

servicing
Northern Pinal County
ARIZONA
Superstition Mountain Country



Studying Fireworks
see page B-2



An All "AJ" Affair!
see Sports, page C-1

Apache Junction Gold Canyon NEWS 50¢

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County Justice Foundation



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Rodeo Queens Loggin' The Miles



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Public Meetings

- Apache Junction City Council work session**
7:00 p.m. Monday, June 16, 2008
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Apache Junction City Council regular meeting**
7:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 17, 2008
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Pinal County Board of Supervisors**
9:30 a.m. Wednesday, June 18, 2008
County Complex, Florence
- Apache Junction Fire District board meeting**
5:30 p.m., Wednesday June 18, 2008
565 N. Idaho Road

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School District Won't Seek Override In '08

School Board's tie vote kills proposal for November ballot

By Meghan McCoy
The News

APACHE JUNCTION— The Apache Junction Unified School District (AJUSD) governing board could not come to an agreement over the issue of placing a Maintenance & Operations (M&O) Budget Override question on the November ballot for voters to address.

At their monthly board meeting last Tuesday, June 10, 2008, the question resulted in a 2-2 tie vote regarding the adoption of a resolution for a special budget override election in November 2008. The tie vote means the issue failed and the question of the Override will not be on the ballot this year.

The question failed following a lengthy discussion by board members at both the study session and regular board meeting last Tuesday. The failed item needed to be decided by July 7, 2008 according to state law.

President Lucy Young and Board Member Pat McNamara

were in favor of a M&O Budget Override being brought before voters in November, while Board Member Deborah Skinner and Vice President Wendy Moore voted against the issue. Board member Dan Scott was not present at the meeting.

The M&O override was first implemented in 1999, after the district asked voters for help in downsizing classrooms that were averaging 40 to 45 students per class. In 2003 the M&O override was renewed by voters. In May and November of last year the M&O override was rejected by voters leaving the district to begin slashing the budget with a three-year phase out of \$950,000 each year beginning with the 2008-2009 school year.

When the M&O override was defeated by voters last November, the district held three town hall meetings in an effort to involve the community in decisions on where to cut expenses within the district, without affecting students. Taking that



Apache Junction Unified School District Board Members (left to right) Deborah Skinner, Vice President Wendy Moore, President Lucy Young, and Board Member Pat McNamara. Board member Dan Scott (not pictured) was absent. Also pictured is Superintendent Dr. Greg Wyman as the panel discusses a possible special budget override election during their monthly board meeting on Tuesday, June 10, 2008 at the district office.

information into consideration, along with input from personnel, 52 cost-saving measures were identified, some of which will be implemented as early as next school year.

Before the board vote on Tuesday, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Greg Wyman presented the board with a variety of options concerning the override, which

included foregoing the override; going out for a new override or renewing the existing override that had been rejected by voters last November.

Discussion regarding the override was heated considering 30 to 40 district personnel positions would need to be cut for the 2009-2010 school year because of the \$950,000 reduction phase out. Wyman said they have turned over every rock they possibly could to help save money. Since the M&O override helps

the district in funding programs and staff, they will face a difficult time maintaining this due to the nearly \$1 million reduction in funding.

Although Moore agreed that more money was needed to maintain staffing and programs she said she believed it was not a good time to ask the voters for approval. "I am very concerned about going out for an override because of economic reasons

see **Override**, A-3

Council To Hold Budget Hearing

Revenues down— City tightens belt

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

APACHE JUNCTION- The Apache Junction City Council will hold a public hearing this week regarding the proposed final budget for fiscal year 2008-2009. The Hearing will be held during a special meeting at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 17. The regular City Council meeting will follow.

As previously reported, even though city tax revenue declined 6.5% from \$26.2 million to \$24.5 million in the past fiscal year, Apache Junction city staff will see no layoffs or cutbacks in programs for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. However, they will not receive cost of living or step increases, according to the proposed budget.

"The economy has suffered and this organization has not escaped what the larger economy is experiencing," said City Manager George Hoffman during a special City Council meeting Tuesday, May 13. "The core objective of this proposed budget is to minimize the reduction in the



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programs and services we provide to our citizens. As a service industry, we rely on people to provide programs and services."

During a June 3 special meeting, the City Council members thanked city staff for eschewing cuts in a tight budget year.

Regular meeting
The consent agenda for the

regular meeting calls for the approval of Resolution No. 08-17: Authority to submit a Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) grant application. During the June 2 City Council meeting, staff was directed to begin preparation of a TEA-21 grant application for a landscaping and scenic beautification project on the Idaho Road exit of the Superstition Freeway/U.S. 60.

