

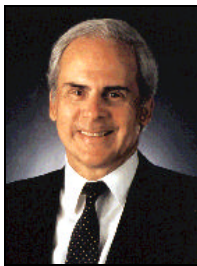
★ ★ NATIONAL ★ ★ WWII MEMORIAL

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4

A NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 1999

MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL CO- CHAIRMAN



Frederick W. Smith

Once again I have the pleasure to report dramatic progress in our campaign. Last summer, we raised \$27 million after 18 months of fund raising. We've now more than doubled that, nearly reaching the \$60 million mark: \$28 million from corporations; \$12 million from foundations, veterans groups and states; and \$19 million from 325,000 citizens like you!

Interest in the campaign continues to grow. Hopefully, you've seen or heard Tom Hanks tell America that "It's Time to Say Thank You" to our World War II generation.

Public service ads were released nationally in mid-April, and the campaign took off quicker than any the Ad Council can remember. Media response has been tremendous. We had 3,600 calls to our "800" number in April; 34,000 in May. Through 1998, we had 5,400 calls; since January, more than 131,000!

Tom's impact has been sensational. We are fortunate and grateful to have America's favorite actor donating his time and talent to help us complete this important project.

This issue also announces an important milestone: approval of the memorial's preliminary design. We are at last nearing the final design approval needed to break ground. Then, it's just a matter of raising the rest of the money.

These are exciting times for the campaign. We're going to keep working hard, and hope you'll continue to do the same in your communities. Have a great summer!

PRELIMINARY DESIGN APPROVED

The National World War II Memorial successfully completed the second of a three-phase design approval process in June when the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), by a 9-2 margin, approved Friedrich St. Florian's preliminary design.

The Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) had given the preliminary design its unanimous approval in May, calling it "an eloquent...statement worthy of the subject and the site."

"We are obviously pleased with these results," St. Florian said. "The design is still a work in progress, but it has achieved a greater sense of clarity and unity, and a greater degree of integration into the National Mall. It was gratifying to have that confirmed by the commissions."

Memorial designs must be approved three times during the design process.

The design concept, presented when the design is ten to fifteen percent complete in architectural detail, was

approved by the commission in the summer of 1998.

The preliminary design, approved last month, is presented when at least 25 percent complete.

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) hopes to return to the CFA and NCPC for final design approval by the end of this year.

During the recent public hearings, Haydn Williams, chairman of ABMC's site and design committee, said the design team's "changes, additions, and refinements have resulted in a stronger and more powerful design composition, one with a greater sense of monumentality, one that respects and compliments its historic surroundings, and one that is appropriate and commensurate with the momentous event being remembered."

"We are eager now to move the design process forward to final approval," St. Florian concluded.



A view of the memorial plaza. See story on page 3.

THE FIGHT FOR IWO JIMA

Iwo Jima was one of the toughest battles of the Pacific, and still remains remembered today because of the Marines' famous flag raising over Mount Suribachi. In early 1945, however, few expected the battle would be such an epic struggle.

Iwo Jima presented surprisingly difficult terrain for offensive operations. The ground was extremely rough and broken, and included a seemingly endless number of caves, ridges, and rocky outcrops that could conceal and protect the enemy. Moreover, its 22,000 Japanese defenders had heavily fortified it with hundreds of pillboxes, bunkers, and blockhouses. They also used the caves to create extensive networks of underground passages and chambers to protect them from bombardment and to aid communications and movement.

Due to these skillful defenses, the Japanese were largely unaffected by the 72 days of pre-invasion air strikes and the massive naval bombardment preceding the landing.

On Feb. 19, 1945, three Marine divisions — the 3rd (held in reserve), 4th, and 5th — supported by ships and aircraft began the attack. The operation, which was expected to take two weeks, lasted 36 grueling days and cost the Marines one-third of its force, with over



Captain Fred Haynes, June 1944

6,800 killed and nearly 20,000 wounded.

Richard Bishop and retired Gen. Fred Haynes both served in the 5th Marine Division and recalled their experiences on Iwo Jima. Bishop, a 1st Lieutenant, was the executive officer, and later commander, of Battery G in the 13th Regiment. Gen. Haynes, then a Captain, was the operations and training officer of the 28th Regiment, which took Suribachi.

