

# ★ ★ NATIONAL ★ ★ WWII MEMORIAL

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 4

A NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 2000

## MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL CO-CHAIRMAN

*Frederick W. Smith*



As the summer comes to an end, we are rapidly closing in on our fund-raising goals.

Thanks to the hard work and commitment of so many individuals, young and old, in communities large and small, from corporations to classrooms, we soon will declare victory.

We also are beginning to see a light at the end of the design approval process. The Commission of Fine Arts recently gave its unanimous approval to our final architectural design.

We need one more approval from the National Capital Planning Commission, hopefully in September, to clear the way for groundbreaking on Veterans Day in November.

You'll find renderings and a description of the current design inside this newsletter. Take a moment to read about this beautiful tribute to America's WWII generation that you are helping make possible.

Support from our national leadership has been important from the beginning.

During a recent White House event, President Clinton reminded attendees of the significance of this memorial when he said that "until it has a place on our National Mall, the story of America that is told there will be woefully incomplete."

We've come a long, long way together in less than four years. Thanks to you, we soon will complete an important but missing chapter in the history of American memorials.



## CFA unanimously approves final architectural design; NCPC next

The final architectural design of the National World War II Memorial was unanimously approved July 20th by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA).

The commission also reaffirmed its commitment to the memorial's Rainbow Pool site on the National Mall, noting that any lesser site would diminish the importance of World War II in shaping our country.

Design architect Friedrich St. Florian called the vote "a very important approval for us. We set out to create a design that is inspirational, timeless and sensitive to its site and surroundings. We are very pleased the commission agreed that we achieved these objectives."

F. Haydn Williams, chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission's site and design committee, described the memorial as "a place for commemoration and the celebration of the American spirit and national unity. It will honor the whole nation and its people."

Others testifying in support of the memorial included Sen. Bob Dole, Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-Ohio), Rep. Robert Weygand (D-R.I.), Del. Robert Underwood (D-Guam), former Secretary of the Navy John Dalton, Butch Miller, past national commander of The American Legion, Luther Smith, a WWII Tuskegee Airman, and Deirdre Park of the Gold Star Wives of America.

The ABMC will seek approval of the final architectural design from the National Capital Planning Commission in September, which would clear the way to break ground this year on Veterans Day, November 11th.

*Above: view of memorial arch and pillars from plaza. More images and story on page 4.*

# IN THE FIRST WAVE: KIT FIRTH CRESS

By David A. Lande

When Congress passed a bill creating the women's naval reserve in July 1942, a fresh-faced graduate of the University of Pittsburgh named Kit Firth Cress immediately went to the local recruiting office. She would be among the first to volunteer for the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES). During World War II, 350,000 more women would join the United States' military — about 100,000 of them joining the WAVES as Kit did. Others joined the WACs, WASPs, SPARs, and Marines.\*

Kit left for Cedar Falls, Iowa, with the very first class of enlisted WAVES. The Iowa State Teachers College at Cedar Falls had been turned into a training center for the Navy, so the new enlistees slept in the dormitories, occupied the classrooms for indoctrination sessions, and drilled in the gym. Taught how to march by retired Navy chiefs, the women marched down the corridors of the school to classes and meals. They still wore civilian clothes because their uniforms hadn't arrived yet.

"It was Christmastime and I thoroughly enjoyed Cedar Falls," she recalled. "It snowed a lot, and the snow was clean and white and it sparkled — something I had never seen in Pittsburgh. At the end of boot camp I was given leave and went back home — by train, of course, as there were no commercial airplanes [available] then." Kit's parents were delighted to greet her back home, but "aghast" that she had enlisted.

The early battles in the Pacific theater had been costly for the Allies, but a celebrated victory over the Japanese fleet at



*Kit Firth Cress in uniform*

the Battle of Midway in June 1942 had marked the beginning of an Allied turnaround in the South Pacific.

