED	25 - 26 CENTER CLOSED
19 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit Salad / Baked Chicken, Broccoli, Brown Rice, Apple/Orange	27 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit / Hamburger, French Fries, Baked Beans, Cranberry Bar
20 Scrambled Eggs, Hashbrown, Toast, Yogurt & Fruit / Lima Beans, Roasted Vegetables, Rolls, Applesauce	28 Potato Casserole, Scrambled Eggs, Toast, Turnover & Fruit / Beef Fajitas, Zucchini, Carrots, Rice Pudding
21 Cream Of Wheat, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit / Taco Salad, Lettuce, Tomato, Grapes	29 Bread Pudding, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Fruit / Menudo, Rolls, Chicken w/ Hominy, Upside Down Pineapple Cake
22 Breakfast Burrito, Muffin,	

Menu subject to change

Sally and Lawrence Antone sing Christmas songs for all to enjoy in the Mission School House.



Kids enjoy a hay ride around the museum and church grounds.



Ak-Chin O'odham Runner
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ANNOUNCEMENTS
 Announcements and wishes
 may be phoned in, faxed
 or e-mailed.

**ARTWORK, LETTERS,
 STORIES**
 The Ak-Chin O'odham
 Runner is a Community
 Newspaper and encourages
 Community involvement.

If you have artwork, photos,
 poems or a great story that
 you would like to share,
 please contact us so we
 can include it in "YOUR"
 newspaper. Also, if you have
 suggestions or comments
 about "YOUR" newspaper,
 let the Runner Staff know
 that too.

All submitted letters MUST
 be signed by the author and
 are limited to 200 words.
 Authors must also include
 their name, address, and
 phone number. Names can
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 Anonymous submissions will
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We reserve the right to edit
 all submitted material for
 clarity, grammar and good
 taste. All submissions should
 be received as typed or
 non-cursive writing. Please
 do not submit UPPERCASE or
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Submitted pictures need a
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 Allow 2 weeks for return.

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NEXT DEADLINE
 Don't forget the
 DEADLINE for the
January 5 - 18, 2024
 issue is due by
FRIDAY, JANUARY 12TH

Please submit all
 announcements, wishes, etc.
 no later than
FRIDAY, JANUARY 12TH

Material submitted after the
JANUARY 12TH DEADLINE
 cannot be guaranteed
 placement. If appropriate
 and relevant, it will be
 included in the next issue.

Light Parade continued from Front



of community members
 who made their way
 down Farrell Road
 to watch," Chairman
 Miguel said "Thank you
 to all float entrants who
 participated, it was great
 to see how involved the
 community was."



2023 Masik Tas Community Celebration

Story and photos by Ashley Vincent



The Ak-Chin Youth
 Council hosted the 2023
 Masik Tas Community
 Celebration at the old
 vaila site on Sunday,
 December 10th.

It was an eventful
 afternoon and evening
 as there were numerous
 contests happening.

The day started
 off with the wood
 chopping contest where
 participants were given
 10 minutes to chop one
 large wooden stump into
 small uniform pieces.

Out of the five contests
 the top three were Delroy
 Clark who took first
 place, Justin Chiago who
 took second place, and
 Xendryk Silas-Antone
 who took third place.

Next on the agenda was
 the popover contest,
 where five ladies would
 compete to take the title
 of "best popover" for the
 year.



Although, there were
 some minor setbacks
 with the fire, all the
 ladies were able to whip
 up their best batch of
 dough and fry their fluffy
 golden popovers for the
 judges to try.

Taking first place was
 Barbara Juan, coming in
 second was Mary Anna
 Diaz, and third place
 went to Artemia Antone.

Following the popover
 contest was the menudo
 contest. This year two
 contestants entered in
 hopes of taking home
 the grand prize for best
 menudo.



Everyone in attendance
 was able to taste samples
 of menudo labeled #1 &
 #2, they then were able to
 anonymously vote which
 menudo tasted the best.

Awarded first place was
 Alexandra Carlyle and
 awarded second was
 Yolanda Miranda.

The last event of the
 night was the children
 and adult dance contest.
 This year's judges were
 Marilyn Thompson,
 Delbert White, and Jesus
 "Buddy" Corella. All
 of the contestants were
 judged for best chote,
 best waila, and best
 cumbia.

The race was close as all
 the contestants showed
 out their best dance
 moves. For the children's
 category, best chote and
 waila was awarded to
 Abraham and Harlee

Jose. Francisco Kisto and
 Emily Woody took home
 the award for best cumbia.
 For the adult category,
 Noahli and Mylauni
 Antone took home best
 chote and cumbia, while
 Marissa Bowman and
 Kaycee Lopez were
 awarded best waila.

Molina's Music provided
 the music for the dance
 contests as well as
 entertainment throughout
 the day and for the rest of
 the night until the event
 was over at 9 p.m.

