

## Ak-Chin Awarded IHS Joint Venture Construction Program

Story by Robert Miguel  
Submitted photo

Wednesday, November 19th, the Ak-Chin Indian Community received word of being one of seven recipients to be awarded the new and expanded healthcare facilities through the Indian Health Services (IHS) Joint Venture Construction Program.



United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. and Ak-Chin Tribal Chairman Gabriel Lopez.

Chairman Gabriel Lopez, Councilmember Cecil Peters and Ak-Chin Self-Governance Director Karen Fierro, as well as Ak-Chin Lobbyists; Craig Williams, Robert Harmala and John Sobel from the Jenner & Block Firm; were all present at a facility in the Salt River Indian Community when United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert

F. Kennedy, Jr. officially accepted and signed the made the announcement award on behalf of the of the award. community.

Chairman Lopez “Quality health care for

Joint Venture continues to Page 5



Santa Claus makes a special appearance in Ak-Chin Community to spread some joy and “Light Up The Village” for Christmas.

## Community Christmas

Story and photos by Runner Staff

December is always a special time of the year for families to get together and celebrate the season.

The Ak-Chin Indian Community has made it a priority over the years to add to the merriment of its members, with events and activities set up to allow families to enjoy a special occasion.

Monday, December 1st, Ak-Chin Community departments and staff brought together a great arrangement of fun and joy for all to celebrate, with the third annual “Christmas In The Village” and “Light Up the Village”.

The “Christmas in the Village” was hosted by the Him-Dak Museum,

from 4:30 pm to 6 pm, at the St. Francis Feast House area, where everyone enjoyed activities that included; Christmas crafts, Cookie decorating, refreshments, Christmas carols and a hayride.

Immediately following the conclusion of the “Christmas In The Village”, many made

Community Christmas continues to Page 3



Champions: Top l to r: Morgan Peters, Henry Garcia Jr., Cecily Peters. Bottom l to r: Eliza Santiago, Raychel Peters, Kathleen Miguel, Robert Miguel.

## Back-to-Back Champs

Story and photos by Runner Staff

How ‘bout them “Funner Runners”? The squad from yours truly, the Ak-Chin O’odham Runner

Newspaper department, made it back-to-back champions, as the team took the Employee Duel

Monday, November 24.

Employee Duel continues to Page 4



Community Members gather to enjoy a Thanksgiving meal prepared and served by staff from the Ak-Chin Police Department.

## PD Thanksgiving Dinner

Story and photos by Kristen Villegas

With the upcoming busy season for Ak-Chin departments, it’s no secret the community

will be seeing more of each other, as these activities aim to bring the community together. The

end of the year draws near so that means more events for members to partake in.

PD Thanksgiving continues to Page 6

## Azalyana White: A Rising Star in Maricopa High School’s ROTC Program

Submitted by Dr. Mario Molina, Ak-Chin Education Division Director

Freshman Azalyana White has distinguished herself as an exceptional talent within the ROTC program at Maricopa High School, earning accolades and recognition for her outstanding performance.

Her exemplary dedication and skill have not gone unnoticed, as Colonel Kirksey has recommended her for the prestigious role of color guard.

This esteemed position, responsible for carrying the flags during parades and ceremonial events, is seldom extended to freshmen, highlighting Azalyana’s remarkable aptitude and commitment to her ROTC duties.

Accompanying Azalyana in a recent photograph were her Ak-Chin Counselor, Mrs. Blackwell, and former Advisor Estrella Reyes-Helping-



Azalyana White with Estrella Reyes-Helpingstine (left) and Ak-Chin Counselor, Mrs. Blackwell.

stine. mentors.

Both Mrs. Blackwell and Mrs. Reyes-Helpingstine were invited to observe the ROTC class for the afternoon, underscoring the significance of Azalyana’s achievements and the support she receives from her

Azalyana’s journey serves as a testament to her extraordinary capabilities and sets a high bar for her peers, marking her as a prominent figure in the ROTC community at Maricopa High School.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PAGE 2 ELDER NEWS  
PAGE 3 COMMUNITY NEWS

PAGE 4 AWARDS & SPORTS  
PAGE 8 ANNOUNCEMENTS



# Ak-Chin Preschool thankful for Ak-Chin FD

Submitted by Stephanie Valdez, ECE Program Manager

The Ak-Chin Early Childhood Education program had their annual thanksgiving lunch on Thursday, November 20. and invited the Ak-Chin Fire department to enjoy the meal and show how we are thankful for them.

Each classroom was able to eat lunch with one of the firefighters at their table and talk to them. The lunch lasted about an hour.

Once the meal was finished the fire department was given a big thank you poster decorated by the preschool students and each child went around and gave the firefighters high fives and hugs.



# 2025 Diabetes Day Rival Run & Walk brings more fun

Story and photos by Raychel Peters

On, Thursday, November 20, Ak-Chin Health Education held their annual Diabetes Day Rival Run & Walk, in recognition of Diabetes Awareness month, with a 1.5 mi run/walk, Farmer's Market and Bingo.

The pre-Thanksgiving workout had a great turnout, "We had a total of 138 individuals that participated at the Diabetes Day event." Martina Guy-Peters, Ak-Chin Health Educator shared.

A registration table was set up outside the Ak-Chin Circle Elements Event Center, along with tables lined with healthy fruits and vegetables for the Farmer's Market.



Participants signed in to receive their raffle tickets and then encouraged to take a couple laps around the Ak-Chin Circle field. Many came sporting

their ASU, UofA and other fave college teams, for the opportunity to earn more raffle tickets.

Martina also shared an interesting stat about this year's Rival Run & Walk. "We ordered for the first time, the same number of t-shirts for ASU and U of A fans. Usually there are more ASU themed shirts ordered for this event."

Once laps were completed, participants were able to choose from an assortment of large reusable grocery bags to build their own produce bag.

Health Education set up a great selection of fruits and vegetables to choose from, like; potatoes, sweet potatoes, apples, oranges, jalapenos, carrots, celery, green chili, onion, zucchini, and yellow squash.

Inside Elements there was a healthy dinner offered, with chicken, vegetables, and drinks.

Participants gathered around the tables with their families to enjoy the meal, along with a few rounds of Diabetes Bingo, which was a first-time add-on for the event.

Peters shared the intention of the



Diabetes-themed Bingo game "was to provide a fun educational game... It consisted of five different categories: diabetes prevention, diabetes signs and symptoms, diabetes risk factors, diabetes treatment and tests, and diabetes complications."



Throughout the evening raffle drawings were also held, with healthy incentives and ASU, UofA themed items for awards. "Health Education

would like to thank Riva and the Elements staff for all their help in coordinating the set up for this event. A special thank you to the Ak-Chin Youth Council for all your help. We would also like to thank Waylon Antone, Clayton Antone, Ak-Chin Fire,

and Ak-Chin PD." "As always, we appreciate and thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to dedicate to fitness."

# ATTENTION: Ak-Chin Elder Center will be Closed, Until Further Notice

We apologize for the inconvenience, while we work through issues.

Home Delivery, Medical & Dialysis Transportation will resume as normal.

Thank you for your patience, dear elders! We truly appreciate you and can't wait to welcome you back!

If you have any questions, please call the Elder Center at 520-568-1760.

