

ONE NAVAJO MAN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE BADGE NAVAJO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

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Several days ago, I was traveling on the Navajo Indian Reservation, as I have done many times. I felt thirsty, so I pulled into a Trading Post to get something cold to drink.

Near the entrance sat an elderly Indian man. As I walked by him, I noticed him looking me up and down, looking at my Navajo County Sheriff's deputy uniform, as if in amazement. I went inside and got my soda pop. When I came back out, before I could reach the step, the elderly man called me over.

We introduced ourselves, and he said that years ago, he too had been a lawman. He said my uniform looked really good, that it had been well chosen. Everything had a purpose, he said, as if the uniform was in harmony with nature. And then he chuckled, "Whoever came up with this uniform must have been thinking like an Indian!"

The elder seemed most intrigued with my badge. He asked if he could hold it for a few minutes, to take a closer look. It seemed such a small request.

After studying it for several minutes, he finally told me what he thought of it.

The badge was very well thought through, he said. Once again, he remarked that "Whoever came up with this badge, must have been thinking like an Indian!"

Because the badge is a circle, it represents the whole universe, a never-ending circle, which is good and in harmony.

Inside the circle is a five-pointed star, as of the five-fingered hand, and inside the star, sits a man. It's as if the man sits in the big hand for protection from all that is evil.

Surrounding the man are two black rings. The big ring is for mourning a big loss, and the smaller ring is for the protection of a single man, who sits in the badge and that most likely, the man protected is the man wearing the badge.

Then the elderly man held the badge as if it were a compass, with the top pointed North. In the big ring are two stars, one on the right and the other on the left. The star on the right is the morning star; the star on the left is the evening star, so the two daily stars are there for protection, during the day and through the night, always protecting the people.

Then the elderly man said this symbol should never be buried with a fallen officer. It should never be put to rest in the ground. But maybe it should be passed on to the survivors, for their grief and protection.