

COMMUNITY NEWS/NEW PERSONNEL

YAN cultural Preservation and Technology department in good hands

BY DON DECKER,
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Judie Piner, program coordinator of the Preservation and Technology department coordinated all aspects of the long walk to old San Carlos from December 1-17.

Ms. Piner made sure the mapping crew had plenty of water and food on hand as the crew pitched their tents along the way in such places as Fossil Creek and Roosevelt Dam. With the help of Ron Juan, a Quechan Indian from Yuma who is married to Lorna Hazelwood and former council woman of the Nation, Ms. Piner made critical supply stops along the way where the roads were accessible to the walkers.

The only time the mapmakers were inaccessible was for a distance of 15 miles from Strawberry to the L&H Ranch located 15 miles west of Payson. The saving grace was a rented satellite telephone that could only be used for

emergency purposes.

Ms. Piner is the chief investigator of the mapping project which collates all of the mapping data that was generated by Compass Data which brought a high tech GPS device that marked the location of the precise location of the path that was taken by the mapping crew which consisted of Fred Sanchez, Jordan Lewis, Everett Phillips of Compass Data and Nancy Ruiz, EPA assistant who assisted with the mapping by recording video on a Go-Pro camera and documenting the long walk in a diary.

The culture center currently has a large interactive video screen that shows all of the Apache place names of the sacred and special places of the Apache and other landmarks for the Yavapai.

The interactive map got started when the Apache culture director, Vincent Randall visited the Southern Ute in Ignacio, Colorado where he saw an interactive map. Ms. Piner recalls the time



Map crew walking up Fossil Creek Road from Needle Rock, All photos by YAN News

when Mr. Randall showed enthusiasm for the interactive video monitor with pictures taken from a satellite.

"He fell in love with it (the interactive video monitor in Colorado) and he (Mr. Randall) said, 'You gotta go see this,' so we took a trip up there with Elizabeth Rocha (Apache cultural specialist and language teacher)," said Ms. Piner. There was also a question about capability and Ms. Piner thought

about how she could accomplish acquiring an interactive video mapping screen.

"I met a man at a conference who was from Alaska who had done it (interactive video mapping screen) much cheaper and bought the equipment for \$5,000. He was also a programmer. But I was still stuck with 'how I could do it financially,'" Ms. Piner said about her quest to get the interactive video screen for mapping

the geographical areas important to the Yavapai and Apache people in the Verde Valley and surrounding areas.

Through several grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences in the past few years, Ms. Piner's department has been able to finally buy the huge interactive screen that sits in the lobby area of the culture center.

"Following the first year's grant, we were able

to build the cabinet - a custom made cabinet," said Ms. Piner about the new cabinet that houses the giant video screen.

Ms. Piner who has been with the Nation for 8 years, said her department has on-going activities that enhances the Nation's historical preservation program.

"My goal for this department has been to provide an access point for tribal members to come in and see videos, pictures and documentation of different events. Someone can come in and watch a documentary in our library or watch an oral history of their parents or their daughter's digital story," said Ms. Piner.

For the December mapping project, Ms. Piner contacted mapmaker Blaine Horner of Colorado to be hired to map the Nation's 1875 trail using satellite imagery. Instead, Mr. Horner directed Everett Phillips to come to the Yavapai-

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morning toward nearby Hackberry Mountain, 7 miles to the east and they were not to be seen again until late that evening 10 hours later at the rendezvous point called Needle Rock at the eastern side of

Hackberry Mountain. Present day country roads were not part of the 1875 landscape, so the mapmakers made their own pathway along this massive mountain range that can be seen from many miles in the Verde Valley. Hackberry Mountain is a high mountain covered with juniper trees, black volcanic rocks and formidable canyons that provided an extra challenge for the walkers that evening.

Arriving late that night

below.

Jordan Lewis, 22, and a cultural specialist for the Nation recalled that day of hiking Hackberry Mountain on December 4.

"It was a treacherous hike, rugged terrain and it wasn't sturdy ground and it was all up hill. You actually had to do this to actually see what your ancestors went through," said Mr. Lewis.

He gives much credit to his ancestors and acknowledged their fortitude and perseverance. "We are still here today. If they can do it, I could do it and that's why I'm doing it today in remembrance of our ancestors that passed on like my great grandparents that lived in the lifetime of this era."

Needle Rock, which sits next to Hackberry Mountain, is a descrip-



Fossil Creek, the life line of the Yavapai and Apache yesterday and today.

