After thirty years of building the Rug Show to be a one-of-a-kind event to showcase the incredible artwork of the Navajo Elders while celebrating their culture and traditions, we knew that this year would be a time of change. What we did not expect was how much change.

In January, we began the process of putting together the 2020 Rug Show. We decided to start by tackling what we believed would be our biggest challenge: finding a new venue for our unique and special show.

As February turned to March, we began to feel uneasy about being locked into a venue contract for the Rug Show. We hoped that things would be looking better in the fall. But would people be ready to travel and congregate in the large groups that helped make our past shows so successful?

It didn’t take long to realize that this year was going to be unlike any in A.N.E.’s history. And the challenges we would face were only beginning. As the Covid-19 pandemic spread through the spring and inundated the Navajo reservation in a tidal wave of cases, deaths, and heartbreak, our focus shifted from the Rug Show to doing everything in our power to get life sustaining aid to the Elders.

Because we were unable to travel to the reservation in the spring, the best course of action was to focus on distributing $100 food certificates directly to the Elders through the mail. By sending food certificates we could ensure that the Elders and their families had the resources that they needed to purchase food, cleaning supplies, hygiene items, and daily necessities when they were able to travel to the store. In order to fund the monthly distribution of food certificates, we decided that the best way to raise money was to spread awareness of the catastrophic impact Covid-19 was having on the Elders. In an effort to reach a broad and diverse audience, we undertook an information campaign through social media, google advertising and print advertising. It worked. Our efforts to spread information on the struggles facing the Elders we serve coincided with international news coverage about the virus’ devastation of the
Navajo people and we were able to engage a new audience on the east and west coasts where people whose own communities had been ravaged by the pandemic were sympathetic to the needs of those living in the latest virus hotspots. Donations for food certificates increased, and as an unintended consequence so did our social media followers.

In late July, as Covid-19 cases on the reservation seemed to plateau and decline, we were finally able to plan in-person distributions to the reservation in August and September. Thanks to courageous and dedicated volunteers, we were able to deliver more than 420,000 pounds of food, medical supplies, mobility equipment, water, and clothing to the Elders.

Although it was a fantastic achievement to be able to deliver important and needed supplies to the Elders, we were able to see firsthand the economic toll that the pandemic had taken on their families. The Elders family members who were employed before the pandemic had been laid off for months, leaving entire families without income, while groceries and supplies were continuing to get more expensive in reservation stores. Having seen the economic reality facing the Elders, the importance of the Rug Show became clear.

The Rug Show has never been and was never intended to be a fundraiser for the Adopt A Native Elder Program. The Rug Show has always been a marketplace for the Elders and their family members to sell their artwork so that they can earn income to sustain themselves. When one of the Elders or their children sells a rug, that money never goes into a savings account. The money earned from weaving always has an immediate need, whether that is for food, firewood, a truck payment, or for school supplies for grandchildren.

This year, with higher unemployment and higher cost of living, weavers needed income from their sales even more. However they had not had any opportunities to sell their weavings this year, with the lockdowns, travel restrictions, and curfews, many trading posts have been closed and stopped buying, and all of the rug auctions have been canceled. Knowing that the weavers needed a market to sell their rugs to make it through the winter, we endeavored to put all of our energy after the Food Runs into creating a virtual Rug Show that would hopefully replace some of the income that the Elders and their families relied upon.

Creating our first virtual Rug Show was a journey, to say the least. First, we decided to use our increased social media following and contact list to share the importance of the Rug Show with a new audience. We knew that many in our community had been struggling and without work as well, but we hoped that by reaching a larger nationwide group of potential buyers that we might be able to make a difference for the Elders. Next, we worked on attempting to create virtual content that could share the stories of the rugs.

Although a virtual show could never replace the physical presence of the Elders, we wanted to be able to educate potential buyers about the history of Navajo weaving, the stories woven into every rug, and the culture of the Elders. With an incredibly tight timeline we were able to work with a local film studio to display the rugs and film content that could bring a Rug Show into people’s homes around the country. Last, we worked on the logistics of a virtual sale. We worked with the weavers to make sure we received their rugs in time to get them measured, photographed, tagged, and put on the website. We spent two weeks indexing, photographing, and uploading all of the jewelry and crafts. We worked with our web developer to increase our server space so that our website could
handle an expected increase in traffic. And we organized our warehouse into a bonafide shipping department.

