

Celebrations continue for Navajo Code Talkers Day

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 18 August 2017 12:28



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – “Aug. 14 is Navajo Code Talkers Day and we celebrate with our warriors, our families, and our friends,” President Russell Begaye said. “We will be forever grateful for their service and dedication.”

During World War II, Navajo Code Talkers used Diné Bizaad to develop an unbreakable code for the United States Marine Corps and helped bring an end to war in the Pacific theater.

“The Navajo people continue to honor our Navajo Code Talkers as true American heroes,” said Vice President Jonathan Nez. “We honor your warrior spirit and the power of Diné Bizaad whenever we speak our language. Thank you for your sacrifice.”

Our code talkers fought with valor despite the fact that the government tried to systematically eradicate our language and culture. They fought in some of history’s most gruesome battles despite the knowledge that American soldiers might mistake them for Japanese soldiers.

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These men knew the risks. These men knew the irony and frustration with a federal government who suddenly valued our language. Yet they fought and they helped anyway for a cause greater than themselves.

Navajo Code Talkers Day began with a 5K run, in which Nez and 80 others participated in, and the annual Navajo Code Talkers Day parade.

During the ceremony, Begaye delivered the welcome address, the National Young Marines laid the wreath at the Window Rock Veterans Memorial, and the National Veterans Executive Committee presented our code talkers with the National Veterans Award, which will be displayed for now at the Navajo Nation Museum and prominently in the future Navajo Code Talkers Museum.

We thank the Navajo Code Talkers Day Committee and the Descendants of Navajo Code Talkers for their efforts to make this event successful.

President Ronald Reagan designated Aug. 14 as Navajo Code Talkers Day on July 28, 1982. Before this date, the world was unable to acknowledge the role of the code talkers in case the language would be needed again. Sworn to secrecy, these men continued to contribute in ways beyond the battlefield as fathers, ranchers, mechanics, railroad workers, teachers, police officers and much more. Their efforts helped protect the foundation for our society today.

“The discipline, teamwork, leadership and courage exemplified by the Navajo Code Talkers and our veterans inspire confidence and success,” Begaye said. “The code talkers demonstrate to the world that our language and our culture is valuable. That it is sacred. That it can save a nation.”