



NAVJO TIMES | DONOVAN QUINTERO

Nelson Benally sits by his flock of sheep and goats on Monday near Sawmill, Ariz. Benally was forced to leave his summer campsite with his herd of more than 160 sheep and goats due to the Wood Springs 2 fire.

‘Where the fire started’

65-year-old shepherd evacuates with herd

BY DONOVAN QUINTERO
NAVAJO TIMES

WOOD SPRINGS, ARIZ. — Nelson Benally, 65, who was evacuated from his summer sheep camp on Monday, said he saw the lightning that started the Wood Springs 2 fire.

He was at his camp on Saturday when it began sprinkling. At the same time, he heard a loud thunder crack through the Defiance Plateau forest. A bright flash of lightning hit the earth.

Soon it began to smolder.

“That’s where the fire started,” he said in Navajo.

He said he saw wildland fire fighters arrive seemingly in no time and work on putting out the fire. He went back to herding his flock.

On Sunday, Benally thought fire crews extinguished the fire because he didn’t see any smoke. He went about his chores thinking nothing more of it.

By the afternoon, he looked toward where he saw the lightning strike, he said, and saw rising black smoke billowing into the air. It was getting large.

“Now it seems bad,” he said.

Benally’s sister, Mary Blackmountain from Kinlichee, said when she saw the fire start again, she became concerned for her little brother and knew she had to go check on him, especially after her nephew told her he was being stubborn about evacuating. So they got ready and took water.

“We hauled water for his sheep and goats at midnight,” Blackmountain said, referring to

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ABOVE: A DC-10 airplane converted to fight fires releases fire retardant over the trees while fighting the Wood Springs 2 fire on Monday. The fire has, so far, burned nearly 9,000 acres since it began on Saturday.

LEFT: A large plume of smoke from the Wood Springs 2 fire rises into the air on Sunday. The fire has burned nearly 9,000 acres since it started on Saturday.

Schools prepare to reopen amid pandemic

BY CINDY YURTH
TSÉYI’ BUREAU

WINDOW ROCK — The Navajo Nation’s schools, located in three different states and under various types of administration, are making widely divergent plans for reopening next month as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

At least one Arizona district will be entirely online for the time being; New Mexico’s schools are being mandated by the state to take a hybrid approach; and San Juan School District in Utah will base its strategy on an online survey of staff, students and parents.

According to its website, Chinle Unified School District in the heart of the reservation (and the current hotspot of the COVID-19 pandemic) is not taking any chances and school will be entirely online until further notice.

The district has purchased 3,000 laptops — enough for every student — and equipment to set up Wi-Fi hotspots for those who don’t have access to the internet. Students will have the option to check out the laptops by paying a small insurance premium,

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NAVJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

SHIPROCK rises behind a field of hemp last week. Neighbors of the hemp farm complain of a skunk-like odor, bright lights disturbing their sleep and non-Navajo workers who drive too fast.

Hemp farm neighbors complain of smell, lights, use of water

ARLYSSA BECENTI
NAVAJO TIMES

SHIPROCK – It’s not easy being Dineh Benally’s neighbor.

Loretta Bennett and Marietta Lister live down a narrow road in Shiprock and for years it’s been a safe and peaceful place to grow their children and grandchildren. It’s been a good area to raise horses, and grow alfalfa, fruits and vegetables.

But this picturesque surrounding changed drastically once Benally took it upon himself to bring in outside workers in order to develop a hemp farm without consulting his neighbors.

“We have a lot of greenhouses ... It gives a bad skunk odor,” said Bennett. “They never approached me ... All of a sudden I saw

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Lizer voted for \$300M investment in ‘company’ that may be Remington

BY RIMA KRISST
NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK — Last weekend, after word that the Navajo Nation might purchase Remington Arms Co. hit the national news, President Jonathan Nez confirmed to the Navajo Times that the \$300 million “Remington proposal” was again on the table.

Because of concerns about lack of transparency the last time the idea was considered in 2018, Nez said, “The Navajo people

demand the committees who are discussing this proposal do so openly and not in executive session...”

In an ironic twist, Nez’s own vice president, Myron Lizer, voted for the \$300 million investment proposal on June 12 while sitting on the Navajo Nation Investment Committee as Nez’s proxy, according to Speaker Seth Damon, begging the question, once again, who knew what when?

Neither Nez nor Lizer responded to a request for comment.

The story about the possibility of a revived Remington deal broke last Friday when The Wall Street Journal announced that the firearms manufacturer was “preparing to file for chapter 11 protection ... and is in advanced talks for a potential bankruptcy sale to the Navajo Nation...”

Damon explained that as a normal course of business, the Nation can work on potential investments through the Investment Committee process

with the Nation’s financial advisor RBK, where recommendations go from the Investment Committee to the Budget and Finance Committee for approval and then to the president.

Damon stated he could not officially verify if the “company” in play was indeed Remington.

“There could be ongoing investments and dealings with investors but I can’t comment on any negotiations that may or may not exist,” said Damon.

‘Fake news?’

The last time the Remington purchase was considered by the Navajo Nation, the potential deal was revealed to the public in a July 16, 2019 New York Times article that referred to a “draft letter” from the Nation offering to buy the gun manufacturer for \$475 to \$525 million in cash.

The story shocked the Nation, including then-President Russell Begaye, Vice President Jonathan Nez and then-Attorney General Ethel Branch, who

all claimed to have no knowledge of the offer until they read about it in the New York Times.

Pearline Kirk, the Navajo Nation’s controller, remained mum on the matter, Branch promptly launched an investigation, and a firestorm of dueling press releases between the president’s office and speaker’s office ensued.

“As president, I question the secrecy by which this offer

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Casinos push back reopening date

BY BILL DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

LOS ANGELES – The Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise has announced another delay in re-opening its four casinos. The new date for reopening is July 28.

The casinos have been closed since mid-March as part of the shutdown of businesses in Arizona and New Mexico in the attempt by tribe and state leaders to slow the spread of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus.

The 1,000-plus employees of the enterprise will remain on administrative leave with pay, said Brian Parrish, interim CEO of the enterprise.

The reopening date is tentative as board members continue to meet with tribal leaders to determine when the casinos can be opened safely.

With other tribes opening their casinos in Arizona a month ago and a number in New Mexico also reopening in late June, the board was hoping to reopen on July 6 with special rules to encourage social distancing and wearing protective masks.

But the surge of cases in Arizona made gaming officials take another look at reopening at this time. Another factor, said Parrish, is the fact that the tribe is continuing to urge residents to stay at home.

Casino operators that appeared to have had successful re-openings are now taking another look at their decision.

For example the casinos on the Gila River reservation recently closed down temporarily when a casino worker came down with the virus and died.

Wild Horse Pass, Lone Butte and Vee Quiva near Phoenix have all shut down as cases in that area have spiked in recent weeks.

While reopened casinos have not been singled out as the cause of the spike, casino operators said they could not continue to urge people to gamble when the chance of catching the virus has never been higher.

The decision to postpone reopening the four Navajo casinos is a costly one with the board's decision to keep all workers on paid leave.

While the enterprise received reimbursement for 10 weeks of the cost to pay employees from the federal Payroll Protection bill, employees have now been on paid leave for 19 weeks with at least four more weeks in July before money starts coming in.

Parrish said on Tuesday the cost of paying the salaries of employees as well as paying other bills, including the \$220 million the tribe loaned to the enterprise over the years, is now way more than \$4 million.

The good news is that everyone wants the casinos to open as soon as possible.

The enterprise recently surveyed members of the casino's player's club and found them eager to see the casinos reopen. The club is made up of many of the top spenders at the casinos.

The enterprise also surveyed its employees, who you would think are happy being paid for staying home, but they overwhelmingly said they can't wait to return to work.

BY RIMA KRISST
NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK — Imagine being a Navajo Nation essential employee who has been exposed to or contracted COVID-19 in the line of duty and all you're trying to do is quarantine and take care of yourself and your family.

Imagine that during this time when you most need support you are faced with bureaucratic red tape and hostile supervisors who, instead of helping, are making matters worse.

That was the picture painted by delegates at last Thursday's Naabik'iya-ti Committee meeting who said the Department of Personnel's policies are failing essential employees, while non-essential employees are at home collecting administrative leave scot-free.

When they become ill with COVID-19, some frontline employees are reporting to delegates that they have been forced to use their own sick and annual leave to cover their absence.

In response, on June 3, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee passed a bill (No. 122-20, Resolution HEHSCJN-08-20) to amend the Nation's personnel policy to provide 120 hours of leave to employees who been exposed to or have tested positive for COVID-19, or who need to care for a family member who has the virus.

HEHSC Chairman Daniel Tso said after hearing many complaints from essential employees, the COVID-19-related leave bill was developed so that people would not have to tap into their leave or go on leave without pay to take care of themselves or others.

"Some employees were told if they were not going to be at work to use their annual leave, which the committee thought was unreasonable," he said.

However, according to several delegates, the bill intended to help employees has imposed further restrictions by the Department of Personnel Management and created hardship for many.

Tso said Division of Human Resources Director Perphelia Fowler and her DPM team were the ones that put the bill together.

"The AG and legislative counsel were told to coordinate with DPM to come up with this," said Tso.

Fowler did not respond to this reporter's request for comment and the DPM's COVID-19 leave policy.

'Which policy supersedes?'

DPM Human Resources Director Tonia Becenti, who presented to delegates on behalf of Fowler, explained while the quarantine for someone who is exposed or is positive for COVID-19 is 14 days, the HEHSC bill allows for an additional week if the illness is prolonged, just to make sure an employee is no longer positive.

However, in many cases, that is not enough time because many COVID-19 illnesses go far beyond the maximum 120-hour leave, said Delegate Vince James.

Per the legislation, after 120 hours, if an employee has not recovered from

COVID-19, they must use accrued annual or sick leave, or be approved for leave without pay or seek family medical leave, which James says sends them back to Square One.

Becenti clarified that in order to receive the 120-day COVID-19 leave employees need to make a written request to their supervisor. Once the leave is granted, the employees cannot come back to work unless they have a doctor's note saying they are no longer positive, she said.

Becenti confirmed that if employees need to go beyond the 120-day leave, they need to notify their supervisor and can apply for short-term disability or Workman's Compensation in addition to family medical leave.

Several delegates said the legislation has caused confusion and hardship because it contradicts the president's office's state of emergency order that closed government offices and granted nonessential employees administrative leave for its duration.

"We are forcing our employees to use up their sick leave and annual leave and on top of that we have an executive order that says the president has issued administrative leave," said Delegate Otto Tso. "They should not be using any of their sick leave or annual leave whatsoever."

"Which policy supersedes the other?" asked James. "It all comes back to DPM. Who is actually in control?"

James said he does not understand why the HEHSC leave bill was put in place.

"It should have been a part of the executive order," he said. "Everything should be under administrative leave."

The June 3 bill is also not retroactive and does not address those essential employees who were asked to use their sick or annual leave in the months prior to June, he said.

"What do we do with the Navajo Nation employees who were exposed to COVID-19 back in March, April, and May?" he asked. "This legislation does not cover them. How do we replenish those individuals who were forced by their supervisor or DPM to start using their sick leave and annual leave, which in reality was supposed to be administrative leave? How do we reimburse those leaves?"

To add insult to injury, Vince says many employees who were exposed to COVID-19 on the job have been denied the special duty pay because they had to quarantine at home.

"The agreement was that they have to be at the work site in order to get hazard pay," he said.

Meanwhile, other workers who were not exposed to COVID-19 were able to draw hazard pay.

"It's not accommodating the Navajo Nation frontline workers," said James. "It's not OK."

Fear of retaliation

Otto Tso said employees don't want to say anything publicly because they are afraid of retaliation. He said even

his own family members are scared to talk because they've been told by their supervisors not to break the chain of command.

"We have employees who tell us that there's dysfunction that goes on in programs," said Otto Tso.

James suggested that once an employee tests positive for COVID-19, it should be entered into the DPM system and there should be no further questions or limitations put on their recovery because of leave policies or other burdensome requirements for documentation.

He said that while he and other delegates have received complaints from departments, the majority he has received have come from the Division of Public Safety, where many employees were exposed to COVID-19 on the job, especially early in the pandemic when they had no personal protective equipment.

"If all of the PPE gears were there in the first place, they most likely wouldn't have been exposed," he said.

"In some of these departments, including corrections, police departments, social services, and senior centers, those frontline workers were practically out there with no protection," said James. "Nothing was put in their budget for PPE until just recently. Because of this situation, our Navajo employees were exposed to COVID-19."

Furthermore, some employees who are still recovering are now being told they have to apply for family medical leave, but the process to qualify is lengthy and employees fear a gap in pay, which could put them at risk financially.

James said because of the bill, some employees are now being told if they don't want to apply for family medical leave, they have to exhaust their sick and annual leave.

"You're forcing them by saying, 'if you want to get paid, you need to use your leave,'" he said.

James said the miscommunications and misinterpretations about the personnel policies are hurting many Navajo families, who are getting the run-around when they should be taken care of by their employer.

Becenti responded that it appeared that many of the employee concerns regarding leave that were being brought up had not come to DPM, but those individuals that did come to DPM prior to June 3 were advised to use administrative leave prior to sick or annual leave.

She clarified that DPM has been also telling department human resources and supervisors to use administrative leave before they start using sick leave or annual leave.

"We always advised them to use admin leave as long as this executive order is in place for anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19," she said. "DPM does not tell supervisors to use sick or annual leave."

Becenti explained that regardless of their situation all Navajo Nation employees should be being paid whether they are working or not, essential or not, and if they are not getting paid they need to let DPM know immediately.

James indicated that there is clearly

a communication breakdown between DPM and department supervisors if the employees have been reaching out to delegates saying that they've been forced to use their sick or annual leave.

"We pay you a salary to get this information relayed out to the division directors and program managers," said Tso. "It's the responsibility of these programs! It's an executive branch function!"

PPE was unavailable

Becenti said that all division directors have been advised to work with their supervisors and program managers to obtain PPE for their employees, but that it was a challenge to get supplies early on in the pandemic.

"We can't always rely on our employer to provide everything for us," said Becenti. "We have to try to help in any way we can because of the shortages. As employees we have to do our part, whether we make our own masks or bring our own hand sanitizers."

"I don't agree with that," said Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton. "I think your statement is inappropriate and I think that mentality needs to change."

"I believe that during this pandemic if you're going to ask employees to report to work, you should have the necessary equipment to keep them safe," she said. "If you don't have that equipment, then I don't think we have the right to ask our Navajo Nation employees to report to work."

Charles-Newton says she does not understand how delegates continue to hear from employees who don't have proper PPE gear when delegates have been told by division directors that the employees have received PPE.

She asked why Fowler was not presenting to the committee.

"As Council, we're painted this nice picture by the executive branch directors, that everything is good, that the employees are taken care of," said Charles-Newton.

She said because of all of the uncertainties, many employees are afraid to return to work.

"Are you currently implementing a plan for opening up offices for services that are provided to our Navajo people?" asked Charles-Newton.

Becenti responded that the executive branch's "return to work policy" is currently under review and will soon be released by the president's office.

"We are being advised by our division directors that we will be coming back in phases and that each department should be working on a pre-occupancy plan on how to phase employees back in," said Becenti.

This will likely include plans for staggered and flex scheduling and telecommuting, especially for people with underlying health conditions.

"Each department should be working on this," she said.

IF YOU are an employee who would like to share your story relating to this article, please email rkrisst@navajotimes.com

REOPEN

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which may be waived for indigent families.

Wi-Fi access will be available in school parking lots and from buses that will deliver food and learning packet supplemental items.

Teachers are expected to learn the Schoology learning platform and Beyond Textbooks online curriculum to tailor lessons to their subject matter.

Special education teachers will work directly with families to schedule in-person (if necessary) or telephonic therapies, and "social and emotional support" for students and families will be available.

Several Chinle teachers contacted by the Times said they're not too enthusiastic about another quarter of online learning, but are grateful they

finally have a plan and can start to prepare.

"I think the fact that they invested in equipment so all students have equal access to virtual learning is a plus," said one teacher who asked not to be identified, as teachers have been cautioned against talking to the press. "If we're going to do this, we need to be all in."

An hour northwest in Kayenta, the administration is still digesting results of a staff and parent survey and pondering the effect of Gov. Doug Ducey's recent postponement of the start of the school year from Aug. 3 to Aug. 17.

"We're going to have a work session July 8 and then finalize things at the July 13 board meeting," reported district secretary Christina Yazzie. "Most likely it will be some form of distance learning."

At last month's school board work session, Superintendent Lemual Adson reported he had had staff take some measurements and, to preserve the

recommended six-foot social distancing, only 13 students could be allowed in a classroom and 14 on a school bus.

"I just don't see any feasible way that will work for us," he told the board.

In New Mexico, by contrast, the state department of education has issued a detailed set of instructions for "re-entry" into the school year. Schools will divide their students into two groups, and alternate them every day or week at the school buildings. While one group is taking regular classes, the other group will do distance learning, then the next day or week it will switch.

All students and teachers will be health-screened daily, and teachers who are at high risk of getting sick with the coronavirus may opt to teach from home.

Meals will continue to be provided to both in-school and at-home students.

Neither Central Consolidated School District nor Gallup McKinley County Schools re-

turned a call to ask if they had devised an implementation plan specific to their district.

San Juan School District in Utah has a little more time to get their plan together as Utah schools don't go back until Aug. 20. According to its website, it was still gathering data from an online survey of staff, students and parents as of Tuesday.

The federally funded BIE schools are not subject to state guidelines. A draft plan for re-opening these schools will be presented at two Zoom meetings, one for tribes and one for the public, on July 9 and 10, respectively. Comments on the plan will be taken through July 25.

The draft plan, which can be found at <https://www.bia.gov/sites/bia.gov/files/assets/as-ia/opa/pdf/BIE%20School%20Reopening%20Plan%205.28.2020%20ASIA%20revised.pdf>, allows schools to make their own decisions based on regional conditions, subject to the approval of the regional education program administrators.

BIE grant schools are under local control and will each make their own policies for re-opening.

The Division of Diné Education has come up with some guidelines for all schools on the Navajo Nation, but acting superintendent Patricia Gonnine did not return a phone call asking for details.

The New Mexico guidelines summarized the delicate task of all the districts: "As we move toward welcoming our students back to our campuses, it is critical that all educators, family members, and community members recognize that the need for prudent and proactive measures to prevent the spread of the virus will become more important— not less—in order to keep our students and communities healthy and safe."

Information: Links to join the Zoom consultations on re-opening the BIE schools can be found here <https://www.gov-info.gov/content/pkg/FR-2020-06-26/pdf/2020-13819.pdf>

Smoke advisory due for forest fire

WOOD SPRINGS, Ariz. – The Navajo Department of Health and Navajo Environmental Protection Agency are issuing a smoke advisory for the Wood Springs, Fluted Springs, and Sawmill areas.

The advisory will be in effect until the wildfires are controlled enough that the risk from the fire and smoke is reduced. The Wood Springs 2 fire is generating smoke that affecting surrounding communities, especially those to the north and east, the direction the smoke is currently blowing.

All residents should take precautions to protect their health from the wildfire smoke.

Older adults, children, pregnant women and individuals who have heart or lung diseases are higher risk of being affected from wildfire smoke.

YOUR EYES ARE YOUR BEST TOOLS TO DETERMINE IF IT'S SAFE TO BE OUTSIDE:

- If visibility is under five miles, the air quality is unhealthy for young children, adults over age 65, pregnant women, and people with heart and/or lung disease, asthma or other respiratory illness. Outdoor activity should be minimized.
- If visibility is under three miles, young children, adults

over age 65, pregnant women, and people with heart and/or lung disease, asthma or other respiratory illness should avoid all outdoor activities.

- If visibility is under one mile, the air quality is unhealthy for everyone. People should remain indoors and avoid all outdoor activities including running errands. Unless an evacuation has been issued, stay inside your home, indoor workplace, or in a safe shelter.
- No matter how far you can see, if you are having health effects from smoke exposure, then take extra care to stay inside or get to an area with better air quality.

Relief for coronavirus

WINDOW ROCK – The following are relief agencies in the fight to stop the spread of the coronavirus on the Navajo Nation.

These are places to which people can send donations, contributions or other help.

- Navajo Nation COVID-19 Fund at <http://www.nndoh.org/donate.html>. You can also contact the Health Command Operations Center Donation Branch at 928-871-6206 or general@nndoj.org.

The Navajo Department of Health's COVID-19 website at <http://www.ndoh.navajo-nsn.gov/COVID-19> and the Navajo Health Command Operations Center at 928-871-7014.

- Navajo & Hopi Families COVID-19 Relief

Fund at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/NHF-C19Relief>

- Food Baskets for Elderly on Navajo Nation-Covid19, Chinle, Ariz.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-for-elderly-on-navajo-nation>

- Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health at <https://secure.jhu.edu/form/jhs-phamerin>

- Bill Richardson Covid-19 Navajo Families Relief Fund at www.nmchildren.org.

- NB3 Foundation COVID 19 Response Fund at <https://www.classy.org/give/92644/#!/donation/checkout>

Fighting the fire



A helicopter flies toward a pumpkin, which holds 6,000 gallons of water, with its bucket on Sunday as it fights the Wood Springs 2 fire on Wood Springs, Ariz.



Navajo Nation Rangers speak to local residents about the Wood Springs 2 fire on Monday at a roadblock.



Two DC-10 airplanes, converted to fight forest fires, fly by one another over the Wood Springs 2 fire in Wood Springs, Ariz.



A DC-10 airplane converted to fight fires releases fire retardant over the trees while fighting the Wood Springs 2 fire on Monday. The fire has, so far, burned nearly 9,000 acres since it began on Saturday.

► LIZER

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was made,” said Begaye at the time. “Offers that include high-dollar amounts and do not include the involvement of the executive branch are highly questionable. It’s my responsibility to protect the Navajo people’s money.”