Bishop's battery of four 105-mm howitzers supported the 28th Marines, and fired thousands of rounds of direct and indirect artillery fire throughout the operation. He recalled that the Japanese were rarely in the open, and generally stayed concealed in their fortified positions. "You usually didn't see the enemy. They popped-up. We got a lot of sniper and mortar fire."

But he also noted that the threat of an attack kept them on alert. "We were constantly on guard against sudden banzai attacks, usually at night by small units."

Although the enemy unsuccessfully attempted a night infiltration attack against his battery, Bishop said that they usually just peppered the area with occasional harassment fire from a machine gun. "I was surprised we didn't have more night attacks," he said.

"The tenacity of the Japanese defense was a surprise," said Gen. Haynes. "We were also surprised by their numbers. There were probably twice as many as we expected." Despite the stiff defense, the 28th Marines quickly advanced across the narrow neck of land that separated Suribachi (located at Iwo's southern tip) from the rest of the island and cut it off from reinforcements.

Both men noted the tremendous psychological effect of the flag raising on Suribachi on the operation's fifth day. "Men were elated when the flag went up,"



Richard Bishop on Iwo Jima, March 1945

said Gen. Haynes. On the island, Marines cheered, and at sea, ships blew their horns and whistles.

Navy secretary James Forrestal, who was observing the operation and had recently arrived on the beach, turned to Marine Gen. Holland Smith and remarked, "Holland, the raising of that flag on Suribachi means a Marine Corps for 500 years."

Though Suribachi had fallen, the toughest Japanese defenses were yet to come, and the enemy had been ordered to defend Iwo Jima at all costs. "They just wouldn't surrender," General Haynes said. "And we tried, but they wouldn't respond."

The Marines were forced to slowly grind their way across the rest of Iwo, fighting for every ridge, gorge, and cave. Less than 900 of the Japanese survived to become prisoners, and Iwo marked the first time in the United States' island campaign that the Japanese inflicted more casualties than they received.

Bishop noted that even in the face of such harsh opposition, the Marines "carried out their assignments with grit and determination." Indeed, by the end of the battle, 27 had received Medals of Honor — most posthumously — which was nearly a quarter of all Marine Corps Medal of Honor winners in the entire war.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN ENHANCES MEMORIAL'S POWER

The memorial preliminary design approved this summer incorporates many refinements to last summer's approved design concept. The 237-by-338-foot lowered memorial plaza remains the unifying element. The ceremonial entrance width was increased from 145 feet to 171 feet to allow a wider central vista, and the ramps were moved to the sides, allowing the enlarged steps to serve as an amphitheater for ceremonies.

Ramps at the north and south approaches that provide access to the plaza from pathways between the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument were widened from 10 feet to 11½ feet, and the slope of the ramps was reduced to provide a gentle entry to the plaza.

The two memorial arches were widened to better accommodate pedestrian circulation, and their height was increased from 36 feet to 41 feet above street level. Inside the arches, four bronze American eagles on bronze columns will support laurels that celebrate victory.

Fifty-six 17-foot pillars individually represent the 48 states and eight territories that comprised the U.S. during World War II, and collectively

symbolize the unity of the nation.

A sacred area at the western side of the plaza is framed by two cascading waterfalls and is comprised of four elements: a cenotaph with a sculpted wreath attached to memorialize those Americans who gave their lives; two sculpted wreaths commemorating the sacrifice of America's allies and all of humankind; a light of freedom rising out of a crater symbolizing the triumph of light over darkness; and a wall of freedom with inscribed words, yet to be selected, that will stir visitor emotions.

The Rainbow Pool and its historic water jets will be rebuilt at the center of the plaza. The design provides seating along the pool circumference; altogether, the memorial will seat 500-600 visitors. Two fountains located at the base of the arches complement the pool waterworks.

The ceremonial entrance has three lawn panels between the steps. The



A view of the sacred area that features a light of freedom.

double row of elm trees that frame the plaza will be restored to their original splendor, and a replanting plan will replace unhealthy trees. The outer areas of the 7.4-acre site will include a contemplative area, and will be landscaped with trees and pedestrian pathways equipped with benches.

