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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Pinedale-Iyanbito Community Members are Scheduled to Honor Speaker Morgan this Weekend**

PINEDALE/IYANBITO, N.M. – To express their sincere gratitude Pinedale-Iyanbito community members have scheduled two appreciation dinners for Navajo Nation Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan (Iyanbito/Pinedale) this weekend at each chapter houses that Speaker Morgan represents.

An appreciation dinner is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. Saturday, March 17 at the Pinedale Chapter House, according to Louise Mariano, a team community leader organizer for the Pinedale event.

An Iyanbito gourd dance and feast is also scheduled for 1 p.m. Sunday, March 18 at the Iyanbito pow wow grounds and community.

“Speaker Morgan has been helping a lot of community people,” Mariano said. “The community has been wanting to express their appreciation to him for returning to the speaker position for a third term.”

Mariano said with a laugh that Speaker Morgan wanted “a simple get-together, but I told him, ‘It’s not up to you, it’s up to the community members how to honor and appreciate you.’”

Mariano said there is a team of community members who have been meeting for several weeks planning the two events to illustrate their thankfulness to their community leader, Speaker Morgan.

Speaker Morgan was born and reared in Pinedale, N.M. His clans are are Tsinaajinii (Black-Streaked-Wood People), born for Haltsooi (Meadow-People). His maternal grandparents are Tobaashniazhi (Two-Who-Came-To-Water). His paternal grandparents are Kinyaaanii (Towering-House-People).

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Morgan comes from a long-line of Navajo artists. He is a talented silversmith, and he and his brother started a silversmithing company.

Morgan sang with a band at Fort Wingate High School. He shared his love for music with five children and four grandchildren who each children learned to play guitar using the same guitar Morgan's father bought him in the 1960s.

After graduating from Fort Wingate High School in 1972, Morgan attended University of New Mexico. In 1981, he attended Dine' College, where he studied Navajo government. Morgan began serving the public in the 1980s as Chapter Manager of Pinedale Chapter from 1981-1983, Secretary/Treasurer from 1983-1987, and Chapter President from 1987-1990.

In 1991, Morgan was elected to the Navajo Nation Council. In 1995, he started serving as Chairperson of the Transportation and Community Development Committee. He was elected Speaker of the Council on January 27, 2003. Morgan has represented the Pinedale and Iyanbito Chapters for 12 years. He says he gets re-elected because he listens to the people.

"The whole idea is listening to the people," he said. "If you begin to deviate from the people, you lose track of people and they lose track of you."

Morgan served on the Memorandum of Understanding Task Force for the Fort Wingate Army Depot Land Transfer Team and the Intertribal Transportation Association in 1995. He has served on several school boards since 1981.

Morgan pledges to improve services and enhance work among the Legislative Branch through performance-based evaluations. This measured approach ensures quality job performance, accountability and efficiency.

Morgan's legislative priorities include enhancing the Local Governance Certification process, improving records management, improving media and public relations, and providing adequate office and meeting space for the Legislative Branch.