"It was amazing and difficult. You know, we spent a lot of time going up and down hills which were really challenging for all of us. We didn't realize what this was going to take in order to get through it," said Ms. Ruiz

A supply transport was made available to the mapmakers as their walk paralleled a country road the first few days of their walk. After the first day's walk, the tired crew members returned to the comforts of their respective homes in Camp Verde that evening to prepare for the next day's journey to Fossil Creek, a distance of 6 miles eastward into the deep canyons of northern Arizona where a mountain spring awaited their arrival the next day.

The second day, the crew members who returned by transportation where greeted by other members of the Yavapai-Apache Nation at Needle Rock.

Mapmaker Mr. Phillips said that the electronic mapping device required the necessity to never break the chain of the pathway. This required returning to the last site of departure from the mapping activity and continuing the mapping pathway. A continuous redline was being developed by satellite mapping which marked the pathway being identified by the satellite marking device (GPS).

The road to Fossil Creek

provided a good respite from the rugged mountain climbing the previous. This was the fourth day of the walk and the mountain country road which appeared level was climbing higher until it reached a summit where the crew rested for a few minutes. This also gave the map crew an opportunity to adjust their backpacks. Because the road was available, a supply van remained with the mapping crew that day which carried their heavier gear such as tents, mapping devices, food and water.

Going into Fossil Creek descending the canyon pass became easier for the walkers.

There are scenic vistas along this pathway into Fossil Creek. The vegetation is mainly cedar trees with some traces of desert flora such as the cactus plant and mesquite bushes. The mapping crew took a brief break along the way before reaching their end of the day destination. Mr. Phillips, mapping coordinator, took the special time to recheck the satellite data and to download vital information for safe keeping which would be sent to the central office at a later date to collate the mapping data for study and then, eventually placed on the new electronic plotting map located inside of the cultural center.

In the history of the Yavapai-Apache, the Fossil Creek springs area is con-

sidered a holy place. This is also a historical place where at the turn of the century, local Yavapai and Apache were hired to build a water flume which carried water to a hydro-electric plant at Irving inside of Fossil Creek. This power plant was built around 1909 that provided employment for the Yavapai and Apaches of the area.

Now, nothing remains in the area since the power plant buildings were disassembled in early 2000. The metal water plumes that were assembled in the early 1900s that was used to transport flowing



Katherine Marquez takes a well-deserved break in Fossil Creek after a hike up the canyon on December 4 on the Fossil Creek Road

water to the turbines of the power plant, were torn down as well.

It was the intent of the U.S. Forest Service to return this area to its formative state and designating this area as primitive with strict controls of hiking and camping activities.

Small camps were set up in this canyon as different families pitched their

tents and grass huts along the creek where the water flowed. This water was the sustenance of the people who lived here—depending on it for their livelihood.

Fossil Creek was a thriving community due to the influx of workers who lived here beginning at the turn of the century when the Yavapai and Apaches were let go from the military stockades of old San Carlos (where the mapmakers where making their way to).

That evening, the map crew found the perfect place to pitch their tents and it was the first time the crew was going to set up their camp.

It is the close cooperation of support that unified the mapping crew as they helped one another in setting up their tents. Most important of all, the first time the crew was cooking a healthy meal consisting of steamed vegetables and rice—cooked by Mr. Phillips. Nancy Ruiz lent her cooking skills to help Mr. Phillips. After the long walk of 8 hours that day, it was time for a home-cooked meal for the crew.

The next morning, it was an early rise as the crew ascended the trail out of Fossil Creek. With a nearby road to walk on, the mapping crew saw these vistas as they made their way up the forest road that had been closed due to a rock fall. After ascending Fossil Creek, it was onward toward near a small mountain community of Strawberry and this time, moving away from the road onto challenging mountain trails.

Recorded by Nancy Ruiz using the advance Go-pro video, a record was kept of the walk toward Baby Doll Ranch, a distance of 13 miles to the south. Fortunately, this path consisted of a flat mesa and a trail that was marked as the Arizona Trail although it had no semblance to a

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The most challenging mountain of the long march was Hackberry Mountain east of Camp Verde. The mapping crew hiked to the top of this mountain.

at Needle Rock, a greeting party who drove to the rendezvous point waited for the walkers believing that the map walkers would arrive during the day light hours that evening.

That was not the case as the walkers soon found out that the ascension up Hackberry Mountain was more challenging than originally thought. That night as the mapmakers approached the apex of the Hackberry Mountain, the crew resorted to headlamps as they descended into Needle Rock down

tive rock jutting out into the skyline and serves as a landmark that often signifies a meeting place or a rendezvous point. In this case, a gathering for the Yavapai-Apache Nation members to greet the map walker's first day outing marking the trail with satellite maps.

The next morning, December 5, Nancy Ruiz, the lone female hiker with the mapping crew stood next to Needle Rock recalling the previous memorable evening walking up Hackberry Mountain.