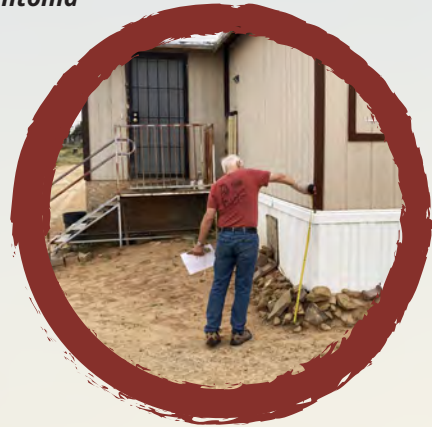


# FROM THE COMMUNITY

"Very grateful to Red Feather for assisting me with a water heater. I am so pleased that there was an organization out there to assist us in times of need. Being on a fixed income, I was wondering how I was going to finance and buy a new water heater and someone informed me to maybe reach out to Red Feather. I was a bit reluctant at first because I never ask for assistance. I tried to do my best to stretch and save to purchase new items, but am so pleased and grateful that Red Feather assisted me. Thank you Red Feather!"

-Miltonia



## VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUT

Larry Spade and his team from SAWS ([sawsramps.org](http://sawsramps.org)) have been a vital partner in our work building and installing ramps for those who need safe access to their homes. Always focused, effective and bonified ramp experts, Larry and the SAWS team have helped us get ADA-compliant ramps built and installed for elders and others across both Hopi and Navajo communities, reducing elder falls and centering access and accessibility for all.

## THE BIG PICTURE

**Honoring traditional ecological knowledge is critical  
A meaningful step forward for nation-to-nation relationships**

Chief Kirk Francis Senior reflects on President Joe Biden's announcement "Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Federal Decision Making" regarding an initiative to honor and incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into federal action.



This article was originally published in the opinion section of Indian Country Today on Dec. 13, 2021. Author Kirk Francis, Senior is chief of the Penobscot Indian Nation, a member nation of the Wabanaki Confederacy. He is also president of the United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) Sovereignty Protection Fund. [Read the full article at www.indiancountrytoday.com](http://www.indiancountrytoday.com)

"Indigenous peoples have coexisted with the lands of the Americas since time immemorial. Our existence is inextricably intertwined with our homelands. Our lands are the foundation and heartbeat of who we are as a people and as such, we have tended to them with the utmost respect and reverence. We have lived sustainably in our ancestral homelands for countless generations, relying on our traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), a body of information built upon observations, experiences and lessons derived from living in a sustainable manner with the natural environment.

Our traditional ecological knowledge systems evolve out of a spiritual framework that acknowledges humans are a part of nature, that there are interconnections among all things, and because of this, humans have responsibilities to live in harmony with all of creation.

Traditional ecological knowledge worldview and lifeways have been passed from one generation to the next, often in oral traditions in which elders transmit important traditional knowledge — including ecological knowledge — reflecting discovery, practical application and best practices for sustainability. Traditional ecological knowledge is a practice that promotes environmental stewardship and sustainability through relationships between humans and environmental systems that have evolved over millennia, continue to evolve, and have been passed from generation to generation.

Since each sovereign tribal nation has its own scientific and resource management entities, it is also important that they exist on a level playing field with federal, university or state-sponsored scientific communities, with respect to data usage, funding for essential programming and autonomy in consultation that respects cultural and practical needs."

Read the full article at <https://indiancountrytoday.com/opinion/honoring-traditional-ecological-knowledge-is-critical>

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# RED FEATHER

Newsletter Winter 2022

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FROM THE GROUND  
VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUT  
EVERYONE DESERVES  
A HEALTHY HOME  
THE BIG PICTURE  
FROM THE COMMUNITY  
PROGRAM METRICS

## INSIDE:

**HELP US GET HOMES WINTER READY!**  
THANKS TO A GENEROUS GIFT FROM ANNA AND LARRY BENNETT, RED FEATHER HAS DEVELOPED AN ELECTRICAL PANEL UPGRADE FUND TO MAKE SURE ALL HOMES QUALIFY FOR EFFICIENT HEATING AND COOLING OPTIONS. MINI-SPLIT DUAL HEAT AND COOLING PUMPS CAN KEEP HOME TEMPERATURES STABLE AND REDUCE ILLNESS AND DEATHS FROM EXPOSURE.