The entire process of creating the virtual Rug Show has been one of growth, learning, and surprises. We learned about scripting content for filming, we learned that building a virtual Rug Show is just as time intensive as putting on an in-person Rug Show, and we learned that a Rug Show without 200 volunteer helpers is much more difficult!

Our biggest surprise was the amount of traffic that a virtual show could drive to our website. As many of you witnessed firsthand, the opening night of the show was filled with hours of frustration as we all experienced slow load times and website failures. Despite our best efforts to prepare the website for the Rug Show, the turnout exceeded our wildest dreams.

At Deer Valley, we hoped to attract 7,500 visitors over five days. Our virtual Rug Show achieved more than 130,000 page views in a weekend. The website traffic and associated sales led to our next new experience, the time it takes to pack and ship nearly 1,000 rugs, jewelry, and craft orders. As we reflect on the show, we are left with thanks and gratitude. Thank you to everyone who put up with our technical issues and purchased rugs and jewelry to make our Elders lives easier.

Thank you to our incredible Caroline Murdock for spending countless hours designing the virtual show so that it would feel like an A.N.E. event. Thank you to our A.N.E. staff; Bobbie Ikegami, Jeff Dillon, Heather Johnson, Gloria McCabe, and Beverly Benally for the weeks of painstaking inventorying, indexing, and shipping. Thank you to John Aldrich for the hundreds, maybe thousands, of hours spent photographing and uploading rugs to the website. Thank you to John and Virginia Aldrich, Marty Black, and Warren MacNeil for volunteering every day for two weeks to help pack and ship. Thank you to Rodger Williams and Eileen Quintana for sharing their stories and Navajo culture with Rug Show viewers. Thank you to our postal woman, who greeted us with patience and good cheer when we presented her with a mountain of packages to be picked up over several weeks. And thank you to everyone who generously donated to make our first virtual Rug Show possible.

In the end, we may have found our new Rug Show venue: www.AnElder.org.
Eileen Quintana’s video, *A Woman’s Weapons*, touched a chord in many people with her poignant description of how weaving wards off poverty and hunger in the lives of Navajo women.

CJ Robb did a great job explaining the meaning of the different rug designs. The contemporary designs of Sacred Waters and Autumn theme rugs were beautifully displayed on a wooden wall backdrop in the studio. The weavers were very happy that all of the theme rugs sold the night of the show.

**VIDEOS**

We hope you had the opportunity to view the videos presented for the virtual Rug Show. One of the things that we enjoy providing at the Rug Show is an insight into the vibrant culture, history, and art of the Navajo people. In the past, the weavers and their families did this so well in-person at the show. The goal of the videos was to produce an aspect of this for you, to view in your home, through the new virtual venue.

CJ Robb did a great job explaining the meaning of the different rug designs. Rodger Williams, in front of a photo of Spider Rock, spoke on the origins of Spider Woman and gave a narration of the weaving stories.
We received the majority of rugs for the Virtual Rug Show while we were on the fall Food Runs. Other rugs were mailed to us with the weaver’s hopes that people would buy them. And, you did! Thank you to everyone who purchased one of these special rugs.
Aheéhee’

The 2020 Adopt-A-Native-Elder Virtual Navajo Rug Show & Sale would not have been possible without the generosity of individuals, foundations, corporations, and other funders whose contributions continue to make a difference in the lives of the Elders. Thanks to your kindness and generosity, the traditional Navajo Elders we serve were able to have a market to sell their rugs and jewelry to earn income to sustain themselves this winter. Thank you!

John and Virginia Aldrich  Mary Shanklin
Burrow Family Foundation  Jan Stevenson
George S and Delores Doré  Barbara Soulier
Eccles Foundation  Vickie Thun
Robin Griffith  Carol Ashton & Ann Voda
Jim Holbrook, Premier Plastics  Newman and Zenith Ward
Rebecca James  Foundation
The David Kelby Johnson  William Wishnick Foundation
Foundation
Karen Kauffeld  Salt Lake County Zoo, Arts, and
Janine Luke Parks (ZAP)
Shelley Mechan  Kathie and Hugh Zumbro
Fred and Patti Palmer  Liz Wall
Mary Shanklin  Barbara Yamada

Thank you also to the generous foundations and individuals who gave from their hearts this year to provide food, firewood and medical supplies to the Elders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Your relief efforts greatly supports the lives of countless Navajo Elders.

