



'08 Community Dinner

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THE KAYENTA TODAY

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE KAYENTA TOWNSHIP AND COMMUNITY

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Trying to Return Home

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Winter 2008

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Navajo Western Agency Oath of Office

By Malcolm Benally

TUBA CITY, ARIZONA - The Oath of Office Ceremony was held on a cool Tuesday morning, January 06, 2008 inside the Greyhills High School Auditorium. After Miss Western Navajo, Raenelle Nez sang the National Anthem in the Navajo language, and several dignitaries and guests of the ceremony were introduced, Dr. Joe Shirley, Jr. addressed the newly elected officials with words of advice. For the morning's proceedings, the world famous Chilchinbeto rug, the world's largest Navajo rug, served as the backdrop for the stage, courtesy of the Kayenta Township.

"Public service is a privilege, not a right," he reminded the incoming officials. The President's message was filled with optimism and candor as he recounted his experiences after over 40 years in public service. When you hold public office, it is something you have to wake up for everyday, even when your constituents direct their criticism at you, he said. "A lot of sacrifice comes with it and not much money.

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Kayenta Town Manager Goes To Work

By Malcolm Benally

KAYENTA, AZ – Every community has a repository of stories, leadership, and community events it can turn to in telling its story to the outside world. As a former world history teacher at Monument Valley High School, Jarvis Williams, Town Manager for the Kayenta Township, understands that history must be written so that its original documentation can benefit the greater public.

In his new role as Kayenta Town Manager for this tight knit community, Jarvis weaves anecdotes and examples to highlight important points from a PowerPoint presentation titled "History of Kayenta Township: A Tough Journey" during a day-long work session and orientation for the new incoming township commissioners. The oath of office ceremony was in Tuba City where the new Kayenta Chapter Officials, three new Kayenta Township Commissioners, and School Board members were sworn-in on January 6 at Greyhills High School.



Kayenta Town Manager Jarvis Williams

He explains the Home Rule status the township received when the Navajo Nation Council passed Resolution CAU 47-03 on August 29, 2003. Based on Home Rule, the Kayenta Township has the local authority and is "given permission to perform all functions and exercise any power necessary for local self-government and is consistent with the laws of the Navajo Nation." The discussion leads the group

attending the orientation to agree that the community itself can give more meaning to the definition of home rule, now that they have the ability to make their own ordinances and enforce them. On a closing note to the presentation, he reminds the group that the township is currently seeking delegation for business site leasing authority from the Navajo Nation Economic Development Committee.

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Pictured: Elwood Sagney was sworn in as a KUSD School Board Member at the KUSD Board Room.

New KUSD Governing Board Members Sworn In

By Malcolm Benally

KAYENTA, Arizona – It was a quiet swearing-in ceremony for the new Kayenta Unified School District No. 27 Governing Board members on Monday in the board meeting room of the KUSD Administration Building. Navajo County Superintendent for Schools, Linda Morrow and her husband drove over 300 miles from their home in Pinetop, Arizona for the ceremony

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Town Managers Message

Happy New Year!! The New Year has arrived with new opportunities and possibilities. It's a good time to reflect on the past year and remember the good things that happened. Although, there are always challenges and obstacles that are place in our path we must always anticipate a bit of struggle.

I believe that it makes us stronger because we have to reach deep within ourselves to get us through it. We come out on the other end a bigger and better person for it. So we must take advantage of new opportunities and make the best of them for ourselves and our families.

In the two months that I made my introduction as the newly hired Town Manager across the community and other places around the Navajo Nation, the same question had always eventually surfaced, "what is your plan?" The people that I spoke with were curious to know what is going to happen in Kayenta. "What can we expect?" they said. But before I delve into how I answered that question, I wanted to provide a glimpse of 2008 and also the reasons why communities make the decision to take their destiny into their own hands.

Role of Government

Most people don't wake up one morning and tell themselves that they're going to create a new government for the people. For the most part it is long thought out process with more than one person involved. Community change doesn't happen overnight, it takes weeks, months even years for it to happen. Even when it does happen it may need some tweaking so that it serves the community in a more efficient manner.

No government is perfect as there are needs that don't receive as much attention as others but it's the process by which those priorities are determined is what is the most important. Without those processes the list of needs can become overwhelming and congested.

A book titled, "Managing Small Cities and Counties," talked about government, its role and provided a clearer picture of what government is, "Government at any level provides a mechanism through which people can work together to improve the quality of their lives. Community governments are the principle mechanism through which people can improve the quality of life in their own neighborhoods."

These are important statements as it simply states the need for government at the local level. A former co-worker relayed a statement to me regarding community government and he told me that of all the levels of government the most important to community members is the local government. How we choose to improve the quality of life in our communities is determined by us, collectively.

Furthermore, a community government is needed to determine how those services are rendered. In most Navajo communities the community government is a certified-Chapter government or a Locally-Governance Certified Chapter that provides those services that the community needs.

In Kayenta, it is both the Kayenta Chapter and the Kayenta Township. Both governments provide different services but serve the same purpose which is to improve the quality of life for its residents.

The Kayenta Township has been in existence for the last 20 years as a pilot project, sales tax project, and a Home Rule community. The principle reasons are still the same which is to improve the quality of life for the community. The past leaders have always argued for better service for the benefit of its residents. But they also knew that it was going to be a struggle to put the important components in place to make this thing work.

Humbling Beginnings

Everyone that has been involved, small or big has contributed something to this organization and that is important because it is often a point that is left out of conversations concerning the Township. Although, there are those that have been very active in the process there are also those that are very subtle about their contributions.

I've had conversations with individuals that remind me of the hardships of the organization that were experienced when the Township, in its beginnings, started with no funds just a lot of volunteers. Those types of stories are reminders that the community government was important and badly needed. Not to say that the Navajo Nation was not doing its job, but that the time had come for a community to realize that they needed to put things in place that would allow for more local control.

Soon taxes were levied, a commission put in place, ordinances and resolutions were passed, projects put into place, and technical staff hired. But there is still a lot of work than needs to be done. As we continue to generate revenue from local sales tax and grants there is a greater need to be more accountable to the local taxpayers. This prompts us to be more aware and always be cognizant of our actions.

Importance of Planning

We want to create one-year, two-year, five-year, ten-year plans that support the growing needs of the community for now and the future. We want to find avenues that allow for the community to be heard and allow for meaningful discussions concerning the present and future plans of the community.

