

Happy Holidays Ak-Chin O'odham Runner



Maricopa, Arizona

Volume XXXIV, Issue #22

December 18 - 31, 2020

Central Arizona College Class of 2020

Story and photo by R. Peters

What a delightful sight to see as two of Ak-Chin's brightest make strides to complete their degrees with Central Arizona College.

Community members Holly Antone and Guadalupe Gloria recently shared their excitement on FB on receiving their Associates Degrees with CAC.

Holly, who also works full-time at Ak-Chin Him Dak as a museum tech received her Associate in Arts in the Spring. She attended CAC off and on as a part-time student due to her workload. "I eventually decided that I was able to handle a full-time schedule while working so I did." Holly shared.

Holly also completed her first semester at Arizona State University, "GO DEVILS" where she is looking to major in American Indian Studies. "However, I am thinking of switching majors, not sure of what yet. ASU offers great programs to study in."

Holly said she had a few overwhelming moments while attending school, "the subject that I had a hard time in was science. It was a lot of information and terminology to retain but I got through it."

Once she buckled down Holly worked hard to get good grades, happy memories included "making friends and networking, and also seeing your test grades after you been up all-night studying!"



Guadalupe Gloria, Chairman Robert Miguel and Holly Antone celebrate these young women on their recent academic achievements, on December 15.

CAC Class of 2020 continues to page 6

Harrah's HDS Program continues to excel

Article and photos submitted by Erica Manuel, HDS Supervisor

On Thursday, December 10, 2020, HDS Culinary Intern, Andrew Humeyumptewa prepared a 5-course meal for the Harrah's Ak-Chin

Leadership Team, as a part of his culinary exam, to measure Andrew's culinary, time management, and leadership skills. Andrew's culinary

internship has included working in the buffet and now the Chop Block steakhouse for Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino. Andrew chose to stick with cuisine that he is comfortable with, which is an Asian cuisine. Andrew was responsible for the menu creation, planning and execution for this culinary exam.

HDS Supervisor, Erica Manuel and Executive Chef, Colin Ribble, worked together to coordinate several opportunities for Andrew to participate in culinary practical skills "exams" to measure Andrew's skill level and opportunities for further development in his culinary internship. Andrew has grown immensely in his planning and culinary execution, in the training gained through his participation in the HDS Program.

Stay tuned . . . Andrew will be

HDS continues to page 6



Andrew's dessert dish, Cold Brew Coffee Jelly, with pumpkin spice cream and whipped cream.

Ak-Chin installs community wide broadband network

Story and photo by J. Peters



These workers are setting up connections on top of tower.

With changes happening every day during this pandemic, frustrations have grown to an all-time high. In cases of schooling and jobs coming to a complete halt, and stay at home restrictions, the need for online access to the internet has become even more crucial in order to complete important tasks at hand. Fortunately, Ak-Chin membership has been provided with a community-wide Wireless Internet Service.

Ak-Chin Council recently approved installation, and those who signed up will be able to utilize these services. Internet installation for the Greasewood subdivision began on December 14, and will continue through the community until all

the requested households gain access. The homes will be provided an outdoor antenna and internal router set with password protected connection to secure their Wi-Fi access in home. Members must remember that each house is responsible for monitoring their own internet usage.

Back in October a questionnaire was sent out to notify Ak-Chin members through such outlets as the Runner newspaper, community email and Facebook groups and word of mouth, to tell the membership about the provided Wi-Fi access for community homes. This free and secure assistance program was approved for student, elder and resident internet access to help jump

Broadband continues to page 3

Chairman 2020 Reflections

Sape Mas Ma Ak-Chin,

As we come to a close for the 2020 year, the community, as was with the entire world, experienced an unfortunate pandemic called COVID-19, which altered the way of life for many.

Lives were lost, others either experienced the illness, schools were closed, enterprises and business were shut down (some permanently), recreational facilities were shut down, jobs were lost, we had to learn how to keep 6 ft away from one another, we had to adjust to wearing a face mask in public and the list goes on.

We experienced the rapid decline and steep costs of simple essential items such as; water, toilet paper, paper towel, disinfectants and food supplies.

In Ak-Chin, membership experienced the difficulty of the lifestyle change. We had to set a curfew, limited the amount of people in group settings, shut down the usage of our parks, limited hours to Vekol Market, church congregations were set to a limit and we unfortunately lost two community members to the virus.

Plenty of grief, pain, suffering,

misunderstanding, and anger overcame membership, which was understood. But the community and membership adjusted and have accepted the fact that this is a new way of life for now and have hopes that we will get back to some sense of normality soon.

Through this ordeal, positive efforts in providing services to the Community continued, in particular with the Government, as Ak-Chin was eligible for support through the CARES Act funding. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) is a \$2.2 trillion economic stimulus bill passed

Reflections continues to page 4

Ak-Chin Parks and Rec Light up the nights with Christmas cheer

Bringing a colorful sight to the Milton "Paul" Antone Memorial Park, the staff at Ak-Chin Parks and Recreation went above and beyond this year to bring everyone in the Community some much needed cheer.

Every December the park is decorated with a wonderful display of lights, and in this year full of major ups and downs, it is very calming to see certain things cannot be changed. With the park still closed for the safety of the community, the decorations

bring cheer to the off-limits area.

The Parks and Rec staff worked hard to assemble their lights, putting up an array of different inflatable displays with cute characters, along with holiday decorations that can be seen throughout the park.

