



BLACKFEET NATION

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Blackfeet Tribal Member Found Deceased While Working on the Maple Springs Fire in North Carolina

Press Release

Contact:

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Browning MT – The Bureau of Indian Affairs is saddened to announce the death of, Darryl Elden Vielle, a member of the Blackfeet Camp Crew #3. He was found deceased in his room on the morning of November 30, 2016 at the Phillips Hotel in Robbinsville, NC. When found, CPR was administered by local emergency personnel; however, it was initially determined the individual may have passed several hours earlier prior to the discovery.

The local coroner's office is expediting an autopsy to determine the cause of death and to reunite Darryl with his family in Montana.

The eight-person camp crew Darryl worked with was assigned to the Maple Springs Fire in North Carolina on Nov 10. The crew was responsible for dispensing, distributing and inventorying supplies for firefighters. They also loaded trucks, and maintained buildings to keep the Incident Command Post clean and organized.

Logistics Section Chief, Val Norman who oversaw the Camp Crew said, "The Crew's performance was exceptional, showing diligence in all aspects of their assignment."

"The Blackfeet Nation mourns the loss of Darryl and ask for prayers for his family." Stated Harry Barnes, Chairman of the Blackfeet Tribe. ". Throughout our history, members have stepped up in service to family, Tribe and country. Darryl is an example of that call to service and this unfortunate turn of events does not lessen his answering the call." Darryl is expected to return to his Blackfeet home on Monday, December 5th with an honor escort from St Ignatius provided by the Blackfeet Fire management team. Final arrangements are still being made. It will be released as soon as possible.

Darryl was 51 years old. The Blackfeet Tribe and the Bureau of Indian Affairs sends their deepest condolences to Darryl's family, friends and colleagues as well as the Blackfeet Tribal Nation. We keep them all in our thoughts during this difficult time.

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