That seems easy enough however as revenues begin to increase the process becomes more complex as there are more needs that arise with increasing revenue. This can create debates and arguments that may create roadblocks or barriers to good ideas. Certainly, that is not what we want to do therefore it is important to understand the needed components of planning for the community.

The instruments of a good plan include comprehensive planning, zoning ordinances, maps, a capital budget, and a capital improvement program. More importantly, we need to understand the roles of the community, administration, and elected officials.

In Kayenta, we have the information to draft a comprehensive plan, maps, capital budget, and a capital improvement program. For the last

few years, the organization has been gathering the necessary information and will now work towards drafting a zoning ordinance that is workable for the entire community.

Finally, it is my belief that in our community with all the necessary components in hand we can draft a good plan with the assistance of a capable administration and newly energized elected commission.

So...what needs to happen?

This is the part where I answer the question that was posed earlier. The process is a three-pronged approach that will begin with the assessment, planning, and finally approval. However, this is easier said than done. The first part is already ongoing and that is the assessment of the organization and administration.

The next part is to begin planning for the next fiscal year. Although, its six months away it is about that time to begin planning for next year. This part of the process involves the entire administration, community, and Commission.

Surveys, public meetings (if needed), the goals and objectives, policies are found in this portion therefore it is the most time consuming and tedious. Following this process all that is needed is the approval the Commission but as mentioned earlier the Commission is very involved in this entire process.

Looking Back

As we look forward to the opportunities and possibilities that 2009 will offer we must also take a look back and reflect on what has happened in 2008. The year of 2008 was filled with achievement and challenges.

It was a tough year for the Kayenta Trading Post as they had to make the decision to close their doors for good. However, the closure allowed for a new Napa Auto Parts Store to open in its place which has provided a closer location for those needing parts for their vehicles.

This was probably the year that we have seen the most construction activity in Kayenta in a long time. In fact, I can't remember a time when there was this much construction in town. We've seen the new Kayenta Community School come up, the construction of the Animal Control building, the construction of a new Fuel Station, the road leading to the rodeo grounds began construction, additions to the Recreation Park, the new Mustang Football Field, and the re-constructed Airport runway.

In addition, the Kayenta Township also reconstructed its website to make it more user-friendly and have added items such as the ordinances and expanded items such as the tourism page. The Kayenta Township Blog site was also added for those that have internet access so that up-to-date news stories could be uploaded to provide the most recent information concerning the community. The busiest day for the site took place after the election as nearly 800 visitors tapped into the site to view the results.

Continuing with the election, we've also witnessed historical events at the local level, regional level, and national level. Locally, we've seen a longtime Chapter leader, Albert Bailey, hand over the reigns to Stanley Clitso,

who is looking to move the Chapter towards LGA-certification. We've also seen long-time Commissioners Eugene Badonie, Jimmie Austin II, and Charles Young leave their seat as they welcomed new and familiar faces to their seats. Delores Greyeyes and Carol Todacheene are the new faces for the Commission while a familiar face, Helen Bonnaha, re-claimed her spot in the Commission.

At the regional level, we witnessed 25-year incumbent Navajo County Supervisor Percy Deal hand over his seat to Honorable Council Delegate Jonathan Nez, an MVHS Alumni. Veteran and attorney Chris Clark-Deschene claimed the Arizona State Representative seat for this area. Ann Kirkpatrick replaced reservation favorite Rick Renzi for the U.S. Congress Representative District 1 seat.

Finally, we witnessed history as America voted its first African American President, Barack Obama, into office. Plenty of change in the political scene as they strive to make a name for themselves as elected leaders.

This year also saw legendary MVHS Volleyball Head Coach Lucinda Nash win her first state championship in five years and claim her 4th overall. In addition, the KUSD administration hired MVHS Alumni and 3A North Boys Basketball Coach of the Year Jacob Holiday as their Athletic Director. On the educational side, MVHS Vocational Agriculture Program won several awards for their veterinary science program. The Kayenta Middle School and Primary School met their AYP goals.

Plenty of changes for the year and I'm sure I missed a few but for the most part I think we can say that we have been working hard as a community to make it better.

Conclusion

Over time the town of Kayenta has continued to grow and along side it is the needs. Who is in the best position to handle those growing needs? From my perspective it is the Kayenta Township and the Kayenta Chapter working in partnership to provide the services needed. Each entity has its own unique qualities that have contributions that only they can give.

I believe that the community has enough talent and leaders to assist in making the right decisions that will raise the community to a much better place. Through collaboration and understanding, the community can better understand the unique qualities offered by both groups and work to enjoy those services to improve their quality of life.

Thank you,
Jarvis Williams
Kayenta Town Manager



Town Manager

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Before taking the role of Township Manager, Jarvis worked for two years as the Community Involvement Coordinator and was instrumental in working with local leadership in re-opening the Kayenta Recreation Center (formerly the Kayenta Field House). In addition to the recreation center, the town youth now can enjoy a day at a state of the art Skate and BMX Park as well as a children's playground. As a student athlete at Monument Valley High School, "I remember our coaches telling us that we needed to support the younger kids in Middle and Intermediate School. So, sometimes we went and watched them play and encouraged them from the stands. Sometimes we were given the opportunity to address them in the locker room or as a group. It was a good learning experience." After high school, Jarvis turned his focus to family life and took several years before considering a higher education. "I call it the long-term plan", he says.



At Fort Lewis College, he enrolled in the Southwest Studies program and dabbled in community organizing on campus for a spell. His friends and intertribal students at the college met often to address Native issues and once even tried to address discrimination at the school, but didn't get far. That is when he realized that what he really wanted to do was come back to his community and help his people. "I didn't know to what extent I would help, but I knew that I wanted to," he says.

Armed with a degree in Southwest Studies, Jarvis returned to Monument Valley High School and taught World History to his students. Since the town of Kayenta usually does not appear when you spin a globe, Jarvis said he was compelled, as a history teacher,



Pictured: Jarvis Williams and MVHS Students for Project Pride in April 2005

to paint a picture for his students that showed "where we sat in comparison to the rest of the world. It was about making those connections to important events in history and relating it to the present situation in the world today." Stemming from his work and experience as a teacher at MVHS, it was natural for him to ease into a position with the Kayenta Township and to his current role holding the key as Town Manager.