"The mood of the country was terrific," Kit commented. "Everyone was in it somehow. There was a job to be done, and we all wanted a part of it. To borrow a phrase, it was a 'popular war.' And it was a big adventure. There's nothing like a change from the everyday routine, and this was it with a vengeance. There was a big thing going on all over the world, and I wasn't going to miss out on it."

After her leave, Kit was sent to Norman, Oklahoma, for specialty training to become an aviation machinist mate. Other WAVES would go on to become administrative secretaries within Navy commands, corpsmen in hospital settings, land-based radio operators in contact with ships on antisubmarine operations, and various other occupations that would "free a man to fight."

"We were a mixed group of women from every income and educational level, but we melded very well. We felt we were all in this together and had no time for

niceties. We borrowed everything from each other: money, clothes, makeup, food, whatever. We helped each other get ready for inspections and looked out for one another in any way we could."

What Kit remembers best from the training related to the old Navy adage suggesting that if you couldn't fix something with what you have: "Get a bigger hammer."

When training was complete, Kit earned her rate as AMM 3/C and got orders to Corpus Christi, Texas, a permanent Naval Air Station where pilots were being trained as night fighters. But she never had the chance to put her new machinist skills into practice. Instead, she received word that she'd qualified for officers' training and was to report to Officer Candidates' School at Smith College, in Northampton, Massachusetts.

After being commissioned an ensign, she was assigned as materials officer for the Naval Air Station at Ottumwa, Iowa. There, in 1944, she met and married a dashing young naval aviator, Lieutenant William Robert Cress.

She reflected, "What I learned in the Navy is that I could take care of myself, that I could take orders if I tried very hard and kept my mouth shut, that I could handle people if I made the effort, and that I was not always right. I wasn't aware of any of this at the time, but as I get older, I can see it more clearly. I've been a volunteer since I retired from the school system. It is a pleasure to pay back a little of what my country has given me."

Now as snowbirds, Kit Firth Cress and her husband divide their time between Mansfield, Ohio, and Sarasota, Florida.

*David A. Lande's recently published non-fiction works include From Somewhere in England, Honor Bound, and Rommel in North Africa. He is currently writing books about the resistance movement and Messerschmitt aircraft.*

\*WAC: Women's Army Corps. WASP: Women's Airforce Service Pilots. SPAR: The U.S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve derived from the motto, Semper Paratus (always ready). Women Marines had no official acronym.

# DOLLAR PER VET CAMPAIGN: ONLY FIVE STATES LEFT

States across the nation continue to honor veterans as the countdown to groundbreaking begins. To date, 45 states have donated to the memorial campaign and as this newsletter goes to print, one state, Delaware, has \$1 per vet legislation waiting approval.

Many milestones in the "\$1 per vet" program took place this spring. Ten states donated to the memorial since our last newsletter and two of these states, Alabama and Wyoming, made a second donation. Alabama, which sent 321,000 men and women into World War II, increased their initial donation to represent a full \$1 per veteran. Wyoming increased their initial \$50,000 gift to \$58,000 for a total contribution of \$1.75 per veteran.

Illinois, the state that sent the fourth highest number of citizens into the war, donated \$987,000 and enacted a voluntary state income tax check off program. Plans are currently underway for Governor George Ryan to present Senator Bob Dole with the check at a ceremony honoring Illinois World War II

veterans.

Senator Dole and Major General John P. Herrling, USA (Ret), secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission, also traveled to Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Missouri to accept checks from state officials.

