



PRESS RELEASE

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**TOHLAKAI, N.M., MAN SENTENCED TO 41 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR
ASSAULTING WOMAN WITH A BASEBALL BAT**

ALBUQUERQUE – This morning in federal court in Santa Fe, N.M., **Ervin Yazzie**, 34, a member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Tohlokai, N.M., was sentenced to a 41-month term of imprisonment to be followed by three years of supervised release for his assault conviction.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Yazzie was arrested on May 3, 2011, on a criminal complaint alleging that he assaulted an unarmed Navajo woman with a baseball bat on July 17, 2008. The assault occurred in the vicinity of the Twin Lakes Chapter House, which is located in the Navajo Indian Reservation. Yazzie has been in federal custody since his arrest.

According to court filings, Yazzie repeatedly struck the victim in the face and head with the bat during the attack. The victim suffered life-threatening injuries as a result of the assault and had to be airlifted to the University of New Mexico Hospital where she was comatose and remained in the intensive care unit for approximately three weeks.

On May 25, 2011, Yazzie was indicted and charged with (1) assault with a dangerous weapon, and (2) assault resulting in serious bodily injury. On October 20, 2011, Yazzie entered a guilty plea to Count 2 of the indictment, charging him with assault resulting in serious bodily injury. In his plea agreement, Yazzie admitted attacking the victim with a baseball bat and striking her on the head numerous times before fleeing. As required by the plea agreement, Count 1 of the indictment was dismissed after Yazzie was sentenced.

The case was investigated by the Crownpoint Division of the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety and the FBI, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Mark T. Baker and Presliano A. Torrez.

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