The staff celebrated a no-crowd tree lighting on December 4th, with Ak-Chin Councilmember Lisa Garcia doing the honors

Photos by Recreation Staff of switching the lights on.

Even though, Christmas lighting and decorations are still the norm, this year has left an unsettling feeling for everyone, and for those who do not feel like putting up their decorations, that's okay. Just take a stroll on over to Ak-Chin Parks and Rec for a nice and cozy holiday glow, beaming with all your Christmas favorites that are sure to brighten your day!



A tree of lights stands tall, displayed at the park.



Man's best friend play at the park.



This reindeer is a long way away from the North Pole.



These camping critters roast marshmallows around a glowing fire.



Lighting up the old park entry sign.



Cute decorative ornaments and gifts set out by recreation staff.

Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

NOTICE
2021 Agricultural Lease Payment

In compliance with SRPMIC Emergency Declaration Directives for COVID-19, the 2021 Agricultural Lease payment to landowners will be made by mail, direct deposit, or SRPMIC Pay Card only. There will be no in person payout.

On Friday, January 22, 2021, Agricultural Lease Payment checks will be mailed to your address on file or, if you have elected to use direct deposit, disbursement will occur to the financial institution on file with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community ("SRPMIC") Finance Department. Incorrect information will cause a delay in receiving your payment. To update your address or direct deposit information, or to sign up for direct deposit, please contact:

SRPMIC Vendor Maintenance, ph: (480) 362-7729
(staff is available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Arizona time)
The last day for Agricultural Lease Payment updates is December 16, 2020.
Please call as soon as possible.

Pay Card disbursement will be placed onto your SRPMIC Pay Card on Friday, January 22, 2021. To sign up for a SRPMIC Pay Card for your lease payment or to add your lease payment to an already issued SRPMIC Pay Card, please contact the SRPMIC Finance Department at (480) 362-7620. The last day for Agricultural Lease Payment updates is December 16, 2020.

Payments less than \$15.00. All direct deposit and Pay Card payments will be disbursed regardless of the amount. For checks less than \$15.00, landowners will need to contact the SRPMIC Finance Department and request that a check be mailed. Such checks will be processed 7-10 business days following the request after January 22, 2021.

Questions? Contact the SRPMIC Finance Leasing Payment Office (480) 362-7730.
*Agricultural lease payments will be made based upon former payments received and cleared through banking institutions by January 4, 2021.

Hearing Notice Ak-Chin Indian Community Planning and Zoning

Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a Hearing regarding the following cases at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 22, 2020, at the Environmental Protection Department, Water Reclamation Facility Conference Room, 46200 W. Ralph Street.

CASE: SD-07-20: Ak-Chin Circle Pedestrian Solar Lighting: Applicant/Community Operations Manager, Bart Smith, is requesting Site Development Plan Permit approval to install eighteen (18) solar lights along an existing pedestrian path within the Ak-Chin Circle Area.

The project consists of:

- Light pole installation along Farrell Road between Narcia Street and State Route (SR) 347; and along SR 347 between Farrell Road and Tobi Drive. The light poles will be approximately 110 feet apart and be 16.33 feet in height.

CASE: SD-08-20: Feast House Improvement Project: Applicant/Community Operations Manager, Bart Smith, is requesting Site Development Plan Permit approval to construct a new feast house building and canopy, which will provide better working conditions for food preparation and improve the existing facilities and operations.

The project consists of:

- Limited grading and drainage improvements; and
- Construction of a 58'-8" x 20'-8" (1219 SF) concrete masonry block (CMU) building; and
- Steel Vato with a metal roof deck (68'-8" x 60'-8"), exterior fans, exterior lighting, and a concrete slab floor; and
- Utility upgrades; and
- New kitchen area (510 SF); and
- Automatic and manually controlled roller shades on the west side of the Vato; and
- Accessible toilet facilities; and
- Additional storage space.



The Behavioral Health Division of the Ak-Chin Health and Human Service Department currently offers virtual services for the Ak-Chin Indian Community. Behavioral services conducted virtually include:

- Intake and assessment
- Individual counseling
- Substance abuse group
- Anger management group
- Parenting group services
- Case management

The Behavioral Health Division of the Ak-Chin Health and Human Service Department currently offers virtual services for the Ak-Chin Indian Community. Behavioral services conducted virtually include:

For any questions regarding services offered by the Ak-Chin Health and Human Service Behavioral Health Division, contact any of the following numbers for additional information
Ak-Chin Health and Human Service Department
Main Number: 520-568-1090

Job Elliott MS, LPC, LISAC, Behavioral Health Therapist
Health and Human Service Department: Behavioral Health Division
jelliott@ak-chin.nsn.us
Office: 520-568-1091

Lynnette Houston-Volden LMFT, LASAC Family Therapist
Health and Human Service Department: Behavioral Health Division
LHouston-Volden@ak-chin.nsn.us
Office: 520-568-1086

Pamela Thompson MBA, Director
Health and Human Service Department
Pthompson@ak-chin.nsn.us
Office: 520-568-1092



December Elder Menu

18th
Closed

28th
Bar-B-Que Ribs,
Plain Ribs (D), Baked
Potato, Peas,
Pineapples

21st
Hot Dogs, French
Fries, Baked Beans

29th
Squash, Casserole,
Brown, Rice, Salad,
Rolls, Mandarin,
Oranges

22nd
Taco Salad, Lettuce,
Tomato, Cheese,
Plums

23rd
Tamales, Rice, Beans,
Lettuce, Tomato,
Upside Down
Pineapple Cake

30th
Menudo, Chicken W
Hominy (D),
Succotash, Rolls,
Coffee Cake-
Muffins

24th
Closed

31st
Closed

25th
Closed

Join us for Transportation to Chandler Every Tuesday in December!

