

KATONEY Cont.

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But that pursuit had its share of road blocks. “I was always in front of Judge Kolomotitz,” he said, recalling a stretch of trouble that eventually culminated in prison time. But even in Navajo County Superior Court, waiting for sentencing, his hands kept moving, this time sketching the face of another man awaiting judgment. The man noticed and asked if he did tattoos. Katoney said that he did and he ended up tattooing him. “He scared me so much I had to do a great job,” Katoney said. He did, and the moment stuck: maybe he really could make tattooing a part of his life.

When he got out, he wanted to stay sober, stay out of trouble and build something. At AA and NA meetings, he met people willing to sit for tattoos. Word spread. Work flowed. Then, a turn: a job washing dishes at Bojo’s Gril & Sports Club on Second Street in historic downtown Winslow put him under the wing of owner John Jacobs, who handed him the side of the building as a canvas. “Paint something beautiful,” Jacobs told him. Katoney painted a few murals and then chose to paint one of Frida Kahlo.

One afternoon, a woman walked in asking who’d painted the mural. That woman was Jhane Myers, a Native artist and film producer. She commissioned a Kahlo portrait and the calls started coming. The Heard Museum in Phoenix. The Oakland Museum of Art. Galleries. Commissions. An auction at the Heard Museum saw a painting of his go for \$3,000 and it filled him with a sense of pride and enriched his artistic purpose.

He opened his first tattoo shop above Bojo’s, a word-of-mouth operation. When it closed, he bounced between



Photo by Shawn White
This mural of Frida Kahlo on Bojo’s Gril & Sports Club created by Yancy Katoney brought even greater attention to his artist abilities.

other shops, all while painting murals across town: Shorty’s Olde Town Grill, Captain Tony’s Pizza, the new RT Rentals building. Each job, each connection brought people like Andrew Payne at RT Rentals championing his work and pulled him closer to a dream: owning his own place again one not in some cramped closet but one with big windows where people passing by could see the work being done.

That dream became the Spotted Toad Tattoo Shop, named for the creature he sees as his personal emblem, a figure that’s hopped its way through his psyche for years. His landlord is John Suttman, a respected local artist whose encouragement has made the space feel less like a lease and more like an alliance.

And then came an unexpected full-circle moment: Randall and Cheri Sahmie, longtime friends and fellow



Photo by Shawn White
Tattoo artist and painter Yancey Katoney sits inside his Spotted Toad Tattoo Shop at Broken Focus Studio in Winslow, the creative space he now shares with fellow Native artists Randall and Cheri Sahmie.

Native artists, were searching for a space for their art workshop. Suttman mentioned he’d already rented to a tattoo artist, without naming names. They knew instantly it had to be Katoney. They called him. They had an idea: why not put it all under one roof?

That collaboration now has a name: Broken Focus Studio. Its doors will be open to the public from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., beginning Saturday, Aug. 23, at 200 W. Second St. in Winslow.

While Katoney’s path to this moment is remarkable in its own right, the Sahmies’ journey through the art world is every bit as winding and vivid. Their story will follow in next week’s Tribune, the second chapter of how three friends built a shared native-owned creative space in the heart of downtown Winslow.



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Heber businessman arrested on allegations of sexual misconduct

On July 17, Navajo County Sheriff’s Office deputies responded to a report of a sexual offense in the Overgaard area. The initial report included allegations against local business owner Joseph Riccardi, 68, of Heber, owner of New York Eats and Treats. Detectives immediately initiated an investigation into allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor.

On Aug. 8, deputies responded to a separate report from Riccardi indicating he was in crisis and in possession of a firearm. Deputies made contact and were able to safely secure Riccardi and the firearm without

incident.

Following further investigation and the execution of a search warrant, Riccardi was interviewed and arrested for sexual exploitation of a minor and sexual conduct with a minor. He was booked into the Navajo County Jail and is being held on a \$25,000 cash-only bond.

Sheriff David Clouse stated, “The Navajo County Sheriff’s Office takes all allegations involving crimes against minors with the utmost seriousness. Protecting our most vulnerable and ensuring offenders are held accountable is a top priority. We remain



Joseph Riccardi
committed to seeking justice for victims and maintaining the safety and trust of our community.”



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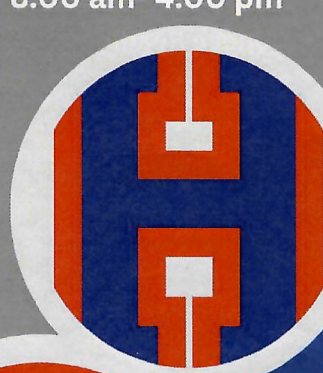
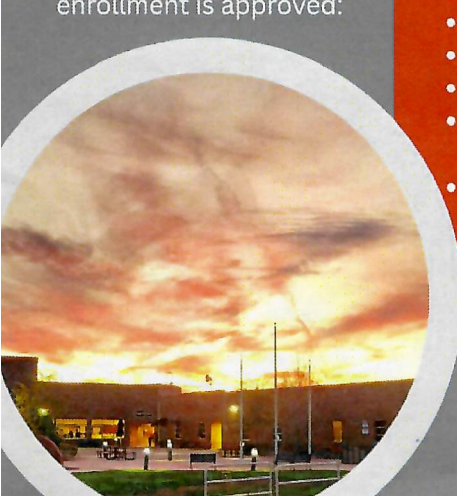


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