

Newsletter



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ACIA Director, Board Chairman Step Down

PHOENIX—Ron Lee, executive director of the Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs (ACIA), the state’s legislative liaison with Arizona’s 22 Indian Tribes and Nations, announced that he would step down from his position, effective Oct. 29, 2004. Lee, Dine’ (Navajo), has directed ACIA since September 1998.



ACIA Executive Director Ron Lee, who resigned on Oct. 29

“I have immensely enjoyed my work of building meaningful relations between the tribes and the state,” said Lee. “The past six years have been rewarding in learning the processes by which our state is governed, and in assisting in building stronger, sustainable intergovernmental relationships. I’ve especially enjoyed working with the tribes as well as with the governor, the legislature, local governments and the private sector.”

ACIA was on the verge of closure when Lee took over the reins. In May 1998, the Arizona Auditor General’s office recommended that the Legislature “consider creating a differently structured agency to manage state-tribal relations.” However, Lee decided that the agency simply needed new leadership and direction to meet its potential of

(Continued on page 2)

Mark your calendars for Indian Nations Day!

Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day (INTLD) will be held on **Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2005**. INTLD, which is in its 10th year, brings together tribal, state and local leaders to meet and discuss tribal legislative issues.

This year’s event is hosted by the Arizona State Senate and facilitated by ACIA and the Tribal Liaisons Group.

INTLD was the brainchild of former House Speaker Burton Barr and then-Representative [now retired State Senator] Jack Jackson, Sr.

In 1986, legendary Arizona leader Burton Barr and Jackson were concerned over the lack of communications between the 21 Indian Tribes/Nations and the State of Arizona. Their solution? Get people together to educate themselves about tribal governments, cultures and peoples.

The first Indian Nations Day was held at the Arizona State Fair, a tradition that continues to showcase the rich cultures and traditions of Ari-

zona’s Indian Tribes/Nations to this day.

However, legislators and tribal heads wanted to do more to spark effective dialogue between their governments, and Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day was enacted into law in 1994.

Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day activities tentatively include:

- A special joint legislative session in the Senate Chambers;
- Keynote speeches by newly-elected tribal and state leaders [list to be announced as invitees are confirmed];
- Special presentations and informational sessions during legislative committee meetings;
- Opportunities for tribal leaders and community members to meet both formally and informally with state legisla-

tors; and

- A luncheon on the Senate lawn.

Organizations such as the National Conference of State Legislatures (NSCL), the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and other state Indian commissions and offices have expressed keen interest in Arizona’s Indian Nations Legislative Day as a model for inaugurating similar events in other states.

In 2002, ACIA was given the responsibility of facilitating this vital forum by the Arizona State Legislature.

Planning is currently underway for INTLD; watch the ACIA Web site, your email box, or your favorite news source for more information, or call ACIA at (602) 542-3123.

(Continued from page 1) **ACIA ED steps down** “coordinating frequent, structured, government-to-government communication between the State and the tribes.”

Lee persuaded the Legislature to give him a two-year extension to revitalize ACIA. Through a series of activities, including:

- Reinvigorating the Arizona Indian Town Hall, the state’s premier tribal-state forum;
- Initiating a legislative assistance program, including real-time online bill tracking, technical assistance, training and facilitation for tribal community members who wish to learn how to work the legislative process; stabilizing the staff, which had suffered from high turnover; and
- extensive outreach to tribal communities throughout the state. As a result, ACIA won a 10-year extension in 2000, the longest period permissible by statute. In recognition of ACIA’s track

record in building intergovernmental relationships, the Legislature granted Lee the job of facilitating Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day in 2002. Over the past two years, the tribal attendance and satisfaction with the annual events increased dramatically.

During Lee’s tenure, ACIA continued to build vital bridges between tribal, state and local governments, and with the private sector. Although budget cuts in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks forced ACIA to cut back on some programs, Lee continued to strengthen vital links to business and government entities.

ACIA’s board expressed its regrets at Lee’s resignation, but recognizes his contributions to the agency and are excited as he starts a new phase of his career.

Lee stated that his plans are to

spend time with his family before making any career decisions.

Also announcing his departure was ACIA Board Chairman Todd Honyaoma, Sr. The Hopi council representative from Sipaulovi on Second Mesa did not run for a new council term to accept a new job off the reservation, and consequently is resigning

his position as a board member. The board is also sorry to see Honyaoma step down, but look forward to working with a new Hopi board member upon appointment by the governor.