On his free time, what does the current Town Manager enjoy on his down time? "Right now, I don't own an iPod," he says. "If I did it would be a generous mix from Pow Wow to classical to Jazz, some American Pop and, of course, good ol' eighties tunes. There would be music to serve whatever mood I'm in at the time. ... When I'm not working, I'm at home. I'm

always up for a good movie or sporting event. I probably should become more active but right now I just love being at home with my kids."

The town of Kayenta is a central market place for many outlying communities. The town is also enjoyed by an international community of tourists. Jarvis believes the market here in K-town is wide open. "We receive several thousand tourists every year and they love the area. They're always looking for something to do in the evenings when they're done visiting Monument Valley. As for the community, I'm sure they would like to see a Chinese restaurant, a KFC, or another laundry mat. I know the kids mentioned a mall or a Wal-Mart but at this point we need to improve our

infrastructure before developing something like that."

So, the town of Kayenta is headed for greater things, and the sky is the limit. And the work that entails developing a community is large. The Town Manager acknowledges that during these tough economic times, most groups tend to partner for more projects or items that serve the community. He says, the Kayenta Alternative Rural Hospital Steering Committee has worked for the last 15-20 years to bring a hospital to this area. And that work is beginning to take fruition. That is the type of dedication many rural communities on the Navajo reservation needs. "The township has a good group of employees who are dedicated to their communities and that's a good thing because those feelings transfer over to their positions as they serve this community," he says. "The foundation is pretty solid and the financial resources are handled at the local level which allows us for more mobility and to be proactive in providing a better quality of life for its residents."

The community leaders remember that there was once just a dirt road that shot through what is now Kayenta, Arizona. At one time, it was probably a vision. Then the tourists came through to see what was there, loved the land, and now they keep coming back for more. Now, they can spend the night, have a nice dinner, and maybe catch a flick at the Black Mesa Cinema. With a Town Manager who has painted a picture of what history looks like in K-town, maybe the people will draw it and write it.



Pictured: Jarvis Williams showing former Miss Navajo Jonathea Tso a map of the Kayenta Township.

Survey Finds 4 in 10 Indian Country Jail Inmates Were Held For a Violent Offense in 2007

WASHINGTON – At midyear 2007, an estimated four in 10 inmates in Indian country jails were confined for a violent offense, the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) announced today. Domestic violence (20 percent) accounted for the largest group of violent offenders, followed by simple or aggravated assault (13 percent) and rape or sexual assault (2 percent). Six percent of Indian country jail inmates were being held for unspecified violent offenses.

The percentage of Indian country jail inmates held for drug offenses was unchanged from 2004 to 2007 (7 percent each year), and DWI/DUI offenses dropped from 14 percent in 2004 to 8 percent in 2007.

Eighty-three jails in Indian country held an estimated 2,163 inmates at midyear 2007, up from 1,745 inmates held in 68 facilities at midyear 2004. The Indian country jail population increased an estimated 24 percent since 2004 when the last BJS Survey of Jails in Indian Country was conducted. The survey collects information from correctional facilities operated by tribal authorities in Indian country or by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of Interior.

Since 2004, available bed space for inmates held in Indian country jails grew faster (34 percent) than growth in the inmate population (24 percent). Jails in Indian country were rated to hold an estimated 2,900 persons at midyear 2007, and were operating at 75 percent of their rated capacity at that time. On their most crowded day in June 2007, 31 of these facilities were operating above their rated capacity.

Inmates were held an average of 4.5 days, up from four days during the same period in 2004. The average length of stay for inmates was the highest (9.4 days) in facilities rated to hold 50 or more persons. Inmates held in jails rated to hold 10 to 24 persons experienced the shortest average length of stay (2.1 days).

American Indians and Alaska Natives under correctional supervision in the U.S. increased by 4.5 percent, from 68,177 in 2004 to 71,274 in 2007.

Most were under community supervision on probation or parole (43,600 or 61.2 percent) in 2007. Of the 27,674 American Indians and Alaska Natives held in custody at midyear 2007, the majority were in state prison (13,956 or 50.4 percent), followed by other local jails (8,600 or 31.1 percent), federal prison (2,955 or 10.7 percent) and Indian country jails (2,163 or 7.8 percent).

Seventy-seven Indian country jails reporting on job functions employed 870 jail operations staff (correctional officers and other staff who spent over 50 percent of their time supervising inmates). There were approximately 2.3 inmates to every jail operations employee at midyear 2007, down from 2.5 inmates at midyear 2004.

An addendum to the 2007 survey obtained information on inmate health services and facility programs. Seventy-eight out of 83 facilities responded to at least some of the addendum, covering 91 percent of inmates held at midyear 2007.



All of the facilities that responded to the addendum provided some form of medical care to inmates. The majority (69) provided medical services off site through the Indian Health Service, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Most facilities said they had policies to test for infectious diseases: 55 facilities tested for HIV, 62 for hepatitis B, 61 for hepatitis C and 63 for tuberculosis.

Seventy-two Indian country jails provided mental health services to inmates, including 41 jails that screened inmates for mental health disorders at intake. Seventy-three facilities reported having at least one suicide prevention policy, and 63 performed risk assessment at intake.

Specialized programs or training for inmates were also offered to inmates held in Indian country jails: 59 facilities provided drug or alcohol dependency counseling or awareness programs, 38 offered domestic violence counseling, nine provided sex offender treatment, 56 offered religious and spiritual counseling, 12 offered vocational training, and 14 provided job seeking and interviewing skills training.



Forty-one jails in Indian country offered inmates GED classes, 28 offered basic and high school education classes, and 48 offered inmate work assignments which included facility support services, public work assignments, farming and agriculture work, and correctional industries. The report, *Jails in Indian Country, 2007* (NCJ-223760), was written by BJS statistician Todd D. Minton. The report can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/jic07.htm>.

For additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics' statistical reports and programs, please visit the BJS Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs>. The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey L. Sedgwick, provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has five component bureaus: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; and the Office for Victims of Crime. Additionally, OJP has two program offices: the Community Capacity Development Office, which incorporates the Weed and Seed strategy, and the Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking (SMART) Office. More information can be found at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>.

Vandals Break Into Kayenta Recreation Center



By Malcolm Benally

On December 15, 2008, not quite the night before Christmas, a Kayenta Township staff member reported on early Monday morning that the Kayenta Recreation Center had been burglarized and vandalized. At least two or more vagrants broke the back, east door windows and entered the recreation center. The main office, media room, and concession area had broken windows, which have since been replaced.

