

# THE AMERICAN VETERANS CENTER'S 16TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE & HONORS

NOVEMBER 7-9, 2013 - WASHINGTON, DC

## LOCATIONS OF EVENTS:

*See schedule for times*

### “The Wounded Warrior Experience” & Conference Speaker Sessions

U.S. Navy Memorial  
Naval Heritage Center  
701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 123  
Washington, DC 20004

### “The Special Relationship: Commemorating 75 Years”

Friday Evening Reception  
The Embassy of the United Kingdom  
3100 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20008

### The American Veterans Center Honors

Renaissance Washington DC Hotel  
Renaissance Ballroom  
999 9th St NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
*Note: Black Tie Preferred*

*Bus transportation will be available from the Renaissance Washington DC Hotel to all off-site events.  
The buses will pick up/drop off at the K Street entrance on the side of the hotel lobby.*

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

*TIMES & TOPICS SUBJECT TO CHANGE - ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS & PARTICIPANTS TBA  
VISIT [WWW.AMERICANVETERANSCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.AMERICANVETERANSCENTER.ORG) FOR CONTINUED UPDATES AND ADDITIONS*

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

6:45 - “THE WOUNDED WARRIOR EXPERIENCE”

Bus transportation from Renaissance available, departing at 6:25 and 6:45 PM

*Presented by Military Order of the Purple Heart Service Foundation*

Featuring service members who have been wounded in the line of duty, sharing their inspiring stories of recovery and determination, along with resources available to service members transitioning from the military to the private sector.

Hosted by **Jennifer Griffin**, National Security Correspondent for the Fox News Channel

Featuring:

**Cpl. Garrett Jones** - Wounded by a roadside bomb in the Iraqi city of Fallujah, losing his left leg. Continued to serve on active duty, eventually returning to a war zone when serving on the front lines in Afghanistan.

**SSgt. Jeremiah Workman** - Marine Corps veteran of Iraq and recipient of the Navy Cross. Author of *Shadow of the Sword*, which chronicles his story of one of the most decorated and highest profile veterans struggling with PTSD.

**Kim Ruocco** - Director, Suicide Postvention Program - Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS); her husband, Major John Ruocco, was a decorated Marine Cobra gunship pilot who lost his life to suicide in between deployments.

**Dr. Tim Miller** - Veteran of Vietnam and UCLA's Chief of the Division of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, chief reconstructive surgeon for Operation Mend, treating service members injured by IEDs in Afghanistan and Iraq.

**SFC Michael A. Schlitz** - Wounded by an IED in Iraq in 2007, double-amputee suffering burns over 85% of his body, now a motivational speaker for fellow wounded warriors trying to overcome their own injuries.

**SSG Erick Millette** - U.S. Army combat patrol leader in Iraq, surviving nine direct hits by IEDs, now an advocate for veterans overcoming PTS and TBI.

*Additional Participants TBA - visit [www.woundedwarriorexperience.com](http://www.woundedwarriorexperience.com) for updates*

6:45pm – Reception      8:00pm – Discussion

*This program will be filmed for broadcast on The Pentagon Channel the week of Veterans Day 2013. Visit [www.woundedwarriorexperience.com](http://www.woundedwarriorexperience.com) for more information and panelist updates. This event is free of charge.*



## FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8

### SPEAKER SESSIONS AT THE U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL – SESSIONS BEGIN AT 8:30AM

*Buses from Renaissance Washington Hotel depart at 7:45 and 8:10 AM - Bus transportation available to and from hotel throughout the day, on the hour U.S. Navy Memorial*

*Naval Heritage Center*

*701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 123*

*Washington, DC 20004*



#### 1943: AMERICA ON THE OFFENSIVE

**William J. Fili** – Veteran of 34 aerial combat missions and gunner on the B-24 Liberator “Destiny Deb,” later shot down over Ploiesti, Romania. Taken prisoner, he was rescued six months later in a massive two-day airlift.

**Major Norman T. Hatch** (*Tentative*) - Marine Corps cinematographer and winner of the Academy Award for the documentary, *With the Marines at Tarawa*. His crew was responsible for capturing on film the legendary “flag raising” on Iwo Jima.

*Additional participants TBA*

#### THE GREATEST GENERATION - A CONVERSATION WITH VETERANS OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Featuring:

**Captain Max Duncan** – Decorated Torpedo and Gunner officer on the *USS Barb*, the submarine responsible for sinking more enemy tonnage than any other during the war. Her skipper, Eugene B. Fluckey, was awarded the Medal of Honor, and in a daring raid several of its crew led the only ground-based combat operation on the Japanese home islands.

