

# NAhtAsuutaaka' (White Shield) Newsletter

April, 2014

Volume 2

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Dorreen Yellow Bird, Editor

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## White Shield elders learn new technology



**Culture Center** – Elders sometime feel they are out-of-touch with their world because new technology – computers, cell phones, iPads, Nooks, Tablets and other items – are not user friendly. “I feel really old when I need my grandson to help me with my new iPad,” said one elder. Even very young children can speed through their cell phone get the weather, take  
(continued on page 3)



***From the desk of Fred Fox, Vice Chairman & Councilman for White Shield***

Spring is here and high school track is in full swing. Graduation is almost here. Our kids had a great prom and it's been awhile since the White Shield School had one. Our kids worked real hard to make it a success. I'm proud of our kids here in White Shield. They represented our school all year.

The Warbonnet dance was a great success for this year's Arikara Celebration Committee. From what I hear, it's going to be an awesome celebration. The committee has been fundraising all year and their hard work will show in July.

We have a lot of projects for White Shield this year. I would like to talk about the process and how they are going to be constructed. First of all, the main projects are the following: 1.) White Shield Lagoon - \$3.9 million; 2.) White Shield Phase I School - \$3.7 million (possible funding for entire school); 3.) White Shield Phase I Community Building - \$3 million; 4.) White Shield Housing Project - \$5.1 million; 5.) Little Warriors Head Start - \$1.3 million.

The priority will be the lagoon, school and community building. The lagoon will have an IHS engineer as project manager. The design and construction will all go through a bidding process, which will be overseen by the Indian Health Service.

The White Shield School is being handled by the White Shield School Board. The architect and engineering went through a bidding process. The plans will be presented to the School Board and then later presented to the community. The construction project will also go through a bidding process.

The Community building will also go through a bidding process, which will be overseen by senior project manager hired by the MHA Nation, Lonnie Burr.

None of these projects will ever be HAND PICKED. The bidding process will go through a strict set of guidelines. Each company will have a background check and be fully investigated. Each company will also be capable of handling a project of this magnitude. TERO guidelines will be fully enforced.

There will be a Segment Update meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. I will have designs and plans for most of the projects. The guest speakers will be Whitney Bell, CFO, MHA Nation; Richard Mayer, CEO, Thunder Butte Refinery; Pat Packineau, GM, 4 Bears Casino and Tax Director, Mark Fox.

We have a lot of developments throughout the reservation so we will bring in the managers to discuss the developments in our Tribal Businesses.

Finally, I have some great news. We are working out the details of getting Dr. Rising Sun as a full-time physician in the White Shield community. I'm hoping to have him on board before the summer. This gives the White Shield community a legitimate reason to build a new Health Care Facility. White Shield can serve the off reservation Tribal Members from Fargo and Bismarck. The Health Facility could possibly have X-ray equipment, blood work equipment, a Public Health Nurse, etc. so maybe at the next Segment Update we can brainstorm and get ideas to get the ball rolling. Thank you and everyone take care. Fred

“selfies”, send and receive pictures or make a call with just a couple of taps on their cell phone.

It was a grant from the Seventh Generation Fund that provided the opportunity for technical assistance to elders. The Fund is an indigenous non-profit organization that promotes and maintains the uniqueness of Native people. As a part of the first year grant, IPAD were purchased and given to those who attended the training. The IPADS contain the Arikara language for classes that will be taught later in April. The project is a three-year project that must be applied for each year but that also means that more iPads can be purchased and given out each year.

Bill Harjo, Oklahoma Indian, was the teacher for the classes. The morning was spent learning about cell phones – how do to send pictures? What is an AP? How do you make and send group messages and on and on. The students had a lot of questions and the lunch was ready before they knew it. The afternoon was spent with the new IPADS which had been charging while students were in class. The afternoon was spent preparing the IPADS for use and getting to know the basics.

There will be two more classes for training. The schedule is tentatively set for the middle of May, but will depend on Harjo’s schedule too. All elders are encouraged to attend if they have questions about their cells, IPADS, computers and so on.

## March Madness

**Elder Center** – March was a cold month, so the elders of White Shield warmed things with fun, food, family and games at what they called March Madness.

On Sunday, a “healthy” potluck turned out to be just that with salads, trays of greens, jello, cheeses, meats and lots of laughter and fun.

They are planning more fund raisers for summer with similar activities. Most of the elders participated by bringing cakes, cookies, brownies, fresh cinnamon rolls which were sold and the money put in the elder account.