All the contest winners
 were awarded gift cards
 ranging from different
 amounts depending on
 what place they won.

The Ak-Chin Youth

Council would like to
 thank all of the Youth
 Council parents and
 families who helped
 out, all the community
 departments who lent a
 helping hand, Molina's
 Music for playing
 throughout the day, all of
 the contest participants,
 and everyone who made
 it out to celebrate with
 us.

We'd also like to
 congratulate all of the
 winners of our contests.



Digital Community News Outlet Recognizes Chairman Miguel as Local Community Leader



**Ak-Chin Indian Community
 Chairman, Robert Miguel**

Phoenix, AZ — Patch, a
 digital community news
 outlet, partnered with
 T-Mobile to recognize
 the accomplishments
 of local community
 leaders and celebrate
 their contributions.

Based on a nomination
 submitted by Michael
 Kinter, senior vice
 president and general
 manager at Harrah's Ak-
 Chin Casino, Chairman
 Robert Miguel was
 selected. Excerpts from
 the profile are included
 here:

How do you know the community leader?

Robert Miguel is the
 Chairman of the Ak-
 Chin Indian Community.
 Harrah's Ak-Chin is an
 enterprise of the Ak-
 Chin Indian Community.
 I'm the General
 Manager at Harrah's
 Ak-Chin Casino.

What does this community leader do?

Following in the
 footsteps of his
 grandfather, Chairman
 Miguel is committed
 to the success of his
 tribal community. He is
 the first tribally elected
 chairman of the Ak-Chin
 Indian Community, an
 office he has held since
 January 2016.

Why do you believe the community leader should be recognized or honored?

Raised by his paternal
 grandparents, the late
 Jonas and Mathilda
 Miguel, Chairman
 Miguel learned at
 an early age the
 importance of respect,
 dedication, tradition,
 culture, diplomacy and
 leadership.

Before serving on
 the Tribal Council,
 Chairman Miguel
 worked in various
 capacities within the Ak-
 Chin Indian Community
 including working with
 Ak-Chin Farms, Ak-Chin
 Parks and Recreation
 Department and the Ak-
 Chin O'odham Runner,
 the official newspaper
 of the Tribe.

He is a strong education
 advocate and has
 focused his energies
 on providing education

opportunities for
 tribal youth, providing
 access to services
 for the special needs
 community, and
 promoting healthy
 lifestyles through
 wellness and recreation
 programs.

Chairman Miguel
 is a champion of
 growing and nurturing
 the Ak-Chin Indian
 Community's cultural
 and traditional
 practices.

Chairman Miguel has
 represented the Ak-
 Chin Indian Community
 on various committees
 and boards, including
 the Ak-Chin Preschool
 Parent Committee
 President, Tribal
 Gaming Commissioner,
 Industrial Park Board
 Vice-Chairman, and
 Recreation Board Vice-
 President just to name
 a few.

His board service
 extends outside of
 the Ak-Chin Indian
 Community as well to
 such organizations as
 Native American Rights
 Fund (NARF) Board of
 Directors, Inter-Tribal
 Council of Arizona (ITCA)
 Board of Directors,
 Arizona Indian Gaming
 Association Board
 of Directors and the
 Arizonans for Tribal
 Government Gaming
 (ATGG).

Chairman Miguel is
 often asked to speak
 at local, state and
 national organizations
 such as the Native
 Nations Conferences,
 National Indian Gaming
 Association (NIGA),
 Global Gaming (G2E),
 Arizona Indian Gaming
 Association (AIGA) and
 Reservation Economic
 Summit (RES) just to
 name a few.

What's one thing you want everyone to know about the community hero?

Chairman Miguel and
 his wife Connie have
 seven children and like
 his grandfather before
 him, he lives by the
 family motto, "How Can
 I Help You." And that
 philosophy impacts his
 leadership style and
 decision-making.

Community gathers at Ak-Chin Recreation for Holiday Season

Story by Raychel Peters, photos by Runner Staff

December 1, 2023, many events were presented to the Community as an opportunity to get together for the beginning of the holiday season.

A tree lighting ceremony and Christmas dinner was held in the evening at Ak-Chin Recreation, after the Christmas in the Village event at Ak-Chin Feast House.

Families and friends gathered to see the Community light up the

tree at Milton "Paul" Antone Memorial Park, and then Santa appeared with his friends to greet everyone.

Afterwards, everyone made their way inside the gymnasium to enjoy a hot bowl of stew or menudo and fresh yeast bread.

Candy bags were also handed out to those who lined up to take pictures with Santa. Meanwhile, Ak-Chin Youth Council had a table set up for a

community shirt give away.

"It was great to see the entire community come together to celebrate the Christmas Holiday," Chairman Miguel said.

"The tree lighting and the dinner that followed was well attended, and a big thank you to Santa Claus for making the evening special. Thank you to all the organizers and staffers that made this year's celebration wonderful!"



