

For Immediate Release
May 24, 2011

SHIPROCK MAN SENTENCED TO 57-MONTH PRISON
SENTENCE FOR FEDERAL ASSAULT CONVICTION

Defendant Ordered to Pay \$208,662.20 in Restitution to Victim

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court in Albuquerque, **Richard Harry Yazzie**, 57, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Shiprock, was sentenced to a 57-month term of imprisonment to be followed by three-years of supervised release for his conviction on an assault resulting in serious bodily injury charge. Richard Harry Yazzie also was ordered to pay \$208,662.20 in restitution to the victim of his assault.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Richard Harry Yazzie assaulted a 50-year-old Navajo man (Victim) by hitting him with a car and then driving over him in Shiprock, New Mexico on May 30, 2010. Yazzie has been in federal custody since his arrest on June 15, 2010 based on a criminal complaint filed on June 2, 2010. Yazzie was later indicted for assault resulting in serious bodily injury on June 24, 2010. Yazzie entered a guilty plea to the indictment on October 4, 2010.

According to the criminal complaint filed in this case, witnesses reported that Yazzie hit the Victim with his vehicle and then ran over the Victim at the family residence in Shiprock. The Victim, who had tire marks on his chest, was taken to the Northern Navajo Medical Center Emergency Room where he was treated for open fractures on his right lower leg and massive internal bleeding. The Victim was then airlifted to the University of New Mexico Hospital for advanced treatment. In his plea agreement, Yazzie admitted assaulting the Victim and that the Victim suffered serious bodily injury as a result of the assault. Yazzie said he was intoxicated at the time of the assault.

The case was investigated by the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety, Shiprock Division, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Kyle T. Nayback.

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