Pending appointment of a new executive director by Gov. Napolitano, his assistant, Debra Krol will

manage ACIA’s day-to-day operations.



Outgoing ACIA Board Chairman Todd Honyaoma, Sr.

Kent Ware Honored at NARD Opening Ceremony

PHOENIX—Native American Recognition Days (NARD) opened with a special tribute to one of Phoenix’s strongest advocates for Indian rights.

The family of Kent Ware, Sr., who passed away on August 13, received a proclamation from Gov. Janet Napolitano honoring the Kiowa World War II veteran and member of the Kiowa Black Leggings Warrior Society, who was acknowledged as the patriarch of the urban Indian community.

Mr. Ware, a highly decorated WWII Veteran, flew in 33 combat missions as a B-17 gunner, and won several medals including the Purple Heart and four Bronze Stars.

After moving to Phoenix, Mr. Ware was a founding member or instrumental in the founding of the Phoenix Indian Center, Native American Connections, Arizona Affiliation of Indian Centers, Native American Seniors Association, Phoenix Indian Medical Center Auxiliary, Parents Anonymous Committee and the Native American Community Health Care Center. He also spearheaded the establishment of the American Indian Veterans Memorial Organization.

The early morning ceremony, held at the Arizona State Capitol on Oct. 1, was attended by about 200 people. The event was hosted by the Tribal Liaison Group. This group, composed of tribal liaisons in several state agencies, in addition to the proclamation, local Native veterans presented our nation’s colors and the Oyate Singers offered veteran honor songs.

NARD is a six-week celebration of Native culture in the Phoenix metro area; events included the NARD Parade on Central, the NARD Awards, an intertribal powwow and musical performances at the Desert Botanical Garden. For more information, visit www.aznard.com.



Ware family members receive proclamation from Gov. Napolitano honoring patriarch Kent Ware Sr., long-time urban Indian leader



NARD Co-Chair Eric Descheenie and Marnie Hodahkwen, tribal policy adviser

NDNS4Wellness seeks mentors for the Circle of Health

PHOENIX—NDNS4Wellness' Circle of Health Mentoring Program is seeking mentors to provide support for youths seeking to avoid or overcome substance abuse.

NDNS4Wellness/American Indian Prevention Coalition is a community-based non-profit organization which provides substance abuse treatment and prevention services for Native American youth in both the Phoenix metropolitan area, and by contracting with tribes. The group operates five Level 2 treatment homes, a recovery charter school and after-school programs.

The Circle of Health (COH) Mentoring Relationship Program's goals are:

* To support healthy and success-



Sharing The Vision

ful youth development and academic success.

* To connect youth to their tribal cultural and spiritual practices.
* Encourage mentoring within the Native American Community
* implement an effective Circle of Health Mentoring Program for youth within Maricopa County, Phoenix Arizona.

To qualify as a mentor, applicants must be age 21 or older; be alcohol and other drug free; be eligible for or currently possess an

Arizona fingerprint clearance card; provide three verifiable character references; be willing to dedicate 2 hours a week to the Circle of Health Mentoring Relationship Program; be willing to commit to a mentor relationship lasting a minimum of one year with one youth; and agree to attend mandatory trainings and participate in other COH events as their time allows.

For more information, call Tina Austin or Candy Trimble at (602) 258-4477, or email: taustin@ndns4wellness.org.

Applicants may also visit NDNS4Wellness' office, located at 2302 N. 7th St, Phoenix.

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Arizona Site Stewards: Are We Making A Difference?

by Mary Estes, Site Steward Program Coordinator, Arizona State Historic Preservation Office

Today, Arizona has 750 Site Stewards serving in 27 communities across the state. From October 1, 2003 to September 31, 2004, Site Stewards reported 130 situations of site destruction, almost double last year's reports. While most reports of vandalism come from Site Stewards trained and certified by the State Historic Preservation Office, we are not alone in the battle.

