



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Delegate Davis Filfred honors Navajo Code Talkers on behalf of Council



PHOTO: Council Delegate Davis Filfred speaks in honor of Navajo Code Talkers at the annual Navajo Code Talker Day celebration at the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Arizona on Aug. 14, 2016.

WINDOW ROCK – Speaking before hundreds of people on Sunday at the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Council Delegate Davis Filfred (Mexican Water, Aneth, Teecnospos, Tóítikan, Red Mesa) expressed gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council in honor and recognition of National Navajo Code Talker Day.

“Our Navajo Code Talkers went many years without being recognized for their honorable service because their actions and the code they used were classified by the federal government and they were told not to speak about their service, but we are honored to be with them today,” said Delegate Filfred. “We honor those with us today in person, and those who have passed on.”

Delegate Filfred, who enlisted with the U.S. Marine Corps in 1990 and served the United States in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm during the Gulf War, also noted that

members of the Navajo Nation Council recently passed a bill that urges the U.S. Congress to appropriate funds for the construction of a national monument in Washington D.C. to recognize the honorable service of all Navajo Code Talkers.

“We want a national monument to honor our Code Talkers and to remember the many who have gone on before us,” Delegate Filfred said, before concluding his remarks with a resounding “Oorah!” – a term commonly used among U.S. Marines to show camaraderie and mutual respect.

Several Navajo Code Talkers applauded Delegate Filfred’s comments, as they stood from their seats in the front row along with their families and loved ones.

Also in attendance were Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye, Vice President Jonathan Nez, former Navajo Nation Chairman and President of the Navajo Code Talkers Association Peter MacDonald, Sr., and Arizona Sen. Carlyle Begay (Dist. 7 – R).

Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) was also at the celebration to show support for the Navajo Code Talkers and their families.

“As a young Navajo leader born in the early 1970’s, I appreciate all the sacrifices these warriors made to end World War II, on this special day. I honor and recognize them as national treasures and we must never forget their legacy,” stated Delegate Shepherd. “They protected our way of life as Diné and the freedom that we have. I ask that we continue to pray for all of our Navajo warriors and their loved ones.”

Peter MacDonald recalled the historic proclamation signed by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan that designated August 14 as the National Navajo Code Talkers Day. In his proclamation, Reagan described it as a day dedicated to all members of the Navajo Nation and to all Native Americans who gave of their special talents and their lives so that others might live.

“I ask the American people to join me in this tribute, and I call upon Federal, State and local officials to commemorate this day with appropriate activities,” states the Reagan proclamation.

In 2007, the Navajo Nation Council passed a resolution designating August 14 as a Navajo holiday in honor of the Navajo Code Talkers.

“I want everyone to remember that this is a nationally recognized day, it is ‘National Navajo Code Talker Day,’” MacDonald stated.

The event also included a moment of silence and a 21-gun salute by the Tséhootsoóí Twin Warriors Society. Following the salute, scarlet and gold balloons were released into the air at Veterans Memorial Park, in remembrance of the many Navajo Code Talkers who have passed on.

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