Flat panel dividers for the library were thrown on to the gym floor where an automatic coffee percolator was completely broken to pieces. The suspects made off with a 27" LCD television, a DVD player, a CD Player, and person

al items from the Navajo Nation Library area. Also stolen were the seven DVD titles: Signs, Shrek, Lady of the Water, Brother Bear, Footloose, Flash, and Lord of the Rings.

Graffiti was crudely spray painted in black onto two bulletin boards. All in all, the damages were ones that required repair and maintenance. A preliminary investigation has yielded no suspects at this time and no one was hurt.

Kayenta Recreation staff and the Township now have taken the necessary precautions to prevent this from happening in the future.

A New Community Involvement Coordinator for the Kayenta Township

Yá'át'ééh. Shí éiyá Malcolm Benally yinishyé. Yé'ii Dine'é Táchii'nii nish'í. Tó Áhaní éí báshíshcín. I am from Forest Lake, Arizona. I am the Kayenta Township Commission's Community Involvement Coordinator who will be working with the greater community of Kayenta, as well as finding innovative ways to address the community's needs. It is an honor to work for the commission because I feel that right now the time calls for people to come together around local governance, and this is the only way any community on the Navajo Nation can effect change.

As far as my background, I studied the Navajo and English languages at Northern Arizona University and fulfilled my prerequisite studies at Arizona State University. Before that, I went to school at Holbrook High School. I think that I have been very fortunate in my upbringing, to be able to speak and write Navajo fluently, as well as enjoy a good book or watch a good film.

My Dad worked most of his life for the Santa Fe Railroad and in his retirement, after over 30 years, he had no qualms saddling up his horse and taking out the sheep everyday when he came home. While my Dad was away, it was my Mom and the women in my family (mainly aunties and grandma) who went the extra mile to make sure the home was always warm and there was food on the table. My dad passed on about 8 years ago. So, when I am away in the city for

work, back in school, coming home is always something I think Navajo people are blessed with. And coming back to Kayenta to work with the Township and be closed to home is a huge blessing.

Having said this, I think hard work, loyalty, good listening skills, having an open mind, and persistence are key to finding success anywhere. And I know the Kayenta Township Commission has done this for the community through the years. It's been over 20-years in the making, and slowly, people are warming to the benefits of having a municipal government. However, through the years, the staff and commissioners have successfully realized the construction of new roads, a skate park, the opening of the recreation center, a playground, the animal shelter, and current works in progress.

The Township has an interactive website you can visit to read about the latest news daily at www.kayentatownship.net. The blog site is also a place anyone can comment their concerns, criticisms, and have input into the possible direction of the Township. Or, if you have a concern about road conditions in your neighborhood and anything your local Township can address, please don't hesitate to write me a letter, email me at mbenally@kayentatownship.net or, call me a call at: Malcolm Benally, Community Involvement Coordinator, P.O. Box 1490, Kayenta, Arizona 86033. Phone: (928) 697-8451.

2008 Chuska Challenge



Biking among the aspen - "Bikers enjoy the fall colors of the Navajo country during the 14th annual Chuska Challenge near Tsaile."



Rug winners - "John Miller and Nariisa Koehn of Zuni, NM pose with Jimmy Keith and the rug they purchased during the benefit auction at the Chuska Challenge in Tsaile."



Chuska Mud Bog Challenge

The Year in Photos 2008



For the last 75 years the Kayenta Trading Post had been a common shopping location for local area residents. Therefore, it was a shock to hear in February that the long-time business would be closing its doors. With the closing of the Trading Post, 27 jobs were lost. In response, the owners offered positions in nearby Monument Valley to their employees as well as keeping some employees for the Radio Shack. The Radio Shack store was reopened at a new location on Highway 163, just east of the old Kayenta Trading Post. The old Kayenta Trading Post is now a NAPA Auto Parts store, an auto parts store was something the community had been wanting for a very long time.

Top left: The Kayenta Trading Post on a typical day.

Bottom left: John Whetherill at the Kayenta Trading Post many years ago.

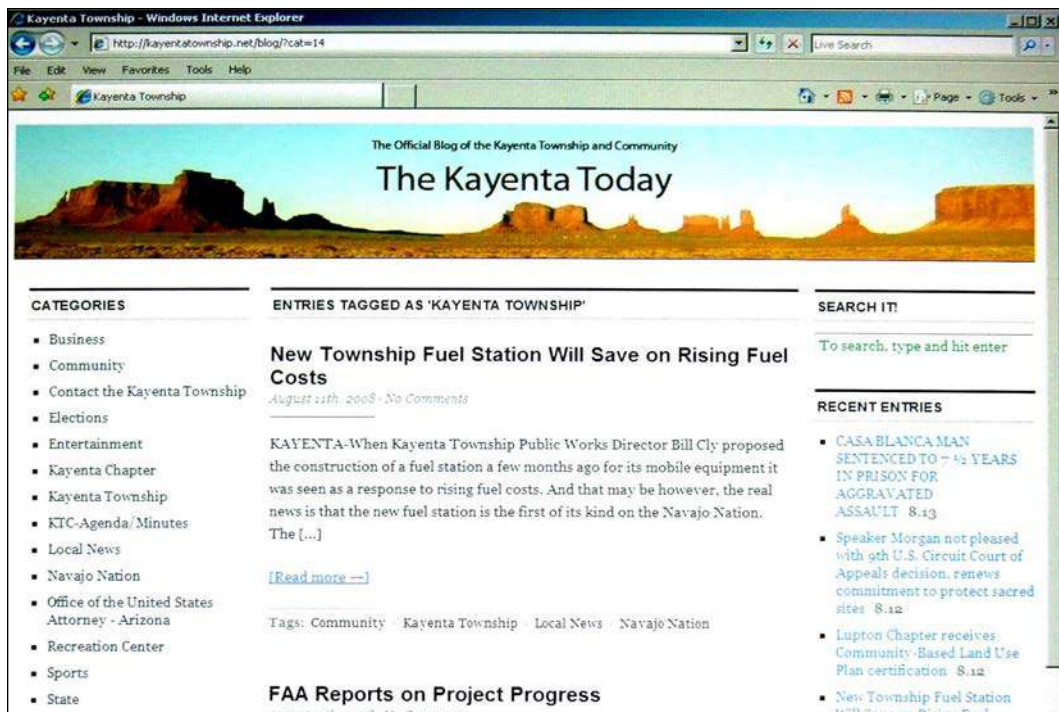
Top right: The new Radio Shack store in Kayenta.