Hunters, hikers, and members of jeep clubs, are also stepping forward in an effort to protect our past. Just days before the Secretary of the Interior announced the establishment of the new Agua Fria National Monument on Perry and Black Mesas, two javalina hunters turned in the report of two individuals pot-hunting on Tonto National Forest

property in Squaw Peak Canyon adjacent to the new monument. The report brought a quick response and damage assessment from the U.S. Forest Service and a call from the Bureau of Land Management for additional Site Stewards to monitor the monument. The Bureau of Land Management asked that jeep club members of the Adopt a Trail Program take the Site Steward training to make them more aware of crimes involving the ancestral villages of Native peoples and how to deal with them.

Working together, the Steward, the archaeologist, the law officer, and the tribal, federal and county courts trying cases of antiquity violations, can make a difference. In Federal courts, cases involving the Archaeological Resource Protection Act are taken as serious business. With county attorneys and in local courts, however, we find that there is not

enough time or effort spent on trying to make the case. Archaeological crimes are often seen as a crime against property, while in reality, they are crimes against a culture--Arizona's Native peoples--and robs all of us of that connection to the past.

To counter that perception, the Arizona Site Steward Program, the State Land Department and the Center for Desert Archaeology in Tucson, partner with conducting training to local law enforcement regarding the state antiquity law, how to investigate a crime scene, and how to make a case for archaeological site vandalism. The last training in September, "Stopping the Thieves of Time" was conducted at Window Rock, Arizona and attending by over 30 tribal and county law enforcement officers, including one county prosecuting attorney.

News Digest

Arizona Native American Journalists bring home the gold—silver, and bronze

Several Arizona Native American journalists came home from the UNITY: Journalists of Color Conference in Washington, D.C., held in August bearing gold-not to mention silver, bronze and honorable mention awards at the Tribal Media Award banquet.

Some winners included:

- Mary Kim Titla (San Carlos Apache), KPNX-TV reporter, won 3 first place and 1 second place awards for broadcast news reporting, including the Kinishba Fire



Deb Krol and Mary Kim Titla show off their gold [Loren Tapahe]

- and the Lori Piestewa story
- Paul Natonbah (Navajo), photographer at the *Navajo Times*, won one first place and one second place for sports photography.
- Levi Long, (Navajo) reporter at the *Navajo Times*, won honorable mention for a news piece on crime victims.
- Jack Ahasteen (Navajo), cartoonist at the *Navajo Times*, won first place, second place and honorable mention for individual editorial cartoons.
- Oree Foster (Navajo), reporter for the *Navajo Times*, won third place and honorable mention for articles on former D-Backs pitcher Miguel Batista.
- George Joe (Navajo), freelance writer, won several awards for newsletters and articles in various publications.
- Last but not least, ACIA's own Debra Krol (Salinan/Esselen) won two first place awards for news and feature writing in *American Indian Report* and *Native Peoples Magazine*.

Congratulations to some of the best in Native journalism!

Phoenix Indian Center names new Board Members and new leadership

PHOENIX – The Phoenix Indian Center added expertise in Native American law, Arizona gaming, and internet technology to its professional resources.

The executive leadership includes President of the Board Patty Dimitriou (Navajo), a Principal of Alternatives/Alternativos Multicultural Marketing; Board Vice President Daryl Bradley (Navajo), a Project Manager with Stantec Engineering Services; Board Treasurer Richard Todd, founder of Universal Background Screening; and Board Secretary Veronica Zendejas, Community Relations Director for the Arizona Diamondbacks.

New board members include Jonadev Chadhuri (Muscogee Creek), attorney at Snell & Wilner; Ramon Martinez (Salt River Pima Maricopa), Marketing Coordinator for Casino Arizona; Sheila Morago (Gila River), Executive Director of the Arizona Indian Gaming Association; and April Tinhorn (Hualapai/Navajo), webmaster for the Indian Health Services Regional Office.

Phoenix Indian Center Interim COO, Faron Jack says, "We are particularly excited about the emerging leadership and new resources of this year's board of directors. The breadth and scope of our board's capabilities will propel our organization forward and allow us to more successfully serve the community and our people."

Tohono O'odham break ground on new cultural center

TOPAWA—The Tohono O'odham Nation broke ground for its first Cultural Center and Museum on Oct. 29.

The \$7.1 million complex will include museum exhibits, an elders room, community education classrooms, outdoor gardens, nature trails, a library, dance areas and a repository for artifacts belonging to the tribe that are now housed in non-Indian museums and government archives across the country.

Planners for the nation have been working with the Arizona State

Museum to design the building.