The Times article also quoted a mystery attorney involved with the deal named Drew Ryce, erroneously referred to as “the tribe’s lawyer,” who is also a former colleague of Kirk.

“My office will of course investigate what appears to be a highly irregular manner by which this supposed investment was pursued,” said Branch.

Certain Navajo Nation Council delegates at the time, including Tom Chee and Leonard Tsosie, decried the article as “fake news.”

Former Speaker LoRenzo Bates said there was never an offer and that Controller Kirk had only been instructed to conduct due diligence in considering the possibility of buying Remington.

At that time, Tsosie said the president’s office had been made aware of the discussions about the possible purchase in Sihasin Fund and Investment Committee meetings and that Begaye and Nez were feigning ignorance.

Current legislation

Three weeks ago, on June 12, the Investment Committee approved a resolution that recommends a direct equity investment to the B&F.

The resolution states, “The Investment Committee hereby authorizes an investment from the Navajo Nation Master Trust Fund, not to exceed three hundred million dollars (\$300M) for the acquisition of the company.”

Damon clarified that the investment Committee is made up of three members each from the legislative and executive branches, including B&F Chairman Jamie Henio, B&F member Jimmy Yellowhair, delegated Auditor General Helen Brown, Controller Kirk (chair), Tax Commission Director Martin Ashley and President Jonathan Nez.

Damon said Henio, Ashley, Yellowhair and Lizer (acting as a proxy for Nez) voted to support the proposal with Brown abstaining. Damon confirmed Investment Committee meetings are public meetings although they are not well publicized.

Legislation No. 0133-20, sponsored by Henio and co-sponsored by Damon, would have the B&F Committee approve the direct equity investment “in a Company set forth in (resolution) NNICJU-08-20...”

B&F is authorized to approve direct investments in non-public companies provided they have a projected annual rate of return of more than the five-year average rate of return on the Nation’s Master Trust Fund, which was at 4.48 percent as of March 31.

The “company” referred to in the legislation is a “manufacturing entity with a strong brand,” which would apply to gun manufacturer Remington Arms, and that due diligence was done by outside legal counsel on behalf of the controller’s office.

However, the due diligence and negotiations concerning the company are covered by non-disclosure agreements and are not publicly available, it states.

The B&F Committee met on June 23 to consider Legislation No. 133-20 in executive session but it was tabled in a motion by Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty in order to have a work session with the Investment Committee.

B&F delegates, including Chair Henio, did not respond to a request for comment.

‘Everything blew up’

Damon verified that in 2018, the Council’s Sihasin Subcommittee voted to have the controller do the due diligence to consider the Remington deal and see what options might be available.

However, after the public backlash over the potential half-billion dollar purchase was revealed in the news media, everything came to a halt, he said.

“Once everything blew up, everyone backed off of the deal,” he said. “There was never a follow-up after that.”

Damon, who was the B&F chairman at the time, confirmed as far as he knew there was never an offer made.

While Kirk had presented due diligence updates to the Sihasin and Investment committees, nobody ever saw an offer, he said.

The New York Times refused to share a copy of the referenced “draft (offer) letter” with the Navajo Times.

Damon said after the NYT article appeared, he asked Kirk specifically if there had been an offer made and she responded, “No, there is no offer.”

Branch, the attorney general, got the same answer from Kirk, he said.

Nonetheless, Damon says he is fully in support of investments that can bring revenues and jobs to the Nation.

“I think the Navajo Nation should do more direct investments that yield high returns on investment and get returned back to the Master Trust Fund,” he said.

As stated in Legislation No. 133-20, the B&F is also committed to diversifying the Nation’s investment portfolio to include direct investments as a means of increasing the Nation’s overall revenue and rate of return.

Regular investments in the stock market and bond market and real estate average 1.8 to 3 percent annual returns, while direct investments in businesses can yield much more, said Damon.

He said a good example of a profitable direct investment was when the Navajo Nation casinos were created in 2008.

If there is more direct investment, it can create economy for the Nation and can also help make up for the loss of revenue from Navajo Generating Station, he said.

With gun sales at an all time high during the pandemic and the bid for the “company” down to \$300 million, time will tell if the deal has enough firepower.

Nez: Young people spreading virus to vulnerable elders

BY ARLYSSA BECENTI
NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK – President Jonathan Nez told viewers during Tuesday’s Facebook town hall that data shows over 66 percent of the Navajos dying of COVID-19 are elders, whereas younger people are the ones catching the virus and spreading it.

“The people who are getting the virus ... (are) from 20 years old to 60 years old,” said Nez. “Those two combined is over 60 percent who are contracting the virus.

“How does that correlate with the deaths?” he asked. “Young people are getting the virus and they are able to recover. But the younger generation may be the cause of the

spread to the older generation.”

Tuesday night’s new COVID-19 cases were the lowest they have been since March, with 17 new cases, bringing the total to 7,549. Recoveries reported from all 12 health facilities were at 5,218. Deaths were at 364, up just one from the previous day.

The Chinle Service Unit continued to lead the Nation in the cumulative number of positive tests with 1,945, followed by Gallup with 1,277; Shiprock with 1,212; Kayenta with 1,073; Crownpoint with 662; Tuba City with 641; Fort Defiance with 470; and Winslow with 265 cases.

Mentioning the surge of cases in and outside of the Nation, including Phoenix, Nez urged listeners not travel to hotspots. He noted a spike

in the Winslow Service Unit and Coconino County in general.

“If we are not careful these types of spikes will happen if we go off into hotspots around the Navajo Nation,” said Nez. “It’s critical we use masks.”

With the Fourth of July weekend coming up, and celebrations that usually happen in Kayenta and Window Rock canceled, Nez said a health order for a 57-hour lockdown will be implemented again and will continue for the next three weekends.

Also, the Navajo Nation will extend its closure of government offices until July 26. Nez said the Nation has a plan to get the government open again, but because of what is happening in neighboring cities and states re-opening now would be

premature.

“If we start spiking here and we need special care, I’m afraid our people will get turned away,” said Nez, “because they’re dealing with their own emergencies out there. We can lessen the rate doing what we’ve been doing.”

Arizona continued to see a spike in coronavirus cases with Wednesday seeing 4,900 new cases and 88 deaths. The overall total of cases for the state is 79,399 with 1,645 deaths.

On Tuesday, Utah saw 553 new cases and four deaths. In total there are 22,256 confirmed cases. As for New Mexico there is a total of 12,147 cases and 497 deaths.

“Wear your masks,” said Nez. “Wearing a mask shows you care for yourself and others.”

► COMPLAIN

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all these greenhouses go up.”

It was only supposed to be a pilot project, or at least that’s what Bennett understood, but the next thing she knew huge greenhouses were being constructed a few feet from her home.

“I didn’t know what was going on,” said Bennett. “Last year, they had what he called a pilot project where he planted stuff out there with weeds combined; it was messy. This year, he decided to grow greenhouses and it stinks.”

The stench of hemp is described to be just as potent as that of marijuana.

When driving on the narrow dirt road past Benally’s home, fields of green plants can be seen on one side of the road. On the other side rows of greenhouses are being constructed in what might as well be the Bennett’s and Lister’s back yard.

Bennett is tired of the smell, and she also doesn’t like the bright grow lights that shine through her windows at night. Bennett grows alfalfa and Lister grows produce, but the water from their irrigation line has been dismal. They blame the wells Benally drills in order to claim the water for his hemp.

“They are still getting water from our irrigation,” said Lister. “(I’m) trying to get my alfalfa field cut here and I didn’t give it much water. It didn’t grow much. If he has that kind of money, why can’t he do something about the irrigation?”

Trying to grow a small garden, grass for cattle and alfalfa is practically impossible when water sources are scarce. Bennett can’t compete with the sheer size of Benally’s hemp production, or the money that he is putting into getting the project running.

“We can’t afford big equipments like a swather or bailer to work a whole farm so we rely on the chapter,” said Lister.

“They tell us to get back to farming,” said Bennett. “Plant good stuff for your kids, for yourself, and teach your kids how to do this. But what is he (Benally) planting? That’s not what they tell us to plant.”

Hemp lawsuit

In the few days since the Navajo Nation Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against Benally for illegally growing, producing, manufacturing, transporting, licensing and selling industrial hemp within the Navajo Nation, Benally has persisted with his hemp operation.

The former Navajo Nation president, vice president and congressional candidate currently serves as the San Juan River Farm Board president, and during a June 30 meeting he informed farm board members of a June 15 hearing in Shiprock regarding the lawsuit. He said the judge sided with him and he will continue to grow.

“They also passed an order to issue a temporary restraining order to stop production and stop growing,” said Benally during the meeting. “You, as a farm board, and myself know I’ve been growing this



NAVAJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

Workers run water lines in a field at a hemp operation in Shiprock last week.

for the past three years. We went to court. The judge denied the order of the Department of Justice or the attorney general. Right now we are moving forward with our growing and production of our farms out here.”

Benally doesn’t only have a hemp farm growing on his property. He has hemp production sites scattered throughout the communities of Shiprock, Hogback, and most recently Gadiahi.

These farm lands belonging to others. This is what Bennett and Lister don’t understand: How is he able to use these lands?

“That attorney general’s order was denied,” said Benally. “You can’t just come in because these farms belong to the individual farmers and the individual farmers determine what they want to grow. That’s what the judge ruled on.”

Pushed on this statement, board member Tracy Raymond asked for an opinion from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

“What does the BIA stand on that?” asked Raymond. “I always thought the regulation in the CFR that these are all trust lands. At that point the BIA is involved in it. The statement saying the farmland belongs to the individual farmer, is that true?”

The BIA representative at the meeting said he didn’t feel comfortable answering the question since this is in litigation, but said he would check on it.

Benally said this question will be addressed during a future court hearing. He apologized for not talking with his neighbors before erecting the greenhouses, and said he will talk to one of the affected families to address their concerns.

More hemp farms

Once you leave Benally’s hemp plantation, which has numerous Asian workers in the field, and make your way to Bea Redfeather-Benally’s (no relation) plot of land there is other activity happening.

A few non-Navajo workers, who Redfeather-Benally said are Mexican, are constructing a fence to support a tarp in order to keep the prying eyes away.

Like Bennett and Lister, Redfeather-Benally is worried about the non-Navajo workers who are working near young children, including her own.

She, too, is disgusted by the pungent smell of hemp; she fears for her

neighbor’s safety because the woman lives alone; she worries about the dogs she fosters because already two of them have been run over by Benally’s fast-driving workers.

It comes back to how Benally was able to get the land to produce hemp.

“We have water here, which was put up for us, the irrigation water,” said Redfeather-Benally. “They tried to approach me and I chased them off. They’re going around making deals like that.”

She described how her elderly neighbor was approached by Benally and offered \$1,000 an acre to lease his land, but he turned down the offer and said his land was for his kids. Redfeather-Benally said there are other tactics Benally has taken to get farmers to give up their land.

Although Benally may have started all his production three years ago, as he said, the three farmland owners noticed the quick development of the greenhouses began this spring, when the coronavirus hit the Nation extremely hard.

They believe Benally is using this time to ramp up production while the Nation is closed until July 26. The workers even continue their hemp farming during weekend lockdowns and evening curfews, Redfeather-Benally said.

Where are the leaders?

Redfeather-Benally said she can’t get ahold of any of her local leaders, so she plans to start a petition to remove Benally from his farm board position. As one of many concerned Shiprock community members she said she has started posting pictures and videos of hemp workers in the field across from her residence on social media.

She said Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton left a comment expressing her support for Benally.

“Hemp is not illegal on the Navajo Nation,” Charles-Newton responded to an emailed list of questions sent to the speaker’s office by this reporter. “A revamp of Title 17 during the 23rd Navajo Nation Council decreased the THC level, and no regulations were put in place regarding hemp.

“Hemp production is happening up and down the San Juan River, not just in Shiprock,” she said. “Other farmers have taken up production of hemp.”

Delegates who are usually vocal about the plight of their community members aren’t saying much about Benally, even after numerous community members complained. Charles-Newton said the situation is

under investigation, and the Resource and Development Committee is dealing with it.

The Times reached out to RDC Chair Rickie Nez and received nothing as of press time. The Times also reached out to Delegate Amber Crotty, who represents Gaadiahi. She had not answered at press time.

NMSU project

The only entities that appear to be responding to the situation are the Navajo Nation Department of Justice and Navajo Nation Police.

“We started getting reports on the issue that hemp fields are being grown,” said Chief of Police Phillip Francisco.

One of the main concerns for Francisco is finding out whether Benally is growing hemp or marijuana. The plants are identical except for their levels of the psychoactive component, THC. So they had the plants tested.

Anything above 0.3 percent THC is defined as marijuana and is illegal on the Navajo Nation.

“We sent some to the lab ... legally we are at a crossroads,” explained Francisco. “No lab can actually verify the threshold of hemp and marijuana, so we are searching for a lab that can do that, and that can be accepted in court. We don’t know if it’s marijuana or hemp.”

The only entity that is allowed to grow hemp on the Navajo Nation is New Mexico State University. The tribe has given NMSU researchers permission to grow industrial hemp on a small parcel of land they lease within the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry property purely for research and development purposes.

In order for the university to get the 200-square-foot plot to grow hemp, it had to go through Council and even speak to residents.

During a previous Shiprock Chapter meeting, Charles-Newton’s tone was different when it came to NMSU’s hemp project.

She said this venture needed to be translated and explained to the Navajo people before it could go any further, and that there was no supporting resolution from her chapter about this cultivation. She was one of four delegates who voted no on the project.

“I have to speak for the people,” said Charles-Newton at the time. “I know what hemp and marijuana is. If it were just up to my vote personally alone, I probably would’ve voted green.

“But my job is not to represent myself; it’s to represent the people,” she said. “I said ‘The people have said nothing about this to me so I have to vote red.’”

Redfeather-Benally said she understands people are for hemp production because it could bring economic development to the Nation, but so far Benally’s operation seems to be employing foreign workers rather than Navajos. She also doesn’t believe the crop is only hemp and believes marijuana is being cultivated as well.

“People say, ‘It’s hemp, know the difference,’” said Redfeather-Benally. “I know the difference. It’s easy for them to say because it’s not in front of their residence. They don’t see what we see. They don’t go through what I go through.”

► SHEEPHERDER

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early Monday morning.

In the morning, she got news again he still was saying no to leaving. She went to him, she said.

“You can’t stay there, I told him,” she said. “Then the ranger told us we needed to leave, so we just started herding the sheep.”

The family had already taken most of the flock away by horse trailer. One more flock of about 30 stood in a small makeshift coral. Smoke could be seen from the direction Blackmountain said her brother’s summer home was.

Benally said Navajo Rangers reached his

campsite and said he needed to evacuate by about 1 p.m. He wasn’t about to leave his more than 160 head of sheep and goats behind.

Rangers hurriedly helped him herd them along Navajo Route 26, which connects Chinle to Sawmill, Ariz. They then chased his herd south onto Navajo Route 7, which connects back to State Highway 264.

His sister and the family corralled the large flock and began loading them into horse trailers. A small flock remained as they waited for the trailers to arrive to pick up the rest.

Benally sat on a wood stump. He said he was concerned his hogan and campsite he’s been going to since 1972 may have been destroyed by the fire. The area he lives in is rich with grass, enough to sustain his flock.

The 60 hotshots and the 10 aerial firefighters were no match for Sunday’s and Monday’s winds.

The BIA’s initial 60-acre burn estimate was obviously no longer correct as trees could be seen lighting like match sticks one after another on Sunday.

On Monday morning, fire officials said the fire had burned approximately 3,000 acres. By the end of the day, they said the fire had consumed nearly 6,000 acres.

The fire that originated about three miles east of Wood Springs was moving in a northeasterly direction. It jumped Navajo Route 26 and is threatening to cross Navajo Route 7.

As for Benally and his 160-plus sheep and goats, he said if the fire didn’t destroy their home, he will return when the fire is extinguished. For now, they will have to wait it out in Kinlichee at his sister’s house.

“We will see how it goes. I might have to rebuild again if the fire took it,” Benally said.

Wildfire in Dinétab



The Woodlands 2 fire rages near Buell Park on Monday.

COURTESY PHOTO | MARSHA CARL



The Woodlands 2 fire rages near Sawmill, Ariz., on Monday.

COURTESY PHOTO | MARSHA CARL



A man stands from atop a hill and watches a helicopter take water to use on the Wood Springs 2 fire on Sunday in Wood Springs, Ariz.

NAVAJO TIMES | DONOVAN QUINTERO

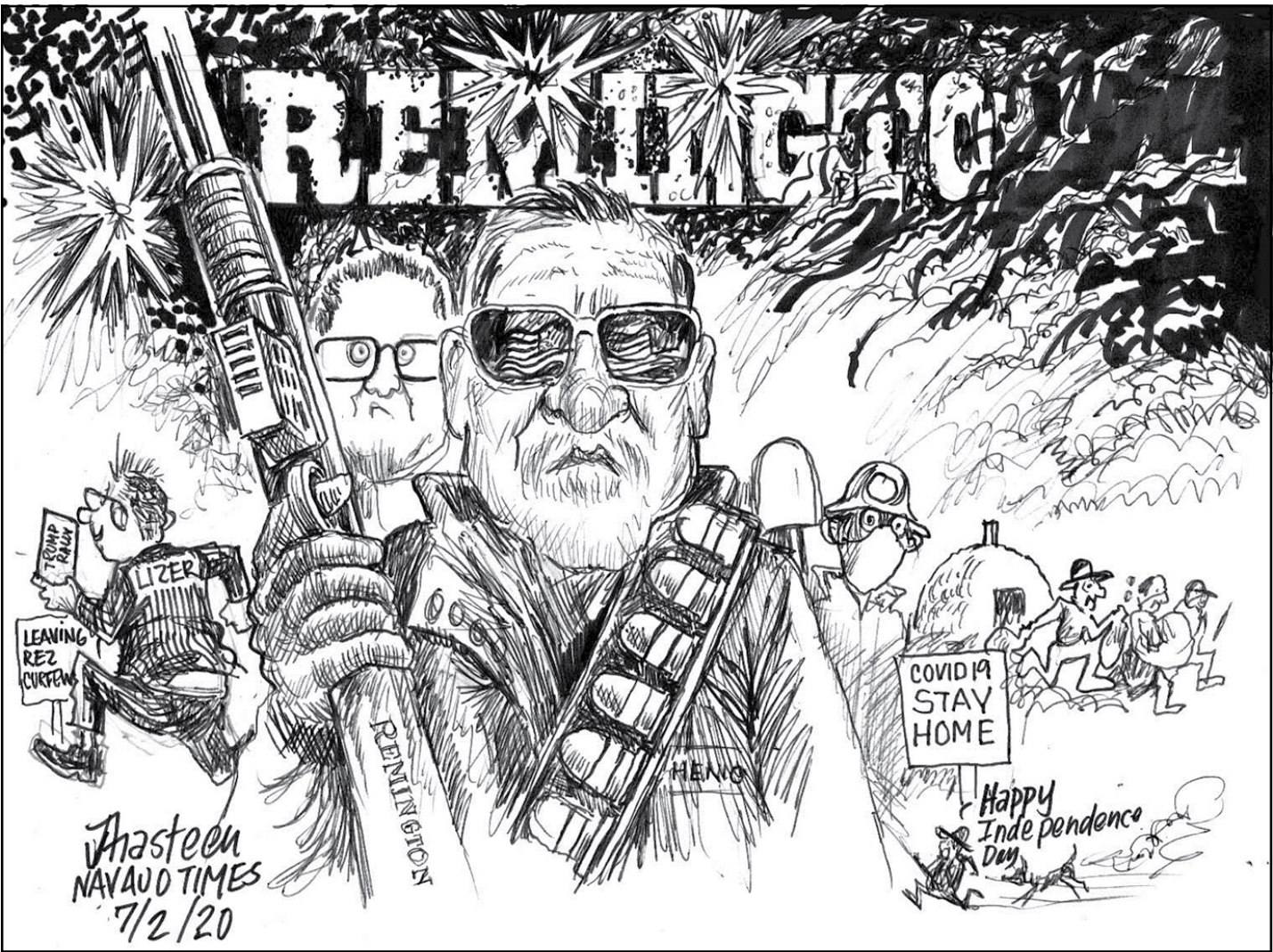


A helicopter flies toward the Wood Springs Fire with water on Sunday nearly engulfed in smoke.

NAVAJO TIMES | DONOVAN QUINTERO



JACK AHASTEEN
EDITORIAL CARTOONIST



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lizer, we are watching

Armchair general: One who speaks authoritatively on topics one actually knows little about.

I am writing in response to the Navajo Nation vice president Lizer's interview with the Navajo Times today (June 25). I am writing as a Navajo/Diné woman and granddaughter of the late Paul Williams Sr. (Steamboat Chapter).

Shináli hastiin was a life-long politician who served on tribal council and as chapter president for the community of Steamboat, Arizona.

Shináli was respectful and cared for the needs of his constituents. He was knowledgeable about many things yet he consulted with elders and hataali about what makes a good leader.

Shináli focused on clean politics, transparency, and k'e. He listened to the people. He was an advocate and he was persistent in the role he played in the U.S. Supreme Court landmark case involving tribal sovereignty (Williams v. Lee, 1959).

Shináli listened to his community members and accepted constructive criticism by all. Guess what? He did not engage in name-calling or refer to community members as "armchair generals" and he didn't deflect when asked important questions about his personal agenda or political alliances.

Most importantly, shináli did not engage in gaslighting or in the manipulation of the truth. Yes, the initial outrage was sparked by Navajo Nation vice president's attendance at a Trump campaign rally and his disregard for COVID-19 pandemic safety protocols.

