



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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NAVAJO MAN INDICTED ON FEDERAL ASSAULT CHARGE

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales announced that **Preston Yazzie**, 40, of Crownpoint, New Mexico, was arraigned today before United States Magistrate Judge Robert Hayes Scott on a federal indictment charging him with assault resulting in serious bodily injury. According to the indictment, which was filed on November 10, 2010, the charge against Yazzie, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, arose out of an October 12, 2010 incident during which Yazzie assaulted Irving Nez, also an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation.

According to a criminal complaint filed on October 20, 2010, Yazzie struck Mr. Nez repeatedly on the head and body with two metal pipes after the two started arguing during an October 12, 2010 cookout. As a result of the assault, Mr. Nez sustained a broken left leg, a wound to the back of the head which required staples, and multiple scrapes and lacerations to his face, arms and legs, and he had to be admitted for inpatient care at the San Juan Regional Medical Center. The complaint alleges that both Yazzie and Mr. Nez had been drinking beer before the assault occurred.

Yazzie has been ordered to reside in a half-way house pending trial. If convicted of the assault charge, Yazzie faces up to ten years imprisonment, a maximum \$250,000 fine, and up to three years supervised release.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Paul H. Spiers.

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