

# Arizona Coach Talker

Newsletter of the Arizona Guides Association

Volume 22, Issue 5

May, 2009

## An Evening at La Puesta

Fort McDowell Adventures is located on the spectacular 25,000 acre Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation just east of Scottsdale Arizona. It is the premier outdoor activity and event venue in the state and features the Sonoran Adventure Center, six unique event venues, and The Wild West Experience. They've been hosting groups from around the world for more than 18 years.

Though focused primarily on corporate and group events, they have added Friday Night Franks to their western themed outdoor experiences. The name, Friday Night Franks, is in recognition of the work of Mr. Frank Harrison, a Fort McDowell tribal member who in 1948 successfully fought to secure the right to vote for Native Americans living in Arizona. Every Friday night, year round, the evening offers traditional campfire fare like S'mores, hot dogs, and brats, along with soft drinks, beer, wine and cocktails, all reasonably priced to make it a great value for Valley residents. These Fridays also feature Native American storytelling, live music, dancing, wagon rides, fire pits and horseshoes for the entire family.

The AGA appreciates, and thanks, them for hosting us for our Annual Meeting and Elections!!!

### AGA Annual Meeting ~ May 4, 2009

**When:** Monday, May 4, 2009

**Where:** La Puesta at Fort McDowell Adventures

**Time:** 6:00 P.M. Annual Elections and Hospitality

7:00 P.M. Potluck Dinner

8:00 P.M. Election Results for AGA Officers for 2009-2010 Season

**Please RSVP to Kathryn Lee:** [kathryn@cvttankers.com](mailto:kathryn@cvttankers.com) OR CALL (602) 469-3441.

**NOTE: Everyone MUST RSVP to sign up for a dish!!!!**

### AGA President's Notes.....

Hello Everyone,

Another year has passed and I hope everyone had a successful year with our somewhat reluctant tourists. Since I was unable to join our last field-education trip, I am looking forward to a report about it. The weather seemed to be good for it!

We have been very fortunate to have the most dedicated board and committees helping this past year and I wish the same for the coming year. I want to express my special thanks to all the board and committee members who helped me so much!

Our next meeting is at Fort McDowell Adventures – so let's have an adventure, carpool out there and have a successful turnout for the election.

Ruth Henry, AGA President

### ***Election Reminder !!***

***Annual Elections will be held at the AGA annual meeting in May. Remember that if you can't be at the annual meeting, you can ask for an absentee ballot from the nominating committee (Larry Dyb 480.628.2037 or larrydyb@juno.com). Proxy ballots are not accepted at the annual meeting, and absentee ballots must be received by the annual meeting date to be counted.***

### ***In case you missed it...from the Arizona Republic***

***Sun to power Grand Canyon visitor center .....*** The Grand Canyon Visitor Center near the South Rim is getting a solar-power system that will help educate about 1 million visitors annually about solar power. The effort is being funded by donations from utility customers who support renewable energy. Arizona Public Service Co. is giving the \$185,000 system to the National Park Service. The system will include three ground-based solar-panel platforms and a digital readout to show how much electricity is being generated and to explain how the system works. Additional panels will be installed on the roof.

APS customers can choose to pay an extra penny per kilowatt-hour of electricity as part of the Green Rates program. The utility uses the money for renewable projects like the Canyon solar panels. APS believes this is a great location to interact and educate a large number of visitors, and also a lot of non-Arizonan visitors, allowing them to associate Arizona with solar energy.

The 18-kilowatt system is about twice the size of the largest household systems. It will provide about 30 percent of the center's annual electricity, saving the Park Service about \$2,500 a year. Installation is scheduled to be completed by March. The utility will buy the renewable-energy credits from the project to count toward the state-required goal of generating 15 percent of its energy from renewable sources by 2025. The Grand Canyon Visitor Center near Mather Point lookout is the first viewpoint most travelers encounter when driving to the Canyon.

***Downtown donning a new label .....*** Downtown Phoenix is giving itself an image makeover to raise its profile, both among out-of-state visitors and Arizona residents. Following the lead of other major cities, Phoenix is looking to establish its own brand, using the same promotional strategy that can launch a successful coffee chain or compact car. Las Vegas is known as an adult playground. Austin is known as a live-music destination. Phoenix hopes to similarly set itself apart. Its potential new brand is: "Arizona's urban heart."