The reality is that the vice president sends a contradictory message to our cheiis and másánis, who have been told they can't attend gatherings, they can't attend ceremonies, and they can't interact with family or friends. The vice president can continue to justify his actions but it is not acceptable to engage in such negative behaviors, blaming and name-calling.

The Navajo Nation vice president needs to remember the Navajo/Diné people voted for President Jonathan Nez and not Lizer's personal Republican or business agenda.

I am speaking on behalf of a number of Navajo/Diné elders who have contacted me with this sentiment: "Lizer can vote however he wants in his own booth, but for now he represents the majority ... the Navajo/Diné people and his constituents."

I believe it is important for the Navajo/Diné community to hold the

NNVP accountable. We are a collective society, we are watching, and we will continue to voice our concerns.

Deidra Williams Angulo
Steamboat, Ariz.

The next pandemic: alcohol

It looks like another pandemic is looming around the corner on the Navajo Reservation. This time its location is in our backyard.

The Dollar Store in the St. Michaels area has submitted a request for a liquor license for liquor to be sold from their store. Just like the Bilagáanas, give them an inch and they take a mile.

Obviously they are not familiar with the history of alcohol beverages in this area. It will be a pandemic. People will die, families will be destroyed, jobs will be lost, children will be exposed, and health issues will increase.

I would like to say, "Yeah, let's have another way to socialize and have fun."

The reality is Native tribes have yet to figure out why alcohol is still a problem since its introduction to them. I would like to say, "It's OK because we have a cure now." There is no cure and no new way of socializing. There is only destruction.

This situation is similar to the denial going on now with the pandemic. We can't convince people to keep safe by wearing your mask, social distancing, stay home, wash hands, or you could die. How many more people have to die for people to wake up?

Same question to traders and consumers of alcohol. The only thing that seems to work to sober up people is the spiritual way of living, which is not easy. The most difficult is to surrender to a power greater than yourself. This kind of surrender is not weakness; it is strength and love of oneself, and that is a whole story in itself.

The idea of a Dollar Store is good; it's progress to see these stores in our communities. Keep it that way. Alcohol doesn't work for us and we can do without it.

Sharon Manuelito
Window Rock, Ariz.

Provide free tax help to Navajos

I am again relaying this message to the Navajo Nation government. It's really time for the Navajo Nation to provide an IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program to the Navajo people.

For the last several years, I've participated in a VITA program every tax season for my employer. The VITA program is a service initiated by the IRS.

With the help of the IRS, volunteers are trained, obtain certification and the link to the IRS TaxSlayer software. Volunteers then prepare and process federal and state tax returns for clients. And the greatest thing about the service: the service is free.

This is an incredible service for the community I work for. Over the last several years, our little office has processed thousands of tax returns for community members and community employees. And our VITA service continues to grow each year both in the number of tax returns that we process and the amount of tax refunds clients get, with no fees assessed to the client. Last year, our office transmitted over 2,000 tax returns and over \$3 million in refunds.

By providing this service, the community is saving its community members hundreds of dollars in servicing fees that a paid preparer charges. Even at a \$100 fee per client, that's a savings of \$200,000. This is more money in the pocket of the VITA clients.

The interested entity does need to provide a few things like volunteers, computers, Internet service and space. But with the training and software, the volunteers can quickly process tax returns. New entities may need a little training on how to move the tax return from prepared, quality review, transmittal, and record keeping, but that gets quickly accomplished.

Now, it is true that this service is already being provided within the Navajo Nation, but not up to its full potential. If the Navajo Nation government and the respective enterprises pooled together, this series could be provided around the Navajo Nation and save the Diné thousands of dollars.

So I put it out there to the Navajo Nation government, from legislative to executive: Help your constituents out by working to provide this service on the Navajo Nation. Save the people's money so that more of life's necessities like food and gas can be purchased by your constituents.

With the ending of the 2019 tax season, there is a short turnaround this year for the 2020 tax season. Planning needs to start now, recruitment of volunteers, space for tax preparation needs to be secured and equipment like computer, printers and copiers need to be purchased or found so

50 YEARS AGO

NAC seeks nonprofit status in federal court

BY BILL DONOVAN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

The Navajoland chapter of the Native American Church and its use of peyote was in the news again in July 1970.

Attorneys for the church, Ted Mitchell and Don Juneau, asked a three-member federal panel to force the Arizona Corporation Commission to allow the church to incorporate as a nonprofit organization.

The previous month, the commission had rejected the application, citing the use of peyote by its members. In rejecting the application, the commission pointed out that state law prohibited use of the drug.

The largest branch of the Native American Church, the 40,000-member chapter had been fighting court battles for more than a decade to secure the right for members to use peyote in its services. In the past four years, the church had been successful in changing federal and tribal laws banning its use.

The states, however, were a different matter. The NAC would be fighting the states of Arizona, New Mexico and Texas for another five years on the issue.

In their filings before the federal panel, church officials argued that the use of the cactus plant was the center stone around which the entire tradition of the religion operated. In fact, if peyote were not allowed in church services, the entire religion would have no purpose and would not exist.

The use of peyote was a sacrament essential to its services.

Attorneys for the state argued that peyote, like marijuana, was a hallucinogenic drug, which serves no purpose other than to get the user high.

The suit claimed the state's position violated the Civil Rights Act and the 1st, 4th and 14th amendments of the Constitution.

As for the importance of the lawsuit, getting incorporated as a nonprofit organization was essential to the financial wellbeing of the church. Now that it was protected under federal law, the church was going after grants and donations and needed to be a nonprofit so that people who donated could write it off on their taxes.

In other news that week, a study was released that should have changed a lot of misconceptions about the work ethic of Navajos.

The study, done by the Workforce Commission, pointed out that a lot of people, as well as heads of manufacturing companies, did not believe the Native lifestyle produced efficient workers in manufacturing plants. The results of the study contradicted those views.

Company officials interviewed in the study reported that their Native workers were among the most efficient as well as being the most reliable. One of the companies profiled

in the study was General Dynamics, which operated an electronics plant in Fort Defiance.

The Navajos have a unique ability to do delicate work like assembling circuit boards, company officials said, pointing out that for generations tribal members have used these skills to produce rugs and jewelry.

As for being reliable, the company referred to snowstorms that past January that completely disrupted life on the reservation. And yet, despite roads that were snowbound and icy, the Navajo workforce had a nearly perfect record of showing up.

And finally, the Navajo Times announced that it appears there would be six men running for tribal chairman. With the primary election ballots scheduled to go to the printer in two days, it didn't seem likely that anyone else would be throwing their hat into the ring.

Of the six, three candidates appeared to have the best chance of being selected for the two spots in the general election.

Raymond Nakai, who was seeking his third term as tribal chairman, seemed to be a lock-in for one of those slots. Considered a hero by members of the Navajoland NAC for his work to get the use of peyote allowed by the federal and tribal governments, he was expected to get most of their votes in the primary.

It seemed that Sam Billison would get that second slot since this was his third attempt to become chairman. A very respected educator, Billison basically started running the day after Nakai had his second inauguration.

But Peter MacDonald, the former head of the Office of Navajo Economic Opportunity, seemed to be the wild card. He had been praised for his speech-making ability in both Navajo and English.

The other three candidates seemed to be long shots in making it to the general election.

The most well known of the three was Donald Dodge, who resigned his position with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to run. He had the best pedigree of the six.

That left Frank Eriacho and Joe Watson Jr. Eriacho, the former head of the ONEO alcoholism program, was well known on the reservation but few knew his positions on the issues. The same could be said of Watson, who stepped down as head of tribal operations for the BIA in Fort Defiance.

The odd thing about Watson was that up to two weeks prior, he had decided not to run but his candidacy was pushed by Dick Hardwick, editor of the Navajo Times.

There were rumors that Eriacho and Watson were stoolies for Nakai who urged them to run in the hopes of taking votes away from MacDonald and put Billison into the general election. Having defeated Billison twice before, Nakai probably felt Billison would pose no threat to him in the general election.

that the tax returns can be prepared, transmitted and printed.

Just a thought to the leaders of the Navajo Nation.

Mark C. Graham
Gilbert, Ariz.

Put a price on carbon pollution

As we mourn losses of family and community members, livelihoods, and our ability to gather due to COVID-19, we face another silent threat to our future — a warming, drying climate.

On Tuesday, Flagstaff City Council joined Tuba City, Cameron and Tolani Lake chapters to endorse The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR 763) — national legislation that will combat climate change by putting a price on the carbon pollution that drives it.

Worldwide, climate scientists and economists agree that pricing carbon pollution must be a part of solving climate change. HR 763 is a bipartisan,

revenue neutral, and fair approach that reduces carbon pollution as it spurs innovation, creates new jobs, and protects America's most vulnerable people with the dividend. It has 81 co-sponsors and growing public support nationwide.

It works by setting a small and steadily increasing fee paid on the carbon contained in fossil fuels at or near the mine, well, or U.S. border and returns the collected fees in equal shares to people as monthly dividends. Most low- to middle-income families will get more back in dividends than they'll pay in increased energy costs.

Find out more and join the Arizona leaders urging Congress to price carbon pollution at citizensclimatelobby.org.

Shawn Newell
Flagstaff, Ariz.

SEE LETTERS CONT'D | A7

LETTER POLICY

Readers may submit opinions and statements about any news story or on any other subject. Length should be about 600 words, although letters of any length are accepted, and all are subject to editing.

Letters must include your full name, place of residence and a phone number. Letters are accepted for publication in our print edition and online.

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‘Rule of law’ prevailed for East Coast tribe

BY THOMAS E. SIMMONS

GUEST COLUMN

The rule of law is often invoked as a rallying cry for justice. John Adams, the second U.S. president, said that a republic should be a “government of laws, not of men.” This idea – that no one is above the law – has shaped American history.

But laws have no agency of their own. They’re tools made of text. In the hands of the selfish or the dishonest, they can be turned to unjust ends as easily as a knife in the hands of an aggressor.

Too many times in American history, miscreants have wielded the law to disenfranchise Indians. No sooner did the first Europeans arrive in spotted settlements along the East Coast than they commenced making grossly unfair contracts with Native Americans, insisting on their rigorous enforcement. This was followed by volumes of treaties, which were not so vigorously enforced.

Within this context, it’s tricky for a non-Indian lawyer like myself to preach the benefits of the rule of law. Too often, the law has been a ruse to trick, to cheat, and to steal. But occasionally at least, it shows itself in its proper light.

In mid-June, 76-year-old Judge Paul Friedman issued a decision from the

federal district court in the District of Columbia. Judge Friedman grew up a New Yorker and was appointed to the bench by President Clinton. One of his notable cases involves the supervision of John Hinckley, the man who tried to assassinate President Reagan. Over the years, Judge Friedman has relaxed the restrictions over Hinckley as Hinckley’s mental condition improved.

Last year, Judge Friedman delivered a lecture in Washington, D.C. In the lecture, he noted a diminishing faith in the rule of law. He said it was a “trend we’re seeing throughout public life.” He said the trend violated democratic norms. He called it a destructive narrative.

The decision Judge Friedman issued last month was in a case captioned “Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe versus Bernhardt.” The Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe was the plaintiff. It has lived in what today we call Massachusetts for about 12,000 years. It’s sometimes called the People of the First Light. It has 2,700 members.

These 2,700 tribal members are familiar with the glacial patience required to navigate a legal battle. The Mashpee Wampanoag remained steadfast in a process which took more than three decades in order to regain

recognition as a federal tribe in 2007. Its postage-stamp-size reservation is 320 acres.

Bernhardt is the defendant in the case. Bernhardt’s full name is David Bernhardt. He is the Secretary of the Interior. And one of the subdivisions of that Department – as readers are well aware – is the BIA (the Bureau of India Affairs).

The BIA’s website claims: “The BIA has changed dramatically over the past 185 years, evolving as Federal policies designed to subjugate and assimilate American Indians and Alaska Natives have changed to policies that promote Indian self-determination.”

But in March, the BIA notified the Mashpee Wampanoag that it was beginning the process of taking its land out of trust, rescinding its reservation status, and annulling its gaming eligibility. So much for promoting Indian self-determination.

The tribe promptly sued for an injunction to put a halt to the BIA’s decision. The tribe maintained that taking property out of trust would result in a loss of sovereignty over the land, its inability to exercise self-governance, the loss of its eligibility for federal programs (such as COVID relief), and liability for back taxes. It could also jeopardize its low-income housing projects and harm third parties who purchased the foreclosed-on land only

to have it revert back to the tribe later if the tribe ultimately won in court. The tribe also argued that the irreparable harm to its cultural and community connections was so fundamental that it could not even be calculated in terms of money.

These are the sorts of “irreparable harms” necessary to sustain an award of injunctive relief. The BIA countered that the tribe’s characterizations of the repercussions of taking its land out of trust status were overstated. Judge Friedman was having none of it. He issued the injunction requested by the Mashpee Wampanoag.

The tribe won a tactical victory. There is more legal wrangling which will follow. But it is Judge Friedman’s tone in his opinion that is truly inspiring.

The Mashpee Wampanoag did not win because they were Indians. They didn’t win because they were sympathetic. They didn’t win because the BIA was unsympathetic, either. They won because the judge applied the law and insisted that the BIA adhere to it. The BIA’s decision was not simply wrong, it was “arbitrary, capricious, and contrary to law.”

The opening paragraphs of the judge’s 10-page decision set the tone. In it, Judge Friedman explains how the Mashpee Wampanoag tribal chairman was promised by the Department of

Interior that it would not revoke the trust status of the land until their controversy had been resolved in court.

“Then,” the judge says, “on March 27, the Secretary went back on his word to the Tribe in contravention of the Department’s own practice of not taking such action while litigation is pending.” Apparently, the Secretary directed the BIA to rescind its trust land determination for the tribe. Wisely, the tribe immediately filed a motion for an injunction with the court.

This sort of double-speak is inconsistent with the idea of government agencies bound by the rule of law. Judge Friedman’s ruling was based on a unnecessarily complex body of law involving the definition of “Indian” in the Indian Reorganization Act (the IRA). It wasn’t based on the troubling double-speak of the agency.

Still, when the rule of law prevails in a way that is consistent with just outcomes and rights of self-determination, there’s good reason to praise it. For those reasons, this is a decision worth celebrating.

THOMAS E. SIMMONS is a professor at the University of South Dakota School of Law. He co-teaches a clinical course on tribal wills and estate planning involving Indian trust land. His views are his own and not the views of the University of South Dakota, its administrators, or its Board of Regents.

Moving toward wellness during COVID-19

BY ANTHONY FLEG

GUEST COLUMN

Movement and wellness is a challenge for all of us as we work under the stress of a pandemic.

Our own wellness, and wellness in our larger communities, becomes a challenge as we put out fires of COVID-19, here on the Navajo Nation and beyond.

A group of diverse organizations that included tribes, health and fitness organizations and groups focusing on education and youth gathered virtually on June 26 to work together on how to keep Indigenous communities exercising.

The workshop, “Moving Toward Wellness During COVID,” was hosted

by the Native Health Initiative and its Running Medicine program.

Six organizations from Utah, South Dakota, New Mexico and Colorado shared their unique strategies toward keeping people moving during the pandemic.

“It was inspirational to see how creative our brothers and sisters have gotten in this moment that forces us to think in new ways about wellness,” says Rod Lansing, Diné, a long-time leader and volunteer with NHI who serves as an associate director for Running Medicine.

In a breakout session during the workshop, participants talked about

the unique opportunities this moment has created, including reaching new populations (e.g., adults now working from home) and connecting across programs, communities and tribes.

I, director of Running Medicine director and moderator for the workshop, reminded everyone of the new rules that COVID-19 has introduced.

Before, all of us would simply think about how to get people moving. Now, we start with looking at where our community is at, what is safe. Only then can we move to the next step of creating opportunities for movement and wellness that will keep participants and their families safe.

This workshop is just the beginning of our work to support efforts

to increase movement in Indigenous communities during COVID.

There are plans for monthly “working sessions” by Zoom where groups can brainstorm together, and all are welcome to join – contact runningmedicine-abq@gmail.com for more information.

Tribes and organizations represented in this workshop include Laguna, Taos, Zuni, San Felipe, Santa Ana, Picuris, Cochiti, Ute Mountain, Navajo and Pine Ridge Reservation.

And Phoenix Children’s Hospital, Tuba City Regional Healthcare Corp., beWellnm, UNM Pediatrics, Thunder Valley CDC (Pine Ridge), Indian Health Service Health Promotion, New Mexico Department of Health, Urban Indian Center of Salt Lake City, Native Acu-

puncture Project, A&M Wellness, Doña Ana County Health and Human Services, Comagine Health, and Veterans Administration Behavioral Health.

And fitness groups iRunFar.com, The Native Runner, Native Women Running, Wings of America and Running Medicine.

And education and youth: Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute, Institute of American Indian Arts, Native American Community Academy, Bernalillo Public Schools, Teach for America, Zuni Youth Empowerment Project, Luna County Parents as Teachers and St. Joseph Mission School.

ANTHONY FLEG is director of the Native Health Initiative’s Running Medicine program.

POLICE REPORT



Laverda Sorrell

ALBUQUERQUE – The FBI and Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety are marking the 18th anniversary of the disappearance of a Native American woman by distributing a poster on her case in the Navajo language and reminding the public of a reward of up to \$10,000.

Laverda Sorrell, of Navajo, New Mexico, was last seen by her husband, according to a statement he provided to authorities.

He said he dropped her off at 11:30 pm on July 4, 2002, at the Window Rock School District No. 8 in Fort Defiance where she worked.

A family member reported her missing to the Navajo Nation Police on July 8, 2002.

“Anyone who disappears often leaves behind loved ones

‘Anyone who disappears often leaves behind loved ones who will never stop looking for them, and that’s the case with Laverda.’

who will never stop looking for them, and that’s the case with Laverda,” James Langenberg, special agent in charge of the Albuquerque FBI Division, said. “The FBI is committed to providing answers for her family and we will not stop looking for her, either.”

Jesse Delmar, executive director of the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, said, “We are very committed to resolving this case and we con-

tinue to seek the public’s help for any information that would be helpful to us.”

A statement provided by the family reads: “As her family, we are sending out this sincere plea to the public to help us as we have not given up on our search to find Laverda. No matter the outcome, we are determined to bring her home and find closure for our family.

“Laverda was everything to our family: a daughter, a mother, a sister, and an aunt who was such a compassionate, selfless, and caring person. She was the glue that kept and brought our family together because of her tender, gentle, and loving grace. If you have any information that might be helpful, we implore you to contact the FBI immediately.”

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$10,000 for information leading to the identification, arrest, and conviction of the person or persons responsible for Laverda Sorrell’s disappearance.

Anyone with information on Laverda Sorrell’s disappearance is asked to call the FBI at 505-889-1300 or send information online at tips.fbi.gov

County sheriff’s report, June 21-27

HOLBROOK – The Navajo County Sheriff’s Office reports the following activity from June 21 through 27.

Holbrook area (sub)

On June 21, Andrew Michael Schlechty, 31, of Winslow, was arrested in Holbrook for a misdemeanor warrant and misconduct involving a weapon. Andrew was booked into the Navajo County Sheriff’s Office Jail.

On June 22, Jonathan Tsosie, 34, of Ganado, and Sharon Oskey, 29, of Ganado, were arrested for possession of marijuana, possession of drug parapherna-

lia, and misconduct involving a weapon. They were jailed at the Navajo County Sheriff’s Office Jail.

Winslow area (sub)

On June 24, Ricky Ben, 26, of Blue Gap, Arizona, was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol (.08). He was booked into the Navajo County Sheriff’s Office Jail.

FBI, White Mountain police seek help with stabbing murder

PHOENIX – The FBI and White Mountain Apache Tribe police are seeking the public’s assistance to identify the individual/s responsible for the murder

of Joseph Clyde Taylor, 29.

On Aug. 5, 2018, Taylor was stabbed in Whiteriver, Arizona, at around 5:45 p.m.

Taylor was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

The FBI is now offering a reward of up to \$5,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for his murder.

Anyone with information is asked to call the FBI at 623-466-1999. Tips can also be reported to tips.fbi.gov

The seeking information poster can be found here, along with a photo of the victim: <https://www.fbi.gov/wanted/seeking-info/joseph-clyde-taylor>



ATTENTION NAVAJO COUNTY VOTERS! Primary Election August 04, 2020

EARLY VOTING SITES:

Dilkon—Bashas Parking Lot	July 08, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Hopi—Election Office Parking Lot	July 09, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm MST
Shonto—Chapter House	July 13 & 14, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Kayenta—Bashas Parking Lot	July 15, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Pinon—Bashas Parking Lot	July 16, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Forest Lake—Chapter House	July 17, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Dilkon—Bashas Parking Lot	July 20, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Pinon—Bashas parking Lot	July 21, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Kayenta—Bashas Parking Lot	July 22, 2020	10:00 am to 3:00 pm DST
Navajo County—Recorder’s Office	July 08 to July 31, 2020	8:00 am to 5:00 pm MST

ID’s are required to vote at all sites & must be a registered Navajo County Voter

Voter Registration Deadline:	July 06, 2020
Last day to request a ballot by mail:	July 24, 2020
Last day to vote in person for Early Voting:	July 31, 2020

Requesting an early ballot is simple! In uncertain times, early voting is appreciated more than ever. If something in your life changes, and you cannot make it to the polls on Election Day, as a backup, you may request and receive an early ballot. This ensures that you are still able to cast your ballot and vote. However, requesting and receiving an early ballot does not prevent you from going to your polling places and voting in person if desired. Your Vote matters! #Navajocountyelections

If you have any questions or to request a ballot, Call the Navajo County Recorders Office @ 928-524-4192

*** Please mail your ballot back on time and make sure you sign the back of your return envelope so it can be counted***

LETTERS CONT'D

FROM PAGE 6

Challenge Lake Powell Pipeline

Arizona should challenge the Lake Powell Pipeline because it could stop this unnecessary, wasteful, expensive, and destructive boondoggle.

