



Indian Country

THIS WEEK FROM

TODAY

THE PREMIER E-NEWSLETTER SERVING THE NATIONS, CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE

A Letter from the Publisher

Shekóli. During winter sessions for the National Congress of American Indians recently, I had the honor of meeting some incredibly strong, intelligent and young Indian leaders. They had been brought together in Washington, D.C. to receive awards as 2015's Champions of Change from the Center for Native American Youth (CNAY). An affiliate of the Aspen Institute, CNAY is a youth-directed organization founded by former Sen. Byron Dorgan of North Dakota, himself a long-time champion of Indian country. The awards ceremony was a celebration of the impact that positive programs can have on struggling communities. The event was also well attended, with Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell in attendance.



to develop a way to overcome adversity and thrive. The honorees found strength in the sacred power of water, the enlightenment that comes from speaking in one's native tongue, the beauty and satisfaction in carving and paddling one's own canoe, and the endless rewards of a talking circle.

The balloon in Champion Carin Young's project releases water when it hits the ground and serves as a symbolic representation of how talking about our challenges helps release our fear and shame, thereby nourishing us. Today, Indians have the means to explore and share ideas for the future course of our peoples as never before. The CNAY and its Champions for Change are but one example of

how communication among our communities is key, and an encouraging sign of hope.

Na kî' wa,

Ray Halbritter

As is related in this week's feature "The Strength of Native Youth," several of the five award winners had suffered themselves before taking steps to improve their lives. After she struggled with attempts at suicide following an attack on her person, one young woman started "The Warrior Circle Project." It is a safe place for teenagers and young people to converse at a local community center. A Native Hawaiian woman struck upon a healing process involving a water balloon for other kids who had endured molestation. A unifying theme among the projects was incorporating traditional knowledge

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In Washington, Cause for Hope

Donna Ennis, the community center manager for the Fond du Lac Reservation, is heartened by current Indian Country initiatives from both the White House and Congress:

President Obama has shown that he is seriously committed to Indian issues. He has brokered passage of the reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, the Tribal Law and Order Act, and the \$3.4 billion *Cobell* settlement. As part of his budget request to Congress, federal funding for tribal contract support costs for three years beginning in 2017 will be moved from the “discretionary” to

“mandatory non-discretionary” category within the federal budget. This is a huge step in recognizing self-governance efforts by tribes.

Indian Country is also experiencing federal support in recognition of its trust responsibility. Sens. John Barrasso (R-Wyoming) and Jon Tester (D-Montana) recently introduced the bipartisan Department of the Interior Tribal Self-Governance Act of 2015 (S. 286). The bill amends the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act and streamlines the self-governance process, making it easier and more efficient for tribes to carry out federal programs.

“Self-determination and self-governance help promote local tribal decision-

making for important programs that affect their communities,” said Barrasso. “For years, tribes have faced bureaucratic roadblocks when trying to implement these programs. By making key improvements to the way self-governance works in the Department of the Interior, this bill gives tribes the tools they need to tailor federal programs to the needs of their local communities.”

“Time and again,” said Tester, “we’ve seen that tribal leaders and councils who are elected to serve their communities are best equipped to help folks on the ground. This bill gives tribal governments the flexibility they need for greater self-governance.”

These efforts are applauded. <http://bit.ly/1B84w1C> ☞

The Politics of Our ‘Race’

Dina Gilio-Whitaker (Colville), a research associate at the Center for World Indigenous Studies, points up the politics that lie at the heart of the Indian “race” as defined in the United States today:

We live in a race-based society, created by a government that has been fixated on racial difference since its 18th century beginnings. When American Indians talk about their heritage and history, they aren’t classifying themselves based on racial difference.

It was the U.S. government that inflicted (and continues to inflict) this socially

constructed ideology on Indians as a way to ultimately claim their lands and assimilate them once and for all into American society. It is woven into this country’s fabric. This is one of the things scholars mean when they say settler colonialism is a structure, not an historic event.

The concept of blood quantum is still maintained as a racial marker for all Native people. Native persons who interact with the federal government today do so on the basis of their blood quantum—paradoxically, as a test of their authenticity as a Native person. The Native who was supposed to be “vanishing” must always prove that he or she has not vanished, based on racial

quantification criteria determined by the federal government. It is a double bind that few non-Natives seem to understand.

The distinction American Indians are talking about when they talk about their heritage is a political distinction, not a racial distinction. Native Americans as citizens of Native nations today fight for a “degree of measured separatism” in order to preserve their lands and cultures, and resist assimilation that has been forced on them by the United States. It is a conscious resistance to the universalizing melting pot theory of Americanism. <http://bit.ly/1BOVzxP> ☞

The Lesson of Plenty Coups

David E. Wilkins (Lumbee) finds modern inspiration in the 19th century vision quest of Crow Chief Plenty Coups after the demise of the buffalo and his tribe’s confinement to reservations:

As the time of trouble was upon the Crow people, the nine-year-old Plenty Coups undertook a vision quest. He was visited by a powerful dream in which a voice told him about the unique qualities of the chickadee.

The messenger described the small bird to Plenty Coups, noting that while lacking in size and physical strength, it had a

strong, industrious mind. An excellent listener, it paid close attention to all that it saw and heard without being intrusive. Plenty Coups was instructed to emulate these skills by exercising his body, but above all he was to train and expand his mind.

Upon his return to camp, an exhausted Plenty Coups described his dream to the community elders who then were responsible for interpreting his experience. Plenty Coups’ prophetic dream and the elders’ interpretation helped the Crow Nation make necessary cultural adjustments to their radically altered lifestyle. They used the strength, audacity and bravery of a tiny bird to navigate in a world that had turned

cruel and chaotic.

The vision provided the Crow with the ability to not merely survive, but to devise genuine, constructive, even honorable ways to move forward. Although subject to vacillating and debilitating federal policies like land allotment, forced assimilation, inconsistent treaty enforcement and BIA paternalism, the Crow are still very much alive and remain within their original territory.