Large numbers of Arizona residents and visitors come here because it's a political center, a business center, and an education center. The brand will tout Phoenix as the best place to have a cosmopolitan experience in Arizona. A new brand alone won't draw more tourists overnight, but it's the first step in a years-long process to build an identity for downtown. While Phoenix has a long way to go to be thought of among the most dynamic metropolitan areas of the West, this is the beginning of that urban identity. The new \$1.4 billion light-rail line, luxury condos, an Arizona State University campus, new restaurants and an expanded convention center have added some big-city flavor.

The "urban heart" brand will provide the identity and marketing that Phoenix can build on over time. The new image aspires to portray what Phoenix is becoming. For a brand to work it can't just be a lofty goal, marketing experts say, a successful brand must spotlight something unique about the city and deliver on what was promised. Although "Arizona's urban heart" may not emerge as an official slogan, the concept will anchor how downtown businesses promote themselves.

An accompanying logo featuring a green "X," a play on the last letter in Phoenix's name as well as the traditional symbol marking the location of a place, now adorns a number of banners downtown. The logo is a visual cue that downtown's previous marketing effort, "Copper Square," indeed is over. Launched in September 2000, that campaign was a nod to Arizona's copper-mining heritage. Downtown, Copper Square referred to the roughly 90-block district bound by Seventh Street to Third Avenue and Fillmore Street to south of Jackson Street. But, it never caught on, and now, years later, many people still call the area "downtown Phoenix." In 2007, the Mayor called on the Downtown Phoenix Partnership to get rid of the name. Although the city helps fund the partnership, it is an independent group supported by downtown property owners. The

city is not officially participating with the new branding effort. In June, the partnership scrapped the brand "Copper Square."

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**Nature center opens at Cave Creek park .....** A newly constructed nature center at Cave Creek Regional Park, 37019 N. Lava Lane, north of Carefree Highway, opened to the public in March. Located north of Phoenix, the 2,922-acre park is in the upper Sonoran Desert and ranges in elevation from 2,000 feet to 3,060 feet. Features unique to the 4,000-square-foot center include a garden roof over the main space to increase the building's insulation value, and a solar power generating panel to help offset energy consumption and the use of recycled materials.

The center houses a small gift shop, administrative offices and meeting rooms that can be rented by groups. The center also has an amphitheater with a fire ring a short distance from the patio. The center will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The new nature center at Cave Creek is just one of several Green Government projects that the Parks Department has been involved with over the past year. Visit [www.maricopa.gov/parks](http://www.maricopa.gov/parks) or call the park office at (623) 465-0431.

**Endangered fish reintroduced in park .....** Two endangered fish recently were re-established by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and Maricopa County Parks and Recreation at McDowell Mountain Regional Park, north of Fountain Hills. Gila topminnow and desert pupfish were released as part of the Safe Harbor Agreement that allows non-federal landowners to participate in conservation and recovery efforts of these endangered species by providing habitat for establishing new populations. Participants in the agreement are able to provide a new, secure habitat for establishing additional topminnow and pupfish populations, some of which will count toward recovery goals for these species.

More than 100 topminnow and several hundred pupfish were released into the park's Pemberton Pond. The Gila topminnow was listed as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act in 1967, and the desert pupfish listed as endangered in 1986. Population surveys and repatriation efforts for both species have been ongoing for several decades. Establishing new populations in areas relatively free from non-native aquatic species and with compatible land management uses is an important step to recover these fish. The department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Arizona State University, the Nature Conservancy, private landowners, and other conservation partners are working together to recovery both species.

Topminnow and pupfish populations in Arizona have declined over the past 150-plus years due to loss or degradation of suitable habitats from various land management practices and the introduction of non-native fish, bullfrogs, and crayfish - predators and competitors for limited resources like food and available habitat. The Gila topminnow was once considered among the most abundant fishes in the lower Colorado River basin, but is now reduced to only 14 natural populations and a few dozen reestablished sites. Likewise, pupfish used to be much more widely distributed in southern Arizona, southeastern California, and northern Sonora, Mexico.

