



Ak-Chin O'odham Runner



Maricopa, Arizona

Volume XXXIX, Issue 1

January 10 - 23, 2025

2025 Council Inauguration



L-R: Chairman Gabriel Lopez, Vice-Chairman Delia Carlyle and Councilmember Dennis Antone; share a moment after their Inauguration Ceremony at Ak-Chin Environmental Department, January 6, 2025.

Story and photos by Raychel Peters

Monday, January 6, 2025, the Ak-Chin Indian Community gathered together for the 2025 Tribal Inauguration for newly elected Chairman Gabriel Lopez, Vice-Chairman Delia Carlyle and Councilmember Dennis Antone.

All three stood before Judge Bala, along with their family members to take their Oath of Office, with numerous

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community members witnessing.

Gabriel gave up his seat as councilmember to run for the open chairman position, being vacated by Robert Miguel, as he had completed two consecutive terms. Delia, after a 2-year hiatus from council ran and won the Vice-Chairman position, which was previously held by Lemuel Vincent. Dennis, who is Ak-

Chin's youngest tribal member to be elected, ran in the special election for Gabriel's vacant seat. He will begin his first term as a councilmember, serving for the remaining two-year term of Gabriel Lopez's vacancy.

After the three councilmembers took their oaths, the Ak-Chin Language Program sang a couple of songs for the newly elected council



L-R: Ak-Chin Councilmembers Dennis Antone, former Chairman Robert Miguel, Recreation Director Ann Marie Antone and Chairman Gabriel Lopez cut the ribbon for the Recreation Grand Re-Opening.

Recreation Re-Opening celebrates "A Promise to the Next Generation"

Story and photos by Kristen Villegas

The evening of January 6, 2025, members, residents and employees were invited to attend the Grand Re-Opening of the Ak-Chin Parks & Recreation gymnasium.

To begin the 6 PM event, attendees gathered outside for introductions from Director of Recreation, Ann Marie Antone; shortly after she was joined by newly-elected members of council, Dennis Antone and Chairman Gabriel Lopez along with former Chairman Robert Miguel to cut the ribbon.

Ann opened the event with a brief breakdown of the renovation,

highlighting the gym floor design creator, Eliza Santiago and the support of council. Ann also shared a few ideas and projects the Parks & Rec will be implementing in the future for members, as she acknowledged and reiterated how the re-opening was for the "future generations." She then opened the floor for comments.

Community Services Manager, Nicole "CoCo" Carlyle-Coester recounted memories of the past recreation center; making comparisons to the present.

"If you were around in the 1970's, you would remember what the recreation

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Governor Hobbs visits Ak-Chin



Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs joins Ak-Chin Councilmembers Cecil Peters, Gabriel Lopez and Chairman Robert Miguel at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center, December 23.

Story and photos by Raychel Peters

On December 23rd, Arizona's 24th Governor, Katie Hobbs came out to visit the Ak-Chin Indian Community.

Governor Hobbs had scheduled her visit immediately following her election into office.

"She wanted to see first-hand how the farm functioned in provided top quality

crops for consumers and customers." Chairman Robert Miguel shared.

Upon arrival to the Community Governor Hobbs was escorted to Ak-Chin's potato-pecan processing plant, where she was greeted by Ak-Chin Farm Manager Damian Murietta.

Damian provided a tour of the plant, pointing out



Ak-Chin Ba'ban Kehina Dancers perform at the 2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Celebration, Sunday, December 22. Photo by Isabella Luna

2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Pt. 2 brings more action and entertainment to enjoy

Story by Runner Staff

Ak-Chin's birthday was again well celebrated with over two weekends packed with events for all to enjoy.

2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Pt. 2, did not disappoint as it sported a long schedule of action and entertainment over the week of December 19-22.

"The 2024 Masik Tas Celebration was one for the ages. From community activities that included the light parade, spiritual runs, toka games, dance contests, and frybread cookoff to the concerts, carnival rides, and rodeo, it was a major success despite plenty of minor challenges." Former Ak-

Chin Chairman Robert Miguel stated.

"I don't know the numbers, but attendance was probably one of the largest we've ever had. It was great to see everyone really enjoying the opportunities we were able to provide during our birthday celebration."

Cecily Peters, Ak-Chin Community Events Manager shared attendance numbers, courtesy of Proem of over 15,000 daily on Friday and Sunday, and over 20,000 on Saturday.

Visitors came out to enjoy all the free fun, including the carnival, with more thrilling rides, the three-

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Exciting Changes at the Elder Center: Construction and Expansion Underway

Story submitted, photos by Raychel Peters



L-R: Elder Center Director, Leslie Carlyle-Burnett, wishes Robert Narcia and mom Jenny Holsen a Happy New Year during elder lunchtime.

As many of you may have noticed, the Elder Center is currently under construction as part of an exciting expansion project!

While we understand that this temporary change may cause some inconvenience, we are committed to keeping our services available and ensuring that the Ak-Chin Indian Community

Elders continue to receive the services needed.

In November, the Elder Center staff faced a tight schedule in order to vacate the building so that construction could begin.

This relocation has led to a temporary move to the Service Center, which is open to serve our Elders during the transition.

We sincerely apologize for any disruptions in service and understand that this may have caused frustration, particularly during the busy holiday season.

Please know that this move was just as inconvenient for the Elder Center staff as it has been for the Elders we serve.

We greatly appreciate your understanding and patience during this time of transition.

What to Expect at the Service Center

While the Elder Center is undergoing its expansion, we are still serving breakfast and lunch at the Service Center.

The hours are as follows:

- **Breakfast:** Served Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM
- **Lunch:** Served Monday through Friday from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Transportation Services Available

We continue to offer transportation for non-emergency medical appointments, including dialysis.

If you require a ride to a medical appointment, please contact Georgia Corella, our Elder Center Transportation Supervisor, at 520-568-1760.

We kindly ask that you provide at least **48 hours' notice** to ensure that your transportation needs are scheduled and confirmed.