Top right pictures; everyone is enjoying the tree lighting ceremony at Milton "Paul" Memorial Park with Santa.

Below right; members are lining up to get one of the free community shirts that Ak-Chin Youth Council was handing out during the Christmas dinner.

Pictures at left: These adorable youngsters are all smiles as they were able to meet with Santa and exchange their gift list with him.



Him-Dak Museum Christmas Crafts

Story and photos by Ashley Vincent

Ak-Chin Him-Dak Art Program's very own Jeanette Peters and Waylon Antone hosted a Christmas crafts night for the community on December 6th.

The younger members were able to paint and decorate wooden cut outs of Christmas trees and Christmas ornaments.

The adult members were able to make their very own Christmas wreaths starting out with plain

garland then adding their ribbon of choice to add some color to their wreath.

The Art Program provided a wide range of Christmas decorations for all participants to decorate their ornaments and wreaths so they could take home and proudly display.

Below families work on their Christmas art projects to take home.



2023 Ak-Chin Masik Tas host Traditional Games - Songivul and Toka Tournaments

Story and photos by Runner Staff



TOKA

Ak-Chin Language Program hosted their annual Toka tournament, Sunday, December 3, kicking off the events for Ak-Chin's 2023 Masik Tas Celebration.

Twelve toka teams battled all morning to make their way to the winner's circle, where the top three teams would receive beautiful wooden carved trophies made by the talented Earlton Lewis.

Taking first place was team Si'si'Puk, second went to team Junhama, and third place went to Ak-Chin's very own S-kubjuv Ju:dum.

Although not everyone received trophies, all the remaining teams are recognized as winners as well for stepping onto the toka field early that morning, enduring everything that comes with the game.

From slips in the

mud, running in tumbleweeds, diving into the rocks, to using their bodies as shields, racing to pick up the o'la before their competitor could capture it back, giving their all, win or lose, all of the ladies had a great time.

The Ak-Chin Language staff and Youth Council would like to thank everyone who helped make the day possible.

This year's event would not have been great were it not for the following: All of the Songivul and Toka team participants, Ak-Chin Council, Ak-Chin Youth Council, Youth Council Coordinator Joseph Davis, all of the temporary workers, Ak-Chin Police Department, Ak-Chin Fire Department, Ak-Chin Security, Ak-Chin Sanitation & Public Works Department, Mary Anna Diaz, Earlton Lewis and the Ak-Chin Runner.



SONGIVUL

Ak-Chin Youth Council was on hand to help coordinate this year's Songivul Tournament and assist with the Toka tournament as well.

Young men of all ages, took to the Songivul field to play the traditional game of Songivul in hopes of challenging their opponents and themselves to this physical game of strength and endurance that was once played by their ancestors and continues today.

Joseph Davis, Ak-Chin Youth Council Coordinator shared, "We had a lot of fun getting out there on the field and doing our part to keep this game alive. We plan to continue hosting this tournament, and growing the number of participants year in and year out."

The Youth Council would like to thank

all of the young men that participated in the Songivul tournament.

"We'd also like to give special recognition to players that came from the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community."

Youth Winners:
1st Place – Adrio Jimenez
2nd Place – Kaleb Rivers
3rd Place – Connor Miguel

Teens/Adults:
1st Place – Zachary Valles-Garcia
2nd Place – Tizoc Lopez
3rd Place – Dennis Antone



More photos on page 5

Spiritual Run brings good blessings for 2023 Masik Tas Celebration



Before sunrise on Saturday, December 2, a group of runners from the community gathered



beside White and Parker Rd., warming themselves by the fire, preparing for this year's 2023 Masik Tas Spiritual Run. Ak-Chin Youth Council has hosted the Spiritual Run again this year.

Joseph Davis, Youth Council Coordinator shared, "The Spiritual Run continued for a second year, and it had the same primary goal of blessing the community

grounds before we kicked off all of the Masik Tas and holiday events in the community."

Before the runners were paired up to run the approximately eight-mile route, a medicine man, Tim Antone, from Tohono O'odham Nation was asked to fan off each runner, while the Ak-Chin Language staff members shared a blessing song for the runners.

Ak-Chin Councilmember Gabriel Lopez, Antone

and Joseph Davis, Ak-Chin Youth Council Coordinator shared a few inspirational words to the group about the blessings and significance of the Spiritual Run.

"This process was done before and after the run to protect the runners, and to cleanse them and give them strength so that they can do what they set out to do. Spiritual runners are very important for each community to have, as they are the messengers and the ones who carry

prayers on behalf of the people." Joseph explained about the fanning and singing.

Once the first runners were set up, the other paired runners were dropped off along the route that ran throughout the boundaries of Ak-Chin, beginning at White and Parker Rd.

Running north, then west on Peters and Nall Rd., they will cross over John Wayne Parkway, behind the village homes, north on Santos Rd. and then east to Farrell Rd., ending at the old vaila site in the heart of the Community.