Transit will be offering free drop off and pick up to and from your home to various popular shopping destinations. Transportation will be held on Tuesdays beginning December 1st, 2020.

Location	Drop off	Location	Pick up
Target	10:40am	Target	12:40pm
Bed Bath and Beyond	10:43am	Bed bath and Beyond	12:43pm
Chandler Fashion Center	10:47am	Chandler Fashion Center	12:47pm
Hobby Lobby	10:55am	Hobby Lobby	12:55pm
Phoenix Premium Outlets	11:15am	Phoenix Premium Outlets	1:15pm
At Wild horse Pass		At Wild horse Pass	

Transit will provide you with a pickup time when you call to schedule. Times on route are times of pickup and drop-off at the popular destinations, not your home. Must be 15 years or older to ride without a guardian. Must be at designated stop on time or Transit cannot guarantee transportation.

Call up to 7 days in advance to book your seat. Limited seats available for your safety.

TO SCHEDULE A RIDE:
CALL: 520-568-1630
TEXT: 520-340-0382

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



Newspaper of the Ak-Chin Indian Community ©2020

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'dham Runner
Editor: Raychel Peters
Photojournalist: Justine Peters
Graphic Artists: Diana Carlyle and Rebecca Bowen

Ak-Chin Tribal Council
Chairman: Robert Miguel
Vice Chair: Gabriel Lopez
Council Members: Delia Carlyle, Lisa Garcia and Octavio Machado

Regular Contributors:
Ak-Chin: Cultural Resources, Education, EPD, Health Education, Him-Dak, Library, Health & Human Services, Recreation & MUSD.

The Ak-Chin O'dham Runner is published on the first and third Friday of each month.

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.

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Ak-Chin O'dham Runner
16600 N. Maricopa Hwy
Maricopa, Arizona 85139

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Announcements and wishes may be phoned in, faxed or e-mailed.

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

If you have artwork, photos, poems or a great story that you would like to share, please contact us so we can include it in "YOUR" newspaper.

Also, if you have suggestions or comments about "YOUR" newspaper, let the Runner Staff know that too.

All submitted letters MUST be signed by the author and are limited to 200 words. Authors must also include their name, address, and phone number. Names can 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
2020 Subscription rate is \$33.75. If you would like to receive the "Runner" by mail, please send a \$33.75 check/money order to:

Ak-Chin O'dham Runner
16600 N. Maricopa Hwy
Maricopa, Arizona 85139

Make check/money order payable to:
Ak-Chin Indian Community

DEADLINE
Don't forget the DEADLINE for the

January 1 - 14, 2021 issue is due by

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

Please submit all announcements, wishes, etc. no later than

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23RD

Material submitted after the

DECEMBER 23RD DEADLINE

cannot be guaranteed placement. If appropriate and relevant, it will be included in the next issue.

Broadband continued from Front

through hurdles the pandemic has set for everyone over the past strenuous months. Members were given a November 30th deadline to sign up for the service program and many did. This very useful aid will bring much needed relief for those who have struggled with online tasks. It is encouraged for households who have outside internet services (example CenturyLink/ Orbital etc.) to keep those services even if they have requested to have the Community Wireless Project installed, as this project does not support streaming services such as Netflix, Hulu and similar platforms.

Once members have signed the provided policy documents, the policy states for membership to be mindful that the provided bandwidth (the maximum amount of data transmitted over an internet connection in a given amount of time) is to be shared by everyone. So, being aware of usage is very critical to keep the homes connected. There will be times when access is running high and connection will be slow, so please be patient.

The new service will have some bumps in the road, but the community should be gracious for what has been provided. As of now the service will have its run, but in the future the continuation of the service will be reviewed by council to see if the project will expand.



Home installation process.



Ak-Chin Child Development

Literacy

•Letter Knowledge-recognize/name letter's, recognize beginning letters in familiar words, relate some letters to the sounds they represent.

•Phonological Awareness-begins with listening to sounds. The next skill is rhyme and alliteration.

•Print Awareness- Children development of print knowledge varies to child's interests and experience with language. Child also begin to understand that print is meaningful. This is where children start to show interest in mock writing, which later leads to writing.

•Technology- Use technology as advantage find engaging stories and literacy games for you child.

•Reading Together- Reading builds a bond between child and parent(s). Reading daily for at least 15-20 minutes will benefit your child literacy development.

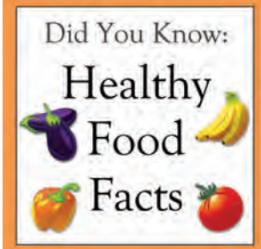
Activities to help your child with Literacy.

Letter Knowledge
<https://blog.allaboutlearningpress.com>

Phonological Awareness
<https://blog.allaboutlearningpress.com>

Print Awareness
<https://www.homereadinghelper.org>

Reading tips for parents
<https://readingpartners.org>



THIS SWEET, SLIGHTLY TART BERRY IS NUTRIENT-RICH PACKED WITH VITAMIN C, POTASSIUM, FOLIC ACID, FIBER AND ANTIOXIDANTS.

