

BIA sends more officers to Pine Ridge

By Mary Garrigan
Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. — The costs associated with those extra 35 officers will be paid by the BIA with \$500,000 in emergency funds, according to Elmer Four Dance, Special Agent in Charge at the BIA District 1 office in Aberdeen. Four Dance said the 10 extra officers were dispatched to Pine Ridge on Tuesday. They came from Oklahoma or Billings, Mont., and are either BIA officers or policemen with federal commissions from other tribal police departments.

The BIA emergency funding is “above and beyond” the more than \$3.3 million in fiscal year 2008 contract funding that the BIA paid the Oglala Sioux Tribe in the past year to provide policing services on Pine Ridge. FY 2008 ends Sept. 30.

Native American tribes have the option under federal law to allow the BIA to manage all public safety services on their reservations, or they can contract with the BIA to operate their own police departments. In South Dakota, the Oglala Sioux and Rosebud Sioux tribes have tribally-run police departments. Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has a BIA-run police department.

OST President John Yellow Bird Steele has been critical of BIA funding levels as the cause of the current public safety crisis rocking the reservation. Nearly 30 police officers resigned or were relieved of duty following a scuffle that broke out between some members of the tribe’s executive board and its police department at an Aug. 12 meeting. In the wake of those staffing shortages, the BIA sent 25 officers from around the country to supplement the remaining tribal police force.

The BIA says those supplemental officers will stay until it determines that the tribe is able to adequately staff and run its own department, or until a decision is made to return control of the OST Department of Public Safety to BIA management.

During FY2008, the BIA provided a total of \$9,456,365 to fund all justice-related programs on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, Four Dance said. That total included \$3,335,726 for law enforcement services under a Public Law 638 contract with the tribe. That money pays for the Department of Public Safety expenses, which includes police officer salaries, dispatch services, 911 services and all costs associated with providing police services. That \$3.3 million includes a special appropriation of about \$475,000 for additional officers in 2008.

Four Dance said a review is underway to determine how the OST Department of Safety allocated its BIA law enforcement contract. At one point in 2008, the OST police force had 56 officers, but that number has continued to change over time, he said. Former and current public safety employees say the department has had as many as 67 police officers and as few as 46 within the last 12 months.

“We’re actually looking at that,” Four Dance said of an ongoing BIA review of OST public safety programs. “The bottom line, again with that, is that we’re going to determine where the money was spent. We’ll be taking a look at how those funds were allocated in 2008.”

In comparison, the Rapid City Police Department operated with a 2008 budget of \$11.6 million and 132 full-time equivalent employees.

The almost \$9.5 million expenditure for all criminal justice programs on Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in FY2008 also included:

- \$886,579 for criminal investigation programs that are managed by the BIA with input from the tribal police department.
- \$4,826,047 in detention-related corrections costs. That total includes \$2,523,171 in adult detention funds; \$492,719 in juvenile detention funds; and \$1,810,157 in detention facilities funding.
- \$1,137,013 for tribal court funding.

Santa Fe Indian Market featured many locals

By Ernie Bulow
For the Independent

SANTA FE — There was nothing tired or clichéd about the creative offerings of more than six hundred Indian artists at the 87th annual Santa Fe gathering, Aug. 23-24.

Native American art continues to reinvent itself, keeping a freshness and excitement that brings collectors back for more every year. Certainly one of the best venues for sampling what is new and fascinating is the annual Indian Market held each August in Santa Fe.

Zuni and Navajo from the Gallup area made a very strong showing at this year’s market as Window Rock artist Sheldon Harvey won Best in Show with an oil painting. He also took all the ribbons in oils and wood sculpture.

Chris Pruitt, a young Laguna/Apache metalsmith from Laguna Pueblo, won the Lupien Fellowship at the Wheelwright Museum this year, following in the footsteps of his brother Pat Pruitt, whose work in stainless steel garnered serious attention. Pat received a SWAIA fellowship this year as a promising new artist.

Chris Pruitt, 27, was already an overachiever before he came to jewelry work. In high school Pruitt commuted daily to Manzano High School in Albuquerque as well as holding down a job.

Working restaurants like Carrabas’ and the Convention Center, Pruitt became a full-fledged chef serving up specialties at places like Cow Creek Ranch, north of Pecos. His mentor in silversmithing, besides his brother, is the award winning Charlie Bird.

Jacob Morgan, a Navajo from Crownpoint, was a winner of the Museum’s Goodman Fellowship. Jacob, son of the famous silversmith Harry Morgan, is a sixth generation metal worker. He draws on traditional designs and techniques with a modern twist.

Morgan tried a number of



Ernie Bulow/For the Independent

Alicia Nelson, Navajo basket weaver from Teec Nos Pos, has been working in the medium for 12 years, but is a newcomer to the Santa Fe scene.

careers before he gave in to family tradition and moved back to Crownpoint. Trained as a carpenter, he worked as a locksmith for five years.

Another recipient of the Goodman award was Zuni Justin Cole Hustito, a cousin of last year’s winner, Silvester Hustito.