The nation has budgeted \$15.2 million for building, equipping and furnishing the facility, 45,000 square feet of space for a variety of cultural, historical and educational uses.

The museum will be open to the public and the repository and archives available on a more restricted basis to tribal members and to the public for research, said Bernard Siquieros, project administrator for design and construction.

In addition to rotating exhibitions from the repository, the museum will exhibit artwork done by tribal members, especially O'odham youth, he said.

The cultural center is intended as a gathering spot, Siquieros said. "We're going to encourage our community to use it for festivals and celebrations. Out front, there is an area for traditional dancing and outdoor cooking."

The nation has hired a team of archaeologists and museum specialists for the center's operation.

Veletta Canouts, an archaeologist formerly with the National Park Service, will be the administrator. Eric Kaldahl, formerly with Desert Archaeology in Tucson, is curator of education. Anya Montiel, formerly assistant curator of contemporary arts for the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, is curator of collections.

The cultural center and museum is scheduled to open in December 2005. (*Arizona Daily Star*, Oct. 28)

GRIC gives \$1 million to Heard

SACATON—The Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) is giving the Heard Museum. The grant, made to the City of Phoenix on behalf of the Heard Museum, represents the largest grant made by the tribe through its State-Shared Revenue Program, developed as a result of voter-approved continuation of gaming compacts.

The \$1 million grant from the Gila River Indian Community will go toward the Heard Museum's new signature exhibition HOME: Native Peoples in the Southwest, a \$7.6 million project that is scheduled to open to the public May 22, 2005. The exhibition will include more than 2,000 objects from the museum's collection and will serve as the signature experience for visitors coming to the Heard Museum. (Heard Museum, Nov. 4)

Census Bureau Launches AI/AN Multimedia Page

WASHINGTON, D.C.— The U.S. Census Bureau recently released a new version of its American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month multimedia page, offering easy access to the latest data and related materials on this race group.

The Web site highlights population characteristics from the American Community Survey, as well as the 2003 population estimates. Additional media tools, including hyperlinks to data tables, photos, maps, radio spots, tribal information and other useful resources

also are provided.

Some highlights of the newest Census data include:

- As of July 1, 2003, Arizona had the largest numerical increase (29,400) in American Indian/Alaska Native population since April 2000, or 286,280 reporting American Indian or Alaska Native alone;
- Maricopa County, Ariz., had the largest numerical increase between 2000 and 2003 (10,800), or 77,500, in American Indian/Alaska

Native population of any county in the U.S.

To access this page, visit the U.S. Census Bureau home page at www.census.gov, click on "Newsroom" and then to "Multimedia Resources" or go directly to: <http://www.census.gov/pubinfo/www/multimedia/aian2004.html>.

ACIA is in the process of updating its demographics pages on our Website, www.indianaffairs.state.az.us. As we develop new tables, we will upload them for our stakeholders' use.

Washington State Bar Association to add tribal law to exam

RICHLAND, WASH.—At its annual meeting, the Washington State Bar Association's Board of Governors voted unanimously to add an Indian law section to its exam beginning in 2007. Washington's bar association is the second in the nation to add such a requirement.

The change will help ensure that Washington attorneys are competent in Indian law while strengthening state-tribal relations in Washington, said Gabe Galanda, a Seattle Indian lawyer and former chairman of the bar association's Indian law section.

Beginning in the summer of 2007, law students and lawyers hoping to practice law in Washington will have to show that they understand the legal basis for tribal sovereignty, tribes' civil and criminal jurisdictions and the Indian Child Welfare Act, according to a bar association release. Lawyers will not be tested on individual tribes' laws.

The change received widespread support at a bar association meeting in September. Washington attorney general and gubernatorial candidate Christine Gregoire and King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng endorsed the addition, as did Rob McKenna and Deborah Senn, both candidates for attorney general.

Swinomish Tribal Chairman Brian Cladoosby congratulated the bar association "on recognizing 150 years after our treaties were signed that it is important for Washington lawyers to demonstrate competency in working with the first governments of

Washington state."

"All Washington citizens will benefit from this important change," said Cladoosby, who is also chairman of the Association of Washington Tribes.

Losch said he studied Indian law while in law school, but is often surprised by how often his colleagues encounter it.

"It's almost unavoidable these days," he said. "The fact that Indian tribes are factoring more into the economic market place and the relationship between governments ... (means lawyers) need to understand the basics of Indian law generally that deal with the powers of jurisdiction."