Those of us living on the Navajo Nation have always had to pay a premium for fuel. Fuel prices on the Navajo Nation in 2008 skyrocketed through out the year. On November 11 the 7 to 11 store in Kayenta was selling unleaded fuel for \$1.35 a gallon. Word quickly spread and soon there were huge lines of vehicles waiting to fuel up. A store employee had no idea why it was so busy until it was mentioned that the price for unleaded fuel was \$1.35. She quickly contacted the manager and the price was set back to \$2.35 per gallon. The \$1.35 price was an error done by management while adjusting fuel prices on the computer earlier that day.



“The Mustangs post a thrilling 4th quarter come back in front of 2,200 football fans to win the 2008 MVHS Homecoming Football game, 26-22, against the Ganado Hornets. The game was also the first to be played on the newly installed field turf which carried an \$800,000 price tag for the school district. The field turf, which is used in 21 National Football League stadiums, is expected to drastically improve the safety of the athletes playing on the field.”



Phoenix news channel 3 KTVK paid a visit to Monument Valley in May 2008. The Good Morning Arizona Show broadcasted live from park with interviews from locals and Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, JR.

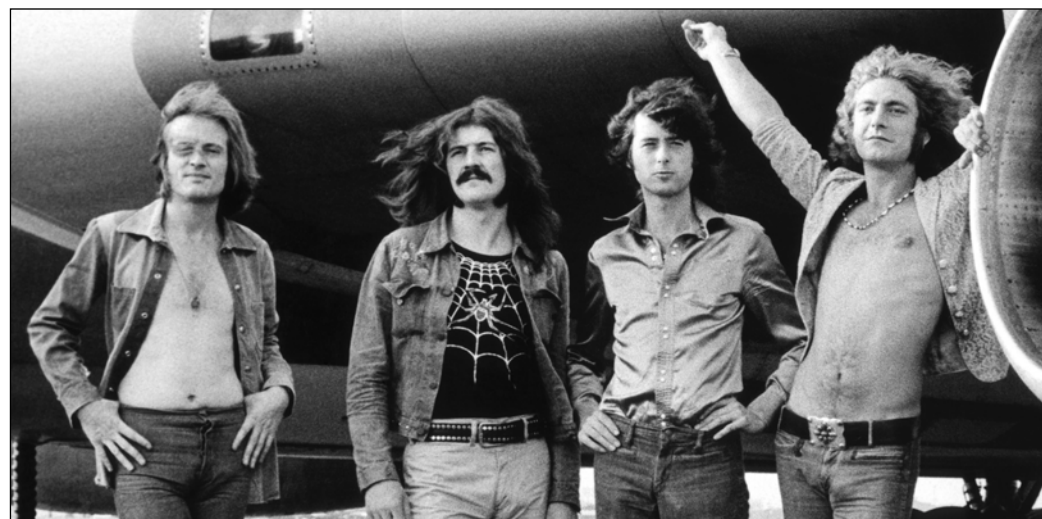
In July 2008 the Kayenta Township launched the official Kayenta Today blog site. The purpose of the blog was to better inform people about the happenings in Kayenta and the surrounding areas on the Navajo Nation, eventually the site went on to include news from all over Indian Country. The original printed version of the Kayenta Today Newspaper is still available, but has gone from a monthly publication to a quarterly publication in order to cut costs. The Kayenta Today Blog Site can be viewed at: <http://kayentatownship.net/blog>



June 2008 was the official groundbreaking for the reconstruction of the Kayenta Airport. The airport runway was in dire need of replacement, ruts and potholes littered the runway making landing and take off for aircraft a challenge as well as dangerous.



Kayenta locals were treated to an awesome fireworks display at the annual Kayenta 4th of July Celebration. Every year the event includes a rodeo, pow-wow, song and dance, fun walk, and a free community BBQ. The Kayenta 4th of July Celebration has quickly become a well attended event on the Navajo Nation by people from all over the world. Lead singer Robert Plant from the legendary 70's super group Led Zeppelin was seen in attendance at the rodeo this year. Although his presents was incognito, a few people recognized him and got an autograph and few pictures. Robert Plant also stopped by local restaurant Golden Sands to eat and also purchased a copy of Kayentas local metal band Ethnic De Generations CD "Blood Land" at the restaurant. Below: Far right, Robert Plant with fellow band members of Led Zeppelin



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And if you have a wife and family, you must have their support. So, do it with heart. What you do for the people is a very sacred matter," he said.

Speaker of the Navajo Nation, Lawrence T. Morgan, who was running a bit late due to an earlier engagement, spoke after the newly elected officials took the oath of office. He compared elected office to the four seasons, "There are many more to come," he said. "Naaat'áanii dadíínósin, treat your time in leadership in a sacred manner. Keep an open mind when you are faced with the many issues of the Navajo Nation. And do all you can to work with Title 26," he said. Title 26 is the Navajo Nation Local Governance Act which was adopted on October 29, 2004.

The oath of office was administered by the Honorable Judge Jennifer Benally. New officials who took the oath of office are the 2009-2012 Western Navajo Agency Chapter Officers, which are Chapter President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer, Grazing Committee Members, and Farm Board Members. The 18 Navajo Chapters of

the Western Navajo Agency include: Coppermine, Kaibeto, Lechee, Tona-lea, Tsaah Bii Kin, Navajo Mountain, Shonto, Bodaway/Gap, Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Birdsprings, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta, and Oljato Chapters.

The Kayenta Township has three new commissioners who took the oath of office, Helen Bonaha, Dolores Greyeyes, and Carol J. Tohacheene. The elected Kayenta Chapter officials taking the oath of office are: Chapter President-Stanley S. Clitso, Vice-President-Ruth Gilmore, Secretary/Treasurer-Lenora Spencer, Grazing Committee Member-Barbara Greyeyes, Farm Board Member-Ben L. Edwards. The 2009 - 2012 Kayenta Community School Board members are Helen Bonaha, Ben Johnson, Carol J. Todhecheene, Patricia A. Parrish, and Francis Paul Shorty, Sr.

Also, two of our Kayenta Township employees have been elected as school board members! Weylin Singer will be a school board member for the Kaibeto Boarding School and Bill Cly will be a board member for the Richfield Residential Hall.



Above: L-R Helen Bonaha/Kayenta Township Commission, Lawrence T. Morgan/Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, Carol Todachene/Kayenta Township Commission, Jennifer Benally/ Navajo Nation Judge, Dolores Greyeyes/Kayenta Township Commission.