The site will be monitored at one month, six months, and one year post-stocking. Thereafter, it will be monitored annually. The Pemberton Pond is intended to be the source of fish for stocking other sites, and it will be visited periodically throughout the year to collect some fish for those new stockings.

Topminnow and pupfish are very effective at feeding on mosquito larvae, and controlling mosquitoes in areas with shallow standing water. They are a native solution to mosquito vector control and help reduce the spread of West Nile Virus. It is hoped, that the numbers of topminnow and pupfish are high enough that these fish can be used by county health departments instead of the non-native and highly invasive mosquito fish.

**News from the Arizona Office of Tourism**  
**(AZOT) .....**

**New Director, Deputy Director named for Arizona Office of Tourism .....** After six years as the Director of the Arizona Office of Tourism, Margie Emmermann has transitioned to another role in state government as the Policy Advisor, Mexico and Latin America, and Executive Director, Arizona Mexico Commission. Sherry Henry has assumed the role of director of AOT, and Mark Stanton is the new deputy director for the agency. Sherry has been an active member of the Arizona tourism community for more than 25 years. She served as general manager of the Fiesta Inn in Tempe, as well as past chairman of the board of the Fiesta Bowl, Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association, Valley Hotel & Resort Association, Tempe Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Arizona Tourism Alliance (ATA). Most recently, Sherry was manager of hospitality marketing for the Fiesta Bowl and executive director of ATA. Mark Stanton is an expert in the fields of marketing, public relations and

advertising. He was a principal agent with Martz Agency in Scottsdale, as well as leading his own agency. During his 20-year career, he has represented hotels and resorts, in addition to tourism destinations throughout the state.

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**Ak-Chin Native American Tribe - Him-Dak Eco Museum .....** The Ak-Chin Native American Tribe is located within the Santa Cruz Valley in central Arizona. The community is composed mainly of Pima and Tohono O'odham, as well as some Yoeme members. Ak-Chin is an O'odham word that means "place where the wash loses itself in the sand or ground."

To ensure their history and culture are preserved for future generations, the Tribe established the Him-Dak Eco Museum to collect, analyze, preserve, protect, promote and teach various aspects of the Ak-Chin heritage, culture and communication between generations. Tribal crafts, exhibits and photographs of the Ak-Chin people are displayed. The museum is different from a traditional museum in that land and territory replace the museum building, and the residents of the area take on the roles of curator. The museum is a reflection of the Tribe and how they define their values and identities to share with visitors.

Him-Dak means "way of life" in the Ak-Chin language. This gem of a museum is housed in a contemporary native-style building in the heart of the small Ak-Chin Indian Community. In addition to an informative exhibit, art work by residents is showcased. Often referred to the "museum without walls," the collection and even archaeological excavations have been created by community members. Community members have also catalogued the museum collection and transcribed the oral histories. Location: 4685 N. Eco-Museum Road Maricopa 85239; Phone/Fax: (520) 568-9487; Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Saturday by appointment.

**Legislature to Make State's Nickname Official .....** Like a longtime couple that finally decide to make it legal, the Arizona Legislature is on the verge of making "the Grand Canyon State" the official state nickname. Arizona has been known as the Grand Canyon State for decades: The Canyon was here long before Arizona was a state, and the state Office of Tourism's Web site boldly proclaims that Arizona is the Grand Canyon State. House Bill 2019 would make that nickname official. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Sam Crump, R-Anthem, went before the House Government panel. If approved, it would join a growing list of other "official" items, from the state tree (the Palo Verde) to the state neckwear (the bola tie). It should be an easy vote, unlike the tortured path that gave us the official state butterfly (the two-tailed swallowtail).

