



QUECHAN NEWS

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AT THE FORT YUMA QUECHAN NATION IT'S POW WOW TIME!

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**Items Of Special Interest
To Tribe Members**



Look For This Symbol

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Photo
Courtesy of The
Strong Hearts
Native Society

and celebration.

For the past couple of months, our young people have been hard at work, learning the songs of their grandfathers and grandmothers, contacting various groups, and arranging for a full three days of fun and cultural immersion.

Now, we will gather together with our native cousins and visitors from around the world in sharing and instruction.

Since those who have come great distances need time to find their places and set up their temporary homes on the Pow Wow Grounds, the actual start of events gets underway Friday evening just about sundown. The

WELCOME ONE AND ALL!

Friday, March 2nd marks the start of the 27th Annual Strong Hearts Native Society Pow Wow here at Fort Yuma, with elders, dancers and drum groups representing many nations gathering at the San Pasqual Football Field for three days of singing

first event will be a traditional Ribbon Dress and Gourd Singing Contest, which begins at 6:00 PM. Gourd Singing began as a way of recognizing our veterans at the end of World War II, and although it is not strictly a part of the Pow Wow, it is always a welcome addition at any

gathering of native warriors.

Visitors will be sure to enjoy watching the gathering of nations here at Fort Yuma, as the invited guests will be arriving and setting up camp at San Pasqual High School throughout the day. Once everyone is in place and the Gourd Singing is finished, the fires will be lit as Quechan singing and dancing fills the night, for a traditional welcome.

Come Saturday morning, the actual Pow Wow begins with the Gourd Dance Contest, followed by the first Grand Entry of all participants at 1:00 PM. Prizes are awarded for the top five spots in all contests, with divisions such as Juniors (from ages 5 to 12), Teens (who are 13 to 17), Adults (18 and up) and those who compete as "Golden Age" participants. There will also be a special group for "Tiny Tots" under five, who want to dress up and get involved!

All of the dancers and singers who register for the competitions are invited to take part in the special barbecue dinner Saturday evening at 5:00, when registration closes. During the dinner, there will be a special Bird Singing Competition as entertainment. This is sure to be a crowd pleaser, since everyone competing will be gathered in one place at one time, eating and listening to the songs. Those who sing the Bird Songs will have to make a real impression to capture a prize here.

Once the dinner is over and the Bird Songs have been judged, it will be time to get up and work off a little of that meal as the Gourd Dancing begins anew. Scheduled to last for an hour, the Gourd Dance will then give way to another Grand Entry, lit by huge fires and the stadium lighting at San Pasqual field.

Those who feel they could have made a better impression at the first Grand Entry will take this chance to modify their dress or change into a better costume, or perhaps kick things up a notch in their attitudes.

Since a Pow Wow is a fluid event, with various dances and entries scheduled by the visiting Master of Ceremonies, everything that happens will be at the direction of our special guest, Joe Stands & Looks Back, of Kayenta, Arizona, a Sicangu Lakota. So be prepared for some flexibility in the times for these events, as he makes adjustments to be sure everyone gets their chance to make their best impression.

Sunday will be another full day, with Gourd Dancing starting off the day at 10:00 AM. and the final Grand Entry of all involved beginning at noon.

The final competition should be intense, as it is scheduled to last almost 5 hours. Once the judges get together to tally their scores, the top five in each category will be announced, and prizes will be awarded at 6:00 PM Sunday.

Pow Wow Etiquette For Visitors

The San Pasqual Strong Hearts Native Society and Fort Yuma Quechan Nation welcomes everyone to this year's 27th Annual Pow Wow.

While you enjoy the pageantry and ceremonies performed during this year's Pow Wow, watch for the clues that instruct a visitor on how to behave and show respect for what is taking place.

The Strong Hearts Native Society welcomes everyone, regardless of tribe, creed, race or

ethnicity. They just ask for your respect and understanding of the native traditions celebrated before you. As newcomers or returning guests to these colorful events, a bit of explanation may enhance your enjoyment and understanding of the various events.

There is a circular movement to most dances, which represents the circle of unity and the cycle of life. Dancers often follow the clockwise motion of the sun. Some of the regalia or orna-

ments of the costumes represent special events or the honors collected in a person's life, special religious traditions, or symbols rooted in legend. As such:

There are a number of important matters of respect that must be observed:

When the Eagle Staff is brought in during the ceremony everyone stands. Participants and visitors are asked to remain silent while the ceremony is

conducted. Photography is not permitted during this ceremony.

Respect must be shown should an eagle feather fall to the ground during dancing. Everything must stop until a proper Returning of the Feather has been performed.

Pointing with a finger, particularly the index finger, is considered impolite. It is best to indicate a person or direction by pursing the lips and pointing out

the subject with the eyes, or nod in the direction you wish to indicate. For the Lakota, indicating through a motion of a thumb or finger, while not preferred, is seen as more polite than pointing with the index finger, but *never* point towards a person.

While photography of singers and/or dancers is considered appropriate during a contest, be sure to ask their permission before taking a photograph of an individual participant.