See you soon!  
The Elder Center Team



## ELDER CHRISTMAS GIFT CARD DISTRIBUTION

WHERE: AK-CHIN ELDER CENTER  
48141 W FARRELL RD  
MARICOPA, AZ 85139

DECEMBER 10, 2025

PICK UP HOURS: 9AM-6PM

**GIFT CARD DISTRIBUTION WILL BE A DRIVE-THRU EVENT**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE THAT IF AN INDIVIDUAL IS PICKING UP A GIFT CARD FOR AN ELDER, THE ELDER MUST PROVIDE A HANDWRITTEN NOTE AND SIGNED BY ELDER IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE GIFT CARD\*\***

FOR ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS CALL THE ELDER CENTER @ (520) 568-1760

# ATTENTION Enrolled Ak-Chin Indian Community Elders

If you wish to travel to wonderful destinations, for example, Hawaii 2026, you need a Travel ID or the REAL ID.

- The Arizona Travel ID is designed to meet federal identification requirements for air travel and other purposes.
- All Arizona residents can apply for a Travel ID. This includes citizens, permanent residents, and individuals with legal status in the U.S.
- When applying for a Travel ID, you must provide specific documents, including:
  - Proof of identity (a birth certificate or passport).
  - Proof of residency (a utility bill or bank statement with your name and address).
  - Social Security number verification, which can be done via a Social Security card or a tax document.
- You can apply for a Travel ID at any Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) office. It's recommended to make an appointment to avoid long wait times.
- The fee for obtaining a Travel ID in Arizona is typically around \$25, but it's advisable to check the latest fee schedule on the ADOT website.
- The Travel ID is required for domestic air travel, to enter federal facilities, and for other identification purposes that require a compliant ID.

Please call the Elder Center at 520-568-1760 if you have questions or need assistance. We are happy to assist you in obtaining the required ID for Air Travel.

# FREE CONCERT DECEMBER 19<sup>th</sup> 2025

PAPAGO WARRIORS

LOS SOCIALES

CHAKA & FRIENDS

LOS HERMANOS CUATRO

CLEAR BAG POLICY







Newspaper of the  
Ak-Chin Indian Community  
© 2025

16600 N. Maricopa Hwy.  
Maricopa, Arizona 85139

**OFFICE HOURS**  
8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.  
MONDAY - FRIDAY  
PHONE: 520•568•1375  
FAX: 520•568•1376  
E-MAIL:  
runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us

**Ak-Chin O'odham Runner**  
Editor: Raychel Peters  
Photojournalists:  
Kristen Villegas and  
Robert Miguel  
Graphic Artists:  
Eliza Santiago and  
Diana Carlyle  
News Assistant:  
Kathleen Miguel

**Ak-Chin Tribal Council**  
Chairman: Gabriel Lopez  
Vice Chair: Delia Carlyle  
Council Members:  
Dennis Antone, Lisa  
Garcia, and Cecil Peters

**Regular Contributors:**  
Ak-Chin: Education, Elders,  
EPD, Health Education, Him-  
Dak, Library and Recreation

The Ak-Chin O'odham Runner  
is published on the first and  
third Friday of each month  
(unless otherwise noted).

The "Runner" is delivered  
to all residents and  
departments of the Ak-Chin  
Indian Community, as well  
as surrounding community  
businesses, interested groups  
and subscribers.

All information and original  
work contained in this  
newspaper is copyright  
and may not be reproduced  
without written permission  
from:  
**Ak-Chin O'odham Runner**  
42507 W. Peters & Nall Rd.  
Maricopa, Arizona 85138

**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. If you have  
suggestions or comments  
about "YOUR" newspaper,  
please 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 be omitted by request.  
Anonymous submissions  
will not be accepted.

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 formatted paragraphs.

Submitted pictures need a  
return address and brief  
description. Pictures with no  
address will remain on file.  
Allow 2 weeks for return.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATE**  
2025 Subscription rate is  
\$43.00. If you would like to  
receive the "Runner" by mail,  
please send a \$43.00  
check/money order to:  
**Ak-Chin O'odham Runner**  
42507 W. Peters & Nall Rd.  
Maricopa, Arizona 85138

Make check/money order  
payable to:  
**AK-CHIN INDIAN  
COMMUNITY**

**NEXT DEADLINE**  
Don't forget the  
DEADLINE for the  
**December 19, 2025** -  
January 1, 2026  
issue is due by  
**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12TH**

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

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

Community Christmas continued from Front

their way to the Ak-Chin  
Recreation department; with  
some enjoying the hayride  
over; where the "Light Up The  
Village" took place.

"Light Up The Village" was  
coordinated between the Ak-  
Chin Recreation and Community  
Events departments, along with  
support from Ak-Chin Library  
and the Runner.

Everyone made it to the gym,  
just in time to see Santa and his  
#1 Elf; escorted by their Ak-Chin  
FD reindeer; to officially "Light  
Up The Village" with the lighting  
of the beautiful Christmas tree in  
front of the gym, along with all  
the iridescent decorations.

Once inside the gym, Santa was  
escorted to his photo area, while  
a line formed to have pictures  
with the Jolly Ole Elf. Many  
came dressed in their comfy and

cozy "themed" pajamas for pics.  
Meanwhile, another line formed  
for dinner, which was a most-  
delicious selection of prime  
rib or chicken tenders, along  
with creamy buttered mashed  
potatoes, green beans and bacon,  
rolls and another delicious  
assortment of desserts.

Families were also able to enjoy  
the craft-making tables set up  
by the library and community  
events staff.

Ak-Chin Council was also on  
hand to hand out goodie bags to  
everyone, and raffle tickets were  
being called for a great selection  
of gifts.

Please be ready for more  
Community activities and events  
planned for the next couple of  
weeks to celebrate the holidays  
and Ak-Chin's Masik Tas.



Taking a  
"hay ride"  
through  
parts of the  
community  
was a great  
time.



Decorating cookies was a "hit"  
for "Christmas In The Village"  
attendees.



Him-Dak's Jeannette  
Peters helps a youngster  
with crafts.



The Great "Snow  
Beast", makes an  
appearance at  
"Christmas In The  
Village".



It was a perfect night for  
making some "smores".

Everyone lined up for the delicious  
dinner, catered by Vekol Market.



Chairman Gabriel  
Lopez and Vice-  
Chairwoman  
Delia Carlyle,  
hand out goodie  
bags to everyone  
at the "Light Up  
The Village"  
celebration.



The Community Christmas was well attended as families  
enjoyed dinner, raffles, gifts, photos and visiting with Santa.



# Third Annual Gobble Gallop held in Memory of Fallen Rider

Story and photos by  
Michelle Trujillo

More than 40  
motorcycle riders  
roared into Ak-Chin  
Circle the Sunday  
before Thanksgiving  
for a good cause.

On November 23, the  
third annual Gobble  
Gallop raised funds  
for the Maricopa  
Pantry's Community  
Potluck and honored  
a fallen rider who  
helped dream the  
event into reality  
years ago.

Organizers said the  
fundraiser collected  
more than \$1,200  
and 300 pounds of  
food, including side  
dishes and canned  
items for the Pantry's  
community-wide



Bikers take to the road during Gobble  
Gallop.

free potluck on  
Thanksgiving Day  
at Maricopa Wells  
Middle School.  
The annual potluck  
offers Maricopa and  
Ak-Chin residents  
a chance to gather  
for the holiday, but  
it also comes with  
overhead costs, from  
room rentals to other  
essential expenses.  
"We paid the bills and  
fed about 500 people  
that had no food or  
anyone to share the  
day with," said Jim  
Shoaf, founder and  
CEO of Maricopa  
Pantry. "It was a  
blessing and we're

Gobble Gallop continues to Page 5



Sheriff Ross Teeple and State Representative Teresa  
Martinez, open the gates to the new structure of  
the Maricopa Pantry during a ceremony last week.

