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May 2009 Supervisor's Update

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Supervisor-District 2

May was an interesting month in Pinal County. There's a lot going on throughout the county that affects us all at one level or another.

Let's take these items one at a time starting with the easy ones first. The Boys and Girls Club of Apache Junction held a fantastic fundraiser in Gold Canyon. I can't tell you how important it is that we help to provide opportunities for our youth; especially over the summer. Our Boys and Girls Club does a great job with the limited resources they have. For those in the Greater San Tan Area and Florence, we're working to get the Boys and Girls Club out to you as soon as possible.

With the summer comes a marked decrease in some of our community's population. Gold Canyon seems to get hit the hardest as our Snowbirds head back to cooler climates. Unfortunately, the already-hurting businesses are severely impacted. Many of the businesses recently decided to add additional banners to their buildings in the hope of attracting more customers. However, current county ordinances don't allow this additional signage. With the input of our businesses and citizens, I've ask our lawyers to draft a temporary ordinance allowing a standardized 120-day signage policy to help our struggling businesses. I do understand that there is a fine line between "business friendly" and "shanty town." We're in this together and I ask for your help and understanding.

Another hot topic is the entrance to the Tonto National Forest near the Siphon Draw Trail. The State Park recently closed the existing entrance and we are now in negotiations with the Forest Service and the local community to create a new entrance. I'd like to thank Todd House for facilitating the initial meeting with the community as we work towards a solution. I'm confident we'll have local community access to the forest by the end of the summer.

One of the most moving events of the month was the Pinal County Sheriff's Office Fallen Officer Memorial Ceremony. Of all the memorials I've attended, it was the most moving and respectful ceremony I've seen. I'd like

to thank Sheriff Babeu and his staff for putting together the event. I'd like to especially thank Sergeant Stormy Wallace for putting together the Fallen Officer Mounted Ceremony. As a horse guy and a former 1st Calvary Soldier, it was extremely moving.

The update wouldn't be complete if I didn't mention the County's budget. The Board of Supervisors adopted a tentative budget of over \$412M. Unfortunately, the budget is based upon an across the board 5% salary reduction for County employees. The tentative budget was accepted on a split vote, 2-1. I was the lone NO vote as I believe there are more options to explore before across the board salary reductions. We were able to begin additional work study sessions to explore our options.

We've already asked our County Departments to reduce their operating expenses by nearly 17% and we've reduced our employees numbers by over 100. As such, the county is blessed to have almost \$30M available in Fund Balance and Rainy Day Funds. Although no decisions have been reached, I'm confident our Board of Supervisors will explore every measure to ensure across the board salary reductions are taken off the table. For our employees, I feel your pain and believe that "It is raining". Based upon the numbers, there are other ways to get through this and salary reductions are not necessary!

This month's employee in the spotlight has already been mentioned. Sergeant Stormy Wallace has been with the PCSO for 10 years. She is a tireless worker and has recently assembled the Pinal County Sheriff's Office Posse Mounted Unit; the State's largest mounted law enforcement unit. I'm proud of her accomplishments and I love proclaiming the greatness of our county's horse-based heritage and mounted law enforcement arm!

Do pass this update along to your friends. If you'd like to be added to the email list, please send an email to Bryan.Martyn@pinalcountyz.gov or call 480-982-0659.

Remember, strive to be a part of the solution!

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