As people began to arrive, cups were handed out for money. If you wanted to be king or queen of the event, you solicited money for your cup. Winners turned out to be Gloria Yellow Bird, visiting from the Garrison Nursing Home and Denby Deegan.

Plinko, ping pong ball in a cup, and bingo were played with small prizes to the winners.

“It was really fun,” was the comment from those attending.

## War Bonnet dance hosts large Friday evening crowd



*John Malnourie, Bob Mulluck & Vincent Malnourie*

**Ralph Wells Complex** – The largest fund raising event for the annual July 11-13 celebration was a success.

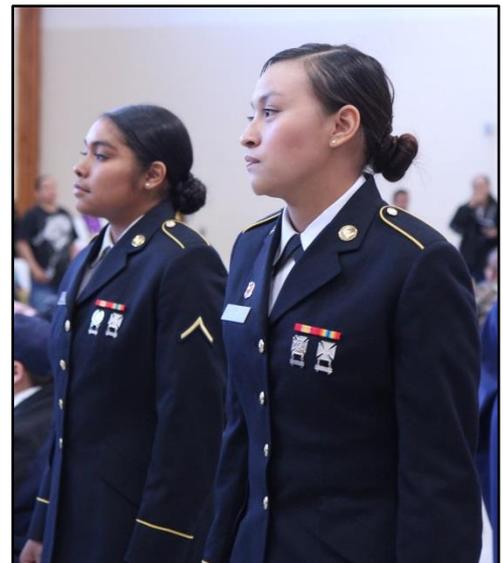
There were over 300 people, five drums, many dancers, giveaways and good food.

As the date draws near, there are plans to construct a new arena, but the new arena will not be complete until year 2015 or 2016.

White Shield 2014 Celebration officers are: Richard White Bear, president; Maggie Yellow Bird, vice president; Genevieve Azure, secretary; Leah Bear, treasurer; Joseph Azure, arena director; Trinity Lattergrass, drum keeper and Tana Mountain is Celebration Princess.



*Auxiliary members Madonna Azure, Sally White, Gerilyn Yellow Bird & Vivian Gillette*



*D. Wells & Leslie Jackson*

## Elders tell of successes and lessons learned

By Dorreen Yellow Bird, editor



***Rev. Duane & Yvonne Fox, two students,  
Denby Deegan***

Charlotte Coleman, Home and health teacher, asked Rev. Duane Fox, Yvonne Fox, Kaye Bell, Denby Deegan and myself to sit down with her high school classes and talk about our successes and even our failures. I would also do a story for newsletter I promised. Because I was part of this story, I did not want to write it as a story, and at the

suggestion of Rev. Fox, I am writing it as a narrative column.

The story began as I hurried down the hall at the school Friday, wondering if there was something we could say that they hadn't heard before. I remember back in my high school days, it seemed adults were always giving us advice and we would yawn and think "same ol' same ol'." When I reached the door, I could hear Deegan talking about his career as an architect.

I was late.

Deegan had reached for a career that few Native American Indians try and he had succeeded. He said his reaching out could be attributed to his sister and family. That is important. Many of those who reach higher goals have families that have stood behind and beside them all the way.

That, however, isn't always true. There are young men and woman who succeed in spite of family who don't consider careers important.

Another speaker, Yvonne (Bonnie) is one of our bundler keepers. She received the Bundle passed down to her by her mother, Pearl Howard and Grandmother Philomine Little Sioux Felix. The Sacred Mother Corn bundle was passed down through many generations. Bonnie has already named her daughter, Kari Lieberman to succeed her and she is teaching Kari about caring for the Bundle and ceremony for it.

She has important lessons to teach. Her lessons come from Mother Corn, a Sacred spirit who came to us to teach us life lessons. Bonnie then can pass those lessons on to children. It is her right and responsibility because of her special relationship with the Bundle.

Like Bonnie, Rev. Fox also had a calling. He chose to follow in his father's footsteps and became a preacher of God. Teaching about how to live a good life is his career and his role in the community. He never misses an opportunity to fulfill that role.

Delilah Yellow Bird, Arikara culture and language teacher, talked about her long road to her current position as language teacher. I smiled when she told us, her mother was a fluent speaker and wanted Delilah to pass the language on to the next generation, but she told her

mother, Florence (Badger) White, no, don't teach us the language. She paused and smiled, "now I teach it" she said. Her first chosen career was a race car driver. That comment made us raise our eye brows only because we knew no young girl who strived for that career. Really brave, I thought.

