



INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY

Digital. Indigenous. News.

E-Weekly Newsletter - October 3, 2018



Sharice Davids at her campaign office.
(Photo via Twitter)

The National Republicans Congressional Committee cancelled \$1.2 million worth of campaign advertising that would have supported the incumbent

Sharice Davids gets a boost of sorts ... from Republicans

By Mark Trahant

Sharice Davids gets a boost of sorts ... from Republicans.

The National Republicans Congressional Committee cancelled \$1.2 million worth of campaign advertising that would have supported the incumbent, Rep. Kevin Yoder in Kansas. The Hill newspaper said it's a sign "that Republicans are pessimistic about Yoder's chances of holding his Kansas City-area district."

Yoder is still getting support from other conservative groups. The Hill said the Congressional Leadership Fund has spent about \$1.8 million on television advertisements on Yoder's behalf. And the group still has \$750,000 booked in the Kansas City media market for the election's final four weeks.

Read about Davids and other Natives running for election [here](#)

Inside this week's issue of Indian Country Today

#NativesInTech
Native woman becomes one of seven profiled by Google for company's 20th birthday

#IndigenousPeoplesDay
Celebrations in New York and Los Angeles highlighted

#NativeVote18
Native voters can be the difference in at least 20 congressional districts

Hacking her way past Google

By Jourdan Bennett-Begaye Indian Country Today E-weekly Newsletter October 3, 2018 Page 2



Robin Maxkii- Google Search On video screenshot.

A computer science journey from Diné College to the White House

Robin Maxkii remembers sitting at a computer in the library. She was not yet 11. There was a time limit for computer use, but she needed more time on the computer. Did we mention, she was 11? The computer was s-l-o-w, Windows 98.

So Maxkii opened the start menu. Click. Click. Click. No. More. Timer.

“To me that was a very empowering feeling of ‘Did I just do this?’ I wanted this to happen and I just did it. I only did it because I was looking around,” she said. “I’m chasing that feeling now when I’m coding.”

People typically tell her that her first hack wasn’t a hack. She argues it was. It was the first time she told a computer what to do.

Back then, Maxkii, Stockbridge and Mohican, wanted to understand how to code so she can make her blogs look “pretty.” She had no money so she taught herself HTML.

Now Maxkii is one of the seven faces for Google’s Search On [documentary series](#) that celebrates the company’s 20th birthday, including the [homepage](#).

In the 6-minute [video](#), the Native American Journalism fellow talks about her journey in higher education, especially at tribal colleges, and how it led her to her last internship in Washington, D.C., with the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s SciLine, a news service that provides journalists with scientific expertise.

She attended Diné College in Tsaile, Arizona, for her dual associate degrees. After she obtained her bachelor’s degree in information technology and psychology from Salish Kootenai College on the Flathead Nation in Montana.

Finish reading profile on Maxkii [here](#)

Take That Columbus!

Fourth Annual Indigenous Peoples Day celebration in New York

By Vincent Schilling

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9 Indigenous organizations will gather in New York to unify and bring awareness to Indigenous People's Day on Oct 7 & 8

On October 7 and 8 a consortium of 9 Indigenous organizations will gather in the New York City area to unify and bring awareness to Indigenous People's Day, traditionally celebrated as Columbus Day.

These nine Indigenous organizations coming to the New York area are the American Indian Community House, the Redhawk Native American Arts Council, the United Confederation of Taino People, the Kechiwa Nation, the Halawai, the Naoiwi, Shinnecock Cultural Arts and the Ramapough Nation.

The celebration in New York City follows the recognition of other major cities and states across the country to include San Francisco; Los Angeles; Alaska; Vermont; Multnomah County, Oregon; St. Paul, Minnesota; Olympia, Washington; Traverse City, Michigan; and Albuquerque, and Sandoval County in New Mexico.

"These localities have all replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day, banding together to call on Americans to re-think who, and what Columbus Day symbolizes to Indigenous people of the Americas," says organizer Cliff Matias of the Redhawk Native American Arts Council.

"On Columbus Day weekend in 2015 for the first time ever in NYC, 6,000 Indigenous people and their supporters gathered on Randall's Island to celebrate the 523 year survival of First Nations cultures and traditions. The event received worldwide media coverage and was the beginning of creating Indigenous Peoples Day in NYC."

"In 2018, we once again will be rethinking Columbus Day with a focus on Indigenous people, their beautiful cultures and traditions. This free two day celebration will be hosted on the beautiful Harlem River field in front of the Icon Stadium on Randall's Island," said Matias.

For more information about the New York celebration [click here](#). Find out what Grammy-winning group will be joining Redbone for the Los Angeles celebration by clicking [here](#)



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 the stories of the week?**

Don't forget to watch the
 Indian Country Today weekly video
 news report every Friday with
 Associate Editor Vincent Schilling

Watch last week's (September 28) [here](#)

'Our relatives are calling for help' – Northwest Tribes stand up for dying Orcas

By Frank Hopper

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Transient killer whales near Unimak Island, eastern Aleutian Islands, Alaska.
(Photo by Wikipedia)

J-35 or Tahlequah, was a young orca mother who pushed the lifeless body of her newborn calf in front of her for 17 days

To researchers she is J-35. To the Native people of the Salish Sea she is Tahlequah, the young orca mother who pushed the lifeless body of her newborn calf in front of her for 17 days.

