

DEDICATED TO THE PROMOTION OF TOWNS COUNTY

OPINIONS & COMMENTARY

Navajo Men Celebrated 8/14

Why The Great Navajo Men Are Celebrated August 14th

Perhaps this is unrecognized American history which needs to be recognized and taught in schools. Being that our "r" word (racism) has been overused to the point it is effectively meaningless by political operatives, there are in fact certain races of victims who were treated with immense racist rage and murderous hatred.

Our many tribes of American Indians, one of which is being recognized here, actually volunteered, not with hatred, but dedication, courage, character, honesty, loyalty, integrity and love of America.

I refer to the hundreds of Navajos recruited from the vast Navajo Nation who served as Code Talkers for the U.S. Marine Corps, of which only three remain alive today: Peter MacDonald, Thomas H. Begay and John Kinsel, Sr. Among those great men was Samuel Sandoval, one of the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers who, during World War II, transmitted messages using a code based on his native language.

Sandoval died Friday, July 29, at a hospital in Shiprock, New Mexico. He was 98 and had 11 children. Those Code Talkers served with our outstanding Marines in every assault in the Pacific Theater of WWII.

These fine Americans, regardless of how they were treated in bygone history and OTHERS, used their unwritten language for communications, leaving the Japanese and/or any other enemy confused, thus providing an absolute secure network of communications for our military tactics and strategies between various units of Americans. The Navajo language could not be HACKED! These men were instrumental in freedom and liberty prevailing in WWII!

Sandoval was on Okinawa when he learned from another Navajo Code Talker that the Japanese had surrendered, and he relayed the message to higher-ups.

At the time of his death, Sandoval was reportedly looking forward to the Aug. 14 date for honoring the Navajo Code Talkers, and wanted to see a museum built near the Navajo Nation capital of Window Rock to honor the Code Talkers, according to NPR.

"Sam always said, 'I wanted my Navajo youngsters to learn, they need to know what we did and how this code was used and how it contributed to the world,'" Sandoval's wife Malula told news outlets July 30. "That the Navajo language was powerful and always to continue carrying our legacy."

Born in Nageezi near Chaco Culture National Historical Park in northwestern New Mexico, Sandoval enlisted in the Marines after attending a Methodist school where he was discouraged from speaking Navajo. It was there that Sandoval helped recruit other Navajos to serve as Code Talkers. Together, they expanded on words and an alphabet created by an original group of 29 Navajos.

Sandoval served in five combat tours and was honorably discharged in 1946, NPR said in its coverage of his passing. The Code Talkers had orders not to discuss their roles until their mission was finally declassified in 1968.

Ergo when thinking of and honoring our American history of those who defended freedom and liberty, not just for you and me in America, but for the entire globe, our United States Marine Corps should be at the top of your list, along with those supreme warriors of the Navajo Nation who came to our aid in one of the most deadly and dangerous eras in world history. On Aug. 14, 2022, perhaps with the irony of history past, remember the Navajo Code Talkers and Navajo Nation as one of our Lord's Blessings to mankind! -Semper Paratus

Letters To The Editor

Thinkin' Out Loud

Dear Editor,

In my life there have been comments made that would suggest a misunderstanding of what I was trying to share or what I was doing. Now, we have all had this happen to us and by us. We are all made of dust, what do you expect to happen?

Lord? We are destined to fail... "Yep, I knew what would happen when sin entered and My children got a hold of the knowledge of good and evil. They would run with it their own way. Many will still decide they no longer need ME."

Lord? I need to be polished when I speak; people won't listen if I share where I have fallen short. "I want you to speak out of your weakness, so I may be made strong."

Oh, no. Lord? That makes me vulnerable and an object for misunderstanding. "Remember Peter? I told him he would deny ME three times. He did and then he wept bitterly."

Yes Lord, I remember. "I left that in My book for a reason. So MY children who are called by My Name could relate to the fallen nature of dust. In My perfect time they would come with heads bowed and hearts broken to receive... My gifts, from My Hands. They would be restored and renewed to continue on the path to Home... with ME!"

May we all remember, when we get an opportunity to critique or correct a testimony, the speaker may be speaking or doing from a place of vulnerability or obedience. If words are necessary, only HIS Words will do.

Houston? We have a communication problem. I heard it said, "We do not listen to understand, we listen to reply." Forgive us, Lord, and help us ALL to do better.

