Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs Director W. Patrick Ragsdale will be the keynote speaker this week at the 14th Annual Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial taking place on May 5 at the United States Indian Police Academy in Artesia, N.M. The event, which is being held in conjunction with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and the International Association of Chiefs of Police, is a major BIA commemoration for tribal, state and federal law enforcement officers who have given their lives while on duty in Indian Country. Representatives from federal law enforcement offices, national law enforcement organizations, tribal police departments, and tribal and city officials will be in attendance.

The Memorial's design is based upon indigenous design concepts. It is comprised of three granite markers sited within a circular walkway lined with sage, a plant of spiritual significance to many tribes. Four planters representing the four directions of the earth, each filled with foliage in colors representing people of all races, are located near the walkway's entrance. The markers are inscribed with the names of 86 American Indian and non-Indian law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty since 1852, including two FBI agents killed at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1975 and two BIA officers, father and son, who died in 1998 and 2001, respectively. The names of two Quinault tribal police officers killed on the same day in 1910 while investigating the assault on a young girl were added last year.

The Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial was formally dedicated on May 7, 1992, at the Indian Police Academy at its previous location in Marana, Ariz., and was rededicated on May 6, 1993, following the Academy's move to its present site.

2005 is only the second year in the Memorial's history that no names will be added to it (the first was in 1992). This year's event will instead commemorate all law enforcement officers who have fallen in the line of duty.

WHO: W. Patrick Ragsdale, Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of the Interior.

WHAT: Keynote address by BIA Director Ragsdale at the 14th Annual Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers' Memorial.

WHEN: 10:00 a.m. (local time), Thursday, May 5, 2005.

WHERE: United States Indian Police Academy, DHS Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, 1300 West Richey Avenue, Artesia, N.M. Phone: 505-748-8151.

CREDENTIALS: This invitation is extended to working media representatives, who are required to display sanctioned media credentials for admittance to the event.