

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**WORLD WAR II VETERANS AND FAMILIES
TO GATHER AT WWII MEMORIAL TO COMMEMORATE V-J DAY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) and the National Park Service (NPS) will pay tribute to the Greatest Generation during a special event at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Friday, September 2, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. commemorating the 71st anniversary of the Allied Forces Victory in the Pacific and the effective end of World War II.

As part of the ceremony, nearly twenty World War II veterans will lay wreaths at the “Freedom Wall” of the Memorial in remembrance of the more than 400,000 Americans who lost their lives during World War II.

Retired U.S. Army Colonel James L. Riffe will serve as the event’s keynote speaker and will offer personal remarks about his own service during WWII. Colonel Riffe served in the Pacific Theater of Operations from October 1944 through the end of the war. In April 1945, he commanded a unit that took part in the invasion of Okinawa.

WUSA9 Morning Anchor Mike Hydeck will serve as the event’s Master of Ceremonies.

Friends Chairman, Josiah Bunting III, will speak on behalf of Friends, and Superintendent of the National Mall and Memorial Parks, Gay Vietzke, will speak on behalf of NPS. The Military District of Washington will provide military support for the event.

About Friends of the National World War II Memorial (www.wwiimemorialfriends.org):

Founded in 2007, the Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to honoring and preserving the national memory of World War II. To meet this mission, Friends sponsors an annual public lecture series featuring prominent historians; hosts an annual teachers conference in Washington, DC; and collects and archives video interviews of World War II veterans and other members of the Greatest Generation. Additionally, Friends has the lead responsibility in planning and staging five or more major national commemorative events annually and each summer sponsors a dozen free public performances of military bands at the Memorial. Friends relies on private support to breathe new life into the Memorial and to ensure that it continues to serve as a living lesson for all Americans.

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For media inquiries:

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