Once the runners reached the site, they were welcomed by Ak-Chin Language who sang more traditional songs and again blessed by the medicine man.

Lerline Peters, Councilmember Lopez, Tony Jose and Joseph



Davis shared more with the participants, highlighting the importance of O'odham traditions such as the spiritual run.



Youth Council hopes that these efforts will create a bigger group of runners that the community can call on whenever they are needed; especially more young men.

Everyone has their role/purpose in the community and we hope that more and more individuals will grow to take on this commitment so that the community can grow stronger in prayer through the runners."

Ak-Chin Youth Council would like to thank the 23 individuals who made the commitment to the Spiritual Run this year.



They all expressed their gratitude for everyone running and hope that this tradition continues because it is a big part of the O'odham Him-Dak culture.

After everyone was fanned off, breakfast burritos and drinks were available for everyone in attendance.

Joe added, "Aside from having this Spiritual Run every December, the



More Toka and Songivul pics



MASS SCHEDULE

St. Francis of Assisi Ak-Chin
 Roman Catholic Mission
 16657 N. Church St., Maricopa, AZ 85139

Sunday Mass at 12 noon
December 17th Fr. Peter Teresa McConnell
December 24th Fr. David Koch McConnell

CHRISTMAS DAY at 11 AM
December 25th
 Fr. Peter Teresa McConnell

Sunday Mass at 12 noon
December 31st
 Fr. Peter Teresa McConnell

Solemnity of Mary Mother of God at 12 noon
January 1st
 Fr. Antony Tinker

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

NOTICE
2024 Agricultural Lease Payment

The 2024 Agricultural Lease payment to landowners will be made by mail, direct deposit, or SRPMIC Pay Card only. There will be no in person payout.

On Friday, January 19, 2024, Agricultural Lease Payment checks will be mailed to your address on file or, if you have elected to use direct deposit, disbursement will occur to the financial institution on file with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community ("SRPMIC") Finance Department. Incorrect information will cause a delay in receiving your payment. To update your address or direct deposit information, or to sign up for direct deposit, please contact:

SRPMIC Vendor Maintenance, ph: (480) 362-7729
 (staff is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Arizona time)
The last day for Agricultural Lease Payment updates is December 11, 2023.
Please call as soon as possible.

Pay Card disbursement will be placed onto your SRPMIC Pay Card on Friday, January 19, 2024. To sign up for a SRPMIC Pay Card for your lease payment or to add your lease payment to an already issued SRPMIC Pay Card, please contact the SRPMIC Finance Department at (480) 362-7620. The last day for Agricultural Lease Payment updates is December 11, 2023.

Payments less than \$15.00. All direct deposit and Pay Card payments will be disbursed regardless of the amount. For checks less than \$15.00, landowners will need to contact the SRPMIC Finance Department and request that a check be mailed. Such checks will be processed 7-10 business days following the request after January 19, 2024.

Questions? Contact the SRPMIC Finance Leasing Payment Office (480) 362-7730.
 *Agricultural lease payments will be made based upon farmer payments received by January 2, 2024.

AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY SANITATION HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

- 12/19/23
Trash Pick Up
- 12/21/23
Recycling Pick Up
- 12/22/23
Trash Pick Up
- 12/26/23
Trash Pick Up
- 12/28/23
Recycling Pick Up
- 12/29/23
Trash Pick Up
- 1/2/24
Trash Pick Up
- 1/4/24
Recycling Pick Up
- 1/5/24
Trash Pick Up





Silas Norris.

"I worked everywhere," Dora shared, as she was hired on a part-time basis in the beginning and worked as a floater, cleaning numerous departments for the community, first under the direction of then Human Resources Director, Marlene Gentry.

When the Custodial department was officially created under Ak-Chin Maintenance, Dora was then assigned a dedicated department. She cleaned at Environmental, Capital Projects, Information Systems and the Runner.

I have had the honor to work with Dora for many years. Dora has always been a joy to be

around, she has a great attitude and radiates such positive energy. I know everyone here at the Runner is going to miss her smiling face as she busily cleaned and took such great care of us. We truly wish her a happy retirement!

In a letter, Dora shared, "I have decided to retire from my position as custodian after 20 years

of dedicated service to the Ak-Chin Indian Community. I feel it is time to step back and enjoy my retirement. Thank you, Dora Hernandez."

Thank you, Dora for your dedicated service to the Ak-Chin Indian Community, we wish you all the best on your well-deserved retirement.



MHS seniors Mylauni Antone and Alexa Norris.

Maricopa Wells Middle School and plans on continuing through her high school years. She also likes cooking and baking cookies.

Dance 1, 6th hr, featuring freshman Doyleen Pablo, performed "Sun-kissed!" Doyleen has been dancing for three months. Doyleen has many hobbies including painting, drawing, Lego building, and playing video games.

