

## PINAL COUNTY LIFESTYLES

JULY 2011

Hello Gentle Readers – Hello July! For a month that's supposed to be indolent and laid back because everyone is either in the mountains cooling off or out of state visiting relatives and/or national parks, there are 31 days ahead of us that seem pretty busy to me.

Depending on when your copy of *Lifestyles* arrived, you may have missed out on Build a Scarecrow Day (the 3<sup>rd</sup>). Of course, there's always National Sugar Cookie Day (the 9<sup>th</sup>) and Teddy Bear's Picnic Day (the 10<sup>th</sup>). July 11<sup>th</sup> is for folks who are without companionship so lend a hand during Cheer Up the Lonely Day. And if you've got one more special day in you, indulge yourself during National Stick Your Tongue Out Day on July 19<sup>th</sup>.

The country's mid-section and the East Coast have unfortunately been the recipients of months of really awful weather in terrible combinations: droughts, massive flooding, devastating tornados, fires, and unseasonably hot (or cold) temperatures. We, here in Pinal County and in Arizona, have been pretty fortunate when it comes to disasters like this year's crop of natural calamities. However, on occasion Mother Nature reaches out to remind us that Arizona is home to its own kinds of weather-related or other disasters so it's really only a matter of time until we'll take our turn in the barrel.

This is why I am raising the call for volunteers and donations for the Grand Canyon Chapter of the American Red Cross. In 2010, volunteers from this chapter responded to 47 emergencies in Pinal County ranging from flooding and storm damage to multi-family house fires. "We presently have about 20 active Red Cross volunteers in Pinal County, most of whom are from Casa Grande," says Tracey Kiest, Communications Manager for the Grande Canyon Chapter. That's a very small number of people to come to the aid of 375,000 county residents in a 5,386 square mile area.

You may not need a helping hand today but when the emergency is yours, that aid is invaluable. Monetary donations are always welcome but volunteers are even more welcome. Please visit <http://www.arizonaredcross.org> or call 1.800.842.7349 to learn more.

Last month, several Pinal County residents travelled to Tucson to take part in the 98<sup>th</sup> Arizona Town Hall conference. The focus for this year's Spring conference was "Capitalizing on Arizona's Arts and Culture." Arizona's history is dotted with examples of cultural experiences and impacts that left a significant mark on our collective development and psyche. For example, most of our public libraries were established as result of women's clubs that had as a primary goal the acculturation and "civilizing" of early Arizonans in the early years of statehood.

Today the global field of arts and culture (*i.e.* performing, literary, and visual arts, architecture and the built environment, etc.) contributes some \$1B to our Arizona economy. As state, county, and local communities search for ways and areas in which to diversify their economic drivers, investments in arts, artists, and cultural organizations may be one of the more easily accomplished strategies. Both Merylyn Ridgeway and Tom Belden took active and enthusiastic roles in the Town Hall deliberations – the full set of recommendations (as well as the briefing material) can be found at <http://www.arizonatownhall.org>.

Happy Birthday, America – we're 235 years young this year! To help us all celebrate this birthday of birthdays, the City of Casa Grande will be holding its Fourth of July Fun Day from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Palm Island Family Aquatics Park. There'll be plenty of activities and games for kids of ALL ages throughout the day with time off to recuperate before you report to the Paul Mason Sportsplex at 7 p.m. for the City's spectacular Annual Fireworks program.

If celebrating our national birthday in Casa Grande is not your cup of tea, try the Fourth of July Great American BBQ event at Maricopa's Pacana Park – from 6 to 10 p.m. The event's sponsored by the Maricopa Chamber of Commerce and will have (obviously) BBQ, a water zone, beer tent, and almost all the fabulous fireworks you could want to watch. Regardless of which event you attend, please bring a chair or blanket and be prepared to "oooh" and "ahhh!" all night long.

Thank you all for being an engaged and active part of the best County in the West,

***David Snider***

Pinal County Supervisor District 3