



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel, Sr. passes away at 107 years old



John Kinsel Sr. was one of the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The 25th Navajo Nation Council mourns the loss of Navajo Code Talker John Kinsel Sr., who died on Saturday at the age of 107.

“On behalf of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, we are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of John Kinsel Sr., one of the last remaining Navajo Code Talkers. Beyond his legacy of a warrior, he was also a proud Navajo man who upheld the values of his heritage while serving his country with distinction. As we honor his life, we extend our deepest sympathies to his family, loved ones, and the entire Navajo Nation. May his spirit rest in peace, and may his memory continue to inspire generations to come,” said Speaker Crystalyne Curley.

Kinsel served as a Navajo Code Talker in World War II in the 9th Marine Regiment and the 3rd Marine Division during the Battle of Iwo Jima. He was among the brave Navajo men who used the Diné language to develop an unbreakable code during World War II, contributing to the United States’ victory.

Kinsel was born and resided in Lukachukai, Ariz., where he grew up immersed in Navajo traditions and culture. He enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps in 1942, joining the elite group of Navajo Code Talkers who played a critical role in military communications.

The Navajo Code, based on the Navajo language, proved vital in securing U.S. military operations during World War II, particularly during major campaigns like Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, and Okinawa.

“Kinsel was a revered Navajo Code Talker and an American hero, whose legacy as a Code Talker is marked not only by his service but by his continued dedication to sharing the story of the Navajo Code Talkers with future generations,” said Council Delegate Carl R. Slater who represents the Lukachukai Chapter where Kinsel resided.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council extends prayers and condolences to Kinsel’s family and honors his service in protecting the freedom of the United States and the Navajo Nation.

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