



Navajo Nation Council recognizes Mr. Paul Dokey of the *Tsi' Yi' Tóhí* Singers at 92

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PHOTO: Mr. Paul Dokey of Woodsprings celebrated his 92nd birthday Friday. Dokey was recognized by Council Delegate Vince James and the Navajo Nation Council for his cultural contributions as part of the *Tsi' Yi' Tóhí* (Woodsprings) Singers and for creating the song “The Treaty of 1868.”

TSI' YI' TÓHÍ (WOODSPRING), Ariz. — On Friday, Feb. 26, the 24th Navajo Nation Council recognized *Tsi' Yi' Tóhí* Singers group member Paul Dokey for his cultural contributions to the Navajo People through song and dance. The distinction was facilitated through Council Delegate Vince R. James (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kinłichii', Steamboat) who presented the recognition during Dokey's 92nd birthday.

James said Dokey is credited with the song “The Treaty of 1868.” The composition was presented to the Navajo Tribal Council in 1984 and has since become a beloved cultural round dance and two-step song.

“Mr. Dokey has done a significant service to his community of Woodsprings and the greater United States by using his wisdom as a medicine man to tell our Navajo history,” said James. “Mr. Dokey and the *Tsi' Yi' Tóhí* Singers helped put Woodsprings on the map. His song has been requested and played on the radio for years now.”

Dokey said he wrote the song in 1969 with knowledge of family and relatives who would often describe their experiences during the Navajo Long Walk.

James shared that the song's lyrics describe the Navajo Peoples' history starting at Fort Sumner where the sunrises gave them hope and motivation to continue creating opportunities for future generations.

The song continues with other significant events in Navajo history, including the contributions of the Navajo Code Talkers, meetings in Washington and the eventual development of the Navajo Nation flag.

"I want to thank Delegate James for helping me with ideas for the future and the Navajo Nation Council for recognizing me, it gives me strength going forth knowing all I can do with my songs," said Dokey in the Navajo language.

"We as Navajo have gone through a lot and we have a lot to be thankful for. We need to be able to use our prayers, land and songs to make us strong," he continued.

Dokey went on to encourage current and future Navajo people to work together to heal and learn from the past.

James added, "It is nice that we are able to come to Woodsprings for something positive this time to recognize an awesome individual's life." Last summer, the community of Woodsprings experienced a drastic forest wildfire.

Dokey was presented a plaque of recognition signed by Speaker Seth Damon and Delegate James. Video of the presentation made Feb. 26 is viewable online at the Navajo Nation Council's Facebook page: <https://fb.watch/4rrGKjXe4-/>.

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Byron C. Shorty, Communications Director, bcshorty@navajo-nsn.gov, (928) 287-2085

Timothy E. Benally, Public Information Officer, timothybenally@navajo-nsn.gov, (928) 380-6121