

Alhambra and Blackhat.

President signs bill to design new animal shelter

By Vida Volkert

Staff writer

eastnavajo@gallupindependent.com

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye signed legislation to approve supplemental funding in the amount of \$255,000 for the design and construction of an animal shelter in Crownpoint.

“The resolution has been signed and returned to Office of the Speaker,” Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez said.

The legislation was originally approved by the Navajo Nation Council during the summer session in July, after Navajo Nation Animal Control Program Manager Glenda Davis pleaded for funds to start designing a shelter that would serve as a model for four more shelters across the reservation.

Old, dilapidated shelters

Davis told the council the current shelters are old and nearly dilapidated or condemned. In

See Animal shelter, Page 5

Animal shelter

Continued from Page 1

addition, the program is understaffed with only six animal control officers covering a territory the size of West Virginia, or about 27,000 square miles.

Davis reported an estimated 10,000 animals are impounded, euthanized and disposed of off the Nation over a five year period at an average save rate of nine percent. Davis said the current shelters do not

have the capacity to hold that number of animals for more than a day.

Davis said she has put together a team to help identify funding sources to apply for matching funds to build the new facilities. The plan is to use the shelters to house animals under impoundment or quarantine and to provide for animal vaccinations, microchips, spay/neuter and animal adoption on the Navajo Nation.

Number of strays continues to rise

Navajo Nation Animal Control authorities estimate there are between 250,000 and 450,000 stray or unwanted dogs roaming the Navajo reservation.

The dog population continues to increase despite efforts from tribal and McKinley County authorities and partners to try to reduce it through low-income and free spay and neuter clinics.