

## Flags to fly at half-staff to honor Navajo Code Talker

Written by Staff Report  
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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—The Navajo Nation mourns the loss of Navajo Code Talker Alfred James Peaches, who passed on Jan. 16 at Flagstaff Medical Center.

President Russell Begaye ordered flags across the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff from sunrise on Jan. 23. Peaches' passing is about a week apart from fellow Navajo Code Talker Ernest Yazhe, who passed on Jan. 12.

"The Navajo people have lost another warrior that defended freedom and the American way of life during World War II, said President Begaye. "Navajo Code Talker Alfred Peaches was a role model and hero to our great Navajo Nation.

"We unite in prayer and mourning for his family and friends," he added.

Vice President Jonathan Nez said the passing of another Navajo Code Talker is a reminder to tribal members to visit and honor the legacy of those who still carry the secret knowledge that ended the war in the Pacific Theater.

"We honor the legacy of our Navajo Code Talkers through the revitalization of our Navajo language, Dine' bizaad, which not only ended the war, but demonstrated to the world the strength and power of the Navajo language," Vice President Nez said.

He noted that the passing of a Navajo hero and warrior from his home chapter of Shonto was especially devastating.

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Peaches attained the rank of corporal during his service in the U.S. Marine Corps. He served from Nov. 1943 to May 1946 with the 29th Marines, 6th Marine Division.

He was a combat veteran of the Battles of Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands, Saipan, Guadalcanal, Iwo Jima, and the Occupation of China. Peaches also served his country again during the Korean War, where he was honorably discharged.

Born on April 28, 1925, in Shonto, Arizona, Peaches' parents were the late Adelaide Donald and Henry Peaches. Peaches is Bitter Water Clan, born for White Corn Clan. His maternal grandfather's clan is Water Edge Clan and his paternal grandfather is Zuni.

"We want to give special thanks for the care provided by the excellent staff team of nurses at Flagstaff Medical Center," said daughters Terri Peaches and Doris Ross. His sons Vernon and Albert preceded Peaches in death. Wife Jeanette Hillis Peaches, daughters Doris Ross, Terri Peaches, sons Glenn and Nathaniel Peaches, five grandchildren and one great-grandchild, survive him.

A memorial service will be held on Jan. 23 at Leupp First Presbyterian Church at 11 a.m. The Ira H. Hayes American Legion Post 84 from the Gila River Indian Community in Sacaton, Ariz. will provide color guard and the Navajo Hopi Honor Riders will escort.