Above: Elected officials await taking the oath of office in Tuba City.

Community Christmas Dinner

By Malcolm Benally

KAYENTA, Arizona – The Kayenta Township and Kayenta Chapter hosted the Third Annual Community Christmas Dinner Saturday, December 20, 2008 at the Kayenta Recreation Center. Over 300 hundred people packed the recreation center despite inclement weather conditions. The highlight of the occasion was toys for the children. As soon as the toys were set out and organized for the give away, the kids could not contain their excitement as they kneeled in front of the array of toy guns, footballs, dolls, cars, books, crayons, basketballs, etc.

Each year Florence Cohn organizes a trip from Southern California, where over 30 organizations, schools, businesses, and families sent gifts of toys, canned food, and clothes for the community. Just a little after 11:00 a.m., the recreation center slowly began to fill to capacity.

After Alice Yazzie, Kayenta Township Commissioner, opened the ceremony with an invocation in the Navajo language, events for the day's highlights were well under way. Malcolm Benally introduced himself as the new Community Involvement Coordinator for the Kayenta Township Commission. He is Yé'ii Dine'é Tachii'nii, Red Streak Running Into Water, born for To Áhaní, Near To Water people. He is from Forest Lake, Arizona. He will be working in collaboration with Jarvis Williams, the Town Manager, Ed Whitewater, the Economic Development Director, and Shonie Delarosa, Information Technology/Media, to promote the goals and mission of the Kayenta Township Commission.

Jarvis Williams, the Town Manager gave the welcome address. He mentioned, "The meaning of Christmas,

for me, is to gather as a family. Every year, families who spend a majority of their time away from one another due to school, work, and distance usually get a chance to come back together in the spirit of Christmas." In his role as the Town Manager, he encouraged everyone to come and attend the township meetings to learn more about what is being planned for the community, such as new roads, road improvement, a new hospital, and the newly built animal shelter. Then he told a couple of jokes to get everyone laughing and into the spirit of Christmas.

The Kayenta Bible Church Harvest Time Choir took the stage to sing Christmas carols. Florence Cohn, who brought a group of people from Southern California to deliver toys, got all the children in line by age groups to pick two toys as gifts. Especially for the children, the gift of toys was definitely the highlight of the day. Bikes, skateboards, and toys were raffled off, in all the excitement, as the kids gathered around the PA system to check for their winning numbers.

As people filed out of the recreation center, people were thankful for the dinner that was served by Evelyn Begay, her family, and her helpers. The Christmas menu included: Turkey, Ham, Mashed Potatoes, Corn, Biscuits, Jello, Salad, Punch, and Coffee. Courtesy of the Kayenta Chapter, participants received a bag of candy, fruits, and nuts to take home.

A special thanks for making the Christmas Dinner a success goes out to: Kayenta Chapter, the Kayenta Bible Church, Kayenta Family Chiropractic, Kayenta Community School Cafeteria, Monument Valley High School, Florence Cohn, Evelyn Begay & Family, Kayenta Burger King, and Kayenta Hampton Inn.



Above: Hundreds of toys were given away to many children at the dinner.

The Year In Photos 2008

ENTERTAINMENT



Tony Rosales (right) and Duwayne Begay (left) of the Tuba City based group Coalition hold their award for their music video "Cry" which won Best Music Video from the 2008 International Cherokee Film Festival in Tulsa, Oklahoma.



Local Kayenta metal band Ethnic De Generation released their long awaited debut CD "Blood Land" in February 2008, and has sold over 1000 copies to date. Known as one of the hardest working and dedicated road bands from the Navajo Nation, the group has been together well over ten years and have a strong fan-base that stretches throughout North America as well as Europe. Their music has been featured on Sirius Radio and many other radio stations across the country. Ethnic De Generation is currently working on new material for their next CD release.



Radmilla Cody signs autographs for students at the Kayenta Community School for Red Ribbon Week.



Top two photos: Gerald Vandever and Ernest Tsoie III on film location at White Sands, NM for the short film "Retired". Retired employs the conceit of a world where gods still live among men to explore questions of individual belief and cultural identity as well as the mystery and meaning of faith. The script was written by award winning Cherokee animator Chris Kientz and directed by Kayenta filmmaker Shonie De La Rosa of Sheephead Films. Retired will display a cutting-edge style that combines classic story telling with state of the art visual FX. The film is expected to be released early Spring of 2009.

Continued from page 1

The newly elected Kayenta Unified School District No. 27 Board Members are Helen Bonnaha, Elwood Saganey, and Ruth Gilmore. After becoming official members of the KUSD Governing Board, all three new members had an opportunity to speak. Mrs. Bonnaha spoke about the need for accountability and her wish that a lot of higher level meetings be held here in Kayenta and throughout the Navajo Nation, so that people become aware of the needs of schools within rural communities.

Mr. Saganey talked about his experience as a Korean War Veteran compels him to be proactive in his community.



Helen Bonnaha being sworn in as a KUSD Board member.



Ruth Gilmore being sworn in as a KUSD Board member.

was never aware of the opportunity. Upon his return from the service, he ties that were available to him from a GI Bill that he was entitled to. As a result of missed opportunities, he urged his colleagues it is always a good idea to listen thoroughly and hear people out before making informed decisions, especially when it involves addressing student needs.

Ruth Gilmore, the newest member of the school board thanked everyone for coming and said she looked forward to a positive experience as a Governing Board Member. After the short ceremony, a small luncheon was held for everyone.



MVHS Voc. Ed. Program Receives an Animal Weight Scale from Township

By Malcolm Benally

KAYENTA, AZ - Vocational Education Director, Mr. Clyde McBride, and a staff of eleven, run the Career Technical Education Program at Monument Valley High School. Mr. McBride said the school picked up new equipment for his Agriculture-Animal Science students on January 01, 2009, and the students were able to start using its new True Test Animal Weight Scale during class time. So far, "the students have already weighed over 20 sheep and about four or five dogs," Mr. McBride said.

The animal weight scale was purchased for the Vocational Education program by the Kayenta Township in appreciation for their award laden return from Flagstaff recently where they attended the Northern District Future Farmers of America, FFA Mid-Winter Leadership Conference. MVHS student Steven Blackrock won 1st prize in the Creed Speaking contest, Kalestina Sullivan was the runner up, and Nicole Williams placed 6th. Cherylita Bahe won the top prize for the FFA Information Contest.

