

PINAL COUNTY LIFESTYLES

MAY 2011

Gosh – it's May already! Temperatures are soaring as are the vacation expectations of school-age children and children-at-heart adults. In the meantime, there are a lot of other interesting things to think about this month. May is the proud home of National BBQ Month and National Salad Month, and for the dessert crowd, Blueberry Cheesecake Day on the 26th. It's National Dance Like A Chicken Month (May 14), Cinco de Mayo (May 5th, of course!) and Clean Up Your Room Day (May 10 only 2 days after Mother's Day – what does that say?). As for Sunday, May 8, Mother's Day ... I'm with you when we all say EVERY day is Mother's Day!

May 21 is Armed Forces Day so hug a veteran whenever you can or at least thank them for their service for our country and then come out to Mountain View Cemetery on Memorial Day (May 30) to remember and celebrate our veterans who paid the ultimate price for America's freedom with their lives. This somber, moving ceremony grows in attendance every year but it's always lacking something – and that would be your presence. The program starts at 9:00 a.m. sharp with a fly-over performed by the Arizona Antique Aircraft Association. I very much hope to see you there that day.

So what's happening in Pinal County, I hear you ask. Good question, Gentle Reader. Computers, County Elections staff, and consultants are pouring over the recently released 2010 Census data with an eye to creating new county supervisory districts for the five (5) member Board of Supervisors that will take office in January, 2011. Our proposed maps should be ready to be sent to the U.S. Department of Justice for their review sometime early this Fall. The pressure for DoJ review and approval as early as possible is due to 2012 election deadlines – including the collection of nominating petition signatures which are normally due in early June.

Not to outdone in the number crunching side of things, the County's Finance and Budget departments continue to work at refining and polishing the County's FY 2012 budget. Reducing our expenditures to match our projected revenues, while taking into account the new cost and programs shifts courtesy of the 2011 Arizona State Legislature, somewhat akin to being on roller skates while herding cats uphill in a rainstorm. You're pretty sure you'll get there, but you're never sure how many cats there will be and what shape you'll be in when you reach the top.

The City of Maricopa is very pleased about the recent announcement that Banner Health has committed to the construction of a Banner Health Center – to be located in the Wells retail center at Porter Road and Alan Stephens Parkway (behind or north of the Wal-Mart). Construction is scheduled to start this summer and be completed by mid-2012. The first phase calls for 40,000 square feet of space for up to 18 physicians and ancillary services. At build-out, the Center will double in size.

Some quick notes about “Things of Note That Happened in March” are:

- The Casa Grande Relay for Life organization held undertook its annual fund-raising event on March 12
- The Maricopa Relay4Life group organized its very first event (held March 25) – 52 teams walked the walk and raised \$40,000!

- Environmental Concerns Organization (ECO) worked with the City of Maricopa for 15 consecutive days to clear some 50 tons of trash and debris from the city's Heritage District
- ECO and community volunteers also collected 8,488 tires during the campaign which were in turn taken to the Pinal County Material Recovery Center
- Casa Grande continued to benefit mightily from the tireless labors of AmeriCorps Fire Eight volunteers as they cleaned up and constructed miles of trails on Casa Grande Mountain – what an awesome display of youthful commitment to our country's best and highest ideals of volunteerism.

Now back to the calendar for a minute: May is many things to many people but above all, it's also a month of endings and beginnings. The promotion and graduation ceremonies celebrated in our schools are part of the cycle. To those who successfully navigated their eighth grade of education – “Congratulations on this, your first phase of learning.” High school graduates and members of the Class of 2011: “Congratulations and all the best as you move on into the next stage of life and learning.” To those proud graduates of college and university programs: “Kudos for all that you've accomplished thus far – don't forget how to learn as you move out into life.”

See you around the County,

David Snider

Pinal County Supervisor District 3