



For Immediate Release

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88-year old WWII Marine rides motorcycle 6,000 miles to appear as Grand Marshal in National Memorial Day Parade in WDC

Battle of Okinawa vet urges America to “keep the Spirit of ‘45 alive’ by commemorating 70th anniversary of the end of WWII this year

(Washington, DC) A Marine veteran of the battle of Okinawa has just returned home from a 6,000 mile solo motorcycle ride around the country to help promote a nationwide commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II that will be taking place this August.



Seventy years ago, Dr. E. Bruce Heilman was a young Marine fighting on the Japanese island of Okinawa in what was to be the final battle of World War II. As the chancellor of the University of Richmond in Virginia for the past 30 years, he is concerned that the youth of America remember what his generation did to defend freedom and democracy in the world and appreciate the true meaning of Memorial Day.

“This is a very special Memorial Day for me,” said Heilman. “More than 14,000 young Americans lost their lives during the 83 days of the Battle of Okinawa 70 years ago. It is important that we never forget them as we honor the Gold Star families of all eras who have paid such a price for the freedoms we too often take for granted.”

This weekend Heilman has been invited to participate in the annual Rolling Thunder motorcycle rally in Washington, DC as the guest of the American Legion Riders whose chapters came out to support him during his month long ride through over 20 states.

On Monday, he will appear as a Grand Marshal in the 10th Annual National Memorial Day Parade. Heilman will ride up Constitution Avenue with a contingent of Riders in front of a 70th Anniversary Commemoration float that will be followed by more than 200 youth who will be marching with photos of some 400,000 Americans who lost their lives defending freedom and democracy during WWII that they will carry to the National WWII Memorial at the end of the Parade.



“Dr. Heilman is an inspiring example of what made the ‘Greatest Generation’ great,” said Warren Hegg, national spokesman for Keep the Spirit of ‘45 Alive, a nonprofit coalition of organizations that are planning a WWII 70th Anniversary Commemorative Weekend that will kick off in Times Square on August 14, and conclude with the world’s longest continuous wreath laying ceremony on August 15. www.Spiritof45.org

Dr. Heilman is available for interviews throughout the weekend. (703) 328-7691

www.Spiritof45.org

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