

# GILA RIVER ROYALTY NEWSLETTER

## *Gila River Royalty Committee*

### It's That Time of Year – 2010 Miss Gila River Pageant!

The Gila River Royalty Committee and the Public Information Office has been busy in the planning of this year's Miss Gila River Pageant. We hope to present the history, culture and traditions of the Akimel O'odham and Pee-Posh People that reflect the modern tastes and values of the Gila River Indian Community in this year's royalty pageant. We are actively seeking contestants from within the Community to compete for the title of Miss Gila River.

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Greetings from the Gila River Royalty Committee, it is our on-going task to arrange, schedule and organize the Community events and public appearances of the Gila River Royalty. Our Royalty Newsletter will be informing and highlighting our activities within Community, as well as appearances and events throughout the state.

***The mission of the Gila River Royalty Committee is to preserve the culture and traditions of the Akimel O'odham and Pee Posh women through personal growth and development.***



2009-2010 Gila River Royalty: from left Miss Indian Arizona-Daryl Lynn Jay, Jr. Miss Gila River-Starsha Dosela and Miss Gila River-Kristen Dosela.

### A Brief History of Miss Gila River

It all began nearly 47 years ago during the 1<sup>st</sup> Mul-Chu-Tha fair, when the 1<sup>st</sup> Miss Gila River was crowned and her name was Ms. Wilma Thurman. The idea that the Gila River Indian Community should have a tribal royalty also began after the 1<sup>st</sup> Miss Indian Arizona Pageant held at the Arizona State Fair in 1961.

Ms. Christine Brown was a contestant representing the Gila River Indian Community in the Miss Indian Arizona Pageant. She thought it would be a good thing to have an individual who would be able to share and represent the culture and history of the Akimel O'odham and Pee-Posh People to the outside world.

In the spring of 1963, the first Miss Gila River pageant was held during the 1<sup>st</sup> Mul-Chu-Tha in Sacaton, Arizona. Contestants in the pageant represented all seven districts. We shall continue to celebrate a legacy that began 47 years ago with this year's 48<sup>th</sup> Miss Gila River Pageant.



### Up-Coming Events

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| 2/4-7/10   | 72 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Tohono O'odham Rodeo & Fair. Sells, AZ.                       |
| 2/12-14/10 | 43 <sup>rd</sup> Annual O'odham Tash. Casa Grande, AZ.                                |
| 2/19-20/10 | 65 <sup>th</sup> Iwo Jima Landing and Flag Raising. Ira H. Hays Park. Sacaton, AZ.    |
| 2/19-21/10 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Native American Basketball Invitational Pow-Wow. Glendale, AZ. |
| 3/13/10    | 48 <sup>th</sup> Miss Gila River Pageant. D-6 Boys & Girls Club. Gila River, AZ.      |
| 3/19-21/10 | 48 <sup>th</sup> Annual Mul-Chu-Tha Fair & Rodeo. D-3 Sacaton. Gila River, AZ.        |

### Do you have what it takes to be Royalty?

Gila River Royalty throughout the past year has participated in a variety of events and activities within and outside the Community.

Miss Gila River has attended the UNITY Annual Conference, participated in the Native American Recognition Days, Fiesta Bowl Parade and Community Block Parties.



## 2010 Miss Gila River Pageant “Embracing Womanhood from The Teachings of Our Ancestors”

This year's Miss Gila River Pageant will be held in Komatke Village - District 6 at the newly built Boys & Girls Club on Saturday, March 13, 2010. Keeping in line with this year's Mul-Chu-Tha theme “*Honoring Our Ancestors*” this year's pageant theme will be “*Embracing Womanhood from the Teachings of Our Ancestors.*” District 6 was chosen as the site of this year's pageant as the current royalty are all from District 6.

When the first Miss Gila River Pageant was held, there were contestants representing all seven districts. Young Akimel O'odham and Pee-Posh women presented their knowledge, skills and talents in an all night display of culture and tradition. From those early days of the Miss Gila River Pageant, modern talents and skills have been included among the requirements of the contestants' abilities.

Other requirements are that contestants must have knowledge of tribal history, current issues affecting the Community, have a platform to address one or more of those issues and be of good moral and ethical character. Current Royalty and committee members will be making presentations at District meetings to recruit contestants and to answer any and all questions related to this year's pageant.



### 2009 Gila River Winter Bird Count

Every year since 1999, the Department of Environmental Quality along with volunteers organize the Winter Bird Count. The purpose of the bird count is to record and document the number and types of species of birds that are present in the Community. Miss Gila River and Jr. Miss Gila River attended this year's bird count at the District 6 location.

After the early morning bird count, participants were invited to the HuHuGhum Heritage Center for lunch and to learn more about wildlife within the Community. They also had a chance to hear stories that explained the cultural significance of birds from Community members.

### Maricopa High School Family Cultural Night

President Barack Obama proclaimed the month of November to be Native American Heritage Month and Maricopa High School Native American Education Program held the 1<sup>st</sup> Family Cultural Night. Miss Gila River and Jr. Miss Gila River attended his celebration of culture and history. It was meant to bring families together and to encourage parent involvement in their children's education. Miss Gila River Kristen Dosela greeted over 150 students and parents in the Akimel O'odham language and stressed the importance of being drug and alcohol free. Jr. Miss Gila River Starsha Dosela told a teaching story about being thankful. The Native American Education Program plans on having future events at Maricopa High School aimed at bringing families together through cultural activities.

#### To contact Miss Gila River & the Gila River Royalty Committee:

Miss Gila River/Gila River Royalty Committee  
P.O. Box 97, Sacaton, Arizona 85147  
Or by email at: [missgilariver@gric.nsn.us](mailto:missgilariver@gric.nsn.us)

\* If you would like to request an appearance of Miss Gila River, please send a formal letter or invitation by email or letter to one of the addresses listed above. Please include the nature of your event, date, location, the duration of appearance, and any special request or performances by Miss Gila River.

