



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**24th Navajo Nation Council salutes the
life and service of Navajo Code Talker Joe Vandever Sr.**



PHOTO: Navajo Code Talker Joe Vandever Sr. was honored Aug. 14, 2019 at the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, AZ. Vandever passed Jan. 31, 2020 at the age of 96.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Speaker Seth Damon and the 24th Navajo Nation Council send heartfelt condolences and prayers to the family and friends of the late Navajo Nation Code Talker Joe Vandever Sr. “We received word that we lost a true Navajo and American hero, Navajo Code Talker Joe Vandever Sr. Godspeed to him during his next journey,” said Speaker Damon.

Joe Vandever Sr. passed Jan. 31 at the age of 96. He was Táchii’nii (Red Running Into the Water People) born for Tó baazhni’ áazhí (They Came to the Water People). His late wife, Bessie, passed on Sept. 24, 2019. The couple was married for 73 years.

Survivors include sister Mary Vandever Delgarito; sons Gary, Tracy, Obie, Joe Jr., and Lester Vandever; daughters Beth Nez, Phegie Vandever Slim, and Sheila Vandever Nez. Vandever leaves behind 36 grandchildren, 55 great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild.

Vandever will be buried at the Santa Fe National Cemetery. He enlisted in Santa Fe March 26, 1943 and was discharged with the rank of corporal on Jan. 22, 1946. He served in combat at

the norther Solomon Islands, Bougainville, Emirau Islands, Guam, Marianas Islands, Okinawa, Ryukyus Islands, Occupation of Japan, and Occupation of China.

“The 24th Navajo Nation will provide the Vandever family with a letter of condolence and a Navajo Nation Flag to honor the honorable and faithful service of Navajo Code Talker Daniel Vandever Sr. to the Navajo people,” said Speaker Damon. He noted that the Diné Bizaad Subcommittee will be convening Feb. 3 and that they will honor the life and legacy of Joe Vandever Sr. and his contributions on saving the Navajo language.

Chairman Daniel Tso said, “It is disheartening news to hear of the loss of another Navajo Nation and U.S. national war hero. Fellow Navajo Code Talkers relayed stores of hero Joe Vandever Sr. orating protection prayers for all while in the field of battle. This is truly a value: thinking of protecting one’s fellow Navajo. Godspeed, hero Joe Vandever Sr.”

The 24th Navajo Nation Council will continue to honor and carry the memory of Joe Vandever Sr. on the Council floor.

Information: www.navajonationcouncil.org.

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