Ah-Keel Dancers Harvest Celebration on March 10 This Year

Chris and Arlie Emerson have a long family history in making music. The first cousins both had parents that were members of the Quechan Indian Band, traveling the Imperial and Yuma County areas, marching at the lead in rodeo parades and taking them both along on appearances all over the southwest when they were kids.

Now in their forties, and with a traditional Quechan dance group of their own, they are bringing their own extended families along with them to Pow Wows, events and celebrations, to renew and recreate the sights, sounds and beliefs of their traditional upbringing.

As participants in this year's 27th Annual Strong Hearts Native Society Pow Wow, their 15 member group will be performing the Harvest Dances they specialize in, as a preview of the celebration they host here each spring. Held this year the week after the Pow Wow, the Ah Keel (Harvest) Celebration will once again gather in the empty field just below the north side of Indian Hill, between the Ft. Yuma Trailer Village and the Union Pacific Rail Road.

With scheduled guests like the Sherman Indian High Apache Crown Dancers, and the Pi Pah Singers, and an open invitation

to all bird singers and dancers to come and take part, the day long Ah Keel Celebration on March 10th will almost be a small Pow Wow of it's own. There will be a whole day of Indian dancing, arts, crafts and fireworks for sale, as well as loads of good food to eat. It *is* a Quechan party after all, so plenty of food for everyone is a given!

"It's an old tradition with the Quechan people" says Arlie, as they explain how they remember life on the reservation when they were children.

"You see for a long time they'd have different dances, like every weekend," continues Arlie, "at different peoples houses, and move them from house to house every weekend . . . as something to do to get people together and keep the culture alive. But that just died out" as they grew older.

So, in an effort to bring back the togetherness and family spirit they recall from their youth, they now perform the Harvest Dances that stretch back for hundreds of years. "We just want (everyone) to come and enjoy the songs, and enjoy the dancing" they say.

"We let the other people who come sing and dance first" at their celebration, "and we bring out our baskets of food and gifts

for the people, and we set them around the blankets around the sacred fire," says Arlie, in his preview of the coming Ah Keel celebration. "We have a sacred fire watcher who sits and watches over the fire and blesses it, and blesses the baskets, as well as blessing the grounds and the singers. And after we dance we go out and give the people who are there our baskets, because that's our gift to them" for taking part in the celebration.

The age old Ah Keel Celebration is a day set aside to give thanks and acknowledge the gifts and goodness of the Creator, and to recognize that we owe every good thing we have to him. "That day is set aside as us thanking everybody, and to give thanks to the Creator, for our lives and for the harvest," says Arlie.

It is a celebration they have performed many times, not only here locally, but where ever they've been as guests of other nations and cultures, creating a real feeling of healing and acceptance from other native peoples.

The harvest dance only began to be revived at the end of the 1930's, when the federal government and the BIA began to turn over more control to the Quechan themselves again. "All

these years we hadn't had it, and we wanted to do more than just go out and just dance for the public," says Arlie, "so we said let's do more with (the Harvest Dance)."

"We want to set this day aside for the Creator," says Chris, "and we want to bring people together, as a good occasion, so we figured that that's what we should revive. And now it's getting bigger, bigger, bigger every year."

"This is a real positive event, for all Quechan people" they say, "we want them to come out and be happy, and leave happy, when it's over."

While they're at the Pow Wow, you can help support them at their booth, where they will be selling fry bread and Indian white beans for a hot meal between events, and see their dances where they'll perform only outdoors, under the sky and stars, around a fire.

It's their dedication to finding the real meaning in all they do, and the happy feeling the want to generate in their dancing, that lead to their being invited to take part in the Snake Dance celebrations in northern New Mexico last August.

"We've learned how to mingle with other cultures and tribes" travelling the Pow Wow

circuit both with their parents as kids, and now as adults in the Ah Keel Dancers.

"So that's why we were invited up to Hopi country, because there were a lot of people that we knew, and that remembered us from the '70's, when we were kids" says Arlie. "And I have in-laws up there, I have niece" Chris continues the story, "and they had their Snake Dance on Saturday, and we were invited, and the next day they had us come in and dance right there in their snake dance plaza, and we were the first people of the outside to ever be invited and let dance there where they hold their Snake Dances!"

"We couldn't wear our shoes in the plaza, because it's a sacred spot where they dance with the snakes. They thought we'd think the sand would be hot on our feet, but the sand up there is not hot like the ground is here in the summer!" he laughs.

Their dedication has made the Quechan Ah Keel Celebration a well established institution once again. They'll begin setting up their own dance plaza and fire ring Thursday evening, March 8th, and may spend Friday night sleeping right there. The actual celebration begins at noon on March 10th, and may well last past midnight.

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QUECHAN NEWS

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Have a story idea, or an event you want covered?

QUECHAN NEWS is here to cover the special events and everyday lives of Quechan Tribe Members, and the issues that affect you in the world today. This newsletter is here to keep the lines of communication open, to expand opportunities, and uplift the Native Spirit of the San Pasqual Valley. Your ideas and input are welcome! Just call the QUECHAN NEWS office Monday through Friday at (760) 572-3912, or email your stories and story ideas to w.isbell@quechantribe.com. I'm looking forward to hearing from you!