Although many people think of bitterly fought lawsuits when they think of legal contact between the tribes and local or state governments, Loesch said much of the interaction is much more benign. Lawyers for the tribes and local governments spend a lot of time constructing the mundane documents of government, such as mutual aid agreements to social service contracts,

"There's a very broad array of subjects in which we deal with the other governments," he said.

Galanda said the Washington bar association's decision will likely impact Oregon and Idaho's bar exams, and may prompt changes on tests around the country.

"With dialogue on this issue rapidly spreading throughout the national bar and Indian country," he said, "it is only a matter of time before

Indian law becomes an integral part of many state bar exams." [Courtesy *Skagit Valley Herald*, Oct. 24, 2004]



Dr. Donald Warne (Oglala Lakota Sioux) speaks on traditional cultural healing in tribal communities at the Governor's Speaker Series on Nov. 10.



Marnie Hodahkwen, tribal policy advisor, and Dr. Warne.

Hualapai Tribal Member Tapped for U.S. Marshal Position

A member of the Hualapai Nation of Arizona with 30 years of law enforcement experience is being tapped as the next U.S. Marshal for Nevada.

Ted Quasula would be the first Native American to hold the prestigious post. He is being recommended by Sen. John Ensign (R-Nevada), who called him a dedicated public servant.

"Ted's life-long commitment to law enforcement, his professionalism and his incredible experience make him an extremely qualified candidate," Ensign said in a statement this week.

Once confirmed by the U.S. Senate, Quasula, who is currently



Ted Quasula
[courtesy Western Community Policing Center]

the chief of police for the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe of Nevada, would handle a variety of duties in a state home to nearly two dozen tribes and where 90 percent of the land base is owned by the federal government.

Quasula has over 30 years' experience as a law enforcement official, including being the director of law enforcement at the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He rose to the top post in October 1990 after holding a variety of positions within the agency, including a field criminal investigator.

It's one of many law enforcement jobs he has held since first becoming a police officer in Flagstaff, Arizona, more than 30 years ago.

One of Quasula's biggest concerns was the lack of adequate police services for large, remote res-

ervations. BIA and tribal cops are often required to patrol vast land bases alone, a situation that has led to the deaths of several officers, including at least one in Nevada.

In 2000, Quasula retired from the BIA but has remained active in tribal issues. He was a president of the National Native American Law Enforcement Association and started a consulting group. He came out of retirement in January 2001 to work for the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe, whose lands are located within Las Vegas city limits.

Nevada's U.S. Marshal post has been vacant since July, when Richard Winget retired after a little over a year on the job.

[courtesy Las Vegas Review-Journal]

Voices of Civil Rights records FMYN stories

FORT MCDOWELL INDIAN COMMUNITY—Fort McDowell receives many visitors anxious to experience golf, gaming and galloping horses in the desert. However, the visitors who came to the Fort McDowell Recreation Center on Sept. 2 differed from the nation's usual tourists: a team of award-winning journalists made a very special visit to Fort McDowell to collect stories of the tribe's struggle for equal rights and self-government.

The Voices of Civil Rights Project (VOCR), a collaboration of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights and the Library of Congress, crossed the nation in search of first-hand accounts of people's experiences with winning equal rights for their communities. Fort McDowell is the 10-week tour's only reservation stop, said AARP representative Shelly Buckingham. The tour ran through Oct. 11.

"We are excited and honored," said Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation President Raphael Bear. "Many elders have struggled to bring the promise of the American dream to our commu-

nity Without their struggles and sacrifices, we would not have what we have today."

Bear also related some of Fort McDowell's history, including the massacre at Skeleton Cave, the forced removal to San Carlos, the works of Yavapai leader Wassaja, including the early decades of the reservation, and the Orme Dam fight.

"We have had to fight for our land and for our right to vote," said Bear. "We understand we can't count on anyone but ourselves."

Next, the tribe showed DVDs recounting the history of voting rights in Arizona and the recent award-winning documentary produced by the Fort McDowell youth on the Orme Dam struggle.

Journalists then fanned out to capture stories from community members and visitors. Among those who told their stories were FMYN elders Diane Dorchester, who spoke of the fight to stop construction of Orme Dam, and Gilbert Jones, Jr., who organized protesters during the tribe's standoff with the FBI in 1992.