Kaye Bell talked about her life in a big family. She said we used to play in the dirt, sifting it through an old screen until it was soft, then we would make farm houses and gardens. It was then I thought I wanted to be a farmer. As I grew and became interested in other careers I would think that is what I wanted to do. The last career I wanted to be was a teacher. That is what I became and it is very rewarding, she said.

I was last.

I had parents, but I must add it was my husband, Edward Lonefight, who pushed me toward college and a career. It was his idea that I major in English while I wanted to major in art. It was that English major that became my bread and butter. I really loved college because I learned so many new things – the world opened up for me. I practically had to be pushed out the door with my master's degree. One of my academic counselors told me to go to work and see the practical side of things before any more college. I moved on with 17 credits toward my Doctorate.

But what became one of the most life-changing aspects of my life was those 16 years I spent as a Sundancer. I was rung out to the last bead of sweat, turned inside out and shown the world in a whole new way. It is a way of life that includes ceremonies, constant prayers and the Pipe.

It helped me look at our Sahnish history in a different way.

I told the students, as I was told in ceremony; the Sahnish were given special gifts by the Creator. These gifts are there for them too. You cannot show anyone these things, you must experience them for themselves and that is the difficult part.

We also have strong and powerful ancestors. We are still here, still alive, because of our ancestor. In one of the historical journals I studied, they wrote of Chief White Shield. The Chief told the white traders that our people would not drink their alcohol unless they paid us because, he said, when we drink we make fools of ourselves for you. If you want to see fools you have to pay us.

When I read about White Shield, it was easy to see why he was chief. The journals documented his role in one of the battles. The Ree were losing the battle. We were greatly out-numbered by the Sioux and were about to surrender. White Shield, an old man, dressed in full regalia with his long war bonnet flowing behind him, mounted his war pony. He rode alone in the middle of the battle and challenged the enemy. Come and fight me, he challenged them. I am an old man but will fight your bravest warrior and he rode his horse back and forth. The Sioux were so impressed with his courage, that they left the battle field and the war ended.

Finally, I think the students should also know we are not Chief White Shield. We have made mistakes and they will too, but the important thing is to remember you will make mistakes but try again – learn from the mistakes. Don't dwell on them. Get passed them. Be a Sahnish.

## OBITUARY



***Robin Lynn Fox (Red Butte Woman)***

Robin Lynn Fox (Red Butte Woman), 38, Parshall, ND, died Sunday, March 9, 2014, in Roseglen, ND. Robin was born in Spokane, Washington, on March 11, 1975 to Henry and Annette Marie Fox. She attended school in Seattle, Washington, at Indian Heritage School. She graduated from the Fort Berthold Community College with her LPN and RN degrees. She also received her Bachelor's Degree from the University of North Dakota.

Robin met her finance Dave Merkley in 2004 in Wendover, Nevada and they haven't been apart since. She loved to dance and had a smile that could light up a room. She was a strong friend and

Companion.

She had many friends and excelled in all that she did. Robin was the Director of the Rockview Plaza School for Tots. Robin was good at sharing a joke and she had the kind of laugh that when you heard it, it made you want to laugh.

She loved her family and loved being with family. She had a special attachment to her Auntie, Elaine Incognito. Even though they were years apart, they were soul sisters. You could always find them together at family gatherings.

Robin was a big Seattle Seahawk fan. She was a member of the Ladies Auxiliary Post 253 in White Shield, North Dakota and a member of the White Shield Spirit Riders.

She leaves her companion, Dave Merkley with three daughters, Annette, Ree and Autumn; her father, Henry Fox and mother, Jeralyn (Magell) Fox, Parshall, ND; three sisters Alayna Fox, Popular, Montana; Heather Fox, Ft Belknap, Mt; three brothers Danny Fox, Popular, Mt; Jerry Bear and Darryl Look, Seattle, Washington.

Preceded in death were her mother Annette Marie Fox, sisters Nanette Healy and paternal grandparents Lawrence and Dora (Sitting Crow) Fox, Fort Berthold; Maternal grandparents William Healy and Maime Conway.

## OBITUARY



***Enola Packineau Pond  
(Peppermint – Hisuaish)***

Enola Packineau Pond (Peppermint *Hisuaish*) born February 8, 1946 died March 15, 2014. Her parents were George & May (Montclair) Packineau at Elbowoods, ND. She was a member of the Water Buster Clan and Child of the Knife Clan and a member of the Memorial Congregational Church.

