



Serenity Villegas enjoys her moment underneath the fireworks during 4th of July.

Community's 4th of July Celebrates 250 Years of Independence

Story and photos by Runner Staff

The Ak-Chin Indian Community celebrated in a big way as many events were offered to celebrate America's 4th of July and commemorate 250 Years of Independence.

To kick the summer holiday off, a hot dog eating contest was held

July 3rd for departments to enjoy, with a free lunch to all who attended and of course free hotdogs to all who participated.

July 4th, festivities began with a pool party at Ak-Chin Parks and Recreation from 12 pm – 5 pm.

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Ak-Chin - New Zealand - Canada Participate n Cultural Exchange



L-R: Ak-Chin Tribal Councilmembers Cecil Peters, Dennis Antone, Canada Coach Megan, Ak-Chin Parks & Recreation Director Ann Antone, New Zealand Coach Nardi Leonard, Chairman Gabriel Lopez and Vice-Chairwoman Delia Carlyle pose with tribal trophies during the Cultural Exchange event at Ak-Chin Gymnasium, Monday July 13.

Story & photos by Runner Staff

What a celebration! The opportunity to share and experience the cultural and traditional ways of life from three countries under one roof was amazing for players, coaches, staff and the public, on Monday, July 13th, as the Ak-Chin Parks and Recreation department hosted an International Tribal Cultural Exchange.

In preparation of this week's Native American Basketball Invitational (NABI) games, teams from Ak-Chin, New Zealand and Canada, were able to get acquainted and re-acquainted with

one another during the Cultural Exchange, which was sponsored by the Ak-Chin Indian Community.

A fourth team, Australia, was on the agenda to participate, but due to unforeseen circumstances, they were unable to partake in the event.

After introductions and a light breakfast, morning activities; which were closed to the public; began with a clinic run by New Zealand coaches.

Drills and exercises of; ball handling, rebounding, screening,

and shooting were taught, as well as teamwork advice.

The basketball drills went on all morning, with a few breaks in between.

One of the highlights of the clinic, was having Ak-Chin and New Zealand players split into teams and watching them interact with one another on their preferred choice of skills.

At the conclusion of the morning clinic, players were split up into two teams and workout games of who could score the most points

within a certain time were held. Winning teams were celebrated, while the losing teams had to do push-ups.

The teams received a treat a lunch time, as they were served a traditional meal prepared by the Miguel Family, of red chili, potato salad, beans, and chumuth (tortilla).

An assortment of fruit and cookies were provided as a dessert.

Meals were provided by Ak-Chin Community Events and desserts were sponsored by NABI.

As the doors opened to

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Nyaila Miguel and Stella Miguel take a bite out of their 1st place medals.



Maricopa Coyotes: L to R: Coach Martin Lopez, Dominic Ascanio, Elijah Peters, Edward Rocha, Carson De Paola, Sebastian Lopez, David Olivas, Jayan Ybarra, Jose Coronado, Aiden Montiel, and Coach John De Paola. Not pictured: Isaac Sanchez and Jovanny Sanchez.



John Zabawa competed with the Southwest Natives.



Ak-Chin's Brandon Peters of the Warriors, prepares to swing for the fences.

Ak-Chin Members participate in Lori Piestewa Games

Story & photos by Runner Staff

Ak-Chin sported great participation from members for the Lori Piestewa National Native American Games 2026, held July 10-12, 2026, at the Arizona

Athletic Grounds in Mesa, Arizona.

Ak-Chin could be found on the court participating in the varsity boys' and girls' basketball,

women's basketball, little league and high school baseball and adult co-ed slo-pitch softball divisions.

The Ak-Chin boys basketball team began tournament play with a first round win against the Arizona Chiefs, edging a one-point win, 44-43. In the second round the team received

a bye, moving them onto the next round with a 2-0 streak. Making it into the tournament bracket, the team was unfortunately defeated, which forced them to end tournament play.

Ak-Chin Lady Hoa Nad: O Kam basketball squad experienced what they'd hoped for since the team was formed as a club

team, a championship in bracket play!

After suffering a lopsided defeat in the first round against NWT (Natives with Talent), the Lady Basket Makers took to the court against the Dream Snatchers from Arizona.

Playing a much better game, Ak-Chin kept

the game within reach, but unfortunately succumbed to the Dream Snatchers. The two pool play losses placed Ak-Chin into the Showcase Bracket B tournament, and a fresh start in play.

The Lady Hoa Nad: O Kam ballers played a near perfect game in the first round with timely scoring and tough

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Charles Lee Carlyle
"Charlie"
February 5, 1952 -
September 27, 2025



From the Family of
Charlie and Richard Carlyle

We would like to offer our sincere gratitude for the love and support shown during our time of loss. We continue to miss and mourn our loved ones every day.

We appreciated all the prayers, food, gifts, and assistance that was provided during our loved ones' services. It's difficult to do the things we have to for their final goodbyes, just know you all have a special place in our hearts.

Special blessings and thanks to: Ak-Chin Council, FD, PD, HHS, Exceptional Hospital, St. Francis of Assisi, Fr. Antony Tinker, Flower Ruelas, Lawrence & Sally, Marvin & Bertha, Joe Enos, Lerline Peters, John & Terri, Sonny Loko, the singers, and choirs



Richard Coleman
Carlyle
July 20, 1973 -
May 29, 2026



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

July 2026 Mass Schedule - 12:00pm

July 19
Fr. Peter Teresa McConnell

July 26
Fr. Antony Tinker



2026
Flower Wreath Making Classes



Please Join us every Tuesday starting
August 4th to October 13th

4:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Him-Dak Art Building

Open to Ak-Chin Community members and residents who would like to learn how to make flower wreaths for All Souls Day.

Transportation provided within the community.
Please call before 4:00pm
For further information or for transportation please call 520-568-1350



LET US TAKE YOU TO THE
FOOD BANK!

