

Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive

Rubenstein Associates, Inc.
Public Relations
Contact: Pat Smith (212) 843-8026

For Immediate Release

Surviving Members of “Greatest Generation” Gather at USS Iowa to Kick off Nationwide Celebration of 68th Anniversary of the End of World War II

Oldest Living Tuskegee Airman, Rosie the Riveter to be joined by Los Angeles Consulate Generals for “Spirit of '45 Day” Opening Ceremony on Saturday, August 10 at 10 a.m.

Los Angeles, August 7, 2013 – **Lt. Col. Bob Friend**, the oldest surviving member of the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, and veterans of some of most famous battles of World War II will be honored during a ceremony commemorating the 68th anniversary of the end of WWII that will be held in front of the **Battleship USS Iowa in San Pedro** (250 S. Harbor Boulevard) on **Saturday, August 10th at 10:00 a.m.** The public is invited.

Friend, 93, one of the first African American pilots to serve in the U.S. military, was assigned to the 332nd Fighter Group and was stationed in Europe during World War II. He will be joined by **James P. Thompson**, 93, a glider pilot who flew into combat on D-Day. Also attending the ceremony will be members of the 28th Infantry Division who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, veterans of the battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa, and members of the famous all-Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most highly decorated unit in military history. Also represented during the ceremony will be members of the 8th Air Force the Merchant Marine, the Filipino Scouts and Chinese Americans who served during WWII.

The Home Front will be represented by **Ms. Elinor Otto**, a “**Rosie the Riveter**” during the war, and is still employed by Boeing in Long Beach at age 94.

The one-hour ceremony will feature a display of the flags of America’s Allies in WWII and those of countries that they liberated in 1945. Guest speakers include the **Honorable Rudi Veestraeten, Consul General of Belgium and chair of the European Union in Los Angeles**, and the **Honorable Maria Hellen Barber De La Vega, Consul General of the Philippines**.

A proclamation from **Iowa Governor Terry Branstad** will be presented to **Jonathan Williams, president and CEO of the Iowa** during the ceremony to officially begin a nationwide “Spirit of '45 Day” celebration that will include hundreds of events commemorating the 68th anniversary of the end of WWII on August 14, 1945, that will be taking place in cities across the country, including observances during Major League Baseball games.

Harlan Boll, the publicist for the Bob Hope family, will speak about the role that movie legend Jimmy Stewart and the Hollywood community played during WWII.

The ceremony will conclude with a recitation of President Franklin Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" by **FDR re-enactor Michael Moore**, followed by a performance of "Taps" and a minute of silence to honor the more than 400,000 Americans who gave their lives in defense of freedom during WWII, and the millions of the men and women who were the "ordinary heroes of the Greatest Generation" who have passed away since 1945.

The ceremony will be part of a cross country "Tribute to the Legacy of Service of America's Greatest Generation" that will be honoring the two last WWII veterans who served in the Congress, the late Senators Dan Inouye and Frank Lautenberg, who co-sponsored Spirit of '45 Day when it was passed unanimously in 2010. <http://www.spiritof45.org/buglers0.aspx>

Following the ceremony, the public will be invited to visit booths in front of the Iowa, featuring exhibits and displays by WWII heritage groups, veterans support organizations, health care companies, and KRLA Radio. **WWII historian and author Jay Wertz** will conduct a series of group interview sessions throughout the Day, which will also feature performances of swing dance music by the **Jay Munns Quartet** and appearances by WWII re-enactors led by Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Gen. George Patton lookalikes.

The Iowa is providing special discounted prices for visitors touring the Battleship during the Day.

The Spirit of '45 Day program will conclude with teen singing sensation **Jamie Beaman** leading a group sing along of popular '40's songs, ending with "God Bless America"

Saturday's program was organized by **CareMore**, a healthcare company based in Cerritos, CA that provides the Medicare Advantage plan to people living in Los Angeles County, Orange County, San Bernadino County, Santa Clara County, and Pima Coutty in Arizona.

www.CareMore.com

The **Queen Mary** will be hosting a Spirit of '45 Day program in Long Beach on Sunday, August 11, which concludes with a wreath laying ceremony on its rear deck at 5:00 p.m., followed by a dance to live swing band music.

About the Spirit of '45 Day: In August 2010, the US Congress voted unanimously in support of observing a national Spirit of '45 Day to honor the legacy of service of the men and women of the World War II generation. Spirit of '45 Day is observed on the second Sunday in every August, aligning with the day US President Harry S. Truman announced that WWII had ended and America erupted in celebrations of relief and joy, and then immediately took up the task of laying the foundations to assure a better future for its children and their children's children, of both their allies and former foe alike. Spirit of '45 Day provides an opportunity for all Americans to reflect on the achievements and values of the WWII generation, so that their

example of courage, self-sacrifice, can-do spirit, unity and service to others will forever inspire future generations. For more information, visit www.Spiritof45.org.

####