



LEGISLATIVE NEWS

Quarter 3, Issue 1

Tuesday, May 15, 2007

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President Shirley Advocates on Health Care and the Supreme Court

Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., spent Wednesday, April 18, 2007, meeting with House members and Senate office staffers advocating on health, natural resources, and the Navajo Nation Supreme Court.

President Shirley met with Congressman Patrick Kennedy (D-RI-1) asking for his support to fund the construction of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court. Congressman Kennedy is a member of the House Appropriations committee. The President also asked for Congressman Kennedy's support for the passage of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2007.



Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr. greets Congressman Patrick Kennedy (D-RI-1)

In March a house version of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2007

(HR 1328) was introduced, and in April a Senate version, S1200, was introduced.

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NNWO Calendar:

- Wednesday, May 16, 2007, House Science and Technology Committee hearing on Global Climate Change
- Wednesday, May 23, 2007, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing on Veterans Health
- Senate Indian Affairs Committee markup on Indian Affairs legislation (Date to be announced)
- House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee hearing on Veterans' Mental Health Services (Date to be announced)
- Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation committee hearing on Air Services to small and rural communities
- July 27, 2007, Last day for Tribal Governments to decide whether to elect to comply with the Adam-Walsh Child Protection Safety Act of 2006

Navajo Justices Hear Oral Arguments in Washington

The Justices of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court held oral arguments at the American University School of Law, just one of several hearings held at university law schools across the country.

The case was held on Joe verses Black, a trial case arising from the Kayenta district court on comparative negligence. The case reached the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, which was sent back to the lower court, with instructions to apply comparative negligence consistent with the Navajo concept of nalyeeh. Nalyeeh is a term that transliterates to mean, victims be compensated under Navajo thinking so *that there are no hard feelings*.

Introducing Chief Justice Herb Yazzie was



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Keen Allen Begay Advocates for Supreme Court

What began as an idea for Navajo Nation Washington Office Legislative Counsel Javier Ramos has quickly become an initiative that just may fund the construction for the Navajo Nation Supreme Court.

Navajo Nation Council Judiciary Committee Chairman Keen Allen Begay spent the tribal holiday working to secure funding for the future of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court building, a proposed \$11 million facility. The Navajo Nation government observed Monday, April 23, 2007, as Sovereignty Day, a tribal



Judiciary Committee Chairman Keen Allen Begay and NNWO Legislative Counsel Javier Ramos meet with the staff of Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI).

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National Native American Mentoring holds Training in Washington

The Navajo Nation Boys and Girls Club office organized a two day National Native American Mentoring Program implementation training in Washington, DC, on April 17-18, 2007. The two day session, of which tribes in Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oklahoma, and Arizona, was held at the new location of the Navajo Nation Washington Office.

Principal organizer Lamont Yazzie welcomed the participants, followed by an address given by Navajo Nation Vice President Ben Shelly.

"It's important for us to teach our culture," said Vice President Shelly. "I learned a long time ago four subject areas taught by our Navajo elderly—perseverance, hope, respect, and reward. It's our Navajo philosophy. That's what we must impart to our young people."

Mentoring involves recruiting volunteer mentors who are then matched with a youth mentee. Volunteer mentors meet with their mentee at the club site for one hour a week. Mentors give guidance to youth but also form friendships and dialogue challenges through listening. Through grants a mentor program coordinator oversees the weekly activities at a club site.

Covered in the two day work session was a strategic funding presentation for tribal programs to continue their grant cycle and reporting accomplishments and reporting protocols to granting agencies.

Dr. Susan Weinberger with the Mentor Consulting Group spoke on maintaining funding matches during summer months of boys and girls club programs.

A 14 month comprehensive plan was shared with the group. It covers steps from funding to contract requirements, technical assistance, parent orientation, and mentor and mentee protocols.

The group also discussed ways mentoring can make an impact on

incarcerated Native American youth and ideas for juvenile justice. Research has illustrated that mentoring programs have contributed to reduced first-time drug use by nearly half and first time



A group from of local coordinators the Navajo Nation participate at the two day work session at the Navajo Nation Washington Office conference room.

alcohol use by 33 percent.

Grant cycles for the boys and girls club began in August 2006, a renewal from previous awards to the program. The cycle will continue for three years.

Yazzie was assisted by Miranda Morgan Singer who serves as an assistant in the Window Rock office, and helps direct daily operations of clubs on the Navajo Nation.

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Javier G. Ramos, legal counsel for the Washington Office. "I myself am an in-law," said Ramos. "In-laws have responsibilities to the wife's family. I can imagine a day where this concept becomes further developed by court cases which may in turn be incorporated in American legal jurisprudence."