Every Monday
Door-to-Door Transportation Available
Need help getting to the food bank?
We've got you covered!

Our Transit Team provides **FREE** door-to-door transportation for Ak-Chin residents and Members who would like to visit the food bank every week. We don't stop at just one location—we visit **TWO** food banks every Monday, giving riders access to even more food and resources.

Here's How It Works:

- We pick you up at your home
- We take you to both food bank locations if requested
- You can participate at each food bank stop
- We help transport your food items
- We take you safely back home

No driving. No parking. No hassle.
Don't be shy—we'd love to have you join us!
Reserve Your Seat Today!

CALL 520-568-1630 or TEXT 520-340-0382

You can call ahead up to 7 days in advance to schedule your ride. We are providign transportation to the F.O.R Foodbank In the town of Maricopa city as well as The Maricopa Pantry in Thunderbird Farms.

July Elder Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Breakfast served from 7 AM to 8:30 AM Lunch Served 12 noon to 1 PM Craft Room is OPEN from 8 AM to 3 PM For Transportation Call Georgia at 520-568-1760 Call After Hours 24/7 520-858-5043				Chair Yoga - Tuesdays & Thursdays at 11:15 AM Elder Center Exercise w/ Health Ed Wednesdays Only at 9:30 AM - Elder Center Menu/Calendar Subject to Change Without Notice		7/17 Veggie Scrambled, Toast, Avocado Slices, Apples Split Peas, Chicken Dumpling (D), Carrots, Cracker, Tropical Fruit
	7/20 Cream of Wheat, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Banana Pinto Beans, Beef Soft Taco (D), Butternut Squash, Corn Bread, Ambrosia Salad	7/21 Breakfast Quesadilla, Salsa & Sour Cream, Avocado Slices, Fruit & Yogurt Broccoli Cheese, Soup, Turkey Sandwich, Green Leaf/ Tomato, Pickle, Apple/Orange	7/22 Waffles, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Fruit Salad Baked Chicken, Baked Potato, Sauteed Cabbage, Apple Sauce	7/23 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit Squash Casserole, Romain Salad, Wild Rice, Crackers, Peaches	7/24 Breakfast Pizza, Avocado Slices, Fruit with Cottage Cheese Hot Chicken Sandwich, Lettuce/ Tomato, Macaroni salad, Roasted Potatoes, Jell-O	
	7/27 Breakfast Sandwich, Hashbrown, Fresh Fruit Creamy Pork Chop, Sauteed Spinach, Wild Rice, Whole Wheat/White Rolls, Fresh Cut Fruit	7/28 Cereal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Apples Potato Soup & Salad, Whole Wheat/White Roll, Pineapples	7/29 Scrambled Eggs, Potatoes, Sausage, Toast, Fruit & Muffin Hamburgers, French Fries, Baked Beans, Ice-Cream	7/30 Potatoes with Chorizo, Refried Beans, Tortilla, Fruit Salad Chicken Salad On Lettuce, Tomato/ Cucumber, Crackers, Apple Salad	7/31 Grilled Cheese, Scrambled Eggs, Avocado Slices, Fruit with Cottage Cheese Short Ribs & Hominy, 3 Bean Salad/Peas(D), Moon bread, Watergate Salad	
	8/3 Cream of Wheat, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Banana Ham Wraps, Macaroni Salad, Chips, Grapes	8/4 Biscuits & Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Fruit with Cottage Cheese Chili Beans, Chili Meat/Diced Potato (D), Roasted Diced Sweet Potato, Corn Bread, Mandarin Oranges	8/5 Breakfast Bowl, Pita Bread, Yogurt Parfait Baked Chicken, White Rice, Green Beans, Whole Wheat/White Rolls, Tropical Fruit	8/6 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit Sandwich Bar, Green Leaf/ Tomato, Cole Slaw, Tomato Juice, Watermelon	8/7 Breakfast Quesadilla, Salsa & Sour Cream, Fruit Salad Spaghetti, Romain Salad, Texas Toast, Ambrosia Salad	

Stay Hydrated

Aging reduces the body's ability to retain water, and older adults are more susceptible to dehydration, which can lead to numerous health issues. To make hydration more

exciting, try flavoring your water with slices of fresh fruit or herbs like mint or basil. You can also enjoy herbal teas, infused water,

or added hydration. Incorporating foods into your diet with a high water content can help you stay hydrated. A few of these include watermelon, cucumbers, and citrus fruits.



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ANNOUNCEMENTS
Announcements and wishes
may be dropped off,
phoned in, 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
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taste. All submissions should
be received as typed or
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Submitted pictures need a
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Allow 2 weeks for return.

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**AK-CHIN INDIAN
COMMUNITY**

NEXT DEADLINE
Don't forget the
DEADLINE for the
August 7-20, 2026
issue is due by
FRIDAY, JULY 31ST

Please submit all
announcements, wishes,
etc. no later than
FRIDAY, JULY 31ST

Material submitted after the
JULY 31ST DEADLINE
cannot be guaranteed
placement. If appropriate
and relevant, it will be
included in the next issue.



Contestants scarf down trays of hot dogs during the Employee "Hot Dog Eating Contest" at the Ak-Chin Gym, July 3.

Hot Dog Eating Contest

Story & photos by Runner Staff

One and all came out to the Ak-Chin Parks and Recreation gym for the Community Events hosted Employee Hotdog Eating Contest on July 2.

Beginning at 12 PM, employees chowed on the hotdogs with various toppings provided before cheering on the contestants.



Tony "Hot Dog Wrangler" Rodriguez represented the Runner well during the Hotdog Eating Contest.

