

COMMUNITY NEWS

Home Sweet Home

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

Most adult members who are over the age of 65 can recall the tar shacks that the Nation's members lived in on the 'reservation' during the 40s, 50s, 60s and 70s. There are stories of tin roofs and chicken wire over tar paper holding up the walls of one-room houses with outhouses nearby and no indoor plumbing. And everyone ate out of a lone frying pan that was placed in the middle of the floor—a dirt floor sometimes. These are hard-time stories told by Nancy Guzman, an Apache from Camp Verde.

Nancy Smith Guzman remembers some of the old times living in Camp Verde. But all of that has come to past as the Guzmans, Manuel and Nancy enjoy their newly remodeled new home.

After all, this is the year 2017 and their home which they moved into back in 1989 has now been reborn with new walls, both exterior and interior and made into a new whole...a brand new home. This day, they sit on the front porch of their remodeled home and it could be a home located in the fancier neighborhoods of north Phoenix around Union Hills area.

It has the most beautiful crystal chandelier hanging over a massive giant dining table with a huge cherished 4 by 5 gold framed J.C. Penney mirror that they bought a long time ago. The mirror is about the only thing that could be considered an antique as the rest are new fixtures. The mirror was in storage for a long time and Mrs. Guzman recalls the day she bought it years ago at the now closed J.C. Penney Home Store at the Metro Center store in Phoenix. "The stamp is still on the back," says Mrs. Guzman while standing next to the mirror,

Surely, visiting guests



The Guzmans enjoying their new home with hanging chandeliers, a massive dining table, a brand new kitchen with real oakwood cupboards and hanging trademark lighting, and new appliances.

will see themselves in the mirror as they dine and converse when family members and friends start arriving this coming Christmas Eve when the Guzmans will cook their traditional tamales, pisolé and menudo for dinner. Mrs. Guzman's husband, Manuel, is originally from Agua Prieta-Sonora, a bordering town of Douglas, Arizona. He knows all the hand-me-down recipes of his family and in the early 90's his mother came to stay with them in Camp Verde for a short amount of time.

It's a big family tradition when they gather during Christmas Eve to draw names. "They all come over. People call and say, 'Can we come over?' says Mrs. Guzman who is the Apache matriarch of her family.

Their new home can be considered "fabulous". And on the floor, what appears to be stone tiles is actually a huge sheet of linoleum that fools the eye. The kitchen area could be photographs out of

Good House Keeping magazine. The beautiful Oakwood custom-designed cabinets fits their kitchen replete with a new massive stainless steel refrigerator and the island for mica countertop and in the laundry room, a brand new upright front end Kenmore loader washer and dryer next to each other. Adjoining their kitchen is a walk-in pantry that Mrs. Guzman always wanted and it has plenty of shelves that is packed with dry goods, canned goods and all the fixings for the Guzman's upcoming house-warming gathering. "Oh, yes, I can store huge pots and pans in there now. Before, we kept all our pots and pans outside and now, it's all right here," she points to the shelves inside.

"Our first day to move back in was March 13, 2017," says Mrs. Guzman after having moved out last April of 2016 to live in a trailer in Middle Verde while their house was gutted and remodeled. The old house that is no lon-

ger visible with exception of the roof framing, was sitting exactly here in 1989 when all of the 5 Guzman kids lived in the home. "It was a 4 bedroom home with an enlarged living room—an open concept with the kitchen nearby," said Mrs. Guzman recalling what was before but is no longer here in the new home. A few years later they took a \$4,000 loan to upgrade that same old house and placed a breakfast nook in there with a wooden stove in the middle. It was a modest improvement according to Mrs. Guzman about the old days. Now that the children have all moved out, the new configuration divides the dining room with a smaller family room for TV viewing, door greetings and visiting and there are only 3 bedrooms and one is the guest bedroom.

The bathrooms are bigger with new porcelain and a massive walk-in marbled shower proudly shown by the Guzmans. Mr. Guzman says the best feature of the smaller bathroom

is the "rainshower", a trademark mechanism that replicates rain in the shower. In their other master bathroom, a massive huge tub with shiny brand name fixtures accents the tub.

There are no fluorescent lights in the home and if there are lights in the ceiling, these reset lights as they are called, are hidden into the ceiling.

All of the remodeling funds come from the tribe according to YAN housing director Sharie Benson.

"There's a budget to do the renovations for a house. There's a list that has been in place for a number of years and we're just working down the list. We try to do 3 a year but this year, we're closer to 2 per year," she said. The housing department expects to start another renovation by the end of this year.

The Guzman's original home was built through the Mutual Help Program and now that the house has been paid off, other owners who have the same type of housing quali-

fy for renovation. Mrs. Guzman was director of housing many years ago under the BIA-HIP projects and is familiar with the housing rules during those years. "If you own your home, and are done with the mortgage you can qualify for the funds which is now set aside from the tribe's gaming funds for renovation," said Mrs. Guzman. She recalls the old days of 1995 when only \$20,000 per home was available

Regardless of who pays for renovation of homes, the Guzmans are happy for their brand new home in Camp Verde on the Nation's land. "They gave us the keys and we walked in," say Mr. and Mrs. Guzman while sitting out on the front porch watching the Arizona sunset. And now, with 11 grand kids and 3 great-grandkids, the massive giant wooden dining table will host the upcoming holiday dinners in the Guzman's brand new home.



The back part of the house features a circular window with 'popouts' that bring out the trim on the windows, the smaller window and the door frame.



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