



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### **Armed Forces members honored at the start of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride**



**PHOTO: (left to right) Council Delegate Tom Chee, Speaker LoRenzo Bates, and Navajo Area IHS acting director Brian Johnson at the opening ceremony for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride in St. Michaels, Ariz. on May 17, 2018.**

**WINDOW ROCK** – On Thursday morning during the opening ceremony for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride, Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) and Council Delegate Tom Chee (Shiprock) had the honor of laying a wreath in remembrance of fallen men and women of the Armed Forces.

The ceremony held at the Navajo Area Indian Health Service office in St. Michaels, marks the official start of the four day event in which dozens of motorcycle riders will travel over 1,200-

miles through the states of Arizona, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico, in honor of military men and women that gave their lives in service.

“We wish all of the riders and safe and memorable journey and we thank them for taking the time and resources to honor Gold and Blue Star families,” said Speaker Bates. “We honor and remember all of our Navajo men and women that have given their lives for our country.”

The motorcycle riders will stop in several communities along the way to take part in scheduled ceremonies with Gold Star families to recognize and honor individual men and women who lost their lives.

Delegate Chee was invited to the event to provide the closing prayer, and also took time to visit with the motorcycle riders and thanked them for their service and wished them safe travels in the coming days.

“I am thankful to each of our military men and women for their sacrifices for our people and this country. They are an example for all of our people in terms of their contributions and service,” added Delegate Chee.

At the start of the event, the Fort Defiance Veterans Association posted the colors, Kelly Mortenson and Carlie Martin provided the National Anthem, and Ramone Yazzie sang the flag song. Former Council Delegate Larry Anderson provided a blessing for the safety of the riders during the ceremony and Navajo Hopi Honor Riders president Bobby Martin provided remarks on behalf of the riders.

The motorcycle riders will conclude the 1,200-mile ride when they gather at the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock on Sunday afternoon. The Office of the Speaker is one of several sponsors for this year’s event.

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