

## Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive

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### For Immediate Release

## **America's Youth Honors Greatest Generation During "Spirit of '45 Day" Ceremony At National WWII Memorial, Sunday August 11<sup>th</sup>**

### ***Fellow Veterans Honor Later Senators Inouye and Lautenberg, Last WWII Veterans to Serve in U.S. Senate***

Washington, DC, August 6, 2013 – Metro area youth leaders will unveil a 150-foot "Wall of Honor" that includes photos of World War II veterans during *Spirit of '45 Day* ceremonies at the World War II Memorial on the Mall Sunday, August 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

Retired four-star **Gen. Frederick J. Kroesen, Jr.** heads a distinguished roster of speakers participating in this year's program, preceded by a brief concert by the West Point Alumni Glee Club, beginning at 9:45 a.m., featuring WWII era songs and patriotic music. The general public is invited for both the concert and the formal ceremonies.

Gen. Kroesen, a former Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army, was a combat soldier during the liberation of Europe, serving as a platoon leader and company commander with the **254th Infantry Regiment of the 63rd Infantry Division, which blazed a path of "Blood and Fire"** across Germany in March-April 1945. Other speakers during the ceremony include **Dr. Robert Sutton**, Chief Historian of the National Parks Service; **Brigadier General (Ret) Jack Nicholson**, former Secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission; US Navy Memorial Founder **USN Admiral (Ret) Bill Thompson**; **Lt. General USAF (Ret) Richard Y. Newton, III**, Air Force Association; and **Linda Mathes**, CEO of the American Red Cross, National Capitol Region.

Also speaking will be veteran Army Air Corps pilot **Captain Jerry Yellin**, who flew the final combat mission of WWII over Japan on August 14, 1945.

The Washington program at the WWII Memorial kicks off a national series of ceremonies that will follow the sun across the nation with hundreds of similar ceremonies, ending with a final observance at the Punch Bowl in Hawaii. Each ceremony will conclude with "Taps" played by a member of Bugles Across America.

The WWII photos in Washington and elsewhere are being archived as part of the preparations for the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII in August 2015.

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The late Senators Daniel Inouye and Frank Lautenberg will be specially honored during the day as the last WWII veterans to serve in the United States Senate. The two were also responsible for leading the move to have Congress declare the second Sunday in August as “Spirit of '45 Day” commemorating the end of WWII on August 14, 1945.

**Major General (Ret) Alan Salisbury**, Chairman and CEO of the Code of Support Foundation, will serve as MC for the WWII Memorial ceremonies. The Code of Support Foundation is has helped organize the event with co-presenter of the event, “Both of our organizations are focused on service and giving back,” said Salisbury. “Spirit of '45 Day embodies that notion as it was lived by the greatest generation both on the front lines and on the home front. This day honors that spirit, and seeks to motivate today’s generation to get involved in some form of selfless service to their community and to the nation,” he concluded.

**About the Spirit of '45:** “Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!” is a nonprofit collaborative of organizations and individuals that are helping to raise public awareness and participation in Spirit of '45 Day, the annual day of remembrance and national renewal that Congress voted unanimously be observed on the second Sunday in August. Spirit of '45 Day honors the legacy of service of the men and women who were the “ordinary heroes” of the World War II generation, so that their example of courage, self-sacrifice, can-do spirit, unity and service to others will forever inspire future generations of Americans. ([www.Spiritof45.org](http://www.Spiritof45.org))

**About the Code of Support Foundation:** COSF works to increase the American public’s awareness of the service and sacrifice of our troops, veterans, and military families, and asks all Americans to move beyond *caring*, to *committed and involved*, both in providing the support our military community has earned, and in doing their part to keep America strong and free.

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