Looking Forward to the Expanded Elder Center

The construction of the Elder Center expansion is progressing, and we are excited for its completion in the fall or winter of 2025.

This expansion will help us serve our Elders even better with more space, updated facilities, and additional resources.

Thank you again for your patience and understanding during this time of change.

More Giftgiving for Elders



Elders!

Christmas gifts from the Preschool were distributed after the December 8th Christmas party.

If you haven't received your gift yet, please stop by the Service Center to pick it up.

For our homebound elders, give us a call—we'll be happy to deliver your gift to you!

A heartfelt thank you to the Preschool for the thoughtful Christmas gifts. Your kindness is truly appreciated!

We look forward to the future and the positive impact this expansion will have on the Ak-Chin Indian Community Elders.

Please stay tuned for further updates, and don't

hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance during this transition. We are here to serve you! Call us. 520-568-1760.

Thank you, Ak-Chin Elder Center



The table is set for breakfast and lunch at center.



Above, elder staff have office cubicles and storage.



Elder Turtle mascot hanging out at the center.

Elder Calendar

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>*Breakfast Served 7 AM to 8:30 AM *Lunch Served 12 PM to 1 PM</p> <p>*For Transportation call Georgia at 520-568-1769</p> <p>*Movie Questions? Call the Elder Center at 520-568-1760</p> <p>Menu Subject to Change Without Notice</p>				
<p>1/13 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Banana</p> <p>Bar-B-Que Ribs/Plain Ribs (D) Mashed Potato, Green Beans, Pineapples</p>	<p>1/14 Scrambled Eggs, Hashbrown Casserole, Bacon, Turnover/Fruit</p> <p>Spaghetti, Romaine Salad, Texas Toast, Apple Cobbler</p>	<p>1/15 Breakfast Burrito, Salsa Sour Cream, Fruit w/ Cottage Cheese</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Movie Day</i></p> <p>Baked Chicken, Sliced Acorn, Cauliflower, Wheat/White Rolls, Grapes</p>	<p>1/16 Cream of Wheat, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit</p> <p>Tomato Soup & Grilled Cheese, Vegetable Soup & Hot Ham Sandwich (D) Watergate Salad</p>	<p>1/17 Veggie Scrambled, Avocado Slices, Potatoes, Toast, Grapes</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Aluminum Can Candle Craft at 9:30</i></p> <p>Beef Fajitas, Corn, Rice, Sliced Apple/Orange</p>
<p>1/20 CENTER CLOSED - MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY</p>	<p>1/21 Ham & Eggs, Potatoes, Toast, Peaches w/ Cottage Cheese</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Goodwill Shopping, Leaving at 9AM</i></p> <p>Indian Tacos, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Fresh Cut Fruit.</p>	<p>1/22 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Movie Day</i></p> <p>Potato Soup & Salad, Wheat/White Roll, Cherry Crisp</p>	<p>1/23 Pancakes, Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Mix Berries</p> <p>Chicken Enchilada, Zucchini, Carrots, Mandarin Oranges</p>	<p>1/24 Biscuits & Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Fruit Salad</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quarterly Birthday, 12 noon</p> <p>Short Ribs & Hominy, Romaine Salad, Chumuth, Cake</p>
<p>1/27 Cream of Wheat, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit</p> <p>Red Chili Stew, Peas, Chumath, Watermelon</p>	<p>1/28 Bread Pudding, Scrambled Eggs, Sausage, Mix Berries</p> <p>Grilled Chicken over Caesar Salad, Avocado, Sliced Apple/Orange</p>	<p>1/29 Breakfast Tostadas, Salsa, Sour Cream, Scone, Fruit Salad</p> <p>Hamburgers, French Fries, Baked Beans, Jell-O</p>	<p>1/30 Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit</p> <p>Squash Casserole, Wild Rice, Romaine Salad, Vanilla Pudding</p>	<p>1/31 Chorizo & Eggs Scrambled, Refried Beans, Tortilla, Turnover/Fruit</p> <p>White Beans with Spinach, Pork Chop, Carrots, Tropical Fruit</p>

Ak-Chin O'odham Runner
 Newspaper of the Ak-Chin Indian Community © 2025
 16600 N. Maricopa Hwy. Maricopa, Arizona 85139
OFFICE HOURS
 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
 MONDAY - FRIDAY
 PHONE: 520•568•1375
 FAX: 520•568•1376
 E-MAIL: runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us

Ak-Chin O'odham Runner
 Editor: Raychel Peters
 Photojournalists: Kristen Villegas and Ashley Vincent
 Graphic Artists: Eliza Santiago and Diana Carlyle
 News Assistant: Delila Villegas

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

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

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

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

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 Ak-Chin O'odham 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'odham Runner is a Community Newspaper and encourages Community involvement.

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

All submitted letters MUST be signed by the author and are limited to 200 words.

Authors must also include their name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted by request. Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.

We reserve the right to edit all submitted material for clarity, grammar and good taste. All submissions should be received as typed or non-cursive writing. Please do not submit UPPERCASE or formatted paragraphs.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATE
 2025 Subscription rate is \$43.00. If you would like to receive the "Runner" by mail, please send a \$43.00 check/money order to:
Ak-Chin O'odham Runner
16600 N. Maricopa Hwy.
Maricopa, Arizona 85139

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

NEXT DEADLINE
 Don't forget the DEADLINE for the **January 24 - February 6, 2025** issue is due by **FRIDAY, JANUARY 17TH**

Please submit all announcements, wishes, etc. no later than **FRIDAY, JANUARY 17TH**

Material submitted after the **JANUARY 17TH DEADLINE** cannot be guaranteed placement. If appropriate and relevant, it will be included in the next issue.

Inauguration continued from Front



Photos courtesy of Him-Dak Museum



Governor Hobbs visit continued from Front



At right, Ak-Chin Farm Manager, Damian Murietta shares information on Ak-Chin's potato processing plant with Governor Hobbs during her tour of Ak-Chin Farms.

the plant's operation and work schedule.

Murietta also explained the sprinkler system and its efficiency with the community's water.