According to Doyleen's dad, Douglas Pablo she was previously in marching band, but she was behind her classmates and wanted to try something different. She chose dance and has been happy with that decision. "She had tons of fun during the performance, her favorite part was the beach ball part when she was running around and enjoyed being in the moment. She enjoyed watching the students dance and goofing around with her friends behind the scenes. Dancing is new to her, but she is very passionate about it."

All classes performed the opening song which was "Here Comes The Sun" and they also came

together again for the finale song, "It's the Most Wonderful Time of Year!"

Artistic Director Lindsey Skomro has been teaching at MHS since 2018 and enjoys watching her students learn and grow. Skomro says "My experience working with the girls is always rewarding. It's amazing to witness their growth. I hope that the girls continue to make memories that they will hold on to after graduation, and apply the tools they have learned in Dance to real life experiences."

MHS Dance will be performing May 2-3, for the Spring dance concert, "Dancing Through The Decades". For more info on MHS Dance follow, @MARICOPADANCECO



Olivia Andaverde receives flowers for her performance.
Photo submitted by Priscilla Andaverde

Miguel duo perform at DSPA Nutcracker



Story and photo submitted

With the holiday season upon us and the Christmas spirits at a high, the Desert Sun Performing Arts (DSPA), put on a wonderful rendition of the Nutcracker at the Maricopa High School Performing Arts Auditorium, Saturday, December 9.

Children and young adult dancers "wowed" family and friends who were in attendance, to the Nutcracker segments from the Sugar Plum's play.

The story featured young Clara, who would encounter many

adventures, and after the Mouse King had been defeated, she transforms into a Sugar Plum, which follows with a great celebration that takes place in a lavish garden.

The Nutcracker performance featured the father daughter duo

of Ak-Chin Chairman Robert Miguel and daughter Stella. Stella, played a key role, as she performed a ballet solo during the beginning of the show. Chairman Miguel, was one of two voice narrators during the performance.

All classes performed the opening song which was "Here Comes The Sun" and they also came

Gobble Gallup raises funds for Maricopa Pantry Melting Pot Luck



Photo by Michelle Trujillo

On November 19, Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center hosted its Inaugural Gobble Gallup Motorcycle Run, where riders came out to fundraise for the Maricopa Pantry's Community Melting Pot event, to help feed those in need for Thanksgiving.

Jim Shoaf, Maricopa Pantry organizer was grateful to everyone who participated.

"For the first ever Gobble Gallup Run, it was great fun and good to see the riders come out. We even had some people come to just drop off a donation and we were able to have our annual Thanksgiving potluck. Our potluck has always been open and free to everyone and we hope that tradition remains. We feed close to 500 people, so it really

helps."

David D.T. Trujillo, Operations Manager at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment was instrumental in getting the Gobble Gallup Motorcycle Run initiated.

"I wanted to do a motorcycle run, because I like to ride."

Knowing that riders have also done runs to help with toy drives, D.T. decided to do the Gobble Gallup. "I did this with Maricopa Pantry. I wanted to give back to the community because they feed everybody."

Jim also gave thanks to those who helped coordinate the event.

"We have to thank David Trujillo and the Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center who approached us on

the idea and made it happen. We had some logistical hoops we had to jump through but thankfully we also had Veteran Protection Services LLC to provide the required escort for us. We also have to thank Copa TV for their help with marketing and Honeycutt Coffee for providing the riders with caffeinated fuel!"

D.T. said they raised and donated enough funds and food for the city's annual Thanksgiving meal, as well as to cover the rental fees. He also shared that they plan to grow this event for next year, and already has Harley Davidson interested in setting up a booth next year.

"We're looking to grow it every year, its going to be a pretty good deal."

Shoaf also shared, "We had about a hundred riders which was a good start to work with going forward. We also want to see more people line the neighborhoods which really brings a smile to the riders. Overall, now that we know the process, we have some great ideas for next year and we're excited."

2023 White House Tribal Nations Summit



(L to R) Chairman Kasey Velasquez- White Mountain Apache Tribe, Chairman Robert Miguel- Ak-Chin Indian Community, Chairwoman Tania Lewis - Yavapai Apache Nation, Chairman Terry Rambler- San Carlos Apache Tribe, Chairman Tim Nuvangyaoma - Hopi Tribe, Chairman Timothy Williams - Fort Mojave Nation, President Martin Javier - Salt River Pima Maricopa Community

Ak-Chin Chairman, Robert Miguel, was one of many Tribal Leaders, throughout the United States, to attend the Tribal Nations Summit in Washington DC.

The summit took place at the offices of the Department of the Interior and featured opening remarks from DOI Madam Secretary Deb Haaland, who highlighted the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to Indian Country, from signing and passing the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the executive order signing of the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Act,

just to name a few.

Similar comments were made by both President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris during their time at the podium.

"It's hard work to heal the wrong of the past and change the course and move forward. But the actions we're taking today are key steps into the new era of Tribal sovereignty and self-determination-a new era, grounded in dignity and respect, that recognizes your fundamental right to govern and grow on your own terms." President Biden said.