As you know, Arizona heavily relies on Colorado River water, and, due to the drought contingency plan, some deliveries have been reduced and caused economic hardship. Despite this new reality, Utah politicians and the Bureau of Reclamation

are pushing to approve the controversial LPP before President Trump may leave office in January.

Washington County, Utah, where I live, would receive the LPP water and it uses an average of 302 gallons per capita day. In contrast, Phoenix uses 111 and Tucson 122 gallons per capita day. The BOR recently released its biased LPP environmental statement that failed to analyze any water conservation alternatives.

The LPP may violate the Colorado River Compact by transferring upper basin water for a

lower basin use. LPP construction and operation would also harm public lands and wildlife on the Arizona Strip. Arizona must issue state and county permits for the LPP to be built.

Arizona should not grant these LPP permits because the LPP may violate the compact, conservation alternatives were ignored, and its own water deliveries are being cut back. The BOR’s inadequate LPP environmental statement should not be used to allow Trump to approve the LPP.

Richard Spotts
St. George, Utah

Navajo couple takes to nomadic ‘van life’

BY PAULY DENETCLAW
NAVAJO TIMES

GALLUP — Nearly every week-end for eight years, Chantal Wadsworth and her partner Vernan Kee went on adventures in the wilderness to hike and camp around California. They loved being away from the hustle and bustle of the place they called home for eight years, San Diego.

“A lot of the times we found ourselves going out towards mountains or the desert traveling like two hours every week-end just to get out there and have some room to walk around and hike with our dogs,” Wadsworth said. “We just wanted to be outdoors all the time. Being in an apartment or having a home, it really didn’t satisfy us that much anymore.”

Their love for the outdoors eventually led them to an unexpected lifestyle that has been popularized through social media known as “van life.”

The couple chooses to spend their time outdoors and living in their white van that they built out to create a living space. They also recently bought a travel trailer to attach to their van for added space.

“We just go around in our van with all of our dogs and this is basically what we call home,” Wadsworth said. “We live inside this van all the time and we just travel around the United States.”

Well... they used to travel until COVID-19 hit the rez. For the past two years, they moved from San Diego back to Sanos-tee, New Mexico, to start a van life.

As the states began to issue shelter-in-place orders, the couple was visiting San Diego. As with the rest of the country, Wadsworth didn’t know what was going to happen. The couple was worried they might not be able to leave California if they didn’t go right away.

“We literally just packed everything up,” she remembered. “We left California. We came straight back to the rez. And then once we got here, we did the two-week quarantine, of course, and then finally we



Vernan Kee and Chantal Wadsworth moved out of their apartment in San Diego into a van so they could explore their homelands. They’ve been living van life for almost two years now.

were able to get back onto the reservation.”

They’ve been here on the rez ever since and haven’t left to go anywhere because they’re worried for the safety of Wadsworth’s grandmother.

“We really don’t want to go anywhere because my grandmother, we’re with her on the rez,” she said. “We’re really afraid for her and we’re the ones that are going to town and bringing the supplies back. We really didn’t want to put her in harm’s way.”

So her grandmother stays in her home and the couple stays in their van close by.

“It was pretty scary,” Wadsworth said.

However, the van did come in handy when going into town for supplies during the shortage of everything from disinfectant to meat to toilet paper. The couple would stay in an RV park in Farmington the night before and be at the store before it even opened.

“It was kind of like you have to be there at the right time in

order to get some supplies,” she said.

Social distancing wasn’t difficult for the couple as they spent nearly all last summer up in the Chuska Mountains with just their dogs for company.

“Being alone and not around people, that that didn’t really affect us so much but it was just being in the middle of a hotspot, which was the Navajo Nation, that I think that was more concerning than anything else,” Wadsworth said.

She was hearing stories about



Van life has been popularized over the last couple years through social media. It’s been a great lifestyle for Chantal Wadsworth and Vernan Kee who love being outdoors with their six dogs.

whole families contracting and battling COVID-19. This scared her most.

“It’s not worth it to go out and travel or try to visit any other places,” she said.

The days of Wadsworth and Kee traveling all over the rez from the Valley of the Gods to Bisti Badlands back up to the Chuska Mountains are long gone now.

Wadsworth reminisced about last summer when they cared for 14 dogs they rescued and re-homed eight of them. Six of them were puppies.

The couple still has six rescued rez dogs — Bruce, Harley, Koba, Sandy, Bear Bear and Dusty.

Before the pandemic, the couple enjoyed volunteering and picked different projects to do including litter cleanups. Since COVID-19 hit the Navajo Nation, they’ve been volunteering to help organizations distribute food and supplies to the community.

2020 ELECTION SEASON IS HERE.

REGISTER TO VOTE ON OR BEFORE JULY 6.



Why is July 6 so important? It is the voter registration deadline for the Primary Election on August 4. Don’t wait. Register to vote, update your voter registration, or request a Ballot-by-Mail online at [Arizona.Vote](https://www.Arizona.Vote). It’s your source for trusted election information.

[Arizona.Vote](https://www.Arizona.Vote)

Water out of thin air? That’s the idea behind new system

BY KRISTA ALLEN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

GREY MOUNTAIN, ARIZ. – The taste of the water brought back memories from his childhood, when he would go hunting with his grandfather in the mountains, said Na’ni’a Hasani Chapter President Milton Tso.

The water Tso drank was created from the sun and the air – sháá’íín and níłchi. It was produced by SOURCE, an off-grid, self-contained “hydropanel” designed by Zero Mass Water, a Scottsdale-based company.

It literally pulls clean drinking water from the air.

“It sounds crazy when you say that you can make water out of the air with no power and no water source,” said Colin Goddard, director of market development for Zero Mass Water. “People really need to see it for themselves.”

Tso and LeChee Chapter President Jerry Williams were two of the handful of chapter leaders who responded to Goddard’s email two months ago, when he asked if residents were interested in a standard residential SOURCE at their homes.

“I sent out an email to every single chapter I could find on the (Navajo Chapters) website and talked to partners that we have and any former colleagues — we just wanted to introduce to them what we do,” Goddard explained. “And as a result, we have these pilot projects with half a dozen chapters, and we are hoping to learn more and continue to learn from them and understand if this technology can be beneficial.”

Meet the technology

Goddard said a standard residential SOURCE array is made up of two hydropanels: one primary and one additional designed to meeting one’s drinking needs. A standard array averages 1-2 gallons each day or eight to 20, 16.9-ounce standard water bottles, depending on sunshine and humidity.

Each hydropanel holds about 7.9 gallons in a reservoir where it is mineralized with calcium and magnesium for optimal taste, and kept clean. Standard arrays have 15.9 gallons of water storage capacity. SOURCE utilizes solar power and a small battery to enable water production when the sun shines and water delivery on cloudy days or at night.

Each SOURCE hydropanel operates with some noise and each connects to the Zero Mass Water Network Operations Center in the Phoenix area.

“The noise that you hear is the solar photovoltaic panel in the middle that’s powering a fan that’s pulling in air all around the panels inside of the hydropanel,” Goddard said. “And then when the air enters the hydropanel, it passes over this special material that we’ve developed that acts like a sponge and it absorbs the natural humidity in the air.

Then the air is heated to a high temperature using high-efficiency solar-thermal. This is kind of like the condensation of water vapor as it touches a colder surface.

“When you take a hot shower, you see all the condensation on the (mirror and the window) because the air is hot, causing condensation,” he said. “That’s how we create liquid drinking water from the moisture in the air.

“And that water — condensation is one of the best ways to start with a good clean water — so when that starts to collect, we constantly recirculate the water and have an onboard ozone system to make sure the water stays clean. So, these are storage tanks that clean themselves powered by the sun. And then we run the water line to wherever the homeowner wants.”

Water lines to homes

Zero Mass Water recently installed standard residential SOURCE arrays in not only Grey Mountain, but also in Piñon, LeChee, Coalmine Canyon, St. Michaels, and at some Diné residencies along U.S. Route 89 as a result of a \$100,000 “Unreasonable Grant” that Zero Mass Water applied for and received.

“That’s how we’ve been able to fund these first projects entirely at no cost to the chapters or to the homeowners directly,” Goddard said. “The small grant that we got, I think it’s helped put something in the ground that people can come see. Hopefully from there, that can spark conversations ... (for) other innovative, collaborative ways we can work together with local leaders.”



SPECIAL TO THE TIMES | KRISTA ALLEN

Each of the SOURCE hydropanels connects to the Zero Mass Water Network Operations Center in the Valley. Data returns from each hydropanel to the operations center, which resolves any alerts remotely or deploys the field service team if needed.

Goddard said he and his team are hoping to install a few more SOURCE arrays in the New Mexico side of the Navajo Nation over the next several weeks.

“When the COVID-19 pandemic really broke out, I started to read so much about the challenges specifically to the Navajo Nation and its ‘highest (COVID) rates in the country,’” said Goddard, who joined the Zero Mass Water team two years ago after spending at least a decade as a gun safety advocate in Washington, D.C., following the April 16, 2007, massacre at Virginia Tech University, where he was in his French class when a classmate opened fire.

“It kind of shined a light on what was already a challenging water situation,” he said. “And we thought, ‘OK, we’ve got to really focus on this more holistically and engage.’”

Goddard said Zero Mass Water started five years ago in a desert not too far from Diné Bikéyah. The Zero Mass Water founder and CEO wanted to look at one of the big challenges facing humanity: clean water access, and to find a solution in the same way that cell phones have revolutionized communication and leapfrogged old systems in remote areas.

“Solar panels have done the same thing for energy and leapfrogged centralized electricity generation,” Goddard said, “and do the same thing for water.”



SPECIAL TO THE TIMES | KRISTA ALLEN

Zero Mass Water’s SOURCE hydropanel sits outside a family’s house near the Grand Canyon in Route 64 in Gray Mountain, Ariz., where the arrays are producing clean drinking water.

“I understand we’re engaging on an issue that COVID has shined a spotlight on, but this is a multigenerational challenge within the community. So, we want to understand what has been working. Can something like this technology be helpful? What role could it play? We’re really excited about the reception that we got so far, from these families and some of the chapter leaders who we spoke to.”

Jerry Williams said he’s looked at the SOURCE arrays and saw how they work and came to the conclusion that this could help Diné who live off the grid.

“This is something that we really need to look at it and it’s something that we need to pursue,” Williams said, “because once these are installed, one of the (homeowners) said she gets water every day.”

Goddard said SOURCE water is only for human consumption and for cooking, not for livestock or irrigation.

“We believe that access to clean drinking water is a fundamental human right and we know that there are so many families on the Navajo Nation and across the globe that need a lot of different water supply for different things,” he said.

“The work that we’re focused



SPECIAL TO THE TIMES | KRISTA ALLEN

A water line from the SOURCE hydropanels run to wherever the homeowner needs tap water. For instance, near the kitchen for cooking and cleaning.

on is, How can we ensure that what people are drinking and cooking with is clean and safe and resilient and available for that?” he said.

The SOURCE arrays are currently designed to last 15 years. Zero Mass Water scientists and engineers are currently working on new technology to extend the life of a SOURCE array. The only required maintenance is changing the air filter and the water filter every year. The mineral cartridge needs to be replaced every five years.

“For the families, this is

quite an emotional experience to have a clean water tap in their house for the first time — in their whole life,” Goddard added. “The whole system is self-powered, there’s no power cord running to any diesel generator. It’s all powered by the sun naturally.

“These systems that we’re putting in people’s homes are going to be providing water for the next 15 years,” he said. “All you need is air and sunlight, which the Navajo Nation has a lot of. We can make water anywhere.”

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Officer Lee, first to fall to virus, laid to rest

BY DONOVAN QUINTERO
NAVAJO TIMES

CHINLE — The final radio call was given out for Navajo Nation Senior Police Officer Michael Lee on Thursday during his burial service.

Lee died on June 19 at the Banner University Medical Center in Phoenix.

Dozens of Navajo Nation Police officers, including retired officers, attended the 29-year police veteran's service that was held at the Potter's House Christian Church in Chinle.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, only immediate family were allowed into the church. It was live-streamed on the Navajo Nation Police's social media page.

Retired Navajo Police Sgt. Dave Frank waited outside the church for the procession to the cemetery to begin. He said he got to know Lee when they went to dive school together.

"He was my friend, diving teammate," Frank said. "I didn't believe it when heard about his death. It stayed with me for quite some time."

Frank said they trained in Honduras. After they completed their training, they patrolled the Chinle District and when they were needed at one of the five lakes within their jurisdiction, they grabbed their scuba gear and went to work.

"He was more of everything to us, especially on the diving team," he said. "I'm going to miss him dearly."

Navajo Nation Police Chief Phillip Francisco, who was in attendance, said the department was "devastated and heartbroken."

Francisco handed the flag that was draped over Lee's casket to his wife after a folding ceremony was conducted at a family cemetery plot in Del Muerto, Arizona, which is about five miles east of Chinle.

"It is with great sorrow that the Navajo Police Department announces the passing of Officer Michael Lee," Francisco said. "Officer Lee was a husband, a father, a son and a protector of his community."

Lee graduated from the Navajo Law Enforcement Academy in Toyey, Arizona, in October

1990.

During his 29 years of police service, Lee worked as a Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, or SORNA, officer, and worked in Window Rock for seven years at the beginning of his law enforcement career. He served the Chinle community until his death.

Mostly, Lee was remembered for his work with the Toys4Tots program, which he was involved with for more than 20 years.

Fellow Toys4Tots Coordinator Jaye Tom, who handles the Lukachukai area, said the program has "huge shoes" to fill.

"He was known for what he did for the children in the Chinle Police District," Tom remembered on Thursday, who

'He was more of everything to us, especially on the diving team. I'm going to miss him dearly.'

worked with Lee for 10 years in the Toys4Tots program.

He and his family used to go to California every year to get the toys, he said.

Tom, who was a school board member at Lukachukai Community School, didn't know exactly how many children, but for his area, he said he works with about 400 kids.

"He had a lot of dedication. The Navajo Police Department sometimes didn't have overtime, but he would still go out," Tom said. "His whole family would be out there for two weeks before Christmas wrapping presents and getting everything together. He just made itinerary interesting and more fun."

Another Navajo Nation Police Officer lost her battle with the virus.

Criminal Investigator Esther Charley died at a hospital in Tucson on June 20, according to a Navajo Police news release.

"We extend our deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the family, friends, and colleagues of Senior Criminal Investigator Esther Charley," the police statement said.



The Navajo Nation Police honor guard carries the casket of Senior Police Officer Michael Lee during his funeral last Thursday.



The Navajo Nation Police honor guard carries the casket of Senior Police Officer Michael Lee during his funeral last Thursday.



The Navajo Nation Police honor guard gets ready to fold the flag that was draped over the casket of Senior Police Officer Michael Lee during his funeral last Thursday.

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NAVAJO TIMES | DONOVAN QUINTERO

Riders in a row

A family rides their horses over State Highway 264 on Sunday evening in Ganado.

OBITUARIES

Chenoa Billy



ST. MICHAELS, ARIZ. — Graveside service for Chenoa Billy, 28, of St. Michaels, Arizona, was held July 1 at the St. Michaels Catholic Mission Church. Chenoa was born March 29, 1992, in Shiprock, into the Bit'ahnii (Under His Cover Clan), born for Kin-yaa'aanii (Towering House Clan). She passed away June 22, 2020, in Mentmo-

re, New Mexico. Chenoa attended Sanders-Valley High School and was employed at Sonic in Gallup. Chenoa is survived by her boyfriend, Zachariah Yazzie; son, Montero Yazzie; daughter, Miya Yazzie; parents, Barbara Ann Phillips and Dennison Billy Sr.; brother, Dennison Billy Jr.; and paternal grandparents, Marie and Tom Billy. Chenoa is preceded in death by her maternal grandparents, Lily and Tony Phillips. Pallbearers were Kenneth Billy, Kendrick Billy, Dennison Billy Sr., Aznel Tsosie, Zachariah Yazzie, and Randy Boyd. Honorary pallbearers were Loren Toddy, Montero Yazzie, Irvinn Toddy, Dennison Billy Jr., Antonio Toddy Cuzman, and Lyle Phillips. Silver Creek Mortuary was in charge of arrangements.

Robert Hale

TWIN LAKES, N.M. — Graveside service for Robert Hale, 82, of Twin Lakes, New Mexico, will be held Thursday, July 2, at 10 a.m. at the family land in Twin Lakes, with Leo Fischer officiating. Robert was born May 9, 1938, in Twin Lakes, into the Naakai dine'e (Mexican Clan), born for Haltsooi (Meadow People Clan). He passed away June 25, 2020. Robert was employed with the New Mexico Highway Department in Buffalo Springs, New Mexico, for 29 years. He enjoyed watching western movies, working outside, song and dances, driving around to visit, and was very sociable. Robert is survived by his wife, Ella Mae Hale; daughters, Yvonna Walters, Roberta Hale-Charley, Valencia James, Vanessa Hale, and Renee Hale; brothers, Richard Hale and Eugene Hale; sisters, Eunice Cadman, Pearl Smith and Genevieve Frank; and grandchild, Torrie James. Robert is preceded in death by his parents, Blanche Robertson-Hale and Jimmy Hale; brothers, Norman Hale and Leonard Hale; and sisters, Betty Shirley and Rose Hale. Pallbearers will be Joey Allen, Virgil Tsosie, Eric Howey, Henry Hale, Benjimen Jimenez, and Sebastian Lawrence. Honorary pallbearers will be Torrie James, Jason Lawrence, Terry Charley, Christopher Hale, Garrett Hale, Chris Hale, Ray Watson, Eugene Hale, Andy Cadman, Donovan Cadman, Darryl Cadman, Andrew Hale, Jeremy Hale, Presley Sherman, and Lamar Leekity. There will be no reception due to safety and the prevention of COVID-19. Rollie Mortuary is in charge of arrangements.

Andy Willie

GALLUP — Graveside service for Andy Willie, 64, of Brimhall, New Mexico, will be held Thursday, July 2, at 1 p.m. at Rollie Mortuary in Gallup, with Seth Yates officiating. Burial will follow at the family land in Brimhall. Andy was born Sept. 14, 1955, in Coyote Canyon, New Mexico, into the Haltsooi (Meadow People Clan), born for Tódich'ii'nii (Bitter Water Clan). He passed away June 20, 2020, in Tohlokai, New Mexico. Andy attended school up to the 6th grade and was employed as a carpenter. He enjoyed listening to music, cleaning and doing yard work. Andy is survived by his father, Thomas Willie; brother, Bruce Willie Sr.; and sisters, Sandra Willie and Virginia Willie. Andy is preceded in death by his mother, Esther Willie; wife, Virginia Tsinaaginna; and brother, Larry Willie. Pallbearers will be Bruce Willie Jr., Nate Willie, Darnell Willie, Daylon Willie, and Harry Brown. Rollie Mortuary is in charge of arrangements.

Dale Allen Dailey

(JUNE 10, 1939 — JUNE 16, 2020)



KIRTLAND, N.M. — Dale was born in Blue Gap, Arizona. After attending Intermountain Indian School in Brigham City, Utah, he moved to Idaho Falls, Idaho, for a short time. He then moved to San Jose, California, where he started and raised his family alongside his wife Mary. During his 20s, Dale enjoyed bull riding in the states of California, Arizona and New Mexico. After 25 years in San Jose, he relocated to Kirtland, New Mexico, where he successfully started his business, Dale's Cabinet Shop Inc., for over 20 years. Upon retirement, Dale enjoyed traveling to visit his family in nearby states of Arizona, Nevada and California. He spent most of his time playing bingo, bowling and fishing with his grandkids and great-grandkids. Dale was a loyal fan of his beloved Bay Area sports teams: San Francisco 49ers, San Francisco Giants and the Golden State Warriors. Lastly, Dale was a loyal supporter of his local sports organizations, the Kirtland Bronco sports program and many of the recreational youth programs. He showed his support by not only attending many games, but also sponsoring and donating every year. Dale is survived by his siblings, Dan Dailey, Elsie Dailey, Bennie Dailey, Esther Haskie, Linda Caigoy, Dennis Dailey, and Andy Dailey; children, Richard Dailey, Alfred Dailey and Marlene Jaramillo (Tony); and six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. Dale is preceded in death by his brothers, LeJoe Dailey and Denny Dailey; wife, Mary E. Dailey; mother, Mary Lee Dailey; son, Allen Dale Dailey; and grandsons, Lane Anthony Jaramillo and Darrin Allen Dailey.

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NABI leads grad to career as epidemiologist

BY QUENTIN JODIE
 NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK — Dominic Clichee first introduced himself to the Native American Basketball Invitational in the mid-2000s as a high school basketball player.

Last week, Clichee returned to the NABI community as a keynote speaker during the 2020 NABI Foundation Virtual Educational Youth Summit.

He gave a presentation via Facebook of his experience as a NABI alumnus and his journey as an epidemiologist on the Navajo Nation.

“NABI holds a special place in my heart,” Clichee said. “Not only did I play there but I actually worked the event when I working for Nike N7.

“One of the biggest tools and skills I learned from NABI was the ability to network,” he added. “I had the opportunity to interact with coaches and players.”

The former Navajo Pine standout played in the 2004 and 2005 NABI tournament. After graduating high school, Clichee signed with Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts.

“It was thousands and thousands of miles away from where I grew up so that was definitely tough,” Clichee said.

He played one season at Clark University as the coach that recruited him took a position with the Boston College men’s basketball program.

Looking to earn more playing time, Clichee said he started having conversations with then-Haskell Indian Nations University men’s basketball coach Ted Juneau, a coach he met at NABI.

“That small interaction and networking opportunity led me to eventually transferring to Haskell,” he said.

In between his junior and senior season, Juneau encouraged Clichee to apply for an intern position with Nike N7. At that time, Clichee said, Nike N7 was transitioning from a grant-funding organization into a full-fledged retail brand.