**Three Arizona Events Selected as "Best Western" Events .....** American Cowboy magazine announced the results of its second annual Readers' Choice Awards for Best Western Events. The winners appear in the April/May issue and on the magazine's website, [www.americancowboy.com](http://www.americancowboy.com). This year, close to 1,000 readers participated in the online poll, selecting their favorite Western events held in the United States and Canada. "The Readers' Choice Awards symbolize a stamp of approval straight from our readers," said Bill Garrels, publisher of American Cowboy. "They celebrate the events that really stand out as crowd pleasers, and help give them the national recognition and acclaim they so richly deserve. The awards are also a great way for folks to discover and attend events they may not otherwise have known about." Voting participants in the poll were able to select their favorite events from a roundup of 148 editor selected nominees in ten different categories, including Best Rodeo Event, Best Family Event, and Best National Day of the American Cowboy Event, among others. Write-in votes were also allowed. "We'd like to congratulate the winners and thank all our readers who voted for the events that they feel are deserving of this prestigious award," Garrels added.

Below are three categories the Arizona events were awarded. The events are listed in order by number of votes received.

#### **Best Heritage Event**

- 1: The Spirit of the West Festival, Sioux Falls, SD
- 2: **Prescott Frontier Days, Prescott, AZ**
- 3: Bishop Mule Days, Bishop, CA

#### **Best Art Event**

- 1: Cheyenne Frontier Days Western Art Show and Sale, Cheyenne, WY
- 2: **Cowboy Artists of America, Phoenix Museum of Art, Phoenix, AZ**
- 3: C.M. Russell Auction and Exhibitors' Show, Great Falls, MT

#### **Best Music Event**

- 1: CMA Music Festival, Nashville, TN
- 2: **Tombstone Western Music Festival, Tombstone, AZ**
- 3: Country in the Rockies, Steamboat Springs, CO

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**New Casino Near Ahwatukee Opening Nov. 1 .....** The Valley's newest casino, a \$200 million facility under construction by the Gila River Indian Community off Interstate 10 south of the Ahwatukee Foothills, will open by November 1. The skeleton of the 10-story, 242-room Wild Horse Pass Hotel and Casino can be seen for miles by cars approaching Ahwatukee and Chandler from I-10 or Loop 202. The new Wild Horse Pass will replace a facility with the same name built in 1997 at 5550 W. Wild Horse Pass, just a short drive away. It will have 1,002 slot machines, up from 875; 44 black jack tables, up from 24; and 25 poker tables, up from 17, according to Wild Horse Pass general manager John Straus.

Gila River Casino officials said the new hotel will not replace the 2002 Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Spa, which caters increasingly to convention and business travelers. Instead, Wild Horse Pass officials say, the new hotel will primarily go after customers who are there for casino games and other Vegas-style entertainment. The hotel will be managed by the Gila River Indian Community. Straus says, "My ultimate goal is to have 100 percent of the rooms 'comped' to players. It's all about giving back to our VIPs."

It's an understatement to say the economy is not the best for opening a business that depends entirely on consumer's discretionary income. Last quarter, Arizona casino earnings were down a collective 16 percent, the biggest quarterly drop since Arizona legalized tribal gaming in 1993. But Gila River opened its new Lone Butte casino in Chandler during the economic gloom of late 2008. Officials say Lone Butte, which caters to gamers who live nearby, is busy -- even though customers are spending less than when they felt more flush. They have said the new Lone Butte and Wild Horse Pass are part of their community's long range plans and they see no reason to delay them.

Wild Horse Pass intends to compete with Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino, a 1,089-slot machine resort and casino in Maricopa that is part of the international Harrah's Entertainment chain. Many Harrah's guests come from elsewhere in the country - or world - for free rooms, meals, gifts and gambling vouchers that are part of the perks of being members of the Harrah's Total Rewards players club. Harrah's is tough competition, but Wild Horse Pass officials say they are up for the game.

Along with more gaming, the new Wild Horse Pass will bring more entertainment and dining to the west side of Interstate 10 including:

- Don Shula's American Steakhouse, which has a theme based on the 1972 undefeated Miami Dolphins. Menus are to be painted on official NFL game footballs and signed by the legendary coach.
- Ling and Louie's Asian Grill and Ling and Louie's Express, sit-down and quick-serve Asian restaurants.
- Café 247, a 24-hour diner.
- Tamales, southwestern style food including fajitas and fresh guacamole.
- Famous Famiglia, which serves hand-molded pizza wedges, cheese-stuffed garlic sticks and pasta.
- Fatburger, known for gigantic burgers the chain promotes as having low fat content.
- A nightclub and 1,400-seat showroom.