The birth and death of the baby on July 24 coincided with this year's Tribal Canoe Journey, the Paddle to Puyallup, and many took Tahlequah's extended public grieving period as a sign to coastal Native people that their relatives from under the water were calling for help.

On September 13, just a month and a half after the baby's death, another orca from the same pod was declared dead. J50, known as Scarlett, died of malnutrition. Another death earlier in the summer of a young male, Crewser, J-92, brings the number of Southern Resident Killer Whales in Puget Sound down to just 74.

On September 24, the Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery and Task Force, formed last March by Gov. Jay Inslee, released a draft report with recommendations for addressing the issue. It focuses on restoring Chinook salmon populations, which are the Southern Resident Killer Whales' main food source, reducing the noise impacts of vessels and reducing pollution.

The flurry of publicity generated by Tahlequah and her baby and the deaths of Crewser and Scarlett have moved many tribes in the Northwest to action. The Lummi attempted to feed salmon to the ailing Scarlett in August without success. Rallies and prayer ceremonies honoring the orcas who died have been held by tribes and environmental groups from all over Puget Sound. Also, Gov. Inslee's task force includes representatives of the Makah, Colville, Squaxin Island, Suquamish, Skokomish, Lummi, Spokane, Port Gamble S'Klallam and Samish tribes.

Although the causes of the orca deaths are complex and multifaceted, the Native people of Puget Sound, part of the Salish Sea, know what the main problem is. The orcas need food.

To finish reading the story, [click here](#)

Twenty congressional districts where #NativeVote18 could make all the difference

By Mark Trahant

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Rep. Don Young, R-Alaska, meeting with Interior Assistant Secretary Tara Sweeney. (Photo via Facebook)

There are at least 20 congressional districts where the Native Vote tops one percent of potential voters

Consider Arizona's 1st Congressional District: It's the most Native-centric district in the country, nearly a quarter of the voters are also tribal citizens.

The district was once considered a toss-up. It has been represented by both Republicans and Democrats in recent years. But now the district is rated by the Cook Political Report (as well as other observers) as "likely Democratic."

Across the country this is the kind of district where the demographics suggest a future primary challenge. It's the kind of district where an older, white Democrat will eventually be replaced by younger, and in this case, Native politician. (Indeed: Two Native women have already run in the Democratic primary, Wenona Benally, Navajo, and Mary Kim Titla, San Carlos Apache. And on the Republican side, Carlyle Begay, Navajo, was a challenger in this district two years ago.)

When, not if.

Yet on Election Day the Arizona 1st Congressional is still a district where the Native vote is critical to the outcome. The reason the Arizona 1st is considered "likely Democratic" is that Native American voters have spoken before in big numbers. In Apache County, for example, where most of the voters are Navajo, Rep. Tom O'Halleran, a Democrat, earned nearly two-thirds of the vote two years ago. The next county over, which includes Flagstaff, was much closer (even though O'Halleran won that, too). The Native vote is decisive because it's a bloc vote. And in practical terms, this means that Republicans won't spend the money required to make this race competitive. It's not worth the investment.

To read more on Trahant's Midterm Election coverage, click [here](#)



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Register today for the Indigenous Trauma and Resilience Conference, October 15–17, 2018, at the Treasure Island Resort & Casino in Welch, MN.



Check out our latest #NativeNerd column in Indian Country Today By Vincent Schilling

This week's column:

#NativeNerd on The Walking Dead: There is a Native Zombie connection



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Women say man charged in Ashley Johnson-Barr's death had sexual assault history

By Vincent Schilling

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One of Wilson's cousins says he had "raped her more than 40 times" in 1996 when she was 12 and Wilson was 18

Peter Wilson, the 41-year-old man charged with kidnapping, sexually assaulting and strangling the 10-year-old Kotzebue girl, Ashley Johnson-Barr, had a history of sexual assault and rape according to two women relatives who spoke to reporters at the [Anchorage Daily News](#).

Relatives of Wilson have disclosed to the Daily News that he had begun a pattern of rape and sexual abuse of young girls decades before this incident with Ashley Johnson-Barr.

One of Wilson's cousins told the Daily News that he had "raped her more than 40 times" in 1996 when she was 12 and Wilson was 18.

The cousin described the first attack. "I was fighting him and trying to get him off of me so he choked me," she said. The cousin also said the initial attack led to a four-month nightmare of rapes and beatings in the remote Northwest Arctic Borough village of Kiana.

Wilson's younger sister, Albertha Wilson, told the Daily News that on another occasion Peter Wilson sexually abused her and another child. "I know lots of sexual predators are going to read (this) and I want to tell them all, they won't get away with it no longer," Albertha Wilson said. "I'm making a stand."

Albertha Wilson told the Daily News she was three when Peter Wilson sexually abused her and another child when they had lived in Anchorage when Peter Wilson had been babysitting. In later years, Albertha said Peter had called and apologized.

Prior to the death of Ashley Johnson-Barr, the 10-year-old Peter Wilson is charged with murdering, Albertha Wilson said to the Daily News that she did not think her brother was capable of killing someone.

"I swear to God I didn't. Just because I'm his sister, I kept telling myself he wouldn't kill a little baby," she said. "But everything else that happened, it all made sense. He did it to us when we were babies."

To finish reading article by Schilling, click [here](#)

Thanks For Reading!

Indian Country Today

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