

Navajo Nation honors the life of Vietnam War veteran Andrew Kelly Jr.

Written by gallupsun

Thursday, 20 October 2022 11:50

WINDOW ROCK, ARIZ. — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer issued a proclamation on Oct. 19 calling for all flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff on Oct. 21 in honor and remembrance of Vietnam War veteran Andrew Kelly, Jr., of Tuba City, Ariz., who passed away on Oct. 17 at the age of 72.

Kelly is Honágháahnii (One-Walks-Around clan) and born for Tsé deeshgizhnii (Rock Gap People). His maternal grandfather is Naakai dine'é (The Mexican Clan) and his paternal grandfather is Tł'ízí lání (Manygoats Clan).

Kelly enlisted with the U.S. Army in 1969 and served with the First Air Cavalry Division as an Army Medic with the rank of SPC4. He was awarded several medals for his service in the Vietnam War, including the Silver Star, Purple Heart, Bronze Star, two Air Medals, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Commendation Medal, and Combat Infantry Badge. The Silver Star is the third highest military decoration for valor in combat.

Nez gave his condolences to Kelly's family.

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“On behalf of the Navajo Nation, we offer our condolences to the family and community of our beloved veteran, Andrew Kelly, Jr., who gave of himself throughout his life to help and serve others,” Nez said.

Kelly was one of the recipients of a home through the Navajo Veterans Housing Program.

“I, along with several of his fellow comrades, had the honor of presenting a new home through the Navajo Veterans Housing Program to Mr. Kelly,” Nez said. “He was a great warrior and defender of freedom. We honor and remember his life of service for our country and we give thanks to his children and grandchildren for sharing his life with us.”

Nez offered prayers to Kelley’s family.

“We pray that his family takes comfort in knowing that he is now with God at this time. We also thank the Navajo Hopi Honor Riders for offering their support to Mr. Kelly’s family and loved ones,” Nez said.

Andrew Kelly Jr. is the son of Andrew Kelly, Sr., who served in the United States Army in World War II and his grandfather, Charles Kelly, served the United States in World War I.

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“Mr. Kelly was loved and respected by many veterans, family, friends, and community members. We will never know the full extent of his sacrifices for our country and our people because he was such a humble person. We honor and remember him for everything he gave and for the love and support he offered to many throughout his lifetime. His legacy lives on in our hearts and memories,” Lizer said.

Kelly has five daughters and two sons, 17 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. The Navajo Hopi Honor Riders will provide a funeral escort beginning at the Summit Funeral Home in St. Michaels, Ariz. at 10 am on Oct. 21, followed by a gravesite service for Andrew Kelly, Jr. at a family plot in Sanders, Ariz.

