

**NAVAJO HOPI HONOR RIDERS, INC.**  
**PO BOX 266**  
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**928-421-1166**



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Contact: Geri Hongeva  
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Kin Łání, Az – On Saturday July 29, 2023, the Patriot Tour will be arriving at the Navajo Nation capital for the first time since it started in 2009. The flag tours the United States visiting communities to be a part of a patriotic event. One American flag, 50 states in 115 days.

Typically, the Patriot Tour will stop in Gallup, then continue westbound on I-40 into Arizona. This year, the flag will stop at the capital of the Navajo Nation visiting the Window Rock Veterans Memorial Tribal Park for a special Navajo blessing ceremony.

The Navajo Hopi Honor Riders have been selected to host this special stop on the Navajo reservation; a rider from NHHR will escort the flag from Window Rock to Winslow, Arizona. As the flag gets transferred from one rider to another, a Navajo blessing ceremony will be conducted by US Army veteran Patrick Arthur from Chichiltah. The public is welcome to attend at 10am.

The Patriot Tour is coordinated by the Nation of Patriots motorcycle group and thousands of volunteers across the United States, which started in 2009. The Nation of Patriots Arizona committee changes the route every year to honor and remember past, present and fallen veterans of all military branches. One American flag brings thousands of people in unity in so many communities.

Ollie Arviso, from Fort Defiance, Az, is a retired US Army veteran who will be escorting the flag from the Navajo Nation capital to Winslow, Az. He served 32 years and retired on December 1, 2022. Arviso served four combat tours: 2 tours to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (2003-2004, and 2004-2005). Then served 2 tours to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (2010-2011 and 2014-2015).

"It is a great honor. I am a very patriotic person and the American Flag means everything to me. Knowing what I have done for my country, and the pride I have, and now to be selected to represent and do this honor, is a blessing and privilege to carry on a tradition of what our American flag represents for all our servicemen and women, who have dedicated their lives one time or another, all to serve our nation. The pride that our Navajo Nation takes with our Veterans and the many generations of Navajo's who fought for our rights as a Nation, always brings pride for what we do as Americans. I am proud of my service to my country and always stand for what we believe as a nation" explained Arviso.

Arviso comes from a family who served in the military. His maternal grandfather, Wilson Dahozy Sr. served with the Army Air Corp during World War II. His paternal grandfather, Benjamin Casus Arviso, was a World War II veteran who served on the USS Philadelphia.

Currently, he works at Navajo Arts & Crafts Enterprise as the Director of Operations. He is married and has two children. He is an alumni of Window Rock High School, graduating in 1991. His clans are Hashk'aan Hadzohi (Yucca Fruit clan) born for Tábaahá (Edge Water People). Maternal grandfather is Ashihí (Salt People clan), and paternal grandfather is Tsérjikiní (Cliff Dwellers People clan).

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"I have been riding with NHHR for over 15 years, except for when I was in military training and on overseas deployments. I started just as a rider participating in the honor ride, now, I am a road guard for the Annual Lori Piestewa Honor Ride," said Arviso.

I have been riding since I was 8 years old riding my dad's dirt bike. Later, I began riding street sport bikes and now, I am riding a 1200RT BMW Street Touring Bike, added Arviso.

The Navajo Hopi Honor Riders and the Nation of Patriots of Arizona have collaborated in helping veterans get assistance. Both organizations are non-profit. NOP-AZ and NHHR both have missions and goals to help military families across the southwest.

"Our missions are very similar in that we both honor and support our military and those that have served. With approximately 20% of Native Americans serving in the military, it is an honor for us to bring the flag to Window Rock to pay respect to those past, present and fallen heros. Holding the flag transfer ceremony in Window Rock brings together several different groups and individuals with the common purpose of honoring those who have served" stated Anthony Caniglia, Regional Commander of the Arizona Nation of Patriots.

This year, NOP-AZ committee decided to include a stop in Window Rock by reaching out to NHHR board members to help coordinate a flag transfer on July 29<sup>th</sup>. This also helps spread the overall mission and engage more communities throughout the state and locate possible veterans who might need assistance.

"We strive to select flag bearers who have not only served this country honorably in the Armed Forces, but an individual that represents their community and is committed to continued service. We are all better together in helping and providing support to veterans," explained Caniglia.

The Navajo Hopi Honor Riders is inviting the public to attend and also encourage riders to join them during this escort. Staging at 8:30am, Kick Stand Up 9:00am, Gallup Cultural Center on July 29<sup>th</sup>, then riding to Window Rock Veterans Memorial Tribal Park for flag ceremony.