# Maricopa Food Pantry Ground Breaking

Story and photo by Robert Miguel

For Jim and Alice  
Shoaf, the day to  
move forward in  
providing a structure  
that would offer  
food distribution  
and a community  
center for much  
needed resources  
and volunteer  
opportunities; has  
finally come true.

On Thursday,  
November 20th,  
the Shoaf's,  
invited guests,  
local and county  
representatives  
were invited to a  
groundbreaking  
ceremony at the  
Mountain View  
Community Church  
in Thunderbird,  
for an 8,000 plus  
sq. ft. structured  
foundation.

The culmination of  
this event has been  
a dream come true  
for the two, after  
twenty-one years.  
Even more so now,  
as they hoped to  
expedite the project  
ever since their  
refrigerated trailers  
were destroyed by a  
fire four years ago.

destroyed our  
trailers, Alice looked  
at me and said, 'God  
didn't close the door,  
he opened another  
to give us the drive  
to open up our  
warehouse,'" Jim  
said.

"We're going to  
get this built, while  
we're still alive and  
we're going to get it  
functioning properly  
so it'll take care of  
the people in this part  
of Arizona for years  
and years to come.  
It's always been my  
dream to take care  
of the people in this  
area."

Jim shared his  
upbringing and  
how poor he and  
his family were,  
growing up raising  
animals and growing  
crops were how they  
survived.

He and Alice have  
seen too many people  
succumb to hunger  
and many who do  
not know where their  
next meal would  
come from.

These unfortunate  
experiences have

driven the two to do  
all they can to help  
in as many ways as  
possible, to provide a  
meal or food.

"I don't want to  
ever see anybody go  
hungry," said Jim.

Funding has been  
secured for the  
structure, but the  
facility will still need  
financial assistance  
in other areas before  
potentially opening  
its doors in March or  
April of 2026.

"I'm hoping by  
April we can open,  
but we're still trying  
to raise money for  
electric and the  
septic, which will get  
us in the building,"  
Jim said. "Once  
we're in, we can  
really get the inside  
of the building set  
up with the offices  
needed."

The Shoaf's and the  
Maricopa Panty have  
given perishable  
goods on a couple  
of occasions this  
year to the Ak-Chin  
Community, and  
they hope to provide  
more in the future.

"When the fire



It was rivalry week in football between the Arizona State University Sun Devils and the University of Arizona Wildcats, but on the 24th, at the Ak-Chin Recreation department gymnasium, it was eleven departments who took to the courts for some friendly rivalry in chair volleyball.

Of the eleven, which included; TNT (Turtles n Training), The Usual Seusses with Dr. Excuses, Him-Dak, Team Divided, Smashers, Human Resources, Blazing Turtles, Parks & Reckless, Suncats & Wild Devils, Team Ka-Ching and Funner Runner, it was the team from the media that claimed the title.

After dispatching TNT and the Smashers, it was a matchup against the Suncats & Wild Devils for the right to a stop in the title game. After a back-and-forth battle, the Suncats & Wild Devils, pinned a three-point loss on the Funner Runner squad, sending them into the loser's bracket.

The Runner then faced off against the Parks & Recreation team, with the winner facing off in a winner take all game against Suncats.

The game between the Runner/Recreation was possibly the best game of the tournament as the game went back and forth until the end. With a three-point lead and game point for the Recreation crew, the Runner made a valiant effort to tie the score at 10 apiece. The Runner team claimed victory when one of the Recreation players (we won't say who but they know who they are) stood up to hit the ball, a serious "no-no" in the chair volleyball rules, giving the Funner Runner a one-point win.

In the title game, Funner Runner jumped out to a quick lead and never looked back, making it back-to-back, as they took last year's title.



2nd PLACE - Suncats & Wild Devils



3rd PLACE - Parks & Reckless



Left: Mayra Martinez with The Usual Seusses hits over to the Him-Dak. Right: Armondo Zepeda's quick thinking helps keep the ball in for the HR Team. Below: Cecil Peters from Team Divided aka Ak-Chin Council bumps over to Team Parks and Reckless.



To commemorate Rivalry Week, Recreation offered shirts to all players with a house-divided logo, and held raffles for items designated for both ASU and UofA fans.

A big Forks Up or Bear Down to the Ak-Chin Recreation for hosting another great event, and a big cheer to all the teams

for coming out to support the cause and their favorite Arizona team.

Congrats to Wildcat Country who battled it out in ASU territory, amongst all the Forks Up tailgates, as UofA claimed the rights to the 2025 Territorial Cup, with a 23-7 win against the Sun Devils on November 28th.



Raffle winners claim their prizes. And one lucky staffer from HR was even a two-time winner!

# Honor Roll Shout Out for Maricopa Wells

Story and photos by Raychel Peters

On, October 20, Maricopa Wells Middle School held their Quarter 1 Awards Assembly. Aubrey Lozano was one of the honored students recognized for her academic achievement in maintaining an A-B report card.

She was awarded a certificate along with some MWMS swag. Below she shows her award, along with receiving a fist bump from MWMS Principal Thad Miller.

Congratulations Aubrey, keep up the great work!!



# Mini Basketball Games

Story and photos by Kristen Villegas

The mini basketball season is here and the kiddos have been hard at practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It's evident that the practice is paying off as these kids have come out more aggressive than before as their first game took place on November 22, 2025.

If you wish to support them, they have games on Saturdays December 6 and December 20, 2025, January 10 and January 17 of 2026; starting at 10 am. For more information on the games or practices, please contact Parks and Recreation staff at 520-568-1740.



The first set of games began with the 3-5 age group taking to the court first.

Left photo: Emerson Antone finds an opening to take his shot against 3 grey blockers.

Below: William Delma gets his feet right for a shot against the Maroon team.



Above: Andrea Lopez takes it down the court with speed after rebounding from the grey team.



Below: Arian Coronado with the help from Aaliyah Vincent, pushes through a group of Maroon players, Joaquin Dickerson and Ember Navarette.



# Pride Awards for Saddleback Students

Story by Bojana Uzelac, Ak-Chin 3rd-5th grade Student Advisor  
Photos by Kristen Villegas

Congratulations to Itzehl Trejo (5th grade) and Ariya Ramon (4th grade) for receiving the Pride Award.

The pride award recognizes those who display the 3 Be's of the school which are: Be safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible.

They are students who strive to make good choices, maintain positivity in the school and are role models to their peers.

Great work girls!







From left to right: Devin Delrow - Principal Advisor for Tribal Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Ak-Chin Councilmember Cecil Peters, Ak-Chin Chairman Gabriel Lopez, Mark Cruz - Senior Advisor to Health & Human Services Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Ak-Chin Vice-Chairwoman Delia Carlyle, RADM (ret.) Micheal Weahkee - IHS Phoenix Area Deputy Director, Karen Fierro, Ak-Chin Self Governance Director, and John Sobel, Federal Government Relations to Ak-Chin (Telegraph Advisors).

every American is a moral duty and the cornerstone of a stronger nation,” Kennedy said.

“For more than 30 years, the Joint Venture Construction Program has shown what true partnership can achieve – building health, hope and opportunity across Indian Country as we continue the mission to Make America Healthy Again.”

Ak-Chin’s selection to participate in the JVCP establishes a recurring staffing package of funding. IHS will provide funds for staffing within the healthcare facility and will give regular funding in perpetuity within the Indian Health Service Ak-Chin Self-Governance compact and funding agreement.