As Navajo Supreme Court Chief Justice Herb Yazzie spoke, he shared on the struggles of Navajo court system with American jurisprudence.

"These laws are not written," said Chief Justice Yazzie. "It's the very laws that bring us, sometimes, into conflict with the modern laws that seem to be imposed upon us. We struggle everyday to maintain those laws, and live by those laws, but to coexist without conflict."

Associate Justice Lorraine Ferguson and Chinle District Court Judge Leroy S. Bedonie were also present at the oral arguments in Washington.

The **LEGISLATIVE NEWS** is a bi-monthly publication, written and produced by the Navajo Nation Washington Office. It contains updates on congressional legislation, news and information in the Senate, House, White House, and federal agencies.

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President Shirley Spends Day on Health Care, Supreme Court

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Congress has spent eight years working to pass the bill, which encountered a setback last year when the U.S. Department of Justice issued a "white paper" that Senate Indian Affairs Committee Chairman Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND) directly attributes to killing the bill.

In other meetings President Shirley met with Congressman Raul M. Grijalva (D-AZ-7) advocating for the construction of new IHS hospitals, including Kayenta and Dilkon. Funds for construction over the last few years has dwindled. Last year Congress appropriated \$24 million for facility construction. President Bush is asking Congress for \$14 million for this year's construction projects.



President Shirley reviews health stats as he receives a briefing from NNWO Legislative Associate Randall Simmons.

"We appreciate your support congressman," said President Shirley as he presented Congressman Grijalva with information on the Indian Health Care Improvement Act reauthorization bill.

The President also met with Congressman Rick Renzi (R-AZ-1). Congressman Renzi pledged his support on the Indian Health Care Improvement Act.

Other meetings included the House Natural Resources Committee, and the staff of Senator Jeff Bingaman (D-NM).

Since the President's visit to Washington the Indian Health Care Improvement Act

Amendments was introduced in the Senate (S 1200) on Thursday, April 24, 2007.

Judiciary Committee Chair works on Sovereignty Day

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holiday commemorating a U.S. Supreme Court victory in 1985, which affirmed tribal sovereignty.

Chairman Begay met with the staff of U.S. Senators Daniel K. Inouye (D-HI) and Jack Reed (D-RI) advocating for construction funding for the Navajo Nation Supreme Court. Chairman Begay also met with the staff for Senator Tim Johnson (D-SD).

"We're continuing our efforts to work with Congress," said Chairman Begay, who represents Many Farms and Round Rock chapters. "I would like to see, just looking at the plans, a facility that portrays the Navajo justice system."

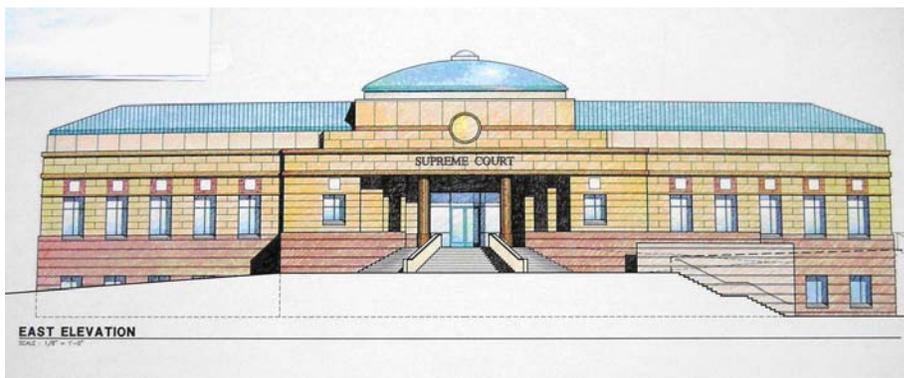
The proposed construction of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court building is planned on a 5.982 acre site. Funds from the Navajo Nation government include \$1.5 million for architectural/engineering as well as environmental assessments and archaeological clearances.

"The Navajo judicial system is the best of both western and Navajo traditional laws," said Chairman Begay. "A new Supreme Court building will give us a sense of sovereignty at work."

Navajo court statistics show for 2006 a total of 81,332 cases of which 21,304 remain open serving 250,000 people in a 25,000 square mile area. The Navajo Nation Supreme Court today holds hearings in the Butler building which measures no more than 432 square feet.

The draft legislative bill provides for authorization in grants to be made by the U.S. Department of Justice that will fund the construction of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court building. The legislative initiative has the support of the Navajo Nation Council Inter-governmental Relations committee.