He then listed off the main crops for Ak-Chin; potatoes, cotton, corn, sorghum, wheat, alfalfa pecans and its newest crop, jalapenos.

"We're in our second year of growing jalapenos," shared Damien. "We're always looking to try something different out here."

Governor also toured the Eco-Museum, San Juan Church and Southern Dunes Golf Course, meeting with key staff to learn more about their respective areas.

Her last stop was

members that offered prayers, protection and guidance as they step into their new roles on behalf of the Ak-Chin Indian Community.

Afterwards, everyone stepped up to offer their congratulations and well-wishes, followed by photos with family and friends.

The Election Board shared, "Sending heartfelt Congratulations to our newly elected Chairman Gabriel Lopez, Vice-Chair Delia Carlyle and Council Member Dennis Antone.

May our community continue to be blessed under your Leadership. Thank you to everyone that made 2025 Inauguration Day a success."

at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center for lunch and then Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino.

"One of the highlights was her stop at the San Juan Church where she was able to meet with community member and elder, Janice Miguel-Perez." Miguel shared.

Janice, who was making homemade fresh cemat (tortillas) at the time, was able to bag a dozen for the Governor, who happily accepted.

Governor even learned how to say the O'odham word 'cemat'.

"What was great to see, was when we jumped into the Governor's SUV, she immediately took one piece of cemat out of the bag and started eating it."



Governor Hobbs takes photo with Him-Dak Staff, after touring Ak-Chin's Eco-Museum.



Brady Wilson, Ak-Chin Southern Dunes Golf Club Manager points out key areas on the course to Governor Hobbs.



Community Elder, Janice Miguel, welcomes Governor Hobbs to the family's San Juan Church, as she offers her a dozen fresh tortillas.

Rope's Round-Up

February 14th-17th, 2025
Everyone Welcome

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

OPEN WOMEN'S RODEO Friday, February 14th @ 1pm

Events	Fee
Ladies Maverick Gathering (3 Lady Team) (limit 10)	\$300/Team
Steer Stopping (limit 30)	\$100
Ladies Barrel Racing (limit 50)	\$100
Ladies Breakaway Roping (limit 40)	\$100
Ladies Team Roping (2X) (limit 50)	\$200/Team
Ladies Steer Riding (limit 30)	\$100
Sweetheart Team Roping (2X) (limit 50)	\$200/Team
<small>(Added Attraction) 1 side must be male</small>	

OPEN JR. RODEO Saturday, February 15th @ 9am

ENTRY CATEGORIES:	Woolly Woolly (limit 20)	Call Riding (limit 20)	Steer Riding (limit 20)	Bull Riding (limit 20)
Dummy Roping (limit 20)	Ribbon Roping (limit 20)	Ribbon Roping (limit 20)	Ribbon Roping (limit 20)	Ribbon Roping (limit 20)
Goat Tagging (limit 20)	Barrel Racing (limit 20)	Barrel Racing (limit 20)	Barrel Racing (limit 20)	Barrel Racing (limit 20)
Stick Horse Barrels (limit 20)	Flag Race (limit 20)	Breakaway (limit 20)	Breakaway (limit 20)	Breakaway (limit 20)
Entry Fee: \$40	Entry Fee: \$50	Entry Fee: \$50	Entry Fee: \$55	Entry Fee: \$55

OPEN RODEO Sunday, February 16th @ 1pm

PERFORMANCE TIME	Events	Fee
Performance on Sunday, February 16th at 1pm Slack at 8am (if needed)	Ranch Bronc Riding (limit 20)	\$100
	Bull Riding (limit 30)	\$100
	Chute dogging (limit 30)	\$100
	Daily Tie Down Roping (limit 30)	\$100
	Ladies Barrel Racing (limit 50)	\$100
	Ladies Breakaway Roping (limit 50)	\$100
	Ladies Team Roping (2X) (limit 50)	\$200/Team
	Open Team Roping (2X) (limit 100)	\$200/Team
	Century Team Roping (2X)* (limit 50)	\$200/Team
	Sr. Break Away Roping* (limit 50)	\$100
	4 Tribes Team Roping (2X)* (limit 50)	\$200/Team
	Maverick Gathering (4 man team)	\$400/Team
	Open Wildhorse Race (limit 12)	\$500/Team

TRAILER ROPING Monday, February 17th
 ENTER AT 9AM - ROPE AT 10AM

9.5 (Capped @ 5.5)	Open Cowboy Draw
Pick 1 Draw 1 for \$200 Enter 3X (Open to first 100 Teams)	\$100 per entry Enter 6X

MAIL-IN & WALK IN ENTRY INFORMATION

MAIL-INS	WALK-INS
Rope's Round-Up ATTN: Penny L. Mix, CES PO Box 1875 Sacaton, AZ 85147	Saturday, February 8th 10A - 5P Ak-Chin Entertainment Center 16000 N. Maricopa Rd. Maricopa, AZ 85139

*Century Team Ropers & *Sr. Breakaway Participants must be 50+ *4 Tribes Team Roper Participants must be enrolled member of Ak-Chin, Gila River, Tohono O'odham, or Salt River, must provide proof upon request. **Will not count for All-Around/Only one highest placing money won in Team Roping will count toward All-Around. ***Must be 18 years old to participate. Team Ropers must pay for full team in ONE envelope with separate entry forms.

program was about, which was literally makeshift ballfields (no pool) ... that was it, and everybody playing on teams, you did the best you could with what you had."

Robert shared how proud he was to see the youth out, "This is your gym, it's your place to come and do what you need to do...take advantage of this." He also recognized those no longer here "that inspired us when we were kids to continue our efforts of providing recreation for our community," such as coach, Milton "Paul" Antone bad.

He acknowledged the many Ak-Chin athletes who played at Maricopa High School, that earned recognition for their abilities, at the

school and in the other tribal communities. He also pointed out the championship banners hung at the school's gym for football and softball were mostly players from Ak-Chin. "Sports were a big reason why we were able to succeed in many ways, physically, mentally and spiritually." I appreciate everyone especially the Ak-Chin Recreation... thank you for inspiring all of us to continue to move forward."

