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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Speaker Morgan Says Reflect On All Veterans' Self-less Contributions

STEAMBOAT, Ariz. - Navajo Nation Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan (Iyanbito/Pinedale) said each and every person should take the time to reflect and pray for all veterans' self-less sacrifices in preserving our freedom and way of life.

Speaker Morgan said Navajo people should adopt a philosophy of expressing their thankfulness to veterans because on numerous occasions, when veterans return home to the U.S. they are physically maimed or have a form of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder.

To show appreciation their own veterans, the Steamboat Veterans Organization expressed their gratitude to their Steamboat veterans and council delegates with a festive appreciation dinner Friday, March 9 at the Steamboat Chapter House.

Lee Bitsui, the Steamboat Veterans Organization commander, recognized veterans who were in attendance, and military families, with certificates of recognition. Bitsui served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, and served as the master of ceremonies for the event. Helping Bitsui with the master of ceremonies duties was Andrew Simpson, a Vietnam War veteran, who served in the United States Marine Corps.

Council delegates, Sampson Begay, (Steamboat/ Jeddito/Low Mountain), Larry Noble (Steamboat/Jeddito/Low Mountain) Elbert Wheeler (Many Farms/Round Rock) and David Shondee (Chilchinbeto/Kayenta) each attended the event.

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“I’m humbled by the fact that they are giving reverence to their veterans,” said Begay who is originally from Low Mountain is an Army veteran who served in the Korean War during 1968-1969.

“The veterans, I consider them my leaders,” Noble said. “Because they’ve been on the front lines. I always consider them as my leaders, I, myself, am their servant.”

Noble, a Steamboat native son, comes from a family line of Steamboat council delegates. Public service began with his late uncle, Donald Noble, who was killed in an aircraft accident during January 1976 while on Navajo Nation business.

“My dad, Harold Noble, took over his term, and served three terms,” Noble said, adding that current Steamboat Chapter Vice-President Wallace Tsosie served as a delegate before the younger Noble took the council seat 12 years ago.

“A lot of the elders here give support, not only in politics, but in furthering the Navajo teachings,” Noble said motioning to the many Navajo elders who attended the event. “All the elders are my elder statesmen, even to this day, they still advise me on politics and community concerns.”

A special highlight of the event was the recognition of World War II Air Force veteran Roy Kelewood.

Bitsui presented him a uniquely crafted trophy with miniatures of World War II air crafts.

Each was recognized by the Steamboat Veterans Organization and chapter officials for the leadership and public service.

The veterans and individuals who were recognized are Gilbert Begay Jr.; Larry T. Begay; Lee Mike Begay; Leonard T. Begay; Norman T. Begay; Peter H. Begay; Lee Bitsui; Robert Gorman; Henry Hildreth; Gibson Jones; Roy Kelewood; James Nelson; Johnson Nelson; Elisabeth R. Noble; Michelle Peshlakai; Andrew Simpson; Desirae Slivers; Fernando Slivers; Leroy Tahy; Luther Tahy; Frank Tapaha; Terry Thompson; Bernadine Toya; Daryl Toya; Irvin Tsosie; Nelson Tsosie; Allen J. Yazzie; Larry Noble; Sampson Begay, Elbert Wheeler; David Shondee.

These veteran organizations recognized are the Tohatchi Veterans Organization; Chinle Veterans Organization; Klagetoh Veterans Organization; Steamboat Veterans Organization; Jeddito Veterans Organization; Low Mountain Veterans Organization; Cornfields Veterans Organization and Ganado Veterans Organization.

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Post-traumatic stress disorder is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened, according to the National Mental Health Institute.

Traumatic events that may trigger PTSD include violent personal assaults, natural or human-caused disasters, accidents or military combat.