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## **The Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

**Window Rock, AZ** – Throughout 2008 Navajo Parks and Recreation Department will commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park.

There are five events that will take place at the Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park throughout the year, including a special *Good Morning Arizona LIVE* shoot at the Park itself, scheduled May 5<sup>th</sup>. First event, beginning May 17<sup>th</sup> and May 18<sup>th</sup> is the Monument Valley Marathon. Thereafter, a Monument Valley Community Day & Concert, The VIEW Hotel Grand Opening, the Discover Navajo Expo, and the Monument Valley Hot Air Balloon Rally.

The Park has been in operation for 50 years. According to department records, in 1957 the Navajo Tribal Council established the Navajo Parks Commission to oversee appointed locations within the reservation's boundaries. From there, the Parks Commission began surveying land areas special to the Navajo people in order to designate which areas would be considered park land. Eventually Monument Valley was one area that was presented before the Advisory Committee of the Navajo Tribal Council and on July 11, 1958, the Resolution establishing Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park was approved. Years later, both the local communities and chapters are working with the park to mark this special occasion.

“We need to continually work with the community, keep them involved.” states Herb Yazhe, the department Senior Planner.

Despite the modest sized conference room at the park, residents, local tour operators, local business owners, chapter officials and the park's staff sit together at a conference table that seats, at most, 12 people. Celebrating Monument Valley, as what would be considered an eighth natural wonder of the world, these very different representatives of the community are brought together. The department hopes these events will be a successful observance of Monument Valley's legacy on a national and possibly international level, through local community input and participation.

As production planning for Monument Valley's five events move forward, event coordinator meetings, which are open to the public, are scheduled till the end of the Anniversary year. As an event draws closer to its commencement, the number of those meetings will increase from once a month to three times a month. The schedule of meetings is routinely posted on NPRD's website, [www.navajonationparks.org](http://www.navajonationparks.org).

For more information please contact Stanley Crank, Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park Supervisor (435) 727-5870 or Herb Yazhe, NPRD Senior Planner (928) 871-6647.