

JUNE 2025

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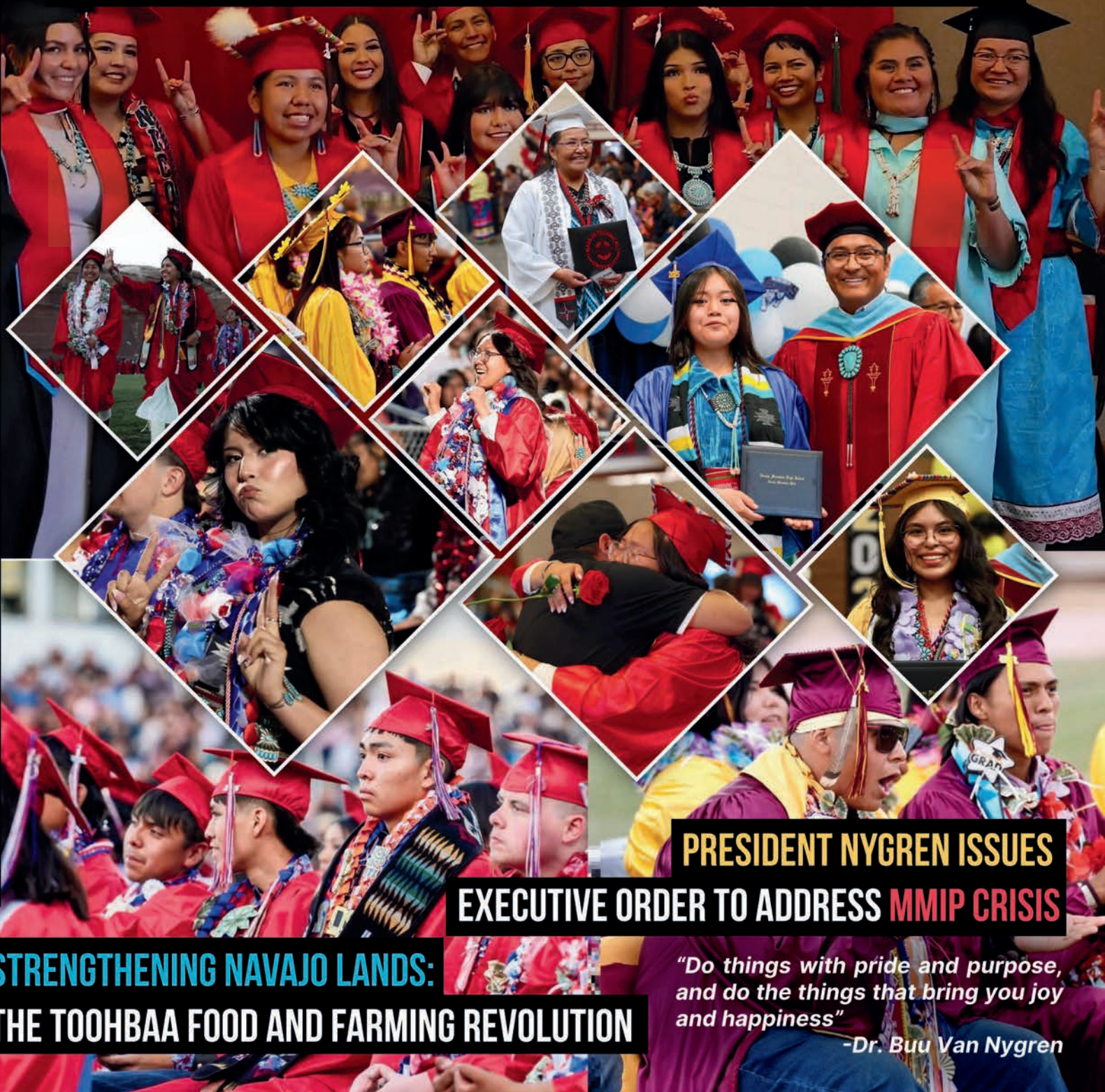
VOLUME 1

ISSUE 5

NYGREN NEWS

+ NEXT CHAPTER: CELEBRATING THE JOURNEY OF THE CLASS OF 2025 +

STAY IN THE KNOW WITH PRESIDENT DR. BUU NYGREN



**PRESIDENT NYGREN ISSUES
EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ADDRESS MMIP CRISIS**

**STRENGTHENING NAVAJO LANDS:
THE TOOHBAA FOOD AND FARMING REVOLUTION**

*"Do things with pride and purpose,
and do the things that bring you joy
and happiness"*

-Dr. Buu Van Nygren



**Nygren News is for the people
and read by the people**

What is Nygren News?

The President proudly distributes “Nygren News” across the Navajo Nation monthly. This FREE newsletter is developed and designed to keep the Navajo people informed on all the projects the Nygren Administration is working to serve and assist the Navajo people. This newsletter is created in-house by the media team, who are all Navajo, and features stories that celebrate our Navajo people and shares important updates. To date, we have published four newsletters in the months of February, March, April, and May.

The June 2025 issue highlights several stories:

- President Nygren delivers a graduation message to the Class of 2025
- President Nygren Issues Executive Order To Address Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Crisis
- Navajo Nation Honors Police Officers and Invests In Public Safety
- Tourism Guide: Navajo tribal park visitation and summer time hiking ideas and tips, including Four Stops, One Nation - Your Perfect day trip through Navajo country
- Protecting Our Water Lifelines: Navajo Nation Combats Vandalism And Neglect Threatening Windmills

Additionally, the newsletter includes a special section by First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren that offers her insights on community initiatives.

The President’s media team, consisting of former award-winning journalists and editors, ensures informative coverage. Nygren News complements other communication platforms like social media, radio and press releases.



Pick up your free copy at local gas stations, senior centers, chapter houses, laundromats, and other public gathering spaces.



CHANGE-MAKER HIGHLIGHT

DRIVEN BY GRIT AND PASSION: RECENT GRAD, D1 SOCCER PLAYER EYES DENTISTRY SCHOOL



Coming from an athletic family, l'yawa Brewer, a member of the Navajo Nation, found passion in soccer. She played at the Division 1 level, both at Illinois State University (ISU) and the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), serving as the team’s first Native American player at both institutions.

Soccer was a sport that allowed Brewer to create a support system and promote representation for Native American athletes in college sports. She played as a center back and defensive midfielder.

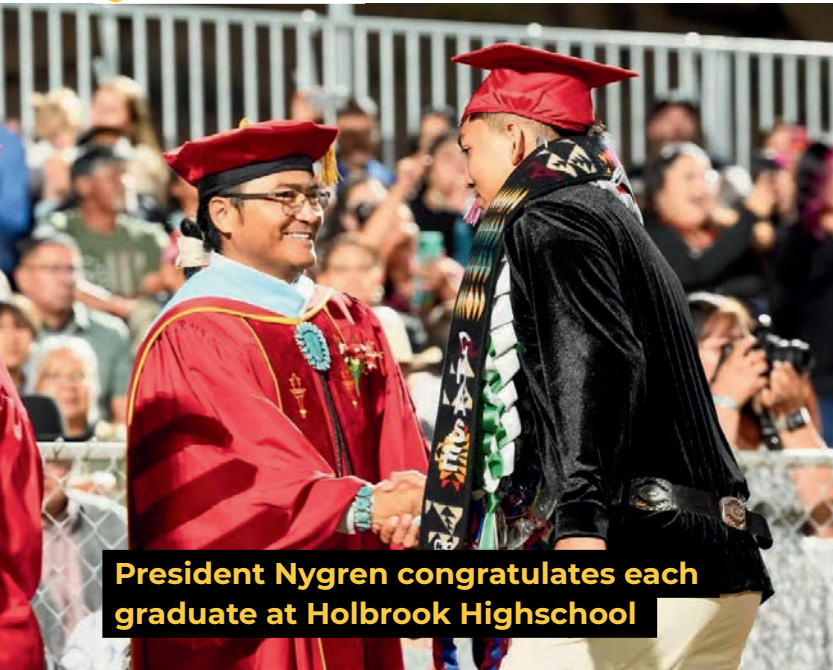
“There are some people in different areas of the U.S. and in the world generally that know little to nothing about Native American culture and Tribal Nations in the U.S.,” Brewer said. “But I was able to give them some knowledge about myself and about my traditions and about who I am as a Native American [Navajo, Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, Oglala Lakota, Colorado River Indian Tribes].”

With a goal to be a dentist, Brewer strives to improve the healthcare system and make it accessible because of her own family’s health impacts. As a future dentist, she plans to give back to different areas across the Navajo Nation and Indian Country as a whole. Initially, Brewer studied molecular and cellular biology at ISU starting in 2021 for two years, then she transferred to UMKC, where she graduated on May 17, 2025, with a major in biology and a minor in chemistry. At UMKC, she also completed her pre-dentistry coursework. This fall, she will enroll at the University of Utah School of Dentistry in their Dentistry Postbaccalaureate Program.

**PRESIDENT NYGREN HIGHLIGHTS
“CHANGE MAKERS” - COMMUNITY
MEMBERS THAT STRIVE TO MAKE A
POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.**



CELEBRATING GRIT, DETERMINATION, AND COMMUNITY: A GRADUATION MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT NYGREN



President Nygren congratulates each graduate at Holbrook Highschool

In her salutatory address for Navajo Mountain High School, Alonnah Holiday spoke about how the Class of 2025 gathered today to “Shoot for the Stars” and follow their dreams. She also shared wisdom about kindness, reminding everyone that life on earth is a precious time.

