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*Empowering Citizens to Build Strong Communities*

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## NEWS RELEASE

### ***9/11 World Trade Center flag to be presented by color guard at Fort Rob Powwow in***

***June*** This Old Glory isn't very red, white and blue any more. It's tattered and torn, but that makes it all the more valuable for the troubles it has seen. The United States flag, to be presented by the Cheyenne River Veterans Association color guard at the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Intertribal Gathering at Fort Robinson in June, flew over the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Robert Dunsbar, a Native American member of the color guard from Eagle Butte reservation, north of Pierre, So. Dakota., said the flag has traveled more than 16,000 miles since their first presentation on the east coast. Dunsbar was training for the Veterans Administration in Massachusetts, along with other South Dakota Native American veterans, when they met a New York City police officer charged with retiring three flags from the 9/11 attack at the trade center. The three flags were given to a police officer's honor guard in New York City, a New Hampshire color guard and the South Dakota color guard. Only the latter flag is a traveling monument to those who lost their lives that day, Dunsbar said. The other two flags are in cases on display, but the NYC officer preferred to see this flag shared with others. Dunsbar said the white stripes show a lot of smoke damage and the last red stripe at the bottom of the flag was torn, but has been repaired. No one is quite sure how the flags survived, he said, but their authenticity has been verified. Most recently, the flag was displayed at President Obama's inauguration powwow in Washington DC. "Our country is at war on terrorism," Dunsbar said. "This flag is valuable for that reason alone." Another traditional flag, the Eagle Feather Staff will also be used to lead out the group, honoring the American Indian women soldiers. The three affiliated tribes (Lakota, Dakota and Nakota, often referred to collectively as Sioux Indians), use the Red Feather Staff to honor veterans who have fought and died in past campaigns or are currently fighting with the U.S. Armed Forces. The military guard will present the colors at each of the grand entries for the 2009 Intertribal Gathering at Fort Robinson. There are four grand entry ceremonies during the course of the three day event. The grand entries are at 7 p.m. on Friday, June 12; 1 and 7 p.m. on Saturday, June 13 and noon on Sunday, June 14. The gathering will also include cultural exhibits, a memorial ceremony, vendors, dance contests, health checkups, food, 5K and ½ K runs and walks. Last year's event drew members of 27 tribes from three states and three countries. The theme is "honoring people through drum, dance and song." For more information about the powwow, contact Joe Simmons at the Chadron Native American Center or Ron Moore with Panhandle Resource Conservation and Development in Scottsbluff. Sponsors for the program include the two above-name organizations, Panhandle Public Health District, the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Humanities Council.