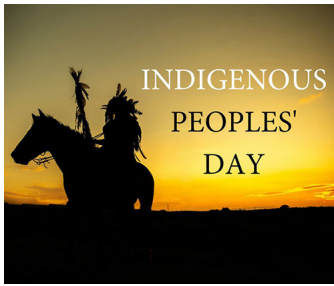


Building Nations commemorates Indigenous Peoples' Day with a horse ride

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 15 October 2021 05:18



Building Nations LLC is promoting a 34-plus mile horse ride to honor the cultures and histories of Indigenous tribes across the country.

Riders will take a horseback ride over a 34-mile route starting at Cornerstone Ministry Center in Smith Lake, 1299 N.M. Hwy. 371, and travel westbound to Rehoboth Christian School, 211 Tse Yaaniichi St.

The second Monday in October is the date set for Indigenous Peoples' Day in New Mexico. That will fall on Oct. 11.

The date was declared as Indigenous Peoples' Day by the Gallup City Council in September 2016; by the McKinley County Commission in October 2017. In April 2019 it became an official state holiday.

This year, on Sept. 30, U. S. Senators Martin Heinrich, D-N.M. and Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., along with U. S. Rep. Norma Torres, D-Calif. introduced legislation to replace the official holiday recognized on the second Monday of October and make it Indigenous Peoples' Day. The bill would also replace any mention of Columbus Day in all federal laws or regulations, referring to the date as Indigenous Peoples' Day.

At least 13 states and more than 100 cities have recognized this change, including Washington, D. C.

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"By celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day, we lift up the strength and resilience of America's Tribal Nations," Heinrich said. "I'm proud to stand with New Mexico's Tribes and Pueblos who have led the way to re-frame this national holiday to honor all of the significant contributions and diverse cultures of our Native communities."

"Let this day serve as a celebration of our country's Tribal Nations and Native communities, and a reminder of the work ahead, to continue to strengthen and improve the federal government's relationship with Tribal governments and Indigenous peoples,"

The legislation is supported by the Indigenous People's Day Initiative, the National Council of Urban Indian Health, the National Congress of American Indians, the Association of American Indian Affairs, the Navajo Nation, and the All Pueblo Council of Governors.

"Recognition of Indigenous People's Day will help our future generations hold onto our identity and ensure the survival of our cultures, languages, and indigeneity. I believe that the name change from Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day will provide young Navajo children with a sense of pride in the beauty they hold within," Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez said.

The legislation is being cosponsored by U.S. Senators Alex Padilla, D-Calif., Tina Smith, D-Minn., Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., and Tim Kaine D-Va.

In the House of Representatives, the legislation is being cosponsored by U.S. Representatives Suzan K. DelBene, D-Wash., Suzanne Bonamici, D-Ore., and Sharice L. Davids, D-Kan.

Public offices and local school districts will be closed for the holiday.

In New Mexico, the participants in the Indigenous Peoples' Day horse ride will travel the route described below and stop at seven exchange areas:

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Begin at 8 am and travel west on Navajo Service Route 49 and stop at a dirt road turnoff at the 5.5 mile marker.

Continue west to Mariano Lake Community School at 11.1 miles.

A gated stop with event staff at 16.5 miles.

The riders and other staff will break for lunch at 21.9 miles.

The route then turns south onto N.M. Highway 566 and stops at the Speedway store in Church Rock, Hwy. 55 MM 45, Springstead Loop, at 26.5 miles.

The Navajo Housing Authority section in Church Rock at 29.7 miles.

The riders then turn west onto Historic Route 66 and travel to Fire Rock Casino at 32.2 miles.

The riders are expected to arrive at Rehoboth Christian School after 2 pm. Riders who wish to participate can join the ride at the designated exchange areas along the route, where water will be provided for the horses.

All riders can also join the route at the Fire Rock Casino exchange area to ride the final 1.8 miles together.

Staff Reports