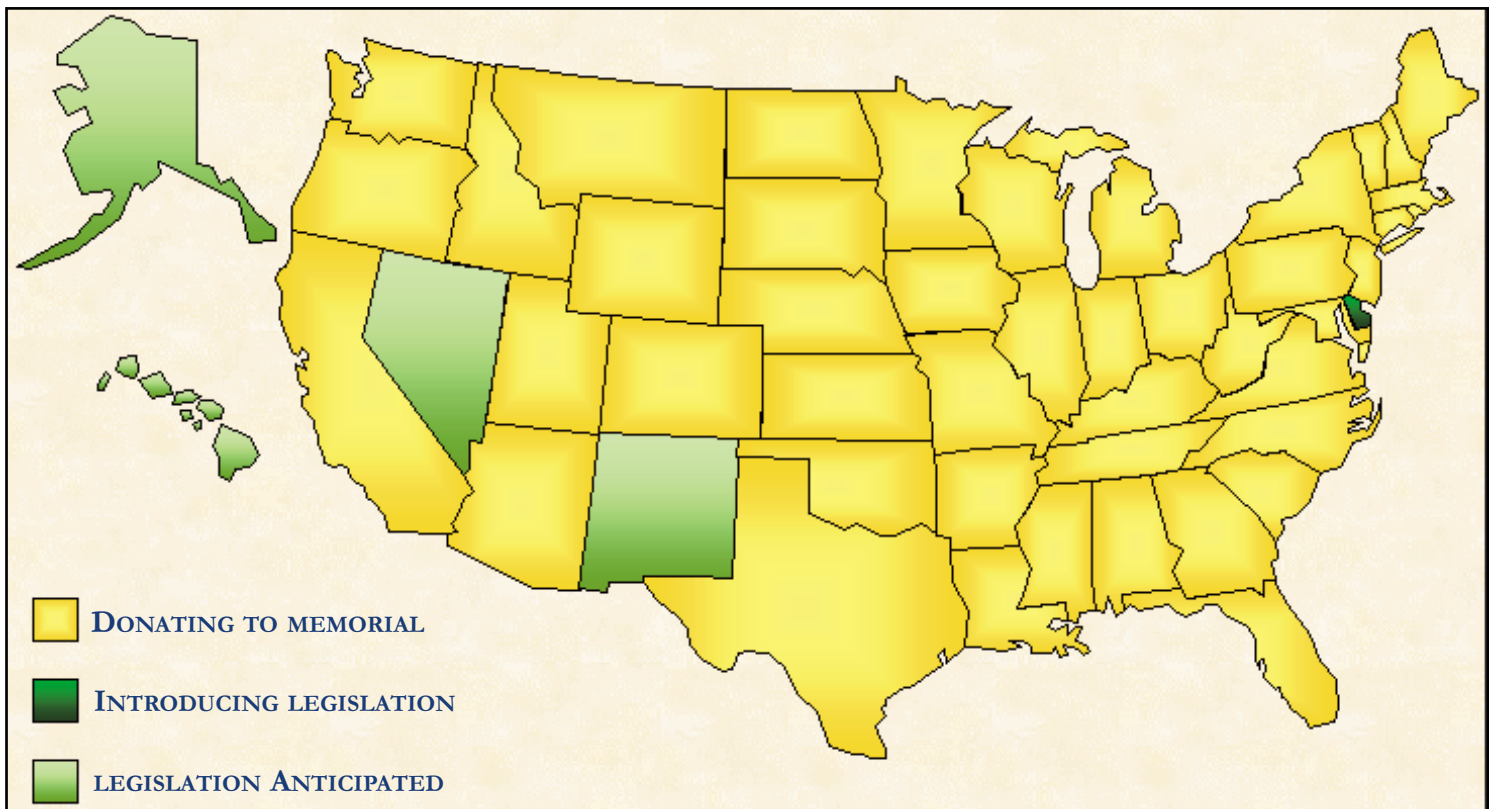
Among the milestones, however, is a story of how veterans and elected officials can work together honoring our nation's greatest generation.