The manner in which Plenty Coups and his people imaginatively and strategically coped with their conflicts provides lessons we might draw upon as we move ever deeper into the 21st century. <http://bit.ly/1FNQIdk> ☞

41st Annual Denver March Pow★Wow

March 20-22, 2015 Denver Coliseum



*Miss Jordynn Lee Paz
(Apsaalooke Nation)
2014 Denver March Powwow Princess*



- ◆Jordynn Paz Specials
- Women's (16-35) Traditional
- Northern vs. Southern vs. Crow Style
- Married Couples Dance
- ◆"Youth Enrichment" Young Men & Women (15-24) Grass & Jingle
- ◆Lauren Frank Giago "Visiting Royalty"
- ◆Tiffany Paskemin Women's Jingle (18+)
- ◆Lakota & Wambdi Clairmont Father/Son(s) Contest
- ◆G.B. Gillette Sisters Team Dance (Min. 3 Sisters by Birth) 17 & under and 18 & Over



- ◆Maurice Gardner (Boys Fancy Dance (10-17)
- ◆Larissa Evelyn No Braid \$500 add on to Teen Girls No. Traditional
- ◆KK Sage Women's Golden Age
- ◆Andrea Gopher Ramage Memorial - Men's Fancy (35+)
- ◆Keith Fox Memorial - Men's Grass
- ◆John Fox Memorial - Men's No. Traditional
- ◆"Wicaglata"
- ◆Cynthia Rouillard Memorial add on Women's Jingle 1st place full set Beadwork

"Aakiiwiiluxbaake dii sholadah, duak bii ahxbuck baaliigaamaadala Denver March Powwow kootahnank. Aho! I would like to personally invite everyone from all tribes and cultures to come and celebrate the 2015 Denver March Powwow. I hope to see you there and safe travels to all. Thank you!"

*"likualasaash"~ One Who Puts
Others Before Herself*

March 25-27, 2016 ★ March 24-26, 2017 ★ March 23-25, 2018

www.denvermarchpowwow.org

denvermarchpowwow@comcast.net

Cabinet Officials Back Obama on Indian Programs

White House officials have emphasized their support for President Obama's request to add approximately \$20.8 billion in funding for Indian programs in the next fiscal year, doing so at a hearing of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs on February 25.

"These increases support improved access to federal programs and resources, particularly focused on youth through the Administration's newly established Generation Indigenous initiative," Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Kevin K. Washburn told the committee. "Investments like these will provide real and sustainable improvements in Indian country."

The president's budget for FY2016 includes \$1 billion to improve Indian education and \$6.3 billion for the Indian Health Service (IHS). The budget applies to more than 20 federal departments that serve Indian country and represents an increase of \$1.5 billion, or eight percent, over the 2015 budget.

"The funding increases proposed in the president's budget are part of an 'all of government' approach to addressing tribal needs, with a particular focus on AI/AN [American Indian/Alaska Native] youth," said Yvette Roubideaux, senior advisor for the IHS. "The increases will help us improve the quality of and access to care for the patients we serve by expanding access to priority health care services that our patients need, which will result in better quality and health outcomes."

Rodger Boyd, deputy assistant secretary of Native American Programs at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, also testified. But committee chairman John Barrasso (R-Wyoming) expressed disappointment that no one from the Justice Department appeared before the committee.

"Individual tribal members and Indian country as a whole cannot afford to be ignored by the administration's Attorney General," he said. <http://bit.ly/1M182hb> 🌐

Shoshone-Paiute's \$60 Million Water Rights Are Assured BY VINCENT SCHILLING

The Obama administration has signed a historic agreement guaranteeing the water rights of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes in Nevada. The agreement, signed by Interior Secretary Sally Jewell on February 27, will make \$60 million available to develop water resources, irrigation projects and facilities for the Duck Valley Reservation.

"We are proud that today's agreement helps provide the Shoshone-Paiute with the water supplies and facilities they need in the Duck Valley Reservation," Jewell said. "This agreement is the latest step in fulfilling the administration's commitment to resolving water rights in a manner that benefits Indian tribes and provides certainty to water users."

"Water is life," said Tribal Chairman Lindsey Manning, who gave a traditional blessing at the signing ceremony. "The value of clean water cannot be overestimated. The homeland of the Shoshone and Paiute is in the arid West, where the adjudication of water rights is increasingly critical as the overall population rises, and economic uses increase, competing with the natural demand."

He added, "We are pleased that the United States has honored the water rights of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley. I personally am honored to sign on behalf of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation because I have witnessed the efforts of many people, from many jurisdictions, in many capacities, over many years to reach this point of a negotiated water rights settlement agreement."

"This is the sixth water rights settlement that we have signed on behalf of the Obama administration," Jewell noted, "but we are certainly not done, there is still a lot of work under way in different parts of Indian country."

<http://bit.ly/1M1xPG4> 🌐

Wisconsin Mine Is Put on Hold BY MARY ANNETTE PEMBER

The iron-ore company Gogebic Taconite (GTAC) has announced that it is closing its office in Hurley, Wisconsin, thereby putting plans to build a huge open pit iron ore mine in the pristine Penokee Mountains in northern Wisconsin on hold. The project has ignited a fiery debate among mining supporters, tribes, local residents and environmentalists.

The proposed 4.5 mile-wide mine would produce 8 million tons of finished taconite annually. It would be located directly over the Great Northern Divide and the Bad River Watershed—

through which many streams flow directly into Lake Superior, and through the famed wild rice beds on the Bad River Ojibwe Reservation.

As concerns arose about potential environmental damage, however, the Wisconsin Federation of Tribes asked the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to invoke the 404c portion of the Clean Water Act to halt progress on the mine. The EPA has made no official move to intervene.

But according to GTAC, complications have arisen because the mining location contains more wetlands than the company had initially anticipated. "It's unfor-

tunate that the federal requirements for mitigating wetlands make it cost-prohibitive for Gogebic to move forward at this time," said Laurel Thomspson, the spokeswoman for Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker.

Bad River Ojibwe Reservation community members are "thrilled" by the news, said resident Marylu Salawater. "We are grateful for the reprieve," she said. "We were lulled into taking our resources for granted. Now we know that they need protection."