**National Park Service Implements Transportation Plan .....** The National Park Service will begin implementing the first phase of the South Rim Visitor Transportation Plan at Grand Canyon National Park this spring. Parking and roadway improvements will occur adjacent to the Visitor Center at the Canyon View Information Plaza. Phase 1 of the construction project is expected to begin this month and be completed by the end of November. The South Rim of the Grand Canyon National Park hosts almost 4 million visitors a year, yet visitor needs and experiences are considerably underserved, according to the National Park Service.

**Grand Canyon to Host Second Annual Celebrate Wildlife Day .....** On Saturday, May 2, 2009, the staff and friends of Grand Canyon National Park will be celebrating their second annual Celebrate Wildlife Day with special exhibits and programs, live animal demonstrations and fun for the entire family. All Wildlife Day activities will take place at the Shrine of the Ages (Shrine) on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park.

The day's outdoor activities will start at 7:00 a.m. and will include bird walks, track and scat identification workshops, telemetry workshops, and more. The special indoor programs will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will include talks on bats, condors, squirrels and mountain lions, just to name a few. There will be an open house from 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Shrine with exhibits, touch tables, informal activities and book sales. New additions will include exhibits by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Leave No Trace Traveling Trainers. Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center of Phoenix, Arizona, a popular highlight of last year's event, will once again be conducting educational demonstrations with live animals from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Celebrate Wildlife Day will conclude at the Shrine with a wildlife skit prepared by the students of Grand Canyon Unified School District at 7:00 p.m. followed by a special evening presentation by wildlife biologist, Robert Mesta, author of the book Condor: Spirit of the Canyon.

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Celebrate Wildlife Day provides visitors with opportunities to learn about regional wildlife and about the work of wildlife biologists. The event is made possible through a partnership between the National Park Service, the Grand Canyon Association, Adobe Mountain Wildlife Center, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, Grand Canyon Unified School District, Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, Xanterra Parks and Resorts, and Grand Canyon Railway. Visit: [www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/wildlife-day.htm](http://www.nps.gov/grca/naturescience/wildlife-day.htm).

**Congratulations to the Arizona Trail .....** for receiving a National Scenic Trail designation! The trail was one of six trails designated by President Barack Obama – the first in 25 years. We now join an elite group of 11 National Scenic Trails within the United States. The designation was part of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, which was signed into law on March 30. The act provides protection for nearly two million acres of national monuments and conservation areas across the United States. The Arizona Trail is more than 800 miles and spans the state from Mexico to Utah. It offers outdoor enthusiast wonderful opportunities to hike, bike, or horseback ride through some of Arizona's most scenic desert landscapes and mountain vistas. This well-deserved national title is sure to bring global recognition to this amazing tourism asset!

## **Scottsdale CVB Tourism Updates....**

**Hotels Flock to Gilbert for Piece of Meeting Business .....** Five hotels are hoping to open their doors to visitors this year in Gilbert, a town that, until now, had only one hotel, an extended-stay In Town Suites that caters to business travelers. The hotels coming to Gilbert want to zero in on people looking for facilities for large meetings, conferences and receptions, as well as people looking for a place to stay. Gilbert is a market that's never been tapped, said Cathy Neff, general manager at the 900-room Best Western Legacy Inn & Suites, which will open its doors at Power and Warner roads March 31.

**Certified Tourism Ambassadors "Freebies & Discounts" Program .....** The Valley Tourism Ambassador Program is pleased to announce that their "Freebies & Discounts" program is now available online at [www.CTANetwork.com](http://www.CTANetwork.com). This program incentive allows all Certified Tourism Ambassadors (CTA) to get to know our destination better. If you are interested in offering a freebie or discount for this site so the local CTAs will be able to better recommend your business to visitors, follow these simple steps: 1) Go to the website, 2) Click on Offer Freebies & Discounts on the left side of the page, 3) Click on Enroll as a Participating Venue and select our local program from the drop-down menu, 4) Complete the online Venue Profile form and accompanying Coupon Information form, and 5) An automatic acknowledgment e-mail will be sent to you. As a participating venue, you not only will support the Valley Tourism Ambassador Program, you also will help CTAs earn points for their annual renewal. If you have questions, contact Whitney Clark at 602-375-2996 or [wclark@vhra.net](mailto:wclark@vhra.net).