Some breakout sessions throughout the week included topics from Indian Health Services, Fee To Trust, Health Human Services, Transportation, Army Corp of Engineers, and Climate Change.

"This was the first summit in years with Tribal Leaders, so it was great to see the commitment the Biden Administration has to Indian Country," Chairman Miel said.

"Arizona was well represented at the summit and to see and meet with other Tribal Leaders was a great opportunity to get reacquainted."

A photograph of three people outdoors. On the left, a man with glasses and a goatee, wearing a red and white plaid shirt and a black bandana, looks at a smartphone. In the center, a young woman with braces and a white t-shirt smiles while holding the phone. On the right, an older woman with glasses and a blue top looks on. The background shows a desert landscape with a tree and hills under a warm, golden light.

More broadband. More broad impact.

For many, a life without the internet is unimaginable. High-speed internet has become increasingly important to day-to-day life as people depend on it for everything from education and work to socializing and health care. On behalf of the state, the Arizona Commerce Authority is honored to work with local, tribal and industry partners to administer almost \$1 billion in funding to bridge the broadband divide and deliver high-speed internet to all Arizonans.

ARIZONA
COMMERCE AUTHORITY

Learn more about this historic effort at azcommerce.com/broadband



Masik Tas
AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY
FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW
ARIZONA

FREE CARNIVAL
DEC. 15-17
AT THE AK-CHIN CIRCLE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER
Fri. Dec. 15 12:00PM - 12:00AM | Sat. Dec. 16 10:00AM - 11:00PM
Sun. Dec. 17 10:00AM - 9:00PM



FREE SHOW
Fri. Dec. 15 | 7PM - 10PM
at The Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center
Gates Open at 5pm

Midland

Sat. December 16 | 6PM-10PM | GATES OPEN AT 5PM



Los Fenix



erick y su grupo massore



PALOMINOS



Lonnie S.



Los Hermanos Cuatro

Fri., Dec 15

After Party

Sat, Dec 16

10PM-2AM | NO COVER

LUXE LOUNGE

16000 N. Maricopa Rd. Maricopa AZ 85138



JOB OPENINGS

Communication Officer (Dispatcher)

Compensation Analyst

Detention Officer (non-certified)

Maintenance Technician (4)

Motor Pool Technician

Plant Electrician

Plant Electrician & Instrumentation Technician

Police Officer (certified and non-certified)

Security Guard (9)

To review the full job description and apply visit www.ak-chin.nsn.us, Job Openings, and apply online. ALL positions close at midnight (12:00 p.m.) on the closing date.

Great benefits Health Insurance (medical/dental/vision), Vacation/Personal Sick leave, 14 Holidays, 401K

Happy New Year
2024

From the Runner

Dec. 15 - 31 Birthdays

12/15

Angelica Salas-Vargas
Janice Perez

12/16

Lisa Vincent
Raven Humeyumptew
Maria Carlyle-Zepeda
Tyler Peters
Maxine Antone
Ba'n Sehongva'Jose

12/17

Lita Yarberry
Leslie Lewis-Manuel
James Compton

12/18

Justin Humeyumptewa
Ralston Justin
Sarina Smith
Bianca Valenzuela
Josie Hernandez

12/19

Manuel Peters

12/20

Lanna Lewis
Collette Susunkewa
Roni Zappia

12/21

Adrian Romo
Elijah Narcia
Aiden Peters
Eileen Pinheiro

12/22

Volincia Pablo
Manuel Rodriguez
Izik Antone
Candida Upton
Nicolas Olivas

12/23

Yyondrez Antone
Bartholomew Smith

12/24

Velacita Lopez
David Peters Jr.
Kyle Peters

12/25

Serenity Villegas
Arrow Santiago
David Manuel Sr.
Danny Vincent

12/26

Andrew Pinheiro
Angela Trenado

12/27

Erica Oliver
Orlando Lewis

12/28

Javier Zepeda
Bernadina Gonzalez
Julianna Orona
Sabrina Sam
Jersey Peters

12/29

Abel Lewis
Kathleen Miguel
Aubrey Lozano

12/30

Renita Montero-Zamudio
Christopher Lewis
Bernadette Carra
Lee Miguel II

12/31

Mercedes Rivera-Lopez

EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS 12/15 - 12/31

15-Dec

Lucy Flores, Maintenance

16-Dec

Kenneth Kingsland, Retail
Maria Carlyle-Zepeda, Human Resources

17-Dec

Leslie Lewis-Manuel, TGA

18-Dec

Bianca Valenzuela, Retail

19-Dec

Manuel Peters, Environmental Protection
Daniel Espinoza, Law & Order
Richard Kindred, TGA

20-Dec

Devontae Hopson, Fire & Safety
Roni Zappia, Maintenance

21-Dec

Micky Moull, Environmental Protection

22-Dec

Heidi Hinz, Maintenance

23-Dec

Bartholomew Smith, Community Government

24-Dec

David Peters, Retail
Nicole Bench, Law & Order
Velacita Lopez, Cultural

26-Dec

Joe Garcia, Elderly
Johnnie Traughber, Law & Order

28-Dec

Hector Medrano, Sanitation

29-Dec

Kathleen Miguel, Parks & Recreation

31-Dec

Mercedes Rivera, Community Government

Quick HOLIDAY RECIPE



You can make this in **under 5 minutes** and be on your way!