Heritage & Culture

At The Ft. Yuma Artist's Marketplace Tony Soares Instructs Locals In Traditional Pottery Creation



The beginning steps of a Traditional Pot are shown in these photos, as Tony demonstrates for his class how it's done. Starting clockwise from the large photo on the left, he first lays a large sheet of clay over the bottom of an already finished pot to copy the curve of the bottom. Then, ropes of clay are turned out and added around the outer edge, on top of the new bottom piece.

The ropes are then carefully mashed into the edge of the sheet and followed around the edge, and lightly "spanked" into the edge with a small wooden paddle, continuing all the way around, gradually extending the edge and enlarging it.

Once he gets halfway down the original form, he'll set it out to dry, so it will hold the round bottom shape after he removes the new pot from the original. It is then turned over to continue adding more ropes of clay, as the walls are paddled into shape. The pot has to be dry enough to hold its form, without gravity flattening it out as he works it into its finished form.

Finally, the pot is seen next to a batch of locally gathered clay drying in the sun.



All Photos: William Isbell, QUECHAN NEWS

Artist Tony Soares, of Joshua Tree, California spent two weeks in February at the Fort Yuma Artists Marketplace teaching the basics of traditional pottery construction, as followed by the indigenous peoples of the lower Colorado and Gila River areas.

His interest in clay began at the age of seven, when his grandmother taught him the basics. Although he once used commercial clay, as a person interested in the finer points of traditional arts, he began seventeen years of experimentation to learn how to find, grind and perfect his own clay formulas, recreating a process now lost to many Native American tribes.

Although he brought some of his own clay with him (gathered in the Salton Sea area), he spent time with Victor Curran of the Artist's Marketplace searching the area for good deposits of local clay to be used in the classes here. They located large areas of dry clay soil along the hill-sides down the old Winterhaven

highway near Algodones, both along the railway and at the sides of the highway. Some of that soil was collected for use in the class.

Once finely ground using a metate Tony brought for clay preparation, it was mixed with water and worked to the proper consistency. The first few attempts to use it resulted in salts coming to the surface as the pots were drying, so the clay was further processed by mixing it in a large plastic bucket with clear water, to allow the salts to dissolve and float to the top. Repeatedly pouring off the water and then adding more water to the bucket allowed the salts to leach out of the mixture.

The local clay was then placed in a large sheet suspended from a framework, to let the remaining water drain off and evaporate away, until the clay was ready for use.

The clay is stored in large plastic bags, to keep it moist and ready for use.

Tony brought along some samples of his work, tools for working clay into shape, and a large photo book of Mojave pottery designs, for his class to use as inspiration for the work they would produce.

Some students wanted to make cooking and decorative pots, and some were determined to delve into the creation of anthropomorphic (human like) or animal shapes for their projects. A favorite design found in the book was an old Mojave pot with four spouts around the top half, with a human head at the very top. Quite a few copies of that particular design were in evidence once the finished items were ready for decoration and firing.

To start a more traditional water jug or cooking pot, small plaster forms were used to guide the students in giving their pots a curved bottom surface. A curved bottom is much more desirable a shape than a flat bottom, for two reasons:

First, native peoples had earthen floors, and created their pots without the use of a pottery wheel, forming their pots in soft sand pits. A rounded bottom will sit just fine in soft sand, and create a small depression that holds it up when filled, with no fear of it falling over.

The second reason a rounded bottom is desirable is that without a sharp edge where the pot sides meets the bottom surface, the pot will better take firing, and cracks are less likely to form without the sharp edges along the seams you see in modern factory ceramics. This is one more example of the intuitive design wisdom built into many native crafts.

To create the larger pots that the entire class could see from across the room, Tony uses an old trick many ancient people used in reproducing the same shapes over and over. He uses a large, finished pot to get the proper bottom shape.

As shown in the photos

above, a large sheet of clay is rolled out and brought to a constant thickness, and shaped like a huge pie crust, or a giant piece of fry bread. The original pot is then covered with a slick plastic shopping bag, and the new soft clay is laid over the upside down original, taking the same shape.

Ropes of clay are then coiled around the outside edges, and pushed into the wet clay by hand, followed by the application of the wooden shaping paddle. The clay is basically "spanked" into shape, as the outside edge of the new pot grows larger. Tony carefully watches his progress all the way around, being careful to maintain an even thickness in the wall of the pot as it grows.

Once he reaches the widest point at the center of the original pot, it's time to stop, since if he continued, he'd just be making a pot within a pot! At that time, the pots are set outdoors to dry.

Continued on page 7

STRONG HEARTS NATIVE SOCIETY

Works Hard To Provide a Total Pow Wow Experience

Joe Montague, the current President of The Strong Hearts Native Society at San Pasqual High School says "I think these Pow Wows are a real good way to get the whole community involved, in getting all of our traditional singers and traditional people to come together, to show other cultures what we do and how we do it."

