President Shelly urges caution when traveling during winter storm

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — It’s going to be cold and snowy on parts of the Navajo Nation for the next week as a major winter storm rolls in on Feb. 27.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly encourages tribal members to check on the elderly and ensure they are taken care of before hunkering down as the storm hits home.

“Please visit your elders and make sure they have enough wood, food and water for the storm. A lot of our elders live in remote areas and they are the ones most in need of assistance,” President Shelly said.

He noted that some elders might be in need of medical attention or assistance with feeding their livestock.

“Use caution when traveling, especially under snowy and icy conditions. Please don’t attempt to travel if it isn’t necessary,” President Shelly said.

During the recent snowstorm earlier this week, five to six chapters were affected by the heavy snow, which made travel on several roads impossible.

Mexican Water, Montezuma Creek, Navajo Mountain and Ttec Nos Pos faced heavy snow and requested snowplows to clear the roadways.

The Navajo Division of Transportation implemented their snow removal plan and is working with state and county resources to provide snowplow services on essential roads and school bus routes.

The winter storm will last from Friday through Thursday next week.

The National Weather Service in Flagstaff has alerted travelers that heavy snow is expected in higher elevations. The greatest amounts of precipitation will be around the central and eastern Mogollon Rim and White Mountain areas.

For snow emergencies, please contact NNDEM at 928-871-6892/6893.

-30-
Navajo veteran commanders provide updates, plan of action for Veterans Act

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—The Office of the President and Vice President hosted a meeting for the five agency veteran commanders of the Navajo Nation today.

Chief of Staff Deswood Tome met with Edsel Pete, Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs manager, veteran service officers, and agency commanders from all five agencies. Division of Human Resources executive director Lorenzo Curley served an important role in the meeting, as he has worked with the veterans department for the last two weeks, providing direction.

The regular monthly meeting provided an opportunity for the Executive Branch to hear agency updates on the Navajo veterans housing project and discussions on formulating a plan of operation for implementation of the Navajo Nation Veterans Act.

President Shelly was in Washington, D.C. meeting with federal officials, but took time out of his schedule to comment on Navajo veterans and said they must work together toward the common goal of implementing the Navajo Nation Veterans Act.

Before serving as president and vice president, President Shelly was a council delegate for 16 years and served as chairman of the Budget and Finance Committee. During his tenure, the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund was established.

“I supported the Veterans Trust Fund and the set aside that was established to fund services,” President Shelly said. “We will continue working to implement the Veterans Act to provide services.

“For many of our kids are returning home from combat in need of health care, counseling and employment. It’s our turn to protect them,” the president said.

President Shelly said the need for Navajo veterans from the five agencies not only include housing, health care, retirement and employment, but other areas such as communication and common courtesy.

“We will complete the plan of operation and other new developments, like the veterans apartment complex we want to construct in Window Rock,” he said.

On Jan. 27, 2014, President Shelly approved more than $1.9 million to begin construction of 300 veterans homes in four years. The initiative was for construction of 15 homes per agency, which equals 75 homes annually.

For 2014, the agencies averaged 12-13 homes completed. Many agency commanders are anticipating completion of their initial 15 homes by the end of March. The agencies are preparing for construction of the next 15 homes in 2015.

There is a need for veterans in need of housing who qualify for the program at the agency level. As the agencies prepare to begin construction of the next 75 homes for 2015, Navajo veterans must step forward for assistance.

The two biggest challenges for many veterans to overcome in order to participate in the housing initiative are having a home site lease and supporting chapter resolution.

-30-
WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Today, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly appointed Deswood Tome as chief of staff for his administration. Tome previously served as special advisor to the president.

Arbin Mitchell, Tome’s predecessor as chief of staff for President Shelly, resigned on Feb. 20. Mitchell began his new appointment for the Office of the Speaker today as their new chief of staff.

“I have every confidence in Deswood Tome as our new chief of staff,” President Shelly said. “His dedication and unswerving commitment to the Navajo people will continue through his new appointment.

“Our office also thanks Arbin Mitchell for serving the Navajo people and our administration these past few years,” he added.

Tome said he will resume the daily government operation up to the oath of office of the incoming administration, upon which time he will step down with the president and vice president.
Summary remarks of President Shelly at Utah State Legislature

Good morning Governor Herbert, Mr. Speaker, legislators, tribal leaders and other invited guests.

Thank you for the opportunity to join you today to strengthen our relationship between the Navajo Nation and the state of Utah.

We have worked with the Utah State Legislature for decades to address the needs of the Navajo people living in the state. We appreciate your commitment to the Navajo Nation and we look forward to growing this relationship to meet the needs of our ever-changing world.

$3.5 MILLION CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDING

In November 2014, the Navajo Nation received a letter that stated grants amounting to $3.5 million for projects on the Navajo Nation were approved by the State of Utah. These funds were from the Navajo Nation Revitalization Fund and the Navajo Royalties Holding Fund.

Leveraging these funds for capital outlay projects has been greatly beneficial to the Navajo Nation. We will continue contributing matching funds to stretch our dollar and meet the needs of our tribal members residing in Utah.

The $3.5 million from the State of Utah are for 21 capital outlay projects ranging from power lines, multipurpose buildings, roads, solid
waste disposal, waterlines, bathroom and kitchen additions, and senior citizen centers.

We appreciate this partnership and the Navajo Nation looks forward to growing this relationship to meet the needs of the estimated 33,000 Navajos living in the State of Utah. These residents are members of six Navajo chapters located in the state.

Our Utah tribal members have identified seven areas of focus: Transportation, Education, Health, Public Safety, General Services, Community Development, and Economic Development. Our projects for capital outlay funding are for these priority areas.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is a major priority. Roads are what connect our Navajo chapters to the rest of the state. Our Tribal Transportation Improvement Project listing includes the road reconstruction of Highway 162.

