

Printed in the April 25 edition of the Moccasin

VISIONS

by

Vice Chairman David Reede

Greetings San Carlos! On April 22, 1970, 20 million people across America celebrated the first Earth Day. It was a time when cities were buried under their own smog and polluted rivers caught fire. Now Earth Day is celebrated annually around the world. Through the combined efforts of the U.S. government, grassroots organizations, and individuals like you, what started as a day of national environmental recognition has grown into a powerful campaign to protect our environment. I share this information with you to stress the importance of community action as it relates to protecting our reservation land. On a daily basis my office receives calls from concerned people regarding illegal dumping and trash control. I thank you for your comments relating to this matter and I am ready to help. Our reservation is home to some of the most beautiful desert views in the state. As residents and care takers of the land it is our responsibility to ensure that it is protected from pollution and litter. Even small amounts of litter are unsightly, unhealthy and dangerous. Litter may cause; fires, pollution, accidents, low morale, diseases in people and animals, and declining tourism and business. I am committed to keeping our communities clean and beautiful by supporting program events such as the Diabetes Lean and Clean activities. Additionally, I am proud to announce that my office will soon launch PROJECT PRIDE, a program related to cleaning up our communities. My office is currently in the process of exploring ways in which we can support clean neighborhoods through strategic placement of community dumpsters and trash cans. I look forward to reporting more on this project in the upcoming months.

This past week my staff and I actively participated in several meetings for ventures that have the potential to uplift our community. Our first meeting addressed the provision of electricity for residents of San Carlos. The Tribe is currently exploring the possibility of securing another utility (electricity) service provider for tribal members. A recent discussion between tribal planning and the Arizona Public Service (APS) included developing an exploratory plan to have the APS provide service to most of the tribal members, except for residents who live in the Bylas area. They will eventually be provided service at a later date. Another topic of discussion was the possibility of the Tribe investigating solar energy as a possible alternative to the electricity that we currently use.

I am also happy to report that the Tribal Emergency Response Commission (TERC) is making progress toward developing a comprehensive emergency response plan for our community. TERC is an organization composed of first responders (police, ambulance), elected officials, and tribal department officials. TERC is the administrative arm of the first responders and would be notified in case of emergencies. They hold monthly meetings to discuss a variety of issues pertaining to potential emergencies that could impact the San Carlos Apache reservation and its residents. At a recent meeting new TERC Officers were elected and are now awaiting confirmation by the Tribal Council. Once the officers are confirmed, TERC will proceed with their next meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, May 14, 2007 at 10 am in the EMS Conference Room in Peridot.

Finally, the San Carlos Apache Tribe Strategic Tribal Empowerment Prevention Plan (STEPP) Coalition is aiding the districts in the creation of local coalitions to help prevent the use of Meth. The mission of the San Carlos Apache Strategic Tribal Empowerment Prevention Plan is to revitalize and restore Apache culture and to provide a culturally based circle of prevention by empowering the community to address the needs of the San Carlos Apache Tribal community through strategic, comprehensive and integrated prevention planning and service delivery. I commend the Gilson Wash and Seven Mile Wash Districts for their commitment to ending the Meth epidemic in their communities. Last week these two communities held meetings to plan for the creation of local STEPP coalitions in their district. I would also like to recognize Bylas for spearheading this effort by forming the first district coalition last month. I encourage all community members to attend these meetings to learn more about how you can help us create a drug free San Carlos. For more information on upcoming STEPP meetings, please contact Mr. Donald Lott, STEPP Coalition Chair at 475-2798 ext. 1511.

In the spirit of community, I encourage you to be the change you would like to see in your world.