Under section 818 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, P.L. 94-437, authorizes IHS to establish joint venture projects under which Tribes or Tribal organizations would acquire, construct, or renovate a health care facility and lease it to the IHS, at no cost, for a period of 20 years.

Participants in this competitive program are selected from among eligible applicants who agree to provide an appropriate facility to

IHS.

The facility may be an inpatient or outpatient facility. The Tribe must use Tribal, private or other available (non-IHS) funds to design and construct the facility.

In return the IHS will submit requests to Congress for funding for the staff, operations, and maintenance of the facility per the Joint Venture Agreement.

Proposals considered under this program are evaluated against the following criteria:

- The need for space at the location is verifiable when evaluated by using the criteria in the
- IHS planning methodologies;
- The Tribe is able to fund and manage the proposed project using its own (non-IHS) funds;
- The project is consistent with the IHS Health Systems Planning program; and
- The project is consistent with the IHS Area Health Facilities Master Plan.

This award is an exciting and momentous accomplishment for the Community, comparable to the delivery of the community’s water settlement, which was delivered in the 80’s.

The Joint Venture Construction Program application process was very competitive as many tribes across the United States applied.

The availability of the program has been offered every ten years.

The Community applied for the Phase I JVCP Application in October 2024 of last year and were notified in January 2025 of the selection to move onto the Phase II JVCP application. Ak-Chin’s final JVCP application was submitted in April 2025.

There were 25 applicants in Phase I and only 11 were chosen to apply for Phase II application.

The Indian Health Service selected 7 Tribes to participate in the Joint Venture Construction Program.

The Community will fund construction of the new healthcare facility, which will be leased to IHS at no cost.

There is a time period of negotiations with the Indian Health Service to establish details of services, etc.

Ak-Chin is the first Tribe in the IHS Phoenix Area to be awarded the JVCP and second in Arizona

to be awarded. Tohono O’odham Nation was awarded in the IHS Tucson Area 2001 for the San Simon Heath Center.

The moment was of obvious excitement and jubilation for Ak-Chin.

“We are deeply grateful to IHS for this powerful partnership, which will enable us to replace our current aged and inadequate health clinic to meet the needs of our growing population,” said Chairman Lopez.

“A new health center will be a huge step toward increased self-governance and greater control of Ak-Chin health care.”

The community had been waiting to hear back from Indian Health Service for a decision since June 2025.

All that waiting came to an end when Secretary Kennedy personally delivered that message on November 19th. That itself is amazing and speaks to the important relevance to this project.

For decades, Community Council placed healthcare as a number one priority, knowing that it would take time to finally have a facility of their own.

Although there were many obstacles, the continued process of moving forward showed the support and perseverance of having the Community’s best interest at the forefront in all aspects to healthcare.

Council was able to put

together a professional team consisting of consultants, attorneys, and specialists to ensure the Community had the best opportunity for this application as possible.

The submission of the JVCP application was a team effort which included the following Community officials and departments: COM, CSM, Treasurer, HHS, Self-Governance, Purchased Referred Care, Planning & Development, Capital Projects and GIS.

Ak-Chin Community Council, both past and present, have a well-known presence in Washington, DC. The connections and relationships established; has provided direct access to advocate for the Community on many levels.

The Community Council relationships have provided a positive rapport in Washington DC, including at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services headquarters offices and the Indian Health Services headquarters office in Rockville, Maryland.

Community Council’s consistent meetings with congressional representatives gave the ability to make the human connection sharing Ak-Chin examples of healthcare concerns and requests to the table.

The JVCP application was a concentrated focus of discussion with congressional delegation, Congressman Eli Crane and Senators Mark Kelly

and Ruben Gallego. Their offices sent in support letters to Indian Health Service in support of Ak-Chin’s JVCP application.

Their bipartisan support is an excellent example of commonalities shared in respect to healthcare direct access for the Ak-Chin Indian Community.

A few days following the announcement, Mark Cruz, Senior Advisor to Secretary of Health & Human Services, Robert F. Kennedy Jr, Devin Delrow, Principal Advisor for Tribal Affairs, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Michael Weahkee, IHS Phoenix Area Deputy Director were able to visit the community, in particular the current Ak-Chin Clinic and the preliminary site for the new hospital.

Many Tribal Leaders and community members who spearheaded and inspired this outcome, I’m sure are jumping for joy; in particular, those who are no longer with us.

On a personal note, when the announcement was made and shared to membership, I could not help but notice that we received rain for a couple of days.

Being taught that weather in nature, was a great sign, I could not help but signify the rain as “tears of joy” from our membership who are up in Heaven.

Congratulations to the Ak-Chin Indian Community!



Ak-Chin Tribal Council and staff show Health & Human Services and IHS staff the designated site of the planned Health Facility.

Gobble Gallop continued from Page 3

looking forward to expanding it next year.”

This year’s Gobble Gallop doubled as a memorial ride for Antonio Jackson, a generous Maricopa man and business owner who was killed in October when a vehicle collided with his motorcycle in the Valley.

It was Jackson, who, years ago, shared his idea for a community fundraiser ride in Maricopa with

David Trujillo, operations manager at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center.

In addition to owning his local moving company, Jackson was an active volunteer at Maricopa Pantry and other community fundraising efforts.

“Antonio was a part of anything that benefitted or helped other people - He was such a nice guy and would do anything for

anybody,” Trujillo said.

Many of Jackson’s family members attended the event, including his wife and son. Riders received a special ride pin engraved with Jackson’s likeness.

As the event unfolded, people shared memories of him and expressed their support to the family.

“It meant a lot for his family to see that people who didn’t even

know them cared about Antonio,” Trujillo said.

“Everyone knew the kind of person he was, and they wanted to support his family because Antonio would’ve done the same.”

It wasn’t just motorcycle riders who turned out for the event at Ak-Chin Circle. Families wandered through the parking lot before the ride began, taking in rows of polished chrome on display.

Copa TV Editor-in-Chief John Stapleton hosted an open-air market with local food and merchandise vendors.

Registrants were treated to free donuts and coffee, courtesy of Richard Maldonado, owner of Valor Pride Security.

Spectators lined the route and cheered on the caravan as it rolled through Maricopa neighborhoods and along

major thoroughfares, including Sonoran Desert and John Wayne parkways and Smith-Enke, Porter and Honeycutt roads.

Trujillo said he anticipates even more growth next year and is grateful for the support of the Ak-Chin Indian Community.

Editor’s Note: The writer of this article, Michelle Trujillo, is the spouse of Gobble Gallop organizer David Trujillo.

FREE CONCERT

DECEMBER 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2025

DOG YARD

CLEAR BAG POLICY

Ak-Chin Circle ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

MORE ARTISTS TO BE ANNOUNCED

IN THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY COURT  
45526 West Farrell Road  
Maricopa, AZ 85136  
Phone (520) 589-1385 Fax (520) 588-1386

CASE NO.: CV-2025-00028-DV

Arrow L. Bowman  
VS  
Aubrey D Weintraub

Petitioner  
Respondent

CIVIL SUMMONS

THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY TO:  
Aubrey D Weintraub

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to appear before this Court in the above-entitled matter for a Preliminary Hearing set on Tuesday the 16th day of December, 2025 at 11:00 AM at the Ak-Chin Justice Complex 45526 W. Farrell Road, Maricopa AZ 85139.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR FOR AT THE TIME AND DATE SET FOR THE HEARING A JUDGMENT BY DEFAULT MAY BE ENTERED AGAINST THE RESPONDENT AND THE PETITIONER MAY BE GRANTED THE RELIEF REQUESTED IN THE PETITION OR THE PETITION MAY BE DISMISSED FOR FAILURE OF THE PETITIONER TO APPEAR.