## GIVE NOW AND DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT!

THE BENNETT'S WILL MATCH ALL GIFTS TO THIS FUND UP TO \$2000! SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW OR VISIT [WWW.REDFEATHER.ORG/ELECTRICALFUND](http://WWW.REDFEATHER.ORG/ELECTRICALFUND) TO CONTRIBUTE, AND MAKE SURE NO ONE MISSES OUT ON SAFE AND EFFICIENT HEATING THIS WINTER.

You can send check donations to PO Box 907, Bozeman, MT 59771.  
Please note that the donation is for the electrical upgrade fund on the check.  
Scan QR code to donate now or visit [www.redfeather.org/electricalfund](http://www.redfeather.org/electricalfund)



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@redfeatherdevelopment



Red Feather Development Group



# From The Ground



**ROY LEE HOSTEEN**  
4-Corners Program Coordinator



**Finding this path:**

"After I retired from my former life in the mining industry, I had daydreams where I thought it would be great to win the lottery and go out and help families. Just give them a hand, maybe even get them a new stove, or a roof. Just whatever they needed to give them that motivation that comes from getting a little help, getting a boost.

"That was my retirement daydream before joining Red Feather, but it sort of faded away. Then I interviewed with Red Feather, joined the team, and when we started working in homes again after COVID, that dream sort of came back to me. As far as becoming a millionaire, I didn't get that part of my dream, but I got to the part of helping people, I'm just spending someone else's money. And when I realized that I had this moment of just "wow, the essence of my dream did come true", so that was pretty exciting.

"And I just keep thinking about the next family we are going to help. Because I've seen the benefits of what we do. I've helped people who were truly just scraping by, I've had clients come to me and say "we didn't know how we were going to make it" and I've seen people just break down, just be so grateful because no one else was coming out to just give that little bit of help to get over a hump.

"And then we started the 4-Corners Weatherization and Stove Swap Out Program, and we kept running into these issues for people, where they had a mold problem, or a stove leaking CO2, or bad water heater, and they wouldn't qualify for weatherization because of this. So I went back to the team with this problem, and that's when we approached NTEC (Navajo Transitional Energy Company). Their Community Benefit Fund gave us a grant specifically for this issue. So we had money to go in and fix these problems, help people pass their audits, and then get full weatherization on their homes or get new stoves. When that happened, it was like "Wow- now we can get people what they really need.

"It was phenomenal. Red Feather has been a lifeline to a lot of families. When I go out and see homes that are in need of service, I say "We are here to serve. We are here to help." That 'we' includes people from outside the reservation, from outside the community. All the donations that we get from people all over the world, this is so generous. People are so grateful. I get the gratitude from our clients every day for this type of help that comes from people from all over."

**Keeping the balance:**

"I immerse myself in this, in helping families. For awhile I got very immersed in it, it was even taking over my weekends, evenings, early mornings. When that happened I had to pull back a bit, so I could approach this program with the happy attitude it deserves, and not go down that road of over-working myself. It's easy to get so immersed when you are doing such important work. But now I really take the time to refresh myself. I don't take calls after five. I need my own time. I need time with my wife. She is also a huge part of what makes it possible for me to do this work. Her support makes me able to do what I do.

**Remembering the motivation:**

"One of the reasons this work is so important to me, one of the things that drives me, is that my late uncle, he used to be a medicine man. He used to say, "We, we as human beings, we invite ourselves into the home of a fire." Meaning that fire is the thing that stays in the house. Being human, having vehicles, we go here and there. But the fire doesn't, it stays in the home keeping the house warm even while you are gone. It's the hot water, the electricity, keeping everything working in the house.

## We are guests in the home of fire and water: INTERVIEW WITH 4-CORNERS PROGRAM COORDINATOR ROY LEE HOSTEEN

"It is the same thing with water. It holds the home, and humans are just visitors into the homes of these two elements. This came from my elderly uncle, and he always said "Just keep in mind that we are just visitors." That just always stuck with me.

