



Lori Piestewa, the First Native American Woman to Die in Combat

Lori Ann Piestewa was the first Native American woman in history to die in combat while serving with the U.S. military.

A member of the Hopi tribe, Lori was born in Tuba City, Arizona in 1979. Both her father and her grandfather had served in the U.S. Army, so it was no surprise when Lori enlisted.

In March, 2003, Lori was stationed in Iraq. Her unit was traveling through the desert, got lost, and ran into an ambush. As their vehicle came under attack, Lori drove very skillfully to avoid enemy fire until a grenade exploded in front them. Although some of her team survived their injuries, Lori did not. Jessica Lynch, one of the survivors, said that Lori Piestewa was the true hero of the day. She did everything she could to try to get her unit to safety.

Since her death, Lori Ann Piestewa has been awarded the Purple Heart and other military medals of honor. A mountain in Arizona, Squaw Peak, was renamed Piestewa Peak, and the highway near the mountain was also named in Lori's honor.

According to the Hopis, Lori's last name, Piestewa, means "the People Who Live by the Water" and "the Ceremonies at the Springs". It was very fitting when she was honored at a special 2003 Memorial Day service in Arlington National Cemetery by having rose petals scattered in a reflecting pool.

Lori Piestewa



Check the right answer.

1. Where was Lori Piestewa born?
Arizona New Mexico Iraq
2. When did Lori Piestewa die?
1979 1999 2003
3. Where was Lori when she was under enemy attack?
Afghanistan Iraq Syria
4. Where is Piestewa Peak?
Arizona Iraq Utah
5. To which tribe did Lori Piestewa belong?
Apache Hopi Navajo
6. What does Piestewa mean?
the People Who Live by the Springs
the Ceremonies of the Roses
the People Who Live by the Water
7. Who is Jessica Lynch?
She was in Lori's unit and survived the attack.
She was the governor of Arizona in 2003.
She is Lori Piestewa's sister.
8. What is an ambush?
a small desert cactus
a surprise attack
a military vehicle