GIVEN under my hand and seal of Ak-Chin Indian Community Court in the State of Arizona this 24th day of October, 2025.

Deanna Justin, Court Administrator of the Ak-Chin Indian Community Court



During the evening of November 21, 2025, the Ak-Chin Police department extended the invitation of a Community Appreciation Dinner at the Ak-Chin Recreation gymnasium, that featured Thanksgiving staples; like turkey, ham, pumpkin pie, and much more.

To begin the dinner,

Community elder Sally Antone shared a blessing, which was followed by words from Ak-Chin's Police Chief Manuel Garcia; who expressed a heartfelt "thank you" to the community.

Afterwards, guests were invited to make their plates, with elders being served first by their families and PD officers.

Ak-Chin Police department staff and officers took turns serving members who waited in line. They also took the time to make rounds around to each table to grab food and drinks for those who asked.

The night was one of great food and good laughs.



# Community Holiday Food Distribution

Story and photos by Robert Miguel



Ak-Chin members lined-up early at the Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center on Saturday, November 22nd as the community gave out a food and supply distribution, Thanksgiving style!

The line of cars began wrapping around the roundabout around 9 am between Harrah's and the Center and moved at a snail's pace.

But there were no complaints, as membership received goods, which featured a turkey, pumpkin pie, bag of 10-pound beans, 10-pound bag of rice, case of Powerade or juice, bread, flour and other perishable goods.

Volunteers of community employees and members

helped register community members and assisted in putting goods into their vehicles, during the drive-thru process.

Volunteers were ready to roll before 9 am and stayed throughout the afternoon, even during the cloudy-rainy weather.

I was able to get in line to pick up my goods and timed how long it would take for me to get from my

starting position, which was under the walkway bridge, to the point of receiving.

It took me an hour and thirty-four minutes from beginning to end.

It reminded me of the traffic encountered going to an Arizona Cardinals football game, the only difference was, membership came out winners with all the goods they received!



## Hearing Notice Ak-Chin Indian Community Planning and Zoning

**Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Hearing regarding the following case at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, at the Justice Center Conference Room.**

### Case: PS-08-25 Ak-Chin Farms Park:

Project Applicant/Parks and Recreation Director, Ann Antone, is requesting Preliminary Site Plan approval to construct a 6.6-acre community park at the intersection of West Peters and Nall Road and Farm Lane.

The proposed project will consist of:

- Play equipment; and
- Ramadas and shade structures; and
- Restroom building; and
- Multi-purpose sports field; and
- Basketball court; and
- Walking path; and
- Parking area; and
- Fencing; and
- Landscape, irrigation, and lighting.

## SHOPPING WITH TRANSIT

Join us for transportation to Chandler this December!

### Important Information

- This is a FREE, on-demand scheduled service.
- Riders must call in advance to reserve their trip.
- Passenger pick-ups will begin after 9am in hopes to arrive to shopping center by 10:15am.
- Riders will arrive at the destination between 10:00–10:15 AM.
- Return pick-up from the shopping location is exactly at 1:00 PM.
- Passengers will be taken home in the reverse order of pick-up.

### Important Rider Rules & Expectation

- All normal transit rules apply.
- Riders must provide a valid phone number and keep their phone with them during the trip.
- Vehicles will not wait past the 1:00 PM return departure time.
- If a rider is not present at 1:00 PM, they may forfeit the ride home.
- Any delays, issues, or changes: Riders must contact Transit immediately.
- Space is limited — rides are first come, first served by reservation.

**AK-CHIN TRIBAL TRANSIT**  
SERVING THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY

DISPATCH LINE 520-568-1630

## SHOPPING WITH TRANSIT

### Schedule

Riders may call now to reserve their December shopping trips. Early scheduling is encouraged due to limited availability.

#### Week 1

- Tuesday, Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> Phoenix Premium Outlets
- Wednesday, Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> Chandler Fashion Center
- Thursday, Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> Arizona Mills Mall
- Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> Arizona Mills Mall,  
(9 AM - 3 PM) Chandler Fashion Center, & Phoenix Premium Outlets

#### Week 2

- Tuesday, Dec. 9<sup>th</sup> Arizona mills Mall
- Wednesday, Dec. 10<sup>th</sup> Phoenix Premium Outlets
- Thursday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> Chandler Fashion Center

#### Week 3

- Tuesday, Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> Chandler Fashion Center
- Wednesday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> Arizona Mills Mall
- Thursday, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> Phoenix Premium Outlets

**AK-CHIN TRIBAL TRANSIT**  
SERVING THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY

DISPATCH LINE 520-568-1630



# We are **GRHC!** Where Care Meets Community.



**The Flu Vaccine and all vaccines are available to Gila River Health Care Patients.**

Walk-in to one of our Gila River Health Care Primary Care Departments. Contact us at any of Primary Care locations for any questions you may have,

Hu Hu Kam  
Memorial Hospital  
(520) 562-3321 Ext. 1495

Hau'pal (Red Tail Hawk)  
Health Center  
(520) 796-2600 Ext. 2697

Komatke Health Center  
(520) 550-6000 Ext. 6060

Pediatrics  
(520) 562-3321 Ext. 7337

Public Health Nursing  
(520) 550-6042



## Happy Holidays from Gila River Health Care's SANE Forensic Nursing Department

The holiday season is often a time of celebration, but it can also bring added stress and challenges for many.

Unfortunately, heightened stress during this time can lead to an increase in interpersonal violence, impacting individuals and families in profound ways.

As forensic nursing professionals, we want to remind our community that support is available. If you or someone you know is experiencing violence, seeking care early can make all the difference.

Together, let's work toward creating a safe and supportive environment during this season of giving and beyond.

### Gila River Health Care's Forensic Nursing Services:

- Sexual Abuse
- Interpersonal/Domestic Violence
- Child Physical Abuse
- Follow-up Forensic Exams
- Community Education

For more information, please contact us at 520-562-5151 or email [sane@grhc.org](mailto:sane@grhc.org)

View our GRHC news,  
information & events:

Scan QR  
code to  
view!



December 2025					
Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000
Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000
Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000	Single Room Suite Suite Counseling & Case Manager LAWRENCE - 14000000 Tina's Health Department DANIELA - 14000000 New Pregnancy Planning KATIE - 14000000

December 2025	
Day	Time
Monday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tuesday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Wednesday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Saturday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sunday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm

December 2025	
Day	Time
Monday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tuesday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Wednesday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Thursday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Saturday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sunday	8:00 am - 5:00 pm

**Reminder!**

Gila River Health Care's  
Upcoming December Closures

**Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS WILL RESUME FRIDAY, 12/26/25.

**New Year's Day, January 1<sup>st</sup>**

NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS WILL RESUME FRIDAY, 1/2/26.

If you need immediate assistance, please call 911  
or visit the Emergency Department at Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital.

For any information on services open during the holiday,  
please call Gila River Health Care's main line (520) 562-3321.





# JOB OPENINGS

## CURRENT JOB OPENINGS:

- Accounts Payable Technician
- Communication Officer (part-time)
- Communications Officer
- Court Security Guard
- Deputy Clerk II
- Detention Officer Certified
- Detention Officer Certified (part-time)
- Detention Officer- Non Certified
- Plant Electrician
- Plant Electrician & Instrumentation Technician
- Police Officer (non-certified)
- Police Officer (certified)
- Security Guard
- Security Systems Technician

## Open to Enrolled Ak-Chin Members Only

- General Worker (Temp Worker)
- Museum Technician (2)
- Oral Historian

[www.ak-chin.nsn.us](http://www.ak-chin.nsn.us)

To review the full job description and apply visit [www.ak-chin.nsn.us](http://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. If you need assistance, please call the Human Resources Dept. at 520-568-1050.