During the commencement address, Ral’Shaun Descheny, a Rock Point alumnus, reflected on what it means to be back home and shared insights from his academic journey, supported by his community.

“This place raised me; this community shaped me,” said Descheny. “Do not be afraid to leave, but don’t forget where you come from.”

These remarks serve as a reminder that, no matter how small a school, the community leaves an impact because great leaders come from strong communities. It also encourages us to find our way back home, demonstrating how capable we are of succeeding in life.

Grit and determination are at the core of progress and success. They have fueled our students’ journeys, and they will continue to be essential as you step into the future.

As President, I recognize each graduates’ efforts—they refused to give up and continued to show up for themselves. Our students are filled with strength and heart; they are shaped by the values of our Navajo way of life.

You are the future. You are the next builders, protectors, role models, and leaders. So be bold. Be humble. Be proud. And always look toward the future.

In the words of Mufasa, “Remember who you are.” God bless, and congratulations to this extraordinary Class of 2025!

You are the next builders, protectors, role models, and leaders. So be bold. Be humble. Be proud. And always look toward the future.

This graduation season, I congratulate all of our graduates: high school graduates, trade school graduates, college graduates, graduate students, and professional schools graduates.

Your accomplishments do not go unnoticed by your community and your humble roots, which make you unique and culturally strong as Diné people.

Across the Navajo Nation, we celebrate your success—from Head Start and Pre-K to doctoral degrees and every major achievement in between.

Each graduation and commencement ceremony is unique and tells a beautiful story. And while I could not be at all graduations this season, I traveled many miles to our small, rural schools because sometimes they may seem overlooked. Nonetheless, each ceremony was wonderful.

At Holbrook High, the “Roadrunner Way” was the central theme and motto. In her introductory remarks to her classmates, who achieved a remarkable 90% graduation rate, senior Kiera Brown shared the “Three Be’s”: “Be Active. Be Kind. Be You.”

In small communities like Navajo Mountain, where classes are close-knit and opportunities sometimes feel distant, our youth are often discouraged from dreaming big.





\$43 MILLION LECHEE WATER PROJECT SECURES FUTURE GROWTH AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY FOR NAVAJO NATION

LECHEE, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation has gained a vital resource since the closure of the Navajo Generating Station- access to one of Lake Powell's water intakes. This will help ensure sustainable water supplies for LeChee Chapter residents.

On May 7, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed a \$43 million contract with B4 Enterprises, Inc., of Cedar City, Utah, to upgrade and build the LeChee Water Improvements Project.

The initiative aims to modernize infrastructure and improve water reliability.

"When the federal government sees this project, they'll recognize the Navajo Nation as a sovereign nation, building its own infrastructure," said President Nygren. "Doing this with our own planning and dollars shows how serious we are about passing the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement in Congress."

The project includes a membrane water treatment plant near the old generating station that will produce 1 million gallons of water daily. It also features a 500,000-gallon raw water tank, a 320,000-gallon finished water tank, and 31,000 feet of 12-inch pipeline connecting to existing storage tanks.

A booster pump station will support efficient delivery. Renovations to the Lake Powell intake include new electrical and control buildings and second-stage pumps capable of 700 gallons per minute, providing a modern, reliable source directly from the lake.

This is Phase 1 of construction. LeChee and nearby areas, popular with tourists visiting Antelope Canyon and Horseshoe Bend, will benefit from a stronger water supply that supports local business and growth.

"We're the people of this land," said Council Delegate Helena Nez Begay. "We are not going anywhere. We want our children to move home."

"The Navajo Nation owns this intake," said Jason John, Navajo Water Resources Director. "With this water project, LeChee will have ten times more water available for economic development."



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\$14.6 MILLION CONTRACT APPROVED TO IMPROVE N5001 ROAD IN TOADLENA AND TWO GREY HILLS

TWO GREY HILLS, N.M. — After more than 60 years of advocacy, residents in the Toadlena and Two Grey Hills communities are finally seeing long-awaited progress on the N5001 roadway.

On May 14, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed a \$14.6 million contract with the Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority (NECA) to begin construction on a 2.78-mile stretch of the road, which connects the base of the Chuska Mountains to U.S. Highway 491 in Newcomb, N.M.

More than 70 families rely on this critical route for daily travel.

“Thanks to improvements in our payment processes, government efficiency has increased by reducing project payment times from 120 days to just 36 days—helping us finish projects faster and control costs,” said President Nygren.

The Navajo Department of Transportation reports that the Navajo Nation oversees approximately 14,000 miles of inventoried roads. The improvements to N5001 will help reduce this inventory by upgrading washed-out bridges and deteriorated surfaces, making travel safer and more reliable.

According to NDOT engineer Darryl Bradley, construction is scheduled to begin in June.

The project is funded through a partnership between the Federal Highway Administration, which is covering 98 percent of the cost, and the Navajo Nation General Fund, which is providing the remaining 2 percent.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, who sponsored the legislation to allocate \$341,178 in General Funds, said the road improvements to N5001 will have impacts to the families of the region, which features master weavers who weave the Two Grey Hills-style design.

“Stabilizing this road is building up that rural infrastructure, and now we need to continue because we want it to connect to Newcomb,” Crotty said. “In case of an emergency, that road can be used as a safety alternative and enhance school buses going to the road.”



Thanks to improvements in our payment processes, government efficiency has increased by reducing project payment times from 120 days to just 36 days—helping us finish projects faster and control costs.



More than 200 Police Officers cover the entire Navajo Nation



STANDING STRONG: NAVAJO NATION HONORS POLICE OFFICERS AND INVESTS IN PUBLIC SAFETY

WINDOW ROCK — On May 9, the Navajo Nation honored the courage, service, and sacrifice of its police officers during the annual Navajo Police Officer Day. The event recognizes those who protect more than 178,000 residents across 27,000 square miles and commemorates officers who gave their lives in the line of duty.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren expressed his deep gratitude: The Navajo Nation Police Department (NNPD), led by Chief Ronald Silversmith, is the largest tribal law enforcement agency in the U.S., with over 205 commissioned officers and more than 100 civilian staff.

During the celebration held in Kayenta, Ariz., President Nygren addressed officers, their families, and community members.

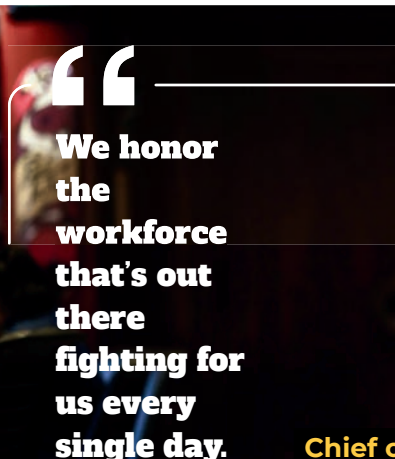
“Today, we come together to honor the workforce that’s out there fighting for us every single day,” President Nygren said. “We must strive to be the best—You are the frontline of safety for our communities, and we thank you.”

President Nygren also acknowledged the families of fallen officers, saying, “Their bravery will not go unnoticed, and we thank them for serving and protecting the Navajo people.”

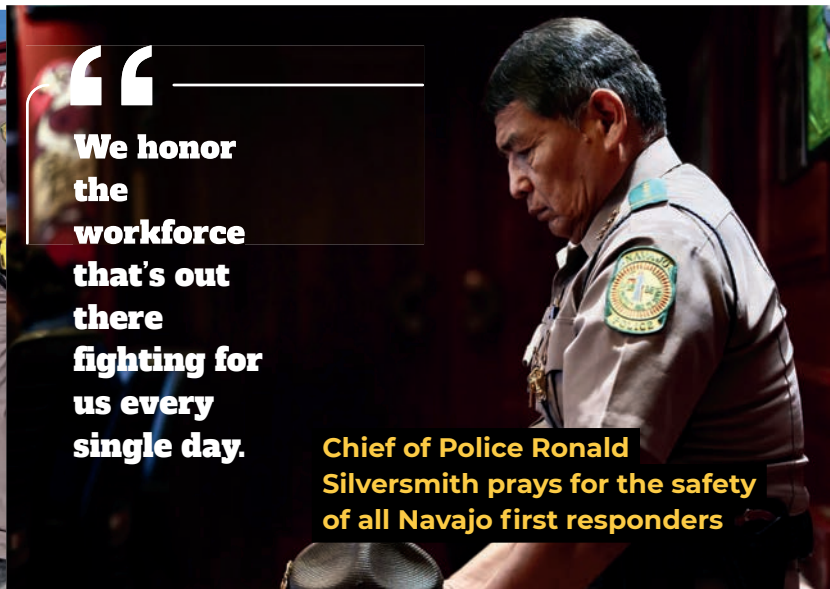
A major step toward improving emergency response includes a recently signed lease to begin planning the Nation’s first Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Currently, 9-1-1 calls are routed off-Nation. Funded by ARPA, the PSAP will allow emergency calls to be answered locally and is expected to be completed by August 2026.



