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94-Year-Old Navajo Code Talker's Home Gets Major Facelift

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TUBA CITY, Ariz. — A Navajo Code Talker who was forced out of the home he built 60 years ago when it fell into disrepair is settling back in thanks to some extensive renovations done by volunteers.

Dan Akee and his wife, Margaret, had been living in a trailer alongside the home in Tuba City for the past six years. But now a week into living in their newly restored house, the couple was celebrating Saturday with the 200 volunteers who helped them.

Tribal officials first took note of their living situation and reached out to the Red Feather Development Group, a nonprofit organization that focuses on reservation housing needs in Arizona.

Volunteers and donors pitched in to renovate the house for the 94-year-old Akee, considered a hero among Navajos. He was one of hundreds of tribal members who used a World War II code based on their native language to stump the Japanese. He is among 10 who are still living, according to Red Feather Development Group spokeswoman Norena Gutierrez.

Volunteers, including crews from the Western Agency of the Department of Navajo Veteran Affairs, helped design and complete the renovations over the course of three months. Navajo Nation President Russel Begaye was among those present when the couple got to go home.