

From the bravery demonstrated at Valley Forge and the establishment of the U.S. Indian Scouts on August 1, 1866, to the present day, Native Americans have heeded the call to duty. Though often excluded from the annals of United States history, these people, nonetheless, have defended the only land they have ever known, asking for nothing more than opportunity in return.

The Navaho Nation, when called upon to serve the United States, contributed a precious commodity never before used in this way. In the midst of the fighting in the Pacific during World War II, a gallant group of men from the Navaho Nation utilized their language in coded form to help speed the Allied victory.

Equipped with the only foolproof, unbreakable code in the history of warfare, the code talkers confused the enemy with an earful of sounds never before heard by code experts. The dedication and unswerving devotion to duty shown by the men of the Navaho Nation in serving as radio code talkers in the Marine Corps during World War II should serve as a fine example for all Americans.

It is fitting that at this time we also express appreciation for the other American Indians who have served our Nation in times of war. Members of the Choctaw, Chippewa, Creek, Sioux, and other tribes used their tribal languages as effective battlefield codes against the Germans in World War I and the Japanese and Germans in World War II.

Beyond this unique role, American Indians serving in the United States military forces have established an outstanding record of bravery and heroism in battle. Many have given their lives in the performance of their duty. Their record should be recognized by all Americans.

By House Joint Resolution 444, the Congress has requested me to designate August 14, 1982, as National Navaho Code Talkers Day. *Ante*, p. 244.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate August 14, 1982, as National Navaho Code Talkers Day, a day dedicated to all members of the Navaho Nation and to all Native Americans who gave of their special talents and their lives so that others might live. I ask the American people to join me in this tribute, and I call upon Federal, State and local officials to commemorate this day with appropriate activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 28th. day of July in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN

**Proclamation 4955 of July 30, 1982**

**National Purple Heart Week, 1982**

*By the President of the United States of America*  
*A Proclamation*

Just 200 years ago, on August 7, 1782, General George Washington established the Honorary Badge of Distinction/Badge of Military Merit—which we now know as the Purple Heart—at Newburgh-on-Hudson.

When General Washington directed the creation of the Badge of Military Merit specifically to honor our lower-ranking soldiers, he demonstrated a philosophy unheard of in contemporary Europe, which reserved military honors for officers and members of the nobility. Thus, our Nation's first military award recognized the spirit of voluntarism and selfless dedication of the average American which has been so fundamental to the American way of life ever since.

After the Revolutionary War, the Purple Heart fell into disuse but was revived in 1932 by President Herbert Hoover as an award to be presented to Army personnel who were wounded or killed in combat against an enemy of the United States. It later was authorized for Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard personnel, and, now, all armed services personnel as well as certain civilian nationals are eligible to receive it.

Countless Americans have been wounded in combat while defending our great Nation against armed enemies. Because of the nature of their injuries, these Purple Heart recipients bear their battle wounds for life. Many more have made the supreme sacrifice, giving their lives for their country.

It is most fitting that this special group of veterans be recognized for their outstanding contributions to our Nation's security. It is also most fitting that we recognize the bicentennial anniversary of the creation of the Purple Heart and the fiftieth anniversary of its reestablishment as well as the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

*Ante*, p. 247.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 526, has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in August as National Purple Heart Week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate the week beginning August 1, 1982, as National Purple Heart Week. I call on all Americans to join in honoring Purple Heart recipients who have served and those who will serve our Nation with distinction.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 30th day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN

**Proclamation 4956 of July 30, 1982**

### **National Hispanic Heritage Week, 1982**

*By the President of the United States of America*  
*A Proclamation*

Hispanic men and women have played a vital role in the development and progress of the United States, opening new frontiers and establishing missions and settlements that were the forerunners of some of our most important and thriving urban and cultural centers. Across the southern regions of our great country, from Florida to California, Hispanic explorers, pioneers, and settlers have helped to shape this vast land.