

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**VETERANS TO GATHER AT NATIONAL WWII MEMORIAL ON MEMORIAL DAY  
TO REMEMBER 400,000 AMERICANS LOST DURING WORLD WAR II**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – The Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) and the National Park Service will honor and remember more than 400,000 Americans who lost their lives during WWII during a special Memorial Day Observance at the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Monday, May 29, 2017 at 9:00 a.m.

During the ceremony, two World War II veterans – Lieutenant Jim Downing and Dave Yoho – will offer personal remarks about their service during WWII. Lt. Downing is the second oldest known survivor of the December 7, 1941 surprise attack on Pearl Harbor by Imperial Japan that killed more than 2,400 Americans. At 16-years old, Mr. Yoho found himself serving as a U.S. Merchant Marine aboard a T/2 Tanker supporting combat ships in the South Pacific.

The ceremony will feature musical performances by Grammy Award-nominated songwriter Bob Regan and country music artist Rockie Lynne. Mr. Regan will be performing his song “The Last Monday in May,” a song about Memorial Day written in collaboration with veterans. Mr. Lynne, a U.S. Army veteran who served as a paratrooper with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division, will perform several patriotic songs during the ceremony.

Award-winning journalist and WUSA9 Weekday Morning News anchor Mr. Mike Hydeck will serve as the event's Master of Ceremonies.

Friends' chairman Josiah Bunting III and Gay Vietzke, superintendent of the National Mall and Memorial Parks, will offer welcome remarks. The Military District of Washington will provide military support for the event.

As part of the commemoration, more than a dozen World War II veterans will lay wreaths at the Freedom Wall in remembrance of their fallen brothers and sisters.

**About Friends of the National World War II Memorial ([www.wwiimemorialfriends.org](http://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; provides teachers with curriculum materials; 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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