**Corporate Travel in Retreat, Thanks to AIG .....** Shamed by images of wealthy 'corporateers' cavorting at the expense of ordinary people, U.S. companies canceled an estimated \$1 billion worth of conferences in the first two months of this year and trimmed back on others. Hoteliers are calling it "the AIG effect," after the insurance company that took a public drubbing for spending freely on corporate perks despite its financial turmoil. Hotels saw the effect right away. At the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino in Las Vegas, almost \$131 million worth of business events have been canceled so far this year. The Four Seasons hotel in Los Angeles has taken a 15 percent hit in its meeting business. Nearly 200,000 travel-related jobs were lost in 2008, and an additional 247,000 will be cut this year, according to the Department of Labor. More than 20 percent of companies have canceled events because of recent media and political attention, according to the U.S. Travel Association. To win back business, Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co. is offering to donate 10 percent of the cost of a conference held on its premises to charity.

## **Airport News.....**

**Sky Harbor Traffic Down 12 Percent .....** Passenger traffic at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport fell by 796,000 during the first two months of 2009 compared to the same period in 2008. The airport reported that just over 5.8 million passengers used Sky Harbor during January and February of this year, down 12 percent from 2008. Air cargo is off 18 percent for the first two months of 2009 compared with January through

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February 2008 – 40,200 versus 49,100 tons. Arrivals and departures in February dropped 14 percent with 2.8 million people this year versus 3.3 million in February 2008. Airports and airlines have seen traffic drop as consumers and businesses pull back spending.

**Full - Body Imaging Machines to be used at U.S. Airports .....** In a shift, the Transportation Security Administration plans to replace the walk-through metal detectors at airport checkpoints with whole-body imaging machines - the kind that provide an image of the naked body, *The New York Times* reports. Initially, the machines were supposed to be used only on passengers who set off the metal detectors, to provide them with an option to the customary secondary physical pat-down and inspection by electronic wand. But Robin Kane, the agency's acting chief technology officer, said that the initial results from pilot tests at some checkpoints at 19 airports in the United States had been so good that the idea of using the machines as the standard checkpoint detector made sense. The plan now is that all passengers will "go through whole-body images instead of the walk-through metal detector," he said.

**Sky Harbor to Receive Stimulus Funds .....** Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport will receive \$10.5 million to improve two runways through federal stimulus spending. Arizona leaders also spoke with U.S Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood about stimulus funding for the people mover linking the airport to the Metro light rail system. Arizona officials are confident of federal approval of the Sky Harbor link, which is due to be complete in 2013.

## ***Sedona News ..... From Laura Vandergrift***

The new Visitor's Center located as you enter the Village of Oak Creek, is tour bus friendly, and has restrooms. The displays are wonderful, though the views aren't as good as the stop at Bell Rock.

Currently, busses are allowed to stop at Bell Rock for a quick photo stop. However, the Forest Service does not want tour busses to use the restrooms at Bell Rock, due to sewage issues. It would be best to let your passengers know that Montezuma's Castle is their bathroom break until they get into Sedona. If you stop at Bell Rock, remind them that busses aren't allowed to use it as a restroom stop because of these issues. If the facilities there are overused and cause problems, tour busses will be banned from the Bell Rock photo stop.

## ***Education .....***

**Mark your Calendars .....** for the Arizona Highways Travel Show May 30 & 31. Arizona Highways Magazine has been promoting the great State of Arizona for 83 years. It now has a new way to showcase Arizona – the Arizona Highways Travel Show. The Arizona Highways Travel Show is an opportunity for the consumers to learn about the attractions, activities and events that are available in our great State of Arizona, all in one convenient location. Whether it is a day trip to Tucson, an overnight to Sedona or a two-week vacation at Lake Havasu, this is the show residents and visitors alike will want to attend. Show goers will also be entertained and informed by a wide variety of subjects including how to take the best photographs, to storytellers, history presentations, the best hiking and biking trails, nature watching, music and lots more. The event will be held at the Phoenix Convention Center, Hall F, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. May 30 & 31. To exhibit or for sponsor information, contact Rich Ripley at 480-838-9123 or via e-mail at [rich@azinco.com](mailto:rich@azinco.com).