Highway 162 is a Utah Department of Transportation road that is vital to the Aneth Chapter. This project is for eight miles of roadway reconstruction at a cost of $38 million. The project is currently not on the State Transportation Improvement Plan.

Instead, UDOT has recommended that work on the road be completed in two-mile increments over several years. We are requesting that this project be included in the state priority listing for immediate road construction.

The Navajo Nation is willing to cost share with the state at 10 percent of the cost of construction. These funds will come from the Navajo Nation TTIP and we are hoping the state will assist us with road design, preliminary engineering and construction costs.

The state roads connecting our Navajo chapters are narrow, winding roads designed in the 1960s. We are concerned with the safety of travelers in this region of the state.

The Oljato Chapter has requested UDOT to construct right-of-way fencing along State Road 163 to prevent livestock collisions. Keeping travelers safe is our primary concern.

SENATE BILL 90

The Navajo Nation is strongly urging the 2015 Utah State Legislature to enact Senate Bill 90. This bill is to reactivate the Utah Navajo Trust Fund for reinstating services and benefits to Navajo citizens in San Juan County, Utah.

In 2008, the State of Utah resigned as the federally appointed trustee for the Utah Navajo Trust Fund. The Utah Navajo Royalties Holding Fund was created the same year to serve as a receivership for trust royalties while Congress searched for a new trustee.

Because of this, there has been a freeze on new expenditures, including funding for capital projects and housing. Congress has not had any success in appointing a new trustee. Our Navajo chapters unanimously support the State of Utah to resume management of the Utah Navajo Trust Fund.

We ask for the support of Governor Herbert and the Utah Legislature to enact SB 90.

HOUSE BILL 33

House Bill 33 is in response to the alarming achievement gap that exists for Navajo schools in the San Juan School District. When the Utah State Office of Education released the results of a new statewide testing program, four Navajo schools in the district received failing grades.

These schools include Montezuma Creek Elementary School, Whitehorse High School, Tse’bii’nidzisgai Elementary School and Monument Valley High School.

We acknowledge Representative Jack Draxler and the Native American Legislative Liaison Committee for sponsoring HB 33.

HB 33 includes creation of a tribal public education liaison position and creation of a tribal native education commission.

Additionally, adoption of a state plan addressing educational achievement is included, along with reporting to the Native American Legislative Liaison Committee for meaningful reform to improve the delivery of education to Navajo students.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION FOR NAVAJO WATER RIGHTS SETTLEMENT

Senator David Hinkins is the chief sponsor of SCR 2. This resolution supports the negotiated settlement of federal reserved water rights between the Navajo Nation and the State of Utah.

In 2007, the Navajo Nation Water Rights Commission and the state reached an agreement in principal regarding the quantification of
the San Juan River.

Former Representative Christine Watkins sponsored HB 127 in the 2012 Utah State Legislature to establish the Navajo Water Rights Settlement Fund. The purpose was to have the state contribute annually to the settlement fund until a certain amount was reached.

However, because of the lengthy timeframe for Congress to ratify the water settlement, the state has decided not to deposit any more funds until the agreement is reached. SCR 2 reaffirms the state’s commitment for the Utah Navajo Water Settlement Agreement and earmarks the state’s settlement funds.

PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVE
Utah Navajos established the Dine’ Bikeyah organization to advocate for tribal interests, cultural beliefs and environmental stewardship. The organization worked with Navajo people to develop a 1.9 million acre conservation and wilderness area.

The Navajo Utah Commission requests the support of Governor Herbert and the Utah State Legislature in recognizing the interest, connection and sacredness of Utah’s public lands for Native Americans.

GOVERNOR’S VISIT AND TOUR
The Navajo Nation and the State of Utah share a government-to-government relationship. During the annual Legislative Caucus, Governor Herbert makes one hour available during the Native American Summit to meet with tribal leaders to discuss the issues.

While this is an opportunity to address the tribal needs, it is not nearly enough to discuss issues in detail to find proper solutions. The Navajo Utah Commission attempted to have a meeting with Governor Herbert twice since 2013, but was unsuccessful.

We request that Governor Herbert travel to San Juan County to see the conditions of the reservation firsthand and the many challenges Navajo citizens face. We would also like for the governor to meet with the 23rd Navajo Nation Council this spring or summer to find meaningful solutions to the problems facing Navajo residents in Utah.

CONCLUSION
Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. We remain hopeful about the future relationship between the Navajo Nation and the State of Utah. We’ve worked together for decades and our relationship has only been strengthened over time.

Thank you for supporting the Navajo residents in your great State of Utah. Let us continue working together for the benefit of the generations to come. Ahe’hee.
President Shelly reports before joint session of N.M. Senate

SANTA FE—On Feb. 11, President Shelly spent the day at the Roundhouse to speak on behalf of the Navajo Nation on a number of issues.

During the Indian Day festivities on Feb. 6, President Shelly and a number of other tribal leaders from N.M. did not get to speak to the legislature. Instead, Gov. Susana Martinez spoke and provided an update from the state.

Sen. Michael Sanchez invited President Shelly and other tribal leaders to attend the Senate’s session on Feb. 11 to speak on issues from their respective nations. Members from the House were also invited to join, so they could also hear the concerns from the tribes.

The invitation was a chance to makeup for the faux pas from the previous week.

The president began his report with an update on the Navajo Beef initiative. The project allows Navajo ranchers an opportunity to sell their cattle at market value or better, which is then served as steaks at Navajo casinos.

He said the beef is of premium grade and can be made available for pueblo casinos as well. Such a partnership would strengthen tribal relations and foster unity, he added.

“It was some of the finest steak I’ve ever had,” President Shelly said. “And I asked our gaming people to maybe invite some of our senators and representatives to taste some of that beef.”

Other economic development initiatives were mentioned.