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Chief of Police Ronald Silversmith prays for the safety of all Navajo first responders





SMOKE ALARMS SAVE LIVES: NDEM & RED CROSS TEAM UP TO PROTECT NAVAJO HOMES

WINDOW ROCK — With fires on the rise, the Navajo Department of Emergency Management (DEM), Kayenta Chapter, and American Red Cross (ARC) have launched a local smoke alarm initiative.

On May 8, NDEM and ARC hosted an outreach event at the Kayenta Chapter House with 12 teams of volunteers, including members from IHS, N.A.T.I.V.E., and Kayenta Boarding School, who installed smoke alarms across the community. A total of 43 alarms were installed in 17 homes.

"We didn't just show up, install the alarm, and leave," said Sharen Sandoval, director for NDEM. "We sat with the families and coached them on fire safety. What it is and why it's important." Sandoval said house fires are a major issue in the Nation.

"What was surprising is 50% of house fires can be prevented with a smoke detector," Sandoval said. "We get a call for a home fire every other day."



NDEM made a game plan to not only install smoke alarms but to talk about safety procedures

NDEM also secured a tribal grant from Arizona Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster to strengthen these efforts.

"Protecting our families starts with simple steps," President Nygren said. "Something as small as a smoke alarm can mean the difference between life and death."



AHEAD OF TOURISM SEASON , BODAWAY/GAP STORE REOPENS AFTER FIRE

BODAWAY/GAP, Ariz. — On May 16, the Bodaway/Gap Red Mesa store and Sinclair gas station went up in flames.

Less than 10 days later, the store and two of its gas pumps reopened on Thursday, May 23. A third pump remains damaged from the fire and will be replaced. Craig Colloway, owner of the Red Mesa stores across the Navajo Nation, said Bodaway/Gap is their busiest location. The gas station and store average about one thousand sales per day.

"I am glad no one was hurt in this incident, and that responders acted quickly to make sure minimal damage was done," said President Nygren. "These small businesses not only promote our local economies but provide basic goods and services for our communities. They're the stop before home, for groceries, for gas."

The booming business thrives on U.S. Highway 89, a popular route between Flagstaff and Page, Ariz., especially during the summer, tourist season.

Craig has several gas stations on Navajo, and this is the busiest store," said Tony Skrelunas, executive director for the Navajo Division of Economic Development (DED).



Part of the store's sign was burned in the fire at the gas station in Bodaway/Gap

Colloway said, "getting the gas pumps running again just before tourism season is necessary for the millions of visitors who sightsee at the nearby Antelope Canyon, Horseshoe Bend and Lake Powell."



These small businesses not only promote our local economies but provide basic goods and services for our communities.



Navajo Nation's EMS has evolved as technology advances—finally accommodating EMS workers saving lives in the field



HONORING NAVAJO EMS WEEK: 'WE CARE. FOR EVERYONE'

In honor of Navajo Emergency Medical Services (EMS), I proclaim May 18 to May 24 as the Navajo Nation EMS Week. This week's theme is, "We Care. For Everyone."

A prayer was said in Navajo, provided by Public Safety Division Director Mike Henderson, as a form of appreciation and guidance for all EMS workers who are out in the field every day, providing medical emergency response.

Our Navajo EMS workers are at the forefront of responding to emergencies, whether it is to car accidents, tending to the elderly who may be injured from a fall, or being on site during the fair season. No matter where they are, every second counts in saving precious lives.

Our Navajo EMS program has developed over the years, and it's important to acknowledge its efforts and growth as a program to serve the Navajo Nation.

They know what's best to take care of our communities, and signing this proclamation today ensures our appreciation to the tough work that EMS workers deal with. I shared how I am always thinking of them.

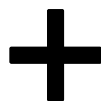
As President, I am committed to making sure our EMS workers have access to mental health services and are equipped with up-to-date features that help improve faster response times and safe transportation and care for patients.

Thank you to the Navajo Division of Public Safety, Chief of Navajo Police, and the Department of Health for attending this proclamation signing. Most importantly, thank you to all our Navajo EMS responders, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), paramedics, supervisors, field operations managers, EMT instructors, coordinators, support staff, and administrators.

Your dedication and services do not go unnoticed, and we are proud of the work that is done to save countless lives on a day-to-day basis. Thank you for your service.



... Signing this proclamation today ensures our appreciation to the tough work that EMS workers deal with.





EMS workers travel to remote parts of the Nation requiring reliable vehicles .



NAVAJO EMS RECEIVES A NEW FLEET OF 15 AMBULANCES, MAKING HEALTHCARE MORE ACCESSIBLE



In honor of Navajo Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week, Navajo EMS shared a public presentation of their new ambulance fleets at the Veterans Memorial Park on Tuesday, May 20.

The overall cost of the 15 new fleets was about \$4.5 million. Funding for the new fleet comes from a portion of the CARES Act funds that the Nation received while the rest was funded by the EMS funds to replace the outdated fleets. These new fleets were ordered in 2022, purchased in 2023, and received two weeks ago. The new 15 ambulances are equipped with more up-to-date tools and features.

Navajo EMS plans to purchase another 15 ambulances using funding from the recent Navajo Nation Council allocation of unmet needs by Fall 2025.

They were designed for Navajo, making accessibility to travel through rough terrain and remote areas. The new ambulances are equipped with liquid springs, which allow the unit to adjust its balance to provide comfortable support for patient transportation.

Other features include shocks that can absorb the impacts of potholes, portable repeaters that boost radio signals, and different compartments that store tools for maintenance.

It also includes automated Stryker, features that help with heavy lifting for oxygen storage, a stair chair that helps lift patients, and a refrigerator that maintains proper temperature for medications for different outside temperatures year-round.

All these features were built for crew and patient safety.

Additionally, advanced Emergency Medical Technician, Josh Ellison, shared that the key thing about Navajo EMS week is raising awareness of this profession, encouraging current employees to pursue medical school to continue the importance of delivering and services to the Navajo people.

“Not everybody can do what we do, it takes special people to do what we do,” Ellison said.

Although there is a small percentage of paramedics, the Navajo Nation proudly has its own EMS crew who are mostly Navajo.



They were designed for Navajo, making accessibility to travel through rough terrain and remote areas.



Tourism on Navajo

TRIBAL PARKS HIGHLIGHT BEAUTY OF NAVAJO NATION

Tourism season is underway on the Navajo Nation! The summer heat will rise, and days will become longer, it is the perfect opportunity to be outside with family and friends.

One of the **most popular visited sites** on Navajo include **Lake Powell Navajo Tribal Park** near Page, AZ and **Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park**, located in Oljato, Utah, known for its scenic views. After the COVID pandemic, the visitation in 2023 from Lake Powell was 504,482 visitors and increased to over one million (1,042,886 to be exact) visitors in 2024. With Monument Valley, visitation went from 504,482 visitors in 2023 to 524,722 visitors in 2024.

Some of the other tribal parks include the **Little Colorado Gorge Navajo Tribal Park** in Cameron, AZ, **Tseyi' Dine' Heritage Area (TDHA) Cottonwood Campground in Chinle, AZ** and the **Four Corners Monument**. Within 2023 to 2024, the **Little Colorado** went from 8,993 visitors to 12,364, **TDHA** had 25,000 visitors to 32,231 visitors, and **Four Corners Monument** went from 17,242 visitors to 18,645 visitors.

Tourism is anticipated to have another high visitation rate this year, which began in May and will run through September.

Monument Valley has a 17-mile loop drive of the scenic, sandstone formations and cultural experiences. Visitors are encouraged to be prepared for long wait times and inclement weather during its peak season.

Lake Powell includes Antelope Canyon, which is home to its very own canyon slots and Antelope Marina. The Upper Antelope Canyon has more room for visitors to walk through unlike the Lower Antelope Canyon which is narrower. This requires permits and guided tours to explore these areas.

For camping at the **TDHA**, it is a perfect opportunity to star gaze and to learn more about the ancient history that lives in this area by guided tours near the entrance of Canyon de Chelly National Monument.

Lastly, the **Four Corners Monument** includes Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Utah that intersect at one point.

Although, there are many parks to visit, these sites are the top tribal parks on Navajo that highlight the beauty of Diné Bikéyah. All visitors are welcome, and these sites should be added to a bucket list of places to visit this summer!



(Top) Lake Powell is one of the most visited tourist destinations in Arizona, along with Horseshoe Bend, both located in Page, Ariz.(below).



