

June 2008

FROM THE DESK OF SUPERVISOR DAVID SNIDER

Welcome to the merry month of June! For many families it's the start of the summer season when the kids are enjoying a respite from the rigors of studying and parents are lamenting the lack of a respite from the work-a-day world that has long since stopped slowing down in the summer months. And for those of us who don't have school-age reminders of summer vacation time, there is always the lure of a dash to the coast or the mountains for a breath of cooler climate. Unfortunately, we all suffer from the inexplicable problems of working twice as hard in advance of the time off ... and ten times as hard to catch up when we return to the workplace.

But June is also a month of changes – and not just from 90 degree days to 110 degree days! The face of the Maricopa City Council will evolve as Mayor Kelly Anderson and Councilmen Kelly Haddad, Will Dunn, and Dallas Paulsen (sitting in for Steve Baker who moved out of Pinal some months ago for work-related reasons) leave office. Mayor Anderson and Councilmen Dunn and Haddad labored long and hard in the effort to create the City of Maricopa where there had been no city. Under the best of circumstances, giving birth to a city is no easy or simple task but these gentlemen gave it their all over the past five years and they deserve our thanks for their time and dedication. And Councilman Paulsen gets kudos as well for having stepped up to serve his city in its time of need – he put in endless hours of research and meetings to do his best on behalf of his neighbors in Maricopa.

These retiring gentlemen in Maricopa will be succeeded by a new group of faces, led by Mayor Anthony “Tony” Smith. Joining him in the Council hot-seats will be Marquisha Griffin, Marvin Brown, and Carl Diedrich. I wish them all the best in their pursuit of excellence in public service and commit to them that Pinal County will be there to work with them as we face the challenges of growth, development, economic development, and change.

Last month's election in Coolidge clearly proved that one vote does count! Although incumbent Mayor Tom Shope ran unopposed, the Council race came right down to the May 20th General Election wire and then went past it. In the primary election, Randall Rushing and incumbent Judy Rotz-Lopez were summarily elected to the City Council; however, Emily Verdugo-Aldrich and Lester Curry faced off on May 20th – Mr. Curry had a one vote edge over Ms. Verdugo-Aldrich with a write-in vote and a contested ballot. After a review of the balloting, a tie was declared. The matter was decided at the June 9th City Council meeting as the “old” council adjourned sine die and the new Council assumed their duties. I'd like to note that Council members Paul Prechel and Bonnie Palmer have each served Coolidge for nearly two decades and deserve the thanks and gratitude of their constituents and the larger Pinal County community.

I had the pleasure of attending an event at the Francisco Grande last month in celebration of Older Americans Month. Organized by our twin towers of strength, Olivia Rodriguez and Mary Lou Rosales, the event brought together representatives of Chambers of Commerce from Pinal and Gila Counties as well as members of the Pinal-Gila Council for Senior Citizens to explore the issue of the mature worker and their impact on Arizona's workforce and economy. Governor Janet Napolitano took a break from her work with the legislative leadership on the FY 2009

budget to address the assembled group and talk about programs that her office and the State Legislature have put into place for older Arizonans. The event was a great success with a number of elected officials also in attendance.

One more note on this column's theme of change. Last month marked the official retirement of Marge Jantz from the Casa Grande Main Street program. She arrived in town nearly a decade ago to assume the reins of the program on the heels of Donna Renninger. Marge's style was considerable different, but her attention to detail and her passionate embrace of things-Casa Grande were a potent combination. It's clear that Casa Grande's downtown is a better place for having her small but vibrant hand on the steering wheel. I'm pleased that she'll continue to be a part of our local and county community despite her determination to retire from the Main Street program. Thank you, Marge!

At the top of this column, I spoke of the summer months and children being released from the bonds of the classroom. I want to take this opportunity to urge everybody to drive extra carefully in residential neighborhoods because kids don't look when they're playing in the front yards of our neighborhoods. Please, if you have a pool, don't relax your vigilance: even two seconds of inattention can be fatal for young ones who are naturally fascinated by water. Let's all get through this 2008 summer time without a fatality due to drowning in a backyard pool.

Finally, here's my sincerest Happy Birthday wish to the United States of America! This July 4th marks the 232nd birthday of our beloved country and I know we'll be gorging ourselves on all the typical food groups while looking toward the skies at dusk for fireworks. As you do so, please join me in thanking all those who have served or who are currently serving our country in all branches of the US military. Thank those who serve and protect us here at home – both police officers and fire fighters. Thank those who work so hard to make our country's economy strong and vibrant and those who teach our future generations the truths that keep us free. God Bless America, Arizona, and Pinal County.

David Snider, Supervisor
Pinal County District 3