

Navajo Code Talker Holiday walks on

Written by Staff Reports
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President, vice-president honors his legacy

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez offer their condolences to the family of Navajo Code Talker Samuel Tom Holiday, who passed away June 11 at age 94.

Born in Monument Valley, Utah, on June 2, 1924, Holiday served with the 4th Marine Division, 25th

Regiment during World War II. Part of an elite group of Marines, Holiday sent and received coded messages as he served his country in Saipan, Iwo Jima, Tinian and Marshall Island, in the Pacific Theater.

That code, based on the Navajo language, proved unbreakable and helped the United States win the war. Holiday received a Congressional Silver Medal and a Purple Heart for his service.

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“Our Code Talkers are Navajo heroes and they are national heroes,” Begaye said. “As we remember the life of Samuel Holiday, we also honor his selfless service to both the Navajo Nation and to the United States.”

After the war, Holiday made his home in Kayenta, Ariz., and worked as a police officer. He married Lupita Mae Isaac in 1954 and the two had eight children, 33 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren and two great-great grandchildren.

Holiday’s health began to fail shortly after his 94th birthday. He died Monday evening at the Southern Utah Veterans Home in Ivins, surrounded by family members—many of whom were able to travel because of donations from a GoFundMe page.

“Our sincerest condolences go out to the family of Navajo Code Talker Samuel T. Holiday,” Vice President Nez said. “He was a dedicated advocate for the youth and for health and wellness.”

The vice president said Holiday’s family would take him to the Navajo Nation Park Race Series every year, where he congratulated every finisher.

“The Navajo Nation took pride knowing we had Mr. Holiday representing our communities and we will always remember his words of encouragement and inspiration,” Nez said. “The Nation thanks Code Talker Samuel T. Holiday and his family for their service. We will keep each of you in our prayers.”

Funeral arrangements are pending.