Lake Powell had 504,482 in visitors and increased to over one million (1,042,886 to be exact) visitors in 2024



FOUR STOPS, ONE NATION:

Antelope Canyon/ Horseshoe Bend

Upper Antelope Canyon Tour Operators

- Antelope Canyon Tours, Inc.
- Tse Bighanilini Tours
- Adventurous Antelope Canyon Tours

Lower Antelope Canyon Tour Operators

- Ken's Tours
- Dixie's Lower Antelope Canyon Tours

Other Activities

- Rainbow Bridge Hike (from Navajo Mountain)
- Revolution Rail Bikes — Rails to Trails running/biking trail

Coffee Shops

- Antelope Pointe
- Stay Grounded (LeChee)

Canyon De Chelly

Jeep, Hiking & Vehicle Tours

- Antelope House Tours
- Adam Teller
- 928-674-5231 / 928-429-1187
- canyondechelly.net
- Beauty Way Jeep Tours
- Leander Staley
- 928-674-3772 / 928-241-3767
- beautywayjeeptours.com
- Canyon de Chelly Tours
- Tanya Yazzie
- 928-349-1600
- canyondechellytours.com

Hiking-Only Tour

- Footpath Journeys
- Lupita McClanahan
- 928-401-0430
- footpathjourneys.com

Horseback Tours

- Justin's Horse Rentals
- Justin Tso Sr.
- 928-675-5575
- Find on Facebook: Justin's Horse Rental

YOUR PERFECT DAY TRIP THROUGH NAVAJO COUNTRY

Monument Valley

Top Attractions & Trails

- Mitten Buttes Area: Wildcat Trail, Three Sisters Trail
- Hummingbird Campsite

Hiking & Camping

- Goulding's Hiking Trails
- Goulding's Campground & RV Park

Dining, Coffee & Lodging

- Blue Coffee Pot Café
- Yeego Coffee Shop (at Visitor Center)
- Amigos Restaurant (Kayenta)

Guided Tour Operators

- Sacred Monument Tours, LLC
- toursacred.com | 435-727-3218
- Monument Valley Tribal Tours — 385-347-6243
- Three Sisters Navajo Guided Tours — 602-327-2472

Horseback Trail Rides

- Dineh Trail Rides — 928-209-2692
- Tse Bii Trail Rides — 928-489-2593

River Tour

- Ancient Ways by Lewis Williams
- 505-239-8505 (San Juan River)

Window Rock

Culture & Attractions

- Navajo Nation Museum (Window Rock)
- Navajo Nation Zoo & Botanical Park

Trails & Outdoor Activities

- Veterans Hiking Trail
- Fitness Trail near Fort Defiance Health Center

Places to eat

- Power Up Nutrition
- Kermie's Sandwiches (Window Rock)
- Mother's Coffee
- Traditional Food Vendors at Chihootso Marketplace

Entertainment

- Movie Theatre (Window Rock)
- Cocina de Dominguez
- Mikasa Restaurant

Animal Care

- Ft. Defiance Animal Care Facility — Dr. Kelly Upshaw



SUMMERTIME HIKING TIPS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF OUTDOOR SAFETY

As the summer approaches, it is crucial to remember important outdoor safety that can protect you and those around you. Temperatures may run high, or emergency situations can possibly occur. Always be alert and prepared for any summer outdoor activities.

With the assistance of the Navajo Emergency Medical Services, here are some hiking tips:

- **Always let someone know where you are going**
- **Don't travel alone; hike with others when possible**
- **Check the weather for the day you plan to do any outdoor activities**
- **Research and know your route; plan ahead to avoid getting lost**
- **Stay on designated trails and respect the land**
- **Make sure to wear proper footwear and clothing based on terrain and weather**
- **Choose a time that avoids the heat**
- **Always be aware of your surroundings (i.e. wildlife and watch where you step/sit)**
- **Stay hydrated and pack extra fluids**
- **Pack snacks to maintain energy levels; sugary snacks are recommended in case of emergency**
- **Stretch your body, know your limits, and listen to your body during activities**
- **Carry a cooling pack in case of high temperatures**
- **Carry basic safety gear**
- **Carry a first aid kit**



TEEC NOS POS, Ariz. — A major restroom upgrade is coming to the Four Corners Monument Navajo Tribal Park, thanks in large part to the efforts of the Navajo Nation Parks & Recreation Department (NNPRD) to improve visitor amenities at one of the region's most visited sites.

The Four Corners Monument Navajo Tribal Park Modular Restroom Project involves building and installing a 77-by-14-foot prefabricated modular restroom unit featuring 16 individual sections, including two ADA-compliant stalls. The project is under a design-build contract by Rock Gap Engineering, which Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed on May 19.

Construction will include selected demolition and upgrades to an existing NNPRD modular building. The new facility will be outfitted with solar-powered LED lighting and exhaust fans, while connecting to an existing septic system and leach field. All plumbing, HVAC, and electrical work will meet 2021 International Code Council building standards.

"The Four Corners Monument Navajo Tribal Park is a cultural and geographic landmark for the Navajo people and our visitors," President Nygren said. "Investing in infrastructure like modern restrooms honors our commitment to hospitality, safety, and long-term sustainability."

The work also includes underground waterline installation, ADA-compliant ramps and sidewalks, and coordination with the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) for water system integration. Each section will have stairs, continuous decking, handrails, and locking hardware, with the two ADA units accessible by ramp.



HEART, STRENGTH, AND HORSES: CELEBRATING THE 21ST ANNUAL DASH 4 CASH



On May 10, my staff and I joined the community in the Northern Navajo Agency for the 21st annual “Dash 4 Cash” Authentic Horse Race.

This cherished event takes place in my backyard—in the communities of Yellow Point Rock, Red Mesa, and Teec Nos Pos.

I love this local event and its powerful purpose of connecting with our horses and supporting our horsemen and horsewomen. Whether they ride Quarter Horses, Arabians, Thoroughbreds, Mustangs, or a mix of them all, the 37-mile endurance race near the Carrizo Mountains is always an adventure.

This year, 18 teams competed, including the Zia Gachupin team from the Pueblo of Zia—thank you for making the journey! Congratulations to every team that participated.

I want to thank the Tom Family for organizing Dash 4 Cash each year and creating a space where horse racers from across the Navajo Nation and beyond can come together. A special congratulations to this year’s top five finishers in what was a competitive and close race:

- Dinnebito — 1:45:06
- Whitehorse — 1:46:12
- Johnson Boys — 1:50:10
- Zia Gachupin — 1:53:40
- Young Bad Boys — 1:58:12



This race isn’t about fancy hats or glitz like the Kentucky Derby—it’s about heart, strength, and community. With 18 teams and horses, and countless supporters, this is our version of a championship. Thank you to the Navajo Division for Children and Family Services for also being out in the community handing out water and tabling this family-grassroots event.



This race isn’t about fancy hats or glitz like the Kentucky Derby - it’s about heart, strength, and community.



NAVAJO COWBOYS MENTORING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ROPERS



Over a hundred youth attended a free roping clinic in Window Rock, Ariz. during the Navajo PRCA Rodeo.

WINDOW ROCK — Camree Aday drove nearly four hours from Whiteriver, Ariz., with her horse to learn roping techniques from professional ropers Derrick Begay, Erich Rogers, and Aaron Tsingine at the Navajo Nation Youth Team Roping Clinic.

“They work with you one-on-one,” Aday said. “If you’re swinging a certain way and it’s bad, they help you. I’m getting better at the mechanics—like how to dally and swing my rope.”

The free clinic, held just before the PRCA event at the Dean C. Jackson Arena, exemplifies the mission of Tsingine and sponsor Native Land Insurance Services, Inc.

“That discipline carries into everyday life and helps them grow into good contributors to society,” said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. “Access to professional mentoring like this—from our own Navajo cowboys—is priceless.”

The two-day clinic held May 26–27 also featured professional ropers Jake Barnes, Clay O’Brien Cooper, Matt Sherwood, Ty Romo, Myles John, and Dugan Kelly.

“You have to dally when you turn,” Barnes told students.

Alvin Nez of Snowflake, Ariz., brought his 11-year-old granddaughter, one of over 150 Native youth attending.

“They’re learning fundamentals of team roping,” Nez said. “It’s better for them to learn from professionals.”

Just days before the PRCA event, President Nygren met with the young riders, thanking Tsingine and fellow ropers for creating this space.

“We’re giving back to Native youth,” Tsingine said. “None of us ever went to a roping school. If we bring that to these kids, we give them a positive mindset. We discipline them because that’s how we learned.”



Access to professional mentoring like this - from our own Navajo cowboys - is priceless.





Cadee Williams, Danielle Lowman and Kassidy Dennison offer their pro rodeo tips to dozens of youth looking up to them



NAVAJO YOUTH ROPE IN LESSONS OF GRIT AND TRADITION

Under a warm 75-degree sun, I watched a powerful moment unfold: dozens of young Navajo cowboys and cowgirls, all under 17, gathered in the stands, listening intently as three of our own—Danielle Lowman, Kassidy Dennison, and Cadee Williams—shared their skills and spirit at a breakaway roping clinic.

This free clinic, made possible by Native Lands Insurance, reminded me of the strength and resilience of our youth. Opportunities like this are rare—many families cannot afford expensive rodeo clinics. Native Lands CEO Brittany Begay helped change that.

I've always said it's Navajo women who get the work done, and today proved it again. These women taught more than rope work—they modeled discipline, endurance, and giving back. They returned home to uplift the next generation. That's true leadership.

I encouraged the kids to carry the same determination they brought to the arena into their daily lives—to keep working, learning, and becoming future champions. What they're learning isn't just about competition—it's about courage and character.

Kassidy Dennison's message especially stood out. She told the youth: "Be one with your rope—know your swing, know how to control yourself. We're girls, and we may not swing as aggressively, but you have to be strong with your rope. Get to know your rope every day."

Breakaway roping may be led by women, but it's open to all. Today wasn't just about rodeo—it was about passing down values, pride, and purpose. These young athletes didn't just learn how to rope. They learned how to endure.