JUST ONE CUP OF STRAWBERRIES CONTAINS 100% OF YOUR DAILY VALUE OF VITAMIN C!

THE ANTIOXIDANTS AND VITAMINS FOUND IN STRAWBERRIES HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO HELP REGULATE BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS AND LOWER THE RISK OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

If you need additional resources about home activities, have questions or concerns or would like to talk to one of our teachers, please call us at 520-568-1700. We are here to help!

COUNTDOWN TO 2021

READ 500 MINUTES BY NEW YEAR'S EVE
DECEMBER 31ST @ MIDNIGHT
RECEIVE A MYSTERY PRIZE
TO SIGN UP:
DOWNLOAD THE READSQUARED APP
KEEP TRACK OF YOUR READING MINUTES
STOP BY THE LIBRARY TO CHECK OUT A BOOK
OR DOWNLOAD THE LIBBY APP
*LISTENING OR READING A BOOK COUNTS!
Youth (5-17 years) & Adults (18 years and older)
Call 520-568-1675 if you have any questions
Open to Ak-Chin members, residents, employees & their families.



As you share holiday traditions, ask your family members about their medical history.

Knowing your family's medical history can help you make the best decisions for your medical care.

Contact your local Indian health care provider for more information, visit [Healthcare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov), or call 1-800-318-2596.

DEC 11 2020 08:27

AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY CIVIL COURT
COUNTY OF PINAL, STATE OF ARIZONA

IN THE MATTER OF: J.F.J. Concerning: Minor(s) BRIAN JOHNSON

CASE NO.: CV-2020-021-AD
SUMMONS TO APPEAR

THE AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY TO:
BRIAN JOHNSON

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and required to appear before the Court in the Ak-Chin Indian Community Court, 45525 W. Farrell RD, Ak-Chin, Arizona on Tuesday the 23RD day of February, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. for a Final Adoption Hearing.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO HAVE LEGAL COUNSEL REPRESENT YOU AT YOUR OWN EXPENSE DURING THE PROCEEDINGS.

GIVEN under my hand and the seal of the Ak-Chin Indian Community Civil Court, in the County of Pinal, in the State of Arizona.

DATED this 11th day of December 2020

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

****NOTICE****

**Due to the upcoming holidays on:
Friday, December 18th
Friday, December 25th
Friday, January 1st
Trash will be picked up on the Thursday before each of those days.

Also, for those weeks, recycling will be collected on the Wednesdays before each of those days.

Thank you and Happy Holidays, stay safe ~ Sanitation Dept.

ATTENTION
Ak-Chin PARENTS and GUARDIANS

If you have a student-athlete from Ak-Chin participating in an upcoming event and would like them to be featured in future editions of the Runner, Please let us know!

Email: runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us
Phone: (520)-568-1375

Be Safe · Social Distance · Mask Up · Be Well



MERRY
Christmas
AND
HAPPY
NEW YEAR



Dry Food and Supply Goods, and Turkey Distribution Drive Thru Saturday, December 19, 2020

- Distribution will be at Service Center from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and is for Ak-Chin Member and resident households who reside on the reservation and for Member households who live off the reservation.
- Supplies are for each household and **not for each member.**
- Members must show proof of residence with current address (i.e. utility bill, insurance card, Driver License and/or tribal ID with current address).
- Individuals who are picking up items for a Member **MUST** have a letter of authorization from the Member naming the individual who is picking up the supplies. This allows the Community to have a record of who picked up their supplies.
- Community households living on or off the Reservation and are unable to pick up their supplies on Saturday, December 19, please contact **Kathy Ruiz at 520-568-1030** to arrange a pick up.
- **The Community's office will be closed December 18, 24 and 25.**

Reflections continued from Front

by the 116th U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Donald Trump on March 27, 2020, in response to the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States.

Continued lobbying from Ak-Chin lawyers in Washington D.C. and Community leadership helped secure funding which supported projects such as; COVID-19 testing for membership and employees, essential supplies, employee funding during closures, educational needs and safety equipment gear just to name a few.

Community leadership recently made the decision to make a one-time financial distribution for membership 18 years and older, notices were put out via social media and newsletters for information on how to secure and obtain the distribution.

We understand that membership have encountered plenty of financial hardships during this difficult time, especially those members who live off of the reservation and out of state. Council is thankful to membership for

their patience and understanding. We hope that this financial distribution will help you recover somewhat financially as we look to recover our normal way of life hopefully here pretty soon.

In reference to a sense of normality, the first wave of vaccines for the pandemic has arrived in the United States, giving the impression that the sun of hope is slowly rising. Ak-Chin may possibly see its first vaccine testing early 2021. Vaccines that have arrived have already been designated to certain areas around the United States; Police, Fire, Doctors and other first responders will be the first in line for the vaccine.

Despite the vaccine's arrival, leadership is still cautious and continues to encourage membership to abide by safety measures set in place by the Community, State and Center for Disease Control (CDC).

It is reported that COVID-19 is still at a high level and that the worst may still be yet come. They say that the Christmas and New Year holidays will bring more

positive cases and be more life threatening. We ask all to stay safe and healthy and to continue to watch over those whom are more vulnerable to the virus.

The Ak-Chin Community will continue to test membership and employees up until March of 2021.

Prior to the pandemic, the community continued to move in providing healthcare, educational services and opportunities, employment, elder care and other needs. As the year continued and the community adjusted, leadership was able to re-entertain ongoing projects and currently in the process of moving forward.