Geri Poirier
Christ the King

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The Veterans' Corner
Scott Drummond
USCG Veteran



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Community Wildfire Defense Grant

Just when I thought I would be able to wind down and maybe retire in a year or so and let some younger, more energetic person take the reins of Chestatee-Chattahoochee RC&D, along comes some exciting new programs and grants that have been dropped in our laps that if we are successful will be great benefit to our communities and will keep me on board here for at least 5 more years. I'm having too much fun to quit. My job is like getting paid to do things that are exciting and fun.

Our list of projects is growing every day and now the agencies call us and say, "here is a project we want you to do, and you do not have to compete for it." My momma always taught me to be nice to everyone and do what is right and you will succeed. I'm glad listened to her because it has paid off all my career and especially now. This is probably good because if I were to retire, I would just be at the farm working on my tractors, sawmilling, planting things, and trying to stay away from Linda's ideas for projects. All of a sudden work sounds pretty good because I can still do all of my farm things, and now will have a good excuse for staying out of Linda's way.

I was previously written about the \$4.562 "Partners for Climate Smart Commodities" grant that we expect to be successful with for a significant amount if not all of it and it is for 5 years. Now along comes the U.S. Forest Service "Community Wildfire Protection Grant" that is also for 5 years and could be up to \$10M. I can't imagine how we could spend that much for the projects that we have been given \$330,000 over the past 6 years, but we will give it our best shot. We have to compete with the organizations over the entire south, so it is not a sure thing, but we have friends in high places that want us to continue our successful projects, so here we go again full speed ahead.

The Community Wildfire Defense Grants are intended to help at-risk local communities and Tribes plan and reduce the risk against wildfire. The Act prioritizes at-risk communities in an area identified as having high or extremely high wildfire hazard potential, are low-income, and/or have been impacted by a severe disaster. Here is the press release for this grant. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack launched a new \$1 billion Community Wildfire Defense Grant program. This new, five-year, competitive program funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is designed to assist at-risk communities, including Tribal communities, non-profit organizations, state forestry agencies and Alaska Native corporations with planning for and mitigating wildfire risks.

The program launch comes at an important time as shifting development patterns, land and fire management decisions, and climate change have turned fire "seasons" into fire "years" with increasingly destructive fires. Applications will be available in the coming days. Individual grants will fund up to \$250,000 to create and update community wildfire protection plans or conduct outreach and education, and up to \$10 million for associated infrastructure and resilience projects. Local and Tribal governments are encouraged to conduct planning exercises to assist their communities with wildfire preparedness, response, and adaptation efforts. Projects must be completed within five years of the award obligation. The number of projects selected will be determined by available funding, which is \$200 million annually.

The new program will also help communities in the wildland urban interface meet the three goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy to maintain resilient landscapes, create fire-adapted communities and improve wildfire response. "Insight and guidance from the communities most at risk for catastrophic wildfires helps us mitigate those risks more effectively," said Forest Service Chief Randy Moore. "We need a collaborative effort at all levels to ensure the success of this critical national effort."

Addressing wildfire is a whole-of government approach, and through the White House Wildfire Interagency Working Group, agencies are working together to align and promote funding opportunities and resources. In addition, earlier this month, USDA, the Department of the Interior, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, announced appointments for a new Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, which will assemble policy recommendations on how the agencies can better mitigate, prevent, and respond to wildfire risk. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also provides an historic \$8.25 billion investment for wildfire management, through a suite of programs aimed at reducing wildfire risks, detecting wildfires, instituting firefighter workforce reforms and landmark pay increases for federal wildland firefighters.

As soon as I can wrap my brain around all this I will start writing and use our experiences to hopefully make it successful since all of this is what we do every day. I told you I was having fun!

Guest Columns

From time to time, people in the community have a grand slant on an issue that would make a great guest editorial.

Those who feel they have an issue of great importance should call our editor and talk with him about the idea.

Others have a strong opinion after reading one of the many columns that appear throughout the paper.

If so, please write. Please remember that publication of submitted editorials is not guaranteed.

RC&D
Frank Riley
Executive Director



Chiggers

Chiggers are most active during the spring summer and early fall. If you haven't been bitten, then consider yourself fortunate, because you live a blessed life. Let's talk about chiggers, what they are, and what you can do to protect yourself from them.