“

**Be one with your rope—
know your swing, know
how to control yourself.**





CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2025

Just before we celebrated Mother's Day, we were blessed with a calm and beautiful Saturday to honor the graduating seniors of Red Mesa High School and Red Valley Cove High School. Families, educators, and community members gathered to celebrate the achievements of our graduating class.

I had the honor of delivering the keynote address, where I spoke about the importance of the students taking care of their whole self, their mind, body, and spirit as they step into a new chapter of life.

I encouraged our graduates to take care of their minds by finding healthy outlets and doing what they love. For me, that means tapping into my creativity through weaving, a space where I feel both grounded and inspired. I reminded them to make time for their passions because those are the things that sustain us through stress and change.

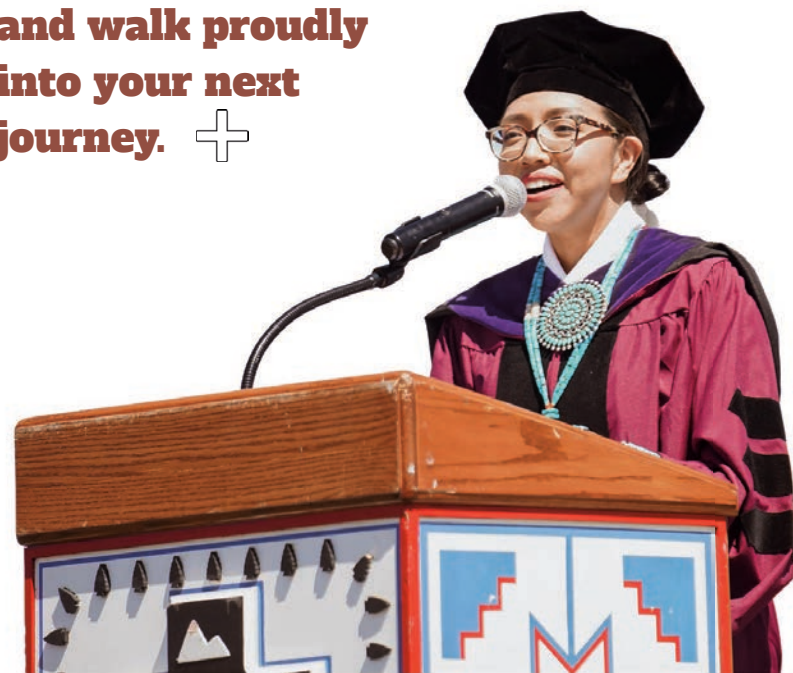
We also talked about the importance of taking care of their bodies, recognizing that we are only given one body and it's our responsibility to care for it. That means making mindful choices about what we eat, staying active, and being intentional about what we consume physically, mentally, and emotionally.

I shared how crucial it is to nurture our spirits. That starts with surrounding ourselves with people who are good for us, those who encourage us, uplift us, and genuinely want to see us succeed and just as importantly, we should strive to be that person for others.

It was inspiring to see how many of these students are already on a strong path forward. From Career and Technical Education completers to college acceptances, honors graduates, and even dual enrollment students, each name from Kalayla Yazzie and Shyla Pipkin, the class Salutatorian and Valedictorian to Raquel Chilly, senior class president tells a story of dedication and the promise of what's to come.

We are proud of all our Navajo students who continue to pursue their education and reach meaningful milestones. Whether you're promoting from FACE and Head Start, or walking across the stage to be hooded for your doctoral degree. Each of you carries our hopes and our prayers.

+ Congratulations, Class of 2025!
Take care of yourselves
and walk proudly
into your next
journey. +





Crowning Strength & Culture: Miss Indian Broken Trail & Mr. Łíí' Łigai Hastiin



Whitehorse High School came alive with the perfect celebration of our language and Diné culture as it hosted the Miss Indian Broken Trail and Mr. Łíí' Łigai Hastiin Pageant for the 2025–2026 titleholders.

From traditional storytelling to impromptu questions in Diné Bizaad, each portion of the pageant showcased the beauty of being Navajo.

It was an honor to serve as a judge among esteemed royalty such as Miss Gallup Inter-Tribal Ceremonial Queen, Miss Northern Navajo, and Miss Northern Navajo Teen. Each of them are so unique and carry their own strengths. I commend them all for their courage and simply stepping onto the stage and trying out.

Congratulations to the new Miss Indian Broken Trail, Katiana Ben and Mr. Łíí' Łigai Hastiin, Deron Yazzie. Ahéhee' to the families, educators, and community members who continue to nurture our youth and language. Events like this remind us that our culture is not just alive and thriving.



Any opportunity to celebrate who we are, we should take it.

CULTURAL INSIGHT: OUR SACRED ANIMALS

Throughout our creation stories, certain animals were once powerful spiritual beings that later became what we know today as the protectors of our people. Tł'ish Tsoh, the Big Snake, and Ma'ii Tsoh, the Big Wolf, became the protector of the Tódich'íinii, the Bitter Water people. Náshdóí Tsoh, the Mountain Lion, became the protector to the Honágháanii, the Ones Who Walk Around clan. Shash, the Bear, became the protector of the Kinyaa'áanii, the Towering House people. Dahsání, the Porcupine, became the protector of the Hasht'ishnii, the Mud Clan, which is my own clan.

Just as these beings were given power to protect, others lost theirs. The Fish People and certain Reptiles were once powerful but because they abused their powers, they were stripped of their authority. Even Tł'ish Tsoh, the great snake, misused his power, and as a result, his arms and legs were taken from him. To make sure our protectors could continue their sacred duties, the Mountain Lion, the Bear, and the Wolf were given their fierce appearances, and the Porcupine was given her quills.

Ma'ii, the Coyote, is unpredictable and mischievous, but he always leaves us with a lesson. In this present world, he continues to serve as one of our messengers. When we see Coyote or see Owl, we know they are trying to warn us, reminding us to listen, and to be aware.

The birds gifted us our Navajo language. Insects taught us how to build our homes and spider woman gifted us the art of weaving. The horned toad remains one of our strongest protectors. Horses, given to us by our holy deities, protect and carry us. All two-toed and hoofed animals serve vital roles in our ceremonies, our nourishment, and our way of life.

These animals are more than just beings we share the land with. They are a part of us. They are our guides and protectors. Every family has their own stories and teachings. When we respect them, we strengthen our people. These stories and lesson are alive in our songs, our ceremonies, and the way we move through life today.



CONGRATULATIONS, CLASS OF 2025!



PINE HILL GRAD



NTU GRAD



ROCK POINT GRAD



ROUGH ROCK GRAD



HOLBROOK GRAD



My administration continues to advocate for education, so that we promote opportunities to benefit our Diné children's futures.





**BE BOLD. BE HUMBLE. BE PROUD. AND
ALWAYS LOOK TOWARD THE FUTURE!**



NW SHIPROCK GRAD



WHITE HORSE GRAD



UNM STOLING CEREMONY



ROCINANTE HS GRAD



LUEPP SCHOOLS GRAD



NAVAJO MTN HS GRAD





Native Lands Insurance offered a \$500 reward for Junior girls barrel racing raising the stakes for the young ladies



“Seeing these young girls and boys really testing the waters of being future cowboys and cowgirls was wonderful to see.”



SADDLE UP FOR THE FUTURE: PRCA CELEBRATES KIDS' DAY

WINDOW ROCK — On May 31, rodeo season kicked off with the “Raising Resilience Leaders Kids’ Night” during the Navajo PRCA Rodeo.

Beginning with the national anthem sung in Navajo followed by various events like bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, steer wrestling, bull riding, team roping and tie-down roping.

In celebration of Kids’ Night, wooly riding left the crowd in awe, with loud cheers for the female barrel racers and breakaway roping events. During the young girls’ barrel racing category, Kayson Yazzie won \$500 for the Junior Barrel Racing Champion of the PRCA.

The PRCA rodeo allows Diné youth and local cowboys and cowgirls to showcase their skills that highlights confidence and hard work. These skills allow the youth to learn important teachings of caring for livestock, building knowledge from professionals, have good sportsmanship and do everything with pride. These teachings are what keep the rodeo traditions alive. Continue to support Navajo youth in this competitive sport and have fun!

With the support from the Navajo Division for Children and Family Services’ (NDCFS), their initiative of “Culture is Healing” promotes the healing for Navajo children and families through the Preserving Navajo Family Initiative.

Thank you to NDCFS and the PRCA for not only celebrating Navajo children, but for showcasing the Diné lifestyle and rodeo culture that play a role in the Navajo Nation’s economic development and livelihood of ranchers and farmers.

“Seeing these young girls and boys really testing the waters of being future cowboys and cowgirls was wonderful to see,” said President Nygren.





SPAY & NEUTER PROCLAMATION TO ADDRESS 500,000 STRAY PET PROBLEM ON NAVAJO



Joe Begay, right, who has been with animal control for over 30 years, explained the importance spaying and neutering pets

“**We have a responsibility to act now and take care of the animals we share our land with.**”

WINDOW ROCK — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed a proclamation on May 31 declaring October “Navajo Nation Spay & Neuter Awareness Day,” the official month for mass spay and neuter efforts.

“I am signing this five months ahead of schedule because there is an urgent need to address the overpopulation of stray animals,” said President Nygren. “We will work toward a mass effort to spay and neuter our pets.”