As we continue to move forward and preserve in the true spirit of the Ak-Chin people, let's understand and learn from this pandemic that we endure obstacles in life and that together we will never let anything overcome us as we continue to build, not only for today, but for our future.

Sape, and safe Holidays to you all.

Robert Miguel,
Ak-Chin Chairman

“Happy Holidays??”

By L. R. Houston-Volden LMFT (AKCHHS)



This is normally the time of year many of us look forward to in order to celebrate, express joy, and laughter, share togetherness and good food with family and friends. We tell old stories, make new memories, and for a lot of people, based on their beliefs, it's a time to honor the spirit or driving force of their lives.

So, we wonder why *The Grinch* and *Ebenezer Scrooge* are so popular during the holiday season? Just as popular as visions of candy-canes and gingerbread men is “Bah-humbug” and “Holiday Blues.”

Holiday heartbreak and misery are the inspiration for so many sad holiday songs, if you ask, people will easily tell you that it's a “fact” that people become depressed around the holidays. I want to start this conversation letting you know, that is actually a myth, normally.

It's true that the holiday season (Thanksgiving thru New Year's Day) is not always easy or filled with joy for everyone and there is more pressure to act like you are happy and be social with others during the holidays than any other time of year, it can be a tough time for some. However, while it is true that the holidays can be a time of increased stress for everyone, in fact, in a “normal year” the amount of depression and suicides normally decreases in the month of December.

The myth can be so damaging because it can give the impression to people who are in suffering and in need of support the belief that it is only because of the season and delay them in getting the help they need.

As we already talked about, in a “normal year” there is an increase in stress related to the holidays for most people, but it's also joined with excitement about an opportunity for many to share time with friends and family and participate in traditions and rituals that have meaning and value to their lives. For some, especially children, there are built in breaks from school and for everyone the hope and anticipation of a New Year and possibly a new start.

Those positives help in some ways on an average year to balance out some of the stress most of us usually feel: high expectations, disappointments, current events, personal grief, loneliness, illness, economic concerns, separation from family members, or relationship issues.

In a “normal year” what is also true is that people who are already suffering with emotional or mental health issues (mental illness) find themselves more affected this time of year than others and can see an increase in their stress levels and symptoms and feelings related to depression. It is important for us to know the difference because 1 in 5 people are diagnosed with a mental health issue every year (in a “normal year”)

This year is not a “normal year”. It has been tougher than any other time many of us have experienced. This holiday season will be unlike any that most of us have ever experienced.

With the realities of coronavirus and the changes in how we socialize, the limits on family gatherings, virtual versus in-person schooling, working from home, cancellation of most social events, sports and entertainment avenues, there has been a large increase in the number of people experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression.

This increase is even more true for adolescents from ages 12-17 and especially those previously diagnosed with mental health concerns. However, throughout this crisis we have learned to be creative in the way we connect with others. Including watching endless tik-tok videos of old people like me dancing!

Many of us have had to shelter in our homes and limit the scope and size of our family gatherings and celebrations.

At the same time, we have dealt with the risk of getting exposed and becoming sick, someone we love getting sick, or even worse the realization of loss related to Covid-19.

All of these realities mixed with what we'll call the “side effects” of the pandemic: economic crisis, job loss, social isolation, educational crisis (67% of parents are worried their children will fall behind from not being in-person schooling), an increase in substance use and abuse, local and national political unrest, social unrest, challenges to our physical health (#Covid19), and financial instability. On TV, the number of lives lost counted up every day. This year is not a “normal year”

There are lots of reasons that this year a **Blue Christmas**, would make sense. There are a lot more people experiencing the symptoms of anxiety and depression, there is a lot of concern about a shortage in mental health professionals, and a need for more access to services for people that need the support. It is out there, there are more options available than ever before for virtual counseling.

My hope is to give you some ideas about how even though “the myth of the holiday blues” might be more real this year, there are things you can do to help make it better.

If you are experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression, some examples are; headaches, fatigue (very tired), excessive drinking/using drugs, over-eating, insomnia, feelings of deep sadness, frequents bouts of crying; or if you know someone who needs extra support (things to look out for: the person is more withdrawn or distant; Are they acting strangely? Impulsively? Are they irritable or mean? Do they usually respond to me but now they are not? Are they no longer talking about the future? Saying they don't want to live?) These can all be warning signs they need more help.

There are things you can do to help reduce stress on your own:

- get enough sleep
- take down-time for yourself
- and eat balanced meals.

More ways to cope with the stress brought on by the Holidays is to:

- set realistic expectations for yourself,
- not take on more responsibility than you can handle,
- enjoy the moment you are in,
- and don't set yourself up by comparing these times to what happened in the past.
- limit your drinking if you are feeling stress due to the holidays, alcohol increases feelings of depression.
- Reach out to a “long-lost” friend or relative if you can and spread some holiday cheer, sometimes just letting others know you think of them can make a world difference.
- Create online social gatherings with friends and family to increase contact with loved ones

You are not alone, with the New Year comes new possibilities for all of us, and a chance to move on to better days. So, I guess the answer is Yes, Happy Holidays are possible even 2020.