**The Certification Committee .....** wants to thank everyone that participated in taking the 2008-2009 Certification Tests, and to those that showed interest in obtaining the information for taking the test. We hope that those guides will also consider signing up for the upcoming exams in September 2009, January and May 2010. Remember, a little knowledge goes a long way; imagine how far a lot of knowledge goes!! Become a Certified Guide! Thanks!!

**Sharon Waldie, Certification Committee Chairperson**

*Sample Certification Test Question: Name the prehistoric Indian group that lived in the Phoenix area.*

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- Did you know that Grand Canyon National Park contains over 1,750 plant species, more than any other national park unit? The canyon is home to an incredible assemblage of plant species, some found nowhere else in the world.
- The fountain in Fountain Hills, located at the center of a man-made lake in Fountain Park, runs every hour at the top of the hour for 15 minutes for 12 hours a day. Two 600-horsepower pumps propel water 330 feet in the air. A third pump used only on special occasions can boost water up to 560 feet, or three times higher than the Old Faithful geyser in Yellowstone National Park. On blustery days, a wind gauge automatically shuts down the fountain if winds exceed 10 mph.
- Metro Phoenix is surrounded by mountain ranges (a Basin and Range Geological Province) in all four cardinal directions and sees more than 325 sunny days per year, hence the nickname “Valley of the Sun”.
- The Phoenix Historic Preservation Office issued \$629,170 in matching grant projects to private property owners for the rehabilitation of historic buildings, leveraging more than \$5 million in private investment. Using voter approved funds and a state grant, Phoenix acquired 1,675 acres of land for the Phoenix Sonoran Preserve and 82 acres for a park at 19<sup>th</sup> Ave and Lone Mountain Road.

## *Items of interest.....*

### ***Honoring the Code Talkers By Sam Lowe***

Arizona’s first and only Navajo Code Talker Museum opened in Tuba City in 2007, more than 60 years after those it honors earned their heroic distinction. Although they were instrumental in winning several battles during World War II, only a very few knew about their existence until 1962. And it took another 30 years before the entire story was made public and the Code Talkers were finally recognized for their efforts. Now their feats have been extolled, examined, explained and even exploited in literature and on film. They are the subjects of more than 500 books, several TV documentaries and “Windtalkers,” a full-length movie.

The concept of utilizing Navajos for secure communications in the South Pacific originated with Philip Johnston, who was reared on the Navajo reservation and spoke their language fluently. He knew about the military’s search for an unbreakable code and suggested the Navajo tongue because it was an unwritten language of extreme complexity and was spoken only on the tribal lands of the American Southwest. Johnston convinced military officials that the plan was workable and in May 1942, the first 29 Navajo recruits created the code at Camp Pendleton, Calif. They were then deployed to the Pacific theater where they used their language to transmit information on tactics and troop movements so skillfully that the Japanese were unable to decipher a single message.

By the end of the war, about 400 young Navajos were trained as code talkers. But, because the language was considered potentially valuable as a code even after the war, the young heroes were sworn to secrecy for 23 years, until the government declassified the story in 1968. More than 30 years later, in 2001, an Act of Congress awarded Congressional Medals of Honor to all the code talkers, gold to the first 29 and silver to the others.

Although they have been elevated to a lofty status in the legends of American warfare, the museum that pays them tribute is small and unimposing. It’s located in an annex at the rear of the Tuba City Trading Post,

near the Explore Navajo Interactive Museum. Inside, visitors can watch a film clip about the code talkers, then examine displays of arms, radios and other equipment they used during campaigns on Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Old photographs depict the young men being sworn in, developing the code and using the code for its intended purpose. Tableaus, posters, wartime memorabilia and books about the men complete the exhibit.

