

serving
Northern Pinal County
ARIZONA
Superstition Mountain Country



**Happy
Easter!**



**Track Is
Back!**
see Sports, B-1

APACHE JUNCTION
Gold Canyon
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NEWS

50¢

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*Easter
Sunday*
WORSHIP
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**Fiddleneck Weed
Can Kill Horses**



See SaddleUp!
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It's That Time



A column by Capt. Arnold
Freeman, AJPD
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**Soroptimists
Winners**



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Public Meetings

**AJUSD Governing
Board (school board)
regular meeting**
11 a.m. Tuesday,
March 30, 2010
1575 W. Southern Ave.

**Pinal County
Board of Supervisors**
9:30 a.m. Wednesday,
March 31, 2010
Administration
Building A,
31 N. Pinal St.,
Florence

**Apache Junction
Economic Development
Public Forum**
6:30-8 p.m. Thursday,
April 1, 2010
300 E. Superstition Blvd.

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Weed Season Plagues Residents, City

Growth causes allergies

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

Thanks to the above-average rains the area has seen in recent months, weeds are growing out of control, causing a headache among City officials, allergy sufferers and home occupants.

"I will tell you we've probably had more calls and concerns about weeds this winter and spring than any other time," said Brad Steinke, the City's director of development services.

"Our part of the deal is that we have code compliance staff in our development services department. There's four full timers there. At least three of them spend their time going after proactive enforcement and reactive enforcement."

Proactive enforcement is when code compliance officers actually go out and try to observe violations. Reactive is enforcement on the basis of complaint only, he said.

"The vast majority of all enforcement we do is complaint based," Steinke said. "Most of the issues are complaint-type issues. The proactive ones are in a category which is pretty small. It involves trash in yards. It involves inoperable and unlicensed vehicles visible in the yard. It involves weeds and now the council has directed us to include enforcement of illegal portable signage. Those are the lists of the proactive things we're doing. When it comes to weeds, we will look for weeds that violate the code in height. I think it's 12 inches or more. That's important."

Steinke said his department will send letters to violators telling them to cut their weeds back in 20 days. If they don't comply, they receive another, more "edgy" letter, he said, telling the violators they must do so or face legal processes.

"That usually takes care of it," Steinke said. "In fact I will tell you 98 percent of our



Ninety-eight percent of the City's code compliance cases are settled voluntarily without having to go to court. Photo courtesy of the City of Apache Junction.

code compliance cases are settled voluntarily without having to go to court. The only ones that go to court are really the mutants, we'll call them."

Olen Deadmond, owner of Do-It-Best Hardware in Apache Junction, said there

are different ways to go about ridding a home's yard of weeds.

"There's a Hula-Hoe that removes the weeds mechanically without using any chemicals or anything," Deadmond said.

"Then there's a couple of different types of chemicals. Pre-emergent keeps things from growing or germinating in the ground. Then there are chemicals you put directly on the weeds—roots and all. Round Up is one of those types of products."

He said that home occupants are going to be in for a rude awakening when the weather warms up.

"A lot of people haven't been out yet with the cooler weather," Deadmond said. "They're going to go outside and see that they've gotten bigger."

Deadmond explained that weeds should be taken care of when they're small, not mature. Smaller weeds take less chemicals.

Weeds can cause health issues
see Weeds, A-9

Silly Mtn. Trail Nearly Done

Trail created by SALT, City officials



(Front row, kneeling) With Silly Mtn. in the background, City Councilwoman Robin Barker and Mayor John Insalaco joined interpretive trail volunteers to celebrate the nearly completed project.

The new interpretive trail at Silly Mountain Park being built by the Apache Junction Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Superstition Area Land Trust (SALT) is nearing completion.

The interpretive trail is a gradual one-third mile pathway laid out in a figure-eight design, paved with compacted crushed granite and lined with native Sonoran desert plants. The path can be walked easily by people of all ages and is wheelchair accessible. The construction of the trail had strong support and con-

tributions from a number of businesses and organizations throughout the community.

The initial idea for the trail came from Don Wells, SALT vice president. That idea evolved through a community input process and from concepts developed by the J2 Engineering and Environmental Design consulting firm. These concepts were transformed into reality through the planting plan and detail design developed by Nick Blake, AJ Parks superintendent and City landscape architect. A \$35,000 grant to SALT from the Nina Mason

Pulliam Charitable Trust provided the primary funding for the project.

The Apache Junction Parks and Recreation maintenance crew, supervised by Keith Graves, did the clearing, grading and compacting of the pathway, with assistance in the initial clearing effort from Tom McDonald of Smiling Dog Landscapes. The Parks and Recreation Staff installed the water lines and drip system. The final grading and construction of the pathway were done by the

see Trail, A-3

County Wins 'Sunny Award'

Web site honored for transparency

Phoenix City and Pinal County were named winners of the "Sunny Award" last week marking them as some of the best state and local government Web sites for transparency by Sunshine Review, a pro-transparency organization.

Award winners are among only 39 Web sites in America earning an "A" transparency grade from more than 5,000 analyzed. Sunshine Review's "Transparency Checklist" analyzes Web sites for information about budgets, meetings, elected and administrative officials, permits and zoning, audits, contracts, lobbying, public records and taxes. The "Checklist" measures what content is available on government Web sites against what should be provided.

"Sunny Award winners deserve recognition for making information available to citizens and for setting a transparency standard that all governments can, and should, meet," said Mike Barnhart, president of Sunshine Review. "Access to information

empowers every citizen to hold government officials accountable for the conduct of the public's business and the spending of taxpayers' money. Official accountability is the corner stone of self government and liberty."

Sunshine Review is a non-profit organization dedicated to state and local government transparency. The Sunshine Review wiki collects and shares transparency information and uses a 10-point "Transparency Checklist" to evaluate the content of every state and more than 5,000 local government Web sites. Sunshine Review collaborates with individuals and organizations throughout America in the cause of an informed citizenry and an accountable government.

Since its inception in 2008, Sunshine Review has analyzed the Web sites of all 50 states, more than 3,140 counties, 805 cities and 1,560 school districts.

For more information, visit www.sunshinereview.org.

Sharing Life

Mother makes organ donation awareness her mission

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

When the 31-year-old daughter of Apache Junction winter visitor Patricia Thomas died in September 2008 after a long illness, it was one of the most devastating events in her life.

But one thing made it easier for Kathleen Shannon's family—the decision to donate her organs. Listed as her emergency contact, Shannon's brother, Patrick Shannon of Denver, made the call.

"She always said that if anything ever happened to her, she wanted to have her organs donated," Thomas said. "That made

see Life, A-8



The News Kidcast

Mostly sunny, highs of 80 with showers on Friday and cooler temps with high around 60.

This week's
Weather
"Artoonist"
**Kaylee
Wagner**

Age 5

Gold Canyon
Elementary
School