The writers and videographers

were also treated to lunch at the Fort McDowell Casino.

The journalists were amazed at Fort McDowell's stunning lands, friendly people and strong community. One journalist, videographer Hannah Rozensweig of New York City, said that she wants to return just to visit someday.

Other journalists were impressed by Fort McDowell's youth's knowledge of their history and culture, a contrast to most of the communities visited during the VOCR tour, where the new generation is not involved in current issues or even interested in learning their past.

The consensus among the group? "We didn't get to spend enough time here," said VOCR photographer Lester Sloan.

There's still time to share your story before the Dec. 31 deadline by visiting the VOCR Web site at www.voicesofcivilrights.org. Stories will be stored at the Library of Congress and will be made available to educators and scholars, said Buckingham.

ACIA Board of Commissioners

ACIA Established 1953; A.R.S. 41-542

Board Members:

Todd Honyaoma, Sr., Chairman (928) 734-3000
Hopi Tribe
Community Council Member, The Hopi Tribe

Cora Maxx-Phillips, Vice-Chairperson (928) 871-7910
Navajo Nation
Director, Division of Navajo Nation Health

Johnny Endfield (928) 338-4346
White Mountain Apache Tribe
Vice Chairman, White Mountain Apache Tribe

Lucinda Hughes-Juan (520) 792-8090
Tohono O'odham Nation
Tohono O'odham Economic Development Authority

Aaron Mapatis (928) 769-2216
Hualapai Nation
Vice-Chairman, Hualapai Nation

Rodney Martin (928) 305-9176
Non-Indian Member
Martin Consulting

Paul Nosie, Jr. Chairman (928) 475-2653
San Carlos Apache Tribe
Planner, San Carlos Tribal Detention Center

Eric Sexton, Secretary (623) 907-4608
Non-Indian Member
Area Manager, Northern Arizona, Community First National Bank

Ex-Officio Members:

The Honorable Janet Napolitano, Governor of Arizona
Representative: Marnie Hodahkwen, Policy Advisor for Tribal Affairs
(602) 542-1442, FAX (602) 542-7601

The Honorable Terry Goddard, Attorney General
Representative: Craig Soland, Special Counsel for Litigation
(602) 542-7761, FAX (602) 542-4085

The Honorable Tom Home, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Representative: Karen Butterfield, Associate Superintendent
(602) 542-4391, FAX (602) 542-3050

Catherine Eden, Director, Department of Health Services
Representative: Michael Allison, Native American Liaison
(602) 542-1025, FAX (602) 542-1062

Victor Mendez, Director, Arizona Department of Transportation
Representative: Don Sneed, Sr., Planner ADOT-TPG
(602) 255-8140 FAX (602) 256-7563

David Berns, Department of Economic Security
Representative: Cheron Watchman, Community Liaison, Intergovernmental Operations
(602) 542-0284 FAX (602) 542-4197

Gilbert Jimenez, Director, Department of Commerce
Representative: Annie Alvarado, Director, Rural Development Office
(602) 280-8135, FAX (602) 280-8139

Margie Emmermann, Director, Arizona Department of Tourism
Representative: Dawn Melvin, Native American Tourism Development Manager
(602) 364-3707, FAX (602) 364-3701

Note: The Commission is composed of 7 Indian members and 2 non-Indian members-at-large appointed by the Governor, and 8 ex-officio members.

OFFICE HOURS: 8:00 AM—5:00 PM, M-F

Walk-ins welcome; please call ahead if you need to meet with a specific staff member

ACIA Executive Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Open
DEPUTY (ACTING) DIRECTOR: Debra Krol
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY: Vera Phillips

Sam Billison Passes On

WINDOW ROCK—Navajo Code Talker Samuel Billison, who served on the Navajo Nation Council and was the longtime president of the Code Talker Association, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 17, of heart complications.

Billison joined the Code Talkers, a group of Navajo Marines who invented a military code based on the Navajo language to confound the Japanese during World War II. They used the code and their native language to communicate troop movements and orders.

Billison, 79, was born in a hogan in Ganado, Ariz., and came from a traditional family, family members said Wednesday. Billison, a medicine man's son, graduated from Albuquerque Indian School and obtained his associate of arts degree from Bacone College in Bacone, Okla, his son, Samuel Billison Jr. said. He earned his doctorate of education from the University of Arizona. Billison has the distinction of being the first Navajo of the Navajo Code Talkers to earn a doctorate degree.