The proclamation follows growing concerns from the Navajo Nation Animal Control, the Division of Natural Resources, and several nonprofit organizations over the surge in stray cats and dogs.

“It was one of my officers who suggested (mass spay and neuter efforts),” said Joe Begay, Navajo Nation Senior Animal Control Officer. “I told him to put a team together and now we’re here with this proclamation. Now hopefully someday we can get this under control.”

On May 30, nine animal control officers joined the Navajo Nation’s only veterinarian Dr. David Manuelito and his team at the State Room. President Nygren recalled a horror story from an animal control officer about a young child who was killed by a stray dog. According to pre-COVID data from the Division of Natural Resources, the number of stray animals on the Navajo Nation is estimated to be around 500,000.



Navajo Nation Animal Control staff urge pet owners to use available resources, including spay and neuter clinics, vaccination events, and surrender or transfer programs. These services can be accessed through the Navajo Nation Animal Control website.

Currently, there are four animal control offices across the Nation including Fort Defiance, Shiprock, Kayenta, and Many Farms, with a mission to complete a fifth in Crownpoint, N.M.

The Navajo Nation emphasizes that responsible pet ownership and animal population control are crucial to public health and safety. Stray and free-roaming animals often suffer from untreated injuries, infectious diseases like parvo, rabies, and mange, as well as hunger, thirst, and exposure to extreme weather conditions.

“This isn’t just about animals—it’s about protecting our communities, our children, and restoring balance,” said President Nygren. “We have a responsibility to act now and take care of the animals we share our land with.”

Go to NavajoNationPets.com to view a calendar of upcoming low-cost spay and neuter clinics.





PRESERVING AGRICULTURE AND SUPPORTING FARMERS IN NEED

MANY FARMS, Ariz. - On May 28, the Navajo Nation Water Management staff took President Nygren to one of the farms outside of Many Farms. During this farm visit, President Nygren met with farmer Delvina Ashkie who expressed her concerns on irrigation and water system repairs.

Delvina Ashkie is a math teacher at Chinle Junior High School and is a farmer. Her family shares 8.5 acres of land that consists of fields of alfalfa that is grown for their own livestock and corn that is harvested to make kneel down bread.

"It was my mom's, but my mom divided them up for all her kids," she said.

However, with the dry terrain, there is a lack of water that usually runs out by July. During the month of January of this year, the underground water piping froze and busted due to the damaged gate valves of a nearby dam.

Since then, Ashkie held a meeting at the Many Farms Chapter House and did a presentation on the estimated costs for repairs.

"But the thing they told us is that the only way they could help us is if they went underneath the irrigation, which we didn't want, the local farmers here," said Ashkie.



Hardworking Navajo people like grandmas and grandpas are out here working our lands. If they weren't doing this then who else would be farming? We need to support them.

There are about 13 active farmers who use this irrigation system and with the lack of water, it impacts their fields. Ashkie's family and local farmers were able to raise over \$200 for a temporary valve repair, but water needs to be depleted before repairing the one that's in the nearby dam.

"Hardworking Navajo people like grandmas and grandpas are out here working our lands, if they weren't doing this then who else would be farming? We need to support them," President Nygren said.

It was advised that the family remains in contact with Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources Executive Director Mike Halona to address this issue and ensure that their repairs are completed with no stipulation.

"There's not many ranchers and farmers out there so we should be honoring, respecting and working with them," President Nygren said. "They are trying to bring back that way of life back to the forefront."





11 volunteers completed a typical 2 weeks worth of garden beds within a few hours to kickstart planting process



'WE'RE BRINGING OUR SEEDS HOME'—A STEP TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE

CHURCH ROCK, N.M. — The average lifespan of a Navajo male is 64 years-old and Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren wants to see that rise - and it can all start with garden beds.

On May 30, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren visited the Church Rock Incubation and Training center, where Navajo Technical University's Sustainability Club and the Navajo Department of Fish and Wildlife and Workforce Development gathered to build garden beds for produce and a potential seed bank.

Matt Tafoya and his team from NTU created seven beds with 18 inches of compost and potting soil, where tenants and staff at the Incubation Center can choose their own plants as well as Indigenous seeds.

"One of the challenges we faced was everyone wanting to grow their own plants and have gardens with these Indigenous seeds but the problem was we couldn't find them anywhere," said Tafoya.

While most seeds planted were for stews, salsas, and vegetables, Tafoya noted they included a designated area for Indigenous seeds so they can propagate locally rather than traveling to Tucson, where they're kept.

Nekai Eversole from the Department of Fish and Wildlife emphasized the need to connect families with traditional foods.

"My goal is to help families come back to traditional foods, learn how to grow them, and learn how to work with the land," said Tafoya. "We want to have various organizations come together and start little gardens within communities that will sustain the communities."

Leonard Whitehorse Jr. added that Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) reflects how Diné people have always planted, and it's time to return to that approach.

"Some of our relatives live in far places off the highways and they can't keep certain groceries because they don't even have electricity to keep the healthier foods cold..." said President Nygren. "What you guys are doing is bringing back those traditional teachings from a time when we could rely on our plants for our food, I really appreciate that."



My goal is to help families come back to traditional foods, learn how to grow them, and learn how to work with the land.





STRENGTHENING NAVAJO LANDS: THE TOOHBAA FOOD AND FARMING REVOLUTION

WINDOW ROCK — Led by matriarchs from the Shiprock area, ToohBAA (formerly the Shiprock Traditional Farmers' Cooperative) unites over 20 local farmers with access to more than 10,000 acres of land.

ToohBAA is a San Juan River based farmers collective with a goal to revitalize ancestral food systems by combining tradition with modern practices to grow healthy foods across various farms in the Shiprock area.

A key step is the \$200,000 grant from the Navajo Nation's Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), signed by President Buu Nygren on May 2. The funds will be awarded to ToohBAA's fiscal sponsor, the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, to develop 5.6 acres for the ToohBAA Agricultural Operations Center within the Shiprock Industrial Park.

This funding, identified by the Navajo Nation Council's Resources and Development Committee, will finance fencing, the construction of a shop and office, and produce processing facilities for farmers.

"This is about taking control of our land and future," President Nygren said. "Revitalizing farmland and supporting local farmers will bring our people closer to food sovereignty."

The ToohBAA Agricultural Operations Center will serve as a hub for sustainable farming, livestock management, and food processing—aiming to turn thousands of idle acres into productive farmland.

"We're using this funding to build infrastructure, support farmers, and develop commercial food production—restoring the land and creating jobs for our community," said Duane "Chili" Yazzie.

Yazzie noted that ToohBAA has been a vital part of the community for years, including providing food to nearby tribes and pueblos during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. This helped ensure regional food security and support during a critical time.

With continued support, ToohBAA's work will strengthen regional food security, create jobs, and build a resilient, sovereign Navajo food system rooted in both tradition and innovation.

In essence, the grant is helping transform ToohBAA from a community-supported food source into a sustainable food production center—helping weave tradition with modern infrastructure to nourish and empower the Navajo people for generations.



"This is about taking control of our land and future. Revitalizing farmland and supporting local farmers will bring our people closer to food sovereignty."



Chili Yazzie explains the importance of communities and the Nation becoming food secured as many tribes struggle with food insecurity.



PRESIDENT NYGREN ISSUES EXECUTIVE ORDER TO ADDRESS MMIP CRISIS



WINDOW ROCK - On May 2, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed Executive Order No. 02-2025, titled "Implementing the Nihí K'é dóó Béédahoozinígíí Naalkaa Bikégó Naaltsoos," establishing a comprehensive plan to address missing persons within the Navajo Nation.

May 5, is observed as National MMIP Awareness Day, highlighting the ongoing call to action.

The order requires all Navajo Nation divisions, departments, and programs to implement the "Nihí K'é dóó Béédahoozinígíí Bikégó Naaltsoos" plan, emphasizing empathetic investigations and staff training.

- Coordination among law enforcement, public safety, health, family services, and prosecutors to improve case intake, investigation, communication, and prosecution.
- The Office of the Prosecutor will work with law enforcement and victim services to ensure timely transfer of investigation materials.
- Programs such as the Family Harmony and Behavioral and Mental Health Services will provide trauma-centered support, collaborating with federal, state, and tribal agencies.
- The Division of Public Safety will lead guideline implementation, with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Missing Persons Unit conducting law enforcement training under the direction of the Navajo Police Chief.
- As of April 24, 2025, there are 68 Missing Diné relatives: 50 adult males and 14 adult females, one juvenile male, three juvenile females.
- On Navajo Nation, 53 Missing and 15 off the Navajo Nation.

President Nygren stressed the importance of training to ensure proper implementation.

"We are going to make sure the Navajo Nation government continues to investigate, continues to meet with families, and continues to follow up. This is what today means," President Nygren said.

This critical step demonstrates the Navajo Nation's commitment to justice, safety, and healing on this significant day.



We are going to make sure the Navajo Nation government continues to investigate, continues to meet with families, and continues to follow up. This is what today means.



Darlene Gomez brought needed awareness to the Gathering of Nations ahead of MMIP awareness month as it's a crucial ongoing fight.