INGREDIENTS:

Ritz Crackers®
Melting chocolate (white or regular)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Melt chocolate in microwave (follow directions on package)
2. Dip Ritz Crackers® halfway in chocolate
3. Set on parchment lined tray, top with sprinkles (optional); set aside to cool;

For this and other recipes: snackworks.com/recipes

Wishes

Happy Birthday to my son Manuel
Love, Mom

Happy Birthday to my grandsons Tyler, Aiden, David Jr. and Kyle and my granddaughters Serenity, Sabrina, Jersey and Aubrey
Love, Grandma

Happy Birthday Dooby Doo
Love, Uncle Mag & family

Happy Birthday to our Goddaughter Bianca
Love Goddaddy & Godmama

Happy Birthday to our #1 Granddaughter Aubrey
Lots of love to you on your special day and every day.
Love, Bapa and Luma

Happy Birthday Aubrey
Love your Family





Ak-Chin Indian Community

2023 MASIK TAS CELEBRATION

LIGHT PARADE

Saturday, December 9, 2023
Starting at 7:00 PM

FREE CARNIVAL

December 15 - 17
2023

Food & Craft Vendors Wanted
For questions, information and
application/registration submittals

Email: AllEventsStaff@ak-chin.nsn.us

RODEO EVENTS *Everyone welcome*

Ak-Chin Circle Arena 16000 N. Maricopa Rd.



ROPING Thursday December 14th

BOOKS OPEN
AT 9AM

1ST ROPING:

#9 Pick 1 Draw 2 for \$150.00
Enter 2Xs Capped at a 5+

2ND ROPING:

#11 Pick 1 Draw 2 for \$150.00
Enter 2Xs Capped at a 6+

3RD ROPING:

Cowboy Draw
Draw 3 for \$150.00 Enter: 2Xs

All Ropings are 3-steer
Progressive After 1
100% Payback



Flaggers Decision Final (MANAGEMENT MAY CHANGE ANY ROPING)

Ak-Chin Indian Community and Stock Contractor are not responsible for accidents, injury, loss or theft during this event.

JR. RODEO Friday December 15th at 9am

ENTRY CATEGORIES:

5 YEARS & UNDER

Sheep Riding (limit 20)
Dummy Roping (limit 20)
Stick Horse Race (limit 20)
Stick Horse Barrels (limit 20)
Entry Fee: \$30

6-9 YEARS OLD

Calf Riding (limit 20)
Ribbon Roping (1x) (limit 20)
Barrel Racing (limit 20)
Goat Tail Pull (limit 20)
Entry Fee: \$35

10-13 YEARS OLD

Steer Riding (limit 20)
Ribbon Roping (1x) (limit 20)
Barrel Racing (limit 20)
Breakaway (limit 20)
Team Roping 2X (limit 20)
Entry Fee: \$40

14-17 YEARS OLD

Bull Riding (limit 20)
Ribbon Roping (limit 20)
Barrel Racing (limit 20)
Breakaway (limit 20)
Team Roping 2x (limit 20)
Entry Fee: \$45



Buckles & Jacket
to All-Around
(6-9, 10-13, 14-17)

Safety Vest required for All Rough Stock events. Western Attire Enforced

No late entries, no phone entries, no refunds. *Except with an acceptable doctors/vet note. Contact Rodeo Secretary 24 hours prior to start of rodeo. All payments must include rodeo entry form. To receive payout, contestants must show birth certificate. 100% Payback

ONE TIME ADMIN FEE OF \$20 PER CONTESTANT

**Contestants must stay in their own age category.

**Ribbon Roping Muggers in the 6-9 & 10-13 age divisions only.
**Team Roping & Ribbon Roping partner must be 18 years or older

MANDATORY CHECK-IN | All contestants must sign a waiver. NO EXCEPTIONS

Cash, Money Order, or Cashiers Check accepted.

Please make payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2023 Rodeo

**No personal checks accepted.

*MAIL-IN & WALK IN ENTRIES ACCEPTED
SEE INFORMATION BELOW

Ak-Chin Indian Community and Stock Contractor are not responsible for accidents, injury, loss or theft during this event.