Also on the consent agenda is:

- The consideration of approval of a contract renewal with Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) for economic development service in an amount not to exceed \$21,541 and the reappointment of Councilman Rick Dietz as the city's representative to the board.
- The approval of contract extension with Supreme Oil Co. The city's gasoline supply contract with Supreme Oil Co. allows renewal for two additional one-year periods. This is the second renewal. It will extend the contract's term from July 1, 2008,

see **City Budget**, A-3

Residents Rally Behind 'Cupcake'

Lost pooch steals the hearts of Arroyo Vista I residents

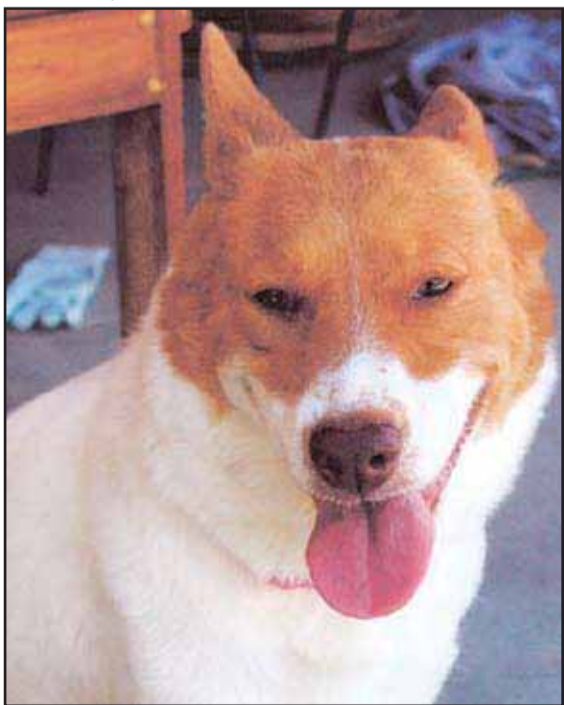
By Jill Jones
The News

GOLD CANYON- The Arroyo Vista community and The Superstition Mountain Homeowners Association are hoping to locate the owner of a female dog that was found in their community. Several residents have been caring for the dog, which they think may be a Basenji mix. She has been in the Arroyo Vista I area since around May 30 and several residents have been caring for her. "She has cupcakes on her collar so we've named her Cupcake...and she's extra sweet!" said Janet Armstrong. Cupcake's pink collar did not have any tags.

Cupcake was found on Jalapa Lane. She is white with brown patches and according to her caretakers has a wet, black nose perfect for giving whisker likin's. She has a fluffy tail, brown eyes and a big heart. She is said to be friendly and very sweet. She rides in the car nicely. She also walks very nicely on a leash and enjoys every step, according to Armstrong.

Cupcake was given a bath and behaved well

see **Lost Dog**, page A-5



"Cupcake" was found in Gold Canyon wearing a pink collar adorned with cupcakes but no tags.

Final Segment Of Loop 202 To Open

Grand opening celebration July 15

By Jill Jones
The News

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) will be hosting the "Roundin' Out the Red Mountain" grand opening celebration on Tuesday, July 15, 2008 signifying completion of the Loop 202 (Red Mountain Freeway) in addition to the conclusion of freeway projects funded by Proposition 300.

The final segments of the Red Mountain Freeway between Broadway Road and University Drive and between University Drive and Power Road are in the final stages, with the rubberized asphalt being installed over the next few weeks.

The new section of freeway between Power Road and University Drive will include exits at Brown; McKellips; and McDowell roads and will also include roundabouts at the McKellips and Brown road exits.

The grand opening celebration will be held on Tuesday, July 15 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on the nearly five-mile long section of freeway between Power Road and University Drive. Commu-

nity members are invited to join in the festivities, which will include an opening ceremony and ribbon cutting along with an ADOT Fun Run/Bike Ride and ADOT Road Show. The public parking entrance to the event will be located at McDowell Road and Loop 202.

The Red Mountain Freeway, along with the Loop 101, State Route 51 and the Loop 202 Santan Freeway, was funded through the Proposition 300 one-half sales tax approved by Maricopa County voters in 1985.

Local businesses and organizations are encouraged to set up exhibits or donate services for the ADOT event. If you are interested in becoming an exhibitor or donor, please visit http://www.azdot.gov/Highways/valley_freeways/Loop_202/red_mountain/index.asp.

For additional information on the freeway and the celebration visit the ADOT web site at www.azdot.gov/valleyfreeways.

The News Kidcast

Clear and sunny skies with highs from 105 to 110. Lows in the upper 70's.

This week's
Weather "Artoonist"
Hunter LaBrake
Age 9
Special to The News