**Working with fire and ash:**

"How I see home is a place of fire. The idea of teaching families about their new woodstove, teaching them about how to get a clean burn, how to work with wood and smoke, it's so rewarding. Some people just don't have that perspective, or they think "Look, it's just a fire, I didn't think there was more too it." But learning about woodstoves, how the wood burns, turns to gas, which is the smoke, and then burns again, to give us heat, this is alchemy. It requires knowledge and care.

"The same way with the ash. When we deliver new stoves I always ask people, "Where do you put your ash?" and I tell them, if they have kids or others dump the ash, to always make sure it goes in a proper place. Because I have seen situations where ash was taken out with embers still in it, and the wind got hold of it, and it set the house on fire. This has happened to several homes I know of. So this is one of those safety things that I always remind people about. We need to remember to tell our kids and grandchildren this. Same with stove safety and stove care. I always remind people not to burn trash, not to use cardboard to start the fire. Yes, it might not seem like it makes a difference at first, but if you treat your stove that way, it won't work as well, it will break down. It's like taking care of a car. If you want it to continue to work for you, you have to do the maintenance. This is how we take care of the fire in the long term.

**Creating safety in every home:**

"I was a project manager in the mining industry, and when I retired, I kept that idea of "safety first always". We live by that in the mining industry, and it is the same in this work and this program. We are so lucky to have this contractor we are working with [for the 4-Corners Program]. They are just so amazing. Every home we go into they check for CO2 leaks, look for safety issues, check every appliance in the home. This is that "safety first" mentality, and it's so important to everything we do. When it comes to the old stoves I see, I mean, it's a losing battle for a lot of people. Some of them are barely holding together, and that's truly unsafe. So to get a new stove, and have everything there, the whole chimney kit, it's a really amazing gift to be able to give people.

**How the dream grows:**

"I was talking to my nephew, and he said his brother-in-law fixes and cleans pellet stoves. So I said to him, "This would be a great business for him, because we have numerous clients who need their stoves cleaned out. If you get yourself certified, you could have a full business with this." So employment for others, creating more jobs, that's the broader circle. That's the next dream, the next level of these concentric circles going outwards, Red Feather's work expanding and making bigger change. And then it's really having the tribal government, the tribe itself also join these efforts, see the importance of what we do and say "We will and are joining you in creating healthy homes for everyone on the reservation."

**Joy in completing the work:**

"What brings me the biggest joy around all of this? Sense of completion. Sense of completion for others. Something is done and done well."

## EVERYONE DESERVES A HEALTHY HOME

**Bridging the Digital Divide with the Power of the Sun**

Thanks to a recent grant from the Arizona Community Reinvestment Collaborative and a generous donation from Goal Zero, Red Feather is helping bridge the digital divide for Hopi and Navajo families living off-grid or currently waiting for electrical hook-up. During lockdowns we heard stories of families driving long distances to the nearest McDonald's to charge the laptops they needed for work or school, or attending school virtually from inside the car in order to charge their laptop from the car battery. With an estimated 30% of homes on the Hopi and Navajo reservations still without power, lack of electricity can make accessing the digital world challenging. The ACRC jumped in with grant funding to get 30 solar charging units into off-grid homes, and Goal Zero, the manufacturer of top-of-the-line portable solar power units matched this purchase, bringing solar-powered charging to 30 more families.



Thanks to GOAL ZERO for their matching gift and generous support of this project!



## PROGRAM METRICS

ELDERS RECEIVING AGING IN PLACE INPUTS THANKS TO THE **AARP** COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT SO TRIBAL ELDERS CAN SAFELY AGE AT HOME:

15+

MAJOR HOME REPAIRS OR SAFETY RENOVATIONS CARRIED OUT LAST YEAR:

70

FAMILIES WE WILL HELP WITH MAJOR HOME WEATHERIZATION TO PREPARE FOR WINTER THIS YEAR:

250

HEPA FILTERS AND ENERGY SAVING KITS DISTRIBUTED TO FAMILIES THANKS TO SUPPORT FROM THE NORTHERN ARIZONA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS:

140+

