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President Ben Shelly Declares August 14-19 as ‘Navajo Nation Code Talkers Week’

Window Rock, AZ—For the first time in history, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly announced today that he has issued a proclamation declaring August 14-19, 2011 as ‘Navajo Nation Code Talkers Week,’ in collaboration with ‘National Code Talkers Day.’

The Shelly-Jim Administration supports our Navajo Code Talkers Association and all veterans. “This year we support and honor our heroes, the Navajo Code Talkers for the week August 14-19, 2011 and recognize them for their bravery, the Navajo military voice code, military service and for saving countless lives,” the president said. “We are asking all our tribal members to give thanks to our warriors and to encourage families to teach our children to speak Navajo and carry on our language.”

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed August 14th as National Navajo Code Talkers Day and to express appreciation to all Native Americans who have served the United States in times of war.

“In honor of National Navajo Code Talkers Day, I ask all Americans to join us in commemorating our Navajo Code Talkers, by taking a moment to pray for our war heroes and the brave military men and women who protect all our people, our freedom and our land today,” stated President Shelly.

Navajo Code Talkers Association President Keith Little was excited to hear about the week of honor. “We are very proud and honored President Shelly has declared a commemorative week, it supports our mission and vision of bringing together people of all walks of life in unity, patriotism and freedom,” he said.

Navajo Nation Code Talkers Week kicks off with the National Navajo Code Talkers Day on Sunday, August 14 at 7:30 a.m. with a reveille and raising of the flags at Navajo Veterans Park in Window Rock. For more information go to: www.navajocodetalkers.org or call: 928-688-5202.

The full text of the proclamation is listed below:

Whereas, Young Navajo men, answered the call of the United States Marine Corps during World War II – Unbeknownst to them at the time, America’s best cryptographers were falling short, and as modest Navajo Marines they were able to develop from the Navajo language the most ingenious and successful code in military history. They drew upon their proud warrior tradition to brave the dense jungles of Guadalcanal and the exposed beachheads of Iwo Jima. Serving with distinction in every major engagement of the Pacific theater from 1942-1945, their unbreakable code played a pivotal role in saving countless lives, hastening the war's end and assuring success for the United State; and

Whereas, These brave and innovative Navajo Marines were sworn to secrecy until 1968 because of the significance of the military voice code that capitalized on the unique Navajo language to help the United States win World War II. They were not even allowed to discuss their accomplishments with their families and loved ones. When the secrecy surrounding the code was finally declassified and subsequent realization of the sacrifice and valor of these brave Native Americans began to emerge, they became known as the Navajo Code Talkers; and

Whereas, President Ronald Reagan in 1982 signed a presidential proclamation designating August 14th as *National Navajo Code Talkers Day* to begin the process of properly recognizing the Navajo Code Talkers and expressing appreciation for all Native Americans who have served the United States in times of war; and

Whereas, The Navajo Nation honors these American treasures and revered elders of the Navajo Nation, the few remaining Navajo Code Talkers, under the umbrella of the Navajo Code Talkers Association continue to commemorate August 14-19 with special activities that allow them to gather with their families, visit with fellow comrades and demonstrate the Marine core values: honor, courage and commitment; and

Whereas, The Navajo Nation asserts that it is in the best interests to afford due respect to the Navajo Code Talkers, all Veterans and the men and women currently serving, for their courage, sacrifices, and dedication; and

Whereas, The Navajo Nation asserts that this week is dedicated to commemorating an ancient language, a valiant people, and a decisive victory that changed the path of modern history.

Now, Therefore, I, Ben Shelly, President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim August 14-19, 2011 as “Navajo Nation Code Talkers Week,” to provide an opportunity to honor our Navajo Code Talkers and celebrate all those who served in the uniform of the U.S. Armed Forces.

ATTEST:

Signed at the Executive Office on this day of August 10, 2011

Witness my hand and the Great Seal of The Navajo Nation

Ben Shelly, President
The Navajo Nation

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