



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., tribal leaders join 1,500, family of the late Clint John, in march for peace, tolerance

Marchers call for peace, unity, end to racial violence and intolerance in border towns

FARMINGTON, N.M. – Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., joined Navajo, Ute, Southern Ute and Hopi leaders on Saturday, as well as 1,500 Navajos who marched for peace, unity and an end to border town racial hatred and intolerance.

Shiprock Chapter President Duane “Chili” Yazzie, one of the march’s organizer, said he was pleased with the response from people who want to see racial intolerance come to an end.

“We’d like to demonstrate to the city of Farmington, and all the bordertowns as well, that we stand in solidarity in objecting to and demanding that abuse of our Navajo people, as a result of racial violence, does not continue to happen,” he said. “We recognize that this racial violence is perpetrated by a very small minority of the non-Indian community.”

The peaceful march began on the top of Harper Hill on U.S. 64 and continued down a 1.5-mile stretch toward Farmington. Its purpose was to honor and remember victims of violence and discrimination in towns that border the Navajo Nation.

The call for the march occurred following the June death of 21-year-old Clint John of Kirtland who was shot to death by a Farmington police officer. Many of the marchers wore T-shirts and carried banners with Mr. John’s picture.

President Shirley has called for an independent investigation of his shooting.

“I really believe there really was no deadly force needed to deal with the late Clint John,” the President said at the end of the march. “Today we ask why? Why did that happen? There’s no need for that.”



Veterans are given a place of honor at the front of the parade line in recognition of the sacrifice they made in order for people to express themselves in this fashion. Following behind them are about 1,500 marchers.

“Wherever we find, hatred, wherever we find racism, intolerance, we need to deal with it harshly,” he added. “There’s is no excuse for having it. It’s inexcusable.”

The President said marches like this are good because it promotes tolerance and speaks against racism and intolerance.

“It helps us to bring to bear our concerns, whether they are related to racism, hatred, intolerance or whatever the challenges are that face each and every one of us.”

“This is a reminder to come together, to stand together, to always be the strong one and stand against racism, intolerance, disrespect, hatred, greed. If we can do that, I know we have a chance in this world,” he said.

Southern Ute Tribal Chairman Clement Frost said Native people are from the land and will always be here because it is their home.

“We are advancing as Native American Indigenous people,” he said. “We have those skills. We have those traditional values that as Indians will carry us forward. And that’s what the non-Indians must realize. We, as Indian Nations, will never go away. We will always be here.”

Ervin Keeswood, Navajo Nation Council delegate from Hogback and an organizer of the march said “the insurgency of racism today is wrong.”



Shiprock Chapter President Duane “Chili” Yazzie gives final directions and encouragement to the marchers as they prepare to head down Harper Hill on U.S. 64.

He sang a memorial song to remember all the victims of violence, including his uncle who was found in Chokeycherry Canyon in 1974, he said.

“We have the basic human right to live on our earth, the Mother,” he said. “We must not reach out in anger to those folks but we must reach out in prayer so they understand who we are as a people, *Diné*. All colors of life have a right to live on this Mother Earth of ours.”

Hopi Tribal Chairman Ivan Sidney said Native people must also develop understanding and embrace their own cultures and languages in order to perpetuate tolerance.

“When our children are in trouble, it is time to embrace them. It is not time to push them away,” he said.

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Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr. greets Southern Ute Tribal Chairman Clement J. Frost and Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Chairman Manuel Heart at the beginning of the Unity Peace March into Farmington on Saturday. Hopi Tribal Chairman Ivan Sidney also traveled from Kykotsmovi to participate.