

Yvonne Iverson/Spilyay

A new walking path with exercise stations has been constructed at the Warm Springs Health and Wellness Center. The path was dedicated to veterans at the Annual Veterans Appreciation Luncheon, organized each Veterans Day by the Commissioned Corps Officers of the U.S. Public Health Service who work at the clinic. The paved path starts in the parking lot of the Health and Wellness Center and continues around the building just inside the fenced area. Along the path are multiple exercise stations with instructions on how to use them. "The path is open for the whole community to use," said Commissioned Corps Officer Juanita Simpson.

### MHS Football awards banquet at high school this Thursday

The Madras varsity football team awards banquet is at 7 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 29 in the Madras High School commons. Light refreshments will be provided. Parents are being asked to provide any pictures they have taken throughout the year for a recognition video. You are asked to e-mail them to: RWells@509j.net.

### Notah Begay Foundation releases obesity report

(AP) - A foundation backed by professional golfer Notah Begay III has identified New Mexico as "ground zero" for finding better ways to address obesity and diabetes in Native American children.

In a report released Monday, Begay's foundation pointed to New Mexico's large Native American population and what it describes as dramatic health and educational disparities. The foundation has spent the past year discussing with tribal leaders, health experts and others the challenges of dealing with obesity and diabetes. More than 250 stakeholders participated in the discussions.

The result is a set of recommendations that call for everything from awareness campaigns and more research to the strengthening of programs that promote language and traditional cultural values. The foundation's work was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and PNM Resources Inc.

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## News from Indian Country

### Ancient rock carvings stolen in Sierra Nevada

BISHOP, Calif. (AP) - Rock carvings that graced a sacred American Indian site in California's Sierra Nevada for thousands of years have fallen prey to modern thieves armed with power saws.

At least four petroglyphs—some 2 feet wide and located 15 feet above the ground—were hacked from lava cliffs in the Eastern Sierra, the Los Angeles Times reports Sunday.

Visitors to the area, known as Volcanic Tableland, discovered the theft and reported it to the federal Bureau of Land Management.

"This was the worst act of vandalism ever seen" on the 750,000 acres of public land administered by the BLM field office in Bishop, BLM archaeologist Greg Haverstock said.

The thieves must have used ladders, electric generators and power saws. In addition to the four carvings that were stolen, one was defaced with deep saw cuts on three sides, and another was removed but apparently broke during the theft and was left propped against a boulder near a visitor parking lot.

More than 3,500 years ago, Native Americans carved pictures of hunters, deer and other animals, and geometric and other designs into a half-mile-long volcanic escarpment. The images adorn hundreds of lava boulders.

The petroglyphs are probably worth only about \$500 to \$1,500 on the illegal art market but are priceless to American Indians, authorities said.

"We still use this sacred place as a kind of church to educate tribal members and children about our historical and spiritual connections," Paiute tribal historic preservation officer Raymond Andrews said.

"So, our tribal elders are appalled by what happened here."

Volunteers have stepped up surveillance at the site, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The BLM is offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to arrests.

A first-time felony conviction for damaging or removing petroglyphs can carry a one-year prison sentence and a \$20,000 fine.

### Tribal college program teaching Lakota language

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) - Red Bird, 61, is one of the remaining people in the world who can speak Lakota, an indigenous language spoken by Hunkpapa Sioux since time unknown.

He spends his days in a large airy room with green plants in the windows among 10 boys and girls, speaking to them only in the ancient language of their ancestors.

Outside the classroom door is a sign with the word "English" stamped out in a red circle.

Other than the English they jabber among themselves, these little ones hear

and speak Lakota with Red Bird and the three instructional aides in the room.

Red Bird speaks it fast and fluently since his own childhood on the Cheyenne Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The aides speak it slowly. They, too, are learning as they go.

The children speak it enthusiastically, aided with flash cards or art projects made with glue and cotton balls to learn words for rain and lightning. Their success wrapping their tongues around these new words is applauded and happiness shows on their faces when they get it right

It is an experimental program at Sitting Bull Community College in the Kids Kampus building on the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, which straddles the North Dakota-South Dakota border.

It is an interesting hybrid of specialized day care and a language immersion project. Lunch, playtime and a nap are part of the deal.

"The reason I came here is I want to save my language. It's precious to me. When there came a chance to teach, I jumped at this," Red Bird said.

He estimates maybe one-

third of the reservation is fluent in Lakota. The death of each elder diminishes that number; 10 years ago 80 percent were fluent, he said.

The Lakota language is well documented from the early work of missionaries and later revisions by linguistic experts and tribal members.

Red Bird participated in a Lakota dictionary project, a massive tome with entries both in Lakota to English and English to Lakota. He said he and other Lakota speakers regularly gather to add new words to make it a living, contemporary language.

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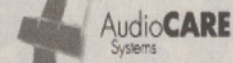
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