

FEBRUARY 2012 NEWSLETTER COLUMN

One month gone and eleven more to go! January seemed to fly by but that's probably because there was so much going on: the start of the 2012 legislative (and elections) process, the sad and simultaneously brave announcement from Rep. Giffords, and the issuance of 1099 forms as tax season rolls around.

A sign that we've moved into another yearly cycle took place during a recent Board of Supervisors meeting. At the request of County Manager Behring, the Board shared their budget philosophies for the coming fiscal year so that staff and elected officials would get a sense of what the Board would support or oppose. I led off the discussion by saying that I will not support any increase in the County's property tax rates.

This means, especially in light of news from the County Assessor's Office that assessed values will decrease by perhaps another 10 percent, that not only will taxpayers' tax bills go down – at least that part of the tax bill that the County controls – but the amount of revenue that we will have to operate in FY 2012-13 will be less. It also means that our dedicated, hard-working employees will go a fifth year without any adjustments to their wages. But we are not out of the recessionary “woods” yet and now is the time to hold the line.

By now if you don't know that Arizona's Centennial officially takes place on February 14th, you've been asleep or sailing around the world in a small boat for months. It's been quite a century of change and development – I wonder what they'll say as Arizonans look back in celebration of their Bi-Centennial in 2112?

There's lot going on to fete Arizona's birthday. In addition to the Casa Grande Dispatch's *Casa Grande A Century of Progress* (Brian Kramer & Susan Randall) and the Casa Grande Valley Historical Society's *Images of America Casa Grande* (Dawn Snell) – the CG Historical Society will spend the better part of Saturday, February 11th with a very special series of events at the Historical Museum. Historical re-enactors will portray various events over the past century (yes, there will be at least one shoot-out!) while artisans will demonstrate various arts and crafts during the day-long (10-4) event.

Not to be out done, the newly energized Casa Grande Cowboy Days group invites everyone to “catch the cowboy spirit” as they hold rodeo roping and riding events throughout the eight day extravaganza – February 18-26 at the Casa Grande Rodeo Grounds. There's lots going on (too much to list here) so go to <http://casagrandecowboydays.com> for a complete schedule. But here's a word to the wise: there'll be a great parade through downtown Casa Grande on Saturday the 18th as a start to the All Indian Rodeo.

And if you can't get enough of parades, you'll want to be in downtown Sacaton on the following Saturday by 9:00 a.m. as the American Legion of Gila River Indian Community (Post 84) and other veterans organizations celebrates the 67th Anniversary of the historic flag-raising on Iwo Jima. Veterans from the far flung corners of our country

assemble to honor those who fought in World War II's Pacific Theater and specifically the flag-raising on that small speck in the Pacific Ocean. Gila River Indian Community's own Ira H. Hays was an important part of that team effort. The parade includes a fantastic fly-over (last year's display featured a B-17 that rattled your teeth!) and inspirational speeches immediately following the conclusion of the parade.

Congratulations are in order! Ak-Chin Tribal Council elections recently returned Council members Terry Enos and William Antone to the Council. The Casa Grande Chamber of Commerce honored Craig McFarland (Community Leader), Rona Curphy (Community Leader), and Judee Jackson (Hall of Fame) during its Annual Business & Awards Dinner. The Eloy Chamber of Commerce also feted Eloy Mayor Byron Jackson (Good Neighbor Award), the Pinal Hispanic Council (H.B. Christy Award), and Justice of the Peace Marie "Toni" Lorona (S.P.O.K.E. Award) last month.

Not to be outdone, the Maricopa Chamber of Commerce finished off the month of January with its Awards Dinner and honored Bob Gillespie with the Sonny Dunn Citizen of the Year Award, Diane Morrow with Renate Chamberlain Volunteer of the Year, the Maricopa Education Foundation with Non-Profit of the Year, and National Property Inspection Company with Business of the Year.

Finally, here are some other good things to do for your calendar. On February 4th (from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.), Sun Life Family Health Center Dental Clinic will be doing its annual Free Dental Screenings for Children at their Casa Grande office (865 N. Arizola Road). This great clinic is co-sponsored by Casa Grande Daybreak Rotary and Sun Life Family Health Center. For more information, call Renee Louzon-Benn at 520.381.0366.

Pinal County's Board of Supervisors invites everyone to two ribbon-cutting events: the new Public Health Clinic in Maricopa (February 7th at 2 p.m.) and in San Tan Valley (February 21st at 2 p.m.). Against Abuse's Seeds of Change Gala takes place in the Province Town Center on Saturday, February 25th and all proceeds go toward the construction of a women's shelter in Maricopa. For more information, go to www.seedsofchange gala.org.

The Second Annual Pinal County Veterans Memorial Golf Tournament will take place on March 3rd on the Arizona City Golf Course. Proceeds from the tourney will go to the construction of a long-overdue memorial honoring our Pinal County veterans who've given their lives for our country. For more information, contact Steve Ketsdever (520.858.5678) or Palmer Miller (520.431.3399).

David Snider, Supervisor
Pinal County District 3