Finally, two 70-foot flagpoles flying the American flag will frame the ceremonial entrance. The flags of the individual branches of military service, the Coast Guard, and the Merchant Marine will be flown on occasion at the ceremonial entrance of the memorial.



View of the memorial from 17th Street.

GIVING SECURITIES: A BETTER DEAL FOR YOU!

In recent years, there has been remarkable growth in the value of stocks and other investments. This fact, coupled with recent tax law changes, may make this an ideal time for you to consider a gift of securities to the National World War II Memorial.

Gifts of appreciated stocks or bonds have the same positive benefit to the memorial as a gift of cash. However, a gift of securities is usually more beneficial to you, the donor.

With a gift of marketable securities which have been held longer than one year, you receive a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the securities. In addition, because you are donat-

ing rather than selling, you avoid paying any capital gains taxes on the appreciation in the value of the securities. This allows you to make your usual gift at a lower cost or even make a larger gift at no increased after-tax cost.

The exact savings depends on how much the asset has increased in value, your tax rate and level of income, and other factors. However, for a gift of \$1000 in securities, the savings alone could amount to as much as \$396. You should consult with your financial advisor to determine your exact personal savings.

Gifts of securities can be easily arranged. New stock certificates may be

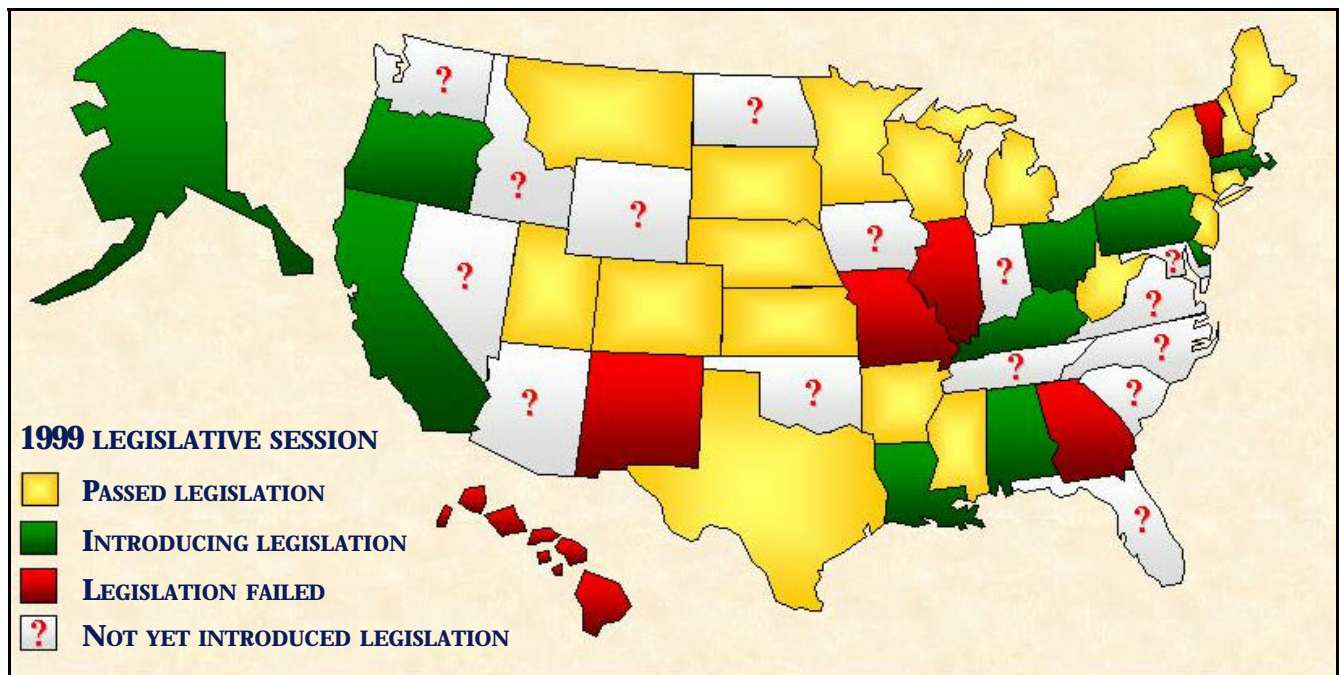
drawn directly in the name of the National World War II Memorial Campaign. Or, you may assign current stock to our fund by completing the reverse side of the certificates with our name and address. The stock certificates should be sent certified mail, return receipt requested, or by FedEx to: Anne Senft, assistant director of individual giving, National World War II Memorial Campaign, 2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 501, Arlington, VA 22201.

