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# Sekaquaptewa, Emory: man who wrote Hopi dictionary passes on



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*Tucson, Arizona (AP) 12-07*

Emory Sekaquaptewa, a university professor, anthropologist, judge, artist and the "Noah Webster of the Hopi Nation," has passed on. He was 79.

Tribal officials announced recently that Sekaquaptewa died Dec. 14. The location and cause of death was not disclosed.

Sekaquaptewa was a pioneering champion of preserving his native language.

Born at Hotevilla on the Hopi Nation's Third Mesa in 1928, Sekaquaptewa was believed to be the first Native American to attend West Point.

He was the first Hopi tribal member to earn a law degree from the University of Arizona, where he became a noted research anthropologist in its Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology and also taught courses including Hopi Language and Culture during a teaching career that spanned nearly 40 years.

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Sekaquaptewa and Gordon Krutz, another University of Arizona faculty member, became key liaisons with American Indian students at the school and their family members.

"Emory was an anchor for Hopi students who came here," Krutz said. "He was a symbol. He made himself available."

He also opened a silversmith shop with his brother, Wayne, at which they developed innovative silver overlay jewelry

production methods.

Sekaquaptewa held a leadership position with the village of Kykotsmovi on Hopi and sat on the Hopi Land Negotiating Committee, was executive director of the Hopi Tribal Council, was an associate judge on the Hopi Tribal Court and founded and served as chief judge of the Hopi Appellate Court, where he melded federal and state laws with Hopi traditional rules in judging tribal dispute.

But perhaps the achievement that Sekaquaptewa most cherished was his work in compiling and publishing the Hopi nation's first written dictionary.

Krutz said Sekaquaptewa always wrote words on little cards, and at some point decided he should put them together into a dictionary. The project spanned about 30 years.

Krutz called Sekaquaptewa the "Noah Webster of the Hopi Nation."

He completed the research with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and published the "Hopi Dictionary/Hop Giikwa Lav Gaytutuveni: A Hopi-English Dictionary of the Third Mesa Dialect" in 1998, with some 30,000 entries and pronunciation guides.

Sekaquaptewa also was working on a children's book to teach the Hopi language to the next generation.

A private burial service was held on the Hopi nation but a memorial service still is planned at a future date, the tribe said.

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