BULL BASH Friday December 15th at 4pm

Events

Open Bull Bash (limit 30)

Fee

\$200

Added \$

\$500

Open Novice Bull Riding (limit 10)

\$150

\$500

Open Women's Steer Riding (limit 10)

\$75

\$500

ONE TIME ADMIN FEE
OF \$30 PER CONTESTANT
To receive payout, contestants must complete
W-9 and provide a form of identification.



MANDATORY CHECK-IN
All contestants must sign a waiver.
NO EXCEPTIONS

All payments must include Rodeo Entry Form.
Cash, Money Order, or Cashiers Check accepted. Please
make payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2023 Rodeo
**No personal checks accepted 100% Payback

*MAIL-IN & WALK IN ENTRIES ACCEPTED
SEE INFORMATION BELOW

Ak-Chin Indian Community and Stock Contractor are not responsible for accidents, injury, loss or theft during this event.

OPEN WILD HORSE RACE December 16th & 17th

\$500 per Team | 18 Team Limit



ONE TIME ADMIN FEE OF \$30
PER CONTESTANT

No phone entries, no refunds.

Contact Delbert White:

dwhite@ak-chin.nsn.us or 520-414-5515

All teams must be paid up by 11am Saturday, December 16, 2023

MANDATORY CHECK-IN

To receive payout, contestants must complete W-9 and provide
a form of identification. All contestants must be 18 years old to
participate and sign a waiver. NO EXCEPTIONS

On-site: December 16, 2023: Books Open 8am-11am **Books
open until event is filled; Late fee of \$20 per contestant
after December 9, 2023**Cash, Money Order, or Cashiers
Check accepted. No Personal Checks accepted**Please
make payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2023 Rodeo

ALL ENTRY MONEY IS 100% PAY
OUT ALONG WITH ADDED MONEY

*MAIL-IN & WALK IN ENTRIES ACCEPTED
SEE INFORMATION BELOW

Ak-Chin Indian Community and Stock Contractor are not responsible for accidents, injury, loss or theft during this event.

OPEN RODEO December 16th & 17th

PERFORMANCE TIMES

Performances on Saturday & Sunday at 12pm
Slack at 8am (if needed)

Cash, Money Order, or Cashiers Check accepted. Please make
payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2023 Rodeo **No personal
checks accepted. No phone entries, no refunds. *Except with
an acceptable doctors/vet note. Contact Rodeo Secretary 24
hours prior to start of rodeo. To receive payout, contestants must
complete W-9 and provide a form of identification. BOOKS OPEN
UNTIL EVENTS ARE FILLED. LATE FEE OF \$20 PER CONTESTANT
AFTER DECEMBER 9, 2023.

*MAIL-IN & WALK IN ENTRIES ACCEPTED
SEE INFORMATION BELOW

Ak-Chin Indian Community and Stock Contractor are not responsible for accidents, injury, loss or theft during this event.

*Century Team Roper Participants must be 50+ *4 Tribes Team Roper Participants must be enrolled member of Ak-Chin, Gila River, Tohono O'odham, or Salt River, must provide proof upon request. *Will not count for All-Around/Only one highest placing money won in Team Roping will count toward All-Around. Must be 18 years old to participate! One time Admin Fee of \$30 per contestant. Team Ropers must pay for full team in ONE envelope with separate entry forms. All payments must include Rodeo Entry Form.

Events

Bareback (limit 20)

Fee

\$150

Added \$

\$1000

Saddle Bronc (limit 20)

\$150

\$1000

Bull Riding (limit 30)

\$150

\$1000

Steer Wrestling (limit 30)

\$150

\$1000

Tie Down Roping (limit 30)

\$150

\$1000

Ladies Barrell Racing (limit 50)

\$150

\$1000

Ladies Breakaway Roping (limit 40)

\$150

\$1000

Ladies Team Roping (2Xs) (limit 50)

\$300/Team

\$2000

Team Roping (2X) (limit 100)

\$300/Team

\$2000

Century Team Roping (2Xs)* (limit 50)

\$300/Team

\$2000

4 Tribes Team Roping (2Xs)*

\$300/Team

\$2000



Buckles to each
event winner!

\$15,000
ADDED
MONEY

100% Payback

MANDATORY
CHECK-IN
All contestants must sign a
waiver. NO EXCEPTIONS

MAIL-IN & WALK IN ENTRY INFORMATION

MAIL-IN ENTRIES OPEN
October 23, 2023

ENTRIES MUST BE
POSTMARKED BY
December 4, 2023

MAIL ENTRIES TO
Ak-Chin Indian Community
ATTN: Community Events
42507 W. Peters & Nall Rd.
Maricopa, AZ 85138

WALK INS
December 9 | 10am - 6pm
Ak-Chin Entertainment Center
16000 N. Maricopa Rd.
Maricopa, AZ 85138

WEBSITE POSTING 12/12/23

EMAIL: AllEventsStaff@ak-chin.nsn.us

Follow us on Facebook @AkChinIndianCommunity

masiktas.ak-chin.nsn.us



Artwork by Joe Smith