Town Manager, Jarvis Williams, said it is important to recognize the FFA students for their leadership. Purchasing the animal weight scale for the Monument Valley Agricultural Education Program is a way for the Kayenta Township to show their support.

Animal Science students are already using the weight scale, which can weigh anything up to 3,300 lbs. "Anything from a cat to a Clydesdale horse," Mr. McBride said. Since Navajo communities are known for raising horses, cattle, and sheep, the program has an emphasis on livestock management and care. The program offers Veterinary services to the community as a student based enterprise. In one success story, the students nursed back to health a pony that was attacked by wild dogs when its mother

was hit and killed by a vehicle. The students sutured the wounds and provided proper nutrition to bring the pony back to health. Mr. McBride says that in the past three years, Animal Science students have treated at least 250 sick or injured animals.

The Vocational Agriculture and Animal Science program provides student growth through classroom instruction, field activities, and hands-on practical experience. MVHS has a 12-acre Land Lab that is used to keep animals and some open space to grow vegetables for educational purposes. The students have assisted District 8 Grazing officials this past summer to vaccinate over 1,500 cattle, sheep, and goats in the surrounding communities. In 2009, the program plans to organize three groups of students to provide animal vaccination services to cover much of the Western Navajo Agency through a summer employment program.

The program was awarded the 2007 Regional Innovative Program of the Year, which includes 16 states and 6 counties. In 2008, the program was awarded the Arizona Outstanding Agriculture Program of the Year for their inclusion of the veterinary sciences, their use of the scale in the vet lab, and their efforts to include the community. The program uses the Arizona Model for Vocational Technical Education and looks, "to the local community and business people to provide input, advice, and offer training sites for its [sic] students."

So, the next time you need Veterinary Care for your animal, you can save time and money by going to the MVHS vet clinic. The students, under the tutelage of Mr. Clyde McBride, can provide veterinary services to most domestic animals, including cats, dogs, cattle, sheep, and horses.



Natural Gas slowly replacing Propane in K-town

By Malcolm Benally

KAYENTA, AZ - The Kayenta Unified School District No. 27 has become the first natural gas customer. Julius Young II, Operations Director for KUSD stated that the High School is currently in its first weeks as a natural gas consumer, mainly to save money for the school district. If everything goes as planned, "By the end of March the Intermediate School should be hooked up to receive natural gas. The Primary School might still have to wait another year," he said.

Since Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr. signed the Notice to Proceed order, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority has been busy connecting 2-miles of its gas line extension project in Phase One of a three phase project. This gas line will run north to south and connect natural gas to our local schools and businesses. Garrett Morris, NTUA Natural Gas Department Supervisor said it will not be until towards the end of 2010 when local area residents will become natural gas customers.

The Monument Valley Unified School District being the first customer, the B.I.A. community school is next in line to receive natural gas. Mr. Morris also stated that they are coordinating with local businesses like the Laundromat, C-stores, Hotels, and restaurants requesting natural gas, and will be hooked up by the end of the year.

A lot of residents still rely on woodstoves, burning coal, or using propane to bring heat into their homes. Since residents will soon have their first opportunity to choose between using propane or natural gas, Kayenta Today looked into the benefits of using natural gas in the home. The main uses for natural gas in homes are for heating, hot water, drying your clothes, and cooking food.



Having natural gas means that residents will save time and money, especially during the winter months. According to a statistics chart published online at www.energykinetics.com the average family who uses propane gas in their home spends an average of \$2,523 per year. The family who uses natural gas spends only \$1,463 per year saving the family \$1,060 a year in utility bills! That's scholarship money for one semester.

The biggest benefit of natural gas is that it can come into your home straight from a utility company's main distribution or dedicated pipeline. In this case, natural gas will come from the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority or NTUA. This means a propane truck does not have to come out to your home every time you run out of propane. Or, you don't have to find your tools, unhook your 50-gallon propane bottle, and drive to the nearest gas station to refill your propane. Having natural gas in the home means that residents will save time and money, especially during the winter months.

Natural gas develops naturally in deposits underground. Since propane is one of the elements of natural gas, it must be separated and distilled at a factory, whereas natural gas can be pumped out from the ground.

On a lighter note, it is also a plus for barbeque enthusiasts because natural gas is a cleaner burning fuel. Exhaust from propane can affect the taste of your barbeque ribs.



OSM Approves Black Mesa Complex



An Ariel view of the Black Mesa mine.

By Malcolm Benally

DENVER, Colorado - After several revisions since February 14, 2004 when Peabody Western Coal Company first applied for life-of-mine permit, the U.S. Department of Interior's Office of Surface Mining recommended approval of the Black Mesa Complex life-of-mine permit AZ-0001D on December 22, 2008. This means, 62,930 acres of land will be mined as one coal mining operation or as a "permanent program permit area" for years to come, and will be regulated by the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) within Navajo and Hopi lands now designated as the Black Mesa Complex or, as the Black Mesa Project lands.

In his Dec. 22 memorandum to the Director of the Department of Interior, Richard Holbrook, Manager of Program Support Division, explains that under the permit, "Peabody is authorized to mine coal for the Navajo Generating Station through 2026 at current production rates." The mine currently produces 8.5 million tons per year as a low-sulfur coal strip mine.

Black Mesa Navajo and Hopi residents continue to voice their concerns over how the land will be impacted over the life of the coal strip mine, especially giving voice to their resistance against use of the Navajo aquifer with the saying "Water is life." The Navajo aquifer is considered one of the most pristine sources of drinking water in the southwest United States. Under book length provisions of the LOM permit, the Black Mesa Complex will continue to withdraw 1,236 acre-feet per year, through mid-2026, the memo states.

In a press release from the Black Mesa Water Coalition, the coalition states that, "Many community members from the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe

are extremely disappointed in the lack of public outreach the OSM and the Department of Interior has carried out through the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process." The Black Mesa region, or Dziłíjiiin, is the ancestral lands to thousands of Navajo and Hopi families, and is regarded as a sacred mountain to the Navajo people.

In a January 08, 2009 letter to the Navajo Times, Marie Gladue, daughter of Big Mountain matriarch and long-time resistor to the relocation law, states eloquently the symbolism that ties the Black Mesa region to Navajo culture, she writes: "In reference to Black Mesa, she is keeper of water and water creations. The female mountain has her head at Navajo Mountain, her upper body is the main northern Black Mesa, her arms are Shonto Wash, and in one hand she holds a cane Aghaala' (tall black rock near Kayenta), in the other she holds a Navajo wedding basket."