President Shelly encouraged the legislature to support the Thoreau rail spur along Highway 371 via a two-line rail system for the transport of goods and services from the Four Corners to the transcontinental rail line.

He thanked the state for funding the feasibility study on the rail spur and said its completion would be another successful exercise in economic development.

Burlington Northern Santa Fe has committed $8 million for two rail loops that will accommodate 100 rail cars for each loop. Not only would the project increase gross revenue receipts for the tribe, state and county, but it would also temper the relationships between the respective governments.

“These are meaningful partnership ideas we need to continue with the growth we have created,” President Shelly said.

During his term of office, 2,440 new jobs were added and the president said the Thoreau rail port would be an opportunity to create more N.M. jobs.

The Tribal Infrastructure Fund and capital outlay funding was another area of concern shared by President Shelly. He said the importance of the funding cannot be stressed enough, especially since they’re often used to leverage other funding to complete projects.

He thanked the House and Senate for providing funding all these years for tribal infrastructure development and noted that conventional wisdom dictates that the state foster tribal efforts for self-determination.

To make such self-sufficiency possible, President Shelly encouraged the legislators to approve the Navajo Nation gaming compact with the state.

He said that Navajo gaming provides employment, taxes, revenue and other business opportunities with vendors that are crucial to Navajo self-determination.

“We need your support,” President Shelly said.

Gaming provides tribes the opportunity to generate funds independently, the president said, adding that the Navajo Nation supported early gaming compacts from pueblos operating casinos.

“It takes us working side-by-side. We all share this great state as neighbors,” President Shelly said. “On behalf of the Navajo Nation, I wish you success in this legislative session of 2015.”

Earlier the same day, the president also reported before the House Agriculture, Water and Wildlife Committee to voice his opposition to House Bill 291. Sponsored by Rep. Yvette Herrell, the bill is related to public lands for the creation of the N.M. Federal Land Management Commission.

The fact that tribes and pueblos of N.M. are not involved with the formation of the proposed commission, there are serious concerns from the Navajo Nation, the president said.

“We are alarmed because the State of New Mexico could easily sell such lands to private interests, even out-of-state interests,” President Shelly said.

The potential for the state to sell public lands held sacred by tribes is too great, he maintained, especially with the recent fight to get the traditional cultural property designation for Mount Taylor after private interests attempted to open the mountain up to uranium mining.

“Further, House Bill 291 does not address the government-to-government agreements in place that we have to manage federal lands, nor does it address federal laws and policies tribes utilize to relate to the federal government,” President Shelly said.
President Shelly praises Rep. Kirkpatrick for tribal advocacy on Capitol Hill

WINDBERG, Ariz.—On the morning of Feb. 9, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined Speaker LoRenzo Bates, members of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council and the general public for the special Navajo swearing-in ceremony for Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick (D-Ariz.).

The Navajo Nation Council hosted the event.

Administering the oath of office was Judge Carol Perry. The Twin Warriors Society of Ft. Defiance provided color guard duties and the students of Dine’ Bi’ Olta recited the Pledge of Allegiance in Navajo.

Council delegate Jonathan Nez served as master of ceremonies and provided the welcome address.

Nez thanked Rep. Kirkpatrick for working with the Navajo Nation and for being the people’s voice on Capitol Hill.

President Shelly said it’s rare for a congressional leader to go above and beyond the call of duty to meet the needs of Native Americans.

Rep. Kirkpatrick was raised on the White Mountain Apache Reservation, which she said shaped her understanding and appreciation of the issues facing tribes today.

“The Navajo Nation is thankful for all that you have done for us,” President Shelly said. “We showed our appreciation for you at the voting polls this past year.”

He noted that residents in the Western Agency of the Navajo Nation were particularly grateful, after 27 miles of dirt road on Navajo Route 20 was paved in 78 days, connecting the Navajo communities of Bodaway-Gap, Coppermine and LeChee.

The roadway on U.S. Route 89 collapsed on Feb. 20, 2013. N20 was eventually selected as the detour route to restore essential traffic and the decision was made to pave the road.

The Navajo Nation worked with Arizona Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to get the $35 million project completed.

“But it was Rep. Kirkpatrick that lobbied in Washington, D.C. and secured the funding to make the project a reality,” President Shelly said.

While the highway improved the quality of life for thousands of Navajos in one portion of the Western Agency, Rep. Kirkpatrick is also working to assist tribal members in another portion of the agency.

In Jan., Rep. Kirkpatrick traveled to Ariz. with a congressional delegation from the U.S. House of Representatives to discuss issues facing the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe with the Office of Navajo Hopi Indian Relocation in Flagstaff.

The members of the House Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee on the Interior and Environment traveled to the Navajo and Hopi Reservations to see conditions firsthand and meet with tribal leaders.

During their Window Rock visit, President Shelly advocated for residents raising livestock for their survival. Recent livestock seizures by the Hopi Tribe have reawakened a generations old divide between the two tribes, he said.

“For many Navajo families living on (NPL, HPL and Bennett Freeze), raising livestock is a way of life and the only means of survival in those remote locations,” he said.

However, the president said he was confident that Rep. Kirkpatrick would find an amicable resolution to the livestock seizures.

Such advocacy has garnered praise for the “Navajo Nation’s Congresswoman” throughout her term of office. The oath of office ceremony in the Navajo Nation Council Chamber was an opportunity to say thanks to a hardworking congresswoman.

“It’s very rare to have a politician in Washington, D.C. that cares about tribal issues. The Navajo Nation is fortunate to have one in Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick,” President Shelly said.

-30-
BERNALILLO, N.M.—Since 2011, the Navajo Beef initiative has been growing and offering unmatched culinary delights at casinos owned and operated by Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise.