Begay's visit to Washington is comes after last week's coordinated efforts of President Joe Shirley. "I want to thank the President," said Chairman Begay, "for meeting with congressional leaders in advocating for the Supreme Court."



Conceptual drawing of the Navajo Nation Supreme Court facility.

President Shirley met with Representatives Patrick Kennedy (D-RI-1), Rick

Renzi (R-AZ-1), and members of the House Resources Committee affirming his support for the proposed project. The president sent letters to various House and Senate members, co-signed by Navajo Nation Council Speaker Lawrence Morgan and Navajo Nation Chief Justice Herb Yazzie.

The Senate Appropriations subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, and Science is expected to hold a mark-up hearing sometimes next month. Navajo Nation Washington Office Legislative Counsel Javier Ramos is working with House members and staff on similar introductions in the House.

Walker and Roanhorse back in Washington on Health, Social Service

Navajo Nation Council Health and Education Chairman Thomas Walker, Jr., and Navajo Division of Health Director Anslem Roanhorse attended the Ninth Annual Tribal Budget Consultation Session sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Service. The consultation session was held on March 28-29, 2007, at the Health and Human Services building in Washington, D.C. Budget consultation is an opportunity for Tribal Leaders throughout the nation to provide comment on budgetary concerns regarding different programs administered by the DHHS.

The DHHS administers many programs which provide services to the Navajo Nation and Indian Country including: Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Aging, Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Agency for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Health Resources Service Administration, Indian Health Service, National Institutes of Health and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Many Tribal Leaders attended the consultation and provided their comments. However, according to informal polling, government employees outnumbered tribal participants. Several commented on the need to increase funding for the programs that impact Native Americans. Several Tribal Leaders provided written comments that were included in handouts. On the first day the meetings were divided into several breakout sessions where federal employees in leadership positions were joined by Tribal Leader Presenters.

During the Health and Human Services operating division break out sessions, a tribal representative remarked that the Office of Management and Budget is not in the process. It is vitally



Navajo Nation Council Health and Social Services Committee Chairman Thomas Walker, Jr. (left) represents the Navajo Nation at a recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Tribal Consultation meeting in Washington.

important that they be at these consultation meetings, said the tribal representative, who noted OMB's absence from the meeting. "They need to talk to the tribes directly," he said.

The Office of Management and Budget is tasked with formulating the President's budget request to Congress, and works with federal agencies. They assist the President in budget policy and issue directives to agencies to formulate budgets according to the President's budget policies.

For fiscal year 2007 a slight increase for FTEs was increased \$1.6 million.

Indian Health Service Director Dr. Charles Grim Visits Navajo

CHINLE, Navajo Nation—The U.S. Assistant Surgeon General, Dr. Charles W. Grim was the recent guest of the Navajo Nation, as he toured Navajo area health service facilities and was honored at a dinner in Chinle, Arizona.

Dr. Grim toured several of the Indian Health Service facilities, Chinle, Gallup, Fort Defiance, and Winslow. Dr. Grim was the main guest speaker at the dedication of the new Red Mesa health service facility in Red Mesa, Arizona.

"One thing I want to tell you is that Navajo Nation has the best staff, one of the best in the nation," said Dr. Grim. "This facility is taking the lead on taking care of chronic diseases on the nation," said Dr. Grim, referring to the Chinle health service hospital, a 25 year old facility.

Dr. Grim explained the current federal budget and how Congress



Navajo Division of Health Planner Roselyn Begay addresses Navajo health care concerns at a dinner in Chinle in honor of Indian Health Services Director, Dr. Charles Grim.

voted to adopt a continuing resolution to fund fiscal year 2007, an unprecedented measure.

The continuing resolution that directs spending for fiscal year 2007 did not include earmark spending, usually congressional budget add-ons, more discretion was given to agencies.

The Indian Health Service director announced that \$15 million will be given to the Navajo area Indian Health Service. President Shirley spoke at the dinner in Chinle and urged Dr. Grim to exercise his discretion to project current health construction projects like Kayenta and those projects on the current

priority list including Dilkon, Bodaway-Gap, Pueblo-Pintado and Gallup. For this fiscal year's budget request the administration requested Congress for \$12.6 million, less than of the amount requested for FY 2007.

President Shirley chairs session at United Nations

New York, NY—Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr. chaired a world session on new solutions for disadvantaged communities at the United Nations.

The Navajo Nation has taken a lead role as an International Telecommunications Union voting member of the United Nation's Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication (OCCAM).

