

EDITORIAL

Nevertheless, the Yavapai-Apache Persisted.

The Miracle of Exodus Day Postponed

Written by Vincent Hood, a Yavapai of the Yavapai-Apache Nation with assistance from Elders

It was mid-February, the weather reports were so dire that it was given a name—they called it northern Arizona's "snow-pocalypse." At the beginning of that week, forecasters were predicting record breaking winter conditions for Thursday and Friday. While the weekend's weather projections were said to be without snow, people were still worried about those two chilling days—as if Friday's storm would prevent a Saturday.

These were the sentiments of the residents of Arizona. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) was prepared to announce shutdowns of major state routes, newscasters were pleading Arizonans to "stay home."

Meanwhile the Yavapai-Apache Nation was set to recognize the sacrifices of their forebears on that very weekend, February 23rd, 2019. Exodus Day—an annual commemoration planned on the day that

set in motion the deaths of many and the separation of people from their beloved homeland.

The March of Tears took place in the winter of 1875, when human beings were force marched from Camp Verde to a place almost two-hundred miles away from their homes, farmland, and irrigation systems. The mass transport was devastating to the residents of the Verde Valley, a place that was home to many—people who could trace their descendants to years that stretch past ten-thousand. Even now, archeologists write off the testimonies of the original inhabitants and publish—without hesitation—the mystery of the "vanished people" who inscribed and built the ancient ruins of the Verde Valley. To this day the mystery remains unsolved, although my people would say otherwise.

Two decades and five years would pass before any real hope of return wasn't crushed by the political pressures of the newly arrived settlers, ranchers, and miners of the Verde Valley, which came in the form

of petitions and letters sent to Washington, D.C., describing my people in the most disparaging of terms. It took initiative, unbreakable belief, and courage to embark on a restorative journey to their homeland at the turn of the century (1900 AD). "The Return" is not an accomplishment, but the accomplishment of the people who waited and suffered. It set forth a series of other miraculous events that laid the foundation of the Yavapai-Apache Nation.

Yet Exodus Day, as meaningful as it is, was in real danger of being unrecognized during the week of "snow-pocalypse." Rumors of "cancellation" and "postponement" began to swirl as the storm was fast approaching. It was not until Wednesday, via social media, that the majority of the Yavapai-Apache Nation tribal members had received any official announcement of "postponement" from the administration. Indeed, the snowstorm lived up to the hype and brought record snowfall to parts of Arizona. Coconino and Gila county announced a state of

emergency for the days of February 21st and 22nd and portions of state routes, as predicted, were shut down.

Nevertheless, more than a hundred Yavapai and Apache gathered on Saturday, February 23rd, 2019, to honor the sacrifices of their ancestors. It was an impromptu event in lieu of a postponed Exodus Day commemoration. The day was memorable. The mountains that surrounded the valley were blanketed in snow, a view that was reminiscent of the snow-capped landscape our people were forced to walk on foot 144 years past. Documentation exists from cavalymen and my people, detailing the bitter winter conditions of 1875.

A humble group of tribal members, most of which were women and children, participated in a mile-long run, an observance that pays tribute to the resolve and spirit needed to move forward in order to return home. The spontaneous event culminated in the parking lot of the Yavapai-Apache Culture Resource Center, where Yavapai and Apache

children danced and Apache drummers sang.

And yet this memorable moment would not have been, without the initiative of people willing to put aside personal and political considerations and take real faith in their community. Granted, a few individuals saw it as an act of defiance in the face of an administrative decree. In a Facebook post, councilwoman Amanda Honwyteva wrote an earnest passage, describing the moral fiber and courage of the Yavapai-Apache people and that some were going to gather at the culture center in Camp Verde (Delivered Friday, February 22nd). The post was sincere and explicitly said that in no way was this an effort to undermine the decision of the administration. The next day, an unexpected crowd arrived in droves, nearby roads had been cleared so that anybody within the Verde Valley could drive safely using active roads. Two councilmembers went out on a limb and participated in the unscripted event.