On Feb. 10, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with representatives of NNGE and Labatt Food Service at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort at Santa Ana Pueblo to discuss progress with the Navajo Beef program. The group dined on Navajo Beef prepared by the executive chef of the Corn Maiden Restaurant for a high class dining experience that was one part celebration and one part demonstration.

Joining in the dinner were representatives from NNGE, Labatt, Navajo ranchers participating in the program and board members from gaming.

The group dined on Navajo Beef prepared by the executive chef of the Corn Maiden Restaurant for a high class dining experience that was one part celebration and one part demonstration.

Joining in the dinner were representatives from NNGE, Labatt, Navajo ranchers participating in the program and board members from gaming.

The Labatt Premium Verified Native American Beef program partners select Navajo ranchers with Navajo casinos. The company has expanded their program to include other tribes and pueblos.

Navajo cattle is purchased, placed on to feed and ultimately processed into boxed beef items upon market readiness. The beef is then distributed to Navajo casinos to be enjoyed by the consumer.

Local Navajo ranchers ship their cattle to feedlots owned by Billy Hall, a cattle buyer who owns the number one certified Angus feedlot in the country. From there, cattle are shipped to a harvest facility and then to direct source meat processing facilities.

Finally, Labatt distributes the beef to casinos, schools, travel and health centers in the southwest. “Navajos supporting Navajos” is the overarching theme.

President Shelly said the Navajo Beef initiative is not only a source of pride, but also a tremendous opportunity for self-sufficiency.

“Navajo Beef” is an important Navajo way of life that must be preserved,” President Shelly said. “By working with our partners at Navajo Gaming Enterprise and Labatt, we are enriching our tribal economy and traditional way of life.

“We look forward to growing this partnership for the generations to come,” he added.

Labatt is the eighth largest broad line food service distributor nationally, said Al Silva, chief operating officer of Labatt Food Service.

Silva said the idea to incorporate Navajo Beef into the menus of Navajo casinos was an important step to prove the quality of the meat. The decision by NNGE to become the first customer for Navajo Beef has opened the door to other opportunities like tribal schools and hospitals.

The partnership connects producers with consumers and Navajo cattle ranchers are able to market their cattle at a premium and increase their bottom line for economic stability.

In 2013, Navajo ranchers had a ranching economic impact of $439,768 through sales of their cattle. In 2014, that number increased by 15 percent to $745,940 for 236,000 pounds of usable meat harvested.

In 2014, there were 481 head of cattle in the Navajo Beef Program. For 2015, that number grew to 561 and estimates for future project continued growth.

Silva said, “You can see the product is superior to anybody else’s product. There’s no apology there.”

The steaks served at the dinner were flavorful and marbled with succulent cuts of tenderness that Silva says is unmatched because of ranching techniques incorporating a low stress environment and low antibiotic use.

Navajo ranchers are literally doting on their head of cattle, Silva said, ensuring they are vaccinated, watered and fed. They are herded by cattlemen on foot or on horseback, which reduces the stress on the cattle and in turn means a tender meat product.

“A calf needs a booster shot like your kid needs a booster shot,” Silva said.

Proper vaccinations mean the cattle are less susceptible to diseases and illnesses. Healthy cattle equals weight increase and a superior product for the growing niche market of Navajo Beef.

Last year, Navajo ranchers averaged $1,200 per head through the Navajo Beef program, Silva said. Labatt serves Navajo Beef at all Navajo casinos and plans are to pitch the product to other industries on the Navajo Nation.

President Shelly is proud of the Navajo Beef initiative and said the steak was the best he’s ever tasted.

“Where’s the beef? It’s on Navajo,” he said.

Navajo Beef won the People’s Choice Award at the Arizona Indian Gaming Association Expo Cook Off in 2014.
Navajo Nation Council confirms standing committees

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<th>Standing Committees of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council</th>
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Photo: The table above displays committee membership along the agency represented by each delegate. Also displayed are the chair, vice chair, and members for each standing committee.

WINDOW ROCK—During a special session held on Tuesday, the Navajo Nation Council confirmed membership to four standing committees including the Budget and Finance Committee, Law and Order Committee, Health, Education, and Human Services Committee, and the Resources and Development Committee.

The proposed standing committee memberships were confirmed through Legislation No. 0038-15, sponsored by Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland).

Speaker Bates introduced the legislation in accordance with 2 N.N.C. §181 which states that the Speaker is authorized to select committee membership, which is subject to confirmation by the Navajo Nation Council.

Following the adjournment of the special council session, each of the four standing committees convened in special meetings to confirm a chair and vice chair for each committee.

In accordance with 2 N.N.C. each delegate is appointed to no more than one standing committee for a term coinciding with their term of office as a delegate. Additionally, Title II also mandates each standing committee to have one member from each of the five Navajo agencies.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org or find us on Facebook and Twitter, search for keywords: Navajo Nation Council
President Shelly tours Hooghan Hozho’, announces plans for veterans housing

GALLUP, N.M.—Creating opportunities to end homelessness is the mission of Community Area Resources Enterprise, Inc. of Gallup.

The non-profit organization is also known as CARE 66 and is dedicated to providing affordable housing opportunities to homeless people. Their belief is that by providing opportunities for people to improve work and life skills, they will become self-sufficient.

On Feb. 9, President Shelly toured the $8.4 million Hooghan Hozho and Liberty Hotel development in Gallup. First Lady Martha Shelly and executive staff assistant Carl Smith joined the president, plus staff from CARE 66.

The mixed income family housing development is located at 201 East Coal Ave., near downtown Gallup and stands in stark contrast to other buildings in the area. The three-story building features bright colors and bold architectural design.

Phase one of the project is for the apartment complex and phase two will be for construction of the hotel.

Navajo Housing Authority provided $7.1 million for the project. A multitude of other funding sources contributed more than $1.3 million for the complex.

