



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

MEDIA CONTACTS

Alray Nelson, Communications Director
Kyrn Hardy, Public Information Officer
E-mail: nnlb.communications@gmail.com
Phone: (928) 565-0440

Navajo Nation honors the life of Award-winning Silversmith and former Council Delegate Victor Beck Sr.

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KAYENTA, Ariz. — Speaker Seth Damon and the 24th Navajo Nation Council offer their condolences to the family of renowned Diné silversmith, respected community leader, and former Council Delegate Victor Beck Sr., who passed away at the age of 80.

Victor Beck Sr. is Tl'izi Lani (Many Goats Clan) and born for Áshjìhi (Salt People Clan). He was born on October 2, 1941 and was originally from Pinon, Ariz. Raised on the central portion of the Navajo Nation, he served from 1979 to 1983 as the Council Delegate representing the Pinon Chapter.

“Honorable Victor Beck Sr. was a loving father, grandfather, and beloved husband who was revered in his community for his leadership and kind spirit. He regularly participated in the Santa Fe Indian Market and the Heard Museum market to showcase his award winning silversmithing skills mastered over 50 years. Beloved by all who knew him, Mr. Beck was a humble and caring man who deeply loved his family and the community he served. The Navajo people send prayers of protection to give strength to his family during this time,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh).

As an artist, he received several notable recognitions that included the Ted Charveze Memorial Award, and the Best of Division & Classification in Jewelry from the Heard Museum. In 2003, Mr. Beck was published in the Arizona Highways Magazine and was selected as an Arizona Living Treasure for his contribution in preserving Navajo culture through artwork.

“Mr. Beck will be remembered as one of the great Native American artists of this generation for his craft and mastery of contemporary silversmith work. A loving husband to his wife Eleanor, he was a supportive father and grandfather who attended Native American Church meetings with his father Clifford. Three former Navajo Nation Council Delegates were from the Beck family who served the Navajo people with utmost dignity. We offer our sincere condolences to those who loved Victor and send prayers to the Creator to bring comfort to his family,” said Council Delegate Jimmy Yellowhair (Hard Rock, Forest Lake, Pinon, Black Mesa, Whippoorwill).

Mr. Beck started silversmithing after taking classes at Northern Arizona University and SUNY-New Paltz in the early 1970s. As a Council Delegate, he assisted in the establishment of the Piñon Unified School District and advanced legislation to create the Whippoorwill Chapter House.

“We have lost a great Diné man who contributed years of public service to the communities he served. Victor and Eleanor Beck have always extended Ké to me and everyone they met. They remind me of our Diné parents’ teachings to learn from our elders and asked me to learn their

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prayers because when they are no longer here one day, we would continue to pray their prayers. And for me to learn their teachings so I would speak their words when they were no longer here. It is a great honor knowing his artwork will be represented through his jewelry around the world. On behalf of the Navajo Nation, we express our deepest condolences to the Beck family and may our prayers keep them strong,” said Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Dennehotso, Kayenta, Chííłchinbii’tó).

Victor Beck Sr. was laid to rest on Monday. He is survived by his children, Kehazbaa Beck, Nanibaa Beck, Victor Beck Jr., his sisters Mary Lucy Beck, Emily Begay, Marilyn Beck, and grandson Nathan Victor Benzie. The late Ester and Clifford Beck Sr. of Pinon, Ariz. were his parents.

His late wife Eleanor Beck passed away in 2016 and is remembered as a beloved matriarch who also was a silversmith and enjoyed attending Native American art shows across the country.

Council Delegate Jimmy Yellowhair and Delegate Nathaniel Brown officially presented a Navajo Nation Flag to the family to honor his years of service to the Navajo people and to the art world.

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