While I figure out a complex equation to explain to my 6-year old how much sanitizer Santa needs to get his Christmas Eve trip done, we'll be here if you need us:

Ak-Chin Health & Human Services Behavioral Health Department
520-568-1090

- Lynnette Houston-Volden
520-568-1086
LHouston-volden@ak-chin.nsn.us
- Job Elliott 520-568-1091
JElliott@ak-chin.nsn.us

- SAMHSA's National Helpline
1-800-662-HELP (4357)
TTY:1-800-487-4889
- Gila River Indian Community
Crisis Hotline 1-800-259-3449
- Text 741741 To text with someone
Crisis Text Line

REMINDER

The next Runner
submission
deadline will be

**WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 23RD**



Holiday Thoughts from the Environmental Protection Department

2021 is right around the corner and this is the time to enjoy family and give thanks for all the positive things that have come and will come our way in 2021. Although 2020 provided many challenges to our community, we can look to 2021 with hope and optimism

for life to return to normal for everyone.

Normality will no doubt include viewing things differently in many ways and adjusting our lifestyles to accommodate and protect our community members going forward. There will also be things

that will also remain the same; such as pesticide safety in and around your home. Interestingly, many of the health topics of this year compare and resemble pesticide safety. Here are a few comparative items to consider in this season and into 2021.



NEW BEHAVIORS AND SIMILARITIES



HEALTH

Pathogens (causes of illness)

- CoVid – 19, Flu, Polio, Tuberculosis, etc.
- Social distancing
- Keeping Surfaces clean
- Personal Hygiene – Wash hands
- Mask Wearing
- Be mindful of symptoms
- New vaccinations will be available soon

SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES

Controlling Pests (that harbor or spread disease)

- Rodents, Mosquitoes, Bed Bugs, etc.
- Keep pesticides and other chemicals out of reach of children and safely stored.
- Use of disinfectants-antimicrobials They are pesticides!
- Keep home site areas uncluttered and clear of debris.
- Use protective gloves, eyewear and masks when using
- Be mindful of symptoms of pesticide exposure.
- Using integrated pest management will reduce the use and exposure of pesticides in the community: Defend: Nukud (nooh-kooth)



Masik Ta's celebration!



With your help, we look forward to working you to keep your homes and families safe for the holidays.

BEST HOLIDAY WISHES TO EVERYONE!



COMMUNITY BIRTHDAYS DEC. 18th - 31st

18-Dec
Bianca Valenzuela
Sarina Smith
Justin Humeyumptewa
Ralston Justin
Josie Hernandez



22-Dec
Manuel Rodriguez
Candida Upton
Nicolas Olivas
Volincia Pablo



27-Dec
Erica Manuel
Orlando Lewis

28-Dec
Bernadina Gonzalez
Javier Zepeda
Julianna Orona
Jersey Peters
Sabrina Sam



29-Dec
Kathleen Miguel
Abel Lewis
Aubrey Lozano

30-Dec
Christopher Lewis
Lee Miguel, II
Renita Machado
Bernadette Carra



31-Dec
Mercedes Rivera-Lopez

19-Dec
Manuel Peters, III



20-Dec
Roni Zappia
Lanna Lewis
Collette Susunkewa

21-Dec
Aiden Peters
Eileen Pinheiro
Elijah Narcia
Adrian Romo



23-Dec
Yyondrez Antone
Bartholomew Smith

24-Dec
Velacita Lopez
David Peters Jr.
Kyle Peters

25-Dec
David Manuel, Sr.
Serenity Villegas
Danny Vincent
Arrow Santiago

26-Dec
Angela Trenado
Andrew Pinheiro

Want to earn a GED
Want to go to college
Want to be a Role Model

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
AT 520 568-1280

Email: Tera Thornton @ TThornton@ak-chin.nsn.us or Call : (520) 568-1280

2020 Year in Review

Our small community of Ak-Chin has persevered a great deal this past year. We have been scared, sad and lonely at times, but through our strength, family and friends we have found faith in the future, hope for a brighter tomorrow, a love of self and community.

As 2020 comes to an end, we would like to share what we have seen and covered through our eyes and lens. Unfortunately, this year we have not been able to capture the true essence of Ak-Chin, so we are humbly asking our Community to help ensure our precious moments from this year do not go unheard or unseen.

Please send us pictures that brightened your day, of special family events, a great road trip, that fantastic play on the field or court; stories of encouragement, a letter of achievement or new milestone, inspiring words that brought a smile and maybe even a tear.

Let's all show how our Community strived for a "BRIGHTER TOMORROW" in 2020!

We are asking all material (photos, information, etc.) to be emailed to: runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us

Please send all material by: Monday, December 28, 2020.

Thank you and may you all have a safe and healthy holiday season.
From the Runner

EMPLOYEE UPDATE

Francesco (Frank) Betro
Firefighter-EMT
for Fire Department

Rider Appreciation Giveaways

Ak-Chin Tribal Transit would like to extend a thank you for your support. To show our recognition to our loyal passengers we will be hosting appreciation giveaways.

- To be eligible to receive a ticket you must utilize transit services. Every time a passenger enters the bus they will receive a ticket.
- Winners will be announced in drawings that will be held every Monday
- Prizes may vary Do not need to be present during the drawing to win
- Receipt of a raffle ticket does not guarantee a win
- Prizes will be given to the parent/guardian on the behalf of winners under the age of 18

TO SCHEDULE A RIDE:
CALL: 520-568-1630
TEXT: 520-340-0382

I want to send a BIG Birthday shout out to my husband Kyle Peters! You're definitely about to hit a big milestone in your life!