Following his graduating as the 2010 Student of the Year, Clichee interned for a few months and that eventually turned into a full-time position with Nike.

“I was at a high-level corporate structure to where I could see what was happening,” he said. “But I felt at the time I needed to be in the communities and be on the ground. That was where my heart was really at.”

As part of his responsibilities working for the N7 Fund, Clichee went through tons and tons of applications. It was there he noticed that a lot of the program directors that applied for the grants had “MPH” listed after their names.

And after doing a simple Google search,

SEE LEADS | B2



SUBMITTED
 Dominic Clichee gave a presentation about his experience as a NABI alumnus and his journey as an epidemiologist during the 2020 NABI Foundation Virtual Educational Youth Summit last week.



SPECIAL TO THE TIMES | UC IRVINE ATHLETICS
 Brad Greene, a Paiute-Shoshone tribal member, completed his redshirt junior season with the UC Irvine men’s basketball team this past year. Greene helped the Anteaters to a 21-11 record, which included a 13-3 mark in Big West play.

College player: Don’t forget the phrase ‘student-athlete’

BY QUENTIN JODIE
 NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK — For proof that the system is still working, the Native American Basketball Invitational Foundation has to look no further than Brad Greene.

The Paiute-Shoshone tribal member in Lone Pine, California, completed his red-shirt junior season as a member of the UC Irvine men’s basketball program this past spring.

As a NABI alumnus, Greene said his experience has equipped him to be a successful student-athlete, as the foundation “is committed to supporting Native American youth by implementing programs that encourage higher education, sports, health & wellness and community building.”

“The experiences that I’ve had at NABI have really helped me become the person who I am today,” Greene said during the 2020 NABI Foundation Virtual Educational Youth Summit last week. “Not only in academics and athletics, but just overall as a person. The tools they gave me have been really rewarding.”

This past season, the 6-11 center played 32 games with 31 starts for the Anteaters. UC-Irvine finished the season at 21-11 overall, which included a first-place finish in Big West play with a 13-3 conference mark.

Greene played a vital role in the team’s success as he averaged 9.0 points, 7.7 rebounds and 1.4 blocks per game. He had a team-high nine double-doubles and led the team in rebounding 17 times.

On Jan. 21, he set a new Bren Event Center record with a career-high 21 rebounds against Hawaii. He also registered a season-high 18 points with a dozen rebounds and four blocks against CSUF on Feb. 1.

Despite his exploits, Greene stressed the importance of balancing his time and effort between the basketball court and the classroom.

“One of the biggest things I was told when I got to college was the phrase ‘student-athlete,’” said Greene, who is pursuing a double major in sociology and educational science. “Without your education and without succeeding in the classroom, there is no basketball for you.

“Once you get there both aspects become your job,” he added. “Knowing



SUBMITTED
 Former Ganado standout Michelene Coleman signed her letter of intent to play for the Rust College women’s volleyball program in Holly Springs, Mississippi.

Ganado grad signs with Rust College

BY QUENTIN JODIE
 NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK — Former Ganado standout Michelene Coleman has found a new home in Holly Springs, Mississippi.

Coleman signed her letter of intent to play for the women’s volleyball program at Rust College, a historically Black liberal arts college.

“It’s an HBCU school and I wanted to learn some things about my culture,” said Coleman, who is Diné and African-American.

Coleman said picking the NAIA Division I college was an easy choice since her older sister, Jasmine, attends the school, playing on the women’s basketball team.

“It opened my eyes up when I went out there to drop her off,” she said, noting that she had an opportunity to practice with the Rust College volleyball team.

“I really liked the interaction I had with my coach and teammates,” she said. “I’m excited to be going to college

and I’m glad the volleyball coach gave me this opportunity to continue my education and volleyball career.”

Coleman said she feels pretty confident about taking this next step in her life as she’s contemplating on what to major in.

“I feel good about leaving for college,” she said. “It gives me the opportunity to learn new things off the reservation and explore the world and meet new people. I’m looking forward to the opportunities that are out there waiting for me. I can’t wait to finally go out there and grasp what I’ve worked for all these years.”

Coleman said two other colleges were on her radar as Yavapai Community College in Prescott, Arizona, and Prairie View A&M in Texas sought her services.

Rust College, however, prevailed with the full-ride scholarship they offered.

“I gave her some insight and we looked at different things,” Coleman’s mother, Ivanna Jones, said. “What we really

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SIGNS

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looked at was the financial side of things.”

Jones said she is a single mother of five and it was important for her daughter to get her college paid for.

“That was what we were looking for,” she said.

Coleman said she’s grateful to be playing at the next level, and she thanked her siblings for inspiring her.

“My sisters worked so hard to get their scholarships,” she said of Danielle, Jasmine and Jami-ka. “They inspired me to seek out the same thing and never let go of my dreams.”

Coleman said her older brother, Jamaal, motivated her to work hard as he completed his redshirt freshman year with the Cochise College men’s basketball program.

“He’s such a hard worker and he made me want to be a better person,” she said. “All my siblings made me want to do great things in everything that I do.”

In addition to her siblings, Coleman was equally quick to acknowledge that her mom and aunt, April Clairmont, have also influenced her.

“My aunt was a hall-of-famer,” Coleman said. “And my mom has been with me all these years and she coached me. She never played favorites with me. She made sure I worked hard and earned what I deserved. I’m grateful to have them both in my life.”

And although she has some reservations about her baby leaving for college, Jones said she’s excited that her youngest daughter is ready to leave the family nest.

“People have asked me about how I would feel when she goes off to college and I think I’ve accepted it,” Jones said. “Of course, I’ll have my emotional days but I’m happy to see her go after her dreams.”

Jones said her daughter put in the work to be an imposing volleyball player as she played three of four seasons on the Ganado High volleyball team. (Coleman sat out her sophomore season due to a foot injury she sustained at a volleyball tournament.)

“She works hard at whatever



SUBMITTED

Ganado graduate Michelene Coleman (right) attempts a middle attack in this file photo last year. Coleman will take her talents to play for the Rust College women’s volleyball program in the fall.

she sets out to do,” she said. “She’s very coachable and she was a leader on and off the court. She picked up the slack in the places we needed her and she’s a team player.”

And although she was a three-sport athlete in high school, having also played on the basketball and track teams, Coleman said playing volleyball collegiately was what she

wanted to do. “It’s been a part of my life ever since I was a little kid,” she said. “Playing volleyball at the next level is what I wanted to do and I hope to make a difference.”

Coleman wanted to thank all of her coaches, including high school coach Jerome Burns, for their wisdom. She also expressed gratitude for her family, friends and teachers.

“I want to thank them for all their support throughout my journey,” she said. “I want to thank my fans and especially God. He’s helped me throughout some hardships.”

LEADS

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Clichee said that’s how he ended up being an epidemiologist. “I was just good with numbers,” he said. “That is what an epidemiologist does. We look

at prevalence and incidence rates, which is basically disease investigation to help identify areas where the disease is spreading and we find ways to mitigate the spread.”

Prior to this year, Clichee said they studied the prevalence and incidence rates of infectious disease at a local level but since March there has been a drastic shift with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The newly identified virus was first detected in China in December and as of June 28 the number of COVID-19 positive cases for the Navajo Nation had reached 7,469, which resulted in 363 deaths, according to a press release from the Navajo Nation OPVP office.

“We really don’t understand the disease process, it differentiates from person to person,” Clichee said.

Nonetheless, Clichee said the

eight service units serving the Diné people are working together to mitigate the spread of this highly contagious disease.

“One of the things that a lot of people don’t get to see is the collaboration between the different entities on the reservation,” he said. “At one point we did have the highest rate of infection of COVID-19 in the United States and the world.”

“However, this pandemic has brought opportunities to highlight areas where we need to improve and those areas include working with our federal partners, our tribal partners and the interaction between the different hospital facilities,” he added.

Clichee said they’re doing their best in identifying individuals that have contracted the disease.

“We’re actively doing contact tracing,” he said. “We’re

actively doing case investigations and keeping up with this to ensure that if someone does test positive for COVID-19 we are creating a bubble around them so we can keep them from infecting others.”

Like all viruses, Clichee said the novel coronavirus needs a host to survive.

“If we can minimize the hosts that it has to infect then we can decrease the rates of infection,” he said. “What that means is staying at home and staying away from other individuals. I know this is difficult but again if the virus doesn’t have a host, then it goes away.”

As an epidemiologist, Clichee said the best thing they can do is stop the spread.

“Some of the most effective ways of stopping the spread are simple, such as staying home, washing your hands frequently and using hand sanitizer that is

above 60% alcohol based,” he said.

As a PhD candidate for public health, Clichee also teaches prospective students who are in their second year of the master’s program.

“I also advise for a research center,” he said.

He’s the liaison for the Center for Indigenous Environmental Health Research, a research center that is looking at the concept of resiliency.

“It’s the ability to overcome adversity,” he said. “Growing up on the rez you have plenty of adversity. We see it in mainstream media. Unfortunately, in our area there are high rates of poverty and low educational attainment.”

“But one of the things that they don’t highlight is our ability to survive as Native people,” he added. “It’s going back to the things that we learned on the reservation. It’s about never giving up – looking for that next opportunity and taking advantage of it.”

With the support from families and our culture, Clichee said the skills to be successful are built within us.

“They’re innate,” he said, while noting that those skills aided him in pursuing his educational and professional goals even though he struggled with leaving home.

“I think I still have some PTSD going to the Albuquerque airport, flying out of there even it’s for a job now that I’m an adult,” Clichee said. “That airport was always associated with sadness and, unfortunately, not wanting to leave home and leaving my family for five to six months at a time.”

But with self-discipline and knowing that there is an endpoint, Clichee understood that once he achieved one goal it opened up other opportunities. “I knew that our tribal leaders and my family had talked to me that education is something that you have to strive for,” he said. “It’s the only reliable way to make an impact for your community.”

While talking to prospective college student, Clichee said they may not realize the significance of the journey they are about to partake.

“You have the ability to change the world and shape the future that you want to have,” he said. “When you go out there and strive, your success is going to leave footprints and that’s going to inspire others.”



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▶ PLAYER

FROM PAGE 1

how to balance both is very crucial and very critical to your success at college.”

To achieve that, Greene said the biggest skill he learned was time management.

“While you’re at college you’re expected to put the work in, whether that’s working on your game or academics,” he said.

Sometimes, he said, you’re asked “to put in more time than what’s required.”

Greene advised prospective college students who earn scholarships to be ready to perform on and off the court.

“If you’re not doing one of them you’re not upholding your part of the contract,” he said. “It leaves the coaching staff at a discretion to do what they need to do. You got to either succeed or you’re not going to be there, so you really got to prioritize what you’re going to do.”

Despite showing success at the collegiate level, Greene painted a bleak picture of his playing days while in high school.

“When I first started high school I never thought about college,” he said. “There weren’t too many people that I knew that were going to college or pursuing athletics in college so I didn’t have that idea of going to college.”

It wasn’t until his sophomore season that Greene realized that his basketball skills could land him on a collegiate team as he got introduced to playing travel ball.

He got his start by playing with a traveling team from Las Vegas, Nevada. It required him to make the one-way, four-hour trip to Sin City to get his name out there.

“I had to travel a lot to get my name out there and get exposure,” he said. “I had to try and get college coaches willing to drive out (to Lone Pine) to see me. It was a long journey but I had to start somewhere.”

Greene credited his mother, Marjianne Yonge, and grandparents for the sacrifices they made for him to attend his summer tournaments.

“They were willing to drive me, and they were willing to push me,” he said, while adding that he had to prove his worth by staying committed.

“If I didn’t show that to my mom or grandpa I don’t think I would be where I am today,” he said. “They really took hold (of what I was doing). I spent a lot of hours at the park, a lot of hours in the gym trying to work on my game.”



Brad Greene credits his NABI experience for setting him up to be a successful student-athlete on the UC Irvine men's basketball team. Greene averaged 9.0 points, 7.7 rebounds and 1.4 blocks per game as a redshirt junior for the Anteaters.

SPECIAL TO THE TIMES | UC IRVINE ATHLETICS

AIA postpones resumption of sports, activities until Aug 17

PHOENIX — Citing Arizona Governor Doug Ducey’s executive order regarding the start date of in-class instruction, the Arizona Interscholastic Association will delay all-school related athletics and activities until Aug. 17.

On Monday, Ducey pushed back the start date — originally scheduled for Aug. 3 — due to growing concern over the recent spike of coronavirus cases in the state of Arizona.

“We couldn’t be more disappointed about the information that just came out regarding our schools. However, we understand that the most pressing concern is to ensure our student-athletes can return to school in the safest way possible,” AIA Executive Director David Hines said in press release. “We will do everything in our power to make sure that when we get back up and going again, the transition will be as seamless as possible and to create memorable interscholastic experiences. And we’ll be able to accomplish that as long as everyone does their part to stay safe and prevent the spread of the virus.”

With the delay, the AIA said the starting dates of practice for all fall sports and activities will be pushed back, which means a delay in the start of season.

Last week, the AIA was in the process of sending out surveys to all member school principals in hopes to gather information on how to proceed for the upcoming fall sports season.

Due to the governor’s orders, the AIA will issue those surveys at a later date “to more closely coincide with the state’s target date of reopening schools.”

In the meantime, they will continue to meet with the numerous statewide stakeholders and prepare to create alternative sports schedules.

With the uncertainty, the AIA stated that the “exact dates for the beginning of competition will not be finalized until the organization gathers much-needed information” from its members.

The AIA advised everyone to continue to adhere to all health department guidelines in combating this virus.

“Please stay safe and vigilant in our fight against Coronavirus,” the AIA statement read. “Following health department guidelines and taking proper precautions will go a long way for schools to be able to reopen.”

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Forging relationships

Family’s blacksmithing hobby helps them ride out the curfew

BY CINDY YURTH
TSEYI’ BUREAU

TOHATCHI, N.M. — As a stay-at-home dad, Michael Mitchell had already perfected a few techniques for “getting my kids out of their rooms.”

But after the curfew orders went into effect, he had to up his game to keep his four teens and young adults from going stir-crazy while their mom, a nurse who works at an assisted living facility, was laboring long hours on the front lines.

Although he had some trepidation about letting his youngest two work around a 2,300-degree forge, he decided to share his blacksmithing hobby with them.

To his surprise, it took off — for all of them, from 13-year-old Hunter to 22-year-old Mike.

“They all really like it,” he said as his quartet of offspring nodded in agreement Monday.

Mitchell’s own interest in blacksmithing is relatively new — about a year-and-a-half ago, he started noticing interesting metalwork — a door handle in Gallup, some simple projects on the internet.

“I thought, ‘I already know how to silversmith,’” he said. “I can do that.”

He started out heating strips of rebar or scrap metal in his wood stove and bending or hammering them into shapes. Then he got interested in knives.

The Mitchells had been studying jiu jitsu as a family for years, and at one point took a class in Apache-Navajo knife fighting (don’t worry, they use plastic dummy knives).

The more Mitchell learned about blades, the more he saw them everywhere: movies, books, the internet. He learned about Indian hunting knives, Spartan swords, Viking seaxes and bearded axes, Japanese tantos and katanas.

In the Iron-Age battles he read about, there was often a famous sword, but you never heard about the blacksmith who made it.

“To me, the blacksmiths are the unsung heroes of battle,” he said.

Sadly, he discovered most modern knives are made in China, engineered by computers and produced thousands at a time. The once-revered art of bladesmithing is critically endangered.

But not at the Mitchell house, where Hunter, Mike, their 17-yr-old sister Amy and 15-year-old brother Myron take turns at the forge in the family’s carport while hammers ring and grinders buzz.

Is there a quarantine going on? This family barely notices.

Amy is making a knife out of a railroad spike, crafting the handle out of parachute cord.

“It’s pretty exciting to learn a new skill,” she said. “I was surprised how much strength and endurance it took. My forearms were sore for about a week.”

“If you’re going to be a blacksmith, it helps to be in tip-top shape,” agreed her father.



NAVAJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

Hunter Mitchell appraises the piece of metal he is making into a knife Monday in Tohatchi, N.M.



NAVAJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

Michael Mitchell removes Hunter’s blade from the forge in the family’s carport Monday so Hunter can pound it thinner.5

Mike is making a tanto, a short sword that was a samurai’s sidearm.

Hunter is also making a knife, but Myron, the green

thumb of the family, prefers to beat swords into plowshares instead of the other way around.

After telling his dad he wanted a small, hand-held hoe

for his cornfield, “He told me, ‘Make it yourself,’” recalled Myron, “and then he taught me how.”

Myron’s hoe is beautiful, hefty and solid.

“It breaks up the ground like it’s nothing,” he declared proudly.

Sure, he could have bought a similar tool for \$10 at the hardware store, but “I like knowing that I made it myself,” he said. “It’s very satisfying, to make your own tool.”

The kids’ mom, Charlene, doesn’t participate in all this metal madness. By the time she gets home from work, she’s tired enough that banging on a chunk of tin is not the first leisure activity that comes to mind. But she does encourage it.

“It keeps them busy,” she shrugged. “They’re not talking about alcohol and drugs. And it keeps them fit.”

Of course, you can’t spend all



NAVAJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

Michael Mitchell holds the “Diné katana” he is working on, engraved with the four sacred mountains. Mitchell also makes handles for all his blades out of either wood or cord. He said the handle of this one “hasn’t come to be yet.”



NAVAJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

As his siblings plug their ears, Mike Mitchell grinds the tanto blade he is working on.



NAVAJO TIMES | SHARON CHISCHILLY

Left to right, Hunter, Amy, Myron, Michael, and Mike Mitchell show off their projects in Tohatchi, N.M., on Monday.

day every day at the forge. The Mitchells also run, work out and play instruments together, and they’re learning American Sign Language.

The two younger boys are home-schooled, while Mike and Amy are taking online classes at the University of New Mexico-Gallup. Both hope to become nurses like their mom.

As far as activities, “I like to mix it up,” said Michael.

And meanwhile, there are a few more cool handmade knives in the world.

“I tell my kids, ‘When you’re

hammering that metal, you’re breathing life into it,” Mitchell said. “A piece of your spirit is going into that blade. This knife is going to still be on earth after you’re not around any more.”

Nothing like a sharp observation to cut the dullness out of staying at home.

Information: If anyone is interested in learning how to blacksmith or bladesmith, Mitchell is happy to share tips and some resources he has found. He will respond to emails at fourwarriorz@gmail.com.

ART BRIEFS

Métis singer/songwriter wins Indigenous artist of year

EDMONTON, Alberta, Canada – Peace Country’s very own Celeigh Cardinal, Métis, earned her first JUNO Award on June 29 during the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Science’s 49th annual ceremony.

The contralto singer/songwriter was with friends and family in Morinville, Alberta, when her “Stories From A Downtown Apartment” album was announced as the winner of the Indigenous Artist of the Year category.

Cardinal said, “I’ve been dreaming about standing on the JUNO stage since I was a little girl, but I’ve known for a long time that I don’t fit the mold of what the music industry considers ‘marketable.’

“With this win,” she said, “I hope that all the little brown girls out there see that they can be anything and all the folks who lie awake at night with anxiety and doubt see that they can let more happiness and dreams break through.”

The Western Canadian Music Awards also honored Cardinal with the Indigenous Artist of the Year title in 2018 for her sophomore release, “Everything and Nothing At All” (May 11, 2017).

‘Three Sisters’ to be live-streamed

WASHINGTON – As part of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival “Beyond the Mall” digital programming, “Corn, Beans, and Squash: What the Three Sisters Tell Us” will be live-streamed today from 12 p.m. to 12:45 p.m. (ET).

Corn, beans, and squash, commonly known as “the Three Sisters,” have been important companion crops in Indigenous communities in the Americas for centuries. This combination not only holds traditional wisdom and folklore but has also been proven to be scientifically and environmentally symbiotic.

Join the conversation between Smithsonian Gardens horticulturist Christine Price-Abelow and Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian staff – Mitsitam Cafe chef Freddie Bitsoie, Navajo, student and teachers coordinator Renee Gokey, Eastern Shawnee, and cultural interpreter program coordinator Mandy Van Heuvelen, Mnicoujou Lakota.

The program will include step-by-step instructions on preparing a delicious dish incorporating the Three Sisters.

Information: <https://youtube.com/smithsonianfolklife> or <https://www.facebook.com/events/2648257885500942/>

Hopinka’s feature headlines 3rd Annual Lumbee Film Festival Online

WILMINGTON, N.C. – Seventeen films directed by indigenous filmmakers have been chosen for the 3rd annual Lumbee Film Festival, taking place online from July 1-5.

The festival is organized through a partnership between the Lumbee Tribe and the Cugalorus Film Foundation with the goal of showcasing films made by Native Americans while raising awareness about the legacy of indigenous artists, especially those working in the Southeastern United States and creating a platform for emerging Native artists.

Sky Hopinka’s “malni - towards the ocean, towards” takes home this year’s grand prize for best feature and will screen on the closing night of the festival, June 5 at 4 p.m. MDT.

This mesmerizing feature weaves together the stories of Sweetwater Sahme and Jordan Mercier as they contemplate the afterlife, rebirth and the places in between. Spoken mostly in chinuk wawa, their stories are departures from the Chinookan origin of death myth, with its distant beginning and circular shape.

“It is beautiful to see ourselves in resistance to the attempts to make us invisible,” said festival director Kim Pevia. “The festival helps make us

visible to ourselves and to others through the arts. It is important for us to have our own representation and tell our own stories.”

SWAIA moving forward with virtual Indian Market

SANTA FE – The Southwestern Association for Indian Art has announced additional details about its partnership with the Clark Hulings Fund, which will launch the 2020 Virtual Indian Market on Aug. 1 while providing business training and support to Native artists.