Eight competitors signed up for this year's Hotdog Eating

Contest; this included Robert Loewen of Harrah's, Kyle Chavez of Security, Adrian Olmos of Information Systems, Omarion Flores of the Parks and Recreation, Antonio Rodriguez of the Runner, Eric Chavez of the Tribal Gaming Agency, Marcus Delores of the Library and Arnulfo Bandin III of Ak-Chin Circle.

Starting at 12:30 PM, the competitors lined up next to the tables facing the crowd before giving their marks and starting to devour the dogs.

Throughout the match, it was difficult to determine who was in the lead, but ultimately it was Arnulfo Bandin III, also known as the Dog Devourer, taking home bragging rights as the 2026 Employee Hotdog Eating Champion for his AKC team!!



4th of July continues from Front



Events Department staff gave away free watermelons.



Jumping Castles and Water Slides was popular with the kids.



Plenty of people enjoyed "vendors row" where goods were sold through out the 4th of July Celebration at Ak-Chin Circle.



Prior to fireworks, attendees were treated to the showing of Grown Ups & Grown Ups 2 on the jumbo tron.



Children and adults enjoyed their time at the "Splash Pad!"



Two youngsters have a wonderful time tossing up the ball, while a lifeguard assists a young swimmer during the "Pool Party".

Community enjoys 4th of July Pool Party

Story and photo by Antonio Rodriguez

On July 4th, 2026 from 12 P.M. to 5 P.M., the Ak-Chin Parks and Recreation threw their annual 4TH of July pool party to enjoy the holiday and bring the community together.

The event was full of swimming and fun activities for attendees to enjoy and indulge themselves in.

One of the activities attendees had fun doing was the raffle. As everyone who attended was given a ticket that they could put their name on and use to enter into a chance to win a prize of their choosing.

Every hour, the raffles would be held for both adults and children to win prizes, ranging

from water guns to ice chests.

Everyone in the pool had the opportunity to enjoy cruising down the water slide and appreciate time with family and friends.

Once tired out, attendees were invited to refresh themselves with lunch, enjoying hot dogs, sno-cones and slices of watermelon to celebrate the summer holiday celebration.

Everyone that attended was treated with a day full of patriotism and fun; with free patriotic giveaways; adding to an event that makes an already exciting holiday so much more memorable.



Ak-Chin Parks & Rec staff put on a great patriotic pool party.



The party continued to Ak-Chin Circle, where an estimated attendance of over 1,000 helped celebrate Ak-Chin's 4th of July activities.

Many escaped the heat at the Entertainment Center, to enjoy other services such as popcorn, ice cold drinks, and a quick dine in at 347 restaurants.

Attendees began to fill the field area, where picnic tables were set up along with water slides and jumping castles, for everyone to enjoy before the fireworks show.

Near 8 pm, everyone quickly raced out onto the field as the first fireworks went up, with Independence music blaring, "ooohs" and "aaahs" could be heard throughout. Children were quick to point out the humongous colored fireworks that lit up the sky.

The Community provided free hot-dogs, hamburgers, watermelon, chips, water, and music.

The twenty-two-minute show was given a "thumbs up" by many who made their way back to their vehicles, or a final stop to "vendor's row" for a last chance meal and drink.

There were over ten vendors who sold goods along "vendor's row" that included; birria tacos, pickled slushies, frybread, menudo, fresh squeezed lemonade, sweet bakery goods, sno-cones, designed shirts, and other goods.

Cecily Peters, Ak-Chin Community Events Manager expressed her thanks to all who helped make this holiday special.

As the countdown for the fireworks display came, more people filtered in, setting themselves up in a great area to watch the fireworks.

"We would like to thank everyone that made this event successful; Ak-Chin Circle, Harrah's Casino, Fire, Police, Security, Emergency Manager, Parks and Rec, Council, Farms, and Robert Miguel. Thank you to everyone for coming out and celebrating the 4th of July with the Ak-Chin Indian Community."

Grown Ups and Grown Ups 2; was also showing on the jumbotron outside the Ak-Chin Circle.

Children were also able to enjoy the splash pad while the movies were shown.



Bowling party closes out Summer Youth Program

Story and photos by Runner Staff



To end the Summer Youth Work Program, Ak-Chin Human Resources department invited all youth workers to Ak-Chin Circle for an end to the work program party. This happened on Tuesday, July 7, where youth workers along with representatives from their departments partook in bowling, arcade games, and yummy pizza.

Those whole attended were given certificates of their completion in the work program created by Human Resources and handed by their department representatives.

Human Resources Administrative Support Technician, Alma Camacho shared, “We would like to thank each of the participants, as well as every supervisor of the departments who made this possible... thanks to Marla Antone and my Supervisor John McCullouch for all the support that I also receive from them.”

John McCullouch, Human Resources Supervisor added, “As the 2026 Ak-Chin Summer Youth Program comes

to a close, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to every department that welcomed our youth and gave them the opportunity to learn about the important work being done throughout the Community.

Your time, patience, and willingness to mentor the next generation made this program a meaningful experience for each participant.”

Although, not every department was able to attend, HR enjoyed being able to celebrate the end of “another successful summer” with the bowling party, as well as recognizing the many who were still hard at work providing essential services to our community.

“Your continued dedication does not go unnoticed, and we are grateful for all that you do.” John added, “Thank you to everyone who helped make this year’s program a success. We are proud of our youth and appreciate the investment each department made in their future, ‘Ñeok g t-ñeidam hegai. Hegai ’ab himdag we:m.”



Community department summer workers from Vekol, Housing, the Runner, Him-Dak Museum, Education, Central Plant, Library and Purchase Referred Care came to celebrate the last week of the Summer Youth Work Program with bowling and gaming in the arcade with staffers from their departments.

Right: Aurora Peters, a summer worker for the Him-Dak Museum tries her best to get a strike during her turn.



ROI sign ups all summer long

Story and photos by Runner Staff



Throughout this summer, the Ak-Chin Education department has held ROI signup events for families throughout the community.