After three years as an active member of Strong Hearts, with the experience of planning and putting on the past three Pow Wows at Fort Yuma, Joe is tasked with leading his fellow students through the seemingly endless maze of details that go into planning a big public gathering. In doing so, he says "It's more of a learning experience, and it brings everybody closer together."

"Being on the committee, I've learned more, and now I understand my culture more (in regards to) the traditional singers and dancers" he continues, "so I think everyone can go out there and learn something new,

learn more of our Native American heritage, as they continue the tradition of participating."

And learning is a big part of the preparation, with students gathering in a circle at Mr. Owl's class twice a week or more, to learn the old songs and receive insights and explanations of every word they will sing.

Guest instructors who have sat in on songs since they were young now pass on the knowledge they carry in their own hearts. Local elders like Preston Arrow Weed will not only sing them the songs planned for the Pow Wow, they will pass along what they know of the different dialects as well as the meanings of the words.

Part of the meaning is how the songs have been used to express history, to pass on traditions, and unify the members in the circle as they sing.



Joe Montague, a junior at San Pasqual High, is this year's Strong Hearts Native Society President.

There is still the opportunity for a little old fashioned native humor in the lessons as well.

When they began their introduction to Bird Songs this year, Faron Owl began by passing out the "gourd" rattles used to keep

the group in time as they beat out the rhythm of the song. Now made of tin cans decorated with designs punched through the can's exterior, the cans will hold either 100 date pits for the common higher sounding note, or 150 date pits for the fuller, deeper note as it's shaken.

But Mr. Owl passes around a rattle that has no pits, that makes no sound, and asks the students "Why would there be a rattle that makes no sound?"

His answer: "That's for the guy that has no rhythm!" They'll keep that rattle, with a hole punch design they all should be familiar with, to give to unknown guests who wish to join in, so if he messes up the beat, he can sing along and not upset their rhythm!

Once the new guy is seen to be able to match their beat, the singers can then use a short break in the program to trade

him a shaker "with a better sound", and he'll be none the wiser.

So, the humor and hard, repetitive practice work together, to get "The voice of your heart to come out" says Mr. Owl.

"It's fine to learn the songs phonetically, that's all well and good" he explains, "but it's learning to sing with feeling that's the hard part."

Which is why they spend so much time with the guest singers who know the language and speak it in their homes, to absorb the real meanings and textures of the music they will be performing, until every song becomes a part of them.

Whether they are directing traffic, manning the soda booth, answering visitors questions or helping with the pay-outs at the conclusion of the Pow Wow, as you watch the Strong Hearts go about their duties this weekend, think of all the work they've done, and be aware that you're probably witnessing only the final 5% of the work it takes!



Ana Hartt Villereal - Miss Quechan Nation 2006/2007

Sponsor of

Junior Girls Special Contest & Teen and Juniors Gourd Singing Contests

A senior at San Pasqual High School, 17 year old Ana Hartt Villereal was crowned the 2006/2007 Miss Quechan Nation in September of last year. As an enrolled member of the Quechan Nation, she is also proud of her Hopi and Kumeyaa roots, and is proud of her traditional upbringing.

She began travelling with her extended family at the age of two to Pow Wows and various celebrations, not only to southwestern states such as California, Nevada, Utah and New Mexico, but she's been as far as North and South Dakota to sing and dance the Indian way. Ana dances in a Jingle Dress and Fancy Shawl Dress, and shares Quechan Bird Songs wherever she goes.

While attending San Pasqual High, Ana not only served as an active head council member of

the Strong Hearts Native Society, she also played on the girls basketball and softball teams.

She will graduate this June, and hopes to attend Gross Mont College in El Cajon California in the fall. Of course, if you've ever seen her at public gatherings, working with small children and sharing her love of native culture, you'll know why her major fields of study will be Native American History and Child Development.

Once she completes her college education, Ana says "I plan to put together my own school or program, to teach the beauty and knowledge of our Native American Culture to children."

As a member of the Strong Hearts Native Society (which organizes and sponsors the Fort Yuma Pow Wow each spring), she also says that her "hope and prayer (is that) our respecting

elders will continue to share our beautiful tradition with our visitors and (youth). Together we can preserve our traditions for the next generation."

Her own special part in this weekend's festivities will be getting the Juniors Girls Special Dance Contests together, in all categories, as well as the Juniors Gourd Singing Contests.

A lot of work goes into putting on a Pow Wow, and Ana has been right in the middle of it all, helping to get publicity materials and programs put together, gathering costumes, learning new songs and practicing her dance steps, as well as dressing up and posing for publicity photos. In the midst of all that, she had to take part in the Silver Spur Rodeo parade with her fellow princess, Heather Medart, and represent the Quechan Nation right at the peak of Pow

Wow planning season. Through it all, she's kept her usual, smiling, sunny outlook on life, and is never heard to complain about the constant activity the title of Miss Quechan Nation requires.

