

Crowd 'Rock the Vote' in Thoreau

Written by By Dee Velasco For the Sun
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Reaching the youth through rock music

Thoreau was treated to a free rock/metal show Oct. 8 at Lil's Diner to encourage the youth to get out and vote for the upcoming November election.

Bearing the cold and doing whatever it took to warm up, a pretty decent crowd came out to hear some great rock and metal music from local bands. Temperatures that night read around 42 degrees and it showed as a few people were covering up with blankets while others were seated in their cars warming up listening to music.

The bands that played at the show included "War Motor," "Condemn the World," "Narbona," "Born of Winter," and "Testify."

Darius Yazzie, frontman of "Testify," said the idea to put on a rock and metal show to spark the interest of the youth to get out and vote came together last month.

"We wanted to do a show for the youth to get them involved in voting in our community area,"

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Darius Yazzie said. "What better way to bring everyone together than a metal/rock show to inspire the youth to raise their voice out there."

Darius Yazzie said the area has never had a metal show before, and with the awesome response this show received, another show may be in the works for next spring. "Whether it be a metal show or something – we just want to get the kids out," he said.

"Testify" has been playing for 10+ years. Darius Yazzie said it's a lot of work, but it's all worth the effort.

"We're still jamming out and we don't mind putting in the work to give the community a great show," he said. "As long as they are having a good time, that works for us."

Community member Adam Shorty said he would take the cold just to hear more of the bands.

"Metal music I love it, the people here love it, crazy as it sounds I would even stay till 3 in the morning to just hear more for a great cause," Shorty said.

Hailing from Red Valley, Ariz., the band "Condemn the World," a family band that was formed in 2015, were eager to jump on the bill. In an interview with the *Sun*, the band members said they support Navajo Nation Councilman Edmund Yazzie, who is the councilman for the Thoreau area.

"Edmund is a very supportive person who cares for his community and we were happy to be a part of this event," Skylit Jupolf, who sings vocals and plays guitar for "Condemn the World," said.

Edmund Yazzie is currently the Navajo Nation councilman for Thoreau, Smith Lake, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, and Churchrock. He was at the concert that night letting his community know to get out and vote this coming November for the general election with the state and the Navajo

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Nation.

"We just want to make awareness by telling everyone their voice and their vote sets a statement for the next leadership they want in office," he said.

Edmund Yazzie spoke briefly on what has been on his mind for the upcoming election – one thing being the plans for a new Indian Health Services hospital in the Rehoboth area. He said the facility is heavily needed in the Thoreau area.

"We really need the medical facility out here, 75% of the patients are being flown out," he said. "IHS told us that if we build this new hospital it's going to have an updated trauma unit where we don't have to fly people out."

Edmund Yazzie said that a feasibility study had been done.

Aside from helping out his community, he is also the drummer for "Testify." Along with his son Darius, Edmund Yazzie agreed that the metal show was the best way to reach the youth as well as the community.

"The main thing is get out there and vote," Edmund Yazzie said.

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