



PRESS RELEASE

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ACOMA PUEBLO MAN INDICTED ON A DOMESTIC ASSAULT BY A HABITUAL OFFENDER CHARGE

ALBUQUERQUE – A federal grand jury has indicted Eric Thomas Valley, 42, on three assault charges, including a domestic assault by a habitual offender charge, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales. The indictment, which was filed on Nov. 7, 2012, was publicly posted this morning.

Valley, a member and resident of Acoma Pueblo, was arrested on Oct. 23, 2012, based on a criminal complaint alleging that he assaulted his domestic partner, also a member of Acoma Pueblo, by repeatedly striking her in the head with a wooden rolling pin on Oct. 10, 2012. The assault allegedly occurred in Acoma Pueblo. According to court filings, the victim sustained numerous injuries, including three lacerations to the head that had to be stapled closed, as a result of the alleged assault.

The indictment charges Valley with domestic assault by a habitual offender; assault resulting in serious bodily injury; and assault with a dangerous weapon. According to the indictment, Valley previously had been convicted of the following offenses: (1) battery on a household member in Magistrate's Court in Cibola County, N.M., in June 2005, and (2) battery against a household member in Acoma Tribal Court in May 2009.

Valley faces up to five years of imprisonment if convicted of the domestic assault by a habitual offender, and up to ten years of imprisonment if convicted of the assault charge. Valley has been in federal custody since his arrest, and remains detained pending trial of the case.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Office of Justice Services, Laguna/Acoma Agency, and the Acoma Tribal Police Department, and is being prosecuted by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney David Adams.

Charges in criminal complaints and indictments are merely accusations. All criminal defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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