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Although the Tuba City facility is recognized as the only official Code Talker museum in Arizona, the heroes are honored in at least four other venues. At Kayenta, Richard Mike has put an impressive collection of code talker artifacts on display in the local Burger King, which he owns, and in the Shadehouse Museum, which he built. He came by the collection because his father, King Paul Mike, was a code talker who retrieved the articles during his wartime career. The Burger King display is filled with letters, flags, uniform parts and some weaponry. Richard Mike built the Shadehouse Museum next to the fast food outlet because he had more code talker stuff but no place to put it. It's a small structure, faced with split pine logs and surrounded by Navajo hogans and sweat lodges. The contents include not only code talker memorabilia but also historical items about the tribe. There is no charge to see either display. The Monument Valley Visitor Center, located 23 miles north of Kayenta, has one wall dedicated to the code talkers. The exhibit consists of documents, photographs and written commendations that trace the origins of the servicemen and detail their valor.

Two other tributes are monumental, in the strictest sense of the word. One is in downtown Phoenix, on the northeast corner of Thomas Road and Central Avenue. It is a huge bronze of a seated Navajo holding a flute. The inscription says the sculpture, done by Doug Hyde, represents "the spirit of the Navajo Code Talkers...who bravely served this country during World War II." The other is the Navajo Code Talkers Veterans Memorial in Window Rock, the capital of the Navajo Nation. It's also a sculpture, portraying a code talker in full military gear and created by Navajo/Ute sculptor Oreland Joe. It sits on the grounds of the tribal headquarters, near the geologic formation that gives the city its name. Today, there are fewer than 50 code talkers still alive. (From the AOT web site.)

### **HUMMER "ZIP" FACTS**

**By Diane McCoy-Berney**

**(Friends of Pinnacle Peak Park Newsletter)**

- ~ To date, 341 species of hummingbird have been identified**
- ~ Hummingbirds exist only in the Americas**
- ~ Arizona has 16 of 20 hummingbird species found in the United States**
- ~ Costa's and Anna's hummingbirds are seen year-round in the area**
- ~ Hummingbirds perch nearly 80% of the time**
- ~ Hummers can not walk or side step on a perch**
- ~ Average life span is 4-5 years**
- ~ Predators include hawks, roadrunners, cats and large insects**
- ~ Hummers are the smallest species of bird**
- ~ Hummers can hover, fly up, down, sideways, backwards and upside down!**
- ~ The move their wings in a figure eight pattern**
- ~ Hummers beat their wings between 40 to 60 times a second**
- ~ Hens build the nest, incubate the eggs and feed the young**

## **GET OUTSIDE !!**

***Yes, it's going to heat up soon, but there are many hikes  
still to be enjoyed before summer arrives!***

***Black Canyon Trail ~ Runs north and south for more than nine miles to connect trailheads  
at New River Road and Table Mesa Road west of I-17. Used for decades as both a***

*livestock trail and stagecoach route, the path follows an abandoned road that ran between Phoenix and Prescott. Trail directions and info at: [bctaz.com/index.html](http://bctaz.com/index.html)*

## ***The Arizona Coach Talker***

*AGA Newsletter*

*P.O. Box 45302*

*Phoenix, AZ 85064-5302*

**VOTE** ..... **MAY 4<sup>th</sup>**

**~ An Evening at La Puesta ~**

**[www.arizona-guides.org](http://www.arizona-guides.org) (Please note this is.org, not .net)**

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### ***Websites to visit ....***

***[www.pinnaclepeakpark.com](http://www.pinnaclepeakpark.com) ~ Pinnacle Peak Park offers a wide variety of educational programs, talks and hikes that provide an insight into natural and cultural history of the Sonoran Desert. These activities include: Full Moon Hikes; Astronomy Talks; Guided Hikes; Blacksmith Demonstrations; Wildlife Programs.***

***[www.azgfd.gov/tv](http://www.azgfd.gov/tv) ~ View some amazing videos from Arizona Wildlife Views and learn more about Arizona's wildlife and conservation efforts.***

***Certification Test ~ Sample Question Answer : The Hohokam***

*~ HAVE A GREAT SUMMER ~*

*GET OUT AND LEARN MORE ABOUT ARIZONA!!!*