For more information on the donation of securities or other planned giving options, please complete and return the enclosed insert, or contact Senft at 1-800-639-4992.

STATES CONTINUE TO GIVE!

The State Campaign program has met with great success the last few months. As you can see from the map below, a lot of movement has occurred since the last newsletter. The movement is due primarily to readers who have taken the time to ask their legislators to support the legislation in their home state. But we still need help in the states coded green, red and with a question mark. To date, five states have declined to introduce the legislation which would honor men and women who served in the armed forces during the Second World War: Idaho, Indiana, Nevada, Florida, and Tennessee. The legislation failed in six states where it was introduced and either died in committee or the governor did not sign it: Illinois, Vermont, New Mexico, Georgia, Hawaii, and Missouri.

If your state is in the process of passing similar legislation or if you would like more information on the legislation, please contact Carol Lindamood (800) 639-4992 or e-mail her at: lindamoodc@wwiimemorial.com.



NCOA "HONOR WALK" TO SUPPORT MEMORIAL

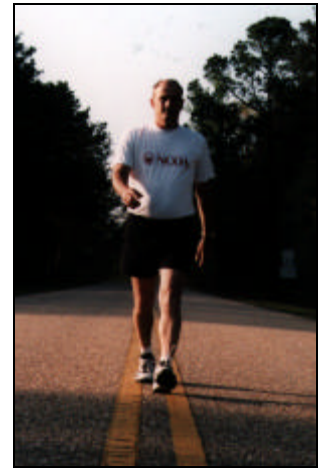
The Non Commissioned Officers Association (NCOA) is sponsoring Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Ron Bedford's walk to honor veterans and help raise funds for the National World War II Memorial. The "Honor Walk" will begin in Mobile, Ala., on Sept. 2 (V-J Day) and end in Washington, D.C., on Veterans Day 71 days later.

CSM Bedford will pass through six states, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. During the trip, he will visit five state capitals, 15 military installations, and hundreds of towns. Along the way, CSM Bedford will be joined by thousands of veterans and their families, local dignitaries, mayors, governors, and members of Congress.

The walk's kick-off event will be a noon concert at U.S.S. *Alabama* Park in Mobile. Other events will take place throughout the trip. At each stop, CSM Bedford will be encouraging donations and pledges to the memorial.

"The NCOA is proud to honor the men and women who defended our country in World War II," said Roger Putnam, NCOA president. "We encourage everyone who can to join CSM Bedford on portions of the route and to donate to the memorial in the name of the NCOA Memorial Honor Walk.

If you would like more information on the walk, or to contribute in its honor, please call 1-877-WW2-WALK.



CSM Ron Bedford in training for the NCOA Honor Walk

SPOTLIGHT ON: QUAD CITY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

By Kitt Rodkey

It takes a lot of creativity, commitment, and organizational savvy to get a volunteer organization going with a bang. The Quad City Community Action Council (QCCAC) in northwest Illinois is a good example of how to do it. The council, which was organized by its co-chairs Linda Johnson and Viola Lyon, has done an incredible job in raising awareness and donations for the memorial.

The QCCAC employs a variety of strategies to publicize the memorial campaign. Some of the activities have been:

- ★ Holding community-wide special events
- ★ Obtaining editorial coverage in area papers
- ★ Leaving material at retail stores and setting up tables at a national hardware chain
- ★ Having a presence at area concerts
- ★ Asking 250 area religious leaders to dedicate a Sunday to honor WWII veterans
- ★ Sponsoring a golf tournament
- ★ Getting community theater groups to donate a portion of their ticket sales

Johnson noted that making presentations at public meetings is a good way to get started. Her remarks at a meeting of the Bi-State Regional Commission — made up of area mayors and city man-

agers — helped stimulate a proclamation urging citizen support of the QCCAC's campaign. This type of networking attracts volunteers, generates publicity, and builds excitement.