Enola was raised on the Ft. Berthold Reservation. She graduated from Parshall High School then attended Haskell Indian Nations University, Lawrence, KS. After graduation she was employed by the BIA as a contract officer in Denver. She also worked for the National Park Service as well as the US Navy GSA and the University of California, San Francisco.

She married Allen Pond April 14, 1972 and they had two children, Ramona and Mathew.

Enola and Al spent many years living near Big Horn Canyon Recreation area at Ft Smith, MT (1976 – 1986) while employed by the National Park Service. They moved to San Francisco and lived there for 22 years until they relocated to Ft Berthold after retiring in July 2007. Enola began working for the Ft. Berthold Housing Authority as a contract officer and then as the acting Executive Director until she passed away.

She won a lawsuit that initiated Indian Preference in hiring and also making it possible for Native Americans to manage their own programs and giving Native American Preference in all aspects of employment with the BIA.

She was serving on the Parshall Community Board. She served as treasurer of the Nux-baga and Water Buster Powwow committees.

Enola is survived by her husband, Allen; daughter, Ramona; son, Mathew; grandchildren, Alexis, Alaina and Eric; sisters, Alice Harwood, Aberdeen, SD; Ramona Two Shields, Parshall, ND; Iva Gillies, Parshall, ND; and June Packineau, S. San Francisco, CA.

Preceded her in death are her parents, George & May Packineau; brothers George, Jr., Leslie, Emerson, Mickey and Charles.

***The following is the text of a letter submitted by Tex Hall, the chairman of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara Nation of North Dakota, to Ken Rogers, the opinion page editor for The Bismarck Tribune.***

Dear Ken:

Running a government and politics in general brings with it one's fair share of detractors. I am generally inclined to let my work and the results speak for themselves. But, a recent front page story in your Sunday March 9 edition, "Adrift in a flood of work, Native companies say fronts are epidemic", was based on countless assumptions and inaccuracies that as Chairman, I find it necessary to respond to give you, your staff and readership some balance and a better understanding of our tribal government.

First, the article gives readers the impression that our TERO laws, which we adopted as a sovereign nation to provide Indian preference for jobs and contracts and to promote economic growth for our tribal members, are the only laws on the MHA Nation that govern business opportunities related to the energy boom. Not so.

Entrepreneurs have to comply with tribal laws ranging from oil & gas, transportation, environmental, law enforcement, to fish & wildlife. Our tribal government is responsible for enforcing all these laws in order to protect our land, water, and communities. There are numerous state and federal laws in play as well. The bottom line is that all businesses, Native and non-Native, such as the ones featured in your story; have to comply with all these laws, not just TERO laws. If they don't they will not remain competitive or in compliance. This important angle should have been a major part of the story.

Second, your story contains numerous allegations about Indian business "fronts" that are alleged by just four Native Businesses out of 140 totals. A front is when an Indian business is not a real bona fide company, meaning they have someone else doing the work but collect the check. Yet no actual "fronts" were revealed. Rather, the author simply repeated allegations by others about the existence of "fronts." It is understandable that certain businesses are going to be unhappy about how well they are doing – that's the reality of a highly competitive energy market. And yes, there are lots of businesses. Some will thrive; some will not. That is not TERO's nor the Tribe's fault.

Third, as Chairman, my overriding goal has been to fight for our people and do whatever I can to see that we have a chance to reclaim our economic sovereignty - our self-sufficiency. I'd like to see every single member of our Tribe who wants to work or own a business succeed, and I will do everything within my power as Chairman to make conditions for that success possible. But - it is not our Tribe's job to run someone's business for them. If they succeed, that is great. If they don't, I hope they retool and get another chance. My job, as I see it is to make sure that my Administration and our Tribal agencies follow our Constitution and our laws. I believe that governments job is to ensure laws are followed.

For instance, our TERO Office investigates and then certifies whether a native company is 100% Indian-owned and that requires proof of actual ownership, and proof of an actual business on actual land – which means a real building, staff, equipment, business knowledge to perform the work, and insurance.

When a Native business enters into contracts with an oil company, that contract is between the oil company and the Native business. It's up to the Native company to perform the work and comply with our Tribe's laws and requirements, such as obtaining a TERO license, Department of Transportation permits, and to pay fines for dumping or spilling hazardous material or salt water on the reservation. If a Native company does not comply, they may lose their license or permits, if they do not perform the terms of their private contracts they could lose that as well.