At least being a host of the Pow Wow means she won't have the added pressure of being in the midst of the competition this weekend. She's just looking forward to being available all weekend, to represent the Quechan, and see the sights, listen to the beat of the drums, hear the singing and laughter, and watch the colorful parade of native history come alive in costume and dancing.

Ana wants to thank her mother and grandmother, and all of her close friends who have stuck by her and supported her with love, and hopes all of our visitors have a safe journey home after the Pow Wow.

Ana enjoys public speaking and native songs and dance in helping to spread her love of the Quechan way of life.

POW WOW FLIN

All Photos
Courtesy of
The Strong
Hearts Native
Society

Andre Polk-Estrada of The Strong Hearts Native Society practices his dance moves for this week's 27th Annual Pow Wow (above) in anticipation of joining in as a part of the colorful scenes surrounding him on this page. Check the descriptions of the various dances and costumes on the back cover of this issue and see if you can tell which event is being presented in each photo on this page.



Heather Medart - Miss Native San Pasqual 2006/2007 Sponsor of Adult Dance Team Contest & Tiny Tots Special Dance Contest

Our San Pasqual High Princess says she's been a part of Pow Wows every since she can remember, dressing up and participating in the Round Dance on Friday nights since she was at least eight. "Anybody can participate in that dance, you know" she says, "you don't have to be a Jingle Dress Dancer or a Fancy Shell Dancer, you just come out and participate, so used to enter into those dances."

At that tender age, though, she admits "It was pretty overwhelming" to be a part of a Pow Wow, but as she grew older and more comfortable with the crowds and excitement, she began to take part in the Bird Singing as well.

In Bird Singing, the girls will get together and spread their shawls as they dance, mimicking birds wings as they move,

with the different colors of ribbons on their dresses showing the different colors of a birds plumage, as a representation of beauty.

"The girls will go out and challenge the boys in their dance, and the boys will go out and try to lure the girls in" she says. "They will then move their hands in an arc, seed spreading motion, as if they are spreading their seeds." Although Heather is still unsure of the full history and meaning of the Bird Song Dance, she's sure it's all about courtship.

With a family background-linked to many tribes, she says that she's always been a part of the Pow Wow, but laughingly admits she never actually danced in competition "For the simple fact that I don't want to embarrass myself!"

Still, her Quechan/Mojave/

Chemehuevi/Maricopa background gives her extra incentive to really watch the way the various tribes bring their own interpretive flavor to a common theme in each dance.

On Friday night, Heather will be on hand to introduce herself to the crowd and sponsor the Tiny Tots Dance Contest. That event will take place about 6:30 or 7:00 PM, since "I don't want the little kids out there too late. . . It gets cold and they start getting restless, and they'll have to get to bed."

Part of her official duties will be to act as a representative for the entire tribe, so together with the other Quechan Royalty on hand, she will be introducing herself formally at the beginning of various events "two or three times a day." When not required to be front and center, she will also be helping out

where ever she's needed, as a member of the Strong Hearts Native Society.

In setting up for both the Tiny Tots and Adult Team Dance Events, Heather was charged with finding the money and arranging the logistics of each event, visiting with people to secure the funds needed for a successful event, as well as registering the entrants.

Heather decided her athletic ability was an asset she could put to use in her last stretch of fund raising, and decided that she would hold her own Bike-A-Thon to collect the final amount needed. So she gathered together over 30 people willing to sponsor her, and spent a day in January riding 30 miles while her sponsors kept track of the miles covered. The distance was enough for the last \$600 she needed for the Pow Wow.



Heather has been attending Pow Wows since she danced the Round Dance at age 8.

Life on The Move Leads To Job at Diabetes Project

Deborah Tourtillott has lived a life of constant change, moving from Ft. Yuma to Utah, on to Minnesota and back home again. She's attended public school at San Pasqual, a boarding school in the mountains outside of Salt Lake City and gotten her first professional training in the frozen north of the continental United States. She hopes to complete her latest health care certification through continuing education both on-the-job and at Central Arizona College later this year. Yet, through all of the changes in location, home life and career, the thing that she's loved most, and has remained a constant in her life, is the love of her people.

Although she was raised here at Fort Yuma and attended San Pasqual Elementary School, Deborah's adult education began in Brigham City, Utah, where she was enrolled in the Inter-mountain/Intertribal Boarding School in her teen years. The co-ed school is located in the mountainous, peach orchard country about an hour outside of Salt Lake City, and provided Deborah with her first taste of the opportunities of a the larger world. Although she spent Christmas and her summers back home at

Ft. Yuma, she was soon married and relocated to Eagan, Minnesota with her new husband.

While in that Saint Paul suburb, she began her professional life as a manager for One Hour Martinizing, circulating among six stores in the area. The training allowed her to stay in that position for the six years of her life in Minnesota, before moving back home, where she quickly found a place as a CHR for the Quechan Tribe at Fort Yuma. In order to do that job, she was sent to Rapid City, S.D. to receive another three weeks of intensive training to be fully certified.

But as her family grew and she looked around for a little better job making more money, the best available opportunities seemed to be those with Paradise Casino.