"We will continue to investigate the possibility of pursuing a permit to mine the Upson site," GTAC said in a statement. <http://bit.ly/1aK72mc> 🌐

Karuk, Yurok Tribes Bringing Broadband to Remote California Homes BY LYNN ARMITAGE

A \$12 million Native-based project to install an estimated 82.3 miles of fiber optic cable in five communities in Humboldt County, in a remote section of northern California, could kick off as early as next month. The long-anticipated effort by the Karuk Tribe, in collaboration with the Yurok Tribe and California Public Utility Commission (CPUC), is known as the Klamath River Rural Broadband Initiative.

In October 2013, the Karuk Tribe was awarded \$6.6 million by the CPUC for the broadband project. Both the Yurok and Karuk Tribes will provide matching funds to satisfy terms of the grant.

"Communications in rural areas have always been difficult," said Karuk Tribal Chairman Russell Attebery. "The project will help solve the communications problems we have faced."

The initiative will begin with the town of Orleans, whose residents can only access the Internet if they can afford satellite or have dial-up service. The broadband initiative should help the Orleans community in several practical ways.

"The Karuk Tribe operates the health clinic in town, so this fiber optic connection will give them access to electronic health records more quickly, and allow them to participate in high-definition video conferencing," said Eric Cutright, IT director for the Karuk Tribe.

Broadband access should also make schooling easier in the Klamath-Trinity Joint Unified School District. It is expected that California schools will be converting to a new computer-based testing system this spring, which will pose a problem to towns with limited Internet access.

The Federal Communications Commission estimates that less than 10 percent of residents on tribal lands have broadband access. <http://bit.ly/1w4gYR4> ☎

Senate Fails to Override Obama Veto of Keystone XL Pipeline

The Senate's attempt to override President Obama's veto of legislation that would have forced through the Keystone XL pipeline fell short by five votes on March 4.

Pipeline proponents needed 67 votes to override Obama's veto of what has been termed the Keystone XL Pipeline Act. The bill aimed to push through the \$8-billion, 1,700-mile-long conduit from Alberta, Canada to the Gulf Coast by circumventing the State Department approval process that is necessary to build that portion of the pipeline that would cross Canada's border with the United States. The president said he vetoed the bill because he sought to preserve the State Department approval process.

Republican proponents of the pipeline said they would still fight for its construction. "We will continue working on this important infrastructure project," Sen. John Hoeven (R-North Dakota) told *The New York Times*. "Another option is to attach this legislation to other energy, infrastructure or appropriations legislation that the president won't want to veto. The will of the American people and Congress is clear."

Environmental groups, by contrast, who have long opposed the pipeline, applauded Obama's veto. Among other arguments they have invoked is the Environmental Protection Agency's recent assessment that mining the Alberta oil sands, for oil to be sent through the pipeline, would significantly add to the carbon emissions that are primarily responsible for global warming.

"This dirty tar sands oil pipeline is simply not in America's national interest, and this new Congress should stop wasting its time and start acting in our national interest," said Danielle Droitsch, Canada Project director at the Natural Resources Defense Council. <http://bit.ly/1G0zARN> ☎

Navajo Nation In Jeopardy of Losing Unspent Housing Money BY ANNE MINARD

The Navajo Nation is concerned that federal legislation could cost the tribe more than \$80 million this year in funds for housing projects.

At issue is H.R. 360, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2015, introduced by Rep. Steve Pearce (R-New Mexico) in January. "Pearce's bill for the most part is very good and the Navajo Nation supports it," said Carolyn Drouin, attorney for the Navajo Nation Office of the President and

Vice President.

But one portion of the bill is "troublesome," she said. That is Section 302, which seeks to rein in funds carried over year to year when they are not spent. The current version of H.R. 360 specifies that carry-over funds for each tribe will be limited to three times that tribe's yearly funding allocation.

Under the provision, the Navajo Housing Authority would lose \$81 million in housing funds this year alone, which would then be redistributed to other tribes, said Aneva Yazzie, the chief executive officer of the Navajo Housing Authority. Therefore, last month the

Navajo Nation Council passed a resolution declaring an emergency over the potential loss of housing funds that the bill proposes.

"The Navajo Nation has needs," said Navajo Nation House Speaker LoRanzo Bates. "We have an unemployment rate in excess of 60 percent. We lack infrastructure. When you lack infrastructure, the housing needs and the economic development needs of the Nation cannot move forward."

Pearce's office declined to comment. Previous versions of the bill had failed to make it to the floor of the Senate. <http://bit.ly/1BUg6B2> ☎

Home Safe Home

Secure spaces help Native domestic violence survivors **BY LYNN ARMITAGE**

Bottom Line: *Many Native women are at risk of domestic abuse. But a new housing program is addressing the situation.*

When Irene Moses was 13, she fell into a relationship with a 24-year-old man and ran away from her foster home to be with him. At 14, she became pregnant with his child. That's when the abuse began. "He beat me, threw me down and threatened to kill me," said the Lummi Native.

And yet Moses stayed with her abuser for another eight years, even marrying him. During that time, she said, the man caused her to suffer a miscarriage, kidnapped her and their one-week-old daughter (their second child), and beat them both.

Despite the violence, the young mother always returned to her abuser because she had nowhere else to go. "There weren't a lot of women's shelters at the time that would take a teenager with two children," Moses said. Staying in an abusive home, she added, was preferable to being homeless.

The story is not unusual. But an innovative local housing program is now offering Moses—and Native women like her—hope and possibility.

The initiative is a joint effort between the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) and the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV), a nonprofit network of more than 70 programs, including a number of tribal programs. At its core is the mission of finding permanent, safe housing for victims so that they need never again live with their abusers out of desperation. Over the last three years, the program has helped 681 domestic violence victims and their children rebuild their lives.

"We have known for a long time that lack of financial resources and not having a safe place to live was the number-one

reason why people who are in an abusive relationship and leave have to eventually return," said WSCADV Director of Strategic Initiatives Judy Chen.

Three tribes were chosen for the pilot project: the Lummi Nation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians and the Kalispel Tribe of Indians. Thirty-five percent of the program participants were Native women.

"We have a great number of tribes in the state and are very aware of domes-

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Now they just look
out to be looking.'*

tic violence on reservations," said Chen. "Finding solutions that are rooted in Native communities is very important to us."