The point I am making is that our government is responsible for making sure all businesses, Native and non-Native, comply with our tribal safety and environmental rules. In fact, we have created an entire compliance division by cross training and requiring our officers to obtain both Tribal laws and Federal certification. To protect our homelands, we will rigorously enforce our tribal regulations against both Native and non-Native companies and we will be fair. We cannot guarantee success; but our goal is to create an environment where one can succeed. It is important for your readers to know that we stringently follow the law in the protection of our people and the environment. It is also important to remember there are always two sides to a story. There are many Indian owned businesses doing well; they have played by the same rules as everyone else and are succeeding.

There is an old saying that says everyone is entitled to their opinion but not their own facts. Here are some important facts. Since 2010, when I was elected for a third term, I have worked to create a level playing field with a fair business climate and regulatory laws. As a result we have 1,000 oil wells, producing 180,000 barrels per day, a multi-million dollar cleans fuels refinery under construction and we've implemented anti-flaring regulations, and put a safe railroad crossings and roads plan in place. We've also created 20,000 jobs and have several hundred small businesses working on the reservation.

This did not happen by accident. We have worked hard to make this a planned, safe oil and gas development and we will continue to do so.

Tex "Red Tipped Arrow" Hall  
Tribal Chairman, Mandan, Hidatsa & Arikara Nation

### ***Letters responding to Tex "Red Tipped Arrow" Halls' letter***

Dear Ken,

I would like to thank Lauren Donovan for her excellent article in the Bismarck Tribune's March 9<sup>th</sup> edition entitled, "*Adrift in a flood of work, Native companies say fronts are an epidemic*". I thought the article was very well written and provided a fair and balanced approach to "fronting" on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation (the "FBIR"). I also read Chairman Tex Hall's response letter regarding the article and wanted to take this opportunity to address some of my concerns to said response, as follows:

Chairman Hall's letter starts out by asserting that Ms. Donovan's article is based on "countless assumptions and inaccuracies" so he was compelled to respond. When I read Chairman Hall's opinion I was surprised he didn't clearly reveal the assumptions and inaccuracies to which he was referring too. The only statement Chairman Hall appears to challenge is whether there are "fronts" on the FBIR. The

basis for this vague challenge appears to stem from the fact no fronts were named in the article. Obviously this is very poor reasoning in support of claims of inaccurate reporting. I believe it's reasonable to conclude that Chairman Hall turns a blind eye to fronting and refuses to enforce our TERO Ordinance because he supports fronting.

Having said this, I believe I need to be clear in stating I am not saying our Chairman is fronting. It is probably just a coincidence that fronting became acceptable after the Chairman took office. Furthermore, I want to commend Chairman Hall for being able to run the Three Affiliated Tribes on a day to day basis while also running his company, Maheshu Energy, LLC ("Maheshu") which is involved in trucking operations, building oilfield locations, pipe sales, drilling fluid services as well as permitting and leasing minerals and right-of-ways to various lease operators on the FBIR. My company provides some of the same services as the Chairman's company and I have approximately 80 employees. There is absolutely no way I could run my company and the Tribe too and I often wonder how our Chairman does it.

Chairman Hall's further contends his "overriding goal has been to fight for our people" and that he would "like to see every single member of our Tribe who wants to work or own a business succeed." I question Chairman Hall's sincerity regarding this statement given that in 2011 and 2012 the Tribe gave out contracts to water our roads to abate dust to two non-Indian companies. In 2011, the work was given to a non-Indian company without entertaining any bids. In 2012, the dust control work was given (without bidding) to a different non-Indian company by the name of Blackstone, LLC. I am not sure what the non-Indian company was paid in 2011, but Blackstone, LLC was paid over \$570,000 to water our roads in 2012. If our Chairman really desires to see our Indian-owned companies succeed, wouldn't he make sure that the contracts for this work went to a native company as required by our TERO laws?

One could speculate that this could have very well been an oversight by the Chairman; however this was not the case. I questioned the Chairman's business relationship with Blackstone at a certain Tribal Council meeting in January of 2012. The Chairman Hall specifically told me that his business relationship with Blackstone was none of my business. Thus, the Chairman's refusal to be transparent and candid about his relationship with Blackstone prior to the award of the contract for dust control in 2012 causes me to conclude that Blackstone was destined to get that contract instead of a Native owned company.