For a time her career in health care would take a breather, as Deborah found employment for over five years at the casino in Security. She kept up on things,

however, and was ready to apply when a new Health Aide position at the Quechan Special Diabetes Project opened up about six years ago. Her previous experience and training as a Certified Healthcare Representative was just what she needed

of this year.

"The first thing we do, is we talk about diet" she says, when a new client arrives at the Diabetes Project. "When we talk about diet, we talk about what they eat, and the amount," since it is all about adopting an entirely new way of thinking about nutrition and health.

"We have recipe books they can copy recipes out of, or that they can borrow if they check them out. We also have baking classes, so if want your sweets you can have them, because we teach you how to use Splenda, instead of sugar, when you bake."

And since diet is the first step, "I've had people see me in the grocery store and say 'Oh, no! It's the diabetes lady!' and try to hide their shopping cart!" she laughs.

"But once we talk about their diet, then we talk about how to monitor themselves, and keep track of their blood sugar. All of the meters now come with a memory, and they will keep track

of the past 100 checks for you, and that's important" she says, "because we have a computer program here, so if they bring in their meter, I can hook it up to my computer and print out a chart of when they have their ups and downs, so they can learn when these occur, and help to keep it under control."

She keeps in close touch with Deborah Drummel, the IHS Dietician, as well as the doctors who make referrals, to keep up with everything she needs to know to help her clients stay healthy.

"But basically, anyone who needs us can call us, and we'll help provide anything thing we can for them" she says.

Meters, testing supplies, recipes, diabetic socks (to improve circulation) and exercise programs are all part of the service at the Diabetes Project. "Sometimes, all they might need is someone to come in and talk to."

"I've never been accused of being shy!" says Deborah "and I love my community, my Quechan people. If they just want to come in and talk, I'm there for them, 'cause sometimes, it can be tough."

After a life on the move, it seems that she has found her place at the Diabetes Wellness Center!



Deborah Tourtillott truly enjoys the time she spends visiting with her clients and providing them with a friendly ear to hear their concerns.

QUECHAN NEWS Photo by William Isbell

to move into her current position as a one-on-one "counselor" to clients of the Diabetes Prevention Project.

With the testing on only one more book to complete, she hopes to be certified as a Diabetes Prevention Aide by the end

First Annual Cultural and Health Youth Conference Set For April 3rd - 5th at Yuma Civic Center

Since late December last year, Fort Yuma's Alcohol Drug Awareness and Prevention Program has been holding a series of planning meetings with other agencies and interested parties on the reservation in preparation for our first annual Youth Conference, to be held the first week of April. Recent meetings have begun to "hammer out" the subjects to be presented at the conference, which will concentrate on both cultural awareness for native youth and health education.

At least five separate sessions will be presented over the two and a half day conference, with HIV/AIDS, alcohol and drug education and the Quechan language among the topics.

But don't expect a boring "sit

down and listen as we tell you how it is" style of presentations at this conference! The presenters plan to include role playing, art creation and games as part of their instructional materials, as well as offering incentives for students such as Yuma County Fair Tickets (which will be also in town through the weekend after the Conference), I-Pods, store gift cards and other fun giveaways.

The first day of the conference, students will be asked to register at the Yuma Civic and Convention Center between 10:00AM and noon, with opening ceremonies to begin at one that afternoon. Singers and native dancing will open the conference, followed by guest speakers and an opening prayer.

Groups will then be allowed to break up and attend various sessions, depending on their interests. The first days work sessions should conclude by 4:30PM, with a talent show and social get together scheduled to follow.

On Wednesday, April 4th, a full day of activities are planned, beginning with a free on-site breakfast at 9:00AM, with the actual event kicking off with Reynolds Nejo, the Commander of the Gila River Police Department speaking. Cmdr. Nejo is a well known inspirational speaker, with an important message for our youth that covers peer pressure, right and wrong, and enduring values.

Three more training and education sessions will be held

after lunch on Wednesday afternoon, followed by a dinner and Cultural Awareness Night, featuring Tribal Royalty and the Strong Hearts Native Society, with singing and dancing.

The last day (which ends at noon), another breakfast will be held, followed by an over view of the conference, when the adults tell the youth what they hope they've accomplished, and the students are given time to respond and tell the organizers what they liked, what they felt did not go over as well as hoped, and what they'd like to see in future native youth conferences held by the Quechan.

There will also be a raffle for the prizes prior to the closing prayer and dismissal.

Students and other attendees

from out of town will be able to book rooms at the Ramada Inn Chilton Conference Center at a special rate when they reserve their rooms as a part of the "Quechan Tribe Youth Conference".

With planning well under way, there are still items needed to be worked out over the 8 weeks between now and the first week in April, such as donations for food and prizes. Additional speakers and educators who'd like to make presentations are also welcome to get involved, since there is still time to adjust the schedule and add some really fun and educational presentations to the program.

If you'd like to help, contact Mary Jones or Birdian Parker at ADAPP: (760)572-0232.