The four pillars of the program are 1) offering temporary financial help; 2) locating housing for survivors and advocating for them with landlords; 3) securing solutions to give victims voice and choice on where they want to live; and 4) establishing partnerships between advocates and community organizations.

The program was based on a model that has already worked in the low-income housing and homeless field. "The philosophy is that housing is a human right," said Chen, "and the problems in people's lives that may have led to homelessness, such as losing a job or medical issues, are best dealt with when somebody is housed and they don't have to worry day to day about where they are

going to live."

Three years into the program, its success is evident. "After 18 months, 96 percent of survivors were still in their own housing—even those with very low incomes," said Chen. Eighty-four percent of participants, she said, felt safer after participating in the DVHF program: "Some women said, 'My kids don't look out the window in fear anymore. Now they just look out the window to be looking.'"

Bear Hughes, a Spokane tribal council member, said that the \$250,000 his tribe received from the program enabled 35 women (mostly Spokane enrolled Natives) to settle into permanent, safe housing over a period of three years. The biggest challenge, he said, was trying to find housing on the reservation, because many women felt safer surrounded by their families and a familiar Native community.

"We lack housing on the rez for victims," he said. "It's something we are working on as a government. Maybe in about six more months to a year, we will have a domestic violence shelter here."

Lummi Victims of Crime, the first Native American domestic violence shelter in Washington, also received a \$250,000 grant from DVHF and achieved success. "Over the past three years, we were able to help 134 women move out of our shelter and transitional housing and into their own homes," said Nikki Finkbonner, a Lummi Victims of Crime coordinator. "Of those, only five have lost their homes."

As for Moses, she is now a happily 32-year-old married mother of six (two are step-children), safe in her own four-bedroom home in Bellingham, Washington. She is free from the fear of homelessness that had trapped her in an abusive relationship. Her children go to school every day, she has earned her GED and she is working on a degree in marine biology.

"I never lost hope," she said. "I couldn't have done any of this without DVHF."

<http://bit.ly/1A1nKTR> 🌸

Energy Boom, Culture Clash

Diné and Pueblo call for oversight **BY LAURA PASKUS**



New oil wells in northwestern New Mexico are bringing prosperity to some residents and environmental worries to others.

Bottom Line: *In northwestern New Mexico, energy dollars are on the rise—and may be leading some tribal residents down the wrong path.*

Traffic roars along U.S. Highway 550 on the Navajo Nation as the four-lane thoroughfare cuts through the tiny reservation towns of Counselor and Lybrook.

Nearby, oil rigs churn and burn away, 24 hours a day, seeking to squeeze crude from the Mancos shale thousands of feet below. During the early stages of drilling, the rigs flare off gases, their flames stretching 30, 50 or

more feet into the air.

Residents are nervous.

The federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has approved about 100 new oil wells in the area known as the San Juan Basin over the past few years. The Navajo Nation has wells on its lands, predominately concentrated in San Juan County, Utah.

But the tribal government has no jurisdiction on the private lands along the reservation's eastern border, where the new oil drilling is occurring. And that means that while the new development can mean jobs, revenues and a boost to the local economy, it is also

bringing woes and worries to some local communities.

"The land is just being trampled," said Lori Goodman, a volunteer with the activist group Diné Citizens Against Ruining Our Environment (CARE).

The eastern edge of the Navajo Nation is a checkerboard of state, county and federal land, tribal lands, and allotments deeded to individual Navajo families by the federal government in the late 19th century. The rules vary for each jurisdiction.

Currently, drilling here is taking place on allotments, but with no regard to the effects on the surrounding

landholders. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and tribal officials are not adequately overseeing the development or educating tribal members about its impacts, critics say.

"They [BIA officials] need to get out of their offices and get out here and take a drive," said allottee Etta Arviso, "and see what's going on with the community's safety."

In many cases, one family can sell its lease and reap the payout, while those living nearby must deal with the traffic and noise, as well as the potential for water or air contamination or dangerous blowouts.

"Grandma and grandpa are selling their leases," Goodman said. She noted that many of these elderly people might not speak or read English or know the long-term implications of what they are signing: "They get \$60,000, \$80,000. They've never seen money like that, and they're not understanding the value."

Indeed, during the first six months of 2014, companies paid area families more than \$72 million in what are termed "bonus payments" for the rights to drill, Goodman said, citing numbers she received from the Navajo Nation.

Diné CARE is not the only group that has expressed concern over the situation. Others include the San Juan Citizens Alliance, the Western Environmental Law Center, WildEarth Guardians and the Sierra Club.

And in 2014 the All Pueblo Council of Governors—representing all of New Mexico's 19 pueblos and Ysleta del Sur in Texas—formally asked the federal government to protect all archaeological sites and sacred properties associated with Chaco Canyon National Historical Park, which may be at risk from the drilling.

"Chaco overall in general is a sacred site and a homeland to the pueblos, and especially to the Zuni people," said Mark Martinez, a former tribal councilman with the Pueblo of Zuni. "We call that our spiritual place and part of our umbilical cord to our migration route. So that's very important to us."

In December, the BLM agreed to defer the sale of new oil leases close to Chaco Canyon. But that does not mean that development is slowing in the area.

At the end of 2014 Saddle Butte Pipeline, based in Durango, Colorado, applied for a permit from the federal government. The company hopes to build a crude oil pipeline that would travel from Lybrook 130 miles south, through federal, state, private and Navajo lands, to rail lines along Interstate 40 in western New Mexico. The pro-

*'The land is just
being trampled,'
said local
volunteer activist
Lori Goodman.*

posed pipeline would parallel an existing natural gas pipeline and ramp up to eventually carry 50,000 barrels a day out of the Four Corners.

Holding meetings in Lybrook, Farmington and Santa Fe, the BLM sought public comment on the issue. At one particularly heated meeting in Santa Fe, local environmental activists and Navajos spoke passionately against the pipeline, as well as against increased oil development in the region.

"We have people for generations living in that area, and that area has donated energy from the very beginning," said Donna House, a Diné ethnobotanist and activist. She criticized the federal agencies and the Navajo Nation tribal government for not including citizens in the decision-making processes. "We have given up our energy, and we are still in poverty."

"That's great that you want a job, that's great you want to pay for their college education, but what about my babies?" asked a young Diné activist, Tina Garnanez. "What about asthma? What about cancer?"

