

OPINION / COMMUNITY

Nation's tribal council visits Washington, D.C.

From the Executive Office of the Yavapai-Apache Nation

Chairwoman
Jane Russell-Winiecki
From March 27th - 30th, the Tribal Council of the Yavapai-Apache Nation attended "Impact Week" in Washington, D.C., which is sponsored by the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona. A delegation from each Arizona tribe meets with Legislators from around the U.S. to discuss concerns in Indian Country.

With a new administration in Washington,

it is critical that our Native voices be heard and we presented our many concerns over the 4 days. As you may know, President Trump attempted to have the Affordable Care Act repealed and replaced with a newer version. It failed but it would have meant that Medicaid would have vanished and would have had a profound effect on us. Services impacted would have included life-saving surgeries

and preventative care and long-term care for the elderly and disabled. IHS also funds behavioral health services, including alcohol and substance abuse, social services and mental health needs.

President Trump is also suggesting severe budget cuts to the Department of Interior, BIA and BIE with a 12% cut across the board.

B.I.A. oversees 55 million acres of trust land for Indian Tribes

including Yavapai-Apache Nation. Also included to be cut are the Department of Health and Human Services (\$4 billion budget), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$800 million budget), and the Department of Education ((\$300 million budget), the Department of Justice and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Tribal Priority Allocations (TPA) cover such needs as scholarships and higher-education funding, human services, economic development and natural resource management, the Senior

Nutrition Program and the Diabetes Program, to name a few.

As representatives of the Yavapai-Apache Nation, we asked for their support and told our story, including the many successes we have achieved. We reminded them of their "Trust" responsibility to us and other Tribes, in that the Courts and Congress have long acknowledged a responsibility between Tribes and the Federal Government.

The Federal Government holds



legal title to Indian lands, but they also have a "Trust" responsibility to support Indian lands, assets, resources

and people. They also have a fiduciary responsibility and that duty is the strictest duty of care recognized by the U.S. legal system. According to the U.S. Supreme Court, in that responsibility, the U.S. has charged itself "with the moral obligations of the highest responsibility and trust toward Indian Tribes."



Tribal Chairwoman Jane Winiecki meets with Arizona U.S. Senator Jeff Flake in Washington, D.C. during a recent Washington visit for the tribal council.

The YAN Environmental Protection Department along with other tribal departments worked very hard in planning the Earth Day event. Thank you to all who have supported, donated, participated, and of course, attended this event. If you didn't go, you missed out! Everyone had a great time considering the heat. Great speakers, performers and plenty of great information on the environment. We almost doubled on attendees. We look forward to a bigger and better event next year and hope you will all join for the cause. Happy Earth Day!

Have A Wonderful And "Happy Birthday" To my son, David Wright on 5-19-2017! Hoping you have a great day! Love, Mom.

And, a wonderful and "happy Birthday" To my grand-daughter, Harmony Michelle McArthur, On 5-21-2017! Hoping you have a great day also! Love, From Grandma. Genevieve Stacey-Wright.

Happy Belated Birthdays To:
Genevieve Stacey-Wright 4-14-2017;
Jennifer Stacey 4-15-2017;
Evoonne Fulton 4-17-2017
And Tony Fulton 3-28-2017.

Depends how you interpret the Constitution

ARTICLE II - TRIBAL CONSTITUTION. MEMBERSHIP.
"SECTION 1. REQUIREMENTS. THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE YAVAPAI-APACHE TRIBE

SHALL CONSIST OF THE FOLLOWING:

(b) All children born to any member who are one fourth (1/4) or more Indian blood."

(c) All persons who are one fourth (1/4) or more Yavapai-Apache Indian blood".

The tribal members who wrote this Yavapai-Apache tribal Constitution, ARTICLE II, SECTION 1, clearly wrote to provide for the child & all children of their 1/4th tribal members.

That, the membership of the Yavapai-Apache tribe SHALL CONSIST OF THE CHILDREN OF ITS 1/4th MEMBERS.

A 1/4th member parent's child - "1/8th blood quantum" -

In accordance with article ii, section 1, as written, is that, All (1/8th bq) children of a 1/4th parent "are members".

Yet, the nation, in misinterpreting its constitution, has been, wrongfully requiring 1/4th (blood quantum) for membership, instead of 1/8th.

When, clearly, article ii, section 1, is written to include in its tribal membership all 1/8th individuals.

The nation is not adhering to the provisions set forth in its tribal constitution.

This "misinterpretation" had been presented to the new constitution committee's

First meeting, by don decker and genevieve. Stacey-wright.

That committee's chairperson just "tabled" it

For future discussion - maybe next year?.

This section does "not" need to be "tabled".

There is nothing further to discuss.

The writers of the tribe's constitution made clear its membership requirements.

Apparently, the nation has been misinterpreting this membership requirement for decades - since the tribal constitution was adopted.

The time for the nation to correct this misinterpretation is now!

How can the nation allow this misinterpretation to continue - denying 1/8th individuals their membership and benefits?

The 1/4th blood requirement is wrong and should be corrected to 1/8th now!

Many one-eighth (1/8th tribal members, including children,

Have been wrongfully deprived of their tribal benefits!

(This current administration could, and should, take immediate action to get this corrected.

Genevieve Stacey-Wright.

Trip to Washington D.C. Commentary

Comments submitted by councilwoman Cindy Nahee on recent Washington, D.C. Tribal leaders congressional week, March 27-30, 2017.

What was your impression of Washington, D. C.?

"This was my first trip to D.C. In the capacity of a tribal council leader. The opportunity to reaffirm the yavapai-apache nation's commitment to finalizing our nation's water rights settlement as well as advocate against the proposed federal budget cuts was invaluable. Although, the expectation of meeting each scheduled congressional member was not achieved, we were able to meet with a member of their congressional staff for 15 minutes. On a couple of occasions, we met in the hallway which was a little uncomfortable due to visitors and staff walking in the hallway."

"We began our official visits on Monday, the day after arrival to D.C., and had a full day walking back and forth to various buildings. We continued with meetings daily on the behalf of the yavapai-apache nation through Wednesday and attended the Inter

tribal Association of Arizona (itaa) tribal leaders congressional week sessions that began on Tuesday and ended on Thursday.

Itaa also scheduled meetings with other congressional members to allow tribal leaders to join together for a stronger voice for Indian country."

What were your expectations of your visit: validated, encouraged, disappointed?

"The trip to Washington, D.C. Was encouraging despite the threat of federal budget cuts, which we all know funds most of our nation's programs. In my opinion, various congressional members or members' staff seemed to have taken the position that the budget cuts would definitely occur, just not so severe. So, with that said, we are aware that our grant funded employees are very concerned about their jobs. Other members on the yavapai-apache tribal council have expressed the need to come up with a plan to help these employees make this transition should proposed budget cuts occur."



YAN tribal council members met with David Schwiebert, Congressman of Arizona, in Washington, D.C.

Sending a big Happy Birthday wish to "the Sunshine of my life" Alestae Pita on April 22nd. Lesta, since you came into our lives, you have given us so much happiness. With all your hilarious jokes especially your Madea acts, you have kept us in laughs! Now you're a big 6 and growing up too fast we never know what to expect! Lol! Hope your birthday is fun filled! All our Love, Grandma N Papa