*Additional participants TBA*

#### WWII: THE PACIFIC

Featuring:

**Donald Mates** - Marine Corps veteran of Guam and Iwo Jima, whose friend and platoon mate - Jimmy Trimble, one of baseball's top young prospects - was killed next to him in hand to hand combat.

**Frank Hall** - Marine veteran of several campaigns across the Pacific, including Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima.

#### KEYNOTE REMARKS - TBA

#### 1973: THE RETURN OF THE POWS AND LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM THE HANOI HILTON

Featuring:

**CDR Everett Alvarez, Jr.** - The first American pilot to be shot down and held prisoner of war in North Vietnam, and among the longest-held POWs. He went on to serve in a number of government positions, including Deputy Director of the Peace Corps and Deputy Administrator of the VA.

Moderated by **Taylor Baldwin Kiland**, co-author of *Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton: Six Characteristics of High-Performance Teams*.

*Additional Participants TBA*

#### A DECADE OF HONOR: LEADERSHIP IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

**CPT Pete Hegseth** - Army infantry platoon leader serving in Baghdad and Samarra, with service in Guantanamo Bay and Afghanistan, where he served as senior counterinsurgency instructor at the Counterinsurgency Training Center in Kabul. Currently Chief Executive Officer at Concerned Veterans for America.

**Lt. Elliot Ackerman** - Decorated Marine Corps platoon leader in the 2004 Second Battle of Fallujah in Iraq, and Special Operations Officer and advisor to an Afghan commando battalion, later a Paramilitary Case Officer for the Central Intelligence Agency. Currently a White House Fellow, and Chief Operating Officer of Americans Elect.

**SSG David Bellavia** - U.S. Army veteran and author of *House to House: An Epic Memoir of War*, which chronicles his story in the 2004 Second Battle of Fallujah, following which he was awarded the Silver Star and nominated for the Medal of Honor and Distinguished Service Cross.

*Additional participants TBA*

#### U.S. NAVY SEALS AND EXPEDITIONARY WARFARE:

A rare appearance by active duty members of the Navy's SEAL, EOD, and Expeditionary Warfare communities share their perspectives on service, sacrifice, and life in their chosen professions.

*Participants TBA*

## CAPSTONE REMARKS

Featuring:

**General P.X. Kelley, USMC (Ret)** - 28th Commandant of the United States Marine Corps, Chairman of the American Battle Monuments Commission during construction of the National World War II Memorial.

### **EXCLUSIVE EVENT - FRIDAY EVENING**

*THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP: COMMEMORATING 75 YEARS*

*A RECEPTION AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY*

*6:30 PM - 8:30 PM*

This special exclusive reception will recognize the long partnership between the United Kingdom and the United States, saluting those of the Greatest Generation of World War II to the generation that has served side by side in Afghanistan and Iraq. The reception will feature British and American food, drinks, and spirits.

*Special guests include Wounded Warriors from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.*

*Buses depart hotel at 6:15 PM.*



## **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9**

**SPEAKER SESSIONS AT THE U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL –**

**SESSIONS BEGIN AT 8:30 AM**

*The U.S. Navy Memorial is located at:*

*701 Pennsylvania Ave, NW*

*Washington, DC 20004*

*Buses depart hotel at 8:15 AM - Bus transportation available to and from hotel throughout the day, on the hour*

## LEGENDS OF WORLD WAR II

Featuring:

**Chester Nez** - The last surviving veteran of the original Navajo Code Talkers, the famed Native American Marines who relayed encoded messages in the Pacific Theater of war.

**Jerry Yellin** - Decorated fighter pilot in the Pacific Theater who flew the first land-based fighter mission over Japan on April 7, 1945, and the last mission of the war on August 14, 1945.

## RED TAILS: THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN

**Calvin Spann** - Combat pilot with the 100th Fighter Squadron, a part of the 332nd Fighter Group under the command of Benjamin O. Davis, Jr.. Spann flew 26 combat missions before the end of the war in Europe and terminated his tour of duty in Italy.

