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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **NAVAJO SOLDIER WELCOMED HOME WITH HONOR RUN**

Navajo Nation leaders surprised a visiting soldier with a motorcycle escort to a welcome home celebration at her home chapter of Steamboat, Arizona on June 10, 2006.

A dozen Navajo Nation honor riders, including Council delegates Larry Noble, Curran Hannon, Raymond Berchman and Vice President Frank Dayish, surprised U.S. Army Sgt. Elizabeth Noble with an escort home on the final leg of her return trip. Her father – Matthew Noble – picked her up on Thursday from Moreno, California, for a 20-day leave to return home to accompany her younger brother to San Diego as he follows the family tradition by entering the Armed Forces.

From Klagetoh, Sgt. Noble rode in with the bikers to Steamboat, Arizona, where her family and friends awaited her with a huge meal and a ceremony where she was honored with a plaque expressing appreciation for her service from the Navajo Nation Council.

Presenting the plaque on behalf of Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan were his staff assistant Angela Barney Nez and Council delegates Hannon, Berchman and Orlanda Smith-Hodge.

Ms. Nez read aloud a letter written in 1944 from Maj. General Paul J. Mueller expressing condolences in the loss of Pfc. Bernard Todecoz. Todecoz was the grandfather of Sgt. Noble, as well as the late LCpl. Kevin Joyce who was killed in action last year.

“We know that this family has sacrificed. Commemoration was given to this family before and generations later, we welcome a warrior back,” Ms. Nez said. “It takes us back to appreciate what sacrifice really means. We learn to appreciate life.”

Sgt. Noble expressed her appreciation to all who welcomed her, noting that it was significant that her leaders came out to greet her.

“It’s a big deal for me to ride a bike,” she said. “I ride in helicopters all the time, but never a motorcycle.”

Council delegate Larry Noble announced that there are now 76 registered Navajo Nation honor riders who help with various honor runs for Navajo Armed Forces and veterans held throughout the Navajo Nation.

“It’s emotional seeing all the bikers come together. It’s very moving anytime – not just today – that I see them doing this honor,” Matthew Noble said.

Since his daughter’s leave was approved at the last minute, preparations to pick her up and surprise her had to happen immediately. To the bikers, he expressed his appreciation saying, “You came. You dropped everything. Thank you.”

He added, “I think these honor runs need to continue.”

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