

Gila County



WINTER 2017/2018

NEWSLETTER

Gila County Sets National Priorities



Patty Power (far left) and Supervisors Martin, Cline, and Humphrey at the November BOS work session.

The Gila County Board of Supervisors held an in depth work session on Tuesday, Nov. 28 with management staff and elected officials in order to help determine the national issues that are most important to Gila County.

The work session was part of a week-long visit with Patty Power, of Bose Public Affairs, who works to help represent Gila County interests in Washington.

“With 96% of our land base federal, 96% of our problems are federal,” said Supervisor Tommie Martin. Martin stressed that the power of having a constant voice at the state and national

level cannot be overstated. “There’s a tremendous difference between knocking on a door once a week and knocking on a door once a year,” said Martin. “If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.”

To that end, Gila County pays \$70,000 annually to contract with Power and Supervisor Martin says the return on investment is phenomenal. Over the 11 years that the county has enlisted Bose to be its eyes and ears in Washington, they have helped bring about 14 million dollars to the Payson and Pleasant Valley Ranger Districts to help with fuels reduction. “With this funding, Gila County has been able to make an impact on the forest,” said Martin.

Power spoke to the group on Tuesday, providing an update on some of what’s happening in Washington and how it might affect Gila County. Power stressed that now, more than ever, it is important to have partnerships with like-minded people. This is particularly true for rural counties, who can form regional partnerships in order to share resources and maintain their influence.

Power praised all three supervisors for their involvement in NACo (National Association of Counties), saying that it helps amplify the voice of Gila County nationwide.

The group talked about strategies to help prevent rural counties from losing their voice and place in conversations happening at the federal level. Malissa Buzan, Director of Gila County Community Services, said “So often, it seems like we’re getting the scraps of the scraps.” Buzan and other department heads and elected officials shared their unique challenges with Power.

The group identified 1) working towards “fixing” the mental health component of criminal justice; 2) making dependable, redundant broadband available countywide; and 3) continuing to foster healthy, productive and sustainable public land management and use as key priorities. Gila County staff and supervisors will stay in touch with Power throughout the year to keep her up to date.

Holiday Closures:

**Jan. 1st New Year's
Observance**

**Jan. 15th: Martin
Luther King Jr. Day**

**February 19th:
President's Day
Observance**

Contact us:

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General Information**

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**Gila County WIC
launches eWIC**

Arizona's WIC programs are going electronic, which for Gila County residents will mean a more convenient, discreet shopping experience.

Samantha Jerome, WIC Manager for the Gila County Health Department, explains that eWIC began rolling out in Gila County at the beginning of November. Previously, participants in the WIC program, which provides food for pregnant women, new mothers, and children up to age five, use paper "checks" to purchase certain foods at the store.

"The Gila County WIC Program provides services to 1,250 participants each month," says Jerome. "The move to eWIC means that our WIC families can shop for the same healthy WIC-approved foods with more flexibility to go to the store throughout the month, with their WIC benefits on one card."

The electronic system will give customers a WIC "debit card," which works a whole lot like a typical debit card. WIC customers will swipe the card after their items are scanned, the WIC items will automatically be deducted, and the customer can then pay for the remaining items however they choose.

Another benefit of eWIC will be a smartphone app that will allow WIC customers to scan barcodes to determine a food's eligibility, readily check their balance, and electronically access the list of eligible foods at the grocery store. In addition, a customer's WIC balance will print out on their receipt.

Although the eWIC rollout is happening in Gila County over the course of months, Jerome says that Gila County WIC staff has been working toward this change for quite a while.

(Pictured L to R above are Gila County WIC staff: Jessica Moul, Brittany Francis, Karen Aguero, and Samantha Jerome.)

**GCSO Donates to Arizona
Cancer Foundation
for Children**



As a result of the Gila County Sheriff's Office first "No Shave November," Acting Sergeant Travis Todd presented Monica Graffius (center) with the Arizona Cancer Foundation for Children a check in the amount of \$1061. Sheriff Shepherd thanks everyone who participated and raised money for such a great organization.

**Prescription Drug Take
Back Event a Success**

On Saturday, Oct. 28, Gila County agencies and partners successfully collected over 800 pounds of unused or expired medication from the community members as part of "National Prescription Drug Take Back Day."

The Globe, Miami, Payson and Hayden Police Departments along with the Copper Basin Coalition, Gila County Sheriff's Office, Gila County Public Health Department, in combined efforts with the Drug Enforcement Agency participated in drug take back day in Gila County.