After extending the public comment period and holding additional meetings, the BLM closed the comment period on the pipeline at the end of January. All told, the agency received about 30,000 comments.

After reviewing comments and studies, the agency's decision makers will look carefully at any substantive comments, said BLM Farmington District Manager Victoria Barr. Then, this summer, the agency will release an environmental assessment, and the public will have another opportunity to offer input.

"Ultimately the decision is still up to the federal agency, under the National Environmental Policy Act," said Barr. "But part of that process is to take a hard look at the comments we receive. And just because a proponent has submitted an application for a right-of-way does not mean the decision will be to grant the right-of-way. It's a process."

Royalties and revenues from oil and gas drilling benefit the federal government and the Navajo Nation, and they make up a significant portion of New Mexico's state budget. But the local communities and families often bear the direct burdens associated with development—whether they be traffic, or noise, or public health or environmental impacts.

"It's time for people in Albuquerque [to realize] your children are impacted, it's your future, too," said Goodman, walking past piñon trees and sandstone outcrops and heading down from the top of a hill a few miles south of the highway, where at least four rigs mar the sweeping view.

"You can't just think, 'Oh, it's just happening to some isolated group of people.' No, we all breathe the same air, and we all need to stand up and protect our environment. There are better ways of doing this. And this is not the right way." <http://bit.ly/1N6LkHY> 📱

The Strength of Native Youth

‘Champions for Change’ are making a difference BY PATTY TALAHONGVA

Bottom Line: *The news among young American Indians is not all desperate. And an important program is taking note of that.*

Three years ago, the father of 15-year-old, Hamilton Seymour (Nooksack) from Bellingham, Washington, committed suicide. Young Hamilton recovered from the trauma by learning how to carve and paddle traditional canoes and share that culture with his peers.

Following her molestation and multiple suicide attempts, 18-year-old Jazmyn Espinoza (Stockbridge Munsee Band of Mohican) of Bowler, Wisconsin created “The Warrior Circle Project,” a safe space at her community center where young people can talk about the many challenges they face.

How can a huge water balloon fight help victims of sexual abuse? Twenty-two year old Carin Young, a Native Hawaiian from Ewa Beach came up with an answer in her “Break the Silence” project. In the Hawaiian culture, water is healing. When a water balloon is broken, Young says, that symbolizes the breaking of the silence around sexual abuse.

And when the water hits the ground, it nourishes and promotes growth—much as talking about the abuse will help the victim heal.

These young people are three of the five members of the 2015 class of Champions for Change, which celebrates Native American youth who are making a difference in their communities. They were honored over the week-

end of February 25-26 by the Center for Native American Youth (CNYA), a Washington, D.C.-based affiliate of the Aspen Institute.

As part of the February festivities, CNYA staff arranged meetings for the honorees with their respective senators

champions, wants to tell the world that low high school graduation rates in Indian country are unacceptable. So, as a freshman at Pomona College in California, he works with friends to mentor local Native high school students, talking to them about everything from getting into college to staying connected with their tribal communities.


“Being here and being with the Center for Native American Youth,” he said, “I really felt like they told us that we matter.”

The youth also had a chance to speak with Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, who had been instructed by President Obama to reach out to youth in Indian country and find ways to improve their grim demographic statistics.

“The future of Indian country is going to rest with the next generation,” she said. “We want to make sure we’re setting up the youth on a path for success.”

Jewell said that Obama had approached her directly with his concerns after meeting youth on the Standing Rock reservation last year.

“He took me by both arms and he said, ‘I really need you to make this happen,’” she recalled. “And I need you to do it while we’re here. And you let me know what I can do to help you.’ So he is deeply personally committed and that is very, very helpful to me. It is why we have movement across the entire Cabinet.”

That kind of optimism motivates Rory Taylor. “I’m going to continue to fight for youth,” he said. “We’re few and far between.” <http://bit.ly/1AIPli2> 



Interior Secretary Sally Jewell with this year’s “Champions for Change”

and congressmen. A fourth member of the class, Tatiana Ticknor (Yup’ik, Tlingit, and Dena’ina), 16, of Anchorage, Alaska, connected with Sen. Dan Sullivan (R) and Rep. Don Young (R). Ticknor is a “Community Doer” of the First Alaskans Institute, engaging with and motivating her peers to participate in the culture and learn the languages of their people.

“It’s been amazing!” she said of her CNYA experience. “Like going to Capitol Hill and talking to my senator. It taught me how they don’t have a lot of time to speak, so now I know how to speak fast and tell my story as fast as I can.”

Eighteen-year-old Rory Taylor (Pawnee), from Minneapolis, Minnesota, the fifth member of the 2015 class of

Talking About Pot

'A 10-year window for tribes to capitalize' BY JACQUELINE KEELER

Bottom Line: *The tribal growth of medical marijuana is an emerging source of discussion and, potentially, revenue—as a recent conference demonstrated.*

William Anderson, former Chief of the Moapa Band of Paiutes, once had a foot infection that went to his spine. As a result, he had to get a spinal replacement of titanium steel.

For two years he battled an infection. But the creams that the doctors prescribed were ineffective. He was left unable to walk and was in constant pain. The Indian Health Service recommended amputation of his foot.

"I just prayed to the Great Creator and said, 'Please just help me function as a normal human being,'" Anderson said. "Then I recalled a documentary I had seen years ago about the use of medical marijuana for cancer patients."

Anderson used the marijuana as a topical oil, felt immediate relief and was able to walk again.

He shared his story with ICTMN at the first Tribal Cannabis Association gathering, at the Tulalip Resort Casino on the Tulalip Reservation in Washington. The forum, on February 28, took place one day after a packed Tribal Marijuana Conference at the same location. Both meetings underscored emerging tribal interest in medical marijuana as a revenue stream and a source of healing alike.

The gatherings were kick-started by an October Department of Justice (DOJ) memorandum that instructed U.S. attorneys not to pursue prosecution of federally recognized tribes that chose to legalize and regulate medical marijuana if they met DOJ criteria. These criteria include preventing the distribution of marijuana to minors and its sale to criminal enterprises.