Next, Chairman Lopez shared a few memories, "I grew up knowing the center, the old center where we had a swimming pool, a basketball court, tennis court and handball court, the flooring was green and the striping was white and it was asphalt... the whole

community used to go there at night."

He also reminisced about the rivalry between the Ak-Chin and Maricopa men's baseball teams and how impressed Maricopa was with the young players from Ak-Chin; giving credit to Joe Miguel, a mentor to many who could pitch, field and hit with just one-arm. Joe shared with Maricopa players who wanted to know how the young ones learned to play, "because...we take the time to teach them."

Chairman gave much credit to the older athletes of Ak-Chin for teaching the younger ones to play and use their athletic abilities to be successful. "If anything, they taught me...put your athletic ability combined with mental ability and put

your mind to it, then you can do anything you want. You can be anything you want to be; councilmembers, a chairman, a police officer; but you have to work at it, stay positive... you can do anything."

He ended by thanking the Recreation staff and all who had a part in the re-opening, "We came from humble beginnings and this is part of what we're seeing now and hopefully for the next future it can grow, because its being utilized a lot... it's helped a lot of students and helped a lot of kids."

New Vice Chairman Delia Carlyle was also in attendance, sharing a few memories as well about the old pool's location and where the old ball fields were located.

"What I remember about memories was that we re-lined the baseball field with powdered milk, commodity powdered milk, (then) we see the dogs eating up the line." She continued, "Enjoy, this is so neat and different from when we were growing up... Really appreciate everything that you have, because it always comes from humble beginnings."

After the shared speeches and memories, Ak-Chin Language staff members offered a prayer and song for the group, followed by the San Juan Kualiya Dance group who performed, ending with their crowd favorite give away dance. Next, the Ak-Chin Ba'Ban Keina Basket dancers performed with traditional singing by

Norma Vincent, Dennis Antone and Narin Lopez.

After closing statements, Recreation staff handed everyone in attendance a small token to remember the event; a small wooden plaque with a picture of the basketball court, made from the wood flooring of the gym that replicated the newest look. Everyone was then invited to enjoy the light refreshments in the game room.

Ak-Chin Recreation invites everyone to come over and see the new gym. Please note that the gym flooring is still under a strict no drink rule, other than water, so please be cautious of that when going over to enjoy the newly renovated gymnasium.



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, January 14, 2025 at the Justice Center Conference Room.

Case: PS-04-24 Hohokam Park Improvements:
Project Applicant/Parks and Recreation Director, Ann Antone, is requesting Preliminary Site Plan approval to replace and upgrade various amenities throughout Hohokam Park. The project consists of:

- Demolish/rebuild existing ramadas; and
- Construct new group ramada; and
- Replace existing shading structure; and
- Replace existing sand at Volleyball Court; and
- Re-grade basketball court area; and
- Remodel restroom building; and
- Alter irrigation system; and
- Replace and repair existing fence; and
- Update pedestrian lighting.

Case: SD-08-24 Harrah's Casino Expansion-Gaming Expansion: Changed to Smoking area:

Project Applicant/Harrah's Director of Facilities and Surveillance, April Stovall, is requesting Preliminary Site Plan approval to retrofit the former Buffet area to accommodate a new 10,000 square foot area Gaming Expansion area. The project consists of:

- 300 slot machines; and
- New 1,000 square foot bar with six (6) bar top slots; and
- Future capacity of Gaming Expansion area to 356 slots at 25 square foot per slot; and
- Designated smoking area separated by glass wall; and
- Updated HVAC unit; and
- New mechanical ducting accommodating smoke mitigation; and
- Upgraded lighting, Audio Visual, and Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing ("MEP"); and
- New carpet, architectural and decorative wall finishes and furnishings.

Case: PS-08-24 Ak-Chin Wellness Center:

Project Applicant/Health Education Director, Marc Matteson, is requesting Preliminary Site Plan approval to construct a new Wellness Center on the north east corner of Court Street and Ak-Chin Parkway. The project consists of:

- 38,800 Square foot Wellness Center building; and
- East facing main entrance with shade canopy; and
- Shaded event patio with artificial turf and fire pit; and
- Pedestrian connection to the future Desert Willow subdivision; and
- 129 Parking spaces; and
- Full landscape package for the exterior of the building.



Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community



NOTICE 2025 Agricultural Lease Payment

The 2025 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 24, 2025**, 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 13, 2024.

Please call as soon as possible.

Pay Card disbursement will be placed onto your SRPMIC Pay Card on Friday, January 24, 2025. 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 13, 2024.

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 24, 2025.

Questions? Contact the SRPMIC Finance Leasing Payment Office (480) 362-7730.

*Agricultural lease payments will be made based upon farmer payments received by January 2, 2025.



Winter Fun for Ak-Chin Preschool

Story and Photos by Ashley Vincent

The Ak-Chin Preschool held their annual Christmas program on Wednesday, December 18th. While family and friends enjoyed their meal, all were able to watch a presentation on the projector starring their preschooler, singing

Christmas carols with their classmates.

There were also a number of different stations for the whole family to enjoy, a favorite was the snow area. The preschool imported snow this year all the way from

the North Pole (Mather Bros, Inc.) as well as train rides provided by the Arizona Choo-Choo Company, it was a fun night for all ages.



GOLDEN TICKET

Greetings to you, the lucky finder of this Golden Ticket from the Ak-Chin Runner! Present this ticket to the Runner office within 14 days to receive for a special prize. Please call the Runner office to let the staff know you are on your way.

CONTEST OPEN TO AK-CHIN MEMBERS & RESIDENTS ONLY

Issue # _____ **Must be 18 years or older to claim prize**

AK-CHIN O'DHAM RUNNER-520-568-1375-16600 N. MARICOPA HWY., MARICOPA, AZ, 85139

We hope everyone had a merry holiday season! Be on the lookout for our first golden ticket of the year, good luck to all!