Imperial Valley College

Spring Continuing Education Classes

At The Johnson O'Malley Indian Education Building Number 5
Quechan Education Complex - 628 Picacho Road - Winterhaven, Ca.

The following classes will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays:

February 13 to March 8, 2007

Basic Computer Literacy (CIS100: Class is \$35/Book is \$25) - 9:45 AM to Noon

Excel I (CIS124: Class is \$35/Books for I and II are \$25) - 1:00 PM to 3:15 PM**

March 13 to April 5, 2007

Word I (CIS120: Class is \$35/Books for I and II are \$25) - 9:45 AM to Noon**

Excel II (CIS125: Class is \$20) - 1:00 PM to 3:15 PM

April 17 to May 10, 2007

Word II (CIS125: Class is \$20) - 9:45 AM to Noon

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Basic Computer Literacy (CIS100) - 1 Unit

A course designed for students with little or no computer experience. The course includes a review of computer terminology, system components and software applications typically used on a personal computer system. In a hands-on environment, the student will learn the basic operating system and user interface commands, the basic features in word processing programs, and basic concepts for using Internet resources.

Microsoft Word I (CIS120) - 1 Unit

Hands-on practice with the *Microsoft Word* word processing software in a Windows environment. The course is designed for beginners and will focus on document creation including multi-page documents; basic editing and text enhancements; line and page formatting; cut, copy and paste, spell check and thesaurus.

Microsoft Word II (CIS121) - 1 Unit

(Recommended preparation: CIS120)

Hands-on practice with the *Microsoft Word* word processing software in a Windows environment. The course is a continuation of CIS 120 (Microsoft Word I) and will focus on editing and formatting features including multiple windows and documents; managing files, tables, merge, labels, sorting and graphics.

Excel I (CIS124) - 1 Unit

A beginning course in the creation and use of spreadsheet applications including templates, spreadsheets and beginning graphic presentations.

Excel II (CIS125) - 1 Unit

A sequence to the CIS 124 course. This course develops expertise in worksheet applications, teaches the use of Windows based graphics presentations, develops data base use and includes macros.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Imperial Valley College personnel will be present on the first days of each class to register students for the classes. Please bring your Drivers License that shows your physical address, to verify residency. If your Drivers License shows a P.O. Box, please bring a utility bill as well. We will also need your Social Security number (just the number, not the actual card).

There is a course fee of \$35 for the first class you take, and \$20 for each subsequent class. The cost for textbooks is approximately \$25. At this time, course fees and textbook costs do not have to be paid at the time of registration. The Quechan Education Complex and Imperial Valley College can work with programs to make arrangements for payments for their employees.

You can also register on-line at: www.imperial.edu. Call Rebecca for more information.

If you would like to register in advance, stop by

**The Quechan Education Complex Administration Office
and we will assist you in your registration.**

Questions? Call Rebecca Ramirez at (760)572-3100

Traditional Pottery Class

Continued From Page 3



Student Vivian Menta applies a decorative design of natural iron oxide to her project prior to firing. Photo: William Isbell, QUECHAN NEWS

"You have to give them time to dry, to let the clay get hard enough to hold its shape, so when you flip it over to get started on the top half, it doesn't flatten out on you when gravity takes over," explains Tony.

At this time of year, with the cooler weather and humid air right off the river on the hill, Tony was able to leave the pot he was working on outside for almost an hour before checking on it, while he painted a few small animal effigies. In the summer, of course, he'd sit down right beside it and check on its' condition every few minutes while it sets up to the proper stiffness for further work.

The new pot can then be finished by adding more coils and "spanking" the clay into shape, using an anvil stone on the inside and the wooden paddle on the outside. The anvil stone is any smooth stone, like the nice flat discs of stone you find in a stream bank, which is moved around along the inside of the surface being worked, for the paddle to strike against through the clay being added.

In this particular case, Tony did not make an exact duplicate of the original gourd shaped pot, with its' tapering, narrow neck. Instead, he used the size and curve of the bottom half of the original pot to create a cooking pot by continuing the walls of the vessel straight up about 8 more inches from the bottom half, and then flaring out the lip at the edge a little.

Meanwhile, the students were busily going about putting the finishing touches into their projects. Some made small pottery vessels in the flattened Hopi and Pima styles, and some made

their own whimsical humanlike and animal figures. Frogs, big-horn sheep and deer were especially popular, as was the fat little Mojave man with the four spouts at the top.

Once everything was decorated to the classes' satisfaction, it was time to fire their creations, and make them permanent.

A fire pit was dug in the soft gravelly soil of the sand box area near the playground at Marketplace, and a large pile of split pine was ignited. Buckets of water were on hand to keep things under control if the wind came up. Once it had all burned down to a nice thick layer of coals, the coals were evenly spread out across the bottom of the pit. The new creations were carefully placed on the coals on cookie sheets, and a series of small split logs were arranged just inside the bank of soil that ringed the fire pit and set on fire.