On the plaza, master Zuni bead worker Lorena Laahy unveiled another imaginative creation with her display of figures from Alice in Wonderland. Alice was joined by the white rabbit and a delightful Cheshire cat in mostly purple beads. Last year Lorena showed an elaborate Betty Boop, featured in this year’s Market magazine. The year before she exhibited an incredible Raggedy Ann and Andy, com-

pletely rendered in tiny seed beads.

Noreen Simplicio, another Zuni artist, had a nice showing of her trademark lizard and frog pots. Based on a traditional form, Noreen’s lizards have been refined over the years to the point they seem to scurry around the pot rim in a sinuous dance. They are delicate and slender and dynamic.

A familiar artist from Thoreau, Frank Salcido, temporarily relocated to Portland, Ore., displayed a



Ernie Bulow/For the Independent

Chris Pruitt, a young Laguna/Apache metalsmith from Laguna Pueblo, won the Lupien Fellowship at the Wheelwright Museum this year



Ernie Bulow/For the Independent

Jacob Morgan, a Navajo from Crownpoint, was a winner of the Museum’s Goodman Fellowship. Jacob, son of the famous silversmith Harry Morgan, is a sixth generation metal worker.

wonderful take on the tradition form of “ledger drawings” which were rendered on pages torn from trading post ledger books.

Salcido’s whimsical figures are



Ernie Bulow/For the Independent

A familiar artist from Thoreau, Frank Salcido, temporarily relocated to Portland, Ore., displayed a wonderful take on the tradition form of “ledger drawings”

Building green housing for Wisconsin’s tribes

By Anita Weier
Madison Capital Times

MADISON, Wis. — Imagine a house where an extended family could live comfortably -- grandmother, parents, children and maybe an uncle or aunt. And try making that house “green” -- one that would not harm the environment or waste energy.

Wisconsin’s First Nations are taking the lead in developing such houses for their members -- with a lot of help from the University of Wisconsin Madison and a local architect.

The idea emerged from Assistant Professor Sue Thering’s work with several Native American tribal groups that wanted affordable, energy-efficient houses.

At first, the plan was to provide housing that was simply green and affordable. But while working with the St. Croix Ojibwa, the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Superior Ojibwa and the Mole Lake Sokaogon Ojibwa to develop the plans, she learned that they also wanted housing where extended families could live together.

“Traditionally, Native American families have more than one generation living

together. Others call it overcrowding but we call it helping out our families,” explained Duane Emery, director of community development and housing for the St. Croix Ojibwa of Wisconsin.

“We want to push green codes or green principles in our design,” he added. “As Native Americans, we need to do this.”

The new project has its origins in an earlier partnership that Thering fostered between the tribes and Madison-based Design Coalition, which has earned national awards for green and affordable projects. Lou Host-Jablonski of Design Coalition and others began teaching green building techniques to builders in northern Wisconsin who will use them for new housing.

“We are training the three tribes -- St. Croix, Lac Courte Oreilles and Sokaogon -- in how to use the materials. They end up with two houses on the St. Croix land that they can refer back to and a group of local professionals who know how to build. We are training the trainers,” explained Thering, who works in UW-Madison’s Landscape Architecture Department and in community

development for UW-Extension.

Construction on two 1,400-square-foot houses on the St. Croix reservation near Hertel, Wis., is expected to be completed this fall using a combination of tribal casino revenues and grant money secured by the UW. Training on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation near Hayward and construction of a model house is scheduled for next spring. A site design and master plan also has been done with the Mole Lake tribe.

What will make the next phase of the partnership highly unusual and “rather historic,” Thering said, is its emphasis on multi-generational housing.

“It would be incredibly green: instead of five tiny houses there would be one large house with less impact on the environment,” she said.

Thering obtained a \$116,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Program, and Host-Jablonski has produced technical drawings for multi-generational homes after meeting with a steering committee from the three tribes to find out what they

wanted.

Existing government-issued housing is simply not adequate for the way the people have chosen to live, Host-Jablonski said. “A standard floor plan does not work. There are not enough bedrooms and the kitchen, dining room and living room are not large enough.”

He added that “in an extended family situation, the kitchen is always the center. You may have two to four adults in a kitchen preparing meals and the kids associated with those adults doing homework or needing to be nearby. The dining room needs to handle 12 to 20 people in an extended family situation, including guests. They need not only a bigger room but a bigger table and more chairs.”

Six to eight bedrooms are needed, he said, as well as facilities that meet the needs of different age groups. For instance, a home office, a workshop or craft area and a children’s space such as a combination nursery-playroom-recreation room become requirements.

The dream house the three tribes envisioned was not an apartment building but a

home. The two concept plans include one house of about 3,000 square feet in addition to a partially finished basement. The smaller home would be about 2,000 square feet plus a partially finished basement. The actual houses may differ somewhat from the plans, depending on the soil and slope and street location.

“That is actually cheaper, instead of two or three buildings on separate lots with water and sewer for this number of people. It is cheaper to build and heat and cool and light it. There is less exterior surface area,” Host-Jablonski pointed out.

The hope is to finish planning this year and to start construction of one or more homes next spring. Locations have not been determined.

In many ways, the goals of energy efficiency and cultural appropriateness dovetailed.

The energy-efficient homes would use 100 percent recycled roofing with recycled cellulose insulation, and interior materials would be durable and low-toxin, with as much recycled and reused products as possible. The windows would be high quality for energy efficiency.