

serving
Northern Pinal County
ARIZONA
Superstition Mountain Country



Butterfly Walk
see Page A-6



Little League All-Stars
see Sports, B-1

APACHE JUNCTION
Gold Canyon

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Follow Rules When Placing Campaign Signs

Monsoons



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Lizard Walk



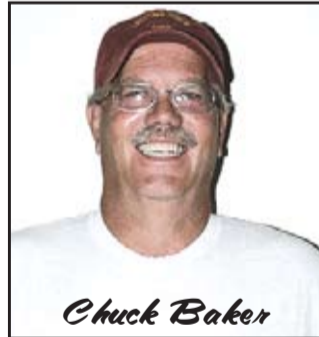
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CAAFA Honored



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Time Out



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Public Meetings

Pinal County Board of Supervisors work session
9:30 a.m. Wednesday, June 23, 2010
Administration Building A, 31 N. Pinal St., Florence

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ADOT seizing signs located incorrectly

By Betty Swanson
The News

Political candidate campaign signs are popping up all over the landscape, reminding voters that it is an election year and the primary election date is fast approaching.

In some cases, the signs are coming down quickly as well, courtesy of the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

The bottom line is that candidates, cause supporters and campaign workers have to do their homework and become knowledgeable about the rules and regulations regarding political sign placement before they hit the street with a sign and pole.

A lot of it involves utilizing common sense, but sign placers should know that regulations regarding political sign placement are being enforced by ADOT and all involved should take the time to check the many regulations involving campaign signs.

Apache Junction Justice of the Peace Judge Dennis Lusk was among the first to note the "disappearing sign phenomena" that was claiming candidate signs along Highway 88 and at the corners of Old West Highway and Idaho



Placing signs involves using common sense.

Road late the week of June 7.

He began making inquiries and tracked the missing signs to the Arizona Department of Transportation whose field personnel had taken down those campaign signs that were improperly placed in ADOT right-of-ways. Luckily for the candidates, the signs had been taken back to the Phoenix Maintenance Yard where they were being held for pick-up by the candidates.

Lusk's campaign signs weren't among the missing. He explained, "I know the rules and follow them." But he felt that a timely overview of the regulations would be

good public information to nip out at this time and contacted the *Apache Junction/Gold Canyon News*.

Locating the signs properly is the biggest enforcement consideration because it involves public safety. A letter was recently sent by ADOT to all political candidates and groups with issues slated to be on the upcoming ballots. The letter basically warns that campaign signs "are not permitted in a state highway right-of-way."

According to ADOT Community Relations Manager Tim Tait, people can look for white square markers pounded into the ground that delineate these areas or, if in

doubt, they can call the Phoenix Maintenance District at (602) 712-6664 and ask.

Signs located on local roads under the City of Apache Junction jurisdiction are being watched as well. But, according to Public Works Director David Fern, "So far,

we haven't been aggressively removing signs unless they are creating a safety hazard."

But he warned that people should be aware of obstructing the line of sight at driveways of businesses and homes. He said that the current city practice for seized signs is to store them for pick-up within 30 days.

Apache Junction Assistant City Manager Bryant Powell also noted that there are regulations regarding the size and number of signs that can be located on residential property.

But Powell said that action taken on code compliance issues such as this would only be "complaint driven."

One area that is not being very strictly enforced by any entity this year is the time frame laws. The current rule is that

see **Signs, A-5**

Council Votes Against San Tan Incorporation

Serdy dissents in 5-1 vote

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

The Apache Junction City Council voted 5-1 Tuesday, June 15, to request that surrounding cities and towns show support for their residents by rejecting the proposed "untimely" incorporation of San Tan Valley.

Councilman Jeff Serdy was the lone dissenter among the council. Vice Mayor R.E. Eck was absent.

"I've been anguishing back and forth about this," Serdy told the council. "The more I think about it, these people pay this money in. In some ways, it's their money. If you buy lunch and they give you too much money back, I feel obligated to give it back."

"They're paying a lot for us right now. ... I wish we would

have stayed out of it and let it work out."

Apache Junction stands to lose \$1.6 million a year if the San Tan Valley incorporation happens, said City Manager George Hoffman. Apache Junction's population and distribution of state shared sales, income and gas taxes would be smaller.

"The formula for distribution of these revenues is based upon the relation of the City's population to the total state population," said Bryant Powell in an e-mail to the *Apache Junction/Gold Canyon News*. "The state collects and distributes these funds. Apache Junction's proportionate share of the population would be less."

In order for San Tan Valley's incorporation to happen, cities and towns within six miles—Queen Creek, Gilbert, Mesa

and Florence—must vote in favor of it. Apache Junction cannot vote although, as it did Tuesday night, it can voice its opposition. According to the Arizona League of Cities and Towns, "The County Board of Supervisors does not have jurisdiction to take action upon a petition for incorporation in an urbanized area unless each city or town within the six-mile vicinity has passed a resolution approving the proposed incorporation."

"The reality of the current legal environment is we are interconnected through shared revenues," Hoffman said.

"We have not been consulted by proponents of the incorporation. We're simply reading the news and being

see **San Tan, A-8**

Council Sees Draft Of Balanced General Fund Budget

No layoffs, no pay reduction

By Christina Fuoco-Karasinski
The News

Apache Junction City Manager George Hoffman presented a draft general fund budget proposal for fiscal year 2010-2011 to the City Council on Monday, June 14, that calls for no layoffs or pay reductions.

The general fund, which makes up 55.4 percent of the \$41,250,360 total budget, shows a \$1,803,990 decrease from fiscal year 2009-2010, according to finance director Donna Meinerts.

During his prepared speech at the work session, Hoffman touched on revenues and expenditures; the City's level of bonded indebtedness; what's on the horizon that can impact the City's budget; public safety/city attorney/court employees; roads; investments/maintenance for the long run; grants and Superstition Vistas.

"What we do know closer to home is that our revenues have fallen dramatically in past years and that we've had to cut expenditures accordingly," Hoffman said.

"We're cautiously optimistic that our sales tax numbers are beginning to bottom out. We do know that, because they're lagged, stated shared income tax will continue to decline,



George Hoffman

both for fiscal year 2010-11 and fiscal year 2011-12."

For the current budget, the City budgeted almost \$3 million of its savings, Hoffman said.

"It is our belief at this time that we will actually end up spending little—if any—of those savings," he said. "This budget again proposes the utilization of savings; we will again seek to spend as little of those savings as we are able."

Hoffman said the City does not have a large mortgage payment. The pool/park/skate park, Multi-Generational Center, City Hall and Rodeo Grounds will be paid off this fiscal year.

"Remaining is a small amount for the Public Safety building; that debt will be paid of in 2012," he said.

see **Budget, A-9**

Legion Donates To Parade

Gives \$1,200

The Apache Junction Veterans Day Parade Committee is comprised of dedicated volunteers who meet at 7 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month at the American Legion to plan the event honoring vets. This year's theme is "Honoring Vets Who Continue to Serve." Pictured, Max Wood (right) Commander of the Sons of the American Legion Squadron 27, presents a check for \$1,200 to Glen Koepke (left), parade committee chairman. This check will cover all expenses for this year's parade.



The News Kidcast

Mostly sunny with highs around 105 and overnight lows around 80 degrees.

This week's Weather "Artoonist"

Riley Komen

Age 6

Peralta Trail Elementary School

