



JOE SHIRLEY, JR.
President

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Vice-President

THE NAVAJO NATION

For Immediate Release
Jan. 23, 2006

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Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., selects first gaming site, opposes proposed legislation to restrict his communications

Reports to Navajo Nation Council death of 7th Navajo soldier fighting in Iraq

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz – In his State of the Navajo Nation address, President Joe Shirley, Jr., today announced his selection of the first Navajo community to host a casino, said he would veto legislation that would restrict his authority to speak to governments and reported the death of the seventh Navajo soldier to die in the War on Terror.

“It saddens my heart to once more report that we lost another Navajo soldier on Friday,” Dr. Shirley said on the opening day of the winter session of the Navajo Nation Council. “I ask that you pray for his family and all of our soldiers fighting in this war.”

The President reported that U.S. Army Sgt. Clifton Yazzie, 23, of Fruitland, N.M., was killed Jan. 20. He was married to Michelle Yazzie and was the father of two children, Chaynitta, 3, and Cayden, 18 months.

At the end of his address, the President took time to recognize John L. Tsosie, founder of the Walking the Healing Path Project. In 1994, Mr. Tsosie organized, participated in and completed a 330-mile trek from Window Rock to Phoenix and from Chinle to Santa Fe to raise awareness about and against “the monster of Domestic violence.”

Attending the council session to present a report was Congressman Rick Renzi, who represents District 1 which includes the Navajo Nation.

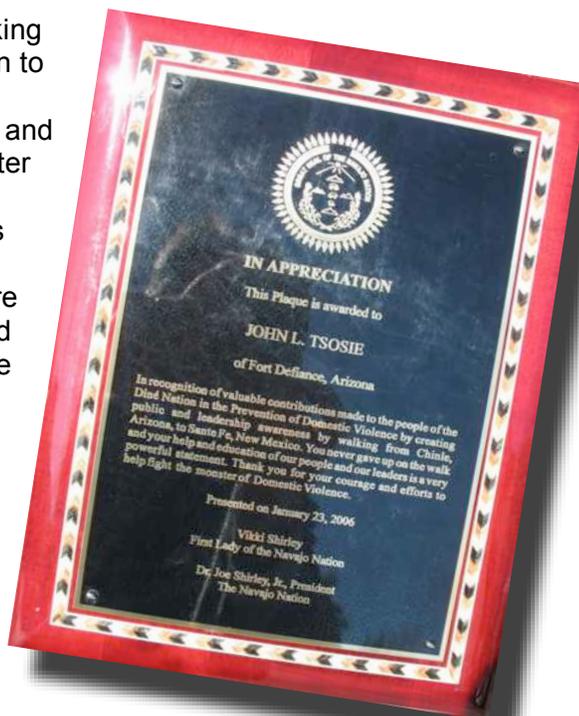


President Shirley and First Lady Vikki Shirley presented a Pendleton rode and plaque to John L. Tsosie in recognition of his efforts to educate the public and leadership about the epidemic problem of domestic violence.

The President said he selected *Nahata Dzill* to host the Navajo Nation's first casino. The area, near Interstate 40, is an excellent location, according to a market study conducted by GVA Marquette Advisors. The study analyzed and ranked locations based upon population, median household income, proximity to tourist income, proximity to competitive gaming facilities, traffic counts and accessibility, the President reported.

He said his administration is working to develop a revenue-sharing plan to benefit each of the 110 Navajo chapters, the central government and the host chapter. Each host chapter should receive impact revenues because of increased populations coming into the community which will impact road conditions, require additional housing, and waste and sanitation facilities and will require increased public safety and fire protection, he said.

On proposed legislation to require prior approval to speak on behalf of the Nation to other governmental entities, President Shirley said a responsible Council "will not attempt to silence the President and the voice of the Navajo people. The day the Council legislates to silence the President is the day the rights of the people to elect their spokesperson are violated."



The inscription on the plaque presented to John L. Tsosie reads:

"In recognition of valuable contributions made to the people of the Diné Nation in the prevention of Domestic Violence by creating public and leadership awareness by walking from Chinle, Arizona, to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

You never gave up on the walk and your help and education of our people and our leaders is a very powerful statement. Thank you for your courage and efforts to help fight the monster of Domestic Violence.

Presented January 23, 2006.

***Vikki Shirley, First Lady of the Navajo Nation.
Dr. Joe Shirley, Jr., President,
The Navajo Nation"***

The President said also reported that the Shirley/Dayish administration:

- Authorized the filing of an immediate appeal of a Jan. 11 U.S. District Court decision that would allow expansion of the Arizona Snowbowl and permit artificial snowmaking using reclaimed wastewater on the San Francisco Peaks. He said the Navajo Nation will seek an injunction to prevent any work from occurring until the appeal.
- Has assisted displaced Black Mesa coal miners who lost their jobs when the Mojave Generating Station in Laughlin, Nev., closed on Dec. 31, 2005.
- Negotiated an interim agreement with the El Paso Natural Gas Co. over its payments for a right-of-way across Navajoland.
- Is executing an agreement with a tribe in southern Arizona that would provide \$1.5 million dollars for the lease of 200 gaming machines for two years. The agreement would ensure that the Nation does not lose the ability to operate the four Arizona gaming facilities allocated to the Nation through the Arizona Gaming Compact and would provide \$750,000 to the Navajo Gaming Regulatory Office.
- Received primary enforcement authority to allow the Navajo EPA to administer the Navajo Nation Water Quality Standards and Certification Programs under the federal Clean Water Act.
- Increased Navajo police officers in the field from 191 to 349. By March 2006, 27 more officers will graduate from the Navajo Law Enforcement Academy.

- Acquired 97 new police-package vehicles for the Navajo Division of Public Safety. This is the first time ever the Nation purchased vehicles specifically manufactured for police usage, and,
- Implemented state-of-the-art technology for all police vehicles. This will allow wireless connectivity from the field offices to police officers within a one-mile radius of any of the 110 chapters. The technology will also provide instantaneous criminal background information from local, state, federal and international databases.

President Shirley spent the greatest amount of his 17 minute address speaking against proposed legislation that would require the Navajo president to seek approval from the Navajo Nation Council or its Intergovernmental Relations Committee for all matters relating to other governments and private companies.

“Obviously, this is an attempt to diminish the authority of the President and the Executive Branch,” Dr. Shirley said. “No sitting president has ever been required to seek Council approval to speak on behalf of the people.”

Such a law “would create an unconscionable amount of red tape and bureaucracy and would effectively eliminate the flow of information from the Navajo Nation to these governmental entities,” he said. “This legislation represents micro-management by a law-making body in its most flagrant form.”

He said the proposed legislation is contrary to the intent of the 1989 amendments to Title II which reformed the Navajo government structure. He said such a law would be a first step toward unraveling reforms that would further empower the Legislative Branch to control and administer Executive Branch functions, and to micro-manage the functions of the Executive Branch.

“If the intent is to do away with the position of the President,” he said, “then it should be the people who are given the opportunity to make that decision.” He said the proposed legislation “signifies a dire need for comprehensive government reform.”

In his address, he also thanked the Diné Power Authority, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority, the Women’s Commission, the Fort Defiance Chapter, and the Office of the First Lady for their charitable work during the past holiday season.

“Through their volunteer efforts, many Navajo children experienced the joy of receiving a gift at Christmastime, many elders and children received coats to endure the cold winter weather and many families received donations for a holiday meal,” the President said.

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