A key reason the QCCAC has been productive is the good chemistry between its nearly 30 members. "Everyone has to play their part," says Johnson. "We have our sparkplugs, while other members work quietly behind the scenes. No one is delegating." She cites the dedication of all the volunteers as instrumental to the success of QCCAC's awareness campaign.

From the beginning, the council decided a key event in the campaign would be a "Patriotic Pep Rally," which was held in June. The council prepared a kit called the "Red Bag" to distribute to all attendees. It contained an introductory letter about the council, a thank you note, and the memorial brochures.

The event was covered by local newspaper reporters and a local cable channel. Numerous veterans groups were represented in both the audience and on the stage. Each group provided an update of their support of the memorial and praised the activities of the QCCAC to increase awareness and raise funds for this long-awaited project.

A production by the Quad City Music Guild of South Pacific was running the weekend of the rally and one dollar from each ticket was set aside for the National World War II Memorial. It is expected that more than \$1,400 from the opening weekend will be donated to the memorial by the Music Guild. The council is also working with other local arts groups.

The memorial's Community Action Council (CAC) project aims to establish numerous self-directing councils nationwide, allowing each participating community to be listed as a supporter of the memorial in the Donor Book of Remembrances, which will be distributed at the dedication ceremony.

The memorial provides CACs with a supply of materials and empowers them to develop their own fund-raising projects and schedules. Fund-raising goals are established in consultation with memorial staff.

If you would like more information about establishing a CAC in your area, please contact Tim Taravella, assistant director for grassroots development, at (703) 696-8384.

Kitt Rodkey is a charter member of the World War II Memorial Society.

MAIL CALL

We welcome your letters, and will print a selection in each issue of the newsletter. Letters are subject to editing and should be sent to Editor, NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL Newsletter, 2300 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 501, Arlington, VA 22201. Please include a daytime phone number and, if available, an e-mail address.

MEMORIAL SUPPORTER

I'm the son of a WWII veteran who was stationed in Columbia and Panama. I also had an uncle who flew sorties over Germany and one who was killed on the beach of Luzon in the Philippines. My father-in-law fought in Italy and I had other relatives that were in the occupation of Germany. That is why I support the World War II Memorial. As a veteran I know what freedom means. I think the memorial is a good way to honor and say "thanks" to those who fought and helped to win the war. We owe it all to them. I hope all veterans will support the memorial and give what they can.

Philip F. Cunningham
Lancaster, Pa.

REQUESTS FOR HELP!

Please accept my gratitude for founding the World War II Memorial. I entered my father's name in the Registry of Remembrance as a tribute to his life and service in the war. His name is Ray Johnson, and he served in Company E, 317th Infantry, 80th Division, and received the Purple Heart for wounds sustained in the Saar Basin.

If anyone knew my dad, please contact me at 1615 N. Jackson, Odessa, Texas 79761.

Ann Dix
Odessa, Tx.

I am looking for anyone who may have served with my grandfather John D. Wenger of Ephrata, Pa. (Lancaster County). He served on the *Missouri* (where I believe he was a gunner) and was

there during the surrender signing. He passed away in 1989, but I am hoping to find someone who knew him and can tell us more about his service years. He didn't talk about it, and we always respected that, but are naturally curious about what life was like on the "Mighty Mo."

If anyone remembers him, please contact me at 14800 Ashford Place, Laurel, MD 20707.

Leslie A. Pontz
Laurel, Md.

I am searching for individuals who may have served with my father, William "Forrest" Elder, from 1942 to 1950. If anyone can help, please contact me at P.O. Box 664, Lomita, CA 90717. I can also be reached via e-mail at laurienca@aol.com.

Lori Elder
Lomita, Calif.