June 12 and 26, families could stop by the Education office to sign up their students from 8:30 AM- 4:30 PM. On July 7 and 8, a

lunch and dinner were provided to all who came.

According to the ROI Brochure; an ROI is a Release of Information form that allows schools to communicate educational information, including grades, attendance, testing, extracurricular, Exceptional Student Services, and behavior

records, to your student’s Ak-Chin Education Advisor in order to streamline access to support services.

This information is held in strict confidence in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Throughout each of these events, the Education staff gave Bahama Bucks gift certificates to all family members and a t-shirt that read “S-ebabgi- (singular & plural, self-verb, ongoing and completed): A term and phrase used by the O’odham that means to slow down, take it easy, to stop and relax.”

At the backpack distributions, Education was also on standby to help families sign their ROIs.

JOM Committee distributes backpacks

Story and photos by Kristen Villegas

The 2026-2027 school year is just days away from beginning for all students. Parents and guardians all over have been working to help prepare their scholars for a good start to the school year. To assist in the back-to-school preparations, the Johnson-O’Malley



(JOM) Committee hosted three backpack distributions on July 9, 13, and 14, at the Ak-Chin Service Center. Families lined up to receive student’s backpacks, supplies, and for those who still needed to fill out their student’s ROI forms; the Ak-Chin Education department was on site to help with sign ups. Hopefully this took away a bit of the stress from all parental figures.

Puppet Shows and Bubble Party

Storytime ended with a bubble party for these youngsters

Story and photos by Kristen Villegas

During the morning of June 24, all who attended Storytime at the Ak-Chin Library were treated to a puppet show of “We Don’t Eat Our Classmates” by Ryan T. Higgins, following a dinosaur who is struggling to make friends in school.

Not only did the kids who watched; love the puppets; they enjoyed the

dramatics of each one of them.

After the puppet show, the kids were thrown a bubble party with a bubble machine and then giftbags were handed out to all.

Storytime couldn’t have been more fun for those youth who attended.



Storytime and Volcanoes

Story and photos by Kristen Villegas

This summer, library fun is not only designated to the weekdays; as Ak-Chin Library Staff try their best to come up with exciting activities throughout the week to cater to all age groups.

On Saturday July 11, Family Storytime and volcano making were offered to all patrons of the library at 1 PM.

To start, families were able to decorate their very own volcanos made from plaster. Once they were dry, a mixture of baking soda and vinegar were poured in to helped them erupt and bubble over.

Storytime included a reading of *Old Rock (is not boring)* by Deb Pilutti. Interested in what the library has to offer? Please see their July Calendar for upcoming activities and/or call them at (520) 568-1675.



Trash to Treasure – Catch the Rain, Keep the Gain!

July brings one of the most exciting times in the desert, monsoon season! With sudden rainstorms and gusty winds, it’s the perfect opportunity to turn everyday “trash” into something useful for your home and garden.

This month, we’re focusing on capturing and reusing rainwater because every drop counts!



- Supplies (Use what you have!)**
- Large containers (buckets, storage bins, old coolers)
 - Milk jugs or plastic bottles
 - Mesh or cloth (to keep debris out)
 - Rocks or bricks (to stabilize)

- How It Works:**
- Place your container under a roof edge or where water naturally drips
 - Cover the top with mesh or cloth to keep out leaves and bugs
 - Use bottles or jugs to collect and store extra water
 - Use collected water for plants, trees, or outdoor cleaning



Why It’s a Great “Trash to Treasure” Project?

Monsoon storms can bring quick bursts of rain, don’t let it run off unused!

- Reusing containers to catch rain:
- Conserves water in a dry climate
 - Reduces stormwater runoff
 - Cuts down on plastic waste
 - Supports a more sustainable community

Desert Tip After a storm, check your containers and use the water within a few days to keep it fresh. Even a small amount of rainwater can go a long way for desert plants!

Use this Trash to Treasure? Please email photos to **Brandy Nelson** at BNelson@ak-chin.nsn.us at Environmental Programs with results.

Nature’s Cleanup Crew Soars Over Arizona!

Submitted by: Brandy Nelson, Environmental Programs

Have you ever looked up and spotted a large dark bird soaring in circles high above the Arizona desert? Chances are you’ve seen a Turkey Vulture!



Despite their unusual appearance, Turkey Vultures are some of Arizona’s most important wildlife helpers. These fascinating birds are native to Arizona and can be found throughout the state, including here in the Sonoran Desert, where they use warm air currents to glide effortlessly through the sky with hardly a flap of their wings.

Why Are Turkey Vultures Important?

Turkey Vultures play a critical role in keeping our environment clean and healthy. Often called “nature’s cleanup crew,” they feed primarily on animals that have already died. By removing carcasses from the landscape, they help:

- Reduce the spread of diseases
- Keep the environment cleaner
- Recycle nutrients back into the ecosystem
- Prevent unpleasant odors from decaying animals

Without vultures, dead animals would remain on the landscape much longer, creating health and environmental concerns for both wildlife and people.



Amazing Turkey Vulture Facts

- Despite their name, Turkey Vultures are not turkeys! Their red, featherless heads simply resemble those of wild turkeys.
- They have one of the strongest senses of smell of any bird in North America and can detect food from miles away.

- They often spread their wings in the morning sun to warm up and dry off.
- Their wingspan can reach nearly six feet wide!



Protected by Law

Turkey Vultures are protected under the federal ***Migratory Bird Treaty Act***, which makes it illegal to harm, hunt, capture, possess, or disturb them, their nests, or their eggs without proper authorization. Because of their important role in the environment, these birds deserve our respect and protection.



What Should You Do If You See Someone Harming a Turkey Vulture?

If you witness someone intentionally harming, harassing, or killing a Turkey Vulture:

- Do not confront the person if it is unsafe to do so.
- Record details such as the location, date, time, and vehicle information if possible.
- Contact local law enforcement, Tribal Rangers, or wildlife authorities.
- Report violations outside of the community to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Remember: Protecting wildlife helps protect the health of our entire environment.

