

## END OF WATCH

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 03 February 2017 06:59

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### Deputy laid to rest like a true hero

Amid friends and family from around New Mexico and Arizona, law enforcement officers remembered Christopher Tsosie, 43, a veteran policeman with the McKinley County Sheriff's Office, who died Jan. 25 in Crownpoint as he was about to start work. He was laid to rest Feb. 1.

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The veteran officer's family mourned alongside his "brother" police officers. They wore their dress blue and grey or brown uniforms trimmed with gold. They gathered together in the Rehoboth Christian School gymnasium to celebrate and honor Tsosie's life.

There were law enforcement personnel from the Navajo Nation, the New Mexico State Police, the Pueblo of Zuni and Sandoval and Cibola counties.

"He was the kind of person that if he was faced with a bad situation, he would flip it and make it positive," Donovan Becenti, an evidence technician with the Navajo Nation Police Department, said. Becenti and Tsosie worked together for years at the Navajo Nation Police Department. "He loved where he was from (Crownpoint). Sometimes, he'd refer to himself as 'the mayor of Crownpoint.'"

The Navajo-born Tsosie, who worked in Navajo Nation law enforcement for more a little more than a decade, died of undisclosed causes. An autopsy report by the state Medical Examiner's Office should be complete in about two to three weeks, officials have said.

Still, Tsosie's effect upon co-workers and the public left lasting memories, according to the near-300 well-wishers who attended the funeral and Wednesday's End of Watch ceremony.

"Just a great, great, fantastic person," McKinley County Sheriff Ron Silversmith said. "He was the consummate professional. He was good at what he did."

McKinley County Commissioner Bill Lee described Tsosie's professional and personal approach in life in three words: courageous, caring and compassionate.

"These words speak out as to who he was," Lee said. "He spent 14 years serving the community. We have lost a great man."

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Tsosie was interred at Sunset Memorial Park along West Historic Highway 66. The city's west end area was blocked off for about 45 minutes to accommodate the lengthy funeral procession.

At the ceremony, Silversmith provided an opening prayer, Ret. Navajo Nation police officer Sandy Ramone gave the eulogy, and Gallup police officer Chavo Chischilly sang a remembrance song and played the guitar and harmonica.

"He was a great person to know and work with," Lt. Pat Salazar of the MCSO, said. "He will be missed."

***By Bernie Dotson  
Sun Correspondent***