AARP  Emma Eccles Jones Foundation  Newman and Zenith Ward
Blue Flame Heating  Navajo United Way  Foundation
Dr. Paul and Susan Bloom  David Kelby Johnson  Wells Fargo
Steve Denkers  Memorial Foundation  Joseph Wilkins Charitable Fund
Mariner Eccles Foundation  Raymond Family Foundation  William Wishnick Foundation
Willard Eccles Foundation  Sublette Family Foundation  Kathie and Hugh Zumbro
Grant and Kathy Hedges  Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs

2020 Fall Food Run to one of our 12 area deliveries on the Navajo Reservation.
It's been an uneasy, sometimes weird feeling one has as we navigate through our days here on the Rez. Our days consist of rushing and trying not to stay too long in one place. At the beginning of this pandemic in February and March of 2020, we had to learn quickly how to protect ourselves from walking onto someone's "space".

Getting necessities is still a scary thing. A good-size grocery store may be more than 60 miles away and with the lockdowns mandated by our Navajo Nation government, we have to rush. We have to shop for weeks and even months because we no longer have the privilege of delaying our next shopping trip. Because we trusted that there were going to always be shelves of supplies, we would go to town only to come back empty handed.

Our small Chapter houses closed because the employees had been asked to stay home. The Hardrock Chapter house has been reopened to twice a week. It is at this time that people who do not have running water have to come in and fill their barrels. We did not get any rain all summer and fall. Water is needed for not only the people but also the livestock. We have had to decrease the number of our animals in order to have enough water and feed to give to our animals.

And now, as we move on to winter it is still dry. We’ve not had any rain or snow up to this point. Relatives are still hauling water in their barrels. Elders are needing firewood to stay warm. Many of them have not had visitors in such a long time that they are now experiencing cabin fever, something they are unfamiliar with.

From Hardrock the nearest post office is 30 miles away in Kykotsmovi, a Hopi Village. They also have lockdown orders. When we go to pick up our mail we have to plan our time so that we are there when the post office window is open. Gas stations are not readily available, so therefore, sometimes post office visits are made every other week.

The closest laundry facilities are more than 90 miles away. That, too, is sometimes a once-a-month trip into town. Some elders do not have in-home care providers and have family members who live in towns and cannot be home with them. We have elders who live alone. Weekly mail runs, shopping trips or laundromat trips are not always feasible. In the Hardrock community we have a community health representative who makes occasional home visits.

All in all, Covid has taken a toll on our bodies, minds and spirits. We are tired of it. Still, we continue to send up prayers.

~ Mary Robertson-Begay, Hardrock, Arizona
I’ve received firewood money and gift certificate. I really do thankful to you and everyone that put this program together. The family are here due to Coronavirus and they have been lay off from their jobs and come back home. So, I’ll have family with me Xmas & New Year to come. Wish all the best of the season and the year 2021.
Love,
Theodore Bedonie,
Big Mountain

To Elder Program,
I want to thank you for the Food Certificate that I have received the other day.
I am doing well again, Recovered from Covid. I thank the Lord for it.
Again, thank you for the Food Certificate.
Sign:
Helen Lee, Pinion

I received the money which you sent to me and use it for firewood. Thank you for your support.
And hello from me to you all. Thank you all for your support for me. I always praying for you friends.
We are doing fine at home with my two grandboys. We just herd sheep all the times.
Bye,
Marie O. Nez, Many Farms

To: All the helpers,
I am doing fine. I just stay home and take care of myself.
I just want to thank everyone that supports and helps with our food drive.
Thanks you so much for all that you do.
THANK YOU AGAIN,
Annie Anderson, Dilkon

I would like to thank the Adopt-A-Native-Elder Program for helping me with donating $100 for firewood. The woods will help me with keeping my home warm this winter. I really appreciate it that you help a lot of our elders on the Navajo Nation reservation. I also received a Rainbow Food Certificate, Grandma Box and medical items that I am also very proud to have received.
Sincerely,
Rose Anne Dailey, Birdsprings

My name is Priscilla Parrish, Anna Cly’s niece and caregiver.
Anna misses seeing you come for the “Elder Day” at Oljato Senior Center. She is looking forward to when the pandemic is passed. She is thankful for the Bashas coupon and the firewood money that you send.
She’s very grateful that you keep her in your thoughts and prayers.
Anna Cly, Oljato
Thank you for money sent. I am glad for money received for rugs. Also, thank you for wool received. Extreme cold. Stay home because of Covid 19. Many gone because of Covid; friends, relatives, community members. Thank you for food vouchers. Wood was delivered. Thank you for your generosity.