Next Time You See One...

The next time you spot a Turkey Vulture soaring overhead, remember that you’re watching one of Arizona’s hardest-working environmental stewards. These remarkable birds may not win beauty contests, but they help keep our desert healthy every single day!

THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY HAS TWO (2) VACANCIES FOR THE AK-CHIN ENROLLMENT COMMITTEE

OPEN TO AK-CHIN COMMUNITY MEMBERS ONLY

Reminder: Community Members can only serve on three (3) Boards, Commissions, or Committees maximum at any given time.

Duties & Responsibilities of the Ak-Chin Enrollment Committee

- Preparing for and attending all meetings of the Committee.
- Reviewing all enrollment applications.
- Preparing enrollment applications for presentation to the Community Council.
- Recommending to the Community Council approval or denial of applications for enrollment.
- Developing recommendations to improve the enrollment process as needed.
- Taking timely action on all enrollment applications and related matters.
- Attending training sessions/meetings pertaining to tribal membership as appropriate.

Requirements: All interested parties who desire to serve on the Ak-Chin Enrollment Committee must submit a letter detailing why they are interested in serving on the Enrollment Committee. In your letter of interest, please note which Board, Commission or Committee you currently serve on, and when your term expires.

Enrolled Community employees must also submit documentation from their supervisor allowing them to serve on the Ak-Chin Enrollment Committee:

Please send all letters of interest Attn:
Ak-Chin Community Council
Attn: Victoria A. Smith
42507 W. Peters & Nall Rd.
Maricopa, Arizona 85138



Deadline to submit letter of interest is Wednesday, July 29, 2026 by 5:00pm.



Dylane Carlisle (front center) receives the Dr. Roe B. Lewis Scholarship from SWIAA Board Members, during the SWIAA Livestock Field Days Conference, June10. (Submitted Photo)

2026 SWIAA Livestock Field Days

Story by Raychel Peters

June 8-10, 2026, many headed to the cool country of Prescott for the 2026 Southwest Indian Agriculture Association (SWIAA) Livestock Field Days, held at Prescott Resort & Conference Center.

The three-day conference offered was free for all youth, ages 8-17, with a fee for adults.

The three-day agenda began with a pre-conference USDA Grant Workshop.

LFD was geared heavily to youth sessions, with icebreakers to get the young minds engaged, then on to important information on care and health issues for animals, Ag Skill-a-thon, along with some fun drone demos and creativity sessions.

There was also an adult track that focused on drought and climate issues, as well as a range panel discussion about livestock.

Breakfast and lunch were included, with dinner on your own. Daily door prizes and raffles were offered during breaks, with the grand prize raffles revealed on the last day.

The last day focused on the SWIAA Scholarship program, with recipient presentations to Amira Quiroz, who was awarded the Mario K. Marks Traveling Scholarship and Dylane Carlisle

receiving the Dr. Roe B. Lewis Scholarship.

“The current board directors and executive director strives to proclaim the same message, as well as advance SWIAA for the next generation.” SWIAA President, Joshua Albert shared. “We carry the work and memories of the founders and many others who worked extremely hard to keep this organization alive. This year’s event was geared towards the youth, and had a record number attendance.”

“We look forward to blossoming this event as well as inviting all to the annual Southwest Indian agricultural Association conference in January 2027, to be held in Laughlin, Nevada.” Albert added.

The Southwest Indian Agriculture Association, Inc. (SWIAA) is a Non-Profit/Volunteer Organization formed in 1987 to bring Native American people together to promote agriculture and agri-business on Tribal lands, provide scholarships in agriculture and natural resources. We strive to educate and facilitate relationships and collaboration between Tribal agriculture producers for better services from agricultural organizations and governments.

For more information, visit: www.swindianag.com

Ak-Chin Indian Community
Capital Projects



July 10, 2026

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION NOTICE for WATER SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT 266 HOMES, AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS

Project Description:

This project will replace the water service lines between houses and the water mainline for 266 houses throughout the Ak-Chin Indian Community in Maricopa Arizona. The service waterline replacement will include new service tap connection to the water mainline and installing new water meters. The old service line will be disconnected and the old water meter will be removed.

The disturbed areas within the construction limits will be resorted to original position.

Purpose of the Project:

This project will replace the old service lines with new more dependable water service lines and new water meters. The project will improve the water service quality to the houses by minimizing water line breaks and repeated repairs on the old service waterlines.

Safety Precaution:

During construction activities, residents should take extra precautions around the construction areas and keep clear from moving construction equipment.

Timeline of the Project:

The project started construction March, 2026, and will continue for 8 months. Currently working in Greasewood, Firehouse and Farms subdivisions. Water service lines for many houses were successfully replaced. Flyer notices will be distributed to the individual houses prior to starting construction on the houses’ new water service lines replacement.

Project Team:

Owner/Applicant:
Carlton Carlyle
Water Operation Manager
Ak-Chin Indian Community
Phone: (520) 568-1148

Design & Construction Engineer
Marcus Felter
Indian Health Service
Western Arizona District Office
Phoenix, AZ
Phone: (480) 280-6341

End of Summer School & Him-Dak Art Program

Story by Megan Quintero photos by Runner Staff

With the Ak-Chin Early Childhood Education and Ak-Chin Him-Dak Summer Art program being the last two programs to complete their summer sessions, all summer programs have finally come to an end.

The two programs kept the kids busy during the summer mornings with lots of activities and a few field trips.

At Him-Dak, the kids participated in making various crafts, such as; painting, coloring, making pinatas, sewing, and other fun crafts. They also participated in activities other departments had prepared for them, such

as; O’Odham Bingo provided by the Ak-Chin Language program.