My fellow Native-owned companies and I have gone to the Tribal Council and offered a solution to the problems created by excessive fronting. The alternative solution presented was simple – to pass a resolution that gave an absolute preference in contracting for work to equipment owned and operated by 100% native companies. This proposed solution adhered to the TERO Laws and gave credence to Chairman's proclaimed resolution to "see every single member . . . [that] own[s] a business succeed." Not only did the Chairman not support this alternative solution he also failed to offer a separation solution to the issues created by excessive fronting. Once again, I must regrettably conclude that the Chairman is insincere in his statements and he does not want to see all of us succeed.

Chairman Hall's letter berates Ms. Donovan for not divulging in her article all of the Tribal laws and ordinances. In my humble opinion, the mentioning of all of our Tribal laws and ordinances was not

pertinent to the article. Having said this, one ordinance in particular was pertinent to this article – our Tribe’s ethics ordinance. The ethics ordinance is the cornerstone to our transparency when conducting business on our Reservation. More specifically, the ethics ordinance specifically prohibits members of our Tribal Council from contracting with lease operators. I personally brought this to the Chairman’s attention in a Tribal Council meeting shortly after he took office. The Chairman had the Tribe compensate a law firm over \$21,000.00 for a legal opinion that the ethics ordinance does not prohibit him from owning a business and contracting with lease operators. To date, the Chairman plays dual roles – one in which he wears the Maheshu hat and conducts business with the very companies that he regulates under his Chairman hat – a direct conflict of our Tribe’s ethics ordinance.

Another law that should be mentioned is the resolution recently passed by the Tribal Council in response to the legal opinion mentioned above. This law is more specific about prohibiting members of the Tribal Council from having an interest in a company contracting with lease operators on the FBIR. This resolution was passed on January 31, 2014. Our Chairman appears to ignore the resolution as he is still operating his company without consequence.

Most importantly, I would like to point out that the Chairman’s letter states:

“My job, as I see it is to make sure that my Administration and our Tribal agencies follow our Constitution and our laws. I believe that governments job is to ensure laws are followed.”

If the Chairman is sincere about this, he should obey our ethics ordinance and the resolution the Tribal Council recently passed. He should then enforce the Tribe’s TERO laws in a way that protects everyone’s interests.

Sincerely,  
Steven A. Kelly, President  
Trustland Oilfield Services, LLC

Dear Ken,

I read our Chairman Tex Hall’s response to fronting on the Fort Berthold Reservation. I own Rezco, LLC which is one of the legitimate 100% Indian owned companies that actually owns its own equipment and has employees. Unlike our Chairman, I am very opposed to fronting and I am writing to respond to the Chairman’s article.

First, I thought it was humorous that the Chairman took credit for all the jobs the oil boom has created on our Reservation. That’s like Noah taking credit for the flood. The opposite is actually true. The Chairman tried to nix the state-tribal tax agreement which makes it economical for oil companies to operate on our reservation. Chairman Levings and Councilman Ken Hall actually deserve the credit for creating opportunities for jobs and economic activity on our reservation.

The real creators of jobs are people like me that risk their own money, buy equipment and employ people. Rezco employees 40 people. Other legitimate Indian-owned companies such as Beaver Creek, J & J Rental, Trustland, Mann Energy, and Native Energy all employ as many or more. Our Chairman owns Maheshu Energy which provides a wide array of services to oil companies on our reservation. Since our Chairman is proud of all the jobs he has supposedly “created”, I would like him to share one more fact with us; how many people does Maheshu Energy actually employ Mr. Chairman? My guess is zero.

Our Chairman does not understand the purpose behind TERO and Indian preference so I will educate him. TERO is an “empowerment” program. It was never meant to be an “entitlement” or an “enablement” program which is what our Chairman has made TERO by letting people get compensated for nothing.

I do agree with the Chairman concerning his point about the Tribe and TERO not running our businesses for us. We don’t expect that. What we do expect is that our leaders will not undermine or twist our laws for their own benefit. Unfortunately, that’s too much to expect from our Chairman.

Deanna White Bear, President  
Rezco, LLC

## White Shield Prom night – Saturday, April 6



L to R: Elija Tree Top & Mya Dickins; Wyatt Felix & Mia Rios; Daniel Jarski & Selena Wilkinson; Lukas Hartman & Katie Price; Frankie Wilkinson & Shania White; Tate Connors & Sarianna LaMay; Wicahpi Gonzalez & Quincy Plenty Chief; Dante Brinelle & Myah Williams.