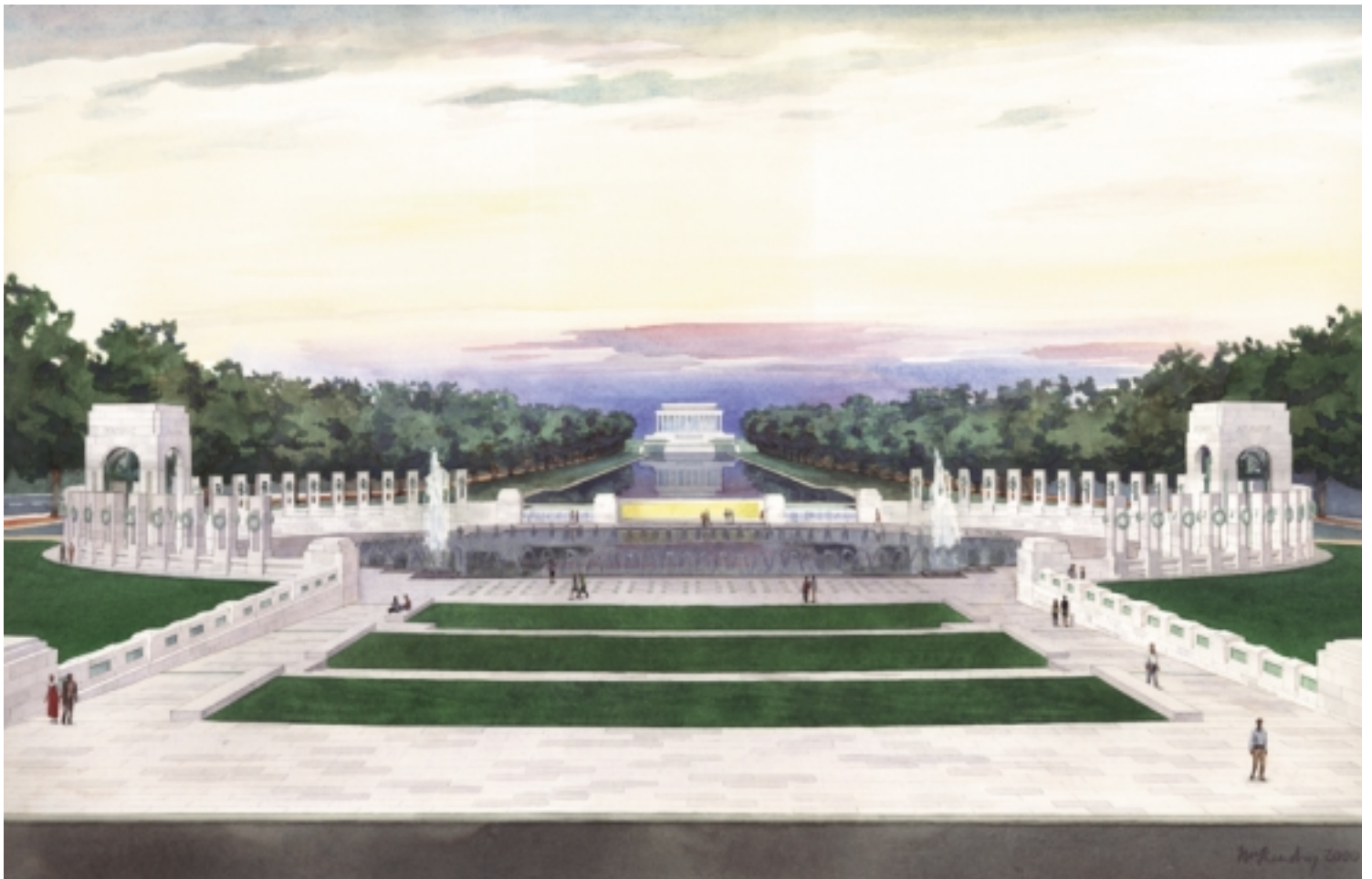
Last year, veteran Joseph J. Joseph received a copy of the memorial newsletter and noticed that his home state, Vermont, had not participated in the \$1 per vet campaign. Mr. Joseph contacted Governor Howard Dean during a television call-in show and asked him to support the campaign. Governor Dean said he'd find a way to make a \$38,000 donation possible, and true to his word, included the money in his budget request.