PD Ends Year with Christmas Crafts

Story and Photos by Ashley Vincent



The Ak-Chin Justice Center lobby was filled with jolly spirits as the Ak-Chin Police department hosted a craft night for the community on December 23rd. Everyone that participated was able

to tap into their artistic side and paint wooden Christmas decorations of their choice.

The department also provided a variety of drinks including hot cocoa and cookies, as

well as freshly grilled burgers and hot dogs for everyone to enjoy while crafting their Christmas project.



2025 DEADLINE CALENDAR

Ak-Chin O'dham Runner

16600 N. Maricopa Hwy. • Maricopa, AZ 85139 • (520) 568-1375 • Fax (520) 568-1376 • runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us

- Submission Deadline
- Deadline Week
- Distribution Day
- Runner Closed for Holiday

January							February							March							April												
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S						
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The Ak-Chin O'dham Runner Newspaper is published bi-monthly (1st & 3rd Fridays). All information/material is due on the submission deadline date. Submission deadlines fall on the Fridays prior to deadline week, unless the submission deadline falls on a scheduled holiday, then it will be the day prior to the holiday. Circulation area includes: Ak-Chin Indian Community, Harrah's Casino, Maricopa businesses and subscribers.



Please remember that all smoking is prohibited at all Gila River Health Care campus locations.

grhc.org

Happy New Year to Our Patients & Members of the Gila River Indian Community.

Thank you for choosing Gila River Health Care for your healthcare needs. We are grateful for your trust and confidence, and are committed to providing you with the highest quality of care possible.

We look forward to seeing you in the new year to come.

Respectfully,
Gila River Health Care



H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

PATIENT NOTICE

Norovirus (stomach flu) a very common and contagious illness that causes severe vomiting and diarrhea.

Norovirus outbreaks are seasonal during colder months.

NOROVIRUS

How does it spread?

- Direct contact with infected individuals.
- Consuming contaminated food or drinks.
- Touching contaminated surfaces and then your mouth.

Symptoms

- Nausea, stomach pain, fever, headache, body aches
- Watch for signs of dehydration, such as decreased urination, dry mouth, dizziness, crying with few tears, and unusual sleepiness.

Prevention

- Cook your food thoroughly
- Hand sanitizers are not as effective as hand washing in killing Norovirus
- Stay home for 48 hours after symptoms end.

Treatment

- Most recover within 1 to 3 days.
- Focus on hydration and seek medical attention if unable to eat or drink, or if symptoms last for more than 3 days

GET YOUR FLUSHOT!



The Flu Vaccine is available to Gila River Health Care Patients

Walk-in to one of our GRHC Primary Care Departments

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

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

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

Ak-Chin Clinic
(520) 568-3881

Pediatrics
(520) 562-3321 Ext. 7337

Scan the QR code to view more Gila River Health Care's Information, and Events!

Scan me!



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE: CALL OR TEXT 988

Gila River Indian Community CRISIS HOTLINE: 1-800-259-3449

Elder Valentine's Tea Party



Thursday, February 6th, 2025
11:00am - 1:00pm
Historic BIA House
Ak-Chin Indian Community

Space is limited to the first 15 Elders
Please RSVP by February 3rd.

To RSVP or more information please call
the Museum at (520)-568-1350

EMPLOYEE BIRTHDAYS 1/3 - 1/23

<p>1/3 David Gorby, Tribal Gaming Agency Johnny Ramirez, Central Plant</p> <p>1/5 Christopher Beginski, Fire Andrew Jiminez, Sanitation DelRoy Narcia, Police</p> <p>1/6 Sonya Martinez, Recreation Jose Miguel, Sanitation Henriette Rubio, Police</p> <p>1/7 Wayne Allison, Police</p> <p>1/8 Ashley Manuel, Library</p> <p>1/10 Gilbert Celaya, Police</p> <p>1/12 Ashley Charles, Social Services</p> <p>1/13 Teri De La Cruz, Community Operations</p>	<p>Elizabeth Dominguez, Elderly Anthony Morales, Police</p> <p>1/15 Veronica Armadillo, Community Operations Jordan Lopez, Recreation</p> <p>1/16 Christopher Crone, Recreation Eduardo Santiago, Recreation</p> <p>1/18 Dominique White, Sanitation</p> <p>1/20 Joe Medina, Maintenance Bianca Valenzuela,</p> <p>1/21 Vera Pablo, Education Francisco Preciado, Fire</p> <p>1/23 Judyt Curry, Education Kris Narcia, Police</p>
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JOB OPENINGS

CURRENT JOB OPENINGS:

- Animal Control Officer
- Accountant
- Aquatics Coordinator
- Asst Cook Detention
- Cashier Stocker part-time
- Compensation Analyst
- Communication Officer
- Communication Officer part-time
- Child and Family Therapist
- Child Care Teacher
- Deli Clerk - Vekol
- Detention Officer (certified and non-certified)
- Detention Officer Certified part-time
- Emergency Manager
- Environmental Technician
- Lab Tutor (part-time)
- Legal Asst Prosecutor
- Plant Electrician & Instrumentation Technician
- Plant Electrician
- Police Officer (certified and non-certified)
- Security System Technician
- Substance Abuse Therapist
- Youth Council Coordinator

**Open to Enrolled
Community Members Only**

- Temporary Worker

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.

Happy New Year!

Due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day holiday,
there will be NO TRASH PICKED UP on Monday, January 20th.

Instead, trash will be picked up on Tuesday, January 21st.
Please share this information with people who may not have access to email.

Thank you!