The Clark Hulings Fund has arranged for SWAIA to work with Artspan to provide websites to SWAIA artists throughout the U.S. and Canada. These individual artist websites will be integrated into a central Native American Art Marketplace opening Aug. 1.

“SWAIA’s goals are both immediate and long-term,” says Executive Director Kim Peone, Colville Confederated Tribes/ Eastern Band of Cherokee. “Our first objective is to launch a solution-based platform to meet the economic needs of our artists.

“Longer-term goals will position SWAIA as a technology leader and innovator, able to offer increased services and support to Native artists,” she said. Information: www.swaia.org.

Native Americans protesting Trump trip to Mount Rushmore

BY STEPHEN GROVES

STIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — President Donald Trump’s plans to kick off Independence Day with a showy display at Mount Rushmore have angered Native Americans, who view the monument as a desecration of land violently stolen from them and used to pay homage to leaders hostile to Indigenous people.

Several groups led by Native American activists are planning protests for Trump’s July 3 visit, part of Trump’s “come-back” campaign for a nation reeling from sickness, unemployment and, recently, social unrest. The event is slated to include fighter jets thundering over the 79-year-old stone monument in South Dakota’s Black Hills and the first fireworks display at the site since 2009.

But it comes amid a national reckoning over racism and a reconsideration of the symbolism of monuments around the globe. Many Native American activists say the Rushmore memorial is as reprehensible as the many Confederate monuments being toppled around the nation.

“Mount Rushmore is a symbol of white supremacy, of structur-

al racism that’s still alive and well in society today,” said Nick Tilsen, a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe and the president of a local activist organization called NDN Collective. “It’s an injustice to actively steal Indigenous people’s land, then carve the white faces of the colonizers who committed genocide.”

While some activists, like Tilsen, want to see the monument removed and the Black Hills returned to the Lakota, others have called for a share in the economic benefits from the region.

Trump has long shown a fascination with Mount Rushmore. South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem said in 2018 that he once told her straight-faced that it was his dream to have his face carved into the monument. He later joked at a campaign rally about getting enshrined alongside George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. And while it was Noem, a Republican, who pushed for a return of fireworks on the eve of Independence Day, Trump committed to visiting South Dakota for the celebration.

Some wildfire experts have raised concerns the pyrotechnics could spark fires, espe-

cially because the region has seen dry weather this year. Firefighters called in crews from two other states to help Thursday as a blaze consumed approximately 150 acres (61 hectares) about 6 miles (10 kilometers) south of the monument.

The four faces, carved into the mountain with dynamite and drills, are known as the “shrine to democracy.” The presidents were chosen by sculptor Gutzon Borglum for their leadership during four phases of American development: Washington led the birth of the nation; Jefferson sparked its westward expansion; Lincoln preserved the union and emancipated slaves; Roosevelt championed industrial innovation.

And yet, for many Native American people, including the Lakota, Cheyenne, Omaha, Arapaho, Kiowa and Kiowa-Apache, the monument is a desecration to the Black Hills, which they consider sacred. Lakota people know the area as Paha Sapa — “the heart of everything that is.”

As monuments to Confederate and Colonial leaders have been removed nationwide, some conservatives have expressed fear

that Mount Rushmore could be next. Commentator Ben Shapiro this week suggested that the “woke historical revisionist priesthood” wanted to blow up the monument. Noem responded by tweeting, “Not on my watch.”

The governor told Fox News on Wednesday, “These men have flaws, obviously every leader has flaws, but we’re missing the opportunity we have in this discussion to talk about the virtues and what they brought to this country, and the fact that this is the foundation that we’re built on and the heritage we should be carrying forward.”

Tim Giago, a journalist who is a member of the Oglala Lakota tribe, said he doesn’t see four great American leaders when he looks at the monument; he sees four white men who either made racist remarks or initiated actions that removed Native Americans from their land. Washington and Jefferson held slaves. Lincoln, though he led the abolition of slavery, approved the hanging of 38 Dakota men in Minnesota after a violent conflict with white settlers there. Roosevelt is reported to have said, “I don’t go so far as to think that the only

good Indians are dead Indians, but I believe nine out of every 10 are ...”

The monument has long been a “Rorschach test,” said John Tallaferro, author of “Great White Fathers,” a history of the monument. “All sorts of people can go there and see it in different ways.”

The monument often starts conversations on the paradox of American democracy — that a republic that promoted the ideals of freedom, determination and innovation also enslaved people and drove others from their land, he said.

“If we’re having this discussion today about what American democracy is, Mount Rushmore is really serving its purpose because that conversation goes on there,” he said. “Is it fragile? Is it permanent? Is it cracking somewhat?”

The monument was conceived in the 1920s as a tourist draw for the new fad in vacationing called the road trip. South Dakota historian Doane Robinson recruited Borglum to abandon his work creating the Stone Mountain Confederate Memorial in Georgia, which was to feature Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis and Stonewall Jackson. Borglum was a member of

the Ku Klux Klan, according to Mount Rushmore historian and writer Tom Griffith. Borglum joined the Klan to raise money for the Confederate memorial, and Griffith argues his allegiance was more practical than ideological.

Native American activists have long staged protests at the site to raise awareness of the history of the Black Hills, which were seized despite treaties with the United States protecting the land. Fifty years ago, a group of activists associated with an organization called United Native Americans climbed to the top of the monument and occupied it.

Quannah Brightman, who now runs United Native Americans, said the activism in the 1970s grew out of the civil rights movement of the 1960s. He hopes a similar movement for Native Americans comes from the Black Lives Matter movement.

“What people find here is the story of America — it’s multidimensional, it’s complex,” Griffith said. “It’s important to understand it was people just trying to do right as best they knew it then.”

The White House declined to comment.



A llama herds a flock of sheep on Saturday near Burnham Chapter House.

All in a straight line

Tribal health board: Native Americans hit hard by COVID-19

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Native American people are being disproportionately affected by the coronavirus, accounting for over half of the confirmed cases in one South Dakota county, according to data from the Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Health Board released June 26.

Tribal leaders have long been concerned that the coronavirus could decimate their members because many are elderly and have existing health problems. Data from two large Rapid City health care providers reveals that 53% of people with confirmed cases in Pennington County are tribal members, the Rapid City Journal reported. Statewide, Native Americans

account for 14% of all cases, while they make up about 9% of the population.

“This shocking revelation must serve as a warning for our people and as a wake-up call to the city, state and federal governments to take immediate steps to slow its spread among our people,” said Great Plains Tribal Chairmen’s Health Board CEO Jerilyn Church in a video message.

The organization, which operates a clinic in Rapid City and advocates for improved health care for Native Americans, said it collected data from Monument Health and the Great Plains Tribal Epidemiology Center. It also held its first mass testing

event last weekend, which revealed that three of the 200 people tested had the COVID-19 virus. Church said the organization is planning two more mass testing events in the coming weeks.

Tribal leaders have argued that Native American communities need to be vigilant against outbreaks, especially because South Dakota has not issued a statewide lockdown during the pandemic. They fear that COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, could be deadly for tribal communities, where multiple generations often live together in one household.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes mild or moderate symptoms, such as

fever and cough that clear up in two to three weeks. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia, and death.

Several tribes have set up coronavirus checkpoints to keep unnecessary visitors from the reservation. But state and federal authorities argue the checkpoints are not approved and block access to U.S. and state highways.

So far, tribes in South Dakota have not seen major outbreaks, although many Native Americans frequently travel between Rapid City and the reservations.

Hard-hit tribe takes strict steps as virus surges in Arizona

BY FELICIA FONSECA

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — People in the deserts of Arizona flee to the White Mountains when the triple-digit heat is too much to bear, cooling off in the forest a few hours away. That worries a Native American tribe that calls the area home, as coronavirus infections and temperatures have both spiked in one of the hardest-hit states.

The White Mountain Apache Tribe is taking some of the most drastic actions in Arizona to protect its 13,500 residents, more than one-eighth of whom have already tested positive for COVID-19. It’s taking cues from severe measures imposed by other tribes nationwide, including the Navajo Nation, which has curtailed an outbreak that once made it a national hot spot.

Those living on the White Mountain Apache Tribe’s reservation in northeastern Arizona faced the risk of fines and other penalties if they ventured beyond their own yards last weekend. A two-week shelter-in-place order is in place. The tribe’s Fort Apache Reservation also is closed to the summertime visitors who flock to the area to fish, hike and camp among ponderosa pines.

The tribe’s confirmed infections and 20 deaths as of last Friday make the reservation one of the hardest-hit places in a state that’s recording over 3,000 cases a day and running short on hospital space.

“COVID has just turned our world upside down,” White Mountain Apache Chairwoman Gwendena Lee-Gatewood said.

The tribe also is ordering homeless people who test positive for the virus to quarantine at the tribe’s casino-hotel — now closed to visitors — and is banning the sale and use of alcohol for the rest of the year. Lee-Gatewood hopes it will help keep people safe if they get lax about social distancing and other measures when they’re drinking.

The tribe’s strict steps come as Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey has imposed new restrictions on businesses like other states where confirmed cases are surging. Fellow Republican governors in Texas and Florida cracked down on bars Friday.

Lee-Gatewood said the White Mountain Apache Tribe took that into consideration, along with the typical summer crowds, when deciding how to target the pandemic on its land.

“We’re seeing these visitors not paying attention to social distancing and wearing masks, and the governor had a real relaxed attitude about all of that in reopening the businesses back up,” she said.

Elsewhere in Arizona, officials on the Havasupai reservation deep in a gorge off the Grand Canyon warned river rafters they would be detained if they stepped foot on land the tribe traditionally uses but isn’t part of its formal reservation. Known worldwide for its towering blue-green waterfalls, the reservation has been shut down for months and has no reported COVID-19 cases.

“We are left to take aggressive

action to maintain the safety of our tribal members and the future of the Havasupai Tribe,” Chairwoman Evangeline Kissoon wrote in a notice to river guides.

After talking with Grand Canyon National Park, the tribe said it would station law enforcement at its boundary with the park, miles from the Colorado River shore.

The nearby Navajo Nation, the nation’s largest Native American reservation that spans parts of Arizona, New Mexico and Utah, has attributed a slowdown in infections to a daily curfew it’s had in place for months, a shutdown of government offices and tourist sites, weekend lockdowns and a mask requirement.

On tribal land elsewhere, residents of the tiny Alaska Native village of Napaskiak are being advised to stay home until July 5, leaving only for medical needs or quick runs to the grocery store. A health care corporation that serves the village and dozens of other rural communities pointed to a “strong likelihood” of community spread.

In Montana, tribal leaders on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation said this week that they closed their boundary with popular Glacier National Park for the tourism season to protect their residents.

The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota has kept up roadblocks since March despite criticism from the state’s governor. Tribal Chairman Harold Frazier said this week that the tribe took the step because it realized it had to protect its people.

“All we have is ourselves,” he said.

In Arizona, the White Mountain Apache Tribe said people can travel on a highway through its land, but they can’t stop along the way. Tribal police also are considering checkpoints, and a COVID-19 testing blitz is planned.

“There’s frustration, there’s impatience, there’s a lot of things,” tribal Councilman Jerold Altaha said in a video. “But remember, we are doing the best we can, we are doing everything we can to help you.”

They’re looking to prevent more people from dying, like Apache elder Timothy Clawson Sr., 91. He married his sweetheart under a tree on the reservation and spent his life in the White Mountains, working as a rancher and at a sawmill.

Lee-Gatewood, the tribal chairwoman, recalled their last conversation. Clawson called earlier this month and said, “Well, chairwoman, I’m at the hospital, and they told me I have this virus. They treated me, and the doctors said I wouldn’t leave here, and I’m calling to say my goodbyes.”

Lee-Gatewood said Clawson told her that he was proud of her.

“You’re a tough cowboy,” she responded. “I’ll keep you in my prayers.”

The next day, Lee-Gatewood got a text from Clawson’s granddaughter: He had died.



Three hikers and their dog spend their afternoon hiking the Pyramid Trail on Friday in Church Rock, N.M.

On the trail

ASSOCIATED PRESS writers Becky Bohrer in Juneau, Alaska, and Matt Volz in Helena, Montana, contributed to this report.

Emelia Pino: a healer of today

BY ANTHONY FLEG

She saw a community hurting, struggling. She is from Zia Pueblo, northwest of the Albuquerque/Rio Rancho area. Zia was one of the first Indigenous communities hard hit by COVID-19 cases and deaths in a state where an alarming majority of cases are among Native Americans.

She is Emelia Pino, daughter of Charlotte and Fernando Pino.

Emelia is one of six children, with four older sisters and a younger brother. She is a senior at Bernalillo High who plans to become a pediatrician, and someone I got to meet over this last year when she was a part of Native Health Initiative's Healers of Tomorrow program.

Make no mistake: Emelia is a healer of today.

She saw a shortage of personal protective equipment, or PPE, in her community and set out to fix it.

"Our community is hurting," she said. "We have lost a few of our elders. Being that we are such a close-knit community, it really hurt me to see my community struggling."

"I don't see youth taking a lead in my community but I felt it was time to stand up and make a difference," she said.

The result of her standing up was 1,400 masks and a variety of sanitation supplies.

But she was not done. She saw youth hurting in a different way, isolated under Zia's strict orders that those under 18 are not allowed to leave the Pueblo.

The mandate is intended to keep these youth and the Zia Pueblo community safe. But

Emelia saw the way it has affected her peers, especially now that the school year is over.

So Emelia Pino, a healer of today, went to work.

She wanted all 270 youth to receive an educational kit with age-appropriate books, games, and supplies. She wrote a grant, something that most folks twice her age shudder to think about doing.

As I write this, she is collecting donations of money and supplies and working to bring joy with these care packages over the next weeks. She is not stressing about how it is going to happen or about the summer ticking away.

In fact, she is already thinking about how to inspire other youth to step up and lead similar efforts in their tribes and communities.

Love for community – that is something we maybe have overlooked during the pandemic. It is something that Emelia reminds us is a true way of gratitude. Step up, stand up, and make things happen.

Emelia, I am now writing to you personally. Thank you. Thank you for showing that all of us can be great, since we all can serve. Thank you for reminding us of the creativity and leadership that youth have for changing our world, not tomorrow, but today, right now.

Thank you for loving your community, Zia Pueblo, in a way that inspires me and all of us to greater service and action. (Emelia, if you blush reading this, that's cool. No one is watching. They promised not to look).

If you would like to help in our donation drive, we are accepting educational supplies



Emelia Pino with some of the donations to her project to give educational kits to the youth of Zia Pueblo.

COURTESY PHOTO

this Thursday, July 2, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., at the NHI Office, located at the UNM Law School.

You can also make a tax-deductible donation toward Emelia's drive through NHI's

website. Contact Anthony Fleg (afleg@salud.unm.edu) with additional questions.

ANTHONY FLEG is the director of the Na

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REGION BRIEFS

Begay named new ranger for Mount Taylor district

ALBUQUERQUE – Yolynda Begay is the new ranger for the Mount Taylor Ranger District, according to the U.S. Forest Service.

She was previously tribal relations program manager at the Forest Service's southwestern regional office.

Begay joins two other new rangers: Michael Salazar, with the Magdalena Ranger District; and Ernest Taylor, with the Mountainair Ranger District.

The district ranger is responsible for overall management of the unit that he or she is assigned to, including oversight of recreation, timber, fire, and other land management activities.

Along with leading district personnel, the ranger also serves as a liaison with community members, local leaders, and elected officials.

All three new rangers are working in their official capacity at this time.

In addition, Matthew Rau will be the acting forest supervisor for the Cibola National Forest and National Grasslands from now until late October, while Steve Hattenbach is on a temporary assignment in Colorado.

Southern Utes developing reopening plan

IGNACIO, Colo. – The Southern Ute Indian Tribe Incident Management Team has been working hard over the last few weeks to develop reopening plans to implement a phased return to

work for tribal employees

The team closely monitors national, regional, and local increases in demand to relax social distancing restrictions, closures and modifications to work practices.

The pressure is rooted in concern over the emotional and economic toll caused by the pandemic. Individuals may have experienced frustration and even grief about the loss of opportunity to enjoy the "normal" activities of life.

"While we continue to take the utmost caution, it is important that we prepare for the 'new normal,' beginning with plans to reopen when the health risks to the tribal membership and staff are drastically reduced," the tribe said in a news release.

Reopening plans are currently in draft form. A final plan will be approved before relaxation of any orders or work modifications could begin. There is no guaranteed timeline for this event, and the phased reopening is dependent on the status and spread of COVID-19.

The planning process is a proactive preparation and no implementation schedule has been developed or approved.

Ariz. gov endorses facemasks

PHOENIX – After telling Arizonans that many public places were again being closed amid a surge of coronavirus cases, Gov. Doug Ducey ended a somewhat contentious news conference by imploring people to wear facemasks.

"Arm yourself with a mask," he said Monday after issuing an executive order to shut down bars, night clubs and water parks while pushing back the start of school in the fall. "It's your best defense against this virus."

While the Republican governor has never discouraged the use of masks, his full-throated endorsement of them was a big change from a largely lukewarm stance the last few months.

"There are some people that can't wear masks for whatever reason, shortness of breath or they are asthmatic," Ducey said June 13 when asked why he wouldn't mandate the use of them.

The change in tone on masks and a return to restrictions are the latest signs that Ducey, similar to some other Republican governors nationwide, is being forced to set political considerations aside amid surging cases.

Public meetings on Lake Powell Pipeline project

PROVO, UTAH – The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, on behalf of the Department of the Interior, will host two public meetings July 8 and 9 on its environmental review of Utah's proposed Lake Powell Pipeline project, according to a BOR news release.

The pipeline project, proposed by the Utah Board of Water Resources, would establish a second source of water for Washington County, Utah, through an approximately 140-mile-long water delivery pipeline from Lake Powell near Glen Canyon Dam in Page, Arizona, to Sand Hollow Reservoir near St. George, Utah.

The department encourages public review and comment on its draft Environmental Impact Statement and draft Resource Management Plan Amendment for the project.

The meetings will be hosted virtually using web-based participation platforms in order to facilitate maximum public participation amid ongoing public health concerns.

Web address for July 8: <http://ow.ly/He8f50Am5HX>
Web address for July 9: <http://ow.ly/2gIG50Am5HW>

Note: Please log into meeting at least 10 minutes prior to 6 p.m. All participants will remain on mute throughout the meeting.

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CAPITAL BRIEFS

Cell on wheels delivers cellular, broadband service to Low Mountain

On Friday morning, a cell on wheels unit was turned on in Low Mountain, Arizona, to provide wireless cellular and broadband service to the area. The network went live for cellular users at 10 a.m. and legislative branch staff were able to live-stream on-location immediately. Valena Tsosie, deputy general manager of Choice NTUA Wireless, said, “This day has been in the making for five-plus years. Our goal has always been to bring service to the Low Mountain community.” The unit is capable of delivering line-of-sight service to a surrounding area of up to 15 miles. The unit is one of two that Choice NTUA Wireless owns and is providing at its own expense for community members. Cell users on Choice’s own network, as well as other major carriers, will now have service in the vicinity. Friday’s cell on wheels going live was made possible by the recent build-out of fiber by Navajo Tribal Utility Authority to the nearby Low Mountain school and chapter house. With the chapter’s fiber and electricity lines in place, the unit was placed in the most feasible location until permanent locations could be identified for fixed cell towers.

At a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay Jr. (Tachee-Blue Gap/Many Farms/Nazlini/Tselani-Cottonwood/Low Mountain) thanked residents, chapter officials, NTUA, Choice Wireless, the president’s office, Navajo Nation Council, Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, Navajo Land Department and others.

Total from CARES Act: \$714 million

The Navajo Nation has received a little more than \$714 million from the U.S. Treasury in payments from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stimulus Act. On May 6, the first payment of \$600 million was received and on June 15 a second payment of \$86 million was received. Also on June 15, a U.S. district court judge ruled that the U.S. Treasury did not have the authority to continue withholding relief funds intended for tribes and ordered that remaining amounts be released. As a result, the Navajo Nation received an additional \$27.2 million on June 18. None of these amounts have been sent to date. Seth Damon, speaker of the Council,



NAVAJO TIMES | DONOVAN QUINTERO

Marie Leo and her daughter in-law Geneva Leo gather Navajo tea Sunday alongside U.S. Highway 191 in Wide Ruins, Ariz.

said, “In working together with the president and chief justice of the Navajo Nation, we will ensure the expenditure of these monies will help prevent this and future pandemics from having such drastic outcomes as COVID-19.” Navajo leaders are now aiming for a request to extend the Dec. 30 deadline to spend the CARES Act funds.

Speaker, prez continue funding jousts

Through Navajo Nation Council resolution No. CMY-44-20, known as the Navajo Nation CARES Fund Act, a legal framework was approved for the expenditure of the funds, according to the speaker’s office. Speaker Seth Damon introduced that legislation on May 7, a day after the first deposits were confirmed, in the hopes of streamlining the process of spending the entire amount of federal relief funds by Dec. 30. No. CMY-44-20 enabled any organization or entity to request funds to use in COVID-19 relief or response activities for the benefit of the Navajo people. The

vetting process for all projects included an approval vote of the Council and the signature of the Navajo Nation president. Using parts of CMY-44-20, on June 19 the Navajo Nation Council approved two major immediate expenditures from the Navajo Nation CARES Fund. A package totaling \$134 million was approved through Legislation Nos. 0132-20 and 0116-20. The immediate expenditures, which are the first to authorize Navajo Nation CARES spending, are intended to address personal protective equipment, hazard pay for front-line responders and others, facility safety assurance measures, relief and support for Navajo Nation chapter governments and more. On June 25, the president’s office issued a news release commending the Council passage of No. 0116-20 but complaining that it had not yet received the resolution one week later. President Jonathan Nez said, “Legislation No. 0116-20 received over 2,800 supporting signatures on an online petition and over 100 written supporting comments from the Navajo people, but

the resolution has not reached our office for consideration. It’s time to stop playing political games and send the resolution to the Office of the President and Vice President.” And despite the president’s call for no amendments to the bill, the Council approved six amendments, which removed or altered the use of \$50 million for test kits, personal protective equipment, cleaning/disinfecting buildings, and hazard pay. Another amendment removed the creation of a three-branch Cares Act “work group,” which would have worked to vet infrastructure projects. “It’s clear that the intent of some delegates was to gut the original legislation to make it unworkable so certain delegates could introduce separate bills that propose spending sprees in a piecemeal approach,” Nez said. “Since Legislation No. 0116-20 was passed, Legislation No. 0132-20 was introduced and quickly approved and that resolution was quickly sent to the Office of the President and Vice President. We strongly caution the Council not to treat the \$714 million in CARES Act

funding as unrestricted spending for pet projects.”