## LEGO ROBOTICS ENRICHMENT

Sign up today to join our Quarter 3 LEGO Robotics Enrichment Program!

**Qualifications**

- Currently 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> Grade
- Regular School Attendance
- No Failing Grades
- Good Behavior at School

**CONTACT YOUR ADVISOR TO SIGN UP**

520-568-1280

## AK-CHIN TRIBAL TRANSIT

SERVING THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY

## 2025 Transit Schedule Changes

### TRANSIT SERVICE CHANGES

Masik Tas, December 19th

**\*\*Event Only transport will be provided\*\***

**\*\*Christmas Eve, December 24th Transit Closed at 11:00am\*\***

**Christmas Day, December 25th**

**Christmas Holiday, December 26th**

**New Year's Day, January 1st, 2026**

JOIN US FOR A

## WINTER FAMILY LITERACY NIGHT

DECEMBER 16, 2025  
FROM 6PM TO 8PM

Ak-Chin Indian Community Library  
Join us for a special holiday story time with hot chocolate and cookies

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT  
library@ak-chin.nsn.us  
520-568-1675

Merry Christmas,  
Son, Haili,  
Grandbaby, Macho,  
our daughters, &  
Fam...It's Timeee!  
With Love, Grandma  
& Grandpa



Happy Birthday  
to my daughter  
Florinda  
Love, Mom

Happy Birthday to  
my granddaughters  
Justine, Zoe and  
Alivia and grandson  
Tyler  
Love, Grandma

Happy Birthday Zoe  
Zoe  
Love, Goddaddy and  
family

Happy Birthday  
Alivia  
Love your family

## 2025 Ak-Chin Masik Tas 10K & 2 Mile

**SATURDAY – December 13th, 2025 | 9:00 AM**  
**AK-CHIN SERVICE CENTER**  
48227 W Farrell Rd. Maricopa, AZ 85139

Join us for a 10K or a 2 mile event in celebration of Ak-Chin's Birthday!

Register by scanning QR code. Deadline December 11th, 2025.

**FREE EVENT OPEN TO EVERYONE**  
**MEDALS FOR TOP 10K FINISHERS**  
**T-SHIRTS FOR PARTICIPANTS**  
**10K RACE STARTS @ 9:00 AM**  
**10K CHECK-IN BEGINS @ 8:15 AM**  
**2 MILE STARTS @ 9:30 AM**  
**2 MILE CHECK-IN BEGINS @ 9:05 AM**

Questions? Please contact Ak-Chin Health Education  
Phone: (520) 568-1080 Email: mguy@ak-chin.nsn.us

## Sugar Plum Tea

DSPA PEARLS BALLET COMPANY

# THE NUTCRACKER

**December 13th**  
**12:00 pm & 4:00 pm**  
**Maricopa High School Performing Arts Center**

Tickets available at [www.dspa.dance](http://www.dspa.dance)

Call 520-483-8915 or visit [DSPA.dance](http://DSPA.dance) for info

DSPA Desert Sun Performing Arts Gems, Inc.

Proceeds to benefit DSPA Gems, Inc.

## Employee Birthdays 12/1 - 12/18

<b>12/1</b> Shantee Lands, Police	<b>12/12</b> Carlo Moreno, Fire
<b>12/2</b> Candice Antone, Parks & Rec Lindsey Valles, Fire	<b>12/13</b> Morgan Trevino, Police
<b>12/7</b> Evelyn Justin, Him-Dak Roberto Palanti, Motorpool	<b>12/14</b> Hector Soliz, Sanitation
<b>12/8</b> Francesco Betro, Fire Larry Joe, Capital Projects	<b>12/15</b> Lucy Flores, Custodial
<b>12/9</b> Florinda Peters, Him-Dak	<b>12/16</b> Maria Carlyle-Zepeda, Human Resources Kenneth Kingsland, Vekol Clarissa Knoll, Preschool
<b>12/10</b> Cruz Rodriguez III, Court	<b>12/17</b> Leslie Lewis-Manuel, Tribal Gaming Agency
<b>12/11</b> Desirae Antone, Custodial Guadalupe Gloria, Preschool	<b>12/18</b> Ruby Lujan, Finance Bianca Valenzuela, Custodial

## Sanitation Holiday Schedule December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Trash Pick Up	2	3	4 Recycling Pick Up	5 Trash Pick Up	6
7 Trash Pick Up	8	9	10 Recycling Pick Up	11 Trash Pick Up	12 Trash Pick Up	13
14 Trash Pick Up	15	16	17 Recycling Pick Up	18 Trash Pick Up	19 Ak-Chin's Masik Tas Holiday	20
21 Trash Pick Up	22	23	24	25 Christmas Day Holiday	26 Community Holiday Trash Pick Up Recycling Pick Up	27
28 Trash Pick Up	29	30	31 (January) New Year's Day Holiday	1 Community Holiday Trash Pick Up Recycling Pick Up	2	3

## Birthdays 12/5 - 12/18

<b>DECEMBER 5</b> Justine Peters Erica Trejo Drevyn Silas-Antone	<b>DECEMBER 10</b> Alex Antone	<b>DECEMBER 15</b> Angelica Salas-Vargas Janice Miguel
<b>DECEMBER 6</b> Dena Romo Janiyah Stevenson Richard Joaquin	<b>DECEMBER 11</b> Desirae Antone Guadalupe Gloria Malinda Pete Andrew Humeyumtewa Alejandro Maldonado Jr.	<b>DECEMBER 16</b> Lisa Vincent Raven Humeyumtewa Maria Carlyle-Zepeda Tyler Peters Maxine P. Antone Ba'n Sehongva'Jose
<b>DECEMBER 7</b> Saryla Miranda Danya Lopez Monica Murrietta Evelyn Justin Omarion White Joseph Manuel	<b>DECEMBER 12</b> Elvera Stephens Gina Lewis Zoe Gardner	<b>DECEMBER 17</b> Lita Yarberry Leslie Lewis-Manuel James Compton
<b>DECEMBER 8</b> Odell Stephens Xavier White	<b>DECEMBER 13</b> Joseph Kaniatobe Phillip Joaquin Tristianna Antone Adeline Thomas Arie Deleon	<b>DECEMBER 18</b> Justin Humeyumtewa Alivia Peters Ralston Justin Sarina Smith Bianca Valenzuela
<b>DECEMBER 9</b> Corey Allison Angelica Antone Leo Lewis, Jr. Terry Santiago Virginia Castro Florinda Peters	<b>DECEMBER 14</b> Kiandry Jacuinde-Miranda Channel Antone	

## 12/2025 December

Library Hours  
Mon-Fri : 9am-6pm  
Sat: 12pm-4pm  
Sun: Closed

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Light Up the Village Closed at 5pm	2	3 Storytime @10am	4	5	6
7	8	9	10 Storytime @10am	11	12	13 Light Parade Closed
14	15	16 Winter Wonderland Literacy Night 6-8pm	17 Storytime @10am	18	19 Masik tas Closed	20 Closed
21	22	23	24 Merry Christmas Closed	25	26 Closed	27 Closed
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR Closed	Programs and events open to Ak-Chin members, residents and employees Minors under 16 must be accompanied by an adult over 18.	

