



25th Navajo Nation Council

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Council Delegates and advocates raise awareness about drunk driving on the first day of the Summer Session



2024 Angels vs Drunk Driving Awareness Month - Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton, Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty and Speaker Crystalyne Curley standing in solidarity with the Peshlakai Family.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. - Leading to the start of the 2024 Summer Session, Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty led an anti-drunk driving advocacy walk with parents Darlene and Dave Peshlakai who lost their two daughters in a tragic drunk driving accident.

The Peshlakai's annually host the Angels vs. Drunk Driving Awareness Walk, an event dedicated to raising awareness about the dangers of drunk driving. The Peshlakai's daughters, Deshauna and Del Lynn, were killed in a fatal drunk-driving accident in March 2010, as they were returning home from a basketball game in Santa Fe.

"Thank you to all the families who participated, this was an awareness walk for to stop drinking and driving. Thank you to everyone who walked this morning. Next welcome to our 2024 Summer Session Trail Riders!" said Speaker Crystalyne Curley, as she greeted attendees and participants of the 2024 Angels vs Drunk Driving Awareness Walk and 2024 Summer Session Trail Ride.

Council Delegate Crotty, who chairs the Missing and Murdered Diné Relatives Task Force, along with Council Delegate and Law and Order Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton, walked in support of the 25th Navajo Nation Council's commitment to enhancing safety across the Navajo Nation.

During the walk, Delegate Crotty delivered a heartfelt message to attendees and trail riders, emphasizing the need for increased policing and support for affected families.

“We helped the Peshlakai family cope with the loss of their girls who were murdered during the Santa Fe N.M. Basketball Championship. We want to ensure we provide love, support, and healing to Darlene and Dave,” stated Crotty.

During the walk, the Peshlakai family called on the 25th Navajo Nation Council to implement more sobriety checkpoints within the Navajo Nation to combat the persistent issue of drunk driving, particularly in border towns.

In front of the chamber, Council Delegates voiced their support of the family’s call for increased safety measures.

Monday’s walk began at the Navajo Nation fairgrounds and concluded at the Council Chamber, where delegates and the public greeted the participants. Darlene Peshlakai expressed a mix of sorrow and hope, saying, “Today is a beautiful day. This year there are more people than expected, which is great because we can reach more people. I want to tell my Council, there needs to be more sobriety checkpoints on the Navajo Nation.”

The loss of the Peshlakai’s daughters continues to drive the parents’ advocacy. Fourteen years after the incident, Darlene and Dave have harnessed their grief into action, organizing community events and partnering with law enforcement to stage DWI checkpoints. These efforts have resulted in numerous arrests and increased awareness about the dangers of drunk driving.

“I wanted to thank the Peshlakai Family. I’ve lost brothers to alcohol and drunk driving. I shared a similar pain; people shouldn’t drink. Don’t drink then drive. You are putting more people at risk and many loved ones,” said Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson.

As the march concluded, the family and gathered advocates spoke with the assembled leaders.

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