There will be a total of 44 units for rent at Hooghan Hozho for Navajo families in need of housing. Construction began in Aug. 2013 and the project will be completed in June 2015.

According to CARE 66 statistics, the median income for a household in McKinley County is $25,005 and the median income for a family is $26,806. The per capita income for the county is $9,872.

About 31.9 percent of families and 36.1 percent of the population are below the poverty line, including 42.3 percent of those under age 18 and 31.5 percent for those 65 and over. The county’s per capita income makes it one of the poorest counties in the U.S.

President Shelly said the building was “exceptional” and said the Navajo Nation would like to pursue a similar apartment complex in Window Rock for veterans.

“Our veterans are in dire need for housing and this development is an excellent model that we can follow,” President Shelly said. “Carl Smith worked for CARE 66 and he is our point person for our veterans housing initiative.”

Thomas Gifford Architect, LLC of Santa Fe provided the building design. Pavilion Construction provided the construction of the building.

The apartment complex will consist of 11 one-bedroom, one-bathroom units, 30 two-bedroom, one-bathroom units and three three-bedroom, two-bathroom units.

Hooghan Hozho also features a secured courtyard, resident facilities and offices for the property manager. The units feature innovative floor plans with balconies.

Residents will have access to an onsite laundry facility, community computer rooms, onsite parking, a central recreation area and onsite social services.

Sanjay Choudhrie, executive director of CARE 66 said future plans include construction of micro apartments for the homeless at 100 square feet per unit, similar to their current program at the Lexington Hotel.

“We have 21 people at the Lexington Hotel and 175 people on the waiting list. We’d like to build (a hotel) so we can get people off the streets,” he said.

Choudhrie said they only accept tenants who are sober and that CARE 66 is the only Native American model in the country that providing housing first to tenants, followed by social services and other forms of assistance to get the homeless on their feet.

Smith said the Navajo Nation has plans to construct a similar apartment complex in Window Rock for veterans in need of housing.

“We have over 10,000 veterans on the Navajo Nation and more than 400 are homeless,” Smith said. “We want to build a HUD rental unit with support services.”

Identifying funding sources for the project is the first step and Smith will approach NHA, the Navajo Nation Council and others for seed money to fund architecture and engineering.

“The rental units will provide transitional housing for our veterans for at least four to six years, until they are able to establish homeownership for themselves,” Smith said.

In the meantime, Hooghan Hozho will address the large population of working Navajo families in need of affordable housing in Gallup.

President Shelly said there’s been a lot of misinformation about NHA in the media recently and the fact that they invested $7.1 million for Hooghan Hozho should prove they are spending money for housing.

“They’re changing how they’re spending money and how they do business,” President Shelly said.

Choudhrie agreed and said, “Most of our projects have some level of NHA funding. We couldn’t have done any of the things we’ve done without NHA. They’ve been a great partner for the last seven years.”
President Shelly attends Indian at Santa Fe, shares issues facing Nation

SANTA FE, N.M.—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly attended Indian Day at the N.M. Legislature on Feb. 6, 2015 and shared a number of issues facing the Nation.

President Shelly told state legislators that the Navajo Nation grew by 2,440 new jobs that were created during his term of office. He expressed his hopes to see that number increase with new jobs in the Land of Enchantment.

“We need your support for the rail spur in Thoreau. This includes a two-line rail system for transport from the Transcontinental to the Four Corners,” President Shelly said. “We extend our gratitude to the State of New Mexico for funding the study.”

He said the opportunities with transportation and rail have resulted in a commitment from Burlington Northern Santa Fe to invest $8 million for two loops that will accommodate 100 rail cars for each loop.

“From such projects, we can increase gross revenue receipts for the Navajo Nation, Four Corners, counties and state,” President Shelly said.

He also spoke about the capital outlay and tribal infrastructure funds provided by the state for projects across tribal lands in N.M.

The funding provided to Indian tribes across the state for infrastructure projects are a demonstration of government-to-government partnerships to leverage funding, he said.

It provides an opportunity for tribes, pueblos and the state to come together to address infrastructure needs, said the president.


President Shelly said their support would be crucial to passing the tribal gaming compact with the state.

“We need your support. Jobs, revenue, tax and business from the many vendors will come forth from this legislature as you pass our compact,” President Shelly said. “We will remain here in Santa Fe to work toward this accomplishment.”

By working together and negotiating with the pueblos and legislators, the Navajo Nation is looking forward to passing a gaming compact that is agreeable to all this legislative session.

He concluded by saying that the new rail system is an opportunity for growth in manufacturing and other future industries.

“The Navajo Nation is not a manufacturing nation. Although we produce natural resources and jobs in the energy market, we have no manufacturing workforce,” President Shelly said. “With your foresight and legislative fix, we can increase opportunity for a manufacturing base in northwest N.M., where there is an abundance of oil, natural gas, coal and agriculture.”
PRESIDENT SHELLY SAYS THANK YOU

REPARATION
Navajo delegation successfully return sacred masks from Paris auction house

HOZHOOJÍ NAHATÁH BAA HANE'

A MAN OF ACTION Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly issued a statement of thanks to the Navajo people for electing him as their leader for the past four years. The Shelly administration has accomplished a lot of tremendous projects on behalf of the Navajo people, he said. The administration will vacate office when a presidential successor has been elected and installed into office. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

FOUR YEARS OF HONORABLE LEADERSHIP

No lawsuits, administrative leave or investigations launched against the presidential administration during the four year term of office - President Ben Shelly and VP Rex Lee Jim will stand the test of time.

Before he entered office and became Navajo Nation President, Ben Shelly guided the general election of 2010 and made the comeback of ages to win the vote of the Navajo people for the highest office of Indian Country. President Shelly took over the reins to the tribal government and took the oath of office to become the first N.M. resident and sitting vice president to get elected as president. Conspicuously absent from the inauguration ceremony was Joe Shirley, former president. It was the first time the exiting president did not attend the inauguration orders for the transfer of power.