February 23rd chance event brought to mind a couple of things. First,

to a simpler time when the Yavapai and Apache gathered without fanfare or in accordance to an organization. Second, when our people would celebrate without a schedule and yet proceed without failure. Third, when we rejoiced and celebrated each other just for being here. And forth, when we persisted, despite the forces of prevention. As if for a brief moment of time, we were strong again, just as our ancestors intended us to be.

Editor's note: Opinions expressed in editorials are not necessarily supported or condoned by the editor of Gahnvah-Yati newsletter or the YAN administration. Editorials are welcomed as long as they do not insult or defame people or make false allegations against people. The editor has the right to edit portions of submitted letters to concur with the above standards while honoring the Indian Bill of Rights as stated in the YAN Constitution.

YAVAPAI-APACHE NATION

Student Clothing Allowance

Disbursement for July 5, 2019 – October 4, 2019 Cycle

A friendly reminder: Before submitting the STUDENT CLOTHING ALLOTMENT APPLICATION, please ensure these documents (if applicable) are included with the COMPLETED APPLICATION. Incomplete applications will be returned to the cardholder's mailing address on file or a letter of request for missing documents will be mailed to the cardholder.

CERTIFICATE OF INDIAN BLOOD (CIB) if this is the student's initial application. Copies are accepted.

PAGE 4 OF THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES with the cardholder's signature. This is to ensure that the cardholder understands and agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of the program.

VERIFICATION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE or the most recent report card if it includes the student's attendance. Students must be in school full-time with no excessive tardiness or unexcused absenteeism.

COURT DOCUMENTS if the student(s) is in foster care or under custodianship. It must be verified that the child or children are legally under the cardholder's care.

COURT DOCUMENTS if the cardholder has a name change and wishes to have it on file with this office and have the name change reflected on their card.

Applications will be mailed May 10, 2019 and will be accepted UNTIL SEPTEMBER 4, 2019. ON OCTOBER 4, 2019 FUNDS WILL BE REMOVED FROM ALL MASTERCARDS AND WILL BE IRRETRIEVABLE, please keep these dates in mind. If you have a change of address or phone number, please notify this office of the change. If you do not receive an application in the mail there may be a valid reason (such as receipts were not returned to this office for the previous disbursement, student's poor attendance record, etc.). Applications can also be picked up at the Student Clothing Allowance office in the Nation's Administration Building.

Schedule for the July 5, 2019 – October 4, 2019 cycle:

- 1st run July 5 – August 4
- 2nd run August 5 – September 4
- 3rd run September 5 – October 4

Cardholders have 30 days to make the expenditures AND return all original receipts via mail or hand deliver to this office. It is suggested that cardholders make copies of the receipts for their records. Please include cardholder's name and the name of each student applied for when returning receipts. Remember, MasterCards are for student clothing, shoes and school supplies only and please, do not exceed your credit line (this may cause a deduction in allotment for the next cycle).

If there should be any questions regarding this program, my name is Victoria Manuel and I will assist you in the best way possible. I can be reached at phone number (928) 567-1056. Thank you!

Schedule of upcoming council meetings:

- June 4- 4 p.m. Council Chambers
- July 2-4 p.m. Council Chambers
- August 10-Tunlii-10 a.m.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Training

Conference

June 26th and June 27th

by RACHEL HOOD

A two-day session to discuss the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) will be held on June 26th and 27th at the Cliff Castle Casino Hotel. The two-day event will be all-day agenda session regarding the implications of VAWA. The panels will discuss how VAWA can dramatically affect how tribal law handles non-tribal offenders on tribal land as well as what is needed to uphold VAWA.

Prior to VAWA being enacted in 2013, the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010 was signed into law in order to address the unique issues pertaining to victims and their offenders.

VAWA specifically addresses domestic violence offenders who are non-tribal citizens and have committed a specific crime on tribal land.

The two-day event will bring awareness as well as inform Yavapai-Apache Nation tribal members as to whether to implement VAWA in the Nation. The event will allow tribal members to provide feedback and inform the YAN legislatures of the public interest regarding the YAN community.

For more information contact Rachel Hood at email: racheljanethood@gmail.com or phone (928) 451-6547.