The attendees at the gatherings had many different takes on the prospects for tribes in relation to the growth and

sale of medicinal weed.

"What the Justice Department did was to invite Indian country to have a historical moment," said Robert Odawi Porter of Odawi Law PLLC, a former president of the Seneca Nation of New York and an organizer of the conference. "No different than any other major decision our ancestors have had to make. Tribal leaders are now going to have the same opportunity to think

*'I think tribes
can be first to
market here,'
said an attorney.
'They have a lot
of experience with
regulation.'*

through whether legalizing marijuana was a good thing."

Former U.S. Attorney Troy Eid, currently the chair of President Obama's National Indian Law and Order Commission, was cautious.

"I think it is very good for tribes to look at and think about how they might want to influence changes in the federal law," he said. "Having said that, there are no changes in federal law here . . . the nine different criteria that they [the Justice Department] laid out are not sufficient to provide protections to tribes or tribal members, tribal citizens. So, you are really rolling the dice."

Thomas Carr, an attorney in Boulder City, Nevada, emphasized the planning and screening of marijuana businesses. Based on his experience, he has found

that enforcement of business licensing requirements "weeded out" potentially bad business operators.

Hilary Bricken, a Washington State cannabis business attorney who also helped organize the conference, advocated that tribes enter the marijuana banking services industry. "I think tribes can be first to market here," she said. "They have a lot of experience with regulation."

Tick Segerblom, a Democratic state senator from Nevada—and the father of his state's medical marijuana dispensary law—urged that tribes seize the moment. "The opposition [to medical marijuana] has disappeared in this country," he said. "It is 10 years before it is legal everywhere. There is a 10-year window for tribes to capitalize on this."

Over the weekend, tribal leaders considered organizing a formally constituted Tribal Cannabis Association to ensure that federally recognized tribes met the criteria outlined by the Justice Department memo. Key to this effort, the leaders said, would be meeting local U.S. attorneys to agree on boundaries of enforcement.

There will be a follow-up meeting on March 12 on the last day of the Reservation Economic Summit in Las Vegas. There, duly authorized representatives of tribes will share feedback from their tribal councils, youth and courts.

As the conference broke up, it was clear that the future of the tribal growing medical marijuana was inconclusive. "We are still up in the air about whether we are going to do it or not," said George Thurman, Principal Chief of the Sak and Fox Nation.

But William Anderson had no doubts. "I'm really grateful to be here today, to just talk and to shake hands with people," he said. "This is what I want to bring to Indian people out there. To show that there are other ways to get help." <http://bit.ly/1zTnxlF> 📱



The Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC) is recruiting for:
ENTERPRISE EXECUTIVE OFFICER HR-15-120 for the overall vision, long range goals, direction, operation and function of the Nez Perce Tribal Enterprises.

Position reports directly to the NPTEC Chairman and is responsible for communication to the NPTEC and Enterprise Board. Oversees and administers the overall operation of the Enterprises. Responsible for staff supervision, strategic planning, budget, training, policy development, contracts, grants, acquisitions, reporting and providing critical fiscal management information to management and elected officials.

Requires a Master's degree in business, accounting, marketing, finance, management or related field with five (5) years business management experience in a tribal setting, five (5) years in a supervisory capacity of large number of staff. Requires eight (8) years experience derived from working with tribal business enterprises. Requires three (3) years of Tribal Gaming management experience, and eligibility to obtain a tribal gaming license. **"Please provide college transcripts"**. Pre-employment drug testing required. Applicant must possess a valid driver's license with the ability to be insured under the Tribe's policy.

A complete application includes: NPT application/resume: **ENTERPRISE EXECUTIVE OFFICER HR-15-120**, P.O. Box 365, Lapwai, ID 83540, by 4:30 pm 3/20/15 (208) 843-7332 Tribal preference applies. INCOMPLETE APPLICATION PACKETS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED. www.nezperce.org.

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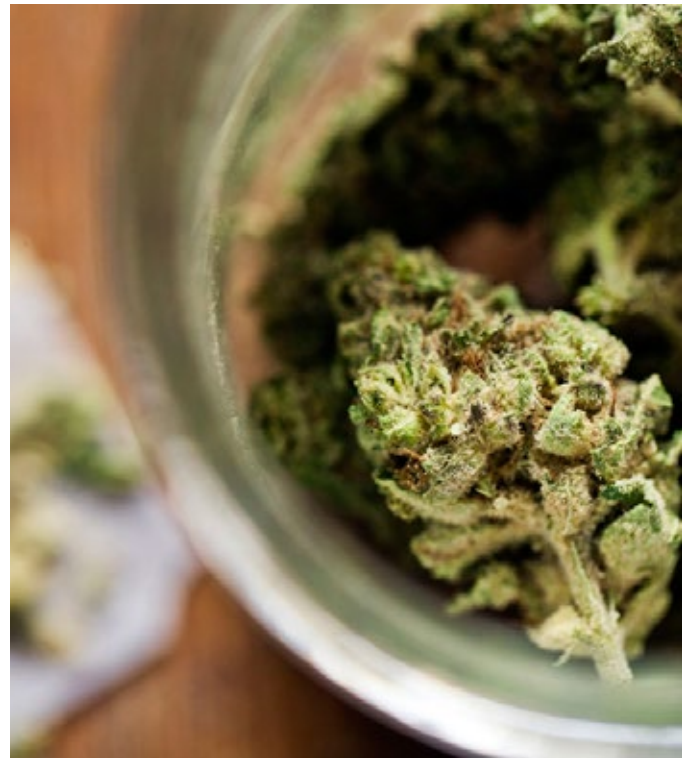
Fashion line Dsquared2 evoked outrage with its “Dsquaw” look, which was unveiled at the fall/winter Women’s Show in Milan.



Comedian Tatanka Means (Oglala Lakota, Navajo, Omaha) appeared at the recent 49 Laughs Comedy Show at Northern Arizona State University.



Fancy shawl dress dancer Raylee Shane, age 5, performed at the 42nd annual “Echoing Traditional Ways” Utah State University Pow Wow.



The legal growing of medical marijuana by tribes was the subject of a major conference over the last weekend in February.