In a continued effort to keep unused and expired medication out of our water systems, landfills and out of the hands of children, the Globe, Miami, and Payson Police Departments offer secure drug drop boxes available to the public 24 hours a day. The boxes are located in the lobby of the police departments.

14th Annual Gila County Christmas Bike Giveaway



Each December, Gila County Recycling & Landfill Management presents the community with better-than-new, re-furbished bikes, which get distributed to families in need throughout Gila County. This year, Gila County distributed a record number of bikes--over 160. A 14 year long tradition, each bike giveaway represents a year's worth of work by county staff, community members, and inmate laborers.

As part of its ongoing commitment to community

health and safety, the Gila County Public Health Department will provide a bike safety helmet for each bicycle for the sixth year in a row.

The bikes are repainted and given new seats, tires, tubes, and handgrips. The bikes used in the program are collected at the landfill and donated by members of the public, local businesses, and community groups.

November Spotlight on Employees Recognition



Gila County Human Resources' Erica Raymond (left) pictured with Denise Cox (right) of the Gila County Treasurer's Office



From L to R: Erica Raymond, Denise Cox, and Amanda Anderson received spotlight on employees recognition

"Thank you for being patient and kind while I explained my frustration! You are definitely a ray of sunshine in your office! Bless you for helping me and resolving my frustration."

Denise Cox from the Gila County Treasurer's Office was one of three employees recognized by the Gila County Board of Supervisors in November as part of the Spotlight on Employees program. She received the above "thank you" from a member of the public. The other employees who received spotlight awards in December were Amanda Anderson and Erica Raymond.

Spotlight on Employees provides recognition to employees for the following qualities: teamwork, quality, morale building, integrity, customer service and initiative.

Gila County by the Numbers

On Saturday, Oct. 28, Gila County agencies and partners successfully collected over **800 pounds of unused or expired medication** from the community members as part of "National Prescription Drug Take Back Day."

In the 16-17 fiscal year, Gila County Community Services provided **55 rent or mortgage payments to help prevent Gila County Residents from becoming homeless.**

In October 2017 alone, Gila County Floodplain responded to **41 flood hazard determinations** or info requests.

The Gila County Assessor's Office was able to work with residents to **resolve 4 out of 4 petitions** submitted to appeal property values without the need for a hearing.

For the month of November, the Payson Regional Constable's Office received a total of **142 papers for service** and drove a total of 2520.4 miles. The Globe Regional Constable's Office received a total of **108 papers for service** and drove a total of 1350 miles.



CASA of Gila County Awarded Two Grants

CASA of Gila County has been awarded two grants that will benefit the program significantly.

First, CASA of Gila County was awarded a \$10,000 Grant from the National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association.

CASA of Gila County is one of almost 1,000 CASA and Guardian ad Litem (GAL) programs across the country that recruit, train and support 87,000 best-interest volunteers who help ensure that children who have entered the court and child welfare systems receive appropriate services, have a voice in determining their futures and ultimately find a safe, permanent home where they can thrive.

A child enters the foster care system every two minutes, and currently there are not enough CASA and GAL volunteers to serve every child. On average, for every child assigned a best-interest volunteer, two others go it alone. "The needs of Gila County's children coming into care are more complicated than ever before, and life in foster care can be chaotic," said Patti Dremmler, CASA Coordinator for Northern Gila County. "Every child deserves the support of a caring, consistent adult with the training to help her or him heal and thrive."

The federal grant funds distributed through the National CASA Association are provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice

and Delinquency Prevention, US Department of Justice, as authorized under the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990. They are awarded through a competitive process. In 2017, National CASA awarded over \$4.6 million in federal grants.

CASA of Gila County also received funding for outreach from the Arizona Department of Public Safety under the federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA). Each year, millions of dollars are deposited into this fund from criminal fines, forfeited bail bonds, penalty fees and special assessments collected by the US Attorney's Offices, US Courts and the Bureau of Prisons. These dollars all come from offenders convicted of federal crimes. Awards are issued for the delivery of direct services to crime victims. The received award will be for the term of October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020. These VOCA funds will be used in Southern Gila County to recruit, screen, train, and manage CASA volunteers who advocate for children who have been removed from home due to abuse or neglect.

For more information about becoming a best-interests volunteer, contact Patti Dremmler at 928-474-7145 (Payson office) or Emily Leverance at 928-402-4427 (Globe office). To apply, visit our website at www.casaofgilacounty.org