Love,
Louise Tolie, Birdsprings

Thank you so much for the money you sent me. I bought food with it. There is no water running, no grass for the stocks. There use to be some water running in the Little Colorado River. Right now it’s just dry.

About my health, I am getting healthy. I didn’t feel good but right now I feel fine. Just to say thank you again and God bless you.

Good-by,
Lillie Kelly, Leupp

To all the helpers and donateers with food certificates and woods for the winter,
Happy Veterans-Happy Thanksgiving-Happy Merry Christmas– and Happy New Year to all. Be safe and take care...

Thank you for all you do for all of us,
Rosemary Cly, Oljato

Thank you for being so thoughtful. I always think of you all as angel.

Work is difficult sometime but you serve people with cheerfully.

You do it. That is why God love you. And we love you too.

I just got old. I’m 80 year old.

A Friend,
Katherine Charley, Teesto

Thank you for everything.
Praying for all.
Happy New Year!
God Bless All!

John Wayne Mitchell, Tsaile

I am 87 years old. I was born under a Juniper tree. When I was a teenager my grandmother, Lilly Morgan Pete, encouraged me to learn how to make dolls. My adoptive mother always told me, “T’aa hwo’ aji t’ eego”. That means, “If it is to be, it is up to me.” They always said if I learned to make dolls that I would have money and it will help me support my family.

Thank you for buying my dolls,
Fannie Kee, Red Rocks
Order Form

Mail form to: Adopt-A-Native-Elder 328 W Gregson Ave Salt Lake City, UT 84115
For quicker processing, order online: www.AnElder.org

Elder #1: ________________________________ Elder’s Food Run Area: ____________
Elder #2: ________________________________ Elder’s Food Run Area: ____________

Sponsor Name: __________________________________________________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________________________
City/State/Zip: ______________________________________________________________________
Telephone: _________________________________ email: ________________________________

**APRIL 1: ALL SPRING FOOD RUN ORDERS DUE**
IF YOU HAVE THE ABILITY, PLEASE CONSIDER PLACING YOUR ORDER FOR BOTH THE SPRING AND FALL FOOD RUNS NOW

**SUPPORT FOR YOUR ELDER:** (May be ordered throughout the year or for delivery at Food Runs)

___ Food Certificates @ $25 ea .......................................................... Spring Fall Mail Now $_______
___ Firewood @ $100 ......................................................................... Spring Fall Mail Now $_______
___ Yarn Box @ $50 (Greyhills, Ganado, Chiefs, Crystal, Old Style, Traditional, ANE Choice) Spring Fall Mail Now $_______

**SUPPORT FOR YOUR ELDER:** Food Run Boxes

___ Rainbow Food @ $100 (Your Elder counts on this food for the Food Runs) Spring Fall $_______
___ Med Box @ $35 ........................................................................... Spring Fall $_______
___ Grandma Box @ $40 ................................................................. Spring Fall $_______
___ Grandpa Box @ $30 ................................................................... Spring Fall $_______
___ Mother’s Day Box *(Spring Only)* @ $30 .................................. Spring $_______
___ Forgotten Box *(Spring Only)* @ $35 ......................................... Spring $_______
___ Forgotten Blanket *(Fall Only)* @ $35 ........................................ Fall $_______
___ Child School Box @ $15 ............................................................... Spring Fall $_______

**DONATIONS FOR FORGOTTEN ELDERS**

___ General ......................................................................................... $_______
___ Food - suggested $100 ................................................................. $_______
___ Firewood - suggested $100 ........................................................ $_______
___ Yarn - suggested $50 .................................................................. $_______
___ Bluebird Flour (20-lb @ $10.00 ea. bag) .................................... $_______
___ Children’s Program – suggested $15 ........................................ $_______

**OTHER**

___ Annual Newsletter Renewal @ $25 (1-year subscription) .................. $_______
___ Cedar Bead Necklace @ $10 ....................................................... $_______
___ T-shirt @ $22 Circle Men’s/Woman’s Size___________________________ $_______
___ Hat @ $15 (one size fits all) ........................................................... $_______

TOTAL $________
WHEN EAGLES FLY

In special remembrance to the wonderful Elders we loved.