Ak-Chin Library staff planned reading activities, crafts and other fun activities for the kids to do during their visit, and the Ak-Chin Fire department brought a fire simulator game for the kids to play with.

For their last day they closed out the program with a last day party!

Meanwhile, at the Preschool, students learned about the different themes of their classrooms. For example, Mrs. Billie’s classroom was science-themed, so the kids learned about

science and did activities related to science.

Not only did they learn about the themes of their classrooms, they also worked on tracing their names, shapes and numbers, and most importantly having fun!

To close out summer school at the preschool, teacher Mrs. Pollie coordinated with Public Works-Sanitation Director, Delbert White and a few other cowboys from the community to put together a last day event for the kids to get a chance to see what the wild west is really about, with a horse ride!



HDS Participates in FMSC



Counter clockwise: HDS Leadership, Graduates, Associates, and Community Youth Workers, Zach refilling rice, Mason holding up bag for the others to pack, Myulani refilling protein powder.

Story and photos by Megan Quintero

Every year during the summer the HDS (Harrah’s Development System) department at Harrah’s Ak-Chin Casino participates in an off-property community service event at FMSC (Feed My Starving Children) in Tempe, coordinated by HDS leadership manager, Erica Oliver and supervisor, Della Honie.

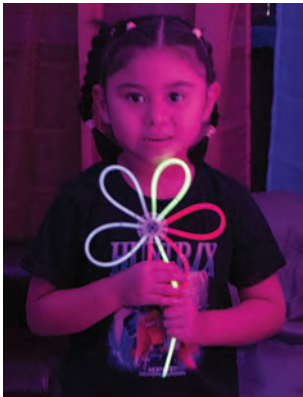
“The reason we do it is because it gives a sense of purpose and giving back to those in need.” Della stated.

On Friday, July 3rd, the HDS team showed up to the event at about 9 am. There were about 200 participants in attendance; about 30 of them were either previous HDS graduates, HDS interns

or HDS community youth workers.

During the packing event the team was split up into three groups; such as warehouse, labeling, and packing.

By the end of the session the HDS team was able to fill 166 boxes with 35,856 meals to feed 98 kids a daily meal for a year



Students enjoy Beauty and the Beast Musical



Story and photo by Elizabeth Antone

On, Thursday, July, 2, the Ak-Chin Education department sponsored a field trip to ASU Gammage Center in Tempe for a musical theater adaptation of the Disney movie,

Beauty and the Beast.

About 15 students attended the event. The theatre was packed with many people crowding the halls; while we got chips, soda and cookies

from the concession.

The music was played by a live orchestra and sounded as if a recording was playing. I enjoyed the costume designs made for the characters.

Ak-Chin Child Development

Accepting applications for
Preschool 2026-2027 SY
Deadline is July 13th, 2026

Our office is open
8am-5pm
Monday-Friday
Register now!
First day of Preschool is
August 10th, 8:30am-2:00pm

Ak-Chin Child Development offers:

- A High Quality Early Education Experience
- Health/Developmental Screenings
- Disability Services (Through M.U.S.D.)
- Kindergarten Readiness
- *Story time (Provided by Ak-Chin Library)
- *Cultural Activities/Events (Provided by Language Program/Cultural Resources)*
- *Physical/Nutrition Education (Provided by Ak-Chin Health Ed. Program)
- *Fire Safety Education (Provided by the Ak-Chin Fire Department)*
- *Field Trips/Fun activities throughout year*
- Health and Safety Protocols in Place

Enrollment is based on availability and children are selected in the following order:

1. Child is an enrolled member of the Ak-Chin Indian Community
2. Child is a non-enrolled member, but he/she is the Legal child of an enrolled member of the Ak-Chin Indian Community
3. Child is living within the Ak-Chin Indian Community boundaries.
4. Child is living outside of the Ak-Chin Indian Community boundaries and is enrolled with another federally recognized Native American Community.
5. Child of a parent who is an employee of the Ak-Chin Indian Community.
6. Non-member children based on availability.

Transportation provided for children living within the Ak-Chin Community boundaries.

Pick up a 2026-2027 Enrollment Packet at Ak-Chin Child Development.

Please bring in the following documents to be considered for enrollment

- Completed Application
- Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood (CDIB) if applicable
- Child's Certified Birth Certificate
- Child's Current Immunization Record

(returning students only need the current Immunization Record and a completed Returning Student application)

Only completed applications with required documents will be accepted. Children registering must be three (3) years old prior to September 1st of the current year.

If you have any questions please contact the Preschool at
48251 W. Farrell Rd.
Maricopa, AZ 85139
(520) 568-1700.
Ak-ChinChildDevelopment@ak-chin.nsn.us

Cultural Exchange continued from Front

to the public, excitement filled the gymnasium as visitors were eagerly awaiting to see and experience the culture and traditions of the New Zealand and Canadian tribes.

Following a traditional blessing and performance by Ak-Chin's Language program and Ak-Chin Men's Singing Group, Ak-Chin Tribal Chairman, Gabriel Lopez, gave welcoming remarks to all.

Prior to the beginning of the first performance, Ak-Chin Language Specialist, Lerline Peters, acknowledged Velacita "Costella" Lopez, who the community lost last week.

Velacita was a long tenured employee as a Language Technician for her community, and was the inspiration for the tradi-

tional song they performed.

The S-kubjuv Ju: dam (Brown Bear) Women's Toka team gave a demonstration of the traditional game of "Toka" game.

Team captain Marissa Antone-Bowman provided information as she described the game; similar to field hockey; played with handmade traditional u'sagas (sticks) and an o'la (puck/ball), which is pushed across the playing surface in attempts to score a goal.

As the game is primarily intended for women and young females, the New Zealand girls were asked to join in after the demonstration.