PROTECTING OUR SACRED LANDS: NAVAJO NATION AFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO BEARS EARS, GRAND STAIRCASE- ESCALANTE



WINDOW ROCK — For generations, Bears Ears has been a sacred and cultural home to many Indigenous peoples, including the Diné. This revered landscape, and the neighboring Grand Staircase-Escalante, embodies deep spiritual, cultural, and historical connections that continue to shape our way of life.

In a letter dated March 26, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren, alongside the Navajo Nation Historic Preservation Department, expressed the Nation's ongoing commitment to these lands and respectfully called on the Trump Administration and the Department of the Interior to preserve the current monument boundaries.

Over the years, the Navajo Nation, in partnership with other tribal nations and federal agencies, has invested significant time and resources into collaborative land management plans that integrate traditional ecological knowledge and scientific stewardship.

"In light of the current administration's stated priorities on efficiency and reducing waste, we believe that maintaining the integrity of established monument boundaries supports those goals," said President Nygren. "Changing the boundaries and reopening finalized planning processes would not only risk the loss of valuable progress but may also lead to inefficiencies, duplicative expenditures, and delays in implementing conservation strategies."

President Nygren's letter to Secretary Doug Burgum respectfully requests that no changes to monument designations be made without full and meaningful tribal consultation, as outlined in federal policy.

President Nygren urges a continued commitment by the Trump Administration to honor tribal voices, protect sacred places, and uphold the government-to-government relationship.



TEXT 'NAVAJONATION' TO 888777 TO GET EMERGENCY ALERTS ON NAVAJO

WINDOW ROCK — By texting 'NavajoNation' to 888777, the Diné public will get weather, endangered missing persons, Amber alerts, and major incident alerts. This free service is provided by the Navajo Nation Police Department to help share emergency incidents across the Navajo Nation, a new resource tool to keep the Navajo people safe.

Harlan Cleveland, of the NNPD's Missing Persons Unit, said this was supposed to be used for missing persons alerts. Upon texting the number, people will get a

kickback message with a link to create a profile, allowing them to receive more alerts beyond missing person alerts.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed Executive Order called Nihi K'é dóó Béédahootinígíí Náalkaa Bikégó Naaltsoos, in early May, requiring all parts of the executive branch, including the Navajo Police Department, Division of Public Safety, Department of Justice, and Division of Health, to adopt new guidelines, that prioritize empathy and compassion for victims and their families.

"This emergency alert notification provides alerts for various areas that keep our families safe here on the Nation," said President Buu Nygren. "This includes aiding our families who are looking for a missing loved one. This system is an additional tool for our people to use and has been needed for a long time."



PROTECT OUR WATER LIFELINES: NAVAJO NATION COMBATS VANDALISM AND NEGLECT THREATENING WINDMILLS

CHINLE, Ariz. — Windmill 10-T523, located just over two miles off Highway 191 near Chinle, is a life water source to 86 head of cattle, 8 horses, and 8 to 10 Navajo families who rely on it daily.

Each cow drinks about 25 gallons of water per day. For the 86 head of cattle that is over 2,150 gallons in one day. Repairs at this windmill were completed over a month ago by the Navajo Department of Water Resources (NDWR), after a leaky 4,000-gallon tank and damaged slab were reported to tribal department. The water resources team replaced the tank and windmill, which pulls groundwater to fill the tank.

"In two to three days, if the wind is good, the tank will be decently full," said Delbert Price, irrigation supervisor with NDWR.

But vandalism and neglect threaten the infrastructure. Both Price and Roland Tso, project manager for NDWR, said windmill parts are often stolen or damaged—pipes, cords, and ladders taken; some use the windmill for target practice.

Waste is also dumped into tanks. Tso recalled an incident where livestock died after drinking from a tank contaminated with antifreeze and oil.

In Many Farms, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren visited windmill 10-T553 to see the conditions firsthand with Division of Natural Resources Director Mike Halona.

Tso noted a hopeful sign: women in the community often take it upon themselves to pull the windmill brake, which helps extend the system's life.

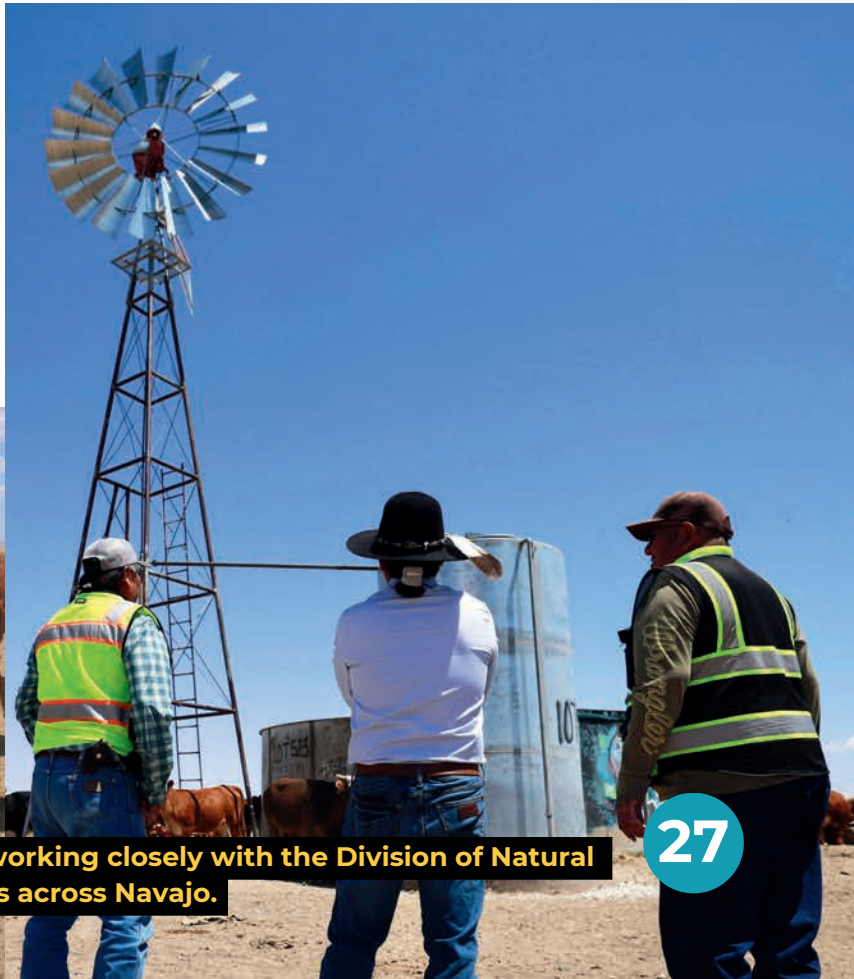
"This prolongs the lifeline," Tso said. "That way these can last longer."

President Nygren called for community action to protect vital water sources by taking ownership and accountability.

"If people could build windmills with wagons in the 1920s, we should be able to maintain them today," President Nygren said. "We need water, and that means taking responsibility—not just to build, but to protect and maintain what we have."

“

We need water, and that means taking responsibility not just to build, but to protect and maintain what we have.



President Nygren has been working closely with the Division of Natural Resources to repair windmills across Navajo.



Navajo Elders raised their next generations of leaders and President Nygren made it a goal to do what he can to make sure they're heard.



HONORING OUR WISDOM KEEPERS AT THE WESTERN NAVAJO ELDERLY PAGEANT

On May 7, I had the honor of celebrating with our elders at the Western Navajo Elderly Pageant—a vibrant gathering that brought together 14 senior centers from across the Western Navajo Agency. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Council Delegate Helena Nez Begay for the invitation and for her continued advocacy for our elders.

The event was more than just a pageant; it was a powerful reminder of the deep wisdom, humor, and resilience that our elders carry. They are our most precious resource, and every opportunity to be in their presence reinforces why I fight so hard to support their needs and honor their voices.

One of the highlights of the day was announcing the new royalty: Mr. Western Elderly 2025–2026, Jesse Salt of Kayenta, and Ms. Western Elderly 2025–2026, Mary Delowe of Tolani Lake. Their pride and grace were inspiring to all of us in attendance.

Dancing alongside our elders, listening to their stories, and hearing their concerns made this a day to remember. These gatherings strengthen our bonds as a Nation and remind us to always walk with gratitude and respect for those who paved the path before us.



They are our most precious resource ...





BIDII BABY FOODS GETS BUSINESS SITE LEASE APPROVAL FROM PRESIDENT NYGREN TO EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS



Bidii Baby Foods was recently approved for a Business Site Lease to continue providing naturally made baby food.



This partnership with Bidii Baby Foods, LLC represents the kind of homegrown innovation and cultural pride we want to see across the Navajo Nation.



TWIN ARROWS, Ariz. — A Navajo-grown baby food company — Bidii Baby Foods, LLC — is planting roots in Shiprock, N.M. with commercial space while growing a future for local farmers, families and contributing to the Nation's economy.

On April 22, during the 2025 Navajo Nation Economic Summit at Twin Arrows Resort and Casino, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed and approved a business site lease for Bidii Baby Foods, LLC. The signing of the business site lease for Bidii Baby Foods, LLC will allow the company to establish a food production and agricultural hub in Shiprock.

Bidii Baby Foods, a family-run agricultural cooperative founded by Zach and Mary Ben in 2021, has been certified in good standing since its inception. Inspired by the birth of their child during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bens created the company to promote traditional foods and infant nutrition, rooted in the belief that "food is medicine."