Meanwhile, Vermont state senators Peter Shumlin and John Crowley, along with WWII bomber pilot and POW Jack Goss, two Korean War veterans, Jim

Forest and Frank Leary, and two Vietnam veterans, Robert Skinner and Robert Walsh, testified before the state appropriations committee and persuaded them to increase Vermont's \$38,000 donation to \$114,000 -- \$3 for every Vermont veteran of the war. The state legislature wholeheartedly concurred with the decision and passed a resolution encouraging all states to donate \$3 per veteran. Governor Dean, justifiably proud of this resolution, presented a \$114,000 check for the memorial to veterans during a ceremony at the Vermont Veterans Home in May 2000.

If you live in one of the five states that has not yet contributed to the memorial (Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico) and would like more information, please contact Carol Lindamood at (703) 696-0677 or e-mail [lindamoodc@wwiimemorial.com](mailto:lindamoodc@wwiimemorial.com)





## Final architectural design views

**F**riedrich St. Florian's final architectural design creates a special place within the vast openness of the National Mall to commemorate the sacrifice and celebrate the victory of WWII. The design is sensitive to its historic park-like surroundings, preserving vistas in all directions.

The memorial plaza and Rainbow Pool remain the principal features of the design. The main sculptural element, the Light of Freedom, will be placed in the center of the Rainbow Pool. When completed, the sculpture will celebrate the triumph of democracy over tyranny — the true legacy of WWII.

Two 70-foot flagpoles flying the American flag will frame the ceremonial entrance at 17th Street. A series of 24 bronze bas relief panels along the entrance will depict America's war years at home and overseas.

Two 41-foot arches serve as markers and entries on the north and south ends of the plaza. Inside the arches, bronze American eagles hold suspended laurels to memorialize the victory of the WWII generation. Inlaid on the floor of the arches will be the WWII victory medal surrounded by the words "Victory on Land," "Victory at Sea," and "Victory in the Air."



*A view of Freedom Wall -- each gold star represents 100 Americans who gave their lives in service to their nation*



*Above: View of memorial arch and pillars from ramp  
Left: Watercolor rendering of final architectural design*

Fifty-six granite pillars represent the unity of the nation during WWII. Each state and territory from that period and the District of Columbia will have a pillar inscribed with its name.

A field of sculpted gold stars at the western side of the memorial will commemorate the more than 400,000 Americans who gave their lives. During WWII, the gold star became the enduring symbol of family sacrifice. The Freedom Wall will contain one star for every 100 Americans who died in service to their nation.

Throughout the plaza, memorial art and inscriptions carved in the granite walls will convey the American spirit during WWII. Two-thirds of the 7.4-acre site will be landscaping and water. The historic waterworks of the Rainbow Pool will be completely restored, and fountains and waterfalls included in the design will add to the celebratory nature of the memorial.

The ceremonial entrance has three large lawn panels, and a landscaped contemplative area will be located at the northwestern corner of the site. Throughout the site, canopies of flowering trees will augment re-seeded lawns.

When completed, the memorial will be an inviting place for visitors to celebrate the victory of WWII and commemorate the sacrifice, at home and overseas, that made victory possible.



*View of the memorial from 17th Street showing open vista to Lincoln Memorial*

# 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.

## REQUESTS FOR HELP

My father, PFC Eugene J. Lord from Detroit, Mich., was killed on Dec. 25, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. I was one year old at the time and never knew him. I would greatly appreciate any information about his life during that time. Please contact me at 203 West Michigan Ave., Suite 301B, Saline, MI 48176.

*Daniel J. Lord*  
Saline, Mich.

I am looking for information concerning a friend, Norbert H. Uhlendorf, from Ill., of the 32nd Reg., 3rd Armored Div., attached to the 1st Army. He was based in Vittel, France in

Nov. 1944, and was killed on Dec. 23, 1944 on the Belgium-German border. Please contact me at 79 Avenue de la République, 92120 Montrouge, France.