The Toka demonstration, the Ak-Chin Baban (Coyote) Keina Basket Dancers performed their

traditional basket dances and ended with a traditional "round dance", which many joined in, covering the entire basketball floor with participants.

New Zealand then took to center court and executed a traditional song and dance that illustrated their beautiful tradition and culture of the "Maori" people.

As the boys and girls of New Zealand transitioned into formation, the much expected "haka dance" was eagerly anticipated.

Phone cameras were up in the air all around the stands, and videos were quickly pushed to record as the "haka dance" was performed!

The chanting and facial demonstration of the dance was truly a "gifted" performance. Once

completed, the New Zealand team received a thunderous ovation.

Following the New Zealand performance, Canada took to the floor and performed a traditional round dance of their culture, which included a traditional drum and singing.

The Ak-Chin San Juan Dancers closed out the day with their "kwualiya dance", which is similar to a country square dance performance.

At the end of their routine, a "give away" dance was held, which involved gifts for players, coaches and staff from both New Zealand and Canada.

Plenty of hugs, handshakes and pleasantries comments were shared from all who attended

the event.

For New Zealand, the opportunity to come and share their culture and tradition, and support of a continued growing sport of basketball, was a highlight.

"Ak-Chin is like our second home away from home," shared Nardi Leonard, who is a coach and organizer for New Zealand.

"When we have planned our participation to NABI, we always make it our top priority to come out to Ak-Chin while we're here.

Since we've been coming here for the past couple of years, we are hoping that we could get Ak-Chin to come out to one of our tournaments in New Zealand."



Ak-Chin Men's Singers and Language Program begin the Cultural Exchange, with a song inspired by the late Velacita "Costella" Lopez..



Ak-Chin Baban Keina Basket Dancers performed their beautiful basket dance for all to enjoy.



New Zealand learned to play the O'odham Stick Game.



Ann Antone, Ak-Chin Recreation director and Ak-Chin girls team were able to meet and greet the Australia team with gifts from the Cultural Exchange event that Australia missed.



The "Round Dance" performed by the Ak-Chin Baban Keina and Men's Group Singers, was well supported as the gym floor was filled with participants



A Toka demonstration was shared by the S-kubjuv Ju :Dam team during the Cultural Exchange. After the demonstration was over, all girls were asked to play a game of toka.



Sophia Peters goes through a conditioning drill with a teammate from New Zealand.



Members of Team Canada, were able to provide a traditional song during activities at the Cultural Exchange. The song concluded with a traditional "Round Dance."



Everyone was excited to join in on the San Juan Kwaylia "give away" dance. Food, shirts and shell necklaces were desired items.



Cameras were at the ready when the New Zealand team performed their traditional songs and the "Haka".



Coaches and Players from New Zealand and Ak-Chin get together for a group photos prior to the conclusion of the Cultural Exchange at the Ak-Chin Recreation gymnasium.



JOB OPENINGS

CURRENT JOB OPENINGS:

- Child and Family Therapist (part-time)
- Communication Officer
- Detention Officer (non-certified)
- Lab Tutor (part-time)
- Maintenance Technician
- Plant Electrician
- Plant Electrician & Instrumentation Technician
- Police Officer (non-certified)
- Police Officer (certified)
- Security Guard

Open to Enrolled Ak-Chin Members Only

- General Worker (Temp Worker)
- Museum Technician
- Oral Historian (part-time)

www.ak-chin.nsn.us

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. If you need assistance, please call the Human Resources Dept. at 520-568-1050.

Employee Birthdays

7/17 - 8/6

7/17
Adan Enriquez, EPD
Martina Guy Health ED

7/18
Silas Norris, Custodian

7/19
Kimberli White, Preschool

7/20
Havier Alvarez Sr, Sanitation
Barbara Elliott, Fire
Brian Poulson, Fire
Perry Vettraino, Capital Projects
Robin Vincent, Library
Andrea Chee Police

7/24
Stephanie Valdez, Preschool

7/30
Mallory Justin, Vekol

7/31
Kristen Villegas, Runner

8/1
Arnold Aguirre, Police
Lenny Dempsey, Police

8/2
Jennifer Boehm, Fire

8/4
Jason Wilhite, Fire

8/5
Anthony Narcia Jr, EPD

8/6
Janelle Mason, Transit



NARD

NATIVE AMERICAN RECOGNITION DAY

SATURDAY

SEPT. 26 2026

More information to come
For any questions please call the
Him-Dak Museum at 520-568-1350

Save the date!



Historic BIA Agent House

14th Anniversary



Historic St. Francis Mission School

11th Anniversary

Join Us to CELEBRATE

the Anniversary of our two Historic Properties

Thursday, August 27, 2026
Historic St. Francis Mission School

Afternoon Event: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Evening Event: 4 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Light Meal & Gift for visitors

For more information, please call the Him-Dak Museum at (520) 568-1350

Ice Cream Day!

Come to the library for a frozen treat. While Supplies last.

July, Saturday 18th 2-3pm

Programs and events open to Ak-Chin members, residents, and employees.
Minors under 16 must be accompanied by an adult over 18.

Call: (520) 568-1675
Email: Library@ak-chin.nsn.us



SUMMER FAMILY STORYTIME

Ages 2-12 yrs

Join us for the last days of summer family storytime with crafts, songs, and stories!

Saturday, July 18th & 25th @10am

Programs and events open to Ak-Chin members, residents, and employees. Minors under 16 must be accompanied by an adult over 18.

(520)568-1675 or Library@ak-chin.nsn.us



AK-CHIN TRIBAL TRANSIT

SERVING THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY

Upcoming Service Interruption Dates

Holiday Closures

- Labor day: Closed all day on Monday, September 7th
- Native American Day: Closed all day on Friday, September 25th
- Veteran's Day: Closed all day on Wednesday, November 11th
- Thanksgiving Day: Closed all day on Thursday, November 26th
- Native American Heritage Day: Closed all day on Friday, November 27th

December Closures to be posted once finalized.
Impact on Services (During Holiday Closures)

•Administrative Offices: Closed. Dispatch lines will be unstaffed on these dates.
•Transit Services: Closed. Will resume on the following regular service day.