As the conference on Infopoverty convened last month at the United Nations the Navajo Nation was represented by President Joe Shirley, Jr., who chaired a session of world leaders on New Solutions for the Needs of Disadvantaged Communities: The ICT Villages.

The International Telecommunication Union is the communications regulatory agency for the world.

"The relationship between OCCAM and the Navajo Nation officially started in Tunisia, where we signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding with OCCAM," said President Shirley to the group. "It is an effort to provide ICTs for all indigenous people so that our children and grandchildren will have the opportunity to stand on their own two feet and be able to provide for future generations."

Education, economic opportunity, health, e-government, and emergency management can be brought through Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT).

"We are now working together to build an OCCAM facility on the Navajo Nation to deliver interactive video distance learning via satellite and internet to indigenous people."

Since there is connectivity at all 110 chapters the Navajo Nation has become a model and a world leader for connectivity to the indigenous population.

The Navajo Nation is currently a voting member of the ITU, the world consortium, to which the United States also holds a vote. The Navajo Nation's vote is the only representative voice of more than 300 million indigenous people worldwide.

"Last year was the first time that representatives from the Navajo Nation participated in the Infopoverty World Conference," said President Shirley. "We have returned because we believe in what Pierpaolo Saporito and OCCAM are doing. We want to be a part of the world solution."



President Joe Shirley, Jr. chairs the New Solutions session at the United Nations in New York. Seated to the left of the President is Pierpaolo Saporito, the president of OCCAM of the United Nations.



President Joe Shirley listens to a fellow member of the OCCAM panel following the UN session. Executive Staff Assistant Leland Leonard to serve a new role for the President's initiative on Information Technology.

Navajo Nation Vice President Ben Shelly was a recent guest at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., where he met with the Office of the Assistant Secretary to discuss water projects on the Navajo Nation.

Vice President Shelly, Staff Assistant Alray Nelson, and Javier Ramos were given a tour through the Pentagon, and shown many of the tributes to Navajo warriors, including a show case of the Navajo Code Talkers.

Staff Assistant Nelson served at the Pentagon in 2005, as an intern and was acknowledged at a White House ceremony.

Vice President Shelly will return to Washington, and meet with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Works to discuss the Navajo Nation's current list of water projects to determine which ones can involve the assistance of the Army Corp of Engineers.



Staff Assistant Alray Nelson shows Navajo Nation Vice President Ben Shelly the briefing room at the Pentagon during a recent trip to Washington.

Vice President Shelly takes lead on FY 2010

The Navajo Nation Washington Office is taking the lead in preparing the Navajo Nation's requests for federally funded programs and projects for the fiscal year 2010. Some three years away, the Washington Office has worked with Navajo government branches, divisions and departments to think of federal spending in three years ahead.

The Navajo Nation Council Budget and Finance Committee heard from Vice President Shelly last month, and gave the executive branch the responsibility to pull together budget numbers for fiscal year 2010.

Congress is currently holding hearings for the funding of programs for FY 2008, while the White House Office of Management and Budget is finalizing the administration's request to congress for FY 2009, which the President will present to Congress in early next February.

The Navajo Nation Washington Office is currently working with tribal branches and divisions in preparing budget requests for programs and projects for the fiscal year 2010. The Washington



Navajo Office of Contract and Grants Director Cordell Shorty, Washington Office Director Sharon Clahchischillige, and Vice President Ben Shelly appear before the Navajo Nation Council Budget and Finance Committee on the Federal Budget for FY 2010.

Office will submit these numbers to the Office of Management and Budget in July, believing that advance work will lend prudence to the administration's budget request as it is presented to Congress in February 2010.

Executive Branch holds Strategic Work Session

Tribal Divisions were represented at a two day work session in Gallup, New Mexico, while the group worked to refine strategic plans for tribal programs as well as initiatives for the next three years.

The Navajo Nation Washington Office hosted a luncheon at the work session and delivered a presentation on the Federal Budget.

Budget preparation responsibilities for the federal government are placed with the administration and federal agencies. This is known as the budget process. As federal agencies work to prepare the budget for the administration it works through the Office of Management and Budget, which reports directly to the President.

In the same year as the administration is working to prepare the budget, Congress works to pass 12 annual spending bills through the appropriations process.

The two cycles, the budget cycle and the appropriations process, occur simultaneously and involve the executive and legislative branches of the federal government to work together.

Congress will hold hearings during the summer and early fall on the 12 annual spending bills, approving them, and sending them forward to the full House and Senate for approval. Once approved by both houses, the bills go to the President for final approval.

The President holds veto power on any of the 12 annual spending bills, which he may choose to invoke. But usually the President will communicate his budget priorities to Congress through a statement of "administration policy." The statement is the President's method of asserting his budget position without vetoing the bills.