It was all just a matter of waiting at that point. A part of the class is taken up in explaining how you determine the length of time to fire your pottery, to be sure it comes out as a dry and permanent creation of stone, rather than the malleable clay it once was. For that, you will either have to perform your own experiments, or attend the next class on native pottery at the Artist's Market!

In the meantime, you can see examples of Tony's work not only here at the Ft. Yuma Artist's Marketplace, you can also find it in the permanent collection at the Palm Springs Museum and at the Taquitz Canyon Museum nearby.

For possible future classes, call The Artist's Marketplace at: (760) 572-4413.

POW WOW DANCES

Descriptions, Origins and What To Watch For As You Attend the Gathering

The Men's Northern Traditional Dance is performed wearing bustles of long eagle feathers worn in bustles at the dancer's waist. In the fancy dance version, brightly colored bustles are also often worn at the shoulders as well.

The costumes are often passed down from generation to generation, since this is a time for men to dance in the ways of their fathers and grandfathers.

In this and similar dances, a red eagle feather in the costume may signify a veteran's injury received in battle.

Spectators should stand and remove their hats during this dance, out of respect for the abundance of eagle feathers on display.

In the Southern Traditional Dance men usually wear buckskin or cotton pants with a shirt and breastplate of threaded bones and beads, which reaches to the waist or knees. A comb like headdress known as a roach is worn, made of porcupine guard hair and the hair of a deer tail.

The Fancy Dance is per-

formed in color coordinated costumes, as a team. Small feather bustles on the back and on the arms are worn to add to the energetic nature of this youthful competition, the most athletic of the Pow Wow Dances.

A competition may develop between the singers and dancers, with "trick songs" being sung that end unexpectedly. Dancers must end on the last beat of the song, and dancing past that last beat can be the difference between winning and losing!

The Kiowa Gourd Dance was originally performed by the respected front line warriors of a tribe, and is now performed by those with military service or who have made exceptional accomplishments in their lives.

The men wear red and blue blankets as commemoration of their past wars - red for battles against the Spanish, blue for the wars against the U.S. Cavalry. As a war dance, this is not included as a competition, but is performed separately from the other dances.

The Women's Jingle Dress

Dance is in commemoration of a dream vision received by an old Chippewa man on his death bed. He dreamed of his daughter and three friends dancing in dresses covered in metal cones that made a jingle sound as they moved. When he made a miraculous recovery from his illness, he instructed his daughter and her friends how to make the dresses based on the spirit's instructions, since he loved the sights and sounds of his dream. The metal cones used on these dresses have traditionally been made of the rolled metal lids of snuff boxes.

The Fancy Shawl Dance is a display of elaborately beaded dresses, moccasins and leggings, complemented with beautifully embroidered long fringed shawls. To show the brilliantly colored outfits to full effect, this dance features a great deal of spirited prancing and twirling movement.

The Traditional Dance is a stately dance of slow movement, or almost no movement, while making a bouncing step,

rythmically dipping and swaying to the beat of

a drum, as a kind of Native Waltz step. Dresses of buckskin, wool or other heavy materials are heavily decorated with beading, quill work, bone, elk teeth or antlers or shell. As an almost formal dance, the colors of the outfits worn will be a bit more subdued than those worn for the other dances at the Pow Wow.



Photo
Courtesy of The
Strong Hearts
Native Society

POW WOW IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

Pow Wows are special occasions for Native American families. They started long ago as the native people began to feel their culture slipping away. In the late 1800's and early 1900's Indians were not allowed to have dances.

Some people in government thought the dances were organized to resist federal forces. These people did not realize that the dances are held only to thank the Creator for the earth and the gifts we have received, or to ask for special favors. In the 1960's, officials realized that these dances and traditions were not dangerous, only important to Native Americans. Because natives can now hold these Pow

Wows, a deep pride in our culture and tradition is returning.

Pow Wows are a lot more than just a bunch of people gathering together to dance in elaborate costumes, plumage, and beadwork. They are big social events -- a time to schmooze and catch up on the past year with friends from different tribes.

Many native families spend their entire summers traveling from one powwow to another. This powwow traveling season is referred to as the "Pow Wow Trail". Many of these people are not only dancers and cowboys, but arts and crafts vendors who set-up booths to sell their

own handicrafts or that of friends and family. These families and friends often travel with the dancers, drummers and singers to help operate the booths.

Some families will go "on the circuit" every year, as a way of making a living. Many large Pow Wows are held at different places every weekend from June until September. They travel to share native foods, beadwork, pottery, and other crafts. There are often rodeos and horse races as part of the summer events, and the summer trail

overlaps the rodeo circuit in much of the United States and Canada. While most come to participate in competitive dancing and singing, there are those who are in it for the athletic contest the rodeo portion offers.

Sometimes the dancers and drum groups compete for thousands of dollars in prizes, but because they must travel long distances they usually do not get rich.

All in all, it's a strenuous but interesting way to raise a family in the modern world!

Photo Courtesy of
The Strong Hearts Native Society



Remember: All Quechan Tribe Members are admitted FREE to the Pow Wow with a current, valid Tribal I.D. when entering through the Admissions Gate!