## Our environment: Birds, Animals and Plants

**By Dorreen Yellow Bird, editor**

Spring of the year, for me, starts with watching thousands of birds moving across the dark, restless sky. As I write, the prairie land near my house is surrounded by a white mist of falling snow. I can only see the top of the hills a few miles from here. There are birds flying in all directions or dropping down and settling then rising into the sky again.

It's these aviary moments that makes me want to draw deep, clean breathes. I know it's the beginning of warm summer days, awesome thunderstorms and the sweet fragrance of blooming wild fruit trees.

Birds are the harbingers of new beginnings. They have actual patterns that indicate their styles of life such as Canada geese, their great "V" patterns; the swarms of snow geese, black birds, sparrows and so on. It is as if the Creator sent them to announce spring.

We are in a migration time in North Dakota, and there is one group that is an extraordinary visitor among the migrating birds – Whooping Cranes. Fortunately for us, they cross over our reservation prairie but many of us never see them. I've never seen one; although there are times I think when I see a great specter in the sky that might be a Whooping Crane.

The Whooping Crane is a ghost back from extinction. It is the tallest bird in North America standing up to 5 ft. tall with the wingspan of 7 1/2 feet. That is a giant! An adult Whooping Crane is white with a red crown and a long, dark, pointed bill. It has black tipped wings. Immature Whooping Cranes are cinnamon brown. While in flight, their long necks are kept straight and their long dark legs trail behind. They have a distinctive call and a crane pair will, in unison, have very rhythmic and impressive call.

Sadly their homelands and hunting areas were devastated which nearly erased them from the earth. The tireless efforts of conservationists have helped Whooping Cranes survive.

They once number about 10,000, but by 1938, when conservation efforts begin, they numbered only 15 adults. Today there are about 600 both in the wild and captured groups. You can see by the map below that their migration path crosses ND. Look to the sky, perhaps you'll see that white, giant. And please let me know if you do see one.



~ April 2014 ~							May ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1	2	3	4	5 White Shield PROM night	
6	7 UND TIMEOUT	8 UND TIMEOUT	9 UND TIMEOUT	10 UND TIMEOUT TAT tribal business council meeting. 10:00	11 UND Wicipi	12 UND Wicipi	
13 UND Wicipi Palm Sunday	14 Ft Berthold Com. Enterprise brd Mting STAFF MEETING 10:00 complex	15	16	17	18 Good Friday 	19	
20 EASTER SUNDAY 	21 Language Classes at Culture Center. 4-5 pm	22	23 Segment Update 6:30 Complex	24	25	26	
27	28	29	30	Notes:			

More Calendars: [May 2014](#), [Jun 2014](#), [Jul 2014](#)



**Elders birthdays in April:** Dolly Hopkins, 12th; Connie Howling Wolf 12th; Howard Wilkinson, 13th; Wayne Perkins 14<sup>th</sup>; Gerry White 25<sup>th</sup>; Karen Mullock, 28<sup>th</sup>.

**RTC is extending HIGH SPEED INTERNET SERVICE TO THE WHITE SHIELD AREA. The service, however, will not be extended unless there is a large number of people requesting the service.**

**Some of the services provided are: better television, high speed Internet, and phone service.**

**Fred Fox, Segment Representative, would like anyone who would like the service to contact RTC and let them know. He said that all elders who wish to have the service will have the Internet paid for by the tribe because it is a connection to telemedicine. “ Soon we will have, Dr. Raising Sun, on staff at White Shield five days a week,” said Fox. This will give elders a connection to the doctor even if they cannot go into the White Shield clinic. There are times, especially during the winter, when it’s not possible to go to the clinic. The service will provide a secondary source for that service, he added.**

**If you want the service, the phone will cost \$30 a month (which you must have to get service) and the Internet will cost \$50 a month.**

**RTC has guidelines for low income which is this: All elders who are signed up will get the free Internet but must have the monthly \$30 for the phone. That cost, said RTC’s Lisa, can be waived if you are low income. According to the Elder Representative, most of the elders fit in that category. Low income is determined by several factors, one is how many people you have in your household. There will be someone around the area to hand out applications or you can go to the Elder Office or Complex and pick one up.**

**If you have questions about the program call RTC at 701-862-3115 and ask for service.**