I had the privilege of serving my country as a radioman in the U.S. Navy during World War II. My first sea duty was aboard the minesweeper *Minivet* (AM-371). While sweeping for Japanese contact mines in the Tsushima Straits, we struck a mine and sank. This accident occurred in December 1945, shortly after the war had officially ended.

If any ship survivors read this, I would very much like to hear from you. I can be reached at 114 Greenbriar, Montgomery, TX 77356. My e-mail is felmarbo@lcc.net.

Robert Feldman
Montgomery, Tx.

ANOTHER FAMILY WAR EFFORT

I joined the Navy in 1942 and was stationed on a yard repair ship just 60 miles from my home in Miami. I wanted to get in the war, though, so I put in for a transfer and wound up stationed in the Solomon Islands.

My brother Jack served aboard oil tankers and made many runs to Murmansk, Russia. At the start of the

war, my brother Bob was not quite old enough to join, so he helped build ships in Alabama until he was 17. He then joined the Navy and served aboard a destroyer escort near Italy.

Although my dad was not physically fit enough to serve, my mother went to the Emery Riddle School of Aviation in Miami and then journeyed to Warner Robbins, Ga., to build planes.

All three of us boys came home safe thanks to God and would gladly go again if our country called. We love our country and consider it an honor to have served her!

William Evans
Memphis, Tenn.

WAIT A MINUTE....

The article "Captured!" from the spring 1999 newsletter has what I think is an error. The reference to boxcars called "40 and eights" is the point in question. Although I have seen it written both ways, I believe the correct designation is "40 or eights." The boxcars could carry one or the other, but not both. A small point in the larger picture of World War II, but one I thought should be made clear.

Normand E. Thomas
Mechanicsburg, Pa.

In regard to your article on the *Memphis Belle* in the spring 1999 newsletter, please be advised that the stateside war bond tour began in the summer of 1944, not 1943, as stated in the picture caption.

I performed my duties as an airplane and engine mechanic on the *Memphis Belle* when she arrived from overseas. My buddies and I felt fortunate that we had the opportunity to service her!

Harry Glaser
Levitown, N.Y.

CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION GIVING

FOUNDERS GIFTS \$2 MILLION

FEDERAL EXPRESS CORPORATION
SBC FOUNDATION

LEADERSHIP GIFTS \$1 MILLION TO \$2 MILLION

AMERITECH
ANHEUSER-BUSCH FOUNDATION
THE BOEING COMPANY
CHRYSLER CORPORATION FUND
EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY
STARR FOUNDATION
HARRY & GRACE STEELE FOUND.
TYCO INTERNATIONAL, LTD.

PA TRON GIFTS \$500,000 TO \$1 MILLION

AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (ATA)
AMERICAN HOME PRODUCTS CORP.
CATERPILLAR INC.
THE COCA-COLA COMPANY
DuPONT
E*TRADE
GTE FOUNDATION
THE LINCY FOUNDATION
RAYTHEON COMPANY
SEARS, ROEBUCK AND CO.
STATE FARM COMPANIES FOUNDATION
TARGET
VIAD CORP

VICTOR GIFTS \$250,000 TO \$500,000

ANDERSEN CONSULTING
BAXTER INTERNATIONAL
ERNST & YOUNG, LLP
GEORGE W. & AMY NEWMAN FOUND.
GENERAL ELECTRIC FUND
GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION
GUARDSMARK, INC.
HOUSTON ENDOWMENT INC.
SHELL OIL COMPANY FOUNDATION
STEELCASE
WARNER-LAMBERT

CENTURION GIFTS \$100,000 TO \$250,000

A.G. EDWARDS, INC.
ALLIEDSIGNAL INC.
ALLSTATE INSURANCE COMPANY
AMERICAN AIRLINES (ATA)
ARTHUR ANDERSON
THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION
AT&T
AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING, INC.
AUTOZONE
CANADIAN NATIONAL—ILL. CENTRAL
CHAMPION INTERNATIONAL CORP.
CHEVRON CORPORATION
CHICAGO MERCANTILE EXCHANGE
THE CHUBB CORPORATION
CIGNA