Headlines from the Web

INDIAN TRIBES GAMBLING ON HIGH-INTEREST LOANS TO RAISE REVENUE

<http://wapo.st/1F55o7Y>

FILING PERIOD FOR CHEROKEE NATION ELECTED OFFICES OPENS MONDAY

<http://bit.ly/1FRLDRg>

MOST NATIVE TONGUES OF THE WEST ARE ALL BUT LOST

<http://bit.ly/1M47hny>

NAVAJOS FILE HUMAN-RIGHTS PETITION OVER SNOWBOWL RESORT

<http://bit.ly/1FXwWwb>

TWO WOMEN BANNED FROM SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE

<http://bit.ly/1aLV5MT>

FORT SILL APACHE ASK COURT TO COMPEL GOVERNOR TO SIGN COMPACT

<http://bit.ly/18kDolP>

Upcoming Events

AMERICAN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM STUDENT CONFERENCE MARCH 14-17

The theme of the 2015 consortium is "Planting Seeds of Knowledge for the 21st Century." Panel discussions will include "Enhancing American Indian Success", "Working Together to Shape Residence Life for Tribal Colleges and Universities", "Conducting a Climate Change Community", "Opportunities in Global Health" and "Reaching Out in Four Directions to Build Bridges Between Communities." Among the ancillary activities will be a speech competition, knowledge bowl, film festival and athletic competitions.

Location: Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, New Mexico

CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE ON AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION MARCH 15-17

"Indian Education: Meeting the Challenge" will showcase 38 years of success and growth of American Indian education in California and the impact that the American Indian Education Centers have had in American Indian communities. Features will include workshops, cultural sharing, activity and hospitality rooms, and a language forum. The keynote speaker will be Venida Chenault (Potawatomi and Kickapoo), president of Haskell Indian Nations University.

Location: Renaissance Hotel, Palm Springs, California

NATIVE AMERICAN LEADERS' FORUM: GENERAL MANAGERS EXCHANGE MARCH 16-17

This second annual forum will bring together general managers from tribally owned casinos for two days of professional, moderator-led roundtable discussions, small group break-out sessions, peer-to-peer dialogues and networking opportunities. The exchange is devoted to the expressing of common concerns and the sharing of information.

Location: Talking Stick Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona

EAGLE SUMMIT AND TRIBAL LEADERSHIP ROUNDTABLE MARCH 18

The summit and roundtable, hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, are geared toward enhancing the relationship between the Service and Tribes by generating new information on eagles, building collaborative partnerships and improving communications to identify areas of mutual conservation concern. The meetings are geared toward Tribes who are located in the Mountain-Prarie Region.

Location: Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge, Commerce City, Colorado.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT LAND BUY-BACK PROGRAM HEARING MARCH 19

In connection with the Land Buy-Back Program for Tribal Nations under the Cobell Settlement, the Interior Department will host a listening session to raise awareness. The purpose is to gather input from tribes in order for the Department to continue to refine its land consolidation processes, and engage individual land-owners who may have questions about the program.

Location: Vee Quiva Hotel, Laveen, Arizona

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Melanie Studley, White Earth Chippewa from the Bear Clan, recently sent this poem to ICTMN. She wrote it in memory of the Nisqually activist Billy Frank, who walked on last May after decades of leading the "Fish Wars" to assert fishing rights that were guaranteed to many tribes:

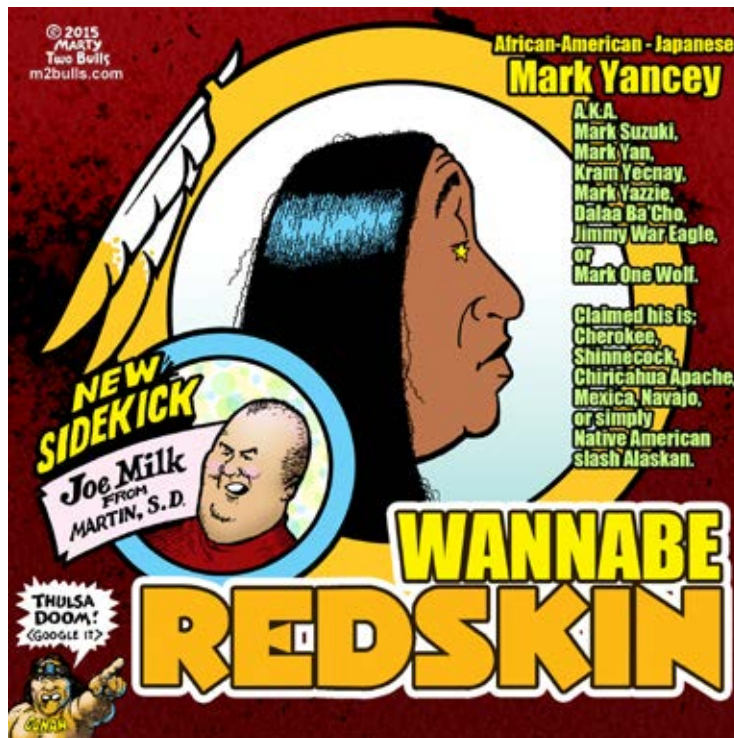
CAST OUT YOUR NET, BILLY FRANK

Cast out your net Billy Frank
The world has lost a good son
Some will not know and never have heard
Of the many great things you have done

But who is not touched by the salmon?
Made better when all cultures thrive?
So cast out your net old Billy Frank
For the Indian people survive

The wind does not know who it touches
The river what life it sustains
Your net knows not who it catches
But the Indian way remains

So cast out your net to the heavens
Catch all of the salmon you wish
Return to the earth, your mother and father
And visit again as a fish.



TOP NEWS ALERTS

From IndianCountryTodayMediaNetwork.com

NEW ICON IN NORTH DAKOTA?

The University of North Dakota, which retired its "Fighting Sioux" logo in 2012 after the NCAA threatened sanctions, may have a new moniker by May, the *Grand Forks Herald* reported last week. The school appointed a nickname committee last September, and the final selection will be made by popular vote. As of December 30, the university had spent \$126,262 on the nickname project on consultation, town hall meetings and online polling, the *Herald* reported.