UGA extension
Watching and Working
Jacob Williams



Some people call chiggers red bugs because they are tiny red mites that are less than 1/50th of an inch long. Chigger are mites that are still in their larval stage. The larval stage is the only one that bites. The other stages of the chigger life cycle either lay eggs or prey on small insects. Chiggers like to live in areas that are full of brush and debris. They can be found in leaf litter. If you have areas with tall grass, they'll like that too. Chiggers mainly bite rodents and rabbits. So, if you have areas that make a good habitat for rodents and rabbits then there is a good chance that you'll have mites as well. Female mites will lay their eggs in the late winter, which will hatch in the spring. Chiggers will reach peak population in mid-summer and remain active until fall. They'll be killed off by a hard freeze.

Chiggers only bite, they don't bury under the skin. When they bite they inject their saliva which has a skin dissolving enzyme in it. As your skin cells dissolve, they drink it up. The saliva that they inject causes irritation, which makes you itch. Chiggers can stay latched on for three or more days, so if you have a chigger bite it's best to wash that spot with lather repeatedly, and then dab the spot with an antiseptic. That will kill most of the chiggers on you.

Chiggers typically like to bite in tight places. That means you'll often get their bites underneath your socks, in your waistband, or armpits.

Chiggers are susceptible to dehydration. Therefore, they like to populate areas with shade and high humidity. Removing brush piles and leaves, keeping grass cut, and removing bushes will eliminate areas that they like to live. Blackberry bushes seem to be a particularly favorite habitat. Chiggers don't like temperatures over 90 (I don't blame them), so when our temperatures drop as summer ends, chiggers will become more active. There are some chemicals that can be used as repellents or to kill chiggers. Products containing DEET will be effective at repelling chiggers, mosquitoes, biting flies, gnats, and ticks. You can also spray it on your clothing to keep them off your clothes. Oil of lemon eucalyptus can be used as a repellent, except for children under 3 years old. Products containing permethrin can be used on clothing to kill chiggers and ticks.

Chiggers are very aggravating to have, but hopefully this article has given you some options for how to deal with chigger bites and how to prevent them from getting on you. If you have questions about chiggers contact your county Extension Office or email me at Jacob.Williams@uga.edu.

Habitat for Humanity

In July of 2020, I was ReStore Manager of Habitat for Humanity Towns-Union Counties. One day I noticed a man, visibly upset, in a conversation with one of my part-time staffers. I approached him and asked if there was anything I could do to help. The man stated that his landlords had given him a 30-day notice to vacate the property due to the landlords selling the property. Although he applied for many of the affordable housing apartments in the area, he was unable to acquire one within 30 days. For those of you unaware, most of our affordable housing apartments have several year wait lists. Due to one of his young children having a service dog because of a disability, he was unable to find a private home for rent. The man was visibly upset, and although we are Habitat for Humanity, there was no way to put a house up in that time frame, or even go through the Family Selection process to begin a home build. I cannot imagine the fear and desperation that he was experiencing knowing that in a short time, his family would be out of a home. My associate Barbara and I searched for rentals and as we all know, the rental market is almost nonexistent in North Georgia, especially when pets are involved.

Habitat Happenings
Executive Director
Charlotte Randall



A week went by, and we had still found nothing. Then I received a phone call at the ReStore. A donor was inquiring about donating a travel trailer to Habitat. I immediately thought of that family in need.

I called the man and told him to come in the ReStore. When he arrived, I let him know that although this is by no means a permanent situation, we would be happy to provide the trailer to his family until they were able to find adequate housing. The feeling of relief to him and the look on his face I will never forget. The family was able to temporarily rent a lot to put the camper on, and three months later, they were able to get into an apartment.

This was an example of just one of many families in our area looking for affordable rentals. With the rise of popularity in Airbnbs and VRBOs, and being located in the beautiful area we are, long-term rentals are even more unattainable. If you or anyone you know is interested in donating an RV or camper trailer to HFHTUC, contact the ReStore at 706-745-7101. Making a difference in someone's life comes in many shapes and forms, and God surely looked out for this family in a time of need.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SHOULD BE E-MAILED OR MAILED TO:

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P.O. Box 365, Hiawassee, GA 30546
Our email address: tcherald@windstream.net

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Letters that recognize good deeds of others will be considered for publication.*

Note: All letters must be signed, and contain the first and last name and phone number for verification.

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