



The 22nd Navajo Nation Council — Office of the Speaker

Contact: Michael Wero, Communications Director

Phone: (928) 871-7160

Cell: (928) 255-3428

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

nccpress@gmail.com
www.navajonationcouncil.org

Former Navajo Nation Council Delegate Tom LaPahe Remembered as Dedicated Leader and Public Servant

Window Rock, AZ - Former Navajo Nation Council Delegate Tom LaPahe, recently retired from the 21st Navajo Nation Council and a well respected leader, died Monday after suffering a heart attack, he was 59 years old.

LaPahe served 24 years on the Navajo Nation Council as a representative of Tachee/Blue Gap, and Whippoorwill Chapters and was first elected in 1986.

I am shocked and saddened about the sudden passing of my friend and colleague, Tom LaPahe," said Navajo Nation Council Speaker Johnny Naize. "His leadership on the Council and his dedication to improve the lives of the families in the communities he represented was extremely admirable. He loved the Navajo Nation and never lost faith in the potential of its people."

While in the Council, LaPahe served on the Economic Development Committee and worked tirelessly with state and federal officials to bring various projects to his region including a shopping center, a new school, and the Pinon Health Clinic.

Current Council Delegate Nelson S. BeGaye (Lukachukai, Round Rock, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Tse Ch'izhi, Rock Point) added, "I consider him as one of the best Council Delegates the Navajo Nation ever had and was highly respected for his inspirational words, leadership, humility, determination and decisiveness. Tom served his family; people and Communities defied the odds and overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles to better his people."

When speaking during Council sessions LaPahe always commanded the floor.

"Tom was a gifted speaker and everyone listened when he spoke. He would always stand up and would be straight to the point and was very effective," observed former Council Delegate Leonard Chee. "He was an Elder and senior leader and no one made any noise when he talked."

Born in Keams Canyon, Arizona, LaPahe is Tse deezhgizhnii (Rock Gap) and born for Todich'ii nii (Bitterwater) with his maternal grandfather clan Kinyaa'aanii (Towering House) and his paternal grandfather clan Ma'iideeshgiizhinii (Coyote Pass).

Tom LaPahe is survived by his wife Louise LaPahe, children Cynthia LaPahe-Natonabah, Ryan LaPahe, Johansen LaPahe and six grandchildren.

A memorial service has been scheduled at his residence on Thursday at 10 a.m., in Whippoorwill just north of the chapter house. Donations and messages can be sent to P.O. Box 1395, Chinle, AZ 86503.

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