Just seeing how much you have grown as a person, as a father, as a husband and son, you have come a long way. I am proud of all your accomplishments throughout the years. Just know how much you are appreciated and loved by your family. I hope you enjoy your day, just know I always got you no matter what! Once again HAPPY 30TH BIRTHDAY PETERS (NOT SURE IF YOU WANTED ME TO MENTION YOUR BIRTHDAY BUT what the heck WHY NOT!)



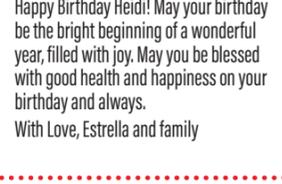
Happy Birthday Daddy, Hope you have a great day and remember; your rollercoaster is still going and no matter how many ups and downs you have I will be with you every step of the way. So, you're not alone on your journey and remember at 30, you will finally start to find different things in life that's changing, so don't be scared because I'm right there.
Love, Joanna



Happy Birthday Heidi! May your birthday be the bright beginning of a wonderful year, filled with joy. May you be blessed with good health and happiness on your birthday and always.
With Love, Estrella and family



Happy Birthday to my son Manuel Love, Mom
Happy Birthday to my grandsons Aiden, David Jr., and Kyle, and my granddaughters Jersey, Sabrina, and Aubrey. Love, Grandma



Happy Birthday Aubrey Renee Love, Bapa and Luma
Happy Birthday to our Goddaughter Bianca Love, Goddaddy and Godmama
Happy Birthday Godfather John From your Godchildren and the Comps

Wishes

HOLIDAY WISHES

Stay safe as we almost come to an end for 2020 and bring in 2021, to all my family, all Ak-Chin members and their families, Ak-Chin employees and their families. May you receive what you ask for in your prayers. Blessings to you and stay strong. Have a Happy New Year!!
Yoli Melero

To all my Children, Here's wishing you, my kids, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. You all know what to do!! Mom isn't going to tell you, but all I can say is that I love you, all that are here with me, 2 missing, but God is with them all.
Love you all, Mom - Alverna Florez

To all my Grandchildren, Here's wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Please be safe.

Be Merry



To all our Dialysis Technicians and our Nurses,
We all would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, that's coming our way. You all have been doing a great job for us and we all "Thank You". May you all enjoy your Holidays, being with your families, and be safe. God Bless you all.
From all the Patients at Ak-Chin Dialysis

Merry wishes for a Christmas full of hope and cheer and a bright beginning New Year!

EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS DEC. 18th - 31st

- 12/18** Bianca Valenzuela, Retail
- 12/19** Manuel Peters, EPD
Richard Kindred, TGA
- 12/20** Roni Zappia, Maintenance
- 12/21** Micky Moull, EPD
- 12/22** Heidi Hinz, Maintenance
- 12/23** Bartholomew Smith, Community Manager
- 12/24** David Peters, Retail
Velacita Lopez, Cultural
- 12/26** Johnnie Traughber, Law & Order
- 12/28** Bernardina Gonzalez, Parks & Recreation
- 12/29** Kathleen Miguel, Maintenance
Mary Zepeda, TGA
- 12/31** Kevin Williamson, Education

WRESTBANDS

ULTRA PACKAGE \$34.95 (Best Value!)

- 1 Movie Pass (Includes Special Engagement, 3D or Star Class Upgrade)
- Regular Drink & Popcorn
- *10 Game Card

FUN PACKAGE \$24.95

- 1 Movie Pass (Special Engagement, 3D, Star Class, & 3D Show Upgrades Will Apply)
- *10 Game Card

MASTER BLASTER PACKAGE \$14.95

- MIX & MATCH
- Enjoy 2 Amusements (Bowling and Laser Tag)
- *10 Game Card

* WRESTBANDS BUY VALIDITY OF PURCHASE ONLY. MUST BE PURCHASED MORE THAN 2 HOURS PRIOR TO CLOSING.

AkChinCircle.com /Ak-ChinCircle /akchincircle

16000 Maricopa Road, Maricopa, AZ 85139 • Center Info (520) 494-7827 • (520) 568-3456

MOVIES AT AK-CHIN CIRCLE
ak-chincircle.com/theater

The Croods A New Age	All My Life
Mon. - Fri.: 3:00pm, 5:15pm & 7:45pm	Mon. - Fri.: 3:15pm, 5:30pm & 7:30pm
Saturday: 12pm, 2:15pm, 4:30pm, 7:00pm & 9:15pm	Saturday: 12:15pm, 2:30pm, 4:45pm, 6:45pm & 8:45pm
Sunday: 12pm, 2:15pm, 4:30pm & 7:00pm	Sunday: 12:15pm, 2:30pm, 4:45pm & 6:45pm

AK-CHIN YOUTH COUNCIL

The Ak-Chin Youth Council would like to invite the community to follow our newly created Facebook and Instagram pages! We will be sharing our "ACYC News" video segments, as well as Youth Council announcements.

We can be found by searching @akchinyouthcouncil.

Thank you!

MARICOPA'S #1 HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING GUIDE

A PURE GIFT GIVING EXPERIENCE

Find the perfect gift for friends & family with on- or off-course experiences!