*Gervaise Khabouliany*  
Montrouge, France

I am looking for Lt. Thomas Lambert, U.S. Navy Press Corp. We spent the war together in the Pacific. I can be reached at 550 Lytton Ave., 3rd Floor, Palo Alto, CA 94301.

*Colin Peters*  
Palo Alto, Calif.

If you were in the Third Army, 4049th QM TRK. CO., during WWII, please contact me at 15212 12th Ave., N.E., Seattle, WA 98155.

*Joseph F. Williams*  
Seattle, Wash.

I would like to hear from anyone who served in the 1st Air Force Clearing Station, 40th Field Hospital (9th AF). We set up July 1, 1944 near Ste. Mere Eglise. I can be reached at 296 Texas Prairie Rd.,

Bates City, MO 64011.

*Marvin Sears*  
Bates City, Mo.

I would like to hear from anyone who was in the U.S. Navy serving at H.E.C.P., Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, NY, during the war. I can be reached at 44-550 Marguerite Court, La Quinta, CA 92253.

*Norris S. Bernard*  
La Quinta, Calif.

## OPERATION ARGUMENT

The article *Operation Argument* in your spring newsletter reminded me of a sight I experienced when first entering Germany in 1945: German jet fighter planes lined up along the side of a split four lane highway. It was an awesome sight to behold because our airplanes were still propeller-driven.

The jets were untouched and unused due to lack of fuel — another victory for the Allied air forces in their bombing of German oil supplies!

*Ray H. Adams*  
Panama City, Fla.

## 8th Air Force's Second Air Division contributes

In June 2000, three World War II aviators from the Second Air Division, 8th Air Force presented Major General John Herrling, USA (Ret), secretary of the American Battle Monuments Commission, with a \$10,767 donation for the World War II Memorial.

After the presentation, the aviators, Colonel Al Asch (Ret), regional vice-president, Second Air Division Association, and association members Dave Thompson and Charles Freudenthal, delighted the memorial staff with personal remembrances of some of their wartime exploits. They also gave an account of the unit's history.

The Second Air Division's B-24s flew over 94,000 sorties in 493 operational missions in the European Theater of Operations. The division flew in Norway, Poland and Northern Africa, as well as Central Europe. Six groups were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and five Division airmen were awarded the Medal of Honor. Almost 6,700 members of the Second Air Division gave their lives in the line of duty.

The Defender-level Gift by the Second Air Division represents the most significant donation that the campaign has received from any World War II Army Aviation association and sets an excellent example for all reunion groups.



*Col. Alfred Asch, Dave Thompson, and Charles Freudenthal share stories with MG. John Herrling during the presentation ceremony.*

## NEW MAJOR DONORS

The campaign continues to receive generous donations from private and public sector contributors. The following list presents the major donations since our last newsletter.

### CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION GIVING

#### FOUNDERS GIFTS - \$2,000,000 AND ABOVE

- WAL-MART

#### LEADERSHIP GIFTS - \$1,000,000 TO \$1,999,999

- DONALD W. REYNOLDS FOUNDATION

#### CENTURION GIFTS - \$100,000 TO \$249,999

- THE PAUL G. ALLEN CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
- CONOCO INC.
- THE MONTFORT FAMILY FOUNDATION
- PEPCO
- WORTHINGTON INDUSTRIES, INC.

### VETERANS, STATE AND ORGANIZATIONAL GIVING

#### VICTORS GIFTS - \$250,000 TO \$499,999

- KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
- NATIONAL FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION
- NAT. SOCIETY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
- STATE OF KENTUCKY
- STATE OF LOUISIANA
- STATE OF MISSOURI
- STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
- STATE OF OKLAHOMA

#### CENTURION GIFTS - \$100,000 TO \$249,999

- STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
- STATE OF VERMONT
- STATE OF WASHINGTON