Questions? Call: (520) 568-1675 or Email: [Library@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:Library@ak-chin.nsn.us)





Donut eating champion, Roman “Teddy” De La Cruz shares his excitement with host Tim Hattrick.

## “A Hole Lotta Dunkin’ Going On”

Story and photo by Robert Miguel

To commemorate the grand re-opening of Maricopa’s first Dunkin’ Donuts, Harrah’s Ak-Chin Casino hosted the sweet and spirited, “A Hole Lotta Dunkin’ Going On” Donut Hole Eating contest on Saturday, November 22nd, in the main Casino Lobby at Harrah’s Ak-Chin.

Twenty-Four contestants were chosen through a lottery process after signing up to participate an hour prior to the event. Participants that entered and selected were from the Total Rewards Player Program the casino offers.

A standing room only crowd who “hooted” and “hollered” with anticipation, greeted contestants as their names were called to make their way to a table setting with Dunkin’ Donut draped emblems and logos being sported.

Four first rounds began the contest, with six contestants per round going head-to-head for the right to advance to the second and final round of six.

The first rounds featured “munchkin donuts” with one-minute given for contestants to see how

many munchkins they could consume within that time.

In the second and final round, full donuts were on the plate, with a time of one-minute and thirty-seconds given to the four contestants who made it.

As contestants munched and scarfed down their donuts, the crowd yelled with excitement, cheering on their donut munching favorite.

When the buzzer sounded to end the contest, Roman “Teddy” De La Cruz’s arm was raised as the Champion. For his accomplishment, De La Cruz received \$250 in cash, 50,000 in Caesars Reward Credits, \$250 in free slot play, a \$50 Dunkin’ gift card and a complimentary two-night hotel stay.

Rounding out the winners were; Second Place – Elias Garcia, Third Place – Brian J. Cox, and Fourth Place – Christie Carrin. All participants in the contest received free t-shirts and a \$30 Dunkin’ gift card.

The Event Host was iHeart Media and KNIX Radio Personality Tim Hattrick.

MOVIES • RESTAURANTS • BOWLING • ARCADE • LASER TAG • GROUP EVENTS

# DECEMBER EVENTS

## Ak-ChinCircle.com

**2025 Masik Tas**  
**FREE CARNIVAL**  
**DEC. 19-21**  
 AT THE AK-CHIN CIRCLE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

**MOVIE RELEASES**  
 12/05 Five Nights at Freddy's 2  
 12/05 Fackham Hall  
 12/05 Jujutsu Kaisen: Execution  
 12/05 Kill Bill: The Whole Bloody Affair  
 12/12 Silent Night, Deadly Night  
 12/12 Hamnet  
 12/19 The Housmaid  
 12/19 Is This Thing On?  
 12/19 David  
 12/25 Anaconda  
 12/25 Marty Supreme

**MEET SANTA**  
 IN THE AK-CHIN CIRCLE LOBBY  
  
**DEC. 21 4PM-8PM**

**MONTHLY MOVIE MUST-HAVE COMBO**  
 Large Popcorn  
 44oz Drink  
 Reese's Peanut Butter  
 Cup King Size  
**\$20**

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 20TH**  
**OFFICIAL AFTER PARTY**  
 IN LUXE LOUNGE  
 CHRISTIAN WARREN  
 PUT ON YOUR DANCING SHOES  
 ALL'S COUNTRY  
 ALL NIGHT LONG  
 DRINK SPECIALS ALL NIGHT  
 10000 N. MARICOPA DR. MARICOPA AZ 85119

**2026**  
**HOLIDAY HOURS**  
 December 22nd - January 4th  
 Bowling & Theater Will Open at 11:00am

**AVAILABLE NOW**  
 \$20  
 \$30  
 \$40

**GIVE THE GIFT OF ENTERTAINMENT**  
 \$25 ENTRY  
 21+ ONLY  
**LUXE LOUNGE**  
**WEDNESDAY DEC 31**  
 7PM DOORS • 8PM MUSIC

# Ak-ChinCircle.com

f /Ak-ChinCircle    📷 /akchincircle

**ARROYO GRILLE** 520.426.6832 | ARROYOGRILLE.COM  
 48456 WEST HWY 238 IN MARICOPA

**DECEMBER FREE APPETIZER**  
**TRY THE PHILLY EGG ROLLS!** W/ANY TWO ENTREE PURCHASES

Must present coupon to server. Not valid with daily or Happy Hour specials. Cannot be combined with other specials, offers or Harrah's Rewards. Does not include alcohol. One coupon per table, no split checks. Valid for one visit (daily, Non-transferable. Offer expires 12/31/25.

Proudly owned by the Ak-Chin Indian Community

RANKED #6 BEST COURSE YOU CAN PLAY IN ARIZONA

Proudly owned by the Ak-Chin Indian Community

**2026 PURE GOLF PERKS 'COPA CARD'**  
**INDIVIDUAL \$199**  
**ON SALE NOW!**  
 10 DAILY RANGE PASSES  
 DISCOUNTED GREEN FEES  
 3+ DAY ADVANCED RESERVATIONS  
 GOLF SHOP DISCOUNTS  
 \$25 PRACTICE FACILITY PASS  
 \$50 INDIVIDUAL GOLF LESSONS  
 \$25 OFF RENTAL CLUBS  
\*Golf Shop discounts exclude sale items, specials or clearance.

520.426.6827  
 AKCHINSOUTHERNDUNES.COM

# Harrah's AK-CHIN CASINO

# DECEMBER 2025

**CAESARS REWARDS**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b> <b>WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHTS</b> <b>THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2025</b>	<b>1</b>  <b>MONDAY NIGHTS ARE GAME NIGHTS!</b>	<b>2</b>  <b>HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS GIFT GIVEAWAY</b>	<b>3</b>  <b>FROZEN FLURRY SURPRISE</b> <b>FOREVER YOUNG</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>4</b>  <b>10X</b> <b>10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b>	<b>5</b>  <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>6</b>  <b>APP-SOLUTELY CONVENIENT!</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>
<b>7</b>  <b>SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!</b>	<b>8</b>  <b>MONDAYS NEED DUNKIN', TOO!</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS GIFT GIVEAWAY</b>	<b>10</b>  <b>FROZEN FLURRY SURPRISE</b> <b>FOREVER YOUNG</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>11</b>  <b>10X</b> <b>10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b>	<b>12</b>  <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>13</b>  <b>FRY'S FOOD STORES® ELECTRONIC GIFT CARD BASH</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>
<b>14</b>  <b>SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!</b>	<b>15</b>  <b>BE INSTANTLY ENTERTAINED</b>	<b>16</b>  <b>HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS GIFT GIVEAWAY</b>	<b>17</b>  <b>FROZEN FLURRY SURPRISE</b> <b>FOREVER YOUNG</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>18</b>  <b>10X</b> <b>10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b>	<b>19</b>  <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>20</b>  <b>MERRY MIX &amp; SIP BOOZE GIVEAWAY</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>
<b>21</b>  <b>SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!</b>	<b>22</b>  <b>OAK &amp; FORK IS OPEN EVERY MONDAY</b>	<b>23</b>  <b>HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS GIFT GIVEAWAY</b>	<b>24</b>  <b>5X</b> <b>FROZEN FLURRY SURPRISE</b> <b>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>5X</b> <b>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b> <b>PLAY YOUR WAY FOR THE HOLIDAY</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>26</b>  <b>5X</b> <b>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>	<b>27</b>  <b>5X</b> <b>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b> <b>ANNIVERSARY HOT SEATS</b> <b>LEGACY OF LUCK KIOSK GAME</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE</b>
<b>28</b>  <b>5X</b> <b>SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!</b> <b>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b>	<b>29</b>  <b>PARLAY TO PLAY CAESARS SPORTSBOOK</b>	<b>30</b>  <b>LAST CHANCE CREDIT BOOST</b>	<b>31</b>  <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE 2026</b> <b>TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b> <b>FREE SLOT PLAY DRAWING</b> <b>LOUNGE ENTERTAINMENT</b> <b>UNDER THE STREETLAMP CONCERT</b>	<b>ROCK THE CLOCK</b> <b>WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2025</b> <b>TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b> <b>FREE SLOT PLAY DRAWING</b> <b>LIVE ENTERTAINMENT</b>		