*Additional participants TBA*

## THE FORGOTTEN VICTORY: THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN WAR

Featuring:

**Lt. General Bernard E. Trainor** - Infantry platoon leader in Korea, who went on to serve multiple tours in Vietnam and as Director, Plans Division, Plans, Policies and Operations Department at Headquarters Marine Corps. Later a military analyst for NBC, *The New York Times* Chief Military Correspondent, Director of the National Security Program at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and co-author of multiple books including the recently published *The Endgame: The Inside Story of the Struggle for Iraq, from George W. Bush to Barack Obama*.

**Colonel Warren Wiedhahn** - Marine Corps veteran of Korea, seeing action at Pusan Perimeter, the landing at Inchon, and the desperate Battle of Chosin Reservoir. Highly decorated officer of Vietnam, who following a 33-year military career now serves as founder and president of Military Historical Tours.

## A CONVERSATION WITH "WILD BILL"

Featuring:

**William "Wild Bill" Guarnere** - Famed veteran of the "Band of Brothers" - E Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne. Recipient of the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and two Purple Hearts during his time in action from D-Day to Bastogne.

## THE MEDAL OF HONOR

Featuring:

**SSG Clinton Romesha** - Recipient of the nation's highest military award for valor at the 2009 Battle of Kamdesh in Afghanistan. Moderated by **Major General Thomas Wilkerson**, President and CEO of the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation

*Additional participants TBA*

## YEAR OF THE MILITARY WOMAN: LEADERS AND TRAILBLAZERS IN THE U.S. MILITARY

Featuring:

**Lt. General Carol A. Mutter, USMC-Ret** - The first woman in the history of the United States Armed Forces to be appointed to the three-star grade, serving as Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (DC/S, M&RA) at Marine Corps Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

**Vice Admiral Sally Brice O'Hara, USCG-Ret** - Served as the 27th Vice-Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, the second woman to hold the Coast Guard's second-highest position, previously serving as Deputy Commandant for Operations.

**Major General Dee McWilliams, USA-Ret** - Thirty-year veteran of the U.S. Army, with duties including Director of Personnel Management for the Department of the Army. President of the U.S. Army Women's Foundation.

**Senior Chief Petty Officer Mary Cunningham** - First female to instruct at the Damage Controlman School, and rising to the rank of Chief Petty Officer in Aug of 2007, she became the first active duty female Chief Damage Controlman.

## CAPSTONE REMARKS

Featuring:

**General Richard B. Myers, USAF (Ret)** - Fifteenth Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2001-2005.

## THE KISSING SAILOR

For decades, the identity of the "Nurse and Sailor" in the legendary "VJ Day in Times Square" photo at the close of WWII remained a mystery. In the recent book *The Kissing Sailor*, following exhaustive research their identities were conclusively revealed.

Featuring:

**Greta Friedman**, identified as "The Nurse" and **George Mendonza** (via Skype) identified as "The Sailor"

## ***SIGNATURE EVENT - A NEW VETERANS DAY TRADITION***

### **THE AMERICAN VETERANS CENTER HONORS THE FIRST AND ONLY TELEVISED AWARDS SHOW**

**HONORING THOSE WHO DESERVE IT MOST  
*Open Bar Reception & Silent Auction: Begins at 6:00***

***Dinner & Honors: 7:00***

***Renaissance Washington DC Hotel***

***Renaissance Ballroom***

***999 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington DC 20001***

FILMED FOR A SPECIAL BROADCAST ON THE PENTAGON CHANNEL, THE AMERICAN VETERANS CENTER HONORS IS THE FIRST AND ONLY TELEVISED AWARDS SHOW HONORING OUR MILITARY MEN AND WOMEN FROM ACROSS THE GENERATIONS.

AT THIS VERY SPECIAL BLACK-TIE GALA DINNER, ATTENDEES WILL MAKE UP THE LIVE AUDIENCE AS WE HONOR HEROES FROM WORLD WAR II, KOREA, VIETNAM, AND THE PRESENT DAY.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE WILL BE SPECIAL CELEBRITY GUEST PRESENTERS, CELEBRATED VETERANS, AND MUSICAL PERFORMANCES, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES ARMY SOLDIERS' CHORUS.

THE AMERICAN VETERANS CENTER HONORS WILL AIR ON THE PENTAGON CHANNEL ON THE FOLLOWING DATES AND TIMES:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

1 AM, 11 AM, 9 PM

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

7 AM, 2 PM, 6 PM

Check your cable/satellite service provider's listings for availability or watch online at [www.pentagonchannel.mil](http://www.pentagonchannel.mil).