The 1.5-acre site, approved under the Navajo Nation's Business Regulatory Department, will house production and manufacturing of baby food products. Products from Bidii Baby Foods, LLC uses locally grown ingredients from its farm in Gadii'ahi, N.M.

The business site will also support food aggregation and resale, host a local farmers market and seasonal outdoor events, and provide shared-use commercial space for area farmers.

This business and economic project aligns with President Nygren's ongoing efforts to support Navajo entrepreneurs and revitalize the post-pandemic Navajo economy.

President Nygren's Administration has launched an artisan relief program with the Navajo Division of Economic Development to help small businesses recover and grow.

"This partnership with Bidii Baby Foods, LLC represents the kind of homegrown innovation and cultural pride we want to see across the Navajo Nation," said President Buu Nygren. "Investing in our land, our food systems, and our entrepreneurs means investing in the health and future of our people. This is more than a lease — it's a promise to our families and our farmers."





COMMUNITY IN ACTION: NAPI FOOD BOXES SUPPORTING FAMILIES IN NEED

BLACKMESA, Ariz. - On May 31, my staff and I traveled to Black Mesa to help with the NAPI food distribution at the Black Mesa Chapter House.

I was able to help load food items in community member's vehicles and listen to some of their concerns regarding homesite leases and grazing permits, and windmills.

Since March 2025, the Executive Branch has been assisting with the distributions of the Navajo Agricultural Products Industry (NAPI) food boxes throughout the Navajo Nation. For the month of May, approximately 5,974 food boxes have been distributed in Western, Shiprock and Chinle areas.

This food distribution wouldn't have been possible without our Navajo Nation Washington Office and (NNWO). NNWO applied for and secured a \$5.5 million USDA grant to bring food out to the 110 chapters and communities to address food insecurity.

Thank you to the Navajo Department of Agriculture, USDA's Local Food Purchase Program, Navajo Pride and NAPI for making this effort become a reality to serve families in need. Additionally, thank you to staff volunteers, chapters and the Division of Children and Family Services for assisting with the distribution process across the Nation.

President Nygren got to work to help load up NAPI potatoes for families who need it.



Each distribution sites will be handing out the following:

- 50-pound bags of potatoes
- 20-pound bags of beans
- 25-pound bags of flour
- 10-pound bags of blue, yellow or white cornmeal

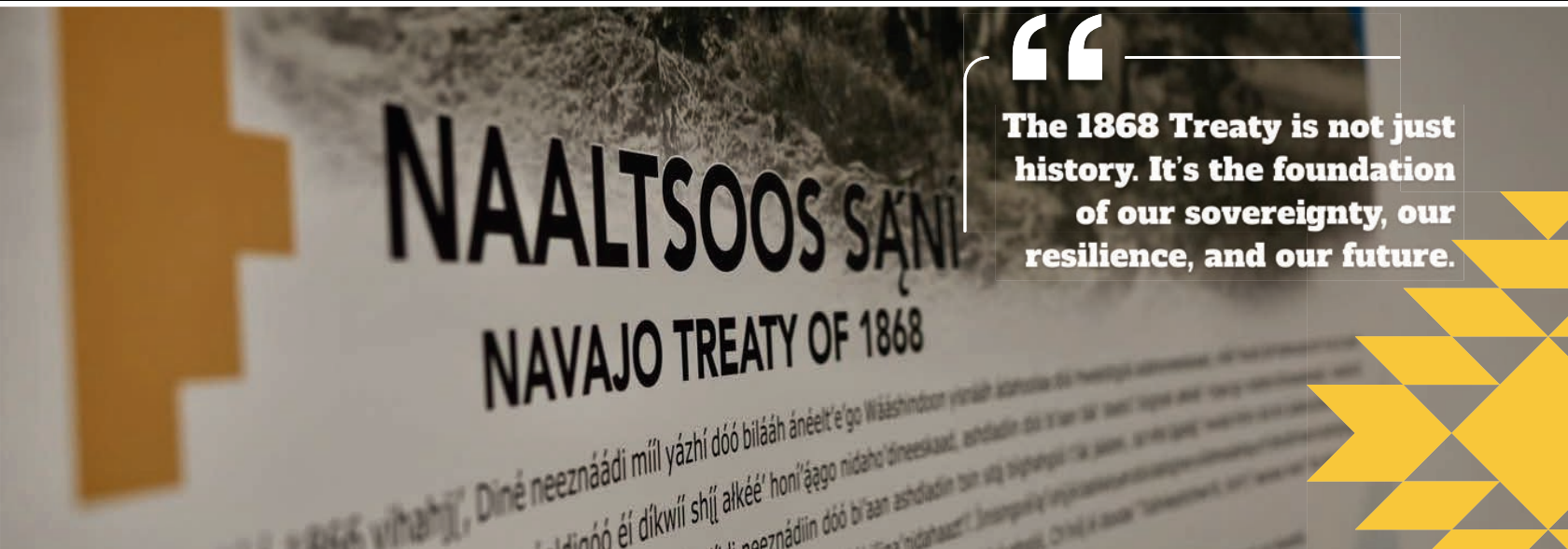


Upcoming food distributions:

- 6/10 - Forest Lake
- 6/12 - Toadlena/Two Grey Hills
- 6/14 - Pinon
- 6/17 - Tselani/Cottonwood
- 6/19 - Gadiiahi/Tokoi
- 6/21 - Nazlini
- 6/24 - Chinle

For more information, call your local chapter houses.

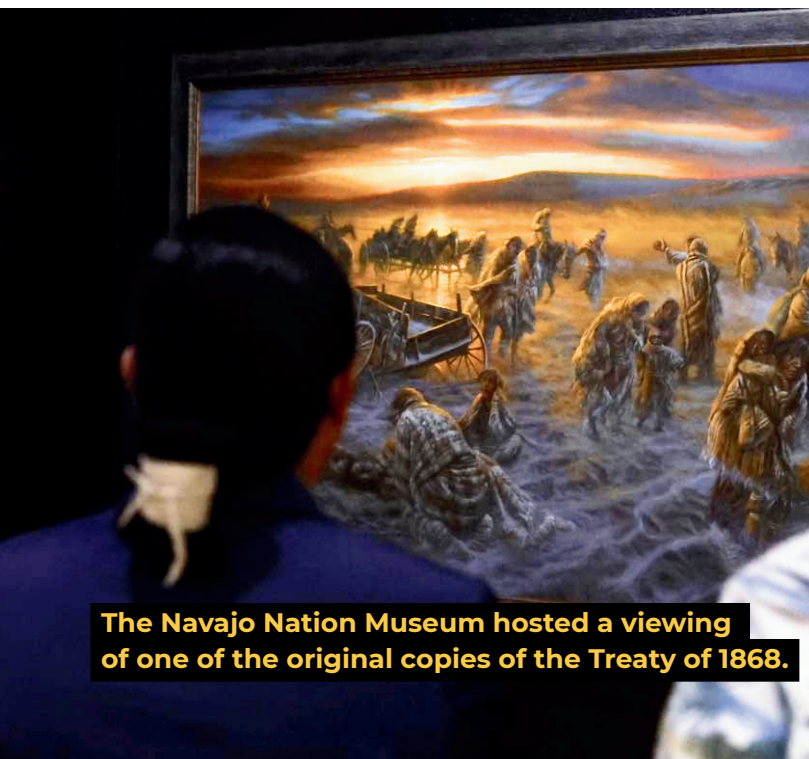




Naaltssoos Sání — A Treaty That Lives On

WINDOW ROCK - Inside the Navajo Nation Museum, I was humbled to see one of the original copies of the 1868 Treaty — a document signed with an 'X' by all of our leaders except Delgadito who proudly signed his name, yet carrying the weight of generations. It was more than ink on paper. It was a promise. A way home.

Navajo Nation Treaty Day is celebrated every June 1st, a day of great significance for the Navajo people. We honor our tribal sovereignty and reflect on the historic signing of the Navajo Treaty of 1868 on this day. More than 157 years ago, a delegation of Navajo leaders, including esteemed figures such as Headmen Manuelito, Barboncito, Ganado Mucho, and other revered leaders, signed the treaty with the United States government.



The Navajo Nation Museum hosted a viewing of one of the original copies of the Treaty of 1868.

This agreement marked a turning point for the Diné people, ending their exile from their ancestral homeland and freeing them from incarceration at Fort Sumner.

This treaty gave us the right to return to our sacred lands after the Long Walk — a trauma that still continues to exist within our people. But from that pain, we rose. We became the Navajo Nation — a sovereign Nation with a voice, with strength, with purpose. What moved me most was seeing our people come full circle.

Today, our youth are graduating with dreams rooted in both tradition and modern knowledge. I spent the past month celebrating with them — hearing their hopes and dreams, seeing their joy.

They spoke of becoming doctors, engineers, teachers, welders, ranchers — and coming back to serve Dinétah. They are living proof that the treaty endures — not just in museums, but in every step we take forward. The 1868 Treaty is not just history. It's the foundation of our sovereignty, our resilience, and our future.

Our Navajo Treaty remains a significant legal agreement that defines who we are as Diné People. It continues to be vital today, aiding us in water rights settlements, such as the proposed Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement Act pending before Congress, and in shaping laws governing our community and federal health care access.



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