Happy Birthday to my grandsons Edward, Jonathan and Joshua and my granddaughters Estalynn and Sarah Love, Grandma

TO YOU

Birthdays 1/10 - 1/23

<p>JANUARY 10TH Jason Luz Jack Tittes-Long</p> <p>JANUARY 11TH Euphrasia Mike Persephanie Antone Mylaunah Robles Octavio Machado Edward Rocha Bradley Miguel</p> <p>JANUARY 12TH Celiyah Antone</p> <p>JANUARY 13TH Ezri Miguel Ella Lewis Amarissa Garcia Viviana Rascon</p> <p>JANUARY 14TH Karl Hoffman Kimberly Smith Teresa Valisto</p>	<p>JANUARY 15TH Carmella Ortiz Jakob Thomas</p> <p>JANUARY 16TH Karly Campbell Dallaz Narcia Verdina Aguilla Eduardo Santiago</p> <p>JANUARY 17TH Ryder Narcia Logan Tittes Dawn Lewis Stacey Yarberr</p> <p>JANUARY 18TH Richard Joaquin IV Dominique White Nathaniel Enos</p> <p>JANUARY 19TH Perla Corona Rosario Ormsby</p>	<p>JANUARY 20TH Jonathan Peter Joshua Peters Bernadine Romo Roland Narcia Adriana Narcia Phoenix-Michelle Alejandro Joe Medina Juan Medina</p> <p>JANUARY 22ND Francisco Kaniatobe Estalynn Lopez Marie Lewis Leah Castro</p> <p>JANUARY 23RD Sarah Peters Kris Narcia Maite Ortega Amber Antone Danielle Theel</p>
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Valentine Crafts

Wednesday, February 5th, 2024
4:30 PM - 7:30 PM
Him Dak Art Building

Open to all Ak-Chin Members and Residents

Transportation provided within the Community.
Please call (520)-568-1350 before 4:00 PM to
schedule transportation or for further
information.

CAUTION: SOME CRAFTS REQUIRE THE USE OF HOT GLUE GUN



Happy NEW YEAR 2025

Begin your 2025 fitness journey with a virtual
walk or run! Choose a 2 mile or 5K distance.
January 10th - January 26th
Submission Deadline: Jan 27th



Register by scanning QR Code.
Submit your virtual walk/run using a
fitness app.
Participants will receive a t-shirt &
meal voucher. Top finisher prizes
available for 5K.
Open to Ak-Chin Members, Residents,
Employees & their families.

Questions? Please contact Health Education at (520)568-1085
or email mguy@ak-chin.nsn.us

@akchinlibrary
@ak-chinlibrarymedia355
@akcilibrary
@Ak-Chin Indian Community
Library

1/2025

January



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 Happy New Year Closed	2 Closed	3 Closed	4 Closed
5	6	7	8	9	10 Storytime 2:30pm	11
12	13 String Lessons Violin	14	15 String Lessons Cello	16	17 Storytime 2:30pm	18
19	20 String Lessons Violin	21	22 String Lessons Cello	23	24 Storytime 2:30pm	25 Closed
26	27 String Lessons Violin	28	29 String Lessons Cello	30	31 Storytime 2:30pm	

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

AFTER SCHOOL MEALS
MON-FRI:
4PM-6PM
SATURDAY:
1PM-3PM

Harrah's Ak-Chin Celebrates 30th Anniversary by Donating More Than \$30,000 to Valley Nonprofits



(Maricopa, Ariz. – Dec. 26, 2024) The leadership team at Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino celebrated the property's 30th Anniversary by delivering checks totaling more than \$30,000 to Valley area nonprofits.

Five local charities including Soldier's Best Friend, Phoenix Pride, F.O.R. Maricopa, Maricopa Pantry, Inc. and The Veterans in Need Project received donations from the property's HERO fund and guest NRT donations.

HERO, a team member-based volunteer program, enables Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino employees and their families to make noteworthy and visible contributions to the community by donating their time, skills, expertise, and compassion to dozens of volunteer projects.

"Giving back is absolutely the best part of my job," said Senior Vice President and General Manager Michael Kintner.

"I'm proud of our team

and our guests that value the critical programs and services that keep our Valley community strong.

In addition to the support from Harrah's employees, our guests' financial contributions through our NRT donation program make a world of difference to those who need a hand up. I'm proud to be a part of this team."

Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino is the state's first and only tribal casino with an international management partner, a relationship that began 30 years ago with Caesars Entertainment and successfully continues today.

"Harrah's is an integral part of the community and our longtime relationship with Ak-Chin Indian Community is testament to that," added Kintner.

"Our ability to provide quality entertainment and give back to our community is a cornerstone of the relationship with Ak-Chin."

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

JANUARY EVENTS

Ak-ChinCircle.com

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025

From the Team at Ak-Chin Circle Entertainment Center

MOVIE RELEASES

- 1/10 Den of Thieves 2
- 1/10 The Last Showgirl
- 1/10 Better Man
- 1/17 September 5
- 1/17 One of Them Days
- 1/17 Wolf Man
- 1/31 Valiant One
- 1/31 Dog Man

NATIONAL POPCORN DAY

FREE REGULAR POPCORN

with the purchase of a movie ticket

LIVE GAME SHOW NIGHT

IN THE LUXE LOUNGE

FIRST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH • 8PM-10PM

Doors open at 7PM | Sign ups start at 7:30PM

\$200 CASH PRIZE

for the winning team

MONTHLY MOVIE MUST-HAVE COMBO

Large Popcorn 4oz Drink
Kit Kat Chocolate Bar

\$16

MLK DAY

OPENING EARLY

CENTER WILL OPEN AT 11AM

KARAOKE Night

LUXE LOUNGE

EVERY THURSDAY

5pm-10pm

Food & Drink Available

DEN OF THIEVES 2

PANTERA

IN THEATERS JANUARY 10

RASPBERRY Martini

\$10

HALL PASSION FROM THE LUXE LOUNGE EXPERIMENTAL FLAVOR
SPLASH OF SWEET • SOULFUL SANGRIA

FLASHBACK SATURDAYS

WITH PERFORMANCES BY DJ NOIZ & DJ ECHO

DOORS @ 8PM • PARTY STARTS @ 10PM

FREE ENTRY • MUST BE 21+

EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT

DAVID & MARICOPA AT MARICOPA AK CHIN

AVAILABLE NOW

2025 POPCORN CARD

2025 SODA CARD



ARROYO GRILLE

at Ak-Chin Southern Dunes Golf Club

WEEKLY GRILLE SPECIALS

BEGINNING AT 5PM* *Subject to availability

WEDNESDAY	CLASSIC FISH FRY \$14
THURSDAY	RIB SPECIAL 3RD THURS! CHEF'S SPECIAL \$20
FRIDAY & SATURDAY	PRIME RIB DINNER \$32

MAKE IT EASY - ORDER TO GO!