* 163 bills signed into law
* 29 bills vetoed
* 16 executive orders issued

2015 WINTER SESSION STATE OF THE NAVAJO NATION

President Shelly and Vice President Jim take oath of office to extend term

The vice president called the vice president directly involved to have the vice president participate in the drafting of the divisions of health and education. This too, was a progressive action, President Shelly said.

The agreement further repositioned the State of the Navajo Nation on Jan. 13 for continuity of government. They will meet with the 23rd Navajo Nation Council during the winter session to discuss plans moving forward to June and August presidential elections. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

PARIS—Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim and Navajo Human Rights officials purchased seven confirmed Navajo sacred masks that were up for auction in Paris, France. Hundreds of items representing different Indigenous nations went on auction on Dec. 15, 2014.

The Navajo delegation arrived in Paris on Dec. 12 and accomplished one of its goals by gaining access to the sacred masks at the Drouot auction house on Dec. 13. Vice President Jim offered Navajo prayers to restore harmony from the masks being removed from the Four Sacred Mountains.

It is also important to note that item 77 in the catalog is not of Navajo origin. Ever auction house does not know the origin of this item as indicated in the catalog.

While in Paris, the news media coverage of the Navajo mission spread throughout Europe. Jane Hartley, U.S. ambassador to France, made a public appeal for the sacred objects to be returned to the respective indigenous tribes, including the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo delegation raised awareness of how the sacred masks belong to the Navajo Nation, and the right course of action was to return them. The vice president called the masks “living and breathing beings,” in Navajo, and as sacred to the people used for healing ceremonies in the winter. It was important that they were taken home.

The ultimate legislative fix

A Publication of the Navajo Nation February 2015

Vice President Rex Lee Jim

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—President Shelly said a “legislative fix” is needed to balance government responsibility.

First and foremost, he has said time and again that a referendum vote must occur that recognizes the Navajo people as the governing body. Each time legislation was introduced the tribal council voted it down.

“The power lies with the Navajo people, not the council,” he said.

President Shelly also said that delegates should not serve on boards or commissions because the potential for politics preventing progress is great.

In addition, he said that the Office of the Auditor General, Navajo Election Administration, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Ethics and Rules, and Government Development need to be repositioned to the Executive Branch.

“These need to be separate and independent entities not subject to the will of the council. That is the only way the Navajo Nation will truly move forward,” President Shelly said. “I am hoping that the next generation of leadership will see the logic in this legislative fix.

“However, it is also important that we work together with our legislators to get the job done for the people,” he added.

The president maintained that it is the Navajo people that are the governing body.

See STATE OF >> Page 8

See EXTENDED >> Page 2

See RESTORING >> Page 2
President Shelly approved special runoff election, NBOES pardon

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—On the afternoon of Jan. 10, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed the special runoff election legislation passed by the Navajo Nation Council into law on Dec. 23, Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates and Speaker on Dec. 29 before sending it to the Office of the President and Vice President.

President Shelly said his staff and other parts of the administration would continue working with the tribal council, along with the Navajo Department of Justice, the Navajo Department of Natural Resources, the Navajo Department of Economic Development and others to ensure continuity.

The event was low key and attended by Cabinet members and others. Vice President Rex Lee Jim said the Navajo people need help, and that the administration will take steps to fix because the laws and government of the Navajo people are not about action.

Navajo Nation Energy Policy, telecommunications, health, medical services and other essential needs, purchase a coal mine to bolster the Nation’s financial portfolio, and address longstanding concerns for the disabled citizens of Navajo.

“Nobody does anything all on their own, it takes all branches of government to get things done,” President Shelly said. “Thank you for working with us. Aloha.”

Resisting restoration of the Office of the President and Vice President

President Shelly and Vice President Jim were in office to work with the tribal council in our daily business. This did not mean that the President, Vice President, and the Navajo Nation Council, along with attorneys from the DOJ, and the chief legislative counsel to fashion an agreement for the president to remain as president and the vice president to remain as vice president will require President Shelly to sign his name.

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**GALLUP, N.M.—Alcohol is a problem in city of Gallup**

**Efforts to come to grips with alcohol-related fatalities and crimes in Gallup haven't worked.**

In the 1980s, nutrition and agriculture program at McKinley County to reopen the liquor establishments closed. Others (non-Indian) said the Nation should provide funds from the $554 million they've been through rehab. He said the U.S. EPA needs to request for a 28-day rehabilitation program, and others to an inpatient-sheltered program for adolescents. However, Conejo said the most important aspect was the work rehabilitation program that provided employment through construction and laundry services or a kiln that produced ceramics. She also mentioned the need to repair the HV AC system of 10 percent. Despite this, McKinley County and county leadership to come to grips with alcoholism, the joint effort to fight alcoholism, is big business. This is solution road,” he said. "This is not a blame game. We need to put our heads together and take care of this alcohol thing. We need to start employing," Conejo said. **But most recently, funding dried with the city of Gallup and with alcohol related fatalities.**

The city of Gallup has made efforts to come to grips with alcohol-related fatalities and crimes in Gallup, which was packed with hundreds of people. Munoz encouraged the audience not to dwell on what went wrong in the case, but to instead focus on solutions and moving forward with the “right things.” Gallup Detox Center and Alcohol Division would therefore be "a must," President Shelly said. “This is not a blame game. This is solution road,” he added. **President Shelly was the first to speak and reflected on the march to Santa Fe with former Gallup Mayor Eddie Munoz.**

