

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Frybread King: Charles Green makes best frybread in Verde Valley

By DON DECKER  
YAN News

It's a rainy September day in Clarkdale on the Yavapai-Apache Nation and it's just the right time to grab a fresh frybread. Charles Green is the man who knows all about cooking frybread.

It's a long ways from Tampa, Florida for Green but the Nation has been home for Green for many years because he has strong social ties: he's married to an Apache, Alice Green Hines, the daughter of Apache elder Rozella Hines. They have 5 kids. "One just left the nest," says Green.

Green swears by his own frybread recipes and says that none of the other frybread makers can make frybread like he can.

"I learned this from an Indian lady-Mrs. Freida (Es-wonia) who was teaching down at the culture building," says Green.

Green is underneath his white tent next to the carport at noon as a torrential rain pounds the top of the tent.

He takes out a ball of dough and rolls it out with a rolling pin on the table covered with flour. After the dough is flattened, Green gently drops it into a hot sizzling skillet.

"We want this to be nice and hot. We don't make frybread ahead of time-it's cooked fresh to order, that way you get it fresh and it's not sittin' around" he says as he flips the frybread once with a large cooking fork. Soon the trademark bubbled surface of the frybread look-

ing like the pock marks on a brown moon surface shows clearly as Green flops the frybread onto a paper plate layered with a paper towel.

"I put my frybread up against anybody's frybread," says Green with a serious look.

"It's gotta be nice, fluffy and light and fresh out of the grease," he says as he hands me the frybread. It's a taster's choice.

On one of the tent poles, a homemade menu hangs precariously which gives the customers many options: 'red chilli pork,' 'Indian taco' (with all the trimmings), 'brownies,' and the local teen's favorite---'hot pickles.' There's powdered sugar for the serious tourist types who love the white stuff on their frybread.

It's a slow day today because of the rain but on a good Saturday, Green lassos all the local town people, the rez folks and an occasional tourist that may have seen one of Green's sign at the service station not far from the rez.

"They saw frybread being cooked on the cooking network," says Green about a lone tourist who made a foray onto the rez because the paper signs gave good directions to his frybread stand. Green has signs stuck on bulletin boards in Old Towne Cottonwood and at the Walgreen's drug store in Cottonwood 2 miles east. His wife also spreads the word when she goes shopping at the local markets. The Clarkdale beauticians love Green's frybread so they drop by to pick up their or-



Charles Green swears by his own frybread recipes and says that none of the other frybread makers can make frybread like he can. (Photo by Don Decker)

ders because it's convenient for them and it's quick. And don't forget the ladies down at the Ovah Smoke Shop down the road.

Green takes a lot of pride in his work as a cook as he is also a cook for the Senior Program for the Nation. He gets to his kitchen around 6 in the morning and starts to prepare the day's menu which has to be served at the Clarkdale and Middle Verde senior dining halls precisely at noon each day 5 days a week.

The seniors look forward to his chicken ala' king, the special chilli stew, the sloppy Joes, the meat loaf (that will make one's mouth water), the baked chicken with mashed potatoes and a side of cold slaw and they know that Green's cooking is made from scratch each day because the seasoning is sprinkled in there by Green

in the correct proportion. "If a cook don't love his job, it'll show in his work. I have no confidence in skinny cooks. I want my cook to be a fat jolly cook because that lets me know he is tasting his food (when he/she is cooking)," says Green in obvious reference to himself. "I got to taste the food I'm cooking. I can't serve the food if I don't taste it," he adds in reference to quality control of his cooking. "If you put your heart into your food, you can taste it!"

Green has a strong southern Florida drawl and he definitely has a passion for cooking.

Green says that people need to notice the subtle nuances of cooking as he points out that chilli beans is geographically different. "You get chilli from the southwest and it's a whole lot different from back east—

it has a different flavor," he adds. "Up north, you might have pinto beans, back east they use kidney beans, so different regions of the country have different ingredients."

Green uses pinto beans in Indian country exclusively.

He learned all the cooking in fancy places in Las Vegas such as the now defunct Dunes Hotel where the Ballagio now sits on the main drag and all the way in Buffalo, New York. That was long ago before Green got married and he came out west from Tampa to live with his mom in Vegas. Construction work was physically demanding for Green as a concrete finisher back in Florida, so he found work washing dishes in the casinos. "I made more money washing dishes in Vegas then construction work in Florida," says Green proudly.

Then, one thing led to another in Vegas. That's when he started hanging around the kitchen watching all the chubby cooks Green talks about. Now, with 30 years of cooking experience, he has bragging rights.

Green says being a cook on the rez is also like being a "detective" especially when delivering meals to seniors at their homes. "Someone taking 16 meds a day has to be on schedule so when meals are delivered by 10 each morning they can take their meds with their food," says Green.

Green says one has to talk with the seniors without prying into their personal matters when delivering meals to homes. "It's

the only contact with people they got outside of the house. You have to talk to them for a minute. Ask them, 'how's your day going?' 'how you feelin?'" -questions like that. If a senior ain't lookin' right-(if) they're disoriented—we need to report that back to our supervisor-so they can contact the senior advocate," says Green.