(520) 426 - 6832 ARROYOGRILLE.COM

JANUARY 2025

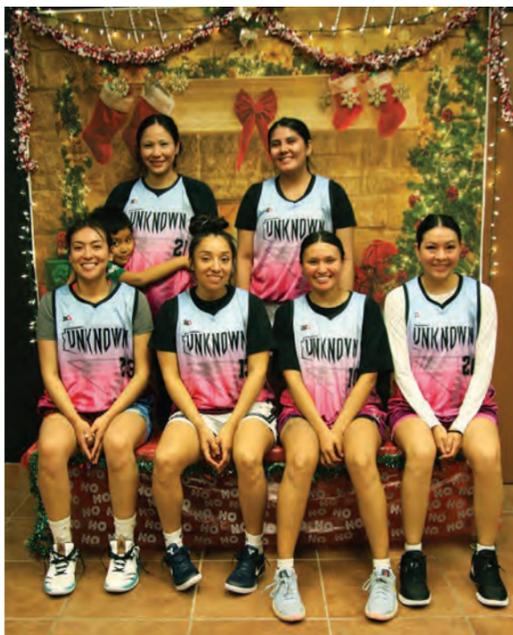
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	BATH & SPA TOWEL SET GIVEAWAY! MONDAY • JANUARY 20, 2025 PROMOTIONAL KIOSKS • NOON - 7PM EVENTS CENTER • NOON - 7PM					
5 SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!	6 REDEEM REWARD CREDITS FOR FREE SLOT PLAY!	7 URBAN VOYAGER LUGGAGE GIVEAWAY	8 LUCKY WINNING WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG HOT SEATS AT THE TABLES	9 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER	10 CANTINA NIGHTS \$2 BEER SPECIALS & SWAG AT THE LOUNGE	11 TEE UP AT THE AK-CHIN SOUTHERN DUNES GOLF CLUB CANTINA NIGHTS
12 SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!	13 FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM, FACEBOOK & X!	14 URBAN VOYAGER LUGGAGE GIVEAWAY	15 LUCKY WINNING WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG HOT SEATS AT THE TABLES	16 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER	17 \$2 BEER SPECIALS & SWAG AT THE LOUNGE CANTINA NIGHTS	18 GOLDEN WHEEL KIOSK GAME CANTINA NIGHTS
19 SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!	20 BATH & SPA TOWEL SET GIVEAWAY	21 URBAN VOYAGER LUGGAGE GIVEAWAY	22 HOT SEATS AT THE TABLES	23 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER	24 CANTINA NIGHTS \$2 BEER SPECIALS & SWAG AT THE LOUNGE	25 RENT A CABANA ON YOUR NEXT STAY!
26 SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!	27 CAESARS SPORTSBOOK WITH CAESARS REWARDS OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF THE NFL	28 URBAN VOYAGER LUGGAGE GIVEAWAY	29 LUCKY WINNING WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG HOT SEATS AT THE TABLES	30 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER	31 CANTINA NIGHTS \$2 BEER SPECIALS & SWAG AT THE LOUNGE	LIVE ENTERTAINMENT AT THE LOUNGE WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHTS

Valid only at Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino and must have a Caesars Rewards card and valid photo ID to participate. Management reserves the right to change or cancel these promotions at any time without prior notice. Must be 21 or older to gamble and take advantage of these offers. Know When To Stop Before You Start! Gambling Problem? Call 1-800-NEXT STEP or text "NEXTSTEP" to 53242. ©2025 Caesars License Company, LLC. See official rules at the Caesars Rewards Center for complete details.

2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Women's Basketball Tournament Winners



TOURNAMENT CHAMPS - WANNABE RUNNERS



2ND PLACE - UNKNOWN



3RD PLACE - SNAKETOWN

2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Men's Basketball Tournament Winners



TOURNAMENT CHAMPS - OTF



2ND PLACE - LA BALLERS



3RD PLACE - YOUR FAVORITE UNCLES

day rodeo and free shows on the main stage, as well as free after-parties in The Luxe Lounge.

Many also indulged in the vast array of food and arts/craft vendors that numbered over 40, that were spread throughout the carnival and rodeo area.

The last week of Masik Tas was stacked with an action-packed rodeo schedule, beginning with the Team Roping on Thursday, December 19, that brought over 220

teams, vying for buckles and cash awards.

Friday, December 20 the Jr. Rodeo was set for the morning, bringing in young wranglers and cowgirls to try their luck in the numerous events that also offered cash prizes and buckles for all top winners. All-Around winners also received jackets.

Miss Jaylee Clendon from Whiteriver, AZ took home more than a few wins for her participation; winning

the Stick Horse Barrels, Dummy Roping, Sheep Riding and Goat-Tail Pull.

Ak-Chin had three participants place in the Sheep Riding event; Jonathan Enos earned a respectable 4th place, while Paislee White and little brother Malakai White both tied for 5th place.

Jose Lopez along with little sister Jaylene Lopez also participated from Ak-Chin, as well as Andrew Enos, Paige White, Eliza Smith,

Aldyse Mariscal, Caleb Ugalde, Zach Garcia and Pate Justin.

The Wild Donkey Race had two teams representing Ak-Chin members; Team Ak-Chin, with Zach Garcia, Drevyn Soliz and Amare Santiago and Team Los Chavalos with Horacio Corella, Daniel Salazar and Jeyden Nova.

After some rough and rowdy pushing, pulling and dragging around the arena, Team Los Chavalos was victorious,

with each winner receiving buckles and cash awards.