“On April 28, 2015, the Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly vetoed CD-74-19, a Navajo Nation Code resolution that would have amended the Navajo language fluency requirement for the Office of the President and Vice President. Ben Shelly also signed law into three bills. Legislation no. CD-64-14 was for amendments to Title 11 of the Navajo Nation Code concerning the Board of Elections Supervisors to eliminate filing fees for party positions not full-fledged candidates. Currently, filing fees by candidates are submitted when they file their candidacy papers. The filing fees are non-refundable. For an appointment to fill an office for which the applicable filing fee shall not be required," was the amendment to the code. President Shelly also signed CD-76-14-04 law and enacted the amendments to the Navajo Nation Farm Board plan of operation. The amendments included change of legislative procedure. This amendment to the Navajo Nation Code Resolution, purpose of farm boards, services to the Navajo Nation, and rights of officers, meetings, pay, and confidentiality and compensation.**

**FLUENCY amendment fails**

**FIGHTING BACK** Last, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said he joined Earth Muüener as the 1980s to train on the Navajo Nation. Earth Muüener's efforts focused on alcohol issues. Right, a Santa Fe sheriff staffed the alcohol problem in Gallup. (Photo by Rick Ababu)

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The 2014 presidential election taught us anything, it was that there is no such thing as a free lunch. Five months have passed since the primary election and things have not changed. The endless litany of questions continues to pop up at every chapter house meeting. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity for working here.

Sincerely yours,

Delton Silvers

Dear President Shelly,

Thank you for giving me this job at the Klagetoh Chapter House. Also thank you for the money you gave us. The money that is going to be given to me is going to be helping me buy school clothes and supplies. Again, thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Rizela Reggie Klagetoh

To: Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly

On behalf of the Klagetoh community... student's employment, we would like to apply for supplemental funds so that the funds had set aside for youth. Not many job opportunities are given for or to this youth. This helps provide job experience and gives them a little money to help for school expenses. Again, thank you for the opportunity.

Kirk S. Wilson

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly

Greetings, I am a member of the Navajo nation and have been here for a long time. I would like to thank all of the students of the employed at the Klagetoh Chapter for allowing us to work. We have been given the opportunity to work and gain job experience in the process.

You have given our chapter funds in order for students who are temporarily unemployed. We have learned to work as a team and acknowledge each other. I would like to thank you for giving us these opportunities. We appreciate what you have done for us and our Navajo community members.

Sincerely,

Nichelle Ashley Klagetoh

Who are the modern Navajo?

Dear President Ben Shelly,

I am a seventh grader at Hawfields Middle School in Melrose, N.M. and I am writing a report on the Navajo and I need some help with finding help from a historian on the modern day Navajo.

Some of the information I could use is the history of the Navajo, the places where they moved, and what did the Code Talkers do?

Were your people affected by the European explorers? In the traditional Navajo religion, what was the beliefs and customs?

Any information would be helpful so thanks for the help.

Sincerely,

Kohl McGure

Melrose, NC

Dear Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly,

I am writing this letter to you to discuss the opportunity of working at the Klagetoh Chapter House. I understand the opportunity of working here was fun, I really enjoyed working here. I am looking forward to next year and what is to come.

Many things got completed and working with my friends was a great experience. I hope you will join us June 6, 2015.

I hope you will join us June 6, 2015.

J.A. Tony Fellin

Klagetoh Chapter for allowing us to work and gain job experience in the process.
The uniform was previously in limbo, the uniform of George H. Kirk, Sr. was returned to the Navajo Nation Museum in February 2015. After more than 15 years of searching, the Code Talker uniform was returned to the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Ariz. on Oct. 29, 2014.

The Code Talkers are living heroes. The Code Talkers are living heroes. The Code Talkers are living heroes. The Code Talkers are living heroes. The Code Talkers are living heroes. The Code Talkers are living heroes.
OPVP provides interns opportunity for government reform

The internship was a three-week program. Random divisions, departments and programs of the tribal government were selected for evaluation. The group analyzed the data that is in the project for a final report that hasn’t been released yet.

The report will identify legislative action, if necessary, and support the Shelly-Jim health care reform. Government reform is what is needed within OPVP, he said.

“I see the tribal government standing at a stand still like we are currently if the same leadership and mentality continues,” he said. “Effective leadership and communications causes progress.”

“I believe the 2014 election highlighted the inefficiency and injustice of the Judicial Branch,” he added.

The 23-year-old Navajo voted for Chris Deschene in the election and said young voters determine their future with their choice of candidate.

Upon obtaining his undergraduate degree he plans on becoming a physical therapist in the military or private sector.

“My experiences, beliefs and values are what is needed within OPVP,” he said.

The 14 interns that participated in the project were not paid and strictly worked in a voluntary capacity during the three-weeks at OPVP.

Benally will be releasing the groups work through a report very soon. Plans to implement the government reform ideas would be at the discretion of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council and the president, upon their election and resolution on this issue.

President Shelly said the project would be his legacy and allow the Navajo people to see the roadblocks and inefficiencies in the tribal process that has far too long prevented the Nation from true progress.

President Benally said that a comprehensive study of the internal management culture and processes of the Navajo Nation government has yet to be conducted.

“This constitutes government growth and development. The bottlenecks affect the quality of life, he said, adding that assessment and restructuring of these systems is what constitutes government reform.

“If the Navajo Nation is to prosper economically it must focus on restructuring these internal management processes,” Benally said.

“Historic Settlement Top, President Shelly signs the settlement agreement. Center, Sec. Jewell joins President Shelly for an early morning prayer. Bottom, the signed agreement. (Photos by的缘King)
President Shelly enacts Healthy Dine’ Nation’ Act of 2014

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, with a stroke of his pen, signed the Healthy Dine’ Nation’ Act of 2014 into law on Nov. 20, 2014 and changed the dynamics for the war on diabetes.

His decision to enact Legislation No. CN-54-14 and amend Title 24 of the Navajo Code came after negotiations with council delegates and food advocacy groups to ensure the proper monitoring provisions were included.