CORNING

COSTCO WHOLESALE
CSX CORPORATION
DELTA AIRLINES (ATA)
DREAMWORKS
EDWARD JONES
ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR
FIRST USA
FORT JAMES FOUNDATION
GENUINE PARTS COMPANY
GULFSTREAM AEROSPACE CORP.
JOHN DEERE FOUNDATION
LUTHERAN BROTHERHOOD
MERRILL LYNCH & CO., INC.
MUSETTE & ALLEN MORGAN JR. FUND
NATIONWIDE INSUR. ENTERPRISE FOUND.
PFIZER INC.
RAPOPORT FOUNDATION
SAKS INCORPORATED
SARA LEE CORPORATION
TENNECO
TRW FOUNDATION
THE ALBERT L. UELTSCHI FOUNDATION
UNION PACIFIC CORPORATION
UNITED AIRLINES (ATA)
UNITED TECHNOLOGIES CORPORATION
U.S. OFFICE PRODUCTS
WACHOVIA CORPORATION
WHIRLPOOL
W.W. GRAINGER, INC.
THE XEROX FOUNDATION

VETERANS, STATE AND INDIVIDUAL GIVING

LEADERSHIP GIFTS \$1 MILLION TO \$2 MILLION

THE AMERICAN LEGION
STATE OF NEW YORK

PA TRON GIFTS \$500,000 TO \$1 MILLION

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
STATE OF TEXAS

VICTOR GIFTS \$250,000 TO \$500,000

STATE OF MICHIGAN
STATE OF MINNESOTA
STATE OF WISCONSIN
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

CENTURION GIFTS \$100,000 TO \$250,000

AMVETS
ASSOC. OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY
STATE OF COLORADO
STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE OF MAINE
MILITARY ORDER OF THE WORLD WARS
STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

GUARDIAN GIFTS \$50,000 TO \$100,000

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
LADIES AUXILIARY TO THE VFW
STATE OF MONTANA
STATE OF NEBRASKA

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
STATE OF UTAH

DEFENDER GIFTS \$10,000 TO \$25,000

AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR
STATE OF ARKANSAS
STATE OF KANSAS
JACKSON C. LINK
VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA
AMVETS Post #7 - ILLINOIS

Contact us!

For information about the memorial, the design concept, how to make a donation, who's who, and what's new :

visit our web site
wwiimemorial.com

or call
1 (800) 639-4WW2

or e-mail
custsvc@wwiimemorial.com

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**National
Co-Chairman**
Frederick W. Smith

90

85

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Gerald Ford

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75

70

65

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Jack Valenti

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35

30

25

20

15

10

5

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James W. Aylward

BROKAW, HANKS RAISE MEMORIAL PROFILE IN NEW YORK

On May 13th, Tom Brokaw, anchor of NBC Nightly News and author of the best seller, *The Greatest Generation*, hosted a luncheon at The 21 Club in New York City to raise awareness and funding for the memorial campaign. Guest speakers included Tom Hanks and campaign co-chairmen Senator Bob Dole and Frederick Smith. To date, over half a million dollars has been raised as a result of this event.



Frederick Smith, Tom Brokaw, Senator Dole and Tom Hanks at New York luncheon.

BLOCKBUSTER INC. PLEDGES \$250,000 IN SUPPORT OF MEMORIAL

Blockbuster Inc. recently pledged \$250,000 in support of the National World War II Memorial.

Blockbuster made the pledge on behalf of local veterans organizations across the country and worked with them to stage events at select Blockbuster stores during the week of Memorial Day to raise awareness of fund-raising efforts for the memorial.

"Blockbuster chose to make the donation in the name of veterans organizations to support their commitment to raising funds for the first ever national World War II memorial," said Jim Notarnicola, chief marketing officer and executive vice president for Blockbuster.

"Memorial Day has traditionally kicked off our summer renting season. Since our members are so good to Blockbuster during this time, we wanted to show our gratitude by honoring veterans in this very special way."

In addition to the cash pledge, Blockbuster stores throughout the country are featuring a National World War II Memorial public service announcement on in-store monitors. The public service spots will run during the months of June, July and August.

The popular video retailer also features the memorial in a special section on their company web site at www.blockbuster.com/company/community/wwii/.