Leaders praise denial of NM’s request to dismiss lawsuit

On Monday, New Mexico First Judicial District Court Judge Matthew Wilson denied the state of New Mexico’s request to dismiss the Yazzie/Martinez versus the state of New Mexico case, saying that all students have a right to be college- and career-ready and that the state failed to meet that obligation. The judge said the state was unable to comply with the state and federal laws regarding the education of Native American and English Language Learner students. The state failed to provide Native American and ELL students programs and services to prepare for college or a career. President Jonathan Nez said, “Navajo students, and all Native American students, deserve the highest quality education. The only way that will be achieved is if the New Mexico fully complies with the court’s order to increase education funding, improve educational opportunities, and meets the intent of the state’s Indian Education Act with decisive action.” The case was decided in 2018 and the motion to dismiss the case was filed by the state on May 1. In response, the Navajo Nation and the All Pueblo Council of Governors, Mescalero Apache Nation and Jicarilla Apache Nation immediately opposed the state’s motion. Delegate Daniel Tso, from Whitehorse Lake, chairman of the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee, said that the New Mexico Public Education Department, as an organization, continues to marginalize the needs of Navajo students. Notably, the state’s attorney could not provide adequate arguments in the state’s motion to dismiss. Crownpoint Delegate Mark Free-land, chairman of the State Task Force Subcommittee, said, “As Navajo leaders, we must continue to ask the state of New Mexico to seriously consider the success of our Navajo students. “For every Navajo student whose Census number is used on applications for federal Impact Aid funding,” he said, “the state should be matching those education dollars instead of working to continue operating under policies and funding mechanisms that don’t work for school districts that need it the most.” On June 18, the Council unanimously approved a resolution that supports the final determinations of the federal Impact Aid Program that the state cannot use portions of the federal funding to calculate funding offsets for state aid entitlements from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020.

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BASIC SYSTEM: \$99 Parts and Install. 36-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$27.99 per month (\$1,007.64). 24-Month Monitoring Agreement required at \$27.99 per month (\$671.76) for California. Offer applies to homeowners only. Basic system requires landline phone. Offer valid for new ADT Authorized Premier Provider customers only and not on purchases from ADT LLC. Cannot be combined with any other offer. The \$27.99 Offer does not include Quality Service Plan (QSP), ADT's Extended Limited Warranty. GENERAL: For all offers, the form of payment must be by credit card or electronic charge to your checking or savings account, satisfactory credit history is required and termination fee applies. Certain packages require approved landline phone. Local permit fees may be required. Certain restrictions may apply. Additional monitoring fees required for some services. For example, Burglary, Fire, Carbon Monoxide and Emergency Alert monitoring requires purchase and/or activation of an ADT security system with monitored Burglary, Fire, Carbon Monoxide and Emergency Alert devices and are an additional charge. Additional equipment may be purchased for an additional charge. Additional charges may apply in areas that require guard response service for municipal alarm verification. Prices subject to change. Prices may vary by market. Some insurance companies offer discounts on Homeowner's Insurance. Please consult your insurance company. Photos are for illustrative purposes only and may not reflect the exact product/service actually provided. Licenses: AL-21-001104, AR-CMPY.0001725 AZ-ROC217517, CA-AC06320, CT-ELC.018944-L5, DC-EMS902653, DE-602516000016, DE-07-212, FL-ECT1003427, EC13003401, GA-LUA205395, IA-AS-0206, ID-EIS-S139131, IL-127.001042, IN-C-P.D. Reg. No. — 19-180188, City of Indianapolis: LAC-000156, KY-City of Louisville: 483, LA-F1914, LA-F1915, LA-F1082, MA-1355C, MD-107-1626, ME-LMS0017382, MI-3601205773, MN-TS01807, MO-City of St. Louis: CC4354, St. Louis County: 100194, MS-15007958, MT-PSP-ELS-LC-247, NC-25310-SP-FA/LV, NC-1622-CSA, NE-14451, NJ Burglar Alarm Lic. # NJ-348F00021800, NM-353366, NV-0068518, City of Las Vegas: 3000008296, NY-Licensed by the N.Y.S. Department of State UIDH12000317691, NYS #12000286451, OH-53891446, City of Cincinnati: AC86, OK-AC1048, OR-170997, Pennsylvania Home Improvement Contractor Registration Number: PA022999, RI-3582, RI-7508, SC-BAC5630, SD- 1025-7001-E1, TN-1520, TX-B13734, ACR-3492, UT-642596-6501, VA-115120, VT-ES-23827C, WA-602586864FC/PROTEY495-495, WI-City of Milwaukee: PAS-0002966, WV-WV042433, WY-LV-G-21499, 3750 Priority Way South Dr. Indianapolis, IN 46240 ©2017 DEFENDERS, Inc. dba Protect Your Home DF-CD-NP-Q220

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Kid Scoop

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

Find Kid Scoop on Facebook

© 2020 by Vicki Whiting, Editor Jeff Schinkel, Graphics Vol. 36, No. 31

MERFOLK

Stories of creatures that are part fish and part human have been told by people around the world for hundreds of years. Today, their stories are told in movies and their images decorate clothing, toys, bedding and more!



Find the two identical mermaids.

Secret Code

- = A
- = C
- = E
- = F
- = G
- = H
- = N
- = O
- = P
- = S

The Little Mermaid

Many people know the story of *The Little Mermaid* because of the Disney animated movie. The tale, first told by Hans Christian Anderson, is about a mermaid who risks her life to save a human prince. With the help of an evil witch, she trades her tongue for legs. In the original story, the prince does not marry the mermaid and she evaporates into sea foam!

Use the code to discover the city in Denmark where there is a famous statue of The Little Mermaid sitting on a rock in the harbor.



The Sirens

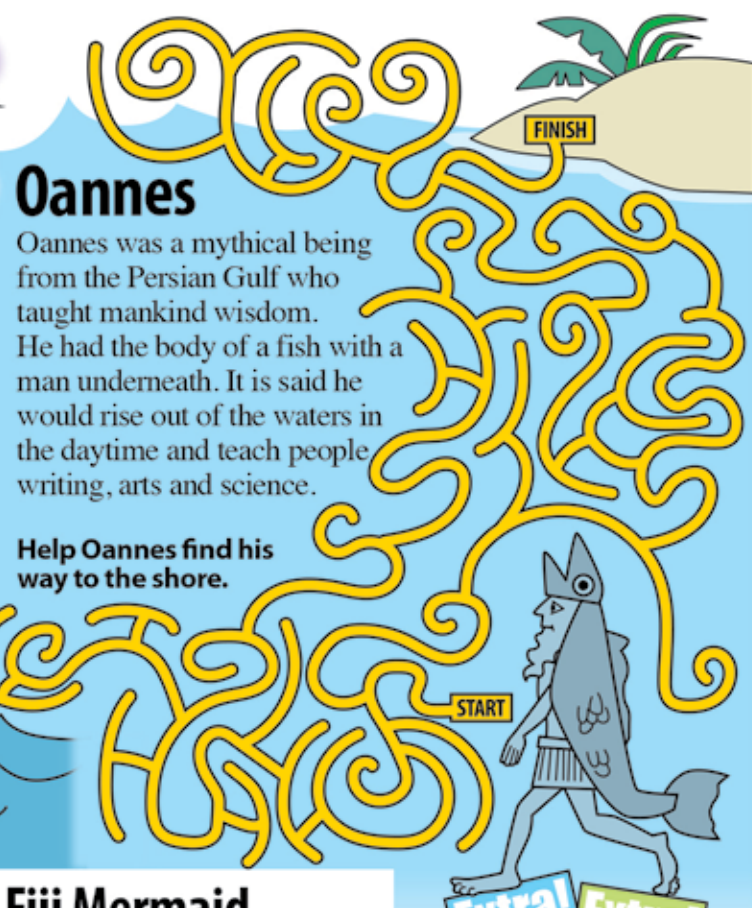
In the classical , *Odyssey*, the hero Odysseus is about sea sirens whose lures sailors towards where they become shipwrecked. Odysseus and his crew put in their ears so they wouldn't the songs and they survived.



Oannes

Oannes was a mythical being from the Persian Gulf who taught mankind wisdom. He had the body of a fish with a man underneath. It is said he would rise out of the waters in the daytime and teach people writing, arts and science.

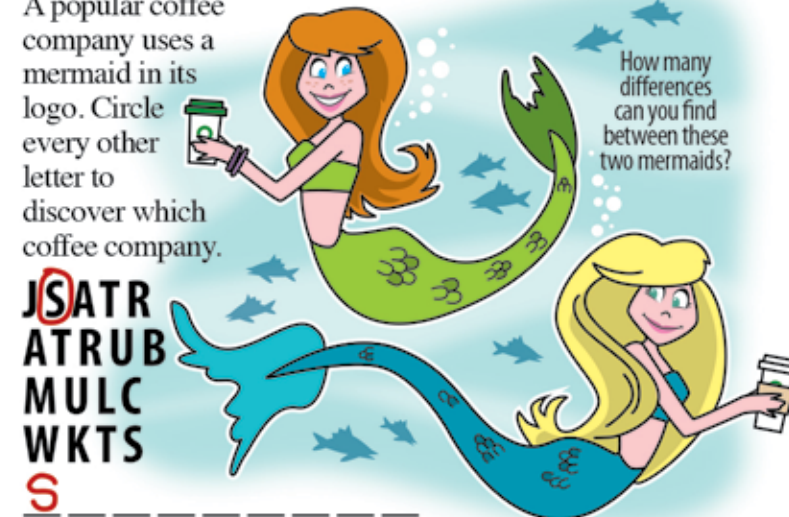
Help Oannes find his way to the shore.



Coffee Mermaid

A popular coffee company uses a mermaid in its logo. Circle every other letter to discover which coffee company.

JSATR
ATRUB
MULC
WKTS
S



The Fiji Mermaid

In the summer of 1842, a report went out that there was proof that mermaids were real. What looked like a mummified creature was displayed at P.T. Barnum's American Museum of Oddities for many years. **Was it real?** No. The dried skeleton was manmade by combining the skeletons of two animals. Unscramble the letters to find out which two.

NYOKME HSKI

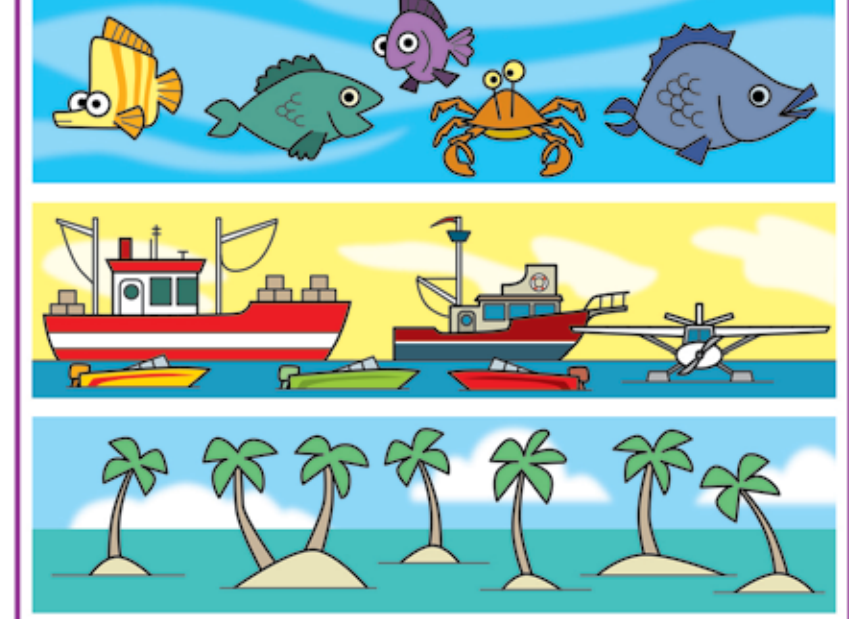
Create a Creature

Cut out different body parts from people and animals in photos in today's newspaper. Combine these in new ways to make a new creature. Give your creature a name and write a story about it.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension; Follow simple written instructions.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Cross out the one thing in each row that does not belong.



Double Double Word Search

CREATURES
EVAPORATE
MERMAID
ODYSSEY
SAILORS
OANNES
WISDOM
TONGUE
PRINCE
LURES
RISKS
LEGS
SONG
TALE
WAX

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?



Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Kid Scoop Together: How to Draw a Mermaid



Write On!

If I Were an Animal

Which kind of animal are you the most like? What kind of animal would you like to be? Write about it!



CLASSIFIEDS

THURSDAY, JULY 02, 2020

D1

ANNOUNCEMENT

CALL OF ELECTION NORTHERN APACHE COUNTY SPECIAL HEALTHCARE DISTRICT

The Governing Board of the Northern Apache County Special Healthcare District submits this Call of Election and provides notice that an election will be held as follows:

Date of election: November 3, 2020

Purpose of election: Elect two (2) Governing Board members for the Northern Apache County Special Healthcare District to serve four (4) year terms of office.

Last date and place for filing nomination petitions: Candidate packets are available for pick-up and filing at the Apache County Elections Office located at 75 W. Cleveland Street, St. Johns, Arizona, 85936. The last date to file Nomination Petitions is July 6, 2020.

Last date to register to vote in the election: The last date to register to vote in this election is October 5, 2020.

The election will be conducted by the Apache County Elections Department. The Election was approved by the Governing Board of the Northern Apache County Special Healthcare District on April 30, 2020.

Northern Apache County Special Healthcare District /s/ Daniel Johnson, Chief Executive Officer

On behalf of the Governing Board of the Northern Apache County Special Healthcare District.

APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Looking for an affordable 62+ senior apartment? Superior Arboretum Apartments, immediate occupancy, one bedroom & studios, on-site laundry & utility allowance. Rent based on Income Guidelines. 199 W. Gray Dr., Superior, AZ. Call 1-866-962-4804, www.ncr.org/superiorarboretum. Equal Housing Opportunity. Wheelchair Accessible. (AZCAN)

AUTOMOTIVE

DONATE YOUR CAR TO CHARITY. Receive maximum value of write off for your taxes. Running or not! All conditions accepted. Free pickup. Call for details. 866-932-4184 (AZCAN)

WANTED Old Sports-cars/Convertibles: Porsche, Mercedes, Jaguar, Triumph/MG, Ferrari, Corvette & others! 1973 & OLDER! ANY condition! TOP \$\$ PAID! Call/Text: Mike 520-977-1110. I bring trailer & cash! (AZCAN)

EDUCATION

TRAIN ONLINE TO DO MEDICAL BILLING! Become a Medical Office Professional online at CTI! Get Trained, Certified & ready to work in months! Call 866-459-5480. (M-F 8am-6pm ET) (AZCAN)

COMPUTER & IT TRAINING PROGRAM! Train ONLINE to get the skills to become a Computer & Help Desk Professional now! Grants and Scholarships available for certain programs for qualified applicants. Call CTI for details! 855-626-7941 (M-F 8am-6pm ET) (AZCAN)

FINANCIAL

Over \$10K in debt? Be debt free in 24-48 months. Pay a fraction of what you owe. A+ BBB rated. Call National Debt Relief 866-

541-6885. (AZCAN)

FOR SALE

3x3 ALFALFA/GRASS, HAY. \$85/bale. Durango. Call (970) 779-8921.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

OXYGEN - Anytime. Anywhere. No tanks to refill. No deliveries. The All-New Inogen One G4 is only 2.8 pounds! FAA approved! FREE info kit: 866-397-4003 (AZCAN)

HELP WANTED

Nurse - Home Health! Giving Home Health has 12 hour shifts available for private duty nursing in Tuba City. Pays \$38/hour for LPN and \$45/hour for RN. Start right now! Call Rosa at 505-598-5000

FACILITIES OPERATION SPECIALIST

Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Indian Education, Facility Management, Fort Wingate, NM. Year Long Contract. Closing date July 17, 2020. Request for Vacancy Announcement, Information: Paul Tohtsonie, 505-488-6422/23 or email: paul.tohtsonie@bie.edu.

BUSINESS TECHNICIAN

Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Indian Education, Facility Management, Fort Wingate, NM. Year Long Contract. Closing date July 17, 2020. Request for Vacancy Announcement, Information: Paul Tohtsonie, 505-488-6422/23 or email: paul.tohtsonie@bie.edu.

Newcomb Chapter is a Navajo Nation Certified Chapter Governmental entity that operates in Newcomb, New Mexico. Newcomb Chapter is advertising for an

ACCOUNTS MAINTENANCE SPECIALIST

position. You may view the advertisement at the Newcomb Chapter website or the Newcomb Chapter Facebook page. Should you have any questions and/or require an employment application please call 505-696-3400. Please send the application and other relevant documents to: Newcomb Chapter, P.O. Box 7946, Newcomb, New Mexico

87455

COVID-19 job weary?

Painted Hills Home Care is going strong and **HIRING CAREGIVERS!** Starting salary of \$13.25ph plus annual bonuses, sick leave, and raises. Cleaning supply stipend (for the client), and referral commissions. Free Care Academy® online DCW certification and continuing education units.

Call or text Harriet at 928-640-0245 or 928-485-1331

Richfield Residential Hall College and Career Preparatory Program

has been providing unparalleled academic and social growth opportunities for Native youth since 1954. We are presently seeking enthusiastic and career-minded professionals to be part of our legacy of shaping the future by providing unparalleled opportunities to our Native youth.

We are excited to announce that we are presently seeking to fill the following positions on our team:

Dormitory Manager

Academic Assistant Homeliving Assistant

See full position descriptions and application details at: <http://richfielddorm.org/join-the-team>

If you are looking for a career that involves working with Native youth and making a difference in our future, this is it!

All positions are full-time (40 hours/week), 9-month, school year, positions that offer a great salary and excellent benefits. Benefits include medical insurance,

matching tax shelter retirement program, paid holidays, school vacation leave, free gym memberships, personal leave, and sick leave. Benefits commence on first day of employment.

Must reside in or relocate to Sevier County, Utah area. Candidates must possess college credits in education, psychology, sociology, or fields related to working with teens, and must pass a background investigation prior to employment. Candidate must also possess a valid driver's license.

Pursuant to Governing

Board policy, equally qualified Navajo applicants will receive preference. Application, Resume, (3) letters of recommendation and college transcripts may be mailed to:

**765 West 1st Avenue
Richfield, Utah 84701 or
emailed to cworkman@richfielddorm.org.**

Questions may also be directed to the aforementioned email address or to (435) 896-6121, extension 8.

LIVESTOCK

ANGUS HEIFER BULLS high altitude, good genetics, sired from registered bulls and great commercial Angus cows. PAP and Trich tested. Call LD at (928) 699-8065. Pictures can be emailed or texted. Located in Mancos, CO

MISCELLANEOUS

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NEED NEW WINDOW TREATMENTS? Call Empire Today® to sched-

ule a FREE in-home estimate on blinds & shades. Call Today! 844-247-3111 (AZCAN)

SAVE BIG on HOME INSURANCE! Compare 20 A-rated insurances companies. Get a quote within minutes. Average savings of \$444/year! Call 855-602-7212! (M-F 8am-8pm Central) (AZCAN)

TIMESHARE Cancellation Experts – Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt and fees canceled in 2019. Get free informational package and learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. Call 866-482-0406 (AZCAN)

SATELLITE

DIRECTV - Switch and Save! \$39.99/month. Select All-Included Package. 155 Channels. 1000s of Shows/Movies On Demand. FREE Genie HD DVR Upgrade. Premium movie channels, FREE for 3 mos! Call 1-844-244-7498 (AZCAN)

DISH Network. \$59.99 for 190 Channels! Blazing Fast Internet, \$19.99/mo. (where available.) Switch & Get a FREE \$100 Visa Gift Card. FREE Voice Remote. FREE HD DVR. FREE Streaming on ALL Devices. Call today! 1-855-722-2290 (AZCAN)

Navajo County Recorder's Office | 928.524.4192
Navajo County Election Services | 928.524.4062

Vote Safe In 2020!

You have choices while voting during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Vote from Home!

Request an Early Ballot, we will mail it to you! You can either request it for one Election, the 2020 Election Cycle or Permanently. You can also track your ballot every step of the way with Ballot Trak. Call us and we will tell you more about it or visit <https://navajocountyvotes.ballottrax.net/voter>

Vote at any Early Voting Site

The Recorder's office will provide several opportunities for you to vote early at an Early Voting Site. To avoid crowds, take advantage of voting up to 27 days before Election Day. Contact the Records office for more information.

Vote in a Vote Center on Election Day

Vote Centers will be open on Election Day, however social distancing will be requested, and limited voters will be allowed inside at one time. We will provide hand sanitizer; sanitization of equipment and Poll workers will be provided with protective gear. Wait times may be longer.



Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation

Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation is accepting applications for the Board of Directors representing the following communities:

- Moenkopi Village
- LeChee
- San Juan Southern Paiute

Applications are available at the TCRHCC Human Resources office. For more information, please contact:
Human Resources • PO Box 600 • Tuba City, Arizona 86045
Phone: 928-283-2432 • E-mail: TCRHCCHR@tchealth.org

tchealth.org • 928-283-2432

Pinon Unified School District No. 4
P.O. Box 839, Pinon, Arizona 86510
Phone (928) 725-3450 Fax (928) 725-2123
www.pusdatsa.org

ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS:

Director – Transportation Department (1)
Director – Exceptional Student Services (1)

CERTIFIED POSITIONS:

DISTRICT

Regular Certified Substitute Teachers
Emergency Certified Substitute Teachers
School Psychologist (1)

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Teacher – Exceptional Student Services (Resource) (2)

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Teacher - Art (1)
Social Worker (1)
Instructional Coach (1)

HIGH SCHOOL

Teacher – Navajo Language (1)
Reading Interventionist (1)
Social Worker (1)

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS:

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance Worker – Electrician (1)
Custodian (1)

TRANSPORTATION

Bus Driver Trainees (2)
Bus Drivers (2)

Teacher Base Salary starting at \$45,000
Teacher Signing Stipend: \$3,000

Visit our website at www.pusdatsa.org

Any questions, contact Human Resources at (928) 725-2104.
The Pinon Unified School District No. 4 is an Equal Opportunity Employer and has adopted Indian Preference in Employment.
Updated: 6/29/2020

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Call: 928-871-1148



TO'HAIJILEE COMMUNITY SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION, INC.

VACANCIES AVAILABLE

The To'Hajilee Community School Board of Education, Inc. (TCSBE) is offering an excellent opportunity for Educators/Support Staff. We offer competitive compensation* in comparison to surrounding school districts. Our Educators and Staff are included in all educational improvement efforts. We work as a team to support the academic increases for our students.

CERTIFIED POSITIONS:

- Librarian (1)
- Teacher Middle School Math (1)
- Teacher Middle School Social Studies (1)
- Teacher Middle School Science (1)
- Elementary Teacher (1)
- Training Instructor (Dine Language & Culture) (1) *
- Gifted and Talented Teacher (1)
- Supervisory Instructional Leader (1) *

For Teachers, Librarians, and Counselors pay scales are based on level of New Mexico State Licensure.

Level I start at \$44,634

Level II start at \$54,431

Level III start at \$65,318

*Denotes a different pay scale

NON-CERTIFIED

- Developmental Specialist (1)
- Pre-School Classroom Assistant (Floater) (1)
- FACE Co-Teacher (1)

Please apply and download our application(s) through our website: www.tohajileeschool.com For more information, you can also contact Adrienne Platero at 505-908-2145 ext. 159 or aplatero@tohajilee.com

A background investigation is required. TCSBE, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity/Navajo Preference Employer.

Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority is seeking a

HACP Paving Manager for Commercial Paving Projects throughout the 4 Corners Area

JOB DESCRIPTION: Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority (NECA) is seeking a **HACP Paving Manager** for employment at various project locations throughout the Navajo Nation. Applicants with a Bachelors in Construction Management, or a minimum of 10 years of construction project management experience will be given greater consideration. Applicants must be computer literate, experience in word processing and spreadsheet, including Build2Win, or similar software and scheduling software. Knowledge of Hot Plant Operations, Laydown Operations, Aggregate Crushing Production/Gradations, Aggregate Base Course Finishing/Gradations and General Construction Experience. Traffic control, OSHA, MSHA and Safety Trainings will be given greater consideration. Familiarity with HACP mix designs gradations and gradations along with Hot Plant and Laydown operational maintenance. Must have the ability to read and understand construction drawings & specifications, project contracts, purchase orders; must have the ability to resolve discrepancies. Ensure accurate and timely reporting; Strong organizational communication skills with ability to multi-task and prioritize. Salary based upon experience. NECA offers competitive salary and benefit packages.

Navajo Preference in Employment Act, 15 NTC, Chapter 7 applies. Fluency in both the Navajo and English languages is of great benefit to the applicant and the Authority.

Closing Date: Open Until Fill (OUF)

Send Resume to:
Human Resource Department
P.O. Box 969
Shiprock, New Mexico 87420

Or bring to NECA at:
#1 Uranium Blvd.
Shiprock, New Mexico 87420

Please call 505.210.7070 for more Information

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LEGAL NOTICES

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION
Pumped Hydro Storage LLC
Project No. 15024-000
NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY
PERMIT APPLICATION
ACCEPTED FOR FILING AND
SOLICITING
COMMENTS, MOTIONS TO
INTERVENE, AND
COMPETING APPLICATIONS
(June 2, 2020)

On March 11, 2020, the Pumped Hydro Storage LLC, filed an application for a preliminary permit, pursuant to section 4(f) of the Federal Power Act (FPA), proposing to study the feasibility of Big Canyon Pumped Storage Project to be located about 23 miles west of Tuba City, Arizona. The sole purpose of a preliminary permit, if issued, is to grant the permit holder priority to file a license application during the permit term. A preliminary permit does not authorize the permit holder to perform any land-disturbing activities or otherwise enter upon lands or waters owned by others without the owners' express permission.

The proposed project would be located entirely on Navajo Nation land and consist of the following new facilities: (1) a 450-foot-long, 200-foot-high concrete arch dam (Upper West Dam), a 1,000-foot-long, 150-foot-high earth filled dam (Middle Dam), and a 10,000-foot-long, 200-foot-high concrete arch dam (Upper East Dam), each of which would impound three separate upper reservoirs with a combine surface area of 400 acres and a total storage capacity of 29,000 acre-feet at a normal maximum operating elevation of 5,390 feet average mean sea level (msl); (2) a 600-foot-long, 400-foot-high concrete arch dam (Lower Dam) that would impound a lower reservoir with a surface area of 260 acres and a total storage capacity of 44,000 acre-feet at a normal maximum operating elevation of 3,790 feet msl; (3) three

10,000-foot-long, 30-foot-diameter reinforced concrete penstocks; (4) a 1,100-foot-long, 160-foot-wide, 140-foot-high reinforced concrete powerhouse housing nine 400-kilowatt pump-turbine generators; (5) a 1,000-foot-long, 120-foot-wide, 400-foot-high reinforced concrete tailrace; (6) three water supply wells with a capacity of 700 horsepower each and a 1,800-foot-long, 36-inch-diameter well water supply pipeline; (7) two new double circuit 500-kilovolt (kV) electric transmission lines that connect the project switchyard to the existing 500-kV and 345-kV transmission lines located 14 miles east of the proposed project; and (8) appurtenant facilities. The estimated annual power generation at the Navajo Nation Big Canyon Pumped Storage Project would be 7,900 Gigawatt-hours.

Applicant Contact: Mr. Steve Irwin, Manager, Pumped Hydro Storage LLC, 6514 S 41st Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85041 Swirwin7@gmail.com
FERC Contact: Ousmane Sidibe; Phone: (202) 502-6245
Deadline for filing comments, motions to intervene, competing applications (without notices of intent), or notices of intent to file competing applications: 60 days from the issuance of this notice. Competing applications and notices of intent must meet the requirements of 18 C.F.R. § 4.36. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, motions to intervene, notices of intent, and competing applications using the Commission's eFiling system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659

(TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, please send a paper copy to: Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, D.C. 20426. The first page of any filing should include docket number P-15024-000.

More information about this project, including a copy of the application, can be viewed or printed on the "eLibrary" link of Commission's website at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/elibrary.asp>. Enter the docket number (P-15024) in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support. Kimberly D. Bose Secretary.
In its application, Pumped Hydro Storage named the project the Navajo Nation Big Canyon Pumped Storage Project. We note that the proposed project is not in any way affiliated with the Navajo Nation and the Navajo Nation has not had any role in Pumped Hydro Storage's pursuit of this project. To avoid any confusion as to the identity of the project proponent, we have omitted "Navajo Nation" from the project name.

To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES June 11, 18, 25, July 02, 2020.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT
OF THE NAVAJO NATION
JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF
CHINLE, ARIZONA
ARLENE WALKER,
Plaintiff,
vs.
ANDERSON TULLIE, EMERSON HORACE III, and QUANNIE TAX AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES LLC,
Defendants.
No. CH-CV-148-19
AMENDED NOTICE OF SUIT
TO: ANDERSON TULLIE,
You or your attorney are hereby directed to file a pleading or motion in response to the Complaint for Fraud, Negligent Misrepresentation, Breach of Fiduciary Duty, and for Violation of Navajo Nation unfair Trade Practices Act on file herein on or before July 15, 2020, in the Office of the Clerk of

the above Court, sitting within and for the Chinle District Court, that being the Court in which said Petition is filed, and to serve a copy of the same pleading or motion upon Petitioner or its attorneys, MASON & ISAACSON, P.A., 104 East Aztec Avenue, Gallup, New Mexico 87301. Unless an appearance is entered by you in this cause on or before the above date, judgment will be rendered against you by default.

WITNESS the hand and seal of this Court on this 26th day of May, 2020. /s/ District Court Clerk
To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES June 11, 18, 25, and July 02, 2020.

Request for Proposal
Bid Number: 20-05-2310LE
The Navajo Nation Office of the Controller - Purchasing Department and the Navajo Division of Transportation (Navajo DOT) are soliciting proposals and sealed bids for "Bid #: 20-05-2310LE, Moenave Road, Tuba City, Aggregate Base Course".
Contacts for a bid packet are:

- 1) Sheila Clyde, Sr. Office Specialist Navajo Division of Transportation - Roads, sclyde@navajodot.org; (928) 551-7108 or (505) 371-8300.
- 2) Jeremy Ben, Navajo Nation Purchasing Department, jbenn@nnooc.org, (928) 871-6316

Closing date is July 3, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Saving Time (M.D.T.). Any proposal(s) received after this date and time will not be accepted and will be returned to the sender. No faxed or email proposals or bids will be accepted.
To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES June 25, July 02, 2020.

Public Notice
Navajo Technical University (NTU) Invitation to Bid (IFB-2020-06)
For Skidsteer with Bucket & Implements
OPEN DATE: June 23, 2020
CLOSING DATE: July 7, 2020 (5:00 p.m. DST)

Navajo Technical University is soliciting bids from qualified vendor for the purchase of a Skidsteer with Bucket & Implements. Bids are due at the NTU Business Office. Bids can be submitted either by U.S. postal mail or electronic mail before 5:00 p.m. DST on July 7, 2020.

For more information (Bid spec, bid requirements and bid package) contact or refer to NTU website: www.navajotech.edu or GGamble@navajotech.edu
To be Published in the Navajo Times June 25, July 02, 2020.

Public Notice
Navajo Technical University (NTU) Invitation to Bid (IFB-2020-07)
For Utility Tractor (90 HP)
OPEN DATE: June 23, 2020
CLOSING DATE: July 7, 2020 (5:00 p.m. DST)
Navajo Technical University is soliciting bids from qualified vendors for the purchase of a Utility Tractor. Bids are due at the NTU Business Office. Bids can be submitted either by U.S. postal mail or electronic mail before 5:00 p.m. DST on July 7, 2020.
For more information (Bid specs, bid requirements and bid package) contact or refer to NTU website: www.navajotech.edu or GGamble@navajotech.edu
To be Published in the Navajo Times June 25, July 02, 2020.

Navajo Nation Division of Transportation
Request for Proposal (RFP)
Bid No. 20-05-2317LE
The Navajo Division of Transportation (Navajo DOT) is soliciting proposals to construct "N9402(2)1,2&3 Bridge N656 Replacement Project in Lupton, AZ". The proposed work consists of grading, subgrade, placement of aggregate base course with stabilization, installation of drainage structures, bridge replacement with abutment protection, traffic signs, and other miscellaneous work as called for in the design plans and specifications for this 0.390 km (0.242 miles) bridge

replacement project over the Rio Puerco River in Lupton, AZ, Apache County, Navajo Nation. Proposals will be subject to all requirements specified in RFP No. 20-05-2317LE. The RFP package will be available for download from the Navajo DOT website (www.navajodot.org), beginning June 25, 2020 at 10:00 AM.
A MANDATORY Virtual Pre-Proposal Meeting will be held on Thursday, July 2, 2020 at 10:00 AM (local Window Rock, AZ time). The Pre-Proposal Meeting will consist of a brief presentation explaining the Project Scope and the necessary items required to be submitted as part of the RFP. Contractors are encouraged to conduct a field review of the project site located 0.25 miles south of I-40 in Lupton, AZ on their own. The link for the web meeting and conference call number are as follows:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/963957325>
Access Code 963-957-325
1-877-568-4106
Proposal and bid package must be physically submitted to the following address by July 23, 2020, no later than 4:00 PM (local Window Rock, AZ time):
Navajo Division of Transportation
Attention: Ardanial Begay
Navajo Transportation Complex #16 Old Coal Mine Road
Mentmore, NM 87319
(505) 371-8351
The Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act and Navajo Preference Act shall apply to this project. Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these provisions. Having preference does not guarantee the award of the project. Competitive Sealed Proposals under the Navajo Nation Business Opportunity Act shall be utilized in the selection of the Contractor. Refer to 12 N.N.C. §332 Competitive Sealed Proposals.
The Navajo Nation reserves the right to waive any formalities or irregularities in the Request for Proposals and/or to reject any or

all bids; to be the sole judge of the suitability of the materials offered and to award a contract for the furnishing of services it deems to be in the best interest of the Navajo Nation.


To be Published in the Navajo Times June 25, July 02, 09, 16, 2020.

REQUEST FOR BIDS
Secure the Services
of a Copy Editor
The Office of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission is requesting for bids to secure the services of an editor to review the commission report on funerary activities. The commission report is in draft and 30 pages in length. The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission plans to present the report to the Navajo Nation Council during the 2020 Fall Session. Details about the bid information such as the format of the bid, deliverables, please contact the Office of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission at: Leonard Gorman, Executive Director
Office of Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 129
St. Michaels, Navajo Nation (AZ) 86515
(928) 871-7436
Email: nnhr@navajo-nsn.gov
To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES June 25, July 02, 2020.

DINÉ COLLEGE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Diné College is requesting for proposals (RFP) for the following:
• 401(K) Plan Services, Administration, Recordkeeping & Investments
RFP packets are available for interested parties by contacting Adrian Crosby, Procurement, at 928-724-6686 or via email at adricrosby@dinecollege.edu (Monday through Thursday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm).
All interested parties must submit proposals in a sealed envelope with the firm name and address clearly written on the envelope. Proposals which are faxed or emailed will not be accepted. Sealed bids accepted by the due date on the RFP. Bids received after this time will not be accepted. Diné College reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, whether within applicable cost limits, and to waive any informality or irregularity in the proposals received whenever such proposal rejection or waiver is in the best interest of Diné College. Submitted proposal for this RFP will become the property of Diné College and become a matter of public record, subject for review.
To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES July 02, 09, 2020.

emailed will not be accepted. Sealed bids accepted by the due date on the RFP. Bids received after this time will not be accepted. Diné College reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, whether within applicable cost limits, and to waive any informality or irregularity in the proposals received whenever such proposal rejection or waiver is in the best interest of Diné College. Submitted proposal for this RFP will become the property of Diné College and become a matter of public record, subject for review.
To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES July 02, 09, 2020.

DINÉ COLLEGE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Diné College is requesting for proposals (RFP) for the following:
• Tsalei GCB Business Classroom Renovation Project
RFP packets are available for interested parties by contacting Adrian Crosby, Procurement, at 928-724-6686 or via email at adricrosby@dinecollege.edu (Monday through Thursday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm).
• Prebid Meetings will vary - refer to Project RFP for information.
All interested parties must submit proposals in a sealed envelope with the firm name and address clearly written on the envelope. Proposals which are faxed or emailed will not be accepted. Sealed bids accepted by the due date on the RFP. Bids received after this time will not be accepted. Diné College reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, whether within applicable cost limits, and to waive any informality or irregularity in the proposals received whenever such proposal rejection or waiver is in the best interest of Diné College. Submitted proposal for this RFP will become the property of Diné College and become a matter of public record, subject for review.
To be Published in the NAVAJO TIMES July 02, 09, 2020.



VISION STATEMENT: *Achieve Today, Lead Tomorrow*

E. Hwy 160 Navajo Rte 59 • Post Office Box 740 • Kayenta, Arizona 86033
Phone: (928) 697-3800 or 3802 • Fax: (928) 697-3448

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

CERTIFIED POSITIONS:
Teachers*
Computer Teacher/IT Network Support*
PE Teacher/Athletic Manager*

CLASSIFIED POSITIONS:
Bus Driver
School Nurse
Education Technician
Maintenance Worker
Custodian
Executive Secretary/HR Technician

NOTE: All vacancies are Child Care Positions and are subject to favorable background clearances. Employment Applications are available at the Human Resource Office, (928) 697-3800, ext. 1102. CCSI complies with Navajo Employment Laws and Navajo Preferences Employment Act. **POSITIONS ARE OPEN UNTIL FILLED.**

Updated: 05/14/2020

TIISYAAKIN RESIDENTIAL HALL, INC.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1100 West Buffalo Street
Holbrook, AZ 86025
Phone: (928)524-6222

POSITIONS OPEN FOR: SY 2020-2021

1. Part-Time Tutors
2. Part-Time Bus Drivers
3. Business Technician
4. Diné Language & Culture Coordinator
5. Lead Residential Advisor – 1
6. Residential Advisors - 3
7. Security/Firewatch – 2
8. Cooks – 3
9. Custodian - 1

OPEN UNTIL FILLED

Forward the Following Documents:

1. Tiisyaakin Residential Hall Employment Application
2. Current Resume
3. Letter of Interest
4. (3) Current Letters of Recommendations
5. Valid AZ Drivers License
6. Applicants must complete AZ DPS, Federal, and Navajo Nation Background Clearances at their own expense prior to employment
7. Unofficial Transcripts/Certificates
8. Certificate of Indian Blood (if applicable & claiming preference)

Tiisyaakin Residential Hall is an Equal Opportunity Employer and gives Preference in hiring qualified Navajos and Native Americans.

All positions and hiring may be subject to change due to the effects of COVID-19 on schools. Employment Applications are only available on our website at tiisyaakin.org Please mail completed applications and documents to 1100 West Buffalo Street, Holbrook, AZ 86025.

06/08/2020

Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

www.tchealth.org

OPEN UNTIL FILLED

Nursing
Certified Nurse Assistant (ACU)
Clinical Nurse (Peds Acute, ACU)
Clinical Nurse (ICU, ER, OR)
Clinical Nurse – **temps** (ICU, ER, ACU)
Clinical Nurse – **per diem** (ICU, ER)
Clinical Nurse II (Oncology)
Lead Clinical Nurse (ACU)
Nurse Case Manager – Inpatient
Public Health Nurse
Public Health Nurse Manager

Allied Health
Adv. Prac. Pharmacist I/II – Oncology 0.25 FTE
CT Technologist (Dual)
Respiratory Therapist

Medical Staff
Chief of Emergency Services
Deputy Chief of Emergency Medicine
Physician - (Emergency, Internist, Hospitalist, Family Medicine, Ob/GYN, Sacred Peaks)
Psychiatrist

Positions Close on 07/03/2020 @ 5:00 pm

- Assistant Security Manager
- Certified Medical Assistants
- Cook
- Environmental Services Technician
- Environmental Services Technician (Temp)

Positions Close on 07/10/2020 @ 5:00 pm

- Environmental Services Tech (Bodaway-Gap)
- Medical Billing Technician
- Medical Coder I/II/III

For more information visit www.tchealth.org or contact Human Resources at (928) 283-2432 or trchchr@tchealth.org.

TCRHCC is a Navajo/Indian preference employer. Final candidates selected will be subject to a favorable adjudicated background investigation.

Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI),

a well-established company in the ag. industry is recruiting for the following positions:

REGULAR FULL-TIME

- Accounting Clerk - Open Until Filled
- Canal System Technician - Closing 7/10/20
- Control Center Operator - Closing 7/13/20
- Plant Operations Supervisor - Open Until Filled
- Plant Operator - Open Until Filled
- Pumping Plant Electrician - Open Until Filled
- Pumping Plant Mechanic - Open Until Filled
- Welder - Closing 7/10/20

SEASONAL EMPLOYMENT

- Equipment Operator - Open Until Filled
- Laborer - Open Until Filled
- Truck Driver - Open Until Filled

NAPI is an EEO Employer. Hiring will be done in accordance with the Navajo Preference in Employment Act. Printed 7/2/20

Download an application at www.navajopride.com
All inquires about positions, contact **505-566-2698**

ADVERTISE YOUR

- JOBS •
- FOR SALE •
- FOR RENT •

Fax: 928-871-1159
Email: legals@navajotimes.com

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

WINSLOW RESIDENTIAL HALL, INC. (WRHI) is looking for reliable and outgoing individuals to work with Native American students Grade 7th – 12th.

Join our WRHI Team! Great Benefits that include **401(K)**, Short Term Disability, **Life Insurance**, Medical, Dental, Vision plans.

POSITIONS	EMPLOYMENT
Certified Counselor	10-Month FT-Exempt
Food Service Head Cook	10-Month FT-Non-Exempt
Residential Clerk	12-Month FT-Non-Exempt

The following must be included with a WRHI Employment Application:

1. Three (3) letters of recommendation (no relatives or personal friends), DATED WITHIN 6 MONTHS of the application date;
2. A copy of HS diploma or GED and College Transcripts/Degree;
3. Copy of valid Driver's License
4. Copy of Certificate of Indian Blood (*Navajo Preference in Employment Act is applicable*);
5. **Federal and State background check(s)**;
6. **Tribal/Local Background**;
7. Copy of License, Certifications, and/or Credentials required for the position.

For an application or more information, please visit our website at www.wrhiinc.org, or visit our office at Winslow Residential Hall, Inc., 600 N. Alfred Ave., Winslow, AZ 86047

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.
Open until filled
Navajo Preference Law Applicable



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