When the legislation was first presented, President Shelly’s concerns with regards to junk food and the monitoring processes of tax collections resulted in a veto at the time. He called the Healthy Dine’ Nation’ Act progressive and asked for further clarification.

“This administration has advocated for healthy living since we took office. Vice President Ben Shelly has run across this great nation all four years of our administration,” President Shelly said.

Today, I am signing this legislation into law to continue our commitment to healthy lifestyles for our people. “Diabetes is an enemy that we will conquer by fighting this war together,” he added. The amendments to Title 24 of the Navajo Code Bill would be imposed upon gross receipts at a rate of two percent upon minimal-to-no-nutritional value food items sold.

The revenues generated from the sales tax may be utilized for community wellness projects such as farming, vegetable gardens, greenhouses, farmers markets, clean water, exercise equipment, health classes and more.

Legislation sponsor Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Naashoni, Nabahudisidi, Standing Rock) and co-sponsor Jonathan Nez (Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Shonto, Tuscarora) joined supporters of the legislation at the Office of the President and Vice President for the discussions. Simpson said, “From the bottom of my heart, thank you, Mr. President I think we compromised on (the legislation).”

“I’ve been living in Newington, a member of the Dine’ Community Advocacy Council and I’ve seen a lot of it. All I can say is that it’s not only a material pleasure, but nourishment for our bodies, minds and spirit. Eating well is what will sustain and empower us for the generations to come. From this day forward, we will have food to feed our desert and return to being a food oasis,” she said.

That is what we prevented in this signing a ‘historical event’ and praised the president for his decision to enact the legislation.

“You again, are leading the way. The President has taken the lead around the world and across Indian Country. We thank you for your commitment, your leadership and your dedication to a healthy Dine’ Nation. Ahe’hee,” Livingston said.

Nez echoed Livingston’s sentiments and called members of the Alliance “champions” that never gave up.

“Many of our young people out there don’t have those choices and wise decisions on living more healthy and active lives,” Nez said. “Again, you’re leading the way. Mr. President, across the world and across Indian Country.”

The amendments to Title 24 of the Navajo Nation would begin to receive approximately $1.2 billion from the sales tax and the war against diabetes on the Navajo Nation continues.

The 132-page bill also includes general provisions, sentencing, trust provisions were included. The amendments to Title 24 of the Navajo Code, was signed into law by President Shelly and provides $980,000 in funding for the purchase of 67.39 acres of land in accordance with the Tribal Land Acquisition Policy.

The land, previously owned by Ray Block LLC, is located at the southwest corner of highway 372 and N776 in Farmington. The owner agreed upon the fair market value purchase price of $1.2 billion for cleanup of 50 abandoned uranium mines and long overdue,” President Shelly said.

On July 23, 2012, the Law and Order Committee established a task force to review the sentencing provisions for the criminal code. The task force will analyze public hearings and a radio forum for their outreach efforts. Public sentiment was that the legislation needed to be stronger sentencing provisions. The amendments were made for enforcement, general provisions, sentencing, offenses, and penalties. The 132-page bill also includes amendments correlating to changes in the Navajo Nation Code, was signed into law by President Shelly providing the Navajo Nation Criminal Code, was signed into law by President Shelly providing language and culture assistance to residents in Phoenix, and expanding the Navajo Nation’s jurisdiction over an additional 67.39 acres of land in Farmington, N.M. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

The remaining 40 percent will be paid after three more months.

“These funds will go toward the cleanup of 50 abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation. On Dec. 13, 2012, we announced that $1.2 billion for cleanup of 50 sites.

More than $985 million will be paid to the Navajo Nation. The Environmental Protection Agency is also receiving funding from the settlement, a total of $43 million. This amount we will receive is $26.4 million, which will be deposited in the next 10 months.

The Navajo EPA worked together to finalize and that funds are to be used for the purchase of 67.39 acres of land in accordance with the Tribal Land Acquisition Policy.

On Jan. 23, 2015, Stephen Eby, director of the Environmental Protection Agency, made the decision to enact the legislation on Dec. 1 to amend the Navajo Nation Criminal Code, was signed into law by President Shelly providing language and culture assistance to residents in Phoenix, and expanding the Navajo Nation’s jurisdiction over an additional 67.39 acres of land in Farmington, N.M. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

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When you add these two buildings, it probably runs close to $10 million, Halsey said.

"Thank you. Take care of it. When this building was first completed, it was not done right. Now it's up to code and has been finished by a skilled construction contractor," the President Shelly said.

"We worked very hard on this building. I would like to thank Oakland-Arviso Construction Co. for its work," he added.

"It took a lot of money, just like president said," he added. "We are grateful for the efforts of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security for their assistance in returning these valuable assets to the Navajo Nation."

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"We have many families without running water, electricity and heat. This is a major step toward tribal self-determination because it allows the Navajo Nation to regulate tribal health care services," he added.

"The Little Singer Community School which you will see later today, is one of the last schools on the 2004 replacement school construction priority listing," President Shelly said.

"The little singer, a number of the accommodation agreements entered into by the Navajo Nation and other tribal governments, are being questioned by the Department of the Interior. The Department of the Interior has raised a number of concerns about the adequacy of the facilities, which are often located in remote areas and have limited access to support services."

"We were working on Administration Building No. 2 right now. When you add these two buildings, it probably runs close to $10 million," Halsey said.

"We are at a time when we are aging in place and need of repair. We have met with a lot of challenges. It's not going to be easy," President Shelly said.

"We have many families without running water, electricity and heat. This is a major step toward tribal self-determination because it allows the Navajo Nation to regulate tribal health care services," he added.

"The Department of Health and Human Services has been working very hard on this project," Shelly said. "We have many families without running water, electricity and heat. This is a major step toward tribal self-determination because it allows the Navajo Nation to regulate tribal health care services," he added.

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