YUOK JUSTICE CENTER NEARS COMPLETION

The Yurok Tribe is putting the finishing touches on a new justice center in Klamath, California. Currently, the Yurok Tribal Court adjudicates at its

tribal headquarters. But the new offsite facility, located nearby, will allow for additional trial times and new programs, including a "wellness court." "We provide this kind of program because it's consistent with our belief system, and we believe that we have responsibilities and that we should meet them," Yurok Tribal Court Chief Judge Abby Abinanti told NorthCoast News.

CHIPPEWA CREE CHAIRMAN DISMISSED AGAIN

Ken Blatt-St. Marks, chairman of the Chippewa Cree, has been removed from his office for the third time in less than two years by the tribe's highest elected body. "We find that Blatt-St. Marks has committed gross misconduct and neglected his duty," said the Chippewa Cree Business Committee last week.

The committee has charged Blatt-St. Marks with fraud and poor work performed by his construction company; his previous dismissals followed accusations of theft, sexual harassment, employee intimidation and hiring irregularities, among other charges, reported the *Great Falls Tribune*.

MORE ARIZONA DISASTER RELIEF

The Agriculture Department on March 4 declared the Arizona counties of Greenlee, Navajo, Pima and Yavapai to be "primary natural disaster areas due to damages and losses caused by a recent drought." The contiguous counties of Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Gila, Graham, La Paz, Maricopa, Mohave, Pinal, Santa Cruz and Yuma will also qualify for natural disaster assistance because they

adjoin the four major counties. In addition, Catron, Grant and Hidalgo counties in New Mexico and San Juan County in Utah, also contiguous, were declared eligible for relief.

A FAREWELL TO JUDE SCHIMMEL

The high-powered University of Louisville Cardinals basketball star Jude Schimmel (Umatilla) came on strong in her final senior home game, on February 26. Louisville's 77-60 win over Boston College was marked by Schimmel scoring 11 points, with seven assists, five defensive rebounds and four steals. To honor her, the Cardinals hosted Native American Heritage Night with First Nations Women Warriors as color guard, traditional dancers from The Red Road and music by the drum group Elk Soldier.

How Did I Miss That?

Insults at the Oscars, threats against the Mall of America and overpriced Italian cars BY STEVE RUSSELL

Jimmy Kimmel made a long and hilarious tape of local newscasters trying to pronounce the name of the Best Director Oscar winner for *Birdman*, Alejandro González Iñárritu. Presenter Sean Penn caused a ruckus of another kind when he remarked, "Who gave this son of a bitch his green card?"

Indians have a whole genre of humor around immigration jokes and a longstanding beef with Oscar for white actors playing historical Indians and Indian actors getting little notice for outstanding work. In that context, most Indians barely looked up from their popcorn when Sean Penn stepped in the cow pie of racism.

* * *

The *Dallas Morning News* reported that the Bugatti Division of Volkswagen has sold the last of 450 Veyrons, 10 years after putting them on the market. The Veyron is a turbocharged, 16 cylinder, all-wheel drive beast that leaps from zero to 60 in under three seconds and tops out at over 250 m.p.h. The base price of the Veyron is \$1.8 million. The average buyer owns three jets, a yacht and 84 other cars.

My cousin Ray Sixkiller commented, "Bugatti Division of Volkswagen sounds like Lamborghini Division of Fiat."

* * *

The Texas Supreme Court issued an emergency order blocking any further marriage licenses to gay people after a lesbian couple in Austin was allowed to marry under a state court order issued because one of the partners has cancer. A federal court has struck down Texas's constitutional ban on same sex marriage, but that order is stayed pending appeal. The couple with the health emer-

gency proceeded in state court. Newly elected Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton is trying to find legal standing to ask that the marriage be declared void.

Can't let that hospital visitation and inheritance stuff get into the wrong hands, you know? If you let gay people make medical choices for ailing partners and inherit from them, next thing you know that will stop straight people from doing the same.

* * *

Wisconsin governor and GOP presidential hopeful Scott Walker appears to be crafting a backup plan for getting on the Green Bay Packers roster as a punter. He punted on evolution. He punted on whether Barack Obama loves his country. Walker declined to express an opinion on whether Obama is a Christian because, he said, he had never had a conversation with Obama about it.

* * *

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is sometimes called "the land of racist dwarves," because of the North Korean obsession with racial purity and the persistent famines that have rendered the average North Korean smaller than the average South Korean.

Still, the boy dictator Kim Jong-un takes pride in the athletic prowess of his country, so he has determined that a North Korean will win the Mangyongdae Prize Marathon in Pyongyang this April.

Cousin Ray wanted to know how Kim could swing that. "African runners win all the big marathons," he said. I told him the Korean government has closed the race to all foreigners, citing fear of Ebola.

"Isn't it handy," Ray harrumphed, "that the best runners come from the same continent as Ebola?"

That's barely true. The distance between Kenya's world-class runners and Liberia's Ebola outbreak is over 3,000 miles.

* * *

A new Quinnipiac University poll shows that Colorado voters are still behind their decision to legalize recreational marijuana, by a margin of 58 to 38 percent. There were differences by age, with voters under 34 supporting legalization by a margin of 82-16 percent and voters over 55 against legalization by a margin of 46-50 percent.

Meanwhile, Alaska became the third state to legalize recreational weed.

* * *

Al Qaeda affiliate al-Shabab has issued a specific threat of an attack against the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota. U.S. media were not as quick to report that the same terrorist video threatened the West Edmonton Mall in Alberta, Canada, and Oxford Street in London. Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, within a week of seeing his agency shut down because Congress could not pass a funding bill, called on shoppers to be "vigilant."

Cousin Ray was not sure how to be vigilant while shopping but he recalled John Crawford, shot dead for picking up a toy gun and carrying it around Wal-Mart while he talked on his cell phone.

"Somebody was too vigilant in that case," Cousin Ray reminded me. "We're in danger of lending a new meaning to 'Shop 'til you drop.'" <http://bit.ly/1K0zNuG> ☞

HONOR
THE
ORIGINAL

H
U
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T
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R
S

"APSAALOOKE"



Crow tribal official Clayvin Herrera, cited for shooting Wyoming elk out of season, is selling t-shirts with this logo to finance his legal battle.

CLAYVIN HERRERA

THE BIG PICTURE