

COMMUNITY

YAN member photojournalist captures Indian country:

A story by Alejandro Rubio

CARSON CITY, Nev. — I didn't receive my first pair of Apache boots until I was 14 years old, and it was the greatest day of my life. These beautiful boots were made and beaded by my grandmother, Elizabeth. They were white with yellow and green beading that wrapped around the top foot and around the top the boot. I was running for Miss Teen for the Yavapai-Apache Nation and was given these boots, along with a beautiful white buckskin dress that also had yellow and green beading. My grandmother was very talented and had also beaded my T-Necklace to go along with my attire.

I won the title for Miss Teen, allowing

me to travel to other tribes to help represent my nation — and that put a lot of stress on my attire. I would lose beads, buckles and strands, and my clothing had holes in it. My grandmother, who loves to travel, took me to all the events that I had to attend. She would help and show me how to repair my attire. As for my boots, they were getting too worn out, and we didn't have time to repair them. You can see how much I had traveled with them, and see all the love I have given them.

When I told my grandma that they were starting to get holes in them, she just smiled and told me, "Those are not holes — those are travel marks. Each

mark tells a story of how much you love yourself and your culture. These marks show how much time and effort you have put into your heart for your ancestors. They are very proud of you right now."

As I got older, I learned more about my nation's culture, from both the Yavapai and the Apache sides. I learned the language, as well as how to bead, sew dresses and cook. But it wasn't until I had my daughter that I learned how to make my first set of Apache boots. After completing them, the feeling that came over me was like no other — I felt proud, and most of all I felt complete.

Learning how to make moccasins was the best gift that I could



Traditional footwear by Moses Davis of the Big Pine Tribe of Owen Valley. Davis has been dancing since he was 6 years old.

ever have in life. As my daughter got older, I taught her how to make her own pair of Apache boots, so she could be able to run for Miss Princess for our nation — and she won!

As she came to me one day, she has told me, "My boots has holes in them." My reply: "Those are not holes — those are travel marks. Each mark tells a story of how much you love yourself and your culture. These marks show how much time and effort you have put into your heart for your ancestors. They are very proud of you right now."

Now, when I'm out gathering, I'm always catching myself looking at everyone's moccasins. I can see how many travel marks they have. I see socks and toes coming out; I see

beads missing, strands missing; I can see the color of the beads fading. Most of all, I can see all the love that was put into their boots.

My advice is to love your moccasins and boots, and don't be embarrassed to show them just because they have holes and they are torn up. Be proud of your travel marks, because they show how much you're proud to be a Native American.

Editor's note:

Alejandra Rubio (Yavapai-Apache), daughter of Darlene Rubio of Camp Verde and Rogelio Rubio, is a graphic design artist for Swift Communications, which publishes First Nation's Focus.

To illustrate her story,

Alejandra Rubio attended the 2018 Stewart Father's Day Powwow this past June in Carson City, where she took the images of traditional moccasins.

Her grandmother is Elizabeth Rocha of Camp Verde. The elder Rocha co-wrote the Apache dictionary for the Apache community which is in the process of being published.

<https://www.firstnationsfocus.com> website
<https://www.firstnationsfocus.com/features/alejandra-rubio-yavapai-apache-why-im-proud-of-my-native-travel-marks/?fbclid=IwAR33oudXIP-8w2dTihLz8iQN-te7vgx-qOVXUQYBAakcDk3Y-htGm7XMELEnDA>



Moccasins worn by 9 year old Luka Montgomery Gomez at a pow-wow in Stewart, Nevada.

Traditional boots by Cheryl Baca from bootmaking class

CHAIRS

From page 7

college or high school volleyball games. But this game is played sitting down.

The large soft rubbery beach ball seems a bit soggy but very manageable in hitting it over the net.

Some well-meaning players like to set each ball to another player next to them for a final hit but most people go for the gusto hitting it as soon as they receive the ball from the other side.

Spiking is not permitted as one has to stay in their seat—this means staying glued to your seat. There are no referees but the players are pretty good sports about monitoring themselves. Move out of line, you are reminded immediately.

Some people try to gain an extra point by claiming the ball "landed inside of the line" when in fact it bounced out of the 14' x 22' playing area. And sometimes, a little bit of friendly shouting goes

on.

Chair volleyball is really a game design for low-impact sports, especially those who have limited mobility such as a leg in a cast or those who can't stand up or can't move quickly.

Just a few minutes of this and one can get worked up in a sweat. A good way to lose some of those Christmas calories from candy and cakes.

The YAN Senior group traveled to the Hualapai Nation in Peach Springs a few weeks back and took on the elders from there. There are other Indian communities who thirst for this fast action sport by setting up tournaments and meets.

Shirley Bonnaha, Harry Hood, Priscilla Lewis, Willie Hood and his wife Julia, Carl Stacey and Monte Jackson are just a few of the gung-ho chair volleyball players.

One other rule: You have to be over 55 years old to participate.

Contact Alexia Eswonia for the next scheduled game.





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