Valid only at Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino and must have a Caesars Rewards card and valid photo ID to participate. Management reserves the right to change or cancel these promotions at any time without prior notice. Must be 21 or older to gamble and take advantage of these offers. Know When To Stop Before You Start? Gambling Problem? Call 1-800-NEXT STEP or text "NEXTSTEP" to 53342. ©2025 Caesars License Company, LLC. See official rules at the Caesars Rewards Center for complete details.



# Ak-Chin Indian Community

## 2025 MASIK TAS CELEBRATION

### Everyone Welcome



Ak-Chin Circle Arena | 16000 N. Maricopa Rd.

## TEAM ROPING

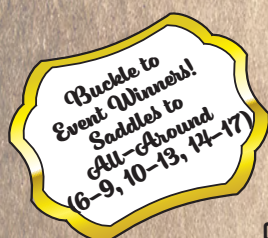
Thursday, December 18th



BOOKS OPEN AT 9AM

Flaggers Decision Final  
(MANAGEMENT MAY CHANGE ANY ROPING)

All Ropings are 3-steer  
100% Payback



## JR. RODEO

Friday, December 19th

@ 9am

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**  
Money Order or Cashiers Check accepted. Please make payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2025 Jr Rodeo \*\*No personal checks accepted.

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

Contestants must provide proof of age up request. No Exceptions.

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. All Payouts voided after 30 days.

## BULLS, BRONCS & DONKS

December 19th @ 4pm

ONE TIME ADMIN FEE OF \$20 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. Money Order or Cashiers Check accepted.

Please make payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2025 Bulls, Broncs, & Donks

\*\*No personal checks accepted

## OPEN WILD HORSE RACE

December 20th & 21st



No phone entries, no refunds.  
Contact Delbert White:  
dwhite@ak-chin.nsn.us or 520-414-5515



**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**

All entry money is 100% pay out along with added money

Money Orders and Cashiers Checks accepted. \*\*No personal checks accepted\*\*

## OPEN RODEO

December 20th & 21st

### PERFORMANCE TIMES

Performances on Saturday & Sunday at 12pm

Slack at 8am (if needed)



Money Order or Cashiers Check accepted. Please make payable to Ak-Chin Indian Community-2025 Open 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. All Payouts voided after 30 days.

\*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 \$20 per contestant. Team Ropers must pay for full team in ONE envelope with separate entry forms. All payments must include Rodeo Entry Form.

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

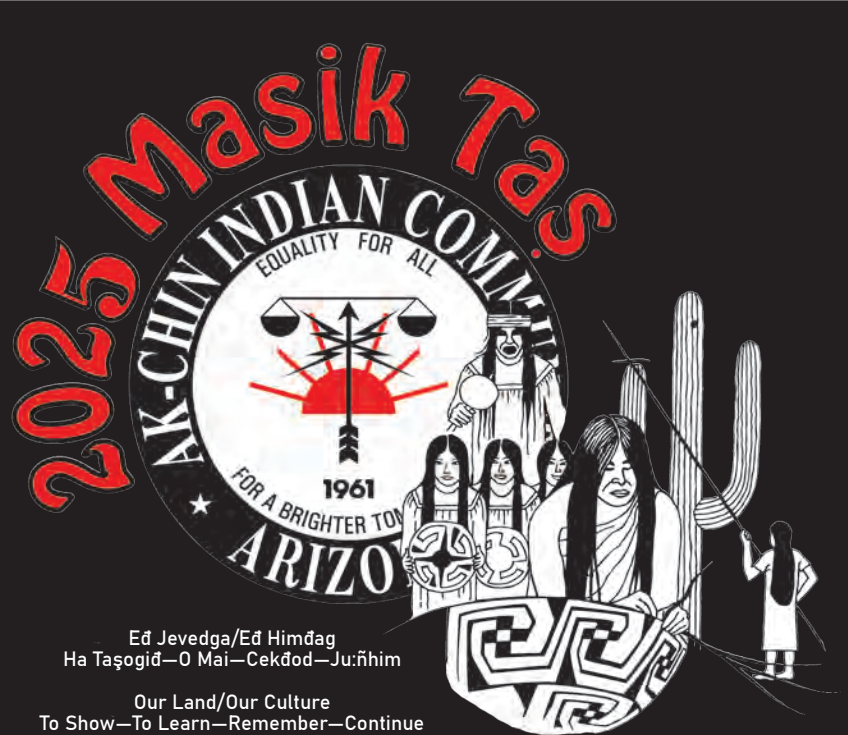
### \*\* INFORMATION \*\*

#### Walk-Ins:

December 13th: 10am - 6pm  
Ak-Chin Entertainment Center  
16000 N. Maricopa Rd.  
Maricopa, AZ 85138  
\$20 late fee will apply

#### For more information

on Rodeo Events,  
please contact:  
Delbert White:  
dwhite@ak-chin.nsn.us  
520-414-5515



Ed Jevedga/Ed Himdag  
Ha Tasogid—O Mai—Cekdod—Jur:him

Our Land/Our Culture  
To Show—To Learn—Remember—Continue

## 2025 AK-CHIN MASIK TAS SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

### DECEMBER 7TH

Spiritual Run with  
Youth Council

### DECEMBER 14TH

Youth Council Community  
Day | 1 PM

### DECEMBER 9TH-10TH

All Indian Elder Chair  
Volleyball Tournament

### DECEMBER 17TH

Youth Council Cud | 6 PM

### DECEMBER 12TH-14TH

All Indian Men's and  
Women's Basketball  
Tournament

### DECEMBER 18TH

Roping | 9 AM  
Ak-Chin Community Day  
(Members and Residents  
ONLY) | 4 PM - 10 PM

### DECEMBER 13TH

• 10K & 2 MI RUN | 9 AM  
• LIGHT PARADE | 7 PM

### DECEMBER 19TH-21ST

• CARNIVAL  
• CONCERTS  
• RODEO EVENTS

### ATTENTION:

To ensure the safety of our guests and expedite Masik Tas entry, a CLEAR BAG POLICY will be in place.

- All bags must be made of clear materials, with minimal logo(s), NOT color or tinted.
- Size must not exceed 12"x6"x12".
- Medical bags, diaper bags, lawn chairs, strollers, wagons and blankets will be permitted upon inspection.
- NON-APPROVED bags/items must be returned to vehicle or discarded.

[alleventsstaff@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:alleventsstaff@ak-chin.nsn.us)

520-568-1000

[masiktas.ak-chin.nsn.us](http://masiktas.ak-chin.nsn.us)

## AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY

Ak-Chin Circle // 16000 N. Maricopa Rd. Maricopa, AZ 85139

FREE  
CONCERT  
SAT  
DEC 20



CLEAR  
BAG  
POLICY



[masiktas.ak-chin.nsn.us](http://masiktas.ak-chin.nsn.us)