

serving
Northern Pinal County
ARIZONA
Superstition Mountain Country



Fire Season
see Kollenborn, A-4



Region Tennis Champs!
see Sports, B-1

Apache Junction
Gold Canyon

NEWS 50¢

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City Paving To Begin May 3



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Champ Camp!



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The Ride To Save LD Park



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Public Meetings

AJUSD Governing Board (school board) regular meeting
1 p.m. Tuesday, April 27, 2010
1575 W. Southern Ave.

Apache Junction Planning & Zoning regular meeting
7 p.m. Tuesday, April 27, 2010
300 E. Superstition Blvd.

Pinal County Board of Supervisors work session
9:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 28, 2010
Administration Building A, 31 N. Pinal St., Florence

Apache Junction General Plan Open House
6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, April 29, 2010
300 E. Superstition Blvd.

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AJ Sex Offender Numbers Vary

80 to 103 live in city, police say

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

The number of convicted sex offenders living in Apache Junction fluctuates, with current numbers sitting at 80 to 103, according to the Apache Junction Police Department.

"There's no real rhyme or reason as to why it fluctuates," said Capt. Tom Kelly of the AJPD. "Some of it can be, too, because of the winter visitors—not that we have a lot of winter visitors who are sex offenders. We have some who come from other states."

"Our community is very mobile. Now, as the season as ending for the winter visitors, those numbers could change by those numbers leaving."

Kelly said the police department keeps a running tab on certain people, but 99 percent of the sex offenders in the community have been "very compliant."

"They cooperate with investigators," he said. "We're lucky enough to maintain where they're at."

Sex offenders are ranked according to their threat to the community, from Level 0 to Level 3, with the third being the most serious. The public is notified when Level 2 or 3 offenders move into their area.

"We don't send notifications out to the community on Level 0 or 1,"



Capt. Tom Kelly of the AJPD

Kelly said. "Normally, the protocol is once they register with the county, the county then forwards us the information. We take a packet, check out what we can in terms of their background, at that time. One of my detectives goes out to the individual's house and verifies the person physically lives

there. We have to meet that person. We sit down with them, discuss what social networking they have, what their Internet sign on (user name)—not their password—if they have any vehicles, if they're employed. We verify all that information. If they are a 2 or 3, then we do the public notifications."

According to the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) database, 26 Level 2 and Level 3 sex offenders live in the 85120 ZIP code, while 19 reside in 85119, for a total of 45. Two live in Gold Canyon, in the 85118 ZIP code.

The offenders living in Apache Junction range in age from 33 to 86, including two females who are 36 and 37. Thirty-one are considered Level 2, with 14 called Level 3.

Of the two who live in Gold Canyon, one is a 70-year-old man, who is a Level 3 offender, and the other is a 39-year-old woman, who is a Level 2 offender.

Convicted sex offenders are required to register with the county sheriff within 10 days following conviction and within 10 days of entering or remaining in any Arizona county.

Any name or address changes must be submitted in writing within 72 hours. Failing to comply with these requirements is a Class 4 felony. These requirements also apply to out-of-state

see Sex Offenders, A-5

Public Input Invited On 2010 General Plan

Meetings April 29 and May 6

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

To some, discussing the City's General Plan is like watching paint dry, said Brad Steinke, Apache Junction's Development Services director.

"To planners, however, it's what we live for," he added. "It's essentially the outcome of everything you hold near and dear. That is to try to bring some rationality and order to the development of the City. Decisions are based on thoughtful planning, long-range projections of where the city could be and ultimately trying to make sure that as the city grows, we have the services and infrastructure to accommodate that growth."

The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range statement of goals, and related policies to guide future growth and development of a



Brad Steinke, Development Services Director

commodate that growth."

The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range statement of goals, and related policies to guide future growth and development of a

city. The plan is essentially a blueprint for the city's future.

The City is hosting two public open-house events to discuss the evolving 2010 General Plan with local residents, business owners and other interested community stakeholders. The open house will allow those who are interested in the city's future to talk directly and informally with City staff members about the following matters:

- Future Land Use and Zoning
- Transportation Planning
- Environmental Planning
- Housing
- Recreation and Open Space Planning and Programs

see General Plan, A-9

Council Honors Police Auxiliary Program

Cost savings to City \$174,996

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

The Apache Junction City Council honored the Apache Junction Police Department's Auxiliary Program during its Tuesday, April 20, meeting by designating April 18-24 "National Volunteer Week."

AJPD Community Resource Coordinator Suzanne Strong followed the tribute with a presentation about the program, which saves the City \$174,996.

During her 15-minute PowerPoint presentation, Strong described the AJPD's different departments and the role each has in the department.

Animal Control boasts 17 volunteers. Their duties include: front desk assistance, Animal Control officer assistance, pickup/delivery of dog food, photographer/website manager and customer assis-



AJPD volunteer Bill Norton (not pictured) is in charge of the antique car the department displays at local events.

tance for adoption. The number of hours volunteered was 1,703 between July 1, 2009, and April 1, 2010, with an estimated savings to the City of \$35,499.

Victim Services has 13 volunteers who help officers with victims, assist with chil-

dren of victims or suspects, transport victims and provide needed information for recovery. They are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Victim Services volunteers, who worked 6,678 on-

see Police, A-8

R.E. Eck Bloodwork Returned

Vice mayor's lawyer says medications are at 'therapeutic levels'

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

The Arizona Department of Public Safety has analyzed a blood specimen drawn from Vice Mayor R.E. Eck shortly after an October 2, 2009 road rage incident and Eck's lawyer said the levels of medication in his system are therapeutic.

The analysis of the specimen, which was provided to the Apache Junction/Gold Canyon News via the Pinal County Sheriff's Office, shows 140 nanograms per milliliter of diazepam (also known as Valium), 355 nanograms per milliliter of nordiazepam (Stilny or Calmday) and traces of zolpidem (Ambien). The specimen was labeled "BERMUDA, EIGHT."

Eck said only that "I'm very happy to be moving forward with this case." He referred all questions to his attorney, James Tinker.

"That's my understanding" that the levels were therapeutic, Tinker said. "The tox results that came back (con-



Vice Mayor R.E. Eck

sistent) with the medications that Mr. Eck was prescribed (for Fibromyalgia). He was taking them as prescribed and they were within therapeutic range."

Whether or not the levels were within the therapeutic range could not be verified independently.

Tinker said that Pinal County must decide what to do with their findings. The sheriff's office did not comment further on the matter.

"The county will make some decision about what to do with the tox results, in the hopes they will act appropriately," Tinker said. "I'm sure they will."

The News Kidcast

Mostly sunny, highs near 90 with lows in the 50's. Cooler temps later in the week.

This week's Weather "Artoonist"

Jasmine Jimenez Age 5

Avalon Elementary School