- PLAY** GIVE A GOLF EXPERIENCE
- DINE** GIVE A DINING EXPERIENCE
- SHOP** GIVE A GEAR EXPERIENCE

GIFT CARDS & BOOKING 520.426.6827 AKCHINSOUTHERNDUNES.COM

ARROYO GRILLE

\$8 PEPPERMINT EGGNOG MARTINI

ARROYO GRILLE AT AK-CHIN SOUTHERN DUNES IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

(520) 426 - 6832 ARROYOGRILLE.COM

Holly shared her words of encouragement during the tough times, "You got this!"

"During this difficult time, you are proving how amazing and resilient you are by continuing your education and I applaud you. Also, remember to give yourself a break when needed."

Guadalupe Gloria received her Associate of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education, and she is ready to take some time off "to be with family" before continuing her higher

education at UofA.

Guadalupe, a teacher's aide for Ak-Chin Childhood Development shared a few bumps in the road this year. "The pandemic and not being able to be in the classroom with a teacher was difficult, because I'm a visual person, especially with my Geology class, but I was still able to achieve a good grade."

She had good moments as well, "My Psychology teacher asking for permission to use my work for future classes.

That helped me feel more motivated."

Guadalupe's motivation to others, "Don't give up. Life may try to keep you down but don't give up and keep striving for what you want. It may take time but if you really want it, get it."

"There were many obstacles I had to travel but I didn't let myself give up and so shouldn't anybody else. Strive for greatness."

Guadalupe is also grateful to those who helped give her the nudge

CAC continued from Front

to finish. "It took me time to get where I wanted to be, but I had family and friends who believed in me and pushed me along the way."

"So, thank you all, especially to my husband and babies for the hugs and encouragement. I definitely couldn't have done it without you, even with the noisy house and movie nights you still gave me the motivation to finish strong."

What a shining example for us all! Congratulations to Holly and Guadalupe, your Community is proud of you.

competing against his boss, Chef Colin, in the next round.



Above, Andrew adds finishing touches to his appetizer dish, Loaded Potato Korokke, with cheddar cheese, bacon, green onions and sour cream dip.

Below, Michael Kintner, Harrah's Ak-Chin General Manager, enjoys the Sesame Ginger Chopped Salad prepared by Andrew.



HDS Food Sale

In recognition of Native American Heritage Month, the HDS Program Associates, Interns and Alumni, coordinated an on-property food sale for the employees at Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino on Friday, November 20, 2020. Indian tacos

were on the menu; the purchases made from the Harrah's Ak-Chin and Community employees resulted in sales totaling a little over \$1,000.

Prior to the food sale, the HDS department had already decided on the recipient of the proceeds from the food sale. The nonprofit organization, *Feed My Starving Children*, will be receiving a check to assist in its efforts to provide meals to children in underdeveloped countries.

Native American Heritage Event

On Sunday, November 15, 2020, Harrah's Ak-Chin hosted a Native American Heritage Event which included traditional songs and dances performed by the Kaij Mek Ne'edam kc Keihindam and the Ak-Chin Ba'ban Keina. This year's event did not have a physical audience however, the event was streamed live via Harrah's Ak-Chin's Facebook page.

The event was hosted by Fred Lopez, DJ from KOHN's Hewel Niok Network. Several more dance groups were invited, however due to the current pandemic, they were unable to attend. It was mentioned throughout, how this year's event was "different" and "not normal", regarding the live streaming and no audience.

Fred Lopez, Carol Lopez and Norma Vincent, emphasized the seriousness of the pandemic but also spoke of the importance of encouraging and uplifting others through the traditional songs, as they are prayers offered, especially to those who have been directly impacted by the pandemic.

Harrah's continued from Front

The HDS Department is a leadership development program for enrolled Ak-Chin tribal members which includes work experience, personal and professional development, and community service activities.



Above: HDS team members Ezequiel Santiago and Melanie Antone knead dough for the popovers.

Below: HDS Interns, Eduardo Santiago and Stewart Peters, along with Andrew help bag condiments for Indian Tacos.



HDS staff listen as Fred explains the significance of dances and songs performed at the Native American Heritage Event.

Harrah's AK-CHIN CASINO **DECEMBER 2020** **CAESARS REWARDS.**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING SPOTS! THE SPA, THE GIFT SHOP	15 MRS. FIELDS® BAKEWARE SET GIVEAWAY	16 MRS. FIELDS® BAKEWARE SET GIVEAWAY	17 CUPPER & CACTUS GRILL GRAB A PIZZA WITH YOUR PARTNER IN FUN	18 7 BAR REWARD CREDIT BONANZA	19 STOCKING STUFFER TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER	
20 REWARD CREDIT BONANZA	21 THE WEATHER COOLED DOWN, BUT TABLE GAMES ARE STILL HOT	22 MRS. FIELDS® BAKEWARE SET GIVEAWAY	23 MRS. FIELDS® BAKEWARE SET GIVEAWAY	24 PICK YOUR WINNING NUMBERS AT KENO	25 HOLLY-DAY BONUS FREE SLOT PLAY! REWARD CREDIT BONANZA	26 WADE INTO PARADISE AT THE HEATED POOL
27 2020 WRAP UP TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER	28 SETTLE INTO A LUXURIOUS GUEST ROOM	29 MRS. FIELDS® BAKEWARE SET GIVEAWAY	30 MRS. FIELDS® BAKEWARE SET GIVEAWAY	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION	A GRAND NYE CASH SWEEPSTAKES THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2020 - NOON - 8PM ONE LUCKY WINNER WILL BE DRAWN EVERY 30 MINUTES FOR \$1,000 IN CASH!	