Annual Staff Training Days
Tuesday, August 18th thru Friday, August 21st
Closed from 8:30am to 3:30pm

Impact on Services (During Annual Training)

- Dispatch: Open for emergencies and cancellations
- Ride Scheduling: All new ride requests are suspended during training hours.
- Standard Operations: New trip scheduling will resume during normal hours.

LAST DAY TO PICK UP PRIZES IS FRIDAY, JULY 31st!

JULY HOURS

MONDAY - FRIDAY : 9AM - 6PM
SATURDAY : 9AM - 4PM
SUNDAY : CLOSED

COME IN DURING OUR OPEN HOURS

UNEARTH A STORY

(520)568-1675
LIBRARY@AK-CHIN.NSN.US



Look who is Double Digits!
Happy 10th Birthday, Connor Aaron Martinez-Miguel.
Although you are a big jerk to us sometimes, just know we love you more than anything in the world. Thanks for being the Gryffindor to my Slytherin. Hope it's the BESTEST Birthday Ever! – Mom

Happy Birthday. Newt, thank you for everything you do for us. You always check on us and always ask us if we are okay. Thank you for helping me around the house, either inside or outside with the yard. You coming into my life has been a blessing. I wish you a Good 10th Birthday! – Grandpa



Happy Birthday to my granddaughters Kaylan, Aurelia, Laila, Kristen, Jennifer, and Rachel, and my grandsons Carlos, Terrance and Jaxson Love, Grandma

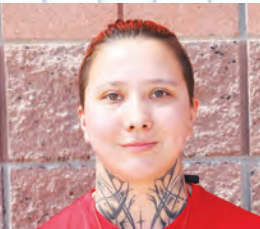
Happy Birthday Rachel!
Love your family



Employee Updates



Aleena Antone
Lifeguard Recreation



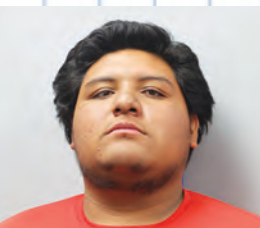
Cayla Thomas
Lifeguard Recreation



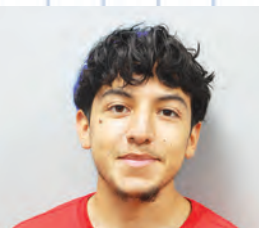
Dustin Whitman
Lifeguard Recreation



Erika Garcia
Lifeguard Recreation



Omarion Flores
Lifeguard Recreation



Shane Antone
Lifeguard Recreation

MEMBERS BIRTHDAYS 7/17- 8/5

JULY 17
Taos Joaquin

JULY 19
Dorian Nosie-Romo
Hannah Smith
Aniya Deleon

JULY 20
Aiden Antone
Marisol Andaverde
Briana Pena
James Lopez
Havier Stephens
Robin Vincent

JULY 21
Dominic Lewis
Kaycee Lopez
Ja'Marrion Stevenson

JULY 22
Mark Narcia

JULY 23
Ulyceiz Ocanas
Connor Miguel
BonScott Alvarez
Carlos Delores

JULY 24
Stephanie Valdez

Samantha Martinez
Doyleen Pablo
Consuella Santiago
Alejandra Castro
Milla Cuatt

JULY 25
Xendryk Silas-Antone
Jamar Stevenson Jr
Norman Vincent Jr

JULY 26
Tyler Mike
Teagan Delma
Fabian Santiago
Sally Antone
Kylie Hill

JULY 27
Kaylan Peters
Aurelia Peters
Lilly-anna Johnson

JULY 28
Terrance Peters
Cheryl Lopez

JULY 29
Laila Lopez

JULY 30
Ashlea Anderson

Juan Makil White
Corrina White
Cecil Miguel Sr

JULY 31
Lino Valles Jr
Clyde Santiago
Brenda Arellanes-Burgos
Kristen Villegas

AUGUST 1
Sadie Rivers
Aribella Vincent

AUGUST 2
Jennifer Bohm
Jessica Narcia
Wynema Vincent

AUGUST 4
Jaxson Brown
Nicole Delma
Nathan Enos
Amelia Osife
Aliyah Vincent

AUGUST 5
Yondell Antone
Rachel Lozano
Anthony Narcia Jr
Esperanza Santiago

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

7/2026 JULY

UNEARTH A STORY
SUMMER READING JUNE 1st-JULY 30th

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Programs and events open to Ak-Chin members, residents, and employees. Minors under 16 must be accompanied by an adult over 18.			1 StoryTime 10-11am	2	3 Closed	4 AMERICA 250 Closed
5	6 Little Dinos (birth-5) 10-10:30am	7	8 Dino Sensory Storytime 10-11am	9 Teen Cooking Class 4-5:30pm	10	11 Family StoryTime 10-11am Volcano Craft 1-3pm
12	13 Little Dinos (birth-5) 10-10:30am	14	15 StoryTime 10-11am Puppet Palooza 4-5:30pm	16 Land Before Time Movie Night 5-7pm	17 Fibers & Friends 4:30-6pm	18 Family StoryTime 10-11am Ice Cream Day 2-3pm
19	20 Little Dinos (birth-5) 10-10:30am	21	22 StoryTime 10-11am	23	24	25 Family StoryTime 10-11am
26	27	28	29 StoryTime 10-11am	30	31	

SUMMER READING PRIZE ENTRIES DUE JULY 30th! LAST DAY FOR PRIZE PICK-UP IS JULY 31ST.
Call us: (520) 568-1675 or Email us: Library@ak-chin.nsn.us

“Our guests continue

positive impact together.”