In discussing public comments on the LOM permit, Section V. of the memo, Mr. Holbrook simply states that the OSM office received 2,000 letters and 2,089 oral comments which were recorded verbatim at informal meetings on audio. The source, opinions, voices, and concerns raised during the public comment period by concerned Navajo and Hopi people are not discussed at any length in the memo.

The Approval of Application for Significant Permit Revision, Project AZ-00010E-P-01, Permit AZ-0001D, Peabody Western Coal Company, Black Mesa Complex was signed by Brent T. Wahlquist, the Office of Surface Mining Director on Dec. 22, 2008. Download the OSM record of decision at www.wrcc.osmre.gov/

12 Looking For A Law That Works



By Malcolm Benally

ANETH, Utah – She lives in Blanding, Utah right now, but what Helen Yellowman really wants more than anything else is to return to her ancestral lands just north of Montezuma Creek, Utah. Her grandmother returned to the southern base of McCracken Mesa from Fort Sumner in 1868, and this is the place where she grew into womanhood in the traditional Navajo way.

In order to return to her rightful place, it has become clear to Helen now that she has many obstacles and barriers to overcome. The land in question faces a litigation process that involves a complicated history, where all the parties involved now have to be subpoenaed in order to get to the heart of their interests. Those parties, whose interests are not known are the Navajo Nation, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Although there is some breathing room left for discovery, the case Helen Yellowman vs. Mary Tso Johnson (including 13 other defendants) is scheduled to be heard in the District Court of the Navajo Nation Judicial District of Aneth, Utah, once all parties are subpoenaed, and is scheduled to be heard sometime in early Spring 2009. Helen's daughters, Ida and Debbie, feel that the court sees that her original documents tie her to the land it will be based on a precedence of law that will allow her to return home. When talking about the upcoming court hearings, Ida Yellowman says: "This is an issue where my mother has missed a lot of opportunities because she has been

misinformed by her local leaders, and she has been misrepresented."

Prospecting for natural resources has been prominent in the Aneth and Montezuma Creek areas since the late 1880s. In 1905, President Theodore Roosevelt granted nearly 7,000 acres as Navajo lands near Aneth, Utah. It wasn't until five decades later in 1957, that Utah Navajos were given the right to vote in local and state elections. Only four years later in 1961, 350 oil wells were pumping on Navajo lands. In less than a decade and without question, Exxon, Texaco, Chevron, Conoco, and Shell oil companies opened oil wells and turned the land into a wasteland that it has become.

In 1979, Yellowman and Johnson family came to an agreement in the District Court of the Navajo Nation. The restraining order that was agreed upon between the families stated that no one was allowed to move on to the existing traditional grazing and/or customary land use areas on the land in question. Except the land in question has no clear answer(s) to date.

Helen Yellowman, 78, now wonders, What court system will allow her to return to her land and practice her traditional life ways? "My Dził Leezh, my Earth Bundle which holds my beliefs are tied to this land," she says. It has been more than 50 years that she feels that she has been uprooted. She just wants her land back.

Due to the complicated nature of this issue, this is the first of a part series for Kayenta Today.

Kayenta Township Holds Town Hall Meeting With Newly Elected Officials

By Malcolm Benally

KAYENTA, AZ – The new Kayenta Township Commission held its first Town Hall meeting on Monday, January 12, 2009. The Kayenta Township Commissioners for 2009 are Richard Mike, Helen Bonnaha, Delores Greyeyes, Alice Yazzie, and Carol Todacheeney. After an invocation in Navajo and English by Bill Cly of the Public Works Department, the Commission elected its new officers.

The KTC Chairperson is Helen Bonnaha. She is Tódóch'íinii Bitter Water born for Tsénahabíłnii Sleeping Rock Clan. Her paternal grandparents are Thízí Łání, Many Goats people and her maternal grandparents are Kinyaa'áanii Towering House people. She is a native of Kayenta, Arizona.

The KTC Vice-Chairperson is Alice Yazzie. She is Tódóch'íinii Bitter Water born for Dibé Łizhiní the Black Sheep clan. Her paternal grandparents are Ké Łizhiní from the Blackfoot Nation and her maternal grandparents are Tábaahá Water Edge clan. She is a native of Kayenta, Arizona.

The KTC Secretary/Treasurer is Delores Greyeyes. She is Tódóch'íinii Bitter Water born for Tó Áhaní the Near To Water clan. Her paternal grandparents are Bit'ahnii Within His Cover people and her maternal grandparents are Thízí Łání. She is originally from Black Mesa, Arizona.

Serving her first term as a Kayenta Township Commissioner is Carol Todacheeney. She is Dziłnát'ohnii Táchii'nii Mountain Tobacco Red Streak Running Into Water clan born for Tódóch'íinii the Bitter Water people. Her paternal grandparents are Bit'ahnii Within His Cover people and her maternal grandparents are Kinyaa'áanii Towering House people. She is a native of Kayenta, Arizona.

The Kayenta Township adjourned the nomination and seating of the new officials and got right down to business. During the announcement, Malcolm Benally introduced himself as the new Community Involvement Coordinator. He will be working under the Economic Development Department,

but will also be working with the Town Manager the Information Technology/Media Department, and the Kayenta Recreation Center.

During the Call to Public, Susie Nelson introduced herself as the new Justice Of The Peace for Navajo County at the Kayenta office. "I will handle mostly non-Indian traffic and civil cases. My office is also available to issue marriage licenses, and death certificates," she said.

Several members of the community spoke and introduced various programs in Kayenta, Arizona. A representative from the Diné Bii Association, Allison Billy spoke on behalf of his organization requesting access roads to be paved and/or improved to its adult home care facility. Dee Bates spoke about her work in bringing a quiet, accessible library to Kayenta. Members from the Kayenta Animal Control Shelter, Kayenta Veteran's Organization, and community members spoke out to congratulate the new commissioners.

In one notable appearance, Joann Benally introduced her daughter Chantelle Benally who will be attending the Presidential Inauguration of Barack Obama on January 20, 2009 in Washington, D.C. Kayenta Burger King will sponsor part of her trip. The Kayenta Veteran's organization also made their services available for local Veteran's to become members of the association.

After the Town Manager and the KTC Financial Report, the commission decided to table the reports to hold a Day Long Work Session to tackle all the important issues of the Township. The KTC will hold a Budget Work Session and a KTC 5-Year Plan Work Session. Congratulations new commissioners and Happy New Year! The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