MEMORIALS

In lieu of Christmas presents, Alaine Mertz made a donation for each of her children in memory of her late husband and their father and long-time volunteer, Oscar Mertz

Jaclyn Parker made a Memorial donation in honor of four family members

Jack Quintana donated in memory of Homer George, a deceased tribal member

Rita Clark made a donation in memory of Sally & Austin Williams and Essie & Kenneth Nez

Ashley Jordan sent a donation of yarn to her Elder Nina Yazzie in memory of her grandfather

Janet Martineau donated in memory of Jeanne Campbell

Linda Myers made a donation in memory of Jeanne Campbell

Nekeeta Starain made a donation to honor Louis Gene, “a beautiful lady with a beautiful heart”

Rebecca de la Torre made a donation in honor of Louise Gene

HONORINGS

Blanche Sumnar made a donation in honor of her beloved Kakó

Therese Lewandowski donated in honor of Kate Lewandowski

Kathryn Yocom made a donation in honor of the birthday of her sister, Susan Bernard

Desmond Branche made a donation on behalf of Giang Luc

Fred and Patty Palmer donated in honor of their daughter and son-in-law, Heidi and Jim Weber

Anne Maertens made a donation in honor of Corvin Tashima-Boyd

Renee Seaman made a donation in honor of John Seaman and Cheri Calvert

Robin Dark donated in honor of Purple Lady Cyndi Schwandt

Rose Naputano donated in honor of Susan Episcopo’s birthday.

Geoffrey Nelson made a donation on behalf of his mom, Elizabeth Rose

Marjean Thomson made a donation in the name of Heather Fowler

Bruce Miller donated as a gift to Pam Berg

Wills and Estate Planning

Supporters of Adopt-A-Native-Elder (A.N.E.) have expressed an interest in naming A.N.E. as a beneficiary in their will or estate plan. If you would like more information on how you may help in this important legacy-building way, please contact John Burrow: (503) 312-5655 or jburrow5@aol.com

YARN BUNDLES = INCOME FOR WEAVERS

There continues to be an urgent need for the Elders to earn income through the sales of their rugs. Please help us to mail yarn bundles to the weavers throughout the winter.

The weaver’s new rugs are posted weekly on our website: www.AnElder.org

PLEASE SHARE THROUGH YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORKS. IF YOU PURCHASE A RUG, TAKE A PHOTO AND LET YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY KNOW WHERE IT CAME FROM. THANK YOU!
**Curfews and Closures are still in effect on Navajo Nation**

Due to COVID, the Elders daily challenges continue to increase even more dramatically. Curfews, shut-downs, and limited hours are in effect for chapter houses, senior centers, laundry facilities, grocery stores, gas stations, and post offices. The Elders and their caretakers are faced with long lines and lengthy waits while attempting to stay safe. If you have not received a letter from your Elders recently, please understand that it does not necessarily indicate that they are ill. The Elders greatly appreciate your letters and your support. We all hope in 2021 these restrictions will lessen and your Elder will be able to correspond with you with more ease.

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**2020 was strife with changes, illness, and hardships for many.**

**Change is in the air for 2021**

Adopt-A-Native-Elder is pleased to announce some front office staffing changes:

- Former Office Manager, Caroline Murdock, is stepping into a new position as Creative Director. Caroline will continue to design our publications, as well as create a new volunteer communication forum and serve in a project management role for A.N.E.’s many projects and events.

- Heather Johnson has accepted the position of Office Manager. Heather has worked as an Office Assistant for the past year at A.N.E. She has exceptional skills and will be terrific serving in this new role.

- Gloria McCabe continues in her role as Office Assistant. Gloria has also been with A.N.E. for a year and gives excellent office support.

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**Early Reminder:**

If you have the ability, now is a great time to order Food Run items for your Elder for both the spring and fall Food Runs. Early Food Run ordering assists us to determine the amount of supplies that will be needed to be ordered ahead of the Food Runs. Online: www.AnElder.org

At this time, we are planning on a spring drop off Food Run delivery.