#### GUARDIAN GIFTS - \$50,000 TO \$99,999

- STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
- STATE OF WYOMING

#### PROTECTOR GIFTS - \$25,000 TO \$49,999

- ALABAMA FARMERS ASSOCIATION

#### DEFENDER GIFTS - \$10,000 TO \$24,999

- COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA
- THE LOEWEN GROUP INTERNATIONAL, INC.
- NATIONAL WILD TURKEY FEDERATION
- POLLACK-RANDALL FUNERAL HOME
- RELIASTAR, INC.
- SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION, 8TH AIR FORCE

## Groundbreaking Ceremony Update

The memorial groundbreaking ceremony on the National Mall is tentatively scheduled for November 11, 2000, pending approval of the final architectural design in September. If the design is approved by the NCPC, the campaign will activate the following toll-free number to provide callers with details about the ceremony:

**1-877-992-2732**

## PHILIPS JOINS LIST OF CORPORATE PARTNERS

**P**hilips Lighting, a proud partner of the National World War II Memorial, will run a fund-raising promotion out of their distributor outlets (nearly 3,000 locations nationwide).

Promotions begin in October and will include the sale of collectable pins, a book, and a video. The company guaranteed a minimum of \$500,000 to the campaign.

## KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS HALFWAY TO GOAL!

**T**he Knights of Columbus recently contributed \$250,000 to the memorial. This represents half the goal the organization set for its membership campaign and brings the total raised to more than \$300,000.

The Fourth Degree Knights of the Knights of Columbus, the patriotic arm of the organization, is spearheading this campaign to raise awareness and funds among Catholic parishes across the country.

To date, hundreds of assemblies have conducted events ranging from bingo nights to walkathons to raise money for the campaign and collect names of veterans and home front workers for the Registry of Remembrances.

## Nearly 800 schools contribute \$500,000

**S**chools across the country have taken up the challenge of collecting donations to support the memorial. To date, nearly 800 schools have donated a total of \$500,000! A growing list of schools supporting the memorial is on our web site.

Students' enthusiasm for the campaign is often sparked when they realize the importance of World War II, and that some of their own family members played a role in helping to win it.

As part of its effort to help teachers promote the study and understanding of the war, the campaign, in partnership with The History Channel, developed an interdisciplinary WWII Teacher's Manual, which is available free by calling toll free 1-877-87-LEARN.

For more information about the education program, contact Bob Lewis at (703) 696-8437, or e-mail [lewisb@wwiimemorial.com](mailto:lewisb@wwiimemorial.com).

## Contact us!

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

visit our web site  
**WWII Memorial.com**

or call  
**1 (800) 639-4WW2**

or e-mail  
**custsvc@wwiimemorial.com**

## WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL CAMPAIGN

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**National  
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**Executive Director**  
*James W. Aylward*

## WAL-MART CONTRIBUTES LARGEST GIFT: \$14.5 MILLION



On the 54th anniversary of “the longest day,” the long-overdue memorial to World War II veterans marched a step closer to reality as Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. presented a check for \$14.5 million to Sen. Bob Dole, chairman of the National World War II Memorial Campaign. The contribution was presented on June 6 by a group of Wal-Mart World War II veterans and associates during a special ceremony at the memorial site on the National Mall.

## PENNSYLVANIA NEWSPAPER SERIES HELPS RAISE \$58,000

In Sunbury, Penn., the local newspaper, *The Daily Item*, raised more than \$58,000 for the memorial through a unique series of articles this summer. The series, which ran from Memorial Day through July 4th, featured biographies of local veterans and a review of activities in the Susquehanna Valley area during World War II.

Thousands of the paper's readers responded to the articles by mailing donations to the First National Trust Bank in Sunbury, which processed the donations and then



Sen. Dole speaks with Norman Ulmer, center, and Jack Plotts, two veterans featured in the series. (photo by Jason Getz, *The Daily Item*)

sent a detailed report to the National WWII Memorial campaign for acknowledgement.

Dave Hilliard, the managing editor of *The Daily Item*, had originally set a goal of \$25,000 for the local campaign and was surprised by the overwhelming response.