

**CH'ÍHOOTSOOÍ, DINÉTAH, WINDOW ROCK, NAVAJO NATION** — Continuing the great tradition of annual Navajo Nation fairs and celebrations, Yee Ha'ólníí Doo has organized a Virtual Fair Celebrating Summer Solstice on June 19-20. The Virtual Fair features a phenomenal roster of cultural and musical performances.

Annual fairs on the Navajo Nation have strengthened the culture of the Navajo People for over a century. Fair season is a time of unity, reacquaintance, friendly competition, and exhibition.

For Yee Ha'ólníí Doo, celebrating the summer solstice honors the traditional Navajo belief system of preparing the land for a future fall harvest. In the Navajo language, the name for the month of June, Ya'iishjááshchilí, translates to mean "the planting of early crops."

Yee Ha'ólníí Doo Interim Executive Director Ethel Branch said that one intention of the Virtual Fair Celebrating Summer Solstice is to plant seeds of hope for the future of the Navajo People after having persevered through a year of pandemic challenges.

"Our people look forward to our annual fairs as a time to reconnect with relatives and share their stories of the times since they've last seen each other. We want to provide a safe space where we can all virtually celebrate the many events that we've grown to love with the Navajo Nation fairs," Branch said.

The virtual fair will host events like a baby photo contest, 'rez' ride photo contest, virtual fashion show, cultural performances, musical performances and a comedy show.

Yee Ha'ólníí Doo Deputy Director Cassandra Begay said that the outpouring of support for the event has been inspiring.

"The summer solstice is a time of invigoration where we recharge our batteries during the long days as we work toward a fall harvest of our efforts," Begay said. "We're blessed to have weathered the adversity of the pandemic to now regroup and make plans for a brighter future."

The organization of the virtual fair is being led by Public Health Education Program Manager Wendy Atcitty, Yee Ha'ólníí Doo. If you're an interested artist or musician, now is the time to secure a slot for your performance.

"I'm really happy with the response we've had from the many performers who want to take the stage in a safe, responsible way," Atcitty said. "James and Ernie are hysterical and I'm looking forward to their humor and the laughs they incite from the audience."

Yee Ha'ólníí Doo's Virtual Fair Celebrating Summer Solstice begins online on at 12 pm MDT June 19 and runs through 5 pm June 20. The daily agenda will take place between 12 pm-5 pm.

Master of Ceremony duties will be handled by Erny Zah. Performers include: James and Ernie Comedy, Lyla June, Kansas Begaye, Summit Dub Squad, Tyler Tawahongva, Dirt Rhodes, and

## Virtual Fair celebrates summer solstice

Written by gallupsun

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Mike SixKiller.

All performances will be hosted on Yee Ha'ólníi Doo's Navajo & Hopi Families COVID-19 Relief Fund group page.

