

NOV 3RD

School Budget Override

Apache Junction Unified School District

The Area's Leading Newspaper Since 1997

servicing
Northern Pinal County
ARIZONA
Superstition Mountain Country



Museum Concert
see page A-7



Girls Cross Country Runs To State
see Sports, B-1

APACHE JUNCTION
Gold Canyon

NEWS

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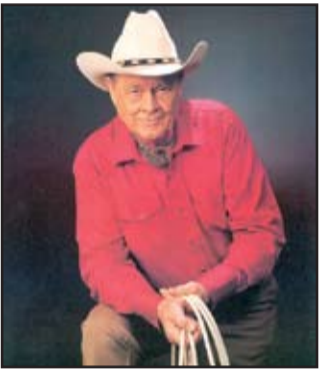
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Inside The News

Ben Johnson Days



see page A-3

Veterans



see page A-7

Letters to the Editor
see pages A-4, 5 & 6

Public Meetings

- Apache Junction City Council work session**
7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 2, 2009
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Water Utilities Community Facilities District (Apache Junction Water Co.)**
6 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Apache Junction City Council regular meeting**
7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2009
300 E. Superstition Blvd.
- Pinal County Board of Supervisors**
9:30 a.m. Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2009
Administration Building A, 31 N. Pinal St., Florence

Index

- Business DirectoryB-4
- Business Page..... A-6
- ClassifiedsB-4,5
- Entertainment..... A-7
- For The Record A-2
- Kollenborn A-4
- Letters to Editor A-4
- Local HappeningsB-3
- Obituaries..... A-2
- Opinion Page..... A-4
- Saddle Up..... A-8
- SportsB-1,2,3,6
- Worship Directory..... A-6

Judge Voids 5 Pinal Supervisors Law

Senator admits law was designed 'solely' to shift control of Pinal County to Republicans

By Ed Barker and Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

A Maricopa County Superior Court judge has voided a new state law that, according to the legislative sponsor's own admission, was designed solely to put control of the Pinal County Board of Supervisors (BOS) in the hands of the Republican Party. The law, HB 2101, was written by a Republican State Senator, passed by the Republican-controlled legislature without a single Democratic vote of support and signed into law by Republican Gov. Jan Brewer.

But last week Maricopa County Superior Court Judge Edward Burke said the legislation, which was approved in



Supervisor Bryan Martyn, the board's only Republican, supported the partisan law that has now been voided by a judge.

the last legislative session, is unconstitutional. Additionally, Judge Burke said he found several legal flaws in the law. Burke's ruling was made



Supervisors Pete Rios (l) and David Snider (r), both Democrats, voted to hire the attorney who won the case for Pinal County.

public on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 and is a victory for the two Democrats on the three-member Pinal County Board of Supervisors. The Democrats, Supervisors Da-



vid Snider and Pete Rios, will remain in the majority on the board through 2010, and, in all likelihood, Democrats will retain control through 2012.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Pinal County Voter Registration | |
| October, 2009 | |
| Source: Arizona Sec. of State | |
| Democratic | 35% |
| Republican | 32% |
| Independent | 32% |
| Other | 1% |

Sen. Al Melvin, a Republican who lives in the Saddlebrook subdivision of southern Pinal County, admitted last week that the sole purpose of his bill was to use the outdated district lines of the five-member Central Arizona Col- see **Law Voided, A-8**

Capitol Christmas Tree To Visit Apache Jct.

In town for about an hour, Friday, Nov. 13

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

The Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center is hosting the Capitol Christmas Tree from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Friday, November 13, at the organization's office, 567 W. Apache Trail.

"For the first time in history, Arizona has been selected to provide the United States Congress with the Christmas tree placed in front of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C.," said Jan Long, Chamber of Commerce office manager. "The yearlong project is an enormous undertaking bringing together the citizens of Arizona. From schoolchildren making the more than 5,000 ornaments to the 75 companion trees placed throughout federal offices in Washington, D.C., the effort involves people throughout the Grand Canyon State."

The Capitol Christmas Tree is scheduled to leave Eagar, Ariz., on November 10 and will tour the state of Arizona for 10 days before visiting: Amarillo, Texas;

see **Christmas Tree, A-9**



Arizona has been selected to provide the U.S. Congress with the Christmas tree.

AJ To Host Wellness Expo

East Valley's largest, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7

The Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department is partnering with wellness advocates to produce "Heal Yourself, Heal Your World," the biggest wellness event in the East Valley, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, November 7, at the Multi-Generational Center, 1035 N. Idaho Road.

"More than ever, society is concerned with health and the environment," said Jamie Sullivan, facility manager. "Many feel overwhelmed or lost at all the information or lack of when it comes to this subject. This event has so much to offer the community. The Multi-Generational Center will host over 70 different booths focused on improving the wellness of you and your environment." The event has grown every



The Multi-Generational Center will host more than 70 different booths focused on improving the wellness of you and your environment.

year. "I encourage everyone to attend this event, try something new, attend classes and even pamper yourself—at no cost to you." "This community has more to offer than we realize. There are talented healers and services right here in the East Valley," Sullivan said. see **Wellness, A-10**

Override On The Line Tuesday

Voters to hit the polls at 7 locations

Voters will determine Tuesday, November 3, whether or not Apache Junction Unified School District will operate on a Maintenance and Operating Budget Override first approved by voters in 1999. Approval would allow the district to exceed its state-formulated budget formula by up to 10 percent for the next seven years.

Voters are being asked to decide the issue despite the less-than-ideal economic conditions because the district is facing an unprecedented financial challenge. Drastic cuts in state financing, a 300-student decline in districtwide enrollment, cuts necessitated by the final phase out of the 2003 override have already necessitated budget reductions exceeding \$4.5 million, said Carol Shepherd, the school district's spokeswoman.

Forecasts for next year are even bleaker, Shepherd said. AJUSD joins nine other school districts in Pinal County and 16 in Maricopa County asking voters for approval of the seven-year override. The majority of the school districts in the state are already operating on them. Polls open at 6 a.m. and will close at 7 p.m. Precincts have

been consolidated and voters are asked to check their Voter Information Pamphlet for their polling location. By consolidating precincts, the District also affects a savings of \$1,000 per precinct on the overall expenses related to the election. Precincts and their polling locations are as follows.

Precincts 43, 42, 63: Superstition Mountain Elementary School Cafeteria/gym, 550 S. Ironwood Drive.

Precincts 44, 46, 47: Desert Shadows Middle School Library, 810 W. Southern Avenue.

Precincts 45, 56, 57, 58: Four Peaks Elementary School Library, 1785 N. Idaho Road.

Precincts 40, 59, 88: Apache Junction Unified School District Office, 1575 W. Southern Avenue.

Precincts 64, 66, 84: Gold Canyon Elementary School, 5810 S. Alameda Road, Gold Canyon.

Precincts 72, 48: Peralta Trail Elementary School, 10965 E. Peralta Trail Road, Gold Canyon.

Precinct 49: Queen Valley Homeowners Association, 1478 Queen Valley Drive, Queen Valley.

The News Kidcast

Mostly sunny and clear with highs in the mid 80's and lows around 55.

This week's Weather "Artoonist"

Jordan Age 5

Gold Canyon Elementary School

