

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release
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70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF IWO JIMA TO BE COMMEMORATED AT WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

A wreath will be laid at the Pacific Arch of the Memorial in honor of the 70,000 Americans who served during this historic battle of WWII.

Washington, DC – On Thursday, February 19 at 12 p.m., World War II veterans and members of the Friends of the National World War II Memorial (Friends) Board of Directors will gather at the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC to commemorate the 70th anniversary of Iwo Jima, a five-week battle that comprised some of the fiercest and bloodiest fighting of the Pacific Theater of Operations of World War II.

After months of naval and air bombardment, U.S. Marines invaded Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945. Approximately 60,000 U.S. Marines and several thousand U.S. Navy Seabees took part in the battle against a Japanese force of 22,000. In thirty-six days of fighting on the island, nearly 7,000 U.S. service members were killed and another 20,000 were wounded. 216 Japanese soldiers were taken prisoner; the rest were killed in action or died by ritual suicide. The U.S. declared the island secured on March 16, 1945.

The Battle of Iwo Jima was one of the bloodiest battles in Marine Corps history. Twenty-seven Medals of Honor were awarded for action on Iwo Jima—more than any other battle in U.S. history.

To mark this pivotal battle in U.S. history, World War II veterans, Friends chairman Josiah Bunting III, and others will lay a wreath at the Pacific Arch of the World War II Memorial to honor all those who served in this historic battle and to remember the 7,000 Americans who lost their lives.

Who: World War II Veterans
Josiah Bunting III
Friends of the National World War II Memorial Board Members
U.S. Marine Corps Bugler

Where: National World War II Memorial
17th Street between Constitution and Independence Avenues
Washington, DC

When: Thursday, February 19, 2015 at 12 PM

About The 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 ensuring that the legacy, lessons, and sacrifices of World War II are not forgotten. 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. Capturing the Voices of World War II, a service-learning program in which high school students interview World War II veterans at "their" Memorial, transforms the Memorial into an outdoor classroom and provides a unique platform to digitally document the stories brought to life through first-person veteran accounts. 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.