The 12 spending bills cover all aspects of the federal government from the Supreme Court to parks and recreations. It includes spending for mandatory programs, social security, international aid, and defense spending. More than half of the discretionary portion of the federal budget is for defense programs, and the military.



Navajo Nation Washington Office Legislative Policy Director Simon Boyce leads a work session on Navajo priorities.



Work group at Strategic Session work on Public Safety and Emergency Services strategic goals.

New Navajo Nation Washington Office Website Underway

NAVAJO NATION
Washington Office

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Legislative Alert Headline Goes Here!

Legislative News
Shiprock Agency Gets HHS Brain Injury Grant - U.S. Senator Pete Domenici announced that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has awarded a \$20,000 grant to the DNA-Native American Protection & Advocacy in northwest New Mexico to support services for those with brain injuries.

Udall's Native American Cemeteries Act One Step Closer To Passage
A bill providing for Native American veterans to be buried nearer to home moved one step closer to passage today, said bill sponsor U.S. Representative Tom Udall, D-N.M.

Renzi Pushes Arizona Legislature to Improve Indian Education
Congressman Rick Renzi (AZ-1) today wrote to Arizona Speaker of the House Jim Weiers to show his support for SB1363, the Indian Education Act being considered by the Arizona State Legislature.

Navajo Group Awarded a USDA Rural Development Grant
New Mexico Business Weekly - June 1, 2006 - A grant that will foster economic development on the Navajo Nation is among 67 loans and grants totaling \$17 million awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

NAVAJO NATION PROFILE
NAVAJO NATION GOVERNMENT
AMERICAN INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS
US GOVERNMENT
VISITING WASHINGTON?

The new Navajo Nation Washington Office website is now online.

The new website will maintain the basic framework of the previous site but will include a reorganization of government links, and updated Navajo Nation profile information.

The new designs are products of Native-owned business Red Ant productions in Gallup, New Mexico, owned by Melissa Henry, and her husband Alfredo Perez.

Water Settlement Bill Introduced in Senate and House

The Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act was simultaneously introduced in the United States Senate and House or Representatives on Thursday, April 19, 2007.

Bearing the same name, the New Mexico Rural Water Projects Act, Senate Bill 1171 was introduced by Sen. Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), co-sponsored by Sen. Pete Domenici (R-NM), while H.R. 1970 was introduced by Rep. Tom Udall (D-NM-3).

"The introduction of the Northwestern New Mexico Rural Water Projects today is the long awaited legislation we believe will be a permanent source of precious water for years to come," said President Joe Shirley, Jr.

The comprehensive bill, divided into four sections, proposes to settle the long-standing water usage, storage, and rights dilemmas in the four corners providing construction and rehabilitation of water infrastructure.

Included in the proposed project is a water plant pumping station to be located on the San Juan river near Kirtland, New Mexico. It specifies the main pipeline will supply water from Kirtland to Shiprock, and to Gallup along U.S. highway 491. Other outlets include proposed pipelines from the Cutter reservoir to Ojo Encino along U.S. highway 550, and pipelines to Navajo Nation communities in New Mexico and Arizona.

The bill contains a provision for land acquisition that is deemed necessary to build, operate, and maintain the pipeline facilities. A cost sharing provision authorizes the Interior Secretary to enter

into a contract with the State of New Mexico to contribute \$25 million for project construction.

Provisions for the improvement of the San Juan River Navajo Irrigation projects are also included. The bill authorizes \$7.7 million for the Fruitland-Cambridge irrigation project that serves 3,335 acres of land, and \$15.4 million for the Tse Daa Kaan (Hogback)-Gadii ahi (Cudeii) irrigation project of 8,830 acres. Another \$30 million is designated for the construction and improvement of San Juan wells, and \$11 million for other irrigation projects. The bill language makes provisions for survey, recovery, protection, preservation, and display of archaeological resources in the affected project and conjunctive use well area.

The 79 page bill, lastly, lays out terms for the Interior Secretary to enter into agreements with the Navajo Nation that negotiates the use of stored water, specifies water quantities and depletion rates, and diversions, as well as rights of water use for Navajo .

The Interior Secretary is also authorized to prepare a hydrographic survey in conjunction with the State of New Mexico Engineer to identify and quantify historic or existing diversion or use of water by the Navajo Nation. An amount of \$5 million is proposed for fiscal years 2008 through 2013. The deadline for the hydrographic survey is set for December 31, 2013.

The Senate bill 1171 has been referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The House bill 1970 has been referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.