



Courthouse staff members welcomed Justice of the Peace Walt Weber to his new position in Ajo last Thursday with cake and smiles. Weber was appointed to the position by the Pima County Board of Supervisors earlier this month. In the courtroom's jury box, front row from left, Amy Magdalena, Patricia Kornack, Weber, Juanita Escalante, and Michael Colmenero; and, back row from left, Elizabeth Zinky, Vilma Weigand, Yvette Montijo, Pat Gonzales, and Carol Pullam.

Board got storm update; welcomed art teacher

The governing board of the Ajo Unified School District met in regularly scheduled study and action sessions last week in a different location – the library. The meetings were moved as a result of water-damaged classrooms that forced the regular board meeting room into duty as two temporary classrooms.

Superintendent Robert Dooley told the board that the reassignment would continue for approximately a month until repairs had been finished. Dooley also told the board that carpet damage in the Dicus Auditorium was extensive enough to require replacement throughout, which he anticipates will be covered by insurance.

Dooley also discussed another flood-related issue, the cancellation of one day of school on Monday, September 10. The decision to cancel a school day is a difficult one, he said, but the decision had to be made in time to notify parents and staff. "For the safety of the students, we can't start school without electricity or water," said Dooley, noting that neither was expected to be available by the start of school that day. In order to make it up, he said, a staff development day that had been scheduled for Monday, September 24, would be rescheduled so the day would revert to a school day.

Dooley also told the board that the school improvement team was looking at assessment models, and that the district was likely to change its present Galileo program which predicts achievement progress to a model more in align with the Common Core goals being adopted through the country. While the new model will be slightly more expensive, it will require less testing.

Rufus Magabotha, whose hiring as art teacher was approved

by the board, talked about his pleasure at coming to Ajo in time to celebrate his 50th year of teaching. Two of Magabotha's books have been published and a third is on the way. His fourth book, he said, will be about American education.

In other personnel business, Deidre Hooker was hired for the custodial staff, and Julie Tiell and Denise Moore were approved as certified substitute teachers. At her request, Rona Cotay was released from her extra-pay position as gifted coordinator, and Brad Harvey was approved senior class sponsor.

The board approved an overnight field trip to Scottsdale September 24-25 for six culinary arts students who will tour Scottsdale Community College culinary arts program and attend a food show under the supervision of teacher Christina Vega-Zubiate. Funds from the Joint Technical Education District will pay for the trip.

The board agreed to seek formal certification of a portion of the campus as a certified wildlife habitat. On Dooley's recommendation, it approved the following categories for student activity fundraising: concessions, investment interest, publications, dues, gifts to student activities, salvage drives, and class pages.

In other matters, the superintendent reiterated a re-signing bonus program of \$2000 per employee based on full-time employment. The program, using state and federal funds, was developed to offset cuts in funding. Neither Dooley nor Brian MacKenzie, principal, is eligible for the program. Athletic director Brian English clarified what proceeds from sports fundraising will be used to support. See Superintendent's Thoughts column. English also told the board that one of his

major goals this academic year for all students playing sports is to "not lose a single kid for reasons of academic eligibility."

The board also laboriously winnowed a list of 100+ legislative priorities developed by the Arizona School Board Association to 10 proposals endorsed by the AUSD board.

WEATHER REPORT

| TEMPERATURES | Max | Min |
|---------------------|-----|-----|
| Sunday, Sept. 9 | 95° | 68° |
| Monday, Sept. 10 | 92° | 68° |
| Tuesday, Sept. 11 | 81° | 70° |
| Wednesday, Sept. 12 | 91° | 72° |
| Thursday, Sept. 13 | 97° | 74° |

Last week a total of 1.66 inches of rain was recorded by Freeport-McMoRan. The company also provides the newspaper with weekday temperatures.

For the week, expect sunny skies, highs in the 90s and lows in the 70s and 80s according to weather.com online.

9th Day of Peace event promises free night of fun, entertainment

The ninth Ajo celebration of the International Day of Peace takes place this Friday, September 21, and will feature lots of entertainment, food sales, and cultural crafts. There will be events targeted at students at the Ajo Unified District school campus, both before the Plaza activities begin and during that night's football program; and a Plaza full of action throughout the evening.

This year's event offers an enlarged AUSD program and greater student interaction, and will include on-campus activities beginning at 3:15 p.m. Before the Red Raiders take to the field that night against Salome High School, there will be puppet performances in the stadium, with special entertainment at half-time.

"We're totally thrilled because the involvement with the school makes the celebration bigger and richer for the kids and for

the town," said Tracy Taft of the International Sonoran Desert Alliance. "We couldn't be happier." ISDA's Liz Yon is coordinating this year's event.

Music will begin in the Plaza at 4:30 p.m., with the traditional parade from the AUSD campus to the Plaza happening at 5 p.m. Entertainment starts at 5:30 p.m. For a list of performers, see the ad on page 3. There will also be food vendors and other booths in the Plaza.

Many local individuals and businesses, including National Bank of Arizona, Freeport-McMoRan, Arizona Public Service, Ajo Transportation, the US Border Patrol, Douglass Funeral Home, and the Ajo Elks Ladies, have provided resources for the event.

Organizers are still looking for volunteers and information is available by contacting Yon at 387-6823.

Chip-sealing scheduled to start on Hwy 85, Ajo through Why

The Arizona Department of Transportation planned to begin a pavement improvement project on a 15-mile segment of State Route 85 from Ajo to a few miles south of Why on Monday, September 17.

The \$1.2 million resurfacing project will include sealing cracks in the highway, applying a chip seal layer to the surface, restriping the roadway and replacing pavement markers.

The project, which extends from about milepost 42 in Ajo to milepost 58 south of Why and includes a small portion of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, is designed to improve driving conditions and extend the life of the highway.

Work is scheduled primarily for Mondays through Thursdays from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Crews will begin at the north end of the project and work in

segments of approximately two miles at a time. Traffic will share a single open lane during the work. ADOT crews will direct alternating traffic with a pilot car through the work area. Speed limits will be reduced in the project area. Brief delays are expected.

When the chip sealing work is complete in mid-October, permanent striping and pavement markers will be applied to the roadway. ADOT says the project should be completed by late October.

ADOT advises drivers to proceed through the work zone with caution, slow down, and be alert for construction equipment and personnel. They also warned that weather and other factors may alter planned work schedules.

To stay up-to-date with the latest highway conditions around the state, visit the ADOT Traveler Information Center at www.az511.gov or call 5-1-1.



Bim, Bom, Flim, and Flam are gray and black, male and female tabbies new to this world. They are ready for adoption. For more information, contact the Pima Animal Care Center at 387-7502.