Billison was a certified K-12 teacher, principal and superintendent. He helped educate thousands of Navajo students throughout Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

Billison served on the Navajo Nation Council for two terms representing his home chapter of Kinlichee, Ariz.

"Most notably, Dr. Billison was president of the Navajo Code Talkers Association. He served in the United States Marine Corps, Reconnaissance Company, 5th Marine Division, and participated in the capture of Iwo Jima," Samuel Billison Jr. said.

"He also served in the Occupational Forces in Japan after WW II. He has been instrumental in obtaining national recognition of the Navajo Code Talkers and has traveled widely on their behalf making presentations to various organizations on how the code was developed and used during World War II. He even provided the voice for the limited edition GI Joe Code Talker action figure and donated all the proceeds he received to the Navajo Code Talker's Association," Samuel Billison Jr. said.

Dr. Billison is survived by his wife, Patsy Billison, five sons and seven grandchildren.

Cards and condolences can be sent to: Attn: Samuel Billison Jr., Box 416, Window Rock, AZ 86515. [courtesy Farmington Daily Times]



Sam Billison [left], at NA Recognition Day at Bank One Ballpark, 2003.

Calendar of Events

- ⇒ **Oct. 1-Nov. 17: Native American Recognition Days.** It's time again for the Phoenix area's largest celebration of Native culture. Miss Indian Arizona, NARD Parade on Central, NARD Awards, etc. Visit www.aznard.com for complete schedule of events.
- ⇒ **Nov. 17-21: Orme Dam Victory Days.** Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. Call 480-816-7211 or visit www.ftmcdowell.org.
- ⇒ **Nov. 18: 2nd Annual Communities Helping Natives Breathe Easier.** Phoenix Indian Medical Center. Call 279-5262.
- ⇒ **Nov. 20: 5th Annual Gila River Artists' Market.** Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort, Gila River Indian Community. Call 520-562-6120.
- ⇒ **Nov. 20: CRIT 4th Annual Fall Gathering.** Parker. Call 928-669-6757.
- ⇒ **Dec. 2-3: ANEAC Economic Summit.** Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino Resort, Ak-Chin Community. Call 520-709-0058.
- ⇒ **Dec. 6-10: 2nd National Tribal Districts & Conservation Advisory Councils Conference.** Flamingo Hotel, Las Vegas. Call P.J. Workman, Choctaw Nation, OTCAC Chairman @ 918-567-2321.
- ⇒ **Jan. 10: 1st Session, 47th Arizona Legislature Begins.** Arizona State Capitol.
- ⇒ **Jan. 18: Indian Nations and Tribes Legislative Day.** Arizona State Capitol. Call 602-542-3123.

Arizona Community Action

- ⇒ **American Indian Chamber of Commerce:** Meetings usually held on the 3rd Friday of each month. Call Margaret Rodriguez at 480-497-1997 or email margaret@authumki.com.
- ⇒ **Arizona American Indian Tourism Association (AAITA):** Organized to promote "environmentally acceptable, culturally appropriate and economically sustainable" Native American tourism. Meets quarterly. 602-443-1400.
- ⇒ **American Indian Veterans Memorial Organization (AIVMO):** Organized to build a national memorial to honor all American Indian veterans. All veterans and their families are welcome. Board of Directors meeting is held the 1st Wednesday of each month at 7:00PM, at Arizona State Veterans' Home, 4141 N. 3rd Street, Room 107A, Phoenix. 602-954-0115.
- ⇒ **Urban Indian Coalition:** Meets at locations throughout the Valley. Call Bonny Beach at 602-258-4477.
- ⇒ **Native American Recognition Days (NARD) Planning Committee:** Call Eric Descheenie at (602) 542-3711 for information or to volunteer for events.
- ⇒ **American Indian Prevention Coalition.** Hosts conferences on wellness, substance abuse and domestic violence issues. Call Sharon Cini at (602) 258-4477, or go to <http://www.ndns4wellness.org>.
- ⇒ **Tohono O'odham Community Action.** Cooperative venture in Sells that aids traditional artisans and farmers. Call Terroll Johnson at 520-383-4966.

The Editor of the ACIA Newsletter is proud to be a member of—

**Native American
Journalists Association**



*Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs
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