



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., orders flags to half-staff in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker George Chavez, Sr.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., today ordered flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff from April 22 through April 25 in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker George Chavez, Sr., who died peacefully on Sunday. He was 85.

“The late George Chavez, Sr., was a renowned Navajo Code Talker who served the United States of America in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II with courage, honor and distinction,” President Shirley said. “Mr. Chavez endured the horrors of combat in the Pacific Theatre on the islands of Kwajalein, Marshall Islands, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima and was in a radio platoon in a forward echelon against hostile forces.”

Funeral services will be at 11 a.m. at the Farmington Civic Center on Thursday. Mr. Chavez will be laid to rest at Veterans Memorial at Memory Garden in Farmington.

Mr. Chavez was born on January 2, 1925, in Nageezi, N.M. He was Na'neesht'e'zhi' Ta'chii'nii (Charcoal-Streaked Division of Ta'chii'nii) and born for TI'aashchi'i (Red Cheek People).

Mr. Chavez joined the U.S. Marine Corps on May 28, 1943, at age 18 and was honorably discharged from as a Private First Class on Nov. 28, 1945. In recognition of his honorable service to the country, he was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and the Congressional Silver Medal.

Mr. Chavez served during World War II with the 4th Marine

Division, 25th Regiment, as a radio telephone operator.

He lived most of his life in Farmington. After returning from the war, Mr. Chavez worked many jobs including the Union Pacific Railroad, El Paso Natural Gas and Gas Company of New Mexico. He retired after 33 years of service from the Gas Co. of N.M.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Ernestine, and his children Janet Harris, Loretta Chavez, Melvin Chavez, Julia Raddatz, Winona Chavez, Alvin Chavez, George Chavez, Jr., and Lisa Sandoval, his stepchildren Nancy Chavez and Vern George. Mr. Chavez had 34 grandchildren, 30 great-grandchildren and four great-great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his son, Irvin "Merv" Chavez, his parents, Martin and Eva Chavez, sister, Laura Vigil and brothers, Neil and Herbert Chavez.

A funeral procession will be led by a motorcycle escort to Memory Gardens east of Farmington. A reception will follow interment at the Light of Life Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall, 780 Boyle Road, Farmington, NM.

Pallbearers will be Mr. Chavez's grandsons Tyson, Terrence, Craig, Micah, Mathias, Adrian Thomas, Garrett, Kyle and Hosteen Nez Sandoval.

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