Friday evening things got even more exciting with the Bull Bash, that included Open Novice Riders and Open Women's Steer Riders. Top winners would also take home their share of winnings and buckles. Ak-Chin had one Bull Rider step up for a chance at an eight-second ride, Marcus Stephens.

While the rodeo events were going on at Ak-

Chin Circle Arena, basketball games were being played at Ak-Chin Recreation gymnasium with a men's and women's tournament.

Ak-Chin Men's team played Friday evening at 6pm and won, advancing in the bracket. They lost their next two games and were eliminated from the tournament. Games continued to Sunday. OTF was the winner for the Men's tournament and Wannabe Runners won the Women's tournament.

2024 Masik Tas continued to Page 2b

TEAM AK-CHIN



Standing l-r: Raymond Whitman, Kyle Peters, Alex Lopez, Dennis Antone, Waylon Antone, Jacob Dickerson, Jr., Jose Miguel, Jr. Sitting l-r: Victor Andaverde, Sammy Justin, Jose Lopez, Manuel Gonzalez.

Masik Tas Moments



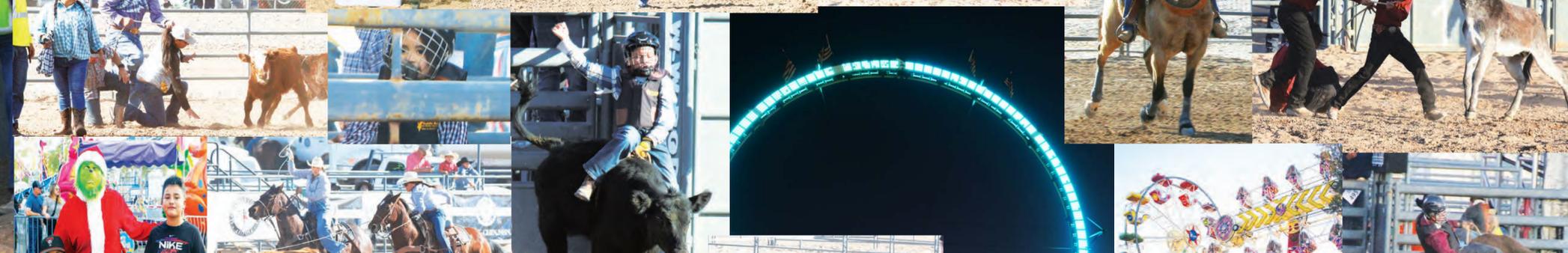
Friday's entertainment also included a FREE SHOW with Runaway June, Clay Walker and Little Big Town. All bands were set up on the main stage north of Ak-Chin Circle. There were many cowboys and cowgirls who moseyed over to the show after the rodeo. An afterparty was held in Ak-Chin Circle Luxe Lounge that featured Buckshot and Bellbottoms.

Saturday had a busy schedule with a full Open Rodeo. Ak-Chin had its fair share of participants enter the team roping events; Chizzum Justin, Tami Justin, and family members Charles Justin, and Joe Zabawa, Sr. Wild Horse Race participants included; Marcus Stephens and Dominique "Patcho" White for the Bustin' Broncs team and Earl Justin Jr. with Team Justin.

Saturday's show lineup included; Los Hermanos, Louie S., Los Musicales, Grupo Metal and Michael Salgado. An official Michael Salgado afterparty in The Luxe Lounge was held with Lideres De La Sierra. It included a Meet & Greet for all the bands. There was also a Special Meet & Greet with actor Jesse Borrego, best known for his roles in Blood in Blood Out, Fame and Mi Vida Loca, in the Circle lobby.

Sunday's rodeo lineup was not as long, although there was slack from the previous roping events before the main program began. After all was said and done, winners were awarded for all Open Rodeo events.

2024 Masik Tas continued on Page 4b



2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Traditional Performers



Photo by Aaron Peters

San Juan Kualiyaya Youth Dance Group



Chi'Chino Spirit O'odham Dance Group



Tohono O'odham Anegam Traditional Dancers

Sunday's entertainment lineup included traditional performances from the Ak-Chin San Juan Kualiyaya Youth Dance group, Gila River Chi'Chino Spirit O'odham Dance Group, Ak-Chin Ba:bam Kehina Basket Dancers, and Tohono O'odham Anegam Traditional Dancers & Singers.

The weather was definitely on their side as the show was great; attendees danced and enjoyed the transition from chicken scratch to country favorites.

Two Rivers played next, with many Ak-Chin players in the band; including bass player Nick Narcia, drummer Marco Thompson, along with Nicole Narcia and Ariah Thompson.

Gertie & The T.O. Boyz closed out the evening, playing all their favorite cumbias and chotes.

The Runner was out and about covering the Masik Tas events. Thanks to all the staff members for the coverage and printing needs.

Extra Kudos to Ramon Diaz, Kerianna Justin, Kaylan Peters, Isabella Luna, and Brianna Peters; who were a big help with photo coverage.

"I met a couple at the basketball tournament." Isabella shared on meeting new people. "It was great to meet with people from other

reservations."

Best assignment? "It was taking pictures of the toka games."

Biggest highlight of this year's Masik Tas? "Watching my sister Candi chasing a calf."

"Working with the Runner was a great experience. Not only did I learn how to operate a canon camera, I gained a lot of insight of what goes into planning for events within the community. Overall, I had a fun and amazing time. Thank

you, Raychel, for this opportunity. I will be waiting for another assignment."

Kerianna Justin shared, "For all four days I got to work for the Masik Tas it was a pretty fun experience, especially to see everyone get together & enjoy themselves with some good food & good entertainment with their loved ones."

Miguel added, "A big thank you goes out to the Events Team for being the backbone of the celebration, making sure

that everything moved forward.

Other individuals which included community members and employees also played a key role in our success. I'm looking forward to this year's celebration, which I'm sure will be another celebration to remember."

The Events team also offered a big "Thanks" to everyone who helped with the 2024 Masik Tas events and celebration, "We could not have done it, without all your help."



2024 Ak-Chin Masik Tas Concerts - Shows

Photos by Runner Staff & Gabriel Lopez

