



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Community unites for 57th Annual Ééhanííh Day



Community members honor culture and heritage at the 57th Annual Ééhanííh Day Celebration in Naatsis'áán.

NAATSIS'ÁÁN, Ariz. — On Saturday, August 2, families and community members gathered at the Ééhanííh Day Grounds in Naatsis'áán for the culminating day of the 57th Annual Ééhanííh Day Celebration. This year's theme, "Traditionally, Ééhanííh Goes On," reflected the resilience of Diné communities and the importance of honoring sacred traditions. The event served as a living expression of Diné identity, woven through prayer, physical endurance, and intergenerational storytelling.

Speaker Crystalyne Curley emphasized the importance of passing on teachings to younger generations through traditional activities like running, games, and horsemanship.

"Running, riding, and playing together are not just activities, they are part of our teachings," Curley said. "In Diné culture, running is more than a physical activity—it is a spiritual discipline used to greet the sun, build discipline, and prepare the mind and body for life's challenges."

Saturday's events began at dawn with a traditional prayer and 5K run and fun walk sponsored by The Fat Family. Participants later gathered for the main arena events, including youth and adult horse races, a community honor parade, and presentations to local leaders and families.

The Recognition Ceremony began with the posting of the colors by the Naatsis'áán Veterans Organization and a rendition of the national anthem. Frank Fat led the opening prayer, and

Navajo County Supervisor Fern Benally delivered a welcome address. Parade Grand Marshals included Kent Greymountain and Jennifer Benally. Royalty representatives honored during the ceremony included Miss Northern Circle School LaXandra Warren and Miss Shonto Madison Hurley.

Guest speaker Larry Noble and facilitator Hank Stevens spoke on the enduring power of community, emphasizing the value of honoring cultural teachings through action. A special tribute was held in memory of the late Julia Fat, with her family presenting handmade quilts in her honor.

Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council Crystalyne Curley reflected on the role of Ééhanííh Day in strengthening cultural identity.

“The Ééhanííh Day celebration is more than an event, it’s a reaffirmation of who we are as Diné people. We see the strength of our culture and the dedication of our communities upholding it. These practices teach discipline, endurance, and respect—qualities our people have carried for generations”, said Curley.

The celebration continued into the afternoon with additional races, community games, and a closing prayer.

The Ééhanííh Day Celebration was made possible through the support of The Fat Family, The Neztosie Family, the North Carolina College of Veterinary Medicine, the 25th Navajo Nation Council, and Boyd Jensen and Family.

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