Green says a senior lunch may be the only full meal they get for the day and with a light sandwich for the evening. "You shouldn't eat a full meal before the night and lay down on it," he says. Green looks at me and says, "You have to watch it, cuz' I put the weight on you brother."

Besides selling frybread on weekends to make ends meet, Green also has a catering business for such things as weddings and cooking for other family gatherings like picnics and birthdays. "Say, you got family comin' for the weekend and you don't feel like cookin'— call me!" says Green. Green also recalls an incident in which a couple getting married heard about Green and were doing some price shopping for catering and found out Green had the best price. "I tell you what—that couple went everywhere in town and priced it out—2 days later, he was back saying, 'OK,' 'OK'"

So, if you have a hankering for some authentic Indian frybread, Charles Green in Clarkdale can put the magic together for you.

Oh, no deliveries.

## Elders surprised by Montessori students at lunch during Indian week



Nel Engle accepts a gift from a child. (Photo by Don Decker)

By DON DECKER  
YAN News

About 34 students from the Montessori School hiked up to the senior luncheon diner on Wiki Way from their school about 3 blocks away below the center. Led by school director Leticia Ancira, these students made their own special gifts that they brought up to give to the elders who come to the center on a daily basis for a noon lunch.

These gifts included sand painted pictures of eagles framed by colored popsicle sticks, dream catchers, beaded necklaces and other assorted crafts.

The elders, about 15 of them, were surprised by the young children who are between the ages of 4 and 6.

The children lined up outside and marched in slowly and quietly and stood between the tables as elders looked on.

Peggy Quail, one of the regulars who just retired from the courts at

the Nation said, "I love it. I always enjoy their arts and crafts". The children seemed to have a sparkle in their eyes as they slowly walked near the elders to see who would receive their special gift.

Delores Plunkett, elder, was surprised by her own grandson, Carter, who brought a sandpainting of Bell Rock, a sacred rock for the Yavapai. "I got the best one," said grandma Plunkett.

Nathan Quail, another elder was impressed. "I'm glad these guys are learning their craft and recognizing their elders—I want to thank them for all their doings".

Council-elect Cindy Nahee said "...it was unexpected. I feel so loved."

Elders were very touched by this special moment with gift sharing by the children and the Montessori School really went the extra distance to make this a special occasion for the elders.

Thanks from the elders!!

## Local youth football team excels

By DON DECKER  
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The Coyotes, part of the Camp Verde Community Youth Football, has a special place for 9-11 year olds who love the sport of football. Team members come from all nationalities and this melting pot which also includes 2 female players on the field makes for a good mix on weekend youth football...better than the NFL games because it's kids that everyone knows in the community.

There are several tribal members on the team: Davon "Debo" Beauty, son of Dexter Beauty of Middle Verde and Joann Cherry of Phoenix, Phillip and Lillian Begay who are children of Rachel Evans, Cody Engle son of Jason and Rhonda Engle, Mario Baca son of Rhiannon Hood, Allissa Robles, daughter of Mamie Fox and Joe Robles of Middle Verde and Ka-haeden Montgomery son of Beverly Crawford and John Montgomery of Tunlii, Jason Fullmer, Jr. son of Jason Full-

mer, Sr. and Olivia McMahon of Middle Verde.

The Coyotes and their parents pack up their gear on weekends and go to places like Wickenburg, Bagdad and as far north as Page to play serious football.

There's energy and the players don their helmets, mouth guards and other protective gear and take their positions on the field. It's a full contact sport but parent Jason Fullmer says that there are no head to head tackles allowed in the sport and these penalties for such incidents are avoided always he said.

Take a walk along the sidelines during one of their games and hear the coaches yelling in the plays from the sidelines. There's no condemnation for playing ball because parents and coaches believe in positive reinforcement of their children unlike old-school football with fuming coaches slapping players on their helmets and irritated screaming fans. But here in Camp Verde, it's all fun in the name of sports.

Jason Fullmer, Sr. and wife Olivia keep the stats because their son, Jason Jr. is on the team. "We lost this past weekend in Wickenburg (September 25) because of politics," says dad Jason about their 6 point loss. Otherwise, their current record would be 3-0. "The referees had some bad calls," said Fullmer in sportman's-like fashion.

To support themselves, the team has fundraisers to help defray the costs of expenses for the team and this year the Nation's rec department picked up part of the tab.

The Coyotes are no push-over either has they have traveled to Williams to run up a score of 47-13 and then pounced on the Cottonwood Cardinals with a 49-12 win.

The Coyotes' season ends with a game in Bagdad west of Prescott on October 17 and then the play-offs will be played at Mingus Union High School field on November 7. "We're pretty strong. I'm sure we are going to make it to the play-offs- do or die," said Fullmer who works for the EPA department of the Nation.



Jason Fullmer, Jr. makes a touch down from a 40 yard run. (Photo by Don Decker)